NIHR Biomedical Research Centres
Guide to brand, channels and comms

1 Introduction

The mission of the [National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)](#) is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. NIHR funds, enables and delivers world-leading health and social care research that improves people's health and wellbeing, and promotes economic growth.

NIHR Biomedical Research Centres (BRCs) are collaborations between world-leading universities and NHS organisations that bring together academics and clinicians to translate lab-based scientific breakthroughs into potential new treatments, diagnostics and medical technologies. The NIHR [has awarded nearly £800 million to 20 Biomedical Research Centres (2022-27) across England](#), to translate scientific discoveries into new treatments, diagnostic tests and medical technologies to improve patient lives.

BRC comms and channels play a critical part in how NIHR engages and involves audiences and stakeholders in what it does, demonstrating the value of health and social care research and the research findings that are possible as a result. Having a consistent visual approach also helps to connect the BRCs and other different parts of NIHR so users perceive a cohesive whole despite NIHR's multiple locations.

This guidance sets out NIHR requirements for using designated BRC names and describing relationships with partners, as well as the role of comms people and other BRC staff in encouraging researchers, industry and BRC users to acknowledge the support of the BRC in their research. This advice applies across all comms channels and other relevant activities.

The guidance also sets out BRC-specific advice for websites and outlines standard requirements for all NIHR infrastructure on social media, media relations, and other comms channels.

NIHR BRCs are part of the NIHR and should support awareness of the NIHR and its public funding by:

- using the designated NIHR name for their BRC and the set statements describing its relationship to the NIHR and the host trust
- encouraging researchers in the BRC and partnering organisations to use appropriate acknowledgements in research outputs and other activities
- applying the NIHR visual identity, including their BRC sub-logo, on digital and print materials
- curating a branded web presence and using social media channels to share BRC funded and supported research
- stating their new themes and funding period on their website as soon as possible (and before end of January 2023)
- flagging press releases, media activity and good news stories on research breakthroughs with the NIHR communications team
- supporting national NIHR communications activities.

All the channel requirements are also summarised at the end of this guidance in a checklist.

As stated above, we expect all BRCs to **update their themes and funding period** as soon as possible (by end January 2023) and to meet other brand and channel requirements in two phases (first deadline by July 2023 and full requirements by December 2023). More information is available in the timelines section.

2 BRC naming and acknowledgement

NIHR BRCs have designated names and follow a consistent naming convention that draws on the name of the relevant NHS Trust award holder.

The name format for BRCs is: "NIHR [HOST TRUST] Biomedical Research Centre."

For example:
    NIHR Barts Biomedical Research Centre

"NIHR" and "BRC" can be abbreviated in text. However, any abbreviations should first have been defined and the abbreviation given in brackets.

A full list of BRC names is available in Appendix A.

2.1 Relationship statements

BRCs are funded and designated by the NIHR and are hosted by NHS Trusts. These relationships should be acknowledged online and elsewhere in a relationship statement and may need to be checked and revised if one has been in use previously:

The NIHR [NAME] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) is part of the NIHR and hosted by [HOST TRUST NAME] in partnership with [PARTNER UNI NAME].

For example:

The NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre is part of the NIHR and hosted by Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with The University of Manchester.

*NB The statement carries a reference to being **part of the NIHR**.*

Please use this statement on websites, social media and other comms channels as appropriate.

Other collaborating organisations may also be acknowledged, although only those named as part of the original funding application (2022-27) and not any others added on subsequently.

Please contact us if you need to develop your relationship statement to incorporate a collaborating organisation named in your funding application and we will provide assistance.

2.2 How researchers and partners should describe the BRC

Please advise researchers, industry partners and other individuals and organisations to acknowledge the funding and/or support of the NIHR BRC in their own research outputs and dissemination activities:

- An acknowledgement should be incorporated within the acknowledgements section of all BRC publications (see 2.2.1)
- Acknowledgment by partners of the support from a BRC can be fulfilled with use of a standard statement and, if a visual opportunity exists on a partner site, the 'Supported by NIHR' logo (see 2.2.2).

2.2.1 Acknowledgment and disclaimer statement (including funder)

A statement should be incorporated within the acknowledgements of publications and other disseminations of research results following studies undertaken at the BRC.

