

# Research Design Service London Charter

## 1. Introduction

This document describes the role of the Research Design Service (RDS) London, detailing in particular how we can advise and support you in developing grant applications. It describes what you can expect from RDS London, and conversely what we anticipate from you in return.

## 2. Scope

RDS London is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to assist researchers preparing research proposals for submission to national, peer-reviewed funding competitions for applied health or social care research. Priority will be given to supporting proposals to be submitted to an NIHR scheme, with particular emphasis on Research for Patient Benefit.

## 3. Nature of support provided

RDS London staff have the knowledge and expertise to advise on a wide range of research-related issues, including in particular all aspects of research design and methodology. We can also advise on issues such as involving patients and carers, consideration of the resource required, dissemination plans. Although one RDS London consultant will take the lead in providing support, other RDS London staff may become involved to bring complementary skills, and we have a wide range of other contacts in academic and clinical disciplines to ensure any necessary additional input where required.

## 4. Eligibility

Sections 2 and 3 above describe who can gain access to RDS London and for what purposes. For clarity, it is helpful to give some examples of situations where we are **not** able to provide support free of charge:

- a. the development of projects for which there is no intention to submit a grant application to a recognised funder as described above;
- b. actually doing any research – such work would need to be explicitly funded from another source, for example from a project grant;
- c. formal supervision or informal support for students;
- d. any aspect of activities that are not research, eg audit, evaluation, satisfaction surveys.

If you are in any doubt about eligibility, please contact us to discuss your situation.

## 5. Mutual Understandings

Investigators can expect to gain access to a professional service in a timely manner. They may approach RDS London at any stage of development of a research proposal: from simply wanting to discuss an initial idea through to requesting input on a specific issue relating to a well-developed proposal. Initial contact may be made in person, telephone, email or post. An RDS London advisor or the RDS London panel as appropriate will provide an initial appraisal of the proposal. Feedback will be provided either by e-mail, telephone or a face-to-face meeting. Subsequent follow-up sessions to address specific issues will then be arranged.

### Investigators can expect the following from the RDS:

- Professional advice about all aspects of developing a grant application and practical support for such development, free of charge.
- Feedback by face-to-face meetings at a convenient time and venue, supplemented by other forms of communication as appropriate.
- Support in co-ordinating the process of proposal development, as required.
- Feedback and comments on whole or specific sections of proposals, as required.
- Support in identifying and approaching other potential lay and professional collaborators, as required.
- Support in identifying suitable potential funding bodies and advising on their application processes.
- All discussions regarding the proposal to be treated with appropriate confidentiality.
- Access to a wide range of research support materials via our researchers pack.
- Signposting to helpful resources.

### In return, the RDS expects that investigators will:

- Use RDS London only for eligible purposes.
- Discuss the research proposal with their research team before submission to RDS London and ensure that any subsequent drafts have had relevant input from the research team prior to submitting for further input.
- Accustom themselves with of the scope and eligibility of the targeted funding stream.
- Consider our advice carefully discussing as necessary and accepting such advice except where there are compelling reasons not to do so.
- Agree to one or more members of RDS London staff being grant co-applicants where their involvement justifies full collaborator status, typically involving a substantial contribution to project design.
- Agree to include appropriate costs in the grant to cover any work proposed for RDS London staff in the running of the project itself.
- Agree that draft proposals can be shared within the RDS London team as appropriate.
- Agree with RDS London staff any wording to be included in a grant application about the nature of RDS London involvement and support.