



**Health Equity**  
**Innovation**  
**Challenge**  
**2022**



## **Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022: Children and young people's mental health - anxiety**

### **Information for Applicants**

#### **Contents**

1. South West Academic Health Science Network
2. Introduction to the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022
3. Thematic areas
  - 3.1. Closing health equity gaps with regards to children and young people's mental health - anxiety
  - 3.2. UK Office for Life Science
4. Eligibility Criteria
  - 4.1. Who can apply?
  - 4.2. What types of projects can apply?
5. How to apply
  - 5.1. Timeline
  - 5.2. Application information
  - 5.3. Application support
6. Assessment criteria
7. Terms of funding
  - 7.1. Funding scope
  - 7.2. What funding cannot be spent on
8. Expectations of successful teams

## **1. South West Academic Health Science Network (South West AHSN)**

The [South West AHSN's purpose](#) is to transform lives through the adoption and spread of innovation in health and care, to improve population health and generate economic growth as part of the national AHSN Network.

To achieve this, we help build capability vital to the adoption and spread of innovation. We support partners to evaluate impact and apply learning, and we share knowledge across our health and care, industry, academic and voluntary sectors networks and collaborations.

Our [Innovation Exchange](#) is designed to help innovators implement solutions to meet the challenges faced by the health and care system in South West England.

Funded by the [UK Office for Life Sciences](#), we work with individuals and organisations who have innovative solutions – such as services, products or new processes – that can be used to improve the NHS and the care system.

Our work focuses on identifying the spreading innovative practice that helps close gaps in health equity.

## **2. Introduction to the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022**

The Health Equity Innovation Challenge is part of the South West AHSN's Innovation Exchange programme, which is designed to help innovators implement solutions to meet the challenges faced by the health and care system in South West England. Working with individuals and organisations who have innovative solutions that can be used to improve the NHS and the care system.

This Challenge focus is on identifying and spreading innovative practice that helps close health equity gaps with regards to children and young people's mental health - anxiety.

The challenge aims to facilitate the implementation and evaluation of developed innovations into relevant health and/or social care settings, to build evidence of the innovation and spread and adoption learning.

We are inviting innovators to apply for this exciting funding opportunity from 07 June 2022. The Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022 will be a one stage application process with teams notified of the outcome in September 2022.

Up to three teams will be supported with up to £25,000 each over six months, completing projects no later than mid-March 2023.

### 3. Thematic areas

All applications for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022 must address the needs of our thematic area of interest of closing health equity gaps with regards to children and young people's mental health – anxiety and should support the UK Office for Life Sciences commission.

#### 3.1. Closing health equity gaps with regards to children and young people's mental health - anxiety

'Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people<sup>1</sup>.'

At the South West AHSN our health equity programmes focus on identifying and spreading innovative practice that helps close health equity gaps in access to care, quality of care, opportunities for a healthy life and agency in managing individual health. Responding to the challenges of improving health and care services across a complex mix of rural areas, coastal communities, and urban centres.

Health inequalities can be experienced by people differently and factors to consider when identifying those who may experience health inequality are:

- Socioeconomic factors, for example, unemployment, low income and deprivation
- Protected characteristics, such as ethnicity, disability, religion or sexual orientation
- Exclusion through geography, for example, rural area, coastal communities and urban centres
- Socially excluded groups, such as people experiencing homelessness, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, sex workers, vulnerable migrants, people who leave prison.

The children and young people's mental health programme aims to reduce health equity gaps in mental health for children and young people within the South West. The programme is focusing on anxiety as a particular area of interest.

Anxiety disorders in children and young people bring significant personal and societal costs. Living with anxiety reduces life chances for children and young people. These challenges are disproportionately experienced by children living in poverty, children who have complex needs and children who face other risks of exclusion, alienation, and marginalisation.

We are keen to work with partners who share our ambition to:

- Address mental health inequity in anxiety, for children and young people
- Increase the opportunities for support that exists outside of current services
- Support targeted health equity initiatives in the prevention and early intervention of anxiety
- Support efforts that reduce inequalities in pathways into and throughout care

---

<sup>1</sup> [What are health inequalities? | The King's Fund \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/what-are-health-inequalities/)

There is evidence to support this priority area for the South West region when considering insight and evidence on gaps in health equity, system priorities and the provision and access to services. For example<sup>2</sup>:

- Children’s mental health needs in the South West are higher than other regions in England.
- Young people’s (10-24 years) self-harm hospital admissions rates are also higher.
- Children in rural areas can also face additional barrier to accessing support for anxiety and these difficulties are disproportionately experienced by
  - children living in poverty (which is often more hidden in rural areas),
  - children who have complex needs,
  - children who face other risks of exclusion, alienation, and marginalisation such as young carers, disabled children, children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and LGBTQ+ children.

