

# Expression of interest

# Title: A Review of the impact of Assistive Technology use in schools and colleges for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

**Project reference: DFE/RPPU/2019/038**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 23.59 Wednesday 30th October 2019**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought to to conduct a rapid literature review of the available evidence on the use and impact of Assistive Technology (AT) on children and students in schools and colleges with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This will help inform policy development and delivery of initiatives announced in the EdTech Strategy, [*Realising the potential for technology in education*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/realising-the-potential-of-technology-in-education).

The expression of interest was posted on 16th October 2019.

## Background

The recently published Education Technology Strategy, [*Realising the potential of technology in education*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/realising-the-potential-of-technology-in-education)(published April 2019), which is backed by £10m, announced 10 EdTech Challenges designed to catalyse activity in priority areas of the EdTech sector in ways that are aligned to the needs of teachers and students. One of these challenges was to support the research community to “*identify the best technology that is proven to help level the playing feld for learners with special educational needs and disabilities*”.

In order to meet this commitment, DfE needs to understand the current landscape of Assistive Technology (AT) used in education and what impact they have on outcomes. This will help us identify the most promising assistive technologies that we should target for further investigation and evaluation.

## Evaluation aims

The aim of this rapid evidence review is to understand the available evidence on the use and impact of AT on children and students with SEND in schools and colleges, including:

* What types of disabilities/needs are most effectively helped by AT and what could be, given the right conditions?
* What types of technologies are most effective (e.g. in terms of independence, communication, academic outcomes etc)?
* What are the necessary conditions for AT effectiveness? Where/when/for whom is AT most successful?
* What are the barriers/obstacles to successful AT implementation?

Drawing on this we can build awareness of what works to help teachers better meet the needs of their students and to improve student outcomes. This will help ensure we target the right areas of need and that our policy development and delivery provides value for money.

## Methodology

The successful bidder will be responsible for conducting a rapid evidence review of the evidence relating to assistive technologies used in primary schools, secondary schools and FE colleges and what impact they have on student outcomes.

Our engagement with sector experts and academics has highlighted differences in AT use and outcomes across different educational stages:

1. Primary schools; experts indicate that AT in primary schools is predominately used for remedial purposes i.e. to support cognitive development, help children progress academically and develop core basic skills e.g. achieving expected competencies for numeracy and literacy.
2. Secondary schools and FE Colleges; AT in these educational stages are more focused on removing the barriers to learning and to accessible content (e.g. improving communication and independence). The AT used in secondary schools is also likely to be the tech students end up using in colleges, so findings are more likely to be reliably extrapolated between these two educational stages.

If the research allows, the successful bidder will be able to highlight whether there are differences in AT depending on whether they are being used for remedial or accessibility purposes across a spectrum of different needs.

## Timing

* Deadline for EOIs – 23.59 Wednesday 30th October 2019
* Invitations to Tender (ITT) issued – Monday 4th November 2019
* Deadline for ITT submission – Thursday 21st November 2019
* Assessment of ITT – Friday 22nd - Monday 25th November 2019
* Successful bidder contacted – Tuesday 26th November 2019
* Contract award / preperation – Wednesday 27th November – 4th December 2019
* Contract agreed & signed – Early December 2019

The research project is expected to run from December 2019 to March 2020.

## Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

* Expertise and experience in conducting rapid literature reviews
* Expertise and experience in analysis, synthesis and summarising of academic literature
* Understanding of the policy environment (schools and colleges, SEND and assistive technology) and experience of working with policy customers
* Experience publishing high-quality reports

Each of these criteria shall have equal weighting.

Expressions of interests submitted must be no more than 1,000 words overall; this includes any website links. Anything longer will be disregarded.

| **Closing date for EOIs: 23.59 Wednesday 30th October 2019**  **Send your EOI form to:** [**edtech.team@education.gov.uk**](mailto:edtech.team@education.gov.uk) **cc:** [**helen.connolly@education.gov.uk**](mailto:helen.connolly@education.gov.uk) |
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## How to submit an expressions 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. 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.

All contracts are let on the basis of the Depatrtment’s Terms & Conditions, copy available attached to the ContractsFinder listing. You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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