



TLRP Northern Ireland Call

This call is for applications to support the development of research on teaching and learning in Northern Ireland through liaison with TLRP projects funded under Phases I, II and III and through engagement with the Programme as a whole.

Summary

The ESRC wishes to commission a small number research projects to extend or follow-up, within a Northern Ireland context, the current research being supported under Phases I, II and III of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The competition is particularly intended to support and expand the research base associated with teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland. Researchers with appropriate knowledge and expertise are invited to submit full proposals by the closing date of **21st May 2004**. The call is funded by the Northern Ireland Departments of Employment and Learning and of Education, together with the Research Priorities Board of ESRC. Funds currently identified total £300,000 over a 3 year period, and it is expected that this funding will be sufficient to support between 3 and 5 projects.

A parallel call is being issued in relation to funding opportunities in Wales (please see the TLRP or ESRC websites for further information). Proposals which aim to extend research in both Northern Ireland and Wales would be welcome in principle. If this is being considered, please contact the TLRP Programme Director for an early discussion.

Successful applicants will benefit from the opportunities and support provided by TLRP and be expected to participate fully in the Programme.

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Executive, Northern Ireland Departments of Employment and Learning and of Education and English Department for Education and Skills. It is managed by the ESRC. TLRP supports research projects and related activities designed to lead to significant improvements in outcomes for learners. Learning outcomes are broadly conceived and include: the development of positive learner identities; the acquisition of qualifications; the acquisition of skill, understanding and bodies of knowledge; the development of attitudes and values relevant to a learning society; and the broader values and commitments relevant to individual and community development and civic concern. Its remit covers learners at all ages and stages in all sectors and contexts of education and training, including informal learning settings, throughout the United Kingdom.

The purposes of the Programme:

- Learning: TLRP aims to improve outcomes for learners of all ages in teaching and learning contexts across the UK.
- Outcomes: TLRP studies a broad range of learning outcomes. These include both the acquisition of skill, understanding, knowledge and qualifications and the development of

attitudes, values and identities relevant to a learning society.

- Lifecourse: TLRP supports research projects and related activities at many ages and stages in education, training and lifelong learning. The Programme is concerned with patterns of success and difference, inclusion and exclusion through the lifecourse.
- Enrichment: TLRP commits to user engagement at all stages of research. The Programme promotes research on teaching and learning across disciplines, methodologies and sectors, and supports various forms of national and international co-operation and comparison.
- Expertise: TLRP works to enhance capacity for all forms of research on teaching and learning, and for research-informed policy and practice. This work is the particular focus of the Programme's Research Capacity Building Network.
- Improvement: TLRP develops the knowledge base on teaching and learning and contributes to the improvement of policy and practice in the UK. The Programme works to maximise the impact of its research.

Projects supported under the Programme are expected to:

- set up learning relationships with partners from all relevant interested parties including practitioners, learners, policy makers and the research community;
- while recognising diversity and difference, achieve significant improvements in learning outcomes for identified groups of learners;
- work in authentic settings of teaching and learning;
- wherever appropriate, bring multi-disciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches to research, including the involvement of appropriate practitioners, learners and other potential beneficiaries in research teams;
- enhance the capacity for a research based approach to education and training practices;
- work in partnership with the wider teaching, training and informal learning communities, to achieve maximum impact of the research results;
- make research-based contributions to the fundamental understanding of teaching and learning and to effective practical action in education and learning.

These activities reflect the essential conditions of researching and enhancing teaching and learning in the circumstances in which teachers, trainers and learners work.

Under Phase I of the Programme four major research networks were supported plus two career development associates. Under Phase II nine major research projects are being supported, including an important project on classroom thinking skills based at Queen's University, Belfast under the overall direction of Professor Carol McGuiness. The Programme also funds five Research Training Fellowships and a research capacity building network. Phase III of the Programme funds twelve major projects and focuses on post-compulsory education and lifelong learning (including FE, HE, workplace learning, continuing professional development and learning in the community, voluntary sector and in informal settings).

A list of the projects supported under Phases I, II and III is at **Annex 1**. Further details can be found on the Programme's website at <http://www.tlrp.org>. Most of the projects also have their own websites— links are also available from the Programme's website.

