

**Honoraria and Expenses Policy –
Patient and Public Involvement
and Engagement Activities
Version 5.1**



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About this Policy

HDR UK's Expenses and Honoraria Policy outlines how payments and expense reimbursements are managed for Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) activities. This policy is aligned with rates set by the [National Institute for Health and Care Research \(NIHR\)](#).

If you agree to take part in HDR UK PPIE activities, you will be asked to read and confirm that you understand this policy. This will help to ensure that any honoraria, vouchers, or expenses are processed smoothly.

Please note that participating in HDR UK PPIE activities does not create an employment relationship with HDR UK. Any reward or recognition provided, whether in the form of vouchers or a bank transfer, as referred to in this policy, is intended to acknowledge the valuable contributions made by public contributors to HDR UK and to health data research. It is not a form of salary or pay.

To support transparency and objectivity, we ask that you let the PPIE team know if you have any conflicts of interest (e.g. board member, charity trustee, roles where you receive remuneration or other income, shareholder including significant interests of close family members). Please also declare any personal or professional relationships with current or former HDR UK staff. If you are unsure whether something counts as a conflict of interest, please contact the PPIE team at involvement@hdruk.ac.uk

You are free to withdraw from any PPIE activity, but we ask for timely and reasonable notice. This will ensure that we are able to make alternative arrangements for public involvement or engagement. Please be aware that withdrawal, especially without reasonable notice, may affect your eligibility for payment of honoraria and reimbursement of expenses related to the activity from which you have withdrawn.

A note on terminology

In this document, the term **honorarium** or **honoraria** is used to describe a token of appreciation given to members of the public recognising the time, skills, experience, and contributions they offer to HDR UK. Honoraria may be provided as **vouchers** or as a payment by **bank transfer** to an account chosen

by the public member and registered on our Continia expense system (see *Honoraria via Bank Transfer* section).

Eligibility Criteria

Any member of the public (also referred to in this document as *public contributor*) is eligible to receive honoraria for their participation in PPIE activities, as well as reimbursement of related expenses. By 'public', we mean patients, potential patients, current and former carers, and people who use health and social care services. HDR UK will not reimburse people for time already contracted or paid for by another organisation. Eligible public members will be offered a choice after each activity to receive honoraria either by bank transfer or voucher. They must inform the PPIE team when they accept each involvement opportunity, of their preferred option, as the claiming process differs for each.

Public members who are asked to attend events as a representative of HDR UK, including those attending as a member of a Patient or Public Advisory Group or Board (PAG or PAB), or in any official capacity as a public, patient, or carer representative for HDR UK, are eligible to receive honoraria from HDR UK for that activity. However, if public members attend events in a personal capacity or for their own interest, and not as an invited HDR UK PPIE representative, HDR UK will not provide honoraria for that participation. If you are unsure whether you are attending an event as an HDR UK PPIE representative or not, please get in touch with involvement@hdruk.ac.uk as soon as possible before the event.

Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

It is widely recognised that public contributors may face barriers to participate in PPIE activities, some of which can be addressed by ensuring our honoraria and expenses policy encourages fair payment and avoids bias or discrimination. We acknowledge that everyone's personal circumstances vary, and while our policy cannot address all scenarios, we remain committed to addressing challenges within our payment system. If you encounter any issues, please contact the PPIE team at honoraria@hdruk.ac.uk. We are here to assist you.

Further Information

Please contact the PPIE team at honoraria@hdruk.ac.uk if you have any questions about this policy or require assistance in submitting your honoraria and expenses. We also welcome any suggestions for improvement, as these will contribute to our annual review of the policy and lead to changes before the next scheduled review if necessary.

Honoraria via Vouchers

We offer [Love2Shop](#) vouchers to acknowledge your contribution to HDR UK's work through participation in HDR UK's PPIE activities. Each invitation to get involved will clearly state whether a voucher is being offered. You are welcome to decline a voucher or request a lower value at any time.

Love2Shop vouchers can be used in a wide range of high street and online shops, supermarkets, and restaurants. A full list of participating retailers is available on the highstreetvouchers.com website.

If you are not satisfied with the standard options, you can exchange your voucher by entering its unique number on the [Love2Shop Rewards website](#). This will give you access to more than 50 alternative brands, including M&S, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Aldi, Primark, Costa, and many others. You can view the full list on [this section](#) of the highstreetvouchers.com website.

