**BRITISH COUNCIL**

# English Language Teaching Research Awards (ELTRAs) 2023–24

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# Call for proposals

The British Council is pleased to announce its 2023 call for research proposals under the English Language Teaching Research Awards (ELTRA) scheme. Through this successful and popular scheme, we aim to facilitate the production of original research to contribute to the body of knowledge related to English language teaching and learning by co-funding a number of partnership awards.

Resulting papers will be published as part of the British Council ELTRA series online (see the ELTRA page on our website). The deadline to submit your research proposal is **Friday 12 January 2024.**

Please read this call carefully as some details of the scheme have changed since the last awards were granted.

## What is the purpose of the ELTRA scheme?

- To facilitate the production of high-quality research relevant to ELT practitioners.
- To improve access of ELT policy makers and professionals worldwide to high-quality and relevant research.
- To facilitate and encourage the establishment and maintenance of active research links between ELT professionals, researchers and policy makers in the UK and internationally.

## Who may apply?

Any person with a formal affiliation to a UK higher educational institution may submit a proposal. The award agreement will be with the institution and not with the individual. Applications must include a letter from the institution confirming they are prepared to accept and manage the award.

The scheme aims to encourage effective research partnerships between academics and institutions in the UK and those in ODA-eligible countries (see https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2022-23-flows.pdf for the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of ODA-eligible countries).

The person submitting the application (the co-Principal Investigator) must be formally attached to a UK university. However, applications will only be considered if they include an additional co-Principal Investigator who is a national of and is based in a recognised institution in an ODA-eligible country which is included as a research location in the proposed study. The research should, in whole or in part, take place outside the UK, with additional co-researchers and research participants based predominantly in ODA-eligible countries. Priority will be given to proposals that also include an early-career researcher.

Applications must include:

(i) a signed letter of support from the Head of Department (or equivalent) of the UK institution to which the UK co-PI is attached, including expression of the commitment and willingness to receive and manage funding and to sign an agreement with the British Council, and

(ii) a signed letter of support from the Head of Department (or equivalent) of the institution to which the co-PI in an ODA-recipient country is attached.

## What type of activity can be considered?

For this year's awards, the British Council wishes to fund research focussing on **teacher development** within the following four areas:

➢ English Language Teaching in Education

Focuses on the teaching and learning of English in formal education systems where the home language is the language of teaching and learning and English is taught as a mandatory or elective subject.

➢ English in a Multilingual World

Focuses on bilingual or multilingual formal education systems where English is the language of teaching and learning for all or part of the education system.

➢ English for Girls' Education

Focuses on girls who are out of school and/or living in socio-economically disadvantaged or isolated communities, where language is often a barrier to girls' education. Projects in this area are designed to empower girls, provide agency and voice, and enable them to make more informed life choices in the future. This is done through the provision of English and other core skills such as digital literacy, and providing opportunities to discuss social issues that affect their lives.

➢ Language for Resilience

Focuses on the role of English and other languages in building resilience, usually outside of the formal education system. This can be in the form of giving a voice to young people and

adults affected by conflict or distrust, building social cohesion in communities or providing individuals with the skills they need to access education, career opportunities, services and information.

All research projects undertaken as part of these grants must be Official Development Assistance (ODA) compliant, with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as their main objective (see https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2022-23-flows.pdf for the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of ODA-eligible countries).

The International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014 makes consideration of gender equality a legal requirement of all ODA spending and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) these research projects should provide evidence toward the achievement of Goal 5, on gender equality, which sets out a desire to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

## What type of activity is outside the scheme?

- We define research as original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding.
- The research must not have already taken place or be underway.
- The research outputs, including the final paper, must be in English (though there may also be a version of all or part of the output(s) in another language or languages).
- Funding will usually only be agreed for a period of one year. If your project will require more than one year, you will need to give a clear justification for this on the application form.
- This scheme is not intended to fund the field work of Ph.D. candidates or similar.
- Researchers/institutions who have yet to complete an existing ELTRA-funded project are not eligible to apply for another ELTRA. Recipients of awards will become eligible to submit research proposals when the research paper from a previous ELTRA award has been accepted for publication by the British Council.

