The Iolanthe Midwifery Trust

Guidance for completing applications for Norah Faith Coniam Award

Introduction to the Norah Faith Coniam Award

The Norah Faith Coniam Award helps the recipient with the cost of professional education or a project that aims to improve midwifery care and practice around baby loss and bereavement, including early pregnancy loss. You will need to show in your application that your proposed plan will lead to improvements in care through practice, education and training or research.

Norah Faith Coniam Award at a glance

Amount Granted	Maximum £1,500
When to Apply	Applications open on 1 Dec 2026 and **close on 1 February 2027**. The award winner will be announced in early June 2027.
Eligibility Criteria	Student Midwives, Midwives registered with the UK NMC
Timing	For projects starting after 1 January 2027 and completed by May 2028. For courses taking longer, you can apply for apportioned costs covering the eligible time period.

What type of projects and research are suitable?

Awards are made to help midwives or student midwives with the costs of self-development or training, to undertake research or to make improvements to local services.

For the Norah Faith Coniam Award, this could include:

- Developing services for pregnant women, birthing people and their families who are experiencing, or who have experienced, the loss of a baby at any stage in pregnancy or after birth
- Developing and/or delivering study days around baby loss for midwives and their colleagues
- The attending of training courses to develop specialist skills around baby loss to improve your midwifery practice
- A study project related to the theme, for example aiming to improve outcomes or understanding
- Research or a project aiming to amplify the voices/experiences of families
- The creation of information resources related to the theme
- Organising a commemorative event that may support families experiencing baby loss, or creating or improving access to a commemorative tool or space
- Assistance with academic fees for Masters and PhD studies

Each application will be judged on its individual merits. See below for a guide to writing a good application.

You cannot normally apply for more than one Iolanthe award in any one year. However, an exception is if you are applying for another Iolanthe award, such as the Norah Faith Coniam Award, and are also eligible and wish to apply for a Dora Opoku Midwives Diversity and Equity Award.

If you have previously received an individual Iolanthe Award, you must wait two years before applying again. For example, a 2025 Award winner could next apply for a 2027 Award. The Jean Davies Award is the only Iolanthe Award that may be applied for by a team and is therefore the exception. If you have previously been part of a team who was given the Jean Davies Award, you may apply for the Norah Faith Coniam Award with no specific time needing to pass.

Travel and location of award work

The Iolanthe Midwifery Trust does consider projects involving international travel. Consideration will be given to overseas placements where there are clear learning objectives which demonstrate a view to maintaining ongoing partnership and collaborative working which is mutually beneficial. However applicants should be aware of the following stipulations:

- Priority will be given to projects taking place in the four nations of the UK;
- Student midwives are encouraged to seek elective placements in a part of the UK that presents a contrast to (or builds upon) their prior experience, for example in urban areas, rural areas or within specific communities.
- We do not fund placements with commercial travel organisations such as ‘Work the World’;
- Where overseas work is funded, the charity would be looking for applications that:
    - Demonstrate a consideration of the ethical issues that may arise from overseas award activity;
    - Identify specific career development goals that will be met by the overseas award activity;
    - Demonstrate cultural familiarity and an ongoing relationship with the intended location, or detailed plans to develop this;
    - Show how the award activity would fall within any university or organisational travel restrictions;
    - Demonstrate an intention to meaningfully engage, learn and develop during the overseas award activity. Longer placements are more likely to be funded than shorter ‘observation’ placements.
    - Demonstrate how learning from the award activity will be disseminated to other midwives, student midwives or health practitioners in the UK.

Conference attendance

The Iolanthe Midwifery Trust is able to fund conference attendance. However applicants should be aware of the following stipulations:

- Priority will be given to conferences taking place within the four nations of the UK;
- Priority will be given to those presenting their work at a conference rather than attending the conference as a delegate;
- Applicants need to give a rationale for choosing a particular conference and the specific career development goals that will be met by attending;
- Applicants need to demonstrate how others will also benefit from their attendance at the intended conference. This might include clear plans to disseminate the learning to other midwives, student midwives or health practitioners.

See below for A Guide to Writing a Good Application

A Guide to Writing a Good Application

	What goes wrong?	How to improve your chance of funding
The purpose of the application	Giving too little information about your proposed project or just copying information from elsewhere (eg academic course objectives)	Clearly justify your choice of project and tell us what makes it worthwhile or innovative. Identify how it will improve midwifery care and practice around baby loss and bereavement; this can include early pregnancy loss. Projects which address health inequalities for ethnic communities or target vulnerable groups are also viewed more positively.
Benefits from the project	Not giving enough thought about how you, your employer, the midwifery profession, maternity services and women/families will benefit.	Spell out the benefits of your project to yourself and others (parents and families, other midwives, and the profession and/or employer). Explain how you will share your experience or the knowledge that you gain.
Costs	Including excessive, irrelevant or personal costs Not being clear in your project description about what the money will be spent on	Give detailed well-researched costs with a brief justification for why these are included. Include precise details on what the money will be spent on in the section describing your project. Don't include personal costs which you are not expecting to get funded (e.g. holiday excursion). Provide evidence of other fundraising – we view this positively as a sign of commitment.
The overall quality of the application	Missing out sections and applications which are too long and unfocused. Applications which don't convey conviction or interest.	Make sure your application is complete, well presented and readable. Use the word counts to help focus the information. Reference your application with research or policy if appropriate but not excessively. Write with feeling and persuasion.
Support and commitment.	Not enough evidence of support to do the project.	Include a supporting letter from your manager/academic lead/course tutor. If possible, ask for a personal reference rather than a standard letter. Acknowledge other support, eg time off or part-funding. Please ensure you give those people providing a supporting letter enough notice. **Supporting information cannot be added after the application deadline.**

Guide to Completing the Online Application Form

We have designed the form to be as easy as possible to fill in. If you have any difficulties understanding what is required please contact awards@iolanthe.org and we will be able to help you.

