



John Coolahan Research Support Framework Guidance Notes

Overview

The John Coolahan Research Support Framework supports teachers' ongoing professional learning. More specifically, it seeks to support them in using existing research to inform their practice, or in carrying out new research, either in collaboration with others or independently. The support offered by the Teaching Council may involve advisory support, and/or it may involve funding. The Council's intention is that the Framework will encourage applicants to adopt an innovative and creative approach in considering how research and evidence can support their own and others' teaching practice.

The Framework places a strong emphasis on research activities that strengthen the links between research, policy and practice, and on collaboration among teachers, and between teachers and other educational researchers. While individual applicants must be registered teachers, collaborative applications are open to all those interested in applying, sharing or interrogating existing research or in conducting new research. However, at least one of the applicants in a collaborative application must be a registered teacher. In considering applications priority will be afforded to

- Research other than that associated with formal programmes of study
- The implementation of evidence informed-approaches to classroom practice
- Collaborative research applications
- Applications where at least one of the teachers on the application is currently a practising teacher in a recognised school or Centre for Education
- Projects that demonstrate significant capacity to contribute to research, policy and practice in relation to:
 - (a) collaboration
 - (b) wellbeing in schools

Applicants who indicate that they are practising teachers will be required, as part of the application process, to make a declaration confirming that.

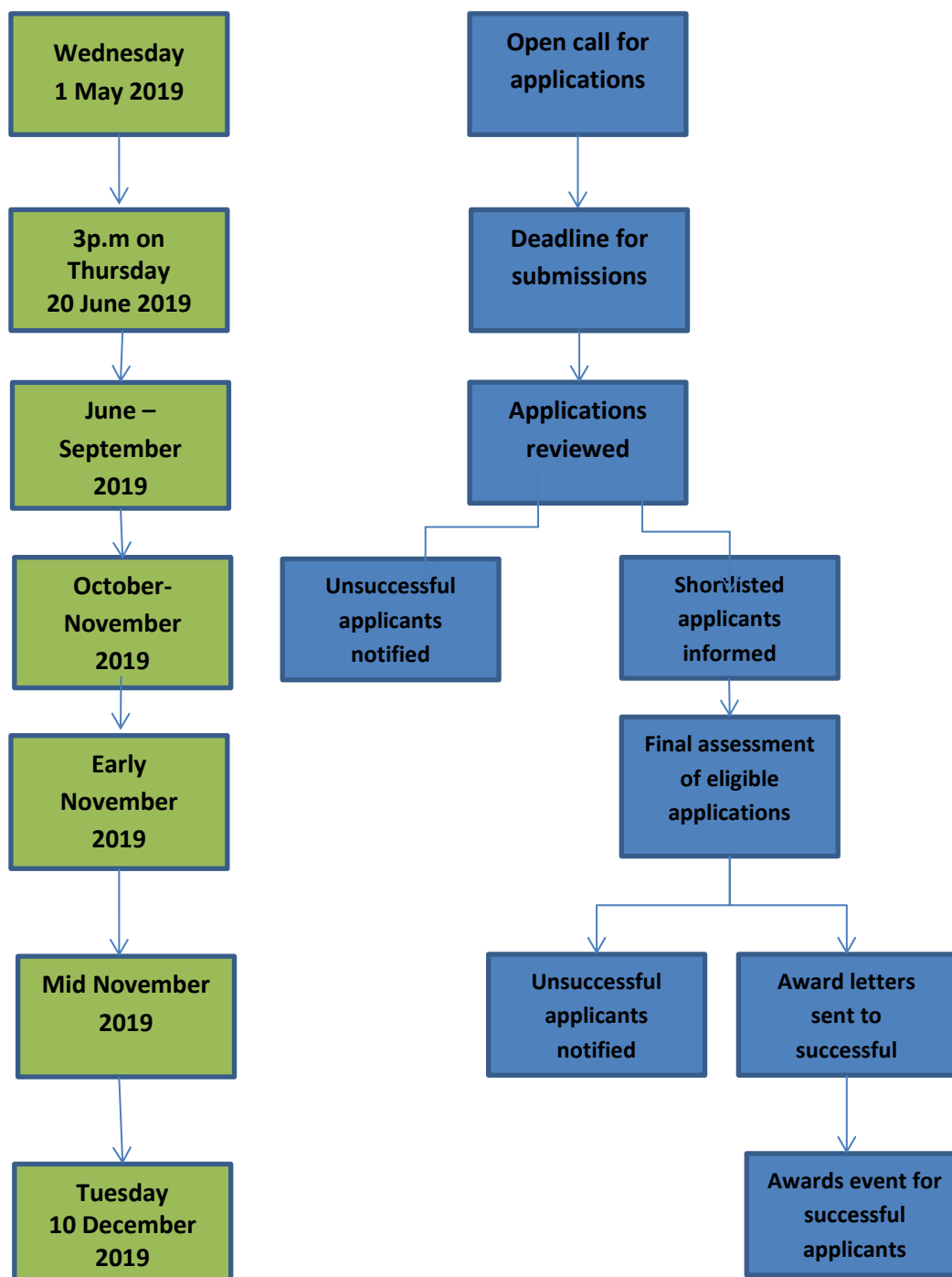


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(i) Application and Review Process

The diagram below provides an overview of the application process for the John Coolahan Research Support Framework. These are indicative timelines and may be subject to change.



