



# Community Nursing Innovation Programme NGS Elsie Wagg Scholarship 2025

Guidance notes for applicants



## About the Queen's Nursing Institute

The Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) supports and develops excellent new nursing practice and innovation in community and primary care. With this support, we want to ensure that patients receive the highest standard of nursing in the community.

The QNI is keen to support nurses at any stage of their career who want to make a difference to individuals, families, carers and communities. We want to harness your enthusiasm and commitment to this and support you in the development of your work.

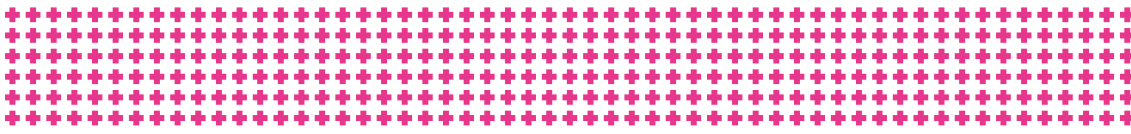
Since 1990, the QNI has supported close to 440 innovative projects across the whole range of community nursing specialisms in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Sharing the results of these projects helps us to drive improvements in knowledge and practice. Often, these funded projects become part of mainstream services.

The National Garden Scheme gives visitors unique access to over 3,600 exceptional private gardens in England and Wales, and raises impressive amounts of money for nursing and health charities through admissions, teas and cake.

Thanks to the generosity of garden owners, volunteers and visitors they have donated over £60 million to nursing and health charities. Their core beneficiaries include Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK and The Queen's Nursing Institute.

The National Garden Scheme isn't just about opening beautiful gardens for charity – they are passionate about the physical and mental health benefits of gardens and gardening too and support nurse-led initiatives that make a difference at local level and are focused explicitly on improving health and wellbeing outcomes for individuals, families, carers and communities through gardens and gardening.

Together, through this partnership programme, we aim to help you put your good ideas for improving health and wellbeing outcomes through gardens and gardening into practice, and to help you develop as a skilled project leader and practice innovator.



## Background

The Queen’s Nursing Institute and the National Garden Scheme have worked closely in partnership as the gardens and health movement has developed over the past decade.

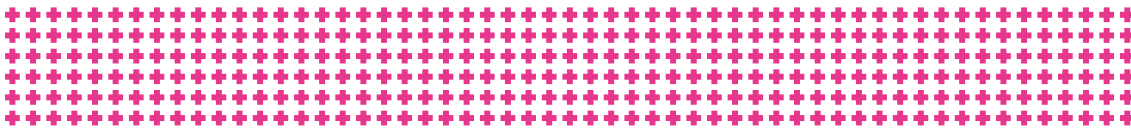
Gardens like the ones showcased in these nurse-led projects have clear and measurable benefits in physical, mental and emotional health. The specific benefits of individual projects vary quite widely, while also sharing common themes. Some people have been helped to develop greater confidence in spending time outdoors, perhaps with their children or other family members. Personal bonds are encouraged to develop in a safe, relaxed and non-threatening environment. Physical activity associated with gardening can have a huge impact on people’s mobility, balance and overall physical condition. The mental benefits simply of being outside can be described more easily than they can be measured, but a growing connection to nature through all our senses can have a transformative effect on almost anyone.

Other projects have connected people with trees and plants that produce fruit and vegetables. In an age when many people derive nearly all their food from shops, many of us have lost connection with the origins of food production. Food grown in gardens is more sustainable, having lower ‘food miles’, is often largely organic, and is natural and unprocessed.

People of all ages can benefit from gardening and some of the most effective projects have been with care homes and nursing homes, making better use of the gardens that many homes have, re-igniting a lifelong hobby for many residents.

The gardens and health movement has great potential to support national and local efforts to improve good health and prevent ill health, to support healthier lifestyles and promote self-care, and to reduce health inequalities – all national policy imperatives for the National Health Service and part of the wider effort across the whole health and care system.

The science behind the health benefits of gardens and gardening is still very much in development. It can be much harder to measure the benefits of such ‘soft’ health and lifestyle changes, compared to the ‘hard’ data gained from pharmacological interventions. Both approaches are necessary if we are to achieve better individual and population health – we cannot medicate our way out of a public health crisis.



## Guidance Notes

The NGS Elsie Wagg (Innovation) Scholarship is open to all nurses working in the community. In addition to the 1700 Queen's Nurses within England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man, there are thousands of nurses working in the community who represent every community nursing specialism.

It is proposed to award five scholarships per year, from 2022/23 to 2026/27, to create a group of 25 NGS Elsie Wagg (Innovation) Scholars by the National Garden Scheme centenary year in 2027.

The Scholarship programme is funded by the National Garden Scheme, supported by their annual grant to the QNI and will be awarded to the five community nurses submitting the best application for a project to develop the health benefits of gardening and garden visiting among a group of people.

Applications are encouraged that aim to improve physical, mental or emotional health, or a combination of all of these. We would also welcome project proposals that in addition contribute to the wider environmental agenda and sustainability within health services, for example by reducing plastic waste or carbon footprint, as long as they are garden focused.

