

# ELTRA 2024-25 Q&As



Details of this year's scheme are also available in the webinar, which can be accessed via the ELTRAs webpage: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/publications/elt-research-awards/eltra-guidelines> .

## Q&As

### Research details

**According to the DAC list, China (with no mentioning of Taiwan/Hong Kong) is considered an 'upper-income middle country' on the list. May I ask if the scheme consider China as the research partner? Or would it prioritise countries in the lower categories on the list?**

Proposals can include any country on the ODA list – we do not prioritise by category. However, where there are multiple countries/territories included in the proposal, we will prioritise applications where all of them are ODA recipients. The World Bank currently defines both Hong Kong and Taiwan as “High income” so it appears they don't fall within the ODA-recipient category.

**We were wondering whether the ELTRA grant could fund a teacher training programme and/or a language learning course as part of the project.**

Yes, it is possible for a proposal to include a training intervention. If you have a look at this year's ELTRA winners (<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/publications/elt-research-awards/eltra-winners/eltra-2024-winners> ), you can see that a number of them involve teacher training interventions as part of the research projects.

**We plan to conduct an experiment in the teaching both of English and, in parallel, a local (indigenous) language. This is relevant for the country concerned, as children are expected to become literate both in English (the national language) and in a local language. We would like an assurance that this dual approach is acceptable for consideration of the proposal.**

The ELTRA call gives English language learning and indigenous languages as an example of a possible theme, and if you look at this year's winners you will see that a number of them feature English alongside other languages. We can't give advice on the specifics of proposals, but as a general position, the involvement of indigenous languages aligns with the concept of English in multilingual contexts, which is a feature of many ELTRA applications.

**Can a project be aimed at the tertiary level – EAP rather than EFL?**

Yes – as long as the project relates to English language teaching and meets all the other requirements of the scheme, including the empowerment theme, then it can be at tertiary level.

**Can the same UK institution apply with two different projects each with a different co-PI?**

Yes – not the same researcher, but different researchers from the same institution can apply. We are, however, unlikely to fund two projects from the same institution in the same year.

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**Could we have one co-investigator (not co-PI) based in a non-ODA-eligible country (i.e. Sweden)? She is a national of the ODA country in question (but doesn't live/work there).**

Yes – as long as you have a co-PI in the UK and a co-PI in an ODA country, then you can have additional researchers in other countries, including non-ODA. The impact of the project must be primarily in ODA countries, however.

**We have a partnership which is a UK university, a Spanish university and a school in Ethiopia. Would be this valid given that there is no Ethiopian university?**

There does need to be a co-PI attached to a university in the ODA-recipient country. If you can arrange a co-PI in an Ethiopian university, you can then have additional researchers (not co-PIs) in the school there as part of your proposal.

**We are considering a project based in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan. We have Co-PIs in UK, Lebanon and Jordan the latter two of which are ODA recipients. UK has not yet recognised Palestine as a state so it is not on the ODA list. Would our project idea still be viable?**

The ODA list does in fact include “West Bank and Gaza Strip” as upper middle income countries so they can be included.

### **Who can apply/be included?**

**I have previously been awarded an ELTRA (which has now been published). Can I still apply for an ELTRA this year?**

If you had a previous ELTRA which has been published (or accepted by us for publication), then you can apply again for this year's awards.

**I am currently working on a project that is funded by a non-ELTRA British Council grant. Can I apply?**

If you have a current British Council grant which is not an ELTRA, you can also apply for this year's ELTRA awards.

**Can a researcher based at an overseas branch of a university apply as co-PI with the other co-PI being based at the main UK university?**

If you are a national of an ODA country based at a branch of a UK university in that country, and research will be carried out in that country as part of the project, then you can apply as co-PI with the other co-PI being based at the main university in the UK.

**I am based at a university in an ODA-recipient country. Can the British Council help me to find a UK-based academic that I could apply with?**

Unfortunately, we are not in a position/ do not have capacity to help with directly linking academics in the UK and in other countries – we do not know which researchers may be considering applying for an ELTRA or the thematic areas that they might be interested in.

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We would suggest that you search online for academics who are attached to Applied Linguistics departments in UK universities, most of which have lists of their staff and details of their research interests. You could then contact suitable academics direct – their university emails are usually also readily available.

**I have looked at the application form, it seems that this scheme only allows to include one person as the co-principal investigator (attached to UK university). Is my understanding correct?**

There should be one co-PI attached to a UK university and another co-PI attached to a university in an ODA-recipient country. The application form needs to be submitted by the UK-based co-PI and the funding will be managed by the UK university. There can be an additional co-PI if your research covers more than one country and/or additional researchers, in the UK or in other countries, for the proposed project.

**If I would like to include a colleague from the UK to strengthen the design of the study, shall I put the name of that person in the section ‘Names and affiliations of other researchers’?**

Yes.

