MRC Regional Account for Clinical Researchers

BEACON

NEWCASTLE HEALTH RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP ACADEMY

# Application Webinar

**Professor Anne-Maree Keenan OBE**

Associate Director, NIHR Leeds BRC

Professor of Applied Health Research, University of Leeds

Panel Chair, MRC RACR: BEACON

# MRC RACR: BEACON Award

## Running Order

- Background to the BEACON Award
- Application Overview
- Application in Detail – Suitability, Project, Academic Support, Clinical Support, matched funding and costings
- Application Assessment Criteria
- Application Timelines
- Broad BEACON
- Application Clinics
- Q & A

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# MRC BEACON Award

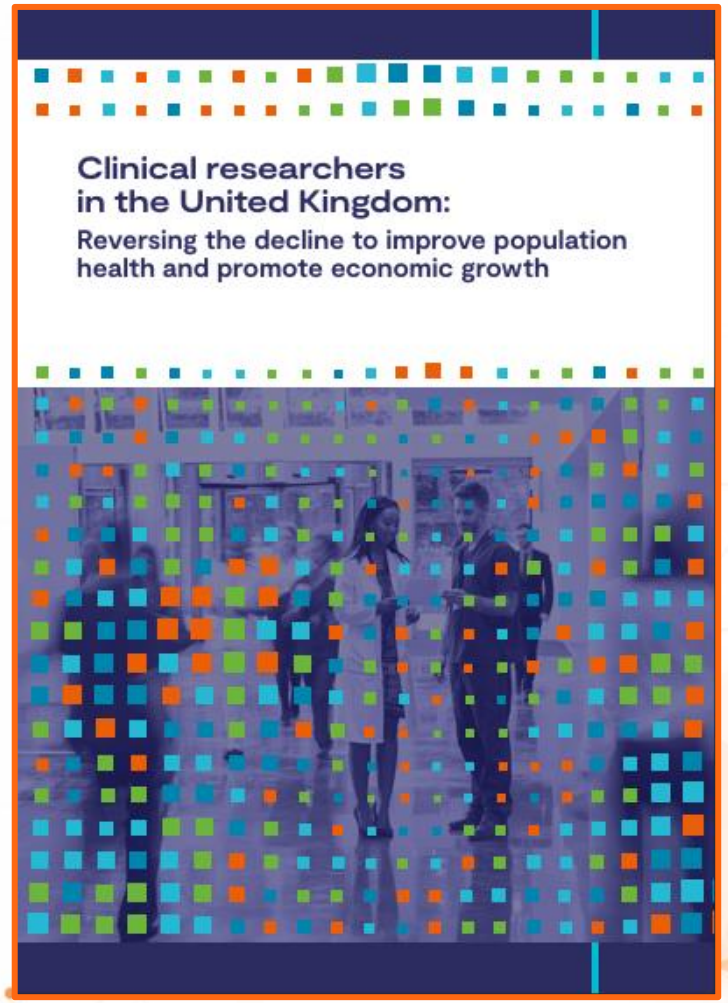
## The background and intended purpose of the award

**2025 OSHR report:** Clinical research capacity is declining at the same time NHS research need is growing.

The MRC Regional Accounts for Clinical Researchers (RACRs) address 2 career pinch points.

**The MRC BEACON Award:**

- Up to £50,000 to support protected research time (up to 50%)
- Registered healthcare professionals with a PhD or MD.
  - Returning to training post PhD/MD
  - Returning to research after time away

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# MRC Remit

MRC funds world-leading discovery and translational research to accelerate diagnosis, advance treatment and prevent human illness – email rfpd@mrc.ukri.org

## Areas of MRC Remit

Global Health Research

Population & Systems Medicine

Molecular & Cellular Medicine

Neurosciences & Mental Health

Infections & Immunity

Translational Research

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# Application Overview: BEACON Award

## What we are looking for

- **Narrative CV:** Summarising your career to date, highlighting relevant skills and experience. Detailing PhDs and how this award will **support your research career.**

- **Proposed Research:** Including an outline of research activities, how they will fit in **MRC remit**, methodology, statistical design and intended next steps and costings. **Matched funding welcome**.

