

Innovation Fund 2025 North East Hampshire

What is the Innovation Fund?

The Innovation Fund started as an idea from a local resident and aims to give communities the opportunity, support, courage, and funding to suggest and progress innovative ideas that could have a big impact on the health and well-being of local people. Over the years the fund has grown to new areas within the Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System, and the impact has been clear to see. By providing opportunities for our communities to find their own solutions to local health and care issues, we can develop support alongside local people, making improvement and reducing gaps in health inequalities in a different and more impactful way.

This guidance is in relation to the Innovation Funding in **North East Hampshire**. **Funding is also available for other areas within the NHS Frimley geography and a separate fund that is specifically aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families.** – for more information please visit: [Innovation Fund | Frimley Health and Care](#)

The fund process aims to create a safe space for local community groups, voluntary groups or established charities to apply with new ideas (or ideas that can take an existing project to the next level) and benefit from the funding along with input, knowledge and connections of local people and organisations in developing and shaping their project further. This fund is supported by a range of partners who may help in the application or administration of the funding. This includes local Voluntary Sector partners and the Frimley VCSE Alliance, Local Authorities and the NHS.

The established Innovation Fund process supports the allocation of small funds to local community ideas and projects. Partners within the local health and care system, such as local authorities and public health, use the framework to allocate monies to projects that can support our shared priorities.

What is the aim?

We are looking for innovative and new ideas and recognise that local people know their own communities the best. The Innovation Fund is intended to empower local communities and organisations to co-design innovative solutions to support local people and communities to address the challenges they experience. This work also builds on recent system wide engagement work such as ['Reconnect, Reset, Rebuild'](#)

We are looking for projects that will:

- Keep people healthy and independent
- Support discharge from hospital or prevent avoidable admissions
- Enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer
- Target health inequalities
- Support carers or community resilience
- increase the focus on prevention so that people are living healthier and more independent lives
- harness digital technology to transform health and care

For example, your idea or project might support social connection, wellbeing activities or volunteer-led schemes that could reduce pressure on GPs, A&E, and social care by keeping people healthier and more connected. It may improve access to services or offer training and support to others who can in turn support the above criteria.

Applications can be made by voluntary and community organisations or charities, and no idea is too small or too large. Opportunities for further development and support of ideas through networking and peer learning will be made available to successful projects. The funding will apply for one year from the date of award and one interim and one final report will be required to show how the money has been spent and who has been reached.

Key dates 2025

Launch and open application process: Monday 22nd September

Close applications: Midnight Sunday 2nd November

Review applications: w/c Monday 3rd November

Award projects: w/c Monday 17th November

Interim Reporting: Due by end of March 2026

Final Reporting: Due by end of November 2026

Key information

1. NHS Frimley is offering funding from £500 up to a maximum of £2,500 to community and voluntary groups and local organisations through the Innovation Fund, for projects or ideas that can support the improved health and wellbeing of the people of local people and communities in the areas listed above. Funding applications will be submitted through the process appropriate to your location and the geographical area in which your project takes place.
2. Projects must focus on **at least one** of the areas listed below, in line with key priorities for NHS Frimley and the partners involved in this work:
 - a) Keep people healthy and independent
 - b) Support discharge from hospital or prevent avoidable admissions
 - c) Enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer
 - d) Target health inequalities
 - e) Support carers or community resilience
 - f) Increase the focus on prevention so that people are living healthier and more independent lives
 - g) Harness digital technology to transform health and care
3. We welcome applications from community and voluntary groups and local organisations provided you can evidence of one or more of the above criteria.
4. Further requirements to note:
 - a. Groups/organisations do not have to be registered charities but must have a constitution, and a bank account in the name of the group, with at least two unrelated signatories.
 - b. Groups/organisations must have the appropriate policies and procedures in place, including appropriate financial record keeping and insurance to safely deliver their idea/project.
5. Projects will be expected to report against the following key metrics:
 - a. Number residents engaged with
 - b. Change in resident well-being before and after activity (e.g. through well-being scores and/or case studies)
 - c. Project spend and activity delivered
 - d. Working with health and care partners in the delivery of your project (e.g. local NHS services, other voluntary sector groups, local care services or charities)*
6. Ideas or projects put forward in applications need to demonstrate the following:

*Where possible the Innovation Fund project team will support applicants with appropriate NHS contacts. Please contact us if you need help.

