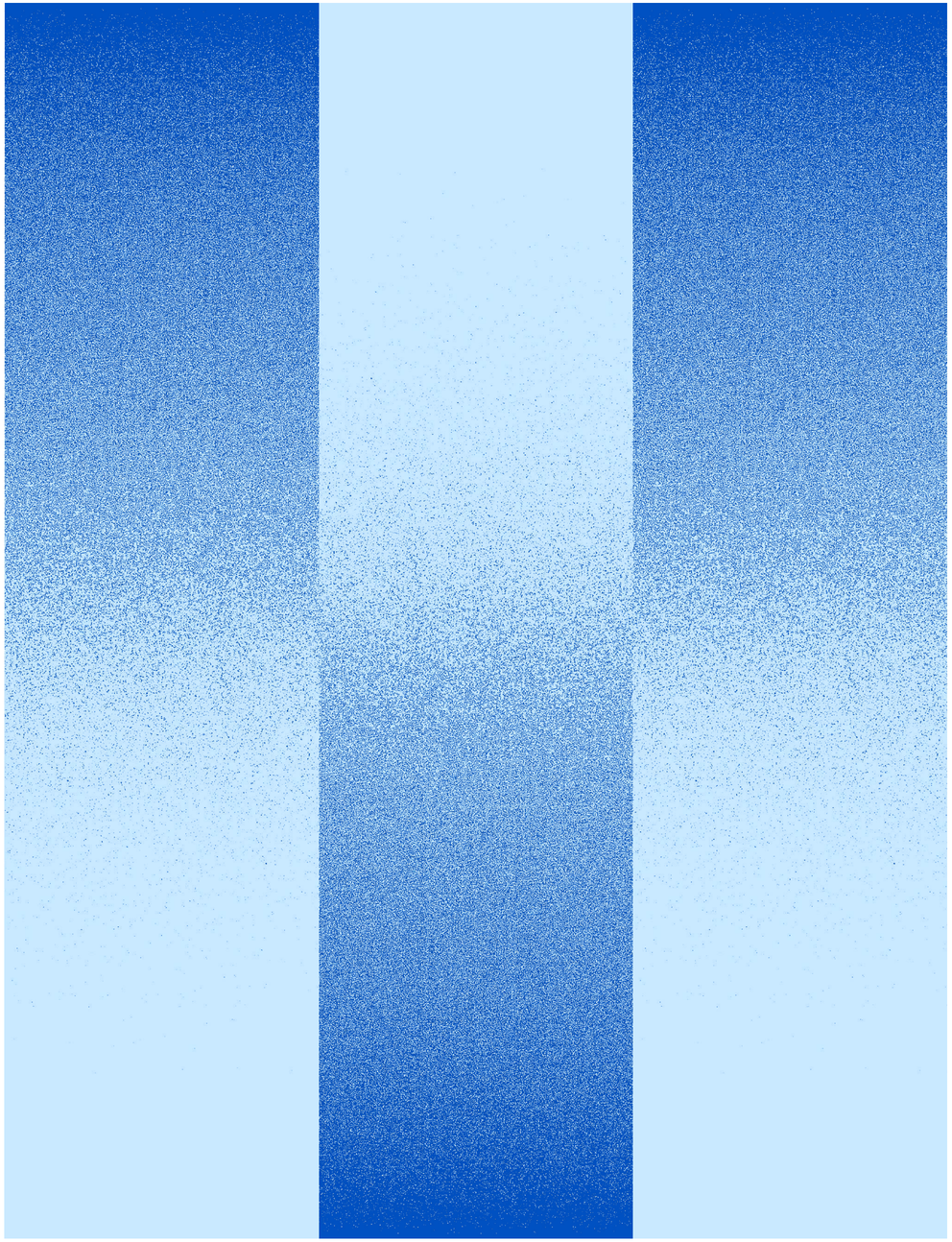
NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Brand architecture guidelines



Version 1.0

Hello

Welcome to our brand architecture guidelines.

They set out the framework for how our brand is structured, described and used across core NIHR brand, NIHR schemes and services, sub-brands, acknowledgements and partnership brands.

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Brand architecture – at a glance

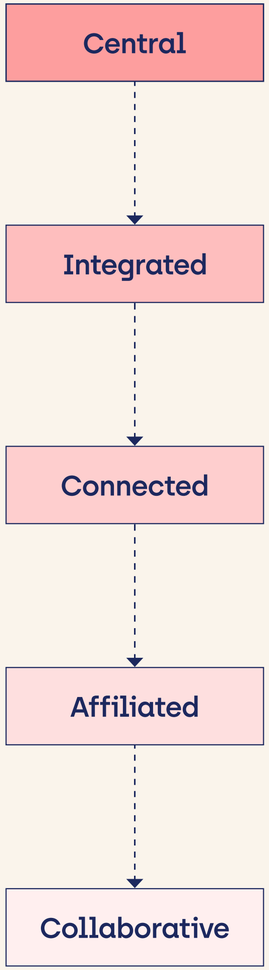
Overview

Our brand architecture is the framework for how our brand is structured and displayed to the world.

It ensures everything we create strengthens our core brand, building clearer recognition, whilst giving a consistent way to grow and develop.

At the centre is a simple model that shows how closely our outputs align with our core brand.

It's simple to understand, easy to use and provides us with a robust framework for the future.



Brand element:	Logo example:
NIHR Core brand	NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research
NIHR Schemes and services	NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
NIHR Sub-brands	Sub-brand logos to be updated pending sub-brand development
NIHR Acknowledgements	Supported by NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research
Partnership brands	Join dementia research

Core brand

NIHR core brand covers products/services that are wholly run by NIHR. We use the core brand and text descriptor to talk about these products and services.

Consistent and repeated use of the core logo establishes the breadth and depth of the organisation and its work.

At a glance

Logo: Core logo

Visual Identity: Follows NIHR visual identity system

Purpose: Builds equity in the brand, demonstrates scale and impact of our work

Examples:
- NIHR Open Research
- NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit

Brand proximity: Central

See pages 13–17 for full guidance on how the core brand is described and used.

Central

Core brand:

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Text descriptor examples:

NIHR Open Research

NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit

NIHR schemes and services

NIHR schemes and services are integral to our brand architecture, bearing the NIHR name in all that they do as a core part of the NIHR.

Where there are multiple awards, locations/ specialisms are signposted with a text descriptor using the NIHR brand font.

At a glance

Logo: Each NIHR scheme or service has its own individual logo

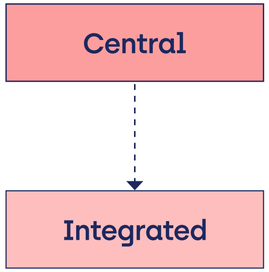
Visual Identity: Follows NIHR visual identity system

Purpose: Builds equity in core brand, whilst clarifying specific role within NIHR research infrastructure

Examples:
- Biomedical Research Centre
- Health Protection Research Unit
- Translational Research Collaboration

Brand proximity: Integrated

See pages 18–28 for full guidance on how schemes and services are described and used.



Core brand:

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Text descriptor examples:

NIHR Open Research

NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit

NIHR schemes and services:

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
NIHR | Biomedical Research Centre
NIHR | Global Health Research Centre
NIHR | Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team
NIHR | Research Delivery Network
NIHR | Commercial Research Delivery Centre
NIHR | Cross-NIHR Collaboration
NIHR | BioResource
NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration
NIHR | Mental Health Research Group
NIHR | Health Protection Research Unit
NIHR | HealthTech Research Centre
NIHR | Policy Research Unit
NIHR | Research Support Service
NIHR | Research School
NIHR | Patient Safety Research Collaboration
NIHR | Translational Research Collaboration
NIHR | Clinical Research Facility
NIHR | Innovation Observatory
NIHR | Blood and Transplant Research Unit

Examples are indicative from the time of writing.

Sub-brands

Sub-brands are only created in exceptional circumstances. They must have a clear role distinct from NIHR's core work (eg NIHR Academy is about workforce development, not research delivery) and/or must communicate as their own entity to be effective (eg Be Part of Research needs to be instantly understandable to the public).

They have long-term strategic importance to NIHR. Time limited initiatives should not be considered sub-brands.

At a glance

Logo: Each sub-brand has its own logo

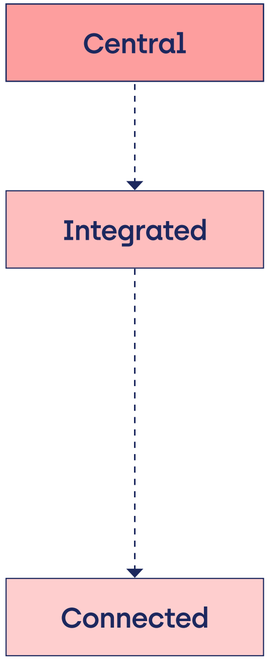
Visual Identity: Follows NIHR visual identity but with individual expression

Purpose: Builds equity in core brand, but allows flex for specific audience/contexts

Examples:
- Be Part of Research
- Academy

Brand proximity: Connected

See pages 29–33 for full guidance on how sub-brands are described and used.



Core brand:

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Text descriptor examples:

NIHR Open Research **NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit**

NIHR schemes and services:

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
NIHR | Biomedical Research Centre
NIHR | Global Health Research Centre
NIHR | Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team
NIHR | Research Delivery Network
NIHR | Commercial Research Delivery Centre
NIHR | Cross-NIHR Collaboration
NIHR | BioResource
NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration
NIHR | Mental Health Research Group
NIHR | Health Protection Research Unit
NIHR | HealthTech Research Centre
NIHR | Policy Research Unit
NIHR | Research Support Service
NIHR | Research School
NIHR | Patient Safety Research Collaboration
NIHR | Translational Research Collaboration
NIHR | Clinical Research Facility
NIHR | Innovation Observatory
NIHR | Blood and Transplant Research Unit

Examples are indicative from the time of writing.

Sub-brands:

Sub-brand logos to be updated pending sub-brand development

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements are used where research or activity has been made possible by NIHR funding (eg funded research projects) or the support of NIHR's expertise, delivery or facilities.

Affiliation to NIHR is reinforced through the use of either the Funded or Supported by NIHR logos, and/or a text descriptor clarifying NIHR involvement.

At a glance

Logo: Should support the funded organisation's logo

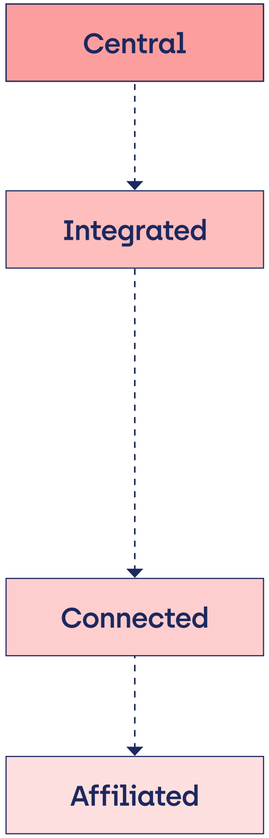
Visual Identity: No use of NIHR identity

Purpose: Builds equity in NIHR brand, whilst appearing in other organisational contexts

Examples:
- Funded by NIHR
- Supported by NIHR

Brand proximity: Affiliated

See pages 34–35 for full guidance on how acknowledgements are described and used.



Core brand:

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Text descriptor examples:

NIHR Open Research

NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit

NIHR schemes and services:

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
NIHR | Biomedical Research Centre
NIHR | Global Health Research Centre
NIHR | Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team
NIHR | Research Delivery Network
NIHR | Commercial Research Delivery Centre
NIHR | Cross-NIHR Collaboration
NIHR | BioResource
NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration
NIHR | Mental Health Research Group
NIHR | Health Protection Research Unit
NIHR | HealthTech Research Centre
NIHR | Policy Research Unit
NIHR | Research Support Service
NIHR | Research School
NIHR | Patient Safety Research Collaboration
NIHR | Translational Research Collaboration
NIHR | Clinical Research Facility
NIHR | Innovation Observatory
NIHR | Blood and Transplant Research Unit

Examples are indicative from the time of writing.

