HARP Clinical Research Fellowship Application Guidance

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# Introduction

Health Advances for underRepresented Populations (HARP) is a clinical PhD Programme dedicated to redressing health inequality through representative research in an inclusive environment. The programme is located at Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and at City, University of London (City). We welcome applications from any health professional, regardless of their background, who have the scientific rigour, drive and ambition to carry out world-class research in underrepresented populations and diseases.

Underrepresented populations are underserved by healthcare and underrepresented in research due to

* social inequalities (examples - demographic and [protected characteristics](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics))
* marginalisation (examples - socioeconomics, education, lifestyle choices, legal and housing status)
* health status (examples - mental health or rare diseases).

This Doctoral Training Programme for health professionals, supported by the Wellcome Trust, Barts Charity, QMUL, City and the Trustees of the St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, will provide a 3-year full-time clinical research PhD training fellowship.

The HARP programme also offers an optional 1-year full-time pre-doctoral training phase for those who have not previously had the opportunity to gain exposure to research but would like to gain that experience and enhance their competitiveness for a PhD position. It also allows, optionally, to do an MSc during this year. Application for the 1-year pre-doctoral phase involves a separate application form, please contact HARP Manager for details.

Following completion of the PhD, those who are employed by one of the supporting organisations[[1]](#footnote-1) will be eligible for up to 20% full-time equivalent funding to support post-doctoral research-related enrichment activities.

# General information

Healthcare professionals that are eligible to apply include:

art therapists

 chiropodists/podiatrists

 chiropractors

 clinical psychologists

 dental hygienists

 dental nurses

 dental therapists

 dentists

 dieticians

 drama therapists

 health visitors

 healthcare scientists (in life sciences

 physiological sciences

 physical sciences and biomechanical engineering

 and bioinformatics)

 medical graduates

 midwives

 music therapists

 non-medical public health specialists

 nurses

 occupational therapists

 operating department practitioners

 optometrists and dispensing opticians

 orthoptists

 osteopaths

 osteopaths

 paramedics

 pharmacists

 pharmacy technicians

 physician assistants

 physiotherapists

 practitioner psychologists

 prosthetists and orthotists

 radiographers

 social workers

 speech and language therapists

 vets

* Applicants should hold registration with UK professional bodies (such as the General Medical Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health and Care Professions Council, General Optical Council, General Pharmaceutical Council, General Dental Council and others). Medical graduates must be registered on a UK/Republic of Ireland specialist training programme or must be a registered GP. All fellows must have completed their undergraduate degree and be registered with the relevant professional body. Non-medical healthcare professionals need to have at least 1 year full-time equivalent (FTE) of clinical practice.
* Projects must demonstrate a clear relevance to the main aim (research projects on underrepresented patient groups or diseases) of the HARP PhD Programme.
* Applications should be made jointly by the candidate with their supervisors, outlining the proposed programme of research and the nature of the training to be provided.
* Salaries should be requested according to experience on the appropriate clinical salary scale, including London weighting if relevant. Typically, consultant level salaries and NHS salaries above Band 7 will not be funded; if this issue arises, this should be discussed individually with the HARP Programme Manager.
* Routine clinical work (that is not related to research) should be limited to no more than 8 hours a week (2 clinical sessions) FTE (16 hours for craft specialities FTE, 4 clinical sessions) during the fellowship and the host institution must provide a signed statement agreeing to this restriction.
* One candidate can only apply with one project and one project can only be submitted by one candidate. A candidate can reapply once, but should seek feedback from the Programme Directors.

# How to apply

Applications must be received by email by 16:00 on the 31st January 2022. No applications received after the deadline will be accepted.

In addition, you also need to apply for a PhD fellowship by the same deadline to

QMUL (via Mysis at <https://mysis.qmul.ac.uk/urd/sits.urd/run/siw_ipp_lgn.login>)

or

City (via Opas at <https://www.city.ac.uk/prospective-students/courses?meta_level_sand=postgraduate+research+degree&meta_subject_sand=health>)

Please contact HARP Manager for further details.

The application needs to contain the following elements:

1. Application form (please note this includes 2 forms, the application form and the equality monitoring form)
2. CV with research outputs
3. ‘Case for support’ document as single document (3 sections)
4. Collaborator support letters (if any)
5. Supporting letter from Head of Department
6. Supporting letter from Supervisor
7. Ethics permissions (if any and available at the time of submission)
8. PhD application via university website (QMUL – MySis; City – Opas).

The fellowship application is a one-stage process; however, all applicants are **strongly** encouraged to discuss their project and any re-application with a member of HARP Faculty prior to submission. Fellowships are awarded by panels consisting of members of the Faculty, Advisory Board, appropriate experts and members of the public who will be co-opted as necessary.

