

# Strategic interventions in health education disciplines

## Challenge Fund

The health education Challenge Fund aims to encourage and contribute to the development of new approaches to the delivery of, or recruitment to, healthcare courses. The funding will also be used for engagement with providers and other stakeholders, and dissemination of outcomes.



HEFCE-funded higher education institutions and further education colleges providing courses in podiatry or therapeutic radiography may submit bids for projects by **Monday 23 April 2018** (for single provider bids) or **Monday 30 April 2018** (for collaborative bids).

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# Strategic interventions in health education disciplines: Challenge Fund

To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions Heads of HEFCE-funded further education colleges
Of interest to those responsible for	Heads of departments providing podiatry or therapeutic radiography
Reference	2018/02
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## Executive summary

### Purpose

1. In March 2017 HEFCE's Board agreed funding to enhance the sustainability of small and specialist pre-registration healthcare courses which are transitioning to the higher education funding system as part of the nursing, midwifery and allied health funding reforms taking effect from September 2017. The funding aims to support demand for, and improve retention on, these courses. HEFCE's funding decisions for 2017-18 are outlined in 'Funding for universities and colleges for 2017-18: Board decisions' at [www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2017/CL\\_062017/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2017/CL_062017/).
2. Accordingly HEFCE has developed a programme of strategic interventions in health education disciplines (SIHED), in collaboration with professional and sector bodies, to support small, specialist healthcare subjects. More information on the SIHED programme is available from HEFCE's website: [www.hefce.ac.uk/it/healthcare/sihed/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/it/healthcare/sihed/).
3. One part of the SIHED programme is the establishment of a Challenge Fund which aims to encourage and contribute to the development of new approaches to the delivery of, or recruitment to, healthcare courses. The funding will also be used for engagement with providers and other stakeholders, and dissemination of outcomes.

### Key points

4. Up to £200,000 is available in 2017-18 to support projects which would benefit podiatry or therapeutic radiography courses. Although the fund is only open to bids from, or led by, providers of podiatry and therapeutic radiography courses for this year, the projects supported could be broader than these individual disciplines as long as benefits to their podiatry or therapeutic radiography provision are clearly outlined.
5. After consultation with the professional bodies for podiatry and radiography, it was decided that two options would be available to potential bidders:
  - a. **Call A** – Providers can bid for a maximum of £30,000 as individual institutions seeking primarily to innovate in their own recruitment or delivery.

b. **Call B** – Funding of up to £60,000 can be applied for to support collaborative projects, for instance to support projects common to providers of the same disciplines, or projects that are based on a regional partnership.

6. It is expected that providers, and where applicable, their partners, will contribute resources or funding or both to the project they are bidding for, and the bids should clarify the amount and shape of this contribution. The SIHED programme board will be asked to evaluate bids and allocate funding.

7. Bidders will be required to outline how they aim to embed innovation tested as a result of this funding, to ensure benefits continue after this funding ceases.

8. Projects funded through this initiative will be expected to evaluate the outcomes and share lessons learned and good practice with other providers of their discipline, and potentially beyond. This will entail supporting the SIHED programme management with their own monitoring and evaluation, including with data (such as student application data) if required.

9. The deadlines for application are **Monday 23 April 2018** (for Call A) and **Monday 30 April 2018** (for Call B).

### **Office for Students**

10. From 1 April 2018, the Office for Students (OfS) will take over from HEFCE as the regulator of higher education. Accordingly, higher education teaching funding, including the SIHED programme, will transfer to the OfS. The OfS will receive the bids submitted under this call after 1 April 2018, and will carry out the initial assessment before bids progress to the funding panel (see paragraph 18). Staff details and email addresses outlined in this letter and in the annexes remain valid.

