

Mental Health First Aid Funding Opportunities Frequently Asked Questions

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Grant Information

1. Grant applicants must often demonstrate several required activities. Those most applicable to MHFA include:
 - o Populations of Focus — MHFA has courses for adults helping adults, adults helping youth and teens helping teens, as well as community-specific courses for Spanish-speaking communities; higher education; rural communities; first responders; law enforcement; military, veterans and their families; tribal communities and Indigenous populations; and older adults.
 - o Evidence Base — Over the past decade, there has been a growing body of research on the efficacy of MHFA in various populations across the United States. [Peer-reviewed studies](#) show that individuals trained in the program:
 - a. Increase their knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental health and substance use challenges.
 - b. Can identify multiple types of professional and self-help resources for individuals

- with a mental health or substance use challenge.
 - c. Show reduced stigma and increased empathy toward individuals experiencing mental health challenges.
 - d. Increase their confidence and likelihood to help an individual in distress.
 - e. Use the skills and information they learn in MHFA to manage their own mental wellbeing.
 - o Community Resources, Supports and Materials — All MHFA Instructors have knowledge of local resources and provide a resource guide to each learner who takes the course. Once trained, First Aiders become a part of a national network and receive monthly communication from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. Some organizations have also developed regular communications to keep certified First Aiders engaged.
 - o Referral and Tracking Process — First Aider information and evaluation data are available to Instructors through National Council Navigator, our one-stop shop for managing courses and materials. This information will support the quarterly reporting requirements related to tracking the number of individuals trained to promote mental health and prevent crises. Organizations have also used a variety of methods to track referrals, including paper and web-based surveys and periodic focus groups to support the data collection and tracking requirements of the grant.
 - o Licensed Mental Health Provider Organization — The National Council for Mental Wellbeing, which delivers MHFA, is a membership organization that drives policy and social change on behalf of over 3,200 mental health and substance use treatment organizations across the nation. If you do not already have a relationship with a local provider, the [Find Our Members in Your Area page](#) on the National Council’s website helps you find an experienced provider in your area. At least one experienced and licensed mental health provider needs to be identified in the proposal.
 - o Collaborative Partnerships — Partnerships are key to the strategic growth of MHFA nationally. Communities that have been successful in implementation have worked with multiple partners. Many of the [case studies](#) featured on the MHFA website describe the types of partnerships that have contributed to the growth of local training programs.
- 2. Can we use grant funding to train more Instructors at our organization?
 - o If you are new to MHFA, you can likely use part of the funding to train Instructors. If your organization is already implementing MHFA, you may need to train additional Instructors depending on your organization’s capacity and the scope of your plan. Please review your specific grant requirements to confirm eligibility.
- 3. Would grant funding cover the costs of hiring a MHFA Coordinator to manage the administrative needs of training?
 - o Please review your specific grant requirements to confirm eligibility. If eligible, include the MHFA Coordinator in the detailed budget you submit.

4. How can I make myself competitive for a grant if I am an independent Instructor?
 - Grants are typically designed for organizations, not individuals. If you are an independent Instructor, we advise you to partner with a community organization such as a mental health center, a local police department or a faith-based organization.
5. How can I find other organizations or MHFA Instructors to partner with?
 - If you are an Instructor, you can find other Instructors in your area using the Forum in National Council Navigator or the Instructor Facebook group. You can also find an Instructor using the [MHFA website](#).

Mental Health First Aid Curriculum

1. How is MHFA different from Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)?
 - MHFA is an evidence-based training that teaches individuals how to identify, understand and respond to mental health and substance use challenges. MHFA's community-specific courses have specialized content for specific populations, including law enforcement. MHFA and CIT, a five-day, 40-hour training program specifically for law enforcement, are complementary programs. For more information about MHFA, visit [MHFA.org](#).
2. Does Mental Health First Aid offer community-specific courses?
 - The following community-specific courses are available:
 - MHFA for Higher Education
 - MHFA for Fire/EMS
 - MHFA for Military, Veterans and Their Families
 - MHFA for Older Adults
 - MHFA for Public Safety
 - MHFA for Rural Communities
 - MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities
 - Youth MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities
 - Youth MHFA for Tribal Communities and Indigenous Peoples
3. Would college students benefit more from Adult MHFA or Youth MHFA?
 - This depends on the people your First Aiders will be supporting. If that population is young people ages 12-18, it may be helpful to train adults in Youth MHFA, so they have the skills to work with the youth. However, if they are working with adults 18 and older, Adult MHFA for Higher Education may be most useful. More information about these courses is available at [MHFA.org](#).
4. Do existing Instructors charge a fee for MHFA training?

