



## AHP Careers Fellowship

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**Tip for completing the application form:** the online module [Writing Great Applications for Learning and Development Opportunities](#) can be helpful to plan the content of your application.

## 1. What is the AHP Careers Fellowship Scheme?

The AHP Careers Fellowship Scheme supports career development for the AHP workforce in the public health and social care sector in Scotland. It does this by funding AHP staff to participate in a learning programme and to lead and deliver a work-based project.

## 2. Who can apply for an AHP Careers Fellowship?

The Scheme is open to AHP staff working in the public health and care sector in Scotland. This encompasses Allied Health Professionals, AHP Healthcare Support Workers (HCSW) and AHP Assistant Practitioners employed in NHSScotland or local authorities in Scotland (please see the [AHPs included in the scheme section](#) of the AHP Careers Fellowship webpage for more information).

We will also consider applications from the AHP workforce within the Third and Independent Sectors, further and higher education where they are submitted in partnership with health and social care AHP services and where there is anticipated benefit to people using / delivering health and social care services.

## 3. What does an AHP Career Fellowship entail?

If you are awarded a Fellowship you will be funded for **up to** 2.0 days per week to:

- participate in a learning programme delivered by NES - approximately 5 days in total over 12 months delivered via a combination of face-to-face workshops and online sessions and
- lead your own work-based project over 10-12 months to improve, change or develop AHP services. This can be in your own team, service, locality, organisation or region. We will also consider national projects.

You will be part of a cohort of AHP Fellows who are all engaging with the learning programme and leading their own work-based projects.

## 4. What can I apply for?

- You can apply for funding to release your time (or additional hours if you are part time) for up to 2.0 days per week to do your work-based project over 10-12 months and participate in the learning programme.
- The amount of release that you request (and are awarded) will depend on the nature and scope of your work-based project. This may be negotiated and adjusted (in consultation with you, your line manager and your AHP Director) following review by the panel that evaluates each application
- The Fellowship funding is primarily for the release of your time/ capacity to lead your work-based project and participate in the learning programme. Depending on the nature of your

project it may also include a component that supports learning for others e.g. training a group of staff in a particular approach or skill if this is required for your work-based project

- The Fellowship funding can support reasonable travel within Scotland where it is clearly required for the delivery of your work-based project and/or to attend the learning programme workshops

## 5. What kind of work-based project can I do?

Your work-based project should be something that...

- you want to do, feel enthusiastic about and can evidence needs to be done
- you've already discussed with, and sought buy in from, others who will need to be involved e.g. colleagues, your team, line manager, service heads and relevant others
- is team, service, organisation or region wide. We'll also consider national projects can be achieved over 10 to 12 months
- is innovative, is about change and development and/ or building on learning, not simply a continuation or expansion of existing service delivery
- contributes to local or national strategy and priorities (see Question 6 below for examples).

**NB If an idea/ project focuses on a digital solution, then please apply to the *Digital Health and Care Leadership Programme (DLP)*. The next Cohort commences in January 2024. Register interest to apply to DLP here. As DLP focuses on digital projects/ solutions, these types of projects will not be progressed through the Careers Fellowship Scheme.**

**Tip for application form:** When completing the application form, keep to the word limit, and explain your idea and what your project is about. Indicate how you might approach your project in terms of methods or sequencing stages of the work. Minimise any technical language and write your application for a panel that may not be familiar with your topic area or specialism. It is ok to not know exactly how you might progress your project, but provide the panel reviewing your application with an indication of this. The project should provide you with a learning and career development opportunity and provide you with new knowledge, skills and experiences to inform your future practice, or help you prepare for a future role/ career direction.

**Tip for application form:** Before you apply make sure you to find out about some of the work that is most likely already happening in your area of interest and refer to it in your application. For example, it's much better to say in your application that you are going to build on learning from an initiative in another service or connect with national work in order to apply it locally, rather than not mentioning any work that is already happening. Also explain what support you may already have to progress your project if you are awarded a Fellowship.

## 6. What can a work-based project focus on?

The Scheme is open to applications on any topic that align with the points above in Question 5 and which demonstrate a clear career development opportunity for the applicant; be sure to explain the context of your work-based project and explain which aspect of local or national strategy or priorities your project will address.

Each year, the Scheme supports AHPs to contribute to the delivery of health and social care priorities and ambitions, this year we are particularly interested in projects that in some way address one of the three themes listed below.

