

Psychedelic Safety Institute

October 2024 Update

Update Summary

This newsletter reflects our progress over the last three months, beginning with a summary and leading into context and updates. Thank you for your support of our effort to improve the state of psychedelic safety. Please feel free to contact Stacey (stacey@psychedelicsafety.institute) or Malcolm (malcolm@psychedelicsafety.institute) with questions, thoughts, feedback, or suggestions.

[Please see this document](#) for all our updated materials, including our Deck, Summary, Psychedelic Safety Summit Agenda, and Project Plans. To understand how you can help, [see our asks here](#).

Update highlights include:

- **We have been supported with \$165,000 from the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation and Eric Williams, with an additional \$140,000 committed from the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, \$206,000 committed from the Education Foundation of America, and \$2,500 in anticipated funding from the Ettinger Foundation for a total of \$513,500.**
 - We are seeking \$404,000 in additional funding to complete our 12-month objectives and \$160,000 for the summit forthcoming Psychedelic Safety Summit, held in partnership with UC Berkeley's Center for the Science of Psychedelics.
- **Announcing PSI's Safety Summit in Partnership with Berkeley**
 - Our Psychedelic Safety Summit, hosted by PSI and UC Berkeley's Center for the Science of Psychedelics, set for March 2025, aimed at developing collaborative strategies to reduce psychedelic-related harms and improve safe use. See our materials for more information on the summit.
 - We're forming a steering committee for the summit. Please respond if you have an interest in participating or would like to make recommendations.
- **Andrew Rose Joining PSI as Director of Programs**
 - Andrew is joining PSI to support the development of our strategic assets, foster stakeholder relationships, and prepare for our upcoming summit.
- **Advancing Across Our Projects**
 - PSI's psychedelic harm typology was featured in RAND Corporation's report.
 - Ongoing projects include a literature review with an AI-powered tech stack to efficiently extract and analyze key information.
 - We've initiated market research on psychedelic use and safety.
 - We've started testing and deploying our ethics toolkit.



- **Key Partnerships**

- Partnerships were established with the Coalition for Psychedelic Safety and Education (CPSE), the Psychedelic Communications Hub, and the Global Psychedelic Society.

Full Update

Introduction

The recent FDA decision on MDMA-assisted therapy for PTSD has sent ripples throughout the psychedelic community. This decision comes after years of dedicated effort and substantial investment from countless individuals across the psychedelic ecosystem. As we collectively process this outcome and continue to understand the consequences for the future of psychedelic care, PSI is committed to serving as a unifying force within the psychedelic community.

The FDA's decision underscores a growing emphasis on safety considerations surrounding psychedelic care. This heightened scrutiny extends beyond regulatory bodies to include healthcare providers, researchers, and the general public. It serves as a clear signal that as we expand options for mental health care, we must equally elevate our commitment to safety and ethics.

In light of these developments, we see an urgent need for unity and collaboration within the psychedelic community. Now, more than ever, we must come together to:

1. Elevate standards for psychedelic safety and ethics
2. Develop a coordinated, ecosystem-wide approach to addressing concerns
3. Build robust infrastructure to support the responsible expansion of psychedelic care

We deeply appreciate the foundational work of MAPS, PSFC, and others in coordinating the psychedelic ecosystem and laying the foundational infrastructure for psychedelic care. Building on their efforts, PSI is committed to addressing critical safety and ethical considerations. Our upcoming Psychedelic Safety Summit will serve as a vital platform to convene and align diverse stakeholders both within and adjacent to the psychedelic ecosystem to shape the next phase of responsible psychedelic care collaboratively. We invite you to participate in shaping these conversations.

Supported by the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, Educational Foundation of America, & Eric Williams

We are delighted to announce that PSI has been supported with \$140,000 from the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, \$206,000 from the Educational Foundation of America, and \$25,000 from Eric Williams. The Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation has committed an additional \$140,000 on or before April 1, 2025. We additionally anticipate \$2,500 in funding from the Ettinger Foundation in January. We are deeply grateful for our supporters.



