

Paper 1: 2024-25 Research Capability Funding (RCF) Spending against the Spending Plan

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Author: Paul Roy and Kat Bagi

Purpose

This paper shows the 2024/25 RCF Spending Plan and our actual spending. The aim is to identify and explain any variance between the Plan and the actual spend.

Section 1 shows the planned and actual spend for each Category, and the total spend. This section identifies any variance and provides an explanation.

Section 2 shows the itemised spend within each Category for transparency of spend.

With the intention of highlighting any questionable or inappropriate use of funding, and providing advice where use could be improved, the Advisory Group members are asked to:

1. Consider the variance presented and the reasons provided in Section 1
2. Scrutinise the within-Category spend in Section 2
3. Raise any missed opportunities that future RCF Spending Plans should incorporate

Section 1

The Spending Plan and actual Spend by Category

Category	Planned Budget	Actual Spend	Variance	Explanation of variance
1. Responsive Calls	£337,000	£325,030	£11,970	Fellowship application support was approved in October but Team unable to create a new scheme in time for January call. Underspend utilised in Category 6.
2. University Career Development posts	£108,256	£108,631	-£375	Minimal N/A
3. University Departmental Development	£453,000	£441,431	£11,569	After meeting the top priority roles at the Universities, remaining £11.5k was not enough to meet the next priority. Underspend utilised in Category 8.
4. Career Fellowships	£131,000	£126,280	£4,720	The salary costs of the ICB Evidence Fellow need to be paid across two financial years and we were only able to pay the 2024/25 costs. Underspend utilised in Category 6.
5. Researchers in Residence	£100,000	£60,165	£39,835	Further 8 projects are being planned and set up is progressing, however, we have not been able to appoint within the 2024/25 financial year. Underspend utilised in Category 6.
6. ICS Research and Evidence	£126,000	£183,906	-£57,906	Underspend utilised here from Categories 1, 4, 5, & 7.
7. Hosting and Sponsorship	£400,000	£395,545	£4,485	Secured RDN funding to contribute to our Research Team staff. Underspends utilised in Categories 6, 8 and 9.
8. Unpredictable needs	£17,000	£35,793	-£18,793	Unexpected and large need from a team who generate a lot of RCF. Able to share with University of Bristol. Overspend met from Categories 3, 7 and 10.
9. Bristol Health Partners	£109,283	£111,500	-£2,217	Minimal N/A
10. Contingency	£6,710	£0	£6,710	Contingency funds were used to cover additional funds requested for Category 8.
Total	£1,788,249	£1,788,250	£1	

Table 1: Entire RCF spending in 2024/25 by BNSSG ICB, segmented by Category.

Re-Allocation of underspend from previous RCF Awards

Underspend of multiple previous RCF Awards at UWE, Bath, Cardiff and Coventry with a total value of £46,269 returned to us and, as per our agreed process, we will reallocate these funds to other uses in line with RCF spending rules:

Costs covered from funds returned	
Expenses (printing, catering, travel)	£320
Balance	£45,949

Table 2: RCF underspend reallocation

Section 2

Category 1: Responsive Calls

Breakdown by round

The Responsive call sub-categories are each managed as three distinct budgets per round. Up until 2024/25 the entire Category budget was available in each round, which led to several rounds being cancelled when the first round received a high number of fundable applications.

Below shows a breakdown of the spend per round, segmented by the sub-category budgets.

Sub-category	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Total
Type 1: Early idea stage	£9,000	£12,000	£18,000	£39,000
Type 2: Developing a grant	£59,469	£86,589	£87,621	£233,679
Service led ideas	£3,000	£9,000	£12,000	£24,000
Pipeline investments	£2,516	£3,519	£21,216	£27,251
Fellowship PPI budget	N/A	N/A	£0	£0
PPI reviewers	£300	£250	£550	£1,100
Responsive Call total	£74,285	£111,358	£139,387	£325,030

Table 3: RCF Responsive Call funding per round

Breakdown by Type 1 project

Below lists all the Type 1 awardees and projects funded by the Responsive Call.

