

NHS Innovation Accelerator: 2024 intake Call for Applications

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1. What is the NHS Innovation Accelerator (NIA)?

1a. About the NIA

The NHS Innovation Accelerator (NIA) is an award-winning [Accelerated Access Collaborative](#) and [NHS England](#) initiative, delivered in partnership with all 15 [Academic Health Science Networks \(AHSNs\)](#) and hosted at [UCL Partners](#).

The NIA was created to deliver on the commitment detailed within the *Five Year Forward View* and more recently highlighted within the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) - helping to create the **conditions and cultural change necessary for proven innovations to be adopted** faster and more systematically through the NHS, and to **deliver examples into practice for demonstrable patient and population benefit**. The aim is to drive ground-breaking innovations that target key areas of healthcare disparities, aligning with the [Core20PLUS5](#) approach to reducing healthcare inequalities.

The adoption and spread of effective innovative practices eliminate unacceptable variations in health indicators and the outcomes of care, gives the best possible experience for people, and integrates care and resources sustainably around the needs of patients and populations. However, it can take many years for evidence-based, high-impact innovations to scale within the health service for all patients and clinicians who want to use or benefit from them.

The NIA is designed to both speed up this process and to learn from the experiences of Fellows participating in the Accelerator so that others can benefit from the knowledge generated.

The NIA supports individuals with a passion for learning and a commitment to share their learnings widely. NIA Fellows are exceptional because of their passion, values, and determination to make a positive impact on the NHS and the patients it serves.

In January 2015, Professor Sir Bruce Keogh announced the first NIA Call for Fellows to join a bespoke learning and support programme. In July 2015, 17 Fellows leading mature, already in use innovations were announced. Now chaired by Professor Sir Stephen Powis, National Medical Director of NHS England, the NIA has held annual calls for innovations since 2015 and to date has supported 97 Fellows representing 85 innovations across the NHS, achieving some impressive results:

- 3,171 additional NHS sites using NIA innovations.
- £216.2M external funding raised.
- 1,244 new jobs created.
- 221 awards won.
- NIA innovations selling across 59 international markets.

The NIA is now opening recruitment to select up to 24 Fellows with promising health and social care innovations that have demonstrated positive impact where they are already in use.

If you have any queries about your eligibility or readiness to apply, we encourage you to get in touch with us at nia@uclpartners.com so that we can help identify the best way to support you.

1b. Underpinning principles

The NIA was co-designed with NHS England and Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) partners along with innovators, patient networks and [The Health Foundation](#). It draws on national and international learning.

The principles underpinning the NIA are:

- **Addressing clear priorities for the NHS and wider care system:** Recruiting - through a robust, competitive process - exceptional individuals representing a portfolio of high-impact evidence-based innovations, sourced nationally and internationally, which address clear needs or challenges faced by the NHS and wider care system in the delivery of the *NHS Long Term Plan*, and more recently, in response to COVID-19 and the *Core20Plus5 manifesto*.
- **Tailored support to Fellows:** Through a bespoke learning programme, with mentorship and networking opportunities to equip them with the skills and attributes necessary to promote wider adoption.
- **Integrating with other innovation programmes:** Ensuring the NIA seamlessly aligns with other national innovation initiatives. For example, the NIA offers opportunities to mature innovations developed through the [Small Business Research Initiative](#) (SBRI) and [Clinical Entrepreneurs Training Programme](#), and aims to provide a pipeline within the Accelerated Access Collaborative.
- **Delivering through partnership:** Developing a robust, broad multi-stakeholder national and international community - involving patient networks, AHSNs, along with mentors and sponsors, and national and international experts - allowing opportunities and collaborations for Fellows, to which they may otherwise not have access.
- **Effective communications:** Working efficiently with the AHSN Network and NHS England's communications teams, to increase the profile of innovation (and its adoption) within the NHS - championing the work of NIA Fellows including through the annual NIA launch event, utilising major event opportunities, social media channels, and local/ national press.
- **Applying lessons learned:** Systematically capturing lessons learned and documenting the impact of innovation scaling to inform:
 - Other innovators on how to achieve wider adoption of their inventions.
 - Senior leaders on the barriers and solutions/ methods to address these, creating a receptive context.
 - System stewards and policymakers, through the NIA Programme Board, on the actions needed to create the necessary conditions for the spread of innovations aligned with the ambitions within the *NHS Long Term Plan* and the *Core20Plus5 manifesto*.
- **Reducing health inequalities:** Supporting Fellows in understanding the role they and their innovation can play in alleviating health inequalities. Providing learning opportunities and bespoke support for Fellows to better understand the population they are seeking to serve and ways to adapt their innovation to drive inclusivity of access, experience, and outcomes.