(ii) Strands of Support

To support a range of ways of engaging in and with research, the John Coolahan Research Support Framework is organised into two strands described below:

Strand 1

Support for innovative projects that seek to explore, share and apply existing research (50% of funding).

Through this strand, groups or individual applicants could, for example:

- Convene seminars, workshops, a shared learning day or a Researchmeet that brings practitioners together to share and interrogate existing research on effective practice, and use research tools to address practice questions
- Establish and coordinate a teacher research network, learning forum and/or professional learning community
- Synthesise existing research in order to support practice-based questions (through for example, literature reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analyses etc.), and share the research in a format that is more readily accessible to practising teachers
- Develop and share a practice-based resource informed by existing research
- Share learning from research through, for example, presenting at conferences or publishing via a blog, vlog, digest or other formats
- Undertake learning about tools for accessing, interrogating, synthesising or sharing existing research or other practical research skills

Please note that this is an indicative list only.

Strand 2

Support for new research (50% of funding).

This strand provides support for groups or individuals conducting new research.

Teaching Council Priorities:

In carrying out its research functions, and in promoting a culture of research in the profession, the Council identifies areas of particular research interest. These are referred to as priority research areas and they can be found [here](#) on our website. In addition, for the current round the Council is seeking applications that facilitate evidence-informed approaches to practice, and thereby enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Priority will be afforded to:

- Collaborative applications and, in particular, multi-disciplinary collaborations, combining different perspectives and knowledge, where at least one of the applicants is a practising teacher in a recognised school or Centre for Education
- Research other than that associated with formal programmes of study

- Applications that demonstrate significant potential to contribute to research, policy and practice in relation to collaboration. Collaboration here is understood in broad terms to include collaboration involving practising teachers, students and/or others.
- Applications that demonstrate significant potential to contribute to research, policy and practice in relation to wellbeing. In this context, the Teaching Council's broad definition of wellbeing, to include both teacher and student wellbeing, as set out on page 18 of the [Cosán framework for teachers' learning](#), will guide the adjudication process

(iii) Guidance on Rigour

Applicants should provide details of how they will ensure rigour in undertaking their projects. This will apply in the case of research projects under both strands.

The means to ensure rigour must be appropriate for the study. Applicants may wish to detail how they will address e.g. validity, reliability, trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, etc. Where the application relates to engagement with existing research – e.g., where teachers are discussing or synthesising existing research, applicants will be expected to be mindful of the rigour and quality of the original research.

A selection of webinars, which provide advice and practical support for teacher researchers seeking to ensure rigour in their research, is available on the research pages of the Teaching Council's website [here](#). Topics include: qualitative methods, quantitative methods and carrying out a literature review.

(iv) Guidance on Ethics

Teaching is an inherently ethical profession. This is reflected in the fact that all registered teachers undertake their professional practice within the context of a professional code. This code is underpinned by the key values of respect, integrity, trust and care and outlines specific standards of conduct. These standards apply to teachers in all aspects of their practice, including when they engage in, and with, research. Applicants should carefully consider how these standards inform their research. Applicants should also demonstrate how they will address potential and actual ethical issues arising in their research and describe specific safeguards they propose to put in place to address any ethical risks.

Ethical issues to consider include confidentiality (including any measures to be taken to protect the anonymity of participants), informed consent and potential harm to participants, with particular reference to any minors and vulnerable adults involved.

If applicants are conducting research through a third-level course or in collaboration with a researcher in a third-level institution, addressing potential ethical issues could involve getting ethical approval for projects via the relevant ethics boards/committees.

If applicants are conducting research using any of the [indicative data sets provided as examples on the Teaching Council website](#), written evidence of appropriate permission from the relevant repository to access this material must be provided to the Teaching Council.

In addition to the above guidance, applicants are advised to view this webinar on research ethics [here](#).

