Call for small research projects on interventions for violence, abuse and mental health

This is a call for small research projects on interventions for violence, abuse and mental health by the Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network (VAMHN). VAMHN is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

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Concept note on Interventions for Violence, Abuse and Mental Health

**Introduction**

The activities of the Violence Abuse and Mental Health Network (VAMHN) in years one and two focused on measurement and understanding respectively. Knowing how to measure violence and abuse (VA), its scale and impact, together with understanding the pathways that lead to VA and its outcomes, are foundational for prevention and intervention efforts. This is VAMHN’s focus for its third year.

Although recent years have seen a rapid increase in intervention research, there remain significant gaps in understanding ‘what works’ to prevent and respond to VA. Further, there is often a mismatch between research and practice. Firstly, some policies and interventions are delivered without strong evidence of effectiveness. Secondly, research does not always address questions that are the most pressing for practice or reflect the priorities of people with lived experience. The implication of this is that we do not have clear indication of whether interventions are wanted, whether they are accessible, and how they are experienced, nor an understanding of benefits, harms and value for money.

In our forthcoming programme of activity, we will focus on ‘interventions’ in their broadest sense. This means that we will be asking network members to think about the full spectrum of prevention and intervention, ranging for example from the role of policy in tackling key societal and community level risks for VA through to interventions that aim to support people with lived experience. Our conceptualisation of interventions includes formal and informal ways of helping, delivered in any settings, and which seek to target risk or experience at any level (i.e. population, community, professional, family or individual). We are keen to encourage thinking about settings in addition to specialist VA and health, such as education, social care and criminal justice.

Key questions that still need to be addressed by research include:

* What is the impact of strategies which aim to improve conditions at community and societal levels (e.g. financial benefits, affordable childcare, minimum alcohol pricing/other alcohol reduction strategies during lockdown, educational interventions in schools) that are associated with increased risk of VA?
* Which interventions are effective in preventing VA and its associated MH impacts?
* What forms of trauma informed care are experienced as helpful/valued by those with experiences of VA? (see below for references to papers defining trauma informed care)
* How do intersectional factors shape experiences of trauma informed care?
* Which forms of support are helpful and effective for improving mental health and welling for those people who have experienced VA?
* How are the outcomes of evidence-based mental health treatments affected when therapy is delivered in the context of current or previous experience of VA?
* How can professionals be best supported to respectfully and effectively identify and respond to VA?
* What is needed to support strengthening of the UK evidence base on prevention and intervention of VA and its impacts? This could include addressing systemic barriers to funding and conducting intervention research in this field or focus on methodological challenges such as inconsistency in outcome measurement.

These questions map to those identified as priorities for survivors. Read the network report [here](http://www.vamhn.co.uk/uploads/1/2/2/7/122741688/consultation_report_on_website.pdf).

**Small grant competition.**

This grant competition is focused on prevention and intervention and intends to address some of the questions and issues set out above. VAMHN has funds to support small research projects to advance this stream of work. The call will be launched on 8th March 2021 and will close on 2nd June 2021 at 17.00.

Topics of interest include (but are not limited to) those listed above under ‘key issues for future research'. We welcome applications for studies at any stage of intervention research, from intervention development, through pilot and evaluation, to implementation. However, the scale of the work must be commensurate with the funding available. We encourage evaluation of existing interventions including retrospective theorisation (i.e. development of theories of change), and the use of secondary data sets. Where the focus is on the development of a novel intervention there must be clear evidence that it addresses a gap in provision that cannot be appropriately filled through adaptation of existing programmes or services. All methodologies are acceptable, from systematic reviews of evidence to primary analysis of quantitative and/or qualitative data.

We anticipate funding 3-5 proposals of up to £25,000, each lasting up to a year. Successful applicants will be expected to publish their findings in a peer-reviewed scientific journal and make presentations to a future network meeting.

All applications should address how the project may proceed using remote methods should social distancing measures still be in place at the time the project commences.

Applicants may find it useful to draw on the following reviews of interventions and conceptualisation of trauma informed care to develop their proposals, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Austin, A. E., Shanahan, M. E., Barrios, Y. V., & Macy, R. J. (2019). A Systematic Review of Interventions for Women Parenting in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *20*(4), 498–519. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838017719233

El Morr, C., & Layal, M. (2020). Effectiveness of ICT-based intimate partner violence interventions: A systematic review. *BMC Public Health*, *20*(1), 1372. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09408-8

Feder, G., Ramsay, J., Dunne, D., Rose, M., Arsene, C., Norman, R., Kuntze, S., Spencer, A., Bacchus, L., Hague, G., Warburton, A., & Taket, A. (2009). How far does screening women for domestic (partner) violence in different health-care settings meet criteria for a screening programme? Systematic reviews of nine UK National Screening Committee criteria. *Health Technol Assess*, *13*(16), iii–iv, xi–xiii, 1–113, 137–347. https://doi.org/10.3310/hta13160

