

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) – England

Inspired by the Obama administration's Race to the Top initiative in the USA, the UK Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove announced in late 2010 plans to establish an education endowment foundation to help raise standards in challenging schools in England. The Sutton Trust and Impetus Trust won the competitive tender from the Department for Education in 2011 to set up the Foundation and administer it. The Trusts appointed Dr Kevan Collins as the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation. Kevan Collins says the government wanted to create the fund as a vehicle to generate evidence of innovations that support pupils from low socio-economic families from all backgrounds to fulfill their aspirations and make the most of their talents. To learn more, visit: <http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

Governance

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is an independent charity in England. Established in 2011, its Board has seven trustees from the Foundation's two founding partners: The Sutton Trust and Impetus Trust. Sir Peter Lampl is Founder and Chairman of the Foundation and is acknowledged to be the UK's leading educational philanthropist, having invested £35 million and devoted over a decade to educational philanthropy. The Sutton Trust, aims to improve social mobility through education. Not part of the governance, but providing high-level advice to the Foundation's trustees and executive team is a volunteer Advisory Board. This group consists of experts from education, public policy and business. One sub-group provides guidance around evaluation methodology and a trustee chairs this group. A couple of major law firms do the Foundation's

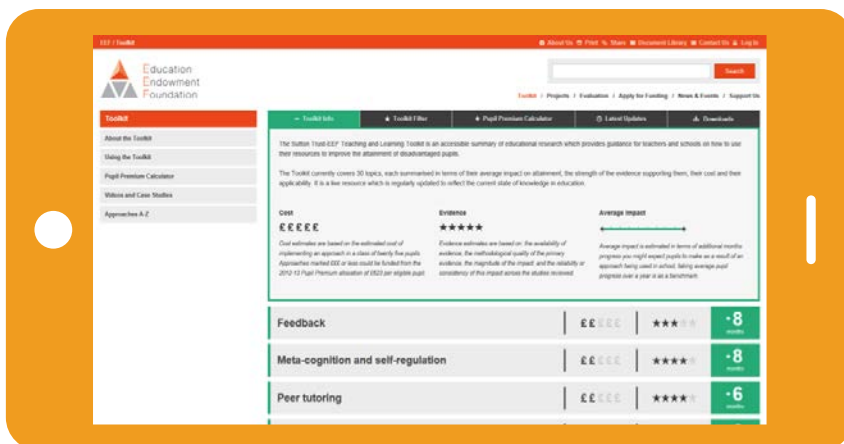
legal work pro bono. Nobody from government sits on the Board, but there is regular and direct communication between the Foundation and the Department for Education.

Innovation

The Department for Education provided a one-off grant to the Foundation of £125m. Through investment and fundraising income, the Foundation intends to award as much as £200m over its 15-year lifespan. The Foundation's other roles are to share the learning and identify 'what works'.

The Foundation's target groups are pupils eligible for free school meals (18% of the school population in 2011) in primary and secondary schools. Schools, not-for-profit organisations and universities have received grants from the EEF. Below is one example of a funded project:

The EEF has awarded £639,485 to Let's Think Forum to deliver its Let's Think Secondary Science (LTSS) programme in 25 secondary schools. LTSS is an approach to teaching that aims to challenge pupils' thinking and encourage group learning. LTSS lessons develop student understanding of key concepts that underlie scientific reasoning, such as variables, correlation and classification. However,



The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit provides guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

more important than the content is the thinking processes that students go through. The lesson activities are deliberately challenging so the students have to work in collaborative groups to find answers to problems. They then reflect upon their answer and methods, and make comparisons with other group outcomes in order to agree a best class answer.

Regardless of the grant size, the Foundation adds about a further 13% to the grant for an independent evaluation of the project to be conducted. The Foundation has established an evaluation panel including a number of leading academics who ensure that every project is supported by a rigorous and robust evaluation.

Model

The Foundation funds projects run by schools and other not-for-profit organisations which fit within one of four broad approaches:

1. Testing and incubating new ideas which have a proof of concept.
2. Evaluating initiatives from other contexts to test with disadvantaged students and schools in England (this could include, for example, programs from overseas or from the independent sector).
3. Scaling up initiatives which have been proven to work.
4. Developing projects with potential that have not, to date, been delivered or evaluated effectively.

