



# Practical support for applying for Fellowships – Advice from the Research Design Service

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# Who am I...

- Research Fellow based in Research Design Service in Sheffield and Sheffield Clinical Trials Research Unit (ScHARR)
- Social science background
- Co-investigator on NIHR & MRC funded grants
- Focus on qualitative methods to develop and evaluate complex interventions

# A handy mnemonic - PPPTS

Fellowship application success depends on PPPTS

**P - Person**

**P - Project**

**P - Place**

**T - Training**

**S - Supervision/Mentorship**

# PPPTS

What do reviewers look for?

- **Person** - Potential as high calibre researcher
- **Project** - Worthwhile, coherent, detailed
- **Place** - Appropriate for project with high standing
- **Training** - High quality appropriate training for you and the project
- **Supervision** - High quality appropriate mentorship to you and the project

# Person

- What are you doing now?
- Does it link with your proposed project?
- What skills have you developed?
- What publications do you have?
- What grants or awards have you won?
- What networks or collaborations do you have?
- How can you demonstrate leadership?

# Person

## Relevant expertise and experience

- Link proposed project to work you may be doing now
- Is there a “journey”? Clinical or academic
- Opportunity to explain why you have chosen the proposed project
- Could be from your PhD, a project or clinical practice
- Need to explain where the fellowship will take you...

# Publications

How many is “enough”?

- Dependent upon where you are in your career
- There is no magic number
- Remember dissemination is not just about papers
  - Conference presentations
  - Posters
  - Blogs
  - Websites

# Project

Does it fit the NIHR remit?

- If it doesn't fit, you won't get short-listed!
- Read the guidance notes
- If in doubt, contact The Academy



# Project

Is there a need for the research?

- Explain the problem
- Explain the consequence of the problem
- Explain what you are going to do to “fix” the problem!

# Project

Is it understandable to the layperson?

- Reviewer will NOT be an expert in your field
- Important to write in appropriate style
  - [Gunning-Fog-Index.com](http://Gunning-Fog-Index.com)
- Do NOT write “we”!!
- Do NOT write about yourself in the third person

# Project

Is it achievable within the timeframe?

- Overly ambitious projects do NOT get funded
- Be realistic

Is the methodology appropriate?

- Is your “fix” the right way to do it?
- May be more than one approach
- Justify your chosen approach carefully

# Place

- Is the host institution appropriate?
- Is it recognised as being a leading centre for this type of work?
- Do they have experience of seeing NIHR fellows through to completion?
- Are you in the right place? Is it time to for you to move?

# Training

- Is this appropriate for the project?
- Is this at appropriate times throughout the Fellowship?
- Is there a mixture of internal and external courses?
- Training is not just courses – secondment?
- Is there detail of how you will develop clinically?

# Mentorship

Are these appropriate for the project?

- Clinically
- Methodologically

Advisory group

- Who
- Rationale

External mentors – demonstrate networks and links

# Other practicalities

Got a good idea? Work on your one minute pitch and get talking to people

It takes a long time to complete the application, it is a big form, lots of things to organise

Make sure you know the NIHR deadlines and factor in public and school holidays

- need signatures
- need costs approved
- need input from your host institution
- need RDS advice

# Help available from RDS

- Book an 'early' appointment with the RDS

Yorkshire & Humber: [www.rds-yh.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.rds-yh.nihr.ac.uk)

North West: [www.rds-nw.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.rds-nw.nihr.ac.uk)

North East & North Cumbria: [www.rds-nenc.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.rds-nenc.nihr.ac.uk)

- Face to face meeting
- Review applications