1. **Sustainability**, which may be in the context of improving efficiencies in service provision; optimising the contribution of roles or optimal deployment of skills within teams to address workforce challenges; or addressing the climate emergency.
2. **Mental Health and wellbeing**, which may enable services to be able to support the mental health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland and our health and social care workforce.
3. **Public health and Inequalities**, which may support one of the Public Health Priorities for Scotland or address other local priorities.

Support Workers, Assistant Practitioners and Registered Staff across the different professions contribute to these interconnected themes which are core to national and local strategies, including:

- [NHS Scotland Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy: 2022-2026](#), (Scottish Government 2022) has five priority areas including sustainable travel, care, and communities to achieve NHS Scotland becoming a net-zero organisation by 2040. The strategy also highlights the behavioural changes needed by staff, people that access services and communities to contribute to social and environmental sustainability and achieving net-zero emissions.
- [Delivering Value Based Health & Care: A Vision for Scotland](#) (Scottish Government 2022) highlights the benefits of practising Realistic Medicine and shared decision making with people that access services to deliver person centred care and a more sustainable system.
- [Health and Social Care: National Workforce Strategy](#) (Scottish Government 2022) enables the recovery, growth and transformation of the health and social care workforce through five pillars of the workforce journey: Plan, Attract, Train, Employ, and Nurture. It outlines steps to support staff wellbeing and the need for appropriately skilled and trained staff to achieve a sustainable health and social care system.
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) (Scottish Government 2023) outlines the approach to improve the overall mental health and wellbeing of everyone in Scotland and reduce inequalities. The strategy promotes accessible mental health care at all stages of the life span and recognises the need for the workforce to have good mental health and wellbeing.
- [Scottish Allied Health Professions Public Health Strategic Framework Implementation Plan: 2022 to 2027](#) (Scottish Government 2022) AHPs contribute to public health through affecting the physical, mental and social wellbeing of individuals, communities and populations. The implementation plan explains that AHPs often support Public Health across four broad areas:

Wider (social) Determinants, Health Improvement, Population healthcare, and Health Protection.

**Tip for application form:** If your idea and proposed project do not align with the Scheme's themes for the year, be assured that your application will be given equal consideration by the Review Panel. Avoid making tenuous links to the themes if these are not relevant to your idea and project, use your word count to describe connections with more appropriate strategies/ priorities. When applying, you will need to explain succinctly which local priorities or national strategies your project aligns with; clarify which aspects specifically your project aims to address. This places your project within a local, organisational, professional or policy context. There is no need to list all relevant priorities/ strategies.

## 7. Why does the Scheme mention public health?

The Scottish AHP Public Health Strategic Framework Implementation Plan for Scotland states a number of outcomes including: AHPs understand that inequalities requires to be a fundamental consideration of their practice. Often AHPs are using a public health approach to their practice but may not use this language to describe their work. Consider how your proposed project may support the public health agenda in Scotland.

The UK AHP Strategic Framework for Public Health explains that there are four broad domains where AHPs often support Public Health: reducing the impact of wider (social) determinants on inequalities, Health Improvement, Population Healthcare, and Health Protection. There are also six public health priority areas identified for all of Scotland where AHPs can contribute. The four domains are more fully explained below.

**Wider determinants** – also known as social determinants, are a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which impact on people's health and wellbeing. Addressing the wider determinants of health and wellbeing has a key role to play in reducing health inequalities. Examples can include promoting healthy and inclusive environments and living conditions; and access to education, employment, social and leisure activities.

**Health Improvement** - describes the work to improve the health and mental wellbeing of individuals, communities or populations through enabling and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices and developing resilience. Examples can include supporting behaviour change throughout the life course.

**Population healthcare** – aims to maximise value, equity and good outcomes by focusing on the needs of the population and delivering person centred services across the entire health and care system. Examples can include rehabilitation, recovery and reablement; and supported self-management of long-term conditions in community and integrated care.

**Health Protection** – aims to protect the population's health from communicable diseases and other threats, while reducing health inequalities. Examples can include screening, radiation protection, and health checks.

**Tip for application form:** If your idea and proposed project do not align with the Public Health agenda, be assured that your application will be given equal consideration by the Review Panel.

More information about AHPs contribution to the public health agenda is available in the [Scottish Allied Health Professions Public Health Strategic Framework Implementation Plan: 2022 to 2027](#) (Scottish Government 2022).