The Foundation makes grants to support and evaluate areas of promise. It does not support schools' core budget activity or provide continuing funding for activity when school funds are not available. When the EEF receive a bid for a grant, they will sometimes assemble other philanthropics with similar areas of focus to see if they might also be interested in funding the project.

Factors for effective engagement

(see all 10 factors on p. 22)

The Foundation sees the most important factor for effective engagement of philanthropy in education as being impact focused. To do this, it adopts a cumulative approach to evaluation. The aim of each funded and independently evaluated project is to build on and extend an

existing evidence set. This is then published through a practical Toolkit for teachers and school leaders.

A challenging factor for the Foundation is identifying great projects for funding. For the first eighteen months the Foundation has been responding to the proposals that come to them. In the first year, they received well over 500 proposals. They are planning to move to what Kevan suggests is a "balanced approach" whereby they will continue to operate an open door policy but will also encourage, nudge and commission against key themes which demonstrate considerable prospects of promise. For example, their current round was promoted with an information technology for learning focus.

Impact

The aims of the Foundation are to identify a supply of enough good ideas on how to address the needs of disadvantaged children, evaluate these and encourage schools, government, charities and others to apply the evidence and adopt innovations found to be effective. As Kevan cautions, however,

for this to bring about lasting change, there has to be authentic teacher and school engagement in the innovation. Otherwise, you become just another organisation doing 'it' to the system.

What are the main outcomes?

At a minimum, each evaluation needs to demonstrate the immediate impact of the project on attainment, and ideally also the impact on attainment a year after the project finishes. Attainment means the standard of academic performance on, for example, tests and teacher assessment. As stated on the Foundation's website:

Average impact is estimated in terms of additional months progress you might expect pupils to make as a result of an approach being used in school, taking average pupil progress over a year as a benchmark.

There are 40 topics currently listed on the website, for example, peer tutoring; digital technology; parental involvement. Each is summarised in terms of their average impact on attainment, the strength of the evidence supporting the approach and their cost to implement.

The EEF has also commissioned Durham University to conduct an independent evaluation of their approach. In particular, the evaluators will track all pupils using the National Pupil Database to demonstrate long-term impact on attainment.

How is information gathered?

Initially, Boston Consulting did some work for the Foundation. This helped the Foundation prioritise the areas it wanted to focus on: attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The Foundation chairs the first meeting between the funded group and the evaluators. The Foundation chooses from an evaluation panel they established who will conduct the evaluation of a project. There is a bit of negotiation required, especially if there are differences in the way the evaluators and funded group want to evaluate the project. For every project, pupils are pre- and post-tested in literacy and numeracy. Qualitative information is also gathered from evaluation data already available on the specific project. Where possible, the Foundation's preferred evaluation approach is to gather information from a Randomised Control Trial. This means randomly selecting, from a group of potential participants, which pupils receive the intervention and which do not (though in some cases the control group will be 'wait-listed' and receive the intervention after the trial has been completed). By randomly selecting from a large group of children, the Foundation aims to get an unbiased measure of the impact of the program.

The challenge is to separate the effect of the intervention from the many other influences on a child's progress, and to include enough children and schools in the trial so the Foundation can be confident we are observing the impact of the programme and other effects that may account for changes in the child's performance. (Kevan Collins, CEO, Education Endowment Foundation)

How do you share the information gathered and with whom?

The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit is a practical kit teachers and school leaders. It integrates findings from the multiple studies it has funded and had evaluated to summarise what the Foundation is learning about an intervention and its impact on attainment.

improving the quality feedback provided to pupils has an average impact of eight months. This means that pupils in a class where high quality feedback is provided will make on average eight months more progress over the course of a year compared to another class of pupils which were performing at the same level at the start of the year. At the end of the year the average pupil in a class of 25 pupils in the feedback group would now be equivalent to the 6th best pupil in the control class having made 20 months progress over the year, compared to an average of 12 months in the other class.

The kit is freely available and on the Foundation's website. For example, research summarised in the Toolkit shows that. The website also offers practical insights from the projects it has funded via short videos of 'Toolkit talks' by, for example, headteachers (principals) and case studies of specific projects.

All results of EEF evaluations are published on the Foundation's website using a standard report. In addition, universities involved in the Foundation's evaluations are encouraged to publish papers in peer-reviewed journals.