

# Healthcare Science Service Transformation funding opportunity 2026

Scottish Government funding has been made available to support Healthcare Science services in NHS Scotland to develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities required to deliver planned service renewal. **Unlike Healthcare Science bursaries, this funding is intended to support service-led transformation rather than individual professional development.**

The application must start with an identified service need and a clearly defined planned change in service delivery that aligns with at least one of the five headings within the [Scottish Government Health and Social Care Service Renewal Framework](#): Prevention, People, Community, Population and Digital.

- **Prevention:** Supporting earlier identification of risk, earlier intervention and proactive approaches to health through advanced diagnostics, genomics, predictive technologies or other scientific innovation.
- **People:** Supporting care that is designed around the needs, circumstances and aspirations of individuals, including personalised medicine, improved diagnostic pathways and better use of scientific data to inform care.
- **Community:** Supporting services to move closer to people's homes where appropriate, including remote monitoring, wearable technologies, point-of-care testing, community-based diagnostics or other service models that reduce reliance on hospital-based care.
- **Population:** Supporting services to use analytics, modelling, service evaluation and population-level planning to respond to local need, reduce unwarranted variation and make best use of available resources.
- **Digital:** Supporting safe adoption of digital technologies, automation, artificial intelligence, data-enabled improvement or other approaches that modernise services and improve access, quality and efficiency.

The service should then identify the specific education or training required to develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities needed to deliver that change. The application should clearly demonstrate how the proposed education or training will develop these and enable the identified service change.

Applications must be submitted on behalf of a Healthcare Science service. Funding will support **one nominated Healthcare Scientist at Agenda for Change Band 6–9** to undertake the identified education or training. The learning should be applied within the service and, where appropriate, shared with relevant colleagues to support sustainable implementation of the proposed service change. A contribution of **up to £5,000** is available towards programme or course fees and associated examination costs. Other costs, including travel and accommodation, are not eligible and should not be included in the amount being requested.

## Who can submit an application?

Applications must be submitted on behalf of the Healthcare Science service with the approval of the relevant service manager. Only one application may be submitted by each Healthcare Science service area within a Health Board. Where a service area includes separate paediatric and adult services, only one application may be submitted for that service area within the Health Board. For the purposes of this funding opportunity, a service area is defined in line with the Healthcare Science service categories set out in [\*Healthcare Science in Scotland: Redefining our Workforce\*](#).

The application should identify the Healthcare Scientist (at Agenda for Change Band 6–9) who will undertake the proposed education or training and explain why they are best placed to lead or support implementation of the planned service change.

The application should describe:

- the current service need or challenge;
- the proposed service improvement or redesign;
- how the proposed education or training will enable this change;
- how learning will be implemented within the service;
- anticipated benefits for patients, service users, staff and the wider service;
- the proposed education or training, including provider, delivery format, duration, expected time commitment and costs;
- the anticipated timescales and key milestones for applying the learning and progressing the proposed service change;
- how progress and impact will be measured.

Successful applications will demonstrate how the proposed service change, enabled by the funded education or training, will contribute to one or more of the following outcomes:

- supporting safe, effective and sustainable service redesign;
- building workforce capability for new or enhanced models of care;
- improving patient access, experience, outcomes or equity;
- enabling innovation, digital adoption, advanced practice or new ways of working;
- supporting services to respond to local, regional or national population needs.

Please note that although the education or training does not need to be completed within the 2026–27 financial year, all awarded funding must be invoiced by 31 March 2027.

## What can be funded?

Funding may support education and training required to develop the capability needed to implement the planned service improvement. Examples include:

- postgraduate modules;
- postgraduate certificates, diplomas or master's level programmes;
- accredited professional development programmes;
- specialist technical training;
- digital, analytical or quality improvement training;
- leadership or change management programmes where these are integral to the proposed service change.

The proposed learning must clearly support delivery of the planned service improvement described within the application.

## What is not funded?

Funding can only be used towards eligible programme or course fees and associated examination costs. It cannot be used for:

- equipment, consumables, software, licences or other service infrastructure costs;
- additional training and education materials, such as textbooks;
- backfill, locum cover or additional staffing costs;
- travel, accommodation or subsistence costs;
- routine mandatory, statutory or induction training;
- training that is not directly linked to a defined service improvement;
- education or training undertaken primarily for individual career development;
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessments or associated fees;
- fees associated with equivalence routes, including IBMS or AHCS equivalence;
- conference attendance, study visits or networking events;
- retrospective costs for education or training already started or completed;
- training for more than one nominated member of staff from the same service area;
- education or training for which funding has already been secured through another route.

## Completion and evaluation

As this funding is intended to support service renewal rather than individual development, evaluation will consider both the education or training undertaken by the nominated Healthcare Scientist and the extent to which the learning contributes to the planned service change.

The nominated Healthcare Scientist will be required to apply for a National Training Number (NTN) at the start of their education or training and complete the Healthcare Science exit survey process on completion. This will enable PSD Scotland's Healthcare Science Education team to record participation and evaluate the funded education or training.

The funded service will also be required to participate in a service impact evaluation. The anticipated timescales and key milestones provided in the application will be used by PSD Scotland's Healthcare Science Education team to determine an appropriate initial evaluation point. At this point, a Microsoft Form will be issued to assess how the learning has been applied; progress towards the planned service change; measurable or emerging

benefits for patients, service users, staff and the wider service; barriers and wider learning; and opportunities to sustain or scale the change. The evaluation will also consider how the learning has contributed to service renewal under the relevant Scottish Government Health and Social Care Service Renewal Framework heading(s).

Where implementation is not sufficiently progressed to provide a meaningful evaluation at that point, it will be asked to provide updated implementation timescales and a further evaluation point will be set.

Applying for an NTN, completing the exit survey and participating in the service impact evaluation will be conditions of accepting funding.

## Application process and timeline

**Applications open on 1 September 2026 and close on 31 October 2026 at 17:00.** During this period, the application form will be available through the Healthcare Science website.

Before applying, Healthcare Science services and service managers should identify the planned service change and the capabilities required to deliver it before identifying suitable education or training. Services should engage early with relevant managers and education providers and consider how implementation and impact will be evidenced.

## Application scoring

Applications will be reviewed and scored jointly by representatives from the PSDS Healthcare Science Education team and the Scottish Government Healthcare Science Policy team. Scoring will consider the strength of the proposed service change, the clarity of alignment with one or more of the five Service Renewal Framework headings, the relevance and appropriateness of the proposed education or training, the anticipated impact for patients, service users, staff and the wider service, and the extent to which the application demonstrates value for money and a credible and deliverable approach to implementing the proposed service change.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

| Criterion              | What reviewers will consider                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Service need           | Is there a clear case for change?                                                                                                                                      |
| Strategic alignment    | Does the proposal align with one or more Service Renewal Framework priorities?                                                                                         |
| Education and training | Is the proposed education or training appropriate to develop the capability required, and is there a credible plan to embed and share the learning within the service? |
| Implementation         | Is there a credible plan, with appropriate timescales and milestones, to apply the learning within the service?                                                        |

| Criterion       | What reviewers will consider                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Impact          | Are the anticipated benefits for patients, service users, staff and the wider service clearly described, with an appropriate approach to measuring impact? |
| Deliverability  | Is there a realistic and achievable plan to apply the learning and progress implementation of the proposed service change?                                 |
| Value for money | Does the requested funding represent good use of public resources relative to the anticipated service benefit?                                             |

## Further information

If you have any queries about this funding opportunity, please contact the Healthcare Science team at [HCS@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:HCS@nes.scot.nhs.uk).