Hameed, M., O’Doherty, L., Gilchrist, G., Tirado-Muñoz, J., Taft, A., Chondros, P., Feder, G., Tan, M., & Hegarty, K. (2020). Psychological therapies for women who experience intimate partner violence. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, *7*. https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD013017.pub2

Jahanfar, S., Howard, L. M., & Medley, N. (2014). Interventions for preventing or reducing domestic violence against pregnant women. In *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* (Vol. 2014, Issue 11). John Wiley and Sons Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD009414.pub3

Keynejad, R. C., Hanlon, C., & Howard, L. M. (2020). Psychological interventions for common mental disorders in women experiencing intimate partner violence in low-income and middle-income countries: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, *7*(2), 173–190. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(19)30510-3

Latzman, N. E., Casanueva, C., Brinton, J., & Forman-Hoffman, V. L. (2019). The promotion of well-being among children exposed to intimate partner violence: A systematic review of interventions. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, *15*(3). https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1049

Ogbe, E., Harmon, S., van den Bergh, R., & Degomme, O. (2020). A systematic review of intimate partner violence interventions focused on improving social support and/ mental health outcomes of survivors. *PLoS ONE*, *15*(6). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235177

Rivas, C., Ramsay, J., Sadowski, L., Davidson, L. L., Dunne, D., Eldridge, S., Hegarty, K., Taft, A., & Feder, G. (2015). Advocacy interventions to reduce or eliminate violence and promote the physical and psychosocial well-being of women who experience intimate partner abuse. In *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* (Vol. 2015, Issue 12). John Wiley and Sons Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD005043.pub3

Sweeney, A., Clement, S., Filson, B., & Kennedy, A. (2016). Trauma-informed mental healthcare in the UK: What is it and how can we further its development? *Mental Health Review Journal*, *21*(3), 174–192. https://doi.org/10.1108/MHRJ-01-2015-0006

Sweeney, A., Filson, B., Kennedy, A., Collinson, L., & Gillard, S. (2018). A paradigm shift: relationships in trauma-informed mental health services. *BJPsych Advances*, *24*(5), 319–333. https://doi.org/10.1192/bja.2018.29

Turner, W., Broad, J., Drinkwater, J., Firth, A., Hester, M., Stanley, N., Szilassy, E., & Feder, G. (2015). Interventions to Improve the Response of Professionals to Children Exposed to Domestic Violence and Abuse: A Systematic Review. *Child Abuse Review*, n/a-n/a. https://doi.org/10.1002/car.2385

**Co-production with, and involvement of people with lived experience**

We expect the meaningful involvement of survivors and third sector organisations within all applications, and for their time to be appropriately costed. For guidance on minimum fee and expenses payments for survivors and third sector organisations, please refer to the guidance [here](https://www.invo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CCF_Public_Payment_Guide.pdf).

In developing their proposals, we expect applicants to explicitly draw on NSUN’s [4Pi National Involvement Standards](https://www.nsun.org.uk/4pi-involvement-standards) to explain how people with lived experience have been involved in development of the application, and will be subsequently involved in undertaking the work and disseminating the results.   
  
The framework has five key metrics:

* **Principles** – the underlying values of the project
* **Purpose** – the reasons *why* people with lived experience are being involved.
* **Presence** – *who* is being involved, and crucially at what level?
* **Process** – *how* people are involved in terms of communication, emotional and administrative support, training, and pay.
* **Impact** – *what difference* did involvement have on the outcomes of the project, and how is that difference being measured?

Applicants should consider each of these metrics when designing and developing their application. For a more detailed exploration of each metric, and some useful questions to ask during the development process, you can read NSUN’s executive summary [here](https://www.nsun.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e1c3cfa4-c32e-47ff-8795-c45f523458c1).

VAMHN offers a range of support to prospective applicants in relation to involvement plans:

* **Connecting service**We recognise that people with lived experience and researchers are not always well linked. To help with this, both parties will be able to advertise ideas for research or requests/offers of involvement on a dedicated page on the Network’s Basecamp. To request an invitation to the VAMHN Basecamp page please contact [vamhn@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk).
* **Webinars with the Network’s Lived Experience Advisory Group**The Network’s Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) will host a webinar early in the grant call, outlining their experiences of involvement in research and their views on good practice. There will be an opportunity for an interactive Q&A session and to book a 15-minute slot to talk through your involvement ideas with the group. Date TBC.
* **New scoring criteria**Scoring criteria for applications have been expanded to include three separate criteria reflecting involvement of those with lived experience in developing the application, and plans for their involvement in conducting the research and dissemination of the results. These criteria offer extra structure to help you better plan the role of lived experience involvement in your work. Please see our “frequently asked questions” for details of our scoring criteria. Please note applications will not progress to review at the funding panel if they score poorly (3 or below) on any of the involvement criteria.
* **Ongoing consultation and support for award holders**For award holders, midpoint consultation with the LEAG and other network members will be strongly encouraged to discuss progress, challenges and potential solutions regarding the involvement of those with lived experience in their project.

