

FAQs for Practice Led Research Grants

We will add to these FAQs as and when we receive and respond to any enquiries from applicants. If your question isn't covered here, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Our new Practice-Led Research Grants are designed to provide funds for leading early years practitioners to explore and develop an aspect of their setting's practice with support from a research mentor, if required.

Can I apply for a grant?

Applicants should be able to answer yes to the following questions:

- Do you work in a setting or school in the UK?
- Do you have a leadership role and the capacity to explore and develop practice across your setting?
- Have you completed one of the Froebel Trust's Endorsed Courses*?
- Are you confident that you can lead a research and development project?
- Can you demonstrate a sustained commitment to a Froebelian approach to early childhood education and care?
- Have you got a great idea that a PLR grant would help you to explore and develop?

I work with, but not in, settings / schools. Can I apply for a PLR grant?

Lead applicants must work in a setting or school but can partner with others. So you can be involved but you cannot be the lead applicant.

I work in a setting outside the UK. Can I apply for a PLR grant?

We are piloting the PLR grants in 2021 and this year we are limiting them to lead applicants who work in the UK. But you can partner with a UK setting / lead applicant to be part of their project if this is likely to be mutually beneficial and will enhance the project.

Do I need to know or be the research mentor?

No! If you are the lead applicant and have research experience, you can select yourself as the research mentor for the project. You are welcome to tell us this in your expression of interest. Alternatively, you can name someone else (with their permission).

If you don't have someone as a potential research mentor, we can help you to find someone. Research mentors don't need to be identified until Step 2, which is the full proposal stage (shortlisted applicants).

How much funding can I apply for?

These are small grants with an expected maximum of £5,000 per award with less than 20% of the budget allocated for resources. We will pay for staff costs, including those of a mentor. We expect a mentor to give at least one hour of support for every project month. The cost is likely to be between £50 and £70 per hour.

What does expected maximum mean?

While it is unlikely that we will be able to make awards of more than £5,000, the Trustees will not exclude a really excellent application for a grant with a budget that exceeds £5,000.

Please note: projects budgeting for more than 20% for resources will automatically be excluded from the shortlisting. In addition, we do not fund:

- Proposals by individuals who are not affiliated with a specific organization
- Projects that are not connected to a Froebelian ethos and philosophy
- Requests for financial help for capital costs. The projects are primarily for research activities, and we expect that most of the budget will be for staff time.

Who are the research mentors?

Research mentors should have experience of designing, carrying out and writing or speaking about a piece of research at Masters level or above. Ideally, they should understand practice-led and practice-based research, including action research. Applicants who are practitioners with research expertise themselves aren't required to have a mentor but may still appoint one or ask us to help find one.

If you know someone who can help you to design and run your project, you are welcome to name them in your application (please ask them first!). If not, we will help you to find a mentor. You should include the cost of a mentor's time in your budget.

Who is included in a leadership post?

A member of the leadership team can be a room leader, a key stage lead, the head of the school/setting or someone in the setting that has an influential pedagogical role in leading practice in your school/setting and whose application benefits from the full backing of the head of the school/setting.

We know that projects are likely to have greater success and more lasting benefits if they have the support and involvement of senior management. If you don't have a senior manager role, please make sure that your senior manager is backing your application and will support the project.

How long should my project last?

It takes time to research and develop practice. We expect projects to take 12-18 months, although we hope that projects will have lasting, positive effects. Projects must start by 31 March 2022 and are likely to finish by 30 September 2023.

How do I apply?

We are accepting initial expression of interest (EOI) forms to be submitted online by 4pm on 23 September 2021 (<https://www.tfaforms.com/4916953>). After this process, we will scrutinise the applications with the support of experts in Froebelian principles and practice who will assess the EOI using a scoring matrix. Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to submit a full proposal for their project and will receive support from the Froebel Trust to do so. We will host an online workshop on

2nd of November to get you started with writing the full proposal and will offer written feedback on your draft to be submitted no later than 2 December 2021. After submission of the final proposal on 12 January 2022 the applications will be assessed and scrutinised again before successful awards can be confirmed and announced by early February 2022.

What happens to my application?

Your application will be scrutinised by experts in Froebelian principles and practice in two stages. One stage will be the EOI forms and, if successful, your full proposal will undergo an additional scrutiny before being confirmed by Froebel Trust Council for final decision on awards.

Can I talk to someone about my application?

We are always happy to help. At any stage you can reach us by emailing our Programme Officer Valeria Scacchi or our Finance Manager Oksana Lissovets by emailing office@froebeltrust.org.uk.

Can I partner with other settings?

Partnering with other settings is permitted and encouraged where this will enhance the project. The eligibility criteria only apply to the lead applicant and the mentor, but everyone should understand what is involved in a project, have the capacity to play their part and have the backing of the senior managers.