

UNSW Faculty of Medicine & Health

Neuroscience, Mental Health & Addiction Research Theme

2024 Collaborative Research Funding: Guidelines and Application Form

**APPLICATIONS DUE:
5pm Thursday 5th October 2023**

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

Enquiries can be directed to:

Rita Zhang

Research Development Manager, UNSW Faculty of Medicine & Health

Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction Theme

E: neuro.mentalhealth.addiction@unsw.edu.au

Submitting your Application Form:

Application Form and relevant attachments must be combined into one PDF. When saving, please use the naming convention:

Application_NMHA 2024_Project Leader Surname.pdf (e.g. *Application_NMHA 2024_Smith.pdf*)

Email to neuro.mentalhealth.addiction@unsw.edu.au by 5pm on Thursday 5th October 2023.

1. Introduction and Objectives

1.1. Our Vision: *Better Health, Better Lives: Building communities free of the burden of the disorders of the brain.*

1.2. Our Mission: *To prevent, treat, cure and care for a broad range of neurological, mental health and addictive disorders by building effective networks of engaged communities undertaking collaborative research that translates into real-world solutions and improves the quality of life of those affected by those disorders.*

The UNSW Medicine & Health Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction Theme aims to address the burdens imposed by neurological, mental health, and drug and alcohol disorders. It constitutes a network of internationally recognised researchers and clinicians leading in the understanding and treatment of complex clinical conditions with physical, behavioural, mental and social dimensions across the lifespan.

The UNSW Medicine & Health Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction Theme seeks to support the initiation and development of collaborative groups that bring together research, education, and clinical partners to explore innovative strategies towards solving these critical problems.

2. Our Collaborating Partners

Our current Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction Theme collaborating partners are:

- UNSW Sydney, including:
 - Centre for Big Data Research in Health
 - Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health, including the Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA)
 - National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)
 - Rural Clinical School
 - School of Biomedical Sciences
 - School of Clinical Medicine
 - School of Health Sciences
 - School of Optometry and Vision Science
 - School of Population Health
 - UNSW Engineering
 - UNSW Psychology
- Black Dog Institute (BDI)
- Central and Eastern Primary Health Care Network (CEPHCN)
- Mindgardens Neuroscience Network (UNSW, Black Dog Institute, NeuRA and SESLHD)
- Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA)
- South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD), including Prince of Wales Hospital (PoWH), Royal Hospital for Women (RHW), SESLHD Mental Health Services and SESLHD Drug and Alcohol Services
- South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD)
- St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney
- Sydney Children's Hospital Network (SCHN)
- The Garvan Institute of Medical Research (Garvan)
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- Western Sydney University (WSU)



3. Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction

The Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction Theme is led by Theme Principal Professor Michael Farrell (NDARC) and consists of four sub-themes.

Children and Adolescent Wellbeing

- Led by Dr Iain Perkes (UNSW and Sydney Children's Hospital Network)
- Key areas of focus:
 - suicide prevention
 - prevention, identification and treatment of depression and anxiety
 - substance use and abuse
 - psychobiological risk and resilience in response to early adversity
 - mental health literacy in children and adolescents

Complex and Difficult to Treat Diseases

- Led by Professor Philip Ward, Director, Schizophrenia Research Unit, SWSLHD MHS and Professor Julia Lappin, Clinical Director, NSW Tertiary Referral Service for Psychosis, SESLHD (Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health, UNSW)
- Key areas of focus:
 - schizophrenia and related psychoses
 - bipolar disorder
 - treatment resistant depression
 - trauma related conditions
 - alcohol and drug addictions and their co-morbidities
 - behavioural change in the context of lifestyle and social adversity

Healthy Ageing

- Led by Scientia Professor Henry Brodaty, Co-Director of CHeBA (Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health, UNSW) and Professor Gerald Muench (School of Medicine, WSU and SWSLHD)
- Key areas of focus:
 - cognitive ageing (including dementia)
 - prevention and treatment of frailty, immobility and falls
 - pain management in older people
 - mental health and positive ageing
 - biology, prevention, and treatment of delirium
 - stroke prevention and treatments
 - alcohol and prescription opioids in the elderly

Brain Sciences and Translational Neuroscience

- Led by Scientia Professor Bernard Balleine (School of Psychology), Scientia Professor Nigel Lovell (School of Biomedical Engineering, UNSW) and Scientia Professor Gary Housley (School of Biomedical Sciences, UNSW)
- Key areas of focus:
 - the interface of regulation and emotion
 - executive function and decision-making
 - the mind – machine nexus
 - neural coding
 - neural therapeutics
 - neural prosthetics
 - neuromodulation and stimulation strategies

4. Funding

Funding of **\$80,000** is available to provide support for strategic projects (reviewed and awarded by a panel including members of the Executive Committee and UNSW) **led by early- to mid-career researchers** to support relevant research work. The projects must relate to at least one of the key areas of focus and will need to be approved by the Faculty of Medicine & Health to ensure they are compliant within the current UNSW research environment.

