

EIS Action Research Grants 2020-21 Notes for applicants

Background

In early 2017 EIS Council approved an Education Committee decision to set up a funding stream that will support practitioner action research amongst EIS members.

What is action research?

Educational establishment-based action research is a simple set of techniques used to help improve teaching and learning. It is usually undertaken by the teacher / educator in their own classroom / setting. Action research involves:

- Identifying an issue (related to learning in your classroom / setting)
- Reviewing any relevant literature around the issue
- Planning a simple research strategy
- Gathering and analysing data
- Taking action based on your findings
- Sharing your findings.

Who can apply?

All EIS members are eligible to apply. The initiative is intended to support practitioner research that would otherwise be unlikely to be undertaken. Research being undertaken as part of a Masters or PhD study will not be ruled out however must be disclosed as part of the application process.

What can I research?

The aim of the initiative is to support research into aspects of pedagogy and the dynamics of teaching and learning, with a view to findings supporting continuing professional development and enhanced practice. Other potential research dimensions could be to inform EIS policy development, or to support the efficacy of teacher trade unions / professional associations.

In 2020-21, the EIS is inviting applications to support research relating to one or more of the following themes:

- Teacher voice / agency
- Empowered schools
- Assessment
- Pupil Equity Funding
- Curriculum architecture; senior phase
- Closing the attainment gap
- Professional collaboration
- Additional support for learning
- Equality (protected characteristics)
- Health and wellbeing of teachers/lecturers/pupils

- Early years education
- Impact of professional learning
- Home-school relationships

How and when do I apply?

Complete and return the application form and research proposal (approx. 300 words). The closing date for applications is **12 noon on Friday 26th June 2020**. Return to: Education Department, EIS, 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6BH or email lmeechan@eis.org.uk

We regret late applications cannot be considered.

What happens if my application is successful?

Successful applicants will attend a researchers' meeting at EIS HQ in Edinburgh. This event will provide support and information about how to undertake successful action research projects. **A date for this meeting will be published as soon as possible and circulated to applicants.**

Successful applicants should begin the research from 2020 and complete a full and detailed report including an abstract summary (approx. 3500 - 5000 words), using supplied guidelines. **As in previous years, researchers will have a full year to complete their project, beginning from the initial researchers' meeting.**

What can the action research grant be used to pay for?

The value of research grants offered by the EIS is £500. This can contribute to the cost of appropriate resources required to conduct the research, for example supportive literature or survey materials.

A proportion of the grant is awarded at the outset of the research, to meet the costs of undertaking it, with the remainder paid upon completion.

The EIS retains the right to publish, disseminate and archive the research findings (different arrangements may be made for research that is part of a Masters', PhD or other course of study).

Guidelines for your action research proposal

The research proposal (approx. 300 words) is the most important part of the application.

Please address the questions below when compiling your proposal:

- What are your reasons for applying?
- What aspect of education do you wish to research and why?
- To which of the themes (see previous page) does this relate and how?
- What do you hope to find out?
- How do you intend to carry out your research (methodology)?
- How will the research findings feed into your practice and / or that of colleagues?
- How could this relate to your professional development?

Criteria for awarding grants

Action research in education is a disciplined process of inquiry conducted by and for practitioners. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the researcher / teacher in improving professional efficacy. Accordingly, the following criteria will apply in considering applications:

- The proposed action research should focus on school- / educational establishment- / classroom-related practice or aspects of education delivery which impact on teaching and learning, in line with one or more of the given themes
- There should be a clear objective, implicit or explicit, of the research enabling professional learning
- Applications should encompass a planned outcome from the research activity
- The scale of the research should be proportionate in terms of anticipated timelines
- Usefulness to EIS policy present or future.

How does this link to Professional Update?

Undertaking action research will certainly contribute to your Professional Update. There is the option to seek Professional Recognition for the action research through GTCS, though this is by no means required. It may be useful to discuss your application and research proposal as part of your PRD process.

Enquiries

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Leigh Meechan at lmeechan@eis.org.uk