

British Science Week Kick Start Grant guidelines

FAQs

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Planning a British Science Week event or activity

What kind of activity or event can I run for British Science Week?

The nature of the event/activity you plan with and for your students and other stakeholders will vary depending on your context and the resources you have available. They could include the following ideas:

- Run activities from our [CREST home-based activity packs](#) or the [British Science Week activity packs](#).
- Invite speakers from local universities, industry or family members who work in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) to lead discussions on science and/or engineering topics or host an 'Meet a Scientist' workshop.
- Take field trips to local science centres, museums or university science departments.
- Put on mini festivals or science fairs.
- Host student-led interactive displays, demonstrations or investigations for parents or other schools and community groups.
- Give out take-home science kits for increasing family engagement.
- Run student-led building projects such as a school garden, community lab or pond with parent or community volunteers.
- Run CPD for non-science-specialist teachers on running simple science practicals in primary classrooms.

Need more inspiration? Head to our [case study page](#).

Do my British Science Week activities have to follow the theme of the year?

No, there is no obligation for your plans to follow the theme and your grant application will not be judged on whether you event is aligned with British Science Week annual theme. While we hope you find the themed activity packs and resources helpful, you are free to choose your own theme or repeat a successful activity from a previous year.

What kind of youth-led activities do you recommend?

The most suitable type of child-led activity will vary depending on the interests and abilities of the young people, and the resources at your disposal. We strongly encourage that you work with your students to help them identify links between science and their personal experiences, interests or local environment, and plan an activity that is meaningful to them.

Examples of youth-led activities we have funded in previous years include:

- students designing, testing and delivering science demonstrations or investigations for younger pupils or family guests;
- students choosing storybooks with STEM themes and reading to younger children;
- students designing and hosting a STEM quiz for their class/year;
- recruiting a cadre of young people as in-school STEM Ambassadors to plan and promote science activities throughout the year;
- young people as hosts/guides for visiting guests at community science fair;
- a Young Gardeners group that took responsibility for developing and maintaining a school garden plot;
- students researching diverse examples of scientists to which they can relate, and developing posters or presentations about them to share more widely.

Did you know that student organisers who spend a minimum of 10 hours designing, planning and running an event will be eligible for a free CREST Bronze Award? [Find out more about the Bronze CREST Awards here.](#)

Conditions of the Kick Start funding

What can the grant money be spent on?

The nature of activity you plan with and for your students and other stakeholders will vary depending on your context. We encourage you to prioritise local suppliers and partners and plan with sustainability in mind; investing in equipment and materials that are reusable, limiting the use of single-use plastic, and avoiding food and other waste.

Here are some suggestions and restrictions on how you can spend the Kick Start Grant:

Funding CAN be used for

- Equipment, materials and consumables
- Field trips
- Speakers or presenters*
- Outreach shows*
- CPD for school staff
- Additional CREST Award entry fees (beyond the free £350)

Funding CANNOT be used for

- Large competition prizes
- Large equipment such as microscopes, laptops
- Journal subscriptions
- Salary costs
- Costs associated with an activity or event that has already taken place
- Costs already covered by other funding
- No more than £100 of the grant can be spent on refreshments

* We are unlikely to fund events that spend the whole budget on an external speaker or show as this does not meet the priority of allowing the children to take the lead.

Can we use the Kick Start funding to pay for a speaker or science show?

Yes, however we don't tend to fund events where the whole grant will be used to pay for an external provider as it is not in the spirit of our priority of supporting children to take the lead.

We encourage you to consider how your choice of speaker(s) can introduce pupils to careers they might never have encountered before and demonstrate diversity in STEM.

You might consider arranging a visit from a [STEM Ambassador](#), or inviting family members in who work in science-related professions. Take the opportunity to broaden your students' views of what 'counts' as science by including a wide variety of roles from the traditional (physicist, lab technician, nurse) to the less traditional (construction professions, hair colourist, data analyst, tree surgeon).

Take care that the show or speaker does not inadvertently reinforce stereotypes that science is only for boffins/geniuses/professors in white lab coats. We want to fund activities that help young people see themselves as scientists.

Can we use the Kick Start funding for a chick-hatching experience?

