

Open Call Research Grants 2021 - Guidance for Applicants

Please read these guidelines carefully before making an application.

About Open Call Research Grants in 2021

1. The Froebel Trust funds high quality research, which builds upon and contributes to knowledge and understanding of Froebelian philosophy, principles and approaches to education and care. This includes critical studies and impact evaluations.
2. The Trust aims to use its funded research to provide insights and resources for parents and professionals who work with young children and their families, and to inform policymaking.
3. Our Open Call is announced once a year and relevant applications are welcomed from eligible researchers who are working in institutions in any country.
4. In 2021, the fund is designed to provide **seed corn grants** for individual researchers or collaborative research partnerships and networks to develop innovative studies that will ultimately lead to larger projects. Seed corn projects should still work towards tangible outcomes and impacts that support the Froebel Trust's charitable objects.
5. It is anticipated that awards will fall within the £3,000 to £5,000 range. Applicants may apply for more than £5,000 but should note that our Trustees are unlikely to make an award over £5,000 unless they deem the project to be particularly strong with good value for money.
6. In 2021, the application window opens closes at **4pm (UK time) on Thursday 23 September 2021**. During the first week of November, applicants will hear whether they have been shortlisted. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to develop full proposals, to be submitted by 12 January 2022. Awards will be announced by 5 February 2022.
7. It is expected that projects will last between 12 and 18 months and the work must start **before 31 March 2022**.
8. Questions about the Open Call Research Grants scheme and / or the application process should be sent to our Programme Officer, Valeria Scacchi by 20 September 2021. Please email: office@froebeltrust.org.uk. Regrettably, we cannot provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Eligibility and What Our Grants Cover

1. The scheme is open to researchers working in institutions anywhere in the world who share our goal of advancing knowledge and debate about Froebelian principles and their application in the teaching, learning and development of children from birth to 8 years. **We actively encourage and will prioritise awards for new applicants who have strong applications and have not previously received Open Call funding from the Trust.** For this reason, we have revised the application process.
2. Applicants do not need to be based in the UK but applications should be written in English and budgets should be in GB £ sterling.
3. Partnership projects are welcome. In such cases, a lead institution should be identified. In all cases, one named person should act as Lead Applicant. This is the individual with whom the Trust will correspond about the application and (if successful) the project. The Lead Applicant is normally considered by the Trust to be contractual partner; the grant holder (i.e. the recipient of the grant funding); and with responsibility for meeting the terms and conditions of the award.
4. Research grants can cover the costs of:
 - Personnel costs directly incurred exclusively in relation to the project, including salary/visiting lecturer replacement or cover
 - Direct activity and production costs including venue hire, equipment and materials, project travel costs, costs of attendance at relevant conferences. Please note, these costs should not represent more than **20%** of the overall budget.
 - Project administration costs where these are not already covered by other funding
 - Project publicity costs, including launch event costs
 - Disclosure and Barring Service checks for applications in the UK and NI
 - VAT on fees where the VAT cannot be reclaimed
5. Grants cannot cover the costs of:
 - Full economic costs
 - Salary costs of staff who are already funded by their organization
 - Core overheads of the applying organisation not related to the project, i.e. heating, rent, etc.
 - Expenses incurred in submitting an application (including attending interviews)
 - Bursaries or other costs for Masters degrees or PhDs
 - Costs arising prior to the start date of the project

The Application Process

1. This year we are introducing a two-step process that is designed to save time and support applicants.
2. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal aligns with the Froebel Trust's [principles](#) and its strategic objectives for the promotion and advancement of Froebelian education and learning. These include understanding more about the characteristics of high quality education that leads to and / or is underpinned by a Froebelian approach; and evidencing the benefits for babies, young children, their educators and their families, especially those who have suffered disproportionately from the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Step 1

1. Please complete the [expression of interest form](#) on our website detailing:
 - General information about the lead applicant
 - Your project outline
 - Details about your proposed research and its fit with our principles and objectives
 - A timeline for the project
 - A cost breakdown
2. Expressions of interest will be reviewed and a shortlist drawn up.

Step 2

3. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to develop a full research proposal to be submitted by 12 January 2022. The Froebel Trust will provide support to develop the full proposal for submission via our online portal. The full proposal will ask details about:
 - Your Froebelian focus
 - General information about the project team
 - A more detailed project outline
 - Intended outcomes of the project and how it will lead to further research
 - Your plans for sharing learning and key messages from the project
 - Budget details in an Excel spreadsheet
 - Data protection and (optional) equalities information
4. All eligible applications will be considered via our scrutiny and grants process. **Applications that do not meet our basic eligibility criteria, including those for projects that are unconnected to Froebelian principles, will be rejected.**
5. The decision of the Froebel Trust will be final. Every effort has been made to develop a thorough and informed assessment process. The Trust reserves the right not to enter into any correspondence about the assessment process and/or any subsequent monitoring procedures.

Assessment process

1. The chart below illustrates the assessment process for Expressions of interest and full proposals.



2. The most common reasons why applications are not successful are that:
 - The proposal did not have enough explicit links to Froebelian thinking or practice
 - The proposal did not reference relevant Froebelian literature
 - The budget was not sufficiently justified
 - The proposal did not have direct links to the Froebel Trust's principles and objectives
3. Applications are reviewed against the following criteria:
 - The extent to which the project develops understanding, interest and/or debate about education that is underpinned by Froebelian principles
 - The originality and significance of the project
 - The feasibility of the project and the quality of its management
 - The extent to which the project supports delivery of the Trust's strategic priorities
 - The intended outcomes or expected impact of the project, including its potential to lead to further significant work
 - Whether the project includes effective dissemination plans
 - Whether the budget has been sufficiently justified and offers strong value for money

Important Dates

4pm on 23 September 2021	Deadline for expressions of interest
Week beginning 1 November 2021	Applicants told the outcome of Step 1
4pm on 9 November 2021	Online workshop to offer guidance to shortlisted applicants
November to January	We support shortlisted applicants in Step 2 (email / phone)
4pm on 12 January 2022	Deadline for full proposals
Week beginning 31 January 2022	Applicants told the outcome of Step 2
February 2022	Contracts signed, awards announced on our website
Before 31 March 2022	Project begins

Further information

1. We want to support projects that aim to benefit young children, directly or indirectly. We want learning from projects to benefit those involved and to be shared with the wider community of early childhood education and care.
2. Successful applicants will be required to sign our Grant Offer, which includes specific Terms and Conditions of award, **which are not negotiable**. A sample copy can be viewed on our [website](#).
3. Anyone who receives an Open Call grant will be expected to provide us with a progress report in the middle of the project and a final report within three months of the project's completion. We will provide guidance about preparing the final report, which will be published on our website.
4. Reports that contain images are often more attractive to readers. We can only publish images if appropriate consent has been collected from people whose images are shown (or their parents or carers, if they are children).
5. At the end of a project, a statement of expenditure will also be required. This explains in detail how the grant was spent.
6. We often ask our grant recipients to get involved in our webinars and conferences. This is a way to share knowledge and understanding with others, especially key messages and learning from a project.
7. If you receive a grant from us, you may be invited to complete a questionnaire or take part in an interview as part of our self-evaluation activities. Participation is entirely voluntary.
8. The decision of the Froebel Trust Council will be final. Every effort has been made to develop a thorough, fair and informed assessment process. The Trust reserves the right not to enter into any correspondence about the assessment process and/or any subsequent monitoring procedures.
9. We are here to help. If you experience any problems with the online application portal or have any questions about eligibility, please email us and we will respond as fast as we can. Please write to office@froebeltrust.org.uk for the attention of the Programme Officer (Grants).