

Information sheet for applicants: Data & Digital Innovation SIG

Open call now live: The Health and Social Care Innovation Wales Data & Digital Innovation Special Interest Group is inviting applications for data and digital innovation projects that could improve health and social care outcomes across Wales.

Who can apply?

- NHS Wales organisations
- Social care organisations in Wales
- Collaborative partnerships, including with academia or industry, where the NHS Wales or social care partner is the lead applicant

What is the call for?

We are looking for projects that use data, digital tools, analytics, automation, artificial intelligence, interoperability or national digital platforms to address a clear service, workforce, patient, population health or system challenge.

Priority areas	Examples of suitable focus
Data-driven service transformation	Using data to redesign, prioritise or improve services
Digital tools and platforms	Improving outcomes, experience, access or integration
Workforce productivity	Reducing burden, improving efficiency or supporting decision-making
AI, analytics or automation	Testing, evaluating or preparing digitally enabled approaches
Interoperability	Making better use of national digital platforms and connected systems

What support is available?

A ring-fenced innovation fund of £15,000 is available to support selected projects until March 2027. The intention is to support a portfolio of suitable projects, subject to quality, fit and available resource.

Please note: The fund is not an unrestricted grant and applicants should not assume that the full £15,000 is available for a single project. Funding will be used to cover agreed resource, expertise, activity or support provided through the SIG route.

- Data and analytical capability
- Specialist digital advice or resource
- Support to develop, test or evaluate an innovation
- Advice to support implementation, spread or scaling

Eligibility at a glance

- Led by an NHS Wales or social care organisation and endorsed by [the relevant innovation department or organisational lead](#)
- Clear data and/or digital innovation focus
- Defined service, workforce, patient, population health or system challenge
- Deliverable as a short-turnaround project or defined phase by March 2027
- Clear plan for evaluation, impact measurement and shared learning
- Clear statement of whether SIG-funded resource is requested or whether advice/support only is needed

Application timeline

Milestone	Date
Open call issued	Monday 14 September 2026
Application deadline	Sunday 11 October 2026
SIG scoring window	Monday 12 October to Wednesday 21 October 2026
SIG meeting and recommendations	Thursday 22 October 2026
Innovation Leads approve projects and spend	Thursday 29 October 2026
Applicants notified	Friday 30 October 2026

What will applications be assessed on?

Assessment area	What reviewers will consider
Strategic alignment	Fit with NHS Wales, Social Care, Welsh Government and national digital priorities
Problem importance	Scale, urgency and clarity of the challenge being addressed
Impact potential	Potential benefit for patients, workforce, services, system value or digital capability

Innovation and evidence	Novelty, differentiation, readiness and supporting evidence
Deliverability	Feasibility, timescales, dependencies, risks and capacity to deliver
Value for money	Proportionate use of available resource compared with expected benefit

How to apply

[Complete the SIG application form](#) and submit it by Sunday 11 October 2026. Applications should set out the project challenge, proposed innovation, expected benefits, support requested, delivery plan, risks and dependencies, and how impact and learning will be captured.

What happens if your project is successful?

- You will agree a proportionate monitoring and benefits plan before work begins
- You will provide progress updates and participate in review checkpoints
- You will produce a final evaluation summary or report
- You will share learning through appropriate routes, such as SIG updates, case studies, webinars or wider knowledge sharing

Important: Submission does not guarantee funding or support. Applications will be reviewed against eligibility, strategic priorities, available budget, available SIG resource and overall portfolio balance.