

NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Greater Manchester

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Collaboration

**Training and Development opportunities:
Internships and Pre-Doctoral Fellowships**

Guidance for Applicants 2026

The NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Greater Manchester

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration Greater Manchester (ARC-GM) supports applied health and care research that responds to, and meets the needs of, local populations and local health and care systems. Our overarching goal is to improve the health of the Greater Manchester population and the quality and sustainability of the health and social care they receive. We will achieve this by co-producing excellent research in areas prioritised by the system and by enhancing its impact through supported implementation into policy and practice.

ARC-GM has four broad Research Themes which align with the priorities of the [Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership](#), as well as two 'cross-cutting' Themes. All ARC-GM supervisors work within at least one of these Themes.

Research Themes:

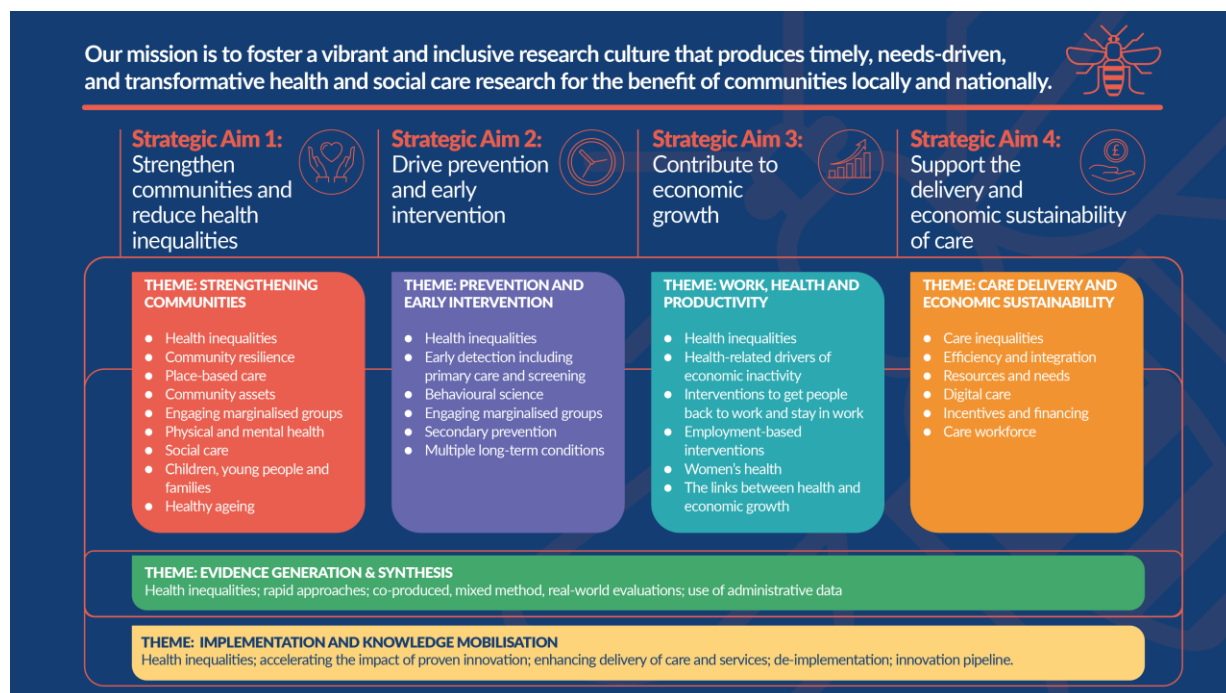
- Strengthening Communities
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Work, Health and Productivity
- Care Delivery and Economic Sustainability

Cross-cutting Themes:

- Evidence Generation and Synthesis
- Implementation and Knowledge Mobilisation

In addition, there are four Enabling Strategies:

- Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement and Research Inclusion
- Research Capacity Development
- Knowledge Mobilisation
- Prioritising Partnerships



Overview of Training and Development opportunities

Each year, ARC-GM offers opportunities for those working in the health and care system who wish to develop their career and gain experience in research relevant to their area of practice. ARC-GM supports two main schemes as part of its wider Research Capacity Development programme: Internships and Pre-doctoral Fellowship Awards.