We know that chick hatching services – that provide an incubator and chicken eggs – are a popular choice for school groups. Similar to butterfly-rearing activities; they provide an opportunity for young people to get up close to animals and learn to make scientific observations. Ethical concerns remain, however, as to the appropriateness of a school setting as a hatching environment and about the aftercare of any hatched animals.

The British Science Association refers to CLEAPSS on all matters health and safety related. Their [student safety sheets](#) provide guidance on how to work in a safe and ethical manner in schools. All British Science Week activities and events are to be compliant with relevant legislation, and any activities that are considered unsafe or unethical – including those that potentially cause harm or distress to animals – will not be funded.

In your grant application you should demonstrate your understanding of the relevant CLEAPSS advice on keeping and handling animals in science practical work and explain your rationale for selecting live animal handling compared to [alternatives](#) (e.g. live nest camera footage from reputable organisations).

What other conditions of the grant should I be aware of?

By applying for a grant, you are agreeing to the following conditions:

- Your event must be STEM-related and fall within British Science Week dates.
- You must participate in the evaluation of British Science Week, for instance completing an organiser questionnaire (provided by the British Science Association) after British Science Week.
- To participate, if invited, in a British Science Association showcase event to share experience, learnings, and student outputs from your British Science Week events/activities.
- British Science Week, UKRI and the British Science Association must be correctly acknowledged in any press releases (please contact the British Science Association for additional information).
- The British Science Week logo must be used on any marketing materials produced, either in print or online. [Downloadable logos can be found here](#).

If for whatever reason you are not able to run an event within British Science Week 2026, the grant money will have to be returned to the British Science Association. For these reasons, please ensure you have contingency plans in the case of health and safety restrictions or partial school closure.

If evaluation questionnaires are not completed and returned to us or if your event differs greatly to the event specified in your application, the British Science Association reserves the right to ask for the funding to be returned.

Full terms and conditions of the grant can be found at the end of this document.

The Kick Start Grant application process

What will we ask for in your application?

You will need to complete the final application using the online platform. **We do not accept applications sent as email attachments.** We recommend that you draft your application offline and submit it only once you have all the required information to hand. There is a downloadable template you can use offline to prepare your application and is available in the application platform. You will be asked to provide the following information in your application:

Information about your school

- School name and address, including postcode
- School reference number (URN, DofE, or SEED number)
- Demographic information about the students at your school if you are eligible based on either the proportion of students that are eligible for PP/FSM or from ethnic minority backgrounds. We ask for the % of students*
- School type (e.g. Primary, Special School, Alternative Provision, etc.)
- Whether your school has previously been awarded a grant from the British Science Association (Kick Start, Engage/CREST URA or British Science Association Community Grant)

Your contact details

- Your name and role
- Your work email address

Your planned BSW event/activities

- A description of your planned event/activities; and how they meet British Science Association priorities
- The expected audience of the event/activities (e.g. just students, students and families, etc.)
- Total number of expected participants
- A rough budget of costs associated with the event and how the grant money will be used

Financial details*

- School's bank or building society account name, number, and sort code
- The name and email address of your school/MAT/Local Authority Finance contact

*Financial information is stored on a secure cloud-based service and will only be used to pay successful grant applicants. Unused details will be deleted.

If the bank details supplied in your application are incorrect, the payment of the grant will be delayed and may result in the grant being withdrawn.

How much money can I apply for?

The Kick Start Grant is **£400**. While in previous years there have been different values of Kick Start Grants, for British Science Week 2026 all grants offered to successful applicants will be for £400.

Successful Kick Start applicants who do CREST projects during British Science Week (or at any point until the end of the academic year) will also be able to get up to £350 worth of CREST Awards for free.

How can I write a high-quality application?

To write the best possible application for a Kick Start Grant, we recommend that you consider these **ABCs** of advice for your grant submission:

A	Are you eligible?	- Before applying, make certain you meet all the eligibility criteria. - We will only assess applications from schools that are eligible.
B	British Science Association priorities	- Make sure your plans fit British Science Association priorities and aligns with our vision and mission. - Explain which parts of your planned activities address specific British Science Association priorities, and how they do so. - Your activities do not have to meet all the British Science Association priorities; focus on demonstrating how you meet some of them rather than listing those you have considered, without explaining how they are being addressed. - Review all information in the Kick Start FAQ for other important details such as what the funding can be spent on and other grant conditions.
C	Clear & credible planning	- Describe your plans clearly but concisely. - Identify which activities you require the funding for, and any other additional funding you have secured. - Your budget does not have to be detailed but must be realistic and linked to the planned activities clearly. You do not need to provide receipts.

