

Mental Health Platform Research Summit 2026



8th October
Sheffield



UK Research
and Innovation

in partnership
with

MQ

Mental health
research

Welcome to the MHP Research Summit

We are delighted to welcome you to the second annual MHP Research Summit, held in partnership with MQ Mental Health Research.

This year we're excited to be at Sheffield United Football Club.

This event represents an exciting opportunity to bring together researchers, clinicians, early career researchers, people with lived experience of severe mental illness, and external partners in a collaborative space.

Welcome from the Platform Director

"It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the second Mental Health Platform Research Summit, in Sheffield. The Summit is an opportunity to share new findings and to spark collaborations. I am especially pleased to see the next generation of researchers presenting their work and contributing to the future of our field."

Thank you for joining us for this important day. I hope you leave inspired, connected, and energised by the conversations and ideas we share."

Professor Andrew McIntosh
Director, Mental Health Platform



MHP RESEARCH SUMMIT 2026

SCHEDULE



8:30am Registration & coffee

9:00am Welcome & opening remarks

09:05am Opening talk:
Emily Wheeler

09:20am Keynote talk:
Professor Belinda Lennox

10:00am Parallel Sessions – Morning
Pavilion Suite: AI and SMI Research
Tony Currie Suite: Diagnosis & Research
International Suite: Mapping the Impact Workshop

11:00am Coffee break and poster viewing
Served both at Pavilion and between Tony Currie/International

11:30am ECR Lightning Talks: Discovery science

12:30pm *Group photo*
Lunch, poster session & networking
Served between Tony Currie/International

1:30pm Parallel Sessions – Afternoon
Pavilion Suite: DATAMIND & MQ Data Science Spotlight
Tony Currie Suite: Creativity in SMI Research
International Suite: Communicating Your Research to
Industry by Medicines Discovery Catapult

3:10pm Lived experience perspective short talks & panel discussion

4:00pm Coffee break
Served both at Pavilion and between Tony Currie/International

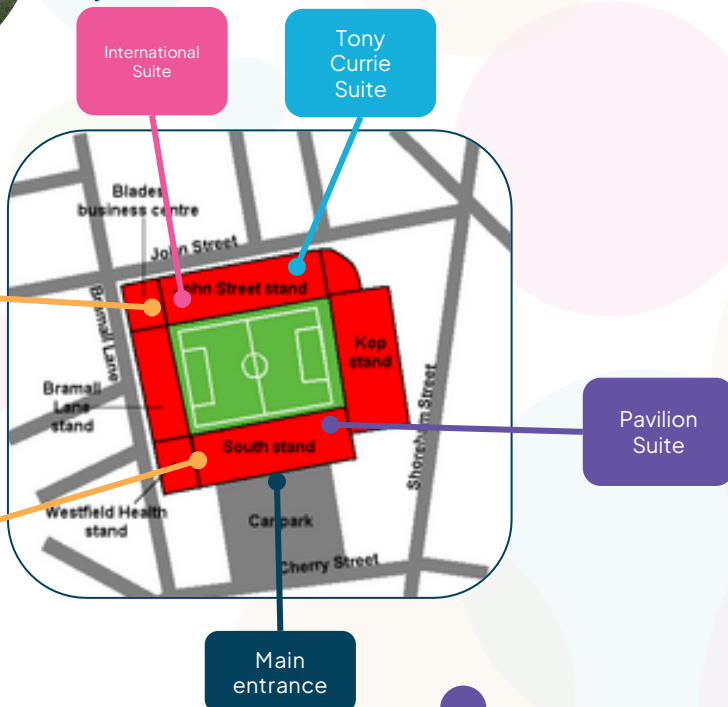
4:30pm Keynote talk:
Professor Cynthia Fu

5:00pm Closing remarks & prize announcements

Welcome to Bramall Lane

Enter at the Cherry Street Entrance, which will lead into the Pavilion Suite. The International Suite and Tony Currie Suite are accessed via a short walk including some stairs.

Venue staff will be there to guide delegates, including taking anyone to a lift.



Registration,
Core sessions

Pavilion Suite

Parallel
Sessions

Tony Currie Suite, International Suite,
Pavilion Suite

Posters

Tony Currie Suite

Coffee breaks

Tony Currie Suite, International Suite,
Pavilion Suite

Lunch

Tony Currie Suite, International Suite

Quiet spaces

1889 Suite
Sensory room

Small meetings

1889 Suite



Core session
9:00 – 9:50
All delegates attend

Pavilion
Suite

9:00am

Welcome and introductions

Andrew McIntosh



9:05am – 9:20am:

Opening talk: Emily Wheeler

Chair: Andrew McIntosh



The stories not captured by the data

Emily is a Lived experience Champion and Director of Strategic Growth at The Alan Turing Institute.



9:20am – 9:50am:

Keynote talk: Belinda Lennox

Co-Chairs: Mary-Ellen Lynall, Georgia Smith



Belinda Lennox is Professor and Head of Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist in the Early Intervention in Psychosis service for Oxford Health NHS FT.

Her research focuses on the causes of psychotic illness, and improving its treatment. She will speak about the particular focus on the possible autoimmune basis of psychosis.

Parallel sessions start at 10:00am.
There is a 10 minute transition time to move to different rooms



Parallel Session 1: Morning

10:00am – 11:00am

Select one to attend from the three parallel sessions.

Tony
Currie
Suite

Diagnosis and Research

This session, co-led by the Brain & Genomics Hub, ImmunoMIND and Complex Emotions, will see speakers explore some of the key diagnostic questions facing mental health research and how these are connecting with the evolving research taking place across the platform.

In a series of talks with Q&A, the session will consider how we understand and define mental health diagnoses, the challenges of capturing the **complexity and diversity of people's experiences**, and whether emerging approaches in genomics, immunology and the study of complex emotions can help us rethink current diagnostic frameworks.

Bringing together perspectives from across the platform, the session will explore how research is helping to address important questions around **diagnosis, classification and individual differences**, and what this could mean for the future of mental health research and practice.



Tania Gergel

Director of Research,
Bipolar UK.

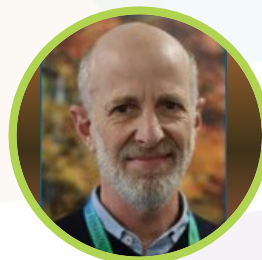
University College London
and Cardiff University



Mary- Ellen Lynall

MHP Deputy Director.

Clinical Lecturer in
Psychiatry, University
of Cambridge.



Scott Weich

Complex Emotions Hub
Lead

Professor of Mental Health,
Sheffield University.



Parallel Session 1: Morning

10:00am – 11:00am

Select one to attend from the three parallel sessions.

Pavilion
Suite

Artificial Intelligence and SMI Research

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not just a collection of algorithms to analyse data, if it ever was. Models now suggest hypotheses, write analysis code, and draft text that may be read by our institutions, funders, and the public.

Researchers already use AI in many of these ways, both globally and within our Hubs. But which of these applications are responsible and acceptable when working on severe mental illness research? And, more pressingly, who answers if (when) they go wrong?



This session will be a **participatory roundtable** on how AI might and should be used across the Mental Health Platform, co-led by Joanne Kenney (Metabolic Psychiatry) and Antonio Pardiñas (Brain & Genomics). Some questions our panel is likely to address, and please bring your own:

Are there tasks, shared across most or all Hubs, that could credibly be handed to an AI model with current capabilities, and how do we oversee them?

How do we reconcile strict data privacy rules with the fact that the most powerful models belong to and are supplied by a handful of companies?

How can the experience and perspective of people living with severe mental illness shape what we do with these technologies?

Panellists

Rachel Caplan-Hastings, Rethink Mental Illness

Sarah Markham, King's College London

Marcos del Pozo Baños, Swansea University

Neil Harrison, Cardiff University

Joanne Kenney, University of Edinburgh

Antonio F. Pardiñas, Cardiff University (moderator)



Rethink
Mental
Illness



Parallel Session 1: Morning

10:00am – 11:00am

Select one to attend from the three parallel sessions.

International
Suite

Mapping the impact of mental health interventions on metabolic and social health

In this **interactive workshop** developed in collaboration with lived experience experts, attendees will identify aspects of physical health and social networks that influence mental health and well-being for a hypothetical individual living with a severe mental illness.

In groups, attendees will explore how different pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions could impact each of these aspects.

Aiming to stimulate conversations, this workshop is ideal for early career researchers, and anyone interested in **value of a 'whole-person' approach** to mental health interventions.



What matters most for an individual's health and well-being?

How might an intervention that improves one aspect affect another?

Could research and interventions better reflect the realities of people's lives?

Come prepared to discuss, debate and think differently about what a successful mental health intervention should look like, and what we might miss when we consider one aspect of health in isolation.



ECR Lightning Talks

11:30– 12:30

All delegates attend

Pavilion
Suite

Session Cochairs: James Walters, Hashwin Ganesh

This session showcases Early Career Researchers selected from abstract submissions.

Each speaker will present their work for five minutes, with time for one question from the audience.



Etsubdink Gebretsadik
University of Glasgow

Why Does Bipolar Disorder So Often Co-occur with Metabolic Disease? A Genetic Perspective

Isabelle McGrath
University of Oxford

Disentangling Causal and Correlated Immune Signals in Psychiatric Disorders Using Multi-Tissue Functional Genomics

Alex Gude
Plymouth University

Beyond the Interview: Journey Mapping as a Discovery Method for Understanding Complex Emotions

Samuel P. Leighton
University of Edinburgh

Emulating a Target Trial: Antipsychotic Use for Delirium, QTc Prolongation and Mortality in the Intensive Care Unit

Rosemary Bamford
University of Exeter

Long-read transcriptome sequencing reveals isoform diversity in genes associated with severe mental illness

Clara Albiñana
University of Oxford

A Novel Molecular Measure of Circadian Misalignment is Associated with Bipolar Disorder and Depression

Lunch is served between the Tony Currie Suite and the International Suite



Parallel Session 2: Afternoon

1:30pm – 3:00pm

Select one to attend from the three parallel sessions.

Pavilion
Suite

Data Science Spotlight: MQ and DATAMIND

This session will explore the growing role of wearable technology and mental health data science in research. From smartwatches and activity trackers to continuously collected physiological and behavioural data, wearables offer new opportunities to understand mental health in real-world settings and capture changes that may not be reflected through traditional clinical assessments.



Early Career Researcher Spotlight talks

Pip Clery, University College London
Jaya Chaturvedi, King's College London
Luigi A. Moretti, UWE Bristol
Siân Bladon, University of Manchester

10 minute research talks

Aiden Doherty
Richard Dobson
Danny Smith

30 minute panel discussion

Aiden Doherty, Richard Dobson,
Danny Smith, Kerry Burley

Meet the panel



Aiden Doherty, Professor of Biomedical Informatics, University of Oxford

My team of ~20 researchers develop reproducible methods to analyse wearable sensor data in both clinical trials and very large health studies to better understand the causes and consequences of disease. Our team develops open software tools and data resources for machine learning methods to measure sleep, sedentary behaviour, physical activity behaviours and steps.

Richard Dobson,

Professor of Medical Bioinformatics,
King's College London



Danny Smith,

Chair of Psychiatry,
University of Edinburgh



Kerry Burley, Director of
'Absolutely Mental Training'

Kerry is a former teacher and lecturer who now enjoys a portfolio career. One of her many roles is as Director, where she writes and delivers issue-based mental health workshops in colleges and universities across Scotland. Kerry has a Bipolar 1 diagnosis and experience of wearable tech. and co-production of studies.



Parallel Session 2: Afternoon 1:30pm – 3:00pm

Select one to attend from the three parallel sessions.