Both Internships and Pre-doctoral Fellowships are open to applications from those working in the health and social care sectors in Greater Manchester, including nursing, midwifery, allied health professions, pharmacy, social work and social care, public health, commissioning and policy making. Those from supporting professions (e.g. research coordination and delivery, health management and administration) are also in scope. Those from medicine and dentistry are **not** eligible. For queries regarding eligibility, please contact karishma.mistry@manchester.ac.uk.

Internships – for detailed guidance, [please see page 7](#).

ARC-GM supports up to 10 Internship Awards per year as an experiential learning opportunity intended to provide those working in health and social care in Greater Manchester with an introduction to applied research. Internships are for 30 days (225 hours) which can be taken flexibly over 4 to 12 months and are broadly aligned with at least one of the ARC-GM research Themes. There are also opportunities to work with other Themes to broaden the range of experience. Internship Awards will start in September 2026.

Pre-doctoral Fellowships – for detailed guidance, [please see page 13](#).

The ARC-GM Pre-doctoral Fellowship Award provides research training awards for health and care professionals working in Greater Manchester (**excluding** medicine and dentistry but **including** those from nursing, midwifery, allied health professions, pharmacy, social work and social care, public health, commissioning and policy making) who wish to develop their career by combining health and social care practice and development, with applied research and research leadership.

The scheme is aimed specifically at those working within health and care who aspire to undertake PhD level study in the future. The Pre-doctoral Fellowship Awards are designed to provide the time and support to develop a PhD proposal and funding application. Pre-doctoral Fellowship Awards will start in September 2026.

Key Dates

Applications open	Week beginning 27 th April 2026
Question & Answer session 1	5th May, 12-1pm
Question & Answer session 2	22 nd May, 1-2pm
Deadline for submission of application	1 st June 2026, 5pm
Shortlisting panel decisions	Week beginning 22 nd June 2026
Interviews	1 st and 2 nd July 2026
Interview outcome	Week beginning 13 th July 2026
Start date	7 th September 2026

Comparison of opportunities

The table below gives brief information about each opportunity to aid comparison between the schemes. More detailed information is given in subsequent sections of this guidance document.

	Internship Award	Pre-doctoral Fellowship Award
Eligibility	Staff with a minimum of an undergraduate degree who are working in health and social care organisations in Greater Manchester (excluding medics and dentists).	
Brief description	Entry-level for those with little or no research experience.	Suitable for those with some research experience who wish to apply for a PhD.
Duration	4 - 12 months.	12 or 24 months.
Time commitment	30 days (225 hours) to be taken flexibly.	Up to 0.5 FTE over one year, or 0.25 FTE over two years.
Funding	Salary backfill funding up to £10,000 per Internship paid to the award holder's employing organisation monthly in arrears.	Backfill funding up to a maximum of £25,000 per Fellowship, irrespective of duration, paid to the award holder's employing organisation monthly in arrears.
Training budget	£2,000 in total.	£2,000 in total.
Supervision arrangements	ARC-GM Supervisor will be allocated upon award of Internship.	Applicant responsible for arranging supervisory team before submission of application. Maximum of three Supervisors; at least one Supervisor must be from ARC-GM.
Application form	Online form available here.	
Interview	Online interview on 1 st or 2 nd July 2026	
Start date	7 th September 2026	

Eligibility

Both Internship and Pre-doctoral Fellowship Awards are open to applicants fulfilling the following criteria:

- Health or care professional (excluding medicine and dentistry) with a minimum of an undergraduate degree. In addition to nursing, midwifery, social work, social care and allied health professionals, those from public health, commissioning and health policy maker backgrounds are also eligible, as are those in supporting professions (e.g. research coordination and delivery, health management and administration);
- Employed within an organisation which provides or commissions health or care services in Greater Manchester (including NHS Trusts, Local Authorities, or voluntary sector organisations and private care providers (e.g. care homes or domiciliary care providers) in Greater Manchester, but excluding private health organisations).

Please contact karishma.mistry@manchester.ac.uk for any queries about eligibility.

We welcome applicants from all sections of the community regardless of age, sex, gender, gender expression, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and transgender status. All appointments are made on merit.

Application Process

All applications for both Internship and Pre-doctoral Fellowship Awards must be submitted using an online form, which will be made available on the ARC-GM website (see <https://arc-gm.nihr.ac.uk/training-how-to-apply> for more information).

