

Non-Consultant Hospital Doctor (NCHD) National Fellowship in Innovation



Deadline for submission of applications to the Spark Innovation Programme:

17:00 Friday Jan 16th 2026

Introduction

The HSE Spark Innovation Programme was established by National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) in July 2017 as a national initiative to empower and engage with NCHDs. Since then, the programme has grown to welcome partnerships with the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Directorate (ONMSD) and the National Health and Social Care Professionals Office (NHSCPO). The programme continues to support, promote and recognise innovation amongst healthcare staff of all grades and experience.

The Spark team and its partners believe that the opportunity to develop one's ideas is central to staff engagement and that it inspires staff, encourages recruitment and supports retention. The Spark team also believes that successful innovation activity is not solely dependent on successfully implemented ideas but also includes the potential for shared learning for the system. Finally, we believe that staff within the system are uniquely positioned to identify challenges, patient needs and process inefficiencies that could be successfully addressed through innovation and Human Centred Design. The ultimate vision of the HSE Spark Programme is to empower all HSE staff to innovate and improve the health service in a collaborative manner.

The Role of Innovation Fellow

Since its inception, the Spark Innovation programme has been led by National Spark Innovation Fellows. To date these have been frontline staff with a passion for innovation who have led innovation initiatives during a one-year fellowship. The Fellows change each year and pass on their work to the incoming Fellows. You can read about the current Innovation Fellows here: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/spark-innovation-programme/national-fellow-for-innovation-and-change/>

The role of the NCHD Fellow is critical in leading and shaping the Spark Programme. The Fellow plays a key part in supporting ideas, design, innovation, collaboration, and initial implementation of initiatives led by frontline staff. The NCHD Innovation Fellow joins Nursing/Midwifery, Health and Social Care Professional and Pharmacy Fellows for the duration of their fellowship. Fellows work collaboratively within the programme. In this way, we ensure that Fellows represent their own professional group and the wider healthcare workforce in all decision making around how best to support innovation at the front line of Irish healthcare.

The Award

The successful candidate will be awarded a Spark National Innovation Fellowship and will receive a salary equivalent to their current rate of remuneration for the duration of the one-year Fellowship. In addition, funding for a postgraduate programme may be provided during the year of the Fellowship only (The course must be agreed in advance with the Head of HSE Spark).

2026-27 National NCHD Fellow in Innovation

The HSE is now inviting applications for an NCHD Fellowship in Innovation commencing in July 2026. The Innovation Fellowship presents an exciting opportunity for an NCHD to develop their innovation and leadership skills. This will be done in collaboration with NDTP, ONMSD, HSCP Office and other stakeholders.

The Fellowship can be a full time or part time commitment for an NCHD for a one-year period. The HSE Spark Programme would be open to having one full-time Innovation Fellow or two Fellows working less than full time (for example, two Fellows working 0.6 WTE). This would allow the Fellow to remain in clinical practice or pursue other interests if desired. Fellows are not requested or required to apply in tandem with another colleague if they wish to work less than full time. HSE Spark will identify the correct partnership between two prospective Fellows should the role be shared. The HSE Spark Programme is open to the fellow working from home or other locations with a number of days in the Spark Office / Dr Steevens' Hospital, as required. We operate a hybrid working model with attendance at our base office in Dublin and at relevant events across the country required regularly. Access to appropriate transport to fulfil the requirements of the role will be required.

If the Innovation Fellow is enrolling in a relevant postgraduate programme the specific course will be agreed with the successful applicant. Time required to undertake the postgraduate programme and associated research will also be agreed with the successful applicant.

Remit of the National Innovation Fellow

The remit of the Fellow will include:

General Duties:

- Lead and continue to develop the HSE Spark Programme in collaboration with the other fellows, the NDTP, ONMSD and HSCP leads, the National Lead NCHD, and other providers including NCHDs, consultants, nursing/midwifery colleagues, HSCPs, hospitals, Regional leadership/staff and other relevant stakeholders
- Act as a resource for healthcare providers to help drive innovation, change and collaboration in the health services
- Develop and lead spark initiatives to support innovation and collaboration within

the HSE

- Encourage engagement with the HSE Spark Programme via site visits to hospitals/services and attendance at training days and conferences
- Develop a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against which to measure the impact of the role and projects supported by Spark
- Assist with scaling up and/or transferring successful initiatives and projects that have been undertaken in one clinical site to other sites
- Prepare reports, articles and or updates for a variety of purposes including the HSE Spark Programme Updates, NDTP updates and other website blogs, Health Matters, Lead NCHD Newsletter, Annual Reports, HR updates, media press releases, social media, etc.
- Promote interdisciplinary team working
- Attend meetings as required, both internally and externally
- Join a number of boards/working groups where the Innovation Fellow has a presence. (These will be discussed and agreed with the Fellow).
- Communicate with healthcare colleagues via various platforms e.g., social media, twitter, email, website etc.
- Undertake further duties as required.

Leading and developing the Spark initiatives:

The HSE Spark Programme encompasses a wide range of initiatives designed to support and encourage innovation amongst NCHDs, consultants, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, health and social care professionals and other healthcare staff. Innovation fellows will be expected to lead the programme and further shape it over their year in the role.

Other Duties:

The NCHD Innovation Fellow will be expected to encourage and support planned and unplanned innovation whilst developing novel approaches to support innovation. Examples of this include:

- Developing initiatives/mechanisms to support innovation at clinical sites
- Cultivating and developing relationships internal and external to the HSE. Examples include the National Lead NCHD, e-Health Ireland and the Office of the CCO, the TTO, the NDTP, ONMSD, NHSCPO, the Trainee Committee of the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies etc.
- Designing, organising and delivering innovation events for healthcare staff
- Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with relevant academic institutions, industries, and international organisations.
- Creating, disseminating, and assessing applications for funding and support
- Overseeing elements of the Spark Innovation Programme budget under the supervision of the HSE Spark Programme Lead
- Contributing to the work of national offices such as NDTP, ONMSD, HSCP, QPS, National

HR, Office of the CCO and / or wider HSE policy and planning, including discussion papers and strategies.