- Many Instructors do not charge a fee to provide MHFA training when they've received funding to cover the costs of the course. The National Council does not set a national standard for what is charged for courses. The only fixed cost is the cost of each Seat in a First Aider course.
5. What is the estimated cost of MHFA implementation?
- See the budget guidance and spreadsheet in the Grant Writing Toolkit on the [MHFA Funding Opportunities](#) webpage.

Course Materials and Evaluation

1. How does Seat usage work when a learner is enrolled or unenrolled?
 - When you add a learner to a course, your organization uses one Seat for that person. If you remove a learner from a course, that Seat is available again and your organization can use it for someone else.
2. How can Coordinators who manage multiple Instructors pull data about all the courses their Instructors have taught?
 - Instructors can provide Coordinator-level access to a trusted individual by submitting an access request form available on National Council Navigator. Coordinator-level access is the set of permissions a Coordinator receives that allows them to complete the outlined functions of the role in National Council Navigator:
 - Create an in-person or blended course on behalf of an Instructor for whom they coordinate
 - Invite learners to join their Instructor's group in National Council Navigator
 - Mark attendance for Instructor-led training sessions
 - Monitor the status of learners' pre-work
 - Unenroll a learner from a course before an Instructor-led training
 - Cancel a course
 - Reschedule a course
 - Individuals with Coordinator-level access can pull training data in two ways:
 - Reports in National Council Navigator — Coordinators can track the progress of a specific learner or class and see trends in exam and survey answers. These reports can be generated using the Reports feature in National Council Navigator.
 - Data Request Form — Complete and submit a Data Request Form in National Council Navigator, and we'll be happy to provide you with the information you need!

Becoming a MHFA Instructor

1. Who can become a MHFA Instructor?
 - Any individual over age 18 can become a MHFA Instructor. No specific academic or professional credentials are required for Instructor applicants. However, an Instructor candidate must:
 - a) Have personal and/or professional knowledge of mental health and substance use challenges (e.g., they are a mental health/substance use professional or have worked with individuals experiencing mental health challenges).
 - b) Have prior experience in training adult learners.
 - c) Understand best practices in adult learning.
 - d) Have experience facilitating groups.
 - e) Have a commitment and strategic plan to roll out MHFA in the community.
 - To teach the Youth MHFA curriculum, candidates must also specifically work with youth ages 12-18 under the specific requirements of the grant.
 - Instructor candidates must identify financial and operational support to schedule and deliver their classes. Therefore, we highly recommend that Instructor candidates demonstrate appropriate external support for tasks related to the program.
2. What is the Instructor's role in teaching a MHFA course?
 - Every MHFA Instructor serves as a presenter, a facilitator and — most importantly — an ambassador of Mental Health First Aid. Following their certification, Instructors are permitted to teach MHFA and to certify First Aiders in their communities.
3. What responsibilities do Instructors have?
 - The National Council for Mental Wellbeing provides resources and support to assist Instructors along their journey. Instructors are responsible for:
 - Planning MHFA courses (e.g., creating business plans, forming community partnerships and reaching out to local organizations or individuals).
 - Setting a course schedule.
 - Setting and collecting course fees.
 - Conducting marketing and media outreach.
 - Handling course registration.
 - Planning the event (e.g., catering, logistics).
 - Collecting and entering course evaluations and incorporating feedback.

Submitting an Instructor application

1. Do all Instructor candidates need to submit an application?
 - Yes. Adult and Youth MHFA Instructor candidates must successfully complete an application that ensures they have a general understanding of the program and the skills that make an Instructor successful, as well as affirming the requirements of the course. More information about the application process is available at [MHFA.org](https://www.mhfa.org).
 - The National Council for Mental Wellbeing screens all applications, so please select

candidates carefully, following the guidance provided.

2. How does someone apply to become an Instructor?
 - Please visit [MHFA.org](https://www.mhfa.org) for more information about the Instructor application process.
3. When will the candidate hear back about their application?
 - We will send candidates a notification of their applicant status in 7-10 business days.

Instructor Certification

1. How are Instructors certified?
 - To attain certification, Instructor candidates must attend MHFA Instructor training and demonstrate mastery of the program through a written exam and an evaluated presentation. (Please note that not all Instructor candidates pass the course.)
 - When a person becomes a certified MHFA Instructor, they commit to teaching the full course with fidelity to the core program model and key messages. Instructors are responsible for almost all components of their trainings, including:
 - Recruiting learners and securing a training location.
 - Ordering manuals for all learners.
 - Preparing course materials.
 - Compiling local resources.
 - Providing learner evaluations to the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.
2. How do Instructors maintain certification?
 - Instructors must agree to preserve the fidelity of the program by following the National Council's guidelines and must deliver MHFA at least three times a year to remain certified.
3. If I am an Instructor, may I certify other Instructors?
 - No. Instructor certification only qualifies Instructors to conduct the Mental Health First Aider course. National Trainers are the only individuals authorized to certify Instructors through training offered by the National Council of Mental Wellbeing.
4. Can a certification be transferred to another employee?
 - No. Instructor certification is only for the individual who has completed and passed Instructor training.
5. Is MHFA offered in other languages?
 - Adult and Youth MHFA have been translated into Spanish.
 - You may not translate MHFA curricula into any additional languages. Translations must be developed and released by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.
 - Bilingual Instructors can help their learners and bridge understanding by explaining concepts in other languages, but the course must be taught in the language of the curriculum. You may have interpreters in the room, if desired, to help with explanations in other languages.
 - We do not authorize any outside alterations or translations of slides or other materials, and copyright parameters prohibit alterations to videos, such as adding subtitles.

