**NIHR Manchester BRC Core Pump Priming Call (CPPC)**

**Innovation and Partnerships: Advancing Inclusive Practices in Commercial Clinical Trials 2025-26**

**Introduction**

We invite proposals for collaborative projects between industry and research partners that drive inclusive practices in commercial clinical trials. This funding call aims to address critical health equity challenges, such as overcoming language barriers, enhancing diverse recruitment strategies, refining inclusion/exclusion criteria, or novel approaches to analysis of research data. We particularly encourage projects that focus on under-served groups, including women, as well as those underrepresented due to age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, health conditions, sexual orientation, digital exclusion, or other structural barriers to participation in clinical trials. Successful projects should demonstrate a clear pathway for scaling into larger funding opportunities.

**Funding available:** Up to **£15,000** per project

**Scope and Focus Areas**

Projects must incorporate at least one of the following:

* **Addressing Language Barriers:** Implementing innovative strategies to enhance accessibility, such as real-time translation services, culturally adapted communication approaches, AI-driven language support tools, and community-based interpreter networks.
* **Inclusive Trial Design:** Modifying inclusion/exclusion criteria to better represent underrepresented groups, ensuring diverse population recruitment.
* **Trust & Communication:** Strengthening engagement with marginalised communities through co-designed outreach strategies, transparent data use policies, and patient advocacy collaborations.
* **Data & Metrics for Inclusivity:** Enhancing demographic data collection and analysis to ensure more representative trials.
* **Financial & Logistical Support:** Models to reduce participant burden, such as equitable reimbursement, local transport partnerships, and decentralised trial approaches.
* **PPIE Co-Production:** Embedding patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) in the design and execution of clinical trials.
* **Staff Education/Unconscious Bias:** Training for clinical and research staff to recognise and address unconscious bias, ensuring equitable treatment and recruitment practices.
* **Inclusive Analysis of Research Data**: Developing and/or piloting innovative methods to analyse research data to improve health equity across our diverse population.

**Review Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

* **Innovation & Impact:** How effectively the project addresses inclusivity challenges in trials in accordance with above focus areas
* **Collaborative Strength of Partnership:** Clear roles, industry involvement, and in-kind contribution to the project e.g. resources, expertise, patient engagement tools, technology
* **Implementation Plan & Feasibility:** A well-defined timeline, milestones, and methods for measuring success and impact.
* **Pathway to Larger Funding:** Demonstrated potential for scaling up and securing additional funding, along with alignment to national/international funding calls.
* **Future Impacts:** Capacity to drive broader research impact and influence policy development.

**Expected Outputs**

* **Case Study & Media Piece:** Projects must contribute to a published case study demonstrating best practices in inclusive trial design
* **Stakeholder Engagement Report:** Summary of industry-research collaboration learnings.

**Applicant Eligibility**

Applications from early career researchers are encouraged. We would also welcome applications from nursing, allied health professional, psychologist, pharmacist and healthcare scientist staff groups along with other healthcare professionals. You do not need to have prior links with the BRC however **lead applicants are expected to have approached the associated themes, prior to submission, to help foster collaboration**. We can facilitate this through the enquiry details below.

**Lead Applicant:** must hold an appropriate contract with a BRC partner organisation and/or with a Higher Education Institute (HEI) within the Greater Manchester area. This contract must exceed the duration of the proposed project.

Our partner organisations are:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust • The Christie NHS Foundation Trust • Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust • Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust • Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust • Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust • University of Manchester

**Industry Partner:** A commercial organisation (Pharma, MedTech, CRO, Digital Health) with an in-kind contribution (e.g., resources, expertise, patient engagement tools, technology).

As a BRC, we endorse and champion [Team Research](https://www.pankhurst.manchester.ac.uk/research/team-research/) principles. Collaborative, multi-disciplinary, diverse and inclusive teams are expected to be evidenced in applications. As part of NIHR funding guidelines, we are expected to collect monitoring data on our applicants to help inform us on whether underrepresented groups are being reached. This data is voluntary and will be pseudo-anonymised and stored in line with our GDPR procedures. This data will not be used to assess the application. This data will be made available to NIHR on request.

**Award Assessment**

* Applications are subject to a review by an appointed scientific review panel.
* Awards are made based on **scientific merit**, **relevance** to our focus areas, **feasibility,** and **impact** on patient health outcomes.
* Public Patient Involvement and Engagement (PPIE)activity is expected to be demonstrated in the application and must be costed for. This can be supported through [VOCAL](https://wearevocal.org/). Please contact the VOCAL Team [**vocal@mft.nhs.uk**](mailto:vocal@mft.nhs.uk) as early as possible for advice, costing, and planning
* As part of the review process, themes will be contacted, to confirm they are aware of the project.

**Funding Call Timeline**

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| **Project duration - Up to 6 months – activity can go on for up to 8 months, but funds must be spent by 31st March 2026** | |
| **Funding Call Open** | **10th March 2025** |
| **Funding Call Closes** | **2nd June 2025** |
| **Panel Review** | **w/c 23rd June 2025** |
| **Award Letters Issued** | **7th July 2025** |
| **Project Start Date** | **1st August 2025** |
| **Project End Date** | **31st March 2026** |

**CPPC will fund direct costs:**

* Directly incurred staff costs, in line with the call guidance
* Materials and consumables – these should be project specific and not general costs
* Equipment/facilities access
* Equipment purchases (capped at £5,000 per item and must be justified against the duration of the project)
* Workshops and patient engagement activities
* Other engagement, knowledge exchange, training and culture change activities can also be supported.

**CPPC award will NOT fund:**

* Animal Work
* Bridging Funds (staff between posts)
* Projects with no clear translational agenda (basic science projects) or applied outcomes
* Indirect or estate costs
* Costs relating to intellectual property
* Equipment costs of more than £5000 per item.

**Please review the CPPC Terms and Conditions document before applying. Contact your University Research Support office and NHS Trust R&I, prior to submission, as appropriate (i.e., if including University/Trust staff costs, cost codes etc). Funding must be spent by 31st March 2026**

**For further enquiries please contact Colette Inkson, BRC Innovation and Partnerships Manager:** [**colette.inkson@mft.nhs.uk**](mailto:colette.inkson@mft.nhs.uk)**; and Rick Body, BRC Partnerships Lead:** [**richard.body@manchester.ac.uk**](mailto:richard.body@manchester.ac.uk)**. Applications should be submitted to** [**brc-crfpartnerships@mft.nhs.uk**](mailto:brc-crfpartnerships@mft.nhs.uk)