- **Working with Greener NHS towards Net Zero:** collaborating with Greener NHS to make sure our Fellows are “climate-ready” in helping to reduce carbon emissions in healthcare. As outlined in the [Delivering a Net Zero NHS](#) publication, the NHS has set two targets:
 - To be net zero by 2040 for directly controlled emissions,
 - To be net zero by 2045 for emissions that the NHS influences.

- **Fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion:** Actively reviewing the programme to ensure that our practices and policies encourage a diverse range of applicants, and supporting Fellows to share, appreciate and learn from each other’s unique perspectives.

- **Patient and Public Involvement (PPIE):** ensuring patient involvement and lived experience informs the development and scale of the promising innovations supported by the NIA. Patient involvement includes:
 - Patient representatives the NIA Programme Board, governing NIA strategy,
 - patient representatives on the NIA Operational Board, overseeing the day-to-day running of the NIA,
 - Patients involved in the short-listing of applications and the interviewing process for new innovations to be accepted on the NIA.

2. Who is the NIA for?

The NIA aims to appoint dedicated individuals representing compelling innovations that have already demonstrated positive impact in practice, combined with a convincing, well-considered plan for how to scale innovations for greater patient and NHS benefit.

The selection process is based equally on both the applicant and their innovation, as demonstrated through the information provided in the application form.

The NIA specifically focus on evidence-based innovations that are in their transition to scale across the health service because of the identified gap in support for innovations at this stage of maturity.

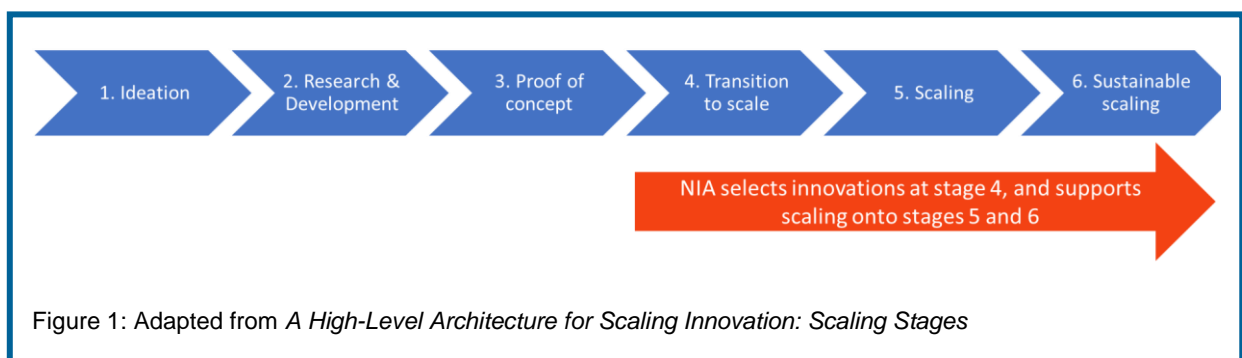


Figure 1: Adapted from *A High-Level Architecture for Scaling Innovation: Scaling Stages*

1. **Ideation:** Developing and analysing the development problem and generating potential solutions through horizon scanning of existing and new ideas.
2. **Research and Development:** Further developing specific innovations that have the potential to address the problem.

3. **Proof of concept:** When the intellectual concept behind an innovation is field tested to gain an early, 'real world' assessment of its potential.
4. **Transition to scale:** When innovations that have demonstrated small-scale success develop their model and attract partners to help fill gaps in their capacity to scale.
5. **Scaling:** The process of replicating and/ or adapting an innovation across large geographies and populations for transformational impact.
6. **Sustainable scaling:** Wide scale adoption of an innovation at the desired level of scale/ exponential growth, sustained by an ecosystem of factors.

We are looking for committed and passionate individuals who, with the support of their organisation, will become an NIA Fellow able to dedicate two days per week to scaling their innovation.

2a. What are we looking for in applicants?

Innovators from all genders, ethnicities and backgrounds are encouraged to apply for our accelerator. We know that many groups have been underrepresented in our past cohorts and we are keen to move toward a cohort of Fellows that better represents the diversity of the people served by the NHS.

You can be the inventor of the innovation, the lead for it within your organisation, or simply the representative of an innovation you find compelling and wish to scale across the NHS.

We welcome applicants from a diverse range of professional backgrounds and skill sets. Applicants, nationally and internationally, can be from, for example, a:

- Public sector organisation, for example, clinicians, administrators, social workers etc.,
- University or Higher Education Institute,
- Charity, Foundation, or not-for-profit organisation - this could include, for example, a housing association, a community interest company, community groups or community collective, a social enterprise.
- Small medium enterprise.
- Large corporate.

We are looking for applicants that have a set of strong values and a passion for learning and sharing insights for the benefit of entrepreneurs and the wider care system. We often refer to our Fellows as exceptional, which they are, but not because of their achievements or accolades. They are exceptional because of their passion, values, and determination to make a positive impact on the NHS and its patients.

