

A collaboration between the British Council  
Assessment Research Group and MetaMetrics

---

# Research into Reading Grants 2023

## Call for proposals

British Council Assessment Research Group and MetaMetrics invite applications for research which will contribute to our understanding of the construct of EFL reading comprehension and reading comprehension assessment.

The Grants are intended to provide a body of validity evidence which can contribute to the validation of the [Lexile Framework for Reading](#) and EFL reading assessment instruments, such as the [Aptis test system](#) developed by the British Council and other British Council test development projects. The projects sponsored by the Grants will contribute to improving the application, use and interpretation of these instruments in learning, teaching and evaluation. The aim of the Grants is to build insights into the interaction between features of text and reading tasks that impact comprehension and can inform teaching, learning and assessment and evaluation.

Projects will generally be 12-18 months in duration but, in exceptional circumstances, projects lasting up to 24 months will also be considered.

Reports produced by research teams previously awarded a Research into Reading Grant can be viewed here: [www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/research/publications/rirgs](http://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/research/publications/rirgs).

To apply, please complete the application form available for download on our website and submit at [ARAG@britishcouncil.org](mailto:ARAG@britishcouncil.org). Application deadline is 17 April 2023.

## In this document

Who can apply? .....	2
Financial support.....	2
Is access to student or text Lexile measures available? .....	2
Areas of interest for 2023.....	3
Key dates .....	4

## Who can apply?

Suitably qualified individuals who are attached to Educational institutions eligible to receive research grant funding (see below) are invited to apply as Principal Investigators to undertake applied research projects of relevance to the areas of interest outlined below.

Please note that regardless of the geographical location of applicants and regardless of where the actual research will take place, all contracts for research projects issued by the British Council are subject to the laws of England and Wales; this is non-negotiable.

The Principal Investigator must be associated with an educational institution or recognised research organisation, similar in standing to the institutions recognised by UKRI.

## Financial support

The Research into Reading Grants support researchers around the world in conducting and disseminating the highest quality research.

The financial support for individual projects will, in principle, be limited to a maximum of £20,000, although it is expected that projects requesting financial support in the region of £13,000 to £18,000 will be most positively considered.

## Is access to student or text Lexile measures available?

Aptis scores and Lexile reading measures for research purposes are available by working with the British Council to administer Aptis. Lexile text measures for research purposes are available by working with MetaMetrics to measure the complexity of the text. For more information on Lexile reading or text measures, visit: [www.lexile.com](http://www.lexile.com).

Research proposals that leverage the benefits of reader ability assessment through the Aptis test and text complexity measurement through Lexile, and integrate these, will be prioritised.

## Areas of interest for 2023

The Research into Reading Grants support researchers around the world in conducting and disseminating the highest quality research. The areas of particular interest to MetaMetrics and the British Council in 2023 are listed below.

Studies clearly addressing one of these areas will be prioritised. Studies outside these areas which have a strong rationale and a link to either Aptis or the Lexile Framework will also be considered.

### 1. Reading comprehension

- Studies investigating the relationship between the use of feedback derived (i.e. Lexile reading measures) from Aptis and the impact on teaching and learning.
- Studies on English language progression, including studies on the relationship between age, instruction (e.g. hours of study, method), mode of access and typical gains in reading comprehension ability as measured by Lexile reading measures and Aptis reading scores.
- Studies investigating the impact of controlled vocabulary on reading comprehension level.

### 2. Reading comprehension growth

- Studies investigating the relationship between reading comprehension level as measured by Lexile and Aptis reading scores (i.e. interaction between person and text), growth in reading and the impact on the comprehension level needed for optimal growth.
- Studies investigating the level of comprehension of reading materials needed to be successful in the global community and in careers.
- Studies investigating the similarities and differences between EFL reading contexts and English medium instruction contexts in terms of reading demands, the cognitive processes elicited as a part of typical reading tasks, and interpretation of Lexile measures and EFL reading test scores.

### 3. Reading text complexity in relation to different levels of language proficiency frameworks

- Studies seeking to identify criterial features of reading texts appropriate for commonly recognised international standards (e.g. CEFR).
- Studies seeking to identify criterial features of reading texts, focussing on local standards and national frameworks within local contexts (e.g. China Standards of English).
- Studies seeking to identify degrees of reading complexity appropriate to specific professional and training contexts.
- Studies examining gaps between student reading comprehension and reading demands of curriculum materials.

### Key dates

<b>March-April 2023</b>	Call for proposals
<b>17 April 2023</b>	Applications close
<b>April-May 2023</b>	Review of proposals
<b>30 June 2023</b>	Notification of decisions to applicants
<b>July-August 2023</b>	Drawing up and signing of contracts
<b>1 September 2023</b>	Project start  We are assuming and working towards a project start date of 1 September, however this will be subject to the completion of administrative processes, incl. the signing of a Research Services contract.