

The Eastern Diabetes Research Network Allocation of NIHR Network Flexibility and Sustainability Funding - Guidance

A. Background

The NIHR Flexibility and Sustainability Funding (NIHR FSF) was introduced by the Department of Health in 2008/09. It provides support through the NHS for NIHR faculty and associated workforce. The FSF funding has been allocated by DH to research active NHS Trusts and also to local research networks to enable them to attract, develop and retain high-quality staff engaged in or supporting clinical applied health research. These organisations in turn must determine how and who to allocate their FSF funding locally within given parameters. There are two FSF funding streams, Trust FSF and Network FSF (CLRN and topic networks FSF).

NIHR Flexibility and Sustainability Funding is allocated to research-active NHS organisations in proportion to the total amount of other NIHR income received by that organisation, and on the number of NIHR Senior Investigators associated with the organisation.

Flexibility and Sustainability Funding is also allocated to NIHR Clinical Research Networks for their local research networks, via the NHS organisations that host each local network.

[Implementation Plan - Flexibility & Sustainability Funding \(pdf\)](#)

Eastern Region Diabetes Research Network FSF allocation

The National Diabetes Research Network Coordinating Centre has determined the distribution of the DRN network FSF budget.

The Eastern Diabetes Research Network aims to use the NIHR FSF money strategically and flexibly to sustain the research workforce in the area it covers. Funding will be allocated against clear criteria, and reports on progress will be expected from successful bids.

B. What the funds can be used for:

1. To support some or the entire research related component of a researcher's salary where that component is not covered by other NIHR sources.

Examples: Clinicians recruiting to DRN portfolio studies, research nurses and associated staff and clinical support staff such as pharmacy, radiology, pathology, etc supporting DRN research, additional hours to existing posts.

2. New staff, who are expected to be faculty members, but have not yet obtained funding from other NIHR sources.

Example: People who are not yet fully active due to experience but who have the potential to contribute to portfolio activity in the future. It could be used to provide training to allow staff to develop the necessary skill to become research active.

3. Existing faculty members who are 'between grants'.
Example: Investigators or research nurses who require salaries to be funded during periods between studies ending and starting or during times of reduced activity.
4. The time Faculty members spend contributing to the wider research endeavour.
Example: in peer review panel, research leads or DRN Clinical Study Groups
5. The research related time of NHS employed administrative and secretarial staff that support Faculty members in their NIHR-related work.
6. Could be used to pump prime a post prior to it becoming substantive but only for a maximum of twelve months and must be research related.

What the Network FSF funds cannot be used for

1. Anything other than salary costs.
2. It cannot be used to support the time of Faculty members in preparing grant proposals as the role of the Network is to provide infrastructure to support Portfolio studies.

C. Allocation of FSF funding by the East of England DRN

NIHR FSF allocations cannot be carried over to 2011/12. The UK NIHR Clinical Research Network has requested that local research networks establish a clear and transparent process for FSF allocation locally. Therefore, the process for requesting and allocating funding is as follows:

1. Requests for funding should be prepared in consultation with the local DRN leads, clinical directors, line manager, R&D where appropriate (A Trust R&D office may also be co-ordinating other various NIHR funding streams in your area).
2. Proposals and requests for funding will be considered by the Eastern DRN Executive board on the 30th of June and the 25th of October 2010. Requests for funding must be submitted using the Eastern DRN FSF Funding Application Form and is open to all current and potential NIHR Faculty members and associates involved with Diabetes research in the region.
3. Requests for funding will be considered by the board within one month of receipt. Results of applications will be provided in writing as soon as possible after the review date.

D. Reporting

Use of the NIHR FSF will be reported to the Executive Group on an annual basis by the successful applicant or by the relevant Trust R&D on behalf of the applicant. The Eastern England DRN will also be required to report on the use of their NIHR FSF allocation as part of their year end financial report.

E. Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.nihr.ac.uk/infrastructure/Pages/infrastructure_faq_flexibility.aspx

Completed application forms should be sent to:

Sandra Mulrennan
Eastern DRN Network Manager
Box 285
Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Hills Road
Cambridge
CB2 0QQ

Or email:

sandra.mulrennan@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk

http://www.ukdrn.org/lrn_eastern.html (web and link to electronic copies)