



CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

through Global Learning

PARTNERSHIPS GUIDE: Face-to-face (i.e., including international travel)

Updated December 2020

International School Partnerships

There's no more authentic way for pupils to learn about global issues than by working with their peers in another country. Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning can help UK-based schools find partner schools in more than 30 countries across Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

Once you've made a connection we have a range of support to help you get started and build a strong and sustainable school partnership, including the [best online platforms and online collaboration tools](#) to use for your international school collaboration.

We can also help you connect with other UK schools via a Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning cluster group. This way you can opt to work together to build links with schools in other countries.

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Applying for funding

To apply for funding, you must have a partner school outside the UK from our list of participating countries. You should be working together either in a one-to-one partnership or as part of a cluster group with a minimum of four schools (two UK and two outside the UK). The amount of funding that you are eligible to receive will depend on the number of schools in your group.

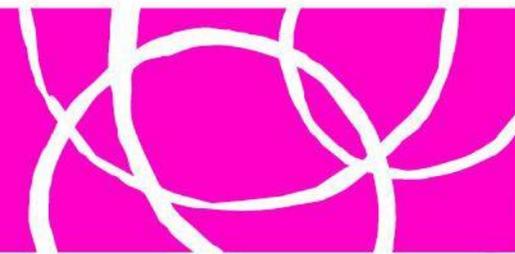
Funding preference will be given to cluster groups. Cluster groups can include a mix of primary and secondary schools. There is no limit to the number of schools that can be part of a cluster. However, as a minimum there should be at least four schools involved, two from the UK and two from outside the UK from any eligible country.

- Applications can include a variety of schools (primary, secondary, SEND etc.)
- Schools can be located in the same city/town, or miles apart
- Schools can choose to work with partner(s) in one country outside the UK, or several different countries
- Schools can work together on one topic/Global Goal or several

Note: Schools wishing to apply with a country in the Middle East (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Yemen) or North Africa (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia) should contact Schools@britishcouncil.org in advance of submitting an application.

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Working with your partner

Schools can start working together online to collaborate on simple projects themed on the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development. They can also share experiences and methods of teaching.

We have created a range of [innovative project ideas](#) that can be used by schools working online and are compatible with the aims of the programme.

We offer a range of funding opportunities for schools to support their partnership work. Funding is available for travel to visit partner schools, training, projects and supply cover as well as other activities. Further details are available on page 7 of this guidance. Due to global travel restrictions, it is not currently possible to travel to visit partner schools. Many schools choose to work together using online communication without ever visiting their partner and have very successful partnerships, please see our [Online Partnerships guide](#) for further information. However, if you are still interested in travelling to visit a partner school in future, you should indicate this in your funding application, as it may be possible to disburse funds for travel once restrictions are lifted.

To apply for funding, you must have a [partner school](#) outside the UK from our list of participating countries.

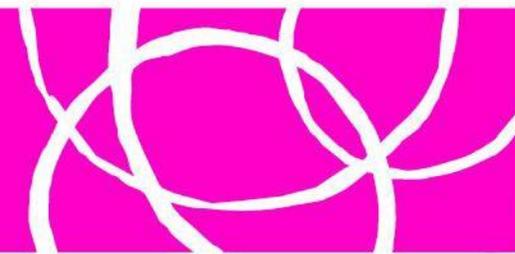
You should be working together either in a one-on-one partnership or as part of a cluster group. Depending on the type of partnership, you will be eligible for different amounts of funding.

If you're not sure which category you fall into, find out more about the different [types of school partnerships](#).

Cluster groups can include a mix of primary and secondary schools. There's no limit to the number of schools taking part. However, as a minimum there should be at least four schools involved, one of which must be from a participating country outside the UK.

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How to join a cluster partnership

There are several ways to get involved in a cluster partnership. You can:

start your own cluster partnership, or
find out whether there is an existing cluster partnership that you can join.

1. As a first step, particularly if you are new to global learning, we recommend speaking to a local advisor. They can advise on how to start up and manage your own partnership and get the most impact out of your cluster collaboration. They may also be able to help you find and join a cluster partnership in your local area. For further details on how to get in touch with a local advisor, visit the [‘help and support section’](#) on our website.
2. Once you are ready you can also use our [Partner Finder tool](#) to search for other schools in the UK and participating countries that may be interested in collaborating. We aim to make it as easy as possible for you to find participating schools outside the UK to collaborate with, so if you prefer, please get in touch with us at schools@britishcouncil.org and we will do our best to find you a suitable partner.

