Call for applications for grants for the Innovation Evaluation project

Institute for Effective Education

April 2018

Goals of the Innovation Evaluation project

Teachers often try out innovative teaching and learning practices with their pupils. Sometimes these are approaches that the teachers have developed themselves, either alone or in collaboration with colleagues in their school (in this document, the word "school" is used to refer to any education setting for children aged between 2 and 18 years). Sometimes they are adaptations of approaches that have been proven to work elsewhere, which the teachers have altered in order to work with their particular pupils.

The overall goal of the Research Schools Network is to improve the attainment of pupils by increasing the use of evidence-based teaching and learning practices. The specific goals of this fund are to increase the evidence base by supporting evaluations of innovations of teaching and learning approaches, communicating the findings among the Research Schools Network, and encouraging applications for larger systematic evaluations of promising approaches. The evaluations will be pilot studies of innovations, not large-scale randomised controlled trials. Nevertheless, there should be a comparison of pupil achievement that will indicate whether or not the intervention has potential.

Examples of projects

1. A teacher has adapted a KS1 literacy programme that has evidence of effectiveness from Australia. She has adapted it for use in the UK and developed materials for use in her class. She tried it out last year and believes that it improved her Year 1 pupils' phonics and fluency. She will evaluate its use this year and compare it to one other Year 1 class in her school who will be using it for the first time and to a third Year 1 class that will use the regular literacy teaching methods.

2. Three schools collaborate on the evaluation of an intervention to improve pupils' KS3 algebra attainment, designed by a teacher in one of the schools. Half of the Year 7 classes in each school will be taught algebra using the intervention, while the other classes will act as a control group. The evaluation will compare the attainment of the intervention and control classes on a common end-of-year test.

Amount of funding

The amount of funding per project will vary depending on the length of the evaluation, the cost and intensity of the intervention, the number of schools involved, the number of year groups participating and the data that will be collected. Funds may be spent on supply cover, purchasing the intervention, materials, evaluation resources (eg, tests), and UK travel. The majority of the funding will be released on successful completion of the project, including writing an evaluation report which is accepted by the IEE and submitting a statement of expenses. **The maximum amount that can be requested per school participating in each project is £5,000 with a total amount of £20,000.** Schools are encouraged to collaborate on projects.

Application process

Please note that this funding is only available to schools that are involved with the Research Schools Network. Schools submitting proposals should already be working closely with their local Research School and proposals should be supported by the Director of Research School at your local Research School. Application forms are available from Research Schools; please make sure you contact your local Research School as soon as possible to ensure you are able to receive the appropriate support in time to make your application.

For an informal conversation about any aspect of your proposal, please contact either the Director of Research School at your local Research School, or Alicia Shaw, Research Schools Facilitator at the Institute for Effective Education (01904 328108, alicia.shaw@york.ac.uk).

Application timeline

Activity	Who	Summer 2018 application round
Call for applications	IEE	30th April 2018
Prepare application	Interested schools	Summer 2018
Submit application	Lead school	15th June 2018
Evaluate applications	IEE	June 2018
Notify applicants	IEE	13th July 2018
Start-up meetings	Awardees and IEE	September 2018
Conduct evaluations	Recipient schools	Autumn 2018 onwards
Submit final reports	Recipient schools	Autumn 2019

Evaluation criteria

- 20 points – Description of the problem and the innovation.
- 10 points – Familiarity with the current evidence in the particular field and potential contribution to the knowledge base.
- 20 points – Quality of the research methods (ie, Sample, Design, Measures, Intervention, Process evaluation, Analysis).
- 20 points – Feasibility of the project in terms of scope, timeline, budget, project management. Potential for further systematic evaluation and future scale-up of the innovation.
- 10 points – Potential for improving outcomes such as attainment, engagement or teacher efficiency through the innovation to be evaluated.
- 20 points – Quality of the written proposal (ie, clarity, organisation, presentation, communication plans).

How to prepare your application

The first page of the application form asks for the following information.

- Title of the project
- Lead School name and URN
- Name/position of lead applicant and
- Work address
- Work email
- Phone number
- Names/positions/schools of co-applicants
- Name of the Director of Research School in the associated Research School who has supported the application
- Year level(s) involved in the evaluation
- Subject(s) addressed by the innovation
- Time needed to complete the evaluation (in months)
- Total amount requested for the evaluation

Description of proposed evaluation

(maximum number of words = 1,500 not including timeline, budget and references)

Further details about what to include in these sections can be found in the [Innovation Evaluation handbook](#). The letters preceding headings in this section will help you to find the corresponding section in the application form and handbook.