Aims and Scope of the Competition.

The aim of this competition is to extend and/or follow-up the research currently being undertaken under Phases I, II and III of the Programme within the Northern Ireland context, where this research does not already include a significant Northern Ireland dimension. However, applications may take the form of joint bids with current TLRP Project teams or of stand-alone projects not involving current award holders. In either case, they should explore issues relevant to existing work of the Programme and should complement, build upon and extend this work within the Northern Ireland context.

Key objectives of this competition are to enhance research capacity and the relevance and impact of the TLRP's research in Northern Ireland. Therefore, proposals submitted under the Scheme should address, within a Northern Ireland context, issues/topics directly relevant to the research being supported under Phases I, II and III of the Programme and should complement, build on and add value to the research currently underway under these Phases.

Without being exhaustive or exclusive, the following broad areas of work may offer particular potential for extension projects.

- Cooperative teaching and learning both across and within institutions
- Inclusion and special educational needs
- Teacher education
- E-learning

All extension projects will also be expected to make a contribution to the achievement of the TLRP's broader objectives as outlined above and award-holders will be expected (and supported) to participate fully in Programme activities. Applicants considering a project on e-Learning should discuss this with the Education Technology Co-ordinator, John Anderson (john.anderson.deni@nics.gov.uk) in the first instance.

Applications are invited from researchers based at UK Higher Education Institutions or other independent research institutions eligible for funding by the ESRC, with at least half of the partners in all applications based at a Northern Ireland institution.

All applicants/research teams must demonstrate that they have appropriate expertise and knowledge to conduct research in the Northern Ireland education system. Given the objective of capacity building which partially informs this initiative, it is expected that that the final selection of projects will consider collaborative processes across institutions and opportunities for strengthening of the research base across all higher education institutions associated with teacher education in Northern Ireland.

Applications may be for:

- collaborative projects, developed in consultation with existing Teaching and Learning Programme projects/networks, which would extend the samples, case-studies or scope of existing project/network (s) to include Northern Ireland and/or for the addition of a Northern Ireland comparative dimension to existing projects;
- stand-alone, complementary or follow-up projects which propose to develop or explore further key issues raised by, or emergent findings from, the existing research under Phases I, II and III of the Programme, specifically within a Northern Ireland context;
- reviews of the implications of a project's or network's research for policy and practice in Northern Ireland in the context of diverging policy ;
- other related proposals to achieve the objectives outlined under paragraph 6) above. These could include cross-cutting proposals aimed, for example, at enhancing the

relevance and applicability of research being conducted by a cluster of projects under Phases I, II and III in Northern Ireland.

Funding Available

Applications may be for between £10,000 and £120,000 (before indexation). Awards may be for up to three years but will be expected to conclude by the end of 2007. Applicants are advised to check the eligibility of any costs requested under *ESRC Research Funding* rules (available from the ESRC website) before applying. Applicants should note that indirect costs will not be payable on fellowship awards.

Normal *ESRC Research Funding* rules will apply to all awards.

Development of Proposals

Applicants are expected to discuss their proposals with a member of the Programme Director's Team before submitting an application. The relevant members of the team and their lead areas of responsibility are detailed below:

Professor Andrew Pollard (Programme Director) (Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge) (Higher Education) (ajp67@cam.ac.uk, tel 01223 369631)

Dr Mary James (Deputy Director) (Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge) (School education) (mej1002@cam.ac.uk tel 01223 369631)

Dr Kathryn Ecclestone (Associate Director) (P/T) (School of Education and Lifelong Learning, Exeter University) (FE and adult education) (K.Ecclestone@exeter.ac.uk) tel: 01392 264848)

Dr Alan Brown (Associate Director) (P/T) (Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick) (Workplace and lifelong learning) (alan.brown@warwick.ac.uk) (tel: 02476 523512 or 01277 821756)

John Siraj-Blatchford (Associate Director) (P/T) (Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge) (ICT in teaching and learning). (js303@cam.ac.uk tel: 01223 369631)

Applicants are encouraged to consult or collaborate with existing TLRP project/network award holders in developing their proposals. Participants in Phase I, II or III projects, whether current or completed, may be involved as applicants, partners or collaborators provided that their time commitment to the proposal would not conflict with any existing commitments to the Programme. As indicated above, any 'stand-alone' projects must explore issues relevant to existing research under the Programme and should complement or extend such work within the Northern Ireland context.

