

Education Research Fund

Grants for applied education research 2021

Criteria for the award of grants – Terms and conditions

1. Role

The Education Research Fund awards grants for applied research in the fields of preschool, compulsory school, and upper secondary school education, including adult education on that level, and after-school activities. The aim of the Education Research Fund is to strengthen the foundations of applied education research, increase opportunities for creating and communicating knowledge that promotes advancement and reform in schooling, and support the implementation of Education Policy 2030.

The term “applied education research” refers to research that:

- creates and communicates practical knowledge about the subject-matters of preschools, compulsory schools and upper secondary schools, studies at the upper secondary level, and after-school activities which leads to the improvement of learning and teaching;
- promotes and further strengthens the cooperation between schools and after-school activities on the one hand and researchers on the other, based on mutual experiences and leading to the creation of knowledge;
- furthers academic knowledge and the adoption of new research methods.

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture will grant awards from the Education Research Fund in 2021 in accordance with Article 42 of the Public Finance Act, No 123/2015.

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture determines the Fund’s priority areas in line with the priorities of Education Policy 2030.

2. Award committee

The Minister appoints five persons to an advisory award committee charged with evaluating the applications received and making grant recommendations. The Chair of the committee is to be appointed by the Minister without nomination, the other members being nominated one each by the Rectors’ Conference of Higher Education Institutions, the Icelandic Teachers’ Union, the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland, and the Directorate of Education. Alternate members are to be appointed in the same manner.

3. Tasks of the award committee

The award committee of the Education Research Fund evaluates applications after receiving the opinion of the relevant expert panel, and makes recommendations to the Minister on the award of grants to applicants. Each application is to be evaluated based on the practical value of the project, the competence of the applicants and the resources at their disposal to execute the project, and the likelihood of the project delivering measurable results and benefits.

Administrative costs, the cost of evaluating applications, and the expenses of the award committee and the operating body are to be paid out of the Fund’s available resources.

4. Calls for applications

Calls for grant applications are to be published by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in national newspapers and on the Ministry's website.

Calls should contain information about the Fund's role, its priority areas, application deadlines and the application procedure.

Each call must allow a period of at least 3 weeks for the submission of applications.

5. Applications

For an application to be considered valid, it must include a description of the expected benefit of the project for the Icelandic education system and of the manner in which the findings will be disseminated to the school community. Moreover, the application must include the names, CVs and publication lists of the persons responsible for the research project, as well as a research plan and budget. The application must also contain the names and letters of intent of any other participants or partners. The names of postgraduate students and post-doctoral researchers may be omitted. Successful applicants will be asked to submit a letter of cooperation signed by, on the one hand, the researchers and, on the other, school leaders; teachers; other employees of schools, education providers and after-school activities; or representatives of the operating bodies of schools participating in the project. Applicants must state whether they have applied for other grants for the project or whether the project has already received other grants.

Applications for grants from the Fund must be submitted electronically to the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís).

6. Evaluation of applications

Applications will be evaluated based on the following considerations.

1. It is important for the project to have well-defined research questions/hypotheses and goals, and for it to be divided into clearly delineated activities.
2. Each activity must be described, including how it relates to the other project activities, and an estimate must be given of the time to be allocated to each activity.
3. The application must outline the research methods to be used and the reason for choosing those methods in each case. Information about the methodology to be used when gathering information and evaluating data must be included.
4. A description is to be provided of the main milestones of the project's work plan and time schedule, marking the transition between the different project phases.
5. Details must be provided of cooperation within the project, both cooperation between the different scientists and researchers and their cooperation with preschools, compulsory schools and upper secondary schools, education providers responsible for studies at the upper secondary level and/or in after-school activities at the compulsory level. If the project includes international cooperation this must be described specifically.
6. Where relevant, information is to be provided about any parts of the project that are doctoral projects, the university/school and department at which the students are enrolled, the names of their supervisors, and the nature of their contribution to the research.
7. The expected benefit of exploiting the results of the project, both for the Icelandic education system and for the international academic community, must be described and

argued. This can be a benefit in terms of increased knowledge, environmental protection, economic or social factors, etc. Project outcomes are defined as the measurable “units” produced by the project. Examples of outcomes include: descriptions of how the results of the research will be applied in the work of schools and/or in after-school activities; published scientific articles; books; academic degrees; research methods; etc.

8. Applicants must specify how the research findings will be communicated so as to make them useful for preschools, compulsory schools and upper secondary schools, education providers at the upper secondary level and in after-school activities, in addition to promoting improvement in teaching and learning.
9. The publication of and access to research findings are governed by Article 10 of Act on public support for research, No 3/2003, as amended. Applicants must describe the proposed publication of the findings in academic journals or reports, at conferences, etc.
10. Applicants must address any relevant ethical issues, including those covered by Act on Scientific Research in the Health Sector, No 44/2014, and how the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 90/2018, will be adhered to.

7. Processing of applications

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture notifies applicants when their applications have been processed and establishes terms and conditions for each grantee. Grants will be paid in two instalments, with the first instalment (80% of the total grant amount) becoming payable when terms and conditions have been established, and the second (20% of the grant amount) when the applicant’s report on the use of the grant funds has been reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

Information about the grants awarded will be published on the website of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

8. Project monitoring

Grantees must submit a report on their research findings. The person responsible for the research project must submit to the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, no later than two months after the project’s completion, a report on the research performed, the use of the grant funds, and the dissemination of the findings.

The grantee may be required to reimburse the grant, in part or in whole, in cases where it is appears that the grant funds have not been, or will not be, used for the intended purpose, or when the final report has not been received within a normal period of time.