

# R&D programme

– What it means to you



the heart of  
health and safety



## Our research and development programme

In 2005, we launched a £1 million-plus Research and Development Fund. We've since commissioned new research each year and continue to publish the findings. Over 25 development projects have also benefited from the Fund.

So why does your professional body commission research and support development projects? And what does it mean for you?

[www.iosh.co.uk/researchanddevelopmentfund](http://www.iosh.co.uk/researchanddevelopmentfund)

# Research

There's no substitute for commissioning original research. We decide exactly what we want to find out – and who we want to come up with the answers. Not only is the profession's reputation as a 'thought leader' enhanced by launching important new research, but you can also benefit directly from the results.

Our first research series focused on the value and impact of professional health and safety advice, putting your own role and status firmly in the spotlight.

Other research projects looked at practical areas relevant to your work too, from the role of the supply chain in the way health and safety is managed to how effective training is in the long term. We've also encouraged proposals that focus on the challenges of making sure that work is healthy and safe for an increasingly diverse population, including groups such as migrant and older workers.

On top of our annual research agenda, we support the British Occupational Health Research Foundation ([www.bohrf.org.uk](http://www.bohrf.org.uk)) and the Cardiff Work Environment Research Centre ([www.cardiff.ac.uk/cwerc](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/cwerc)), which means we can influence and tap into a wide range of other research on issues including asthma, mental health, rehabilitation and hand–arm vibration.

The full report and a summary of each of our funded projects are available free at [www.iosh.co.uk/researchreports](http://www.iosh.co.uk/researchreports). The following reports are currently available:

- *Superior safety performance – OSH personnel and safety performance in construction*, Glasgow Caledonian University
- *Occupational safety and health – promoting good health and good business*, Loughborough University
- *Safety culture, advice and performance*, Cardiff University
- *Exploring health and safety practitioners' training needs in workplace health issues*, Nottingham University
- *Understanding the role of supply chains in influencing health and safety management and regulation*, Cardiff University and Oxford Brookes University
- *Reliable industrial measurement of body temperature*, Institute of Occupational Medicine
- *The health, safety and health promotion needs of older workers: an evidence-based review and guidance*, Institute of Occupational Medicine.

# What are we researching now?

## **Brunel University** – *Post-retirement age workers and health and safety*

Employment levels for people over retirement age are reaching record highs. This project investigates their experiences and views of safety risks and practices.

## **Cardiff University** – *The relationship between work/ working and improved health, safety and wellbeing*

This project looks at the effects of different types of work on health, wellbeing and safety. It will help us find out what job characteristics are 'good' for health, and how important each one is.

## **Cardiff University and Oxford Brookes University** – *The role of supply chains in influencing health and safety management in three sectors*

This study looks at factors that positively influence the way health and safety is managed by suppliers in a number of sectors, including construction and transport.

## **Glasgow Caledonian University** – *The impact of pictorial OSH training on migrant worker behaviour and competence*

This project uses pre- and post-intervention data to determine whether using pictures in training leads to improved health and safety among migrant workers.

## **Institute of Work Psychology, University of Sheffield** – *The effect of work-related violence on employee health and wellbeing: a longitudinal cross-lagged study*

This project looks at the links between violence and employee wellbeing, and the key criteria for developing successful interventions to keep the health risks from work-related violence to a minimum.

## **University of Liverpool** – *Promoting safety engagement among supervisors*

This project explores individual and organisational factors

that influence the safety leadership of supervisors in the construction industry.

**Loughborough University** – *Effect of training on the application and effectiveness of checklist-based risk*  
Checklists offer a quick, effective way of spotting hazards and risks but despite this, the right actions aren't always taken. This project examines how effective different checklist designs are, combined with different levels of training.

## **University of Manchester** – *The effectiveness of occupational safety and health training in the promotion of a positive safety culture*

Training is widely used by organisations to improve their health and safety performance. But how effective is it a year or more later? This project tracks the value of training and its long term impact on safety culture.