Eligibility Criteria for Honoraria via Vouchers

All public members participating in HDR UK PPIE activities and based in the UK are eligible to receive vouchers.

Active involvement is expected in meetings and activities. Claims cannot be made for overlapping activities that occur at the same time. This policy applies to honoraria provided as vouchers or through bank transfer.

Payment Process for Honoraria via Vouchers

You will be asked to provide your email address to receive the Love2Shop voucher as Gift Card via email. Alternatively, you can request a physical card to be sent to your home address, in which case

additional information will be required.

The PPIE team will issue the voucher to you within 10 working days of the activity (i.e., two weeks), and it can be spent immediately. Vouchers will have a set expiry date, and we are unable to reissue them after this date has passed. If your voucher code isn't working or if you have not received your voucher within 10 working days, please contact the PPIE team at honoraria@hdruk.ac.uk

Honoraria via Bank Transfer

Honoraria can also be made via bank transfer and can be offered either as a standalone payment or as an alternative to vouchers. They follow the rates listed in Table 1 but are paid directly to a bank account, rather than through vouchers.

Eligibility Criteria for Honoraria via Bank Transfer

All public contributors based in the United Kingdom who take part in PPIE activities are eligible to receive honoraria via bank transfer. Only one bank transfer claim can be submitted per activity, and duplicate claims for the same activity (for example, using different email addresses) will not be accepted. Contributors must use the same registered Continia email address for all submissions (see next section *Payment Process*).

Active involvement is expected in meetings and activities. Claims cannot be made for overlapping activities that occur at the same time. This policy applies to honoraria provided as vouchers or through bank transfer.

Payment Process for Honoraria via Bank Transfer

The payment process for honoraria via bank transfer involves additional steps and, as a result, takes longer to complete than vouchers.

The first time you agree to participate in HDR UK PPIE activities and request to receive honoraria via bank transfer, you will be asked to complete a form to provide your bank details to HDR UK's Finance team, alongside any other information they require to make payments to you. This information will

be kept confidential and stored in a password-protected database in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) for as long as reasonably necessary. In line with HMRC requirements, financial records are retained for six years from the end of the financial year in which the last payment is processed for an individual. This applies even if someone has completed their term but remains involved in other HDR UK activities, as the retention period is linked to the final financial transaction. After this period, data is securely deleted in accordance with HDR UK data protection policies.

You will also receive an invitation to register on HDR UK's Continia system. This system gives you access to a portal where you can upload honoraria receipts you will be provided for your contributions to the work of HDR UK, as well as relevant expenses claims.

An **honorarium receipt** is an email sent by the HDR UK PPIE Team after the activity you took part in. It includes the information you need to enter into the Continia system when submitting a bank transfer claim. This information includes the amount you can claim, a description of the activity, and the relevant cost centre and funding source.

A step-by-step guide on using Continia will be provided, along with drop-in sessions to help you become familiar with the process. If you need assistance registering on Continia or have any questions about submitting your reimbursement request, please contact the PPIE team at honoraria@hdruk.ac.uk.

We want to ensure that our public contributors receive reimbursement efficiently for their time and any agreed expenses. To support this, the PPIE team will issue the honorarium receipt to you within 10 working days of the activity. **Please submit your claim via Continia within 60 days of receiving the receipt**, as claims submitted after this period may not be processed. If you anticipate any delays, please inform the PPIE team as soon as possible.

Please note that the 60-day timeframe does not apply to reimbursements requested **between January and March**. Due to internal financial year-end processes, all **claims** during this period **must be submitted by 31 March**. You will receive a reminder during these months to ensure timely submission.

After you submit your claim through Continia, it will be reviewed and paid following final approval

by the PPIE team. Normally, payment takes up to three weeks from submission. If you have not received your payment after three weeks, please contact the PPIE team at honoraria@hdruk.ac.uk. Please be aware that if you are claiming for the first time and need to register on Continia, the payment may take longer than three weeks.

Rates for Payment

Honoraria via vouchers and bank transfers (see Table 1) are informed by the 2025 National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) [payment guidance](#) and reflect the type and time of activity involved. These rates apply to **involvement activities** where patients and the public contribute to various stages of research projects, from the design stage to delivery, dissemination, and/or evaluation. They also apply to attending **engagement activities** (e.g., attending a public event like a science festival or academic conference *as a representative of HDR UK*) or development of **public facing material** such as sharing personal knowledge and experiences through writing a blog, co-authoring a report, or presenting at an event.