**Programme of webinars**

The following activities are planned within the Network to contribute to the interventions stream.

* A webinar on challenges and barriers to interventions (date TBC).
* A webinar on trauma informed interventions (date TBC).
* A webinar on technology and domestic abuse (date TBC).
* A network meeting on 8th March 2021 which will mark the launch of the interventions stream grant call. The meeting will also feature a keynote speech from Dr Emma Howarth, networking breakout sessions and updates on the network’s activities. A second network meeting will take place in October 2021 (date TBC).

Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network:

Small Grants Terms of Reference

The Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network (VAMHN) will be hosting three calls for applications for small grants to support research in specific areas, to address identified gaps in knowledge, and to improve the knowledge-base in areas of new challenge or changing policy and practice. The grants can be used to deliver a targeted piece of research or to pump-prime larger projects.

Each of the three calls (one per year) will be themed: measurement; understanding and intervention.

Grants are available up to a maximum of £25,000 (including indirect and estate costs) and grant-funded projects should be delivered within 12 months. All grant holders will be required to deliver a final report of 5,000 words within 3 months of the end of the project (detailing the key findings of the project and the impact/expected impact of the research for the knowledge-base, policy and practice in the areas of mental health and domestic and sexual violence); present the outcomes of the research at a VAMHN conference, workshop, or network meeting; and submit the research outcomes to a peer-reviewed academic/including practitioner journal preferably accompanied by a lived experience commentary. Where applicable, grant holders will formally deposit data generated by the research project with a responsible data repository (e.g. the UK Data Service) and will provide metadata for resource discovery to the UK Data Service and to the network PI within three months of the end of their grants.

The Principal Investigator must hold a position in a UK University (or other HEI) or at a recognised ESRC Independent Research Organisation. Collaborative teams across academia, policy, practice and the third sector, including substantive input from victims/survivors as coproducers of the research, are welcome. We also welcome applications from research teams which include an early career researcher in a substantive position. All applications should demonstrate meaningful involvement of the third sector and those with lived experience.

There are a number of resources available for engaging members of third sector organisations effectively and for engaging those with lived experience in coproduction in meaningful, non-exploitative ways. We strongly encourage applicants to refer to these resources, including for example:

* The VAMHN *Survivor’s priority themes and questions for research: consultation report* available at: <https://www.vamhn.co.uk/uploads/1/2/2/7/122741688/consultation_report_on_website.pdf>
* The National Survivor User Network (NSUN) *4Pi National Involvement* *Standards* available at: <https://www.nsun.org.uk/4pi-involvement-standards>
* *Turning Pain into Power: A Charter for Organisations Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research and Service Development* available at <http://survivorsvoices.org/charter/>
* NIHR Central Commissioning Facility Reward and recognition for public contributors: A guide to the payment of fees and expenses available at:

<https://www.invo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CCF_Public_Payment_Guide.pdf>

* Podcast: Engaging with the voluntary and community sector - Emerging Minds available at: <https://emergingminds.org.uk/podcast-engaging-with-the-voluntary-and-community-sector/>

**The** **application pack** to apply for these small grants will include (i) your application form (details below), (ii) appended CVs for the principal investigator (PI) and each co-investigator (Co-I), and (iii) your budget form. All application documents can be found at<https://www.vamhn.co.uk/grant-competitions.html>.

**The application form** for these small grants will include the following:

* Covering page which includes:
  + Names and organisations of the PI and Co-I’s.
  + The role the PI and Co-I’s will have in the project
* A research proposal (maximum 3,000 words)
  + Introduction – why the project meets the terms of the call and is relevant and timely in the field of mental health and domestic and sexual violence
  + Aim/s of the research and anticipated impact
  + Research question/s
  + Methodology
  + Involvement of individuals with lived experience (in the development of the proposal, in the management/conduct of the project, and in the dissemination of the findings)
  + Ethical considerations and data management (see appendix one)
  + Timeline of activity
  + Expected outcomes in terms of publications and other forms of public dissemination
* One page CV for the PI and each Co-I
* Budget form detailing the financial breakdown of all funds

Applications will be assessed by the Governance Committee (Prof. Fazel, Prof. Walby, Prof Howard/Dr Oram, Dr Fisher), theme coordinators (Dr Howarth, Dr Tanczer, Dr Thiara, Dr Sweeney); the VAMHN Lived Experience Coordinator (Lisa Ward), and at least three additional individuals with lived experience. An external assessor will also attend the grant panel meeting where the award decisions will be made to provide an independent check of quality.

Additional guidance around developing a proposal and delivering a project given the current uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic is provided below in Appendix Two.

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**Appendix One: Ethics and Data Management**

Note that all research involving human participants must comply with all relevant legislation and we require that all relevant ethics committee approvals, risk assessments, and regulatory requirements (including the General Data Protection Regulation; GDPR) are met for all small grants funded through the network plus activities. These approvals must be confirmed before any funds can be released.

