

[Overview](#)

1. What is the Mental Health Sustainability Programme?

The Mental Health Sustainability Programme (*the Programme*) aims to enhance the way that the VCSE sector works in partnership with the private sector to improve people's mental health and wellbeing.

This "money and minutes" Programme aims sustain and grow essential mental health services that small and medium sized voluntary and community organisations offer to the UK population.

2. Who are the Association of Mental Health Providers?

Association of Mental Health Providers (*The Association*) is the only national representative organisation for VCSE sector providers of mental health and wellbeing services in England & Wales and is the delivery partner for the Programme.

3. What other organisations are in the Mental Health Coalition?

The coalition of charities includes Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families, Association of Mental Health Providers, Centre for Mental Health, City Mental Health Alliance, Helplines Partnership, Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health First Aid, Mental Health Innovations UK, Mental Health UK, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Place2be, Samaritans, Student Minds, The Mix Charity, and Young Minds.

4. Who are the funders?

Funding for the programme has been received by private sector partners in the programme such as Goldman Sachs, Linklaters, Henry Bedford Trust and Christopher Saul Associates.

[Applications and eligibility](#)

1. What are the eligibility criteria for provider organisations to this programme?

The organisation must be a: registered charity, not for profit company limited by guarantee, CIC (Community Interest Company) or CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation).

The organisation must have an expressed purpose to support individuals living with mental health needs or illnesses, as evidenced by and stated in organisation's governing documents, as well as by a track record of previous mental health support provision.

The organisation must focus on health inequalities in communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

The organisation must have an annual revenue of between £25,000 and £2million (in last full year accounts).

The organisation must be based in England, with majority of beneficiaries in England.

2. What groups of individuals are 'disproportionately affected' by COVID-19 per your eligibility?

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic / minoritised communities, LGBTQI+, homelessness, those involved in the criminal justice system, maternal mental health, children and young people, older people, etc.

3. Will you accept applications from new organisations without annual/year-end accounts?

We want to support small-medium sized providers and therefore would welcome a phone call to discuss your sustainability and projected accounts in more detail.

Our contact information to arrange this is: mhsp@amhp.org.uk

4. How do you apply?

We are not presently open to applications but expect to welcome new provider organisations in Spring 2021. To pre-register, pending eligibility check, please email mhsp@amhp.org.uk

The Programme

1. In what areas can support be provided?

Support can be provided by our donor partners in the following areas:

Branding / Marketing, Bid Writing / Fundraising, Communications / Social Media, Finance, Governance, Human Resources, Impact / Evaluation, IT / Technical, Legal, Strategic / Business Planning, Mentoring, Website Development

There may be other ad-hoc areas where support can be provided so please speak to us about that.

2. How does it work?

Upon receipt of a completed application form, we will conduct a diagnostic phone call to uncover a little more about your organisation and its most pertinent support needs.

After this we hope to have enough information to take this opportunity to our donor partners to find a suitable volunteer. They are able to view all opportunities on our Opportunities Board.

We will match and introduce you, allowing for time to share information and updates that will support the ongoing work.

Then it is expected that the support is provided by the volunteer to the provider organisation in addressing this support need and the Association is available for ad-hoc support and reporting needs.

3. What is expected of me if I take part in the Programme?

There is a requirement to complete the application form and take part in the diagnostic phone call.

Beyond this, there is some diversity and evaluation data to capture, as well as an agreement of support – the work plan and time commitment is mutually agreed to in this document.

We expect that you will lead the delivery of the support so that your organisation is in control; and in addition, be available for supervisory calls and to undertake further monitoring of the evaluation of the Programme.

4. How are you matched?

Matching is done to ensure that both organisations take on no/mitigated risk or work with organisations that have conflicting values or aims. We also try to pay particular attention to matching with volunteers who have an interest and passion in the area of support (faith based, diagnosis specific, regional awareness etc) that the provider organisation works in.

