

## Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon, and Gloucestershire Cancer Alliance

### Innovation Funding 2024/25

#### Guidance

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon, and Gloucestershire (SWAG) Cancer Alliance Cancer Innovation funding 2024/25, in collaboration with Health Innovation West of England.

This funding forms part of the Cancer Alliance's aim to build a culture of innovation, essential to improving early diagnosis, using cutting-edge technologies. We encourage all system stakeholders to initiate, identify, and develop innovations, and adopt evidence-based innovative approaches to early diagnosis that particularly target local priorities for improvement. At the same time, this will help us to encourage local champions for cancer innovation, implementation, and evaluation across our local system.

#### Who can apply?

We welcome applications from Primary and Secondary Care organisations, Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise groups and organisations and wider system stakeholders, such as Social Care organisations.

We encourage collaboration across organisations and sectors.

We are happy to accept applications directly from companies/innovators, but they must be able to evidence the backing and approval within the application from an organisation or group listed above.

#### What are our funding priorities?

This is a **non-recurrent, revenue financial scheme** to promote innovation in cancer care to improve **earlier diagnosis** in line with the NHS Long Term Plan goal of 75% of cancers being diagnosed at stages 1 and 2 by 2028. We are particularly focused on **adoption and spread**. These can be **later stage innovators** who have:

- implemented in sites outside of the SWAG geographical footprint, with clear evidence showing the benefits realised, and are now keen to work with an organisation in the SWAG area to implement locally.
- have evidence of a successful implementation within the SWAG geographical footprint and wish to spread their innovation with other interested parties across the rest of the SWAG area.

In line with NHS Cancer national planning guidance, we are particularly keen to receive applications which:

- have a focus on (but not exclusive to) tumour sites with the highest volume of late-stage diagnoses in our area:
  - Oesophageal

- Lung
- Pancreatic
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Target the 20% most deprived populations (Core 20plus) who experience health inequalities including inclusion health groups as listed below:
  - People experiencing homelessness
  - People with learning disabilities
  - People experiencing Mental Health issues
  - Drug and alcohol dependence
  - Vulnerable migrants
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
  - Sex workers
  - People in contact with the justice system
  - Victims of modern slavery

### What do you mean by later stage companies?

We are looking for later stage companies for this call and have outlined some questions below to help clarify what we mean by later stage; ideally, we are looking for applications that can answer yes to each of these questions. If you are unsure how to answer and would like to discuss your work further before deciding whether to apply, please get in touch with [swagca@nbt.nhs.uk](mailto:swagca@nbt.nhs.uk).

- Can you clearly describe the problem you're trying to fix and the potential benefits if your work is more widely adopted across the SWAG footprint?
- Do you have the necessary regulatory requirements needed for your innovation, or can you demonstrate you're in the process of obtaining them?
- Have you done a pilot test, which shows you know the innovation works and the process has been followed start to finish by at least one person?
- Have you collected data along the way that demonstrates a positive benefit/impact?
- Are other people aware of your innovation/project, and are they supportive and want to see it spread more widely?

### How much can you bid for?

We welcome bids up to a maximum of £75,000.

**All projects above £20,000** need to factor in a minimum of 20% of their budget to be dedicated towards evaluation. Guidance has been included in the communications of this call for evaluations and there is an opportunity within the application form to request evaluation support should that be needed.

Where possible, and providing the panel is satisfied by the quality of respective bids, the funding will be distributed equitably across geographical boundaries and organisations/sectors within SWAG. Grants funding will be awarded in November 2024. If funding requests exceed funds available, they will have to be prioritised by the panel.

The expectation is that schemes will be started as soon as possible following notification that the scheme has been approved. Schemes must start within this financial year and be reported on at regular intervals via the SWAG quarterly reporting process and a mid and final project report. Projects must be completed within 18 months from confirmation of the funding award.

### **What will not be funded?**

- Funding is not available to support current standards and processes in cancer care, for example posts and activities that are part of core services and staffing such as Clinical Nurse Specialist's (CNS).
- Innovation funding is not permitted to be used for research purposes or to fund capital projects.
- We are open to extending projects previously funded by the SWAG Cancer Alliance, but the focus should be on spreading those projects across the footprint, rather than uplifting a project which has not been evaluated appropriately, or where a sustainability/exit plan has not been sufficiently developed.

