Applicant Guidance Note: Preparing Your Application

Thank you for your interest in the **West Midlands Innovation Fund 2025–26**. This guidance is designed to help you prepare and complete your application efficiently.

Estimated Completion Time

3 to 5 hours, depending on the complexity of your project and the availability of supporting materials.

Before You Start: Pre-Application Checklist

Please ensure you have the following ready:

Project Information

- A clear summary of your innovation (problem, aim, setting, outcomes)
- Evidence base (e.g. links to research, case studies, evaluations)
- Details of any previous pilots or trials
- Regulatory or standards compliance (if applicable)

Partnerships

- Names and roles of all collaborators
- Confirmation of involvement from a recognised health or care provider

Strategic Fit

- Understanding of how your project aligns with:
  - Health Innovation West Midlands priorities (health infrastructure, health inequality, integrated care and productivity & workforce)
  - National shifts (e.g. analogue to digital, hospital to community etc.)

Impact & Inclusion

- Plans for public/patient/staff involvement
- Approach to addressing health inequalities
- Evaluation strategy (including health economics or benefits realisation)

Adoption and Spread

- You will be asked to describe how your innovation could be adopted more widely across the health and care system. This includes:
  - Barriers to adoption and how you'll address them
  - Stakeholder engagement plans
  - Use of networks (e.g. HINs, ICSs)
  - Resources needed for scale
  - Plans for capturing and sharing learning

Financials

- Total funding requested
- Breakdown of budgets
- Overheads calculation (if applicable)
- VAT status

Project Planning

- Logic Model, Project and Milestone Plan

Tips for Completing the Form

- Use clear, jargon-free language.
- Stick to the word limits.
- Save your responses in a separate document before submitting online.
- A downloadable PDF version of this guidance will be available on the website to support your application.

Glossary of terms used within the application form

Innovation: A new or significantly improved process, pathway, service or product that addresses a clear need or challenge within health and/or care settings. Innovation should demonstrate potential for meaningful impact, be feasible to implement, and show promise for sustainability and wider adoption.

Regulatory approvals:

CQC – Care Quality Commission - The independent regulator of health and social care services in England. It monitors, inspects, and regulates services to ensure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety.

CSO – Chief Scientific Officer - The most senior advisor on health science in the NHS, providing leadership for the healthcare science workforce and influencing policy and innovation.

Cybersecurity - The practice of protecting systems, networks, and data in health and social care from digital attacks. It ensures the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of sensitive information.

Data Quality Standards - Frameworks that ensure data used in health and care is accurate, complete, timely, consistent, and relevant—critical for safe care, research, and decision-making.

DPO – Data Protection Officer - A role responsible for overseeing data protection strategy and ensuring compliance with GDPR and other data protection laws within an organisation.

CIO – Chief Information Officer - A senior executive responsible for the strategic use and management of information and technology in an organisation.

DTAC – Digital Technology Assessment Criteria - A framework that ensures digital health technologies meet standards for clinical safety, data protection, technical security, interoperability, usability, and accessibility.

ISO – International Organisation for Standardisation - A global network that develops and publishes international standards to ensure quality, safety, efficiency, and interoperability across industries.

MHRA – Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency - The UK regulator for medicines, medical devices, and blood components for transfusion, ensuring they are safe and effective.

NICE – National Institute for Health and Care Excellence - Provides national guidance and advice to improve health and social care in England, including clinical guidelines, technology appraisals, and quality standards.

NICE EVA – Early Value Assessment - A NICE initiative to rapidly evaluate MedTech innovations that address unmet needs, helping to accelerate access to promising technologies.

NICE ESF – Evidence Standards Framework - A set of evidence standards for digital health technologies (DHTs), helping evaluators and decision-makers assess their potential benefits and effectiveness.

UKCA Marking – UK Conformity Assessed - A certification mark that indicates a product meets UK regulatory requirements for sale in Great Britain, replacing the CE mark post-Brexit.

CE Mark – European Conformity - A certification mark indicating that a product complies with EU health, safety, and environmental protection standards.

RWE: Real-World Evidence. This is the clinical evidence derived from the analysis of RWD. It helps to understand:

- How interventions perform in routine practice
- Long-term outcomes and safety
- Effectiveness across diverse populations
- Cost-effectiveness and service impact

RWD: Real-World Data. This refers to data collected from real-life settings outside of traditional clinical trials. Examples include:

- Electronic health records (EHRs)
- Claims and billing data
- Patient registries
- Data from wearables or mobile health apps
- Social care records