Any research conducted or funded as part of the VAMHN small grants scheme is required to be compliant with the following:

(a) Safeguarding the anonymity of participants in recorded and reported data: Participants' data should be recorded using a coded identifier which is only matched to their identity via a separate file that is separately password protected and encrypted. Study protocols should recognise the risk of participants being identified by readers triangulating information and include strategies to prevent this.

(b) Ensuring freedom to refuse consent and securing informed consent: Data should be collected purely on the basis of having received informed consent when engaging with humans. Limits to confidentiality will be clearly stated and reporting obligations explained. Participants must have multiple opportunities to withdraw consent throughout any arising research processes. If participants choose to withdraw from the research, all of the person's data must be deleted.

(c) Lone working: Any situation where a researcher is likely to be left alone with participants must be avoided, wherever possible. Where this is not possible for practical reasons, a safety and lone working protocol must be used which ensures the safety of involved staff members and participants.

(d) Counselling: Due to the sensitive nature of the research and to prevent re-traumatisation of victims of violence and abuse as well as researchers, principal investigators must provide participants and staff members with appropriate contact points to seek support and counselling.

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**Appendix Two: Additional Guidance – COVID-19**

## **Project timeline**

Given the current uncertainty around the COVID-19 outbreak and when it will be possible to ease social distancing restrictions in different settings there is flexibility in the timeline for delivering funded projects. Applicants should indicate a proposed start date and project duration on the application form. The earliest proposed project start date should be 1st November 2021 and the latest possible start date is 1st January 2022. The start date and project duration will be discussed with successful applicants and may be revised based on changing circumstances. While projects will ideally be up to 12 months duration, if there are delays due to COVID-19 restrictions, extensions may be granted.

## **Involving people with lived experience of violence, abuse, and mental health problems in developing your application**

COVID-19 and social distancing may make involving people with lived experience in developing your proposal more challenging than it would be at other times. VAMHN recognise this, but still want applicants to demonstrate that survivors and their views have been meaningfully involved in developing the proposal and provision is made for them to be involved in managing or conducting the research and be engaged in dissemination of the findings. People with lived experience of violence, abuse and mental health problems will be involved in assessing applications.

Some ideas that you might want to consider and provide details about in your application:

* Has the project proposal been informed by previous research that focuses on the views and priorities of people with lived experience of violence, abuse, and mental health problems? This could be academic research or grey literature. You can find a copy of our consultation on survivors’ priority themes and questions for research here: [https://www.vamhn.co.uk/uploads/1/2/2/7/122741688/consultation\_report\_on\_website.pdf](about:blank)
* Have you discussed your research proposal with people with lived experience of violence, abuse, and mental health problems? Ideally, this would be people who would be involved in the project, if funded, but we understand that this may not be possible. Please remember that many people are working at reduced capacity because of COVID-19 and to leave plenty of time for this.
* We recognise that people with lived experience and researchers are not always well linked. To help with this both parties will be able to advertise ideas for research or requests/offers of involvement on the VAMHN Basecamp page. To request an invitation to join the Basecamp page please email vamhn@kcl.ac.uk.
* If you have tried to involve people with lived experience in developing your application and it has not been possible, you can explain what you have tried and the reasons why this was not successful.

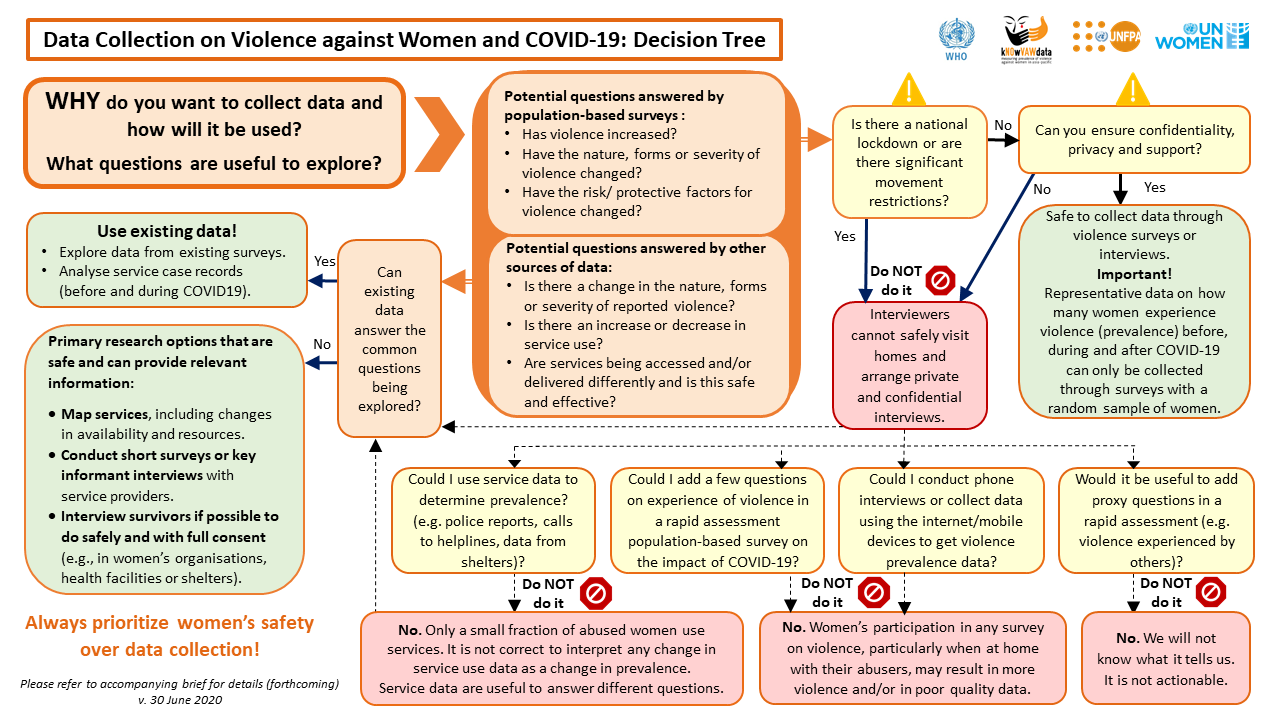
**Involving people with lived experience of violence, abuse, and mental health problems in the conduct and management of research**