## **International University of Monaco** – *Longitudinal study of the effects of shift work on health: analyses of VISAT (ageing, health and work) data*

This study explores the long-term effects of shift work on sleep, cognition, metabolism and quality of life.

## **University of Reading** – *Building safely by design: appraising safety hazards virtually before construction*

This project uses a virtual reality tool to investigate effective modes of interaction between designers and builders. It includes a series of experiments to help provide guidance for structuring effective designer–builder collaboration.

## **University of Ulster** – *An epidemiological study of occupational voice demands and their impact on the call centre industry*

This project will investigate the health risks associated with constant voice use and identify training needs for call centre workers.

## And what's next?

We top up our Research and Development Fund each year so that we can maintain current funding, and support new projects.

The latest call for bids invites proposals that focus on and contribute to our vision of 'a world of work which is safe, healthy and sustainable'. We're particularly interested in proposals offering fresh thinking on an existing issue or exploring a new area in health and safety.

We believe that a network of inter-related projects which work together to tackle a particular area of research will be even more effective. So, later on this year, we'll be launching a new themed research programme.

### ■ Research at your fingertips

Our Occupational Safety and Health Research Database is the first of its kind. It brings together all the major research and researchers in health and safety in the UK. This means that finding work on a particular area, or an expert to get involved in a project, is faster and more simple than ever before. The website includes a survey zone, so you can contribute to research yourself too.

[www.oshresearch.co.uk](http://www.oshresearch.co.uk)

# Development

**Our development programme helps breathe life into your ideas to improve health and safety practice. There are several development projects that have resulted in free resources and training to help you and others in the workplace.**

The Occupational Health Toolkit is designed as a 'one-stop shop' to help you tackle work-related illnesses, and covers all the key areas, right from learning the background to a health problem through to supporting people back to work when they've been off with a serious illness.

- [www.ohtoolkit.co.uk](http://www.ohtoolkit.co.uk)

Our guide and training package *Think about health and safety – what elected members of local authorities need to know* helps get the health and safety message across to elected members in local authorities.

The Development Fund has supported a number of other projects too, including:

- training for IOSH mentors
- an international webinar
- London 2012 safety evaluation workshop
- the set-up of a cross-sector peer review process for safety critical organisations.

Having a dedicated development programme also means we can put our 'money where our mouth is'. As a lobbying organisation in health and safety, we raise issues, challenge assumptions and push for change. But we come up with answers too. As part of our 'Putting young workers first' campaign to raise awareness of how vulnerable teenagers can be when they first start work, we developed a free interactive training course for Year 10 students, with funding from our development programme. Getting involved in this way demonstrates the practical nature of the profession, clearly underlining our commitment to finding solutions to problems.

- [www.iosh.co.uk/campaigns](http://www.iosh.co.uk/campaigns)
- [www.wiseup2work.co.uk/whac](http://www.wiseup2work.co.uk/whac)

As part of our 'Back to health, back to work' campaign, we recommended to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that health and safety professionals could help fill the gap in supporting employees' return to work. We're now running a pilot training scheme for health and safety practitioners, supported by the DWP.

You can see a full list of projects that are being funded at [www.iosh.co.uk/devprojects](http://www.iosh.co.uk/devprojects). Any member or group of members can make a bid for development funding. Find out more at [www.iosh.co.uk/devfund](http://www.iosh.co.uk/devfund). We're always ready to discuss your ideas for proposals.

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If you want to know more about our R&D work, get in touch with the team:



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IOSH is the Chartered body for health and safety professionals. With more than 37,000 members in 85 countries, we're the world's largest professional health and safety organisation.

We set standards, and support, develop and connect our members with resources, guidance, events and training. We're the voice of the profession, and campaign on issues that affect millions of working people.

IOSH was founded in 1945 and is a registered charity with international NGO status.

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