We aim to recruit Fellows who can demonstrate through their application, and at interview, a range of skills and competencies, including:

- A track record of effectively engaging key stakeholders from diverse groups and/or cultural backgrounds (e.g., protected characteristics)
 - High emotional intelligence.
 - The ability to articulate a compelling case for change.
 - A history of team and partnership working, including with users.

- Evidence of external orientation
 - A focus on understanding the perspectives of others, including users and adopters.
 - Actively seeking to learn from others.
 - Willing to openly share insights with a wide range of stakeholders.

- An entrepreneurial approach
 - Open-minded about adaptation.
 - Prepared to take informed and managed risks.
 - Commercial or business minded.
 - Courageous and resilient.

- Personal integrity
 - Commitment to quality of care and improving lives.
 - Patient focused.
 - Inclusive in their practices.
 - Respectful of individuality.

We would like to receive applications from individuals who have a track record of involving a range of critical partners in the development of their innovation work, such as patients, carers, community groups, clinicians, managers, and commissioners. The NIA considers the patient and public voice in all aspects of its work; applicants should be able to demonstrate that end users – patients, carers, citizens etc, have been involved in the design and development of their innovation and that they have a continued commitment to patient and public involvement.

You will also need to show that you have, or have access to, a range of skills and knowledge considered important in enabling uptake of innovation, which includes effective engagement and communication, marketing, business case development, change management and commercial acumen.

We are looking for applicants who are open to learning and can accept the potential need to adapt your innovation and/ or scaling strategy to suit different contexts. You should also be able to demonstrate key personal characteristics, such as ambition, courage, and resilience.

The NIA is aimed at individuals. However, we recognise that to scale effectively across England you will be part of a wider team with complementary skills. **Only the lead applicant** will be appointed as an NIA Fellow and will be given full access to the range of NIA support opportunities. There are, however, likely to be events and briefings during the NIA that are open to your wider team.

It will be helpful when applying, to detail, if applicable, the roles of different team members and/ or partner organisations, and to outline their relevant experience. Partners may include patient networks, health or social care providers and commissioners, charities, universities, consultancies and innovation intermediaries.

During the NIA, Fellows will be required to:

- Actively participate in a tailored learning programme and attend all quarterly and Year 1 events.
- Support their NIA peers and other entrepreneurs through sharing learning and experiences.
- Show progress in personal development and engaging with the NHS to scale their innovation.

- Contribute to the NIA evaluation through provision of quarterly progress reports and other metrics as determined and agreed with the independent evaluators.
- Uphold the behaviours highlighted in the NIA Code of Conduct.

Continuation on the programme in Year 1, and progression onto Years 2 and 3, will be dependent on the Fellow demonstrating that they have met all the requirements highlighted above.

3. What are we looking for in your innovation?

It is essential that applicants clearly describe and demonstrate how their innovations respond to one of this year's Call Themes.

For the 2024 intake, the NIA is seeking innovations that can address a health inequalities challenge within the themes highlighted in the [Core20PLUS5](#), for both Adults and Children and Young.

Additionally, the call is open to all therapy areas with innovations that specifically support NHS centred Carbon Reduction solutions.

The themes proposed are:

- Maternity (Adults)
- Mental Health/ Severe Mental Illness (Adults, and Children and Young People)
- Cancer (Adults)
- Respiratory Disease / Asthma (Adults, and Children and Young People)
- Hypertension/ Cardiovascular Disease (Adults)
- Diabetes (Children and Young People)
- Epilepsy (Children and Young People)
- Oral Health (Children and Young People)
- Carbon Reduction/Net Zero

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the NHS Core20Plus5 manifesto prior to completing the NIA application form.

Criteria

Innovations joining the NIA need to meet the following criteria:

- Address one or more of the Call Themes.
- Address a clear need for patients or the health care system – in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, or long-term management of a healthcare condition.
- Address healthcare inequalities, especially in relation to population groups and major conditions in NHS England's Core20PLUS5 approach to reducing healthcare inequalities.
- Have demonstrated in practice, not theoretically or hypothetically, significantly greater quality outcomes (including clinical outcomes, experience, and safety) for significantly lower cost.
- Have considered the impact of their innovation on health inequalities and if applicable, the actions needed to mitigate any negative impact. The programme will expect Applicants to have considered at the very least the accessibility of their innovation to people from different socio-

economic backgrounds and to those with protected characteristics. The programme will expect (and provide support to) all innovators to step into promoting health equity in their approach.

- Are at the correct phase of maturity - applicants need to demonstrate that their innovation is already in use in a health or care system, has been developed with the extensive involvement of users, is supported by a robust evidence base, and is ready to be used more widely across the NHS. Please refer to Figure 1 for stage of innovation.
- Are financially sustainable and have appropriate intellectual property in place.
- Have satisfied all necessary regulatory and ethical frameworks for use in England.
- Are interoperable with core NHS systems if a digital or digitally enabled innovation.

