

Jeff Thompson Research Awards

Policy and procedures

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Purpose

As early as 1987, Alec Peterson highlighted the importance of setting up capacity within the International Baccalaureate® (IB) to address the research needs of the IB community. He foresaw the need to support schools in their understanding of the philosophy and principles underpinning the IB programmes, the growing need to support research into international education, and a continuing need to conduct research into the ways in which IB programme implementation impacts on the quality of teaching and learning within a school.

In 1998 during his tenure with the IB as director for international education and then as academic director, Professor Jeff Thompson sought to realize Peterson's vision by establishing a small IB research unit housed at the University of Bath. By doing so he hoped to create close links to the University of Bath's Department of Education and, in particular, the Centre for the study of Education in an International Context. He sought also to establish clear links between the IB and the *Journal of Research in International Education* produced by Sage Publications.

Following on from the research unit, the IB moved to a new research structure; research staff are now associated with each of its core functions: Programme Validation and Impact, Programme Development, Assessment, and Quality Assurance. In addition to increased research activity within the organization, IB is dedicated to encouraging and supporting school based research in order to better inform the IB community.

This award seeks to honour Professor Thompson's efforts to establish the research profile of the organization by providing a number of practitioners within IB schools with small incentive awards in recognition of their efforts to conduct research related to IB programmes.

Funding

The scheme will have an annual budget allocation of \$20,000. Individual awards will be granted up to a maximum of \$5,000 each. If not all the funds are awarded in a given year there will be no rollover of unallocated funding from one year to the next.

Award funds may only be used for expenses directly related to the conducting of research outlined in the proposal. Examples of acceptable budget items include:

- Specific travel expenses
- Fees for online survey programs
- Printing fees
- Translation services

Award funds cannot be used towards university tuition or fees or to supplement income while conducting research.

Application

Application templates, the terms and conditions of the award, and application deadlines are posted on the Jeff Thompson Research Award web page (see the right hand column on this page). Award applications are available in English, French or Spanish. All applicants must use the provided application template to submit applications electronically to research@ibo.org.

Applicants may submit other supporting documents with their application.

Questions about the application can be directed to research@ibo.org.

Eligible applicants

Applicants must be employed in an IB World School. All applications must be submitted by a single principal investigator, with whom all subsequent communication will take place. Any number of co-investigators may be named under the application. Applications involving more than one school are encouraged, but no more than one award will be granted to an individual school or project at any particular time. All participating schools, principal investigators and co-investigators will be formally recognized in the granting of the award.

Teachers and school leaders working with any of the IB programmes who are based in IB World Schools or schools offering the IB Careers related Certificate (IBCC) are eligible to apply for this award as principal investigators. Co-investigators may include teaching assistants, administrators, support staff (library and media staff) and people external to the school. No full or part-time employees of the IB are eligible for this award.

A research project must be undertaken within an IB school or group of schools. It must be undertaken by an IB practitioner or group of practitioners, including management and support staff. If a recipient leaves the institution during the term of the award, then it is required that the award funds be used for the continuation of the project within the original IB school or be returned to the IB.

Both the terms and conditions of the award and the application template make it clear that the award scheme is intended strictly as a means to provide incentive funding and in no way constitutes full funding of a research project. As such, award recipients who are also involved in university study are free to align award related activities with their efforts to fulfill the requirements for a degree, however award funds may not be applied towards tuition or university fees.

Selection and award process

Applications received at research@ibo.org will be reviewed by IB's Jeff Thompson Research Award Committee twice a year (see published deadlines). The Jeff Thompson Research Award is a competitive grant and only a small number of applicants per year will be selected for partial or maximum funding. Preference will be given to research which is relevant and important to the IB such as, but not limited to, the following areas:

1. Enhancement of IB programmes—development and assessment
2. Contribution to studies in international education
3. Impact of programme implementation on school improvement, including professional development for delivery of IB programmes
4. Impact of IB programme study on subsequent academic success
5. Impact of IB programme study on acquisition of international mindedness and the attributes of the learner profile
6. Contribution to the development of the local school and practitioner research.

The rating criteria for the application itself will include, but not be limited to, the following.

1. Feasibility of the application
2. Clear and realistic specification of outcomes and deliverables
3. Use of appropriate methodology
4. Access to and capacity to process data and analyze results
5. Ability to disseminate findings to a variety of audiences.
6. Ethical considerations
7. Clear support from the head of school

Finalists, co-investigators or references may be contacted by e-mail if the committee members require additional information.

