

Research for Patient Benefit

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Improving your application

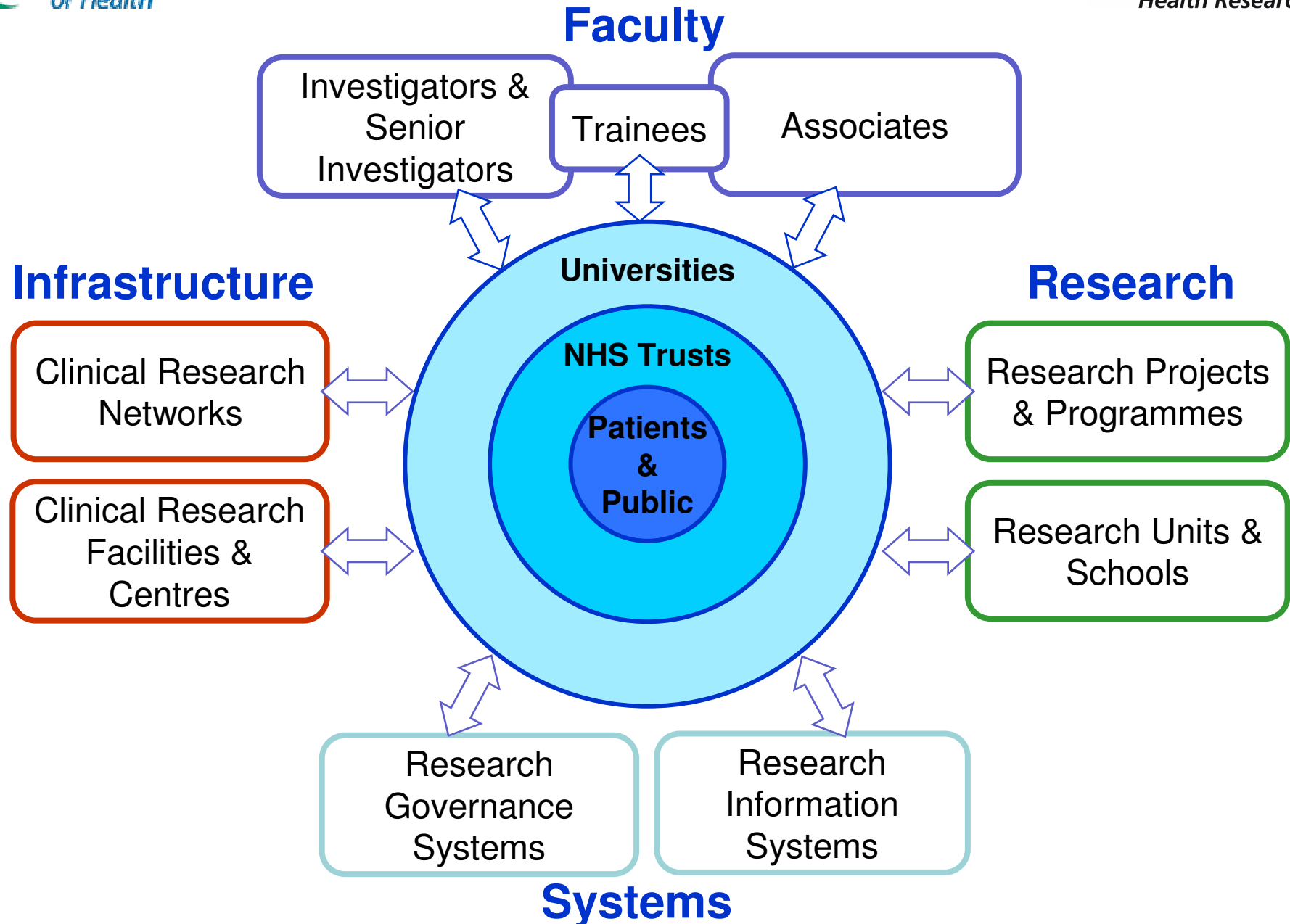
- An outline of the programme and its aims
- Common reasons for applications to fail
- Some tips for improving your application

