

NIR Onboarding Crib Sheet

Practical guidance to support
National Imaging Registry funding
applications and connection

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Practical Prompts when using the Onboarding Crib Sheet

How to use this crib sheet

Part 1 covers information to consider including in the funding application. **Part 2** covers information to request from suppliers to support onboarding and local governance.

Terminology

Throughout this document, “organisation” includes NHS trusts, health boards, community providers, imaging networks and other organisations participating in the application. “Site” means an individual hospital or other location within an organisation.

Part 1

Information to support
your funding application



1. Participating organisations and connection scope

Define the scope of the proposed participation by including:

- Whether the application covers an individual organisation or a group of organisations intending to work together.
- If applying as a group, the basis for the grouping. This may reflect a shared digital strategy, an existing partnership, use of the same supplier or product, a shared imaging system or a common approach to connecting to NIR.
- The organisations and sites included within the proposed scope.
- Whether all participating organisations are expected to connect at the same time.
- Any organisations or sites that may need to connect separately or later.

2. Proposed NIR connections

Consider including:

- Whether the organisation or group of organisations shares one imaging system, uses separate systems from the same supplier, or uses systems provided by different suppliers.
- How many connections to NIR you expect will be needed.
- Which organisations and sites would sit behind each proposed connection.
- Whether grouped or separate connections are proposed.
- Anything about the current system arrangements that may affect the number of connections required.



Why this information is helpful:

It enables the NIR Product Team to understand the anticipated number of gateway connections; the organisations, sites and systems that would sit behind each connection; how the proposed connections relate to the organisations included in the application; the likely scale and complexity of onboarding; how NIR onboarding and technical support may be coordinated across organisations sharing a connection; and the likely NIR Tiger Team resource required.



Key Terminology

What is a “connection”?

A **connection** is the technical link that enables an organisation’s imaging system to communicate with NIR. It does not necessarily mean one connection per organisation or site. For example, several organisations using a shared imaging platform may be able to use a single connection, while organisations using separate systems or technical environments may require multiple connections.

The number of connections required will depend on the local system architecture. Your supplier can advise on the available connection options, with the organisation or group agreeing the proposed approach to include in the application.



3. Systems and suppliers involved

For each system involved, consider including:

- The type of system, such as PACS, RIS or VNA.
- The supplier, product and version currently in use.
- The organisations and sites served by the system.
- Whether the system is shared across organisations or separately deployed.
- The number of system instances involved.
- Whether separate test and live environments are available.
- Whether an upgrade, additional module, licence or configuration change may be required.
- Where more than one supplier is involved, the role of each supplier.

Your supplier can provide the relevant product, version and deployment information and confirm whether changes are likely to be required.



4. Supplier activity

Consider including the work your supplier expects to undertake, such as:

- Advising on the available connection options and recommending an appropriate approach.
- Advising which organisations and sites could sit behind each connection.
- Providing information about the deployed systems and architecture.
- Upgrading the product or enabling additional functionality, where required.
- Configuring the system to connect to NIR.
- Setting up or supporting test and live environments.
- Supporting connectivity, integration, testing, issue resolution, launch and early use.
- Working with other suppliers where more than one supplier is involved.



Key Guidance

Supplier Recommendation

The organisation or group should use the supplier's recommendation to agree the proposed connection arrangement included in its application.

Ask the supplier to make it clear:

- What work is included and which systems, organisations and proposed connections it covers.
- What the organisation will need to provide.
- Any assumptions, exclusions or dependencies on another supplier or local team.
- Any continuing support required during the beta period.



5. Local activity and support

Consider including the local activity likely to be needed, such as:

- Coordinating activity across the organisations and suppliers involved.
- Providing technical information and supporting connectivity and configuration.
- Planning and completing testing.
- Completing local clinical safety, DPIA and information governance activity.
- Preparing local standard operating procedures (SOPs), incident-management processes and other operational documentation.
- Preparing users and teams for the change.
- Supporting launch, early use and beta feedback.



For the local activity required, consider whether you want:

- Funding to backfill or provide additional local capacity.
- Support from the NIR Tiger Team.
- A combination of locally funded capacity and Tiger Team support.

