

Help us to Shape the Future of Counselling and Psychotherapy Research

BACP, the UK's leading professional association for members of the counselling professions, is currently looking for two members of the public with personal experience of therapy to join our Strategic Research Collaboration and Development Group.

Through this unique opportunity you will draw upon your lived experience of counselling, psychotherapy and/or coaching to critically engage in discussions that will inform the development and delivery of BACP's research strategy. You will be a strategic thinker with some experience in research (ideally) and an interest in shaping the future of counselling and psychotherapy research to bring about a positive impact in the field.

Appointments will be for a period of 4 years in the first instance with appropriate remuneration in line with BACP policy.

Responsibilities and Expectations:

Overview:

We are looking for two members of the general public to work with our Strategic Research Collaboration and Development Group. The Strategic Research Collaboration and Development Group consists of researchers and practitioners in counselling, psychotherapy and mental health and is responsible for providing expert advice, challenge and support to inform the development and delivery of BACP's research strategy. Using your unique perspective as a therapy client and/or member of the public, you will help us to ensure that the public/client voice remains at the heart of our research.

Meetings will normally be held online and last up to three hours. One meeting each year may be extended and held face-to-face where feasible. You will work with the group to:

- Inform, shape and critically reflect on the development and implementation of BACP's research strategy.
- Generate and explore new research opportunities, priorities and collaborations.
- Provide constructive challenge and independent expert input as a "critical friend".
- Advise on the development and delivery of strategic research projects and initiatives.

- Consider emerging developments, opportunities and challenges within counselling and psychotherapy research.
- Consider initiatives to support the development of research culture and capacity within the discipline of counselling and psychotherapy in addition to important cross-disciplinary opportunities.
- Contribute to ensuring that research activity remains relevant to practice, service delivery and lived experience.

Person Specification:

Essential criteria

You will:

- Have experience of personally using psychotherapy, coaching or mental health services and/or being able to draw on experience of living with or caring for someone else using similar services.
- Have an interest in counselling, psychotherapy, coaching and/or mental health research.
- Have an understanding of mental health issues facing a diverse range of people and show commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Be able to discuss issues sensitively and confidentially in groups and be able to work as part of a team.
- Have clear oral communication skills and analytical capacity, with the ability to critically engage with research and strategic discussion.
- Be available and able to attend online meetings.

Desirable criteria

- Experience in any of the following areas: research; community based/voluntary settings; service user involvement; sitting on advisory committees/panels.

We would particularly welcome applications from people from diverse, marginalised backgrounds and unrepresented communities.

Our responsibilities to you:

- We will introduce you to BACP and the Strategic Research Collaboration and Development Group and to relevant members of the BACP Research Team.
- We will ensure you receive a full induction and introduction to BACP.
- We will ensure you have a clear understanding of what your role involves.
- We will ensure that there is always a clear point of contact within the research team.

Additional Details and How to Apply

Duration of role:

Your involvement will run from February 2027 and is expected to last up to four years. The Group will meet three times annually, typically in:

- February
- June
- October

Payment and expenses:

We will pay you £125 per half a day for attendance at online meetings. For in-person meetings (one per year where feasible), the attendance fee is £125 per half day plus £35 for any additional hour of meeting time. Expenses for travel, subsistence and accommodation will be paid in line with BACP policy.

How to apply:

BACP is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and applicants for voluntary and contracted roles. As such, we are providing a CV template* that can be used (if required) and a choice of application method based on your preference, however all applications will be scored using the same criteria. Please also note that our goal is to understand how you naturally think and communicate. While AI tools are fine to use for planning and structure, your final application text must come directly from you.

To apply, please send one of the following to research@bacp.co.uk:

- a CV and a small personal statement between 300 - 400 words
- or
- a CV and a 2-3 minute video statement (recorded on your phone, for example)

CVs should be no longer than two sides and the CV template* can be used if required. Please also answer the following questions in your written statement or video:

- What motivates you to apply for this position?
- Why is shaping the future of therapy research and therapy practice important to you?
- What are two key contributions you can bring to this role?

Closing date: We will be closing this advert on 19th October 2026.

Interviews: 4th November 2026.

*To receive a copy of the CV template, or if you have any additional needs that we should be aware of in order to support you with your application, please contact research@bacp.co.uk