(v) Outcomes and impact of the research

All applicants must:

- Clearly specify the research outcomes they anticipate. Outcomes are distinct from research findings, and may include (but are not limited to); individual or shared learning about the topic being researched; the development of a particular research skill; new tools or resources; publications; events; influence on public policy, etc.
- List the ways in which they intend to share their learning from the project with others. Applicants should be mindful of how research findings can be shared, including publication in journals, on the [T-REX platform](#), presentations at conferences, blogging, vlogging, researchmeets, etc. Applicants should consider how they will capture, and share, their own “research story”.
- Clearly set out how they propose to optimise the impact of the project. Impact should be considered from a number of perspectives such as individual, classroom, school, national, etc.

(vi) Eligible Costs

This framework assists applicants in meeting their research costs, in full or in part. A range of costs may be considered by the Council. These include, but are not limited to:

- Conference/workshop fees
- Event/training costs
- Reasonable travel expenses
- Fees associated with courses which are directly related to your application
- Substitution costs
- Room hire and costs of refreshments
- Speaker fees
- Costs of design and/or production of materials.

All applications must include an itemised list of costs being sought, including estimates where exact costs are unknown.

Funding **will not** be allocated to the following:

- Activities that have already been completed
- Materials which have already been purchased
- Purchase of equipment over €150 which have an economic life of over 12 months.

The successful applicant(s) will be responsible for appropriate expenditure planning and management during their project.

(vii) Submitting an Application

Please download and save the form before completing. You will need Adobe Reader to access links and submit the form using the 'Submit' button at the end. Please note, Adobe Reader is not the default PDF reader in certain browsers. If Adobe Reader is not installed on your device, you can download the free application [here](#). Please ensure that you re-read and save the form before submitting.

When you click submit, it should ask how you want to submit the form (through email or an email client). Once you choose the email application, the email will appear pre-addressed to research@teachingcouncil.ie with your completed application saved as an attachment. You will need to press send on the email and it will be saved in your sent items. If you experience any difficulty in using the submit button, you can save your form and email it as an attachment to research@teachingcouncil.ie. Please check the form before sending to ensure that all areas of the form have been completed fully. You will receive an email to confirm receipt of your form in due course.

(viii) Criteria for Reviewing Applications

All applications received by 3p.m. on Thursday 20 June, will be reviewed according to the criteria below. **Applications received after 3p.m. on Thursday 20 June will not be considered.**

Stage 1 – Review for eligibility purposes

All applications received will be reviewed to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria set out hereunder. Only those applications meeting the eligibility criteria will go forward to Stage 2 of the adjudication process (evaluation).

Eligibility Criteria

- **Involvement of a registered teacher:** All applications must involve a registered teacher. No applications will be considered where the sole researcher is not a registered teacher or where a registered teacher is not part of a group/collaborative application.
- **Completion of Application Form:** All mandatory questions must be completed in full, and all applicants must have signed* all declarations.

**By typing his or her name in the declarations section on the application form, an applicant is deemed to have signed the application.*

Stage 2 – Evaluation

All eligible applications will be adjudicated upon having regard to the criteria below:

- **Potential Impact:** What are the outcomes of the project? How will the findings of the project be shared with the wider teaching profession to improve practice? How important and relevant are the questions or issues that are being addressed? Will the project make an important contribution to teaching/teachers' and students' learning?
- **Consideration given to ethics:** Does the proposal adequately consider the ethical dimensions of the research activities proposed?
- **Consideration given to research rigour:** Does the proposal demonstrate how rigour will be ensured?

Priority will be afforded, in the marking scheme, to applications that:

- **involve one or more practising teachers in a recognised school(s) or Centre(s) for Education** and/or,
- **are collaborative** and/or,
- **relate to research other than that associated with formal programmes of study** and/or

- **have the capacity to contribute to policy development and practice with regard to the collaboration and/or wellbeing.** In this context, collaboration is understood in broad terms as set out on page 2 of these guidelines. The definition of wellbeing includes both teacher and student wellbeing, as set out on page 18 of the [Cosán framework for teachers' learning](#).

Stage 3 – Allocation of available funds

Following the evaluation process, funding will be awarded to each application on the basis of the marks scored at Stage 2 and the application of a mathematical formula. Allocation of funding will be subject to certain minimum scores having been achieved at Stage 2 above.

(ix) The Review Panel

To bring diverse experience and expertise to the review process, it is anticipated that the Review Panel will include:

- The Chair of The Teaching Council's Education Committee
- Two Registered Teachers
- One representative from a Higher Education Institution
- One external member with expertise in education and implementation science*
- The Teaching Council Director/Director's nominee

**Implementation Science is a rapidly developing field of knowledge on how to successfully implement new practices, particularly concerned with the implementation of evidence-informed practice and policy.*

(x) Reporting Requirements and Template

Awards will be paid to successful applicants in two instalments. The first half of the award is presented at an awards event for all successful applicants following adjudication by the Review Panel. The second instalment will be paid following completion of the project and submission of a satisfactory final report. Where projects extend beyond one year, annual progress reports must also be submitted.