Note: Schools wishing to apply with a country in the MENA region should contact Schools@britishcouncil.org in advance of submitting an application.

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Managing the cluster

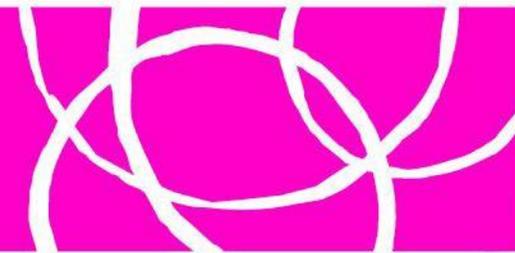
All clusters must be managed by a single point of contact — a UK cluster coordinator. It is expected that this role will be filled by a teacher at the lead UK school. However, suitable parts of the role could be delegated.

Clusters can include schools with a range of experience of international collaboration. Our definitions are:

Lead school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be in the UK.• Leads the application process and manages any grant funding received.• Has strong experience working with international partner schools and of global learning.• Has a role in coordinating the activities within the partnership.
Partner school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideally, has some previous experience of global learning and/or international partnership working.
Network school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possibly new to international partnership work.• Keen to learn from lead and partner schools and start building global learning education.

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Cluster example

Working with their partners in Nepal, pupils at a group of schools in Northern Ireland are developing their computer coding skills while deepening their understanding of Gender Equality.

This cluster partnership comprises ten schools in Northern Ireland, including primary, secondary, government and maintained schools, and seven schools in Nepal. In 2017, the teachers from Northern Ireland made their first visit to Nepal, and reciprocal visits have since taken place in 2019 and 2020.

During the first visit to Nepal, the schools focused on environmental issues, such as waste disposal, recycling, water consumption and energy use. The teachers from Northern Ireland took photographs of the landscape, flora and fauna, and looked at how waste was disposed of in national parks. Back home, they encouraged pupils to carry out surveys and comparison studies to develop their understanding of the localities of their partner schools and, in particular, the effects of the devastating earthquake in 2015.

Next, the schools shifted their focus to Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education and Goal 5 on Gender Equality, and they started to look at ways to encourage more girls in both countries to get involved with computer coding. They also aimed to find the most effective ways to communicate with each other.

When the Nepali teachers visited Northern Ireland, joint training for all the teachers was arranged on the Sustainable Development Goals and Digital Literacy. They learnt about Google's suite of Apps for Education, which can be accessed on any device, at any time of day, helping to reduce communication delays between the schools. Teachers also received training in the use of iMovie Spero Robots and QR reader apps. They worked jointly on an action plan to create a problem-solving project using coding. The official launch of the project was attended by guests from the Department for Education, teacher training colleges, schools and funding bodies.

Each partnership created a teaching tool using a 'coding mat' containing QR codes linking to short embedded films about their various projects. This was taken on the next visit to Nepal to share with the partner schools. Pupils in Kathmandu, for example, saw a mini Sphero and coding mat containing a QR code that linked to a video of Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils in Northern Ireland presenting their findings on a project about water.

Amongst the staff, the partnership has raised awareness of the culture and traditions of Nepal, and teachers have developed firm friendships through face-to-face meetings. However, the most significant staff impact has been on teachers' professional development, particularly in IT. The project has provided opportunities to help staff introduce innovative tools for teaching and learning and interesting ways to share project work.

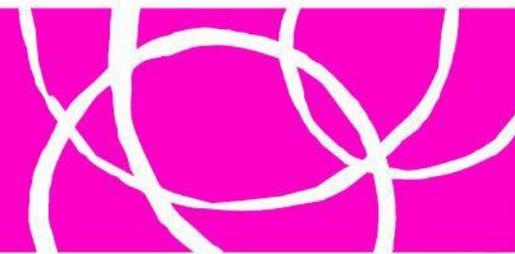
Pupils have been introduced to computational thinking, coding, programming and the use of Sphero robots as tools to share ideas to help care for the environment. They have also developed an increased awareness of their own identities and those of their Nepali partners, along with a general understanding of the importance of caring for their respective environments and the global issues that affect them both.