5. Will work take place remotely?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, and likely beyond, work between the provider organisation and the volunteer will take place remotely through systems that both can access and have confidence with. This will be for individuals to decide.

6. What happens if needs change through the Programme?

We understand this is likely. We have a Supplementary Support form that you can complete for additional requests or changes to the original request, that allow us to monitor progress.

Please get in touch with hayley@amhp.org.uk if you require a copy.

7. Will I be matched with the same volunteer?

Our aim, and the commitment from our donor partners, is to ensure that your support needs are met to completion with one volunteer. Where these support needs diverge, or you have more than one area where specific expertise would be required (i.e. legal and marketing/communications) it is likely you will have separate volunteers to address each need, again until completion.

8. How long can I be supported?

Each match and support area will be different, but it is expected that the volunteer will be able to support projects through to completion whereby you will still be in touch with the Association beyond the length of your active participation.

9. What happens after I have received support through the Programme?

Membership to the Association will be offered as part of the Programme, as will the chance to be supported in other areas such as our webinar series, peer support forums and learning portal.

10. Are there other Programmes I can get involved in?

If you are looking to develop an enterprise model in your organization, it may be relevant for you to seek support through the Enterprise Development Programme, also administered by the Association.

In the case of other programmes, we can discuss this with you on a case by case basis.

Grants – Mental Health Sustainability Fund

1. Will financial support be available as part of the Programme?

The Programme will administer a micro-grants scheme where funds will be available to support the sustainability of organisations, preferably by purchasing something tangible for the organisation.

We expect that provider organisations can access greater workforce capacity and support from the 'minutes' of the Programme and they can pre-register for the minute support by emailing mhsp@amhp.org.uk

2. Why are you only launching a small grants pot?

We have had reports from organisations that they are put off by larger sums of money as they feel it goes hand in hand with a lengthier application process and greater reporting requirement.

We feel this figure balances proportionality of risk with how to connect smaller providers with money that can be used and mobilised quickly.

3. How soon will I need to spend the money?

We expect that funds are mobilised quickly and to truly support an organisation's the money should not be sat in reserves. We expect spend to be evidenced within 6 months of the award, and for the total spend to have been made within 12 months.

4. What if I want to apply for staffing costs?

Small grants, and particularly those focussed on empowering organisations to become sustainable, are not well-suited to requests to cover staffing costs. For this grant, we feel that covering ongoing workforce costs will not contribute to the longevity and impact we could have across the sector. We ask that you consider whether funding to increase your workforce would make your organisation

sustainable, and to consider alternative ways of reaching the same outcomes of sustainable service delivery when making your application. An alternative means of achieving extra capacity in workforce is to take advantage of the 'minutes' offer in the Mental Health Sustainability Programme.

5. What if my organisation was only incorporated in 2021?

We ask that organisations have "a track record of previous mental health support provision". This would be crucial to evidence for a 'younger' organisation in order to a) meet the eligibility criteria and b) show that your organisation could be made sustainable in the mental health sector with the support of this grant.

If you are able to demonstrate this, and provide projected income figures, then we may be able to accept your application, but we ask that you think carefully on this point before submitting.

6. What if we don't just support people with mental health illnesses/needs?

Mental health does not have to be your only focus - but it must be clear and explicit that it is a focus of yours. We should be able to ascertain this from your application (a track record of mental health service provision); backed by your website/Charity Commission listing etc.

It would not be suitable to say apply as provider whose service is financial advice or food bank provision where some service users have a mental health need; but are not targeted as the primary service user cohort nor seeing their mental health need directly addressed by way of access to your services.

7. What if the income of my organisation is less than £25,000?

We took on feedback from our last round and we are pleased to have removed the lower limit for an organisation's income. We hope that we will hear from more exciting organisations who are doing innovative work with communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

Whilst we will need to see that you meet all eligibility criteria (such as being registered as a not-for-profit etc) and that you can evidence how this fund will support your organisation in the long-term, these criteria apply to all interested applicants.

