



PROGRAMME OUTLINE

What is it?

Step Forward is an **umbrella programme** that provides the framework for CDN to turn **research and insight into enhancement on the ground in our colleges.**

Step Forward aims to move beyond the outputs of our own research and insights work to collaborate with colleges and partners in **delivering new provision, building on current provision and training college researchers.**

Step Forward has two strands:
Step Forward Project Support and
Step Forward Researcher Development.

Step Forward Project Support

Making use of a **tailored package of support**, Step Forward Project Support aims to promote an enhancement-led approach in our colleges through collaborative change projects that help them deliver for the learners and communities they serve.

Our team will work with college staff to develop a bespoke package of support that can include **guidance, mentoring, evaluation and other relevant training** to assist in the implementation and delivery of enhancement-led change projects.

Beyond the project itself, Step Forward also provides support to undertake **further research into impact** and to **extend the reach of the project** at regional and national level.

Step Forward Project Support consists of a **set of building blocks** which are available to support the college in a tailored package.

A typical Step Forward Project Support package might include:

- Scoping Workshop
- Action Research Training & Support Materials
- Curriculum Design and Refresh Workshop
- Mentoring
- Evaluation Support
- Networking and Collaboration
- Project Amplification & Sharing Learning

Each project is different however, and may involve support from different **CDN partners**. A unique set of **support interventions** will be provided based on the project scope, the development needs of the staff team, and the desired impact of the project.

The Step Forward Project Support is provided at no cost to the college although there may be opportunities to obtain ongoing or increased support from partner organisations: this would be arranged directly with the partner by the college and would be subject to the partner's usual charges.

The Step Forward Project Support Process



Within an **initial consultation session** with the CDN Step Forward Team, project ideas will be discussed. Particular emphasis will be given to locating projects within one or more of CDN's Step Forward priority strands:

- School College Partnership
- Pathways From Poverty
- Delivering the Climate Change Commitment.

CDN's Step Forward Team will then provide a tailored package of support including an initial scoping workshop and the development of a project outline and action plan to meet the specific needs of projects and project staff.

Upon completion of a Step Forward project, CDN will conduct a final review session with project staff to gather information on the **project outcomes**, impact and next steps. This **knowledge will then be disseminated** via CDN published Case Studies and/ or Reports, sharing knowledge and best practice with colleagues across the sector.

The Step Forward Researcher Development Programme

The Step Forward Researcher Development Programme provides a series of workshops aimed at supporting college staff to develop the skills required to undertake research projects that will enhance their own practice and improve outcomes for the college and its learners.

The programme is open to both teaching and non-teaching staff. It is designed to provide an introduction to research for staff without requiring a major commitment of time, the workshops are spread throughout the year and staff are encouraged to apply the techniques taught to their daily work and ongoing projects.

The workshops will be delivered by a range of experts and include:

- How to write a research proposal
- Carrying out action research
- Research ethics
- How to conduct research interviews and designing surveys
- How to collect and analyse data (quantitative and qualitative)
- Writing up and demonstrating impact
- Writing for journals

Participants reflect on their research experiences throughout the programme and produce blog posts and articles which can be published on the CDN website and other outlets.

Participants will also become part of the wider Step Forward Research Community, which will provide opportunities to meet and share research experience and to hear from experts and researchers in related fields.

The programme will commence in the 2023-24 academic year.

If you wish to be sent information about the programme as it becomes available please email research@cdn.ac.uk

