

## New opportunity in Scotland

### Research Evidence Champion

*Are you an educator working in Scottish education? Are you interested in supporting the sector to increase the use of evidence to inform practice?*

Read on for an exciting opportunity to be part of a new group of Research Evidence Champions in Scotland supported by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

#### Who are the EEF?

We are an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and education achievement. We do this by supporting schools, early years settings and colleges to improve teaching and learning through better use of evidence.

We are now beginning to support work in Scotland through a new identity, powered by the global evidence base, summarised by the EEF.

#### What do we do?

We aim to improve outcomes for socio-economically disadvantaged children. By supporting the education sector to use evidence, the aim of this project is to increase the application of, and engagement with, research evidence by school leaders and educators, to ultimately improve outcomes for children. We aim to strengthen systemwide capacity for educators to support one another to use evidence well, working through existing organisations such as local authorities, school leaders, and other key stakeholders.

#### What is a Research Evidence Champion?

We are looking for a small, diverse group of leaders and educators with a range of expertise in Scottish education. We specifically want representation from a variety of primary and secondary schools and geographical locations.

This group will bring together educators' practical experience and high-quality research evidence, highlighting the most effective approaches for leaders and practitioners to improve children's outcomes. They will advocate for and support the use of evidence in practice throughout the sector, as **Research Evidence Champions**.

Our work with the EEF's Research School Network has demonstrated that, when given support, educators are especially well-placed to articulate and exemplify how to use evidence to change practice. To apply this in the Scottish education sector, we are looking for Champions who are currently working in (or close to) primary and secondary settings. We

expect to establish a grant agreement with a Champion's existing employer to enable them to support the Champion's time ~30-35 days a year.

## What will they do?

Research Evidence Champions will support the EEF, and our new Scottish Evidence Hub, to expand the capacity and reach of our growing evidence mobilisation activity. This will include:

- **Shaping and contextualising evidence-based resources** for Scotland's education system by contributing insights and experiences. This will support the creation of resources for the Evidence Hub (Appendix A).
- **Promote, share, and champion evidence** use across local, regional, and national networks. This could be within your own settings and beyond.
- **Drive the movement of evidence** by leveraging your influence and connections within the system. This will include supporting different stakeholders in encouraging the use of rigorous evidence to support decision making in schools.
- **Bridge the gap between evidence and practitioners**, making research more relevant and actionable for educators. This could be through light touch comms and professional development linked with the resources we create.
- **Support mobilisation efforts** through activities such as professional learning sessions, creation and quality assurance of resources for the Evidence Hub.

## Could you be a Research Evidence Champion?

To apply for this opportunity, you should be able to demonstrate:

- **Experience of using evidence** to inform your practice and strong examples of how you have led evidence informed practice.
- **Experience supporting others to improve** ideally based on rigorous evidence, for example through professional development or other leadership activities.
- **Diversity of experience within the Scottish system**. For example, if you have worked in rural/remote locations, inner-city urban locations, different positions within the system and/or experience working in other areas of education.
- **Experience working in settings or serving communities with high relative poverty** and the impact this has on school decision making processes.
- **An understanding of the wider Scottish education system** levers and drivers, and the current policy context.
- **Ability to develop high quality resources** that will support educators practice across Scotland. This will include writing and creating content in a range of media.
- **Excellent communication** and relationship building skills supporting the contextualisation work for the Evidence Hub.
- **Support from your organisation** to enable you to carry out the role fully and to develop your own organisation.

## **How will you benefit from this opportunity?**

Becoming a Research Evidence Champion will provide you with a unique opportunity to help shape the EEF's work and, hopefully in time, education overall in Scotland.

You will receive a comprehensive induction on our wider work and evidence standards, as well as ongoing training and professional development around current research evidence and project aims. You will help shape how this evidence base is communicated to schools and how we build this exciting new Evidence Hub for educators in Scotland.

You will be a part of a supportive community of other passionate professionals dedicated to the use of evidence to change practice.