Best Research for Best Health

A new national health research strategy

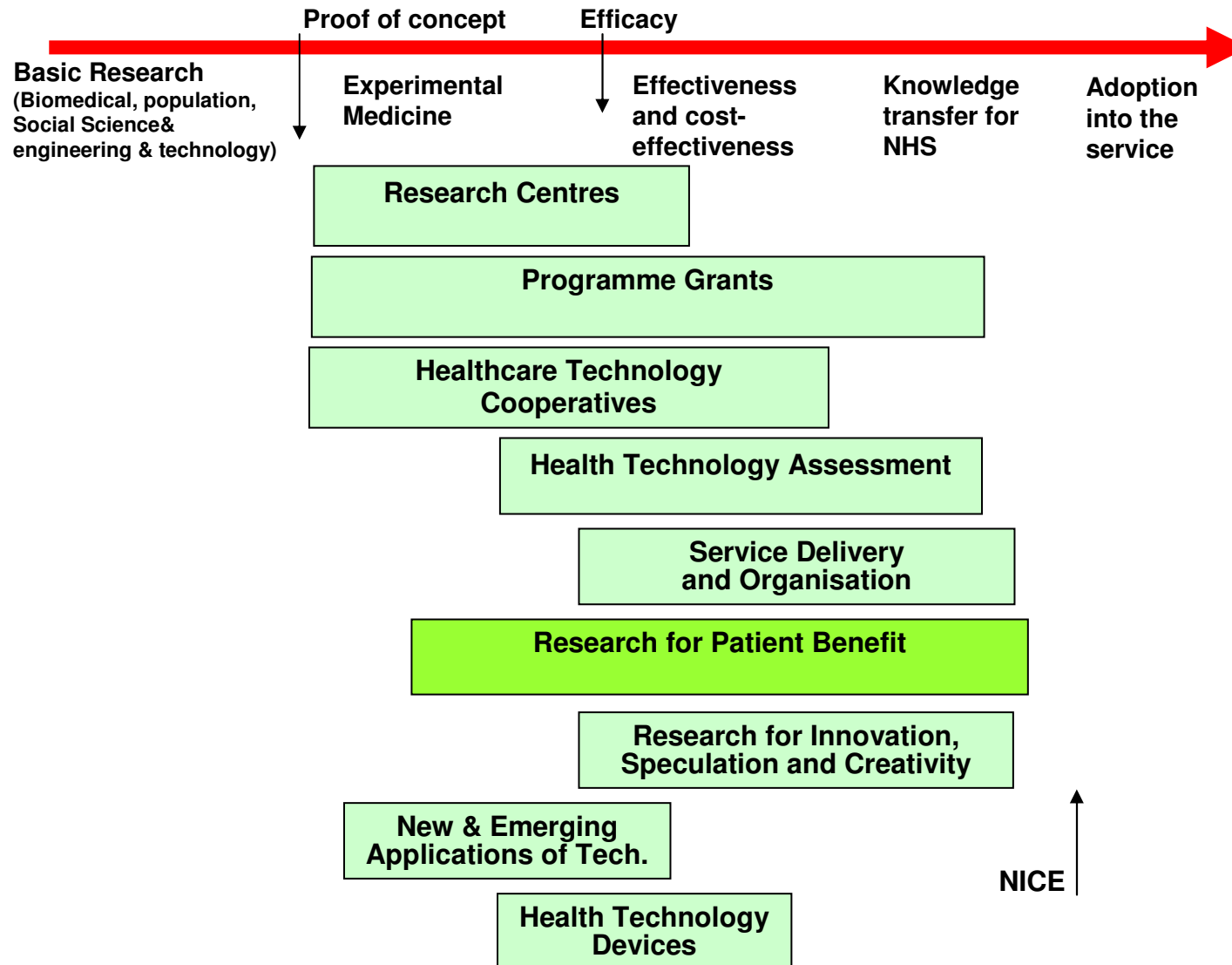


New Government Strategy 2006



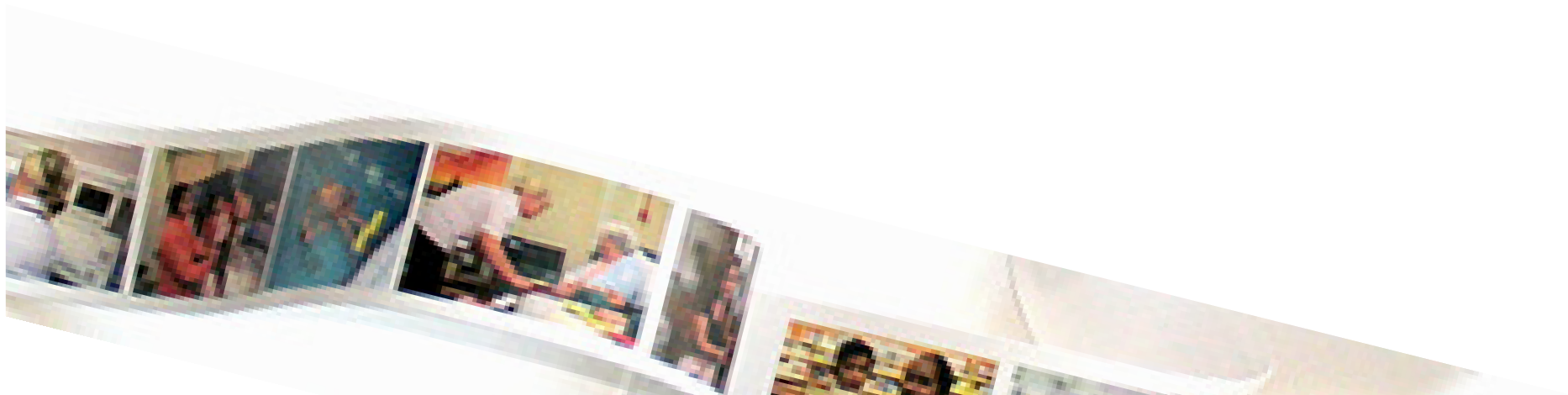
NIHR Research Programmes

Translating research evidence into NHS practice



Research for Patient Benefit

- **response-mode** funding programme
- supports **high quality** health services and public health research **relevant to the NHS**
- administered by the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility
- ten Regional Funding Committees