Applications must be submitted by **5pm on 1st June 2026**; applications made after this time will not be considered. Applicants should contact karishma.mistry@manchester.ac.uk if there are problems accessing the online application form.

Letters of support from the applicant's line manager and service/department manager must be submitted by the closing date to arc-gm@nihr.ac.uk. Applications cannot be taken forward if the applicant does not provide evidence of support of their employing organisation.

All unredacted applications will be assessed for initial eligibility (see Eligibility above) by the ARC-GM Research Capacity Development Coordinator, employed by The University of Manchester, who is not directly involved in the review and selection of applicants. All eligible applications are then redacted as far as possible, removing information which may identify the applicant (e.g. name, contact details, employing organisation). Although every effort is made to ensure that applications are reviewed blind of any identifiable information, in some cases, information which could possibly identify the candidate may not be redacted (e.g. the title of published papers).

Each application will be reviewed by two independent reviewers who have appropriate expertise. Reviewers will provide a score for each of the domains listed

in the applicable Recruitment and Selection Criteria (listed below for each type of award – note that these are different for Internships and Pre-doctoral Fellowships), as well as a brief comment to support their score. Reviews are then collated by the Research Capacity Development Coordinator who will identify where moderation may be required (e.g. where there is high variability between scores).

After review and moderation, shortlisted candidates will be notified by week commencing 22nd June and invited to an interview which will take place on **1st or 2nd July 2026**. Successful candidates will be notified of the outcome of their interview week beginning 13th July 2026.

Unsuccessful candidates will also be notified by the date above, with brief feedback on their application and guidance on potential next steps.

For those applying to Pre-doctoral Fellowships:

- Academic supervisors must be in place and documented in the application. At least one Supervisor must be from the ARC-GM (see relevant Supervision section for further details).

Those wishing to apply for Internships only should select the “Internship” check box at the start of the application form. Similarly, those applying to the Pre-doctoral Fellowship only should select the “Pre-doctoral Fellowship” check box.

INTERNSHIPS

Purpose of Internships

ARC-GM Research Internships comprise research 'tasters' of 30 days (225 hours) duration, used flexibly over 4 to 12 months.

The objectives of the Internship Programme are to:

- Enhance research knowledge and skills in the Intern's field of practice and/or research interests;
- Gain first-hand, supervised experience of applied health and care research;
- Explore opportunities to develop an academic career including postgraduate study e.g. Masters in Clinical Research (MClinRes), Pre-doctoral Fellowships or PhD.

ARC-GM Internships are not intended for Interns to undertake their own specific project. However, they aim to provide training and experience which will enable Interns to take forward their own research ideas in future.

Funding for backfill

Internships offer up to £10,000 salary backfill funding paid monthly in arrears to the award holder's employing organisation and should therefore be undertaken with their agreement. Applicants should discuss their application with their line manager and ensure they have their support prior to applying.

Successful applicants **will** have a budget of £2,000 made available to them for training, which may be used for a variety of purposes (see Funding for Training section). Training budgets will remain with ARC-GM, who will administer the funding on behalf of the award holder.

Recruitment & Selection Criteria

An offer of an Internship will be made based on the criteria below. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview, which will take place on **1st or 2nd July 2026**. Preference will be given to applicants who can demonstrate the following:

- An understanding of the role of applied health and care research in their current and future practice;
- How the Internship experience will benefit current knowledge and skills;
- Willingness to undertake learning and development relating to research skills;
- Evidence of previous study at minimum of BA/BSc level or equivalent;
- Interest in exploring an academic research career;
- Support within place of work/practice setting to undertake the Internship.

Applicants should demonstrate support of their employing organisation by providing an email of support from their line manager/service/department manager, which should be submitted to arc-gm@nihr.ac.uk by **5pm on 1st June 2026**. The email should include the following information:

- Applicant Name

- Statement to confirm that the applicant has discussed this application with the manager; the manager understands what it entails; the manager is supportive of the application; the manager agrees to support their release from practice for 30 days
- Manager's name
- Manager's position
- Date
- Contact address (including postcode)
- Contact phone number
- Contact email address

Structure of the Internship

The structure of the Internship is flexible and tailored to the needs of each Intern, but with core components:

- **Induction:** An induction event led by the Research Capacity Development Team will take place at the start of the Internship. The Research Capacity Development Team will give an overview of ARC-GM and the Internship to ensure each Intern is aware of the range of resources and support available to them, including their training budget and the role of the Supervisor. Interns will be provided with a workbook with induction information, including guidance, opportunities for learning and reflection, and for recording supervision meetings.
- **Supervisory meetings:** Interns will meet with their allocated Supervisor at mutually agreed times (this may be face-to-face or online) at key points over the duration of the Internship (equating to approximately eight hours of contact time). These meetings will include the co-development of a learning plan and discussion of research activities.
- **Training:** Interns will be provided with training opportunities throughout the programme and will be expected to take up courses that are relevant to their Internship plan (see Training).
- **Research Activities:** Interns will participate in activities that contribute to their own learning and development and ARC-GM research. Internships are not intended for Interns to carry out their own independent research projects, and any research activity undertaken by the Intern should contribute towards existing/ongoing work in one of the ARC-GM Themes.

Examples of activities that previous Interns have undertaken successfully before can be found below. Please note this list is not exhaustive and Supervisors are free to develop other activities in discussion with the Intern and in collaboration with staff across ARC-GM Themes. Further examples are available on the ARC-GM website [here](#).

- Developing research ideas/questions into clearly defined objectives and a proposal for a Fellowship or other funding;

- Contributing to an ARC-GM research project e.g. literature review; protocol development, data collection/analysis; interpretation of study findings; dissemination (e.g., via social media);
- Contributing to the writing of plain language summaries, research reports, newsletter articles or website project overviews;
- Building a network of research contacts in their field for the exchange of information and to form relationships for future collaboration;
- Observations of project stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and events;
- Working with the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement team to better understand the role that the public/ patients play in shaping applied health research.

Supervision

Successful applicants who take up the Internship will be allocated a Supervisor who will be an active researcher working on at least one project on the ARC-GM portfolio. All efforts are made to match Interns with Supervisors who have experience that is relevant to the aims of the Intern. It should be noted that “experience” refers to the research experience and expertise of the Supervisor. Supervisors may not have a clinical or practice background similar to the Intern, but they will bring significant methodological and research experience which means they are well-placed to support.

Supervision sessions, meetings, workshops and teaching may be online or in-person, with a degree of flexibility. Interns will agree with their Supervisor the frequency and duration of supervisory meetings.

Training

The structure of the Internship is flexible and tailored to the needs of each Intern within reasonable limits. The core components of each Internship are outlined below.

During the first supervisory meeting, the Intern should devise a learning plan with the support of their Supervisor, based on the Intern’s individual needs and ARC-GM Theme activity and capacity. Interns will be provided with a core of compulsory training opportunities at induction and along the course of the Internship. Alongside the core training opportunities, Interns will be expected to undertake training relevant to their interests and learning objectives.

These more bespoke training requirements can be funded by a personal training budget up to a maximum of £2,000 (see below). Training (core and non-core) may be provided by a range of organisations (including The University of Manchester and others).

Interns will have access to The University of Manchester’s Canvas learning portal where training resources will be hosted.

Core training

All Interns will be expected to undertake training in the topic areas listed below.

Course dates will be provided to Interns with at least six weeks' notice. Wherever possible, training will be recorded to for those who cannot attend. Further details of the core research training sessions can be found in a table at the end of the document and will include:

- 1) What is applied health and care research?
- 2) Developing a research question
- 3) Research governance and approvals
- 4) Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement in research
- 5) Literature searching and reviewing
- 6) How to read a scientific paper
- 7) Academic writing, presentation and poster skills
- 8) Career paths in applied health and care research

Bespoke training

In addition to the core training opportunities outlined above, Interns will be expected to undertake training relevant to their learning objectives and all training should be discussed with the Supervisor.

Interns will be eligible for audit only access (where course materials are available but assessments are not undertaken) to Masters level units for independent study from one of the following courses:

- [MClin Res Clinical Research Masters level units](#) (Research Design, Managing Research in Clinical Settings, Quantitative Design and Analysis, Qualitative Design and Analysis, Statistics, Critical Appraisal & Evidence Synthesis).
- [MSc Social Research Methods and Statistics Modules](#) for example Survey Research Methods or Methodology and Research Design.

