



July 2026

Find out about funding opportunities

The Health Innovation East Midlands funding newsletter highlights funding opportunities for innovators. For each opportunity we have provided a brief summary and a link to the full details.

We help bring health and social care innovations to patients faster, to improve patient outcomes, increase value for the NHS, and support economic growth for UK plc. In supporting commercial, academic and clinical innovators we help develop solutions to real needs, develop the evidence base supporting those solutions, offer support to navigate appropriate governance standards, and drive adoption.

This newsletter is split into categories to help to organise the content by interest. These categories are industry, research and NHS.



If you are an innovator looking for support, please complete our East Midlands innovator engagement form to tell us more about your innovation.

Contact us & complete an innovator engagement form

Featured funding opportunities



NHS Cancer Programme Invitation open call

SBRI Healthcare has announced the fourth round of the NHS Cancer Programme Innovation open call.

The Competition is looking for innovations that will improve productivity by managing demand or improving capacity within cancer care pathways to enable the NHS to meet all Cancer waiting times standards by 2029, and/or innovations that drive earlier cancer diagnosis.

The Competition will support two complementary funding models:

1. **Real-World Implementation and Evaluation** – Up to £3M for up to 24 months.
Open to single organisations based in the UK or EU from the private, public and third sectors to support the real-world deployment and independent evaluation of market-ready innovations across multiple NHS sites, in England.
2. **Innovation Spread Fund** – Up to £5M for the first 24 months of up to a 36 month project. Open to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) in partnership with Cancer Alliances in England to support the spread and embedding of mature innovations that have already independently measured and demonstrated positive patient outcomes and a favourable cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness profile across multiple sites.

For support with applying for this call, contact our Ignite team: ignite@nottingham.ac.uk

For more information, [visit the SBRI website](#).



NIHR Innovation Catalyst - June 2026

Deadline: 14 July 2026

To help mark NIHR20, NIHR are launching the NIHR Innovation Catalyst pilot initiative. The pilot is looking to fund research about interventions that enable care beyond the hospital, supporting a shift towards a neighbourhood health service. This is a one-stage, full application funding opportunity.

[Find out more](#)



Horizon Europe 2026-2027: Cancer Mission

Deadline: 15 September 2026

Improving the lives of more than 3 million people by 2030 through prevention, cure and for those affected by cancer including their families, to live longer and better.

[Find out more](#)



Stevens Hewlett and Perkins Pitch & Protect 2026

Deadline: 24 July 2026

Applications are now open for the official launch of the second edition of Pitch & Protect: The £10k IP Fund. Created to support innovative UK startups and early-stage businesses, Pitch & Protect was launched to help founders better understand, protect and commercialise their intellectual property.

[Find out more](#)



European Innovation Council: Pathfinder, Transition, and Accelerator 2026

Deadline: 28 October 2026

Funding opportunities worth over €1.4 billion for strategic technologies and scaling up companies, with grants of up to €4m.

[Find out more](#)



Ignite bespoke support

Through [Ignite](#), Health Innovation East Midlands offers bespoke services to support health innovations no matter where they are in their development timeline. Within this fast-moving environment, we have a specific focus in the development and delivery of the work packages that are required for the majority of the funding competitions within the UK today.

With an excellent return of successful partnerships and funding wins, we can support innovators in the following key deliverable areas including (but not limited to): Pathway Mapping, Stakeholder Mapping, PPI (Patient & Public Involvement), EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion), Value Proposition, Budget/Cost Impact Analysis, Health Economics, Business Case, Commercialisation, and Adoption and Spread.

Ignite and Health Innovation East Midlands' focus and experience aligned with our NHS background and expertise allows us to support innovators in a unique way that has led to many successful funding competitions for our partners. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact us at: ignite@nottingham.ac.uk

Other funding opportunities



Industry

Horizon Europe 2026-2027: Health, Cluster

Deadline: Various - Apr/Sep 2026, Apr/Sep 2027

Topics available under Horizon Europe's Health programme for 2026/27, with funding of up to €90m per call.

