

# The Anika Foundation/SMHR ECR Seed Grants

## Terms and Conditions

### 1. Purpose

The 2026 Anika Foundation/SMHR ECR Seed Grants aim to support early career researchers (ECRs) to undertake high-quality research projects and pilot studies, strengthen their track record, and build capability in competing for external funding.

Three grants will be awarded.

Two grants to the value of **\$10,000** each will be funded by **the Anika Foundation**, for the following research stream:

- **Stream 1:** Research in adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents

One grant to the value of **\$10,000** will be funded by **the Society for Mental Health Research (SMHR)**, for the following research stream:

- **Stream 2:** Research on any other topic related to mental health (not directly related to adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents).

Grant funding will be awarded for one year: August 2026–July 2027.

### 2. Eligibility requirements

- 2.1 Lead applicants must be members of SMHR. Co-investigators are not required to be members of SMHR.
- 2.2 Lead applicants must be based at a university or medical research institute in Australia or New Zealand for the duration of the grant. Lead applicants holding a conjoint or adjunct appointment at a university or medical research institute are also eligible to apply, as long as the university/medical research institute is the administering organisation for the funding.
- 2.3 Lead applicants must be a citizen or permanent resident of Australia or New Zealand at the time of the closing date for applications (23/04/2026). Co-investigators can have any country of origin.
- 2.4 Lead applicants must have been awarded a PhD (or equivalent qualification as per NHMRC guidelines) within five years of the closing date for applications (23/04/2026), exclusive of periods of career disruption. Details of career disruption should be provided including relevant dates and type of career disruption. Co-investigators are not required to have completed their PhD within 5 years of the closing date.

- 2.5 Projects submitted for Stream 1 must address the designated research areas of either adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents (covering ages 10 to 19 years).
- 2.6 Lead applicants are not eligible to apply for an ECR Grant if they are currently the lead Chief Investigator (CIA) on a successful Australian Research Council (ARC), National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), or Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) grant.

### **3. Timeline of key dates**

Applications open: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Applications close: Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026, 5pm

Outcomes announced: Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Grant start: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026

Grant end: 31<sup>st</sup> July 2027

Final Report due: 31<sup>st</sup> August 2027

### **4. Assessment criteria**

All applications will be assessed and ranked by a selection committee of experts in mental health research and lived experience, and a Board Member from the Anika Foundation.

The following selection criteria and strategic considerations will be applied:

- a) Research project quality, including feasibility, methods, outcomes, and alignment to adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents if applying to Stream 1 (50%)
- b) Expected social/economic/cultural/environmental benefits of the research (20%)
- c) Likely impact on the ECR's career development and their competitiveness in securing future competitive external funding, indicated by the applicant's track record and stated plans to secure funding in the future (15%)
- d) Relevance of the research to people with lived experience of mental health issues and involvement of people with lived experience in the research (15%)

### **5. Terms and conditions**

5.1 The grant will be awarded for one year, ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2027.

5.2 Three grants will be awarded; two grants of \$10,000 each for research in the areas of adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents, and one grant of \$10,000 for research on any topic related to mental health.

- 5.3 Applicants are limited to submitting one application under this scheme per year as a Lead Applicant. Lead applicants are eligible to be named as co-investigators on other applications.
- 5.4 All finance claims must be submitted by the end of the 2026/2027 financial year.
- 5.5 Applications must be submitted using the application form provided.
- 5.6 Applicants must be the lead researcher on the grant, with the aim of enhancing their ability for independent research and external funding.
- 5.7 Written supervisor approval must be provided for the application. A brief statement of support should be submitted with the application form, containing the applicant's name, the stream they are applying for, project title, and details of any in-kind or financial support the supervisor will provide if the application is successful.
- 5.8 The lead applicant is responsible for the project, its concept, the strategic decisions called for in its pursuit, and for the communication of the results.
- 5.9 The lead applicant will be the contact person for all administrative matters to do with the project.
- 5.10 The lead applicant must ensure that the research is conducted in accordance with the relevant University policies, including compliance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) and regulatory frameworks for human research ethics, health and safety and intellectual property.
- 5.11 It is an expectation of this grant funding that publications arising from this grant will acknowledge The Anika Foundation and SMHR as the research funders.
- 5.12 A final report is required to be submitted to the SMHR Executive Committee via [louise.farrer@anu.edu.au](mailto:louise.farrer@anu.edu.au) by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2027.

## 6. Application

The application will consist of 3 components as described below:

- The application form
- Applicant CV – maximum three pages
- Supervisor statement of support (max ½ page)

The above documents should be converted to PDF format and merged into a single PDF file with the following file name: Lastname\_ECRSeedGrantApplication\_2026

- Applications are to be e-mailed to: [louise.farrer@anu.edu.au](mailto:louise.farrer@anu.edu.au)

## 7. Budget

- 7.1 The total funding amount that applicants can apply for is \$10,000 for projects targeting Stream 1 (adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents), and \$10,000

for projects targeting Stream 2 (any other topic related to mental health, not directly related to adolescent depression and/or suicide prevention in adolescents).

- 7.2 The Anika Foundation is a registered not-for-profit organisation.
- 7.3 The award will fund:
- Direct research project costs, (salary and on-costs for personnel, equipment, travel, participant expenses, stationery etc), and
  - Dissemination activities such as collateral, conferences and open access publications.
- 7.4 The award will not fund:
- The applicant's own salary.
  - Costs not directly related to the research project (including institutional levies).
  - Funds that duplicate or supplement another current internal or external funding.
  - Non-specialist equipment provided by the applicant's institution, such as desktop computers or laptops.

**Definitions:**

Term	Notes/ Definition
Adolescent	Research should focus on the prevention of depression and/or suicide risk in individuals aged 10 to 19 years.
Career Disruption	Interruptions that can be claimed when calculating the effective years of scholarly research opportunity post-PhD (or equivalent qualification) include:  Disruption due to international relocation Parental leave Caring responsibilities (with reduced research fraction) Disability Medical or mental health conditions Unemployment Part-time employment or fractional research FTE Community obligations, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural practices and protocols.
Lead Chief Investigator (CIA) on a successful ARC, NHMRC, MRFF, or HRC grant.	Researchers who are CIA on any NHMRC, ARC, MRFF, or HRC grant are ineligible. Those who are listed as investigators on those grants but are not CIA, are eligible to apply.

Competitive external funding	Research grants and awards that are funded by organisations other than the applicant's institution and awarded on merit. Examples include Australian Rotary Health grants, NHMRC, MRFF, HRC and Perpetual IMPACT grants. These do not include individual or corporate donations.
ECRs	Early Career Researchers. Up to five years postdoc as at 23 April 2026, exclusive of career disruption.
Suicide prevention	This encompasses any/all suicidal thoughts and or behaviours, including self-harm with and without suicidal intent.