8. My organisation has an income of greater than £250,000 – can I still apply?

We expect demand to be high and have concentrated this fund for organisations with a turnover of less than £250,000. You would be ineligible to apply if you had an income higher than this.

9. Can I apply for this fund to support new streams of work?

The fund can go towards anything that contributes to your sustainability. If you feel that after a period of review and evaluation through the pandemic, you will expand services in a different area/delivery method/etc. then we would be happy to read your application provided all other eligibility criteria were met.

10. Can I apply to cover income we have lost because of the pandemic?

This funding is not intended to replace lost income/hardship experienced by VCSE organisations as a result of the pandemic and we cannot provide retrospective funding for projects.

11. Can I apply via alternative means? Say if I do not feel able/comfortable to complete your online, written application.

We welcome people reaching out for a conversation which we can hold on Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Through this natural conversation we will seek to gain adequate information to allow the panel to understand your application, organisation and needs as fully as it would in the written word.

Please reach out to hayley@amhp.org.uk to arrange this. Please note that we will not have capacity to offer this to everyone and so we do need to hear from you as soon as possible to meet this need and

give your application the time it deserves. The deadline will not be extended, and the Programme team can only be so flexible in arranging these kinds of appointments so please consider that when requesting adaptations.

We also have the form in Word doc format that you can request by emailing daniah@amhp.org.uk

12. Do you have enough money to give to everyone who applies?

We expect demand to be high and until we review what applications have come in, beyond the criteria as outlined, we cannot anticipate which organisations will be successful.

13. What if we have received funding from you in your December 2020 MHSP grant round?

We regret that we are not able to fund further requests from applicants successful in our December 2020 round. Please get in touch with Hayley to see about alternative means of supporting any request you wish to make at hayley@amhp.org.uk

14. How do I apply for the grants?

The application form is online this year and will be advertised in due course.

15. If successful, what monitoring requirement is there?

If your funding request is successful, we'd like to know about how it's made a difference – we will email you asking for a supporting statement on the use of the grant money, if/how it has increased the number of beneficiaries reached or your income, and any impact statements and photos that are indicative of its use.

We will not ask for financial reports or receipts on the assumption that you will spend money where it has the biggest impact on your organisation's sustainability and response to the pandemic.

We have assistance from our evaluation partner in reporting on the impact that these small grants have; we ask in our application form for information on revenue, as well as the number of beneficiaries reached. We will repeat the request for this data at later intervals to measure the impact via these two criteria. Moreover, we have a short evaluation form that aims to capture how the fund has contributed to your operations and particularly your sustainability. Completing this form is a requirement of the funding.

16. If successful, when can I expect to be paid?

Decisions will be communicated to all applicants in week of 23rd August 2021, with awards being credited to organisations in/by week commencing 6th September 2021.

There is an expectation that a signed grant agreement will be returned before funds are released and support from the awarded organisation will be needed to meet this deadline.

17. If successful, what else can I expect?

You will automatically be inducted into the Programme, gaining access to our peer support forum and webinar series as well as triage support from our Community Engagement Officer.

You will also receive membership to the Association, meaning you can add your important voice to a growing and diverse network of organisations committed to making a real difference to how mental health services are delivered. More about our membership can be found [here](#).

18. Question from our FAQ webinar: What is meant by sustainability, [particularly where this refers to] spending in a 6 month period?

For us, sustainability refers to not using this fund as a 'bandage' – it can relate to continuing to deliver online, or returning to face-to-face and putting in place adequate measures.

We are looking for costs that do not just plug a hole but allow you to continue to deliver your services long-term and that you continue to be there for your community as a service provider. Our aim is to support the sector to continue existing but also, to grow and strengthen.

19. Question from our FAQ webinar: What equips you to make case-by-case basis/discretionary decisions?

With the changing nature of the pandemic and England's response to such, means we must build in flexibility as a funder – this was a recurring piece of positive feedback we received around our approach from our December 2020 round.

We also feel our diverse grant making panel empowers us to make discretionary decisions that reach appropriate organisations, whilst allowing us to remain transparent and equitable.