Lead applicant	Topic	Project initiated by	Lead Organisation(s)	Amount
Kiran Cheedella	Reducing health inequality amongst a Somali community with a focus on cardiovascular risk factor interventions developed through community based participatory research.	Health and Care Services	Downend Health Group	£6,629
Julie Armoogum	PPIE for educational and supported-self management interventions to support people with cancer-related chronic pain.	Academia	UWE	£3,000
Sunny Chan	Exploring non-pharmacological coping strategies to manage	Academia	UWE, Dhek Bhal,	£4,4887

	sleep problems in older adults with dementia.		Bristol Black Carers and the Chinese Community Wellbeing Society	
Chloe Gamlin	Experiences of gynaecological issues including endometriosis in underserved women from ethnic minority groups.	Health and Care Services	University of Bristol	£6,000
Richard Ma	Exploring ways to deliver primary care for people aged over 50 living with HIV	Academia	University of Bristol	£3,000
Barbara Caddick & Helen Leach	Buildings and interior spaces in primary care, and how they impact care.	Health and Care Services	University of Bristol	£7,632
Lucie Martin-Jones	Health inequalities experienced by disabled people exacerbated by the cost of living crisis	Health and Care Services	WECIL	£7,887
Nikki Cotterill	Learning about Incontinence associated with female genital mutilation (LISTEN)	Health and Care Services	UWE	£6,000
Corinne Birch	Proactively reducing hip fractures and falls in primary care	Health and Care Services	Pier Health	£10,896
Jenny Lewis	Chronic Pain in Weston-Super-Mare, Worle and Villages	Health and Care Services	UWE and Pier Health	£7,632
Cathryn Pinto	Primary care delivered mental health support for people with serious, life-limiting illnesses including end-of-life care	Academia	University of Bristol	£3,000
Victoria Pitts	Experiences of HRT prescribing in the perimenopause	Health and Care Services	Downton Road Surgery and University of Bristol	£10,896
Niyi-Odumosu	Engaging Stakeholders to Identify and Address Outdoor Occupational Risks Contributing to Chronic Kidney Disease of Non-Traditional Origin (CKDnt)	Academia	UWE	£3,000

Table 4: Breakdown of Category 1 Type 1 Awards combining 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4.

Breakdown by Type 2 project

Below lists all the Type 2 awardees and projects funded by the Responsive Call.

Lead applicant	Topic	Project initiated by	Lead Organisation(s)	Amount
Alison Llewellyn	Understanding the quality of life and needs of people with either multiple sclerosis or Parkinson's disease towards end of life.	Academia	UWE	£19,594
Emma Anderson	Conversations about Vaccination with Empathetic Refutational Skills Enhancement (ConVERSE) Trial	Academia	University of Bristol	£19,994
Chloë Place	Exploring the lived experiences of international care workers in UK care homes	Academia	UWE	£19,881
Sunny Chan	Co-developing a Dyadic mind-body intervention for Relieving Enduring sleep disturbances Among older individuals with deMentia and their caregivers (DREAM) in both white and ethnic minority communities in Bristol	Academia	UWE, Dhek Bhal, Bristol Black Carers and the Chinese Community Wellbeing Society	£19,876
Nikki Cotterill	Learning about Incontinence associated with Female genital mutilation (LISTEN)	Health and Care Services	UWE	£27,274
Joanne Webb	Preparatory PPI work to apply for NIHR RfPB funding to develop and refine the Social Model of Baby Hubs	Health and Care Services	Sirona	£20,000
Christie Cabral	Improving care for older people with acute infections	Academia	University of Bristol	£19,439
Jo White	Improving service provision for Black people living with stroke in England through sharing their lived experience: Implementation and evaluation of a digital intervention	Academia	UWE	£19,791

Onyeka Amiebenomo	Promoting Eye Care Practice for Children with Learning Disabilities (PEPChiLD)	Academia	UWE	£19,977
India Wheeler, Deborah McCahon, Polly Duncan, Hyunkee Kim	The Bristol Continuity Tool: development and implementation of a new tool to improve continuity in general practice.'	Health and Care Services	Charlotte Keel Medical Centre, East Trees Medical Centre and University of Bristol	£39,725
Matt Jones	How can local Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise Support Services (VCFSEs) and the North & West Bristol Locality Partnership (LP) be better jointly mobilised to improve the health and well being of residents identified as a priority in North and West Bristol?	Academia	UWE and Neighbourly Labs	£17,920

Table 5: Breakdown of Category 1 Type 2 Awards combining 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4.