The research projects will be funded from the UNSW Faculty of Medicine & Health. All funds will be available for distribution in the second week of January 2024 and need to be spent by close of business December 2024. All funds will be administered by UNSW.

Grant funds must be spent for the primary purpose of achieving the objectives of this Seed Funding Scheme and cannot be used for indirect costs. Grants will not be renewed.

All research projects funded under the scheme will be required to provide information regarding outcomes of the project as required for reporting requests. The *Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction* Theme reserves the right to choose not to award any seed funding if applications do not meet a minimum quality.

Research projects must have potential to drive further research or clinical outcomes and should endeavour to create collaboration between multiple *Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction* Theme partners (***should ideally engage three collaborating partners***).

5. Eligibility

The Project Leader **must** be an employee at UNSW or at one of the Faculty of Medicine and Health's affiliated Medical Research Institutes:

- Black Dog Institute (BDI)
- Children's Cancer Institute Australia (CCIA)
- The Garvan Institute of Medical Research (Garvan)
- The George Institute for Global Health (TGIGH)
- The Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research
- Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA)
- Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute (VCCRI).

The Project Leader **must** be an **early- to mid-career researcher** (up to ten years post-PhD, relative to opportunity, taking into account career disruptions as defined by the NHMRC, see *Appendix A*) and can only be listed on one application as Project Leader.

The Project Team is limited to a **maximum of five Chief Investigators** (including the Project Leader) **and five Associate Investigators**.

The Project **must** be **strongly aligned to one of the sub-themes and their key areas of focus**. Your application will be assessed relative to the primary sub-theme your project is aligned with.

The Project **should ideally** engage a **minimum of three collaborating partners**. Broad engagement with health care professionals, service providers, policy makers, community and/or consumer involvement will be highly regarded.

6. Timeline

- **Funding round open:** Thursday 31 August 2023
- **Funding round close:** Thursday 5 October 2023, 5pm
- **Applicants advised of outcome:** Monday 30 October 2023
- **Project funding will be available from January and must be expended by December 2024. Projects must also be completed by December 2024.**

Information will be requested from awardees about outcomes of projects as needed for reporting purposes.

7. Application Evaluation

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed and awarded by a panel, including members of the Executive Committee and UNSW. Applications will be assessed on the following mandatory criteria:

- Alignment with the UNSW Medicine & Health *Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction* Theme vision and mission
- Alignment with one of the named sub-themes and key areas of focus
- The Project leader must be affiliated with UNSW
- The Project Leader must be an early- to mid-career researcher.

Applications will be judged on the following **criteria**:

- Potential for larger funding application
- Scientific quality
- Significance of the expected outcomes and/or innovation of the concept
- Team quality and capability – with **early and/or mid-career researcher team leadership**, with maximum of five Chief Investigators
- Engagement across Theme collaborating partners
- Engagement with clinicians and/or service providers if possible
- Potential for translational research and identified outcomes
- Co-design or community involvement as relevant.

8. Submitting an Application

The application form (pages 7 onwards, please do not submit guidelines back) must be used to complete your application. Applications should provide all requested information and not exceed the requested word limits. For Project Leader and each Chief Investigator (up to a **maximum of five Chief Investigators**, including the Project Leader), a two-page CV (maximum) is to be submitted with the application form. Only information provided in the application will form the basis of the review process.

Please combine all documents into one PDF.

When saving, please use the naming convention:

Application_NMHA 2024_Project Leader Surname.pdf (e.g. *Application_NMHA 2024_Smith.pdf*)

Email to neuro.mentalhealth.addiction@unsw.edu.au by 5pm on 5 October 2023.



APPLICATION FORM

UNSW Medicine & Health Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction Theme Application Form - PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS

1. Project Title

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2. Lay Summary

Provide a description of the project to be used for communications (maximum 300 words).

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3. Project Leader

Provide details of the individual who will lead/manage the project.

Title	<i>Choose an item.</i>	Full Name	
Employing organisation			
Other affiliations			
Work title			
Phone		Email	
Postal address			
PhD pass date	<i>Include career disruption details where relevant (see Appendix A).</i>		

4. Relevance to Primary Sub-theme and Key Area of Focus

Identify how the project aligns with one of the sub-themes and key areas of focus (maximum 200 words).