#### 8. **How big does the work-based project have to be?**

- The scope and duration of your project will depend on your experience, what you hope to get out of it and what the anticipated impact on the service is
- It should be a piece of work that can be completed in 10-12 months
- Your project can be team, service, organisation or region wide. It can also be national

#### 9. **How can I apply?**

First, discuss your proposed work-based project and what you hope to get from being an AHP Fellow (i.e. your own learning outcomes) with your line manager, service manager, AHP Director or a Director/Associate Director in your Local Authority and other relevant people e.g. team members, other colleagues, local or national leads for related work.

Then complete all four parts of the Scheme's application form and submit to [AHP.fellowships@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:AHP.fellowships@nes.scot.nhs.uk) by **12.00 (noon) on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

#### 10. **Where can I find help to write my learning outcomes?**

The Fellowship Scheme provides an excellent career development opportunity, the Review Panel are interested in how being a Fellow will enhance or develop new knowledge, skills and practice. The online module [Writing Great Applications for Learning and Development Opportunities](#) can be helpful to consider your areas for further development and for writing learning outcomes, and you can watch this video about [constructing learning outcomes](#). The [NES NMAHP Development Framework](#) can be used to help you plan your development across the Four Pillars of Practice.

#### 11. **Do I need line manager and director support to apply for an AHP Fellowship?**

Yes, this is very important. Your application must be supported and approved by:

1. your own line manager, and
2. your service manager and budget holder, and
3. your AHP Director (if you work in the NHS, an integrated health and social care team) **or** a Director/Associate Director level senior manager (if you work in a Local Authority)

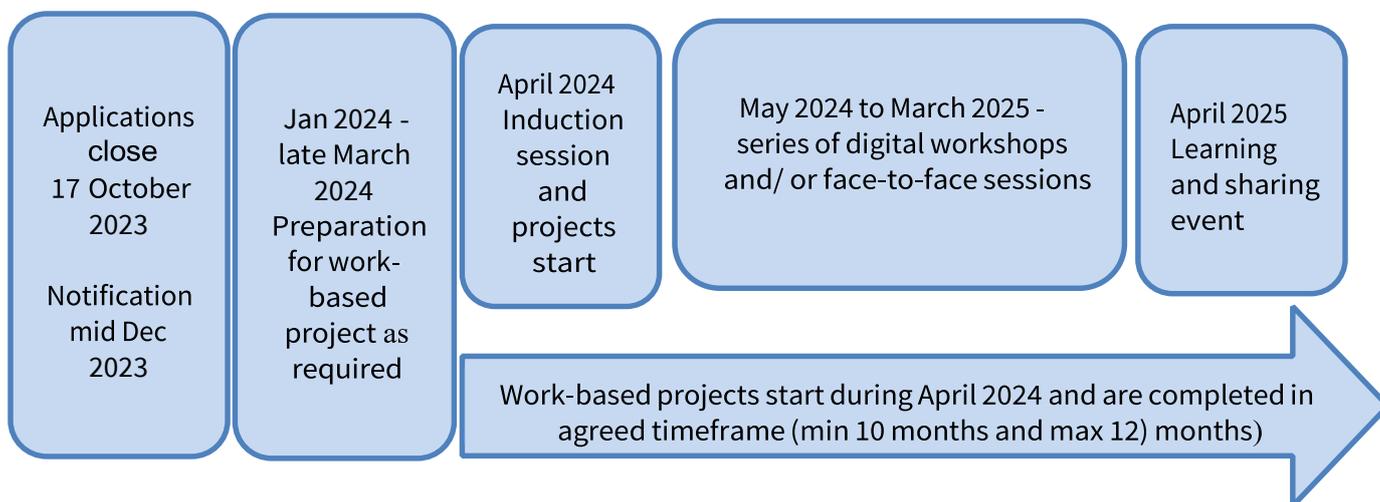
Seeking support for your application from the people listed above is vital and can make a huge difference to your proposed Fellowship successfully progressing or not. Organisation structures, budget holding, and line management arrangements vary across health and social care. For some of you obtaining the support you need may only require you to speak to one or two people (because they hold several of the roles listed above). For others it may mean seeking support from 3 or 4 different people. For this reason, we advise that you start the process early.

## 12. Will my grade or terms and conditions change if I get a Fellowship?

No. You will remain employed by your current employer and your terms and conditions are not influenced by being awarded a Fellowship.