Variance

The table below shows the planned spend against the actual spend within the Responsive Call Category with identification and explanation of variance by each of 6 sub-category budgets. In October 2024 it was agreed that under and overspends should be balanced within each round.

Category	Planned Budget	Actual Spend	Variance	Explanation of variance
1.1 Type 1 Responsive Call	£27,000	£39,000	-£12,000	As per agreement by Advisory Group in October 2024, we utilised underspends from 1.3 and 1.4 to meet fundable Type 1 applications.
1.2 Type 2 Responsive Call	£180,000	£233,679	-£53,679	As per agreement by Advisory Group in October 2024, we utilised underspends from 1.3 and 1.4 to meet fundable Type 2 applications.
1.3 Service Led Responsive Call	£60,000	£24,000	£36,000	As a new scheme in 2024/25, this was not as popular as we expect it to become, the majority of underspend accumulated in the Summer Call.
1.4 Pipeline Awards	£60,000	£27,251	£32,749	As a new scheme in 2024/25, this was not as popular as we expect it to become, the majority of underspend accumulated in the Summer Call.
1.5 PPI awards for fellowships	£9,000	£0	£9,000	The Research Team were not able to create this scheme in time for the January 2025 call.
1.6 PPI reviewers	£1,000	£1,100	-£100	Minimal N/A

Table 6: Category 1 RCF spending in 2024/25, segmented by the 6 sub-categories displaying variance.

Category 2: Career Development Posts

Post	Organisation	Amount
Fellow in primary care mental health research	University of Bristol	£31,290.93
Public Health Career Development SRA	University of Bristol	£62,364.57
Systematic reviewer	University of Bristol	£14,975.35
Total		£108,630.85

Table 7: Breakdown of Category 2 spend.

Ratio of spend

Across Categories 2 & 3 we aimed for a 92:8 ratio of spend in favour of University of Bristol in consideration of the relative contributions of RCF generating NIHR awards.

The ratio of spend in Category 2 was 100:0 in favour of University of Bristol over UWE.

The ratio of total spend on the **combined Category 2 & 3 was 92:8** in favour of University of Bristol.

Variance

Negligible, nothing to report.

Category 3: Departmental Development Posts

Post	Organisation	Amount
Post in Knowledge Mobilisation and Musculoskeletal Health	UWE	£21,833.04
Health Economist	UWE	£20,648.64
Senior Research Associate in Social Care (School for Policy Research)	University of Bristol	£61,254.86
Implementation Science Post	University of Bristol	£5,122.37
BTC Finance post	University of Bristol	£54,889.06
Database Analyst	University of Bristol	£54,379.68
PHS - Statistician	University of Bristol	£60,222.08
BTC Statistician support	University of Bristol	£44,926.04
THS departmental statistician	University of Bristol	£47,954.56
PHS Public, Community, Involvement and Engagement Officer	University of Bristol	£15,749.00
PHS PACT Administrator	University of Bristol	£19,474.97
Public Health Programme Manager	University of Bristol	£21,269.77
Grief Centre	University of Bristol	£13,706.98
Total		£441,431.05

Table 8: Breakdown of Category 3 spend.

Ratio of spend

Across Categories 2 & 3 we aimed for a 92:8 ratio of spend in favour of University of Bristol in consideration of the relative contributions of RCF generating NIHR awards.

The ratio of spend in Category 3 was 90:10 in favour of University of Bristol over UWE.

The ratio of total spend on the **combined Category 2 & 3 was 92:8** in favour of University of Bristol.

Variance

We were able to meet the top priority roles at the Universities. The underspend was not enough to meet the next priority and **was utilised to meet overspend in** Category 8.

Category 4: Career Fellowships

Scheme	Awardee	Area of expertise	Organisation	Amount
Launching Fellowship	Charlotte Lee	Obesity; Mental health; Primary Care; Behaviour Change	University of Bristol	£60,000
Academic Career Award	Laura Goodwin	Urgent and Emergency Neonatal Care	UWE	£59,947.87
ICB Evidence Fellow	Karon Arnold	Medicine Adherence during pregnancy and post-natal	BNSSG ICB	£6,332.10

Table 9: Breakdown of Category 4 spend.

