

Call for Proposals **TIRF-BRITISH COUNCIL** **RESEARCH MENTORING AWARDS**

TIRF invites proposals for the 2026-27
TIRF-British Council Research Mentoring Awards

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE
JULY 27, 2026
(11:59pm Pacific Daylight Time – Canada/USA)

Introduction

The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) was founded in 1999 as an international, non-profit research foundation. Its aim is to generate new knowledge and to collect and organize existing knowledge about the teaching and learning of English for the purposes of informing educational policy; improving classroom practices; and, ultimately, expanding educational, occupational, and social opportunities for individuals in a global society.

TIRF is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Trustees composed of scholars, educators, authors, and individuals who work in the corporate sector. It is supported by charitable donations. TIRF is committed to developing and implementing an innovative, proactive applied research program to help ensure that English as a second, foreign, or additional language is taught, learned, and tested in a manner that is demonstrably effective, expedient, and economical. TIRF is also committed to strengthening links between theory, practice, and policy and to fostering partnerships among researchers around the world.

Description of the TIRF-British Council Research Mentoring Awards

TIRF is partnering with the British Council to offer research mentoring awards. The purpose of the TIRF-British Council Research Mentoring Awards (RMA) is to support new researchers and improve the quality of research undertaken by students in doctoral programs within the field of English language education on issues of mutual interest to TIRF and the British Council.



The goal behind the research mentoring award is to positively impact English language education by working with promising doctoral students who have the potential to influence language pedagogy, research, and policy in the future in their home countries. Both the British

Council and TIRF will work toward developing fruitful relationships with awardees and their supervisors to achieve this goal.

Via the research mentoring program, individual doctoral students have the opportunity to work on potential doctoral dissertation research proposals in collaboration with established researchers who share common areas of professional interest with them. The mentor-mentee relationship aims to elevate the research capabilities of the mentees, thereby increasing the mentees' abilities to improve their skills as researchers and influence the landscape of English language education in their individual contexts. Although it is not a requirement, recipients of the TIRF-British Council RMAs are encouraged to apply for a [TIRF Doctoral Dissertation Grant \(DDG\)](#) after participation in the research mentoring program, using the research proposal created as part of the research mentoring award. TIRF and the British Council are particularly interested in research proposals that have clear implications for educational policy makers and others in positions to make decisions about English language education practices.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a TIRF-British Council Research Mentoring Award, applicants must satisfy the following requirements:

1. be doctoral students in good standing in their respective universities;
2. be from one of the countries selected from the [OECD DAC list](#)—particularly in Africa, East Asia, Southeast Asia, or Latin America—and attending a university in one of these countries (see list of eligible countries below); and
3. have an official doctoral supervisor who is willing to sign the required supervisor statement.

The list of countries eligible for the TIRF-British Council RMAs follows here:

- **Africa:** Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, DR Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, , Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
- **East Asia:** Mongolia and North Korea
- **Latin America:** Bolivia, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua
- **Southeast Asia:** Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam

Research Topics

Proposals for TIRF-British Council RMAs should closely and explicitly address an area of focus under one of TIRF's Research Topics. A detailed explanation of TIRF's Research Topics can be found by [clicking here](#).

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Content-based Instruction
- Digital Technology in Language Education
- English as a Medium of Instruction
- English for Specific Purposes
- Individual Learner Differences and Effective Language Education
- Language Assessment
- Language Planning and Policy
- Language Teacher Education
- Migrants and Refugees: Teaching and Assessing English
- Plurilingualism and Multilingualism in Business, Industry, the Professions, and Educational Contexts
- Revitalization of Endangered Indigenous Languages
- Teaching Second and Foreign Languages to Young Learners

Features of the TIRF-British Council Research Mentoring Awards

- Awardees receive US \$500 upon successfully submitting their deliverable(s).
- Allocations of funds are made subject to budgetary availability.
- Awards can be used to cover expenses directly related to developing the research proposal or for conference travel for dissemination of the research. Submitting a budget to TIRF is not necessary.
- Applications should address an area of focus under TIRF's research topics. The selected topic must be either related directly to English language education or have strong implications for English language education, including the relationship between the spread of English as a majority language and minority language endangerment.
- Applications and all correspondence with TIRF must be in English.
- TIRF requires the final research proposal to be submitted by Monday, April 5, 2027.
- TIRF also requires feedback from mentees on their experiences in the mentoring program. This feedback should be sent to info@tirfonline.org by Monday, April 12, 2027.
- Individuals who have received a TIRF DDG or a TIRF-British Council RMA in a previous year are ineligible to apply.

