



Project Selection Process

SOP v1.1

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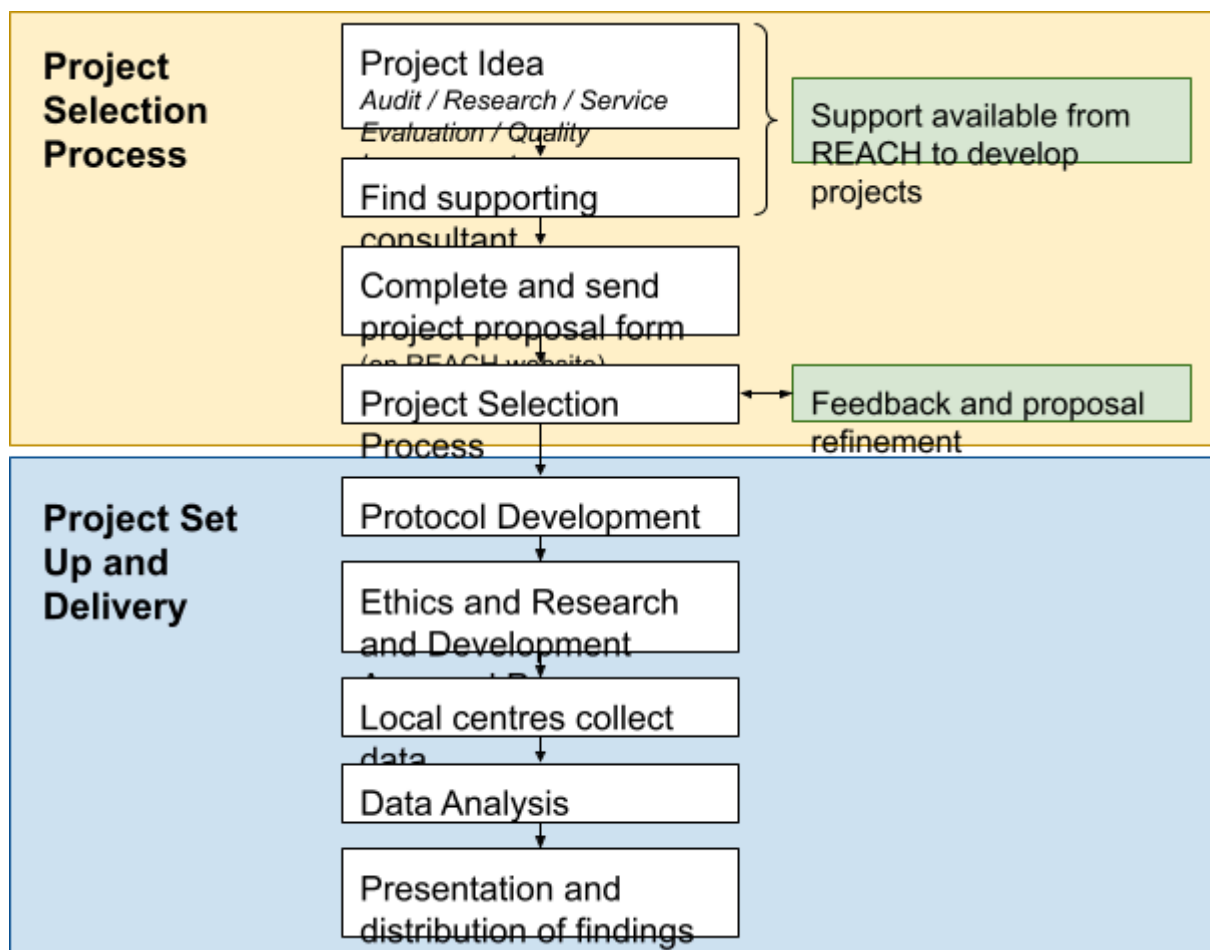


Introduction

This document covers guidance for selection of multi-centre pan-London projects as part of the London REACH (Research, Evaluation and Audit in Child Health) network.