Where there is support of the Supervisor, training budgets may be used for the Intern to undertake an appropriate research Masters module formally, either provided by The University of Manchester or another one of the Greater Manchester Universities. Award holders should carefully consider the benefits and challenges of undertaking a Masters module formally as this entails undertaking the course module assessment(s) which will involve a significant time commitment. Formal credit on successful completion of the module will be awarded. Interns who wish to undertake a research Masters module formally should discuss this with their Supervisor and the Research Capacity Development Team.

The Intern will also have access to:

- NIHR Learn as an NIHR Academy member;
- University of Manchester library resources e.g. My Research Essentials.

Funding for Training

Each intern has a training budget of £2,000 which is held and administered by ARC-GM. This budget could be used to support training where there is an additional cost (i.e. training which is not covered by opportunities provided through the core training programme). The training budget can be used for UK conference attendance (including registration, travel and accommodation within the UK) where there is support of the Supervisor.

The budget may only be used for approved purposes. No funding is available for consumables, research costs or to support public involvement and engagement activity.

All training expenditure should be agreed with the Intern's Supervisor in advance of requests being made to the ARC-GM Research Capacity Development Team for processing.

ARC-GM is unable to reimburse costs to award holders who pay up-front for training where these can be arranged in advance by ARC-GM. Incidental expenses (e.g. car parking) where unavoidable and agreed by the Research Capacity Development Team, may be reimbursed via the training budget if these relate specifically to training.

Support available to Interns

1) Support from the Research Capacity Development Team

The Research Capacity Development Team will provide an induction event for interns as outlined above. Throughout the Internship, the Research Capacity Development Team will be the Intern's point of contact for general queries or training budget requests.

2) Support from the Supervisor

Interns should meet with their allocated Supervisor regularly during the Internship. As a guide, this should total approximately eight hours of contact time over the duration of the Internship. The Supervisor will support the Intern in co-development of a learning plan and accessing research activities.

3) Peer support

Interns will meet online with each other every month via the Internship Forum. This informal support network of fellow Interns will provide a safe space for Interns to discuss anything relating to their experiences of the scheme and share learning and opportunities.

4) Support from Library Services

The University of Manchester Library offers a wide range of workshops, online resources, and one-to-one sessions to support Interns through My Learning Essentials, My Research Essentials and Specialist Library Services. The workshops and online resources cover topics such as searching techniques, academic writing, literature reviews, critical analysis, referencing, copyright, public speaking, steps to

publication and systematic searching.

5) Support from wider ARC-GM team

Opportunities for Interns to get involved with training and research activities can come from across the ARC-GM portfolio. The ARC-GM team can provide a wide breadth of experiences across the research Themes and more broadly, including Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement. Supervisors will link with the ARC-GM Core Operational Management Group team to identify opportunities to work on projects in other Themes.

End of Internship

At the end of the Internship, the Intern will present a summary of the research activities undertaken, their learning and next steps. Interns will prepare a poster and present this orally at the Training and Development Showcase event to be held on in the autumn of 2027.

PRE-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Purpose of Pre-doctoral Fellowships

The ARC-GM Pre-doctoral Fellowship Award is aimed at those who wish to further develop their research experience and who wish to apply for a PhD in future. Pre-doctoral Fellowships are tailored as much as possible to suit individual commitments and timescales. Award holders have the opportunity to undertake formal training with appropriate academic supervision. They will prepare an application for submission to an NIHR or similar Doctoral Fellowship opportunity, which includes a research proposal and suitable training and development plan.

At the end of the scheme, it is expected that each award holder will have:

- developed a robust research proposal which is suitable for a Doctoral Fellowship application, building on existing research skills and experience and fits with the Doctoral Fellowship funder's remit;
- identified an appropriate training and development programme to support the development of research skills;
- developed a clear understanding of their career trajectory;
- developed a publication plan;
- developed their research skills.

Funding for backfill

Successful applicants will undertake their Fellowship over one year (at up to 50% Full Time Equivalent) or two years (at up to 25% Full Time Equivalent). ARC-GM is able to contribute up to a maximum of £25,000 per Fellowship towards the award holder's salary costs, by way of payment to their employing organisation.

Approval is required from the award holder's immediate line manager and the manager of their service or department. This is required as evidence of the employer's commitment to facilitate release from duties for the duration of the award. This should be a separate letter/email of support to arc-gm@nihr.ac.uk. The letter(s) of support must be submitted by the application closing date.

