



GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard Student Research Assistant Program

Fall 2023

Full program overview

Thank you for your interest in the GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard Fall 2023 Student Research Assistant (RA) Program. The Student RA Program is based upon a cooperative three-party relationship between [GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard](#), the program host supervisors and the Student RAs.

Please read through the full program overview. If you have any questions, please reach out to GMH@Harvard Program Manager, Katy O’Neill at katy_oneill@hms.harvard.edu.

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1. Student Research Assistant Program Description

Duration	14 week (~3 month) program from Sept. 2023 – Dec. 2023, up to 15 hours per week
Funding Support	Organized by the GMH@Harvard Initiative, funding support from the Friends of Mewar Fund in Global Mental Health
Hourly Rate	Harvard Graduate Students: \$20/hr Harvard Undergraduate Students: \$21/hr
Eligibility	Harvard students who are enrolled full-time at Harvard College or in a Harvard Graduate Program from September 5, 2023 – December 5, 2023. Students who are Federal Work Study eligible for the duration of the program are encouraged to apply.
Location	Student RAs may work either in person or remotely with their Faculty Supervisor. Faculty Supervisors should discuss in person/remote work preferences with their Student RA.
Placement Information	Faculty from any Harvard school or affiliated hospital. Applicants can apply to work with faculty on a specific global mental health focus area or apply to the Student RA program more generally. Faculty supervisors must have project objectives align with the GMH@Harvard Initiative's aspiration to elevate the profile of mental health as a fundamental public good and universal human right The GMH@Harvard Initiative leadership will match successful applicants with the most appropriate host sites, ensuring that the needs and interests of both the faculty and students are met.

<p>Student Activities</p>	<p>It is envisioned that Student RAs could either work within an established program as a research assistant or propose their own independent research project.</p> <p>Project activities for students in collaboration with their host sites could include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research coordination and support activities, such as managing IRB submissions, scheduling project meetings, recording meeting minutes, and writing progress reports for funders among other activities. ● Conducting literature reviews and research summaries of the relevant evidence base to inform the project. ● Assisting with coding, analyzing, and organizing data ● Collating, organizing, and/or drafting material for the preparation of research papers, manuscripts, progress reports, articles, or other documents for publication and/or presentation.
<p>GMH@Harvard Involvement</p>	<p>GMH@Harvard Program Manager, Katy O’Neill, based at the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School, will be responsible for the logistics associated with the research assistant program, payment process for the research assistants and will facilitate communication between the host site supervisors and Student RAs.</p> <p>GMH@Harvard will reserve one work hour per week for programming and community-building activities amongst the students and other members of our global mental health community. These additional mentorship opportunities will provide students with a sense of community, opportunities for connecting and networking, and professional development. The students will meet with the other Student RAs and the GMH@Harvard Program Manager to connect and check in on program activities.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to attend and participate in GMH@Harvard seminars.</p>
<p>Student Reporting Requirements</p>	<p>Students will be asked to submit a two-page report upon the completion of the program. Guidelines for the report will be distributed after students are selected and placed.</p> <p>Students will also be encouraged and supported to prepare a draft manuscript for publication as a lead author or contributing author on a project based on the research activities completed during the program.</p>

2. Program Timeline

Activity	Dates
Host-site/faculty supervisor application deadline	Monday, March 13 th 2023
Positions advertised	Monday, March 20 th 2023
Student application deadline	Monday, April 17 th 2023
Review of applications. Top applications sent to host sites to review	April/May 2023 TBD
Interview Period	April/May 2023 TBD
Offers sent to candidates by GMH@Harvard (Ongoing until position is accepted)	Friday, May 19 th 2023
GMH@Harvard Introduction & Orientation	Tuesday, September 5 th 2023
Mid-term check-in form due	October date TBD
End of term report due	Tuesday, December 5 th 2023
GMH@Harvard Student RA program closing event	December/January date TBD

3. Student Selection Process Information

Criteria to select finalists

The GMH@Harvard Program Manager screens the applications and narrows them down to the top 2-4 applicants. Students are selected based on the following criteria:

- **Statement of Interest:** Did the essay make a convincing argument with specific examples for why the individual is a strong candidate for this program? Did the essay indicate a strong connection between the applicant, their strengths, and the needs of the host site/faculty supervisor they want to work with?
- **Resume/CV:** Does the applicant have the necessary skills or previous experiences to perform and complete the tasks? Does the resume demonstrate professionalism and relevancy for this position?
- **Transcript:** Is there a clear connection to academic course work? How are the Student's grades?

The GMH@Harvard Program Manager will conduct interviews with the finalists unless the host-sites indicate on their form that they would like to interview the candidates.