Scenario 1: ***Instances where the research received <u>majority funding from the BRC</u>:***
Acknowledgement and disclaimer for NIHR research at the BRC:

"This study/research is funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) [HOST TRUST] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care."

Please also acknowledge any other NIHR support the research may have received.

Scenario 2: ***Instances where the research was funded by another funder <u>but delivered through the BRC</u>:***
Statement (including funder and disclaimer)

"[Research funder statement] This study has been delivered through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) [HOST TRUST] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the [name of the research funder], the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care."

Please also acknowledge any other NIHR support the research may have received, for example, through a research programme award.

Scenario 3: ***<u>Minimum statement</u> to be used in instances where there are funder details and/or word <u>count restrictions AND the research was funded by another funder</u> but delivered through the BRC***
Acknowledgement only (for use within a broader set of acknowledgements/disclaimers)

"The research was carried out at the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) [HOST TRUST] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)."

2.2.2 'Supported by NIHR' logo

You should also encourage researchers whose work the BRC has supported to use the 'Supported by NIHR' logo in their own sites, dissemination activities and comms if a visual element is possible. Further advice on use of this logo is available on the [Our visual identity page of the NIHR website, under 'Partners'](#).

SUPPORTED BY

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

3 NIHR visual identity

The NIHR has an [independent visual identity and brand](#) that unifies our organisation, enabling our funding, support and partnerships to be visible and recognised, while also connecting our distributed structure. As part of this, through their sub-logo (see 3.1), the BRCs are identified as belonging to this family while also demonstrating how the BRCs work together and support partner organisations.

The NIHR visual identity applies to:

- all NIHR communications and NIHR-funded or supported work
- all digital platforms and channels
- all signage and print materials.

The key elements of the NIHR visual identity are:

- The [NIHR logo](#) and [sub-logos](#)
- The [Lato typeface](#). This is a free Google font. [You can download the various versions from the NIHR Visual Identity Drive](#) for design jobs. Arial is the secondary font for general use.
- [Our colour palette of eight colours](#) - NIHR Navy (primary) plus seven others, with specific colour combinations to differentiate our communications for different audience groups
- [Our 13 design motifs](#), for use on the perimeter of photography or in colour blocks as a grid arrangement.

Full information about the NIHR visual identity is available on the [NIHR Communications website](#).

3.1 Using the BRC sub-logo

Designated - i.e. named - parts of the NIHR, such as BRCs, have an [NIHR sub-logo](#), which identifies your part of the organisation as being part of the NIHR. Our sub-logos allow us to present our distributed organisation in a cohesive way.

Your NIHR sub-logo is your most important visible component of the NIHR brand. You should use your sub-logo and apply other elements of the visual identity on websites, social media platforms, e-newsletters and in other NIHR communications such as for events.

The NIHR sub-logos consist of 'NIHR' on the left and the name of the part of the NIHR in full on the right (omitting 'NIHR'), separated by a coral line. For example:

NIHR | **Manchester Biomedical Research Centre**

BRC sub-logos are available to download from the NIHR Visual Identity Drive. NB BRCs should not use the 'Funded by NIHR' logo for BRC work.

NIHR sub-logos should be positioned on the top left of materials. Usage rules for sub-logos are the same as those for the NIHR logo.

Where more than one part of the NIHR is involved, just use the corporate NIHR logo and name the individual parts of the NIHR in the text, rather than using multiple sub-logos, which may dilute the collective NIHR impact.

4 BRC websites

BRC websites are the predominant tool for demonstrating the world-leading research undertaken in BRCs across a range of health areas and to signal the people and places available to carry out or support independent research.

All NIHR websites are expected to meet certain standards in terms of explaining the NIHR, using the NIHR visual identity, and maintaining accessibility, security and governance. These requirements are intended to support the BRCs to create coherence and consistency across the family of NIHR websites and ensure transparency regarding the NIHR's public investment in the BRCs.

This guidance summarises these NIHR-wide requirements, with signposts to full information on the NIHR Communications site, and describes requirements unique to the 2022-27 round of BRCs. It outlines where conformity is required and advises on best practice, while recognising the need for each BRC to be able to demonstrate its own unique offer.