- **Academic Letter of Support:** From **a primary academic mentor**, evidencing relevant expertise, support offered through the research period & confirmation of costings and access to facilities

- **Clinical Letter of Support:** From a **NHS line manager** providing evidence of support, including details of back fill for time bought out. Access to facilities and costings also confirmed.

Coordinate your application through your Centre Leads

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# Application: Suitability

## What we are looking for

| Which Career Pinch Point is this application addressing? (Tick as appropriate) | |
|---|---|
| ☐ **Post PhD Transition –** medical or dental candidates returning to training post PhD and looking to continue their research | ☐ **Research Re-entry –** registered healthcare professionals with a PhD returning to research after time away. |
| Summarise your career to date. Include relevant experiences, skills, collaborations and the outcomes of your PhD. Please also detail<br>- Why is this award the right way to develop your career<br>- What are the short-term outcomes of this award<br>- What are you long term career aspirations and how this award will support these<br>- Please include any factors that provide context to your career, including career breaks and other challenges<br>(Max 1 page, Arial size 11)<br><br>Please attach a short, narrative CV (max 3 pages) to this application, see the UKRI Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) for guidance. | |

Coordinate your application through your Centre Leads

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# Application: Research Project

## What we are looking for

Please include your proposed research and what you will do within this award. Include an outline of your research activities, including how these will fit into the MRC remit.
Please provide details of

- Background and rationale
- Aims
- Approach/Methodology
- Reproducibility and statistical design
- Intended next steps including targeted awards

(Max 2 pages, Arial size 11)

Coordinate your application through your Centre Leads

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# Application: Academic Mentor

## What we are looking for

| Primary Academic Mentor Information | |
|---|---|
| Surname | |
| First Name | |
| Employer organisation | |
| Current Post | |
| Summary of previous MRC funding | |
| Please provide a letter of support which provides evidence for<br>- Relevant expertise<br>- What support will be offered to the candidate, including project initiation.<br>- Access to facilities, including laboratories and facilities<br>- Confirmation of the relevant costings | |

Engage early with your HEI

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# Application: Clinical Line Manager

## What we are looking for

| Clinical Line Manager Information | |
|---|---|
| Surname | |
| First Name | |
| Employer organisation | |
| Current Post | |
| Please provide a letter of support which provides evidence for<br>- How the Organisation will support this candidate<br>- Explicit details as to how you will be released from clinical/current role and how this will be organised to ensure that the candidate is supported in this application<br>- Access to relevant facilities<br>- Confirmation of the relevant costings | |

Engage early with your Lead Employer Trust

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# Application: Matched Funding & Costings

## What we are looking for

**Details of support from Partner Organisations, including match funding: cash or in-kind support**

| | |
|---|---|
| Partner Organisation | |
| Details of any match funding (either cash and / or in-kind support including access to facilities, including laboratories and data) and their estimated value | |
| Please provide a letter of support which provides evidence about how the Organisation will support this candidate | |

Resources and Justification

| | |
|---|---|
| Salary | £ |
| Please provide justification of the amount of time requested for salary back-fill | |
| Consumables | £ |
| Please provide justification for costings of each item | |
| Other | £ |
| Please provide justification for costings of each item | |