## **Call A: Funding for individual provider bids – up to £30,000**

11. Bids are invited from individual providers to support the development of initiatives to innovate in recruitment to, or delivery of, podiatry or therapeutic radiography courses. Funding will only be allocated to providers that offer podiatry or therapeutic radiography, and they will have to demonstrate that the initiatives planned are innovative and of benefit to the discipline.
12. Bids which cover a broader scope than individual disciplines, for instance to stimulate recruitment to their allied health courses as a whole, will be considered, as long as benefits to podiatry or therapeutic radiography courses are clearly outlined.
13. Bids are invited under the following themes:
  - a. Innovative ways to engage with a wider range of applicants, for example development of a summer school to develop study skills for mature students or applicants with non-traditional qualifications, or to engage with groups underrepresented in healthcare courses, for example men or black and minority ethnic applicants.
  - b. Support for students returning after a period of interruption, including consideration of students' changed circumstances, for example following maternity or paternity.
  - c. Innovation in delivery, for example development of accelerated delivery patterns, inclusion of distance learning elements in the curriculum, or piloting common delivery of elements of the curriculum across health disciplines.
  - d. Innovation in placement support, for example working with placement providers to prepare students better for practice, or establishing innovative peer support networks.
14. In addition, providers will need to:
  - demonstrate that they are recruiting for either podiatry or therapeutic radiography courses for 2018-19
  - explain how innovations piloted through the Challenge Fund could be embedded in the institution's work beyond the period of funding
  - engage with the SIHED programme and commit to sharing lessons learned and good practice resulting from initiatives enabled by the Challenge Fund
  - commit to providing statistics and contextual information to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the SIHED programme up to 2020-21.

## **Call B: Funding for collaborative projects – up to £60,000**

15. Bids are invited for collaborative projects to support recruitment to, or innovative delivery of, podiatry or therapeutic radiography courses. Examples could be collaborative projects involving providers of the same discipline, or regional collaborations.
16. Bids are invited under the following themes:
  - a. Initiatives which would be beneficial to the retention and success of students and would be shared within the collaborative partners and possibly beyond: for example online study skills relevant to the podiatry or therapeutic radiography curricula; support networks for students, for example men in healthcare, or single parents; toolkits to identify and help deal with specific issues, for example mental health, or specific learning difficulties.

- b. Development of, or innovations to the delivery of, feeder programmes for podiatry or therapeutic radiography. This could include feeder programmes with a broader scope (for example health).
- c. Initiatives to support widening participation in healthcare disciplines, with particular – but not necessarily exclusive – interest in the disciplines in scope. All areas of widening participation will be considered, including mature students, students with non-traditional qualifications and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- d. Collaborative projects between course providers and clinical settings to support students to prepare for, and benefit from, their placements.

17. In addition, providers will need to:

- demonstrate how the initiative would benefit at least one of the disciplines in scope
- outline the roles and contributions of the different collaborative partners
- engage with the SIHED programme and commit to sharing lessons learned and good practice resulting from initiatives enabled by the Challenge Fund
- commit to providing statistics and contextual information to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the SIHED programme up to 2020-21.

18. Initial evaluation of the bids will be done by the Office for Students. Decisions will be made by a panel chaired by Prof Alistair Fitt, Chair of the SIHED programme board, and including representatives from the Council of Deans of Health, Health Education England, the College of Podiatry, and the Society and College of Radiographers.

19. Allocation of funding will be based on the quality of bids only. The panel will not be required to allocate equal amounts of funding between the two disciplines, or between individual and collaborative bids. It is expected that decisions will be made in May 2018 and funding will be released from June.

20. There is scope for funding to be made available for further calls in the following two years of the SIHED programme if this intervention is successful, though disciplines in scope and themes may differ.

## Action required

21. Bidders are invited to submit their projects to [healthcarepolicy@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:healthcarepolicy@hefce.ac.uk):

- for single provider bids (call A): by **Monday 23 April 2018**
- for collaborative bids (call B): by **Monday 30 April 2018**.

22. Each higher education provider of therapeutic radiography or podiatry can submit one bid for call A, **and** be the lead for, or a participant in, one bid only under call B.