Applications should be submitted in collaboration with appropriate user groups in Northern Ireland (and beyond, as appropriate) and details of collaboration with such groups should be provided in the proposal. It is expected that practitioners and policy-makers will be consulted and involved in the development of proposals and in the subsequent stages of the research.

Applications should have their own Communication and Impact Plan, designed to complement the Programme's Communication and Impact strategy (details of which are available from the Programme's website at <http://www.tlrp.org>) and, where applicable, the activities of the relevant Phase I, II or III project(s)/network(s).

The activities proposed in the application must be supplementary to those outlined in the Phase I, II or III proposal approved for funding by ESRC and must complement, build upon and add-value to the existing research and/or impact objectives of the network/project.

Assessment of Applications

Applications will be assessed by the Programme Steering Committee, which will be responsible for quality control and determining the priorities for funding. Additional advice from peer reviewers, including user representatives of the Northern Ireland Departments of Employment and Learning and of Education, will be sought as appropriate to inform the Committee's decisions. In considering which shortlisted applications should be funded, particular attention will be paid to the following issues by the Steering Committee and other reviewers:

1. **Contribution and Fit to the Programme.** Does the proposal display a close fit to overall aims and objectives of the Programme. Is there a thoughtful commitment to active participation in the Programme as a whole? Would the research add significant value to and extend current research under Phases I, II and III of the Programme in a Northern Ireland context? Would it complement and add-value to other relevant initiatives in the field? Is the research likely to make a significant impact on teaching and learning policy and/or practice in Northern Ireland and to lead to significant improvements in *outcomes* for learners in Northern Ireland (and beyond, if appropriate)?
2. **User Engagement and Partnership.** Does the proposal include strong collaborative partnerships and appropriate user engagement with relevant policy-makers and practitioners (and, where appropriate with learners themselves) in Northern Ireland (and elsewhere as appropriate) throughout all stages of the research? Is there evidence that relevant partners have been engaged, as appropriate, in the development of the proposal?
3. **Contribution to Knowledge.** Is the proposal grounded in a thorough review of the extant literature in relevant fields? Does the proposal have a coherent theoretical and analytical framework? Is it likely to make a significant contribution to the development of the current research knowledge base?
4. **Inter-disciplinary and multi-sector approaches.** Where appropriate, have opportunities for inter-disciplinary collaboration and cross-sectoral approaches been explored?
5. **Research Teams and Project Management.** Does the proposal indicate that the project team, in association if appropriate with existing TLRP projects, has or can develop the skills and expertise necessary to bring the research to a successful conclusion? Does the proposal have a clear, well-designed and robust project management structure capable of supporting the proposed partnerships and delivering on the specified work programme?
6. **Research Design and Methods.** Does the proposal clearly and fully describe a research design appropriate for the achievement of the stated research objectives? Is the project time-scale appropriate to the research design? Are there rigorous methods for assessing learning outcomes (broadly conceived)? Are there realistic proposals for data-collection and data-analysis? Has careful consideration been given to any ethical issues that may be raised?
7. **Contribution to Research Capacity Building.** Is there a commitment to helping to build research capacity in teaching and learning in the field, particularly in the Northern Ireland context?
8. **Communication and Impact Plan.** Is there a well-developed project communication and impact plan, which would make a significant contribution to the Programme's overall Communication and Impact Strategy, particularly in the Northern Ireland context? Is there a clear statement of the anticipated outputs appropriately targeted at a range of potential academic and non-academic audiences?

9. **Value for money.** Would the research represent value for money relative to the likely outcomes? Are the resources requested necessary and adequate for the effective conduct of the research as outlined, including the communication and impact proposals?

