



ember

Ember Mental Health is a programme by The SHM Foundation that supports and funds excellent mental health initiatives in low- resource settings globally.

www.embermentalhealth.org
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EMBER CALL-OUT 2024: INVITING APPLICATIONS FROM COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

Ember is calling for applications from community-based mental health initiatives working in low- and middle-income countries who would like to partner with us. Successful initiatives will be offered a 12-month partnership with Ember, customised to support and strengthen the sustainability and growth of the organisation based on their needs. There will also be an opportunity for the selected organisations to be considered for Ember investment after the 12-month partnership.

Applications are **open until 6pm BST, Tuesday, August 20th**. Find below all the information you will need to understand whether this partnership is suitable for you.

Once you've read all the information, you can [fill in this short and simple application form](#). We are reviewing applications on a rolling basis.

ABOUT EMBER MENTAL HEALTH

What is Ember?

Ember supports and funds excellent community-based mental health initiatives in low-resource settings so they can grow and thrive. It is an initiative created in collaboration between the [SHM Foundation](#) and the [Mental Health Innovation Network](#). Since 2019, Ember has supported over 30 community-based mental health initiatives in their growth journeys.

Within Ember, we are a team of people with a diverse range of professional and personal backgrounds, who are passionate about mental health. The skills and expertise in our team includes implementation, evaluation, social anthropology, research, business, technology, education, design, psychology, social work, and communications. We are a global team, located in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe.





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Why was Ember created?

Ember is a flagship programme of the SHM Foundation, a forward-looking philanthropic organisation working globally to drive positive social change in the areas of mental health and wellbeing, education and livelihoods, and access to the arts.

The SHM Foundation has been innovators and implementers in the field of mental health for over a decade, having designed and funded projects with vulnerable communities across 19 countries.

We believe that people working at the community level play a crucial role and offer invaluable insights in addressing global gaps in mental health care and awareness. Our own journey has taught us firsthand about the many challenges facing community-based projects, especially as they begin to grow. A major challenge for these organisations is finding support that is tailored to their unique contexts, journeys, and specific plans.

At Ember, we understand that each organisation operates under distinct circumstances, facing unique challenges and pursuing individual goals. We know that a one-size-fits-all approach simply won't do.

That's why we take the time to listen closely to each partner's experiences and needs. By deeply understanding their situations, we can offer our expertise to support their plans, adapting our approach to fit their contexts and goals while co-designing strategies to empower them. Instead of a generic solution, we engage in a collaborative process with each partner, working closely to understand their specific obstacles and opportunities. This means that our strategies are custom-built, considering everything from financial health and capacity building to team wellbeing, creative storytelling and impact evaluation.

Our commitment to this tailored support means that no two partnerships with Ember are the same. We adapt our methods and resources to ensure the best possible outcomes for every organisation we work with. By offering support that is as unique as the organisations we work with, Ember supports organisations tackle their immediate challenges while also laying a solid foundation for long-term resilience and meaningful progress.





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What does a partnership with Ember include?

The support Ember provides is tailored to the organisation and its evolving needs, and rooted in an ethos of collaboration, respect, and mutual learning.

Ember provides:

- Collaborative Assessment: We work with successful applicants to identify strengths, challenges, and future visions, co-designing strategies to overcome obstacles and leverage strengths.
- Tailored Support: We tailor our work to meet the specific needs of each initiative. This may include helping organisations develop clearer visions for their future, boosting visibility and stakeholder engagement via enhanced communications, capturing impact, and strengthening financial strategies.
- Visibility and Networking: We provide platforms to raise awareness about your work and build networks through creative publications, events, and networking opportunities.
- Wellbeing Support for you and your team.
- Financial Stipend: An unrestricted stipend of £ 6,000 GBP for the year, split into two instalments.
- Financial investment after the initial 12-month partnership **IF** an organisation is selected as one of the investment partners by the Ember Working Group and the SHM Foundation board.

We work together to draw on strengths and overcome challenges to enable initiatives progress on its journey- whether that means growing, developing a more sustainable business or operational model, transitioning from a volunteer organisation to a professional one, or replicating your work in a new setting.

Explore our website to get a sense of what this looks like in practice: this page shows our [previous cohorts](#), and our [online showcase](#) shares some of what we worked on together and achieved.





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Achievements from previous cohorts

We are particularly proud of the following outcomes by former Ember innovators:

- Partners have accessed new avenues of income from diverse funders and income generating activities.
- Insights and expertise of community-based mental health initiatives in the Global South are being shared with key global and institutional stakeholders, presenting to the likes of WHO, the UN General Assembly, and the Wellcome Trust.
- Partners have gained opportunities to take leading roles in shaping mental health policy and research, including collaborating internationally on research projects and contributing significantly to national mental health strategy.
- Partners have created more sustainable operational structures, for instance transitioning from volunteer-based organisations to transforming their models to establish profitable social enterprises.

DETAILS: EMBER CALL OUT 2024

What are the criteria for applying?

