

MHFA Doctoral Student Grants FY23

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Q: Where can I find more information on the different Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) programs?

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

Q: What do the different version numbers of MHFA courses mean?

A: We update MHFA courses every few years, and we are currently in the process of updating all courses to Version 2.0. Priority will go to research projects that study the most up-to-date curricula.

Although many Instructors are certified to teach both Version 1.0 and 2.0 courses, there is a subset of Instructors who have not yet earned their Version 2.0 certification. This is something you will have to consider in your recruitment criteria if you need Instructors for your study.

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

A: To learn more about US-based MHFA research, visit the [Research and Evidence Base](#) page on [MHFA.org](#). To read about the global evidence base, visit [MHFA International](#).

Application Questions

Q: Where can I apply for the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Doctoral Student Grants program?

A: Create an account on [MHFA's Award Force platform](#) to get started with your application.

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

A: Eligibility criteria can be found on the [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 a MHFA Doctoral Student Grant if I am a part-time student?

A: We recommend that applicants be full-time students because we require grant projects to be completed within two years of receiving the grant. However, if you are a part-time student and have supports and resources in place that make a 2-year completion feasible, we encourage you to apply.

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

A: You do not have to be a certified MHFA Instructor or Coordinator to apply. If you are awarded a grant, you may use part of your funds to become an Instructor or you can find an existing Instructor to work with.

Q: Can you provide examples of past proposals that received awards?

A: We cannot provide samples of full proposals that have been awarded in the past. However, a summary of our current grantees' research projects is available on the [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 university support, doctoral students must complete and submit their own proposals.

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

A: The first portion of the application asks for your research project's title, location of interest, intended population, Mental Health First Aid (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, including 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 a detailed timeline and a budget breakdown.

Q: How long does the proposal have to be?

A: Each of the longer subsections of the application will either have a 250- or 500-word limit, and an application that meets all these limits can be up to 3,000 words long (about six pages single spaced). We encourage applicants to write as clearly and concisely as possible within the word limits.

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

A: Yes. Use APA style and cite your sources in the dedicated response box. References will not be included in your overall 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 pre- and post-evaluations from our Research and Evaluation team to use for your research project.

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 with a blend of multiple-choice, Likert scale and retrospective pre-post Likert scale questions. The post-evaluation also asks about responses to the course and Instructors, and collects qualitative and quantitative data via multiple choice, Likert scales, and open-ended comment boxes.

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

A: Your study design must be strongly related to your aims and objectives. Proposals that include control groups and/or randomization will be most competitive this year. We also welcome qualitative methodologies that complement proposals with experimental or quasi-experimental designs.

Q: What should I 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 so you can run your own First Aider trainings, you can find Instructor training costs on [MHFA.org](https://mhfa.org).

If you are interested in studying First Aider trainings run by existing Instructors, consider building relationships with MHFA Instructors and community organizations that 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 in-person First Aider trainings is \$18.95 per person for materials (e.g., participant manual).

Organizations and Instructors that host First Aider trainings, and their prices, are listed in our [Find-A-Course](#) tool; search on the geographic area(s) where you plan to carry out your study. After your grant has been awarded, our team can also provide you with a list of Instructors who comply with the geographic/demographic criteria you are interested in.

*For reference, prices for First Aider trainings typically range between \$0 and \$75 per person, depending on subsidies 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 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, May 21, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)

Q: When will 2023 doctoral grantees be announced?

A: Awardees will be notified no later than Friday, June 23, 2023.

Q: How are doctoral grantees selected?

A: After the application deadline, a selection committee made up of staff from National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Mental Health First Aid's (MHFA) Research and Evaluation team and members of MHFA's [Research Advisory Group](#) will use a rubric to evaluate applications that meet the minimum eligibility requirements.

The 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 be invited to discuss their proposal in more depth in an interview taking place between June 5 and June 9, 2023.

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 subsections within the application. Please read the instructions under each subsection of the application before you submit your proposal to ensure you receive the highest score possible.