



Private Philanthropic Donors to Global Mental Health

This document highlights private philanthropic donors to global mental health. For the purposes of this document, private philanthropic donors can refer to non-state actors such as foundations, corporations, and individuals.¹ All of the information is sourced directly from the publicly available websites of the organisations listed.

According to [IHME](#), private philanthropy was the largest source of development assistance to health (DAMH) in 2019, providing \$58 million (out of \$160 million), and accounting for 36% of all DAMH. This is consistent with other publications that have analysed historical flows of DAMH which have demonstrated that private philanthropic sources account for around 30-33% of all DAMH.^{2,3} Who are these donors, what funding mechanisms do they use, and where do they operate? The following table presents these private philanthropic donors that have supported mental health initiatives around the globe, and provides information to help answer these questions. Donors are grouped into the following categories:

- [Donors that fund mental health initiatives \(past and present\)](#)
- [Organisations that focus on entrepreneurs and/or impact investing for organisations](#)
- [Donor groups](#)

¹ Lemmi, V. (2020). Philanthropy for global mental health 2000–2015. *Global Mental Health*, 7, E9. doi:10.1017/gmh.2020.2

² Charlson FJ, Dieleman J, Singh L, et al. (2017). Donor financing of global mental health, 1995—2015: an assessment of trends, channels, and alignment with the disease burden. *PLoS One*. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0169384

³ Lemmi, V. (2020). Philanthropy for global mental health 2000–2015. *Global Mental Health*, 7, E9. doi:10.1017/gmh.2020.2



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Donors that fund mental health initiatives (past and present)

Donor	Sector Focus	Geographical Focus	Funding Mechanism	Open calls?
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)	Maternal mental health, MHPSS	Global	Grants	Not currently.
MacArthur Foundation	MHPSS, incarceration and mental health	Global - but grants to mental health largely US based	Grants	Generally, does not fund unsolicited proposals.
Fondation D'Harcourt	MHPSS, capacity building and systems strengthening (projects in Africa, South America - Bolivia, and Europe)	Europe, low-income countries with a focus on African countries	Grants	Not currently. Due to COVID-19 no calls for proposals for 2021.
Wellcome Trust	Research focused. Mental health conditions focus on youth depression and anxiety.	Global. Locations for the mental health program will be chosen soon.	Grants	Yes. Check the website for a list of opportunities.
Open Society Foundation (OSF) *a member of the Moving Minds Alliance	Human rights and mental health, deinstitutionalization, migrant mental health	Global	Grants, fellowships, scholarships, social impact investing	Check the website for any open calls.



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Qatar Foundation	Funds the World Innovation Summit on Health (WISH)	Middle-East North Africa regional focus	No	No
Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI)	Early childhood development, education, advocacy	Mental health funded projects very US focused	Grants	No
Dalio Philanthropies	Bipolar research; clinical training, public education, and patient care at Johns Hopkins University	US focused	Financial support; no specific way outlined	No
Fondation Botnar	Youth and adolescent mental health in cities (focus on secondary cities), mental health research; AI and digital tools	Global (various grants will have a different geographical focus)	Research grants, implementation grants, and one-off grants	None currently. Check the website for any future opportunities.
Comic Relief *a member of the Moving Minds Alliance	A focus on poverty alleviation, but dependent on call. Comic Relief has	Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa,	Grants	Applicants can apply directly. Check the website for open calls.



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	funded mental health CSOs in LMICs.	Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, all four nations of the United Kingdom, Zambia and Zimbabwe.		
Lego Foundation	Early childhood development, education, MHPSS (partners with Sesame Workshop for this), research	Global, but with a focus on Denmark, Mexico, South Africa and Ukraine; Locations can differ on open grant calls	Grants	Check the website for open grant opportunities.
Bernard Van Leer Foundation (BvLF) *a member of the Moving Minds Alliance	Early childhood development, caregiver mental health	Brazil, India, Israel, Côte D'Ivoire, Netherlands, Peru, Turkey, Jordan (refugee response)	Grants	No
Born This Way Foundation	Youth mental health	US focused	Partnerships	No
The SHM Foundation	Mental health, arts, general health. SMH funds Ember (in collaboration with MHIN)	Global. Mental health partnerships in LMICs	Works in partnerships	No



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Michael and Susan Dell Foundation	Education (all locations), health and wellness (U.S. only), or family economic stability (in India, South Africa, and regionally in Central Texas and Greater Boston).	US, India and South Africa	Grants and Investments; Grants must be up to \$50,000	Open. Apply for funding.
Mulago Foundation	Livelihoods (smallholder agriculture), Health (primary healthcare and behavior change), conservation, energy (home cooking, lighting, and power), education (mostly primary), solutions to make organizations more effective	Global	Funds organisations; not projects via grants, debt and equity	No
James S. McDonnell Foundation	Research funder (neuroscience)	Global	Research grants	Apply on the website when available.