Sub-brands:

Sub-brand logos to be updated pending sub-brand development

Acknowledgements:

Funded by
NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Supported by
NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Partnership brands

Partnership brands are jointly delivered initiatives with other organisations, where NIHR is a key partner but not the sole brand owner.

Partnership brands have standalone logos and brands that don't have a visual link with NIHR. Co-branding text descriptors are used to clarify involvement.

At a glance

Logo: No use of NIHR logo

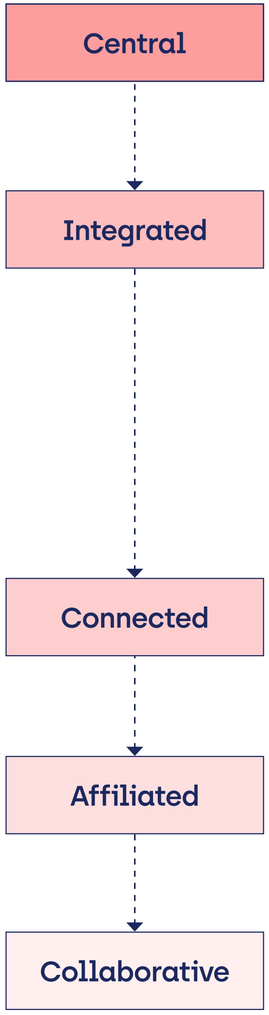
Visual Identity: No use of NIHR identity

Purpose: Independent organisations, where the partnership element is solely described/expressed through text

Examples:
- Join Dementia Research
- James Lind Alliance

Brand proximity: Collaborative

See pages 36–42 for full guidance on how partnership brands are described and used.



Core brand:

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Text descriptor examples:

NIHR Open Research

NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit

NIHR schemes and services:

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
NIHR | Biomedical Research Centre
NIHR | Global Health Research Centre
NIHR | Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team
NIHR | Research Delivery Network
NIHR | Commercial Research Delivery Centre
NIHR | Cross-NIHR Collaboration
NIHR | BioResource
NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration
NIHR | Mental Health Research Group
NIHR | Health Protection Research Unit
NIHR | HealthTech Research Centre
NIHR | Policy Research Unit
NIHR | Research Support Service
NIHR | Research School
NIHR | Patient Safety Research Collaboration
NIHR | Translational Research Collaboration
NIHR | Clinical Research Facility
NIHR | Innovation Observatory
NIHR | Blood and Transplant Research Unit

Examples are indicative from the time of writing.

Sub-brands:

Sub-brand logos to be updated pending sub-brand development

Acknowledgements:

Funded by NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Supported by NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Partnership brands:

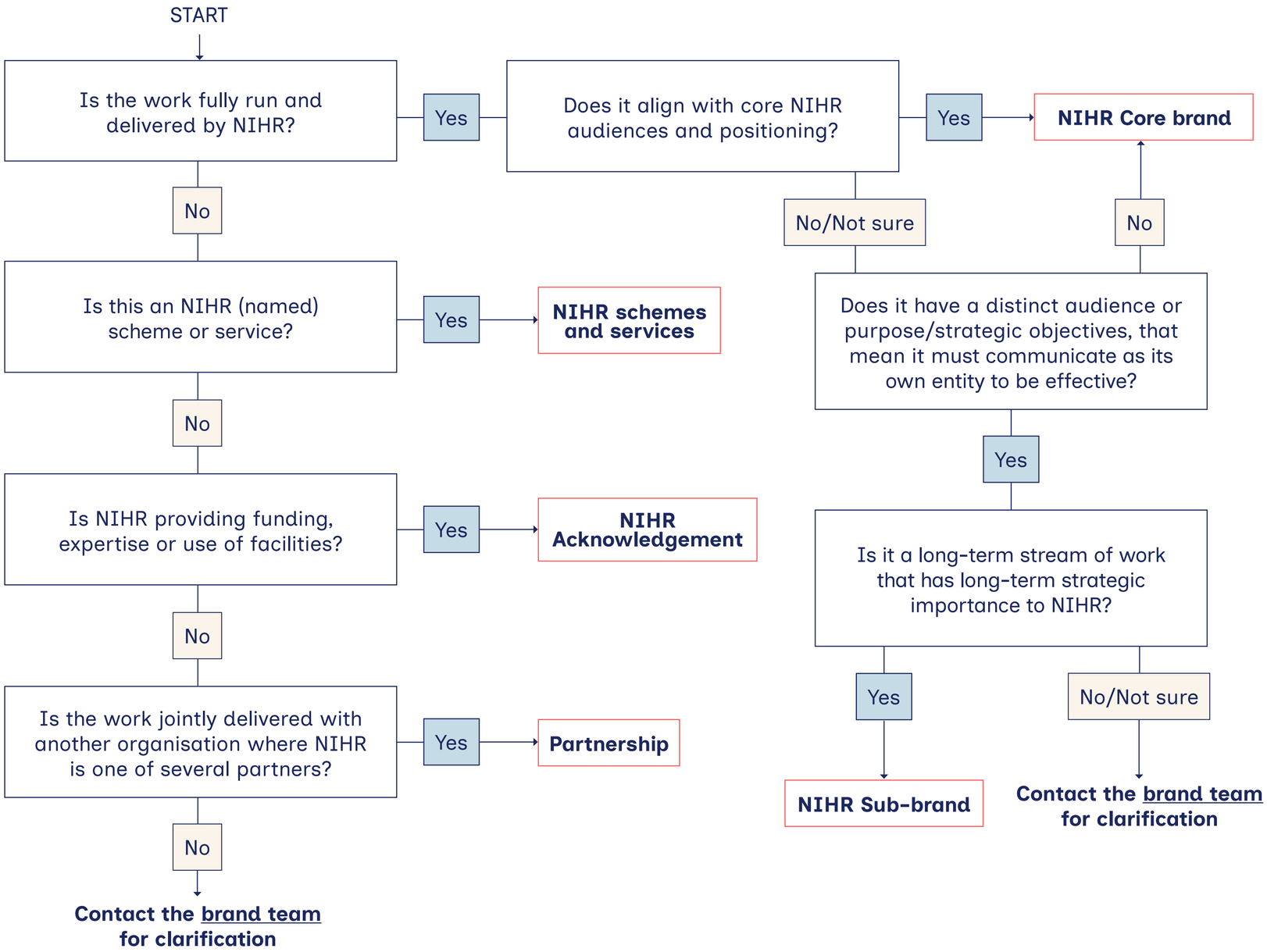
Join dementia research

James Lind Alliance
Priority Setting Partnerships

Brand architecture Decision tree

Use the decision tree to understand where products/services should sit within our brand architecture.

For more information on how our brand outputs are described and used see pages 13–42.



If you have questions about where your work fits within the brand architecture, please contact the brand team.

Brand architecture – in detail

NIHR core brand covers products/ services that are wholly run by NIHR. We use the core brand and text descriptors to talk about these products and services.

Consistent and repeated use of the core logo establishes the breadth and depth of the organisation and its work.

Brand proximity:

NIHR Open Research

NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit

NIHR core brand (including NIHR products/services)	Central
NIHR schemes and services	Integrated
Sub-brands	Connected
Acknowledgements	Affiliated
Partnership brands	Collaborative

How it's described

Product or service names should be written in Title Case (a capital letter for each word) and be preceded by NIHR.

This approach ensures the NIHR brand is always associated with the product or service.

Text descriptor

NIHR Open Research

In action

NIHR Open Research enables researchers to make available to everyone the findings of their projects not published elsewhere. The platform is available to all NIHR funded researchers.

How it's used
Website

All NIHR products and services should be treated simply as things that the organisation does. They should not be thought of as 'separate brands' and they do not require specific visual distinction.

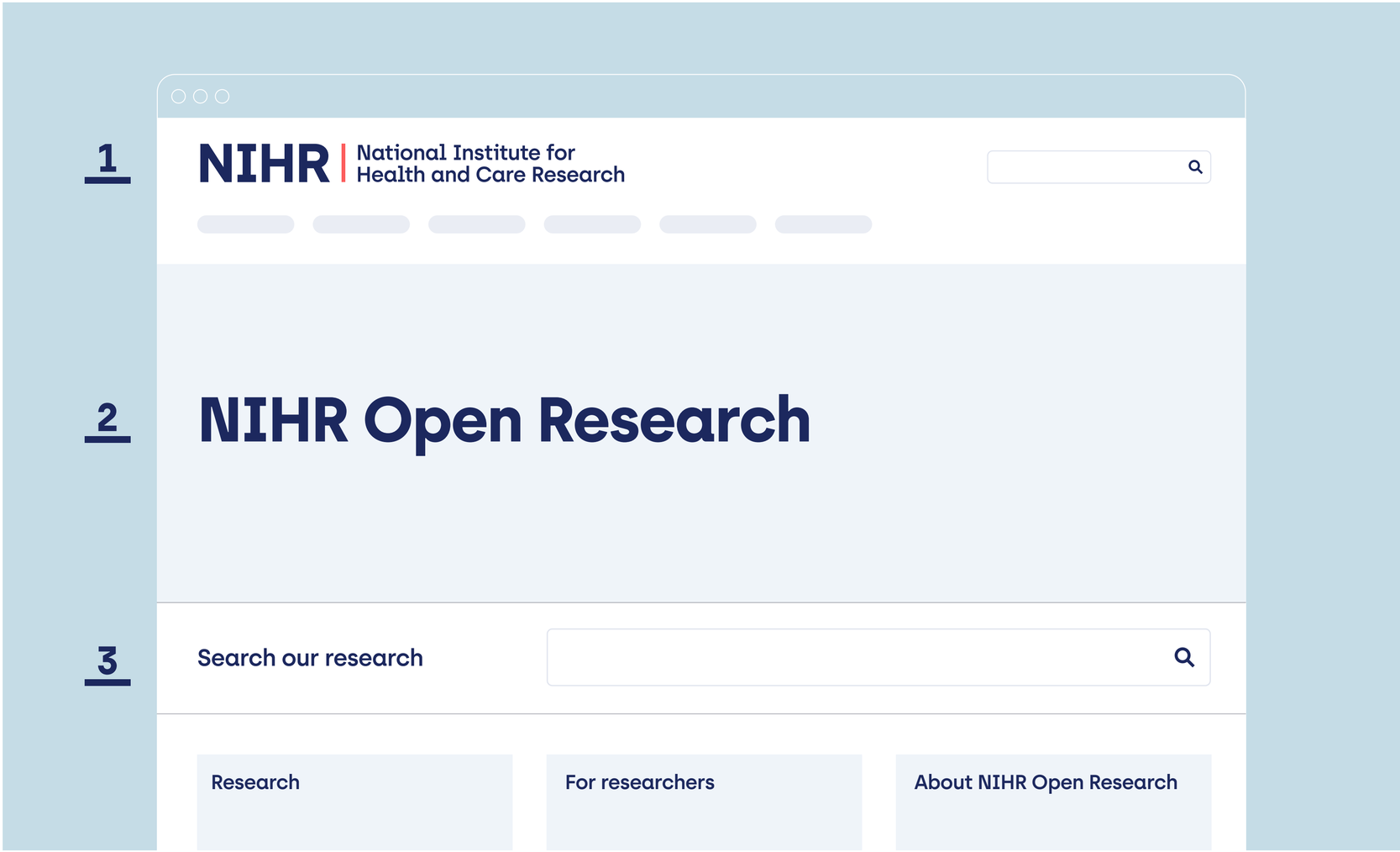
The visual to the right shows how products and services appear.

