



International Alliance of Mental Health Research Funders

Terms of Reference

Purpose

International collaboration is the key to improving the impact of funding for mental health research worldwide. The purpose of the International Alliance of Mental Health Research Funders (IAMHRF) is to act as a forum that unites funders (Members) across borders and thereby:

- Help Members make strategic research investments to improve treatments and care for people with mental health problems and their families;
- Encourage research funding that balances support for projects that address the current burden of mental health challenges and those aimed at long-term development of scientific knowledge and potential cures;
- Foster collaboration on national and international initiatives between Members, many of whom are meeting each other for the first time through the IAMHRF;
- Provide a platform for an international conversation on mental health research funding. The IAMHRF is the only forum where mental health research funders from around the world can discuss key topics, shared opportunities and challenges in the sector;
- Speed up progress and avoid reinventing the wheel through knowledge exchange and the chance to align research agendas;
- Break down silos and encourage Members to look at mental health research funding from a global perspective;
- Unite Members through working groups to develop specific topics of interest to funders (e.g. Common Measures, Lived Experience, etc.)
- Carry out special projects relevant to global mental health and research funding communities.

The ultimate goal of all IAMHRF activities is to commit to better outcomes for people with mental health problems and families by contributing to the development of a strategic global mental health research agenda.

Governance

The IAMHRF is governed by the IAMHRF Steering Committee (ISC) which is responsible for

- Making decisions about the strategic direction of the IAMHRF;
- Evaluating and approving new working groups and projects;
- Evaluating and approving new Members.

The ISC consists of 5-8 Representatives, each serving on behalf of an IAMHRF Member (Representatives), and is chaired by the Executive Director (ED) of the IAMHRF.



The ISC includes at least one Representative with lived experience (LE) to help guide the strategic direction of the IAMHRF and the decisions made by the ISC. The LE Representative does not serve on behalf of an IAMHRF Member and is compensated on an equity basis based on skills, experience and employment situation.

The ISC seeks consensus in all of its decisions, but if a consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made by a simple majority roll call vote by the Representatives who are present and who have a voting right. Voting right is limited to Representatives serving on behalf of a public or private research funding organization, excluding industry and companies. Quorum is four Representatives. The composition of the ISC reflects individual IAMHRF members' interest and engagement in decision-making and is intended to encompass geographically and culturally diverse perspectives on mental health research funding. Should a Representative on the ISC find themselves in a position where they have a potential conflict of interest, the Representative must disclose that conflict of interest to the ISC and manage it appropriately.

The ISC meets at least four times a year with one face-to-face meeting in conjunction with the annual conference. A draft agenda, based on proposals from Representatives, is circulated to the ISC one week prior to the ISC meeting. Any Representative may add items to the agenda. At the beginning of each ISC meeting, Representatives vote to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

The IAMHRF Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) is composed of 3-5 independent advisors with in-depth knowledge and expertise on global health and international networks, research funding, international philanthropy, and non-profit strategy. It provides overall, independent strategic advice at the IAMHRF ED's request. Members of the SAB meet with the ED face-to-face at least twice a year, usually in conjunction with the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Graham Boeckh Foundation (GBF). Intermittent virtual meetings may be scheduled, if necessary. SAB members may advise the IAMHRF ED for an unlimited period of time.

GBF, which has been providing leadership to the IAMHRF since its inception, currently appoints the ED and hosts the IAMHRF secretariat. The ED leads the IAMHRF secretariat, a small team of GBF employees and part-time contractors, that provides administrative and operational support to all IAMHRF activities.

Functions

Realizing the IAMHRF's mission requires a set of activities throughout the year that are intended to help put its purpose into practice. Most activities, informed by the strategic direction provided by the ISC and the SAB, are carried out by the IAMHRF secretariat, and include:

- Organizing conferences and meetings for the membership, either in-person or as virtual sessions;
- Nurturing the network by maintaining regular communication with the membership and key stakeholders from the global mental health sector;
- Engaging various stakeholders and building partnerships worldwide with individuals and organizations in the policy, research, publishing and funding sectors to ultimately increase support and diversify funding for mental health research;



- Promoting IAMHRF membership and recruiting new Members whose presence adds value to the IAMHRF;
- Monitoring key developments and initiatives, media and publications that denote significance for the mental health and research sector;
- Representing the global research funding community in major initiatives emerging in the mental health sector;
- Carrying out special projects on an ad hoc basis (e.g. Global funding landscape study in mental health research);
- Serving as secretariat for IAMHRF working groups and initiatives (e.g. Common Measures initiative);
- Actively participating in the activities of IAMHRF working groups (e.g. Lived Experience);
- Updating the full membership about working group activities and progress.

Communications

The IAMHRF maintains an active [website](#), a [LinkedIn page](#) and [Twitter account](#) to communicate publicly the significant activities driven or supported by the IAMHRF and its Members. IAMHRF's intentional social media strategy aims to boost the global voice of the IAMHRF network, amplify its reach and impact and increase opportunities for collaboration and engagement.