## What outputs are required?

Successful applicants must produce:

(i) a **final research paper** on the project. This would normally include the rationale, methodology, findings, discussion and implications, and references. Guidelines will be provided.

(ii) a **summary** (maximum two pages) of the research findings, conclusions and/or recommendations for a general audience

(iii) a two-to-three-minute **video** on the highlights of the research for a general audience

(iv) a final **financial report** detailing project spending.

We also encourage additional outputs, such as resources for teachers and/or teacher educators.

The British Council will publish all appropriate outputs on its open-access TeachingEnglish website.

In addition to the outputs listed above, researchers are encouraged to publish further papers elsewhere, at their own expense, for example in peer-reviewed journals (open access where possible), and to present their ELTRA and related findings at conferences.

## How can I apply?

Please submit any clarification questions to eltra@britishcouncil.org by **30 October 2023.** We will reply to individual questions by email.

There will also be a webinar for potential applicants where we discuss the details of the scheme, including addressing any questions, on **Friday 3 November** at 11 am UK time.

A Q&A document will be available on our website (https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/publications/elt-research-awards/eltra-guidelines) from **10 November.**

**Please ensure that your institution's legal and/or contracts department review *Annex 3: Schedule 3 (Standard Terms)* before you submit an application, as this will form part of the contract and cannot be altered. Please note that there are two versions of this, depending on the amount of grant you are requesting.**

All applications for a research award must be submitted using the ELTRA application form. Send the completed form to: eltra@britishcouncil.org

**Deadline for applications: Friday 12 January 2024**

## Timeline:

| Call for proposals | 10 October 2023 |
|---|---|
| Deadline for clarification questions | 30 October 2023 |
| Webinar | 3 November 2023 @ 11.00 UK time |
| Q&A document available | 10 November 2023 |
| Deadline for applications | 12 January 2024 @ 23.59 UK time |
| Decision communicated to applicants | 11 March 2024 |
| Contracts finalised and signed | 22 April 2024 |
| Expected date for submission of research paper | 25 April 2025 |

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The British Council's work is based on building meaningful, enduring, and respectful relationships across different cultures. To do this successfully and to build trust with our partners requires a strong commitment to EDI and this commitment extends to all aspects of our work. When we talk about equality at the British Council, we mean treating people fairly, impartially and without bias. We mean creating conditions which encourage and value diversity, promote dignity and inclusion and a culturally sensitive approach.

Applicants are encouraged to ensure equal opportunities in the teams implementing their proposed activity. For more detail on the British Council's approach, see our Equality Policy at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/equality_policy_2022.pdf

For the UKRI approach see https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/

## Gender equality

The British Council supports the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve 'inclusive and equitable quality education for all' and achieve 'gender equality and empower all women and girls' believing that the equal inclusion of girls and boys in education systems across the world is as an important aspect of meeting the SDGs and as well as being a fundamental human right.  The UK Government's International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014 makes consideration of gender equality a legal requirement of all Official Development Assistance spending (ODA). All of the British Council's ODA-funded projects or programmes are therefore required to be **gender sensitive as a minimum**.

Applicants should therefore clearly demonstrate how their proposed research study is either:

- **Gender sensitive** – gender is integrated into the research project's rationale, design and methodology, data is disaggregated by gender, and gender is considered in the composition of the research team, <u>or</u>
- **Gender responsive** – gender sensitive <u>and</u> data on gender is rigorously analysed with a view to inform implementation, communication, and influencing strategies, <u>or</u>
- **Gender transformative** – gender responsive <u>and</u> examines, analyses, and builds an evidence base to inform long-term practical changes in structural gender power relations and norms, roles and inequalities.

