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

> This document contains The Terms of Reference.
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> Please see the separate 'Brief', 'Frequently Asked Questions' and 'Information for Researchers with Relevant Lived Experience & Third Sector & Practitioners' documents for further information.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Loneliness and Social Isolation in Mental Health Research Network is hosting a second funding call for applications for small 'plus project' grants to support research in specific areas, to address identified gaps in knowledge, and to improve the knowledge-base in areas of new challenge or changing policy and practice. The grants can be used to deliver a targeted piece of research or to pump-prime larger projects, for example by engaging in pilot or preliminary work to support subsequent larger grant applications. This second call is themed around **interventions for loneliness, social isolation and mental health problems**.

In this second funding call, grants will be available for small projects of up to £15k and large projects of up to £50k (provided at 80% full economic costing i.e. successful applications would receive up to £12k or £40k respectively from the Network, although please see below regarding costs for third sector organisations). Grant-funded projects should be delivered within 12 months. We expect to grant up to a total of £200,000 overall in this funding call. The **deadline for applications is 5pm on Friday 2nd October 2020**.

We are happy to accept matched funding in this funding call, but it is not required.

In addition to the terms and conditions below, we encourage you to consult the ESRC research funding guide, as all 'plus projects' must adhere to the Network's funders (ESRC on behalf of UKRI): https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/

Eligibility

The Principal Investigator must hold a position in a UK University or other UK Higher Education Institution (HEI). A list of eligible independent research organisations (ROs) is available here: https://www.ukri.org/files/funding/tcs/eligible-independent-research-organisations-pdf/.   Only one person can be named as Principal Investigator and they are expected to be based at the organisation submitting the application. Organisations outside of the UK (including the Republic of Ireland) are not eligible to apply to lead a project in this call. However, staff from non-UL

organisations can be included as Co-Investigators or Consultants (but please see notes below regarding funding for non-UK applicants). It should be noted that the proposed project must have direct relevance to the UK.

We **strongly encourage interdisciplinary and cross-sector approaches** that incorporate multiple academic disciplines, third sector and practitioner partners. We also **require that applicants involve people with lived experience** of loneliness and/or social isolation and mental health problems at all stages of their intended research project, and we also strongly encourage people with relevant lived experience to make applications. The Network Co-Production Group (CoG) is available to provide suggestions on Patient & Public Involvement good practice if required – please contact m.birken@ucl.ac.uk **by 31st July 2020** if you would like to discuss the possibility of this (please note that after this date applicants will be expected to use their own PPI links). You may also want to consult INVOLVE: https://www.invo.org.uk/

We welcome applications led by Early Career Researchers (ECRs: within eight years of the award of their PhD or equivalent professional training, or an individual who is within six years of their first academic appointment – see FAQs for more details). However, PhD students cannot be Principal Investigators and although they may be included as Co-Applicants, any costed time should not adversely affect the primary focus on their PhD (usually time on an application should not more than 7 hours per week).

We will fund at least one project led by lived experience researchers.

Awards will not be made retrospectively: this means that the work for which support is requested must not have commenced before the award is announced.

Your application to apply for these small grants will include (i) your application form and appended 1 page CVs for principal and co-applicant(s) and (ii) your budget form. All application documents can be found on our website: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/network-funding-call. Applications will be shortlisted by a panel comprising network Co-Investigators from a number of different disciplines (see our website for Co-Investigator details: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/meet-team), members of the network Co-Production Group and independent assessors who will provide independent oversight of quality and due process.

Costs covered by the grant
All projects must be costed at 100% full economic cost (fEC). Consistent with UKRI funding guidelines, the proportion of total project costs that will be covered by the Network is dependent on the type of organisation:

- **HEIs** – the Network will cover 80% of the total project cost (consistent with UKRI research funding guidelines). To put this simply, if you were to apply for the maximum grant of £50,000, you would be funded £40,000 of that and would be expected to contribute £10,000 from your organisation and/or relevant partner(s).
- **Businesses, third sector organisations, and government bodies** – the Network will cover 100% of justified costs for these types of co-applicants. Businesses and government bodies may not claim overheads or other indirect costs, whereas third sector organisations can.

The combined costs of Co-Investigators from outside the UK, the third sector, UK business, or government bodies must not exceed 30% of the total fEC) of the grant application. Further information on this can be found in the ESRC funding guide: https://esrc.ukri.org/files/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/

Applications must clearly show which costs will be incurred by UK HEIs and which will be incurred by partners in business, the third sector, or government bodies. We have provided a Budget Form which should help you to calculate the relevant costs for the project and this is available on our website: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/network-funding-call.