Environmental Sustainability

A sustainable health and care system is achieved by delivering high quality care and improved public health without exhausting natural resources or causing severe ecological damage.

- We are therefore asking applicants to describe how they deliver environmentally sustainable solutions. For more information on what this entails, please visit [Greener NHS](#).

Types of Innovations that should not apply.

The following types of innovation are **not appropriate** for the NIA:

- Testing of new drug dosages and clinical administration methods.
- Research into the causes and treatment of illnesses.
- Education and training as the primary purpose or focus of the project.
- Operational research as a principal component of the proposal.
- Early phase development of any innovation as the primary purpose or focus of the project.

To consider when completing your application

When describing the nature and severity of the problem, you may choose to reference factors such as: the significance and impact of the health issue on patients and their quality of life; the consequences for long term wellbeing and mortality; and the wider impact of the problem locally or nationally. Applicants should draw on information such as population prevalence and incidence and cost to health services and wider society.

You will need to provide robust evidence to demonstrate the impact of your innovation and the health economic benefits.

In your application, you will need to describe competitors, and the added value or unique selling point your innovation brings compared with existing practices and other innovations on the market or under development. The current plan is for all innovations appointed to the NIA from 2024 onwards to undertake a Maturity Matrix assessment on commencement and at set intervals, aiming to measure the innovation's readiness to be adopted, and maturity using pre-set criteria.

To find out more as to whether your innovation is suitable for the NIA, please join one of our information events and webinars detailed in section 7.

4. Why apply to the NHS Innovation Accelerator?

The principle behind the NIA is that if we can wrap bespoke support around value-driven, inspiring individuals with compelling evidence-based innovations, then innovations will be taken up at pace across the NHS. As such, the support and development provided through the NIA will be tailored to your needs and aspirations as well as that of your innovation.

4a. Benefits of participation

Bespoke support is delivered predominantly through the following mechanisms:

- Access to mentorship from a range of experts and high-profile mentors, representing a broad skills base.

The following are the current NIA Mentors:

- Dr Adam Kirk, Medical Director at my mhealth; Consultant Physician.
- Adrian Downing, Independent Consultant specialising in Healthcare SMEs.
- Professor The Lord Ajay Kakkar; Chairman, King's Health Partners; Professor of Surgery, UCL.
- Andreas Haimboeck-Tichy, Managing Director of Healthcare UKI, Accenture.
- Professor The Lord Darzi of Denham, Director of the Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College London.
- Dr Archana Sharma, Founder of Neem Tree Press; Medical Doctor; expert in finance and healthcare.
- Dr Ben Maruthappu, Co-founder and CEO, Cera.
- Bobby Kaura, Seed investment and International Development, Illumina Accelerator Cambridge.
- Dr Celia Ingham Clark, Medical Director for Clinical Effectiveness, NHS England and NHS Improvement.
- Ed Jones, Independent adviser; Formerly Chief of Staff to the Foreign Secretary and Advisor to the Secretary of State for Health.
- Elisa del Galdo, Independent Consultant specialising in Business Development
- Fiona Bride, Director of Market Access, Novartis.
- Gary Gallen, CEO and founder of rradar.
- Dr Harpreet Sood, NHS primary care doctor; expert in global digital health.
- Hassan Chaudhury, Global Digital Health Specialist, Healthcare UK; Commercial Director, DATA-CAN.
- Ian Thompson, Independent Digital Health Specialist.
- Jenny Chong, Non-Executive director Medway NHS Foundation Trust; expert in digital health
- Professor Joanne Hackett, Head of Genomic and Precision Medicine, IQVIA.
- Professor Sir John Burn, Professor of Clinical Genetics, Newcastle University; Non-Executive Director, NHS England and NHS Improvement.
- Jon Spiers, Chief Executive Officer, Royal Free Charity.
- Juliet Armstrong, Independent Transformational Change and Digital Transformation Specialist.
- Kay Boycott, Independent Advisor and Strategy Consultant.

- Manish Miglani, Investment Director, Nesta.
 - Dr Mayur Vibhuti, GP and NHS England Clinical Entrepreneur Fellow.
 - Dr Nick Ibery, Associate Partner, Pangea Investors; Medical Doctor; Lawyer.
 - Pam Garside, Partner, Newhealth; Fellow, Judge Business School, University of Cambridge.
 - Robert Mollen, US-qualified corporate lawyer resident in Fried Frank's London office since 1991 and member of London Tech Advocates.
 - Dr Samantha Barrell, Deputy Chief Executive, The Francis Crick Institute.
 - Professor Sudhesh Kumar, Dean of the Warwick Medical School; Director of the Institute of Digital Healthcare, University of Warwick.
 - Professor Tony Young, National Clinical Director for Innovation, NHS England and NHS Improvement.
- Connection to AHSNs across the country who can provide, for example, local networking, navigation, showcasing, critical challenge and support.
 - Regular meetings and critical challenge from the NIA Core Team based at UCL Partners.
 - Set packages of support around Addressing Healthcare Inequalities, Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement, and Net Zero, where Fellows will receive 1:1 support in benchmarking their current position against the NHS criteria or asks in these areas, in order to create tailored developmental plans. The support will last throughout the three years of the NIA programme.
 - Peer to peer support from the NIA Fellows, those recruited in 2024, 2023 and 2022, enabled through an online forum, regular newsletters and:
 - Quarterly events that bring all Fellows together to share learnings, access specialist support and collectively problem solve,
 - Year 1 events that will bring the Fellows within your cohort together for updates and discussions around specific topics,
 - Workshops and webinars on key topic areas including business models, business case development, leadership, and resilience, pitching to key target groups,
 - Ad hoc events and briefings; previous sessions have included NHS procurement, marketing and communications, behavioural economics, NHS Commissioning, Legal and Intellectual Property.