4.1 Key requirements
All BRC websites must:

- be a stand alone website on the NIHR subdomain* with a URL that follows the subdomain naming convention e.g. moorfieldsbrc.nihr.ac.uk
- conform to the NIHR visual identity
- adopt consistent messaging to explain the NIHR family
- meet usability and accessibility standards
- meet security and governance requirements, including registering your website with the NIHR
- adhere to other elements of the [NIHR website acceptable use policy](#).

*Where this is not (yet) possible, we will work with you and your host web manager to ensure the BRC has a sufficient platform and appropriate NIHR naming and visual cues to convey being part of the NIHR family of websites.

4.2 Implementation timeline

By July 2023 we expect you to have:
- Amended your website URL to reflect NIHR naming conventions, if you have a stand-alone website
- Applied your NIHR sub-logo to your web presence
- Updated the 'About us' section of your website with your relationship statement and other set text about the NIHR family
- Undertaken an initial accessibility check on your website
- Met the NIHR security and governance requirements

By December 2023 we expect you to have:
- Applied the NIHR visual identity across your web content
- Responded to the NIHR web usability requirements

Compliance with these requirements will be audited by the NIHR.

4.3 Consistency/reflecting NIHR

The NIHR identity unifies our collective activities, enabling funding and support and partnerships with NHS, social care and public health organisations to be visible and recognised, while also connecting our distributed organisation. BRC subdomains and sub-logos signpost being part of the NIHR family, with up-to-date content demonstrating how the BRCs work together and support partner organisations.

4.3.1 What is required

4.3.1.1 Subdomain URL name

The expectation is for BRCs to have stand alone websites on the nihr.ac.uk domain. Website URLs must be named in accordance with the specified naming convention for BRCs. This is [BRC name].nihr.ac.uk. For example, bristolbrc.nihr.ac.uk or moorfieldsbrc.nihr.ac.uk.

The NIHR Communications site sets out the [eligibility criteria for the NIHR subdomain and the process for requesting a subdomain via the NIHR Hub Support Portal (NIHR Service Desk)](#).

The NIHR communications team can advise on criteria and naming conventions for NIHR subdomains and guide you through the process for requesting a subdomain. Please contact ccfcomms@nihr.ac.uk for support.

4.3.1.2 Sub-logo

Your [NIHR sub-logo](#) (i.e. your BRC logo) is your most important visible component of the NIHR brand. It is essential that it is always legible, prominent and unobstructed in any application.

- Always use the official BRC sub-logo that has been supplied to you. [You can download your sub-logo from the NIHR Visual Identity Drive](#).
- The sub-logo should be positioned on the top left corner of your website, in the website header, with the sub-logo linking back to your BRC homepage.

4.3.1.3 Visual identity

BRCs are expected to apply the [NIHR's visual identity](#) to website designs. This includes:
- Font: the NIHR website uses the [Lato font](#). This is a free Google font. [You can download the various versions from the NIHR Visual Identity Drive](#).
- Colour: please apply the [NIHR colour palette](#) ensuring you follow the colour codes that are assigned for specific audiences.
- Motifs: [NIHR design motifs](#) are available to be used, sparingly, as accents to design.

Further advice on the [NIHR visual identity](#) and [how to apply this to sub-domains](#) is available on the NIHR Communications website.