Progress Report

Those recipients whose research projects are to run beyond a year are expected to submit a progress report by 1 September each year to keep the Teaching Council informed on both of progress and of any changes to the project team and/or circumstances that may affect the project's outcome. The progress report template is available to download [here](#).

Final Report

Successful applicants will be expected to submit a final report within 60 days of completing the research. The final report will demonstrate that a number of conditions have been fulfilled. Fulfilment of these conditions will be determined by the Research Support Framework Review Panel when it meets in January each year to review final reports. In the case of the vast majority of projects, it is expected that final reports will be submitted within a period of three years of being awarded funding. In exceptional circumstances, and on a case-by-case basis, this may be extended, subject to agreement with the Teaching Council, and **an absolute maximum of six years from the date of award**. The final report template is available to download [here](#).

(xi) Conditions of Award

There are a number of conditions of award that should be noted carefully by applicants before submission of their application form. Applicants are deemed to have consented to these conditions upon submission of their application form.

- While individual applicants must be registered teachers, collaborative applications are open to all those interested in conducting research activities under each strand of the Framework. However, at least one of the applicants in a collaborative application must be a registered teacher, and priority will be afforded to applications where the registered teacher(s) is/are practising teachers.
- There is no lower limit to the amount of financial support that may be awarded. The Research Support Framework is designed to support all types of research engagement activity, regardless of scale. Indeed, applications from teachers engaged in smaller-scale classroom-based research projects are particularly welcome.
- The upper limit that may be awarded to a project under the terms of this Framework is €5,000.
- Applicants may be offered less funding than they request, and/or forms of support which are not financial.
- Relevant costs must be in line with the eligible costs specified in this guidance document.
- Applicants must declare if they have applied for or received any other funding to support the same research activities.
- All applicants under the Framework will be required to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration. A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual has an interest which may compromise that individual's obligations to The Teaching Council. A conflict of interest includes perceived and potential as well as actual conflicts of interest. A perceived conflict of interest is one which a reasonable person would consider likely to compromise objectivity. A potential conflict of interest is a situation which could develop into an actual or perceived conflict of interest. If an individual has a conflict of interest (actual, perceived or potential), they have a duty to disclose it and to take any such actions as may be appropriate to manage that conflict and mitigate against it. The Teaching Council recognises that conflicts may arise even when an individual acts with complete neutrality and professional integrity. The existence of this policy is not in any way intended to question the integrity of individuals, but is necessary to protect them and the Teaching Council from reputational damage or other liabilities, and to protect the integrity of the research project.
- Applicants who indicate that they are practising teachers will be required, as part of the application process, to make a declaration on the application form specifying their role (e.g. classroom teacher, principal, SET, etc.).
- Applicants may not apply more than once under this round of the Framework.
- Only fully completed application forms can be considered for award.
- Completed applications forms must be received before the closing date of 3p.m. on Thursday 20 June 2019. Any applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

- Any financial award made must be used for the purpose specified in the application form. In the case of successful applications, any proposed change to the project should be brought to the attention of the Council as soon as possible.
- Where a successful application under the John Coolahan Research Support Framework relates to the organisation of a research event(s), no admission or other fees shall be charged to attendees/participants at such event(s).
- It is necessary to store and process information sent by applicants, to assist the review of applications and review the Council's own work associated with the Framework. Information may be shared with the Centre for Effective Services, who support the Council's research work. Applicants are deemed to have consented to the sharing of their application under this Framework, and any related correspondence, with the Centre for Effective Services.
- Where, for any reason, a successful applicant is unable to take up the financial support awarded, the Council should be informed immediately.
- Tax issues, if any, arise from an award under the Research Support Framework are a matter for the individual recipient(s) and not the Council.
- Information concerning the awards made as part of the Research Support Framework, including the names, titles and affiliations of successful applicants, and a description of the work being funded, may be published on the Teaching Council website and in other promotional material. Final reports which have been deemed suitable for publication by the Research Support Framework Review Panel, will be published on the Teaching Council's website.
- Successful applicants are required to comply with the reporting requirements outlined in this guidance document. Payment of the second instalment of funding is subject to review panel's consideration of the final report submitted, and its satisfaction that all requirements have been met.
- Successful applicants may be invited by the Council to disseminate and share their research at events and other dissemination activities and outputs.
- Successful applicants are required to participate and share their learning at a Researchmeet as part of [FÉILTE](#).
- Successful applicants are required to register, and engage with the [T-REX platform](#).