Can I apply more than once?

Only one Kick Start Grant application per school will be assessed, so please check with colleagues at your school before applying. If more than one application is received from a school, we will discard all but the final application received before the deadline.

The British Science Association offers [Engage Grants](#) for schools in challenging circumstances to run CREST Awards. You can apply for both a Kick Start and Engage Grant in the same grant round, however as the Kick Start Grant scheme is oversubscribed, if you plan to do CREST Awards during British Science Week an [Engage Grant application](#) may be more appropriate.

I am from a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). Can I submit an application for British Science Week activities across more than one school?

We don't currently offer a multi-school application. Please apply as an individual school but let us know if you are working in cooperation with other applicants. On your application indicate which activities in the joint plan you are seeking funding for. Each linked application will be judged on its own merits and eligibility.

How do I check if my school is rural?

You can enter your school's postcode here <https://www.ukpostcodecheck.com/> and check the census data. Any categorisation that contains 'rural' is eligible including:

- Accessible Rural Area
- Rural Hamlet And Isolated Dwellings
- Rural Village area
- Rural Town And Fringe area

If you are unsure if your school qualifies as rural please email us, including your postcode, at bsw@britishscienceassociation.org.

How are applications assessed?

The type of activity you run is up to you and depends on the interests and needs of your audience and the resources at your disposal. We assess the applications against the priorities below. You need not meet all of these priorities, but your application should identify the priorities your activity will address. Your application will be stronger if you give specific details about **how** you will meet two or three of these priorities, rather than mentioning several without demonstrating how the planned activities address them.

1. Involve children supported by Free School Meals, from ethnic minority backgrounds, with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or from any other groups of young people more likely to be underrepresented in STEM.
2. Support girls to develop their STEM skills, understanding and passions.

3. Engage children who wouldn't normally choose to participate in STEM.
4. Are embedded in your local community and involve the wider community as a core audience.
5. Challenge stereotypes about science
6. Make science relatable by connecting it with young people's personal experiences and interests, local environments, and community.
7. Support children and young people to take initiative and actively lead activities.
8. Are cross-curricular and include teachers, professionals or organisations from outside STEM.
9. Raise awareness of the diverse range of careers that studying STEM subjects can lead to.
10. Have an impact on STEM activities throughout the year, e.g., staff CPD or launching a new STEM initiative in your school.

For British Science Week 2026, reduced funding from UK Research & Innovation means that we have fewer Kick Start Grants to award and competition will be considerable. **Only the strongest proposals from eligible schools that have not received Kick Start funding before will be considered for a grant this year.**

Further, we aim for a broad geographical spread of grant funded events and may prioritise grants from one region over another, if necessary, to achieve this.

When will I hear from you if I am successful or not?

You can find the deadline for applications on the [Kick Start Grant webpage](#). Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email around 6 weeks after the application deadline. If successful, payments will be made into the nominated bank account approximately one month later.

If you wish to start planning your event in advance of knowing the outcome of your application, please note that **the British Science Association is not liable for any lost deposits or payments if your grant application is unsuccessful.**

Why was my Kick Start Grant application unsuccessful?

The Kick Start Grant scheme is very popular, and regrettably we must turn down many applications each year.

Although we realise that this will be disappointing, we encourage applicants to have a back-up plan for a smaller scale event to celebrate British Science Week if their application for a grant is

unsuccessful. There are many things which can be done at low cost or even for free, for example inviting a STEM Ambassador volunteer to your school to support classroom activities. If you are unsuccessful this year, we encourage you to try again next year!

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide feedback on individual applications, but you may find it helpful to refer to our [grants video of tips](#) for applying for British Science Association grants for schools.