Go to the [NIHR Oxford BRC website](#) for an example of how to the NIHR visual identity has been applied on a BRC website (see below):
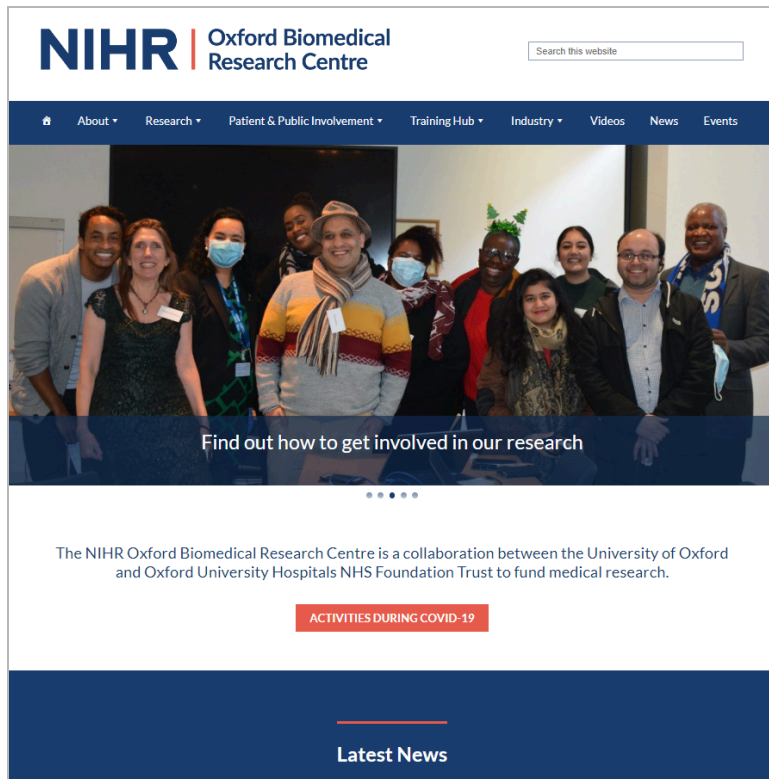
4.4 Explaining the NIHR family

In order to foster good understanding of the NIHR and the BRCs, we need to ensure there is consistency in the way that each is described. This avoids confusion and helps to cement the understanding of what we do.

4.4.1 What is required

The following descriptions should be used on your BRC website (within the 'About us' section and when other references are made i.e. in news stories, case studies) when describing the NIHR, your BRC, and the relationship between the NIHR and the BRC family.

4.4.1.1 How the NIHR is described

Please use the following text to describe the NIHR, and link to the NIHR website from this description.

> "The NIHR funds, enables and delivers world-leading health and social care research that improves people's health and wellbeing and promotes economic growth."

Note that the NIHR updates its description from time to time so you will need to check back for consistency and currency.

4.4.1.2 How the NIHR BRCs are described

Please use the following text to describe the BRC scheme, and link to the experimental medicine page on the NIHR website from this description.

> "[NIHR Biomedical Research Centres](#) (BRCs) are collaborations between NHS organisations and universities. They bring together academics and clinicians to translate scientific discoveries into potential new treatments, diagnostics and technologies."

4.4.1.3 How your BRC is described

Please use the following [relationship statement](#) to describe the relationship between your BRC, the NIHR, your host trust and your partner university. Note that this may need to be revised and updated on your site.

> "The NIHR [NAME] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) is part of the NIHR and hosted by [HOST TRUST NAME] in partnership with [PARTNER UNI NAME]."

This description of your BRC should appear clearly on your homepage and in the 'About us' section and in the website footer.

For an example of an approach that explains the NIHR family, see the [NIHR Moorfields BRC website](#).

4.5 Explaining your links with the wider NIHR

One of the unique selling points of the BRCs is the access they can provide to other expertise and infrastructure within the NIHR. As such, it is important that you clearly demonstrate this.

4.5.1 Parts of the NIHR that BRCs are a part of

All BRCs are required to explain the other NIHR infrastructure they partner with or host. In particular, the 'About us' section of your website should state if you are part of an NIHR Translational Research Collaboration and if you host an NIHR BioResource Centre. Standard descriptions are available to help you describe these.

4.5.1.1 NIHR Translational Research Collaborations

NIHR Translational Research Collaborations (TRCs) are collaborative groups of world-leading investigators established via NIHR Biomedical Research Centres with significant expertise in specific disease areas. The TRCs enable NIHR to work together with industry, charities and other stakeholders to develop and deliver early-phase translational research at scale.

> The NIHR [name] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) is part of Y and Z TRC.

[Read more about NIHR Translational Research Collaborations](#).

4.5.1.2 NIHR BioResource

The NIHR BioResource recruits and maintains a resource of data and samples donated by over 200,000 people. Researchers can use this resource to call up potential participants for studies to understand the links between genes, the environment, health and disease.

