

EMERGING FIELD GROUPS (EFGs)

Policy Paper



The European Association for Research
on Learning and Instruction

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WHAT ARE EFGs ?

The EARLI Board of Directors is proud to offer a new round of Emerging Field Group funding, aimed to support researchers active in innovative and exciting fields.

An Emerging Field Group (EFG) consists of a small group of international researchers working in the field of learning and instruction active within a new, emerging field of research.

EARLI offers these researchers the opportunity to work together during a short but intense period of time to explore the possibilities in their shared field of interest.

The Emerging Field Groups allow for EARLI to position itself as an innovative association, actively stimulating the evolution of educational research into new and exciting directions.

Where the SIGs represent the esta-

blished fields of research, the EFGs allow for exploratory, innovative and risk-taking approaches.

Therefore, EARLI deliberately shapes its EFG Policy as an open policy, allowing for the EFG members to present innovative and risk-taking research, methodologies or tools which have not been pre-defined.

Being part of an Emerging Field Group allows its participants to focus on innovative and new fields of research, with an emphasis on exploration and process rather than a definitive product.

As such, the Emerging Field Group is less concerned about actual output and more concerned about process. EARLI offers the EFG the space and time to explore its ideas while remaining flexible in its under-takings.

FOUNDING an EFG

WHO

An EFG can be founded by a group of EARLI members with the intention to work closely together during a short, fixed period of time. Each EFG runs for two years, with the possibility to extend this with another two years.

Non-EARLI members can also be invited to take part in the EFG during its initial two years. Should the EFG's activity be renewed for a second term, all EFG participants are asked to join the EARLI community by becoming an EARLI member. EFGs are also required to include junior researchers in their team, either PhD students or postdoc researchers who obtained their PhD within the last 3 years.

The main criterion for the founding of an EFG is its topic. The EFG should demonstrate that it concerns itself with innovative research, new methodologies, risk-taking approaches, new theoretical concepts, multidisciplinary efforts, etc.

The initiative to found an EFG can be taken up by an EARLI member. Each EFG selects one (or two) EFG coordinators who will function as the main contact person(s) and EFG facilitator(s). This role can only be taken up by an EARLI member (see further).

WHAT

WHEN

The next call for EFGs will be launched in September 2026. Initially, each EFG will run for two years, following the application approval by the Committee. However, should the EFG be productive and participants wish to do so, they can extend their activities for another two years. In order to be granted extension, the EFG will need to re-apply, indicating why the extension is necessary. As such, an EFG has a maximum running time of four years.

Following the call sent out to EARLI members, each prospective EFG can send an application to the EARLI Office. In this application, the prospective EFG will be asked to demonstrate in which way they meet the various EFG criteria. Each EFG also offers a description of which actions they plan to undertake, preferably including a timeline, a clear and detailed budget and a video.

Each application will be evaluated by an international committee, who will decide which EFG(s) are accepted.

HOW

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1

The EFG is led by an EFG facilitator who acts as a liaison between the EFG and EARLI. This facilitator is the main contact person for the EFG.

Only EARLI members can take up the role of EFG facilitator, though non-EARLI members can be included amongst the EFG participants, during the first two years.

The EFG can be led by one or two facilitators, as long as there is a clear contact person for EARLI. This facilitator remains responsible for the EFG throughout the running time of the EFG (max. of four years).

The EFG facilitator is mainly responsible for ensuring that the group progresses in developing the field and safeguards the innovative / risk-taking approach.

2

The EFG should consist of at least 5 different EFG participants. There is no defined maximum.

The group of researchers represents an international, primarily European profile active within an emerging field of research and at different higher education institutes.

It is possible to include non-EARLI members in the EFG during the first cycle (2 years). Should the EFG wish to extend its activities for another 2 years, all participants will be asked to join the EARLI community by becoming a member.

3

The EFG membership includes **Junior Researchers**, for whom the relevance of being a part of the EFG is clearly described in the application.

Involvement of researchers identified as **"scholars-at-risk" and/or researchers working in low-GDP countries** is required, as this supports their integration into the EARLI community. A clear role for these researchers should be described in the scope of the EFG.