4. 2023 GMH@Harvard Student RA Program Expectations Guide

[The 2023 GMH@Harvard Student RA Program Expectations Guide can be found at this link.](#)

The Student RA Program is based upon a cooperative three-party relationship between [GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard](#), the host supervisors and the Student RAs. GMH@Harvard aims to provide organizations with a qualified student who will be a valuable addition to their team. We also hope that Harvard undergraduate and graduate students will have meaningful experiences that will further their education and prepare them for careers in global mental health.

[Please read the 2023 GMH@Harvard Student RA Expectations Guide.](#) The purpose of this document is to outline roles and responsibilities for the student and the supervisor.

5. Student Application

Harvard undergraduate and graduate students who are interested in a position as a GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard Student RA should submit the following materials through the qualtrics application which will be sent to students once the host sites are finalized and positions are advertised. Students who are [Federal Work Study eligible](#) for the duration of the program are encouraged to apply.

Please see the above description for student eligibility and program requirements. The student application will request the following:

- Statement of interest which should describe your global mental health interests, work and education experience, career aspirations, faculty supervisor you are interested in working with, and what skills you hope to gain from this experience (1000 words max)
- Current undergraduate or graduate transcript
- A sample of your written work. This can be an unpublished or a published piece, whichever you think represents your work best
- Curriculum Vitae/Resume
- Choose a faculty member / research program

[The student application can be found here.](#)

Faculty Supervisor(s)	John Naslund Instructor in Global Health and Social Medicine, HMS
Project Website Link	https://mentalhealthforalllab.hms.harvard.edu/
Research Program/Lab Description	<p>The Mental Health for All Lab promotes the generation of knowledge and its effective utilization with the goal of contributing to the reduction of the global burden of suffering of mental health problems. The specific emphasis of the Lab's efforts is to leverage digital technology and task-sharing to scale up interventions for the prevention and care of mental health problems across the life course.</p> <p>Individuals living with serious mental illness experience dramatically shortened life expectancy compared to the general population, representing one of the most alarming health disparities in the United States. Innovative community-based efforts that actively engage individuals with lived experience are critical to enabling the delivery of evidence-based health promotion programming aimed at addressing this early mortality disparity in this population group. The Coaching Online And Community Health (COACH) research project seeks to adapt the evidenced-based 'Group Lifestyle Balance' health and wellness intervention for virtual delivery in a community setting for people with serious mental illness. This project is conducted in partnership with Fountain House in New York City and utilizes Community Based Participatory Action Research methods.</p>
Student Project/Deliverables	Working on the project described above, the Student RA would assist with adapting content (Nutrition, Physical Activity and Mental Health & Behavioural Management) of the intervention for COACH, and supporting the adaptation of this content for delivery on the virtual clubhouse platform. This would include: updating the existing 'Group Lifestyle Balance' sessions for the COACH brief intervention manual, scripting videos of health and wellness content, identifying existing health and wellness content to include as resources (ex: YouTube videos), etc. The Student RA may also assist with facilitation of the pilot trial of the COACH intervention, involving the recruitment of participants, data collection, and interpretation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative findings. The Student RA could also assist with the preparation of project manuscripts for publication and presentations for stakeholder meetings.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining above description	Yes
Preferred skills	General research skills (quantitative, qualitative, lit review, etc)
Student education level & School	Undergraduate & Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	3

Faculty Supervisor(s)	<p>Vikram Patel The Pershing Square Professor of Global Health and Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School Professor, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health Co-Founder and Member of Managing Committee, Sangath</p> <p>Julia Ruiz Pozuelo Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Optimized, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School</p>
Project Website Link	https://mentalhealthforalllab.hms.harvard.edu/optimized
Research Program/Lab Description	<p>The Mental Health for All Lab promotes the generation of knowledge and its effective utilization with the goal of contributing to the reduction of the global burden of suffering of mental health problems. The specific emphasis of the Lab's efforts is to leverage digital technology and task-sharing to scale up interventions for the prevention and care of mental health problems across the life course.</p> <p>One of the Mental Health for All Lab's current projects is Optimized. Optimized is a NIMH funded R01 clinical trial which aims to optimize treatment for depression by determining which patients will do better on antidepressant medication versus behavioral activation psychotherapy, the two recommended treatments for depression in primary care, through a machine learning generated precision treatment rule utilizing baseline patient characteristics.</p>
Student Project / Deliverables	<p>Working on the project described above, the Student RA may</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct literature reviews and help in manuscript preparation 2. Monitor the work of data entry staff and conduct data checks to ensure data integrity 3. Provide administrative support for meetings (e.g., agendas, minutes, scheduling) 4. Assist in the preparation of clinical trial documents and reports, protocols, and responses to requests from regulatory agencies, local Institutional Review Board, and other health authorities.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Yes
Preferred skills	Quantitative skills (RedCap & Stata) & preferably prior experience with fieldwork in low resource settings
Student education level & School	Graduate students (preferably biostatistics)
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	3

