



Application Guidelines for School Based Research Projects

Applications close: Thursday 1st August 2019

Background

The Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales (AISNSW) works to ensure that support for independent schools is informed by research and grounded in evidence informed practice. This is an essential feature to ensure the effectiveness of the AISNSW and for the benefit of all independent schools.

The AISNSW Education Research Project aims to:

- provide new opportunities for schools to undertake, access and utilise education research in their practice
- further enhance the capacity of the AISNSW to support independent schools in a research based manner.

To assist in overseeing the development and implementation of this project the AISNSW Education Research Council was formed in 2014. The Council is comprised of a number of Heads and senior staff from a wide range of independent schools, together with AISNSW staff.

School Based Research Projects

Purpose

School Based Research Projects are undertaken over a two year period by teachers and/or school leaders. The aim is to improve the work, first of the teachers involved in the projects themselves, and ultimately the work of teachers generally in the independent schools sector.

School Based Research Projects focus on areas of education which will ultimately impact student outcomes, and make a substantial contribution to new insights, in and beyond individual schools.

Examples of project focus could include, but are not limited to:

- school climate
- student learning needs
- approaches to strengthen and deepen teachers' pedagogical content knowledge
- empirical and theoretical evaluation of developments in the target school and potential applications more broadly.



Examples of past projects can be found on the [School Based Research](#) webpage.

School Based Research Projects have an impact on policy and practice within the individual schools concerned, and in the education sector more broadly. Results of these projects are publishable and suitable for presentation at education conferences.

School Based Research Projects teams present at annual AISNSW Education Research Symposia.

A key feature of the School Based Research Projects is an association or partnership with a specialist mentor external to the school or cluster. The specialist mentor may be either a suitably qualified consultant, or an academic from an approved institution such as a university. In most cases, the specialist mentor will be identified and proposed by the school, although the AISNSW can assist in this process where needed.

Application Information and Guidelines

What support will the AISNSW provide?

Funding

A small number of high quality School Based Research Projects will each be funded to the amount of approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000 over a two year period.

It is intended that funding be primarily used to provide time for the research team to undertake the work required to successfully complete the proposed project.

A school may apply to undertake a research project on its own, or alternatively a cluster of schools may apply for a project with one school identified as the lead school.

Access to ongoing support

The relationship between the School Based Research Project team and its specialist mentor is an important one. It is anticipated that school teams and the mentor will work closely throughout the project. Some project funding can be used to meet costs associated with the specialist mentor.

In addition to this relationship, the AISNSW will support schools in ways that can best help them to successfully undertake their project.

Examples of support that the AISNSW could provide, when needed, include:

- facilitating access to a suitably qualified person who can act as critical friend
- facilitating access to relevant international experts
- providing coaching support and feedback to the project leader
- assisting in maintaining the momentum of the project by keeping regular contacts with the project leader.

Collaborative opportunities with colleagues and leading researchers

Collaborative opportunities are built into the project via:

- the annual AISNSW Education Research Symposium, at which all schools undertaking a project will present about their interim or final report findings
- biannually School Based Research Network Meetings, in which all schools undertaking projects actively participate
- connecting with thought leaders and innovative practices from across the globe.

What will participating schools commit to?

Successful applicant schools commit and contribute to the following:

- the Project Development Day – an initial orientation and professional learning day attended by representatives from each research team
- the annual AISNSW Education Research Symposium at which project progress and outcomes are shared via presentations and participation
- representation at the School Based Research Network Meetings
- provision of interim report and the final research paper, together with any relevant artefacts that may be suitable for sharing via the AISNSW website
- liaising with the AISNSW and seeking feedback as appropriate.

Who can apply?

- All AISNSW member schools are eligible to apply, either as a single school or in clusters.
- A cluster arrangement is defined by the ongoing and active involvement of each school in the cluster throughout the entirety of the project.
- Cluster arrangements must identify a lead school, which will have designated responsibility for all financial and reporting requirements over the course of the project.
- All applications need to clearly demonstrate how other schools will be directly involved in the research process and/or benefit from the outcomes of the research.

Copyright, intellectual property and additional use of project material

Copyright and all Intellectual Property Rights in project materials created or developed during the project vests in and remains the property of the AISNSW.

School Based Research Projects are funded on the basis that the data collected, research findings, and any resultant products or artefacts are for the public benefit and to make a contribution to the education sector.

It is the intention of the AISNSW that all independent schools will be able to use the research for their own internal purposes. Published papers and conference presentations by educators undertaking the research in schools are encouraged.

It is acknowledged that some of the data collected, research findings and products or artefacts resulting from the research project may help inform further study, attainment of higher qualifications and/or professional opportunities for teachers involved in the project.

The extent to which the use of the project material in these circumstances is permitted will be considered by the AISNSW on a case by case basis.

A description of all matters relating to copyright, intellectual property and the acceptable use of School Based Research Project materials will be included in the Project Agreement that successful applicant schools will sign with the AISNSW.

How will applications be assessed?

Applications will be assessed by an independent panel drawn from representatives of the AISNSW Education Research Council, and using a rubric comprised of five criteria:



1. background and rationale
2. methods and data collection approaches
3. wider contribution
4. organisational capacity
5. professional response.

The assessment rubric is included at the end of this document.

Where can I find more information?

For more information please visit the [School Based Research Projects](#) webpage of the AISNSW website or contact the Research and Data Division via RandD@aisnsw.edu.au

If you are interested in applying to participate in a 2019 project, please complete and submit the [Application Form](#).

Professional support

If you are interested in learning more about how to design a project and structure your application you might consider accessing the online course [Getting ready for robust research](#)

What happens next?

Applications must be submitted to the AISNSW by **5:00pm** on **Thursday, 01 August 2019**.

An independent assessment panel will meet soon after and schools will be advised about their application outcomes during the week beginning **27 August 2019**.

Successful School Based Research Projects are required to send their team leader, one other team member and their specialist mentor to the Project Development Day and AISNSW Education Research Symposium. The Project Development Day will be held at AISNSW on **17 October 2019**. The AISNSW Education Research Symposium will be held at Rydges World Square Sydney on **18 October 2019**.