

UKRI Mental Health Platform (MHP) Collaboration and Innovation (C&I) PPIE Awards Review Process and Scoring Criteria

The MHP Collaboration and Innovation Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) Awards support partnerships between MHP PPIE representatives, enabling joint efforts to explore emerging research opportunities and pilot new ideas.

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1. Overview of the Review Process

The review process takes place annually after the funding call closes and the applications have passed eligibility checks. Applications that progress are reviewed by an independent Review Committee, and all applicants receive written feedback on the process concludes. Unsuccessful applicants may re-apply once more in a future funding call, if applicable.

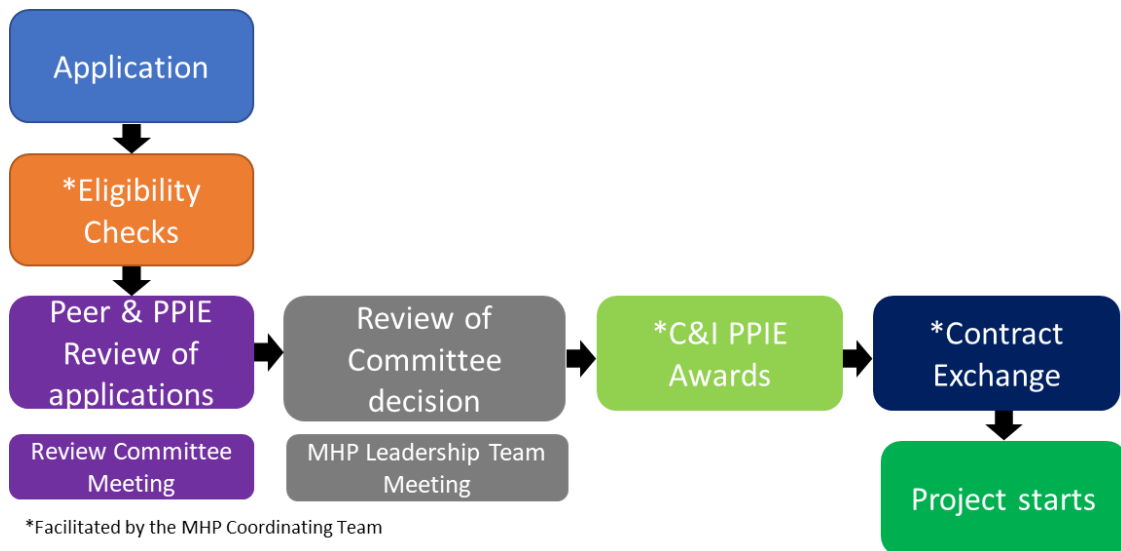


Figure 1. MHP Collaboration & Innovation C&I PPIE Awards Process

2. Eligibility Checks

Eligibility screening is carried out by the MHP Coordinating Team (CT). Applicants are notified of outcomes according to the timeline published on the MHP website.

It is the applicant's responsibility to:

- Apply to the correct funding opportunity.
- Submit a complete application, including all required documents named according to guidance on the application form available from the [MHP website](#)
- Ensure all documents are readable and submitted before the advertised deadline.

It is the MHP CT's responsibility to:

- All documents meet naming, formatting, and technical requirements.
- The application form is complete and consent for data processing is provided.
- All appendices meet acceptance criteria (page limits, formats, font size).
- The proposal meets the minimum eligibility requirements outlined below.

3. Minimum Eligibility Requirements

To progress to review, applications must meet the following:

<p>Applicant and Project Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Application form completed in full, including research and budget plan ○ Consent was provided to process data. ○ The main applicant(s) must be a current PPIE member of the MHP. ○ The project must link at least two of the MHP Hubs
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- The project must address one of the funding themes:
 - Improving PPIE best practice - aiming to identify, co-develop, or promote effective approaches for involving people with lived experience of severe mental illness (SMI) in mental health research. This may include creating guidelines, training, or tools that ensure PPIE is inclusive, meaningful, and impactful across research and other service contexts.
 - Evaluating PPIE impact- aiming to measure or enhance the impact of PPIE in mental health research. Projects might focus on developing innovative methods for evaluating PPIE outcomes, scaling up successful models, or identifying what works to make involvement more effective and sustainable over time.
 - Enhancing understanding of people with SMI- aiming to amplify the voices, experiences, and needs of people living with SMI. This may include exploring barriers to involvement, cultural or social factors affecting participation, or generating new insights into what meaningful engagement looks like for diverse communities affected by SMI.
- The project must be completed by 31 December 2028. Projects are expected to start within 6 months of the decision being made and within 1 month of contract being exchanged.

Budget Requirements

The proposed budget is between £2,000 and £20,000 (100% Full Economic Cost [FEC], i.e., cost to funder) and includes the following:

Eligible costs:

- Direct Project Costs: 100% directly incurred and directly allocated project costs can be claimed, including staff time, travel and subsistence on individual projects.
- Costs of networking activities and events, engagement and knowledge exchange, including travel and subsistence.
- Equipment valued < £10,000.

Ineligible costs:

- Duplication of other sources of funding that would be more appropriate for the activity to be funded.
- Indirect or estates costs at the research organisation.
- Any costs relating to Intellectual Property protection including but not limited to registering, maintaining, or supporting patents or property rights.
- Equipment valued ≥ £10,000.
- Undergraduate or postgraduate activities or training, or core PhD training including tuition or bench fees.
- Contributions to existing knowledge transfer partnerships.
- The salary costs of investigators and staff employed on existing funded Hub awards are also not eligible for inclusion.

