

Rapid Impact Fund 2026 - Scoring Criteria

Focus: Building autism-inclusive cultures

CRITERIA		RATING			
Proposed activity:		1	2	3	4
1	Reflects the focus of the funding round - building autism-inclusive cultures.	Does not reflect the round's focus: the application does not demonstrate any clear connection to the goals of the funding round. It fails to address the needs or experiences of autistic students or outline how the proposed activity will contribute to creating a more inclusive culture.	Limited relevance to the round's focus: the application somewhat addresses the needs of autistic students, but only loosely connects the proposed activity to building a more autism-inclusive culture. The proposed activity may support individuals or groups of students but lacks clarity on how it will influence the wider environment, practices or attitudes in the setting.	Clear relevance to the round's focus but lacks detail/depth: the application clearly links the proposed activity to supporting autistic students and building an autism-inclusive culture. It outlines how the activity will contribute to a more autism-inclusive culture, although some elements of the approach, impact, or wider cultural change could be described in greater detail.	Strong alignment with the round's focus: the application presents a clear and compelling approach to building an autism-inclusive culture. It demonstrates a strong understanding of the experiences of autistic students and outlines a well-designed activity that will positively influence the environment, attitudes, or practices within the school/college.
2	Is quick to implement and will show impact in 6 months.	Not quick to implement and unlikely to show impact within 6 months: the proposed activity requires a significant amount of time (at least a term) to set up or involves complex processes that would delay implementation. There is little to no indication that it	Slow to implement with uncertain impact within 6 months: while the activity could eventually be implemented, it involves considerable delays or is dependent on factors that may slow down progress. The potential impact within 6 months is unclear or unlikely, and the timeline for seeing results	Quick to implement with moderate likelihood of showing impact in 6 months: the activity can be implemented relatively quickly (eg a couple of weeks) and is likely to begin influencing practice, behaviour, or the learning environment within six months. Early indicators of a more autism-inclusive culture are	Very quick to implement with clear, measurable impact within 6 months: the proposed activity is ready for immediate implementation (within days), with a clear and well-defined plan that will yield measurable results within 6 months. The timeline is realistic, and the activity is designed to deliver noticeable improvements

		will influence practice, culture, or student experience within the timeframe.	appears to be too long for the proposed objectives.	plausible.	quickly, making a tangible impact within the specified period.
3	Is creative and innovative.	Established practice: the application describes an initiative that should already be in place in an inclusive setting. Little to no creative or innovative approach.	Basic or reactive approach: the application presents an initiative that addresses a current need in an inclusive setting, but uses familiar or limited approaches. While useful, it does not significantly advance thinking or practice around building autism-inclusive cultures.	Targeted innovation: the application demonstrates a thoughtful and creative approach designed to improve autism inclusion within the school/college community. It addresses a clearly identified challenge and shows potential to strengthen inclusive practices and culture..	Transformative innovation: the application proposes a highly creative initiative with strong potential to shift thinking, behaviours, and systems within the school/college. It offers a distinctive and well-defined approach to building a genuinely autism-inclusive culture that could influence wider practice..
4	Involves autistic young people (YP) in planning and delivery.	No involvement of autistic YP: the proposed activity does not involve autistic young people in the planning or delivery in any way. The project is designed and executed without considering their input or perspective, which limits its relevance and effectiveness in addressing their needs.	Limited involvement of autistic YP (ie consultation): autistic young people are minimally involved in the planning and/or delivery of the activity. While their perspectives may be included to some degree, the level of engagement is superficial or tokenistic, and their role in shaping the activity is not significant or meaningful.	Active involvement of autistic YP in planning (collaboration): autistic young people are actively involved in the planning of the activity, with their input shaping the approach and content. However, their role in the delivery may be more limited, and while their involvement is meaningful, there could be opportunities for deeper engagement or more responsibility in the execution of the activity.	Full, meaningful involvement of autistic YP in planning and delivery (co-production): autistic young people play an integral role in both the planning and delivery of the activity. Their perspectives and experiences are central to shaping the design and execution, and they take on a significant, empowered role throughout the process. The involvement is comprehensive, ensuring the activity is directly aligned with their needs and priorities.