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5. Project Description

Provide a scientific description of the project aims and methods using the subheadings below (maximum 1,000 words).

1. *Background to the idea*
2. *Specific aims*
3. *Method*
 - 3.1. *Study design*
 - 3.2. *Sample and settings*
 - 3.3. *Measures*
 - 3.4. *Intervention (if applicable)*
 - 3.5. *Procedure*
 - 3.6. *Anticipated outcomes (if known)*

6. Significance

Outline how the project may improve health outcomes (maximum 300 words).

7. Capacity Building

Outline how the project will build capacity (maximum 200 words).

8. Selection Criteria

Outline how the project addresses the selection criteria as outlined in the guidelines and anticipated potential for future funding applications (maximum 300 words).

9. Project Plan

Detail the project plan from inception to completion. Where possible, include SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) and consider information dissemination (including non-traditional forms). Add rows where necessary.

Project Objective	Activity	Timeframe	Evaluation measure(s)

10. Project Budget

Provide the total funds sought (up to a maximum of \$80,000) and a breakdown of how the grant funds will be spent. Detail any new leverage investment, expected return on investment and pathway to sustainable future funding (maximum 400 words).

11. Contributions from Partner Organisation(s)

If any cash and/or in-kind contributions will be provided by the partner organisation(s), please provide details.

12. Additional Details

Is this application a scaled down version of a proposal submitted to an external agency, which has been unsuccessful?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please provide details:		

Have you submitted a similar application to any external agency, where a decision is still pending?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please provide details:		

Do you aim to subsequently apply for an externally funded research grant?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please provide details:		

Does this project require ethics approval?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, has an ethics application been approved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If this project requires ethics approval but an application has not been approved, please detail: Has an ethics application been submitted? What is the ethics approval timeline anticipated? How will your project proceed if ethics approval is delayed beyond this timeline?		

13. Project Team – Chief Investigators (please complete all fields)

Please complete for CIs in the project team (including the project lead) to a maximum of five CIs. Please confirm participation of project team members before submission.

CVs* for each CI are to be attached (no more than two pages each). *See Appendix A of this document for more details on CVs.

Copy and paste the table below for each additional CI.

Visit orcid.org for information on ORCID ID.

Name			
Email		ORCID	
Employer			
Affiliation(s)			
Role on project	Brief explanation of role on project (e.g. Project Coordinator/ Manager, Lead Clinician)		
Qualifications / Experience	2-3 sentences maximum detailing relevant qualifications and experience		

14. Project Team – Associate Investigators (please complete all fields)

Please complete for all AIs in the project team, to a maximum of five AIs. Do **not** include CVs.

Copy and paste the table below for each additional AI.

Name			
Email		ORCID	
Employer			
Affiliation(s)			
Role on project	Brief explanation of role on project (e.g. Project Coordinator/ Manager, Lead Clinician)		
Qualifications / Experience	2-3 sentences maximum detailing relevant qualifications and experience		



15. Approval and Sign-off

The Project Leader confirms that the information provided is correct and all team members have reviewed and approved the submission.

Project Lead

Full Name			
Signature		Date	

CHECKLIST FOR INVESTIGATORS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION:

Chief Investigator CVs (maximum 2 pages each) are attached

Project Lead has approved the submission on behalf of the team



Appendix A - Chief Investigator CV Template

(maximum two pages for each investigator, NHMRC track record may be used)

Career Disruption (during the last five years)

CIs may declare any relevant career disruptions in the past five years. Include the dates and nature of the career disruption, defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work due to pregnancy, parental leave, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities, equivalent to a minimum of 90 days of continuous absence.

Briefly explain the impact on your research/productivity relative to stage of career, details of additional research outputs (occurring in preceding years) that you want the reviewers to consider when assessing your application.

Indicate any invitations you were not able to accept due to the career disruption. If you had an extended career disruption starting before 2013 and ending within the last five years, please briefly explain, nominating additional research achievements for the most recent year(s) without a career disruption.

***For Project Leaders only:** can include career disruptions within the last ten years to account for eligibility as Early- to Mid-Career Researcher.*

Relative to Opportunity (during the last five years)

The applicant may provide details on any relative to opportunity considerations and the effect this has had on their research and achievements, providing a brief explanation of the type of relative to opportunity circumstance, date, and impact.

Publications

Please include selected publications, highlighting those of impact from the past five years.

Research Funding

Provide sufficient details about the funding to make clear what the funding was intended for, what you achieved and your contribution to the outcomes within these grants. Include future funding.