This will fulfil a number of QNI objectives:

- ✦ Improving care for people in the community, through innovative nursing care;
- ✦ Recognising nurses for their individual achievements in improving health;
- ✦ Involving the scholarship recipients in a longer QNI programme to ensure delivery of their project;
- ✦ Supporting a project connected with gardens and health and the wider agenda around social prescribing;
- ✦ Acknowledge the QNI's historic link with the National Garden Scheme and its founder Elsie Wagg MBE.

Examples of potential projects could be:

- A General Practice Nurse working with colleagues and patients to create or improve a flower/herb garden at a GP Surgery
- A Community Learning Disability Nurse organising visits to National Garden Scheme gardens for individuals and/or groups of service users, family members and volunteers
- A Community Mental Health Nurse working with colleagues to support service users to access gardening and garden visiting as part of therapy
- A Care Home Nurse working with residents and families to develop a sensory garden at a residential/nursing home and encouraging residents to participate in the planning and to share stories and memories about plants and gardens
- A Prison Nurse working with people in prison and colleagues to create or improve a prison fruit and vegetable garden.

## Eligibility

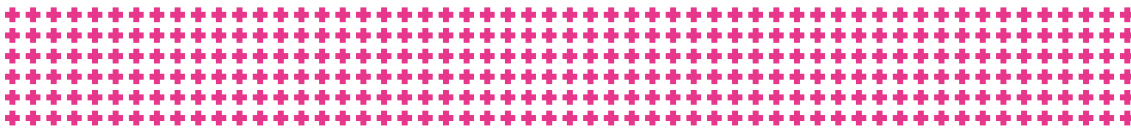
Your application must focus on the development of new approaches that focus specifically on how gardens and gardening deliver improved health and well-being outcomes for people.

### Settings

This will include people who experience nursing services in one or more of the following settings:

- ✦ at home
- ✦ in the community
- ✦ in a residential, nursing or care home
- ✦ in the work environment
- ✦ in prison
- ✦ in General Practice
- ✦ in a hospice
- ✦ with those who are experiencing homelessness, including people who are sleeping rough.
- ✦ in school

Your project can focus on any issue relating to gardens and gardening, improving the health and wellbeing outcomes for people in primary care or the community from any of the above groups and settings. Applications are actively encouraged from nurses from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background.



### Project criteria

To apply for this project funding and support, you must:

- ✦ Be a registered nurse working in clinical practice in a primary care or community setting and have identified a co-lead (does not need to be a nurse)
- ✦ Work directly with people who would benefit from gardens and gardening in a primary care or community setting and
- ✦ Be working in an organisation based in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands or Isle of Man
- ✦ Any multi-disciplinary team project must have a nurse as the lead.
- ✦ Be directly involved in the delivery of the project.

### Project Focus

Your project must:

- ✦ Focus on gardens and gardening in a primary care or community setting.
- ✦ Be based in a primary care or community setting
- ✦ Demonstrate clear identification and evidence of need
- ✦ Involve new and innovative ways of working
- ✦ Involve individuals who might benefit from the idea in the development of the project
- ✦ Improve or reduce inequalities in access to health services
- ✦ Improve wellbeing and quality of life for people in primary care or in the community.
- ✦ Illustrate how your project can benefit your patient/client group, their families and carers
- ✦ Demonstrate enthusiasm, knowledge and interest in the relevant subject area
- ✦ Show how the project will help you and (where appropriate) your colleagues develop as leaders and innovators in a primary care or community setting

### Funding restrictions

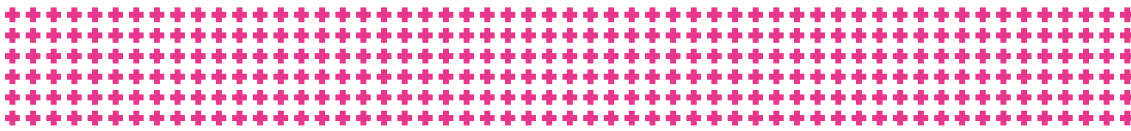
The QNI cannot fund:

- ✦ Projects situated outside of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man
- ✦ Projects not led by a registered nurse (as above)
- ✦ Projects where the total costs are over £5000. (The QNI must be the sole funder)
- ✦ Development of existing work
- ✦ Development of IT programmes
- ✦ Research and development work
- ✦ Work that has already been completed
- ✦ Medical equipment
- ✦ Office equipment (including laptop computers and mobile phones)
- ✦ Courses/study programmes for nurses
- ✦ Funding for overseas study/travel
- ✦ Training packages for delivery to healthcare professionals
- ✦ Salaries for new posts (though you may include the cost of locum backfill)
- ✦ Private sector organisations
- ✦ Projects that are part of established improvement programmes or projects which are already funded by other bodies.

### Please note:

- We expect your organisation to fully support the project; therefore, we would not cover any organisational service charges for running the project.
- Projects situated in Scotland are not eligible but there may be opportunities to be supported by QNI Scotland <https://www.qnis.org.uk/>
- During the duration of your project you must adhere to your employer's guidelines regarding personal protective equipment and infection prevention and control measures, to ensure the safety of everyone involved in the project including colleagues, patients and their families and carers.





