

MHFA Doctoral Student Grants FY24

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Q: Where can I find more information on the different MHFA programs?

A: Please visit the Mental Health First Aid US [website](#) to learn more about our course offerings.

Q: What do the different versions of MHFA courses mean?

A: MHFA courses go through updates every few years. We are currently in the process of updating all courses to the 2.0 version.

Although many Instructors are certified to teach both Version 1.0 and 2.0 courses, there is a portion of Instructors who have not yet earned their 2.0 certification. This is something you will have to consider in your recruitment criteria if you need Instructors for your study. This cycle, only research projects which study the 2.0 versions of MHFA courses are eligible.

Q: Where can I find more information about the existing MHFA research?

A: To learn more about US-based MHFA research, please visit our the [Research and Evidence Base](#) page on our website. For those who are interested in reading more about the global evidence base, please go to MHFA International's website [here](#).

Application Questions

Q: Where can I apply for the MHFA Doctoral Student Grants program?

A: To apply, please visit [MHFA's Award Force Platform](#). Create an account to get started with your application.

Q: What are the eligibility criteria for the MHFA Doctoral Student Grants program?

A: Information about eligibility criteria can be found on our [MHFA Doctoral Student Grants](#) webpage.

Q: Do I have to be a doctoral candidate to apply?

A: We encourage all doctoral students to apply regardless of whether they have reached their candidacy phase.

Q: Do I have to be pursuing a psychology-related doctoral degree to apply?

A: No, you do not have to be pursuing a psychology-related doctoral degree. As long as you plan to conduct research on a MHFA program in the U.S. and meet all other eligibility criteria, we encourage you to apply.

Q: Can I apply for the MHFA Doctoral Student Grants program if I am a part-time student?

A: We recommend full-time students to apply because of the two-year completion timeframe once the grants are received. If you are a part-time student who has supports and resources in place that indicate feasibility of a two-year completion, we encourage you to go ahead and apply.

Q: Do I have to be an existing MHFA Instructor or Coordinator to apply?

A: No, you do not have to be a certified MHFA Instructor or Coordinator to apply. If you are awarded a grant, you may work with existing certified Instructors, or use part of your funds to become an Instructor.

Q: Can you provide samples of past proposals that were awarded?

A: We cannot provide samples of full proposals that have been awarded in the past, but if you are interested in reading a summary of our current grantee's research projects, please visit our [MHFA Doctoral Student Grants](#) webpage.

Proposal Questions

Q: Do I submit my proposal or does my university have to submit on my behalf?

A: While we require support from their university, doctoral students must be the ones to complete and submit their proposal.

Q: What information do I need to provide in the proposal?

A: The first portion of the application will ask for your research project's title, location of interest, intended population, MHFA course(s) you plan on studying, and why you are interested in researching MHFA.

The main portion of the application will ask for specific details on your proposal, which includes the background and significance of your project, your research aims, study design, study procedures, DEI considerations, data analysis plans, and dissemination plans.

Finally, you will need to attach two documents outlining your detailed timeline and budget breakdown.

Q: What types of proposals will be most competitive this cycle?

A: Priority will be given to research proposals with strong quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method designs that aim to measure the implementation, outcomes, and/or impacts of a MHFA community-specific course to [fill gaps in existing literature](#).

Although we will accept proposals on any MHFA course, including our core Adult and Youth MHFA courses, we will strongly prioritize applications around our community-specific courses this cycle. Furthermore, priority will be given to proposals that aim to measure medium to long-term impacts of MHFA training.

High-priority community-specific courses include:

- [Adult MHFA for Older Adults Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Fire/EMS Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Higher Education Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Military, Veterans, and their Families Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Rural Communities Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Public Safety Version 2.0](#)
- [Youth MHFA for Tribal Communities & Indigenous Peoples Version 2.1](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities Version 2.0](#)
- [Youth MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities Version 2.1](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Chinese-speaking Communities Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Korean-speaking Communities Version 2.0](#)
- [Adult MHFA for Khmer-speaking Communities Version 2.0](#)
- [Youth MHFA for Khmer-speaking Communities Version 2.1](#)

Q: How long does the proposal have to be?

A: Each of the longer subsections of the application listed above will either have a 250- or 500-word limit, and an application which meets all these limits can be up to 3000 words long (around 6 pages single spaced or 12 pages double spaced). Applicants should write clearly and concisely within the word limits.