1. Core brand logo

2. Product/service text descriptor

3. Product/service content

Within NIHR context



How it's used
Social/print/OOH

All NIHR products and services should be treated simply as things that the organisation does. They should not be thought of as 'separate brands' and they do not require specific visual distinction.

The visual to the right shows how products and services appear.

1. Core brand social handle

2. Product/service text descriptor

3. Headline copy

4. Core brand logo

Within NIHR context

How it's used
Third party materials

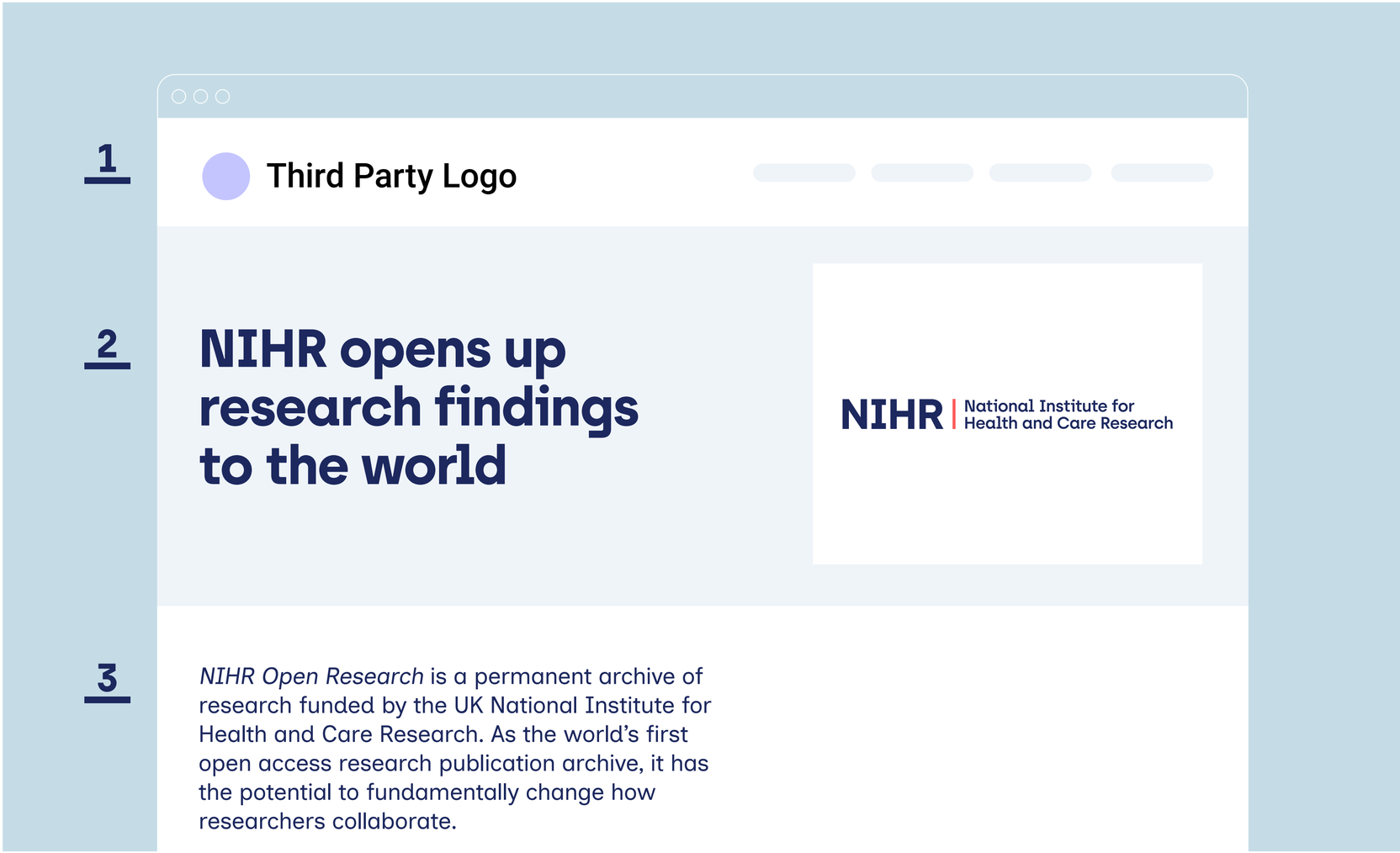
If products or services are being referenced by a third party, we always lead with the core NIHR brand.

We use the NIHR logo and use our name to take ownership over the product/service. Products or services should be secondary references, adding context where needed.

The visual to the right shows how products and services appear.

1. **Third party logo**
2. **Content and logo lead with NIHR brand**
3. **Product or service name begins with 'NIHR'**

Outside NIHR context



NIHR schemes and services are integral to our brand architecture, bearing the NIHR name in all that they do as a core part of the NIHR.

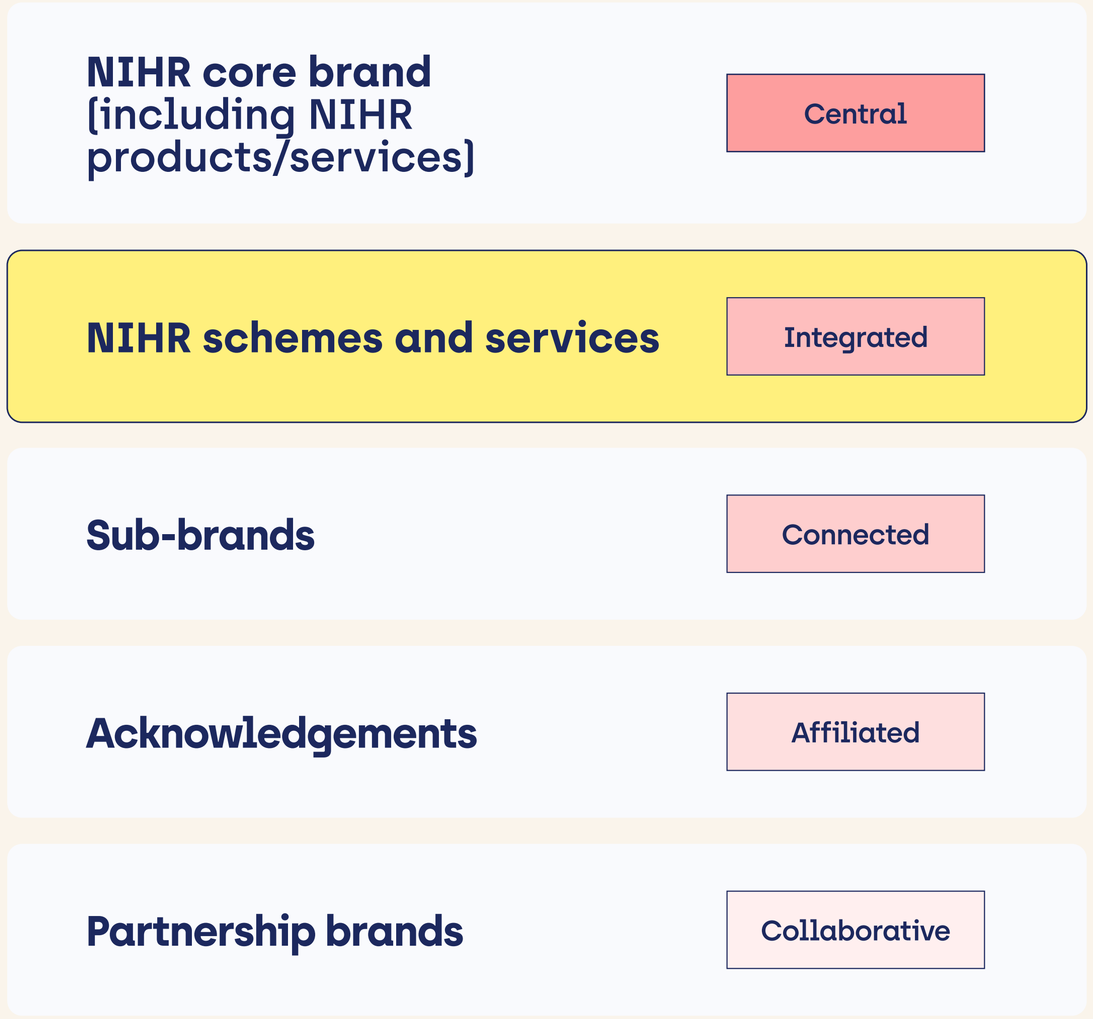
Each scheme has a standalone logo with a unique name.

Locations/specialisms are signposted with a text descriptor using the NIHR brand font.

Brand proximity: Integrated

Examples:

- Biomedical Research Centre
- Health Protection Research Unit
- Translational Research Collaboration



How it's described

Each NIHR schemes and services text descriptor may consist of up of to 3 parts:

1. NIHR
Gives core brand ownership over the scheme.

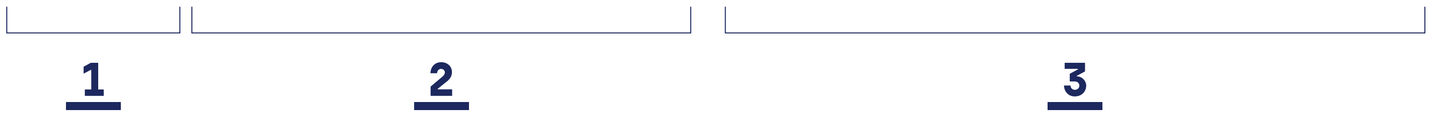
2. Scheme name
The top level NIHR schemes and services name (eg Biomedical Research Centre).

3. Location/specialism (where required)
Location/specialism name can be included where required (eg standalone website or social channel).

All NIHR schemes and services follow the same naming structure, with location/ specialisms separated from the top level designation by a colon.

This visual system drives consistency, which improves audience understanding on ownership of the scheme (NIHR), what it does (scheme name) and where it is based or a specific area of research (location/specialism).

Structure



How it's described

Each NIHR schemes and services text descriptor may consist of up of to 3 parts:

1. NIHR
Gives core brand ownership over the scheme.

2. Scheme name
The top level NIHR schemes and services name (eg Biomedical Research Centre).

3. Location/specialism (where required)
Location/specialism name can be included where required (eg standalone website or social channel).

All NIHR schemes and services follow the same naming structure, with location/specialisms separated from the top level designation by a colon.

This visual system drives consistency, which improves audience understanding on ownership of the scheme (NIHR), what it does (scheme name) and where it is based or a specific area of research (location/specialism).

This is not a definitive list, examples are indicative from the time of writing.

Examples

NIHR Applied Research Collaboration

NIHR Commercial Research Delivery Centre

NIHR Health Protection Research Unit

NIHR Research Support Service

NIHR Biomedical Research Centre

NIHR BioResource

NIHR Cross-NIHR Collaboration

NIHR HealthTech Research Centre

NIHR Patient Safety Research Collaboration

NIHR Research School

NIHR Global Health Research Centre

NIHR HealthTech Research Centre Network

NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration

NIHR Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team

NIHR Policy Research Unit

NIHR Translational Research Collaboration

NIHR Clinical Research Facility

NIHR Blood and Transplant Research Unit

NIHR Innovation Observatory

NIHR Research Delivery Network

NIHR Mental Health Research Group

How it's described
Locations/specialisms

Each NIHR schemes and services text descriptor may consist of up of to 3 parts:

1. NIHR
Gives core brand ownership over the scheme.

2. Scheme name
The top level NIHR schemes and services name (eg Biomedical Research Centre).

3. Location/specialism (where required)
Location/specialism name can be included where required (eg standalone website or social channel).

All NIHR schemes and services follow the same naming structure, with location/specialisms separated from the top level designation by a colon.

This visual system drives consistency, which improves audience understanding on ownership of the scheme (NIHR), what it does (scheme name) and where it is based or a specific area of research (location/specialism).