The paid backfill time can be taken flexibly, and applicants should discuss how this will work with their line manager and relevant departmental manager within the employing organisation at the earliest opportunity. Time will be used to attend workshops and training, develop the applicant's PhD application and their research profile for example, by conducting a literature review, pilot work, public and community involvement and engagement work and working on publications.

Costings

Full costings for the applicant's time must be submitted in the application. Costs should be submitted to cover up to 50% of the applicant's time over one year (1st September 2026 to 31st August 2027) or up to 25% of the applicant's time over two years (1st September 2026 to 31st August 2028). Applicants should contact the

relevant person in their organisation's finance department to provide the relevant salary backfill costs. Applicants should request confirmation of these costings from their finance contact, which should be submitted by email to arc-gm@nihr.ac.uk. Salary costings should include any on-costs (e.g. National Insurance and pension costs, as well as salary increments) over the course of the specified Pre-doctoral Fellowship period.

Additional funding over and above the maximum of £25,000 (including on costs) cannot be provided by the Fellowship*. Applicant should discuss options with their current line manager and/or service/department manager if backfill of their salary will be in excess of £25,000. Options could include:

- The applicant's manager is still willing to release the candidate for the required time despite the funding shortfall;
- The applicant/their manager are able to identify alternative funding to cover the shortfall.

Applicants should refer to the Training and Support section above regarding training and development costs.

*ARC-GM acknowledges that £25,000 may not be sufficient to cover the full 50% of an applicant's salary. The panel will consider a proposal with commitment of less than 0.5 FTE backfill for those in this situation; however, assurance would need to be given that the ambitions in the Fellowship were feasible in the allocated time frame, noting that the Fellowship can be carried out over 12 or 24 months.

Research Topic and Outline

The application should outline the proposed research idea that the candidate intends to develop into a PhD application over the duration of the Fellowship. Applicants should seek advice from their proposed academic Supervisors in developing this application (see Supervision section below).

Research questions that have arisen from 'day-to-day work' within an applicant's organisation and align with patient, service and organisational strategic priorities are particularly welcomed. Applicants should link with their organisation's research department or research champions, should these be in place, for support with this.

Where possible, applicants should describe in the application how their proposed research may link to the ARC-GM research Themes. Applicants should liaise with their ARC-GM Supervisor for support with this.

The assessment of the proposed research will be based on:

- Justification
- Aims, objectives, research questions
- The likelihood of the proposal answering the research question(s)
- Proposed methods
- Outcomes (i.e. pathway to impact – how does the work have the potential to deliver improved outcomes for health and care services, improvement to

health or an improved patient or service user experience?)

It is recognised and expected that the applicant may refine some of the components of their research plan during the Pre-doctoral Fellowship and applicants should acknowledge which area(s) they wish to develop further in their plan.

Please see the Recruitment and Selection Criteria section for further information about how applications will be assessed (in addition to the proposed research).

Training and Support

Pre-doctoral Fellowship Award holders are classed as an 'NIHR Academy Member' as the funding for their award is received through the NIHR Infrastructure of ARC-GM or a partner organisation. As such, ARC-GM will share with Pre-doctoral Fellows any relevant training and development opportunities from the NIHR Academy and report back to the NIHR on the Fellow's academic development.

The applicant and Supervisor(s) should discuss the training or development that is required throughout the Fellowship. Examples of training and support activities that Fellows may be able to access funds for include: support with formal research training courses, such as a Masters module in research; training in specialist skills and research methodologies; placements with other research groups or centres; leadership training; conference attendance; public and community involvement and engagement training; dissemination of relevant research; professional development relating to research.

Supervision sessions, meetings, workshops and teaching may be provided both online and in-person, with a degree of flexibility. Pre-doctoral Fellows will have access to The University of Manchester's Canvas learning portal where training resources will be hosted. Pre-doctoral Fellows will have access to the core and bespoke training opportunities which are available to Interns (see page 9).

Supervision

Academic Supervisors have a vital role in supporting applicants throughout the duration of their Fellowship to work on the development of a specific Doctoral Fellowship application and to undertake the training proposed in their application. When applying for the ARC-GM Pre-doctoral Fellowship, it is expected that applicants will have the help and support from at least one academic supervisor when developing the application.

