

## **FAQ - Research Champion Programme 2026/2027**

Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Surrey

### **1. What does 0.2 FTE mean for this programme?**

0.2 FTE stands for *full-time equivalent*. For a full-time staff member, this equates to one day per week over the nine-month period. For part-time staff, the programme aims to be flexible; arrangements can be made depending on what works for the participant, their manager, and HDRC Surrey. In some cases, part-time employees may increase their working hours (e.g., from 3 to 4 days) with manager approval so that the additional day is dedicated to research champion duties.

### **2. Will the programme be impacted by LGR (Local Government Reorganisation)?**

Timelines have been intentionally designed so that all champions will be in post by 1st June 2026, and the nine-month programme will finish before vesting day 1st April 2027.

### **3. Will there be five successive cohorts over the five-year funding period?**

This current cohort is considered a pilot. The intention is to run future cohorts, but the structure may need to change depending on learning from this cycle and the impact of LGR. Interested people are encouraged to apply now rather than wait.

### **4. Why is the salary cap set at £53,713?**

This cap aligns with Surrey County Council pay scales. HDRC Surrey encourages and welcomes applicants on any payscale up to PS11 (53,713) or equivalent District & Borough Council grading. Applicants below this salary level are absolutely encouraged to apply.

### **5. How many research champion positions are available?**

Approximately 4–6 positions, with flexibility if there are collaborative applicants.

### **6. Can multiple people apply from the same district or borough?**

Yes. There is no limit on applications per organisation.

### **7. Can two applicants collaborate on one research project?**

Yes. Two people with the same research interest may apply jointly. They can either:

Both apply to be research champions at 0.2 FTE each. This requires two separate applications.

Share the 0.2 FTE between them. This also requires two separate application which clearly describes the intent to share the position if successful.

### **8. Will this programme equip participants to begin a career in social research?**

It provides a strong foundation, including practical skills and hands-on project experience. However, it is not a formal qualification and does not include accreditation.

### **9. Will the programme provide academic accreditation?**

No, academic accreditation is not available. There will, however, be a graduation ceremony and recognition of completion.

### **10. Can someone pursue a research topic that doesn't directly relate to their current role?**

For successful completion of the Research Champion Programme, it is essential that research projects have:

- Manager support and approval
- Clear contribution to the objectives of your local authority
- Alignment with wider determinants of health

### **11. When can I apply?**

At the time of writing exact dates are to be confirmed.

The Research Champion advert will be advertised via Surrey County Council's jobs portal. LINK. We anticipate the advert will go live on either 30th March 2026 or 6th April 2026. The application window will be open for a 3-week period.

We will notify webinar all attendees when the advert is published.

### **12. How do I apply?**

Via Surrey County Council's job portal.

Applicants will need to provide:

- A CV
- A manager support statement
- Responses to three recruitment questions:
  - 1) Please tell us what has motivated you to apply. (500 words).
  - 2) Please tell us about the skills and experience you wish to develop as a ResearchChampion. (500 words)
  - 3) Tell us about the research you would like to carry out as a Research Champion. Describe what you would like to find out, why it matters, and the potential impact it may have. Remember to relate your project to our research themes (umbrella "Poverty" and sub-themes) (500 words)

Interviews will be held online and last for 60 minutes per applicant or applicant pair for joint applications.

### **13. What steps should I take to formulate a research idea?**

Applicants should:

- Review the examples in the slide deck carefully
- Reflect on how your area of work and interest relates the wider determinants of health and HDRC Surrey's research themes (see slide deck)
- If you have further questions - attend the drop-in session on Tuesday March 24th 14:00-16:00.
- Email the HDRC Surrey inbox for tailored guidance

**Remember that you do not need a fully developed research project at application stage.**

#### **14. Who owns the research outputs?**

In general, research outputs will be co-owned by HDRC Surrey and the Research Champion's team, reflecting collaboration and contributing to Surrey's shared evidence base.

Some cases may require individual discussions. Please contact HDRC Surrey if you would like to discuss further via email ([HDRCSurrey@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:HDRCSurrey@surreycc.gov.uk)).

#### **15. What level are the training courses?**

Courses will range from introductory to advanced, tailored to each research champion as specified in their learning plan.

#### **16. What is expected of champions in terms of promoting or advocating research?**

There are no formal requirements to promote research beyond completing the project and presenting it at the final research showcase. However, HDRC Surrey expects the skills gained to positively influence teams and create ripple effects.