Examples

NIHR Biomedical Research Centre: Oxford

NIHR Biomedical Research Centre: The Royal Marsden and the ICR

NIHR Applied Research Collaboration: East Midlands

NIHR Clinical Research Facility: Guy's and St Thomas'

NIHR Commercial Research Delivery Centre: Leicestershire and Northamptonshire

NIHR Global Health Research Centre: Non-communicable Disease Control in West Africa

NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration: Aberdeen

NIHR Regional Research Delivery Network: East Midlands

NIHR Health Protection Research Unit: Healthcare Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance at University of Oxford

NIHR Policy Research Unit: Dementia and Neurodegeneration
Queen Mary University of London

How it's used

When referenced within an NIHR brand context, a text descriptor is used.

When referenced outside of NIHR brand context, an NIHR schemes or services logo is used.

Note that NIHR schemes and services logos only refer to the top level designation, not locations/specialisms. This is fundamental to reducing brand complexity, improving efficiencies and increasing brand equity.

Within NIHR context

NIHR Biomedical Research Centre

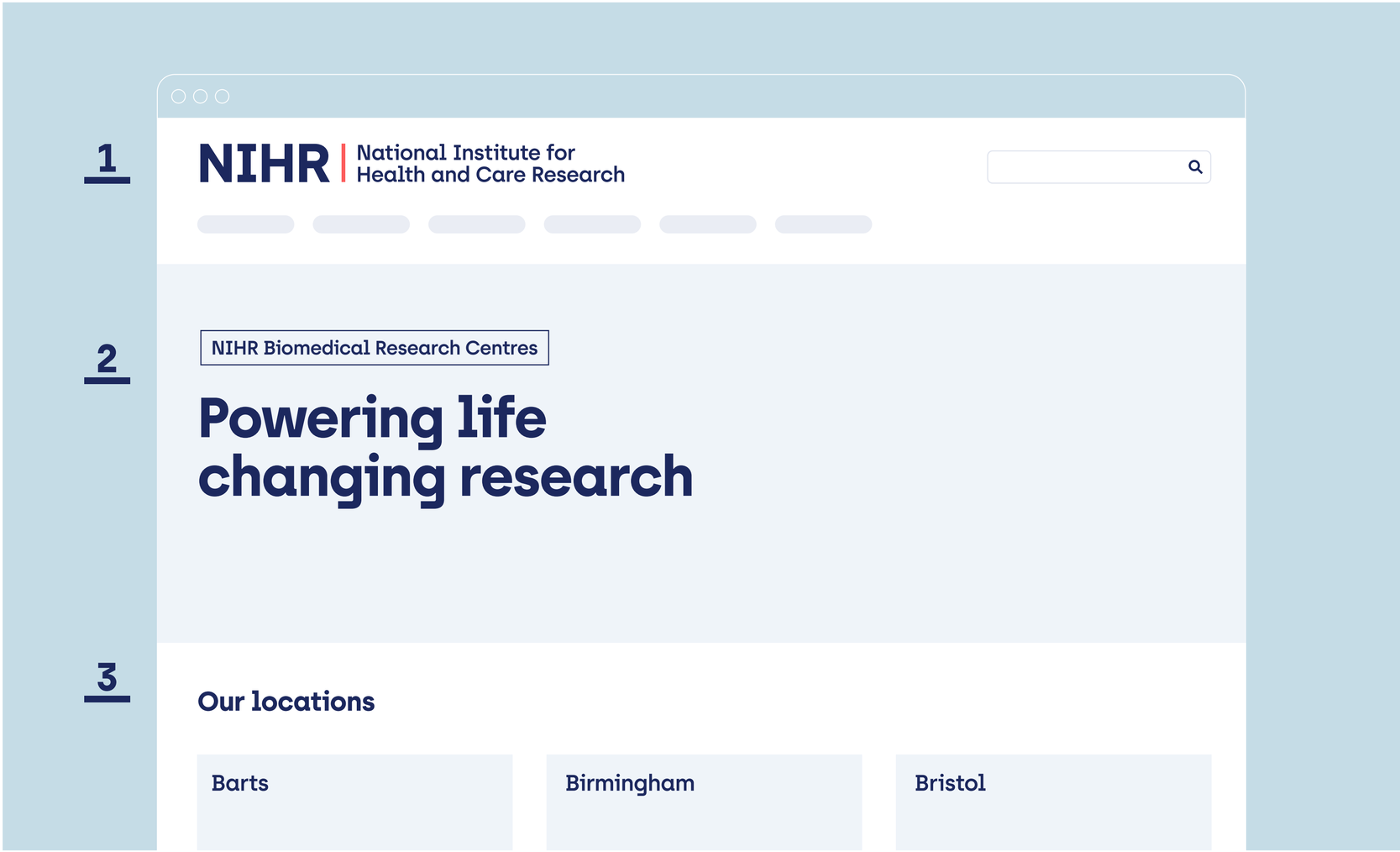
Outside NIHR context

How it's used
Website

When appearing within an NIHR context, NIHR schemes and services are referenced with a text descriptor.

1. **Core brand logo**
2. **NIHR schemes and services text descriptor**
3. **Location/specialism text descriptors**

Within NIHR context



How it's used
Social/print/OOH

When appearing within an NIHR context, NIHR schemes and services are referenced with a text descriptor.

1. **Core brand social handle**
2. **Headline copy**
3. **Core brand logo**
4. **NIHR schemes and services text descriptor**

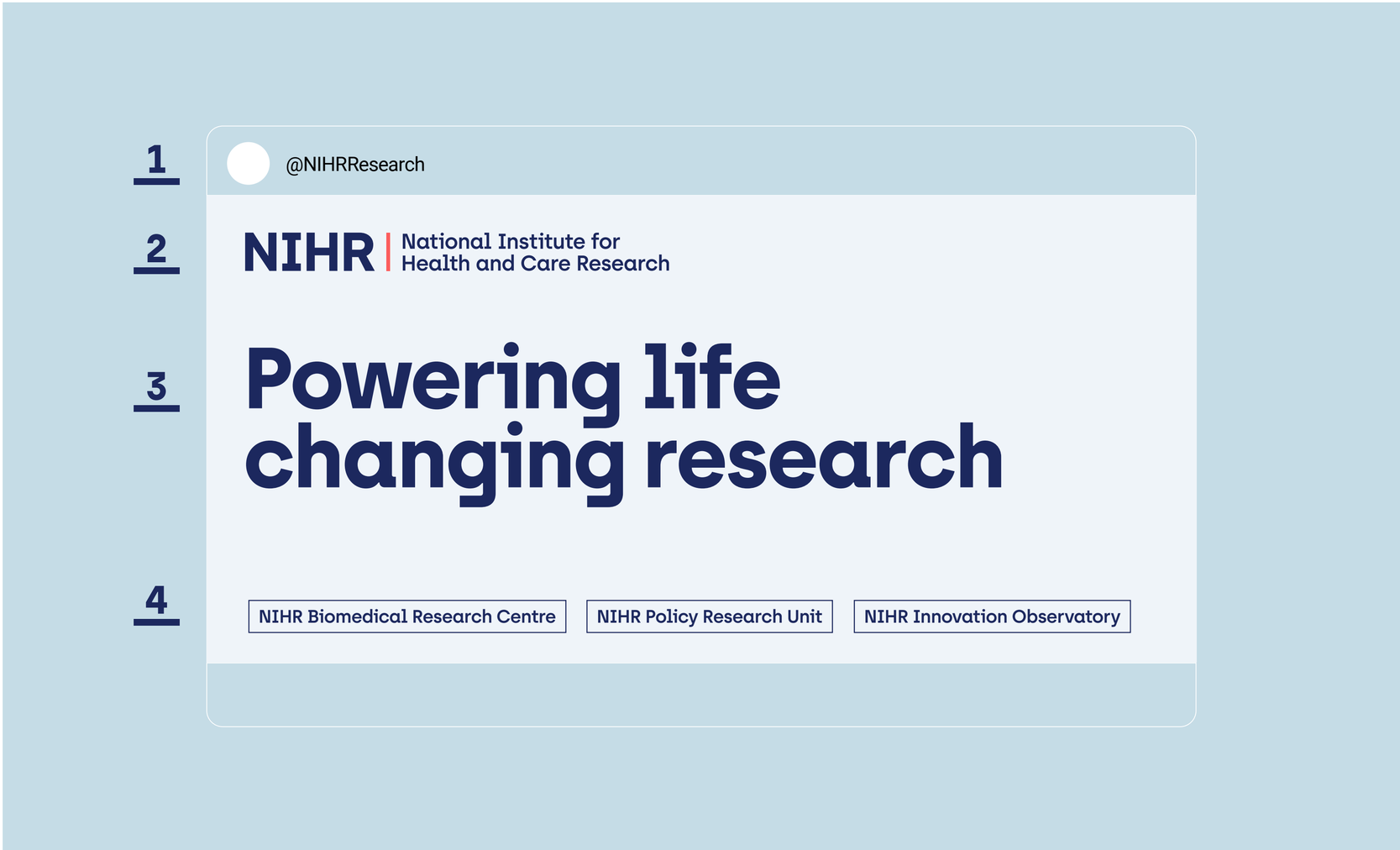
Within NIHR context

How it's used
Social/print/OOH (multiple schemes)

When multiple schemes and services need to feature on a single piece of communication, text descriptors are either aligned horizontally, or stacked vertically. Prominence should be given to the core brand logo.

1. **Core brand social handle**
2. **Core brand logo**
3. **Headline copy**
4. **NIHR schemes and services text descriptor block**

Within NIHR context



How it's used
Standalone location/ specialism website (phase 1)

To drive consistency, all standalone sites should follow a consistent structure across top navigation.

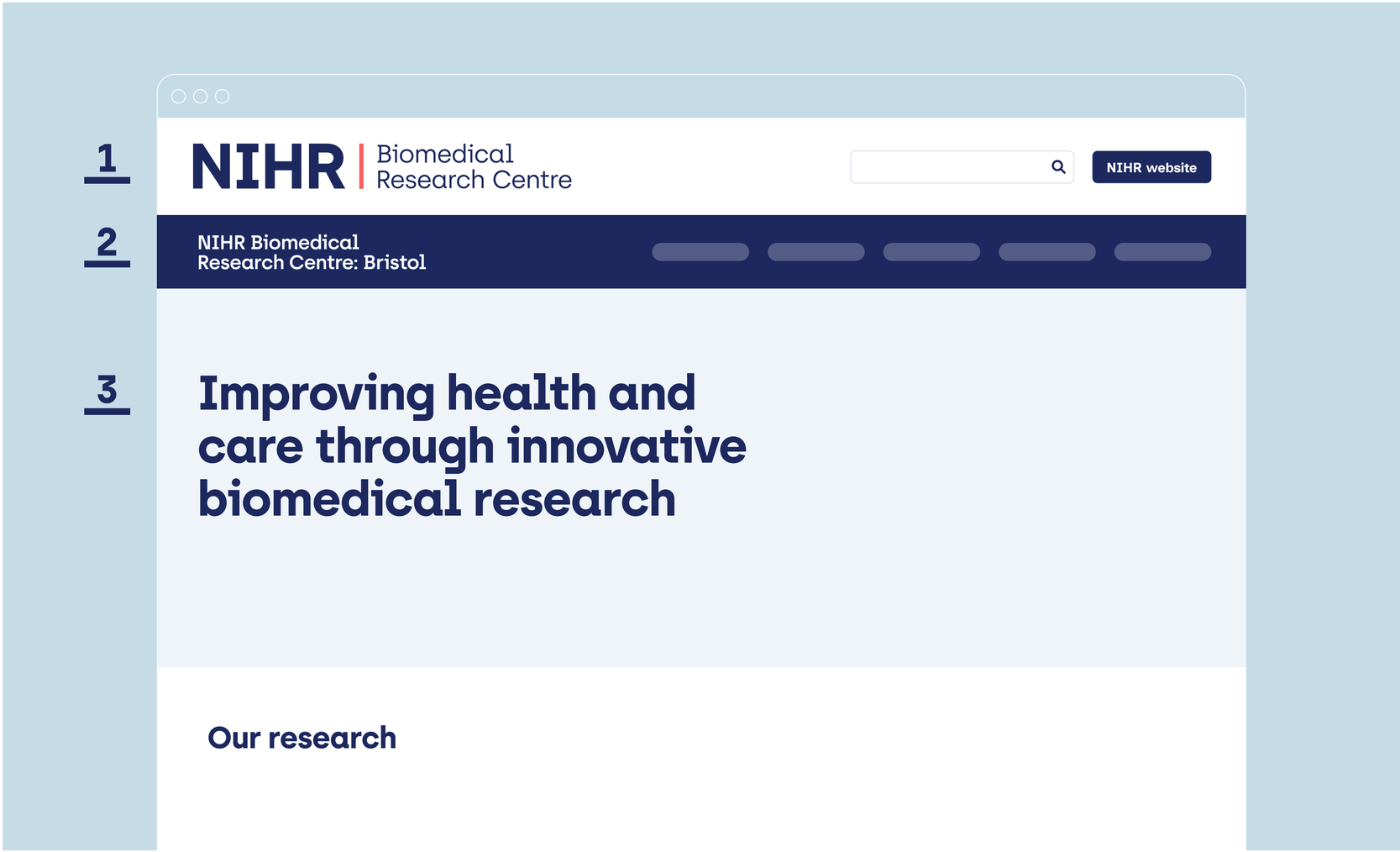
1. NIHR scheme or service logo
Top bar features NIHR scheme or service logo top left. Top right contains additional UI elements eg search bar and link out to main NIHR website.

