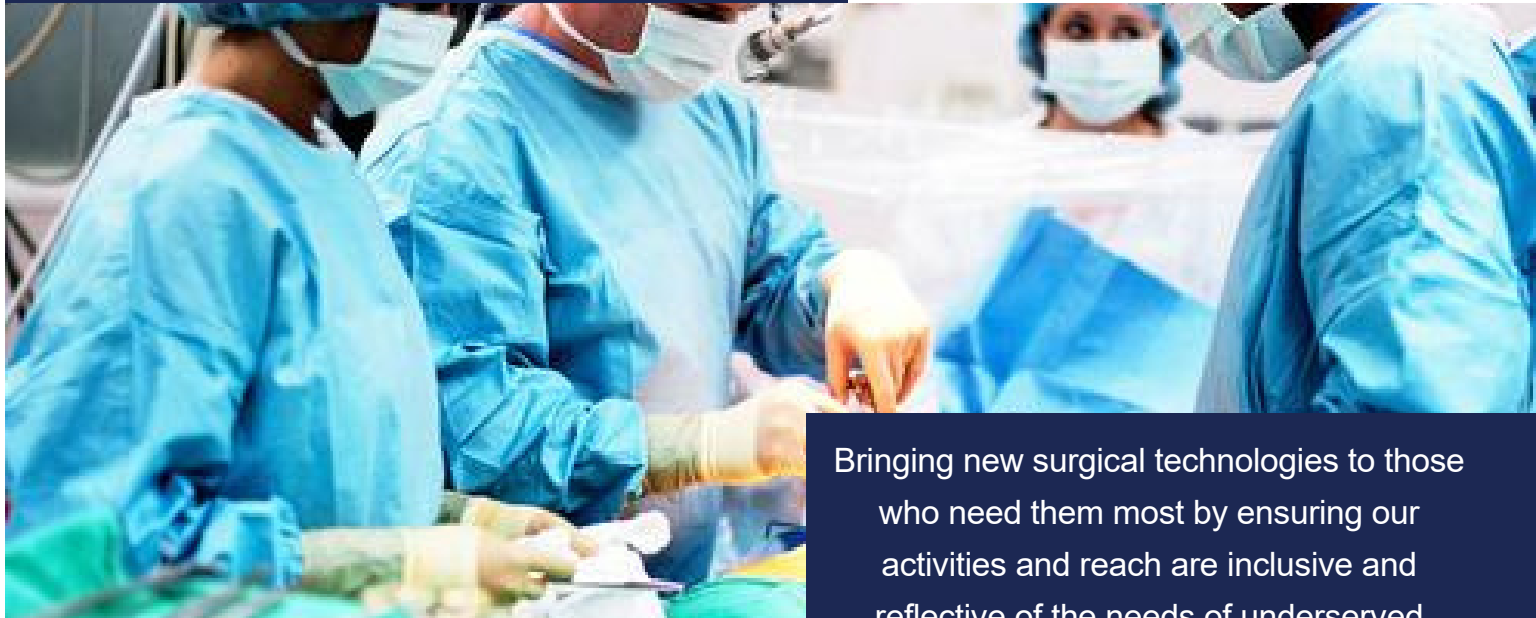


NEWSLETTER

Issue 6 March 2026



***Developing medical devices,
diagnostics and digital
technologies to improve surgical
care.***

Welcome to the HealthTech Research
Centre in Accelerated Surgical Care
newsletter.

Forming Collaborations

*The NIHR HealthTech Research Centre in
Accelerated Surgical Care is part of the NIHR and
hosted by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust in
partnership with University of Leeds.*

Email: hrc-surgical@leeds.ac.uk
<http://hrc-surgical.nihr.ac.uk>

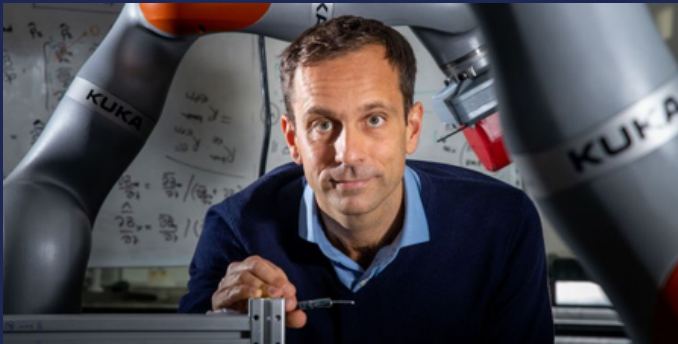
Bringing new surgical technologies to those
who need them most by ensuring our
activities and reach are inclusive and
reflective of the needs of underserved
groups.