The challenges of children and young people’s mental health is not considered a new equity issue, but there is further recognition of the impact of COVID-19 in the system’s ability to respond to multiple symptoms and determinants of health.

### 3.2. [UK Office for Life Sciences](#)

This Challenge is funded through the South West AHSN Innovation Exchange commission, funded by the UK Office of Life Sciences. The Innovation Exchange programme focuses on identifying, selecting and supporting the adoption of innovations which have the potential to transform the lives of patients, and support growth of the businesses we work with. We are interested in supporting innovators and companies which seek to contribute towards economic growth such as helping leverage investments and or creating and sustaining jobs into the South West region.

Health and social care are complex landscapes and can be daunting markets, but through the Innovation Exchange, the South West AHSN can support innovators and companies to understand and meet the needs of the health and care system.

---

<sup>2</sup> Sources: (1) Determinants of health – Strategy Unit research (2011 - 2019) (by LTLA), (2) [Generation COVID, Health Foundation \(2020\)](#), (3) [PHE Wider Impact of COVID-19 On Health \(2020\)](#) (4) [CentreforMentalHealth.org.uk](#), (5) Cornwall JSNA. (6) Devon JSNA

## 4. Eligibility criteria

This guidance will help you to decide if your innovation is right for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022. Please consider the criteria below before applying.

### 4.1. Who can apply?

- Innovations where the impact is in NHS, Social Care and/or voluntary, community, social enterprise sector (VCSE) in the South West region inclusive of Devon, Somerset, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- Applications must be led by an innovator. Lead organisations must be registered in England and could be:
  - SME'S: Industry partners with small or medium-sized businesses
  - NHS and or Social Care organisations
  - Higher education institutions such as Universities provided, they are the innovator
  - Voluntary, community social enterprise sector organisations
- There is no limit on the number of applications a lead applicant can submit.
- Lead applicants may only hold one Health Equity Innovation Challenge award.
- Project team:
  - There must be an evaluation partner involved or appropriate in-house expertise in place prior to applying.
  - Well- developed partnerships must be in place between innovators and relevant implementation sites.
- We encourage all partners in the application to consider their capacity to deliver on the proposal in the available scale and timeframe of the funding.

### 4.2. What types of projects will we support?

Applications are open to projects that meet all of the following criteria:

- Projects that focus on the thematic area of reducing health equity gaps in mental health for children and young people within the South West with a focus on anxiety (outlined in 3.1).
- Projects that meet the UK Office for Life Science Innovation Exchange agenda as described in section 3.2 including contributing to economic growth such as supporting new jobs, sustaining jobs and or attracting investment into the region.
- Projects that can start activity in September 2022 and be delivered in four to six months, completing no later than mid-March 2023.
- Funding requests must be a maximum £25,000 and include funding to support evaluation activity or demonstrate how the evaluation is covered through previous or planned work.
- Innovations that have been developed with the involvement of the intended beneficiaries.
- Mature innovations of any innovation type including services, products or new processes that meet the following requirements:
  - Maturity
    - Where applicable, innovations must evidence how the [NICE Digital Health Technology Framework](#) has been considered and how the team plan to meet the appropriate evidence guidelines.
    - Where applicable, innovations must evidence how the [Digital Technology Assessment Criteria \(DTAC\)](#) has been considered.

- Note: Technologies under development or in prototype stage will not be considered for this Challenge.
- Regulation. Where applicable,
  - CE mark or equivalent regulatory approval obtained or evidence demonstrating the technology is close to obtaining approval and/or Product in use in at least one Trust.
  - Clinical efficacy and safety demonstrated through clinical trial(s).
  - For digital solutions, evidence that the technology has passed the necessary information governance and cyber security requirements.

