



Guidance for Applicants

About The Froebel Trust

The Froebel Trust is a UK-based charity, which aims to promote and advance knowledge and understanding of a Froebelian approach to education, for the benefit of children (birth to eight years) and their families and educators, communities and environments.

It provides funding for research and practice development as well as specialist training, and information and support for continuing professional learning.

We can only support projects that are clearly linked to our charitable objects, which are: *To promote for the public benefit the advancement and understanding of Froebelian principles of education in learning within the UK and internationally.*

Professional Inquiry for Practice Transformation (PIPT) grant

The Professional Inquiry for Practice Transformation (PIPT) grant is **only available** to early childhood professionals working in the UK who have completed all six elements of the Froebel Trust [Short Courses](#) or [Online Course](#) or one of the [Froebel Trust endorsed courses](#). This includes educators and leaders working in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings, schools or universities; registered childminders and Local Authority Advisors.

It provides an opportunity for eligible early years professionals to research and develop an aspect of their practice based on [Froebelian Principles](#) over an academic year. The focus for applications this year (2026-7) is the Froebelian Principle '**relationships matter.**'

Important Dates

Applications portal opens on our website	9am Monday 12 th January 2026 (UK time)
Deadline for applications	4pm Friday 30 th March 2026 (UK time)
Applicants notified of the outcome	Friday 1 st May 2026
Projects must begin	Between 1 st August – 30 th September 2026

Who can apply?

To apply for a Professional Inquiry for Practice Transformation grant, the lead applicant must:

- Be an early childhood professional work in a setting, school, university or local authority in the UK, which is registered and inspected by the relevant, official body in Scotland, England, Wales or Northern Ireland.
- Work with young children (any age from birth to eight years inclusive) and their families and communities either directly (as an educator) or indirectly (as a leader or advisor)
- Have completed (before the project start date) one of the [Froebel Trust endorsed courses](#) at the University of Edinburgh or the University of Roehampton; or all six elements of the Froebel Trust [Short Courses](#) or [Online Course](#) delivered by Travelling Froebel Tutors.
- Understand what is involved in a project of this kind and have the capacity to lead it for one full academic year
- Have full (written) support for the proposed project from their senior manager/leader (if different from the lead applicant).
- Be able to start the project between 1st August and 30th September 2026.

Two or more settings / schools can apply to do a joint project, but the lead applicant must meet the criteria above.

All successful projects will be supported by a research mentor. The lead applicant can act as the research mentor if they meet the eligibility criteria below. Applicants do not have to identify a mentor when applying unless that person is also the lead applicant. We can help successful applicants to find a mentor.

The research mentor must:

- Have previous experience in designing and carrying out relevant research at master's level or above.
- Understand what is involved in professional inquiry, including action research.
- Have previous experience of writing about a research project (e.g. in a dissertation, report or publication) and sharing their learning from that research.

How the funds can be used

- Professional Inquiry for Practice Transformation grants are for up to a maximum of £6,000 (inclusive of VAT and any other charges where applicable). This comprises project costs of up to £5000 plus a research mentor fee of up to £1000.
- The grant is intended to cover direct project costs, such as staff time (including research mentor time) to work on the project / supply cover for project staff; and a small amount for materials or resources associated with project work.
- **The budget should include research mentor time (up to a maximum of £1000)**, even if a mentor has not been identified. We would expect to see at least one hour of mentor time for every project month. The mentor might give more time in busier project months and less (or none) in the quieter months.
- The cost of resources or materials must be less than 20% of the total project budget.

- Shortlisted applicants will need to submit an original bank statement and financial records for their organisation before an award can be confirmed.
- Project funds awarded by the Froebel Trust must be ring-fenced and used only for the stated purposes.
- In deciding whether to support travel to events, the Trust will give serious consideration to the benefits to the project versus the environmental impact.
- The Froebel Trust is committed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an international commitment to end poverty and hunger and stop climate change. We ask you to tell us about how your project will align with these aims in the application form. You can find out more via this link <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

How to apply

Applications must be made through our online portal.