Key information: The NIR Tiger Team can provide practical, time-limited support during onboarding. Depending on the needs of the organisation and the support agreed, this may include onboarding coordination, testing, information governance, clinical safety and operational-readiness support.

Further information about the available NIR support can be found in the “National Resources and Services” tab of the key information spreadsheet within your Letter of Agreement documentation.



Your Letter of Agreement funding application should make clear:

- What support is needed and what activity it would cover.
- Which organisations or connections it would support.
- When it would be required.
- Whether you are requesting funding for local backfill, Tiger Team support or a combination of both

Avoid duplication: Do not request the same activity as both locally funded capacity and Tiger Team support unless the respective responsibilities are clearly separated.



6. Assumptions and dependencies

Consider identifying anything that may affect the proposed approach or delivery, including:

- A supplier product or version not yet being ready.
- A required system upgrade, additional functionality or configuration.
- Dependencies between organisations or hand-offs between suppliers.
- Different organisations being ready at different times.
- Availability of local technical, testing, clinical safety or information governance support.
- Local approvals required or parts of the approach not yet confirmed.

Where more than one supplier is involved, ask the suppliers to work together so that their advice reflects the complete proposed connection arrangement.



Key Guidance

Use a deployment specific diagram

The diagram should reflect the products, versions and system configuration is actually deployed. A generic supplier diagram may not provide enough information for local governance and onboarding.

Part 2

Information to support
your NIR onboarding



Important Distinction

Purpose of this section

The following information does not need to be reproduced in detail within the funding application. Request it from suppliers to help prepare for onboarding and complete local governance and assurance work.

Producing this information may require supplier effort. Ask your supplier to identify any associated activity and costs within its proposal and quotation covered under Part 1. This should be treated as supplier activity rather than local organisational activity.



7. Understanding how information will flow

Ask your supplier to explain:

- Where a user will start a search for an image or report.
- How the search will pass from the local imaging system to NIR and how results will be shown.
- How a selected image or report will be retrieved and which local system will receive it.
- Whether the information will be viewed, temporarily held or imported, and where it will appear for the user.
- How the information will be matched to the correct patient.
- What will happen if information cannot be retrieved, matched or imported successfully.
- What error messages users will see when a search or retrieval is unsuccessful.
- Whether the message will explain what happened and what the user should do next.
- What information will be available to local support teams and suppliers to investigate the issue.



This information can support your local:

- DPIA and information governance assessment.
- Clinical safety assessment and DCB0160 documentation.
- Cyber and technical assurance.
- Testing approach and test scenarios.
- Operational procedures and staff guidance.
- Incident management and support arrangements.



8. Requesting a data-flow diagram

Ask your supplier to provide a simple end-to-end data-flow diagram showing:

- Each proposed connection to NIR and the organisations and sites sitting behind it.
- The local imaging systems and supplier responsible for each system.
- How searches pass to NIR and how images, reports and associated information return.
- Which local system receives retrieved information and whether it is viewed, temporarily held or imported.
- Where retrieved images and reports appear and how information is matched to the correct patient.
- Points where information passes between systems, organisations or suppliers.
- Relevant security, audit and logging points and known failure or exception routes.



9. Where more than one supplier is involved

Ask the suppliers to work collaboratively to provide one combined end-to-end data-flow topology. It should:

- Join the individual supplier diagrams into one complete view.
- Show every system, interface and hand-off involved.
- Show the direction in which searches, images, reports and associated information move.
- Identify the organisations and sites behind each connection and where retrieved information will be received and displayed.
- Make each supplier's responsibility clear, including configuration, testing, issue investigation and ongoing support at each hand-off.

The organisation or group should identify who will coordinate the suppliers and confirm that the combined topology accurately reflects the proposed arrangement.



Need further support?

For onboarding guidance or questions about the NIR Service, contact the NIR Product Team:

england.nirdelivery@nhs.net

For further funding or Letter of Agreement support, contact the DDC programme:

england.diagnostics.ddcp@nhs.net

We're here to help – no question is too small.



Version Control

Onboarding Crib Sheet

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v.1	Creation	27 August 2026