ISRCTN10451254 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN10451254

HEIDI+ project: improving young women's body image [Projet HEIDI+: améliorer l'image corporelle des jeunes femmes]

Submission date	Recruitment status	[X] Prospectively registered
16/07/2026	Not yet recruiting	[ ] Protocol
Registration date	**Overall study status**	[ ] Statistical analysis plan
17/07/2026	Ongoing	[ ] Results
Last Edited	**Condition category**	[ ] Individual participant data
17/07/2026	Mental and Behavioural Disorders	[X] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol
Not provided at time of registration

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific, Principal investigator, Public

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Swiss National Clinical Trials Portal
SNCTP000006934

Study information

Scientific Title
HEIDI+: a pilot randomized controlled trial assessing feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary efficacy of a cognitive-dissonance intervention integrated with self-compassion elements in young women

Acronym
HEIDI+

Study objectives
The intervention being evaluated is aimed at addressing body shame and body dissatisfaction, with the ultimate goal of preventing eating disorders.

1. The first objective of this pilot RCT has two distinct feasibility sub-objectives, each addressing a different question.
1.1. First, intervention feasibility concerns whether the new HEIDI+ intervention, which is an enhanced Body Project with self-compassion elements, can be delivered as designed and is acceptable to participants.
1.2. Second, trial feasibility concerns whether the evidence base and operational conditions justify proceeding to a definitive, adequately powered RCT.
2. A second objective concerns preliminary efficacy; consistent with best practice for pilot trials, this objective is estimation-focused and does not contribute to the go/no-go decision for a potential adequately powered RCT.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 02/06/2026, Geneva Cantonal Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects [Commission Cantonale d'Ethique de la Recherche sur l'être humain (CCER) du canton de Genève] (Commission cantonale d'éthique de la recherche (CCER) Rue Adrien-Lachenal 8, Geneva, 1207, Switzerland; +41225465101; ccer@etat.ge.ch), ref: 2026-00448

Primary study design
Interventional

Allocation
Randomized controlled trial

Masking
Open (masking not used)

Control
Active

Assignment
Parallel

Purpose

Prevention

Study type(s)

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Body shame, dissatisfaction, concerns and negative body image.

Interventions
The target population includes young people from the French-speaking community in Switzerland aged 18–30 who identify as women (including transgender women). Prior evidence suggests the Body Project does not produce robust effects in men. While recent studies have included transgender women, the Body Project efficacy in this population remains unexplored. As the Body Project was originally developed based on cisgender women's experiences, differences in adherence or retention may emerge. Gender and sex assigned at birth will be recorded to descriptively examine potential recruitment or retention issues and inform more inclusive future interventions.

Randomisation: This study will use an individual randomisation design, with participants as the units of randomisation. A random allocation sequence will be generated in R and implemented in REDCap. Restricted randomisation (blocked randomisation) will be used to ensure balanced allocation (1:1) between the two intervention groups. Block sizes will vary to protect allocation concealment. Groups will be formed as participants join (with a target of six participants per group), and intervention sessions will start once a group has reached sufficient size.
Intervention HEIDI+(intervention group): Participants will attend four 90-minute sessions via a videoconferencing platform, in groups of up to six people. This intervention includes discussions and exercises focused on the beauty ideals promoted in our society and how to protect oneself from them. The approaches used are cognitive dissonance and self-compassion.

Intervention Body Project (active control group): Participants will be required to attend four 90-minute sessions via a videoconferencing platform, in groups of up to six people. This program also includes discussions and exercises focused on the ideals of beauty that are valued in our society and how to protect oneself from them. The approach used in this intervention is mainly cognitive dissonance.

Both the HEIDI+ and Body Project interventions cover the same discussion topics, but the intervention techniques used differ. HEIDI+ employs techniques of cognitive dissonance and self-compassion. The Body Project uses only cognitive dissonance techniques. Cognitive dissonance involves leading discussions and exercises designed to help participants reexamine their beliefs. Self-compassion involves speaking to, treating, and encouraging oneself as one would a good friend.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
1. Body shame measured using the Body Shame subscale of the Objectified Body Consciousness (OBC-BS) questionnaire at pre-intervention, post-intervention and 1-month follow-up

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Body dissatisfaction measured using the Body Shape Questionnaire 8C (BSQ-8C) at pre-intervention, post-intervention and 1-month follow-up

2. Beauty-ideal internalization measured using the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-4-Revised (SATAQ-4R) at pre-intervention, post-intervention and 1-month follow-up

3. Eating disorder psychopathology measured using the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q) at pre-intervention, post-intervention and 1-month follow-up

4. Self-compassion measured using the Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form (SCS-SF) at pre-intervention, post-intervention and 1-month follow-up

5. Personality, to assess assertiveness, politeness/social compliance, perfectionism, measured using items from the 100 Nuances of Personality (100NP) at pre-intervention, post-intervention and 1-month follow-up

Completion date
31/01/2028

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Identifing as a woman
2. Living or working in Switzerland
3. Aged 18-30 years
4. Self-reported body dissatisfaction
5. Sufficient level of French to actively participate in the intervention

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Lower age limit
18 Years

Upper age limit
30 Years

Sex
Female

Total final enrolment
0

Key exclusion criteria
1. Meeting a current diagnostic criteria for any eating disorder according to the DSM-5-TR
2. Meeting the diagnostic criteria for a mood disorder or anxiety disorder
3. Pregnancy or lactation
4. Refusal to have the intervention sessions audio-recorded

Date of first enrolment
01/10/2026

Date of final enrolment
30/11/2027

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Switzerland

Sponsor information

Organisation
HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland

ROR
https://ror.org/01xkakk17

Funder(s)

Funder type

Funder Name
Schweizerischer Nationalfonds zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung

Alternative Name(s)
Schweizerischer Nationalfonds, Swiss National Science Foundation, Fonds National Suisse de la Recherche Scientifique, Fondo Nazionale Svizzero per la Ricerca Scientifica, Fonds National Suisse, Fondo Nazionale Svizzero, Schweizerische Nationalfonds, The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), SNF, SNSF, FNS

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

Location
Switzerland

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

Following the publication of the main article, the coded data will be shared in an open registry in accordance with the FAIR principles and under a CC-BY license, as requested by the SNF, which funded the project.

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request