## 13. What's the timeframe for an AHP Careers Fellowship in 2024/25?

Applications close at noon on 17th October 2023. You will be notified of the outcome of your application by mid December 2023 and, if you are successful, you will start your Fellowship in April 2024. The learning programme component will run from April 2024 to March 2025 (approximately 5 days in total including an induction session and a learning/ sharing event). During this time you will also be doing your work-based project. The length of your project will vary depending on its scope and your work circumstances, but it should start in April 2024.



## 14. How are AHP Fellowships awarded?

The AHP Careers Fellowship is a competitive process. All applications are reviewed by a panel who make recommendations to fund or not. Decisions are based on;

- How the proposed fellowship represents a learning opportunity for the individual and their anticipated learning outcomes
- The nature and scope of the work-based project
- Portfolio considerations i.e. aiming to ensure a spread of Fellows across professions, grades and geography

The panel may agree a straight “yes, recommend fund” or “no, funding not recommended”. It may also agree “yes with conditions” or suggest adaptations or adjustments to proposed Fellowships. If this is the case, we will have further discussions with you (and your line manager) to agree if it is possible to progress or not. The panel may also have further clarification questions which need to be explored.

### **15. What will the learning component of the AHP Fellowship include?**

- The learning component is approximately 5 days in total; including an induction session, a series of workshops and sessions delivered via MS Teams and some face-to-face and a learning and sharing event in June 2024.
- The induction session will include information about managing work-based projects, what to expect from the rest of the Scheme, establishing Peer Learning Groups and arranging your own network to support your Fellowship.
- The series of workshops and shorter sessions will be based on aspects of the 4 Pillars of Practice and will be built around the learning outcomes Fellows have outlined in their applications.

### **16. Do I have to attend the full AHP Fellowship learning programme?**

Yes. If you are successful in being awarded a Fellowship you will be expected to participate in as many of the workshops/online sessions as you can and do your work-based project.

### **17. Do I need to arrange mentorship or support?**

Yes, this is very important to support your learning as you lead your work-based project and participate in the programme. If you are successful in being awarded a Fellowship, you will be asked to enter into an agreement with someone locally who will act as support/mentor for you. Where we agree it is necessary and appropriate, we will also identify a person at NES who will offer regular support and guidance.

## 18. Can I apply with a colleague?

Yes, we will consider applications for **up to two people** to co-lead a project. In this instance:

- Submit separate applications forms, making it clear on your form that you are applying to co-lead a project and name who your co-lead is. This will allow the panel to review your applications jointly. Whilst the anticipated project outcomes will be the same, your individual learning outcomes will be different depending on your circumstances and, possibly, your different roles in delivering the work-based project. Your line managers may be different as well
- The total time requested (for both of you together) should not be more than 2.0 days per week over the timeframe of your project. You don't have to ask for equal amounts of time, for example, you could ask 1.5 days for one person and 0.5 day for the other. Please don't ask for anything more than 2.0 days in total (this would be beyond the scope of the Fellowship funding)
- The review panel will be particularly interested in work-based projects that are shared by staff at different grades

## 19. Can I apply for the work-based project then find someone to do it?

One of the strengths of the Fellowship scheme is that it considers how the proposed work-based project will create the conditions and opportunities for the individual Fellow to achieve their own learning outcomes. Whilst the project has value in its own right it is also one of the main mechanisms through which the individual will develop over the course of the Fellowship. For this reason, we need to know who the Fellow will be at the time of application to be able to assess it fully.

## 20. What will the Fellowship Scheme not fund?

- The Fellowship cannot be used for capital funding, equipment or licences
- The Fellowship is not able to support applications related to pre-registration AHP programmes
- The Fellowship cannot support international travel
- The Fellowship cannot support the establishment of new posts

### Top Tips for completing the application form

Contact the NES team to discuss your application before you submit it

Get a trusted colleague to read your application - if it's not clear to them it probably won't be clear to the panel

Check what's happening nationally that's relevant to your project - make sure you mention it

Don't use lots of profession or context specific jargon or abbreviations in your application

Stick to the word limit

Get buy in and support from the people who will be impacted by your project before you submit it - make sure you mention this.

To talk to the NES team email [ahp.fellowships@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:ahp.fellowships@nes.scot.nhs.uk) to arrange a time to discuss your idea before you apply.