## **How will your organisation benefit from this opportunity?**

Hosting a Research Evidence Champion will help support professional development at your setting or organisation, as well as grow connections with other settings and networks. Your setting will benefit from close involvement with evidence-informed practice within the sector. This will, in turn, influence educator practice along with the quality of education in your setting.

## **How will the grant agreement be arranged?**

We are looking to engage four Research Evidence Champions through their employer until July 2028. Our expectation is that Champions will be working in, or close to, Scottish education settings, and therefore we expect to establish a grant agreement with that employer or organisation to cover the Champion's time and capacity.

We expect this to be a commitment of ~30-35 days per academic year. Each organisation will receive a grant of £10,000 per year to support this work. This will be distributed across two payment milestones over each year the Champion is in post.

Champions will have an annual plan with agreed outcomes and milestones. Delivery will be reviewed twice a year with the Champion.

Research Evidence Champions may be expected to travel across Scotland.

## **How can you apply for this opportunity?**

After familiarising yourself with the description, responsibilities and characteristics of a Research Evidence Champion, speak with your employer to determine whether this opportunity is a good fit for you both. Coordinate your approach to the application process to ensure that both your skills and experience as well as your organisation's commitment and capacity to support you are clear.

You may also want to spend some time reviewing the EEF's flagship resource the **Teaching and Learning Toolkit** and **Implementation Guidance** for further context. Appendix A gives a summary of the project so far and it's working aims.

The application process consists of three main stages.

#### *Stage 1: Online application form*

The online application window will be open from 10<sup>th</sup> of February to 2<sup>nd</sup> of March. To apply, please complete an application form via the **online portal**. More details on the application questions can be found below.

#### *Stage 2: Video Activity*

Applicants longlisted from the online application stage will be invited to submit a 2–3-minute video to prepare in advance. Information on this task will be sent separately to successful applicants.

#### *Stage 3: Interviews (online)*

Applicants shortlisted from video submission will be invited to an interview.

Following the interview, for applicants we'd like to work with as Research Evidence Champions we would expect to have a short conversation with a senior leader from your host organisation as part of the due diligence. We expect to confirm who is successful by 1<sup>st</sup> April after a due diligence conversation with your senior leader on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

## What will you need to complete the application form?

You can find the application form questions below. Please note that this is for reference only. Applications must be submitted via the **online portal**.

### Contact Information

1. Contact name
2. Contact email
3. Contact phone number
4. Name of organisation (i.e., who the grant agreement will be with – this could be your setting, organisation, other employer)
5. Type of organisation
6. Postcode of organisation
7. Address of organisation

### Application Questions

1. Please describe your understanding and experience of teaching practice in Scotland, particularly regarding children experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Please detail current debates, wider system changes and relevant research evidence. *(max 300 words)*
2. Please give an example of how you have supported other educators to improve their practice, either within your own setting or beyond. This could include the planning, design and delivery of professional development, training, or other resources. *(max 300 words)*
3. Drawing on your previous experience, tell us how you would use a variety of methods to build and maintain effective relationships with educators, setting leaders and other sector stakeholders. *(max 300 words)*

### Letter of Support

You will be asked to attach a one-page letter of support from a senior leader confirming your organisation's commitment to enable your role as a Research Evidence Champion. To demonstrate that your organisation can effectively support your engagement with the EEF as a Research Evidence Champion, please detail the following in the letter of support:

- Commitment to the EEF's work in Scotland
- Understanding of the responsibilities of a Research Evidence Champion
- Ability to secure sufficient release time for Research Evidence Champion to successfully fulfil their responsibilities
- Ability to reach and engage with other educators, settings and organisations
- An example of how the applicant has supported practice change in your setting or beyond

- An example of how your setting has developed evidence-informed practice, and how hosting a Research Evidence Champion would further strengthen and embed your commitment to evidence use.

### Declaration and Submission

You will be asked to confirm that the details of your application are correct.