Aims

- **supporting projects in health services and public health research**
- **quantitative or qualitative research that could:**
 - study the provision and use of NHS services;
 - evaluate the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of interventions;
 - examine the resource utilisation of alternative means for healthcare delivery;
 - formally scrutinise innovations and developments; and
 - pilot or consider the feasibility of projects requiring major grant applications .

Out of Scope

- laboratory-based research or basic science research, including research based on animals;
- proposals which are solely service developments: although the programme will fund research aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of a service or intervention it will not fund the costs of providing the service or intervention itself
- proposals which are solely: literature reviews, audit, surveys, needs assessment, technology development (although these elements may be part of an integrated research study)

Selection Criteria and Eligibility

- **applications judged on:**
 - the quality of the research proposed and its fit with the scope of the programme
 - the significance and potential benefit of the research to the NHS.
- **detailed guidance for applicants is available from the NIHR-CCF web-site**
- **all researchers in the NHS in England can apply**
- **for joint NHS/university/charitable or other sector applications, funding is normally awarded to the NHS partner**

Visit the website...
www.nihr-ccf.org.uk

-or Google RfPB!!

for:

- **guidance to applicants**
- **FAQs**
- **application forms**
- **closing dates (for ROI and full proposal)**
- **help and advice from CCF**
- **messages from the Programme Director**

Why do proposals not get funded?

- Failing to meet the programme aims
 - i.e. they are out of scope
- Poor science
- Do not meet specified administrative criteria

Selection process

- Three stage review process:
 - Preliminary scrutiny meeting
 - External peer and lay review
 - Full committee meeting

- **Key guidance is**
 - **‘research that arises from daily practice’** and research that has a **‘demonstrable impact on the health or health care of users of the service’**.
- Early applications often asked questions that were too close to the ‘basic’ end of research –e.g. understanding mechanisms, what the distribution is, surveys of practice; limited to description

- **Failure to make a convincing case for patient benefit – not closing the loop**
 - Adding to knowledge but not to practice e.g. basic epidemiology without showing how the knowledge would be used to enhance practice; developing a screening tool without any indication of how it would be used in practice and what benefit it might bring, pilot work without showing how the main study would contribute and how it would be funded.

Poor Science

- Now poor science is the most frequent reason for proposals not being funded
- This is no different to any other high quality funding body
 - Is it a good question
 - Is it well justified-potential benefit; preliminary work
 - Are the methods appropriate – sample, design etc
 - Is there enough detail to make a sound decision
 - Could there be bias – is there sufficient distance and rigour

- Is now the right time for a full-scale trial?
- Does this team have a real chance of success with an RCT?
- How well-defined are the intervention and the outcome?
- Have common pitfalls in data collection and data analysis been addressed?
- Are the arrangements for trial governance satisfactory?
- Can it be done within the budget?

Administrative failures

Make sure the rules are followed:

- Costs are within the prescribed £250k
- An applicant is from an NHS organisation
- The time scale does not exceed 36 months
- Applications are submitted via the web

How to improve applications

- Take careful note of the instructions to applicants; read the FAQs, Directors messages and if still in doubt contact CCF
- Ask committee members for general advice but be careful of conflicts of interest
- Attend to the matters regarding why applications fail - and

How to improve applications

- Make sure that you show the potential benefits of the findings of your study – for patients or the public in terms of **health gain** or for the NHS in terms of **service improvements** regarding costs, access, efficiency

How to improve applications

- Make sure that there is service user involvement in the project –ideally as a co-applicant.
- Three levels
 - Consultation
 - Collaboration
 - User led / user controlled

User involvement

- Development of the grant application
- Design and management of the research
- Undertaking research
- Analysis
- Dissemination of findings

The Team

- Make sure that the team is experienced and competent
 - Include experienced (academic) partners
 - Build in sufficient research support so that the project is not over-dependent on clinician time and effort
 - Use and involve the new regional RDS service when it is up and running from October 2008

The proposal

- Use critical friends to review the application before it is submitted
- Take time to make sure the application presses the right buttons - and delay a round to get it right
- Minor flaws will be tolerated and additional assurances sought, but there is no resubmission – a new proposal is needed

Overview

- There is no shortage of research funds
- The quality of applications is improving and number of funded proposals is increasing
- The programme will now fund pilot studies
- The new regional RDS service will work closely with RfPB to assist in quality improvements.

7th round

- ROI August 12
- Full proposal September 23