You may want to consult this UKRI factsheet explaining their funding structure: https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/fecfaq-pdf/

Your institution should treat this application in the same way it treats all research council (UKRI) applications in terms of costings. We expect the academic institution where the funding would be held to advise applicants on how to cover the 20% of total cost not covered by the Network.

Funding may be sought to cover the **direct expenses** incurred in planning, developing, and conducting, the research, and disseminating findings to key stakeholders, including:

- Investigator's time (i.e. the costs of principal and co-applicants working directly on a project).
- Short-term consultancy or salary costs for expert staff, or short periods of research assistance (include VAT unless consultant is VAT exempt);
- Lived experience involvement costs;
- Research expenses, including participant reimbursement, transcription;
- Small equipment, facility use, and data/software purchases (i.e. less than £10,000);
- Travel (for example to interview research participants, or for co-applicant meetings) and subsistence costs (other than alcoholic drinks);
- Meeting and workshop costs (other than alcoholic drinks) if directly related to the research project;
- Other consumables, unless excluded below, including the purchase of datasets, photocopies, printing costs, microfilm charges, and any other minor items that will be used up during the course of the project;
- A final dissemination event specific to this study, not costing more than £2,000, accompanied by a lay report delivered as a blog.

Any organisation submitting a successful application for 'plus' funding is expected to meet the indirect and estates costs associated with the award.

Items not eligible for funding
The following items are not eligible for funding under this call:

- Student stipends or course fees;
- Computer hardware including laptops, electronic notebooks, digital cameras, digital recorders etc;
- Books and other permanent resources;
- Publication costs – the UKRI provides the following guidance: article processing charges (APCs) and other publication charges relating to peer-reviewed research articles and

conference proceedings cannot be included in research grant proposals. The payment of APCs and other publication charges related to UKRI-funded research are supported through UKRI open access block grants, which are provided to eligible research organisations and will therefore be covered for publications arising from projects funded in this call. For further information see the open access information: https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/open-access/open-access-policy/

- Conference costs (attendance fees or travel to conferences, or conference organisation) NB: but see note above about allowable costs for a dissemination event.

Ethics and Data Management

Note that all research involving human participants must comply with all relevant legislation and we require that all relevant ethics committee approvals, risk assessments, and regulatory requirements (including the General Data Protection Regulation; GDPR) are met for all grants funded through the network plus activities.

Please note: These approvals must be confirmed before any funds can be released. Applications for ethics approval should be submitted as soon as possible after notification of funding, to avoid delays in starting the project. For some project proposals ethics approval may already have been granted.

Any research conducted or funded as part of network plus activities is required to be compliant with the following:

(a) **Safeguarding the anonymity of participants in recorded and reported data:** Participants' data should be recorded using a coded identifier that is only matched to their identity via a separate file that is separately password protected and encrypted. Study protocols should recognise the risk of participants being identified through readers triangulating information and should include strategies to prevent this.

(b) **Ensuring freedom to refuse consent and securing informed consent:** Data should be collected purely on the basis of having received informed consent when engaging with humans. Limits to confidentiality should be clearly stated and reporting obligations explained. Participants must have multiple opportunities to withdraw consent throughout any arising research processes. If participants choose to withdraw from the research, all of that person's data must be deleted.

(c) **Lone working:** Any situation where a researcher is likely to be left alone with participants must be avoided, wherever possible. Where this is not possible for practical reasons, a safety and lone working protocol must be used which ensures the safety of involved staff members and participants.

(d) **Risk protocol** to protect the health and safety of research subjects/participants: This would normally be submitted to your local research ethics committee with your application for ethical approval.

Scoring system used by assessors

Proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria, scored on a scale from 0-6.

- **Originality and potential contribution to knowledge**: Are the question(s) important, novel and likely to lead to significant new understanding, funding and/or impacts?
- **Research quality**: Is there a feasible plan for conducting research that will answer the research question posed? Have ethical and data management considerations been adequately addressed?
- **Value for money**: Are the funds requested essential for the work and justified by the importance and potential of the questions, project objectives relative to Network objectives and areas of thematic interest?
- **Evidence of active lived experience involvement** and engagement during project development.
- **Outputs, dissemination, and impact,** including development of the research workforce.
- **Cross-disciplinarity** (including cross-sector collaboration).

