



mindgardens
Neuroscience Network



mindlabs
a mindgardens initiative

MindLabs: scoping the need for translational research training and support

MindLabs is the engine room of innovation for the Mindgardens Neuroscience Network. It is a virtual space where we create and nurture new ideas and build capacity and capabilities to accelerate translational research, quality improvement and service re-design in mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders.

MindLabs brings together participants from Mindgardens Member organisations: Black Dog Institute (BDI), Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA), the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) and the University of NSW. Through education and training, mentoring, consultancy and seed funding, MindLabs fills gaps in individual and organisational understanding and promotes effective collaboration. It enables people with lived experience, families and carers, clinicians, researchers, and health system managers to work together – across disciplines and organisational cultures – to take new ideas rapidly from theory into practice.

About the MindLabs scoping survey

In establishing MindLabs, Mindgardens was eager to understand what type of support people from its Member organisations most needed. We conducted this scoping survey to explore people’s understanding and confidence with some key principles of collaboration for service transformation and ask them what kind of research translation training and support they would most welcome.

215 individuals responded to the survey, of whom 113 completed all questions. The results that follow are a snapshot of what we learned. We will use this information to guide the continuing development of the MindLabs initiative. Mindgardens thanks all survey participants.

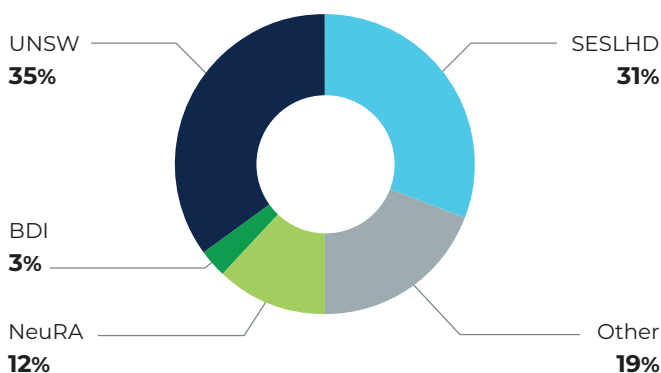
Note: Not all survey participants responded to every question and multiple responses were allowed for some questions. The number of respondents and further explanation of responses are included with each graph.

Who responded

All invited participants were staff or associates of the Mindgardens Member organisations.

This graph presents a breakdown of participation by organisation. It is important to remember that UNSW and SESLHD, which contributed the largest numbers of participants, are bigger organisations than BDI and NeuRA.

Survey respondents (by employer): 118



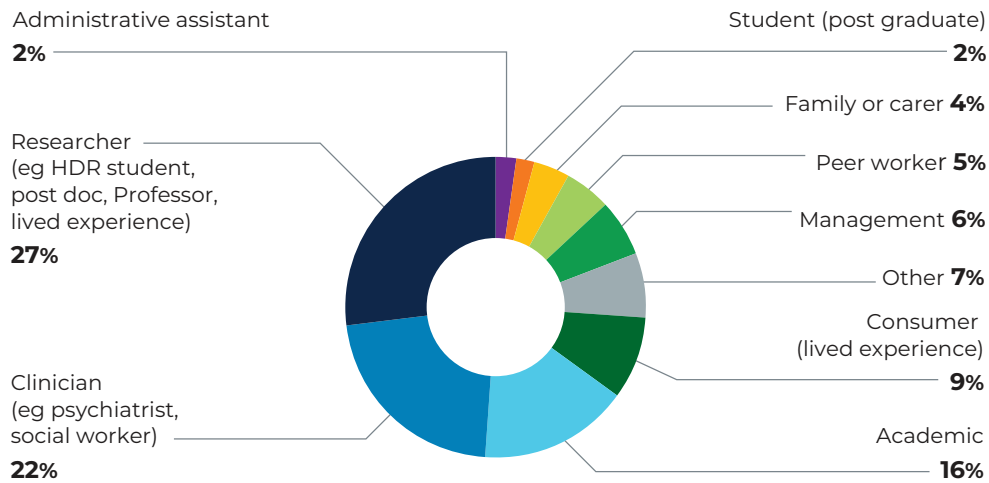
Respondents from UNSW and SESLHD represented 35% and 31% respectively (n=78/118).