Variance

The salary costs of the ICB Evidence Fellow need to be paid across two financial years and we were only able to pay the 2024/25 costs.

Category 5: Researcher in Residence

Project	ICS Team	Award
Cardiovascular services within BNSSG	PHM	£4,967.75
Evaluation of Sirona pilot supporting statutory child protection arrangements	Safeguarding	£6,999.98
Analysing the consequences of long elective waits	Modelling and Analytics	£26,402.58
Consolidate local and national evidence and co-produce and support monitoring and evaluation	Women's Health Hub	£5,126.69
Co-production exploring barriers to care and assessment	The Bridge SARC	£5,022.85
Local Authority Research Practitioner (LARP)	North Somerset Local Authority and Locality Partnerships	£5,000.00
Power to Pill	Woodspring Locality Partnership	£6,645.58
Total		£60,165.43

Table 10: Breakdown of Category 5 spend.

Variance

Further 8 projects are being planned and set up is progressing, however, we have not been able to appoint within the 2024/25 financial year.

Category 6: ICS Research and Evidence

Role	Organisations	Award
ICB Clinical Lead for Data Analytics	ICB	£33,565.00
GPs at the Deep End Clinical Lead	University of Bristol	£27,628.37
GPs at the Deep End Academic Lead	University of Sheffield	£64,210.80
Clinical Lead for Value and Population Health	ICB	£24,252.82
General Practice Senior Research Nurse	ICB	£3,700.00
Research Lead	Sirona	£30,549.00
Total		£183,905.99

Table 11: Breakdown of Category 6 spend.

Variance

Through an award from the Research Delivery Network, we were able to secure income for several Research Team members (Category 7) which created underspend in that category that has been used to increase the budget available in Category 6. This variance was reviewed and approved by the Chief Medical Officer.

Category 7: Research support and Hosting

Post	Organisations	Amount
Senior Research Fellow	UWE	£44,279.92
Contracts Manager	University of Bristol	£35,278.32
Associate Medical Director for Research	ICB	£95,452.31
Research Portfolio Manager	ICB	£56,714.45
Research Finance Support	ICB	£27,540.65
Research Portfolio Officer	ICB	£53,704.44
Research Portfolio Officer	ICB	£9,649.56
Research Portfolio Support	ICB	£33,019.01
Sponsorship in DRE	University of Bristol	£32,983.36
PPI	ICB	£150.00
Expenses (STATA x2, graphics, catering, conference x 3)	ICB	£6,812.64
Total		£395,514.62

Table 12: Breakdown of Category 7 spend.

Variance

Minimal to report, however we were able to appoint a new Research Portfolio Officer, and secure £49,624.93 from the Research Delivery Network which reduced our need for RCF within this category to invest in more frontline providers in primary and community care.

Category 8: Unpredictable needs

Organisation	Project	Reason	Amount
University of Bristol	EMDR	Bridging	£13,900.61
UWE	Transforming assessment and diagnosis of dementia in Bristol for people from Chinese, Caribbean and South Asian and communities	Bridging	£6,705.36
University of Bristol	Senior Research Associate in primary care mental health	Extension	£3,791.98
UWE	PolyPILL project	Extension	£5,982.00
University of Bristol	HELMET	Bridging	£1,475.19
University of Bristol	Telesafe and AUTO-SAND-OOH	Bridging	£3,937.40
Total			£35,792.54

Table 13: Breakdown of Category 10 spend.

Variance

Applications exceeded previous years expectations. We were fortunately able to split the costs of some requests for bridging with the University of Bristol, enabling us to support more applicants.

Category 9: Bristol Health Partners Annual membership

Post	Organisations	Amount
Project Managers (3x)	Bristol Health Partners Academic Health Science Centre	£98,000.00
ICB contribution to the protected characteristics and caring responsibilities data collection project	Bristol Health Partners Academic Health Science Centre	£13,500.00
Total		£111,500.00

Table 14: Breakdown of Category 8 spend.

Variance

Negligible, nothing to report.