Participation in the Programme

Successful applicants will be expected to collaborate fully with the Programme Director's Team and to participate in Programme activities, throughout the life of the Programme, including those arranged as a part of the Programme's Communication and Impact Strategy and the Programme's Research Capacity Building Network or other provision. They will be required to produce an annual progress report for consideration by the Directors' Team and Steering Committee and a final end of award report which will be subject to normal ESRC evaluation procedures.

Submission of Full Proposals

Applicants are encouraged to submit their full application electronically using the ESRC electronic forms submission service by using the **Full Research Programme Forms Editor** (RPG eRP version1.8) available from http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCContent/researchfunding/eforms_home.asp (please ensure that you use the **full programmes** form editor). Please read all instructions before downloading this form. If you require technical support on the use of the electronic submission service please contact the helpdesk by e-mail to esrc.forms@rl.ac.uk or by telephone (01235 445924) (please note that this helpdesk can only address technical questions relating to use of the ESRC electronic system; questions regarding ESRC funding rules should be addressed to the ESRC Office as explained above). Please note that the application will need to be despatched by a registered despatcher at the administering institution and time should be allowed for this.

The ESRC electronic submission system, as detailed above, is the only system which may be used for the submission of proposals electronically; applications sent in other electronic forms (e.g. as attachments to emails) will **not** be accepted. Electronic submissions must be despatched to the ESRC for **receipt by 1700hrs on 21st May 2004**. Please note that **hard copies are NOT required for applications submitted by registered despatchers using the electronic submissions system**.

Electronic submissions are encouraged however applicants from institutions which do not have a registered despatcher for ESRC electronic applications should contact Kim Wright (kim.wright@esrc.ac.uk) to obtain a word version of the form. If submitting applications in hardcopy form, please follow the instructions on the application form and return the original **plus fifteen copies by Friday 21st May** to:

**The Registrar,
ESRC,
Polaris House,
North Star Avenue,
Swindon
SN2 1UJ**

This deadline will be strictly enforced. Hardcopy applications postmarked on or before the closing date of 21st May will be accepted but applications postmarked after this date **will not be accepted**. Faxed or emailed applications **will NOT be accepted**. **Fifteen copies** must be included with the hardcopy original. Please note that on hardcopy applications signatures are required from all co-applicants and from the principal applicant's Head of Department and the appropriate authority at the administering institution. **Please allow sufficient time to collect all these signatures.** Hardcopy applications will NOT normally be accepted without all the required signatures. However, in the event of a serious difficulty in obtaining the signature of a

co-applicant, applicants should contact the ESRC in advance to discuss the possibility of this being forwarded at a later date.

Incomplete applications or applications not submitted using either the ESRC electronic submission system for full programme proposals, or the correct hardcopy full application form, will not be accepted. **Applicants are strongly advised not to leave completion and despatch of applications to the last minute, as late applications will NOT be accepted.**

Please note that research proposals must not exceed 3,500 words. All materials must be produced in font size 12 or above. **Any materials that extend beyond the limit of 3,500 will be removed from the application.** Each page should be numbered. Applicants **must** include the total word count at the end of this section.

Technical and some limited non-technical information specific to the project may also be submitted as annexes. Technical information includes: glossaries of technical terms, charts, diagrams and tables which help to clarify key points within the proposal, statistical formulae, and supporting materials on methodological techniques (eg sampling methods, survey design). Non-technical annexes include bibliographic details, summary ethical guidelines and letters of support that are **essential** to the successful conduct of the research (eg access to datasets, or organisations). Copies of articles, working papers, or general letters of support should **not** be included. The maximum length of all annexed material must not exceed 3,500 words. All materials must be produced in font size 12 or above. Each page should be numbered. Applicants must include the total word count at the end of this section. **Applications which exceed this word count will not be processed by the ESRC, but will be returned to the applicants**

If you have any queries regarding ESRC procedures or funding rules, please contact Tracy Davies, Research Training and Development Directorate, ESRC (tracy.davies@esrc.ac.uk or 01793 413063).

Annex 1

Research Networks/Projects Supported under Phases I, II and III of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme

Visit the Programme's website at <http://www.tlrp.org> for brief summaries of each project.