[Find out more](#)



Industry



Research

NIHR NICE rolling funding opportunity (HSDR Programme)

Deadline: 8 July 2026

The Health and Social Care Delivery Research (HSDR) Programme is inviting outline applications to the NIHR NICE rolling funding opportunity. It supports research that addresses evidence gaps identified in NICE guidance published or updated within the last five years. The HSDR Programme funds high-quality research to improve how health and social care services are organised, delivered and experienced, with a focus on producing evidence that meets the needs of NHS and social care leaders.

- **Who can apply:** UK-based research teams with projects within the HSDR remit
- **Funding available:** No fixed limit (project-dependent)
- **Project duration:** Not fixed (must be justified within the application)

Why apply? This funding supports high-quality research that meets the needs of NHS and social care leaders. Projects must have a clear health-related outcome and show how findings will inform real-world service delivery and decision-making.

[Find out more](#)



Industry



Research

NIHR NICE rolling funding opportunity (EME Programme)

Deadline: 5 August 2026

The NIHR NICE Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME) Programme funds high-quality studies that address research recommendations from NICE guidance published or updated in the last five years. Projects must focus on health-related outcomes and fill clear evidence gaps.

- **Who can apply:** Research teams addressing a NICE research recommendation within the remit of the EME Programme
- **Funding available:** Two-stage funding route; support for robust efficacy and mechanistic studies (amount varies by project scope)

- **Project duration:** Not specified (projects should match the scale and method of the proposed study)

Why apply? This fund helps innovators generate the rigorous evidence needed to show whether an intervention works, why it works, and who it helps. It supports studies that close priority evidence gaps, strengthen NHS decision-making, and improve future care.

[Find out more](#)



Industry



Research

NIHR EME Programme researcher-led

Deadline: 5 August 2026

The NIHR Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME) Programme invites outline applications to its researcher-led workstream. The programme funds ambitious studies evaluating interventions that have the potential to make a step-change in the promotion of health, treatment of disease, and improvement of rehabilitation or long-term care. The translational research it supports covers a wide range of new and repurposed interventions, including diagnostic and prognostic tests, decision-making tools, therapeutics, psychological treatments, medical devices, and public health initiatives delivered in the NHS.

- **Who can apply:** UK-based researchers with proposals within the EME Programme remit; proof of concept in humans is required
- **Funding available:** No fixed limit – costs must be justified
- **Project duration:** No fixed limit – must be justified within the application

Why apply? This funding supports rigorous clinical trials and robustly designed studies testing whether interventions work and why. It is designed for researchers with their own ideas who want to generate high-quality evidence that could make a meaningful difference to patient care.

[Find out more](#)



Industry



Research

NIHR HINCE rolling funding opportunity (HTA Programme)

Deadline: 2 September 2026

This call invites research proposals that support NICE's technology appraisal and guidelines programme. It aims to generate evidence to inform NHS decision-making on the clinical and cost effectiveness of health technologies.

- **Who can apply:** Research teams submitting proposals within the remit of the HTA Programme, addressing a research recommendation in recent NICE guidance
- **Funding available:** No fixed upper limit – budgets should reflect the scope
- **Project duration:** Depends on study design – applicants should propose timelines appropriate to their methodology and objectives

Why apply? This rolling call offers a direct route to influence NHS practice by generating evidence that supports NICE guidance. It's a valuable opportunity for researchers aiming to assess the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and broader impact of health technologies, diagnostics, and interventions in real-world settings.

[Find out more](#)



Industry



Research

UK-Switzerland CR&D Round 3

Deadline: 3 September 2026

UK registered businesses can apply for a share of up to £3 million for innovative projects in specific technology areas. You must collaborate with at least one Swiss implementation partner applying under the equivalent Swiss Innosuisse programme.

[Find out more](#)

**Industry****Research**

[Future opportunity] MRC Gap Fund: single-step support for medical product development

Opens: 16 July 2026

The Medical Research Council (MRC) Gap Fund supports a single, high-risk development step for a new or repurposed medicine, device, diagnostic or other medical product. It helps teams generate vital data to show if their idea should progress to larger schemes such as the DPFS.