The assessors will follow the 6-point scoring system used by UKRI for each proposal:

Score	Description
6	The proposal is outstanding in terms of its potential research merit
5	The proposal is excellent in terms of its potential research merit
4	The proposal is important as it has considerable potential merit
3	The proposal has significant potential research merit but is not of a consistently high quality
2	The proposal will add to understanding and is worthy of support but is of lesser quality or urgency than more highly rated proposals. Such proposals are unlikely to have a significant influence on the development of the research area.
1	The proposal is flawed in its research approach, or is repetitious of other work, or otherwise judged not worth pursuing; or which, though possibly having sound objectives, appears seriously defective in is methodology.
0	Not able to assess (including due to falling outside of the remit of the call).

Award Conditions

To enhance the dissemination of research findings funded by this call, successful applicants will be expected to:

- Work with the Network to communicate their research plans, progress and findings in a form that is accessible to service users/ people with lived experience, including through engaging with the Network CoG by presenting research plans and results at meetings and considering feedback from the CoG in carrying out and reporting the research.

- Provide financial and activity updates at intervals specified by the Network.
- Present a summary of their findings at a **Network event** after completion of the project period.
- Write a **final report** of 3,000-4,000 words within 6 months of the end of the project detailing the key findings of the project, the impact/expected impact of the research for the knowledge-base, policy and practice, and lessons learned. The report should be formatted for an academic journal. Where research findings have already been published in a peer-reviewed journal within this timeframe a copy of the published article will also be acceptable as a final report. If you feel that this is not the format for the type of research project that you are planning (for example, if the project relates to audio-visual output) we can discuss this at the time of awarding funding.

- Write a **blog disseminating findings** to the general public, for example for inclusion on the Network's website.
- Where applicable, grant holders should formally deposit data generated by the research project with a responsible data repository (e.g. the UK Data Service) and provide metadata for resource discovery to the UK Data Service and to the Network within three months of the end of their grants. This will maximise the utility of the data and help progress research in this area.
- Report to the Funder via whatever means are required (e.g. ResearchFish) for as long as required and potentially after the end of the project period.
- Acknowledge the support of the Network in any talks, outputs, etc., and in any presentations and documents.
- Project money must be spent between 1st March 2021 and 1st April 2022.

Decisions on funding are expected by 1st December 2020. Projects should aim to have commenced by 1st March 2021 and no later than 1st April 2021. Please note that you need to discuss how to proceed if your funding application is successful with your contracts department as soon as possible: as part of the application form we ask for confirmation that, if awarded the grant, you would accept the terms set out in the standard contract template on our website (http://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/network-funding-call). We strongly recommend that you contact your contracts department as early as possible in your application preparation.

Applications should be sent to: ellie.pearce@ucl.ac.uk with the email header *'Interventions Funding Application – [Surname of Principal/Lead Applicant]'*. Please ensure you attach copies of (i) your application form (with appended CVs for principal and co-applicants) and (ii) your budget form, with file names as per the table below. Forms can be downloaded from our website:

http://www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/loneliness-network/network-funding-call

Application forms should be sent as word documents and <u>not</u> as pdfs.

In the Budget spreadsheet, please fill in the 'Budget tab' as well as pasting your full costings for your project, from Worktribe or similar, into the 'Costings' tab. Both the Budget and Costings tabs need to be filled in.

The deadline for applications is **5pm on Friday 2nd October 2020**.

Email title:	'Interventions Funding Application – [Surname of Principal/Lead Applicant]'
Attached Document 1:	'Application_ Interventions FundingCall_[Surname of Principal/Lead Applicant]'
Attached Document 2:	'Budget_ Interventions FundingCall_[Surname of Principal/Lead Applicant]'

CONTACTS
If you have any queries regarding this call or would like to discuss your application, please email: ellie.pearce@ucl.ac.uk.

If you would like to consult our CoG members for their advice on lived experience involvement and engagement in the project, including their potential paid involvement as a co-applicant researcher or consultant in the study, please contact them via Mary Birken m.birken@ucl.ac.uk by 31st July 2020 (we will not have the capacity to match you after this date). We strongly recommend that if interested in this valuable resource you contact them as soon as possible, and **not later than 31st July 2020**, to give them time to consider the proposal in detail.