

PRESS RELEASE

Digital health Accelerator seeks cutting-edge companies to help bring the NHS into the 21st century

LONDON, 25 FEBRUARY 2019

Applications for a London-based digital health Accelerator open today, as part of efforts to increase NHS and patient access to cutting-edge technologies.

The DigitalHealth.London Accelerator is targeting innovative healthtech businesses, and inviting them to apply to receive help to develop and deploy digital solutions to some of the NHS' most pressing challenges.

This is the fourth year the initiative has operated in London, where it began in 2015 in response to a challenge by the Mayor of London to make London a global hub for health and technology. The call comes on the back of the recent publication of the NHS Long Term Plan, which focuses on ways to ensure the NHS is "fit for the future," including a push around digital technology. This priority is also echoed in the Topol Review, which was published earlier this month.

The DigitalHealth.London Accelerator has already supported the growth of over 90 technologies, including an app to provide young people access to support around mental health issues, an app to help cut A&E waiting times, and a WhatsApp-style messaging service for use in hospitals and other care settings by healthcare staff.

The Accelerator will ensure that thousands more people will benefit from the latest technologies to improve their health, and that high potential companies grow faster, supporting economic growth in London.

Companies who make it onto the programme will get the help of a designated "NHS Navigator", who will guide them through decision-making and funding processes in the NHS. Additionally, they will receive:

- Specialist training
- Support with product development
- Opportunities to meet experts from business, clinical, and government backgrounds
- Opportunities to showcase their products with NHS decision-makers and influencers

Since the initiative began, the Accelerator has provided over 2,000 hours of support to companies, helped secure 57 NHS contracts, and supported companies to improve the lives of 22.2 million patients. These figures will be published in an upcoming report from DigitalHealth.London.

Jenny Thomas, Programme Director of the Accelerator scheme, said: "We must work with those at the cutting-edge of health tech to help us bring the NHS into line with other industries that are already using tech to improve their services and match demand. It is imperative that NHS organisations are taking advantage of the latest technologies to improve their services for patients, but we don't expect them to do it alone. This scheme supports innovators to ensure they are addressing the right issues, in the right way, and will work with NHS organisations to ensure they can make the best use of what is available. Digital could help better tackle some of the very real challenges the NHS is facing – long waiting times for mental health services, unhealthy lifestyles, and more of us living with long-term conditions."

Companies should apply by 5 April at: www.DigitalHealth.London/Accelerator/Apply

Watch this video to hear more about the programme: <https://youtu.be/-L8IWxm75Pg>

----- ENDS -----

Notes to editors

- Jenny Thomas, Programme Director, DigitalHealth.London Accelerator is available for interview; please contact Rose de Mendonca, Communications Manager, DigitalHealth.London Accelerator, E: rose.demendonca@nhs.net, T: 07881010213.
- Companies interested in applying can get more information at www.digitalhealth.london/accelerator, and by signing up to one of our information webinars, being held throughout the application window. Sign up at www.digitalhealth.london/events
- The DigitalHealth.London Accelerator is a partnership between London's three AHSNs (Health Innovation Network, Imperial College Health Partners, UCLPartners), MedCity, and CW. It is supported by the Mayor of London, and is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.
- The DigitalHealth.London Accelerator is receiving up to £1.7 million of funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for ERDF. Established by the European Union ERDF funds help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>