Membership and Partner Organizations

- Membership in the IAMHRF is open to public or private research funders supporting fundamental, applied, clinical, health services and social science research.
- Membership is also open to industry and companies funding mental health research.
- New Members must be approved for membership by the ISC.
- Members form the core of the IAMHRF's strategic direction and are expected to contribute to IAMHRF's activities accordingly.
- Current Members and Partners are listed in Appendix 1.
- Partners may be organizations wishing to collaborate with the IAMHRF. Partner organizations do not contribute financially to the IAMHRF's operating budget. Their level of involvement is restricted and less frequent than that of Members, but still important in furthering the IAMHRF's aims.

Expectations for Members

Members are expected to contribute intellectually to the IAMHRF's activities and to cooperate to advance the IAMHRF's purpose of collaboration to increase the impact of mental health research funding. Members are expected to be represented at the annual conference through one or two individuals from their organization and, wherever fitting and appropriate, to engage in discussions and debates to help identify challenges and opportunities for collaboration and strategic alignment with the broader mental health sector. Each Member is responsible for all expenses related to participation in the annual conference and other IAMHRF activities.



Each Member retains all decision-making authority with respect to Member activities, including decisions with respect to Member research funding and Member strategic plans. The participation of a Member in the IAMHRF is not a relinquishment of such authority and is subject to the availability of Member funds. Members will at all times participate to the extent authorized by, and consistent with, applicable law, regulations, and policy within their Member country.

The IAMHRF functions on an institutional membership model. On an annual basis, Members are expected to contribute financially to the IAMHRF's operating budget, in accordance with their organizational mandates and the size of their research budgets.

Annual contributions are listed in USD and fall into one of four categories:

- \$2,000 for Members with a research budget of up to \$5M
- \$5,000 for Members with a research budget of \$5M to \$25M
- \$7,500 for Members with a research budget of \$25M to \$100M
- \$10,000 for Members with a research budget of over \$100M.

Payments are made via wire transfer to accounts at GBF. Accepted currencies include USD, CAD, Euros, GBP, others to be confirmed by the GBF Accounting department prior to payment. GBF is responsible for administering all of IAMHRF's activities, including managing its funds. Membership fees do not contribute to the general operations of GBF. They are used solely to carry out the functions of the IAMHRF. Once per year, GBF circulates a summary of IAMHRF activities, including a breakdown of expenditures.

Joining the IAMHRF

The application process for joining the IAMHRF as a Member or Partner is facilitated through an online form, available at <https://iamhrf.org/>. Organizations that do not fund research are ineligible for membership, and should instead apply to join the IAMHRF as a partner using the same form. Submission of an application does not guarantee its approval. All applications are subject to review by the IAMHRF secretariat and must obtain final approval from the ISC.

Applications for membership are evaluated individually, considering the Member's capacity to contribute. Financial contributions are guided by the listed membership fee structure laid out above.

History

GBF, in collaboration with other mental health research funders, pioneered the IAMHRF. It was established in 2010 under the name of SOS (Science of Science) Mental Health to study how the process of mental health research funding could be improved for greater impact. The objective was to generate evidence to help funders make decisions about investments. With this goal in mind, the IAMHRF, in close collaboration with RAND Europe, undertook projects to understand the returns from mental health research and map global mental health funding sources.



Since then, the IAMHRF has grown to over 25 Members representing funders that invest in research in high, low- and middle-income countries, and has connected nearly 50 organizations with significant stakes in the mental health sector globally.



Appendix

Current Members

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| Aim Youth Mental Health (US) | Mental Health Research Canada (CA) |
| Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CA) | Movember Foundation (AU) |
| Cooper Investors (AU) | MQ Mental health research (UK) |
| Fonds de Recherche du Québec – Santé (CA) | NHS National Institute for Health Research (UK) |
| Graham Boeckh Foundation (CA) | National Institute of Mental Health (US) |
| Grand Challenges Canada (CA) | One Mind (US) |
| Health Research Board (IE) | Philippe & Maria Halphen Foundation (FR) |
| Janssen | Society for Mental Health Research (AU) |
| Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft (AT) | The Raintree Foundation (IN) |
| Lundbeck Foundation (DK) | Trygfonden (DK) |
| MaiTri Foundation (AU) | UKRI - Medical Research Council (UK) |
| Mariwala Health Initiative (IN) | Wellcome Trust (UK) |
| Meeting for Minds (AU, IL, CH, FR) | ZonMw (NL) |

Partners

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| Alberta Innovates (CA) | Mind Matters (CH) |
| Brain & Behavior Research Foundation (US) | National Mental Health Commission (AU) |
| Fondation Botnar (CH) | National Health and Medical Research Council (AU) |
| Future Generation Global Investment Company (AU) | Orygen Youth Mental Health (AU) |
| Fondation Fondamental (FR) | Science Philanthropy Alliance (US) |
| Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases | Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US) |
| International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership | Tata Trusts (IN) |
| Medical Research Future Fund (AU) | United for Global Mental Health (UK) |