There were 14 respondents from NeuRA and 4 from Black Dog Institute.

Some respondents (19%) said they worked for a different organisation (“Other”), including health services and universities other than UNSW and SESLHD. Because this survey circulated only to Mindgardens Members, it is expected these people are likely to work with entities that have business relationships with the Member organisations.

Respondents' current roles

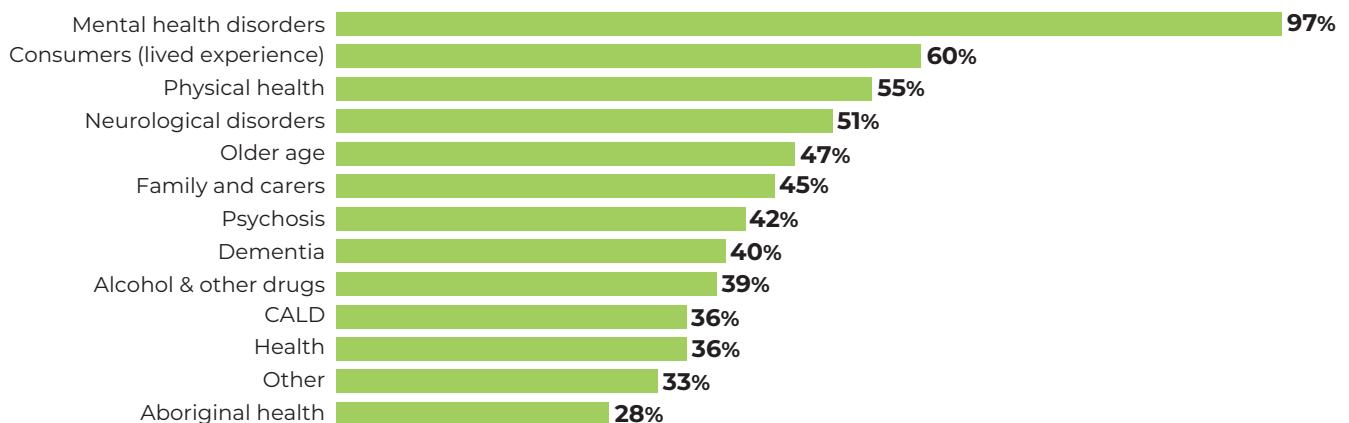
Respondents: 215



Respondents were mainly employed in research (27%), clinical (22%), or academic (16%) positions. Consumers (9%), peer workers (5%), and managers (6%) also completed the survey.

Areas of interest

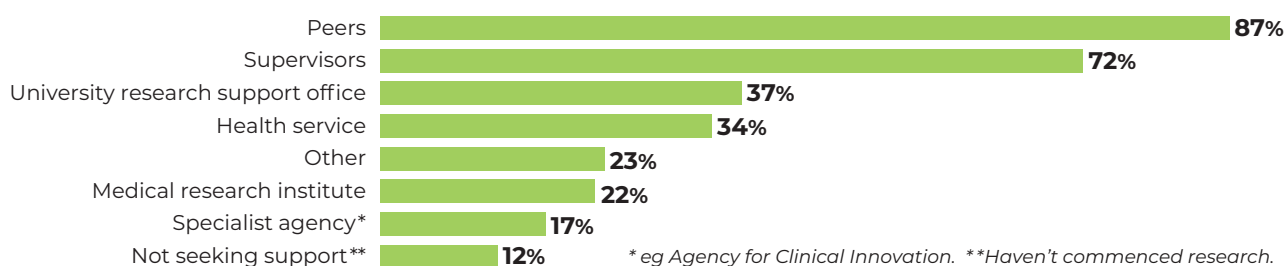
Respondents: 133



Respondents were asked to nominate their main areas of interest. They were able to make more than one selection, and they nominated an average five selections. Leading areas of interest included mental health, consumers and lived experience, physical health and neurological disorders.