The table below provides indicative guidance of the range of issues applicants should consider in developing their approach and methodology.

| | Gender Equality<br>*the differentiated and intersectional experiences of women, men, and gender diverse groups* |
|---|---|
| **Absence** of Gender | Gender **is not** considered in the project's<br>▪ conceptualisation,<br>▪ rationale/methodology,<br>▪ team composition or<br>▪ implementation |
| Gender **aware** | Gender **is**<br>▪ considered in the research project's rationale, **but is** not an operative concept in the design and methodology or implementation<br>▪ not (or minimally) considered in team composition |
| Gender **sensitive** | Gender **is**<br>▪ considered in the project rationale, design and methodology<br>▪ considered in team composition<br>▪ data is disaggregated by gender<br>Gender-sensitive research **does not (yet)** extend to analysis and action to address gender inequalities. |
| Gender **responsive** | Gender **is**<br>▪ considered in the project rationale, design, methodology and implementation<br>▪ considered in the composition of the research team and reviewers<br>▪ given some attention in communication and dissemination of results<br>▪ data is disaggregated by gender<br>Gender-responsive research **does not (yet)** extend analysis and action to address the underlying structural factors such as norms and power relations that contribute to gender inequalities. |
| Gender **transformative** | Gender **is** integrated throughout the project:<br>▪ specific gender analysis building an evidence base<br>▪ used to inform long-term practical changes in structural gender power relations and norms, roles and inequalities<br>▪ team composition and partnerships monitored for gender parity<br>▪ outputs, results, communication and dissemination strategies are focused on contributing to sustained change through action |

All applications will be required to provide (in section 5 of the application form) a statement detailing how the project will be **gender sensitive at a minimum**. This statement will form a key part of the evaluation of applications and must clearly describe how applications include meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities, as required under the International Development (Gender Equality) Act (2014).

Applicants should review guidance on including a Gender Equality Statement provided by UKRI[1], including the criteria that must be addressed while considering gender impact as described in the Gender Equality Statement Guidance[2].

It is expected that some projects will have less impact on gender and gender relations and professional judgement of the applicants should be exercised to ensure appropriate consideration of the context and intended aims of the project.

## Ethics, Safeguarding and Child Protection

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported by this scheme. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity. In the online application form, applicants must clearly articulate how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and how they will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences and all risks are minimised.

We have a duty of care to safeguard the children and vulnerable adults we work with. Please refer to the Safeguarding policy here: https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/how-we-work/policies/safeguarding

Where proposals involve any contact with children, each organisation and individual will need to adhere to the relevant national requirements to ensure they have been fully vetted to work with under-18s. Please also refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct' (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc ), the Inter Academy Partnership report 'Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise' (http://www.interacademycouncil.net/24026/29429.aspx) or contact us for further guidance.

## How will an award be made?

A panel of British Council ELT specialists, including an expert on gender, will evaluate each proposal against a series of criteria (see below). The ELTRA programme team at the British Council will make a final decision on how to allocate awards, taking into account the recommendations of the panel on each proposal, and the overall balance of the portfolio of awards. We may ask the advice of external experts on an in-confidence basis as part of the evaluation. We reserve the right to contact applicants to request or negotiate an amendment to any aspect of the proposal, including for example budget items or project timeline, in order to best meet the objectives of the scheme.

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[1] https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/

[2] https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/UKRI-250221-Gender-equality-statement-guidance.pdf

## What criteria will the British Council apply in judging whether to make an award?

- The relevance of the project and research output to ELT professionals.
- The originality of the contribution to its field within ELT.
- The quality of the research design and the qualifications and experience of the researchers.
- The consideration of gender and EDI in the research. All proposals must be a minimum of gender sensitive and we will distinguish between projects which clearly show an awareness of EDI (e.g. by having a diverse research team in terms of gender-balance or from different ethnic backgrounds or disability), study EDI (i.e. where some aspect of EDI is the topic being researched) and/or embed changes in EDI (e.g. may involve some kind of intervention). See the British Council Equality Policy for more details: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/equality_policy_2022.pdf.
- The potential impact of the research on ELT practice.
- The amount of funding requested and proportion of funding from other sources. We expect to favour proposals which demonstrate funding from other sources, including, but not restricted to, the applicant's own institution.
- The proposal's contribution to the aims of the scheme, with particular reference to international research collaboration.