Social distancing restrictions may make it more difficult to work with people with lived experience of violence, abuse, and mental health problems, particularly those who find remote or online interaction difficult, or who have been negatively impacted by social distancing and isolation measures. It is unclear how long some restrictions may last and how this may impact plans for future research.

Here are some things to consider when developing your application and thinking about how people with lived experience will be involved in your project, as investigators, advisors, or participants:

* Think through the advantages and disadvantages of both face-to-face and online options in advance. Focus your application on your preferred method of delivering the project but include details of how this could be adapted if social distancing measures are still in place. Where possible, speak to people with lived experience about the challenges and how these might be overcome.
* If you are working with people who may find remote interaction difficult, for example due to language or communication difficulties, consider being flexible with the start date for the project.
* Think about the potential benefits of using online tools for engagement.
* Consider using some of your budget to provide training for people with lived experience involved in the project to support them to engage effectively online, or for people with lived experience to work with the research team to develop effective approaches to communication that work for everyone.
* Access to internet or digital technology should not be a barrier to the participation of people with lived experience. Funding can be used to cover participation costs, which may include equipment, payments, or support to access digital technology. These costs should be included in the budget as participation costs rather than equipment.

**Collecting data on violence and abuse during COVID-19**

VAMHN recognise that collecting data on violence and abuse during COVID-19 may place people at risk: safety must always be prioritised over data collection. When developing your proposal, please refer to the flowchart below, which provides a guide to the types of data collection on violence and abuse that are possible and ethical during social isolation and distancing measures.

*WHO, UN Women, UNFPA, and kNOwVAW Data Initiative (2020).*

**2021 Small Grant Call: Interventions**

The small grant call will launch on 8th March 2021 and will go live on the VAMHN website at <https://www.vamhn.co.uk/grant-competitions.html>.

Applicants might want to consider addressing some of the key issues in the field, currently requiring further research, including those listed in the concept note (see page 2).

The closing date for applications is **2nd June 2021 at 5pm**. Applicants are expected to be notified of funding decisions by **6th August 2021**. The earliest proposed project start date should be **1st November 2021** and the latest start date should be **1st January 2022.** Applications should be sent to: [vamhn@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk) with the email header ‘*NAME OF PI* - Small grant application: Intervention’.

**The application** pack to apply for these small grants will include (i) your application form (details below); (ii) appended one-page CVs for the principal investigator (PI) and each co-investigator (Co-I); and (iii) your budget form. All application documents can be found at<https://www.vamhn.co.uk/grant-competitions.html>.

**The application form** for a small grant as part of the ***2021 Interventions*** theme will include the following:

* Covering page which includes:
  + Names and organisations of the PI and Co-I’s.
  + The role the PI and Co-I’s will have in the project.
* A research proposal (maximum 3,000 words)
  + Introduction – why the project meets the terms of the call and is relevant and timely in the field of mental health and domestic and sexual violence
  + Aim/s of the research and anticipated impact
  + Research question/s
  + Methodology
  + Involvement of individuals with lived experience (in the development of the proposal, in the management/conduct of the project, and in the dissemination of the findings)
  + Ethical considerations and data management (see appendix one)
  + Timeline of activity
  + Expected outcomes in publications and other forms of public dissemination
* One page CV for the PI and each Co-I
* Budget form detailing the financial breakdown of all funds (using the template provided at <https://www.vamhn.co.uk/grant-competitions.html>)

Academic enquires about the 2021 call should be directed to: Dr Emma Howarth at [E.Howarth@uel.ac.uk](mailto:E.Howarth@uel.ac.uk). Enquiries about the application process should be directed to [vamhn@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk).

