# ALIVE National Centre Next Generation Researcher Network Capacity-Building Funding Scheme 2025

#### *~Applications close September 29th 2025~*

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#### 1. ABOUT

The ALIVE National Centre’s Next Generation Researcher Network (NGRN) Capacity Building Funding Scheme is part of the National Centre’s Capacity Building Strategy to grow the next generation of mental health research leaders. Calls are now open for:

* Up to four Seed Funding Awards for Early Career Researcher (ECR), Mid-Career Researchers (MCR) and Community-based Researchers (up to $20,000 per application)

The Seed Funding Award is designed to support researchers to develop their research ideas, conduct a pilot study or, complete co-design or other research activities that will support a larger future grant proposal or to advance community-based research.

#### 2. ELIGIBILITY

Up to four awards will be allocated to applications that are addressing mental health research topics related to the *ALIVE National Centre Consensus Statements and Implementation Actions* (<https://go.unimelb.edu.au/vy8p>) and the *Casting the Net for What Matters and for Whom? Actions to the Call* (<https://go.unimelb.edu.au/aaw8>).

There are four categories of projects under this scheme. NGRN-led, Lived-Experience Researcher-led, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led and Community Based Researcher-led. Individuals who have previously received any NGRN capacity-building funds are not eligible to apply.

Below are the eligibility requirements for each of the categories of awards:

NGRN member-led project

* Project lead must be either an ECR (up to 5 years post PhD graduation) or an MCR (5-15 years post PhD graduation).
* Project lead must have been a member of the Next Generation Researcher Network for a minimum of 12 months and must demonstrate how they have actively engaged in network activities of the NGRN and/or other events or training that have been offered by the ALIVE National Centre over the previous year.
* Project lead must have a mentor who is an investigator of the ALIVE National Centre, and with whom they have met to discuss the project ahead of submission.

Lived-Experience-led project:

* Project lead must be either an ECR (up to 5 years post PhD graduation) or an MCR (5-15 years post PhD graduation).
* Project lead must identify as a lived-experience researcher.
* Project lead must have been a member of the Lived-Experience Research Collective for a minimum of 12 months and have attended three or more Collective gatherings at the time of application submission.
* Project lead must have a mentor who is an investigator of the ALIVE National Centre, and with whom they have met to discuss the project ahead of submission.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led project

* Project lead must identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researcher.
* Project lead must be either a member of an ALIVE National Network for a minimum of 12 months or demonstrate direct involvement with an ALIVE National affiliated organisation.
* Appropriate community protocols, processes, and systems with principles for Indigenous Knowledge and data sovereignty must be outlined.
* Project lead must have a mentor who is either is an investigator of The ALIVE National Centre or has a research affiliation with the Centre, and with whom they have met to discuss the project ahead of submission.

Community Based Researcher-led project (people engaged in research activities without PhD qualifications but with equivalent relevant experience)

* Project lead must demonstrate how they have been engaged in community-based research for the past three years.
* Project lead must not currently be enrolled in a PhD.
* Project lead must be a member of the Lived-Experience Research Collective or Next Generation Researcher Network, or Co-Design Living Labs network.
* Lived-Experience researchers and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers are encouraged to apply.
* For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers who are not members of the ALIVE National Networks they must or demonstrate direct involvement with an ALIVE National affiliated organisation.

#### 3. FUNDING RULES

Up to four projects will be funded for the 2025 Next Generation Researcher Network Capacity Building Funding Scheme (Round 4):

