



Association for Learning Development in Higher Education

ALDinHE Research Grants for Learning Development Application Guidance

ALDinHE has allocated up to £8000 in funding for innovative research projects that focus on aspects of Learning Development (LD). The grants aim to encourage educators to contribute to the field of Learning Development by designing new, or evaluating existing practices and resources, or by expanding the existing knowledge base. Individual bids can apply for any amount up to £1250. This may be increased to £1500 if the applicant(s) can demonstrate meeting ALDinHE's strategic priority of student partnership, defined narrowly for these purposes as 'a project where students are *co-researchers and/or co-producers of resources*'. Applications are open to ALDinHE institutional members.

Collaborative* bids are particularly encouraged, where the research project lead is affiliated with an institutional member of ALDinHE based in the United Kingdom. Collaborations may include those with students as partners, which ALDinHE is keen to encourage.

I. Who is the grant available to?

- Colleague(s) working within the UK higher education sector, interested in researching any aspect(s) of Learning Development.
- *Lead* researchers (principal applicants) should be affiliated with an institutional member of ALDinHE (Visit the ALDinHE website to view the list of [institutional members](#)) but may collaborate with those who are not
- *We particularly encourage collaborative research, be this cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional or collaboration with students – this is beneficial in expanding the reach of the impact demonstrated by the project
- While applicant(s) do not have to be based in a Learning/Academic Development unit or working in the role of Learning/Academic Developer, they should be able to **demonstrate a strong interest in the [field of Learning Development](#)** – either in the context of their role or their area of research. Demonstrating the value and the feasibility of the project will also be required.

II. What is the grant for?

- All proposals will have the key aim of either enhancing the student learning experience through pedagogically motivated and evaluated development of practice, or expanding the research-driven evidence base for Learning Development activities.
- There are five suggested themes for 2025, detailed in the [funding call](#); however, alignment to one of these is not compulsory - applicants can apply for funding to support research on any aspect of Learning/Academic development which enhances students' learning
- Visit the ALDinHE website to view [previous winning projects](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page to see LD research by year).

III. What support is available?

- Grants up to a maximum of £1250 (£1500 if including student partnerships) are available for colleagues to research any aspect of Learning/Academic Development.
- Mentoring, guidance and support will be provided to the winning grant holders as appropriate, through either a Project Partner or the ALDinHE mentoring programme.
- Support around disseminating the project progress and delivering the expected outcomes (presentation at the next ALDinHE conference after completion of the funding cycle, and submission to the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education within the calendar year following completion of funding cycle).

IV. What are the criteria for evaluating the grants?

The bids are peer-reviewed against the following criteria

1. Clear alignment with the ALDinHE values, as outlined below:
 - *Working in partnership with students and staff to make sense and get the most out of HE*
 - *Embracing and respecting diverse learners through critical pedagogy and practice*
 - *Adapting, sharing and advocating effective learning development practice to promote student learning*
 - *Commitment to a scholarly approach and research related to Learning Development*
 - *Critical self-reflection, on-going learning and a commitment to professional development*
2. The extent to which the research will directly impact or further enhance students' experiences of higher education.
3. Evidence of collaboration within the field of LD (e.g. with students, across institutions or disciplines) beyond the individual's immediate practice.
4. Appropriate and achievable aims within the context of the project.
5. Demonstration of how the project builds on, and enhances the practice and/or literature of Learning Development.
6. Clear evaluation and dissemination plan as to how the project will be evaluated and shared with the Learning Development community - applicants may wish to go beyond the requirements of the funding.
7. Ethical considerations are clearly explained and mitigations/actions thought through (e.g. if required, have the applicants demonstrated that they have sought consent, or devised a plan to do so?).
8. Clear demonstration of value for money: detailed breakdown of financial details in line with the requirements in section V below.

V. How can the funds be used?

Please note that the awarded funding can be used for the following purposes:

- Transcription services
- Student rewards (including subsistence as part of research participation)
- Materials and resources

- External expertise (i.e. guest facilitator)
- Research assistant (clear details and justification of the role should be provided)
- Travel for collaboration or dissemination purposes (up to £100)

The awarded funding cannot be used for:

- Paying for staff cover
- Software and Hardware
- Conference attendance (please inquire about the [hardship fund](#) if you are in need of funding to attend the ALDinHE conference)
- Expenses already agreed (in principle) to be met by applicants' institutions (including expenses, resources and dissemination activity)

VI. How to apply?

Applicants are required to complete an application form. Please note that you need to submit two versions of the application:

- [Full application with all details](#)
- [Anonymised application for blind review](#) (this is the full application with section 1 removed)

The documents are view-only to avoid the templates being overwritten. Download the documents and save as a new file name to then have full edit access. Please return **both** the full and the anonymised versions of the application to admin@aldinhe.ac.uk **by 23:59 on 18th July 2025**.

VII. Who will review your applications?

Anonymous proposals will undergo a peer review. Reviewers include members of the ALDinHE Steering Group and the Research and Scholarship Development Working Group. Final outcomes of the review will be notified by the end of September.

VIII. Any other requirements?

- a) The project lead should be affiliated to a UK-based institutional member of ALDinHE
- b) Successful applicants will be expected to disseminate their interim and final findings:
 - Submit a one page interim report 7 months after project commencement (template will be provided)
 - Conference contribution to share the interim findings at the ALDinHE conference (various formats available including papers, workshops and posters); in normal circumstances, this will be in the year after the funding ends
 - Submit a final report on completion of the project to be made available on the [ALDinHE website](#) (template will be provided)
 - Provide a news item for [LoveLD Magazine](#) on completion of the project; and
 - Submit an article or case study for the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education within twelve months of the project completion (by 30th October 2027). Please note that applicants' work needs to meet the [JLDHE guidelines](#) in order to be published, and that we can provide support in the process of writing the article for publication.
 - **Successful** applicants, upon signing of the contract, grant ALDinHE permission to:

- o use their application, if relevant, for future training sessions around the grant application or reviewing processes.
- o request short updates, e.g. a talking head video or audio, on their experiences of the funded project, for training or promotional purposes.

IX. What are the key dates?

- a) Deadline for submission of application: **18th July 2025**
- b) Final decision on your funding application to be announced: **end of September 2025**
- c) Projects expected to start: **6th October 2025**
- d) Submission of 1-page interim report: **1st May 2026**
- e) Completion of the project funding cycle, submission of the final report and a news item: **30th October 2026**
- f) Submission of abstract for the ALDinHE conference (a range of interim outputs): **By mid-January 2027**. Please follow ALDCON deadlines and submission guidance for that year.
- g) Presentation of progress/ outputs at the ALDinHE conference: **June 2027 or by exception June 2028**
- h) Submission of an article or case study for [the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education](#): **by 31st October 2027**

X. Documentation

Please ensure you download and save the templates first. Do not complete directly from the link because it will overwrite the template.

[Full application form](#)

[Anonymised application form](#) is the full application form with section 1 removed

[Interim report](#)

[Full report](#)

XI. Contact :

- **General questions:** Ian Johnson, Chair of ALDinHE's Research and Scholarship Development Working Group - ian.johnson@port.ac.uk
- **Technical/process questions:** ALDinHE Administrator admin@aldinhe.ac.uk