Applications will be assessed by the Governance Committee (Prof. Fazel, Prof. Walby, Prof Howard/Dr Oram, Dr Fisher), theme coordinators (Dr Howarth, Dr Tanczer, Dr Thiara, Dr Sweeney); the VAMHN Lived Experience Coordinator (Lisa Ward), and at least three additional individuals with lived experience. An external assessor will also attend the grant panel meeting where the award decisions will be made to provide an independent check of quality.

# Small Grants Competition Frequently Asked Questions:

1. **Does my proposal fall within the remit of VAMHN? How do I find out?**

Proposals should fall under the theme of the funding call. The three themes of the network are measurement, understanding, and intervention. For more details on each of the funding calls, as well as guidance on some key issues you may want to address, please see the concept note (page 2) and terms of reference (page 7).

1. **Who is eligible to apply for the grants?**

Applications from UK HEIs or recognised ESRC Independent Research Organisations (IROs) in collaboration with non-academic bodies, charities, third sector organisations and other relevant agencies are welcome to apply. Projects co-led by a HEI or IRO in partnership with non-academic groupings are also strongly encouraged, however, due to UKRI funding requirements, funding may only be transferred to the HEI partner/IRO partner. Therefore, the named PI must be based at a UK HEI or ESRC IRO. We require that the co-applicant team be multi-disciplinary and welcome the inclusion of early career researchers and those with lived experience as co-applicants. We expect the meaningful involvement of non-academics and people with lived experience of violence, abuse and mental health problems, and for their time to be costed accordingly (see questions 6 and 7).

1. **Do I need to be employed on a permanent contract to be eligible for a VAMHN research grant?**

Principal applicants do not need to have a permanent post, but they must have an existing contract at the time of application that covers the duration of the award period. Individuals not affiliated to an organisation may be included as consultants.

1. **Am I eligible for funding if I haven’t completed an EdD or PhD?**

Principal and co-applicants are not required to hold an EdD or a PhD. A one-page CV must be submitted for all applicants which should demonstrate their relevant skills and experience.

1. **How does the VAMHN define an “early career researcher”?**

The VAMHN uses the AHRC’s formal definition of an ECR: an individual who is within eight years of the award of their PhD or equivalent professional training, or an individual who is within six years of their first academic appointment. These durations exclude any period of career break, e.g. for family care or health reasons. The ‘first academic appointment’ is defined as the first paid contract of employment, either full-time or part-time, which lists research and/or teaching as the primary functions. We consider the date shown on the PhD certificate to be the PhD award date.

1. **What are VAMHN’s expectations regarding third sector involvement?**

We expect all applications to demonstrate meaningful involvement of the third sector, and for the time of third sector organisations or representatives to be appropriately costed. Costing should be shown in both the application form and the budget spreadsheet. For guidance on appropriate compensation for third sector involvement, please see the *NIHR Central Commissioning Facility Reward and recognition for public contributors: A guide to the payment of fees and expenses* document available [here](https://www.invo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CCF_Public_Payment_Guide.pdf).

1. **What are VAMHN’s expectations regarding lived experience involvement?**

All applications should involve people with lived experience wherever possible and we strongly encourage them to be meaningfully involved in the development of the proposal, the management or conduct of the research, as well as engaged in the dissemination of the findings. Applicants must ensure that individuals with lived experience are appropriately costed for their time. This should be shown in both the application form and the budget spreadsheet. For guidance on budgeting for lived experience involvement, please see the *NIHR Central Commissioning Facility Reward and recognition for public contributors: A guide to the payment of fees and expenses* document available [here](https://www.invo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CCF_Public_Payment_Guide.pdf). For guidance on engaging people with lived experience of violence and abuse in research, please see The Charter for Engaging Survivors by Survivors’ Voices, available [here](https://survivorsvoices.org/charter/).

1. **What should I include in the application?**

Along with the research proposal, a financial breakdown of all funds requested must be provided, as well as a one-page CV for the PI and each Co-I.

1. **What funding model is being used?**

All projects must be costed at 100% full economic cost (FEC). Consistent with UKRI funding guidelines, the proportion of total project costs that will be covered by VAMHN is dependent on the type of organisation:

* HEIs - VAMHN will cover 80% of the total project cost (consistent with UKRI research funding guidelines). To put this simply, if you were to apply for £100, you would be funded £80 of that and would be expected to contribute £20 from your organisation and/or relevant partner(s). Please bear this in mind when you are costing your project. Therefore, to attain the maximum available funding of £25,000 at 80% funding, your permitted project costs at 100% FEC would be £31,250.
* Independent research organisations (IROs) – VAMHN will cover 80% of the total project cost (consistent with UKRI research funding guidelines). However, if you are from one of the following IROs then VAMHN will cover 86% of the total project cost:
  + The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)
  + The Institute for Development Studies (IDS)
  + The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR)
  + National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)

All other IROs will be covered at 80%. More guidance on organisations eligible to apply for funding can be found at: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>

* Businesses, third sector organisations, and government bodies – VAMHN will cover 100% of justified costs for these types of co-applicants. Businesses and government bodies may not claim overheads or other indirect costs.

