

Developing an application for the Pre-Doctoral Clinical and Practitioner Academic Fellowship (PCAF): The collective experience of a community of physiotherapists

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What is the PCAF?

The PCAF is an individual research training award for health and social care professionals in England who want to develop careers that combine research with continued clinical practice and professional development.

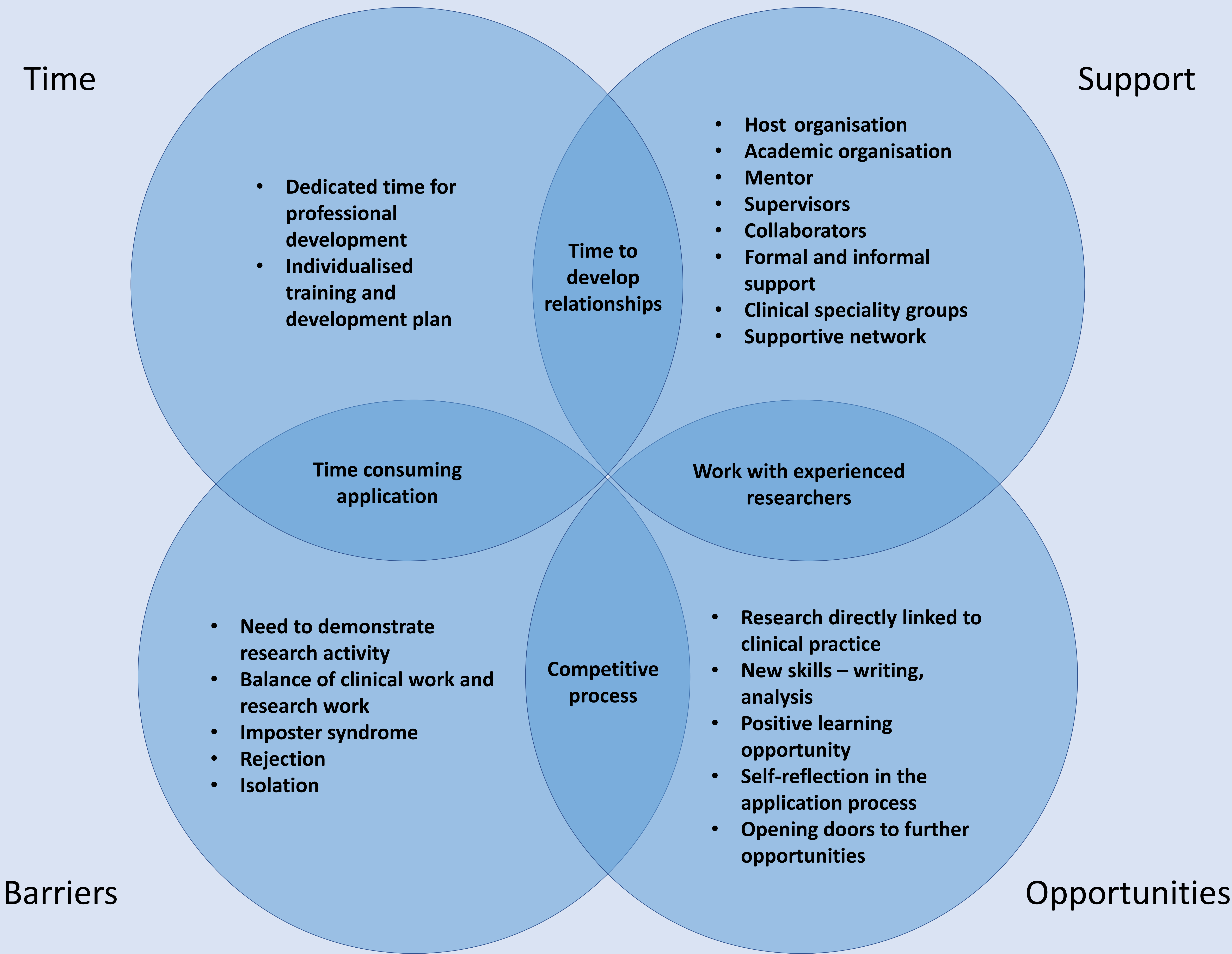
It is awarded annually by Health Education England (HEE) and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NIHR).

- Salary backfill
- Development of doctoral proposal
- Research development support costs (supervision and PPI)
- Funded academic training
- Research time
- Conference costs

Why research?

Research involvement has been shown to improve professional development, job satisfaction and improve staff recruitment and retention (1,2).

Increased clinical research activity drives better information to patients and better patient experience (3).



Advice for future applicants

Justify your research plan and methodology.

Clearly articulate the links between the applicant and the supervisory team.

What skills or knowledge were learned from previous research experience?

Tell your story – show the narrative about why are you applying.

References

- Cordrey, T., King, E., Pilkington, E., Gore, K., & Gustafson, O. (2022). Exploring research capacity and culture of allied health professionals: a mixed methods evaluation. *BMC Health Services Research*, 22(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/S12913-022-07480-X>
- Jonker, L., Fisher, S. J., & Dagnan, D. (2020). Patients admitted to more research-active hospitals have more confidence in staff and are better informed about their condition and medication: Results from a retrospective cross-sectional study. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, 26(1), 203–208. <https://doi.org/10.1111/JEP.13118>
- Nilsagård, Y., Westerdahl, E., & Forsberg, A. (2019). Engagement in performing clinical physiotherapy research: Perspectives from leaders and physiotherapists. *Physiotherapy Research International*, 24(2), e1767. <https://doi.org/10.1002/PRI.1767>