

NIHR School for Primary Care Research Outstanding Contribution to Public & Community Involvement Awards

As part of the 20th Anniversary celebrations of the NIHR School for Primary Care Research (SPCR), we are launching the Outstanding Contribution to Public & Community Involvement Awards. These awards recognise and celebrate innovative, inclusive and meaningful involvement of people and communities across **SPCR-funded research and activity**.

Public and community involvement refers to research carried out *with* or *by* members of the public and communities, rather than *to*, *about* or *for* them, ensuring that their lived experience, perspectives and priorities shape research design, delivery and impact.

They are an opportunity to highlight excellent practice in patient, public and community involvement and engagement, and to acknowledge the vital contributions made by public and community partners, researchers and research support staff.

There are three award streams:

1. An award for public and community partners involved in research
2. An award for early career researcher / support staff
3. An award for research projects

Prize

- Gift vouchers (£100 for award recipients in each category and £50 for highly commended nominees from each department, per award category)
- An invitation to attend the SPCR 20th Anniversary Celebration at Keele University on 10 November 2026 (with travel and accommodation covered)

All nominees will receive a certificate of recognition, and all nominations will also be showcased at the SPCR 20th anniversary celebration event in a booklet, celebrating all nominees' contribution to public and community involvement.

Consent will be obtained from nominees and nominators around the nomination being shared publicly.

How nominations will be reviewed

Applications will be reviewed by members of the SPCR community, including members of the SPCR Public Steering Group, the SPCR Assistant Director, the Public Involvement & Engagement Manager, and the Academic Lead for Public Involvement & Engagement.

Nominations will be assessed on:

- the quality of the involvement described, including how meaningful, inclusive, and innovative it was;
- the difference the involvement activities made to SPCR-funded research, those involved, and involvement practice; and

- what makes the contribution outstanding, including evidence of going above and beyond the individual's role or usual expectations for involvement within a project.

How to submit a nomination

Further information about who can submit a nomination, and what each award category covers is below (pg. 3 – 5).

All nominations should relate to SPCR research and activity and be written in Plain English. We welcome nominations from a wide range of experiences.

Nominations can be submitted online or over email via the online or offline nomination form available [here](#).

Nominations must be submitted by Tuesday 28th July at midday.

Outcomes will be shared before end of September 2026 and nominees shortlisted will be invited to attend the SPCR 20th Anniversary Celebration on the evening of 10th November 2026 at Keele University to receive their award.

Where possible all nominees should be informed of the nomination in advance, including the possibility to attend the SPCR 20th Anniversary Celebration event at Keele University (evening of 10th November 2026) if they are shortlisted.

If you have any queries about a nomination, or would like to submit a nomination in an alternative way, please reach out to SPCR PPIE Manager, Halle Johnson via spcr@keele.ac.uk

Award 1: Outstanding Contribution – Individual Award (Public / Community Partner)

This award recognises public or community partners, involvement groups, or community organisations who have made an outstanding contribution to SPCR-funded research or activity.

It celebrates people or groups whose involvement helped ensure that research was grounded in real-life experience, and who made a clear difference to primary care research and/or how the work was carried out. This contribution may have taken place over a long period, or through a particularly important contribution at a key moment.

This may include people or groups who:

- Shared lived experience, knowledge or insights that helped shape one, or many, primary care research
- Took an active role in involvement and helped make it meaningful and relevant
- Influenced ideas, decisions or ways of working through what they shared
- Worked as trusted and valued partners with researchers
- Challenged thinking or brought perspectives that strengthened the research
- Added value to the research, research team and/or involvement practice

Who is eligible?

- Public partners, community members, or groups/organisations involved in NIHR SPCR-funded research or activity

How to nominate:

Please submit a written nomination of up to 500 words, describing the individual or public/community group's contribution in Plain English.

Your nomination should include:

- The name of the individual and/or group
- The SPCR-funded project/s or activity/s they were involved in
- How they have been involved, including what the person or group contributed
- How their contribution made a difference
- What made their contribution outstanding

Who can nominate:

Nominations may be put forward by:

- members of the research team
- PPIE leads
- other public or community partners
- staff within SPCR member departments

Award 2 – Outstanding Contribution – Individual Award (Early Career Researcher / Support Staff)

This award recognises early career researchers and research support professionals who have made an outstanding contribution to public and community involvement in SPCR-funded research, activities or departments.

It celebrates individuals whose actions helped ensure that public and community involvement was well supported, meaningful, and made a difference within primary care research. This may include individuals who:

- Demonstrated strong commitment to public and community involvement in their own research projects, or through supporting others
- Used new or creative ways to involve people and communities
- Made it easy and welcoming for different people to be involved
- Built positive, respectful relationships with public and community partners
- Listened carefully to what people said and acted on their feedback
- Enabled public or community partners to contribute in ways that genuinely influence research or activities

Who is eligible?

Early Career researchers or research support staff (i.e. PPIE lead, Research Manager, Administrator) based with SPCR member departments

How to nominate

Please submit a written nomination of up to 500 words, describing the individual's contribution. This should be written in Plain English.

Your nomination should include:

- The name of the individual, their role and the team/department they are based in
- The SPCR-funded project or activity the contribution relates to
- What they did to support public and/or community involvement throughout their own project, or to support others
- How they worked with people and communities
- What difference their contribution made to primary care research and/or the people and communities involved
- What made their contribution outstanding

Who can nominate:

Nominations may be put forward by:

- Public or community partners
- Staff within SPCR member departments

Award 3: Outstanding Contribution – Research Project Award

This award recognises SPCR-funded research and capacity (i.e. PhD, fellowship) projects that demonstrated outstanding commitment to embedding inclusive and meaningful public and community involvement throughout their project.

It celebrates projects where involvement was an important and valued part of the research, and where this involvement clearly made a difference to the research and/or the people involved. This may include projects that:

- Used new or creative ways to involve people and communities
- Made it easy and welcoming for different people to take part
- Built positive, respectful relationships with public and community partners
- Involved people in ways that meant they could really influence the research
- Listened to what people said and acted on their feedback
- Made a clear difference to the research and/or the people involved

Who is eligible?

- SPCR-funded projects. This includes projects funded through SPCR competitive and department-run funding rounds, as well as capacity projects
- Projects should have been funded within this phase of the School, i.e. from April 2021 onwards.

How to nominate

Please submit a written nomination of up to 500 words. This should be written in Plain English.

Your nomination should include:

- The name of the SPCR-funded research project
- A brief description of the project and its aims
- How public and/or community partners were involved in the project
- How involvement was supported, inclusive and accessible
- How public or community input influenced the research or how it was carried out
- What difference involvement made to the research and/or the people involved
- What makes this project's approach to public and community involvement outstanding

Who can nominate:

Nominations may be put forward by:

- Staff within SPCR member departments (including PPIE leads and research managers)
- Public or community partners