Faculty Supervisor(s)	<p>Vikram Patel The Pershing Square Professor of Global Health and Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School Professor, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health Co-Founder and Member of Managing Committee, Sangath</p> <p>John Naslund Instructor in Global Health and Social Medicine, HMS</p>
Project Website Link	https://empower.care/
Research Program/Lab Description	<p><u>EMPOWER: building the world's mental health workforce</u> Psychosocial interventions are amongst the most effective, and preferred, treatment options for a range of mental health conditions. Lack of skilled human resources is a major barrier restricting the ability of health care systems to deliver these interventions. Our team is building a digital platform called EMPOWER through which front line providers can learn, master, and deliver evidence-based psychosocial interventions. EMPOWER embraces the accompaniment model, which entails a lifelong learning journey.</p> <p><i>Our current projects are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the US and India: Skill building digital training for frontline workers on brief evidence-based psychological treatment to address adults suffering from depression. 2. In the US and India: Joint curriculum development to digitally train peers with lived experience to support social recovery for people suffering from chronic psychotic conditions. 3. In the US: Curriculum development for school professionals to be digitally trained in transdiagnostic interventions to address adolescents' mood and anxiety disorders. 4. In South Asia: Curriculum development to digitally train frontline workers in a parental-mediated intervention for autism spectrum disorder.
Student Project/Deliverables	To know more about specific opportunities, please visit this spreadsheet .
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Yes
Preferred skills	General research skills (quantitative, qualitative, lit review, etc), able to work collaboratively & independently with individuals from diverse backgrounds, and resourceful & eager to learn methods for scaling up mental health care
Student education level & School	Undergraduate & Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	3

Faculty Supervisor(s)	Ingrid Katz Associate Professor of Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital Behavioral Science Lead, The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), The US State Department
Project Website Link	https://connects.catalyst.harvard.edu/Profiles/display/Person/9744
Research Program/Lab Description	Ingrid Katz has been asked to join the leadership team at PEPFAR (the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) that is run through the State Department. As part of her portfolio there, she will be leading the Global Mental Health program. This work is quite nascent within PEPFAR, and she is quite fortunate to come in at a time where there is a clear recognition that mental health disorders are overrepresented among people living with and at risk for HIV. Ingrid currently has an opportunity to build out this platform and since she will be remaining at Harvard as well, it provides an opportunity to link academia with real-role implementation.
Student Project / Deliverables	Specific project TBD. This work is beginning now, so there would be an opportunity to be part of this work from its creation.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Yes
Preferred skills	Commitment to Global Mental Health, able to work collaboratively & independently with individuals from diverse backgrounds, and resourceful & eager to learn
Student education level & School	Undergraduate & Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	3

Faculty Supervisor(s)	Michael Stein Executive Director of the Harvard Law School Project on Disability
Project Website Link	www.hpod.org
Research Program/Lab Description	<u>Harvard Law School Project on Disability</u> HPOD is committed to enabling civil society, and especially persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to undertake informed human rights advocacy. We provide human rights training and education, facilitate the development of international law and policy, encourage inclusive development practices, share technical assistance on strategic litigation, and stimulate new thinking about the abilities of persons with disabilities and their human rights. In relation to this application, the work will be exclusively academic and lead to publishable materials that will acknowledge GMH's support.
Student Project / Deliverables	Mental health research with an experiential component. Specific project TBD.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Maybe
Preferred skills	Experience researching issues related to law, mental health, neuroscience, and/or criminal culpability
Student education level & School	Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	4

Faculty Supervisor(s)	Walid Yassine Instructor in Psychiatry and Research Scientist, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Research Associate, McLean Hospital
Project Website Link	https://connects.catalyst.harvard.edu/Profiles/display/Person/189509
Research Program/Lab Description	Walid Yassien's research focuses on several neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders. He uses different approaches, such as imaging, behavioral assessment, artificial intelligence, to better understand the brain and the deviation from what is considered "typical". His ultimate goal is to be able to assess risk factors, discover objective biomarkers, elucidate disorder spectrum and symptom overlap, and provide biomarker-based targeted therapeutic interventions in various disorders of the mind. Walid uses advanced statistical tools and artificial intelligence to identify biomarkers and risk factors for mental health conditions.
Student Project / Deliverables	The student would use publicly available databases to look at the environmental effect on mental health.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Maybe
Preferred skills	Statistics, coding, or machine learning skills as well as experience in publicly available databases are appreciated
Student education level & School	Undergraduate & Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	3