The online grant application portal will open at 9am on Monday 12th January 2026 (UK time). Our online portal allows applicants to save and return to partially completed forms. You will need to create a password to save your progress, please do not lose this as you will need it to resume your application.

The deadline for submission of applications is **4pm on Friday 30th March 2026** (UK time). Late applications will not be considered.

The application form asks about:

- Your Froebelian focus
- Evidence of registration of your workplace
- A detailed project outline
- Ethical considerations
- How you or a mentor will guide and support the research
- How will you share your learning with other people, especially any important messages for practitioners, policymakers, families or researchers
- A detailed budget

Make sure you have the support of the head of your setting before preparing and submitting an application. Please consider the setting's sustainability policy and the environmental impact of your proposed project.

A **toolkit of resources** is available on the Froebel Trust website to support you in developing your proposal. This includes

- A **'Beginners Guide to Practitioner Inquiry in the Early Years'** developed by [Froebelian Futures](#)
- A **Planning Template** to help you develop your project proposal
- **Reflection with Guidance: A Froebelian tool for developing practice and transformations** developed by the [Froebel Partnership](#)

We are here to help. If you experience any problems with the online application portal or have any questions about eligibility, please email office@froebeltrust.org.uk for the attention of our Administrator **Mariana Macías Márquez** at office@froebeltrust.org.uk

The Trust's aim is to ensure that the funding and grants we offer are distributed fairly. Both Trustees and the Froebel Trust team are committed to increasing the inclusiveness of our grant-making processes, with the aim of achieving greater diversity in our applicants (including the schools, early years settings and universities which receive our funding). All applicants that meet our funding criteria will be sent a link to our **Equality Monitoring Survey** which helps us to understand how well we are reaching different groups of people. Answers are anonymous, and participation is voluntary. You can read our statement on Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion on [our website](#).

Assessment process

All eligible applications will be considered via our grant scrutiny and selection process. Applications that do not meet our basic eligibility criteria will be rejected.

Eligible applications will be evaluated by at least 2 members of the Trust's Scrutiny Group, which will result in a shortlist of applications. The shortlist is derived from a combination of evaluative comments and scores for each application from the Scrutiny Group and will be reviewed by the Grants Panel. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Some applicants may be asked to provide further information to clarify aspects of their application; some may be invited to a short Zoom discussion for this purpose.

Outcome

All eligible applicants will be notified of the outcome of the selection process by email by **1st May 2026**.

Successful applicants will be required to sign our Grant Offer, which includes specific Terms and Conditions of awards, **which are not negotiable**. A sample copy can be viewed on [our website](#).

Charities are required to carry out due diligence checks on grant beneficiaries. We ask all our grant holders to supply a range of evidence to confirm your identity and details about your organisation to check your eligibility for funding. All information you share with us will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared. Until these careful checks have been completed successfully, we are unable to release any grant payments to you. You can find out more about this required process from the [Charity Commission](#).

An ethics form must be submitted to the Froebel Trust and approved BEFORE the project can formally start.

Anyone who receives a Professional Inquiry for Practice Transformation grant will be invited to participate in an online community of research and practice with other successful project leads/teams. You will also have opportunities to get involved in our seminars, webinars, and conferences. This is a way to share knowledge and understanding with others, especially key messages and learning from your project

Grant holders will be expected to provide regular progress reports. A final report must be submitted within three months of the project's completion. We will provide guidance about preparing the final report, which will be peer reviewed and published on our website. At the end of a project, a statement of expenditure will also be required. This must explain in detail how the grant was spent. We will supply a template to fill in.

The Froebel Trust must be acknowledged on any material or publicity that is produced for external presentation or publication in association with / resulting from a grant. Please refer to our Photography and Film Images policy and Social Media and Communications policy (copies available on request).

If you receive a grant from us, you might be invited to complete a questionnaire or take part in an interview as part of our self-evaluation activities. Participation is entirely voluntary.

The decision of the Froebel Trust Council will be final. Every effort has been made to develop a thorough, fair and informed assessment process. The Trust reserves the right not to enter into any correspondence about the assessment process and/or any subsequent monitoring procedures.