The NIHR [name] Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) hosts one of the NIHR BioResource centres across England.

[Find out more about the NIHR BioResource](#).

4.5.1.3 Other parts of the NIHR you collaborate with or may be of interest to your audiences

We also recommend that you signpost to other parts of the NIHR experimental medicine infrastructure that may be of interest to your audiences (e.g. [NIHR Clinical Research Facilities](#), noting that there are now 28) and other parts of the NIHR you collaborate with.
You can do this by:

- Signposting to the other BRCs that you collaborate with in the About us section.
- Signposting to local NIHR Clinical Research Facilities and to the [UKCRF Network](#).
- Describing the other parts of NIHR you work with that are relevant to your research themes when you describe your research themes within the research section.
- Ensuring you include links to other parts of the NIHR when you make reference to them in any news stories or promotional material.

For an example of how to explain other infrastructure (NIHR and external) that it supports and collaborates with, please see the [NIHR Birmingham BRC website](#).

Our infrastructure

The NIHR Birmingham Biomedical Research Centre makes use of the infrastructure put in place by Birmingham Health Partners. This is supported by resources and personnel provided by University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Birmingham, which creates a fertile environment for engagement with industry. Our approach has seen external demand for clinical academic collaborations in translational research and experimental medicine studies grow rapidly.

An integrated life sciences campus
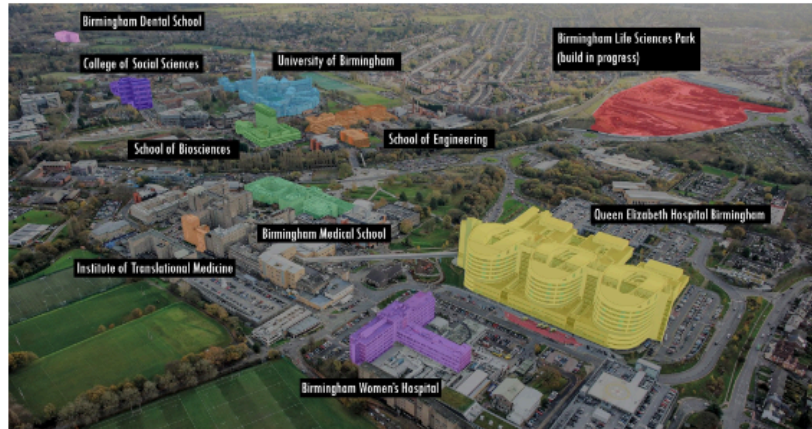
The NIHR Birmingham Biomedical Research Centre is based in the Institute of Translational Medicine, alongside the NIHR Surgical Reconstruction and Microbiology Research Centre, NIHR/Wellcome Trust Birmingham Clinical Research Facility, Birmingham Experimental Cancer Medicine Centre and Midlands and Wales Advanced Therapy Treatment Centre.

The Cancer Research UK Clinical Trials Unit is adjacent to the Institute of Translational Medicine, and the Advanced Therapies Facility is adjacent to the NIHR/Wellcome Trust Birmingham Clinical Research Facility. The Centre for Patient Reported Outcomes Research is located in the Murray Learning Centre on the University of Birmingham campus, and the Phenome Centre Birmingham is based in the School of Biosciences. The West Midlands Regional Genetics Laboratory is based in the Birmingham Women's Hospital.

4.6 Usability

It is important that your web visitors are able to find the information that they require with ease. The content on your BRC website should be planned and written from the user perspective to ensure that you are providing the information about what you have to offer in order to meet their needs. Follow best practice guidance in the NIHR writing for the web guide.

4.7 Target audience

Your website content should be designed to meet the needs of the intended audiences. For example, you should include content for patients and the public looking to get involved in research or commercial or charity partner organisations looking to collaborate through the BRC.

What is required

Ensure that you include specific details about the opportunities available for each of your intended audiences. For example, in the case of your industry and other partners, you should include details of the commercial organisations you have partnered with and platforms and specialist equipment and facilities available.The [NIHR Bristol BRC website](#) has content clearly explaining how the BRC works with industry and what it has to offer.

