



IEA Research and Development Fund

66th General Assembly – 7 October 2025

Lauren Musu

Fostering research and innovation

- Contributes to IEA's mission to provide a model for research in education and innovative approaches
- Funding is drawn from a 3% overhead on participation fees across IEA studies
- Five calls released to date:
 - Call 1: Early 2021
 - Call 2: Early 2022
 - Call 3: June 2023
 - Call 4: June 2024
 - Call 5: June 2025
- Currently, outcomes from 14 completed projects are openly accessible on the IEA website

Continued improvement and changes

- Following from the successful inception and leadership by Thierry Rocher, onboarded Christian Christrup Kjeldsen as the new Standing Committee Chair
- IEA-initiated calls for on-demand R&D projects were added as a possible avenue for funding
- Plans to align website improvements and better visibility within the overall website redesign
- Successful alignment with the IEA IRC in Rome, Italy

Calls and Progress Overview

- Call 1 – All projects (3) completed and outcomes accessible on the IEA website
- Call 2 – All projects (6) completed and outcomes accessible on the IEA website
- Call 3 – Most projects (6/7) completed and posted, or pending final approval to be posted to the IEA website
- Call 4 – All projects (7) launched and in various stages of progress
- Call 5 – Submissions closed 15 September, proposals in review
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- Call 6 – Planned for 2026 on the regular call timeline

Call 3 project status

Title	Lead Researcher	Status
Field Trial Sample Size for Scales (FiTS ³): Requirements for Questionnaire Scale Analysis	Andrés Christiansen, IEA	Awaiting final approval
An Examination on the Performance of Sampling Variance Estimators in International Large-Scale Assessments	Umut Atasever, IEA	Published
Dimensionality and mode effects in PIRLS 2016 and PIRLS 2021 (DIMO): Evaluating the comparability of different assessment modes	Rolf Strietholt, IEA	Published
Enhancing Cross-Cultural Comparisons in International Large-Scale Assessments: A Comprehensive Investigation and Guideline Development Using TIMSS 2019 and TALIS 2018 Data	Andres Sandoval-Hernandez, University of Bath	Published
Approximate Areas of Interest for Enhanced Understanding of Student Motivation and Task Interaction in IEA Assessments	Artur Pokropek, Polish Academy of Sciences	Published
Gauging the Instructional Sensitivity of Ordinal Assessment Items	Anne Traynor, Purdue University	Published
Using Large Language Models for Automatic Item Generation: Development and Validation for TIMSS Grade 4	Marek Muszyński, Polish Academy of Sciences	Finalized, on website soon

Call 4 funded projects

Title	Lead Researcher
An AI-Driven Approach to TIMSS Item Verification and Alignment	Ummugul Bezirhan, Boston College
SMART: Survey Mode and Response Trends in TIMSS and PIRLS Context Questionnaires	Yuan-Ling (Linda) Liaw, IEA
Striving for More Inclusiveness: Understanding and Addressing Student Exclusions in TIMSS and PIRLS	Sabine Meinck, IEA
Enhancing Questionnaire Relevance in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Comparative Analysis of Regional Assessment Frameworks and IEA Instruments in Primary Education	Oliver Neuschmidt, IEA
Information Retrieval Using Retrieval-Augmented Generation on PIRLS Documents	Widianto Persadha, IEA
Assessment Design for Accommodating Participants with Tailored Support (ADAPT)	Rolf Strietholt, IEA
A Two-Step Imputation Approach Combining IRT and Deep-Learning Methods in Large-Scale Survey Assessments	Peter van Rijn, ETS

Alignment with the IRC

- R&D fund coordinators encouraged R&D recipients to submit completed and in progress research to the 2025 IRC in Rome
- In total, 13 R&D awardees presented at IRC
 - One dedicated paper session for R&D outcomes
 - R&D presence at an additional 4 paper sessions
- Call 5 was promoted during sessions and at the IEA booth
- R&D fund coordinators received many inquiries about potential submissions during the IRC



Call 5

- 38 complete proposals received by 15 September deadline
 - 22 Tier 1 proposals (6-month duration, € 55,000 limit)
 - 12 Tier 2 proposals (12-month duration, € 110,000 limit)
 - 4 rejected during initial screening (not relevant to IEA work)
- Remaining 34 proposals cover a nice range of areas, including areas of interest highlighted in the call:
 - Data visualization and reporting
 - Use of AI/LLMs in assessment and psychometric analyses
 - Contextual questionnaires and item banking
 - Trend and longitudinal analyses
 - Bias mitigation
- Proposals are currently under review
- Award decisions are expected in December with projects beginning in early 2026

Financial overview

	Period	2021 (call 1)	2022 (call 2)	2023 (call 3)	2024 (call 4)	2025 (call 5)	2026 (call 6)
TIMSS 2023	2021-24	250	250	250	250		
TIMSS 2027	2025-28					275	275
PIRLS 2026	2023-27			140	140	140	140
ICCS 2027	2024-28				60	60	60
ICILS 2028	2025-29					80	80
Chair donation		20	20	20	20		
Available per year		270	275	410	470	555	555
Awarded		-265	-320	-320	-475	TBD	TBD
Balance (carried over)			5	-45	45	40	TBD
Total Available Funds*		5	-45	45	40	595	

*Does not consider management costs (approximately 0.5 FTE)



Thank you!

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