Attachments

- Attachments have been submitted as per requirements.
- The leads of the Hubs and any Collaborators involved provided a letter of support to the project.
- Letters of support from the Collaborators must include a statement that they have read and agreed to the [MHP Privacy Policy](#) and their data use.

4. Conflict of Interest During the Review Process

The MHP is committed to ensure the review process is as objective and transparent as possible, and that any potential conflict of interest (COI) is minimised or removed. We recognise that individuals who may be involved in the review process may also be active members of the Hubs associated with the application or involved in a variety of other projects that may create a potential or perceivable COI.

The MHP CT will follow the [MHP Declaration of Interest process](#). Reviewers will be excluded from reviewing and scoring an application if they have:

- Direct involvement in the proposed project (e.g. co-lead, collaborator)
- Close professional relationship (e.g. supervisor, Mentor, collaborator or co-applicant with the main applicant in other projects)
- Employment at either the current or proposed host institution named on the application
- Personal or financial interest in the outcomes of the application

We ask applicants to identify during the application stage any potential COI with Collaborators, Hub leads, PPIE or other members of the platform.

All Reviewers are expected to declare any potential COI when they are invited to be part of the Committee. If a COI is identified during the review process, the reviewer must withdraw immediately from reviewing the application.

Also to note:

- Hub leads, researchers or PPIE reviewers involved in the design of the application will not be reviewing the application. However, they may review the application if they are indirectly involved in the project (e.g. part of the same Hub but not employed by the institutions participating in the project)

5. Review Committee Meeting and Assessment

Applications progressing from eligibility checks are evaluated by a Review Committee consisting of:

- Designated Committee Members (usually external reviewers)
- Review Committee Members (Hub representatives)
- Independent PPIE members with relevant lived experience and understanding of PPIE in research

Note that PPIE members will be selected based on their expertise, the relevance of their lived experience in SMI as patients, carers, or service users to the area under study in the application, and good understanding of PPIE role in research.

The Review Committee is co-chaired by an independent PPIE member along with the Director of MHP. UKRI MRC representatives may attend as Observers.

Committee recruitment upholds MHP's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) commitments. Our goals are to ensure that the committee is diverse and representative of the broader scientific community and to ensure a broad range of perspectives in decision-making processes, which can lead to more comprehensive and impactful research outcomes.

The Review Committee will review and score the application and provide outcome (funding recommendations) to the Leadership Team.

6. Assessment Criteria and Scoring System

Applications are scored on a 5- point scale (5 = Outstanding/Fundable, 1 = Poor/Not Fundable) across the three weighted criteria:

<p>1. Team and Cross-hub collaboration (30%): Strength and suitability of the project team to deliver the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team (including collaborators) has the right balance of skills and experience to deliver the project. • Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and appropriate. • The team has access to a high-quality supportive environment at Hub level • Cross-Hub collaborations are well-planned
<p>2. Impact and Strategic alignment (30%): Alignment with the MHP and Hubs priorities and potential impact on people living with severe mental illness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project addresses a timely and significant challenge in Mental Health PPIE with clear relevance to people with SMI. • Demonstrates alignment with the funding themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving PPIE best practice ○ Evaluating PPIE impact ○ Enhancing understanding of people with SMI • Alignment with the participating Hubs' PPIE activities and priorities.
<p>3. Research Quality and Delivery (40%): Quality and feasibility of the research plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious, demonstrates innovation in approach, design, methods, and/or technology, while building on existing Hub work. • Actively embeds diversity, equity and inclusion in research design, participation, and implementation. • Well-planned project, budget and timeline, with a clear risk mitigation plan. • Transparent data management plan ensuring quality, security, and safe data sharing • Applicants are expected to comply with the MHP Data Sharing policy and all data generated must be deposited on DATAMIND's Trusted Research Environment.

7. Awards Process and Next Steps

Following review, outcomes and feedback are communicated to all applicants and the UKRI MRC. Successful applicants (“awardees”) proceed to contract initiation with the MHP CT and the University of Edinburgh Research Office (ERO).

Contracting

If the awardee is associated with a host institution (e.g. academic institution, charity), the institution will be responsible for signing the contract. They will also be responsible for receiving and monitoring the award and paying the awardee for their time in the project. If the awardee is independent, the ERO will initiate contract exchange directly.

Expectations for Awardees

Awardees must:

- Start the project within 6 months of the decision and within 1 month of contract signing.
- Comply with the [MHP values](#), [Code of Conduct](#) and [Data Sharing policy](#). and relevant [MRC policies and guidance](#).
- Secure necessary ethical approvals before research begins.
- Research data generated by the project must be deposited on DATAMIND's Trusted Research Environment.
- Spend funds as approved in the application.
- Keep in touch with the relevant teams (MHP CT, PPIE Steering Group, Hubs Leads and/or Collaborators) to identify any support needs and progress.
- Submit bi-annual project reports to the MHP CT
- Submit a final project report within one month of project completion.

Additional Guidance and Resources:

The following resources offer support for PPIE, EDI, and costing involvement activities:

- PPIE Guidance
 - [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#)
 - [Guidance for applicants on working with people and communities | NIHR](#)
 - [10 for 10: Public involvement in mental health research | The McPin Foundation](#)
 - [NIHR Guidance on co-producing a research project](#)
 - [Embedding lived experience in mental health research | Funding Guidance | Wellcome](#)
- EDI Guidance
 - [Embedding diversity in research design – MRC – UKRI](#)
 - [UKRI Guidance for equality, diversity and inclusion](#)
 - [NIHR Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit](#)
- Costing PPIE Activities
 - [Payment guidance for researchers and professionals | NIHR](#)