How respondents seek support for research work

Respondents: 159

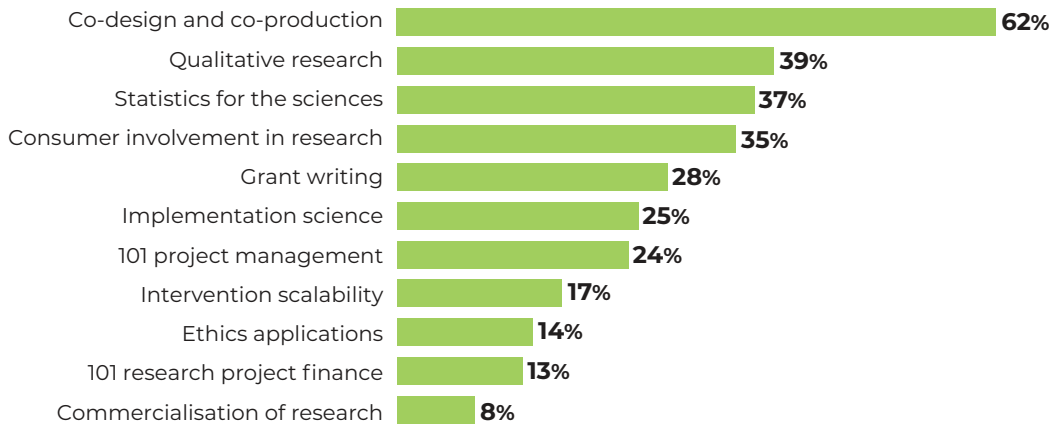


* eg Agency for Clinical Innovation. **Haven't commenced research.

The survey explored how respondents currently seek support in their work. They were able to make more than one selection, and they nominated an average two selections. The majority of respondents sought research support mainly from peers and supervisors (53%), and most looked for support every couple of months (31%).

Respondents' priority areas for future professional development

Respondents: 101

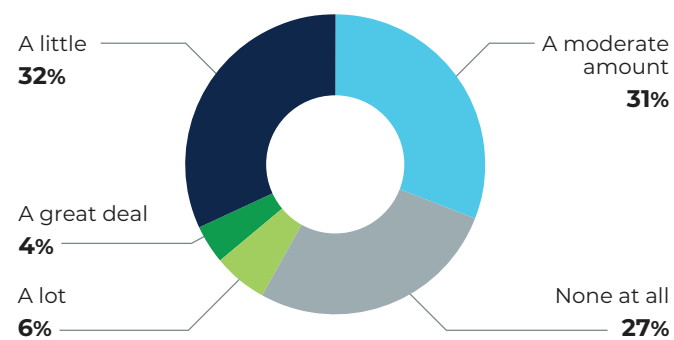


Respondents were presented with ideas for potential training and development topics. They were able to make more than one selection. The percentages in this graph show the proportion of respondents who were interested in receiving training in the topic area.

The top three were co-design and co-production, qualitative research and statistics for the sciences, followed by consumer involvement in research. It was clear that participants especially valued collaboration with consumers and wanted to know more about how to do this effectively.

Respondents' current level of expertise in co-design or co-production

Respondents: 131



59% of respondents indicated they had little or no experience in co-design or co-production. Despite this, 59% said they involved consumers or carers in their research, primarily in study design and implementation. This suggests consumers and carers are included in research, but without formal structures and methodologies designed to ensure their participation is meaningful and complete.