20. Question from our FAQ webinar: Would this fund support [attendance of staff on training about] MHFA Awareness?

Provided you can show how you intend to use this training for the benefit of communities disproportionately affected by Covid-19, we would welcome seeing this as a cost in your application; however we may choose to connect you with MHFAE and the training through our existing relationship with them, rather than the funds at our own discretion.

21. Question from our FAQ webinar: Would this fund support [us to deliver] a programme of MHFA Awareness and MHFA 15hr course[s to other groups in the community]?

If you can show how those attending are working to support communities disproportionately affected by Covid-19, we would welcome seeing this as a cost in your application.

We would also require a breakdown of where these costs are attributed and why this makes your organisation more sustainable.

22. Question from our FAQ webinar: Can a newish CIC without accounts apply? If yes, what documents would they need to submit?

Yes, we would not need to see accounts but may ask for some evidence of constitution i.e. your Governing document. You can provide an estimate of your next year turnover. Provided you are registered and active on Companies House and/or Charity Commission, everything will need to be up to date, submitted and appropriate in order for us to award your organisation.

23. Question from our FAQ webinar: Is there a maximum amount we can apply for specifically for equipment?

The maximum amount that anyone can apply for is £5,000, so in theory you could request that whole amount for equipment costs. However, if you have specific equipment requests e.g. make/model, we may ask for justification to support the specificity of your request.

24. Question from our FAQ webinar: What is the total amount we can apply for?

The maximum you can apply for is £5,000 and the total must be broken down with item costs.

25. Question from our FAQ webinar: Can I apply for this fund if we offer a helpline service?

This funding is not open to support the delivery of helpline services – whether delivered as the sole service offer of your organisation or as one of many provisions of your support. The fund must not contribute to strands of work relate to helplines so please ensure this is explicit in your application.

This decision has been taken as we expect to be releasing funds specifically for these costs in the near future.

26. Question from our FAQ webinar: Can I apply for this fund if we offer a helpline service?

No, this is not a requirement and indeed some organisations might seek costs for the purpose of creating a website if it would increase their sustainability.

27. Question from our FAQ webinar: Do you accept consortia bids?

We are looking to support small grassroots providers and as such we will consider these applications on a case by case basis. The sustainability and impact of all the organisations in the consortia would need to be reflected in the application and all must meet the eligibility criteria (with the caveat that the consortia must have a combined turnover of less than £250,000).

28. Question from our FAQ webinar: [Can] it can be used to help the well-being of staff working at our local hospital?

We would expect that (NHS) funding received to operate from the local hospital would contribute to the well-being of staff and this fund would not support this.

This fund aims to support providers who are active and working in the community, for those disproportionately affected by Covid-19 per our eligibility criteria.

29. Question from our FAQ webinar: Can this be used to pay for staff wages? / Can the funding be used to support core costs? / Would the cost of room hire be considered?

In a hypothetical scenario where we awarded funds to cover staffing costs/room hire/other core costs; once this money ran out, there is no longevity built in (as this is a one-off small grants pot) to continue funding this cost and therefore build on your sustainability as an organisation.

Therefore, these are not appropriate costs for the fund on the basis of them not evidencing the increased impact to your organisation's sustainability.

However, if you were looking to cover a small number of hours for training staff – where staff need familiarization training on newly implemented IT systems that you expect to contribute to your sustainability as they move you from a paper system to a computer one – this would be appropriate, provided the hours were refined and proportionate.

Donors

1. How can I/my organization contribute, in money and/or minutes, to the development of the Programme?

We are grateful to all donations we receive and ask that you get in touch with us directly to speak about this.

Our contact information is: mhsp@amhp.org.uk

Other

1. How do I contact you if my question has not been answered above?

Our contact information is: mhsp@amhp.org.uk

2. How will you handle my data?

Our Privacy Notice can be seen [here](#).

3. What organisations/companies do you accept funding from?

Our Ethical Fundraising Policy can be seen [here](#).