Find out more about the work of this cluster partnership at:

<https://nireland.britishcouncil.org/about/press/co-armagh-school-links-nepalcoding-project>

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One-to-one partnership example

When Sharrow School, a primary school in Sheffield, England, saw an opportunity to work with an international partner to enrich their project on gender equality, they began to look for a partner country and school that would be the perfect fit. With support from Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning, they established a connection with Waliul Haque Adorsho School in Faridpur, Bangladesh, setting in motion a partnership that has inspired pupils, teachers and the wider community.

‘We chose Bangladesh because of the striking difference in culture,’ says Sharrow School teacher Gillian Wakelam. ‘Gender roles are vastly different in Bangladesh, and the fact it’s a country with a completely different culture is so broadening for our pupils.’

Together, the schools have explored male and female gender roles, encouraging their pupils to challenge stereotypes and social constructs, particularly in relation to STEM and engineering. Through sharing their work and experiences, the pupils have been able to look at similarities and differences in both cultures, listen to and understand different perspectives, and develop a questioning attitude in their learning.

‘It’s brilliant that the pupils in both schools can hear and respond to ideas from a different culture,’ says Gillian. ‘Having an international partner to work with on a project like this just makes it real. They’ve brought a completely different perspective to the work we were doing and our discussions.’

Gillian has worked closely with Zahidul Islam, the head teacher at Waliul Haque Adorsho School, to develop a sustainable and equitable partnership. Working in a very rural setting, Zahidul has been instrumental in finding ways to enrich partnership activities with wider support.

‘Zahidul is really passionate about making the partnership and project work and contributing to the longevity of the partnership,’ says Gillian. ‘We needed to get more people involved – particularly older pupils. So, he created a working group, gathering past pupils and people from the community together to contribute to project activities. He sends us photographs of his pupils and the working group, and shares their experiences, and we discuss and review their perspectives with our pupils.’

At Sharrow, Gillian has set up an ‘International Group’, where pupils prepare joint activities to work on with their peers in Bangladesh. She also got the chance to visit Waliul Haque Adorsho School, enabling her to see the teaching and learning environment first-hand and experience the wider Bangladeshi culture.

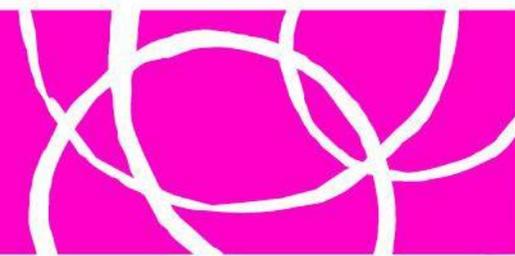
‘It was an amazing visit. Experiencing the cultural side was fascinating. We were immersed in the countryside and the people. We had a chance to experience how people lived, and we could share this experience back home,’ she says.

As well as gaining a greater understanding of gender equality as a global issue, pupils at Sharrow have been inspired and motivated by working in partnership with a school in Bangladesh, and this has greatly impacted on their overall learning.

