Network Plus Project Funding Call #2: Interventions
Opens on 1ˢᵗ July 2020

INFORMATION FOR LIVED EXPERIENCE RESEARCHERS, THIRD SECTOR & PRACTITIONERS FROM ALL SECTORS[1]

The Loneliness and Social Isolation in Mental Health Network strongly encourages grant applications from lived experience researchers, practitioners (including, but not limited to, health and social care staff, community arts/sports/activities staff and built environment practitioners) and representatives from the third sector, who may have various types of roles within the proposed project, including as co-applicants or as consultants. The Network has also ring-fenced at least one grants for research led by people with relevant lived experience for this call, and all funding applications are expected to demonstrate involvement of people with lived experience.

We recognise that not all potential applicants will meet the eligibility criteria as a Principle (Lead) Applicant (see Terms of Reference and FAQs), and we want to support and enable individuals or groups of people with a strong idea to apply.

This guide should be read alongside the Brief, Terms of Reference and Frequently Asked Questions documents on our website: www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/network-funding-call. This guide is designed to answer some additional questions you may have.

WHAT DOES 'INTERVENTION' MEAN?

By '**intervention**' we mean specific activities aimed at reducing loneliness and social isolation in the context of improving individuals' mental health. These activities can involve people from the general population (including groups that are 'at-risk' of loneliness, social isolation and/or mental health problems) and should be aimed at reducing the risk of mental health problems developing. Alternatively, these activities might be targeting to people who already have mental health problems, and aim to reduce loneliness and social isolation and improve recovery or prevent relapse.

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[1] By 'practitioner' we mean, for example, people working in health/social care, community arts/sports/activities and the built environment sector.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply for a grant?
The Principle (Lead) Applicant must hold a contract with a University or other eligible research organisation (see FAQ). This can be yourself or someone you choose to collaborate with. The requirement to hold a university contract is so that grant funds can be held by a recognised research organisation. Individuals who are not affiliated to a University, including those from the third sector, practitioners or people with lived experience, can be co-applicants on the proposal and can take a major role in the proposed research project and can be costed into the study.

I have a research question/idea, but I don't have a contract with a University.
Although you will not be eligible to apply as the Principal/Lead Applicant, we would encourage you to make links with researchers who are affiliated with a University, or to get in touch with us so that we can explore whether there are any potential collaborators within the Network. You would then be able to apply as a co-applicant, as a member of the project team.

I am on a Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) at a University. Am I eligible to apply?
You are eligible to apply as a co-applicant. Whether you are eligible to apply as a Lead applicant will depend on the type of arrangement you have with the University. If you have an Honorary Contract, we suggest that you discuss this question with your University, as you may be eligible depending on the University's own arrangements. Not all LEAPs have an honorary contract agreement. However, if you have an idea you would like to explore, we encourage you to make links with academics interested in similar research topics as you. You can also get in touch with us, as we may be able to put you in touch with potential collaborators.

I work for the NHS, can I apply?
If you work for the NHS but do not have an affiliation with a university, you can apply as a co-applicant. If you also have a university post you are eligible to apply as a Lead applicant and the application should be made through your university. However, please note that following UKRI rules, if a potential project staff member on a grant application is employed by both an academic organisation and an NHS body, we would pay their salary costs at 80% fEC (please see more on fEC below) regardless of which organisation they were listed at. We would expect this project staff member to be listed at the organisation where their role is most relevant to the role they are to play on the proposed project, and at the salary rates they are paid by that organisation. Bearing that in mind, and also because applications are assessed according to factors including value for money, it is the submitting organisation's decision over which organisation/salary rate to list that staff member at on the application. Further information regarding NHS Bodies as organisations eligible to apply for funding can be found at https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/.

How much research experience should I have?
We recognise and value the unique perspective people with lived experience (whether that is personally experiencing loneliness, social isolation and/or mental health problems, or working with individuals experiencing these as a practitioner or as part of the third sector) bring to a research programme and incorporating these perspectives is a requirement of the call. We have not set out requirements for academic qualifications or research experience but we would expect the whole research team named on the application form to be able to meet the objectives of the project and

deliver to time and within budget. The Funding panel, which will include those with lived experience, will be reviewing all elements of the grant application according to set criteria (see the FAQs).

FINDING A COLLABORATOR

I have a research idea but do not have anyone to collaborate with.
The Network actively encourages and enables collaborations. The funding criteria strongly encourages that the proposal involves collaboration between multiple academic disciplines as well as input from practitioners, people with relevant lived experience and from the third sector.