Please note: Voucher and bank transfer rates are not designed to be hourly rates but vary depending on the level of commitment and time required of the public member and the type of activity done.

Table 1. Payment rates for involvement and engagement activities

New rates (effective April 2026) *	Activity details
£18.80	Contributing to an activity of equal than or less than 30 minutes. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading and commenting on an abstract or short paragraphs.
£32.50	Contributing to an activity of approximately 1 hour or less, including preparation if needed. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewing content for a strategy document or report of activities, sending comments via email.• Participating in a 1-hour training session, which requires no preparation.• Participating in a 45-minute meeting, which requires 15 minutes of

	preparation.
£46.25	Contributing to an activity lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in a 1 hour workshop, which requires 30 minutes of preparation • Participating in a 1 hour and 30-minute meeting, which requires no preparation
£60	Contributing to an activity of approximately 2 hours. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in a 1-hour 30-minute meeting or workshop, which requires 30 minutes of preparation. • Participating in a 2-hour meeting, which requires no preparation.
£87.50	Contributing to an activity which equates to half a day (approximately 3.5 - 4 hours). For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in a 1.5 - 2-hour meeting, which requires 2 hours of preparation. • Delivering a talk in a 2-hour workshop, which requires 2 hours of preparation.
£170	Actively participating in a day's activity (approximately 8 hours). For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being part of a shortlisting or interviewing panel, contributing to scoring, and attending decision-making meetings, which when combined equals 8 hours of activity. • Participating in 6-hour meetings or events, which requires 2 hours of preparation for delivering a presentation or chairing group discussions. • Presenting at a one-day event or attending a one-day event as a representative of an advisory group.

*** Includes the £5 NIHR remote working cost- a standing allowance to cover the cost of telephone calls, paper, printing ink, internet connection and other home sundries.**

Public contributors who expect to carry out a significant amount of work, such as preparing to speak at a conference or panel or chairing a meeting, and who will need more than two hours of preparation as well as a substantial amount of travel, **must inform the central PPIE team before proceeding**. This ensures that the honorarium can be agreed in advance. Any work beyond the agreed amount must also be approved beforehand, as we cannot guarantee payment for hours that have not been authorised in advance. Preparation time for the activities listed above may vary between individuals. The PPIE team estimates preparation time when setting honoraria, but if the stated time is not sufficient for you, please contact the team to discuss your needs.

Changes to Rates

There might be circumstances where details of the activity change. If that is the case, the related honorarium is likely to change. Either way, you will be reimbursed for any agreed preparatory work.

If a PPIE activity you have agreed to take part in (whether this is a workshop or public event) is cancelled without reasonable notice — 48 hours for in-person and 24 hours for online activities — HDR UK will still issue the agreed upon honorarium.

At any time, you retain the right to decline vouchers or ask for a lower value voucher or bank transfer payment.

Payment and Personal Finances

Everyone's personal circumstances are different. Accepting a voucher or honoraria via bank transfer may have implications for your personal tax or welfare benefits, as it could be considered income. Unfortunately, HDR UK cannot provide individual financial advice. We strongly recommend you seek expert guidance about your own personal financial circumstances before accepting vouchers or honoraria.

You are responsible for managing your own tax obligations. HDR UK does not deduct tax or reimburse personal tax-related costs. Accepting payment is entirely your choice and is not a condition for participating in HDR UK PPIE activities.

Further guidance is available on [section 8 of the NIHR payment policy](#) and the Health Research Authority webpage '[Payment for public involvement in health and care research: a guide for members of the public on employment status and tax](#)'.

Expenses

You may be eligible for the reimbursement of expenses where this is explicitly stated on the invitation and where expenses are in line with the policy below.

Any reimbursements will be made through Continia (see section *Payment Process for Honoraria via Bank Transfer* for more information) once appropriate evidence has been provided and approved by the PPIE team. Any expenses incurred in a currency other than in Great Britain Pounds (GBP) will be reimbursed at the exchange rate at the date of the claim calculated by HDR UK.

HDR UK does not pay expenses in advance unless exceptional circumstances apply. This will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will require **prior** PPIE team approval.

The policy below covers the most common expense scenarios. If there are any circumstances not addressed here or if you have any questions, please contact the PPIE team for advice **before** incurring any expenses.