Additionally, we continue to build partnerships with a range of complementary organisations to augment the support offer available to Fellows. For example:

- [Innovate UK](#).
- [Healthcare UK](#).
- Further organisations who have directly supported Fellows include, for example, [Genomics England](#), [Health Education England](#), [MSD](#) and [Petrichor](#)
- Members from [Tech London Advocates](#) have contributed time and mentoring support to Fellows.
- [Association of British HealthTech Industries \(ABHI\)](#)
- Collaboration with other Innovation/ Fellowship programmes such as the [NHS England Clinical Entrepreneur programme](#).
- Connection to [HSBC](#) to advise on financial, banking, or money transfer matters.
- Connection to the [PWC](#) Fundraising team for advice on seed and Series A investments.

- Connection to [Hill Dickinson](#) for advice on seed and Series A investments from a legal perspective

Whilst on the programme you can expect to benefit from a range of support including:

- **Insight** into the changing policy context of the NHS.
- **Introductions and showcasing** opportunities to relevant NHS commissioners, leaders etc.
- **Navigation** of the innovation and research infrastructure both within and outside the NHS.
- **Critical challenge** and support to refine plans through access to expert advice.
- **Reputation building:** association with the brand of the NIA and its partners.
- **Influencing national policy:** opportunities to share experiences with senior leaders at NHS England to explore how to unlock systemic barriers to adoption. One mechanism for this is via the NIA Programme Board, chaired by Professor Stephen Powis, National Medical Director, NHS England.

4b. What your time on the NIA will involve

The time commitment for the NIA is two days per week. The two-day commitment covers the time you will spend on actively scaling your innovation and your participation in the NIA (e.g. attendance at quarterly events, working up and implementing sprint plans, providing updates to the NIA team, meeting mentors and lead AHSNs etc.). Whilst this time commitment does not preclude involvement in other developmental schemes outside of the NIA Fellowship, it is required that Fellows commit two days per week during normal working hours to ensure that they make the best use of their time and available resources on the NIA to scale their innovation.

Prior to the formal start of the 2024 intake in April 2024, there are a series of sessions during March 2024 designed to give an induction to the NIA and to support Fellows to develop robust strategies for scaling in the NHS. These dates are detailed in section 7 page 16, below. Please ensure you can attend all the compulsory dates listed and that your employing organisation understands that attendance at these events **is a condition** of the Fellowship.

Two days per week commitment

For some Fellows, the two days commitment whilst on the NIA will be part of your normal jobs, where scaling the innovation is everyday business. For others, particularly those who are based in clinical roles, it might mean a different set of tasks from the day-to-day. This could range from building a compelling business case for intended purchasers; developing and executing a stakeholder engagement and marketing plan; building a network; refining the health economic case; presenting to target purchasers and so on.

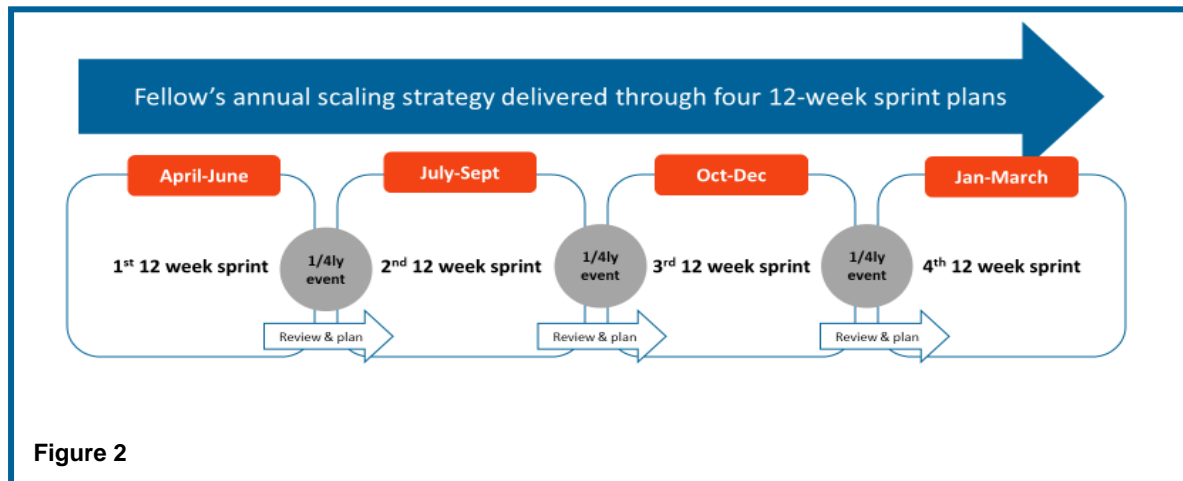
We would expect the two days per week will vary for each Fellow depending on the type of innovation and their strategy for scaling. Activities undertaken within these two days are not prescribed by the NIA; Fellows will be expected to identify the best use of their time.