Faculty Supervisor(s)	Einat Liebenthal Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School Research Associate, McLean Institute for Technology in Psychiatry
Project Website Link	https://connects.catalyst.harvard.edu/Profiles/display/Person/122038
Research Program/Lab Description	Einat Liebenthal studies verbal and non-verbal communication in relation to mental disorders and communication disorders using digital measures of behavior and multimodal neuroimaging methods. The ultimate goal of her research is to inform the development of diagnostic methods and psychotherapeutic interventions that are scalable and neuroscientifically grounded. Her current projects focus on digital phenotyping of language in relation to mental health and the development of naturalistic approaches for dynamic assessment of language and emotion.
Student Project / Deliverables	The student will work on a project designed to develop and validate a movie functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) paradigm for assessing language and emotion functions in individuals who have language and/or emotional impairments in relation to a neurological (brain tumor induced aphasia) or psychiatric (depression) disorder. Depending on the student's skills and interests and the stage of the project, the student may assist in developing a movie-clip stimulus database, behavioral and computational assessment of movie clip stimuli, processing of eye tracking data, processing and analysis of retrospective fMRI data.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Yes
Preferred skills	Desired experience and skills include background and interest in cognitive, clinical, or computational neuroscience and excellent analytical and communication abilities. Specific experience with neuroimaging data analysis, and/or methods for computational analysis of speech, voice, and face data, will be preferred.
Student education level & School	Undergraduate & Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	3

Faculty Supervisor(s)	<p>Karestan Koenen Professor of Psychiatric Epidemiology, Harvard T.H. School of Public Health Head of the Global Neuropsychiatric Genomics Initiative of the Stanley Center for Psychiatric Research at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard</p> <p>Alyssa Fuller Senior Project Coordinator, Biology of Trauma Initiative, Stanley Center for Psychiatric Research at Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard</p>
Project Website Link	<p>https://www.broadinstitute.org/biology-trauma-initiative-broad-institute https://www.broadinstitute.org/stanley-center-psychiatric-research/stanley-global</p>
Research Program/Lab Description	<p>The Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard launched the Biology of Trauma Initiative (BTI) in July 2022. Led by Dr. Karestan Koenen, an international leader in the field of trauma research, associate member at the Broad, and a professor of psychiatric epidemiology at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, this new pilot aims to increase understanding of the biological impact of trauma, with the ultimate goal of improving the health and well-being of trauma survivors.</p> <p>Additionally, the team has several projects within the Stanley Global Neuropsychiatric Genetics Initiative (Stanley Global): This initiative was launched in 2014 and seeks to diversify genetic sample collection outside of the United States and Northern Europe to include Asian, Latin American, and African populations, as well as important population isolates such as that in Finland. Dr. Koenen leads the Neuropsychiatric Genetics of African Populations (NeuroGAP) and Neuropsychiatric Genetics in Mexican Populations (NeuroMex) programs, which aim to conduct collaborative neuropsychiatric genetics research and capacity building in historically underrepresented populations in Africa and Mexico.</p>
Student Project / Deliverables	Specific project TBD. Typical tasks include literature reviews, attending lab and project meetings, and drafting research protocols and consent forms.
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	Maybe
Preferred skills	Data analysis skills (experience with R or REDCap), previous experience in mental health research, experience working in a diverse, global setting
Student education level & School	Undergraduate & Graduate students
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	2

Faculty Supervisor(s)	<p>Laura Kubzansky Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Director of the Society and Health Laboratory, Harvard T.H. School of Public Health</p> <p>Kelsey Hunt Program Manager, Human Flourishing Program, Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Science</p>
Project Website Link	<p>https://hfh.fas.harvard.edu/health-society-and-well-being</p>
Research Program/Lab Description	<p>Dr. Laura Kubzansky's current research program builds on her extensive scholarship in the science of positive health, with a focus on population-level health and well-being. We focus on activities that investigate linkages across positive psychological and social well-being, positive social environments, and physical health, with an emphasis on identifying strategies for increasing health equity and translating this research into policy and practice. Some of our new areas of exploration are sense of safety and health, prosociality and health, arts and health, and social prescribing.</p>
Student Project / Deliverables	<p>Specific project TBD. Most likely either the 'arts and health' or 'social prescribing' projects. Typical tasks include literature reviews, curating research digests, updating data and measurement repositories, etc.</p>
Interest in mentoring an individual working on an independent study pertaining to the above description	<p>No</p>
Preferred skills	<p>Literature reviews; synthesizing literature and creating summaries of the findings; annotated bibliographies</p>
Student education level & School	<p>Graduate students (enrolled at HSPH)</p>
On a scale of 0 to 5, preferred level of supervision from very little supervision (0) to a great deal of supervision (5)	<p>3</p>