Introduction

a. Problem
Describe the problem, challenge or issue facing your school(s) that your innovation is designed to address.

b. Existing evidence
Describe existing research in the area and what existing evidence says about how this problem could be addressed.

c. Innovation
Briefly describe the innovation you will evaluate. How will the innovation help improve the problem you have identified? How will this project contribute to the knowledge base of what works in teaching and learning?

d. Research question(s) or hypothesis
Ask a specific question that you would like to answer during this evaluation. The research question is likely to take the form 'What impact does [what innovation?] delivered [over how long?] have on [what outcome?] for [whom?]?' You may also like to make a specific prediction about what you expect to happen based on existing evidence in this area.

Method

a. Sample/participants
Describe specifically who will participate in your innovation evaluation (eg, what schools, year levels, particular pupils), how they will be recruited to participate, the consent required and how you will obtain consent, if necessary.

b. Assignment to condition
Describe how participants will be assigned to the intervention or control group. This includes the level at which they are assigned (eg, individuals, classes or schools could be allocated to the intervention and control groups) and how assignment will occur. Randomly assigning participants to the intervention or control group is preferred but not necessary. Remember it is only unfair to conduct a randomised evaluation if you are certain that the intervention is going to be better. If you are sure, then you don't need an evaluation.

c. Innovation
Explain your innovation in sufficient detail for the reader to understand what participants in both the intervention and control group will experience, who will deliver the innovation and

the training and support they will receive.

d. Outcome measures

Describe the outcome measures you will use, when and how they will be administered and how they will be scored. If you will also plan to measure non-academic outcomes (eg, motivation, behaviour, attendance) describe how this data will be gathered, and how you maximise the objectivity of this data.

e. Process evaluation

Describe how you will gather data for the process evaluation. This is likely to include observations of the intervention and control groups to determine if the intervention was implemented as designed and that the control group were not doing elements of the intervention, and surveys and/or interviews to assess staff and pupil perceptions of the innovation.

f. Analysis

Describe how will you analyse your quantitative and qualitative data. Explain how you will maintain the confidentiality of your participants.

Conclusion

b. Potential limitations

Identify any potential limitations of your evaluation and steps you will take to try to minimise these. Consider how generalisable your findings might be to other schools.

c. Implications of your evaluation

Consider possible next steps for your school and others if the innovation is found to be successful. Consider possible next steps if the evaluation found the innovation has a negative or neutral impact.

References

Provide references to all research, articles, books etc. mentioned in the application. Please use the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style. APA style references for journal articles are written:

> Surname, Initials (date). Article title. *Journal title, volume (number), page numbers*.

> eg, Bernier A, Carlson SM & Whipple N (2010) From External Regulation to Self-Regulation: Early Parenting Precursors of Young Children's Executive Functioning. *Child Development, 81 (1), 326–99*.

and for books are written:

> Surname, Initials (date). *Book title*. Publisher.

> eg, Bus AG & Neuman S.B. (Editors) (2009). *Multimedia and Literacy Development: Improving Achievement for Young Learners*. New York: Taylor and Francis Group.

This list is not included in the 1500 word count.

Timeline

Include a detailed timeline for your project plan, including milestones. This is not included in the 1500 word limit.

Budget

Applicants must include a budget breakdown of costs. The budget might include costs such as supply cover to allow the lead applicant to carry out observations of the intervention in the class, time for teachers to collaborate, additional student materials, etc. **Indirect costs are not allowed.**

Either complete the table labelled Budget in the application form or attach an Excel spreadsheet with costs and brief explanations. This is not included in the 1500 word limit. **The maximum allowed is £5,000 per school for a maximum total of £20,000 per proposal.**

Communication

Once finalised, the plan for your evaluation will be posted on the Research Schools website. We expect all innovation evaluation grant projects to write an evaluation report within three months of the final date of post-testing. Evaluation reports for all projects funded by innovation evaluation grants will be posted on the Research Schools website, regardless of whether the results are positive or negative.

In addition to writing an evaluation report, how will else you share your study within the Research Schools Network and beyond? How will you disseminate your findings more widely? This section is not included in the 1500 word limit.

Important information

If you have questions or would like advice about your proposal, please contact Alicia Shaw, Research Schools Facilitator at the Institute for Effective Education (01904 328108, alicia.shaw@york.ac.uk).

The word limit for evaluations is 1,500. Words beyond that limit will not be read.

Your budget should not exceed £5,000 per school participating in your project, with a total maximum of £20,000. This funding is only available to schools that are involved with the Research Schools Network and proposals should be discussed with and supported by the Director of Research School at your associated Research School.

The lead applicant and his or her school will be responsible for reporting against spend throughout the project. Grant funding will be released upon completion of the project, including receipt of an accepted final report by the IEE and submission of a statement of expenses. Interim payments may be agreed by the IEE, and will depend upon satisfactory progress against agreed milestones.

The deadline is **17:00 on Friday 15 June 2018**. Late proposals will not be considered for that round.

Submit your proposal by email to Stephanie Simpson (stephanie.simpson@york.ac.uk). She will send you an acknowledgement of receipt. If you don't get a response within two working days, please call her on 01904 328166.