

## **Fuse Strategy**

### *September 2024 - March 2027*

#### **1. Introduction and background**

Fuse, the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health, brings together six Universities in the North East and North Cumbria (Durham, Cumbria, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside) in a unique collaboration to deliver world-class research to improve health and wellbeing and tackle inequalities.

Fuse was established in 2008 as one of the five UK Public Health Research Centres of Excellence that was originally funded by the UKCRC initiative. Fuse is a founding member of the NIHR School for Public Health Research (SPHR). With a focus on translational research, Fuse has since its inception worked hand-in-hand with the NHS, local and national government and the voluntary and community sectors seeking to make a significant contribution to transform public health and strengthen the evidence base for it. Fuse has acted as a platform, leading to a number of other timely and novel initiatives, and facilitated the growth of expertise and partnerships to improve population health. These strong partnerships established within Fuse have led to its reach, impact and credibility regionally, nationally and internationally.

The strategy document outlines what and how Fuse aims to continue to deliver as an established Centre for Translational Research in Public Health. It presents Fuse's ambition to grow further and be bolder in how its mission and aims are achieved.

#### **2. Mission and aims**

Fuse's mission is to transform health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities through the conduct of world-class public health research and its translation into value-for-money policy and practice.

Three aims of Fuse are to:

1. Deliver world-class public health research
2. Build sustainable capacity
3. Build effective and lasting partnerships

#### **3. Strategic Objectives**

The following strategic objectives present priorities and the way of working for Fuse in the next two and half years.

##### **3.1 Innovating, influencing, mobilising and demonstrating impact**

- 3.1.1 Developing and implementing mechanisms for capturing impact of Fuse, and demonstrating importance of collaboration and partnerships.

- 3.1.2 Utilising existing and developing new innovative communication as well as public involvement and engagement methods to strengthen the relevance and impact of Fuse's research on public health policies and practices across the partnerships.
- 3.1.3 Engaging and mobilising Fuse Researchers through refreshed clusters and capacity building activities.

### **3.2 Building on and enhancing reach, trust and uniqueness**

- 3.2.1 Strengthening existing and developing new lasting regional, national as well as international partnerships to maximise the impact and reach of Fuse' research.
- 3.2.2 Ensuring clear message of what Fuse can offer and how to all Fuse stakeholders.
- 3.2.3 Continuing to increase translational research capacity, including public involvement and community engagement as well as creative communications and increase the flow of evidence into practice regionally, nationally and internationally.
- 3.2.4 Maintain the uniqueness of Fuse as a Centre at the forefront of Translational Research. Ensure that translational research is at heart of all Fuse activities by embedding it within the work of the research clusters.

### **3.3 Being current, accessible, responsive and sustainable**

- 3.3.1 Ensuring that the mission of Fuse remains current, accessible, and responsive in a changing environment, both internally and externally.
- 3.3.2 Continuing and strengthening Fuse Public Involvement and Communication activities and methods, focusing on participatory methods, methodological innovation and engagement with the communities, to ensure that our research is relevant, respectful, and responsive to the needs of the communities we serve.
- 3.3.3 Continuing to link with and seek further synergies and complementarity with the existing research infrastructures to maximise the impact and achieve the best outcome without creating additional burden on resources or duplication of effort and activities.

## **4. Implementation plan**

We will achieve these strategic objectives through implementation of Fuse strategic plans for research clusters, Communication, Public Involvement and Engagement and AskFuse. The strategic plans are outlined in separate documents, although there are synergies and all plans are contributing to the overarching aims and objectives of Fuse. The summary below provides a synthesis of these strategic plans. The success measures of achieving the objectives are outlined in the individual strategic plans.

### **4.1 Innovating, influencing, mobilising and demonstrating impact will be achieved by:**

- 4.1.1 Creating opportunities for policy makers, practice partners, public partners, researchers, academics and students to be involved in co-producing creative and innovative public health research and research priorities as well as knowledge mobilisation theory and practice.
- 4.1.2 Demonstrating the outcomes and impact of Fuse research clusters, Communication, Public Involvement and Engagement activities and AskFuse research projects and activities.

**4.2 Building on and enhancing reach, trust and uniqueness will be achieved by:**

- 4.2.1 Continuously developing outreach opportunities and resources to engage practitioners, policy makers, public members and Fuse researchers across the North East and North Cumbria (NENC).
- 4.2.2 Building on Fuse' existing national and international partnerships to grow research collaborations, shared learning, capacity building and training activities and dissemination to increase the flow of evidence into practice.
- 4.2.3 Advancing Fuse's reputation as an established and trusted resource for translational public health research and information regionally, nationally and internationally
- 4.2.4 Using public involvement and engagement to enhance the transparency, accountability, and trustworthiness of Fuse's research.
- 4.2.5 Differentiating Fuse from other similar organisations by embedding and promoting translational research across all Fuse activities.

**4.3 Being current, accessible, responsive and sustainable will be achieved by:**

- 4.3.1 Creating and supporting innovative co-production and knowledge mobilisation theory and practice.
- 4.3.2 Continuing to support Fuse community to identify opportunities for translational research activities at the earliest opportunity in the research process.
- 4.3.3 Facilitating accessible and sustainable capacity and capability building at the regional, national and international level through the work of research clusters, mentoring opportunities, Fuse's events, seminars and other training activities.
- 4.3.4 Promoting and facilitating the use of the most current and relevant knowledge sharing principles and models.
- 4.3.5 Embedding principles from the most relevant and highest quality standards for public involvement, engagement and communication across Fuse activities.
- 4.3.6 Embedding public involvement and engagement as a core component of Fuse's public health research to ensure that the voices of diverse communities are heard and represented in Fuse's research activities.