

Case Study: Diabetes Data Catalyst

How People Like You Are Shaping Diabetes Data Research Funding

BACKGROUND

The Diabetes Data Catalyst, a collaborative initiative involving Diabetes UK, British Heart Foundation, and Health Data Research UK, aims to develop improvements in our understanding of the link between cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. A call for funding was launched in March 2023, supporting driver projects to speed up the use of health data in diabetes research.

"As a person affected by heart disease and Diabetes, I have enjoyed being part of this project with a mission to elevate the needs of both patients and their carers."

- MIKE MOLETE,
PUBLIC
CONTRIBUTOR



OUR APPROACH

To ensure our decision making included the patient and public view, we brought in two public contributors with lived experience of diabetes. These individuals were actively involved in shaping the call for funding process. After an introductory meeting detailing the Catalyst's goals, they provided valuable insights into funding priorities from a public perspective. This involvement extended to advising on application forms, guiding researchers through documentation, shaping patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) questions, and offering input on key application requirements.

Our public contributors helped to shortlist applications and actively participated in the interview process, contributing to the selection of the successful projects. Throughout the entire process, they received support from the Project Manager and our Public Involvement Manager and were engaged in regular meetings to ensure they had a comprehensive understanding of the projects and an opportunity to address any queries.

"The Diabetes Data Catalyst offers the prospect of extending understanding of factors linking heart disease and diabetes using anonymised data. I expect to see exciting results from the work underway."

- PETER ROGERS,
PUBLIC CONTRIBUTOR



WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THIS MADE?

Including the patient voice in the funding process has been a game-changer. Our public contributors directly influenced decision-making, ensuring that the call for funding remained focused on patients and their needs with real, tangible benefits for people living with diabetes. Their involvement gave them a behind-the-scenes look at the process, the types of applications and research being considered, and an understanding of research priorities.

Encouraged by this success, plans are now in motion to recruit additional members with more diverse backgrounds, promoting a balanced and inclusive approach. A special event focused on patient and public involvement is scheduled for 2024, solidifying the Catalyst's commitment to involving the community in research.