* Applicants must outline how the project will advance an implementation action or actions of the ALIVE National Centre Consensus Statements (<https://go.unimelb.edu.au/vy8p>), and the Casting the Net for What Matters and for Whom? Actions to the Call (<https://go.unimelb.edu.au/aaw8>) with explicit discussion in the proposal (including links made to ALIVE networks). Collaborative opportunities with new organisations (outside of ALIVE National) that will arise from addressing and advancing these should also be highlighted.
* The project should include meaningful involvement of people with lived-experience of mental ill-health and/or carer, family and kinship groups where required for shaping the study design and activities, and following any cultural protocols, practices, processes and systems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research or research being conducted in other culturally-specific settings.
* Funds awarded cannot be used for application investigator salary support, but they can be used to employ someone to support the research activities of a study (e.g. research assistance, co-design support, design outputs from the research)
* Applications need to be associated with a planned grant, a PhD proposal or a fellowship application and the relevant schemes should be clearly outlined in the application. For community-based researchers they must be associated with advancing community based research.
* Projects must be completed within 12months (or sooner) of receipt of funds (projects can be shorter than the total 12-month period and in some cases are expected to be, given grant rounds and deadlines for other applications that may be linked with the project).
* Successful applicants will be expected to present their project plan and outcomes at appropriate ALIVE events upon request (e.g., NGRN events, National Centre Annual Symposium, Quarterly Research Forum).
* Successful applicants will be required to develop their findings into a submitted, peer-reviewed manuscript within 12 months of receiving funds (where applicable).
* The application should outline how it informs the five foundations for change in the ALIVE National Centre Casting the Net for What Matters and for Whom? Actions to the Call:
	+ - Everyone can be an agent of change
		- Deep listening for change is essential
		- Maintain “the whole” in all things
		- Connectedness and hope are critical ingredients
		- Holistic well-being is the main outcome
	+ Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge the seed funding award in all public dissemination activities (e.g., publications, presentations) and inform the ALIVE National Centre Hub of these activities so we can assist in publicising the work and ensuring we can track the impact of the funding scheme. The following acknowledgement of the funding source must be included in all presentations, or papers related to the project: *This research was supported by a Next Generation Researcher Network Capacity Building Funding Award as part of the ALIVE National Centre for Mental Health Research Translation (NHMRC GNT2002047).*
* Funds provided to successful applicants are allocated from the overarching ALIVE National funding grant (GNT2002047 - NHMRC Special Initiative in Mental Health 2020 - ALIVE A National Research Translation Centre to Implement Mental Health Care at Scale), and as such all clauses relating to Intellectual Property and Publications from the Multi-Institutional Agreement for the ALIVE National Centre apply to any outputs arising from the funded project. Successful applicants are also required to use the awarded funds in accordance with all NHMRC rules and requirements.
* The ALIVE National Centre reserves the right to clarify details of the project and stipulate conditions related to the awarding of funds.

#### 4. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

Please send the completed application as **one PDF document** including all elements of the submission to alive-hub@unimelb.edu.au. The forms can be found on the ALIVE Platform.

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| Submission Instructions1. Save this file as 2025-ALIVE-NGRN *[APPLICANTS SURNAME]* and submit it **as a single PDF document** (including your track record).2. Email your application alive-hub@unimelb.edu.au with the subject title: 2025-ALIVE-NGRN Application-*[APPLICANTS SURNAME].*Applications close **5:00pm AEST on Monday 29th September 2025**. No late applications will be accepted. |

#### 5. REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be evaluated against the following criteria to determine project quality, feasibility, and track record for seed funding. Reviewer templates include guidance for assessing:

* The research topic and alignment with the *ALIVE National Consensus Statements* and *five foundations for change in the Casting the Net for What Matters and for Whom? Actions to the Call*
* Track Record and Capability
* Methodology/Feasibility
* Innovation/Impact.

Reviews will be conducted by a panel of experienced senior investigators, mid-career researchers and lived-experience researchers as part of the overall ALIVE National Centre’s capacity building strategy.

#### NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOMES

Outcomes will be announced 3rd November 2025.

Successful applicants will be asked to sign an acceptance form indicating adherence to the terms of the award. Upon receipt of this signed form, the ALIVE Hub team will facilitate transfer of funds awarded to the applicant’s home institution. This will necessitate a letter of agreement between the University of Melbourne and the applicant’s institution/organisation, which will be provided directly to the institution/organisation’s research office (or equivalent) by the University of Melbourne. The Centre Manager will coordinate this process with successful applicants.

#### TIMELINE

#### CONTACT

For all queries, please email alive-hub@unimelb.edu.au