Q: Do I have to include citations and references in my proposal?

A: Yes, we want our applicants to cite their sources throughout their application in APA style. There will be a separate box to submit your references, the contents of which will not go toward your word count.

Q: Who will own the data generated from funded projects?

A: The data that is collected from funded research projects will be jointly owned by the grantee's academic institution and the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

Q: Where can I find a copy of the pre- and post-evaluations that are used for the MHFA trainings?

A: If selected as a grantee, you will be able to receive both pre- and post-evaluations from our Research and Evaluation team to use for your research project.

To help you understand the constructs that are currently measured, current evaluations assess knowledge of MHFA, knowledge and beliefs about mental health and substance use, beliefs about performing MHFA actions, confidence in performing MHFA actions, and likelihood of performing MHFA actions. These sections collect quantitative data and are a blend of multiple-choice, Likert scale, and retrospective pre-post Likert scale questions. The post-evaluation also asks questions about responses to the course and Instructors. There, both qualitative and quantitative data via multiple choice, Likert scales, and open-ended comment boxes are collected.

Q: What are some things I should consider when coming up with a study design?

A: Your study design must be strongly related to your aims and objectives. Proposals which include control groups and/or randomization within its quantitative methods will be more competitive than a single group design. We also welcome rigorous qualitative methodologies as a standalone project or as an addition to the quantitative methods.

Q: What are some things I should consider when creating my budget?

A: Your budget should include information about administrative, personnel, materials, supplies, participant compensation and any other relevant considerations

If you are interested in using some of the grant funds to become a MHFA Instructor (i.e., if you want to run your own First Aider trainings), you can find Instructor training costs on our website [here](#).

If you are interested in studying First Aider trainings run by existing Instructors, you may want to build relationships with Instructors and community organizations which run MHFA trainings to establish costs. Previous grantees have made full use of their budgets by building these relationships to hold trainings at a reduced cost or at no cost.* The only mandatory line item for First Aider trainings is \$18.95 per person for materials (i.e., participant manual).

You can find organizations and Instructors that host First Aider trainings, and their prices, in our [Find-A-Course page](#) in the geographic area(s) you plan to carry out your study. Our team can also provide you with a list of Instructors that fit certain geographic/demographic criteria you are interested in after grants have been awarded.

*For reference, First Aider trainings typically range between \$0 and \$75 per person, depending on levels of subsidization from host organizations. These estimates are based on training costs which include Instructor time and materials.

Selection Process & Awards

Q: Do the grant funds go directly to the doctoral student or their academic institution?

A: The grant funds go directly to the applicant. The applicant will be required to submit a full expense report with receipts when spending down the funds for their project.

Q: When is the deadline for the grant proposals to be submitted?

A: The submission deadline is Sunday June 9th, 2024, at 11:59pm.

Q: When will 2023 doctoral grantees be announced?

A: Awardees will be notified no later than Friday June 28rd, 2024.

Q: How are doctoral grantees selected?

A: After the application deadline, a selection committee comprising of MHFA’s Research and Evaluation team and members from MHFA’s [Research Advisory Group](#) will review applications which meet the minimum eligibility requirements using a rubric. Selection committee members are randomly assigned several proposals, and at least two committee members will review each proposal. Scores from selection committee members are averaged into an applicant’s final score. Finalists who receive the highest average scores will then be invited for an interview to discuss their proposal in more depth between June 17th and June 24th, 2024. The final grantees will be notified of their acceptance no later than June 28th, 2024.

Q: What are selection committee members looking for when reviewing proposals?

A: The rubric is based on the clarity, quality, and feasibility of the responses to each of the sections within the project. Please read the instructions under each subsection of the application before you submit your proposal to ensure you receive the highest score possible.

After Receiving the Grant

Q: What should I expect after my proposal has been accepted?

A: If your proposal has been accepted, you will be invited to a kickoff meeting in July or August 2024. Afterwards, the MHFA team will begin the contracting and invoicing process with each of the grant recipients. After you have received your fully executed contract and funds, you may begin your project.

As part of the grant contract, you will be expected to:

- Participate in quarterly research calls to provide updates to the MHFA team.
- Submit a final report of research findings to the MHFA team within 2 years of receiving the grant.
- Participate in an MHFA-sponsored event highlighting research.
- Pursue a formal non-MHFA publication or presentation opportunity.