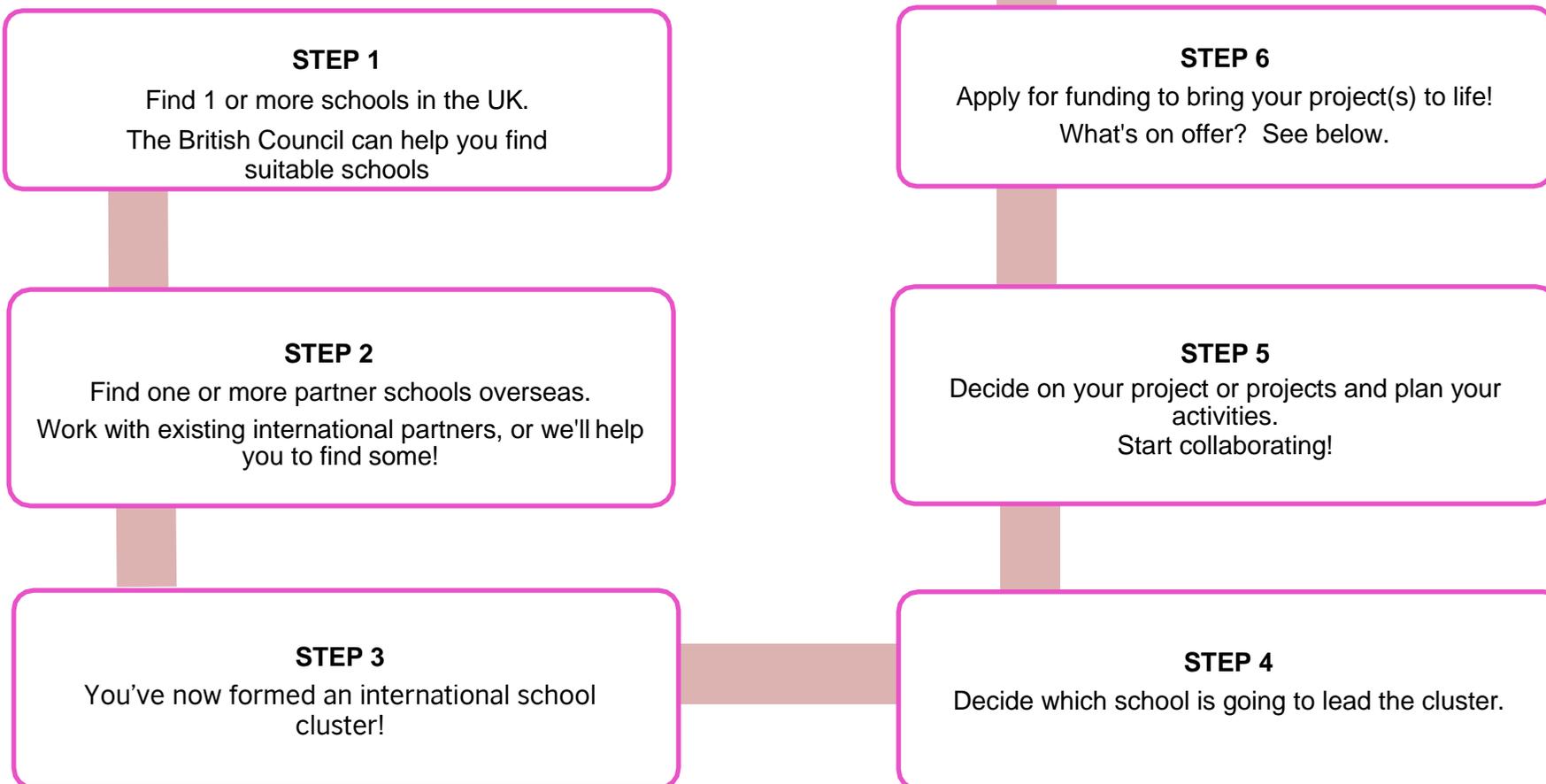
‘Our pupils are really building on their problem solving and critical thinking skills. We’ve got real people in Bangladesh who we need to communicate with and solve problems with together. I’ve seen the pupils grow in confidence so much by working on this project. They are really coming on in leaps and bounds by improving these skills and working in this way,’ says Gillian.

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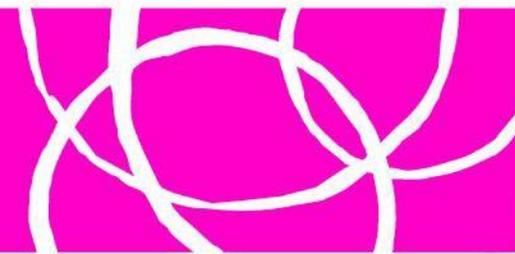


CCGL Online offer – the journey



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What's on offer

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP VISITS

Up to £1,500 per Partner School, to be used towards the costs of flights, accommodation, local travel, visas and vaccines

£500 TO SUPPORT A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

Larger clusters can receive funding for up to two projects.

£250 FOR A SPECIAL COMMUNITY EVENT

Larger clusters can receive funding for up to two events.

Up to £200 PER DAY FOR SUB COVER

Between 3-7 days are available for lead schools.

£100-£250 PER UK SCHOOL FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

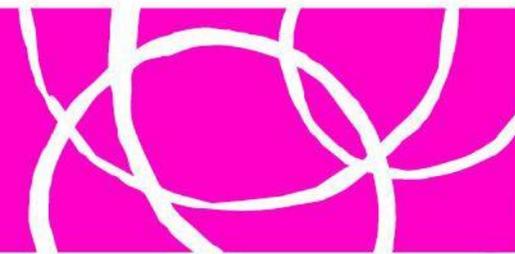
More experienced schools in partnerships can apply for £100; less experienced schools, which are not yet ready to establish their own international partnerships, can receive up to £250, which can be used for sub cover.

