



International Baccalaureate®  
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# Jeff Thompson Research Award

*Policies and procedures*

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## Purpose

As early as 1987, Alec Peterson, the IB's first Director General, highlighted the importance of addressing the diverse research needs of the IB community. He foresaw the need to support research into the philosophy and principles underpinning IB programmes and the ways in which IB programme implementation impacts the quality of teaching and learning within a school.

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 an IB Research Unit housed at the University of Bath. By doing so, he hoped to create close links to the University of Bath's Centre for the study of Education in an International Context.

Currently [IB Research](#), with staff in all three IB Global Centres, focuses on four core areas of research: Outcomes, Curriculum, Assessment, and Quality Assurance. In addition to increased research activity within the organization, the 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 IB practitioners, graduate students and early career university professionals with awards to conduct research related to IB programmes.

## Funding

Individual awards will be granted up to USD \$20,000 each. Up to three grants will be awarded each year. Award funds may only be used by the researcher for expenses directly related to conducting the study, as outlined in the proposal. Examples of acceptable budget items include:

- Data collection
- Fees for analytical or survey software (if the applicant does not have access through a university subscription)
- Printing fees
- Limited travel expenses required to conduct the field work (if applicable)
- Fees for translation or transcription services, or other minor specialized support services
- Materials and supplies
- Stipends (allowable on rare occasions for IB practitioners with appropriate justification; not to exceed \$5,000)

- Equipment required to conduct the research (up to \$500, excluding hardware such as laptops, cameras, video equipment, etc.).
- Mentor honorarium (note, for IB World School applicants only)

Award funds cannot be used towards university tuition. Additionally, awards may not fund indirect costs (such as university overhead).

## Application

The application form and deadline are posted on the [Jeff Thompson Research Award web page](#). Applications will be accepted in English only. All applicants must use the appropriate application form to submit applications electronically to [research@ibo.org](mailto:research@ibo.org).

Applicants may submit other supporting documents with their application if they choose. Questions about the application can be directed to [research@ibo.org](mailto:research@ibo.org).

## Eligibility

IB practitioners (administrators, coordinators, teachers and heads of school employed at an IB World School), graduate students and early-career university professionals<sup>1</sup> are eligible to apply for the award. Only applications from individuals will be accepted (not applications from corporations or institutions). Applicants should note that proposed studies must be in the ideation and/or planning stage, prior to beginning fieldwork, in order to be considered for funding. Applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements will not be considered.

While preference will be given to practitioner research, we will consider each project based on the merits of the proposal, value to the IB community, soundness of the research methods and capacity of the applicant(s) to carry out the research effectively. Research studies should be directly related to IB programme(s), students, teachers and/or IB World Schools.

## Selection and award process

Applications should be submitted to the IB Research inbox ([research@ibo.org](mailto:research@ibo.org)). All applications will be reviewed by the Jeff Thompson Award Committee once a year.

The Jeff Thompson Research Award is a competitive grant. Only up to three applications per year will be selected for partial or full funding. Preference will be

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<sup>1</sup> We define 'early-career professionals' as individuals who have completed their doctoral dissertation or master's thesis within the past five years and are currently employed at a university.

given to research which is relevant and important to the IB such as, but not limited to, the following areas:

1. Improvement of IB programmes
2. Impact of programme implementation on school improvement, including professional development for delivery of IB programmes
3. Impact of IB programme study on academic success
4. Impact of IB programme study on acquisition of international-mindedness and attributes of the learner profile

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

1. Feasibility of the research
2. Clear and realistic specification of outcomes and deliverables
3. Use of appropriate research methods
4. Access to and capacity to process data and analyze results
5. Ability to disseminate findings to a variety of audiences
6. Attention to ethical considerations
7. Clear support from the head(s) of school (when applicable)

Applicants may be contacted by e-mail if the committee members require additional information. All applicants will be informed of the selection results via e-mail after the committee has made its decision. At the time of award, recipients will be asked for payment details. Upon receipt of the signed copy of the final agreement between the IB and the recipient, payment will be made to the recipient.

## **Support from head of school**

In cases when research will be conducted within IB World School(s), applicants must include evidence of support from the 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. Evidence of support should be demonstrated through the signed checklist provided in the application form.

## **Mentoring (IB World School practitioners)**

Applicants from IB World Schools (who are not graduate students) are strongly encouraged to identify a mentor prior to submitting an application. Ideally this mentor will be a university faculty member from a relevant field and will have experience with conducting research. The mentor is expected to: provide guidance and advice on the proposal and on research methods and instruments, review draft reports, and ensure that the research meets quality standards. Preference will be

given to applications with mentoring agreements in place at the time of application (see application form). An honorarium may be provided to the mentor in specific cases (see Jeff Thompson Award honorarium policy).

## Communication and reporting expectations

An implementation plan, including draft instruments that will be used in the research, should be submitted within 6 months of the start of the award. Brief periodic progress reports should also be provided to the IB by email ([research@ibo.org](mailto:research@ibo.org)) during the course of the project. Lastly, all recipients are expected to provide an abstract and a detailed report of the results of their research at the end of the project. The award will be considered completed when all application documents have been approved by the Jeff Thompson Award Committee. This may require revisions for quality assurance purposes.

The IB research website will house an up-to-date list of Jeff Thompson Award abstracts and reports. 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 inform the IB of such publications and to include reference to them in the IB's [International Education Research Database](#) (IERD). Award recipients are also encouraged to present the findings of their research at a relevant educational conference.

## Support from the IB

Successful applicants can expect the following support from the IB:

- Access to IB research materials, including IB research reports
- Access and assistance with uploading information to the IERD
- Advice on publication
- Communication of results throughout the IB Organization and IB World Schools

## Application guidelines

Each applicant is required to submit his/her Curriculum Vitae (CV) along with the application form. An application form must be completed in full and submitted before the deadline. Applications must be submitted in English. While there are no restrictions on project duration, projects should be conducted as expeditiously as possible.

All applicants must submit the application in electronic form to [research@ibo.org](mailto:research@ibo.org). Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of the application by email.

## **Submission guidelines (final products)**

Please submit the following documents to complete the award:

1. A project implementation plan should be submitted within six months of the start of the award.
2. An abstract of no more than 150-200 words, submitted as a Word document.
3. A report of 20-25 pages, submitted as a Word document. All reports must be edited and copy-edited before submission.
4. A detailed record of how the funds were spent. Grant winners must notify the IB if (on a study's completion) expenses are lower than the awarded amount.

Applicants should submit the above documents electronically to [research@ibo.org](mailto:research@ibo.org). The project will be considered finalized after the Jeff Thompson Award Committee has reviewed, provided feedback on and approved all final products. Final abstracts and reports will be published on the IB public website.