

August 2026

Call for Proposal – Action Research Mentoring Scheme, 2026-2027

Guidelines

Overview of the British Council

We support peace and prosperity by building connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and countries worldwide.

We uniquely combine the UK's deep expertise in arts and culture, education and the English language, our global presence and relationships in over 100 countries, our unparalleled access to young people and influencers and our creative sparkle.

We work directly with individuals to help them gain the skills, confidence and connections to transform their lives and shape a better world in partnership with the UK. We support them to build networks and explore creative ideas, to learn English, to get a high-quality education and to gain internationally recognised qualifications.

We work with governments and our partners in the education, English language and cultural sectors, in the UK and globally. Working together we make a bigger difference, creating benefit for millions of people all over the world.

We work with people in over 200 countries and territories and are on the ground in more than 100 countries. In 2021–22 we reached 650 million people.

Background

India's National Education Policy 2020 brought multilingualism to the centre stage and proposed a few concrete steps such as more guidance on the three-language policy, acknowledging the need for high quality teaching learning materials in bi-lingual formats; thereby demonstrating a stronger push towards multilingualism within education system of India. According to the recent *Future of English*¹ research published by the British Council, English language will continue to be a global lingua franca, but within an increasing multilingual

¹ [Future of English | British Council](#)

context. Considering this, teachers, learners, policy makers and other stakeholders in the education system in India will need guidance, support, and insights to implement the multilingualism policy in the country.

British Council India is undertaking an action research grant scheme focussing on English language teaching and learning within the multilingual education context of India. The research grant scheme sits within a wider set of insight initiatives/ projects that the British Council will undertake as part of their three-year insight and research programme that is in the area of multilingual education and practice.

British Council is seeking potential partners to undertake action research with a group of teachers to design the research, its outputs and outcomes, to conduct the action research and present the completed findings. Please note that this concept will be further fine-tuned and finalised with the selected partner/s.

The purpose and scope of this Call for Proposal and supporting documents is to explain in further detail the requirements of the British Council and the process for submitting a proposal in response to this Call for Proposal (“**Proposal**”).

Specification

Background and context

The action research grant scheme supports teacher educators and academics as they mentor a small group of English language teachers through classroom-based research projects, in the area of multilingual teaching. This scheme aims to build the institutional capacity to conduct action research and create an environment and framework that enables teachers to:

- try out different approaches and ideas
- develop their reflective practice
- make choices and decisions about their teaching styles
- develop their confidence
- improve their student learning.

Conducting Action Research

Action or classroom-based research begins with the teacher and a question or set of questions they might have about classroom experiences, issues, successes or challenges. It is a highly reflective process wherein a mentor encourages teachers to examine their own practice and discover what will and will not work for their students in their classrooms.

Mentors play a key role in helping teachers grow, learn and transform. Having a mentor work with teachers on their research projects ensures they will have the necessary support and guidance they need as they navigate the process of classroom-based research.

Teachers will work with their mentors and identify classroom challenges and potential solutions related to Multilingual education.

Criteria for selection is as follows:

Mandatory

- a. ELT institutes/ universities/ NGOs/ government entities who can conduct action research with teachers who are currently teaching English in government primary or secondary schools in India. Please note that the grant **will not be given** to individual/s (teachers/teacher educators/ mentors)
- b. Concept has a relevant and specific issue in line with the themes outlined.
- c. Project plan is clear and realistic.
- d. Themes or issues related to gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and climate change are appropriately included in the project plan.
- e. Applying institutions have the required permissions to undertake this research.
- f. Applying institutions have the needed FCRA documentation to receive funds from British Council.

Desirable:

- a. Applying institutions must have some prior experience of conducting action research in their contexts.
- b. Experience of working in the Indian government school and higher education sector
- c. Experience of working in the area of policy related to multilingual education in similar contexts to India.
- d. Knowledge and expertise in English Language teaching, learning and assessment.
- e. Experience of working with international organisations undertaking similar research projects and track record of delivering outputs on similar projects

Each individual grant for an institute will be GBP 10,000 for a period of 21 months. The programme will run for 21 months (starting December 2026 until August 2028) wherein the mentors will guide and mentor small groups of English language teachers through classroom-based research projects. At the end of the action research programme, institutions will submit a report of all the action research projects conducted and a dissemination plan will be made for the same.

Tentative timelines for the programme are:

Phase of the project	Timeline
Phase 1: Call announcement and identification of mentors	August 2026
Call for proposal issues to bidding applicants	Monday 10 Augst 2026
Deadline for clarification questions	Saturday 22 August 2026
British Council to respond to clarification questions	Friday 28 August 2026
Deadline for submission of Proposals by potential suppliers	Monday 14 September 2026
Phase 2: Evaluation of applications	September 2026
Phase 3: Announcing grant receivers	October 2026
Phase 4: Scheme begins	1 December 2026

The topics for research will fall under the following themes –

1. *Teaching English in a multilingual classroom*
2. *Assessments for multilingual classrooms*
3. *Use of edtech to teach multilingual classrooms*
4. *Language-responsive pedagogy for foundational learning*
5. *Teacher professional development for multilingual education*

Project Activities

- Induction workshop: British Council will hold an induction workshop. The main principles and practices of action research will be the focus of the discussions. The role of a mentor and the different areas of research will be discussed in the workshop along with the reporting timelines.
- Mid-year seminar: A mid-point seminar will be held for the mentors (about 6 months in the programme). It will be facilitated by the academic lead at British Council. The seminar will serve as a check point to understand any issues/ challenges to be addressed.
- Monthly action research project progress meetings (online) between the British Council team, consultants and institution project leads.
- Quarterly action research project progress meetings (online) between the academic lead and mentors
- Quarterly communities pf practice meetings (online) between the academic lead and mentors
- Presentation of final reports and Dissemination event: This will be held at the end of the research period.

Evaluation criteria

The applicants should ensure their applications meet the criteria set out below. The principles underlying the assessment of applications will be:

- All questions on the application form are answered
- The proposed research project provides a clear rationale of the research project being undertaken and the objectives of the research.
- The project implementation plan is clear and mentions the research outputs, outcomes and timelines.
- A rational budget plan is provided stating the costs required to conduct the research.

The British Council will conduct eligibility checks. All eligible applications will be reviewed prior to any grant awards.

Reporting and Monitoring

Each successful applicant will submit reports on the use of the grant, detailing progress and financial accounts, to the British Council as detailed in the grant agreements.

List of Annexes forming part of this Call (issued as separate documents):

Annex 1 – Grant agreement

Annex 2 – Proposal response

Annex 3 – Budget