## What amount of award will be made?

Awards may be made for amounts up to a maximum of £30,000 (GBP).

We will consider proposals in three tranches:

Tranche 1: under £10,000
Tranche 2: £10,000 – £19,999
Tranche 3: £20,000 – £30,000

We do not expect the ELT Research Awards to cover the full costs of the research, but rather to fund essential elements of the research without which the research would not take place. Proposals should make clear how the other costs of the research will be funded. Proposers of jointly funded research must agree to the full conditions of the award (see below).

The proposal must make clear what expenditure items the award will fund. The scheme will not fund items of equipment which institutions would normally be expected to possess (for example computing equipment including laptops). Nor will it fund conference or seminar attendance to disseminate findings unless specifically invited to do so by the British Council (see 'dissemination' below). The grant cannot cover indirect, overhead or estate costs for the institutions involved.

Awards are generally paid in two tranches, with 80 per cent of the value paid upon the receipt of the fully signed contract and the remaining 20 per cent or revised balance (whichever is less) on receipt of the final paper (and any other agreed outputs) approved by the British Council for publication.

Payments will be made to the UK university to which one of the co-PIs is formally attached. The application must include a letter from the university agreeing to accept and manage the award.

## What are the conditions of the award?

The successful proposers will own the intellectual property rights of the research data and outputs, including the final paper, and will licence these rights to the British Council to use and disseminate the final research paper and any additional outputs at its own discretion with no limitation on time or territory. This will be specified in the individual agreement.

The proposer, institutions and researchers must explicitly acknowledge the support of the British Council through an ELT Research Award in any written or spoken dissemination of the research process and all outputs arising from it, including using the British Council logo where appropriate (e.g. on presentation slides).

The British Council reserves the right to make freely and publicly available relevant non-personal information from the application form of successful proposals, as well as any reports and additional research outputs.

The British Council will inform applicants as to whether the proposal is successful or not. The British Council is not obliged to enter into further discussions or offer advice on proposals. The decision of the British Council regarding ELT Research Awards is final.

Successful proposers must satisfy the British Council that the expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the original proposal by submitting a detailed financial report at the end of the project.

Proposers must agree to the terms and conditions of the scheme, which will be outlined in detail in a grant letter to successful applicants.

## Applicant screening

In order to comply with UK government legislation, the British Council may at any point during the application process carry out searches of relevant third-party screening databases to ensure that neither the applicant institutions nor any of the applicants' employees, partners, directors or shareholders are listed as:

- an individual or entity with whom national or supranational bodies have decreed organisations should not have financial dealings

- being wanted by Interpol or any national law enforcement body in connection with crime

- being subject to regulatory action by a national or international enforcement body

- being subject to export, trade or procurement controls or (in the case of an individual) as being disqualified from being a company director, and/or

- being a heightened risk individual or organisation, or (in the case of an individual) a politically exposed person.

If the applicant or any other party is listed in a Screening Database for any of the reasons set out above, the British Council will assess the applicant as ineligible to apply for this grant call. The applicant must provide the British Council with all information reasonably requested by the British Council to complete the screening searches.

## What are the benefits of the award to the successful proposer?

✓ Financial support which enables the research to take place.
✓ Dissemination of the research by the British Council as an example of quality research from researchers in both the UK and ODA-recipient countries, with full acknowledgement of all researchers and their affiliated institutions.
✓ The right to refer to the research as funded by the British Council ELT Research Awards scheme.
✓ Support with access to appropriate partners, teachers and learners overseas as agreed on a case-by-case basis.

## How will the research be disseminated by the British Council?

✓ Publication as part of the British Council Research Papers series online.
✓ Opportunity to present a webinar through our website or online communities.
✓ Promotion of the research outputs through British Council internal and external networks.

## What is the timeframe for ELTRA scheme?

• Proposals must be received in by the British Council by **23.59 on Friday 12 January 2024.**

• Decisions on awards will be communicated by **15 March 2024**.