Expression of Interest: Impact Study, British Council School Programmes in Scotland

Summary of Brief

British Council Scotland wishes to commission an analysis of our work with schools in Scotland to better understand and evidence the role that our programmes and resources play in supporting current domestic policy priorities focused on excellence and equity.

Our programmes and resources for schools aim to support learning, teaching and school improvement. In addition, they broaden learners' horizons; open their eyes to global thinking and help support the development of core skills relevant in today’s global economy. At present we work with approximately a third of all schools in Scotland through programmes such as; Erasmus +, Connecting Classrooms, eTwinning and Modern Language Assistants. The cumulative financial support to schools provided through the above is approximately £1,400,00 annually.

Currently, some of our programmes have been developed to support the Scottish Government’s specific ambitions in the areas of learning for sustainability and the 1 + 2 language policy. We also have initial evidence that programmes play a role in supporting broader priorities focused on excellence and equity but are keen to further scrutinise this, particularly in the following areas:

- Improving attainment in numeracy, literacy, health and well-being.
- Supporting interventions that are aimed at closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- Teacher professional development and leadership.

We envisage that this analysis will have three core components:

1. An analysis of the correlation between attainment and engagement with British Council programmes by school and local authority area in Scotland. This analysis is to include reference to those local authorities involved in the Scottish Attainment Challenge, where applicable.

2. A qualitative assessment of the role that Connecting Classrooms, Language Assistants, Erasmus + and eTwinning programmes play in supporting attainment through a sampling and tracking approach over this academic year. This is to be combined with an analysis of longer term outcomes through a sampling of schools that have been involved in programmes in previous academic years.

3. A core set of recommendations on how programmes may be better utilised or where appropriate improved in order to support current educational priorities concerned with attainment and teacher development in Scotland.

British Council and our work with Schools

Founded in 1934, British Council is based in more than 100 countries and connects millions of people with the UK through our work in English Language, the arts, education and society. We are a Non Departmental Public Body; our sponsoring department is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We are operationally independent but work with the UK Government and Devolved Administrations to ensure strategic alignment with UK policy priorities.
British Council Scotland brings the best of international education and the arts to Scotland and promotes Scottish excellence in arts and education through our international programmes and global network.

In education, we support the internationalisation of the schools, higher and further education sectors through:

- A range of collaborative international programmes for and with partners including the European Union, the Department for International Development, the Department for Education, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Scottish Government. In partnership with Ecorys UK, British Council is the appointed National Agency for Erasmus+ and we manage the delivery of the programme for schools and the higher education sector.

- Supporting the high-profile positioning of Scottish excellence internationally and bringing educational best practice to Scotland through our extensive global networks and initiatives such as the Education World Forum.

For schools, our professional development opportunities, curriculum resources and international linking programmes offer a range of approaches to learning and development. An overview of our core offer for schools and teachers in Scotland can be found in: ‘Bring the World into your School’, see: https://scotland.britishcouncil.org/bring-world-your-school The publication also details how some of our programmes have been developed to strengthen the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence and associated policies. For instance, the 1+2 language policy and learning for sustainability.

The publication also references the evidence that we have to date on how engagement in our programmes can support attainment through various means including as a motivational context for learning and as a mechanism for improving teaching and leadership in schools. Evidence has been drawn from a range of sources including evaluation from participants and studies by British Council, the National Foundation for Educational Research and the UCL Institute of Education. Building on this evidence base we are keen to understand the contribution that our programmes and resources can make to the current educational priorities noted above.

**Approach and methodology:**

The research team will be expected to work with British Council Scotland to define the exact parameters and methodology to be used. However it is anticipated that the analysis will draw on and reference the following for each core component:

1: An analysis of the correlation between attainment and engagement with British Council programmes and resources by school and local authority area in Scotland. This analysis is to include reference to those local authorities involved in the Scottish Attainment Challenge where applicable:

- British Council Scotland has data on programme participation per local authority and by school and would provide this as a base for analysis.

- It would be expected that the following indicators of attainment would be used as a minimum: School Leaver Attainment, Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels and the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy/Scottish National Standardised Assessments where available, see: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education
2: An in-depth longitudinal assessment of the role that Connecting Classrooms, Language Assistants, Erasmus + and eTwinning programmes play in supporting attainment through a sampling and tracking approach over this school year:

- We would be looking for the research team appointed to define the approach to this component but at a minimum would require the sample to include schools from Challenge and non-Challenge Authorities if possible.
- If would be expected that this component would involve qualitative approaches and interviews with teachers and learners twice during the school year.
- Interviews with relevant agencies would also be required. These would include: Education Scotland, General Teaching Council for Scotland, Scottish College for Educational Leadership and Scottish Government.

3: A core set of recommendations on how programmes may be better utilised and where possible improved in order to support current educational priorities in Scotland.

- It is anticipated that the recommendations would take account of the priorities focused on improving attainment in numeracy, literacy, health and wellbeing, and closing the poverty related attainment gap laid out in the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education 2017: [http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/NationalImprovementFramework](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/NationalImprovementFramework). Within this context we would anticipate particularly relevant drivers for improvement to include: School Leadership and Teacher Professionalism. See: [http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/NationalImprovementFramework/driversofimprovement](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/NationalImprovementFramework/driversofimprovement)
- We would also wish to see reference to the Scottish Attainment Challenge: Learning and Teaching Toolkit as a key resource for teachers on evidence based interventions for raising attainment: [http://intranet.britishcouncil.org/Pages/default.aspx](http://intranet.britishcouncil.org/Pages/default.aspx)

**Deliverables**

It is anticipated that the impact study will be completed by the end of June 2018 and will produce the following outputs:

- An interim report that details the assessment of correlation between British Council programmes and attainment as well as the summary of responses from the initial stage of the longitudinal study. This will be expected no later than the end of January 2018. It would be envisaged that this interim report would not exceed 50 single side pages of A4.
- A final draft report that includes; an executive summary, full analysis of core components one and two and recommendations by mid July 2018. It is envisaged that the final report will be around 100 pages of single side A4.

Attendance at the following meetings will be required throughout the study timeline: project initiation meeting, two formal update meetings and a final presentation of the results.

**Qualifications and Experience**

It is expected that the respondents will have the following:

- Substantial experience of working in educational research using qualitative and quantitative approaches.
• In-depth understanding of the Scottish school system and current policy reforms, particularly as they pertain to curriculum development, numeracy and literacy, attainment, teacher leadership and professionalism.
• Good knowledge and/or demonstrable understanding of one or more in the Scottish context: global citizenship, language learning and/or learning for sustainability.

Timeline

Expressions of interest, no longer than 4 A4 single side pages, summarising a proposed approach to the impact study, an indicative budget and the experience and qualifications of the research team, should be submitted to Natasha Kozlowska at Natasha.Kozlowska@britishcouncil.org by Friday, 20th of October 2017.