2. Location/specialism text descriptor
A secondary navigation bar sits below the top bar. NIHR scheme or service text descriptor is aligned left in the brand typeface at standardised size and line height. Clear visual distinction is created by using contrasting colour between 2 parts of navigation.

Website navigation items sit to the right within the same bar.

3. Content
Website content can operate as required. Guidance should specify core brand assets are used and provide recommended style guide for commonly used components.

Outside NIHR context



How it's used
Location/specialism social/print/OOH

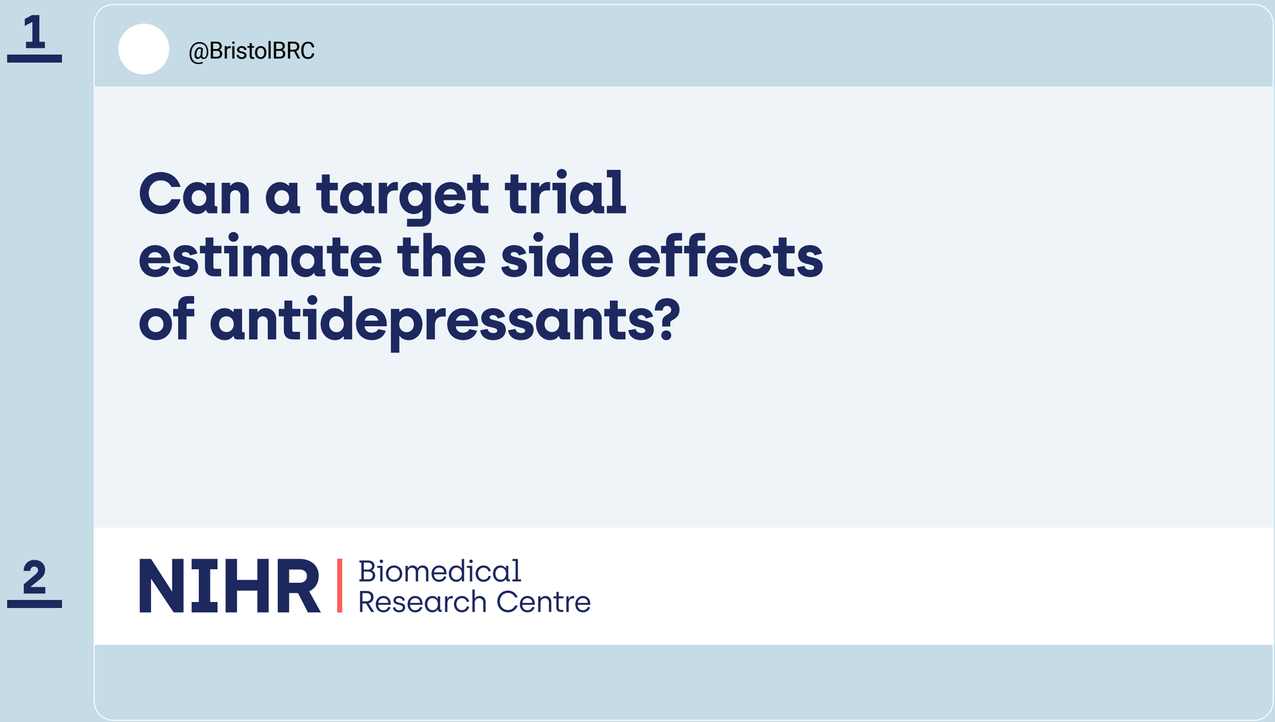
Locations/specialisms can still operate independent social channels. This gives them the autonomy to share communications specific to their location/specialism.

From a brand perspective, locations/specialisms should use the top level NIHR scheme or service logo and follow the NIHR visual identity guidelines.

1. Location/specialism social handle

2. NIHR schemes and services logo

Outside NIHR context



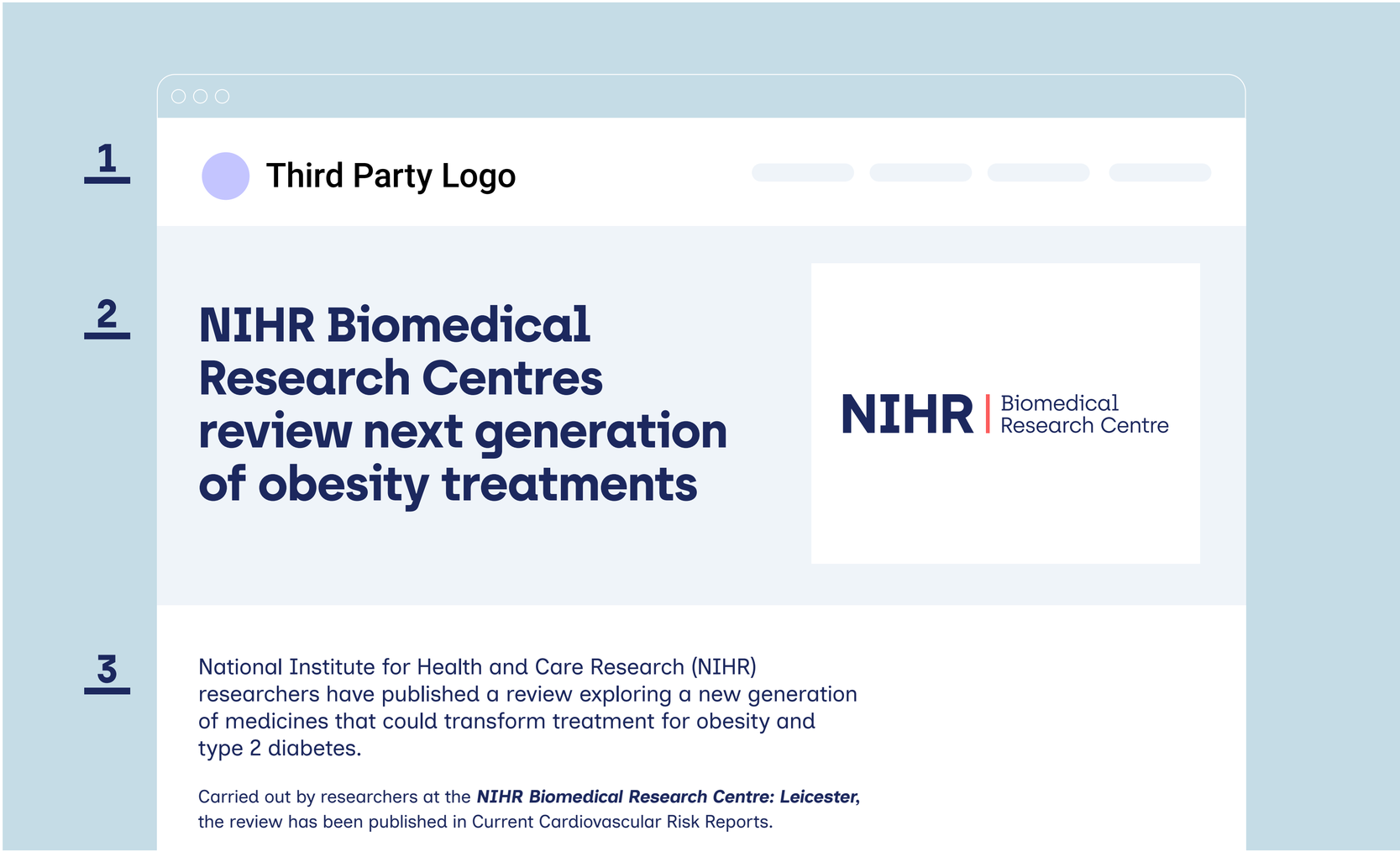
How it's used
Third party materials

If an NIHR scheme or service is being referenced by a third party, we lead with the scheme or service logo. The top level description should position this as NIHR work, whilst locations/specialisms should be given clear ownership over carrying out the work.

The visual to the right shows how products/services show up.

1. **Partner/host/third party logo**
2. **Content and logo lead with NIHR schemes and services**
3. **In copy location/specialism text descriptor**

Outside NIHR context



Sub-brands are core parts of NIHR, but with distinct audiences or purposes that require a degree of brand separation. They remain visibly linked to NIHR but communicate with more independence.

Each sub-brand has its own logo.

