

5th Early Stage Researcher Forum

26 November 2026, 13:00 – 17:00

SUH Lecture Theatre, Level 6

Early Stage Researcher Information Leaflet 2026

Encouraged by the success and positive feedback from the previous events, the Research & Education Foundation (REF) at Sligo University Hospital (SUH) is delighted to host the 5th Early Stage Researcher (ESR) Forum. This event is open to ESRs at SUH, the wider catchment area, and beyond. The REF invites abstract submissions for consideration as a poster for the Poster Exhibition and as a speaker presentation at the 5th ESR Forum.

Event Description

ESR Forum is an event that challenges researchers to describe their research and its significance, in a non-specialist language to a general audience in a just 5 minute presentation. The ESR Forum is a excellent opportunity for researchers to present completed or work-in-progress health-related research and to improve their communication skills, while receiving constructive feedback from an expert panel.

Event Details

When: Thursday, 26 November, 2026, 1 – 5 pm

Where: Lecture Theatre, Level 6, Sligo University Hospital

Who can attend?

This event is open to anyone engaged in health research or interested in learning about local health research. We particularly encourage participation from early stage health researchers, academics, nurses, medical and health & social care professionals, and medical students.

Who can present?

To be eligible to present, you must:

- Be an early stage health researcher*.
- Attend the full event in person.
- Submit an abstract by Monday, 5 October 2026.

Benefits to Presenters:

- Participate in a free pre-conference event focusing on Early Stage Health Researchers.
- Present your work-in-progress and receive valuable feedback from a panel of experts.
- Display your work-in-progress poster during the Poster Exhibition.
- Compete for the prestigious Research & Education Foundation Medal for 'Best Presentation'.

Expert Panel 2026

Our expert panel will be announced closer to the date and will provide valuable feedback to early researchers.

Abstract Submission

To be selected as a speaker, you must submit an abstract for your project. This could include research you are actively conducting or research that is completed but requires further interpretation before wider dissemination.

Selection Process

Abstract submissions will be externally reviewed and scored based on medical and scientific significance, timeliness, data quality, methodology, potential impact, and adherence to format requirements described below. From the accepted abstracts, up to 15 ESRs will be invited to present at the event.

Accepted Abstracts

Abstracts will be accepted for either an oral presentation and poster display or poster display only.

- **Oral Presentation:** If your abstract is awarded an oral presentation, you will be invited to deliver a 5-minute oral presentation about your research project at the ESR Forum. There will be a short Q&A opportunity after your presentation. After each block of up to 5 presentations, there will be a 15-minute session for feedback from the expert panel.
 - *Research & Education Foundation Medal:* Awarded to the best oral presentation.
- **Poster Display:** If your abstract is accepted for a poster display at the Poster Exhibition, please note the following:
 - *Poster Format:* A0 size, preferably portrait.
 - *Printed Posters Drop-off:* **Tuesday, 17 November 2026**, at SUH Library, Level 6 or REF Office, ETC Building
 - *Poster Exhibition:* Posters will be displayed from 19 November to 3 December 2026.
 - *Research & Education Foundation Medal:* Awarded to the best poster.

How to submit

Submission Deadline: Monday, 5 October 2026

Submission Method: Submit your abstract for the 5th ESR Forum by emailing the completed Abstract Submission Form to office@ref-sligo.ie.

Email Subject Line: Use '2026ESRForum [1st Author's Family Name] [partial Abstract Title/Keyword]'

Confirmation of Abstract Receipt

The submitting author will receive an email confirming receipt of the abstract. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within five working days, please contact office@ref-sligo.ie.

Further information

- For more details about the 27th REF Annual Multidisciplinary Research Conference and the 5th Early Stage Researcher Forum, please visit our website at ref-sligo.ie.
- For any queries, contact us via email at office@ref-sligo.ie.

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION CLOSES: Monday, 5 October 2026

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION IS NOW OPEN.

Abstract Submission Form: click [here](#) or request from office@ref-sligo.ie.

Abstract Submission Guidelines: click [here](#) or request from office@ref-sligo.ie.

^{*)} **Definition of Early Stage Researchers (ESRs):** Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) are defined as individuals working in the area of health or academia with less than five years of full-time equivalent research experience in health research. This definition includes postgraduate students, doctoral students, post-doctoral researchers, medical doctors, nurses, and health & social care professionals, or equivalent roles.