**ROLE AND PERSON SPECIFICATION**: **NIHR ARC EAST OF ENGLAND THEME CO-LEAD**

**Background**

The [NIHR Applied Research Collaboration for the East of England](https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/) (NIHR ARC EoE) is a collaboration between the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (the Host Trust), and the Universities of Hertfordshire, East Anglia, Cambridge, and Essex in partnership with other health and care organisations throughout the region. ARC EoE is funded until the 31st March 2026.

ARC East of England (EoE) works locally and regionally on nationally and internationally important questions in health and care, to create a vibrant, inclusive infrastructure for applied health and care research, implementing evidence to benefit individuals, communities, services, and policy development.

The NIHR has announced the new funding round of ARCs from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2031, and the ARC East of England plans to apply for this funding opportunity. If successful, the next ARC will focus on conducting high-quality applied health and care research with a focus on generalisable learning on both regional and national levels and a clear inclusion strategy to diversity participation in and engagement with research. We will also welcome Anglia Ruskin, as a fifth university partner to the collaboration, as well as working with key stakeholders including the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), NHS England, Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), Health Innovation Networks (HINs), and other NIHR infrastructure. The ARCs will also prioritise knowledge mobilisation and the implementation of research-based evidence to support the national scaling of effective interventions and models of care. Read more about the funding call [here](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/nihr-applied-research-collaborations-arcs-2024-guidance-applicants).

**The opportunity**

Succession planning to support the development of a highly skilled research workforce and provide opportunities for emerging leaders to have leadership roles is a key expectation of ARCs. We are therefore seeking expressions of interest from **mid-career researchers** interested in developing a career in applied health and care research leadership. Please note, this expression of interest is contingent upon successful funding for the next ARC period (2026–2031) and would commence 1st April 2026, with opportunities to engage with themes prior to this.

**What this role entails**

Expressions of interest for five Co-Lead roles are invited for the following themes\*:

* Support for Ageing and Living with Long Term Conditions (SALLT)
* Measurement in Health and Social Care (MHSC)
* Mental Health over the Life Course (MHoLC)
* Children’s and Young People’s Wellbeing (CYP)
* Prevention and Early Detection in Health and Social Care (PEDHSC)

The Theme Co-Lead will be identified on the ARC application and will work closely with the relevant Theme Lead to advance and fulfil the theme’s overarching objectives. Drawing upon their own research track record in an area aligned with a theme, the Co-Lead will engage collaboratively with universities and partner organisations throughout the East of England region and nationally with other ARCs, to drive the development of innovative initiatives. In alignment with the NIHR Intention to Fund, the post holder will be a mid-career researcher: an individual already established as an independent researcher but not yet recognised as an international leader in their field.

The Theme Co-Lead will assume responsibility for deputising in the absence of the Theme Lead, ensuring sustainability and effective progress towards the theme’s objectives. The post holder will attend monthly Team Strategy and Operations Group (TSOG) meetings to provide updates on the theme; support with submitting annual reports in accordance with specified timelines and targets and take part in biannual theme review meetings.

**Key responsibilities:**

**Leadership**

* Work closely with relevant Theme Lead to advance and fulfil the theme’s overarching objectives.
* Input to research funding applications relevant to own expertise and aligned to theme objectives.
* Show commitment to ensuring the principles of promoting inclusion, diversity and equality are upheld throughout all theme activities.
* Working with the ARC Implementation and Knowledge Mobilisation leads to support the implementation and knowledge mobilisation from theme projects.

**Governance and reporting**

* Contribute relevant information for NIHR annual reporting and governance processes
* Work with the ARC core team as required to develop comms material and outputs relating to the theme’s work and projects and respond to requests from NIHR.

**Essential requirements:**

* A post with University of Cambridge, University of East Anglia, University of Hertfordshire, University of Essex, or Anglia Ruskin University is required due to contractual arrangements.
* In alignment with the NIHR Intention to Fund, the post holder must be a mid-career researcher, as defined by NIHR: an individual already established as an independent researcher but not yet recognised as an international leader in their field.
* A PhD or equivalent experience in health sciences, social sciences, health or care research, science communication, healthcare policy, psychology, management or a related discipline relevant to the theme of interest
* An understanding of knowledge mobilisation, implementation and experience of public engagement and involvement strategies.
* Experience of providing strategic input and contributing to initiatives in a health, care and/or academic setting and contributing to funding applications.
* Evidence of highly developed communication and interpersonal skills plus experience of working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders, and the ability to build and maintain these relationships.
* Knowledge of NIHR infrastructure.

**Time commitment and funding**

The role requires an average commitment of 1 day per week, including attendance at monthly TSOG meetings. It will primarily be based at the usual employment location, with occasional travel required to various sites across the East of England.

The role will be funded by ARC East of England via the employing university and administered by the host organisation, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation NHS Trust. Dependent on us being successful with the grant application, this will be a fixed term role available from 1 April 2026 until 31 March 2031.

**Expressions of interest**

Please send a CV and letter of application to Emma Dickerson, Business and Operations Manager, NIHR ARC East of England via email by Emma.Dickerson@cpft.nhs.uk by **29th November 2024.** Please clearly state which research theme(s) you are expressing an interest in.

Please ensure your letter of application outlines how your skills and experience meet the requirements of this role and demonstrate how your track record is relevant to the advancement of the theme(s) you are interested in. If you wish to express an interest in more than one theme please ensure you adequately demonstrate your expertise for each theme of interest.

Please note we expect that the expression of interest process will be application only, however subject to interest levels, a short interview may be required if deemed necessary to support an effective appointment process. This will be advised once shortlisting has taken place.

Informal enquiries are welcomed:

* Support for Ageing and Living with Long Term Conditions – [Professor Kathryn Almack](https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/people/researchers/kathryn-almack)
* Measurement in Health and Social Care – [Dr Adam Wagner](https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/people/theme-leads-and-deputies/adam-wagner)
* Mental Health over the Life Course – [Professor Kristy Sanderson](https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/people/researchers/kristy-sanderson)
* Children’s and Young People’s Health and Care – [Professor Tamsin Ford](https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/people/researchers/tamsin-ford)
* Prevention and Early Detection in Health and Social Care – [Dr Claire Thompson](https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/people/theme-leads/claire-thompson)