4

Considering the innovative and explorative nature of EFGs, the type of activities EFGs can host are not strictly determined.

To allow EFGs the freedom to determine their own approaches and activities, they only need to include a plan of action and budget in their application.

EFGs are invited and encouraged to propose new, different and non-traditional activities.

EFG EVALUATION

Each application will be evaluated by an **international committee**, consisting of the EARLI President, EARLI President-Elect, EARLI BoD Portfolio Holder for Activities and Awards, a JURE member of EARLI and one or more high-standing experts in the field of Learning and Instruction. They will assess each eligible application according to the following criteria, with the scope and activities as defining factors. **Please note that members of existing EFGs or topics too closely associated with the existing EFGs will not be considered for this EFG application round. Similarly, all current members of the EARLI Board of Directors as well as editors-in-chief of the EARLI journals are excluded from applying for or taking part in the establishment of a new EFG.**

- The EFG meets the eligibility criteria as described in the EFG Policy.
- The EFG scope is exploratory, innovative and risk-taking.
- The EFG shows evidence of multidisciplinary research that aims to understand and support various learning trajectories and potentials.
- The EFG activities are clearly outlined and purposeful.
- The proposed budget represents value for money, by clearly explaining and justifying expenses.
- The EFG undertakes efforts to disseminate its findings, and contributes to the progress of scientific research in Learning and Instruction.

To extend an EFG for a further two years, the group will need to make an application for extension in which they outline why the extension is necessary, what goals it will fulfill, and how the extension will continue to sustain the group's endeavors. The decision for granting re-approval will be made by the EARLI Board of Directors.

EFG FUNDING

The EARLI Board of Directors is committed to provide Emerging Field Groups with funding to support their activities.

For the first cycle (first two years), a maximum budget of € 20.000 is provided per EFG. Should the EFG wish to extend its activities for the next two years, this will be a no-cost extension. This EFG funding is provided by EARLI as a way to foster innovative and risk-taking projects which demonstrate a clear involvement of key members of the EARLI community, such as scholars-at-risk and junior researchers. It should also show evidence of multidisciplinary research that aims to understand and support various learning trajectories and potentials. The funding received by the EFG can be used to cover a variety of project-related costs (e.g., travel, accommodation, catering, communication, ...). It can also be used to cover Junior Researchers' wages, at a maximum rate of 5% of the EFG funding amount. The funding application should include a clear budget, indicating the costs the EFG intends to cover with the funding.

Following an open call sent out by the EARLI Office, each prospective EFG can apply for funding.

The application should at least include the following elements:

- The aim and scope of the EFG
- The prospective actions or activities (and timeline)
- The members of the EFG
- A detailed budget
- A video (max. 3 mins)

Each application will be evaluated by an international committee, consisting of the EARLI President, President-Elect, the EARLI BoD Portfolio Holder for Activities and Awards, a JURE member and one or more external experts. The final decision will be made by the BoD. Once the funding application has been approved, the EFG facilitator will be notified on the further arrangements.

Each EFG is expected to document and submit its expenses (incl. original invoices and receipts) which are covered by the EFG funding. An EFG will also be asked to supply a preliminary interim report on its progress, as well as a final report upon completion of the project.

EFG TIMELINE



EFG SUPPORT

EARLI offers support to EFGs in a variety of ways.

First and foremost, an EFG functions as a laboratory in which researchers are allowed to experiment with their ideas and methods, without focusing too much on the outcome or result of this process.

Additionally, EARLI offers each EFG visibility through its website, social media and conference activities. Should an EFG so wish, an invited symposium slot at the EARLI Conference can be provided.

EFGs are also encouraged to publish their findings in Frontline Learning Research, the open access journal of EARLI.

Also, as EARLI represents over 2.500 researchers active all over Europe and beyond, being part of an EFG allows researchers to enter in critical dialogue with colleagues and expand their research through fruitful exchange with colleagues. Disseminating a call or invitation to EARLI members on behalf of a specific EFG is also part of the support EARLI can offer EFGs.



The EARLI Office can be contacted throughout the whole EFG process, from application to the organisation of activities, for questions and practical issues.

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