These funds will support:

1. A contribution to PSI's operational budget
2. Financial support for the upcoming Summit
3. Key deliverables, including education & best practices packages, white papers, public education campaigns, and areas-of-focus recommendations, that will drive systemic change in psychedelic safety practices.
4. Engagement of stakeholders to gather insights and feedback on PSI's strategy before the summit

“We are incredibly excited about the opportunity to work on this initiative with PSI, as it is very important for the health of the psychedelic ecosystem, the effectiveness of philanthropy, and the wellbeing of the public in relationship to safe psychedelic use. Given PSI's strong leadership team, we are confident in their ability to execute such an ambitious plan.”

Matthew Ettinger

Board Member, Educational Foundation of America

Announcing: PSI's Psychedelic Safety Summit in Collaboration with The UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics (BCSP)

We are excited to share our plans to collaborate with The [UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics](#) (BCSP) on our Psychedelic Safety Summit, scheduled for March 19-21, 2025, on the UC Berkeley campus. This three-day event will gather up to 100 key stakeholders from within and adjacent to the psychedelic ecosystem. The focus will be on developing and improving strategies to reduce and respond to psychedelic-related harms and improve safe use, identifying research gaps, and creating a coordinated action plan. The summit will culminate in a comprehensive report capturing key findings, discussions, and agreed-upon actions. This collaboration marks a significant step towards advancing a coordinated approach to psychedelic safety. Berkeley has been an exceptional collaborator. We're thrilled to be working with such a prestigious institution on this important effort.

“The UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics is proud to partner with the Psychedelic Safety Institute for their upcoming Psychedelic Safety Summit. Fostering a collaborative ecosystem to advance an evidence-based, comprehensive approach to psychedelic safety is crucial for both mitigating potential risks and maximizing potential benefits. This aligns perfectly with our mission to provide credible, accessible information that enriches the public dialogue on psychedelics—a mission achievable only through meaningful engagement with diverse constituencies across the field.”

Andrea Venezia

Executive Director, the UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics



Andrew Rose Joining PSI as Director of Programs

We are excited to announce [Andrew Rose](#) is joining our team as Director of Programs to support the development of our strategic assets, foster stakeholder relationships, and help us prepare for our upcoming summit. Andrew is a seasoned psychedelic sector leader with experience in strategic roles at prominent psychedelic organizations, who combines his expertise in harm reduction coaching and psychedelic education with over 20 years of personal practice to advance therapeutic applications and family-oriented approaches to intentional psychedelic use.

PSI's Work Highlighted in RAND Corporation Report

We are pleased to announce that PSI's harms typology has been featured in the RAND Corporation's recently released report, "[Considering Alternatives to Psychedelic Drug Prohibition](#)." Our work is included on page 55.

This comprehensive report, authored by Beau Kilmer and Michelle Priest, offers a nuanced examination of potential policy alternatives for psychedelics. The inclusion of PSI's harms typology underscores the relevance and impact of safety considerations and the need for the shared knowledge PSI is developing, in shaping informed discussions on psychedelic policy.

Project Updates

Literature Review Progress

Our literature review is progressing well, with 450 papers currently under examination. To enhance this process, PSI is developing a custom AI tool capable of efficiently extracting and analyzing key information from thousands of research papers. This innovative approach will allow for a rapid, iterative, and scalable review of the existing academic literature. We anticipate that this tool will significantly advance the knowledge landscape across the psychedelic ecosystem. For details on the lit review and its outcomes, [please see this document](#).

Market Research Initiated

We have launched our market research project, which analyzes psychedelic use, safety, and efficacy by integrating data from diverse sources to inform evidence-based policies and harm reduction strategies through extensive analysis of market research, forum data, safety profiles, and efficacy reports. For details on this project, [please see this document](#).