4.8 Navigation

The top level navigation bar is vital for supporting web users to achieve their goal on visiting the website. As such, it is important that the navigation clearly portrays information relating to the BRC purpose, what you do and what your offer is. It is also important that these have consistency across the BRCs so that web users are able to easily navigate information across multiple BRC websites.

What is required

All of the following types of headings should appear in your top level navigation bar as they reflect the role and purpose of BRCs and your offer:

- About us
- Our research
- Patient and public involvement
- Industry and partners
- Training and professional development
- News and events
- Contact us

The following subject areas should feature on your homepage, either through tiles or some other visual aid/menu:

- Leadership and governance structures
- Good examples of capacity development and PPIE/RI work
- Collaborative work with industry
- Impact stories

4.9 Research themes

NIHR BRCs are selected as a result of the world-leading research expertise that they hold. It is important for each BRC website to clearly demonstrate the capabilities and experience held across its research themes and the disease and therapeutic areas they apply. This will help to attract investment from other funders and commercial partners.

- DHSC has requested that research themes for 2022-27 to be updated as soon as possible and by 30 January 2023.

What is required

All BRCs are expected to clearly outline their research themes on their website homepage. Further detail should be shared within an 'Our research' section or similar, with the theme lead identified for each theme.

For an example, the [NIHR Southampton BRC website](#) has a clear outline of its research themes under its About us, with more detail including theme leads in its ['Our research'](#) section.

4.10 Accessibility

The NIHR is committed to making all NIHR websites accessible and inclusive. We want as many people as possible to be able to access our content.

All NIHR websites must meet the [Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 legislation](#) (as required by law for public sector organisations)

What is required
The NIHR expects all BRCs to meet [AA standards of accessibility](#).

The NIHR Communications site should be referred to for further guidance on [how to meet accessibility standards](#). You should pay particular attention to the following elements:

- **Headings** - use headings to break up large sections of text. Ensure that you apply heading HTML styles and use the sequential header levels. Never skip a header level for styling reasons.
- **Links** - links should be descriptive and tell the reader where the link is taking them. Links should not have generic text such as "click here" or "learn more".
- **Images** - Using Alt text to describe images is a vital part of accessibility, and the number one reason why web content may not be accessible. We have prepared a [full guide on alt text and image accessibility](#).
- **Video and audio** - Closed captioning should be available for all videos (except 'live' video), and transcripts should be made available for audio content.
- **PDFs** - Content should ideally be published in HTML rather than PDF format, as PDFs are harder to find, search and maintain. For more on why you should avoid using PDFs, or at least supplement PDFs with a HTML version, [read what the Government Digital Service has to say on the topic](#).
- **Tables** - do not use tables for styling and layout reasons. They should only be used for tabulated data. Make sure you have table headings.

You must complete an annual accessibility check to ensure that these standards are maintained.

You are required to publish an accessibility statement within your website footer. A [template accessibility statement](#) is available to support with writing a statement for your website.

4.11 Security and governance

It is important that all NIHR branded websites adhere to, and maintain, high standards of security and governance. The following NIHR policies apply to the set-up and running of NIHR branded websites.

- [NIHR Website Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [NIHR Privacy Policy](#)

What is required

NIHR websites must meet the requirements set out in the [NIHR Website Acceptable Use Policy](#).

In particular, you will need to identify a website owner and website manager (if different to website owner) who will be responsible for ensuring adherence to these policies and standards. It will be the responsibility of the owner and manager to regularly review the website and ensure it complies with accessibility and privacy standards.

You will need to record the website and its owner using the [NIHR website registration form](#).

You must also include a privacy statement on your website, as well as actively meet NIHR GDPR criteria outlined in the NIHR Privacy Policy.

5 BRC social media

BRCs can set up social media channels to share information about their research activity.

Naming
BRC Twitter and LinkedIn accounts should follow the [NIHR naming and identity conventions](#), recommending that, for example:

- Twitter handles comprise the BRC name with no dashes or underscores such as: [@ManchesterBRC](#)
- LinkedIn names comprise the name of the BRC written out in full such as: [NIHR Imperial Biological Research Centre](#)

The following information should be included in the social media profile biography/about text:

- The name of the BRC written out in full
- For Twitter, the [@NIHRresearch](#) handle (e.g. ..funded by @NIHRresearch)
- For LinkedIn, the [NIHR LinkedIn page](#)

Biogs can also include the names/handles of host institutions in addition to NIHR if you wish.