## 5. How to apply

### 5.1. Timeline

Activity	Date
<b>Health Equity Innovation Challenge launch. Applications open.</b>	Tuesday 07 June 2022
<b>Webinar one: Health Equity Innovation Challenge: Introduction to the children and young people’s mental health – anxiety theme</b>	Tuesday 14 June, 09:00- 10:00
<b>Webinar two: Health Equity Innovation Challenge: Application advice with Q&amp;A</b>	Tuesday 21 June, 15:00 – 16:00
<b>Deadline to submit applications</b>	Wednesday 20 July 2022, 13:00
<b>Lead applicant notified of final decision</b>	September 2022

### 5.2. Application

Applications will be open for six weeks from 07 June 2022 to 20 July 2022 at 13:00.

To apply for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge, applicants will need to [complete and submit the online application form](#), which can be found on our website and provide the required supporting information including [the budget](#) via email to [innovation@swahsn.com](mailto:innovation@swahsn.com).

A [sample of the online form](#) can be downloaded in word format for reference from the website to support drafting an application. Please note that this resource is for reference only and the online application form must be completed.

Applications will be assessed against the Challenge’s assessment criteria described in section six by a panel of South West AHSN staff and regional partners.

Incomplete or non-submitted online applications will not be assessed. Completed applications must be submitted online and the supporting information sent by email to [innovation@swahsn.com](mailto:innovation@swahsn.com) no later than 13:00 on 20 July 2021. Applications submitted after this time will not be considered for this funding.

If you require any advice on how to apply, please contact [innovation@swahsn.com](mailto:innovation@swahsn.com).

### 5.3. Application support

South West AHSN will run two online webinars to offer advice and guidance on applying for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge: Children and young people’s mental health – anxiety.

Attending the webinar is not mandatory and will not impact the outcome of an application.

- Webinar one: Health Equity Innovation Challenge: Introduction to the children and young people’s mental health – anxiety theme
  - When: Tuesday 14 June, 09:00- 10:00
  - This session will cover the theme of children and young people’s mental health – anxiety. It will explore what the South West AHSN have learnt to date about the theme and share our areas of interests. Attendees will be supported to understand

whether their proposal focus fits with the aims of the Challenge. There will be an opportunity to ask questions in the session.

- Webinar two: Health Equity Innovation Challenge: Application advice with Q&A
  - When: Tuesday 21 June, 15:00 – 16:00
  - This session will focus on how to apply for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge. It will cover the application questions and the process of applying. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions during the session.

## 6. Assessment criteria

Application will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Is the project addressing a relevant health equity challenge?
- Is the scope of the project right for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022 and is it deliverable?
- Is there a clear and deliverable evaluation plan?
- Does the proposal align with the UK Office for Life Sciences Innovation Exchange programme?
- Is the innovation mature with a clear market?
- Is there successful collaboration between partners?
- Have the intended beneficiaries been appropriately involved in the innovation?

Applications will be assessed by a panel of stakeholders working in children and young people's mental health, expertise in evaluation and or innovation. Please ensure applications are written in clear and concise language.

Applications will be assessed against the following questions:

### Assessment questions

#### 1. Is the project addressing a relevant health equity challenge?

The proposal must align with the theme of closing health equity gaps with regards to children and young people's mental health – anxiety.

We are looking for innovations with a good fit with the South West AHSN health equity priorities of access to care, quality of care, opportunities for a healthy life, and individual agency in managing health in the thematic area of children and young people's mental health - anxiety.

The proposal must clearly explain what the challenge is and what impact it is having on people and the current system/service. It must be clear what health inequality is being experienced and by who.

The proposal must share relevant evidence of the challenge and how it impacts the identified people experiencing the inequalities.

#### 2. Is the scope of the project right for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022 and is it deliverable?

##### Scope

- We are looking for proposals with a clear vision for the innovation. Within this, proposals must clearly explain what this project would achieve and how it would contribute to the overall vision.
- Proposals must be deliverable. They must clearly explain what activity, outputs and outcomes are expected from the proposed project.
- We are interested in project with strong potential impact for the health and care of the population and/or the health ecosystem of the South West (Devon, Somerset, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly)

- We would like applicants to share how this project will result in improvement and support sustainability beyond the lifespan of this project and to explore how the learning will be used and shared.

#### Deliverability

- The project must be deliverable within the available funding and time frame specified.
- The aims of the project must align with the intended outcomes.
- The timeline and key milestones must be realistic.
- The budget must be appropriate for the intended activity and demonstrate an effective use of resources and value for money.
- Applicants must be aware of the key risks and have mitigations planned.