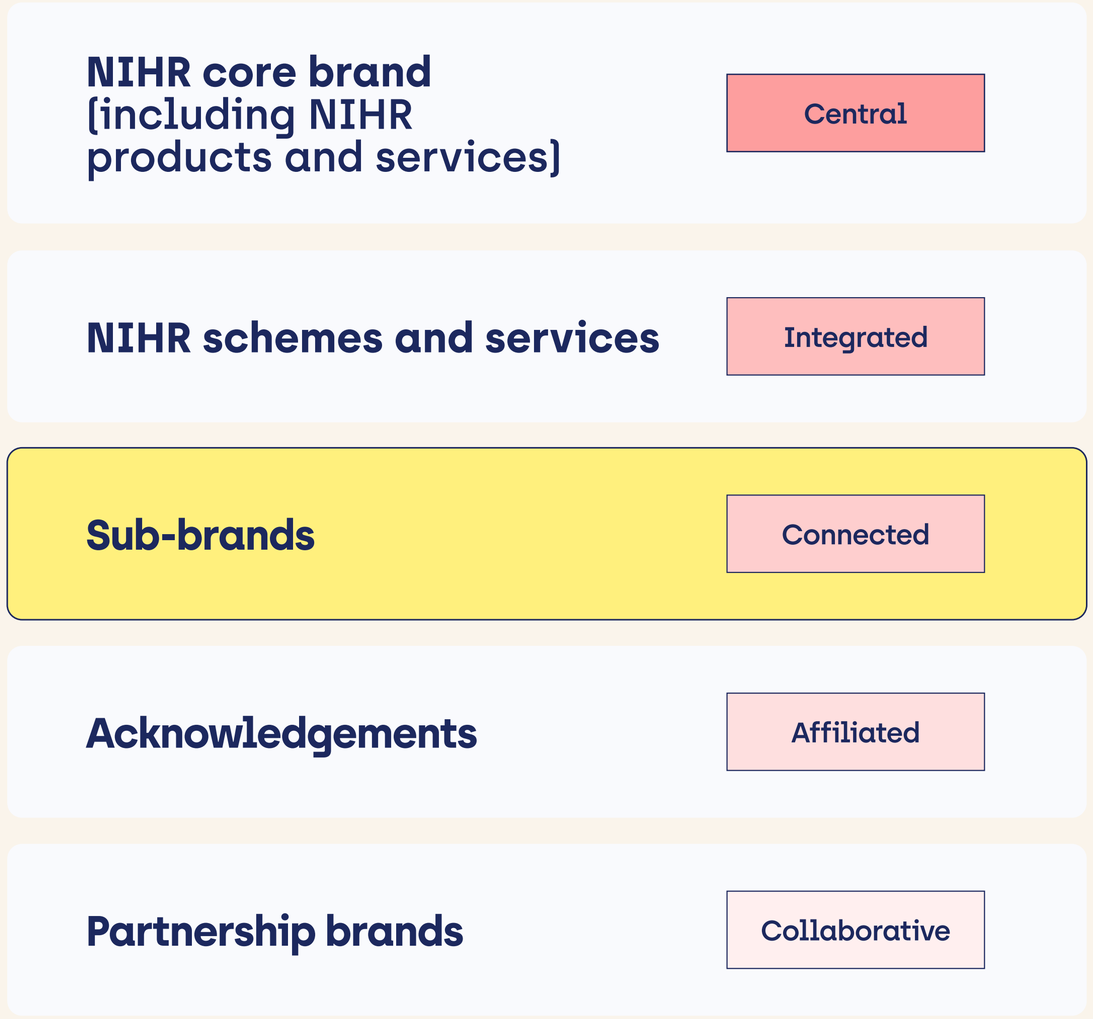
If you have questions about sub-brands, please contact the brand team.

Brand proximity: Connected

Examples:

NIHR Be Part of Research

NIHR Academy



How it's used

Sub-brands have their own logos.

Whilst sub-brand logos follow a similar structure to scheme/service logos, they give more prominence to sub-brand name.

This visually creates a more balanced relationship between the core brand and the sub-brand, as the sub-brand name needs to be easily recognised by its intended audiences.

If you have questions about sub-brands, please contact the brand team.

Structure

Sub-brand logos to be updated pending sub-brand development

How it's used
Main NIHR website

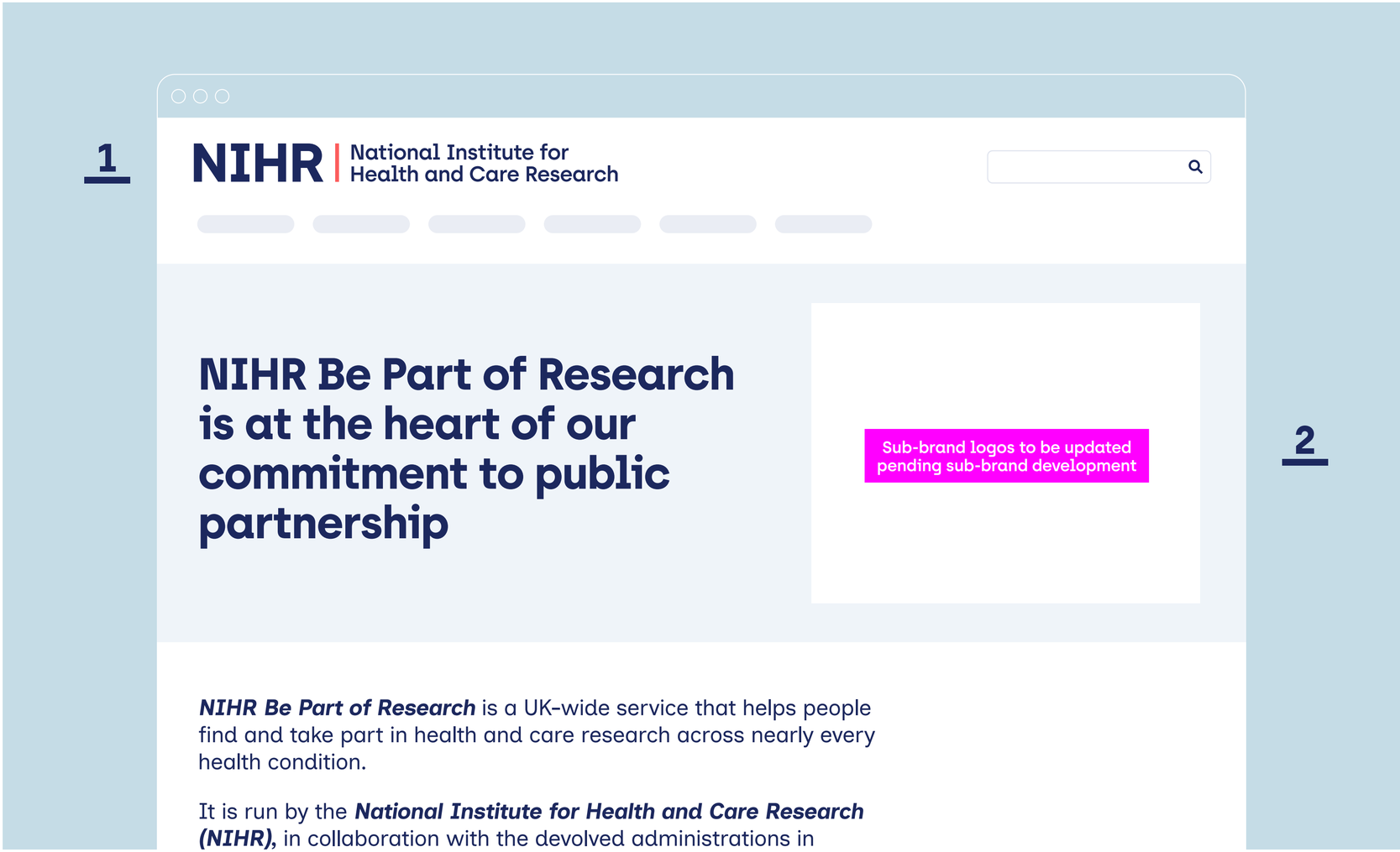
Sub-brands should retain a degree of separation. This reflects their proximity to the core brand and their need to exist as brands in their own right.

1. Core brand logo

2. Sub-brand logo

If you have questions about sub-brands, please contact the brand team.

Example in action



How it's used
Sub-brand website

Sub-brands can have their own standalone websites.

They follow core NIHR brand design principles and navigation styles to maintain consistency, but allow sub-brands to express themselves through distinct visual assets and messaging.

1. Sub-brand logo

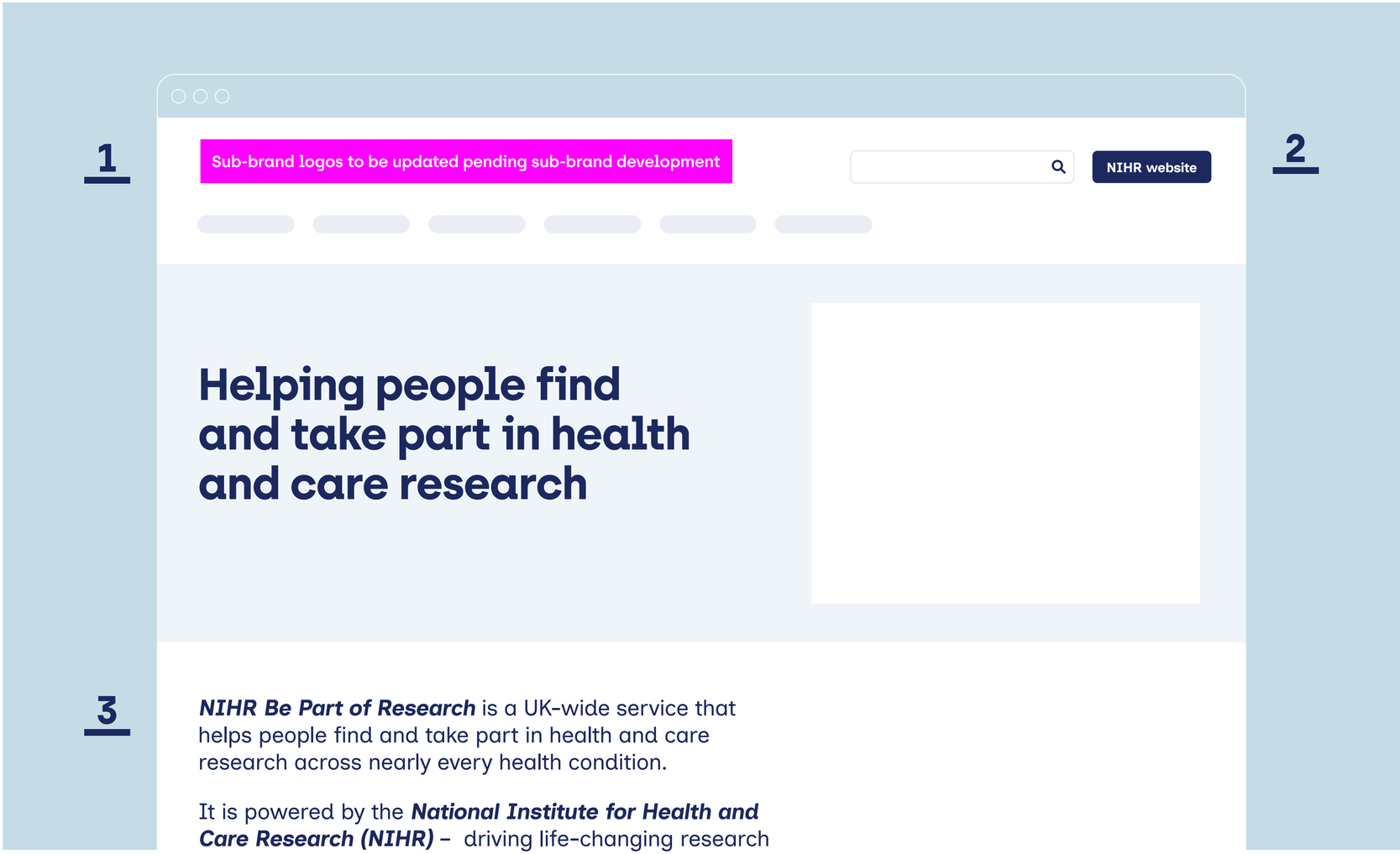
2. Link to core brand

3. Core brand statement

A short description of NIHR adds context, helps build brand equity in the core brand and reinforces the relationship between core and sub-brand.

If you have questions about sub-brands, please contact the brand team.

Example in action



How it's used
Sub-brand social/ print/OOH

Sub-brands may use their own social handles to target and tailor communications to specific audiences.

1. Sub-brand social handle

2. Sub-brand logo

3. Core brand statement

A short description of NIHR adds context, helps build brand equity in the core brand and reinforces the relationship between core and sub-brand.

On social this might sit in the post copy, in print it might appear as boilerplate text on the back cover of a document.

If you have questions about sub-brands, please contact the brand team.