Structure

The NIA is structured into a set of four 12-week sprints, with the aim of supporting Fellows to learn fast and to provide focused momentum throughout the year. For each 12-week sprint, Fellows set out the actions they will undertake to scale their innovations as well as detailing the support they need from the programme to deliver these plans. At the start of each sprint, you will receive critical challenge and support as to your sprint plan from the NIA Core Team. You can also meet with the

NIA Team six weeks into each sprint plan to determine any additional support, signposting and navigation to expertise where needed.

The quarterly events and Year 1 events provide an opportunity for Fellows to review learning and plan for the next sprint.



Testimonials from NIA Fellows

“Navigating procurement processes can be really challenging. The NIA have really helped us to navigate that and understand what levers we can pull. I would absolutely recommend the NIA programme to other innovators.”

Laura Earnshaw, myHappyMind, 2023 Fellow

“We have spoken to a range of experts. That’s been really useful to understand how tech-scaling is done in other industries. I would absolutely recommend the NIA. It’s been valuable to us, both in understanding the ecosystem, building the right relationships and in having the right network of founders and operators around us to share challenges and learn from each other.”

Rayna Patel, Vinehealth, 2021 Fellow

“The NHS Innovation Accelerator really turbo-charged our credibility and reach into the NHS. From the support provided by the NIA, we launched our inaugural national report on patient experience which wouldn’t have been possible without their support, and which helped to showcase the power of our analytics.”

Mark Lomax, Pep Health, 2020 Fellow

“The NIA gets the ball rolling.”

Bieke Van Gorp, Fibrichck, 2020 Fellow

“Brilliant, thank you. What an amazing experience this is!”

Amy Manning, S12 Solutions, 2019 Fellow

“The NHS Innovation Accelerator focuses not just on the innovation, but also on the innovator. It opens doors, supports networking, and helps in overcoming challenges in adopting innovation.”
Dr Asma Khalil, Home monitoring of hypertension in pregnancy (HaMpton), 2017 Fellow

“From the process of application, to interviews and eventual acceptance and implementation, you will learn a huge amount - about patients' needs, the NHS needs' and your own needs for development. It's an amazing opportunity.”
Dr Sophie Bostock, Sleepio, 2016 Fellow

“The NHS Innovation Accelerator (NIA) gave me the insights and contacts within Primary Care to enable this previously unknown sector to become alive with enthusiasm for Kardia Mobile, with GPs, Practice Nurses and patients all benefitting and saving the NHS thousands.”
Francis White, AliveCor Kardia Mobile, 2015 Fellow

“This is a revolutionary programme in the NHS to give innovators the skills and guidance to support fast and systematic spread of innovation across the NHS. It has been a fantastic experience for me and my innovation and I would recommend this programme to any entrepreneur.”
Dr Maryanne Mariyaselvam, Non-injectable Arterial Connector (NIC)/WireSafe, 2015 Fellow

4c. What happens after the initial 12 months of the NIA programme?

NIA Fellows, to date, have been offered the opportunity to apply through an application form process, to continue on the NIA each year. The NIA Programme Board has agreed that Fellows can be supported for up to, but no more than, three years.

The NIA Programme Board assess Fellows' annual re-applications against the following criteria:

- **Demonstrable progress and learning:** as could reasonably be expected during the first 12 months.
- **Sharing insights:** detailing with whom and through which mechanisms.
- **Sustainability:** viable plan and business model in place for continued scaling within the NHS.
- **Time commitment:** attendance at compulsory events and regular sharing of progress and learnings.

Those eligible to continue will access the same benefits as detailed within section 3a, through attendance at the quarterly learning events, access to mentorship, participation in the NIA evaluation and any specific requests made of the NIA Core Team. However, the nature of the support will be less formal and structured.

The process for continuation beyond the initial 12 months and detail of the support available in Years 2 and 3 will be reviewed annually. As such, these may not be the same for the 2024 intake of NIA Fellows.