OVER 3 DAYS OF SUPPORT FROM YOUR LOCAL ADVISER

- Clusters are eligible to apply for all of the above funding elements (to a maximum of £35,000)
- 1-1 Partnerships may apply for an International Partnership Visit grant only (to a maximum of £3,000)

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Support available

- [Classroom resources](#) have been created to make it easier for partners to get to know each other and start working together. These are designed around themes connected to the United Nations Global Goal for Sustainable Development and include interactive challenges which schools can complete together.
- [Training and continuous professional development](#) is available free of charge for teachers and school leaders on working in partnership, global learning, transferable skills and inclusive education.
- Resource with best online [Communications](#) tools available to schools. This document gives you a list of the variety of online platforms that you can use to collaborate with your partner schools
- Local Advisors – The local advisors all have first-hand experience of leading global learning in schools and can support you to assess your current situation and plan how to move forward. If you wish to talk to a Local Advisor, please go to '[help and support section](#)' on our website.
- [Partnerships team](#) - you can get support by contacting the British Council directly, to talk through ideas or ask questions.

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Top tips

Step 1

Partner schools don't need to be in your local area networks – they can be from anywhere in the UK!

Whether you're just starting out, or more experienced and looking to progress an established school partnership, you can participate at a level which suits you and your setting.

Still not sure who to partner with? We are connected with schools all over the UK. Get in touch with us at schools@britishcouncil.org and let us know the themes or topics you're interested in exploring, and we'll match you up with suitable schools.

Step 2

Already have a partner school overseas? Fantastic! Check that they're from this [list of eligible CCGL countries](#).

Need help finding a partner school overseas? We're connected with schools in over 30 countries worldwide. Contact us and we'll help you find a partner.

We recognise that schools in clusters will have different levels of experience. Don't worry if some schools aren't ready to establish their own international partnerships. They can still participate in all activities and receive up to £250 each for professional development.

Step 3

Well done on getting this far!

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Step 4

The cluster will appoint a lead school based in the UK, which will coordinate cluster activities and training and submit the funding application. This is a key role, and does bring additional responsibilities, but the lead school can delegate to other schools in the cluster. Also, the Local Advisor is on hand to support the lead school and wider cluster at every stage. You're not on your own!

Step 5

Start small. Your partnership project should have genuine educational aims, but projects can be small in scale and impactful. Longer, more ambitious projects can be transformational, yes, but they also have greater potential not to get finished! Whatever global issue you decide to focus on – whether the project is big or small – make sure that it's realistic and achievable. For new schools partnerships, check out our Getting to know you challenge, which is designed to help partner schools introduce themselves and develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between schools and localities.

Need inspiration? Download one of our free classroom resources, themed around the Global Goals for Sustainable Development . The templates can be used flexibly across a range of subject areas. Pull out individual lesson plans or activities to fit around your timetable or use one of the templates to run a project across a school term.

Communicating between time zones and busy work schedules can be challenging, but there are lots of options. Email, Skype, social media, WhatsApp, text and post, have been used by clusters across the world to support successful partnerships. Have a look at our guide on the best online platforms to use for your international schools collaboration. Regular, timely and clear communication throughout the partnership's lifetime is essential, especially when face-to-face visits are unavailable.

Whether your partnership is longstanding or brand-new, large or small, a partnership agreement between all participating schools will help with planning activities, setting out roles and responsibilities of the participants, and defining the overall objectives of the partnership.

Step 6

There is a flexible menu of funding options available to support your cluster – see above! Remember, the Partnerships team or your Local Adviser are on hand to help you with the application.

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Making an application

After clearly identifying the objectives and plans of the cluster, the cluster coordinator should submit an application for grant funding that encompasses all their planned Connecting Classrooms engagement.

While led by the UK Cluster Coordinator, applications must be completed as a joint endeavor between UK and overseas participating schools. We expect to see strong evidence of collaboration and joint working.

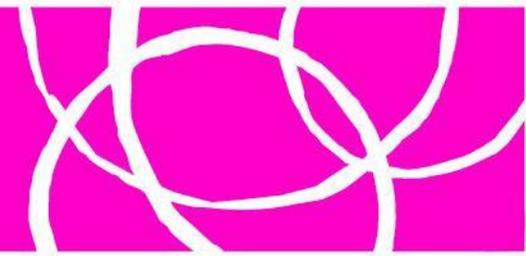
International travel to undertake reciprocal school visits is not currently possible. However, if your partnership's plans for the future include reciprocal visits funded by the Connecting Classrooms grant, please do complete the relevant sections of the application form. If your application is successful, it may be possible to disburse funds for international travel at a later date, without the need for you to submit a re-application.