Engage early with your HEI to confirm costings

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# Assessment Criteria

- **Process:** Triage, Expert Review, Panel meeting, Feedback
- **Scoring:** MRC guidance
- **Criteria**
  - Applicant and Career Development
  - Proposed Research Activity
  - Academic Support
  - Clinical Support
  - Research Costs & Resources
- **Spirit of the Award**

| Score | Guidance |
|---|---|
| 10 | Exceptional – meets all assessment criteria to the highest standard; difficult to identify how it could be improved. |
| 9 | Outstanding – very strongly meets the assessment criteria with only negligible weaknesses. |
| 8 | Excellent – strongly meets the assessment criteria with minor limitations. |
| 7 | Very Good – meets the criteria well, with some minor weaknesses. |
| 6 | Good – generally meets the criteria but has identifiable weaknesses or limitations. |
| 5 | Adequate – meets the criteria overall but has clear weaknesses. |
| 4 | Weak – significant weaknesses substantially reduce confidence in the application. |
| 3 | Poor – major weaknesses or limitations. |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory – fails to meet one or more important assessment criteria. |
| 1 | Unsatisfactory – does not meet the assessment criteria. |

# Timeline

## 1st BEACON Award

MRC Know Your Funder: 17/9

Application Webinar: 21/9

Application Clinics: 29/9, 14/10

**Applications Open Sept 1st**

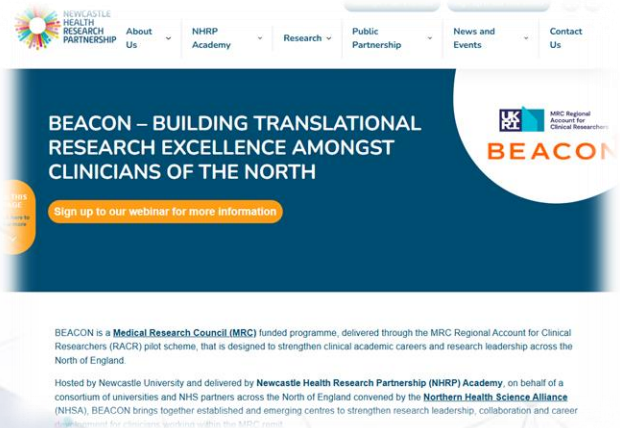
**Application Events through Sept/Oct**

**Applications Close Oct 23rd**

**Application Reviews through Nov**

**Results Nov/Dec 26**

**First Cohort Begins early- mid 2027**




Application and Event information shared through partners, and hosted on the NHRP Website

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# Beyond the Award

## Building a Community

**Broad BEACON**

- Fellows Forum and peer network
- Know Your Funder, development and application support
- Cross-institutional connections and shared learning

**A platform for more**

- A connected northern clinical research community can help identify gaps, support progression and retain researchers across key career transitions.

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# Sign Up to Application Clinics

| University | Contact | Email |
|---|---|---|
| Durham University | Prof Martin Cann | m.j.cann@durham.ac.uk |
| Edge Hill University | Prof Greg Irving | irvingg@edgehill.ac.uk |
| Lancaster University | Dr Amy Gadoud | a.gadoud@lancaster.ac.uk |
| Newcastle University | Prof Chris Lamb | christopher.lamb@newcastle.ac.uk |
| Northumbria University | Prof Paul Gill | paul.gill@northumbria.ac.uk |
| Teesside University | Prof Vikki Rand | v.rand@tees.ac.uk |
| University of Lancashire | Prof Umesh Chauhan | uchauhan@lancashire.ac.uk |
| University of Leeds | Prof Richard Cubbon | r.cubbon@leeds.ac.uk |
| University of Liverpool | Prof Tony Marson | marjon01@liverpool.ac.uk |
| University of Manchester | Prof Jacky Smith | jacky.smith@manchester.ac.uk |
| University of Sheffield | Prof Wendy Baird | w.o.baird@sheffield.ac.uk |
| University of Sunderland | Prof David Steel | david.steel@sunderland.ac.uk |
| University of York (Hull York Medical School) | Prof Adele Fielding | adele.fielding@york.ac.uk |

**29th September**
**5pm-6pm**

**14th October**
**5pm-6pm**

Coordinate your application through your Centre Leads

# Questions

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