Branding
NIHR branding should be used on BRC social media platforms.

- [An NIHR navy social media profile picture (roundel) is available for BRC Twitter accounts](). You may instead wish to use an NIHR audience-specific roundel, if you consider your channel to be targeted primarily at one particular audience.
- If a LinkedIn page is set up, a company page should be used, not a personal profile. This provides more functionality and provides the future option of affiliating your LinkedIn page as part of an NIHR group.
- Social media accounts should acknowledge the NIHR funding in their bio. For example, by tagging the NIHR Research twitter account (@NIHRresearch) in a twitter bio. We also recommend that you tag your host organisation in any social media bios.
- Where appropriate when you tweet about research we have funded please use our twitter handle @NIHRresearch and we may be able to retweet

Advice on social media best practice is available on [the NIHR Communications website]().

NIHR social media channels
The NIHR has [seven audience streams]() under which our national corporate social media channels and content are arranged:

- News and Research
- Community
- Take Part
- Involvement
- Partners and Industry
- Evidence
- Global Health

If you have news or an announcement from your BRC that you believe has national relevance and you would like to be shared or RTed from a national corporate NIHR channel, [please contact the Comms Team at the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility]().

6 BRC press release and media activity

BRCs are required to notify NIHR in advance of any media activity, including but not limited to press releases on research findings. This notification should take place as soon as reasonably practicable and a minimum of **three working days** prior to any journalist outreach.

BRC media activity that should be notified to the NIHR includes:

- A press release being issued through the BRC host or partner institution
- A press release being issued by the journal, funder or partner in the research
- A researcher taking part in interviews for press or broadcast
- A media exclusive, journalist briefing or the journalist's own enquiry

- Filming by BBC or ITV

BRC hosts and partners are in receipt of public funding through the NIHR, which is why we ask for transparency through naming of the NIHR at the point of issue, and advance sight of NIHR-related news and announcements. This notification also allows NIHR to support and amplify noteworthy stories on NIHR channels, and to notify DHSC of such stories in advance, as well as those that might need sensitive handling.

Press releases

Please supply a copy of the draft press release to the [Comms Team at the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility](#) and, where relevant, the research paper, a minimum of three working days before the date of intended issue.

Press releases must acknowledge NIHR funding or support for the research by naming the NIHR in the first or second paragraph of the body of the press release, and always when the BRC is a lead player in the research. Press releases must also include the NIHR boilerplate in the Notes to Editors, available [on the NIHR Communications website](#).

Acknowledging the NIHR in media relations
BRC researchers must acknowledge NIHR if being interviewed about research funded or supported by the NIHR BRC or as a result of their BRC role. For example, you could use the researchers NIHR job title to ensure the NIHR name is mentioned.

7 Collaborating on national NIHR communications

NIHR communications teams in the coordinating centres and corporate comms teams [collaborate with communicators in NIHR infrastructure, schools and units on corporate and national comms activities](#).

Each year the NIHR runs a number of national communications campaigns, including the May Be Part of Research campaign. This campaign, [branded as TrialBlazers in 2022](#), aims to encourage patients and the public to take part or get involved in research.

The NIHR also oversees a network of [NIHR Regional Communications Links](#), which connects communicators in NIHR infrastructure, schools and units in 12 regions across England. These regional networks offer peer support and training to people who deliver NIHR comms, as well as provide an opportunity for collaboration in-region and to influence national NIHR communications. Each year we run an NIHR Communicators' Day' for everyone across NIHR communications to confer and learn from each other.

We maintain a directory of comms leads in each part of the NIHR so we can keep everyone informed of developments in NIHR comms. Please contact the [Comms Team at the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility](#) with details of comms leads at your BRC, so they can be added

to this directory. This person will also be offered the opportunity to join their local Regional Communications Network and an invite to the annual NIHR Communicators' Day.