You can look at our website to see our Co-Investigators, who are happy to discuss research applications in their areas (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/meet-team), and some of our other Network members, who might have overlapping interests with you (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/network-members).

You can also contact ellie.pearce@ucl.ac.uk with an outline of your idea (no more than 300 words) and what research areas or sectors you would be interested in exploring or working with. We can then circulate this to the Network with the aim of putting people in touch with others with similar research interests wherever possible.

I have a research idea but have never submitted a grant proposal before.
We would encourage you to make contact with an academic interested in the same topic, so that you can work on an application together. Please see the previous question for some suggestions on how to find a collaborator.

How developed does my idea need to be?
The proposal itself will need to focus on a clear research question, and will need a detailed plan of the research programme you intend to carry out.

What does 'interdisciplinarity' mean?
By 'discipline', we mean a particular area of research or approach to research, which corresponds to a specific academic subject, such as psychology, or architecture. In this call we are looking for proposals that draw together different approaches to address loneliness and social isolation and improve mental illness. For instance, a project could combine psychological approaches that help an individual reframe how they think about their social contacts, with a community approach that involves group art classes, and which also takes into account the effect of where these classes take place. This example could involve applicants with backgrounds in psychology, the arts, the built environment, and third sector practitioners.

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

Once you have formed your core project team, it might be helpful to agree who will lead the completion of the application form. This might be yourself or one of your collaborators, although we strongly recommend that all co-applicants contribute to its development from the outset, and that you discuss expectations of timeliness for completing application with all team members.

The principal/lead applicant needs to be affiliated with a UK University (or other accepted Research

organisation – see general FAQs), and we encourage you to contact the research services team there for help and guidance in writing the application.

If you have any questions regarding the completion of the form, please contact ellie.pearce@ucl.ac.uk, who may be able to help.

In the co-applicant section of the form, there may be fields which you feel are not applicable to you. It is fine to enter N/A in any of these spaces.

Budget
The application form must be submitted with a fully costed budget. We suggest this is completed in collaboration with your team. Developing the timeline for your project will help you identify in more detail who will do what, and when, during the project, and then to cost all the activity taking place during the project. Please liaise with the institution that would host the grant about this, and contact the Network Co-ordinators if you have any questions.

What is fEC?
This stands for full economic cost and is the total amount that the project would actually cost. The Network is funded through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the way they fund projects is that they only pay 80% of actual costs to Universities. This means that Universities need to pay the additional 20% of the actual costs themselves. Third sector organisation, on the other hand, can claim for 100% of their costs, so they are not expected to make up any shortfall. However, there are rules about how much of the budget can be given to third sector organisations (up to 30% of the full amount, please see FAQs). University finance departments and researchers should understand fEC and help you with this aspect of the costing of your proposed project.

What information should my CV contain?
This should be no longer than one page. Please list any qualifications, training, or experience that you feel are relevant to your application. It is fine also to provide a short summary of your practical or lived experience on your CV, although there is no obligation to do this. Any information will be kept confidential within the Funding Panel. The Funding Panel will be reviewing all CVs of the proposed project team to evaluate whether the team has the right skills and experience to deliver the research proposal.

I have a research topic that I really want to propose but I have never led a large project
In this case, we encourage you to discuss your research topic with an experienced researcher who could lead or co-lead the project. You can also get in touch with us as early as possible as we may be able to partner you with someone who has this experience (please see questions above).

I have a research topic that I really want to propose but I have no experience of managing a budget
Applicants should discuss the calculation of the costs of their project with the finance team at the institution that would host the grant if their application was successful. Please also see the answers above regarding finding an academic collaborator.

What other support is available to me if I am successful in my application?
In addition to getting support from your co-applicants as you work together on your project, the Network may be able to offer a mentor from within the Network to provide support for specific requirements.

ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED?

If you do not wish to submit a grant application yourself but have particular areas of interest in regards to loneliness, social isolation, and mental health, we encourage you to get in contact with researchers or community organisations who may have similar areas of interest to you, and might like to involve you as a consultant on an application. You can also follow us on Twitter: @UCL_Loneliness, which is a good way of seeing who else is interested in loneliness, social isolation and mental health.

CONTACT DETAILS

For queries regarding the above, please contact: ellie.pearce@ucl.ac.uk