5. Details on how to apply

Once you have read this *Call for Applications*, please:

- Familiarise yourself with the [Core20PLUS5 manifesto](#).
- Read the [Guide for Applicants](#).
- Review the wording of the draft [contract](#) and draft [Code of Conduct](#), which both you and your organisation will need to sign should you be invited to join the NIA. Please note both documents are under review and are subject to change.

Once you are assured that you and your innovation meet the criteria specified, that you can commit to the time requirements, including attendance at all compulsory events and that you have the support of your employing organisation, please visit <https://nhsaccelerator.com/apply/> and:

- Complete the application form.
- Upload
 - an authorisation signature from your employing organisation
 - two references
 - if relevant, any additional supporting information.

The deadline for completed applications is **23:59, 22 October 2023**. Late applications will not be accepted.

5a. Support in completing the application form

UK based Applicants

Your local Academic Health Science Network may be able to provide support and advice in applying for the NIA. Find your local AHSN here: <https://www.ahsnnetwork.com/>.

International Applicants

You should contact [Healthcare UK](#) to access the dedicated support on offer for international companies looking to come to the UK.

6. Assessment process

Applications will be assessed as follows:

- **Screening:** The NIA Core Team will screen all applications to ensure they are complete and meet the minimum criteria for participation:
 - Is there a single named lead applicant?
 - Is the innovation at a sufficient level of maturity?
 - Can the applicant commit to at least 2 days per week?
 - Does this innovation address at least one of the Call themes?
 - Is there evidence to support the impact for the innovation?
 - Is the innovation in use in at least one health or social care site, either within or outside of the NHS?
- **Assessment:** Each application will be assessed by a representative group of assessors drawn from: patients, clinicians, commissioners, commercial and implementation experts and academics. Experts will be sourced via patient and clinical networks, AHSNs and NHS England among others. At least four assessors will score each application form and make a

recommendation as to whether the application should proceed to interview stage. Assessors will provide a score and feedback for the applicant and innovation sections.

- **Shortlisting:** The NIA Programme Board will review scores and feedback from the assessment stage, ranking applications by the average of the Applicant and Innovation score. The applications, who have scored a minimum of 65% in each of the Applicant and Innovation sections, will be offered an opportunity of an interview.
- **NICE:** NICE may conduct an informal review of the applications offered for interview and provide feedback on the following:
 - Innovation alignment with NICE guidelines.
 - Any contradictions with NICE guidelines or direction of travel.
 - Any major concerns with the evidence provided.
- **NHS England and NHS Improvement:** NHS England may informally review all applications shortlisted for interview.
- **Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement:** An AHSN PPIE lead will review the application and provide feedback on the PPIE activities undertaken; the feedback will be used for further questioning at interview around the commitment to PPIE as well as to establish a baseline for development should the applicant be offered a place on the NIA.
- **Health Inequalities:** The answer provided in the application form on the impact of the innovation on health inequalities will be scored and will receive feedback. Full details of the scoring criteria will be sent alongside the invitation to interview. The scores and feedback will be taken into consideration during the final decision-making.
- **Carbon Reduction and Net Zero:** The Greener NHS team will review the application and provide feedback on areas of strength and weakness with regards to the innovation helping the NHS reduce its carbon footprint; the feedback will be used for further questioning at interview around the commitment to Net Zero as well as to establish a baseline for development should the applicant be offered a place on the NIA.
- **Interviews:** Interview panellists will be sourced from patient networks, NHS England, AHSNs, NIA mentors and organisations supporting the NIA (e.g., UKTI, Department of Industry and Trade, Health Foundation etc). At least 4 panel members will sit on the interview panel, scoring each interviewee and making recommendations. The recommendations will be collated and presented to the decision-making panel.
- **Decision-making panel:** The decision-making panel will consider the resulting scores and recommendations from the NICE, NHS England, the interview panel, and the Health Inequalities, PPIE and Carbon Reduction and Net Zero reviews. The panel will be chaired by Professor Stephen Powis and will include representation from AHSNs and patients. The panel will ratify which of the applications will join the NIA in 2024 subject to due diligence.

All unsuccessful applicants at both assessment and interview stage will receive written feedback.

- **Due Diligence:** After the decision-making panel, successful applicants will be offered a conditional place on the NIA subject to a due diligence process. During this process:

- References provided on the application form will be verified,
 - (For SMEs only) Fellows will be asked to provide 3-years' worth of accounts, a list of directors and information to determine the company's sustainability,
 - You will be asked to confirm the intellectual property arrangements your innovation has in place,
 - Fellows will be required to complete information governance checklists and to confirm that they are able to attend all compulsory dates.
-
- **Final offer:** On successful completion of the due diligence stage -
 - Applicants receive an unconditional offer of a Fellowship,
 - Fully signed contracts will be issued.