Travel

When planning your journey, please make the cheapest and best value for money travel arrangements using public transport, unless it is unavailable or inaccessible.

Unfortunately, HDR UK is unable to book travel for public contributors as a standard practice. However, we are committed to providing support when needed. If you require assistance, please reach out to the PPIE team, who will be able to offer guidance.

If an in-person PPIE activity you have agreed to take part in is cancelled, HDR UK will honour the expenses that cannot be refunded.

- **Rail and Underground**
 - Please ensure you buy the cheapest rail ticket available for your journey. This may mean booking specific trains rather than open returns.
 - The specific cost of journeys paid for by prepaid cards will be reimbursed, but not the total amounts loaded to a prepaid travel card, such as Oyster cards.
 - We will only cover the cost of Standard Class travel. We understand that, on occasion, first class can be more cost-effective. If this is the case, you will need to demonstrate this

when claiming your expense. Failure to do so will result in delays in processing your claim and may result in only part-payment of your expenses.

- HDR UK will not reimburse missed travel connections, or any additional costs resulting from missed pre-booked travel, unless this is due to service issues or exceptional personal circumstances. If this applies to you, please contact the PPIE Team to discuss your situation.
- **Taxi**
 - Approval in advance by the PPIE team is required for the use of taxis.
 - You should use taxis only if it is essential, such as, if you are carrying heavy luggage and/or have limited mobility. Justification will be required for advance approval by the PPIE team.
- **Private Vehicles**
 - We will reimburse those who use their own vehicle at pence per mile according to the rates in Table 2. These are based on [rates published by the HMRC](#).

Table 2. Private vehicles reimbursement rates

Vehicle type	Reimbursement value
Car and vans	55p per mile
Motorcycle	24p per mile
Bicycle	20p per mile

- Reasonable parking costs may be claimed.
 - HDR UK will reimburse Ultra Low Emission Zone and Congestion Charge costs.
 - Individuals are responsible for parking fines, fixed fees, penalties, or fines for motoring offences. HDR UK will not reimburse any of these fees, fines, or penalties.
 - Any insurance excess payable arising from a claim whilst travelling to or from PPIE activities for HDR UK must be met by the individual personally and will not be reimbursed by HDR UK.
- **Flights**

- Occasionally flights may be considered an appropriate means of travel to PPIE activities. This can help ensure that patients and the public contributing to the work of HDR UK are representative of the UK population.
- Prior approval from the PPIE team is required for flights.
- Only Economy class flights will be considered for reimbursement.
- **Extending a Trip**
 - If you extend your trip beyond the requirements of your contribution, you must pay any additional costs incurred.
 - Extending a trip may have personal tax implications, which are your responsibility. HDR UK does not pay or reimburse personal tax costs.

Please note that each expense must be submitted as a separate claim on Continia. Even if multiple expenses relate to the same event, such as parking fees and mileage on a single journey, **they must be claimed individually.** Each receipt must also be submitted on its own and cannot be combined with other receipts. For example, a train ticket and a dinner receipt must be submitted as separate claims. Remember to upload a photo of your receipts for each claim on Continia.

Accommodation and Meals

Reimbursement of accommodation and meal costs must be in line with the following:

- **Accommodation**
 - If you require any accommodation while carrying out official HDR UK PPIE duties, you must obtain **prior approval** from the PPIE team. Please contact the PPIE team **as early as possible** to discuss your needs.
 - Should your request for accommodation be approved, we will reimburse your accommodation according to the rates in Table 3:

Table 3. Accommodation reimbursement rates

Location	Rate
London	£200+VAT
Outside of London	£150 + VAT

- Please notify the PPIE team of any difficulties finding suitable accommodation within these limits.
- You will be responsible for any additional charges (e.g., leisure facilities, private telephone calls, newspapers etc). Additional costs will not be reimbursed by HDR UK.

● **Staying with Friends or Relatives**

- If you opt to stay with friends or relatives, you cannot claim for accommodation or meals provided by them.
- HDR UK will not pay or reimburse for entertainment or gifts.

● **Meals**

- We will reimburse reasonable expenses for your meals according to the conditions and rates in Table 4.
- Please note that alcohol is not reimbursed.
- Please note, this refers specifically to the cost of meals and refreshments required while attending the activity - it does not include general grocery shopping or other non-meal-related purchases.
- Only reasonable and itemised meal-related receipts will be reimbursed.