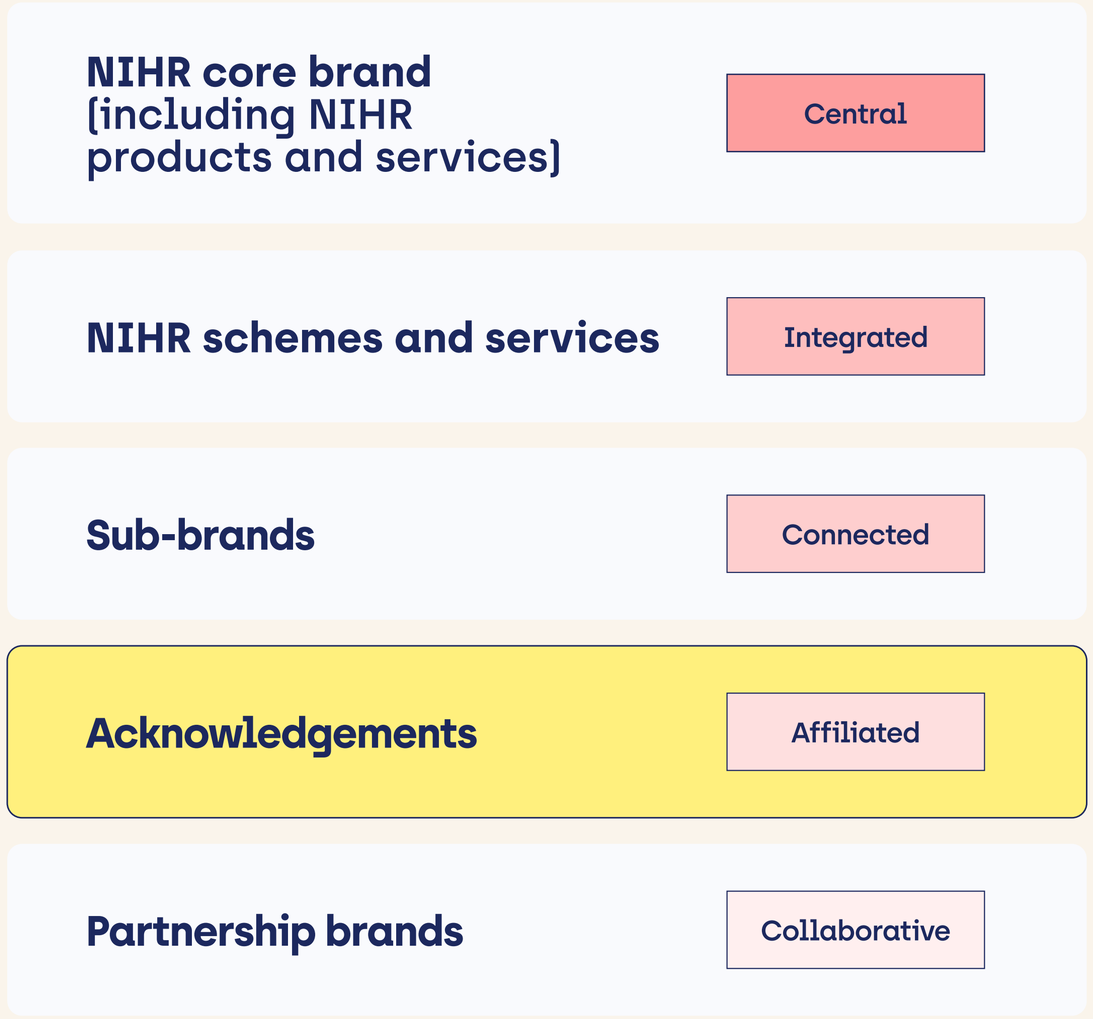
Example in action

Acknowledgements are necessary where research activity has been made possible by NIHR funding (eg a research programme) or the support of NIHR's expertise, delivery or facilities.

Affiliation to NIHR is reinforced through the use of either the Funded by or Supported by NIHR logos, and a text descriptor should be used to specify NIHR involvement.

Brand proximity: Affiliated

Examples:
Supported by NIHR
Funded by NIHR



How it's described

Acknowledgements should clarify the nature of the NIHR funding or support. A Funded by or Supported by NIHR logo should be used where possible, but where this isn't appropriate, a text descriptor clarifying NIHR involvement can be used.

1. Acknowledgements logo

2. In text

1. Acknowledgements logo

2. In text

Supported by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

Funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

Partnership brands are jointly delivered initiatives with other organisations, where NIHR is a key partner but not the sole brand owner.

Partnership brands have standalone logos and brands that don't have a visual link with NIHR.

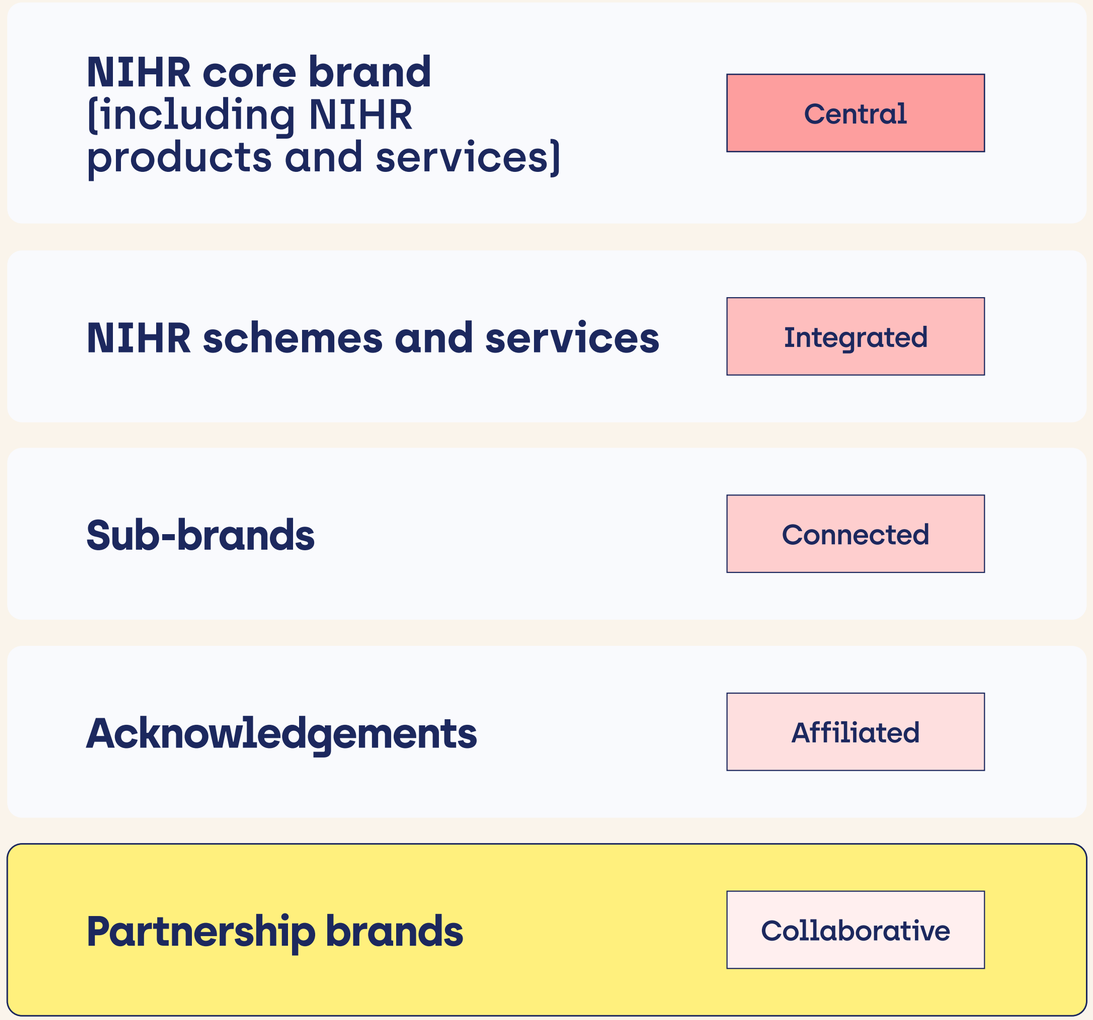
Co-branding text descriptors are used to clarify involvement.

Brand proximity: Collaborative

Examples:

Join Dementia Research

James Lind Alliance



Partnership brands

Partnership brands are jointly owned or co-branded with partner organisation(s). They have standalone logos and brands that don't necessarily have a visual link with the NIHR brand.

Whilst partnership brands show up independently of NIHR brand, they should clarify NIHR involvement. This may be through co-branding logo sets or through a text descriptor explaining the relationship.

Example partnership brand

Join dementia research

Co-branding logo sets

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Third Party Logo

Third Party Logo

Indicative co-branding text descriptor

[Partnership brand] is delivered in partnership by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), [partner name 1] and [partner name 2].

Co-branding
Horizontal logo sets

When showing the NIHR logo alongside partner logos, we follow some basic visual principles.

1. Exclusion zone and alignment

When positioning our logo with other logos, the logo with the largest exclusion zone should be used as a guide for the minimum clear space between them.

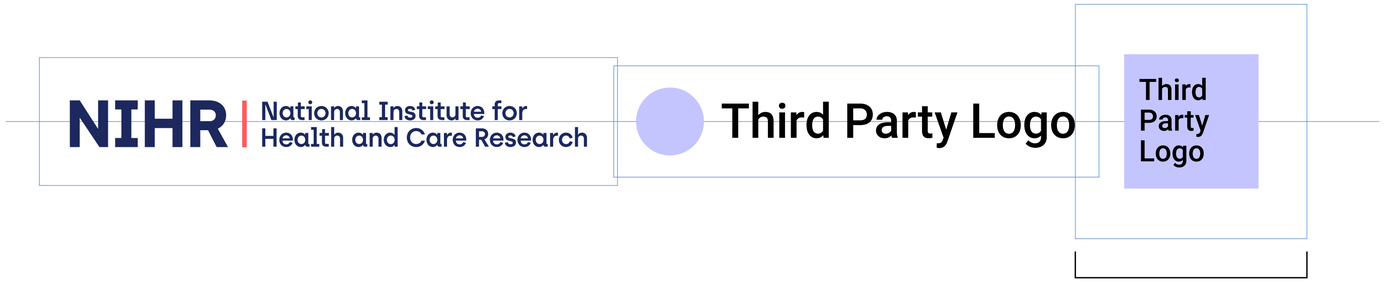
To ensure a balanced layout, all logos should be vertically aligned to the centres.

2. Sizing

If NIHR is the lead organisation, our logo can be separated from partner logos. In this instance the size ratio should be 60:40.

When there is no lead organisation, logos should be positioned together. In this instance, the size ratio should be 50:50 (equal visual size).

1. Exclusion zone and alignment



Largest exclusion zone

2. Sizing

NIHR lead (60:40 ratio)

No lead organisation (50:50 ratio)

Co-branding
Stacked logo sets

When showing the NIHR logo alongside partner logos, we follow some basic visual principles.