## What the QNI offers

### Funding

Up to £5000 to develop an innovation project that focuses on gardens and gardening to improve the health and well-being for people in primary care and in the community in your local area.

### Support

Advice and support for you to complete your application. The QNI can help ensure your project is eligible, by discussing your proposed project with you before submission.

Please email [amanda.young@qni.org.uk](mailto:amanda.young@qni.org.uk) to discuss your idea.

### Professional development programme

- Online interview via Microsoft Teams on Monday 20 January 2025 or 21 January 2025
- Six workshop days during 2025 if successful (mandatory for at least one team member):
  - ✦ 05/03/2025
  - ✦ 06/03/2025
  - ✦ 23/04/2025
  - ✦ 24/04/2025
  - ✦ 17/06/2025
  - ✦ 18/06/2025
- Monthly support group meetings via Microsoft Teams 4-5pm (attendance not mandatory but recommended):
  - ✦ 11/09/2025
  - ✦ 14/10/2025
  - ✦ 11/11/2025
  - ✦ 09/12/2025
  - ✦ 08/01/2026
  - ✦ 10/02/2025

These workshops and support meetings provide professional and personal development opportunities and sharing of experience with other project leaders that will enable you to confidently manage, deliver and sustain your project.

**Transportation to the workshops and accommodation must be booked well in advance to reduce the costs.**

## Application and required documents

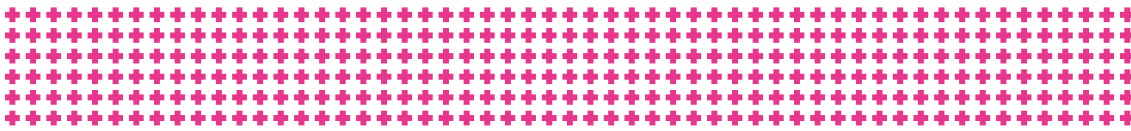
Please ensure that you complete all sections of the online application form and submit via our website. For any queries regarding the funding, please contact [amanda.young@qni.org.uk](mailto:amanda.young@qni.org.uk). For any queries regarding the application process, please contact [aga.kusmierz@qni.org.uk](mailto:aga.kusmierz@qni.org.uk).

You need to submit:

- A completed online application form (a pdf copy will be sent to you in your confirmation email)
- A statement of support from your direct line manager and finance representatives (please attach to your application form)

The QNI expects all applications to have been fully discussed and agreed with the relevant direct line manager and this must be stated in the accompanying letter. Please ensure the letter meets the following criteria:

- Confirmation that you have had an enhanced check with adult's /child's barred list check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Confirmation that your employing organisation has safeguarding policies in place for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Permission for you to have time to undertake the work of the project including the six workshop days and six monthly online support meetings 4-5pm.
- Confirmation that the project will have designated person assigned to assist with project finances.



## The process

- 1** You apply for project funding by 5 p.m. on Friday 1 November 2024 by completing the application form, submitting relevant documentation and returning it to the QNI.
- 2** The QNI will reply to acknowledge we have received your application.
- 3** Your application will be reviewed by an external assessment panel as part of the shortlisting process.
- 4** If shortlisted, you will be invited to an online interview on either Monday 20 January or Tuesday 21 January 2025.
- 5** The QNI will select up to 7 projects to receive funding and we will inform applicants of the outcome a week after all the interviews are completed.
- 6** If successful, your project will run for one year, starting in March 2025 and ending in February 2026.

## Payment

The method and frequency of payment of funds will be agreed by you and the QNI once the application has been confirmed as successful. Please note that £500 will be withheld until the final report and case study has been received.

**If you are successful with your application, you will need a separate designated account within your employing organisation to receive the project funds.**

## Commencement of project

Projects are expected to commence on 1 March 2025.

## Duration of project

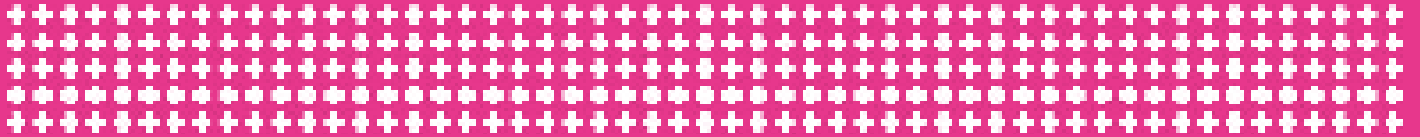
You must complete the project by 28 February 2026.

## Monitoring

If successful, you will be required to send an interim report and financial statement, six months after the start of your project, to report on your progress. You will then need to submit a final report demonstrating the outcomes achieved by the project, a case study and a financial statement, within one month of the end of the project.

You will be visited by a member of QNI staff for a project site visit during the project year.

If you have any queries on any aspect of your project or application, e-mail Amanda Young, Director of Nursing Programmes (Innovations & Policy), [amanda.young@qni.org.uk](mailto:amanda.young@qni.org.uk).



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With thanks to our partner