- **Who can apply:** Applicants based at an MRC-eligible research organisation who will lead the work and generate data to strengthen the development strategy for a new or repurposed medical product
- **Funding available:** £50,000 – £300,000
- **Project duration:** Flexible, aligned to the single step being proposed

Why apply? The Gap Fund supports early translational work that would otherwise stall due to risk. It is ideal for teams who have early proof-of-concept data and need to generate essential evidence before moving to larger, multi-stage funding. It covers a wide range of interventions, from medicines and devices to diagnostics, digital tools and advanced therapies.

[Find out more](#)

**Industry****Research**

[Future opportunity] SBRI Healthcare - NHS Cancer Programme: Innovation Open Call 4

Opens: September 2026

SBRI Healthcare, in partnership with NHS England, is inviting innovations that address two cancer care challenges: improving productivity on cancer pathways to help the NHS meet Cancer Waiting Time standards by March 2029, and driving earlier detection and diagnosis of cancer. All applicants are asked to consider the impact of their innovation on health inequalities.

- **Who can apply:** Single organisations based in the UK or EU (private, public, or third sector) with a demonstrable partnership with an NHS organisation in England and an independent evaluation partner. Engagement with Health Innovation Networks is strongly encouraged.
- **Funding available:** Up to £3 million (excluding VAT), 100% funded
- **Project duration:** Up to 24 months

Why apply? This fund supports the real-world deployment and independent evaluation of market-ready innovations across multiple NHS sites in England, generating the service, patient, and health economic evidence needed to inform commissioning decisions.

[Find out more](#)

**Industry**

Future Leaders Fellowships: Round 11, business and non-academic

Deadline: 4 November

UK registered organisations can apply for a share of up to £110 million to deliver ambitious research and innovation and develop future leaders. This funding is from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

[Find out more](#)

**Industry**

Innovation Loans Expression of Interest

Deadline: Open

UK registered micro, small or medium sized enterprises can submit an Expression of Interest for loans for close to market innovative projects with strong commercial potential. They must significantly improve the UK economy and drive societal benefit.

[Find out more](#)



HSBC Women's Growth Initiative

Deadline: Open

HSBC's Women's Business Growth Initiative £250 million funding pot, looking to partner with women-led businesses. Specialist pitch workshops and events, and masterclasses have been developed with businesses led and owned by women in mind to help you grow your business. Personalised funding support for businesses led by women from an HSBC relationship manager for lending needs over £100,000.

[Find out more](#)



Access to Isambard-AI and Dawn AIRR supercomputers

Deadline: Open call

Apply for 10,000 graphics processing unit hours on the Isambard-AI and Dawn supercomputers for artificial intelligence-related research and development projects. Open to UK researchers from academia, industry, or other organisations.

[Find out more](#)



The FFicn Forward Faster Accelerator

Deadline: Open

Over six months, the programme blends growth bootcamps, investment clinics, strategic mentoring, and high-value ecosystem collaboration – all designed to help high-growth, woman-founded businesses go further, faster. Aimed at: UK-based, female-founded businesses (25%+ ownership) with £1M+ revenue and bold plans to scale in sectors like fintech, health, consumer, media, and tech.

[Find out more](#)



Female Founders - British Banks

NatWest - Women in Business - With over 400 Women in Business Specialists in the UK, NatWest can help women entrepreneurs with everyday business support needs.

HSBC – accelerators, loans, personalised relationship manager if borrowing more than £100k

Barclays – access to coaches, mentors, accelerators and community of other female founders.



UK Innovation & Science Seed Fund

Deadline: Open

The UK Innovation & Science Seed Fund (formerly known as The Rainbow Seed Fund) is a £27.1m early-stage venture capital fund building and growing technology companies stemming from the UK's research base.

[Find out more](#)



The British Business Bank (BBB)

Deadline: Open

BBB are a government-owned business development bank dedicated to making finance markets work better for smaller businesses. Whether you're looking for finance to start a business, grow to the next level, or stay ahead of the competition, they say that they can deliver greater volume and choice of finance.

[Find out more](#)

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