

HERON Project

Payments, Expenses and Claiming Guidance for Participants

Thank you for joining the HERON project.

We believe that people with lived experience bring valuable knowledge, insight and expertise. We want to recognise your contribution and make sure that nobody is left out of pocket because they take part.

Taking part in HERON is voluntary. Receiving a payment does not make you an employee of Every-One or any partner organisation.

What can I claim?

Payment for your time

Participants can claim **£27.50 per hour** for time spent attending agreed HERON meetings and activities.

This normally includes:

- Attending meetings (online or in person)
- Participating in agreed project activities
- Taking part in workshops or discussion groups

Preparation time

Sometimes you may be asked to read documents or information before a meeting.

Where preparation is needed, additional paid preparation time may be agreed in advance and will be clearly explained before the meeting.

Online meeting payment

If a meeting takes place online, you can also claim a **fixed £5 contribution per meeting** to help cover internet, electricity and other costs associated with taking part remotely.

Travel expenses

Where meetings are held in person, reasonable travel expenses can be claimed. Please keep tickets or receipts where possible.

You can claim:

- Mileage at **0.45 pence per mile**
- Train fares
- Bus fares
- Parking costs where agreed

Travel time

Travel time is not normally paid. However, we recognise that some circumstances are different and requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Personal Assistant or Support Worker costs

We want HERON to be accessible and inclusive.

If you need support from a Personal Assistant or Support Worker in order to take part, you may be able to claim:

- **£15 per hour for Personal Assistant support**

This should be discussed and agreed with the project team in advance.

Choosing not to receive payment

Receiving payment is entirely your choice.

You can:

- Accept the full payment you are entitled to
- Accept part of the payment
- Decline payment altogether
- Ask for your payment to be donated to a charity instead

Whatever you decide, your contribution to HERON is equally valued.

How will I be paid?

Payments can be made by:

- **BACS bank transfer**
- **Amazon Vouchers**

You can choose the option that works best for you.

How do I make a claim?

1. Attend the meeting or activity.
2. Complete a claim form.
3. Include details of any expenses being claimed.
4. Attach any receipts or evidence where required.
5. Submit the form to the HERON project team.

If you need help completing a claim form, please let us know and we will support you.

What about benefits?

Some participants receive welfare benefits and may be concerned about whether payments could affect their claim.

Payments for involvement activities can sometimes affect certain benefits, depending on your individual circumstances.

Because everyone's situation is different:

- It is your responsibility to seek advice before accepting payments if you receive benefits.
- We recommend speaking to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Jobcentre Plus, a welfare benefits adviser or another trusted adviser.
- If you are unsure, you can choose to receive reduced payment or no payment at all.

Important information about HERON payments

Participation in HERON:

- Is voluntary.
- Does not create an employment contract.
- Does not make you an employee.
- Can be stopped by you at any time.
- Is based on sharing your lived experience and expertise rather than undertaking paid employment.

If needed, we can provide a letter explaining the nature of your involvement to help with discussions with the DWP or Jobcentre Plus.

Our commitment to accessibility

We are committed to making involvement accessible and inclusive.

If you need:

- Communication support
- Accessibility adjustments
- Flexible arrangements
- Additional support to participate

please speak to the HERON team and we will work with you to remove barriers wherever possible.

Questions?

If you have any questions about payments, expenses, claiming, or the possible impact on benefits, please speak to a member of the HERON project team before making your claim.

We are happy to discuss the options available and help you make an informed choice.

Summary

What can be claimed?	Amount
Meeting attendance	£27.50 per hour
Agreed preparation time	£27.50 per hour
Online meeting contribution	£5 per meeting per meeting
Mileage	0.45p per mile
Bus and train travel	Actual cost (with receipts)
Personal Assistant support	£15 per hour
Payment methods	BACS or Amazon vouchers
Alternative options	Decline payment or donate to charity