Characteristics of Successful Proposals

To complete their proposals, applicants must use the application form. We expect that successful applicants will supply all of the required information. We anticipate that the strongest proposals will come from applicants who do the following:

- write directly and clearly;
- propose research related to one of the areas of focus under TIRF's research topics;
- clearly articulate the research question(s);
- provide a summary of the research idea and state why doing the research is important in their local context;

- show scholarly and professional promise, as judged from the activities on the CV;
- include three to five in-text citations and references on the topic they wish to undertake;
- use APA guidelines for in-text citations, references, formatting, and style; and
- include the signed statement from their supervisor.

Application Procedures

- Submit an application by **July 27, 2026** (11:59 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time — Canada/USA). Late submissions will not be accepted.
- Complete and submit the (1) [RMA application form](#), (2) [the doctoral supervisor statement form](#), and (3) your CV.
- All applications must be submitted electronically via TIRF’s website using a single Word document. An applicant must upload his or her document to TIRF’s website by [clicking here](#). Select “TIRF-British Council RMA” from the drop-down menu when uploading your file.
- Applications may not be submitted more than once in any given competition year. If multiple copies of an applicant’s proposal are submitted, only the first one received will be processed.
- Acknowledgement of the receipt of an application will be sent to the email address provided by the applicant within five business days after the file is uploaded. If an applicant has not had their application acknowledged within five business days of sending it, they should contact info@tirfonline.org using the subject heading “TIRF-British Council Application Received?”
- If applicants have difficulties submitting their proposals electronically, they should send an email to info@tirfonline.org using the subject heading “TIRF-British Council RMA Application – Technical Difficulty.”
- Applications that do not follow the specifications or are incomplete will be rejected.
- Applicants may not exceed the word length for research proposal summaries.

Adjudication of Applications

Each proposal will be adjudicated by at least two senior scholars in the field who have agreed to serve as reviewers. If the two reviewers are not in agreement as to the merits of the proposal, the proposal will be sent to a third reviewer. Supervisors with students who are applying for a research mentoring proposal cannot serve as external reviewers. TIRF retains final authority over all decisions concerning recommendations for funding made to the TIRF Board of Trustees.

The Foundation is unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants about the reasons for which they were not funded. TIRF recognizes that because of the limited grant money available, not all applications worthy of support can be approved for funding.

Notification of Results and Disbursement of Funds

Notification of TIRF-British Council RMAs will be made by late-September 2026.

Funding will be paid in one installment, after successful submission of the deliverable(s) and feedback on participating in the program. When the research proposal has been completed and approved by the mentor, the final report can be submitted and payment will be sent to the awardee.

TIRF's preferred method of payment for the TIRF-British Council RMAs is PayPal. If PayPal is not possible, awardees may request a direct, bank-to-bank wire transfer. Fees for bank transfers are costly, so please use PayPal if possible. TIRF will not under any circumstance provide a grantee with an audit trail for the transference of award monies.

TIRF reserves the right to use information from project proposal summaries and final reports, including the grant recipient's photograph and email address, for dissemination on its website and in other media.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

You must use TIRF's application and supervisor statement forms when submitting your proposal.

- [Click here](#) to download the application form.
- [Click here](#) to download the doctoral supervisor statement form.

A complete TIRF-British Council RMA proposal consists of three documents: (1) the application form, (2) the doctoral supervisor's statement, and (3) your CV (maximum two pages).

- The application form (linked to above) contains each of the following pieces of information:
 - Background information:
 - Your full name and the OECD country you were born in
 - The name of university in an OECD country that you are attending
 - Title of research project
 - The area(s) of focus for TIRF's Research Topics follow here:
 - Artificial Intelligence (AI)
 - Content-based Instruction
 - Digital Technology in Language Education
 - English as a Medium of Instruction
 - English for Specific Purposes
 - Individual Learner Differences and Effective Language Education
 - Language Assessment
 - Language Planning and Policy
 - Language Teacher Education
 - Migrants and Refugees: Teaching and Assessing English
 - Plurilingualism and Multilingualism in Business, Industry, the Professions, and Educational Contexts



- Revitalization of Endangered Indigenous Languages
- Teaching Second and Foreign Languages to Young Learners
- Your email, phone, and mailing address
- The name and email address of your research supervisor or advisor
- Project summary (300-350 words): NOTE: The summaries of successful awards may be made public on the TIRF website as well as through other media. Please prepare your summary with this general audience in mind, and please proofread your proposal carefully.
- Supervisor statement (linked to above)
- A short, current CV (two pages maximum, in 12-point font)

[Click here to submit your TIRF-British Council RMA files.](#)