

Frequently Asked Questions

NHS Innovation Accelerator 2027 Intake

Contents

1. When can I apply for the NHS Innovation Accelerator 2027 cohort?	2
2. Is the NIA only for UK-based companies?	2
3. I am from a start-up; can I apply for the NIA?	2
4. I am a clinician; can I apply for the NIA?	2
5. What are this year's recruitment themes?	2
6. Is the NIA for individuals only or can teams/ companies apply?	2
7. Why is there a time commitment for Fellows of 2 days a week?	3
8. How many Fellows will be selected to join the NIA 2027 intake?	3
9. Are there opportunities to connect with the NIA team before I apply?	3
10. Will I receive feedback if my application is unsuccessful?	3
11. When will the panel interviews take place?	4
12. I have not completed an application form like this before. Where can I go for support? ...	4
13. What is the Readiness Check?	4

1. When can I apply for the NHS Innovation Accelerator 2027 cohort?

Recruitment for the 2026 NIA cohort opens the morning of 17 August 2026 and closes at 23:59 on 27 September 2026.

2. Is the NIA only for UK-based companies?

No, the NIA is not only for UK-based companies. Applicants from across the UK and overseas are welcome to apply

However, whilst the company can be based anywhere in the world, Applicants should note the mandatory requirement to attend the NIA launch, and Fellows' events in person; the applicant should, therefore, be mainly based in the UK.

Additionally, the innovation that applicants are representing should ideally have some UK presence. Whilst we welcome international applicants, we recognise that this programme may not be the best fit for organisations that are just beginning to establish themselves within the NHS. We would encourage these companies to first engage with their local Health Innovation Network and focus on building relationships and gaining experience within the NHS ecosystem. Once they have established a foothold, we would be delighted to welcome a future application to the programme.

3. I am from a start-up; can I apply for the NIA?

The NIA does not proscribe the number of staff your company should have. However, it is for innovations that are both ready to scale across the NHS in England, and that have the necessary resources and team to scale across England over a 3-year period and beyond. Your organisation should, therefore, have sufficient resources to be able to scale up at pace – and be able to take up opportunities that arise from your participation in the NIA.

4. I am a clinician; can I apply for the NIA?

Yes, the NIA is open to Fellows from any background, and we have supported several clinicians to scale their innovations. If you have queries or concerns regarding the time commitment for Fellows, we encourage you to contact the NIA team to discuss your options.

5. What are this year's recruitment themes?

Please refer to Appendix 1 of the Call for Applications for full details. Innovations that provide a clear, evidenced case for impact in at least one Access, Productivity, Modern Service Framework or Women's Health priority are more likely to be taken up by the NHS and wider ecosystem.

6. Is the NIA for individuals only or can teams/ companies apply?

While the innovation may have been created by a team/company, the NIA focuses on the development and support of an individual representing that innovation. Therefore, all applications must include information on a sole named applicant who will be the innovation's representative (a Fellow) while active on the NIA and will participate in the mandatory attendance events throughout the 3-year programme.

7. Why is there a time commitment for Fellows of 2 days a week?

In order to ensure they can take advantage of the benefits of being on the NIA, Fellows need to be able to commit two days per week to scaling their innovation. These two days per week could include for example attendance at quarterly events, producing and implementing spread plans, meeting mentors and Health Innovation Network (HIN), developing stakeholder engagement and marketing plans, building networks, or a health economic case. Basically, any activities a Fellow undertakes around scaling their innovation counts towards the two-day commitment.

For some Fellows, this will be part of their normal day jobs - where scaling their innovation is their everyday business.

For others, particularly those who are based in clinical roles, it might require setting aside the 2 days for the completion of these discreet tasks. **Please note that Fellows are not expected to come to the NIA offices for these 2 days per week, except for the learning events detailed in the key dates document, and other events which are in-person.**

8. How many Fellows will be selected to join the NIA 2027 intake?

Up to 24 individuals will be selected to join the NIA 2027 intake. These individuals will join the existing Fellows from the 2025 and 2026 cohorts, who would have progressed to Years 2 and 3 of the Fellowship.

9. Are there opportunities to connect with the NIA team before I apply?

There are a number of 'Meet the NIA' online information events during the recruitment period that you can join to find out more.

These online Q&A sessions are open to anyone, but we do ask that you register via Eventbrite beforehand. The interactive sessions will provide detailed information about the NIA, the recruitment process and this year's application. Slides will be made available and there will be an opportunity for Q&A with the NIA core team.

Dates for Meet the NIA online sessions:

- Thursday 25 June 2026 12:00-13:00
- Monday 27 July 2026 12:00-13:00
- Tuesday 18 August 2026 13:00-14:00
- Thursday 10 September 2026 12:00-13:00
- Monday 21 September 2026 13:00-14:00

Please register for a session on Eventbrite [here](#). Joining details will be sent to you in the confirmation email upon registration.

If you have any questions that you need answered ahead of or following these events, please feel free to email us at nia@uclpartners.com; we would be happy to arrange a time for you to speak to someone in the team.

10. Will I receive feedback if my application is unsuccessful?

Unsuccessful applications will receive feedback by the end of February 2025. The level of detail of the feedback will depend on the stage to which the application progressed e.g. applicants that have not progressed to the full assessment phase will receive basic feedback whilst those fully assessed will receive detailed feedback.

11. When will the panel interviews take place?

Panel interviews will take place virtually from Wednesday 6 January - Friday 15 January 2027. Applicants will need to be flexible about the time their interviews will take place as they are scheduled around clinician availability to take part in a panel.

12. I have not completed an application form like this before. Where can I go for support?

UK based Applicants

Your local Health Innovation Network may be able to provide support and advice in applying for the NIA. Find your local HIN here: <https://thehealthinnovationnetwork.co.uk/>.

For an example of what information you might be asked when approaching a local HIN, UCLPartners ask Innovators to please complete the [UCLPartners Engagement form](#) and then they assign a member of the team to have an intro call.

International Applicants

You should contact Healthcare UK to access the dedicated support on offer for international companies looking to come to the UK.

You are also welcome to email us at nia@uclpartners.com

13. What is the Readiness Check?

You will first be invited to complete a Readiness Check. This short assessment helps us determine whether the programme is a good fit for you and your innovation before you invest time in completing the full application.

Please answer all questions as accurately as you can. We may verify the information you provide during the review process.

Your Readiness Check will be reviewed internally. If you meet the eligibility criteria, you will be invited to complete the Main Application.

We aim to let you know the outcome of your Readiness Check as soon as possible and within 3 working days. We encourage you to submit your Readiness Check as early as possible when applications open and no later than:

12:00 (midday), Friday 25 September 2026

Main Application

If you are invited to complete the Main Application, you must submit your completed application by:

23:59, Sunday 27 September 2026