1. Exclusion zone and alignment

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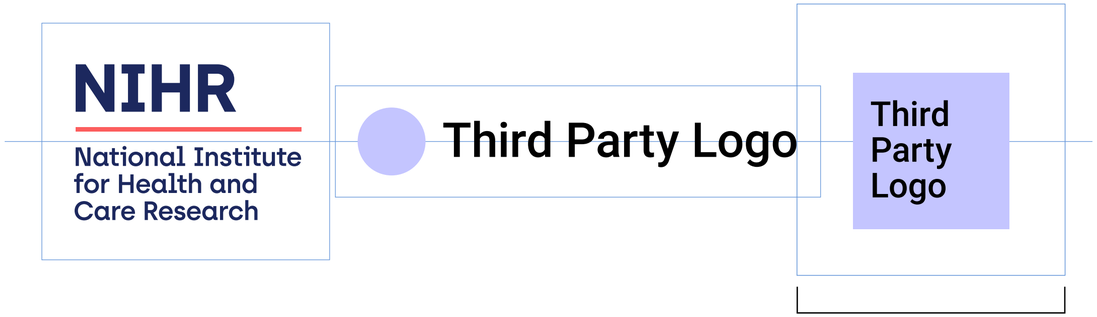


Largest exclusion zone

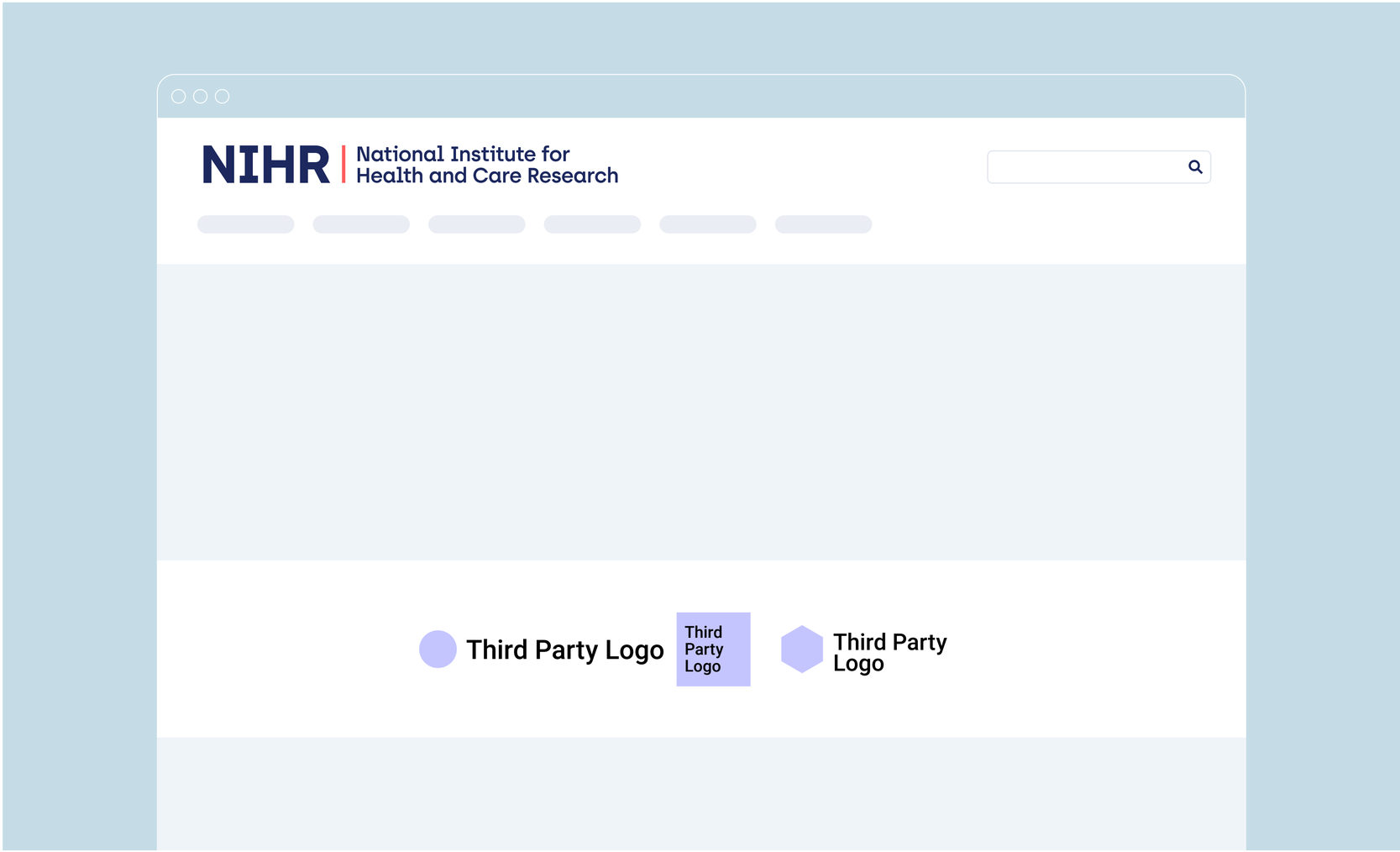
2. Sizing

NIHR lead (60:40 ratio)

No lead organisation (50:50 ratio)

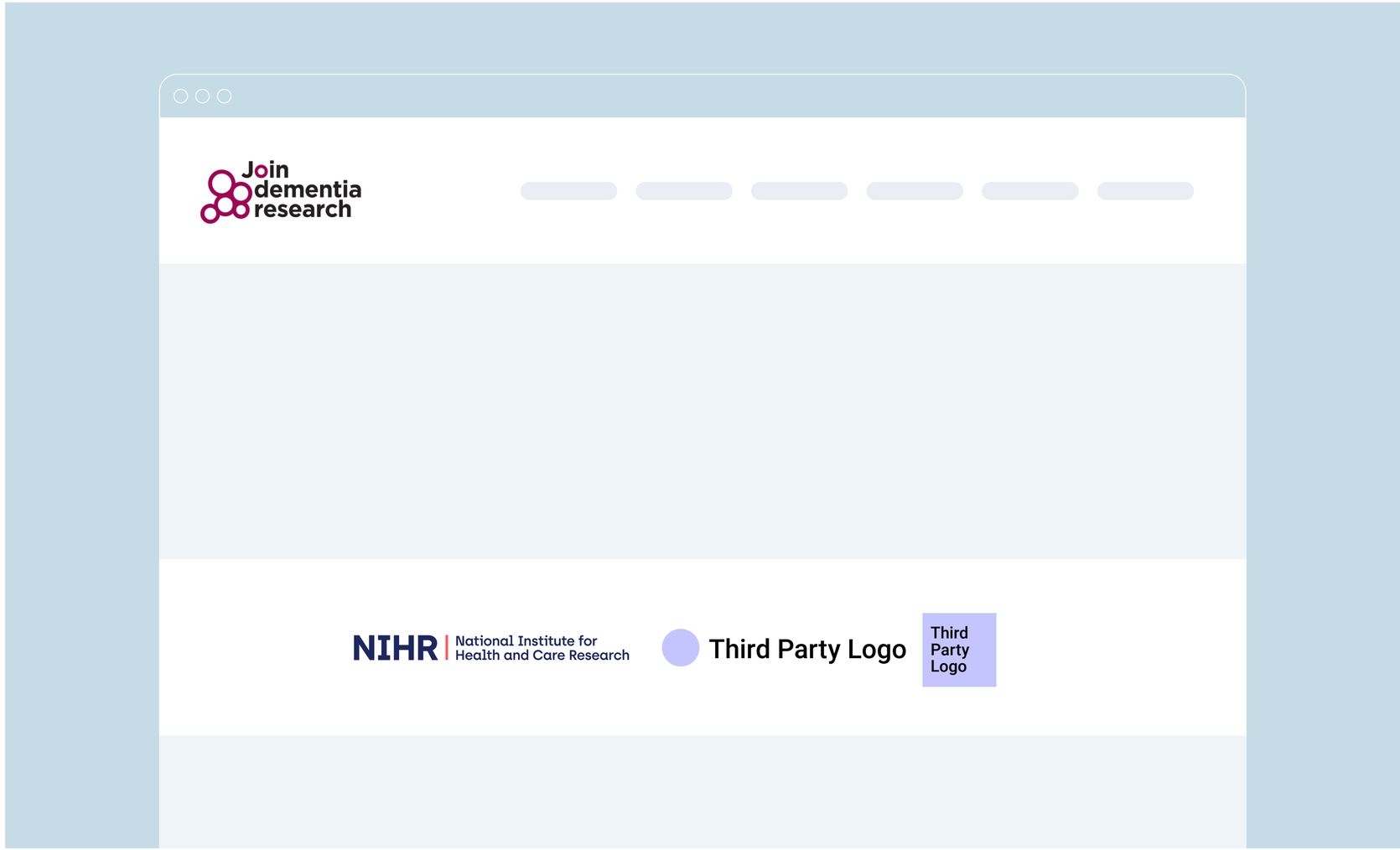
Position and hierarchy

NIHR lead partner



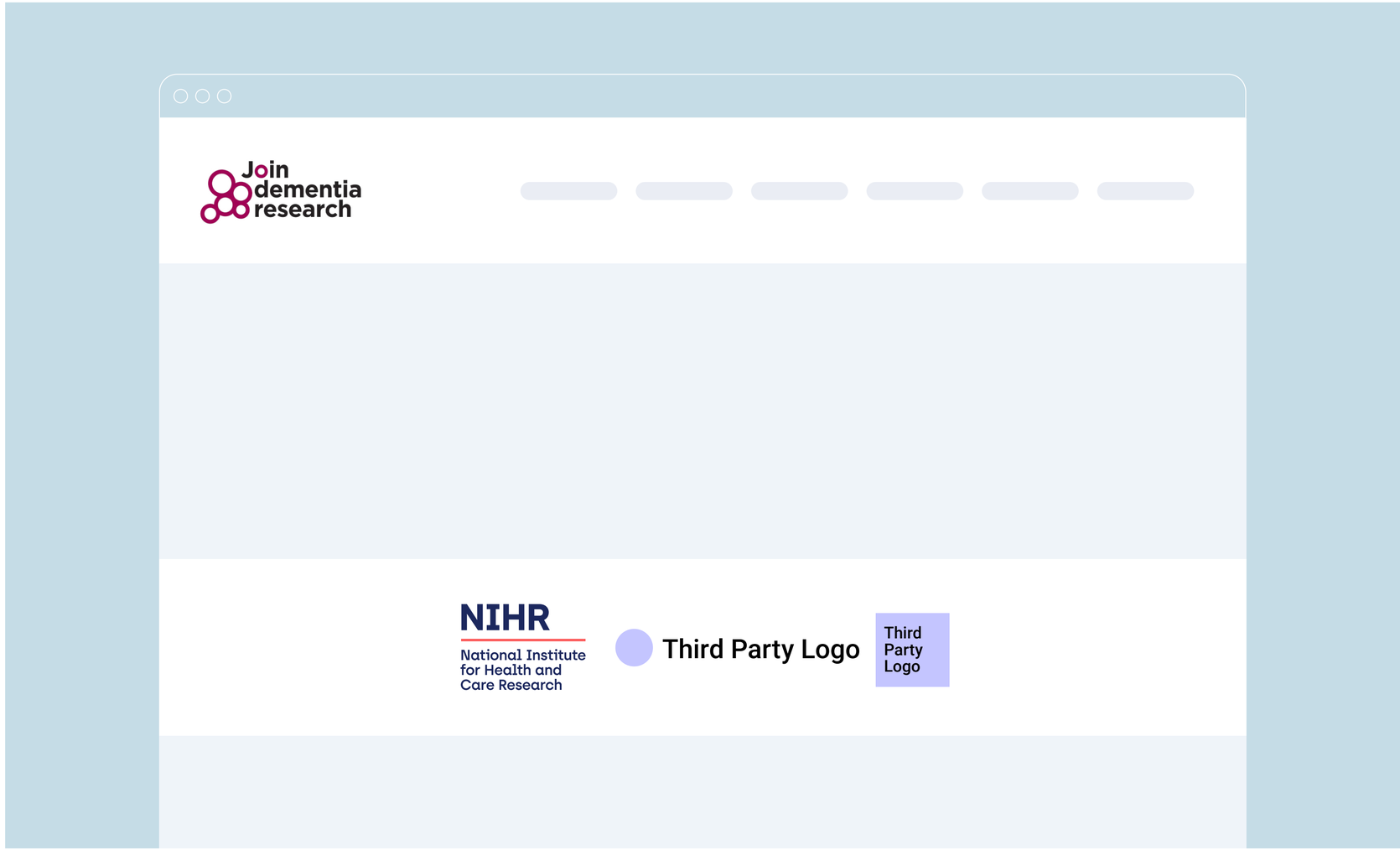
Position and hierarchy Horizontal

No lead organisation (partnership brand)



Position and hierarchy
Stacked

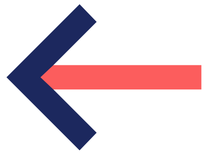
No lead organisation (partnership brand)



NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Contact

If you have any questions about the content in these guidelines please have a chat with the brand team.



Design: red-stone.com