Please note that once you click the submission button on the online form you will be shown a summary of your full application. We strongly recommend that, at this stage, you save a copy of your application for your own records.

## **How will applications be assessed?**

All applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. *Understanding and use of evidence*
  - a. Commitment to the EEF's core mission and an ability to give a compelling narrative about the importance of evidence informed practice.
  - b. Credibility to act as a Champion for evidence-informed practice and the work of the EEF (including support for disadvantaged pupils) in the Scottish sector.
  - c. Good understanding of the current debates within Scottish Education, wider system changes and relevant research evidence.
2. *Experience supporting practice change*
  - a. Experience and leadership of improving practice in settings in and/or across Scotland.
  - b. Experience developing and/or delivering professional development and supporting staff across and/or beyond a setting or organisation.
  - c. An ability to develop high-quality resources that support educators' practice.
3. *Relationship-building and communication*
  - a. A track record of establishing and maintaining relationships with people at varying levels: educators, school leaders, local authorities and other organisations.
  - b. An ability to use a range of communication tools and approaches to build awareness of and engagement with research evidence. This might include training and events, blogs, social media, case studies and exemplification.
4. *Setting/Organisational capacity and support*
  - a. Clear commitment from the setting leader or senior leadership team to enable the Champion's participation and success in their role.
  - b. Sufficient capacity at the setting/organisation to facilitate release time for the Champion as expected.
  - c. Ability to foster a culture of evidence-informed practice improvement within the setting/organisation, and to encourage the Champion to promote and exemplify this work in other settings.

## Do you still have questions?

If you have any further questions not answered in this document, we are running a webinar on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 4pm. You can register using this [link](#).

<b>Key dates</b>	<b>Key activities</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	Applications open
18 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	Informational webinar
2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026	Applications close
9 <sup>th</sup> of March– 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	Round One Task- Video Submission
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	Round two interviews
30 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	Due diligence conversations with leaders
1 <sup>st</sup> of April 2026	Successful candidates appointed

## Appendix A

### Supporting Evidence Use in Scotland: An EEF Project supported by The Robertson Trust

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. We do this by supporting schools, early years settings, and colleges to make a difference with evidence by:

- Generating high quality evidence to respond to the challenges of practitioners.
- Summarising the best available evidence and translating it into resources and guidance that can support the everyday decision making.
- Working directly with practice to change behaviour and ultimately outcomes.

This pilot project seeks to support the narrowing of the poverty related attainment gap for children and young people in Scotland. This is important because gaps in overall learning outcomes persist into later life, impacting lifelong earnings, employment, and health.

Outcomes in Scottish education have fallen in recent years. The 2022 PISA results show assessment scores dropping in reading and maths, with maths falling below the OECD average. Currently, recent exam results show that the poverty related attainment gap is still prevalent and it larger than pre-pandemic outcomes.

Over the next three years, we aim to increase the application of and engagement with research by school leaders and practitioners, to ultimately improve outcomes for children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. It will include creating a resource hub, for practitioners to access robust evidence-based resources to support decision making and change. We will introduce Research Evidence Champions to promote evidence use in schools by practitioners in the Scottish system.

Over the next three years, we aim to increase the application of research by practitioners to ultimately improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty.

### Scottish Evidence Hub

The Evidence Hub will be a place for Scottish practitioners to find high quality resources that are accessible and based on a rigorous evidence base. It will be an online resource with a focus on contextualising the evidence for the Scottish education system. New resources will include:

- A guide to support schools to use evidence to inform spending of Pupil Equity Funding.
- Two subject/phase specific guidance reports created with an understanding of the needs of practice and policy in Scotland.

### Research Evidence Champions

Research Evidence Champions will be 12 individuals recruited from across the Scottish system, from a range of settings where possible. Their role will include:

- Supporting production of case studies to contextualise the Evidence Hub.
- Creating light touch comms to build momentum within the system.
- Engaging directly with schools and other education bodies.
- Providing support to practitioners to drive engagement with the Evidence Hub resources.