Building capabilities in the generation of
evidence for HealthTech and improving
knowledge of market access requirements

Our Research Themes

- **Theme 1 - Early Diagnosis and Personalised Care**
- Theme 2 - Minimally Invasive Therapies and Extended Realities
- **Theme 3 - Assisted Healing and Rehabilitation**
- Timely clinical evaluation
- **Surgical Care Observatory**
- Sustainability & NHS net carbon zero

Leeds secures £1.8m EPSRC award for international surgical robotics collaboration



The University of Leeds has secured major UKRI funding to lead a new international research project developing magnetic robotic technologies for minimally invasive surgery.

The project, titled “Intelligent Magnetic Multi-scale Robotics for endoluminal Surgical Excellence” (IMMERSE), brings together two of Europe’s leading centres in surgical robotics.

The Leeds team, led by Pietro Valdastri, Professor and Chair in Robotics and Autonomous Systems, (pictured) has been awarded £1.8 million from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) for a 42-month project in partnership with [ETH Zurich](#), which is contributing a further £1 million.

IMMERSE focuses on using magnetic fields to control surgical robots operating deep inside the human body. Magnetic manipulation enables navigation of complex, delicate anatomical pathways without rigid instruments, creating new possibilities for minimally invasive procedures in areas otherwise difficult or impossible to reach with existing technologies.

The initial clinical focus will be on gastrointestinal tract and pancreas diseases, including conditions such as colorectal and pancreatic cancer, where improved access and precision could significantly affect outcomes.

Find out more about [Here](#)

Leeds welcomes HM Treasury to showcase impact of city’s £40 million NIHR infrastructure



City and regional leaders this week welcomed HM Treasury to showcase how [Leeds’ £40m NIHR infrastructure](#) is accelerating national ambitions to tackle health inequalities and position the UK as a global leader in life sciences.

The high-profile visit from the Treasury’s Growth and Resilience team began at the University of Leeds’ innovation hub, [Nexus](#), with a roundtable highlighting how the city’s world-leading research and innovation are driving real-world impact.

Director of the [NIHR Leeds Biomedical Research Centre \(BRC\)](#), Philip Conaghan, chaired the discussion, where a range of experts from academia and industry outlined how Leeds is driving progress through its pioneering, partnership-powered NIHR@Leeds infrastructure. Technologies.

Find out more [Here](#)

Tackling health inequalities across West Yorkshire



A business founded by a University of Leeds alum has won £100,000 of funding to commercialise its wearable health technology.

Asclepius Medtech Ltd has developed a small biosensor patch that is fitted to patients' chests to gather real-time health data ahead of surgery.

The company was one of three winners in the Mayor's big ideas challenge, in which local businesses provided innovative solutions to overcome disparities in health outcomes.

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) has supported businesses to accelerate innovation by developing solutions, products or services that address community health challenges in the county.

The Mayor's big ideas challenge supported 19 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Each finalist was awarded £20,000 in development grants to create an innovative solution to implement positive change.

"Each team will now receive £100,000 to accelerate the development of their lifechanging technologies – boosting health and wellbeing throughout West Yorkshire, and creating good skilled jobs in our region."

Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

The top three businesses won £100,000 each to commercialise their business ideas with support from Innovate UK.

find our more [here](#)

Leeds Teaching Hospitals secures major NIHR Capital Research Infrastructure funding to accelerate world-leading research



Leeds Teaching Hospitals has been awarded £1.5m from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to support the Trust's ambition to further advance cutting-edge research and enable more patients across the region to benefit from life-changing research.

The funding has been awarded to support four initiatives which include pioneering equipment and essential digital infrastructure to allow the Trust to drive further collaboration between academic and industry partners, help streamline the delivery of innovative clinical trials, in line with the ambitions of the Life Sciences Sector Plan and develop more treatments for the future.

Funds will allow Leeds Teaching Hospitals to purchase a HistoSonics pioneering non-invasive platform, further expanding the Trust's use of the Histosonic's novel sonic beam therapy (histotripsy) to advance research into new cancer therapies.

Led by Professor Tze Min Wah, Professor of Interventional Radiology at Leeds Teaching Hospitals, this innovative technology was initially used by the Trust to conduct the liver tumour therapy in the Hope4Liver trial (2021) and subsequently world-first kidney tumour treatment using the technology in 2023 through the CAIN Trial. Data from the trial showed that it enabled day-case treatment leading to faster recovery, shorter hospital stays, and reduced complications, benefiting patients who participated in the trial and paving the way for future treatments.

Find out more [here](#)

Bridging the Gap: A Socio-Technical Reflection on Digital Transformation in Public Services



Dr Helen Hughes - Associate Professor and Chartered Psychologist, lead for our Surgical Observatory workstream attended the [HETT Show](#) at the Royal Armouries, where she sat on a panel exploring the role of digital transformation in the future NHS.

The conversation reinforced to me just how crucial it is to understand healthcare as a complex socio-technical system - where people, processes, technology, and context all interact in ways that shape outcomes, and the risks of focusing on 'technology' as a solution in and of itself. It was energising to hear so many voices emphasising collaboration, thoughtful design, and the need for truly joined-up approaches to digital transformation.

After the event, I pulled together some reflections in a blog, digging deeper into the themes we discussed and what they mean for the challenges ahead. If you're interested in the intersection of [hashtag#behaviouralscience](#), [hashtag#systemdesign](#), and [hashtag#healthtechnology](#), you might find it a useful read.

Always grateful for opportunities like this to learn from others and continue the conversation about building a future [hashtag#NHS](#) that works better for staff, patients, and society.

Read her blog [Here](#)

Game-changing health innovations to be celebrated at global awards



We are proud to be sponsoring the Health Tech World Awards recognising the health innovators and innovations helping to transform outcomes across the globe.

Celebrating some of the best examples of leadership, innovation and impact spanning life sciences, medtech, digital health and beyond.

The award recognises innovations that have demonstrably enhanced patient health, safety, experience or quality of life through effective use of technology. Find out more and enter for free here:

Read Full story [Here](#)

HealthTech Innovation in Partnership Event



Roxana Dumitrache, Strategic Programme Manager represented Accelerated Surgical Care HealthTech Research Centre with colleagues from Sustain Lab Rory Turnbull, Pete Culmer and Adam Peckham-Cooper at the recent HealthTech Innovation in partnership event.

Opening remarks from David Brettle set the tone for the day, highlighting the importance of collaboration in tackling the major challenges facing healthcare – from capacity pressures and waiting lists to improving equity and outcomes.

Your Richard Devereaux Phillips (ABHI) and Kate Lodge (Leeds Academic Health Partnership) spoke about the system-wide transformation required across the NHS: shifting from hospital to community, analogue to digital, and sickness to prevention, with neighbourhood health and digital infrastructure playing a key role.

Dan Gilpin presented that Leeds is a test bed for the pilot on the Neighbourhood Programme, noting that what makes it unique is the region's demographics and the richness of the data, which at a smaller scale represents the UK.

An excellent panels discussion led by Chris Herbert brought together perspectives from across the NIHR ecosystem. Dr Hanif Ismail highlighted the importance of patient and public involvement in shaping innovation, while Professor Phil Conaghan, Professor Chris Twelves, and Varaidzo (Vee) Mapunde showcased the impact of Leeds' NIHR infrastructure in supporting world-leading research and HealthTech/ MedTech evaluation. Mr Adam Peckham-Cooper provided a valuable clinical perspective on translating innovation into improved surgical pathways.

HRC SUSTAIN

The second panel reinforced the importance of working across services, linking data and building research capacity to create seamless patient pathways.

A great example provided by Michael Morgan-Curran of this collaborative approach was the Asclepius MedTech Limited case study, showcasing their journey working with multiple partners across Leeds and demonstrating how industry, research infrastructure and the NHS can come together to develop, test and implement innovation.

HealthTech Funding Opportunities

The following are funding streams that are suitable for collaborative applications with the HealthTech Research Centre in Accelerated Surgical Care.

We advise all potential applicants to discuss their potential applications well in advance of the application deadline.

[Professional doctorate: clinical research training fellowship](#) – 08 April 2026

[NIHR THRIVE Programme of Entrepreneurship Training and Funding](#) – 17 April 2026

[Rosetrees Seedcorn Awards \(Sepsis\)](#) – 20 April 2026

[NIHR Developing Research Leaders \(Cohort 2\)](#) – 21 April 2026

[AI Champions: Frontier AI Phase 1](#) – 29 April 2026

[UKRI Translation: Proof of Concept](#) – 13 May 2026

[EIC Transition](#) – 16 September 2026

[European Innovation Council: Pathfinder, Transition, and Accelerator 2026](#) – 28 October 2026

[PBIAA Secondments](#) – December 2026

Funding streams with no time limits

[The Horizon Europe Pump Priming Programme](#)

[Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund II](#)

[Innovate UK Business Growth – RTO Voucher scheme](#)

[University of Huddersfield Health Innovation Partnership](#)

[UK Innovation & Science Seed Fund](#)

[Creative England Investments](#)

[The British Business Bank](#)

[Efficacy and mechanism evaluation programme – fast-track scheme](#) – no deadline

[Global Innovation Fund](#) – rolling deadline

[British Heart Foundation New Horizons Grants](#) – no deadline

[Cardiovascular Small Meetings & Events Funds](#)

[EIC Accelerator](#)

[Ignite Vouchers](#)

[Amplify Grants](#)

[BHF Healthcare Implementation Fund](#)