Scroll down for terms and conditions

Terms and conditions for British Science Week grants

By submitting an application to the British Science Association, the organisation named in the application (referred to as 'you' in these Terms and Conditions) agrees, if awarded a grant, to:

- 1.1 hold the grant on trust for the British Science Association (referred to as 'we' or 'us') and use it only for your event/activity as described in your application or otherwise agreed with us, and only for expenditure incurred after the date of the grant award;
- 1.2 hold your event/activity (or at least one of your events/activities) within British Science Week (6 to 15 March 2026). If for whatever reason you are not able to run your events/activities during this time, the grant money will have to be returned to the British Science Association. For these reasons, you will have contingency plans in case of illness or unforeseen circumstances;
- 1.3 if asked, participate in a British Science Association showcase event to share experience, learnings, and student outputs from your British Science Week event/activity;
- 1.4 act lawfully in carrying out your event/activity, in accordance with best practice and guidance from your regulators, and follow any guidelines issued by us about the event/activity or use of the grant;
- 1.5 correctly acknowledge UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), British Science Week and the British Science Association in any press releases or marketing material. Please contact the British Science Association for additional information.
- 1.6 use the British Science Week logo on any marketing materials produced, either in print or online. Downloadable logos can be found on the British Science Week website;
- 1.7 hold the grant in a UK based bank or building society account which satisfies our requirements as set out in our guidelines;
- 1.8 immediately return any part of the grant that is not used for your event/activity or constitutes unlawful state aid;
- 1.9 where your event/activity involves working with children, young people or adults at risk, adopt and implement an appropriate written safeguarding policy, obtain written consent from legal carers or guardians and carry out background checks for all employees, volunteers, trustees or contractors as required by law;
- 1.10 comply with data protection laws and obtain the consent of your beneficiaries for us and you to receive and process their personal information and contact them;
- 1.11 keep accurate and comprehensive records about your event/activity both during the event/activity and for seven years afterwards and provide us on request with copies of those records and evidence of expenditure of the grant, such as original receipts and bank statements;
- 1.12 allow us reasonable access to your premises and systems to inspect event/activity and grant records;

1.13 the British Science Association publicising and sharing information about you and your event/activity including your name and images of event/activities. You hereby grant us a royalty free licence to reproduce and publish any event/activity information you give us. You will let us know when you provide the information if you don't have permission for us to use it in this way;

1.14 you, or someone from your organisation, will inform us immediately of any safeguarding incident or allegation involving a member of your organisation project staff, volunteers or agents which occurs within the project. You will inform us immediately in the event of an investigation against your organisation or a staff member or volunteer by the police or a regulatory body which relates to the grant funded project.

2. You acknowledge that we are entitled to suspend or terminate the grant and/or require you to repay all or any of the grant in any of the following situations. You must let us know if any of these situations have occurred or are likely to occur:

2.1 You use the grant in any way other than as approved by us or fail to comply with any of these Terms and Conditions.

2.2 You fail to complete the feedback forms or your activity/ event differs greatly to that outlined in your application.

2.3 You receive duplicate funding for the same project costs as funded by the grant.

2.4 You provide us with false or misleading information either on application or after award of the grant. In relation to the grant funded project, you or your organisation act dishonestly or are under investigation by us, a regulatory body or the police, fail to inform us about a safeguarding incident or external investigation, or if we consider for any other reason that public funds are at risk or you do anything to bring the British Science Association or UK Research and Innovation into disrepute.

2.5 You enter into, or in our view are likely to enter into, administration, liquidation, receivership or dissolution.

3. You acknowledge that:

3.1 the grant is for your use only and we may require you to pay us a share of any proceeds from disposal of assets purchased or enhanced with the grant;

3.2 we will not increase the grant if you spend more than the agreed budget;

3.3 if the provided bank account details including account name, account number and sort code, are incorrect, your grant payment may be significantly delayed or your grant offer may be withdrawn;

3.4 the grant is not consideration for any taxable supply for VAT purposes;

3.5 we have no liability for any costs or consequences incurred by you or third parties that arise directly or indirectly from the project, nor from non-payment or withdrawal of the grant, save to the extent required by law;

3.6 the British Science Association will not be held responsible or liable for any consequences, whether direct or indirect to any loss or damage, personal or otherwise, injury or death however arising in grant-funded events and activities. Grant recipients are responsible for taking out any public liability or other insurance necessary to cover the activities;

3.7 these Terms and Conditions will continue to apply for one year after the grant is paid or until the project has been completed, whichever is later. Clauses 1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 3.5 and 3.6 shall survive expiry of these Terms and Conditions; and

3.8 if the application and grant award are made electronically, the agreement between us shall be deemed to be in writing and your online acceptance of these Terms and Conditions shall be deemed to be a signature of that agreement.