

Lived experience advisory panel (LEAP) payment policy

This policy has been co-developed with lived experience input and is based on NIHR guidelines for engaging lived experience experts in the research process. It is to be used alongside NIHR, BPS, or your relevant governing body guidelines about compensating experts by experience.

Table 1. Lived experience payment guide.

Activity	Time Commitment	Payment	Expenses Reimbursed	Notes
Attending an open event / drop-in session	0.5–1 hour	£0	Yes	Considered voluntary/community consultation
Completing a short survey or feedback form	0.5–1 hour	£0	No	No payment, but important contribution
Advisory/Steering Group Meeting (in person/online)	1.5–2 hours	£75	Yes	Includes prep time if expected
Workshop, Focus Group, Co-Production Session	Half day (up to 3.5 hours)	£150	Yes	Includes participation and reasonable prep
Full Day Event / Workshop	Full day (4–7 hours)	£300	Yes	Includes sustained co-production or training
Document review or preparation (remote)	Per hour	£25/hour	No	Agree time in advance
Speaking at a conference or training session	30 min–1 hour speaking	£100	Yes	More if prep/presentation is extensive
Peer researcher/interviewing participants	Varies	£25/hour or project fee	Yes	Payment based on involvement agreement
Planning/research design meetings	1–2 hours	£75	Yes	Time valued for contribution to design

Induction/training sessions	Up to 2 hours	£50	Yes	Optional; some may wish to attend unpaid
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Table 2. Lived experience expenses guide.

Expense Type	What's Covered	Rate/Guidance
Travel – Public Transport	Train, bus, tram, underground fares	Reimbursed in full with receipt or ticket photo
Travel – Private Car (Mileage)	Personal car use to and from activity venue	£0.45 per mile (HMRC standard rate)
Parking	Parking near the venue when free parking is not available	Reimbursed in full with receipt
Taxis	For accessibility needs or when no practical public transport available	Must be agreed in advance unless urgent/emergency; receipt required
Childcare	Childcare costs incurred to enable participation	Up to £15 per hour, with receipt or invoice from registered provider
Carer Costs	Support for adults with care needs while contributor attends	Same as childcare – up to £15/hour with proof of payment to carer
Subsistence	Meals/snacks for full-day involvement where food is not provided	Up to £5 (half day) / £10 (full day) – receipt required
Hotel/Accommodation	Overnight stay if attending multi-day or distant event	Must be pre-approved. Booked by project team where possible.
Accessibility Costs	Additional transport/support needs due to disability or health condition	Covered in full when agreed in advance; flexible approach encouraged

How to claim payment and expenses (for LEAP members)

1. Before the Activity

- You'll be told the payment rate and whether expenses will be covered.
- If applicable, submit any accessibility, travel or childcare requests in advance.

2. After the Activity

- Complete the Payment and Expenses Claim Form (provided electronically or on paper by AU)
- Include:
 - Bank details (or request voucher/cheque/charity donation)
 - Name and address
 - Details of activity (date, description)
 - Receipts for expenses (travel, childcare, etc.)

3. Submit the Form

- Email or post the form to the project lead or finance administrator.
- You may ask for help with filling out the form.

4. Payment Timeline

- Payments will usually be made within 30 days of receiving a completed form but may take longer.

How the Organisation Pays

1. Payment Options

- Bank Transfer (preferred method)
- Voucher (Amazon, supermarket, etc. — on request)
- Donation to a named charity (on request)

2. Expense Reimbursements

- Paid in full, provided receipts are supplied
- Includes:
 - Travel (public transport, mileage at HMRC rates)

- Childcare or carer costs
- Parking (if no free parking provided)
- Subsistence (if full-day activity requires it)

3. Payment Records

- Payment will be recorded for audit but not treated as formal employment.
- Contributors are responsible for reporting any income to HMRC or the DWP (if claiming benefits).

4. Additional Notes

- Contributors can opt out of payment or request partial payment.
- Contributors on benefits will be referred to the [NIHR Benefits Advice Service](#) to ensure participation doesn't affect eligibility.
- We provide a Statement of Involvement upon request to confirm the nature of payment (non-employment, time-limited engagement).