8 Collaborating on images

If you are commissioning images to use on your website, presentations or press releases please use an appropriate consent form. We would also like to build our library of NIHR images and would be very grateful if you could include use by NIHR communications in the consent form and send us some images we can use for our channels (social media, website, news stories and newsletters)

9 Channels checklist and timelines

This checklist summarises all the NIHR requirements for BRC brand, channel and comms. You can use this checklist for a self audit of your BRC.

Requirement	Deadline	Done? (Y/N)
Update your website with information about your themes	End of Jan 2023	
Website is on NIHR subdomain (for stand alone websites)	July 2023	
Website URL reflects NIHR naming conventions	July 2023	
NIHR sub-logo applied	July 2023	
Full NIHR visual identity applied	December 2023	
NIHR descriptor included in 'About us' section	July 2023	
BRC descriptor included in 'About us' section	July 2023	
NIHR relationship statement included in 'About us' section and the footer of your website	July 2023	
Guidance for how researchers should acknowledge support received from your BRC	July 2023	
Relevant NIHR infrastructure signposted to in the 'About us' description	July 2023	
Web navigation amended	December 2023	
Information published for patients and the public	December 2023	
Information published for industry and partners	December 2023	
Initial accessibility check undertaken	July 2023	
Accessibility changes implemented in response to check	December 2023	
Process set up for completing the annual accessibility check	December 2023	
Accessibility statement published	December 2023	
Website owner and manager (if different to website owner) identified and recorded on the NIHR register	July 2023	
	July 2023	

NIHR GDPR criteria met, in accordance with [NIHR Privacy Policy]().	July 2023	
Social media (should you choose to have accounts)		
Account name follows naming convention ● Twitter - @NameBRC ● LinkedIn - NIHR [name] Biomedical Research Centre	July 2023	
Account profile image uses NIHR social media roundel	July 2023	
Biography/about text includes: ● The name of the BRC written out in full ● For Twitter, the @NIHRresearch handle ● For LinkedIn, the NIHR LinkedIn page	July 2023	

Compliance with these requirements will be audited by the NIHR.

10 How we can help you

We support BRCs to deliver engaging and impactful NIHR communications by:

Providing quotes from NIHR or DHSC spokespeople
- NIHR can reach out to NIHR spokespeople and DHSC ministers to secure quotes for media relations given sufficient advance notice. This can help to create richer and more influential stories.

Amplifying your stories on national NIHR channels
- NIHR might create a news story about your research for the news section of the NIHR website, which gets between 4,000 and 5,000 unique views a week.
- NIHR can share your stories on our social media channels, which have large numbers of followers and reach national audiences. For example, @NIHRresearch on Twitter has upwards of 90,000 followers.

Sharing patient stories
- We'd be interested to hear stories of patients who have been involved in the work of the BRC. Let us know these good news stories by getting in touch Comms Team at the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility

Advising on branding
- NIHR can provide advice on applying the NIHR visual identity across online and offline channels, as well as branded templates and guidance.

Supporting channel and website set-up
- For new BRCs or channels, NIHR can support your websites and social media set up to ensure that they meet NIHR requirements.

The NIHR comms team can be reached on ccfcomms@nihr.ac.uk or 020 8843 8072.

Appendix A - Names of BRCs

Name	Host institution
NIHR Barts Biomedical Research Centre	Barts Health NHS Trust
NIHR Birmingham Biomedical Research Centre	University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Bristol Biomedical Research Centre	University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Exeter Biomedical Research Centre	Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Great Ormond Street Hospital Biomedical Research Centre	Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre	Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
NIHR Leeds Biomedical Research Centre	Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
NIHR Leicester Biomedical Research Centre	University Hospitals Of Leicester NHS Trust
NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre	Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Moorfields Biomedical Research Centre	Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Newcastle Biomedical Research Centre	Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Nottingham Biomedical Research Centre	Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre	Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR The Royal Marsden Biomedical Research Centre (*note that this BRC*	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

Name	Host institution
uses an agreed longer version of this short form name in practice)	
NIHR Sheffield Biomedical Research Centre	Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR Southampton Biomedical Research Centre	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
NIHR University College London Hospitals Biomedical Research Centre	University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust