MRC Mental Health Data Pathfinder Awards FAQ

Applicants and eligibility

1. What does £10m funding in mental health research grant portfolio mean?

The £10m research grant portfolio should comprise the total fund amount of current active awards in mental health research from public funders at the research organisation. This should not normally include funding from European public funders. Please contact the office to discuss further if there are any exceptional circumstances or uncertainty around funding or funders that can be included.

2. How and where should institutional mental health research funding portfolio be reported in the application form?

You may include 1 A4 page annex outlining key relevant grants and the total overall public funding awarded in mental health research at the research organisation. Please include award start and end dates. You may also highlight key relevant investments in a cover letter.

3. Is there a limit to the number of co-investigators that can be included on the application?

There is no limit to the number of co-investigators that can be included in the application. Applicants may add more rows to Section 2.2 – Co-applicants as needed.

4. Can I include Industry Partners in the application?

Industry partnerships are welcome to be included on Mental Health Data Pathfinder applications, however it is not a requirement. If Industry partners are to be included on an application, the application should include a MRC Industry Collaboration Agreement (MICA).

Other non-academic partners may also be included – for example NHS, other public organisations, charities, etc.

5. Could you please describe the requirements for consortia applications in more detail?

Research Organisations (RO) are encouraged to consider forming consortia with other ROs where appropriate. A consortia application should identify a lead research organisation and name other research organisations involved in the consortium. Consortia should demonstrate a cumulative grant portfolio of more than £10m. Consortia applications should include institutional letters of support from each research organisation within the consortium.

ROs may only lead one application. Each RO in receipt of more than £10m funding in mental health research is eligible to request up to £1.5m, through an individual institutional application or within a consortium application. A consortium application could exceed £1.5m total request provided each RO in the consortium exceeds the £10m funding threshold for mental health research.

Where relevant, individual researchers may be named co-applicants on applications that are led by a research organisation which is not their host institution. The researcher’s role in the application should be clearly defined and justified.
Case for support

6. **Can the indicative projects describe distinct, unrelated projects, or should they be coordinated?**

Indicative projects should describe examples of research or activities that would take place if funded. They may be distinct work packages or be inter-related and coordinated, but should aim to address a number of the challenges outlined in the Mental Health Data Pathfinder call.

7. **I am submitting a consortium application, made up of more than one research organisation. Can I include more than 4 indicative projects?**

No. The case for support should not normally include more than four indicative projects in total, however the projects described may be broader in scope. Although only four should be described in the application, there are no restrictions on the total number, or size, of projects that can be supported in a successful award.

Consortia applications should not exceed 12 sides of A4. Please contact the office to discuss further if there are any exceptional circumstances or uncertainty regarding indicative projects.

8. **Can I include letters of support from all research organisations in a consortium application?**

Yes. Consortia applications must include a cover letter of up to two A4 sides from the lead RO highlighting university support for the application. Additional letters of support from each additional RO in any consortium should be submitted as annexes (up to 2 A4 sides each).

9. **Which partners should I include in the Partnerships section?** *(Updated 21 December 2017)*

Applications should normally include details of up to five key partnerships that are relevant to the proposal and central the delivery of the proposed work.

Proposals are not restricted to involving only five partnerships; proposals may involve as many partnerships as relevant and needed to the proposed work. All partnerships should be listed within the application, and in exceptional circumstances, more than five partnerships can be outlined in further detail in the Partnerships section.

Partnerships are not restricted to other research organisations, and may involve NHS, government departments, public organisations, charity or industry, for example.

Letters of support from key partners, outlining their role in the proposed work, should be submitted as an annex.

Funding

10. **Are there any restrictions on how the funds can be used?**

These institutional awards can be used flexibly by the institution to support any relevant and justified activities, and should be used in such a manner as to best carry out the research. The MRC expects applications to demonstrate the maximum research impact from funding. Evaluating the success of the Mental Health Data Pathfinder awards will inform any future phases of funding related to a Mental Health Research Platform.
The total amount requested will be the MRC’s contribution; the MRC will fund the awards in full and not a percentage of the requested costs.

As part of reporting, the research organisation will be required to record all expenditure on this award (eg staff, travel and subsistence, other, indirect/estate costs) and submit a financial expenditure statement to the MRC within 3 months of the end of the award.