

# Expression of interest

# IEA Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2021, National Research Centre for England

**Project reference: 2018/025**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: Noon, Thursday 7th February 2019**

## Summary

We invite expressions of interest to form the National Research Centre (NRC) to administer the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement **Progress In Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2021** in England (only).

This expression of interest was posted on Wednesday 16th January 2019.

## Background

England participates in international comparison studies to benchmark our education policy and performance against other countries, review our systems strengths and weaknesses in an international context, and monitor trends over time. This aligns with DfE’s vision to offer world-class education, training and care for everyone, whatever their background.

Organised by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), PIRLS takes place every five years and enables us to compare the skills of 9-10-year-olds in reading and literacy internationally. Pupils representing around 60 countries and economies will take part in PIRLS 2021. The study is administered in around 170 primary schools and engages approximately 5,000 pupils in England.

The study also collects important background data that can be used to improve teaching and learning, such as information about the curriculum and curriculum implementation, instructional practices, and school resources.

A copy of the IEA PIRLS 2021 brochure is attached for information. More background on the IEA and PIRLS can be found at [www.iea.nl](http://www.iea.nl/). The England country results and information about numbers of schools and pupils that took part in the 2016 PIRLS study can be found in the national report for England on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pirls-2016-reading-literacy-performance-in-england).

## Evaluation aims

The aim of the PIRLS 2021 study is to:

* provide an assessment of pupils’ reading performance after approximately four years of formal primary schooling;
* gather contextual information to identify and analyse factors that impact on pupil attainment;
* gather data to enable international comparisons with other participating countries and to measure trends over time.

## Methodology

The PIRLS research methodology is largely determined by the IEA in collaboration with participating countries. Bidders can add particular value to the success of the project through the recruitment and support of schools, and presentation and dissemination of findings.

England’s NRC will be expected to:

1. Work with IEA and its contractors to shape the study internationally to reflect England’s policy priorities.
2. Design the national research project to meet PIRLS requirements in England.
3. Deliver the national research project in England. This will include:
   1. Adapting instruments to the context of England;
   2. Testing the instruments for suitability for deployment in England;
   3. Administering a field trial in order to inform the development of the main study design, nationally and internationally;
   4. Developing a school engagement and recruitment plan that leads to the achievement of response rate targets set by the IEA;
   5. Complete sampling - populate the study sample frame with details of all eligible schools in England in order to allow the international study centre to draw school samples;
   6. Administer paper-based assessment and background questionnaires in sampled schools;
   7. Process and code responses, and securely return the coded data to the international contractor;
   8. Conduct analysis of the international dataset (Summer/Autumn 2022) to meet the aims outlined above.
4. Disseminate findings of the survey in ways which meet study requirements including:
5. Analytical report(s) of study findings for England;
6. Information for participating schools presenting comparisons of their pupils to others in England and/or internationally;
7. Other dissemination outputs and activities to engage/influence education sector stakeholders.

The school engagement strategy and the analysis and dissemination of findings are not directed by the IEA. At tender stage, we will invite organisations to present their unique approach to these aspects of the study.

## Timing

It is anticipated that the project will begin upon signing of contracts and end in approximately March 2023. However, except for the deadline for return of expressions of interest, the dates given below are indicative only and are subject to change according to the requirements of the IEA and the Department.

*Outline study timetable*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Activity** | **Date(s)** |
| Sampling | Prepare school sample | March – July 2019 |
| Field trial | Fieldwork preparation (field trial) | March – October 2019 |
| Field trial | Field trial test window | March – April 2020 |
| Field trial | Scoring / marking | April – May 2020 |
| Field trial | Creating the data files and reviewing the data | By end May 2020 |
| Main study | Fieldwork preparation (main study) | September – December 2020 |
| Main study | Main study test window | March – June 2021 |
| Main study | Scoring / marking | June – September 2021 |
| Main study | Creating the data files and reviewing the data | By end September 2021 |
| Reporting | Prepare report of and disseminate national findings | February 2022 – February 2023 |

*Outline procurement timetable*

* Expressions of interest must be submitted by noon on **Thursday 7th February 2019.**
* We expect that invitations to tender will be issued to short-listed organisations during the week beginning **18th February 2019.**
* The deadline for return of tenders is likely to be in the week commencing **25th March 2019.**

## Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Evidence of effective project management skills and experience of administering assessments or research programmes in the education sector similar in size to PIRLS.
2. A record of success in securing high response rates from a selected sample and engaging and influencing stakeholders
3. Proven ability of using and combining sources of data and applying advanced statistical techniques to produce high quality analysis relevant to the priorities of a range of stakeholders
4. Excellent knowledge of the school system in England and political awareness in order to identify relevant evidence gaps and tailor products to these where required

Each one of these criteria has equal weighting.

An evaluation panel will score expressions received using the following scale:

0. No relevant evidence provided

1. Evidence provided was limited or failed to show how the bidder meets the criteria

2. Evidence meets the criteria

3. Evidence exceeds the criteria

**Please provide evidence against each criteria. Only organisations and/or consortia that score a 2 or higher on each of criteria A, B, C and D will be invited to tender.**

## How to submit an expression of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the NEW EOI Form which can be found under attachments. Expressions of interests submitted must be **no more than 1000 words overall** (including external links); anything longer will be disregarded.

**Please send your completed EOI form to** [**international.surveys@education.gov.uk**](mailto:international.surveys@education.gov.uk) **by noon, Thursday 7th February 2019.**

A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

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