6. Ideas or projects put forward in applications need to demonstrate the following:

- a. That the idea/project will be delivered to those residing within the boundaries of the specified geography of the funding you are applying for.
- b. How the idea/project is new and/or innovative, and/or where it addresses an identified need in the community or a gap in services. Projects can be built on an existing piece of work but must show evidence of the impact it has had.
- c. The aims of the idea/project, who the project will support, how you will link with these local people if not already identified. Explain how the work will have a positive impact.
- d. The measurable difference the idea/project will make – you must be able to describe where your project/idea will have impact in, demonstrating **at least one** of the following:
 - improving physical health
 - improving mental wellbeing
 - tackling health inequalities
 - improving access
- e. How the project/idea will be sustained past the life of the funding.
- f. The intended evaluation techniques and measures that will be used to demonstrate impact

7. The maximum amount an organisation or group can bid for is £2,500, although lesser amounts can be applied for. In exceptional circumstances, if there is a direct health and care benefit of a project's activity, higher levels of funding may be considered. However, in the event of higher amounts being applied for, the funder will need to be engaged and will have final decision.

8. Projects must be delivered between November 2025 and November 2026. Monies received must be spent by 31 December 2026 or the funder has the right to request return of any unspent funds.

Funding criteria

9. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria; higher-scoring applications will be more likely to be successful:
 - a. Is it a **new/innovative** idea? Or does the idea/project **address a need or gap**?
 - b. How does the project demonstrate support to those **people living in the specified geography** of the funding you are applying for?
 - c. Is evidence provided on meeting the core criteria for:
 - **Improving physical health outcomes**
 - **Improving mental wellbeing outcomes**
 - **Tackling health inequalities**
 - **Increasing access to health, care and community offers**
 - d. Does the application provide detail on **continuing outcomes** beyond the funding?
 - e. Is there evidence of **measurable outcomes/evaluation**?

Application process

10. Applications must be submitted using the relevant application form and returned in the way instructed.

11. Please complete the application form with as much detail as possible. It does not matter if your idea or project is not fully formed but some consideration of each question will help the shortlisting panel make informed decisions about which projects to recommend.
12. There is a word limit for each question clearly shown on the form – content that exceeds the word limit may not be considered by the shortlisting panel.
13. Multiple bids (up to a **maximum of three**) from an organisation are permitted, though consideration will be given to the reach of funding across the specified geography.
14. Applications must be submitted by **Midnight on Sunday 2nd November 2025**.

Any applications received after this time will not be considered. All applications will be acknowledged within 5 working days. Applicants who do not receive an acknowledgement will need to make contact to confirm the application has been received.

15. Applications should be submitted via the relevant online application form. If further support is required please email: frimleyicb.innovationfund@nhs.net
16. We are unable to accept applications by post but can support you if you have any difficulties completing the form or have any questions. Please contact us by email to discuss your support need.
Email: frimleyicb.innovationfund@nhs.net
17. Applications will be reviewed by a shortlisting panel who will make their recommendations to the funding organisation. The shortlisting panel will include appropriate representation from:
 - NHS Frimley
 - Local Authority representatives
 - Voluntary Sector representatives
18. It may be necessary to share information about your idea/project and discuss your application with other professionals/organisations. On applying for the funds, you are agreeing to allow NHS Frimley to share your application with funding and advisory organisations and to speak to others about your project in this way.
19. NHS Frimley is committed to a strict policy of zero tolerance. We believe all forms of diversity contribute to a positive and enriching experience for staff and the community we serve. Zero Tolerance means we will never ignore, tolerate or condone discrimination, bullying, harassment, abuse or victimisation of any kind in any form. This includes, but is not limited to, a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background.
20. All applications will be considered, and you will be informed if your application has been successful no later than **5pm on Friday 21st November 2025**.
21. Decisions made by the funding organisation are final, and feedback for unsuccessful applications will be given on request.
22. Successful applicants will be required to evaluate their project, detailing how the funding was spent and providing evidence of the measurable impacts of the project.

23. Successful applicants will be required to sign a Funding Agreement evidencing the required organisational criteria and agreeing to funding expectations. NHS Frimley are working in partnership with Hart Voluntary Action who will be holding and distributing funding on our behalf. Once funding has been approved, successful projects will be provided with details of how to access their funding.