



Lived Experience Representatives Guidance on completing your application

This document provides some guidance and tips on writing and submitting your application to become a lived experience representative for the Independent Mental Health Network (IMHN). Our [application form](#) asks about your experience and strengths; and is an opportunity for you to tell us about why you are the best person for the role.

Please also refer to the role description for the opportunity you are applying for. [These can be found by clicking here.](#)

General guidance:

If you are applying to join multiple projects, we recommend completing a separate application for each. For example, if you are applying to join both the Community Mental Health Framework eating disorder and mental health rehabilitation working groups, we suggest writing an application for both.

Try and be as clear and detailed as you can in your application, referring to the opportunity description and giving clear examples relating to your skills and experience.

Guidance for each question

1. Tell us about why you want to be involved as a lived experience representative in this project.

- Think about the area or topic that the project relates to – we want to hear about what you want to bring or contribute to the project.
- It could be because you have relevant lived experience, have accessed support or mental health care, or know people who have lived experience.
- You might have worked on a similar project before.
- Give examples that back up what you are saying, where you are able to

2. Tell us about how you have worked together with other people to bring about change in mental health or another area.

- This doesn't necessarily have to be because of working with IMHN before.
- It could be a group you have run, participated in, or supported to grow.
- You could have taken part in a campaign that resulted in something being changed, in mental health or otherwise. Tell us about it!
- Tell us about how you worked with other people in the past.

3. Tell us about what organisations, communities or interest-groups you are involved with and how would this benefit you in the role.

- Again, this does not have to be previously IMHN-related.
- We are especially interested to hear about what your wider network looks like – and how you can gather the views and opinions of others, to bring them into your role as a lived experience representative.
- You can link this back to your answer to the previous question.
- We recognise that not all applicants may have links with other organisations, and you may be focusing your application on your lived experience (that's ok too).

4. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about any relevant skills and experience that you may have?

- We want to hear what you are good at! There might be other opportunities that you could be interested in that we can tell you about.
- You are welcome to share your experience of mental health, although this is not compulsory.
- You can tell us about any experience of contributing to meetings that you may have.
- Do you have any professional skills or qualifications? Tell us about them.

Finally...

All applicants will be considered for the roles they apply for. If there are multiple roles available within a project, please indicate your preferred role in your answer to question 4. For example, if you are applying to join both a working group and advisory group to do with the Community Mental Health Framework, please tell us your first choice.

In the case of Community Mental Health Framework projects, to ensure a diverse range of applications, it will not be possible for people to be involved in more than two project areas.