There are four elements to the assessment process:

1. **Eligibility:** at this initial stage the scientific summaries of each application are assessed by the fellowship funding panel. Applicants will be informed at an early stage if their proposal is rejected because it is not within the remit of HARP or is incomplete. All suitable applications will undergo peer review.
2. **Peer review:** the full applications of those successful at the suitability stage will be sent for external scientific peer review by experts of international standing in the field of the proposal.
3. **Shortlisting:** the full applications and peer reviews are assessed by the fellowship funding panel members. Shortlisted applicants are invited to attend interview.
4. **Interview:** the fellowship awarding panels interview the shortlisted applicants and funding decisions are based on the outcomes of these interviews. The Faculty and Advisory Board members and co-opted other experts as well as lay members of the public will form several small panels for the interviews.

Shortlisting is expected to be in March 2022 followed by interviews in April 2022.

Further information and FAQs about applying for fellowships, are available here: [www.harpphd.org](http://www.harpphd.org)

# Guidance for completion of the application form

The word numbers suggested in certain sections are the maximum allowed, but often significantly less words can provide suitable information.

### Application form- Part 1

**Section 1**

CV a maximum of 4 pages (see CV template) + research outputs (for example publications) – **to be attached**

Research outputs: Please enter a complete list of the fellowship applicant’s research publications and other outputs to-date (full citations including title and all authors). These should be separated into

* Original peer reviewed papers
* Reviews
* Books or book chapters
* Editorials, letters or case reports
* Conference presentations
	+ Oral
	+ Poster
* Other research outputs, such as
	+ Development and sharing of new datasets, software, research reagents, tools, methods, products or patents.
	+ Contributions to collaborations/consortia/team science
	+ Participation in Patient and Public involvement and engagement activities (PPI)
	+ Influences on policy, practice, education or training
	+ Development of new preventative, diagnostic, treatment or management approaches and interventions
	+ Improvements to health or quality of life of patients and the public

### **Applicant’s statement** (600 words)

Please use this section to state your reasons for applying for this PhD Programme. Outline the skills, knowledge and experience you have gained from your previous experiences (consider studies, work, community and personal activities) that are relevant to this project. Consider experiences that demonstrate your potential as well as what you have achieved. Please give us any information that contextualises your achievements to date. Describe how the Fellowship will further your research and career aspiration.

### Part-time working

We are supportive of fellows undertaking their Fellowships part-time as part of their usual working pattern and with the support of the host organisation. Part-time working is not permitted for the purposes of continuing clinical training or to maintain another salaried position. Fellows have the opportunity to work part-time either from the outset of their PhD fellowship or as a result of a change to their working pattern during their PhD. Questions related to part-time work can be discussed with the Programme Directors.

### Supporting letters

1) A supporting letter from the prospective primary supervisor showing their support of the applicant and the project. This letter can provide details on the research environment the fellow will work in.

The supervisors need to state their agreement to seek recognition with the[UK Council of Graduate Education Research Supervision Recognition Programme](https://supervision.ukcge.ac.uk/about-rsrp/) within the first 12 months of the Fellowship

2) Letter from the Head of Department where the research will be conducted including statement that appropriate space and support is in place to host the PhD fellow within the department. The Head of Department needs to guarantee facilities and resources for the tenure of an award and where applicable, also guarantee that the award holder will be granted status and prerogatives of other academic staff of similar seniority.

**Section 2**

Scientific title of research**: this should be descriptive, (max 80 characters)**

Scientific abstract **of research including key goals (max 250 words)**

*This should include the purpose, study design, the specific area of research interest for which this application is entered, and the potential application of results.*

Explain why this project is suitable for the HARP PhD Programme **(max 250 words)**

*Based on the overall aim of the HARDP PhD Programme, describe how your research will fit into our remit.* *The NIHR INCLUDE webpage could help guide consideration of what constitutes underrepresented and help applicants consider which factors their proposal aligns with.*

[*https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/improving-inclusion-of-under-served-groups-in-clinical-research-guidance-from-include-project/25435*](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/improving-inclusion-of-under-served-groups-in-clinical-research-guidance-from-include-project/25435)

*Please find example case studies of suitable projects on* [*www.harpphd.org*](http://www.harpphd.org)

### ‘Case for support’

*This document (margin 2cm, Arial 11) should be submitted as an attachment, consisting of 3 parts:*

1. **Four-page project description** (including figuresif you wish to incorporate any)
2. **Reference list**
3. **Gantt chart**
4. **Four-page project description including figures**

Please include the following sections within the project description case for support:

***Background & Importance*:** *Briefly and clearly explain the context of your research, the particular area(s) that your proposal seeks to address and the need for further understanding or treatment options with regards to the research gaps in this field. Why is this study necessary to inform a gap in knowledge that will be useful for subsequent translational research?*

***Preliminary Data (optional)***

***Hypothesis / Research questions and aims:*** *What is your hypothesis or research questions and what steps will the project take to support (or oppose) the hypothesis or answer the research questions?*

***Experimental Design/Methods***

**Development opportunities:** *What are the potential next steps that would be required to get your research findings to a further phase of research, for example a clinical intervention or the next research question to be asked? Please outline any relevant intellectual property issues. When might the benefit be achieved, with realistic justification of these timelines?*

1. **References**: *All authors should be listed (for large author numbers papers, just mark relevant position of applicant/supervisors). Please highlight all publications by you, your supervisors’ group or current collaborators in bold.*
2. Please include a **Gantt chart** of your project

### Impact (250 words):

*Describe the expected impact of your project over the next 3-5 years, including the significance and sustainability. This could include environmental impact - both physical and cultural, impact on researchers, patients, the public, science in general and society.*

### Lay summary (300 words):

*Please outline the background to the problem, the aims and purposes of your proposal and why they are important, a brief plan of the research project and the relevance to main aim of the Programme and potential patient benefit.*

*Note on the language: The lay case for support should be written in appropriate non-technical language. For more information on how to write a clear and informative lay summary please use the following resources:* [INVOLVE plain English summaries](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/plain-english-summaries/); [The Plain English Campaign](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/free-guides.html)

### Resubmission

*One re-application per candidate is permitted*

### Overlap

*Are there other funding bodies that have considered / are considering any part of this application? If yes, add details.*

**Section 3**

**This section should be filled in by the supervisors**

### Supervisors

*Please add details for primary and secondary supervisors. A third supervisor can be added with similar details as second supervisor, this supervisor can be from other institutions, including overseas.*

* *List previous and current PhD / MD / Doctorate fellows of supervisor over last 5 years*
* *Confirm date of last supervisor training date for first and second supervisor*
* *Confirm that supervisors are willing to seek recognition with the* [*UK Council of Graduate Education Research Supervision Recognition Programme*](https://supervision.ukcge.ac.uk/about-rsrp/)*.*
* *Please outline supervision plans managing and monitoring student progression and the supervisor suitability for the supervision for this project (max 200 words)*
* *For the 2nd (optional 3rd) supervisors state how this supervisor will contribute to the project and supervision (max 200 words)*
* *3rd supervisor can be from a different Institution including overseas*

**Section 4**

### Collaborators

*Add details for up to 4 collaborators that will be essential to the success of your doctoral studies. Collaborators are individuals who are not involved in the day-to-day execution of the research but may supply research materials, specific expertise or access to patients. All collaborators associated with the application will be required to provide a letter of support. These should be attached to the application.*

**Section 5**

### Human and animal involvement

**Human involvement in study (300 words)**

*Please only complete this section if applicable to your application.*

*Include details of Ethics Committee permissions relevant for human research that will be required, or have already been obtained.*

**Animal involvement in study (500 words plus additional tables if necessary)**

*Please only complete this section if applicable to your application.*

1. We are committed to the principles of reduction, refinement and replacement in animal studies. The projects must comply with Wellcome’s policy on animal usage in research: <https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/guidance/use-animals-research-policy>.

Provide details of Home Office project and personal licences (number holder name and date of expiry) and details of procedures of moderate severity and above. Detail the maximum severity of the procedures involved.

Please justify the use of animals, the species and techniques proposed and the number of animals to be used per experiment. Please include details of sample size calculations and statistical advice sought for the number of animals required to reach statistical significance.

Please follow the PREPARE guidelines (Planning Research and Experimental Procedures on Animals: Recommendations for Excellence) and the CAMARADES/NC3Rs systematic review facility recommendations for the design and analysis of your experiments. For power calculations, please follow the ARRIVE guidelines (2020, 2nd edition), and other developments and advances in the 3Rs (<https://nc3rs.org.uk/3rs-advice-project-licence-applicants-refinement>), including Norecopa platform (<https://norecopa.no/alternatives/the-three-rs>).