- Developing opportunities for shared learning across various sites and assisting with the transfer of successful initiatives that have been undertaken in one clinical site to other sites
- Take a leadership role within the programme in delivering the innovation fund associated with the Public Only Consultants Contract 2023
- Contribute to the body of research around frontline innovation and take steps to prove the value of the programme

Competencies:

Professional Knowledge & Experience

Demonstrate:

- Familiarity with and a demonstrable track record in innovation, improvement and change
- Knowledge of NCHD work structures
- Knowledge of Irish Health Service structures, integration and reconfiguration
- Excellent ICT skills

Planning, Organising and Delivery of Results

Demonstrate:

- Excellent organisational and time management skills to meet objectives within agreed timeframes and achieve high quality results
- Evidence of effective planning and organisational skills including an awareness of resource management and the importance of value for money
- The ability to improve efficiency within the working environment and to be flexible and adapt to a rapidly changing environment
- A capacity to operate successfully in a challenging operational environment while adhering to quality standards
- The ability to focus on achieving results and to be motivated and enthusiastic with a 'can do' attitude
- The ability to successfully manage a range of different projects and work activities concurrently
- An ability to prioritise, organise and schedule a wide variety of tasks and to manage competing demands while consistently maintaining high standards and positive working relationships

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Demonstrate:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills including the ability to produce professional reports
- A track record of building positive working relationships with people who work in a challenging and, at times, stressful work environment

- A willingness to acquire new engagement and interaction skills as required for the successful delivery of the role (e.g. delivery of online web tutorials, webinars, development of social media posts etc.)
- Excellent communication and relationship building skills and the ability to achieve “buy-in” from major stakeholders
- Negotiation/influencing skills

Leadership and Teamwork

Demonstrate:

- The capacity for management responsibility and the ability to take initiative
- The ability to achieve results through collaborative working
- The ability to build and maintain relationships with colleagues and other stakeholders and to achieve results through collaborative work
- The ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a dynamic team and multi stakeholder environment
- The ability to lead the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required.
- Flexibility, adaptability and openness to working effectively in a changing environment.

Commitment to a High Quality Service

Demonstrate:

- An ability to pay close and accurate attention to detail in personal work and to create a culture where high standards are valued and respected
- Evidence of practicing and promoting a strong focus on delivering high quality person centred services
- A commitment to Human Centred Design for healthcare
- Commitment to developing own knowledge and expertise.

Fellowship Contractual Arrangements

The following employment and contractual arrangements will apply to the Fellowship:

- The Fellowship opportunity is for a one-year period (fixed term) on the Fellow’s current employment terms and conditions/salary working within the HSE Spark Programme.
- Governance lies with the HSE Spark Programme Director and reporting relationship with the HSE Spark Programme Director and the HSE Spark Innovation Lead.

Who Should Apply

Applicants must possess the following:

- Have at least completed Medical internship by July 2026
- A successful track record in engaging and contributing positively to innovation

and change programmes

- Experience of engaging with and working with a range of stakeholders including NCHD colleagues
- The requisite knowledge, skills and attributes to make a contribution to the health service through the Fellowship

How to Apply

To apply please, fill out the application form on the online portal:

<https://surveys.hse.ie/s/WI02EA/>

Here, you will also be asked to submit the following:

- A comprehensive Curriculum Vitae clearly showing relevant achievements and experience from your career to date
- A cover letter/personal statement (maximum 2 pages) outlining why you wish to be considered for this Fellowship and where you believe your skills and experience meet the requirements for the Innovation Fellowship

Additional relevant information:

- At interview, applicants will be expected to discuss their strategy for the year in terms of communication and engagement, new ideas for NCHD innovation and a brief outline of their goals / targets for the year
- Shortlisted applicants may be asked to prepare a presentation that will form part of the selection process
- Candidates are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the programme and the candidate guidance booklet which can be found here: <https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/spark-innovation-programme/professional-innovation-fellowships/>

Closing date for Applications:

Applications must be submitted via the [online portal](#) no later than 17:00 on Friday 16th January 2026

Interviews will take place [online](#) during the week of 9th February 2026

Informal enquiries to:

Jared Gormly, Spark Programme Director at jared.gormly@hse.ie or by phone 087 1242317

The Selection Process

The HSE will consider and shortlist the applications. Consideration will include:

- The candidate's clinical experience
- The candidate's experience of:
 - Contributing to innovation programmes
 - Engaging with stakeholders in the health service
- The candidate's possession of the following knowledge, skills and attributes:
 - Professional Knowledge and Experience
 - Planning, Organising and Delivery of Results
 - Communication and Interpersonal Skills
 - Leadership and Teamwork
 - Commitment to a Quality Service
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend for interview with a panel formed by the HSE.
- Shortlisted applicants may be asked to prepare a presentation that will form part of the selection process
- The application form may form part of the shortlisting process.
- You are invited to attend a webinar on Tuesday 18th November to learn more about the Fellowship from our current fellows. Please see our social media channels and our webpage for details.
- Candidates are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the programme and the candidate guidance booklet which can be found here:
<https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/spark-innovation-programme/professional-innovation-fellowships/>

Failure to include information regarding these requirements may result in you not being called to the next stage of the selection process.



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