The combined costs for co-investigators from outside the UK, UK business, third sector and government bodies must not exceed 30% of the total FEC of the grant application.

When completing the application form, the form must clearly show which costs will be incurred by UK HEIs and which will be incurred by partners in business, the third sector, or government bodies. We have provided a budget template which should help you to calculate the relevant costs for the project. If you are from one of the IROs listed above that are covered at 86% FEC, please email [vamhn@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk) to ask for a separate budget sheet. Please liaise with your Research Grants or Finance Office to calculate the FEC costs for inclusion in the budget sheet.

More information about funding can be found in the ESRC’s Research Funding Guide here: <https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/>

1. **What is the maximum award value?**

The maximum available award is £25,000. Total permitted project costs will vary depending on the combination of HEI and non-HEI costs included but may not exceed £31,250 (which at 80% funding, is £25,000).

1. **What are eligible costs?**

Funding may be sought to cover the direct expenses incurred in planning, conducting, and developing the project, including:

* Investigator’s time (i.e. the costs of principal and co-investigators working directly on a project). Directly allocated costs are eligible for funding but do not have to be included; applicants are encouraged to think about value for money and what can be delivered within the framework of this grant.
* Short-term consultancy or salary costs for expert staff (include VAT unless consultant is VAT exempt), or short periods of research assistance;
* Lived experience coproduction and/or involvement costs;
* Research expenses, including participant reimbursement, transcription.
* Small equipment, facility use, and data/software purchases (i.e. less than £10,000);
* Travel and subsistence costs (other than alcoholic drinks);
* Meeting and workshop costs (other than alcoholic drinks);
* Other consumables, unless excluded below.

Overhead and other indirect costs may be claimed by HEIs and third sector organisations.

The following items are not eligible for funding:

* Student stipends or fees;
* Large equipment purchases (i.e. in excess of £10,000);
* Books and other permanent resources;
* Article processing charges (APCs) and other publication charges relating to peer-reviewed research articles and conference proceedings;
* Conference attendance.

1. **Can I submit more than 1 application?**

Individuals may submit only one application as principal investigator to each grant call but may be listed as co-investigators on multiple proposals.

1. **When can I apply?**

The small grant call launches on 8th March 2021. The deadline for applications is the 2nd June 2021 at 5pm.

1. **How should applications be submitted?**

Applications should be sent to [vamhn@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk) with the email header *‘NAME OF PI-Small grant application: Intervention’*. Please ensure you attach copies of (i) your application form (with appended CVs for principal and co-investigators), and (ii) your budget form. Forms can be downloaded from <https://www.vamhn.co.uk/grant-competitions.html>.

1. **Who should I contact if I have an enquiry?**

For academic enquiries about the grant call, please contact Dr Emma Howarth at [E.Howarth@uel.ac.uk](mailto:E.Howarth@uel.ac.uk). For enquiries about the application process please contact [vamhn@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk)

1. **What happens to my proposal once I have submitted it?**

Applications will be independently assessed by a panel comprised of: Prof Sylvia Walby; Prof Seena Fazel, Dr Emma Haworth, Dr Leonie Tanczer, Dr Ravi Thiara, Dr Angela Sweeney, Prof Louise Howard/Dr Sian Oram, Dr Helen Fisher, the VAMHN Lived Experience Coordinator (Lisa Ward), plus at least three additional individuals with lived experience. An external assessor will also attend the grant panel meeting where the award decisions will be made to provide an independent check of quality.

1. **How will my proposal be scored by assessors?**

VAMHN follows the 6 point scoring system used by UKRI:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Score | Description |
| 6 | The proposal is outstanding in terms of its potential scientific merit |
| 5 | The proposal is excellent in terms of its potential scientific merit |
| 4 | The proposal is important as it has considerable potential merit |
| 3 | The proposal has significant potential scientific merit but is not of a consistently high quality |
| 2 | The proposal will add to understanding and is worthy of support but is of lesser quality or urgency than more highly rated proposals. Such proposals are unlikely to have a significant influence on the development of the research area. |
| 1 | The proposal is flawed in its scientific approach, or is repetitious of other work, or otherwise judged not worth pursuing; or which, though possibly having sound objectives, appears seriously defective in is methodology. |
| 0 | Not able to assess (including due to falling outside of the remit of the call). |

1. **What are the assessment criteria?**

Proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria, scored on a scale from 0-6.

* Originality and potential contribution to knowledge
* Scientific quality
* Value for money
* Level of involvement of users/survivors in the development of the application\*
* Effectiveness of plans for involving users/survivors in conducting/managing the research project\*
* Effectiveness of plans for engaging users/survivors in the dissemination of the findings\*
* Outputs, dissemination, and impact
* Cross-disciplinarity

\* Applications must score 4 or more on each of these three lived experience involvement criteria to progress to review at the funding panel meeting.