**Section 6**

### Patient and Public Involvement (300 words)

1. *Indicate how you are involving the public, including patients and patient groups, actively in any of the stages of your research e.g. in developing the research proposal and/or taking account of likely public reaction to your research. Add justification for costs if any.*

**Section 7**

**Communications Plan (max 200 words)**

1. *State what plans you have for disseminating results of your work to the professional community as well as patients and the lay public. Explain how these plans will be supported by the host Research Organisation’s own policies and facilities communication and education of the public****.***

**Section 8**

### Finance and costs

*The finances requested for the grant should be entered in this section. The finances will be reviewed and adjusted individually, if necessary, for each successful application.*

**Fellow salary**

*The only salary included should be that of the fellow. No other salaries will be accepted in this section.*

**Expenses/Consumables**

*Reasonable research expenses directly related to your proposal can be applied for. Items and their cost should be listed. Access fees for specialised equipment could be listed here.*

**Apparatus/Equipment**

*Only small items permitted (pipettes, small centrifuge etc. costing less than £5,000). Please add these items under consumables.*

**Travel costs**

Travel for conferences *- Do not include in the expenses list, we plan to support at least one national and one international meeting visit per fellow, if the fellow is presenting at the meeting.*

Overseas stay for research *– Please extend the Funding table with extra rows for this if necessary*

*Detailed instruction regarding reimbursement of travel costs, please contact the HARP Manager.*

**PhD tuition fee costs**

*This is provided as a block funding for UK-based students (Irish, residents of Channel Islands and EU citizens resident in the UK)*.

Eligible costs:

* + - Any additional salaries/staff time (e.g. statistician/data manager/trial manager) should be costed as a consultancy under expenses and not as a salary. These costs will be considered by the panel
		- Access charges for use of specialist equipment
		- Costs to cover travel and accommodation (if required) to a collaborating institution can be requested
		- Training courses for the professional development of the fellow can be applied for. These should be relevant to the aims of the fellowship and justified within the application
		- Cost for overseas research – please discuss with HARP Manager
		- Costs associated with patient and public involvement/engagement can be applied for, and candidates are advised to use the INVOLVE guidance here. Please contact the HARP Manager for further information

Ineligible costs within a clinical research fellowship application:

* + - Computers are expected to be supplied by host institution
			* Relocation costs
			* Home office license fees (personal and project)
			* Funding to provide maintenance of equipment
			* Office stationery costs unless required for the project and justified accordingly
			* Publication costs for open access to be claimed from the library (for QMUL-based fellows) or can be directly applied from Wellcome (for City-based fellows), advice on support for open access can be asked from the HARP Manager
			* Travel cost for conferences (see above)

**Animals**

*We require the costs associated with animal use to be separated by species and strain.*

### Specific instructions for finance

Supervisor should follow standard Institute guidelines for submitting a studentship grant application including Worktribe costings and approvals. Allow ten working days before deadline. On Worktribe, the PI is the supervisor, and the project title should follow this format: “HARP DTP <application year> <project title>”. For further details and for questions contact HARP Manager.

### Justification for consumable support requested

*Provide detailed justification for the consumables (max 300 words)*

### Justification for animal research support requested

*Including animal species, the number of animals per species to be used, and why each species is the most appropriate for this project (max 300 words). Please include*

* + - *Animal species*
		- *Animal strain*
		- *Whether they are genetically modified*
		- *Source of supply*
		- *Number of animals to be purchased for each year of the fellowship*
		- *Purchase price per animal*
		- *Number of animals to be maintained for each year of the fellowship*
		- *Number of weeks maintenance required for each year of the fellowship*
		- *Weekly maintenance cost*

**Section 9**

### Reviewers

*Please suggest at least two reviewers with relevant scientific knowledge with whom you or your supervisors have not published over the last 5 years.* *List, if any, potential reviewers you do not wish to be approached.*

**Section 10**

### Equality monitoring- part 2 of your application

*This section is for equality monitoring purposes and the information you provide will be anonymised and will not be available to recruiting supervisory teams. QMUL and City aims to promote an organisational culture that is respectful and inclusive irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, ethnicity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex and religion or belief. Moreover, it seeks to ensure that intersectionality is recognised, with explicit acknowledgement of the interconnected nature of social identities including race, class and sex, where these facets can create overlapping levels of discrimination or disadvantage.*

# Contact

*For further enquiries on any aspect of your application, or any issues relating to the submission of your application, please email the HARP Manager at* *info@harpphd.org* *or phone us on 0207 882 6608.*

# Checklist

Documents to be emailed to HARP Manager info@harpphd.org

1. Application form
2. Case for support document as single doc (3 sections)
3. Collaborator support letters (if any)
4. Supporting letter from Head of Department
5. Supporting letter from Supervisor
6. Ethics permissions (if any and available)
7. Worktribe entry submitted and approved
8. PhD application via MySis for QMUL and Opas for City
1. This is currently agreed for BartsHealth and ELFT employees [↑](#footnote-ref-1)