Tony
Currie
Suite

Creativity in SMI Research

How can creativity contribute to scientific discovery and enhance mental health research across its lifecycle?

Co-led by the Complex Emotions, Brain & Genomics and ImmunoMIND Hubs

This interactive session brings together researchers and collaborators from across three Mental Health Platform hubs to showcase how creative practice is being used within severe mental illness (SMI) research, from engaging people with research and exploring lived experience, through to generating new insights and communicating complex findings to wider audiences.



Through a series of short talks, creative examples and interactive workshops, speakers will share approaches including video gameplay, creative and interactive research methods, lived-experience involvement, public engagement, and collaborations between researchers and artists.

Session leads



Katie
Hullock

Sophie
Legge



Sally
Ohlsen



Millie
Preece



Amelie
Robin





Parallel Session 2: Afternoon

1:30pm – 3:00pm

Select one to attend from the three parallel sessions.

International
Suite

From Great Science to Great Pitches: Communicating Your Research to Industry

This interactive workshop, led by Medicines Discovery Catapult, will explore what makes an effective research pitch from an industry and venture capitalist perspective.

Drawing on experience from translational drug discovery and partnership development, participants will hear from experts how different stakeholders evaluate early-stage research ideas and what makes a proposal stand out.



Watch an example research pitch presentation to evaluate

Interactive session: in groups discuss the pitch and how to improve

Ask questions of a panel of Industry leaders

This session is aimed to anyone interested in strengthening the translational potential of their research through collaboration with industry, including Early Career Researchers.

Medicines Discovery Catapult (MDC) is a Life Sciences service that reshapes drug discovery to deliver better treatments for patients. They partner with innovators across the sector, helping them turn bold scientific ideas into real-world impact.



PPIE Flash Talks and Panel

3:10– 4:00pm

All delegates attend

Pavilion
Suite

Session Chair: Andrew McIntosh

This session showcases PPIE Contributors selected from abstract submissions. Each speaker will present for five minutes.

Sarah Rae
ImmunoMIND

Embedding Lived Experience and Co-production in Industry Research

Michael McTernan
DATAMIND

Nothing About Us Without Us: Why Lived Experience Makes Better Mental Health Innovation

John Gibson, Syeda Tahir
Social Health

Partnership in Action: Collaboration and Authentic Design in the Social Health Hub

Please save questions for after the presentations.

Talks will be followed by a panel discussion with the speakers.



This session was developed by members of the MHP Steering Group and speakers were selected by a panel of people with lived experience.

Coffee is served both in the Pavilion Suite and between the Tony Currie Suite and the International Suite

Core session
4:30 – 5:20pm
All delegates attend

Pavilion
Suite

4:30pm – 5:00pm

Keynote talk: Cynthia Fu

Co-chairs: Danny Smith, Bijayalaxmi Biswal



Mind, Brain and AI: Towards Personalised and Mechanism-Based Treatments for Depression

Cynthia is Professor at Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, King's College London, at Department of Psychology, University of East London and Psychoanalyst, Member at Institute of Psychoanalysis.

She will talk about how artificial intelligence can help us make sense of the complexity of depression, linking mind, brain and clinical experience, to move towards more personalised and mechanism-based approaches to treatment.



5:00pm – 5:20pm

Prizegiving

Final reflections and closing

Andrew McIntosh



Opportunities at MHP: Follow the links for more



Collaboration & Innovation Awards

Funding Cross-Hub projects, with a creative focus.
MHP researchers. Open until 6 November 2026.



PPIE Awards

Funding Cross-Hub projects
MHP members with lived experience.



News, Blogs, Events

Learn about the latest research, meet our researchers, find out about upcoming events, and more.



MHP Partnership Fund

Flexible award for short-term, collaborative projects/activities.
MHP Early Career Researchers. Rolling application.



Industry Mentorship

Learn from the expertise of a panel of Industry mentors.
MHP researchers. Rolling application



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