Applicants to the Pre-doctoral Fellowship Programme must identify their primary academic supervisor who should be eligible to be the primary Doctoral academic Supervisor within the Higher Education Institution of choice for the follow-on PhD. Academic Supervisors will have a substantive contract with a Higher Education Institution, but they may also have a dual clinical role (i.e. clinical academics). Applicants are strongly encouraged to approach their potential supervisors as soon as possible to discuss their intention to apply for the Fellowship and develop their application. Applicants can have up to three Pre-doctoral Supervisors but one of these must be from ARC-GM; this person could be the primary or co-supervisor.

Careful consideration should be given to the choice of primary academic supervisor in terms of:

- record of conversion of Masters to PhD students;
- experience as a PhD supervisor;
- experience in the research area of interest/relevant methodologies;
- ease of maintaining contact with the supervisor/availability of the supervisor;
- suitability for continuation as the PhD supervisor (if the award is successful) or ability of the supervisor to help find the best PhD supervision.

Applicants should contact Karishma Mistry (karishma.mistry@manchester.ac.uk, Research Capacity Development Coordinator) with general queries relating to supervision. Applicants should contact the relevant post-graduate tutor in a Higher Education Institution if support is needed in identifying additional suitable supervisors.

Recruitment and Selection Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed by a shortlisting panel which will include at least two people with a range of backgrounds in applied research. The following criteria will be used to assess suitability of candidates based on their application form and performance at interview for those who are shortlisted:

- The candidate's research experience;
- The research proposal (see Research Topic and Outline section above);
- Timelines and milestones;
- Relevance and potential benefit to the applicant's area of practice;
- The suitability and commitment of the applicant to pursuing further research;
- The quality and appropriateness of the proposed academic training and development (including Doctoral Fellowship application development);
- The appropriateness of the proposed academic supervision;
- The clarity of the application, including presentation style and writing skills.

Applications will be scored for each domain and graded according to one of the categories below after initial review and discussion of the shortlisting panel. Constructive feedback will be provided to candidates on their applications.

'All criteria met'

Good evidence of research knowledge and experience as well as a good understanding of development needs. Clear research question and good study design and implementation details provided. Study clearly appropriate and feasible with realistic budget established. Training plan and doctoral fellowship development plan feasible and relevant with timeline provided. Subject area in line with an ARC-GM research Theme with strong and appropriate academic team identified. Excellent scope for the described project to provide benefit to patients. Very professionally

organised and presented. Very high standard. No amendments or clarification required.

'All criteria met, minor/fixable weaknesses'

Clear evidence of research knowledge and experience with indication of development needs. Clear research question or aim. Essential design and implementation details provided. Study adequately described and reasonable project management and budget details provided. Training plan and doctoral fellowship development plan feasible with suitable timeline. Subject area in line with an ARC-GM research Theme and academically aligned. Good scope for the described project to provide benefit to patients or the public. Professionally presented. Minor amendments and/or clarification needed but suitable for funding.

'Majority criteria met, minor/fixable weaknesses'

Evidence of research knowledge but some essential design and implementation information missing. Clear research question or aim, professionally presented and writing style clear. Relevance and value of study well described. Some project management and budget details provided. Training plan and/or doctoral fellowship development timeline missing or inadequate. Study has potential but needs consultation and revision in most areas. Subject area in line with ARC-GM research Theme but not academically aligned. Scope for the described project to provide benefit to patients or the public.

'Some criteria met, major/fundamental weaknesses'

Evidence of some research knowledge but lacks experience or understanding of development needs. Lacks essential design and implementation information. Research question or aim unclear or inconsistently stated. Application generally clearly presented or written but lacks significant detail and with little effort made to describe relevance or value of study. Project supervision details missing or inadequate. Training plan and timeline missing or inadequate. Some potential but would need major redesign and informed consultation. Subject area not in line with ARC-GM research Theme and/or academically aligned or poor scope for patient or public benefit.

'Criteria not met'

No evidence of research knowledge or understanding, multiple design flaws, relevance of ARC-GM not addressed, poor scope for the described project to provide benefit to patients or the public, writing style unclear, multiple typographical errors.

End of Pre-doctoral Fellowship

At the end of the Fellowship, the Pre-doctoral Fellow will present a summary of the research activities undertaken, their learning and next steps. Fellows will prepare a poster and present this orally at the next Research Capacity Development Showcase event to be held in the autumn of 2027.