If you do use AI to help you draft your application, please make sure it's a realistic and honest reflection of your proposal. When you apply to us we want to learn about you and what you want to do. The writing style or grammar doesn't matter to us. What we are interested in is what you're trying to achieve and how you're going to do it.

You can apply for the award at https://www.iolanthe.org/midwives-award. Below are some further explanations to help you fill in the form.

* **indicates essential reading**

Field	Explanation
***Data protection**	Applying for an award will require you to go to our online application system on an external website based in the USA. By entering data on the application form, you are agreeing to have your data stored and processed within and outside of the UK and the EU as well as by Iolanthe Midwifery Trust. Further details about what this means and the rights you have over the data can be found in our Privacy Policy
***Saving the application**	You can save the application at any time by clicking on Save at the end of the form. You can then continue entering data or choose to resume later. If you want to come back later, you will be given a link (or choose to have the link sent to you in an email) so you can return to the form at another time. **Please note**: The form does not save automatically if you use the back button or close the browser tab or window. Save regularly to ensure you don't lose your work.
Applicant's PIN	If the lead application is a midwife, their NMC registration pin must be entered in this box
Telephone	A mobile number is preferred
Email addresses	We request two email addresses in case your preferred email address is linked with a job or place of study which expires when you move on. This is particularly difficult if it happens in the course of the award administration.
Address	For students, this should be your permanent home address, not your term-time address.
1. Abridged CV of applicant	We will be looking for evidence that you have the capacity to undertake and complete the work. Please include in the additional information section any relevant exceptional performance in training or a job. Please be honest about your CV and explain any gaps in the additional information section.
2. Details of Proposed Project	
Start and end date	Projects are only eligible for an award if they start on or after 1 January 2027 and are due to finish by 30 May 2028. (You will hear if you have been successful in early June 2027). If you are on a longer course, you can apportion costs to the appropriate time period.

Commitment to course/project	Enter brief but comprehensive details here about what time you will have available for the project, and any previous or current work which demonstrates your commitment to this project.
Manager's support	Your manager's support will add weight to your application. Please add a supporting letter at the end of the online application form (section 8)
3. Outline of proposed project	
Project outline	Read the above information about what makes a good application. The maximum word count is 1000 words including references. The text should be referenced where relevant (but not excessively referenced). You can make this box bigger by dragging on the bottom right hand corner.
4. Cost of the project	The total cost requested should be £1,500 maximum. Please provide detailed costs with justification, and be aware that receipts or other documentary proof must be provided for any costs that are later claimed. Please do not enter personal costs you are not expecting to be funded (e.g. holiday excursion).
8. Additional documents	Please upload supporting statements from your employer and details of ethical approval. Additional supporting statements should be provided where relevant for academic courses, conferences or ethical approval for research.
Save/Submit	You can save this application and return to it later. You will be given or sent a link to find it again. We advise against having multiple applications on multiple tabs open simultaneously as this has previously caused problems. When you are ready to submit your application, click on Submit. You will be able to download a pdf of your application. You should receive an email acknowledgment of your submission. If you do not receive this, please contact awards@iolanthe.org **before** the closing date so we can confirm if your application has been received. Only submitted applications will be judged. It is strongly advised that you submit your application with plenty of time to spare to resolve any problems with submission. No applications will be accepted after the closing date regardless of circumstances. Saved but unsubmitted awards will be deleted shortly after the closing date. By entering data on an application form you are accepting that your data will be stored and processed electronically both within and outside the UK and the EU for the purpose of awards administration and judging. More details about how your data will be stored and processed can be found in our Privacy Policy
On submission, applications will be required to agree to the following statements	I have not won an individual Iolanthe Award in the last two years; I am applying for charitable funding to support midwifery practice, provision, education, training or research; I understand that any project activity must adhere to professional midwifery standards and the best available evidence ;

I confirm that this application is my own original work and that the ideas, proposals and plans within it are my own. I understand that plagiarism will result in my application being rejected;

I have declared, and will declare, any project work that has been developed jointly with colleagues;

I agree to acknowledge Iolanthe Midwifery Trust funding in any outputs resulting from this award (for example publications and conference presentations) ;

I will undertake to complete the proposed activity as fully as I can within the award period, unless exceptional circumstances arise. In this case I will communicate this promptly to The Iolanthe Midwifery Trust;

I will keep and provide receipts or other documentary proof for any costs I claim; I understand that The Iolanthe Midwifery Trust will expect any unused charitable funds to be returned if award activity has not been completed within the agreed award period ;

I understand that the decisions of the Board of Trustees of The Iolanthe Midwifery Trust are final and binding.

The closing date/time for this award is 1 February 2027 5pm