All applicants will be advised of the selection results via e-mail after the committee has made its decision. At the time of award, recipients will be asked for details of a preferred method of payment. Upon receipt of the signed copy of the final agreement between the IB and the recipient, a payment will be made to the recipient.

- Awards will be granted and authorized by the Global Head of Research.
- Award recipients will be announced via the IB public website.
- Award money will be sent directly to the accounts specified by successful applicants.

Communication and reporting expectations

As a condition of the award, all recipients are expected to provide a detailed report of the results of their projects within six months of the end of their project. They do this on the understanding that they thereby allow the IB to make the report available through the IB's International Education Research Database. Brief periodic progress reports to the IB will also be requested during the project.

The IB research website will maintain an up-to-date list of past and present award recipients along with descriptions of their projects and all final reports, or summaries, received. Award recipients are encouraged to publish the outcomes of their work elsewhere (for example, in the *Journal of Research in International Education*) but are expected to advise the IB of such publications and include reference to them in the IB's International Education Research Database (IERD).

All award recipients are expected to register as users on the IERD.

Evidence of support from school leaders

All applications must include evidence of support from the appropriate head(s) of school. This is to validate and authorize the conduct of research within the school and will indicate to the IB that the application and research rationale have been understood and accepted by the school itself. The evidence of support should take the form of either a letter or a signed checklist. Applications lacking evidence of this support will be given no further consideration.

Sanctions for non-achieving investigators

Successful applicants must guarantee to the IB that the award will be used solely to support the research described in the proposal. If it can be shown that award money has been inappropriately used for other purposes, the IB reserves the right to bar the school and/or the named applicants from future awards. If the proposed research is not carried out such that there is no evidence of results and no report is generated, then it is expected that the recipient will return the money to the IB.

Support from the IB

Successful applicants can expect the following support from the IB:

- Advice on the application procedure
- Advice on methods to be used and methodological approach
- Advice on proper use of IB intellectual property rights

- Access to IB research documents and statistics, including other IB research reports as appropriate to their need
- Access and assistance with uploading information to the IERD
- Advice on publication
- Communication of results throughout the IB Organization and IB World Schools

Status and access

A successful application will be given recognized status and will receive the same endorsements as an officially recognized research project, such that information pertaining to the activity will be placed on the IB research web pages and included in other relevant IB communications. Applicants will have access to IB statistics, advice from IB staff where appropriate, a letter of support if seeking information from other IB schools or other institutions, and any other information that the IB might be able to provide.

Application guidelines

An application form needs to be completed in full and submitted before each deadline date. Applications may be submitted in English, French or Spanish. All sections should be completed in full, and failure to do so could jeopardize successful acceptance of a proposal. The research proposal needs to meet ethical guidelines and therefore applicants are required to read the [Ethical standards for IB supported research projects](#) before completing the proposal.

The application form is divided into the following sections:

1. **Name and school details**—information about the applicant, their school and contact details.
2. **Professional details**—information about the applicant’s work experience, qualifications, previous research and publications.
3. **Project details**—information about the actual research project: its objectives, methodology, timeline and outcomes; including a brief explanation of the research’s relevance to the IB, how it will benefit the school with respect to teaching and learning, and proposed dissemination of the results.
4. **Further information**—this section requires the applicant to detail information about other practitioners and schools who will be involved in the research. Information from referees who are able to comment on the practitioner’s skill, experience and aptitude and any other information that an applicant feels would be useful may be included here. This is also a section where applicants can provide further evidence that those involved in

the project have the necessary methodological background to collect and analyse the data as proposed.

5. **Acknowledgments**—the applicant is required to sign the completed form and check the relevant boxes to state that he/she has read the terms and conditions governing the award, agrees to abide by them, agrees to report on and make available the results of the research undertaken, and has ensured that all the information included in the application is accurate.
6. **Statement of support from the head of school**—the applicant will be required to provide details of the head of the IB World School where they work. It is essential that the application is supported by the school leadership and must be signed by the head of school to demonstrate that this support is given.
7. **Budget**—the applicant will be required to submit a detailed estimated budget. The budget must only include expenses directly related to the research.

All applicants must submit the application and any related attachments in electronic form to research@ibo.org. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of the application by email.