6. How do I get certified to teach Adult or Youth MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities?
 - To be eligible for a designation in Adult or Youth MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities, you must already be certified as an Adult or Youth MHFA Instructor. To obtain the community-specific course designation, Instructors must:
 - Be bilingual (Spanish and English).
 - Complete the Adult or Youth MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities Instructor curriculum.
 - Pass a quiz for the Adult or Youth Spanish curriculum (with a score of 100%).
 - More information can be found on National Council Navigator.

7. How can I become dual certified in Adult and Youth MHFA?
 - To teach both Adult and Youth MHFA courses, you must become certified in each course individually. After your first certification, you must teach at least one course in that curriculum before you can apply to become certified in the second curriculum. Once your Instructor application is accepted, you can attend an in-person or blended 3-day Instructor training.

8. How can I become certified in a MHFA community-specific course?
 - Community-specific courses include additional content or translations to tailor MHFA to a specific population or market (e.g., MHFA for Higher Education, MHFA for Fire/EMS, MHFA for Spanish-speaking Communities).
 - Community-specific Course Instructor Certifications will still be purchased on the [MHFA Store](#) at \$50 per course.
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Older Adults
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Public Safety
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Corrections
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Spanish Speakers
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Rural Communities
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Fire/EMS
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Higher Education
 - In-person Adult MHFA for Military, Veterans and their Families

Course Delivery

1. Can Instructors split the curriculum into sections?
 - MHFA curricula are typically taught in a single day. However, they can easily be taught over two days (pausing at the halfway point) or over four days (pausing after two units/segments).

2. Once I'm an Instructor, how many people can I train at a time?
 - The minimum number of learners is five, and the maximum number is 30. We recommend 15-30 learners as an ideal class size.

3. How much time can elapse between these sections?

- Courses taught in two 4-hour sections should not be scheduled more than two weeks apart. Courses taught in four 2-hour sections should not be scheduled more than one week apart. If course sections must be scheduled farther apart, add time at the start of the next section to review the content and concepts discussed previously.
4. Can I teach the course alone, or do I need a training partner?
 - Although an Instructor may teach the course alone, we recommend that Instructors co-teach with another certified Instructor. This gives learners the opportunity to experience different teaching styles; also, some exercises are more effective when facilitated by a team. Co-teaching also gives Instructors flexibility to respond to anyone who needs one-on-one time to process the material due to the sensitive nature of the content. Please note that no more than two certified MHFA Instructors can receive credit for teaching any single course.

Course Materials and Evaluation

1. How should I set up the space for my training?
 - Rooms should accommodate six learners per table (up to 30 learners), a table for materials, a projector and screen, chart paper and space to move around the room during the interactive exercises.
2. Do I need to include mental health resource lists?
 - Instructors should integrate local resources into each course, frequently reference them throughout the course and ensure each learner leaves the course knowing how to connect with these resources.
3. Does every learner need a Manual?
 - Yes, each learner must receive a Manual to keep as part of the course materials.
4. Does every learner need to fill out an evaluation?
 - Yes. Learners complete the evaluations using online learning platform (or via paper/online link if attending an in-person class). Blended courses require learners to submit two post-evaluations before completing the course and accessing their certificate.
 - Course preparation: As part of a blended course's self-paced activities, a learner must complete a pre-evaluation and opinions quiz *before* the Instructor-led training.
 - End of coursework: To finish their training and become Mental Health First Aiders, learners must complete the final exam and post-evaluation *after* the Instructor-led training.
 - Follow-up evaluation, Course Response: First Aiders complete a survey to measure their retention and use of MHFA skills after the course is complete.
5. Can I cut slides or other exercises to fit into the 8 hours?
 - No. All materials must be presented as outlined in the Teaching Notes to maintain fidelity to the course.

Additional Resources

For additional information about MHFA, visit mentalhealthfirstaid.org.

For additional information about applying to funding opportunities, visit our MHFA Funding Opportunities webpage: mentalhealthfirstaid.org/support/funding.