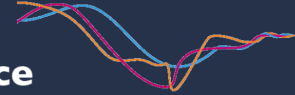


Learnus[®]
Understanding Learning

**Centre for
Educational
Neuroscience**



The Building impact Groups (BiG) project

a stepping stone to the future of education

The Building Impact Groups (BiG) project

Supporting translation between the learning sciences and education practice

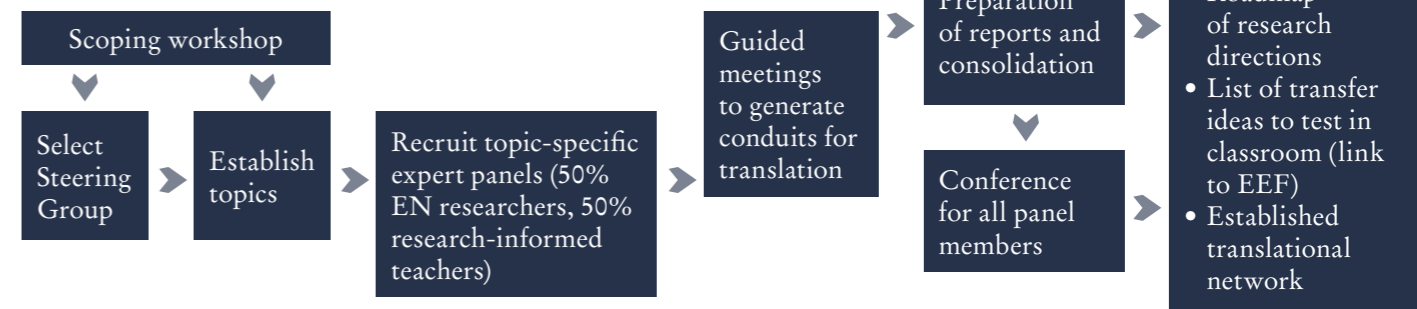


- In this country, we have some of the best educational neuroscience research in the world and some of the best teachers. What we don't have, indeed anywhere in the world, is a reliable and effective way of getting them together – to work out how best to turn research about mechanisms of learning into improved teaching and learning practice, and to allow teachers to guide new research work.
- The Building Impact Groups (BiG) project** puts teachers and researchers in the same room to focus on a single topic and hammer out a direction for research and practice.
- We are proposing a three-year timescale with groups of ten individuals for twelve topics, with varied membership depending on the topic, but a consistent chair and administrative support, and structured product-oriented mechanisms to deliver concrete outcomes. The parallel groups will culminate in a summary conference and a new roadmap for evidence-based progress.
- This approach, and the mechanisms for running the groups, came about from piloting work to establish feasibility and effectiveness.
- The **outcomes** will be (1) a new roadmap of research directions, (2) a new list of transfer ideas to test in the classroom, (3) a tried and tested methodology for translating research into better classroom practice, and (4) an established translation network.
- In essence this approach is exactly the same as the Catapult **innovation hubs** being employed by businesses. Get your best brains together to work on identifying creative ideas for improving teaching and learning based on very focused research.
- What we are proposing here is the creation **an engine room for educational improvement**, a facility that does not yet exist anywhere in the world. What we are asking for is the funding to get this vital translational infrastructure up and running.
- The Building Impact Groups project will last three years. It will bring together over a 100 researchers and educators, in a managed process of innovation. It will produce a roadmap of new research and development priorities; a set of ideas for techniques for evaluation in the classroom, and it will establish network for interaction and innovation between researchers and educators that so far does not exist anywhere in the world.

The pressing need for new solutions is evident from a recent report that there has been little improvement in narrowing school attainment gap in England for 20 years, despite decades of policy focus (IFS Deaton Review of Inequalities, Aug 22).

- We are seeking funding for a time limited, carefully crafted programme to build a robust pathway between practitioners and researchers.
- The outcome would be an established method for optimal targeting of research on real problems identified by classroom teachers.
- Up until now, research has been driven by funding applications to well intentioned but loosely focused national bodies, for piecemeal individual research projects. This has resulted in a scatter gun approach with little focus on real classroom practice.
- We have an excellent national evaluation body in the Educational Endowment Foundation to assess what works, but we are struggling to develop meaningful projects for them to evaluate.
- On the one hand we have researchers who have great ideas, but limited knowledge of everyday challenges within the classroom; on the other we have teachers who can't make head nor tail of what the research means for their practice.

The process: An innovation hub for education



Structure for Guided Meetings (70-minute model)

- Guidance from Chairperson** (5 minutes) for ground rules of meeting
- Initial thoughts** (10 mins) overview of topic and teacher discussion of the topic to start thinking about what it means in the classroom
- Presentation** (20 mins) by academics of latest research on the topic and current open questions
- Discussion** (25 mins) of whether the research resonates with what happens in the classroom, what new things could be tried/evaluated in the classroom, what new questions could be investigated by researchers
- Summary** (10 mins) key outcomes to take forward

Indicative list of topics

- Reading / spelling
- Handwriting
- Numeracy (arithmetic)
- Science
- Social Emotional Development
- Classroom behaviour
- Adolescent behavior (risk taking, peer relations, mental health)
- Concept development (analogy, reasoning)
- Writing skills
- Creativity
- Citizenship and metacognition
- Physical education skills, motor skills
- Brain health (diet, pollution, stress, sleep, fitness)
- Technology use (ICT, screen time, online learning)
- Disorders (SEN Pedagogy)
- Giftedness

Learning Skills Research Foundation and Learnus
are proud to support The BiG Project.

If you feel you can support this important project with a donation, however big or small, please send it to:

Lady Mary Tovey
Finance Director
Learning Skills Research Foundation
32 Complins Close
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Oxford OX2 6PZ

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