In order to be eligible to apply for Ember Call Out 2024, applicants must:

- **Work in the field of mental health.**
- **Be based in a low- or middle- income country** ([check this list](#) if unsure).
- **Engage directly with communities.** We are looking for initiatives that are close to the communities they serve and deeply rooted in their settings, with local leadership. We are less likely to partner with advocacy organisations, political organisations, government services or think-tanks.
- **Be locally led.** This means that initiatives should be based in low-and-middle income countries, that are created and implemented by local leadership teams, or/and with members of the community they serve.
- **Have a team of more than one person.** This can include volunteers.
- **Have at least one English or Spanish or Arabic speaker in the team.**
- **Not discriminate** on the basis of religion, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race or ability. However, faith-based organisations may apply.





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What is Ember's application and selection process?

We know that applications can take up a huge amount of time, and this is particularly difficult for small teams. We have tried to make sure our application process is as straightforward as possible. It is divided into three rounds.

Round 1: Application submission

Applications will be open from **Tuesday 9th of July to 6pm BST, Tuesday, August 20th** through [this short online form](#). You can also apply in [Spanish](#) and [Arabic](#).

We recommend you prepare your application offline and then fill in the online form when you are ready.

Round 2: Application Review and Feedback

The Ember team will review and respond to applications on a rolling basis **between July and September**. If successful, we will contact you to organise a 45-minute interview via Zoom or a phone call.

All applicants will be provided with feedback by September 19th.

Round 3: Final Selection Process

The final round of the Ember selection process will take place **between October and December 2024**.

After the initial 45-minute interview, you will receive an email from a member of the Ember team by **mid-October**, letting you know whether you have progressed to the next round.

If successful, we will contact you to organise a longer interview with other members of the team, to go into more detail about the work you do. You will then be placed on a short-list that will be submitted to our independent advisory group, the [Ember Working Group](#), to make the final decision.

The final selection decisions will be communicated by **mid-December**. If you are unsuccessful at this stage, you will receive detailed feedback on your application.

The partnerships with the selected initiatives will formally begin in **January 2025 and end in December 2025**.





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DETAILS: PARTNERSHIP WITH EMBER

Is there financial support available?

Ember provides successful applicants with a stipend of £6,000 GBP for the year, as a contribution to the time committed to the process. Our work together will also include efforts to enhance their financial position, including strengthening financial strategies, fundraising support, networking opportunities and recommendations to other funders.

How does the partnership work practically?

- Ways of working: We work remotely via tools like WhatsApp and Zoom as is best suited to the organisation.
- Time Commitment: We spend an average of 1-2 hours per week working together directly through calls, online workshops, creative sessions, etc.
- Partner Visit: If possible, we also make a visit to our partners at some point during the year.
- Languages: We conduct partnerships either in English, Arabic or Spanish, so we require that at least one team member be comfortable working in either language. Though Ember's team collectively speaks 14 languages, our model of involving multiple people from our team in each partnership limits the number of languages we can work directly with innovators in. This is something we are hoping to expand as we grow.
- Involving multiple team members: Ideally, we work with multiple people from across the team, rather than just the founder or the senior management, as we know this builds stronger relationships and delivers greater impact.

What does Ember expect from its partners?

- Time Commitment: We anticipate that organisations need to dedicate approximately 3 hours per week over 12 months to the partnership. This includes time working directly with Ember in online sessions and time devoted to working together internally as a team.
- Values of the partnership: We look for partners who are committed to engaging with us openly, honestly, and in a spirit of collaboration.

What do our partners say about us?

The people who are best placed to give you a sense of whether an Ember partnership is right for your organisation, are the teams who've been part of our previous cohorts. Here are a few things they have said about partnering with us:





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"I like that they're [talking about Ember] not focused on just what they can offer, but it's like, "What do you need?" [...] I feel like they've got so much expertise but... they don't tell us what we need, which is good, because sometimes you kind of feel when you're speaking to somebody who's helping you and mentoring you, you kind of take a back seat and you let them drive. They're not doing that; they're letting us drive."

"The first partnership came at a time where [the organisation] was known to no one, no one in the region, no one in the world. But, because of that partnership, it has opened networks around the world."

"[Ember is] an organisation that helps to develop the capacity of smaller organisations to do the work that they are doing."

"I started to realise that Ember was like a figure of support... [like] the tutor of a plant that is growing, so that it can gain strength and become independent."

"Our dream has been brought closer. Actually, I don't even think it's a dream now because it's tangible. [...] The space that Ember created for us to be ourselves without having to mutate but just be ourselves, and that gave us the space we needed to make sure that we are meeting our targets as an institution."

The deadline for submission is 6pm BST, Tuesday, August 20th .

Spread the word!

We want to cast the net as wide as possible. Please spread the word about this call-out, either by emailing any organisations you think might be interested or sharing this page on social media.

Still have questions? Read through the [FAQs](#). If you are facing issues in submitting the application, please write to calloutsupport@embermentalhealth.org