Ethics Toolkit

PSI has been collaborating to implement ethics reports generated by professional bioethicists as a comprehensive, templatable ethics framework for a training organization. This framework's structure has, so far, undergone a stakeholder review by 14 individuals, including professional bioethicists.



Part of our agreement is that we can use a templated version of this framework with other organizations moving forward. We're excited that this framework can elevate the ethical maturity of the psychedelic industry and remove obstacles to good ethical hygiene by organizations that cannot justify the cost of replicating this work from the ground up.

Harms Typology and Preliminary Education Packages

Our initial literature review will be circulated to the research community for feedback and input. Key takeaways will then be summarized and integrated into our harm typology. This will enable us to create preliminary education packages with supporting evidence to distribute to stakeholders and the wider community pre-summit, ensuring a unified understanding of harms and their implications.

Partner Updates

CPSE and the Education Campaign

PSI and CPSE are collaborating to support each other, align efforts and avoid duplication of effort in service of public health and safety. As part of this collaboration, PSI is making its literature review tool available to inform CPSE's public health education pilot campaign. We look forward to continued collaboration.

Psychedelic Communications Hub

Since the FDA Advisory Committee voted against the approval of MDMA-assisted therapy for the treatment of PTSD, PSI has offered support for Robyn Thomas's coordination of the psychedelic communications ecosystem through insight into safety messaging and access to our typology work. We are also discussing with the PCH the best ways to partner on public education efforts and support the communication needs of allies across the ecosystem.

"We are excited to partner with PSI to support a balanced public understanding of psychedelic risks and benefits. PSI has been a valued partner, offering help at this crucial juncture in our work on the approval of MDMA-AT. Moving forward, we look forward to continuing our partnership with PSI, focusing on developing standardized language, media resources, and expanding our roster of expert spokespeople to ensure accurate and responsible psychedelic information is communicated to the public."

Robyn Thomas

Executive Director, Psychedelic Communications Hub

Global Psychedelic Society

PSI is partnering with the [Global Psychedelic Society](#), which is a network of hundreds of Psychedelic Societies around the world, serving as crucial first points of contact for people interested in learning about psychedelics and finding local community. PSI is excited to partner with GPS to disseminate evidence-based best practices for safer psychedelic use and to understand the needs of the public better.



“Global Psychedelic Society (GPS) is excited to announce our collaboration with the Psychedelic Safety Initiative (PSI). This partnership will leverage our worldwide network to inform safety priorities while supporting the dissemination of evidence-based education on safer psychedelic use. We look forward to contributing to PSI's research, public education efforts, and the development of best practices for psychedelic communities. We are excited for this partnership to contribute to a safer, more informed psychedelic future for everyone”

Mareesa Stertz

Strategy and Communications, Global Psychedelic Society

Asks

PSI Funding Goal

We are actively fundraising to secure an additional \$404,000 to fully support our 12-month objectives. These goals include completing our literature review, conducting market research, performing strategic analysis that is a prerequisite to the summit, and planning the summit itself. Your support is crucial in helping us achieve these milestones.

Summit Funding and Sponsorship

We're pleased to report preliminary interest from several organizations for our upcoming summit. To reach this goal, we need to raise an additional \$160,000. We are actively seeking additional funders and corporate sponsors. If you or your organization are interested in supporting this initiative or if you can introduce us to potential sponsors, please reach out.

Summit Steering Committee Formation

We are in the process of assembling a steering committee to guide the summit's development. This group will be crucial in shaping the agenda, curating the invitee list, and defining key outcomes. We anticipate a time commitment of approximately 3 hours per month from September through January for committee members. If you're interested in joining this group or would like to recommend a qualified individual, please respond to this email.

Thank you for your support. We welcome feedback on direction, prioritizations, and any questions. We're excited about our progress and the impact of these activities so we can establish a safer foundation for the psychedelic ecosystem's sustainable growth and positive impact.

Warmly,

Stacey and Malcolm

