

TOOLKIT TO HELP PEER REVIEWERS ON FUNDING PANELS TO ASSESS IMPACT



OVERVIEW

As part of the 'Renew and Refresh' ambition to maximise the impact of our funding, NIHR CCF is expanding its impact literacy and capacity building programme. In this project, we are exploring the development of impact toolkits to help support funding panel members to interpret, judge and make recommendations on allocation of funding with the impact of research in mind. We will conduct interviews to identify if there is a real need for an impact toolkit and, if so, design and test a prototype solution to complement existing impact training and support.

APPROACH



Using the Impact Literacy Workbook as a starting point, we will explore the current approaches of reviewers to impact, establish gaps in those approaches and develop new evidence-based materials to support reviewers in knowing what they should be looking for and how to assess it. We will use an established academic research methodology – intervention mapping – to produce this evidence base and to ensure our approach is inclusive and flexible and captures the perspectives of a broad range of stakeholders, with an initial focus on two schemes: Research for Patient Benefit East Midlands Regional Committee; and Health Services and Delivery Research.

OUTPUTS & TIMINGS



The anticipated outputs will be a) a toolkit for panel members (to be confirmed after the needs assessment phase) and b) academic peer reviewed outputs. The project will start in December 2020, with interviews scheduled from January 2021. The needs assessment will take place in April, with final project outputs delivered in July 2021.

What is impact literacy?

Impact literacy, a concept developed by Bayley and Phipps (2017), is the ability to understand, appraise and make decisions about how to connect research to the outside world.

[Impact Literacy Workbook](#)



RATIONALE

To successfully embed research practice, we need to design impact into the system and reduce reliance on individual upskilling. While staff training is one facet of improving impact literacy, there is a clear need to do likewise at the point where funding decisions are made. However, to date, there has been little exploration and development of a) the criteria by which impact plans should be judged, b) the impact literacy and skills needed by those reviewing impact plans to make judgements, and c) how these skills can be developed. As a result, there is a currently no transparent, coordinated or standardised method by which NIHR review panels are equipped to assess the impact of research at the planning stage. **This project will seek to understand the most appropriate content and format for training, help to improve NIHR peer and panel reviewers' impact literacy, and enable improved and robust decision-making about impact.**