### **Timeline for call:**

Open for applications: **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024**

Deadline for submitting applications: **1pm Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024** (7 weeks to complete application process).

Successful applicants will be notified by **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024** via email (4 weeks for panel to assess applications, hold further fact-finding discussions with project leads where appropriate, and ensure internal governance and approval is in place).

### **Application and Assessment Process**

#### *Application Screening*

Applicants will be required to complete an application form detailing their innovation proposal and associated costs, including evaluation plans.

We would ask each place to co-ordinate their submissions through a single lead evidencing the breadth of local discussions and organisational support for proposals.

We ask that you each bid develops an outline project plan, describing the anticipated key dates and timescales for implementation, including any recruitment required. This will support successful applicants to mobilise their schemes more quickly.

Health and social care organisational support – we require that all grant applications are approved by the appropriate leads and have received support through appropriate sign off by relevant senior management teams and any internal committees. Submissions involving secondary and primary care providers also require support from their Integrated Care System.

#### *Shortlisting*

Applications will be assessed and shortlisted by the Cancer Alliance Panel (with Health Innovation West of England, Clinical, Patient, and ICB representation) using transparent criteria set out in the table below:

Category	Criteria
<b>Innovation</b>	<p>If a medical device, does the innovation have a CE mark?</p> <p>Proposals for DHTs (Digital Health Technologies) – do proposed solutions comply/or are working towards NICE standards as set out in the ‘evidence standards for digital health technologies’? Has it completed DTAC or working towards it?</p>
<b>Collaboration and integration</b>	<p>Does your proposal adopt a collaborative approach through consultation and/or working across the system through different sector organisations e.g. Primary Care, Secondary Care, VCSE sector, patient groups etc.</p> <p>Has any engagement taken place with service users/patients? What was the outcome?</p> <p>In relation to proposals for digital health technologies – are plans in place within your organisation to provide digital support to implement/integrate digital solutions within your project?</p>
<b>Benefits to Pathways and Patients</b>	<p>Does your proposal help to improve earlier diagnosis?</p> <p>Can you describe and evidence identified benefits of the project?</p>
<b>Health Inequalities</b>	<p>Does your proposal tackle health inequalities? Does it ensure prevention of any widening of health inequalities?</p> <p>Has a health inequalities impact assessment been completed? If yes, please attach with your application.</p> <p>Does the innovation have any negative unintended consequences on people with protected characteristics or inclusion health groups?</p>
<b>Data Collection, Impact and Evaluation</b>	<p>How do you intend to evaluate the success/impact of your project? We require all evaluation (appropriate to the size of the project) to be completed within 2 years of the grant being awarded.</p> <p>What is the intended impact &amp; how is this recorded and measured? You will need to set out Key Performance Indicators in your proposal.</p> <p>Can you collect patient characteristic data so any variation in uptake and outcomes for different population groups can be</p>

	<p>identified – as a minimum we ask you seek data on age, gender and deprivation (postcode).</p> <p>Will the project collect any qualitative data to measure impact? Including patient experience data?</p>
<b>Sustainability and Transferability</b>	<p>Can the innovation be applied to other areas/cancer pathways?</p> <p>Can the innovation be scaled up to expand beyond the life of the project?</p> <p>Can it fund itself long term/transition to business as usual after the Innovation funding has been spent?</p>

Please ensure you refer to these criteria when completing the application form.

#### *Assessment Process*

We may ask shortlisted applicants to talk through their application and answer questions in relation to their chosen innovation through the assessment process.

#### *Selection*

The panel will review the outcomes from the application and assessment process against the criteria and agree on the successful applications.

#### **How to apply**

In order to make a funding request application, please complete the [online form](#) and submit to [swagca@nbt.nhs.uk](mailto:swagca@nbt.nhs.uk) by **1pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024**. Any supporting documents should be titled '24/25 SWAG Innovation – *project name document type (e.g., project plan)* and sent to [swagca@nbt.nhs.uk](mailto:swagca@nbt.nhs.uk) before the deadline.

For any queries relating to the call, please contact: [swagca@nbt.nhs.uk](mailto:swagca@nbt.nhs.uk)

This award is from the SWAG Cancer Alliance, and we follow the [NHS Privacy Policy](#). Minimal work-related data is requested, which will be handled by SWAG Cancer Alliance and held in line with their policies.