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World Childhood Foundation	Child protection. Thematic areas: protective family environment, child safe travelling and tourism, child safety online and child friendly social and legal response.	Belarus, Brazil, Cambodia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Sweden, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, United States	Grants for projects	Open. Check the website for details on how to apply.
Stavros Niarchos Foundation	Arts and culture, health and sports, social welfare, education (and mental health projects)	Global	Grants	Open to grant inquiries year round. Check the website for more information
Inter American Foundation	US Agency (independent) CSOs in Latin America and Caribbean	Latin America and Caribbean	Grants for projects	Open all year around. Check the website .
National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund	has supported South Africa Federation for Mental Health (SAFMH)	South Africa	Small, medium and large grants	Check the website for any calls.



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The National Lottery Community Fund (UK)	Ageing, early childhood development, youth employment	UK	Grants (different criteria for under and above 10k)	Open. Currently supporting organisations during COVID19. See website .
The People's Postcode Lottery (UK)	Funds various trusts: Alzheimer's and elderly care (via the Care Trust), human rights, equality, Children	UK focus, however other trusts (including the African Trust) supports national and international organisations	Grants (mainly to large scale international NGOs)	All Trusts do not accept unsolicited applications.
The Postcode Foundation (Sweden)	Funds projects that must have a Swedish relevance, serve a public interest, and address at least one of the SDGs.	Sweden and international	Grants	Accepts ideas year-round. Check website
Oak Foundation	Environment, human rights, women's issues, homelessness, preventing child abuse, special grants initiatives	Global. Active in over 40 countries including the UK, Europe, Brazil, India, Zimbabwe (sub-Saharan Africa)	Grants	Accepts unsolicited requests for funding through a letter of enquiry (however most requests this way will be unsuccessful). See website .



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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	Mental health organisations (US), Children and social determinants of health, child and family wellbeing, health systems research (US focus)	US focus. Does not give to non-US entities; although there could be some exceptions.	Grants.	Check the website for opportunities.
Graham Boeckh Foundation	Youth mental health initiatives, collaborative networks	Canada	Partnerships	Not open to funding requests
Mariwala Health Initiative	Mental health initiatives (especially for marginalized communities)	India	Partnerships	See the website for partnership profile and email for introductions.
AIM	Youth mental health research	Worldwide with a North America focus	Specific support to research projects	The advisory board seeks out research themselves
Cooper Investors	Mental Health & Clinical Neuroscience Research	Australia and worldwide	Grants support	Not open to funding request



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Mental Health Research Canada (MHRC)	Mental health research	Canada	Partnerships; not a funding agency	Website will post funding calls from partners
Brain & Behavior Research Foundation	Mental health research grants	Global - over 30 countries have been represented so far in grant awardees	3 types of grants: Young, Independent, and Distinguished Investigator Grant	Check the website for different grant deadlines.
Vitol Foundation *a member of the Moving Minds Alliance	children and families (sectors: health, WASH, education, livelihoods and humanitarian). See 2020-2022 strategy .	Global	Grants and other mechanisms for non-profit and for-profit organisations.	Does not accept unsolicited applications for funding

Organisations that focus on entrepreneurs and impact investing for organisations

Organisation	Sector	Geographical Focus	Funding Mechanism
Skoll Foundation	Has invested in social entrepreneurs who work in the space of mental health, e.g. Basic Needs, Partners in Health	Global	Only invests in a limited number of organizations that are highly aligned with their mission and award program criteria through the Skoll Awards for Social



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			Entrepreneurship program
Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation	only funds organisations in the early stages of development that have a global reach (often first-time investor)	Global	Provides \$300,000 of unrestricted capital over three years
Omidyar Network	Beneficial Technology, Discovering Emergent Issues and Reimagining Capitalism. Funds non-profits and for profits Has supported: Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, Crisis Text Line	Global	Grants. Does not accept unsolicited business plans, proposals, or personal request
Sesame Ventures	Education and early childhood development, social welfare for children	Global	Investment for start-ups and entrepreneurs. Open to emails for ideas; see website for more details.
Pivotal Ventures	Social progress, gender equality in the US.	US	Investment for startups and support to individual leaders. Not open to unsolicited requests.
Future Generation Australia	The largest private funder of mental health in Australia, with a focus on children and youth	Australia	Provides charities focused on children and youth at risk and youth mental health with a stream



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Organisation	Sector	Geographical Focus	Funding Mechanism
			of social investments equal to 1% of the companies' net tangible assets each year
KOIS	Education and employment, environment and health; supported a mental health project in India.	Global	Uses innovative financing and impact investing to support projects

Donor Groups:

Donor Group	Sector Focus	Financing Mechanism
Big Bang Philanthropy	Funds organisations tackling the most pressing problems of the poor.	Does not accept unsolicited proposals.
Moving Minds Alliance	Support for young children and families affected by crisis and displacement.	Not a funding agency but a collection of philanthropic organisations
Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance	UN affiliated; convened via the Secretary General, for SDG financing	Not a funding agency but a collection of philanthropic organisations
International Alliance of Mental Health Research Funders	A group of global mental health research funders.	Not a funding agency but a collection of philanthropic organisations