### 3. Is there a clear and deliverable evaluation plan?

Proposals must have clear measurement and evaluation plan. There must be defined evaluation objectives and the proposal must describe how impact will be measured.

The proposal will need to demonstrate how it will test and build the evidence base of the innovation in real world settings and must show understanding of what evidence is required to support the next phase of sustainability.

If you do not have in-house evaluation expertise in your organisation or you do not have an evaluation partner, please contact [innovation@swahsn.com](mailto:innovation@swahsn.com) to discuss your project. The SW AHSN has an in-house Evaluation and Learning team who may be able to support you and your application. Please ensure this is no later than two weeks before submission (06 July).

### 4. Does the proposal align with the UK Office for Life Sciences, Innovation Exchange programme?

We are interested in supporting innovators and companies which seek to contribute towards economic growth such as helping leverage investments and or creating and sustaining jobs into the South West region.

### 5. Is the innovation mature with a clear market?

We are looking for innovations that are grounded in evidence for the need for the innovation and how it addresses the challenge identified.

Innovations must have the potential to deliver sustainable improvements to health or social care and share awareness of the commercial, scientific and technical contexts.

Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the market for the innovation including clear knowledge and consideration of competitors and why this innovation is different / more effective / appropriate to bring improvements to the identified challenge.

The innovation must be mature with evidence that the innovation has met the regulatory and intellectual property requirements necessary to bring the innovation to market.

### 6. Is there successful collaboration between partners?

We are looking to support existing collaborations between innovators and NHS, social care and/or voluntary, community, social enterprise sector (VCSE) partners to further their work together and build the evidence base of the innovation in real world settings.

There must be either an evaluation partner involved in the application or appropriate measurement and evaluation expertise and experience in the team involved in delivering and supporting the project.

The organisations involved should demonstrate complementary skills and experience in delivering projects. There must be clear leadership of the project.

#### **7. Have the intended beneficiaries been appropriately involved in the innovation?**

The proposal must be clear on who the intended beneficiary is and how the innovation would address the health inequalities identified.

Evidence is required that beneficiaries have been involved in the development of the innovation and there is a clear plan for future involvement.

Involvement of patients and the public must be essential to the project's success and members of the public must be fairly remunerated for their contributions.

## **7. Terms of funding**

### **7.1. Funding scope**

Each application can apply for up to £25,000 over six months.

Successful teams must be ready to start the project in September 2022 and be complete by mid-March 2023 at the latest.

Funding can cover either the total cost of the project or part-funding of a larger piece of work. If it will be part-funding, the additional funding must be confirmed prior to application. Applications that are contingent on another funding application will not be considered.

Teams must be prepared to report on the project progress and financial accounts throughout the funding period.

The budget must be inclusive of all expenses.

The budget should include funding to support evaluation activity or demonstrate how the evaluation is covered through previous or planned work.

### **7.2. What funding cannot be spent on:**

- Anything normally paid for without grant support such as overheads. This includes legal and accountancy fees which would be classed as an ongoing expense of running a business, e.g., payroll administration
- Statutory costs, e.g., health and safety
- Staff who do not perform a role directly associated with the delivery of the project, that is those performing supporting roles such as reception, central finance, IT support and organisation management
- Dividends
- Cash withdrawals
- Penalties, e.g., late filing fees
- Retrospective payments, prior to project
- Spend on alcohol within refreshments and entertaining
- Non-standard UK travel, e.g., first class travel
- International travel, unless agreed at outset

## **8. Expectations of successful teams**

Successful teams must be ready to start the project in September 2022 and be complete by mid-March 2023 at the latest.

Project leads will be required to provide regular progress updates though the project.

Project lead, in collaboration with partners, will need to submit an end of project report inclusive of the evaluation of the project and additional reflections on the project journey and learnings.

Teams are expected to disseminate findings of the project including allowing partners and the South West AHSN to disseminate project learnings.

Throughout the Challenge South West AHSN will provide opportunities for learning and connecting with the other teams in the Challenge. Teams are expected to participate in appropriate activities.

Teams are encouraged to be involved in activities connected to the wider children and young people's mental health programme of work such as workshops on the theme and evaluation activities.

If you have any questions, please contact [innovation@swahsn.com](mailto:innovation@swahsn.com)

We look forward to receiving your applications for the Health Equity Innovation Challenge 2022.