

Rapid Impact Fund 2026 - Scoring Criteria

Focus: Tackling or preventing non-attendance among autistic students

CRITERIA		RATING			
Proposed activity:		1	2	3	4
1	Reflects the focus of the funding round - tackling or preventing non-attendance among autistic students.	Does not reflect the round's focus: the application does not demonstrate a clear connection to tackling or preventing non-attendance. It does not show how the proposed activity will support autistic students to attend school or college more regularly, nor how it will address barriers to attendance.	Limited relevance to the round's focus: the application shows some awareness of attendance challenges faced by autistic students, but the proposed activity lacks clarity on how it will directly improve or sustain attendance. The approach may support wellbeing or learning but does not clearly link these to improving attendance.	Clear relevance to the round's focus but lacks detail: the application clearly addresses non-attendance among autistic students and outlines how the proposed activity could improve attendance for identified individuals or groups. However, some elements of the approach or intended outcomes lack detail or clarity.	Strong alignment with the round's focus: the application presents a clear and well-developed approach to tackling non-attendance among autistic students. It demonstrates a strong understanding of the systemic and individual barriers to attendance and outlines a compelling plan to improve and sustain attendance for identified individuals or groups, with potential to influence wider school or college practice.
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 evidence that it will improve attendance or	Slow to implement with uncertain impact within 6 months: while the activity could eventually be implemented, and might contribute to improving attendance. However, it involves considerable delays or is dependent on factors that may slow down progress. The potential impact within 6	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 there is a reasonable expectation that it will begin to improve attendance, engagement, or re-connection with learning for autistic	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 in attendance, engagement, or

		engagement within the six-month timeframe.	months is unclear or unlikely, and the timeline for seeing results appears to be too long for the proposed objectives.	students within six months.	sustained participation in learning quickly, making a tangible impact within the specified period.
3	Is creative and innovative.	Established practice: the application describes an activity that would typically already be expected within standard attendance or pastoral support. There is little evidence of creative thinking about how to address non-attendance among autistic students.	Basic or reactive approach: the application presents an initiative that addresses a known attendance issue but relies on familiar or reactive approaches. While potentially useful, the initiative does not demonstrate significant creativity in tackling attendance barriers.	Targeted innovation: the application presents a thoughtful and creative initiative designed to address specific barriers to attendance faced by autistic students. The approach is purposeful and has potential to improve engagement with school or college.	Transformative innovation: the application proposes a highly creative initiative with strong potential to re-engage autistic students who experience attendance difficulties. The approach could influence wider practice and offer new ways for schools or colleges to support sustained attendance.
4	Involves autistic young people (YP) and their families in planning and delivery.	No involvement of autistic YP: autistic students and their parents are not involved in shaping or delivering the activity. Their perspectives on attendance barriers and solutions are not reflected in the proposal..	Limited involvement of autistic YP (ie consultation): autistic students and/or parents are consulted in a limited way, but their involvement has minimal influence on how the activity is designed or delivered.. The level of engagement is superficial or tokenistic.	Active involvement of autistic YP in planning (collaboration): autistic students and/or parents play an active role in shaping the activity. Their experiences and ideas inform how the project aims to improve attendance, although 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 students and parents play an integral role in both the planning and delivery of the activity. Their lived experience directly informs the design of solutions to attendance challenges, ensuring the activity reflects their priorities and insights. The involvement is comprehensive, ensuring the activity is directly aligned with their needs and priorities.