Co-design means 'designing with' the people affected by a problem or opportunity to ensure new solutions will meet their needs. Principles include sharing power and decision making, building genuine relationships, encouraging mutual learning and building capabilities.

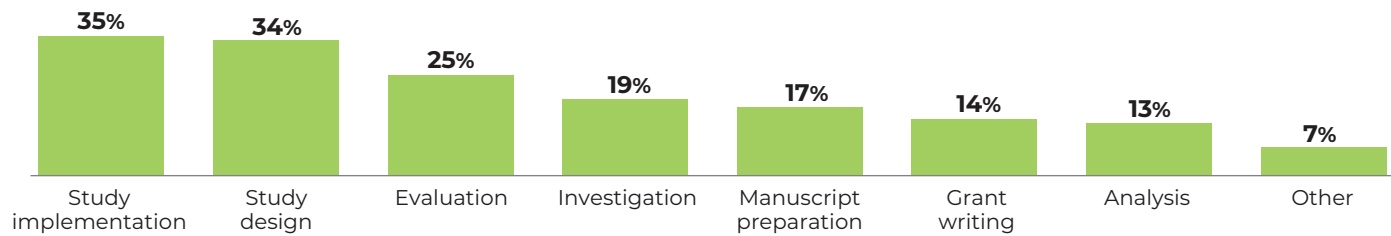
– Neami National

A co-production approach sees consumers leading – or involved in – defining the problem, designing and delivering the solution, and evaluating the outcome, either with professionals or independently.

– School of Health Sciences, University of Melbourne

Consumer/carer stages of involvement in research

Respondents: 55

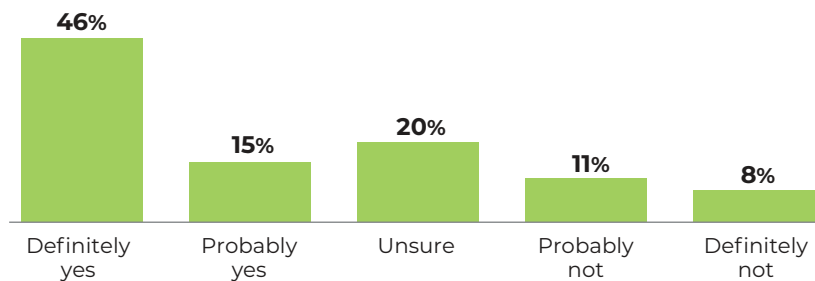


Respondents were able to select multiple choices to the stages of consumer and carer involvement in research. Study design and implementation were selected as the highest involvement phases while consumers and carers were least likely to be included in analysis and grant writing.

In addition, 86% of respondents rated involvement of consumers and carers as highly important, though 41% of respondents indicated that they had not involved consumers and carers in their own research.

Interested in receiving seed funding

Respondents: 113



46% of respondents were interested in receiving seed funding for a project. 36% of respondents were unsure of the ideal amount of funding. 24% indicated they would need more than \$30,000 to kick-start their project and 23% nominated \$20,000 to \$30,000 as the ideal amount.

These survey results provide an invaluable basis for Mindgardens to progress the development of the MindLabs initiative, ensuring its research collaboration training, mentoring and seed funding programs respond to the clearly articulated needs of its Members.

A full report on these findings is available to Members on request.

Contact the MindLabs Team: mindlabs@mindgardens.org.au



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Neuroscience Network



About Mindgardens

The Mindgardens Neuroscience Network is a collaboration between UNSW Sydney, Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA), the Black Dog Institute and South Eastern Sydney Local Health District.

Mindgardens integrates treatments and research for mental health, neurological and alcohol and drug disorders, focusing on real-world challenges, translating new research insights rapidly into clinical practice, and transforming the understanding, prevention and treatment of these disorders.

The first initiative of its kind in Australia, Mindgardens is a unique and highly concentrated hub of expertise, centred on the south eastern Sydney region but with the capacity to serve the whole NSW community and influence practice across Australia and internationally.