

# Nottingham Clinical Trials Unit

## Criteria for engagement

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The Nottingham Clinical Trials Unit (NCTU) aims to conduct clinically important high quality randomised trials that improve health and wellbeing. Clinicians and researchers who plan to engage with NCTU are advised to contact us as early in the process as possible. Ideally, for open calls, this should be **at least three to six months** before a research grant deadline, For commissioned calls, contact must be **at least three weeks** before the deadline. This is so that NCTU can offer its experience and knowledge from the initial stages of study development, and to provide NCTU with adequate time to schedule the work required.

NCTU will be able to provide advice on the right questions, appropriate design and options for funding, and support the Chief Investigator in preparing the grant application. The success and value of NCTU depends on the quality and relevance of the trials conducted. The choice of which trials to engage with is based on the following criteria:

- **Addresses an important question**  
The proposed RCT must address a clinically important question. For example, if the trial is successful, there is a reasonable expectation that the results would lead to a worthwhile change in clinical practice or public health policy.
- **Identified gap in our knowledge**  
An appropriate high quality systematic review supports the need for a trial.
- **Appropriate research team**  
The project team has an appropriate skill mix, and there is clear agreement about the role of NCTU.
- **Potential to secure funding**  
There should be identified potential sources of funding. For example, based on identified priorities for the NHS, a topical issue, or a commissioned or themed call.
- **Feasibility**  
There should be a well thought through strategy for demonstrating that it is feasible to recruit and retain participants into the trial. This might include conducting feasibility or pilot work. Timeframes for protocol development and grant application should be realistic.
- **Financially viable**  
NCTUs involvement in the study must be appropriately financed, with a minimum expectation that NCTU recovers the true cost of its engagement in the study - in terms of staff costs and consumables.
- **Contributes to the NCTU portfolio**  
NCTU will assess its engagement in the trial based on whether it contributes to the NCTU portfolio of high quality and clinically relevant trials.

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*NCTU has a finite capacity. Therefore a key consideration in the decision to engage will be whether there is sufficient capacity to support the project*