This policy should be considered together with other REACH Network policy documents (available via our website), including:

- Our Constitution
- Project Start Set up and Delivery - Standard Operating Procedure
- Project Selection Process - Evaluation Record
- Project Proposal Form



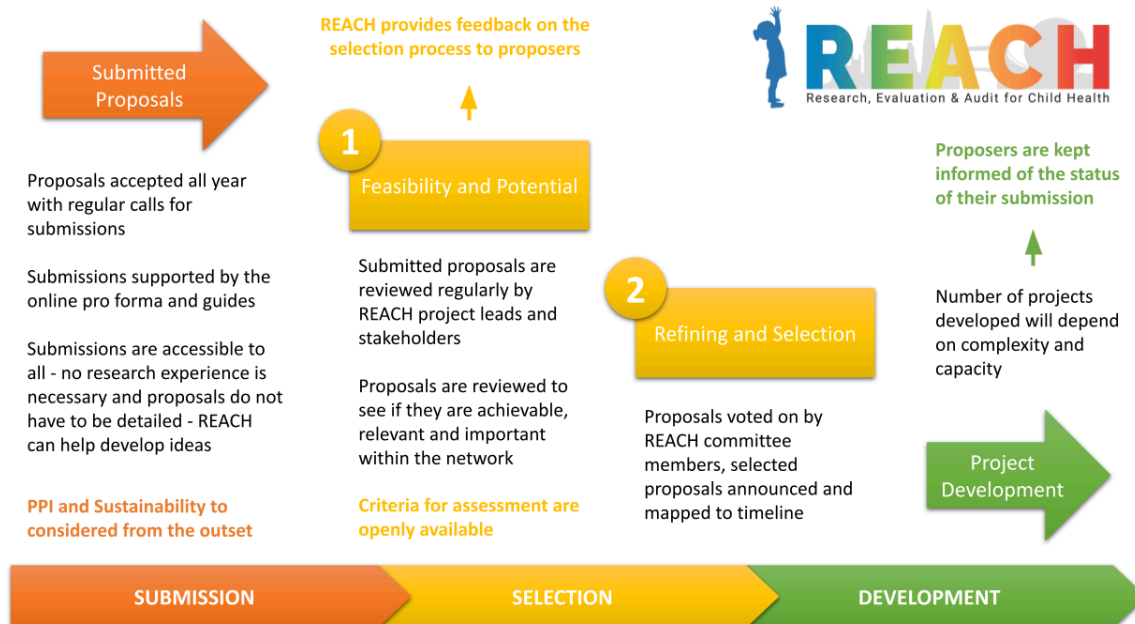
Overview of the Project Selection Process

Our constitution outlines the aim of REACH to deliver high quality research in paediatrics that improves patient care and enhances Junior Doctor experience. In addition to this, providing exposure, education and training in research as well as supporting Junior Doctors from all backgrounds to become involved in research are key aims of the Network.

With this in mind, the Project Selection Process has been designed from its core to be an inclusive and supportive process.

Junior Doctors may have identified important research ideas but may not feel confident to translate this into a project proposal. All are welcomed and encouraged to speak to REACH at any stage of the Project Selection Process in order to develop their ideas. REACH is also committed to providing useful feedback on all project proposals so that junior doctors can understand how to refine their submissions.

This document describes the Project Selection Process, which is outlined in the flowchart below.



This document covers the Submission Process and the two key steps in project selection - Assessment for Feasibility and Potential and Project Evaluation.



Submission Process

The submission process is intended to be simple to encourage the submission of proposals from Junior Doctors without necessitating any previous research experience. Proposers are welcome to discuss their ideas with REACH before submission for advice and support in designing and submitting their proposal.

Eligibility: Proposals are welcome from any Junior Doctor working primarily in Paediatrics, within the London region. We do not require that the doctor should be in training. Proposals that have been discussed with and supported by an appropriate Consultant are likely to be more successful, but this should not be a barrier to submission and REACH will support a proposer to identify a suitable Consultant if this is proving challenging.

Project subtypes: Projects can be audit, service evaluation, quality improvement or research. They should relate to patient care and within the remit of “General Paediatrics”.

Submissions: Proposals should be completed using the “REACH Project Proposal Form”, which is found on the REACH website, and submitted to the Projection Selection Team via the generic REACH email address, reachnetworkldn@gmail.com.

Timeline: Proposals may be submitted at any time. We aim to review their Feasibility and Potential within two months and review eligible proposals for selection once or twice a year, depending on the current level of activity. The submission deadlines to be considered in any upcoming selection process will be advertised in advance of the deadline, to allow time for submissions to be finalised.

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) & Sustainability

The NIHR UK Standards for public involvement in research¹ recommends that members of the public and patient groups are involved in research projects as early as the selection of projects as well as their design. REACH is working towards embedding these standards into its practice.

In proposing your project, please consider how you would involve members of the public or patient groups within your research. This is separate to the participants of the study; PPI is the process of getting input from the wider community so research that is produced is more relevant and useful for public life. REACH will offer guidance in integrating PPI within your project.

¹ NIHR UK Standards for Public Involvement <https://sites.google.com/nih.ac.uk/pi-standards/home>



Patient and public contributors will where possible also be involved in the Project Selection Process.