**I am based in a university in a non-ODA country – can I apply as a co-PI**

No. You can, however, be part of a bid as a researcher, as long as there are two co-PIs leading on the proposal – one affiliated to a UK university and the other a national of and affiliated to a university in an ODA country where the study will take place. We are looking for bids that focus predominantly on ODA countries as that is a requirement of the funding. The link to the list of ODA countries is in the Call.

**If I would like to employ a PGR (PhD student) to work as a research assistant in this project. Should I list this information in the section ‘names and affiliations of other researchers’?**

Yes – and remember to include their CV.

**Is it said that you are particularly encouraging applications that include an early-career researcher. What is your definition of early career researchers?**

An ECR would usually have a recent PhD but limited post-doctoral experience, with some publication history, but again that would probably be quite limited.

**I am writing to ask about the partner institution in the ODA context – does it have to be a university or can it be an NGO or a charity?**

There should be one co-Principal Investigator attached to a UK university and at least one other co-PI attached to a university in an ODA-recipient country. You can, however, add other researchers (not co-PIs) in the relevant section of the application form and you can also include representatives of NGOs and/or charities you would like to collaborate with in the *Other partnerships overseas* section.

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## Finance

### **Will staff time of the investigators be covered by this scheme? If so, are there any specific requirements related to this?**

Staff time can be covered by the grant, but not including indirect, overhead or estate costs. Some applications include staff time, some don't. We do not expect any ELTRA award 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. The judging criteria state that we will "favour proposals which demonstrate funding from other sources, including, but not restricted to, the applicant's own institution" and that funding can include some or all of the staff time.

### **Is there a specific percentage of what can be allocated for staff time working on the project?**

There is no specific percentage of staff time that can be covered by a grant. However, bear in mind that we are looking at the project as a whole, and we will consider value for money as part of our evaluation.

### **Could we have the list of non-covered costs?**

The full grant amount must be assigned to costs directly incurred by the activity or directly allocated to it. We **can** therefore support research staff costs that are directly attributable to the project; we **cannot**, however, cover indirect, overheads or estates costs, as this would require using aid funding to support UK research infrastructure - the university will be expected to cover these.

Specifically, grants **cannot cover:**

- Full economic costs (FECs)
- Institutional overheads, administration fees and other indirect costs.
- Costs of staff based in commercial or for-profit organisations
- Costs of permanent staff in Associated Partner organisations
- Purchase or rental of standard office equipment (except specialist equipment essential to the research). This includes IT hardware – laptops, personal computers, tablets, smart phones, Mac workstations, computer parts and peripherals, etc. Any standard hardware which would routinely be used by researchers and academics will not be funded.
- Office software
- Desks, chairs, filing cabinets, photocopiers, printers, fax machines
- Mobile phone rental or purchase
- Roaming charges
- Tuition fees
- Bench fees (for example PhD, Master's or Undergraduate study)
- Costs related to writing up, promoting or disseminating previous research
- Attendance at conferences or other events unless this is to present outputs and outcomes of the project with prior permission of the British Council
- Patents costs
- Costs relating to the construction, procurement or rental of physical infrastructure, (e.g. office buildings). It is expected that any rooms and facilities essential for the routine

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operation of collaboration are provided as an in-kind contribution by the participating institutions. These can be detailed as an in-kind contribution in the budget breakdown.

- Entertainment costs such as: gifts; alcohol; restaurant bills or hospitality costs for personnel not directly participating in the project; excessive restaurant costs; excessive taxi fares
- Other indirect costs not listed above

**Can the FEC/estate costs be a part of the matched funding / institution contribution element?**

Yes – they should be included on the *University contribution* page of the budget form.

**Does the funding cover the administrative cost of the recipient university?**

No, we cannot cover university administrative costs unless these are directly incurred by the research project activity or directly allocated to it.

**What do you mean by overhead costs?**

These are usually established by the university, so check with yours.

**Other questions**

**Is the 8-page limit in the detailed proposal section of the application form up to but not including the bibliography?**

That's correct. The *Detailed proposal* section of the application form has 12 numbered sections that must be completed in a maximum of 8 pages in total (the details on how to do that are in the application form). There is then an additional page allowed for your bibliography.

**Will British Council promote outputs through its TeachingEnglish website?**

Yes. We have expanded the range of our dissemination activity over the last couple of years to include a range of activities around the launch of each research paper. We now ask for a short video for a general audience as one of your outputs and we may be able to offer you a webinar to discuss your project with our audience of teachers and teacher educators. If you produce other outputs, such as journal articles, we can also reference them from our website.

**Will British Council provide guidance or technical support for creating the video?**

We have standard guidelines for researchers on creating their videos. We can also provide more support if you need it – we want the videos to be as good as possible!