Table 4. Meal reimbursement conditions and rates

Meal	Conditions	Amount
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only if an overnight stay is required ● Only if breakfast is not already included in the accommodation 	<p>If receipted - a maximum of £10, including VAT and service charge</p> <p>If unreceipted – a maximum £5</p>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only if lunch is not provided by HDR UK at the event / meeting 	<p>If receipted – a maximum of £15 including VAT and service charge</p> <p>If unreceipted -a maximum of £7</p>

Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only if travelling late (after 7pm) or as part of an overnight stay 	<p>If receipted - a maximum of £30 including VAT and service charge</p> <p>If unreceipted - a maximum of £15</p>
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Additional Expenses

Participating in PPIE may result in additional expenses such as carer and childcare costs. These types of expenses can be reimbursed, but they must be agreed in advance with the PPIE Team. Please speak to the PPIE team before incurring any such costs, as only expenses approved in advance will be reimbursed.

- **Carer Costs**

- If you need a carer to accompany you to PPIE activities, HDR UK will cover their travel and reasonable meal expenses in line with the rates above. **This will need to be agreed in advance with the PPIE team.**
- If you are a carer for someone else, HDR UK will cover the cost of an alternative carer for the duration of the PPIE activity. **This will need to be agreed in advance with the PPIE team.**

- **Personal Assistants**

- If you need a personal assistant to support your involvement, HDR UK will cover their travel and subsistence in line with the rates above. **This will need to be agreed in advance with the PPIE team.**
- The costs of personal assistants are highly variable and depend on local circumstances. We encourage you to discuss with the PPIE Team and agree on the rates prior to the activity.

- **Childcare Costs**

- If you need childcare provision, HDR UK will cover the cost of childcare for the duration of the PPIE activity.
- The costs of childcare are highly variable and depend on local circumstances. We encourage you to discuss with the team and agree on the rates prior to the activity.

Please make sure you keep and submit receipts for any additional costs through Continia, along with details and evidence of prior approval (e.g., email confirmation). HDR UK cannot reimburse your



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claims without both a receipt and proof of **prior** approval.

The first version of this policy was published in May 2023. Since then, there have been a series of updates, which are documented in Table 5.

Version	Publication	Changes
2.0	October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified ‘conflict of interest’ within this context • Added £30 increase in accommodation reimbursement rates
3.0	August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated wording throughout to improve clarity • Revised ‘Eligibility criteria’ to any public member, with no age limit • Updated the link to NIHR guidance • Added reference to Health Research Authority guidance • Included new sections: ‘Vouchers’; ‘Personal assistants’; and ‘Change record’.
4.0	August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated ‘Vouchers’ and ‘Honoraria’ sections, including description, eligibility criteria, and payment process • Clarified responsibility for managing tax obligation and added reference to NIHR guidance • Updated the sections on ‘Changes to rates’ and ‘Payment and personal finances’ to refer to both vouchers and honoraria, as the same conditions apply • Updated Table 1 to clarify the rationale behind the £30 rate • Updated Table 4, including guidance on reimbursement when a receipt is lost • Included the possibility of reimbursement for Ultra Low Emission Zone and Congestion Charge costs • Updated the language and format throughout the policy to make it clearer and more inclusive
5.0	April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to include the 10% NIHR pay uplift for public involvement in research. For increased rates, see “Payment Rates” section. • Increased rates also reflect the addition of the NIHR remote working cost • Clarified honoraria eligibility for public members attending as PAG/PAB representatives versus attending for personal interest. • Updated policy and Continia guidance on which expenses must be submitted separately (e.g., mileage and parking). • Defined terminology used (<i>public contributor, honorarium/honoraria, honorarium receipt, vouchers, payment via bank transfer</i>) • Added note that participating in HDRUK PPIE activities does not create an employment relationship with the organisation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised wording on Continia/voucher processes and Finance data handling. • Amended guidance on UK-based participation and addressed issues with duplicate claims and non-contributory attendance. • Clarified subsistence rules to specify meals only and added reference to “reasonable expenses.” • Clarified that stated payment amounts are not hourly rates but depend on activity type and scope. • Added statement that booking of accommodation while on HDRUK PPIE business will require prior approval from the PPIE Team
5.1	May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mileage claim rates updated in line with HMRC guidance (21 May 2026).

