

UCL Institute of Mental Health Small Grants Scheme 2023/2024 academic year



Introduction

Mental health is a key strategic priority for UCL, and there is already an excellent record in mental health research. Research and practice are widely distributed across existing UCL Divisions, Centres, Institutes, and NHS partners, and there are considerable opportunities to strengthen the research base and enhance infrastructure.

Led by Prof Anthony David, the UCL Institute of Mental Health (IoMH) has been created to help realise the ambitious vision of building a world-leading centre for research into mental disorders. The IoMH aims to bring together the best UCL clinical academics and scientists in the fields of mental health and illness to work, train and collaborate under its auspices.

As part of its commitment to support mental health research, the IoMH has established a small grants scheme to encourage collaborative and interdisciplinary work in mental health research. Individual awards can be up to £10,000 and last up to 12 months (smaller awards are also encouraged). For the 2023/24 round, we anticipate only making one award. A list of projects awarded in previous years can be found [here](#).

Assessment Criteria

Proposals will be assessed by an interdisciplinary panel of experts and external partners. The key assessment criteria are:

- Focus on mental health
- Interdisciplinarity
- Scientific excellence
- Innovation
- Value for money

Eligibility

Applications must include at least two UCL staff applicants with employment contracts extending beyond the end of the grant period.

To demonstrate our support for interdisciplinary mental health research, applications must include researchers from at least two different UCL Departments. To note that research teams can be from the same Division or Institute, but applicants must be affiliated with at least two different departments. If you are unsure about the eligibility of your research team, please contact the IoMH Comms Officer (r.niven@ucl.ac.uk) before submitting your application.

External partnerships with other academic institutions, the Crick, the NHS, local authorities, charities, commercial organisations, community groups or policy-making bodies are encouraged where relevant to the outputs. Applications that demonstrate novel interdisciplinary approaches or propose new cross-disciplinary collaborations are particularly welcome.

Early-mid career researchers (within five years of their first postdoctoral appointment) are particularly encouraged to apply. If you have more than five years post-doctoral experience but feel you are still an early career researcher, please contact us, and we will be happy to discuss.

Activities

Work funded under these awards may include pilot studies and other exploratory work for larger grant applications. Similarly, we will consider requests for new analyses of already collected data/samples/specimens provided applicants can justify the work would not be possible without the additional funding. Applicants are asked to state whether they already have the relevant research ethical approvals or require an amendment to existing approvals.

Outputs

We will consider a range of project outputs, including peer-reviewed publications, reports, workshops, symposia, or conferences. Target audiences could include researchers, academics, patients, carers, or members of the public. The likelihood of the project to deliver its outputs at 1 year and not later will be an important criterion for funding.

While the IoMH is unable to provide logistical support for projects, we will take an active role in promoting any events or activities.

Successful applicants will be asked to submit a brief project status report in the first three months, highlighting any progress issues and appropriate mitigation plans.

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Awardees will be responsible for submitting a brief final report no later than a month after the end of the project. The final report should describe the outputs of the project and any planned follow-up activity (e.g., grant applications or additional events), alongside any communications or images documenting the project. The IoMH may refer to the information contained in the final report in its own annual report and communications.

Awardees will also be asked to present their project outputs as part of the yearly IoMH small grant awardees seminar.

Costs

Costs relating to any of the outputs listed above or pilot studies or other exploratory work for larger grant applications (including medical imaging costs, lab costs, and data access) are permitted. Staff costs related to the project (e.g., for a PhD student or research assistant to collect data) are permitted. We are unable to fund bench fees, salary costs for applicants or 'teaching buy out.'

You must fill this [budget template](#) and the 'Budget and Justification of Resources' section on the [application form](#) with costs appropriate to the proposal. The application must be signed by the lead applicant's Head of Department, confirming they support the proposed budget. Please note the final amount awarded will be decided by the Funding Panel.

Any funds not spent at the end of the project must be returned to the IoMH.

Timelines

Call launch	20 November 2023
Applications open	22 November 2023
Applications close	17 January 2024
Funding Decision	February 2024
Award period	Projects may be of any duration up to 12 months, and must be completed by 31 December 2024

How to apply

Your application must include:

- The application form according to [this template](#).
- The proposal budget according to [this template](#).
- 1-2 pages CVs of all UCL applicants

Please **combine all the above documents into a single pdf document** and e-mail to Rosie Niven (r.niven@ucl.ac.uk) **no later than 1 pm on 17 January 2024**. Applications will be considered by an expert panel of UCL staff and external partners.