

Policy and Guidelines on Claiming NIHR INSIGHT South West Peninsula Personal Access Costs

Policy Summary

This policy outlines the aims and principles for awarding personal access funds to students funded by the NIHR INSIGHT SW Peninsula project and other eligible early career professionals, emphasising that while having a policy is not legally required, it simplifies the award process. The project can only provide funds for those eligible costs outlined below which align with its objectives, particularly focusing on removing barriers to access to early career opportunities.

We are committed to supporting those who require financial assistance to ensure they can engage with the full range of opportunities and services throughout the duration of their studies and/or early research career without barriers. This policy outlines the criteria and process for claiming personal access costs, reflecting our focus on inclusivity.

NIHR INSIGHT is particularly looking to interest and engage students and recent graduates from a diverse group of professions, irrespective of employment status or locality of residence.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all NIHR INSIGHT funded students and other eligible early career professionals. It covers costs associated with accessing programmes, conferences events, and services, and aims to alleviate financial burdens that may prevent participation. This policy serves as a guideline and is not a substitute for professional legal or financial advice.

Funding Criteria

We will consider all applications that meet our funding criteria and for which the due diligence process has not identified any unacceptable issues.

Funding Priorities

- Those most in need, particularly individuals with self-identified, previously under-served characteristics.
- Those from previously under-served professions.
- Those from vulnerable groups and those with caring responsibilities.

- Those in receipt of benefits such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Tax Credits (Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit) or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.

Eligible Applicants

Applications must come from individuals. Eligible individuals include:

- Students holding an NIHR INSIGHT-funded studentship for one of the following Masters courses:
 - Masters of Clinical Research (MClinRes) at the University of Plymouth
 - Masters in Health Research Methods (MScHRM) at the University of Exeter
 - Masters in Leading Clinical Research Delivery (MScLCRD) at the University of Exeter
- Early career professionals who have recently completed their professional registration with one of the following Regulatory Bodies:
 - Academy for Healthcare Science
 - General Chiropractic Council
 - General Dental Council
 - General Medical Council
 - General Optical Council
 - General Osteopathic Council
 - General Pharmaceutical Council
 - Health and Care Professions Council
 - Nursing and Midwifery Council
 - Social Work England
 - UK Public Health Register

Eligible Costs

Personal access funds are available in the following categories, to NIHR INSIGHT studentship holders and early career professionals to support and enable access to their studies and career development. *Please note that some funding categories are available to NIHR INSIGHT studentship holders only.*

- **Researcher development & travel grant (NIHR INSIGHT STUDENTSHIP HOLDERS ONLY):** Studentship holders can apply for up to £500 towards costs for attending national conferences or research training. These may include, but are not limited to travel and accommodation costs, conference registration costs and childcare or other caring costs.
- **Taught Masters access fund (NIHR INSIGHT STUDENTSHIP HOLDERS ONLY):** Studentship holders can apply for up to £100 (per face-to-face study day) to fund travel and childcare or other caring costs to enable them to attend in-person teaching as part of their course.
- **Taught Masters access fund for international students (NIHR INSIGHT STUDENTSHIP HOLDERS ONLY):** Studentship holders can apply for reimbursement of administrative fees associated with their application to the course, such as IELTS and other immigration requirements, along with costs of relevant travel to appointments

or tests, childcare and other caring costs. *Please note that where studentships are awarded to overseas students, their employer must be – and will remain for the duration of the course - the sponsor of the student's working visa. Visa conditions will remain unchanged; as such the awardee can study part time only and must be UKVI compliance monitored by their employing organisation; part time study is only permitted upon permission from the visa sponsor.*

- **IT support to study a taught Masters (NIHR INSIGHT STUDENTSHIP HOLDERS ONLY):** Studentship holders can apply for a loan of laptops and mobile network dongles to ensure that they do not miss out due to financial hardship.
- **Conference attendance-related costs:** Students and early career professionals can apply for up to £100 (per year) for reimbursement of travel and other costs (e.g. childcare or other caring costs) to enable them to attend or present at relevant local or national research-based conferences.
- **Engagement activity (workshop & taster day) related costs:** Students and early career professionals can apply for a bursary of up to £100 (per year) for travel and other costs (e.g. child care or other caring costs) to attend engagement events.

Application Process

Applications must be for one of the eligible Personal Access Funds outlined above and must be made via our online [application form](#). To apply for personal access costs, individuals should follow these simple steps:

- **Apply in principle:** Provide details of your claim by completing our online [Personal Access Costs Claim Form](#), which can be accessed via our [website](#) or [by email](#) from the NIHR INSIGHT South West Peninsula office.
- **Review and Approval:** Our Access Committee will review your claim within 20 working days of receiving your submission. We are committed to transparency and fairness in our decision-making process.
- **Notification of claim:** If your claim is deemed eligible, we will contact you to request relevant supporting documentation and receipts. If your claim has not been approved we will explain why.
- **Payment:** Once all required documentation has been received and approved, we will process your claim and provide reimbursement via your chosen method, usually within 14 days.

Grant Management and Compliance

The policy ensures appropriate systems for decision-making and monitoring. Data protection measures are in place to handle applicants' information securely.

Promotion

NIHR INSIGHT aims to reach potential beneficiaries of these personal access funds through various channels, ensuring the application process is accessible.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

We respect your privacy and handle all personal information confidentially. We comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the guidelines set forth by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). All information submitted will be used solely for the purposes of processing access cost claims. Anonymised personal data (with applicant names redacted) may be later used to evaluate the outreach of the NIHR INSIGHT SW Peninsula project.

Conclusion

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels they belong. By implementing this policy on claiming personal access costs, we hope to open doors for individuals who might otherwise find them closed. We encourage you to reach out to the [NIHR INSIGHT SW Peninsula Project Officer](#) with any questions or to discuss how we can support your participation.