



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How will participating colleges be identified?

This will be done in a variety of ways depending on the particular strand of action research. We will use the CDN networks to ask for expressions of interest in different areas of work. We may also invite colleges who have been the subject of case studies as part of one of our research reports to participate in an action research strand. For some strands there will be an open call for proposals. If colleges would like to be involved in Step Forward but haven't had the chance to make a proposal we would welcome a discussion of how they might fit in so please contact us on research@cdn.ac.uk.

2. Will there be more strands of action research as well as the initial three that have been announced?

Yes. The aim of creating Step Forward was to provide a framework for all our enhancement work. As we develop new areas of research we will add new strands of Step Forward. These will be widely publicised through the CDN networks and other channels.

3. Is there a financial charge to the college or the staff for participating?

No. CDN is funding the support from the action research facilitators and will not make a charge to the college for this. However, the college will need to resource the activity on which the action research is based and arrange to release staff time to participate in the action research. We are hoping that, as the programme develops, we will be able to work with colleges to apply for funding to support the delivery of new activity but this is dependent on funding being available from suitable sources and is not guaranteed.

4. How much staff time will it take to participate?

The intention is that the action research will be based on provision that the college was going to deliver anyway or for which additional funding has been obtained, so the delivery of the activity itself should be part of the normal work of the staff team.

The action research element will require attendance at regular training sessions and group meetings although we will aim to keep these to no more than one every couple of months and most will be online.

Participating staff will need to allocate some time to carrying out research and evaluation of the activity. We will also encourage the writing of blogs and other pieces of work to reflect on and raise awareness of the activity but the programme does not require any formal reports or form-filling.

Overall we anticipate that staff will need to spend a couple of hours a week over and above their normal work but this is a new programme and this will be kept under review.

5. How do I find out more about action research?

Our partners Claire Collins Consultancy have prepared a range of materials for similar projects that provide an insight into what's involved in action research.

A good place to start is the ETF's guide to doing action research: <https://www.etf-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/AR-Guide-v1.0-2.pdf>

This Padlet contains some great examples of outputs from action research carried out as part of the OTLA programme in England: https://padlet.com/c_collins2/OTLA_news

This video, again produced for the OTLA programme in England, provides some basic information on what's involved in action research, including reassurance that you don't have to have research experience to take part:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APAydgRI4u0>