The UKRI suggests that research and innovation should meet “today’s needs without depleting [our] ability to meet them in the future”². This includes environmental, human and financial resources. We are working to embed these important sustainability considerations in the projects we undertake, and therefore we encourage proposers to consider the sustainability impacts of their proposal.

Feasibility and Potential (Step 1)

All projects submitted to REACH will be reviewed by at least two members of the Project Selection Team (see below) for Feasibility and Potential. We aim to complete this initial assessment for feasibility as soon as possible and at the latest within 2 months of submission. At this stage, proposals will be assessed to ensure that they are achievable, clinically relevant, not already answered within the current literature and will add value to the body of knowledge on the subject.

If it is felt that the proposed project is not feasible, this will be fed back to the proposer by the Project Selection Team. Where appropriate, support and guidance will be offered to refine the proposal for future re-submission.

Feasibility & Potential Criteria

At the initial Feasibility and Potential review, we will be assessing proposals based upon the following criteria. In order to progress to the Project Selection phase, all of these criteria should be met.

- Proposer is a Junior Doctor primarily working within Paediatrics in London
- Proposer has identified a suitable Supporting Consultant with relevant experience
- The Proposed Project has clear aims which have been specified
- The Proposed Project is (or could be) relevant to clinical Paediatrics
- The Proposed Project has a clear and appropriate methodology for its aims and is (or could be) achievable within the function of the REACH Network
- The Proposed Project does not replicate (or closely follow) previously published work or work in progress, unless doing so would be beneficial within the REACH Region or sufficient time has elapsed or changes in practice have occurred since the previous work was completed

All projects that meet the feasibility and potential criteria will progress to the Project Selection Process (see below).

² UKIR Environmental Sustainability Strategy

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-050920-SustainabilityStrategy.pdf>

UKIR Research Financial Sustainability <https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/research-sustainability/>



Project Selection (Step 2)

Projects which meet the Feasibility and Potential criteria will be entered into the Project Selection Process, with a view to being selected as a REACH project. This process will take place once or twice a year, depending on the current workload of the REACH Network, with the aim to select 1 to 2 projects annually. The dates for this process, including submission deadlines will be clearly advertised.

All projects in the selection process will be available for review by all members of the Project Selection Team (see below) in advance of the process. During the Project Selection Process, each member of the team will anonymously score each project on the criteria below followed by a team review and discussion of scores. The project with the highest aggregate score at the end of the process will be selected. In the case of a tie, the team will vote on which project they think is most suitable, with the current REACH Chair(s) having the deciding vote.

Following this process, all proposers will receive feedback on their proposal. Those that are selected as the next REACH project will be invited to be the Project Lead. If they decline, the Project Selection Team will work with the proposer to identify a suitable lead. If a suitable lead cannot be identified we will work with the next highest scoring project. The Proposers of unsuccessful projects will be invited to re-submit their project for the next project selection process, and will be offered support from the Project Selection Team to make any appropriate changes.

Project Selection Team

The Project Selection Team will be made up of: Chair(s), Central Committee members, Senior Team and previous Project Leads. All members of these groups will be invited to the Project Selection Process and 50% of eligible members must be involved in project selection for the process to be quorate. At least one member of the Senior Team and all the current Chair(s) must also be present.

As REACH's PPI programme becomes more established, there should be at least one representative from patient and public groups in the Project Selection Team

Project Selection Criteria

Each of the following criteria will be scored on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Scores are totalled across all domains and assessors to achieve the final score and then ranked.

- The Proposer has demonstrated enthusiasm regarding their submission
- The Proposer has demonstrated suitable awareness of the background to their submission
- The Proposer has demonstrated their ability to proceed with this Proposal OR has identified areas in which they need support
- The Proposed Project is relevant to paediatrics in London
- The Proposed Project considers an interesting question
- The Proposed Project is achievable within the function of the REACH Network



- The Proposer has considered an appropriate methodology for the study
- The Proposer has considered the use of patient and public involvement in the study and also sustainability
- The Proposer has considered possible governance issues

Project Development

Following Project Selection, chosen projects will progress to the next phase - Set Up and Delivery which is outlined in our Project Set Up and Delivery Standard Operating Policy.

Disputes and Appeals

We hope that we have designed a transparent and fair process for the submission, evaluation and selection of proposals. We understand that proposers may be disappointed if their proposal is not chosen to proceed to the next stage. We will offer feedback to all proposers explaining how their proposal was judged. We will also offer suggestions for improvement should the proposer wish to submit the proposal again in the future, and we can support them to do this.

Presently, we do not have capacity to offer appeals to this process - the decision of the Project Selection Team will be final. However, we welcome outside auditing of our processes and will share minutes of the Project Selection Team meetings for the interest of transparency and accountability.