

Herts Young People's Research Advisory Group (YPAG)

Guidelines for Researchers

The Herts YPAG is a group of young people aged 10-18 who provide support and advice to researchers working in health, social care, and community research. The YPAG is part of the UK-wide Generation R network of YPAGs. You can find out more about the group here: <https://generationr.org.uk/hertfordshire-ypag/>

How do we support research and researchers?

Involving children and young people in research improves the quality and impact of research, and enables young people to gain useful skills and experience. All young people have a right to have a say in decisions that affect them, and YPAGs are now an established approach for enabling young people's involvement in research. Research funders also increasingly expect public involvement from young people in proposals and projects, and the Herts YPAG can support with this.



Examples of types of activity the Herts YPAG can support with include:

- Identifying research priorities and gaps and advising on research methods
- Commenting on the feasibility and relevance of research projects/questions to children and young people's experiences/lives
- Reviewing project documents and advising on how to make them young people friendly
- Consulting and brainstorming on creative activities to engage children and young people in research.



When/where do we meet?

- Online meetings are held on Zoom on a weekday evening from 5pm. Researchers can have a 30-minute slot to work with the group.
- Face-to-face meetings are held on a Saturday at the University of Hertfordshire and normally run from 11am-3pm or 12-4pm. You will normally be given a slot of 45 minutes for your session with the group.
- The group meets monthly, with a break over the Summer.

Booking a YPAG meeting session:

The YPAG is led by Lauren Denyer and Dr Helen Abnett and overseen by Dr Louca-Mai Brady.

From April 2026, the Herts YPAG will be funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research Applied Research Collaboration East of England (NIHR ARC EoE) (<https://arc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/>), and the priority of the group will be to work with researchers affiliated with or funded through this. However, there will be capacity to work with researchers outside of the NIHR ARC EoE, so we encourage all researchers to get in touch with us to discuss your research project further.



Costs

- Please email ypag@herts.ac.uk for up-to-date costs for sharing a session at one of our meetings.
- The NIHR ARC EoE may be able to cover the costs of a YPAG meeting where research projects are affiliated to one of the ARC themes. We can discuss this further with you.

If you would like to book a session:

- Please email ypag@herts.ac.uk to share your overall research aims and project timeframe, and enquire about meeting availability.
- **The YPAG is of interest to many researchers and meeting availability is usually booked up at least 3-4 months in advance. Please also take this into account when planning your project. We are unlikely to be able to accommodate last-minute requests.**
- Once we have reviewed your request we will be in touch within two weeks and, if appropriate, will agree with you which meeting you would like to attend.
- We will then ask you to complete an expression of interest (EOI) form, to find out more about what you would like from the session. The form is available here: <https://forms.office.com/e/FauXbnv6CG>.

Feeding back to the Herts YPAG

The Herts YPAG value feedback on how their ideas and suggestions have been used in research. When you book a session, we will ask that you commit to completing a feedback form shortly after attending your first YPAG meeting. We also ask that you provide us with feedback three months after your session to explain how the YPAG's input has been used in your research.

Planning your session with the YPAG:



Once you've got your meeting slot, the Herts YPAG team will meet with you to help you to plan your session, including supporting you to make your work with the YPAG as accessible and engaging as possible.



Key tips for a successful session



- **Get creative:** Make your session as interactive as possible and begin with an icebreaker or warm-up activity. During your session you could include elements such as quizzes, games or arts-based activities to make it fun and interesting.
- **Introduce yourself:** Take time to introduce yourself and your research topic to the group. Think about the skills and knowledge that YPAG members might gain in your session and consider how best to share your research. Don't use too many slides or try to include too much information.
- **Make it accessible:** Think about how to make your research accessible to a diverse and younger audience who may have limited prior knowledge of the topic or methodology.
- **Finish properly:** Towards the end of your session, make time to summarise what you have heard, and think about ways you can feedback to the group three months later to share with them how you have used their ideas.



Acknowledging the Herts YPAG and NIHR ARC EoE



Please acknowledge the group and their contributions when writing academic journal articles, reports or presentations. For sessions funded by the NIHR ARC EoE, please acknowledge their support in accordance with their guidance.

Helpful links:

- Denyer et al. (2025) *Evaluating the Hertfordshire Young People's Research Advisory Group* <https://doi.org/10.18745/PB.26074>
- The **Presenting your research to YPAGs** section of the [GenerationR Alliance/eYPAGnet Toolkit](https://eypagnet.eu/toolkit/delivering/working-with-researchers/) (2021) <https://eypagnet.eu/toolkit/delivering/working-with-researchers/>
- NIHR (2021) *Involving children and young people in research: top tips for researchers* <https://www.learningforinvolvement.org.uk/?opportunity=nihr-involving-children-and-young-people-as-advisors-in-research>