1. **What are the outcomes following panel review?**

Outcomes are (1) approval - a proposal is deemed satisfactory for approval and will subsequently receive funding. (2) rejection – a proposal does not score sufficiently against the assessment criteria to merit the approval of the panel or is not deemed competitive relative to other proposals. The panel’s decision is final.

1. **How long will I have to wait for a decision on my proposal?**

Decisions on funding will be provided by 6th August 2021. The earliest proposed project start date should be 1st November 2021. The latest proposed project start date should be 1st January 2022.

1. **Can I expect feedback on my proposal?**

The panel will aim to provide general feedback on proposals.

1. **How many grants are you likely to award in each round?**

We anticipate funding 3-5 proposals of up to £25,000 in each round.

Additional guidance around developing a proposal and delivering a project given the current uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic is provided in Appendix Two of the Terms of Reference (see pages 9-11).



# **VAMHN Funding Application:**

Before completing this application form, you should read the guidance notes. You must NOT alter any of the formatting for this application form.

# Section 1: Application details

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project Title | | | |
|  | | | |
| Proposed start date: | | **Proposed duration (max. 12 months) :** | |
|  | |  | |
| Total cost of proposal at 100% FEC: | | **Total cost requested from VAMHN (max £25,000):** | |
|  | |  | |
| Organisation where the grant would be held | | | |
|  | | | |
| Principal Applicant |  | | |
| Full name |  | | |
| Position |  | | |
| Do you consider yourself to be an Early Career Researcher? | Yes  No | | If yes, please provide the date you were awarded your PhD (dd/mm/yy): |
| Organisation |  | | |
| Division / Department |  | | |
| Email address |  | | |
| Telephone number |  | | |
| Full postal address |  | | |
| Discipline |  | | |
| Co-applicant (please leave blank if irrelevant) | | | |
| Full name |  | | |
| Position |  | | |
| Do you consider yourself to be an Early Career Researcher? | Yes  No | | If yes, please provide the date you were awarded your PhD (dd/mm/yy): |
| Organisation |  | | |
| Division / Department |  | | |
| Email address |  | | |
| Role in / contribution to the proposed project: |  | | |
| Discipline |  | | |
| Co-applicant (please leave blank if irrelevant) | | | |
| Full name |  | | |
| Position |  | | |
| Do you consider yourself to be an Early Career Researcher? | Yes  No | | If yes, please provide the date you were awarded your PhD (dd/mm/yy): |
| Organisation |  | | |
| Division / Department |  | | |
| Email address |  | | |
| Role in / contribution to the proposed project: |  | | |
| Discipline |  | | |
| Co-applicant (please leave blank if irrelevant) | | | |
| Full name |  | | |
| Position |  | | |
| Do you consider yourself to be an Early Career Researcher? | Yes  No | | If yes, please provide the date you were awarded your PhD (dd/mm/yy): |
| Organisation |  | | |
| Division / Department |  | | |
| Email address |  | | |
| Role in / contribution to the proposed project: |  | | |
| Discipline |  | | |
| Co-applicant (please leave blank if irrelevant) | | | |
| Full name |  | | |
| Position |  | | |
| Do you consider yourself to be an Early Career Researcher? | Yes  No | | If yes, please provide the date you were awarded your PhD (dd/mm/yy): |
| Organisation |  | | |
| Division / Department |  | | |
| Email address |  | | |
| Role in / contribution to the proposed project: |  | | |
| Discipline |  | | |

If there are additional co-applicants, please list.

## Section 2: Research Proposal

|  |
| --- |
| Research proposal (max. 3,000 words not including references) – Please note that applications exceeding this word limit will be disqualified.  Your proposal should include   * Introduction – why the project meets the terms of the call and is relevant and timely in the field of mental health and domestic and sexual violence. * Aim/s of the research and anticipated impact * Research question/s * Methodology * Involvement of individuals with lived experience (in the development of the proposal and in the management/conduct of the project, and in dissemination of the findings) * Ethical considerations and data management * Timeline of activity * Expected outcomes in terms of publications and other forms of public dissemination |
|  |
| Justification of costs  Please provide a brief summary and justification of all the costs requested [up to 500 words]. Please note that you must also submit a budget breakdown, using the budget spreadsheet available at [https://www.vamhn.co.uk/grant-competitions.html] in order for your application to be valid. |
|  |

# **Section 3:** Please include a CV for the principal applicant and co-applicants. The CVs should be appended to the end of this document. CVs must NOT be sent as separate files. Each CV should be no longer than 1 page.

**Once all 3 sections have been completed, please attach your application form and a copy of your budget and email to** [**vamhn@kcl.ac.uk**](mailto:vamhn@kcl.ac.uk) **with the email header ‘*NAME OF PI* - Small grant application: Intervention’.**