

## Funding Remit

Having a clear research funding remit is vital to ensure we receive robust applications for funding that are within our scope. To this end, we have refined and clarified the HIS research funding remit and clarified what we will and will not fund.

### **We will fund:**

We welcome applications that relate to all aspects of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) in healthcare settings. This covers certain aspects of science and medicine – such as the spread of disease and clinical and public health research.

We acknowledge that research can take place in the laboratory, office, clinic or field, and may involve experimental or computational approaches. We support high quality quantitative and qualitative research that improves patient outcomes and patient safety in a timely manner.

We fund people at all career stages from a range of disciplines including biomedical or clinical science, informatics, public health and social sciences.

We fund researchers with the most innovative and exciting ideas. Our support can be for individuals or teams, and can include research resources and equipment, or support for conferences and workshops.

We welcome applications that relate to all aspects of IPC in healthcare settings. This includes research projects that propose and evaluate and provide new insight into:

- the epidemiology, surveillance, prevention, control or management of HCAs and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in healthcare settings,
- cleaning, disinfection and decontamination (both environment and equipment),
- the design of healthcare premises,
- novel techniques for effective antimicrobial stewardship,
- novel techniques (laboratory-based or point of care) for the detection of infection or antimicrobial resistance in the healthcare setting, particularly if these can be used to facilitate infection prevention and control,
- ways to improve understanding of the motivations of safe healthcare behaviour, or describe techniques for achieving behavioural and cultural change,
- novel treatments or interventions including clinical trials, where these can be used to facilitate infection prevention and control,
- IPC challenges in developing countries (when partnered with a British or Irish institution),
- improving understanding of the use of IT systems in infection surveillance and prevention and control.



What we will not fund:

- basic laboratory research that is organism-focused and solely explores aspects such as (but not limited to) genetics, genomics, physiology and pathogenesis
- diagnostics at a proof of principle or an early developmental and pre-clinical stage
- development of *in vitro* or *in vivo* models
- mining for diagnostic markers
- whole genome sequencing that does not inform infection prevention and control practice
- development of novel agents such as anti-infectives or vaccines

What organisations will we fund:

The following institutions within the UK and Republic of Ireland:

- hospitals (this includes centralised pathology services)
- universities
- publicly funded agencies (such as PHE) [where core funding is not available]

We will consider collaborations between British and Irish institutions and organisations from Low Middle Income countries where the Primary investigator is UK or Republic of Ireland based.

Remit - Strategic themes

Our remit has many cross-cutting strategic themes that can broadly be grouped together

**Prevention** which includes mechanisms to prevent the spread of infection in healthcare settings including deployment of vaccines, tracking, planning and risk assessment

**Control** which has a purpose of halting transmission of infection in healthcare settings and includes standard precautions such as PPE, decontamination, improved detection, behaviour change etc.

**Management** which includes mechanisms of surveillance, diagnostics and treatment of healthcare associated infections.

Additionally, over the next 5 years, Council may decide to call for grant applications by a strategic theme, if deemed appropriate to the IPC challenges being faced.



## Remit - Supporting themes

### Funding research in different career pathways

Our funding is available to support those with an interest in IPC research at different stages of their career.

Currently we support:

- trainees (Specialist Registrars) and early career researchers supported through Pilot Project and Small Research grants (in collaboration with senior academic staff. Note this will change if Council approve the redevelopment of this award to the Mike Emmerson International Fellowship.
- Infection Control Nurses and trainees (Specialist Registrars or HSST), who are able to access the Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowship which provides an opportunity to perform research and/or audit alongside receiving training. The Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowship also provides a transition to independence award as it enables the holder to hold an independent position.
- both established researchers and infection control practitioners and teams including those early in their career are able to access small and major research grants.
- members are also eligible to apply for small scale funding for Pilot Project Grants which aim to support future applications for follow on funding.

As part of the 2020-2025 strategy, we will:

- examine our current portfolio to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all potential members
- examine ways to improve the application process and timeliness
- investigate follow-on funding for research projects that are near completion.

### Developing Research Skills and Mentoring

The Society acknowledges that innovation in research that impacts clinical practice will require experience in both the research and clinical arenas, and as such we encourage collaborations between researchers and clinicians.

As part of the 2020-2025 strategy:

- where applicants are novice researchers or new to IPC, we endeavour to facilitate their applications and will explore the potential of providing a mentoring service or training.
- we will explore different application mechanisms in order to streamline the submission process for both applicants and reviewers.



- for Grant Holders, we will provide post-award support for financial, reporting and dissemination activities. We will investigate the need for training and networking events amongst our grant holders.

## Collaboration

As part of the 2020-2025 strategy:

- the Society will look to collaborate with established small and large funders to maximise research impact and to share financial resources and expertise.
- we will endeavour to support networks and collaborations amongst researchers and will currently provide grants for small scale events.

## Drive

As part of the 2020-2025 strategy, we plan to:

**Commission research:** The Society will commission research that will fulfil our charitable aims and vision, and are aligned to identified key priorities or national goals

**Influence the wider research agenda:** We will engage with major funders and stakeholders to influence them to fund the IPC research that needs to be done.

**Provide focus:** The Society will identify core research areas and overlapping themes to help drive research in certain areas.

## Delivering the research strategy

In line with strategic objective 3, HIS will continue to fund research with practical, impactful outcomes that provide evidence for clinical practice, and show tangible improvements in patient outcomes. The research we fund will be patient and practitioner led, of high quality and scientifically robust.

The Society will work towards the HIS strategic objective 3 with the following activities:

- identifying key research themes and focuses whilst maintaining patients at the core of our research remit.
- identifying priority knowledge gaps where research could make a significant impact on patient safety.
- developing the support and funds that are needed to perform IPC research at different career stages, whilst recognising the impact of changes to clinical training, the NHS people plan and academia
- exploring a mentorship programme to encourage IPC practitioners to apply for our funding with high quality robust research proposals
- collaborating with other learned societies, professional organisations and funders to promote infection prevention science, host networking events and promote interdisciplinary research.



## How

- our research focus is broad and multi-disciplinary and prioritises work that has the potential to translate into impact in clinical practice within a reasonable period of time.
- we will fund well-designed research, which is imaginative, novel and acknowledges the complexity of the issues involved. often a multi-disciplinary approach is needed if it is to have a tangible and positive impact on patients.
- we will keep our portfolio of grants and funding mechanisms under review so we can identify gaps in under-supported, but important, areas.
- we will support career development of those committed to increasing the evidence base that supports clinical best practice.
- we will utilise the wealth of expertise in our guideline development group to highlight potential areas of research.
- we will ensure that our application procedures are designed to help applicants to demonstrate how their proposals fit our research funding remit, reflect our objectives and we will ensure our assessment procedures are delivered to the highest standards of quality and best practice.
- we will continue to attract a new generation of clinician scientists and researchers by providing training fellowships and other awards.
- we will consider partnerships with others (such as National Institute for Health Research [NIHR]) who share our vision and can help us to increase and broaden the support we can provide.

## Costs

The Society's research funding budget for 2020-2025 will be maintained at current funding levels to not exceed **£289k per year (£299k where HIS hosts an international conference)**.

**Date approved by Council: September 2019**

**Date approved by Research Committee: August 2020**

**Review date: June 2022**