INTERPLAY: Play, Learning and ICT in Pre-school Education

Plowman and Stephen (2003-2005)

Home-School Knowledge Exchange in Primary Education

Hughes, Feiler, Greenhough, Osborn, Pollard & Winter (2001-04)

The Role of Awareness in the Teaching and Learning of Literacy and Numeracy in Key Stage 2

Nunes, Bryant & Hurry (2001-04)

ACTS II: Sustainable Thinking Classrooms

McGuinness & Sheehy (2001-2003)

Supporting Group-work in Scottish Schools

Christie, Topping, Tolmie, Livingstone & Howe (2003-04)

Provision for Gifted and Talented Pupils at Secondary Transfer

Brookes (Research Training Fellow) (2002-07)

Towards Evidence-Based Practice in Science Education

Millar, Leach, Osborne & Ratcliffe (2000-03)

InterActive Education: Teaching and Learning in the Information Age

Sutherland, Robertson & John (2001-04)

From Black Boxes to Glass Boxes: Computerised Concept Mapping in Schools

Bevan (Research Training Fellow) (2002-06)

Consulting Pupils about Teaching and Learning: Process, Impact and Outcomes

Rudduck, Arnot, Fielding, McBeath, McIntyre, Myers, Reay (2000-03)

Pupil Voice: History and Implications for Teaching and Learning

Flutter (Career Development Associate) (2000-03)

Understanding and Developing Inclusive Practices in Schools

Ainscow, Booth & Dyson (2000-03)

Improving the Effectiveness of Pupil Groups in Classrooms

Blatchford, Galton & Kutnick (2001-04)

Learning How to Learn, in Classrooms, Schools and Networks

James & McCormick (2001-05)

Lessons for Learning: Using Research Study Lessons to Innovate

Dudley (Research Training Fellow) (2003-07)

5-14 Mathematics in Scotland: The Relevance of Intensive Quantities

Howe, Nunes & Bryant (2003-05)

Transforming Learning Cultures in Further Education

Hodkinson, Gleeson, James & Postlethwaite (2001-05)

Using Research to Enhance Professionalism in Further Education

Goodrham (Research Training Fellow) (2001-06)

Learning in Community-based Further Education

Gallacher, Crossan & Mayes (2003-05)

Literacies for Learning in Further Education

Ivanic, Barton, Edwards & Breen (2003-06)

Policy, Learning and Inclusion in the Learning and Skills System

Coffield, Hodgson & Spours (2003-06)

The Effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning in Promoting Evidence-Based Practice

Newman (Career Development Associate) (2000-03)

Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses

Hounsell & Entwistle (2001-04)

What is Learned at University: The Social and Organisational Mediation of Learning

Brennan, Jary, Richardson & Osborne (2004-07)

Disabled Students' Learning in Higher Education

Fuller, Healey, Hurst, Riddell & Wareham (2004-07)

Learning to Perform: Instrumentalists and Instrumental Teachers

Mills, Williamon, Welch & Hargreaves (2004-07)

Improving Incentives to Learning in the Workplace

Rainbird, Evans, Hodkinson & Unwin (2000-03)

Learning as Work: Teaching and Learning in Contemporary Organisations

Felstead, Ashton, Fuller, Unwin & Walters (2003-07)

Understanding the System: Techno-mathematical Literacies in the Workplace

Hoyles & Noss (2003-07)

Enhancing 'Skills for Life': Adult Basic Skills and Workplace Learning

Wolf, Evans, Bynner & Jupp (2003-07)

Learning During the First Three Years of Postgraduate Employment

Eraut, Maillardet, Miller & Steadman (2001-04)

Competence-based Learning in the Early Professional Development of Teachers

McNally, Boreham, Cope & Stronach (2003-07)

Vicarious Learning and Teaching of Clinical Reasoning Skills

Cox, Lee, Varley & Morris (2004-06)

Learning in and for Interagency Working

Daniels, Edwards, Creese, Leadbetter & Martin (2004-07)

Learning Lives: Learning, Identity and Agency in the Lifecourse

Biesta, Field, Goodson, Hodkinson & MacLeod (2003-07)