



Health Data
Research Service

Data Driver Projects Call Webinar



HDRS Progress

- Becoming an entity – incorporated as a GovCo at the end of June 2026
- Building team and mobilising the organisation
- Developing strategy and business case
- Engaging across the ecosystem – speaking to over 250 stakeholders including patients, researchers, and life science companies
- Delivering Driver Projects – Tech Transformation and Data



Data Driver Projects – Purpose and Objectives

HDRS have launched a call to invest in projects that demonstrate the untapped potential of our existing health data, infrastructure and access routes to deliver clinical, research and/or public benefit.

The successful projects will be called 'Data Driver Projects' and will:

- Support HDRS's ambition to accelerate health data use for research and innovation, while improving access, optimisation and re-use of existing data assets
- Demonstrate the untapped potential of existing data, infrastructure and access routes to unlock benefits for researchers, patients, the public, and NHS/HSC organisations
- Shape future HDRS services and investments based on the needs of researchers, innovators, industry and healthcare organisations



What success looks like for HDRS



Measurable and demonstrable research, clinical, patient and/or public benefit by end of March 2027



Greater access to, and use of, existing health data for research and innovation



Reusable datasets, resources and capabilities with clear routes to adoption



Stronger understanding of where HDRS should focus future services, support and investment



Who can apply

- NHS and HSC organisations across the UK (including, trusts, health boards, and integrated care boards)
- Charities, non-profit research organisations
- Universities and academic research institutions
- Life sciences and pharmaceutical companies
- Health technology and AI companies (including SMEs and start-ups)
- Health data organisations, including secure data environments and trusted research environments across the UK
 - Note: Scottish Safehavens, Honest Broker Service, Regional SDEs, SAIL, and NHS England SDE can apply to both driver calls provided the projects submitted meets required eligibility criteria



Eligibility

Applications are particularly welcome from:

- Partnerships and consortia
- Projects that leverage additional investment through match funding, co-funding or in-kind support *where appropriate*
- Projects that demonstrate meaningful public and patient involvement (PPIE) in the design, development and/or delivery of the proposed work

Applications must demonstrate and evidence that all organisations involved in project delivery have, or will have by project mobilisation, the necessary data access, information governance, partnership, and delivery arrangements in place to undertake the proposed work



Focus of funding



Discovery Research

Using existing health data to generate new scientific knowledge, identify patterns, or create research resources



Clinical Trials

Improving how clinical trials are designed, recruited for, delivered, and monitored through health data



Innovation Development

Developing and validating innovative products, technologies, diagnostics, medicines, and AI solutions



Evaluation and Evidence Generation

Generating evidence to support clinical, commissioning, reimbursement, or regulatory decisions.



Out of scope

- **Projects that do not have the necessary data access, governance, partnership or delivery arrangements in place**
- **Projects that will not deliver quantifiable benefit by the end of the funding period (March 2027)**
- Pure research studies with no reusable deliverable
- BAU maintenance, support or licence renewals
- Capital purchases not tied to a scoped project
- Work already commissioned centrally, or IP owned solely by one collaborator
- Non-health data or non-UK data projects
- Contingency budgets, including risk and optimism bias allowances



Funding and governance

Funding

- We haven't capped the call or individual projects
- Size proposals to actual requirements scope, not to an assumed number
- Costings will be scrutinised for value for money relative to the benefits expected
- We expect to fund up to 6 projects for the data driver projects call
- No guarantee of funding beyond this financial year, but please indicate future requirements/plans where applicable

Governance

- Reporting will be light-touch - we want people spending time delivering rather than reporting
- Each successful project will agree a set of success criteria and the milestones expected by project end to be monitored against
- Decisions relating to continuation, discontinuation and funding adjustments will be communicated to projects as soon as possible
- HDRS will help projects to unblock issues and delivery wherever possible



Assessment process

- Applications can be submitted at any point until 5pm on 2 October 2026
- Applications will be reviewed as they are received for eligibility and shortlisting into one of two assessment cycles (mid-way and final)
- Assessment panel includes HDRS representatives and external, independent experts
- The same assessment process, criteria and panel membership (where possible) used across both cycles
- No funding advantage or disadvantage between cycles; assessed against the same standards (Cycle 1 applicants benefit from earlier funding decisions and a longer delivery period)
- Unsuccessful Cycle 1 applications may be invited back by HDRS to resubmit their proposal in Cycle 2
- HDRS may request clarifications or additional evidence during assessment; timely responses are required
- Successful projects may be asked to refine milestones, deliverables & success measures at project initiation



Application requirements

What we need from applications

- Clear delivery plan
- Resource and cost plan
- Evidence of readiness
- Clear impact case
- Adoption and sustainability plan
- Approach to IP and openness.

What we will assess against

1. Strategic Relevance
2. Potential Impact
3. Deliverability and Readiness
4. Adoption, Scalability and Reuse
5. Value for Money
6. Learning and Future Potential



Key Dates

- Call opens: 12 August 2026
- Assessment Cycle 1 submission deadline (mid-way): 5PM, 9 September 2026
- Assessment Cycle 2 submission deadline (final): 5PM, 2 October 2026
- Call closes: 2 October at 5PM
- Projects assessed within one month of submission deadline
- Project mobilisation expected in Autumn 2026



Questions?

Contact: driverprojects@hdrs.com