7. Key dates

Activity	Date
NIA opens for applications (7 weeks instead of 8 weeks and 3 days)	11 September 2023
'Meet the NIA' informational webinars	19 September - 12:30 – 13:30 25 September - 12:00 – 13:00 4 October – 13:00 – 14:00 10 October – 13:00 – 14:00
Application deadline	23:59, 22 October 2023
Application form assessment	28 October – 26 November 2023 (4 weeks)
Review of applicants to be interviewed (Sustainability, PPIE, NICE and Health Inequalities)	28 November – 4 January
Shortlisting panel	11 December 2023
Invitation to interviews	13 December 2023
Unsuccessful applicants notified	14 December 2023
Interviews	10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 January 2024
Final decision-making panel	5 February 2024
Outcomes communicated to applicants	7 February 2024
Deadline for due diligence docs to be returned from applicants	16 February 2024
Due diligence and contracting	12 February – 8 March 2024
Feedback sent to unsuccessful applicants	23 February 2024
<i>The following dates/ sessions are a mandatory part of the NIA. You will not be able to take up a fellowship unless you are able to attend all of them.</i>	
Induction and preparation day for NIA Launch	18 March 2024
Launch event	27 March 2024
NIA induction event/ panel session	17 April 2024
New Fellow 1:1 meetings with NIA team	w/c 22 April 2024
Quarterly events	Tuesday 14 May 2024 Tuesday 23 July 2024 Tuesday 15 October 2024 Tuesday 4 February 2025
Year 1 learning events	Tuesday 4 June 2024 Tuesday 10 September 2024 Tuesday 4 March 2025

8. Who delivers the NIA?

The NIA Team delivers the programme in partnership with:

NHS England

NHS England leads the National Health Service (NHS) in England. It sets the priorities and direction of the NHS and encourages and informs the national debate to improve health and care.

NHS England wants everyone to have greater control of their health and their wellbeing, and to be supported to live longer, healthier lives by high quality health and care services that are compassionate, inclusive and constantly improving.

Academic Health Science Networks

The Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs) have the remit of spreading innovation, improving health and generating economic growth. There are 15 AHSNs across England, established by NHS England in 2013 to spread innovation at pace and scale. During 2016, the AHSNs agreed to collectively deliver the NIA as an AHSN Network programme in partnership with NHS England. To note: from October 2023, AHSNs will be rebranded as Health Innovation + *the region they cover*.

All 15 AHSNs provide direct financial support and governance of the programme, alongside actively supporting Fellows.

- East Midlands
- Eastern
- Health Innovation Manchester
- Health Innovation Network
- Imperial College Health Partners
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex
- North East and North Cumbria
- Innovation Agency: North West Coast
- Oxford
- South West
- UCL Partners
- Wessex
- West Midlands
- West of England
- Yorkshire & Humber

For more information visit www.ahsnnetwork.com.

UCL Partners

UCL Partners is an academic health science partnership that brings together people and organisations to transform the health and wellbeing of the population.

With partners from the NHS, social care and academia, UCL Partners supports improvements in discovery science, innovation into practice and population health, focusing where the need and benefit is greatest.

For more information visit www.uclpartners.com.

9. Checklist for applications

Before applying, please ensure you are able to answer affirmatively to all the requirements in the checklist below:

	Requirements
Applicant	<p>You must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate the necessary skills and competencies as detailed in 2a, <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate why you want to be an NIA Fellow and what you expect to get out of the programme, <input type="checkbox"/> commit 2 days a week to scaling your innovation and participating in the NIA, <input type="checkbox"/> attend all the mandatory NIA event dates, <input type="checkbox"/> be willing to openly share insights and learning, <input type="checkbox"/> actively engage in the fellowship, <input type="checkbox"/> confirm support from your employers for your place on the programme.
Innovation	<p>Your innovation must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> that it meets a current NHS need by addressing one or more of the Call themes, <input type="checkbox"/> that it has a robust evidence base, <input type="checkbox"/> that it addresses, and does not exacerbate, health inequalities, <input type="checkbox"/> that it is at the correct phase of maturity set out in Figure 1, <input type="checkbox"/> that it is already in use in a health or care setting, <input type="checkbox"/> that it is ready to be scaled further across the NHS, <input type="checkbox"/> that the potential enablers and barriers to scaling have been considered, <input type="checkbox"/> that the approaches you have tried to date, and what you have learnt from this, <input type="checkbox"/> consideration of the impact of your scaling approach on different communities, <input type="checkbox"/> the scaling ambition and projections for your innovation, along with your business model, <input type="checkbox"/> your openness to learn and adapt your strategy, <input type="checkbox"/> that it is financially viable, <input type="checkbox"/> that it has satisfied all necessary regulatory, intellectual property and ethical frameworks for use in England, <input type="checkbox"/> that it is an environmentally sustainable solution, <input type="checkbox"/> that it has had considerable patient input into its development to date and in its plan for future developments, <input type="checkbox"/> that it is interoperable with core NHS systems (for digital innovations).