**Funding for research activity or application in social care research**

**Introduction**

The Oxford and Thames Valley NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) aims to develop the research skills of health and social care professionals and researchers in the Thames valley area and nationally by:

* Supporting growth in applied health and care research
* Supporting career development across professions and disciplines
* Promoting equity of access to training
* Supporting the development of the next generation of applied health and care researchers.

We have a small amount of funding (up to £10,000) to support people working in social care practice (registered social workers or occupational therapists working in social care. Although non-registered practitioners working in social care should get in touch to discuss). These awards are intended to introduce people working within local authority social care to research with the aim of supporting them to become more research active in future.

The funding can be used for taught, experiential and supervised activities that support the awardee to integrate research more fully into their practice.

Awards usually cover salary back fill. Small awards would be considered for shorter training opportunities such as research or master's modules. If you have other proposals for research activity, please get in touch.

These awards are open to social care staff employed on a full or part-time basis, if all costs remain within the maximum funding envelope. **Proposals should broadly align with Oxford and Thames Valley ARC themes:**

* Changing Behaviours for Better Health and Preventing Disease
* Helping Patients to Manage Their Own Conditions
* Mental Health across the Life Course
* Improving Health and Social Care
* Applied Digital Health
* Novel Methods to Aid and Evaluate Implementation

[**https://www.arc-oxtv.nihr.ac.uk/our\_work**](https://www.arc-oxtv.nihr.ac.uk/our_work)

**Eligibility:**

The awards are open to any registered social care professional working in the social care sector. Awards will be for those from local authorities within the Thames Valley region. To be eligible for one of these awards you will need:

1. To be a registered\* social care professional working in a local authority setting

2. Hold current registration to practice in the UK with the appropriate regulatory bodies

3. Support from your line manager to undertake the research/training

4. A keen interest in research

5. Mentorship from a named research supervisor (usually identified by you\*\*)

6. The opportunity to develop links with an existing research theme (identified by you – see list above)

7. Ability to start and complete the work by 31st March 2026.

\*Individuals who do not have registration can contact the ARC-OxTV for a conversation about potential opportunities. (arc\_oxtv@phc.ox.ac.uk)

\*\*If you’re struggling to identify potential supervisors, please contact us, and we can try and support this.

**How can the funding be used?**

Successful applicants can use the award to cover costs including salary backfill, incidental costs, research supervision, and training costs. Suggestions on how the budget can be spent are presented below;

1. **Salary backfill** – Whilst you undertake a piece of research activity. The most appropriate backfill arrangements should be decided by you and your team/line manager.

2. **Training** – Short courses, Masters modules

3. **Other research activity** – please get in touch to discuss

If you would like advice or support with your application, or directing to appropriate members of the ARC-OxTV contact: bethan.mcdonald@phc.ox.ac.uk

**Application process:**

Please submit an application and completed checklist (see below) and all corresponding documentation to: arc\_oxtv@phc.ox.ac.uk by **5:00 pm on Friday 25th April 2025**

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| **Key dates: Closing date for applications:**  | Friday 25th April 2025 (5pm) |
| **Interviews:** Online | From week commencing 5th May 2025 |
| **Award period:**  | Usually, from May 2025 onwards and completed by end of March 2026.  |

Application Checklist

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| --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Area of research interest:** |  |
| **Contact details** | **Email:****Mobile:**  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Submitted (yes/no)** |
| **1. Registration with an appropriate UK regulatory and professional body:**1. Regulatory/professional body: …………………………………………………………
2. Profession …………………………………………………………
 |  |
| **2. Brief Curriculum Vitae confirming the following:**1. Employment or connection with local authority social care in the Thames Valley region.
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| **3. Application/Cover letter including:**1. Reason for applying for the award and why the research can help your social care and practice (max 400 words).
2. What experience you have had to date in research (max 400 words).
3. What skills and qualities you have, which make you suitable for the award? (max 400 words)
4. The outcomes that you hope to achieve by the end of the award and how these fit within the ARC-OxTV priorities/themes (max 400 words).
5. Your choices of supervisor and/or mentor at one of the ARC-OxTV collaborative partner organisations - giving reasons (max 400 words)
6. Is there anything else you would like to add to support your application? (max 400 words)
 |  |
| **4. Letter of support from Line Manager**. |  |
| **5. Illustrated alignment of project with respective themes and clinical needs.**1. With ARC related themes.
2. Team/service clinical/care priorities and needs.
 |  |
| **6. A detailed spending plan for the up to £10,000 budget for the award period (+£1,500 supervision).** |  |
| I can confirm that I meet the criteria for the award and I have submitted all of the evidence described above. |
| **Signed:** | **Date:** |  |

Once completed please send to arc\_oxtv@phc.ox.ac.uk by 5pm on Friday 25th April 2025