Please refer to [Applying for funding](#) section of the website where you will find all information relating to the application process including:

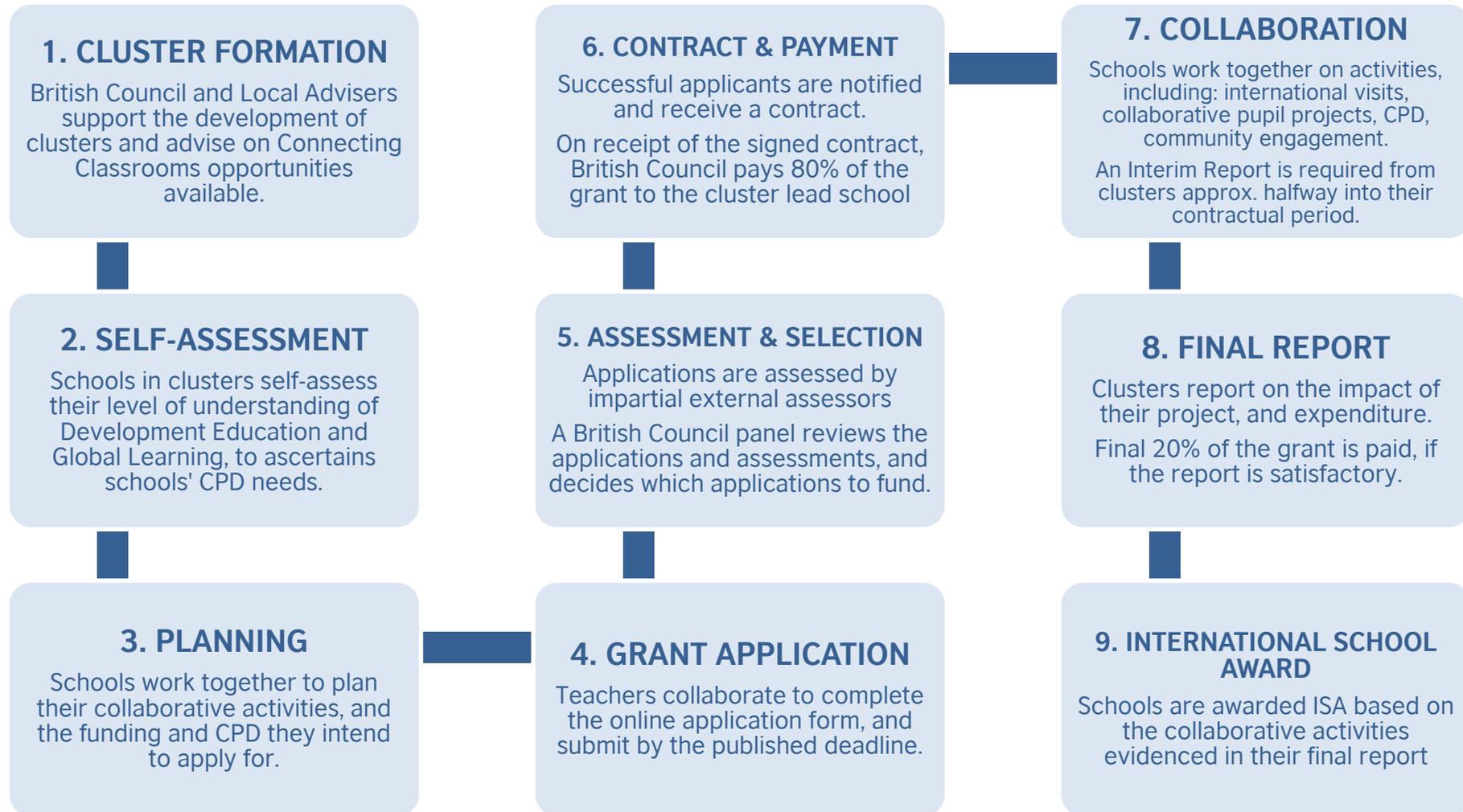
1. What the funding is for
2. How to put an application together
3. [Deadlines](#) and submission link

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Partnerships Journey



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