

NIHR Southampton Biomedical Research Centre Postdoctoral Bridging Fellowships
Applicant Guidelines

Scheme Outline:

The NIHR Southampton Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) has funds available to support Postdoctoral Bridging Fellowships for internal candidates within the University of Southampton/University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Partnership. The funds will be used to support the salary of the successful applicant for up to 1 year, in the first instance (with an additional year possible subject to successful performance review) to facilitate applicants submitting for an externally funded fellowship. The expectation is that the award would make applicants competitive for an external personal fellowship application (e.g. MRC, NIHR, Wellcome Trust) relevant to their research experience, which would then support the applicant beyond the funded period. It is expected that the bridging fellowship period will be used to generate data to support external fellowship applications, or to support those awaiting the outcome of an external fellowship application; the emphasis may vary across Themes, so potential applicants are encouraged to discuss with Theme Leads before making an application. All successful awardees are expected to be active in making external fellowship applications during their award.

There is no provision for the cost of consumables or training in the Bridging Fellowship. Please provide details of how these costs will be met in the relevant section of the application form (if applicable). If the applicant has a clinical background, there is the possibility to combine this award with clinical commitments/training, but permission to be released from the appropriate UHS Clinical Division will need to have been secured and consideration given to their position beyond the end of BRC support.

In this round, the topic of the planned research application must be aligned with the following BRC Theme research priorities and accompanying SMART Objectives or planned future experimental theme work:

Microbiology, Immunology & Infection (MII)

Nutrition, Lifestyle & Metabolism (NLM)

Perioperative & Critical Care (PCC)

Respiratory & Allergy (RA)

Topics involving more than one theme are **encouraged**. The proposed fellowships must fit within the NIHR and BRC remit, with a particular emphasis on experimental medicine which does not include any animal research. The Theme Research Strategy and SMART objectives, are attached to the announcement email. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Theme Leads to discuss their projects before making an application to ensure project alignment.

As these are postdoctoral fellowships, applicants **must** have been awarded an MD or PhD or have recently submitted their doctoral thesis with appointment conditional on successful award.

Application Criteria: Candidates whose proposed research programmes align with the scientific programmes of the BRC are eligible to apply for these bridging funds. To apply, the Postdoctoral Bridging Fellowship application form should be completed and submitted to BRC@uhs.nhs.uk by **5th May 2023** to enable peer review. Awards will be notified by **the beginning of June 2023**. The application form should contain the following information:

- A summary of the proposed research programme including: Title of the proposed research, Background, Hypothesis, Study design/Scientific methods, Analysis plan/Statistics and Project Timelines. This should be a maximum of two sides of A4 in length including references.
- Summary of how the Bridging Fellowship will be used to support applications for an external fellowship, including a timeline/GANTT chart and specific information regarding the funding organisation and call.. This should be no more than 500 words.
- Statement of how the proposal aligns with BRC Research theme(s), priorities and Theme SMART Objectives (500 words max).
- Outline for PPI involvement (200 words max), including future work and any activities already undertaken
- Details of any further funding support that is available to the applicant (e.g. for lab consumables, training).

For further information please contact **Dr Karl Staples** (k.staples@soton.ac.uk)

APPENDIX 1: BRC Research themes and priorities

The BRC has 5 research themes

1. Nutrition, Lifestyle and Metabolism (Leads - Prof Keith Godfrey & Prof Jonathan Swann)

Improving health and resilience across the lifecourse, addressing patient and population needs through improving diet quality/nutrient status, smoking/alcohol behaviours, physical activity, obesity/body composition and cardiometabolic musculoskeletal and immune health.

- Building resilience through healthier nutrition and behaviours from before conception to adolescence
- Sustaining resilience in later life through nutrition, risk management and new therapies

2. Respiratory and Allergy (Leads - Prof Tom Wilkinson & Prof Graham Roberts)

Delivering preventive interventions for allergy and respiratory disease, identifying biomarkers to provide earlier and more accurate diagnosis and personalise therapy, and utilising our ex-vivo models and innovative trial designs to accelerate identification of new therapeutic approaches.

- Preventing allergy and asthma from infancy
- Predicting and pre-empting chronic respiratory disease crises
- Developing earlier, faster diagnosis of lung disease for personalised therapy

3. Data, Health and Society (Leads – Prof Dame Wendy Hall & Prof Anneke Lucassen)

Moving beyond data science to harness computer science, artificial intelligence and exploration of societal implications to create a trusted and trustworthy learning healthcare system.

- Building a trusted and trustworthy learning healthcare system
- Advancing ethical debate and developing new forms of consent
- Connecting people, data and organisations to improve care
- Combining complex data to improve prediction and meet individuals' health needs

4. Microbiology, Immunology and Infection (Leads – Prof Rob Read & Prof Saul Faust)

Delivering innovative solutions to infectious threats and help overcome antimicrobial resistance by conducting experimental evaluation of novel vaccines and other prevention strategies, as well as advanced diagnostics and therapies

- Reducing and controlling infections through new vaccines, digital resources and using 'friendly' microbes
- Developing faster tests for infections and antimicrobial resistance
- Overcoming antimicrobial resistance with new strategies, materials and therapies

5. Perioperative and Critical Care (Leads – Prof Mike Grocott & Prof Denny Levett)

Developing, evaluating and individualising interventions to promote, rebuild and maintain resilience across surgical and critical care pathways.

- Informing better decisions about surgery, resuscitation, critical and palliative care
- Improving preparation for, and recovery from, surgery
- Refining surgical and critical care therapies