

NASS SEND Incubator 2019-20 – Supporting information

This document sets out what the NASS SEND Incubator is, why we're running it, and how it will work. It is intended to act as a guide for those considering applying to be part of the project, and for anyone who wants further information about it.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. What are incubators?
3. What do we mean by 'innovation'?
4. What are the aims of the NASS SEND Incubator?
5. What does the NASS SEND Incubator look like?
6. What is NASS's offer through the incubator?
7. What are we asking for from schools taking part?
8. Who are the Young Foundation, and how does the partnership work?
9. Who will own the innovations?
10. Timescales
11. How do I get further information?

1. Introduction

NASS's strategic aims for 2018-21 include:

- Positioning NASS and its members as powerhouses of sharing 'what works' for children and young people (CYP) with SEND, and
- Developing an evidence base of how member schools improve outcomes for CYP with SEND.

To deliver on these aims, we propose to run a 1-year NASS Incubator to identify and develop up to 10 key innovations from our member schools that improve outcomes for CYP with SEND. We would then support these innovations to be shared across other schools to improve outcomes for more CYP with SEND, and to enable our schools to diversify their service offer, over the following 2 years. The innovations could be delivered as a costed service or product, or shared for free, if circumstances allow.

2. What are incubators?

Incubators are programmes designed to develop innovations and take them to scale, by providing support for development and business planning, access to expertise, and routes towards funding. They exist across the commercial and non-profit sectors. They are a way of nurturing a promising idea, product or approach into a fully-fledged 'commodity' with some proven value, a potential customer base and a route to the funding required to achieve scale.

Some examples of incubators in the field of education and their impact can be seen on the Young Academy's website at: www.theyoungacademy.org/ventures/

3. What do we mean by 'innovation'?

We define 'innovation' as an intervention, product or approach that can evidence improved outcomes or positive impact for children with SEND, which could have broader value for children in other settings – including in special and mainstream schools. It could be developed into a useful product or service which could be shared with other schools or local authorities for free, or could be 'sold' to generate income.

The NASS SEND Incubator aims to develop innovations that address recognised challenges for CYP with SEND. We encourage innovations relating to:

- Behaviour support
- Mental health and well-being
- Improving educational achievement
- Use of technology
- Improving transitions (early years to school, or school to post-16/18)
- Developing engagement with health / social care
- Early identification and assessment of needs

We have included an 'other' category on the application form, as we don't want to exclude good ideas that fall outside of these categories. We will be looking for evidence in your application that there is a demand for your idea or innovation.

4. What are the aims of the NASS SEND Incubator?

- Improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND in schools including non-LA special, LA special and mainstream, through developing and then scaling up innovations originating in NASS member schools
- Develop a financial model(s) for schools to share their innovations to benefit more children with SEND that is viable for schools and LAs
- Develop long-term relationships with social investors and other funders to support ongoing innovation and scaling within the SEND sector
- Ensure that this work contributes to the evidence base for improved outcomes for CYP with SEND and value for money in SEND services

5. What does the NASS SEND Incubator look like?

Phase 1: Sept 2019 – July 2020 – Developing the innovations

The Incubator will work with up to 10 innovations from different schools (schools may choose to collaborate on a specific innovation), and through a process of support and training, further develop each of those innovations to a stage where they are ready to be shared more widely with other schools, to benefit more children with SEND, and possibly to generate additional income for the originating school. This will include information about social investment and introductions to potential sources of investment.

Phase 2: Sept 2020 – July 2022 – Scaling up the innovations

During this phase, we will support schools to roll-out or 'scale-up' their innovation, to reach more young people across more schools. The type and number of schools involved in scaling up will depend on the specific innovation, but the aim would be to include non-LA specials, maintained specials, and mainstream schools. The timing of the roll-out for each innovation will also depend on the particular circumstances and level of scaling, with some likely to be complete before July 2022.

6. What is NASS's offer through the incubator?

Our offer to successful applicants

- 6 group workshops to help develop the innovation, improve the evidence base for impact, test demand, and test which model for scaling is likely to be most effective. These will be tailored to the needs of successful applicants
- One-to-one advice from a social, educational, or business entrepreneur advisor to guide the development and planning

- One-to-one coaching from NASS for wellbeing, resilience and high engagement throughout the incubator
- Peer support from your fellow innovators
- Support to broker partnerships and relationships with other schools and local authorities as the partners or 'clients' for the innovation
- Support to connect with investors that may provide the funds to roll out the innovation until it can be financially sustainable in its own right
- Pro-bono support as needed (marketing, financial planning, business model)
- Dragon's Den style 'Demo Day' to showcase the innovations to schools, funders and other key stakeholders
- Expenses to attend workshops and demo day, and to engage with partners

We will tailor this approach to the successful applicants' needs. By the end of the programme, schools will have:

- a more effective product, approach or service
- a plan for scaling it up and evaluating its impact
- routes towards ongoing funding and support.

Please note we are **not** offering a financial 'pot' to successful applicants. The offer is focussed on the development programme described above. While we intend to support successful applicants to create financially sustainable models for their innovations, and to facilitate links to potential sources of funding, there is no guarantee of direct funding for those taking part.

Our offer to all applicants

We will provide feedback on your application in a way designed to support you in moving to the next stage with your innovation.

Our offer to all NASS members

We will create as many opportunities as possible to share the learning from the Incubator with the wider membership, for example through workshops at conference, sessions at special interest groups, and resources and articles in NASS News.

Depending on funding, we plan for this first cohort to be the beginning of the NASS SEND Incubator process, and to have further cohorts in future years. In this way we hope to support a greater number of members to innovate and develop.

7. What do we need from schools taking part in the Incubator?

- A willingness to attend an interview, in London or via Skype, as part of the application process.
- A commitment for the named lead on the application to attend all the workshops and the demo day, to engage in the support offered, and to be prepared to spend a nominal additional day a month on the development of your innovation. One additional member of staff from the named team may also attend each event
- A commitment to share your innovation with other schools, either at no cost, an amount to cover costs, or an amount that represents value for money for other schools or LAs
- A contribution of £1,000 towards the programme – this is likely to reflect about 10% of the overall cost of the support you will receive, and is intended to be a signal of your commitment to the project
- Commitment to engage with the independent evaluator for the programme, to help us assess the impact of the Incubator

- A commitment to provide up to 2 hours per month from Sept 2020 – April 2021 to mentor a colleague taking part in the next cohort of the Incubator

8. Who are the Young Foundation, and how does the partnership work?

We are delighted to be partnering with the Young Foundation to deliver the Incubator, as they have lots of experience of delivering education incubators.

The Young Foundation's mission is to develop better connected and more sustainable communities across the UK. They have incubated over 80 new organisations including: *Which?* and *The Open University*. You can find examples of the education innovations they have supported at www.theyoungacademy.org/ventures/

We are developing a bespoke incubator curriculum for the innovations in our schools. NASS will be the direct link and support to our schools and provide the SEND input, and the Young Foundation will lead on developing and delivering a tailored curriculum, and providing links to social investment.

Please don't be put off from applying if your idea or innovation seems very different to the 'ventures' at the link above. We think the NASS SEND Incubator is the first of its kind, so there is no particular 'mold' we are expecting you to fit into, beyond our 'Criteria for successful applications'.

9. Who will own the innovations?

Ownership of intellectual property of the innovations will be with the originating schools, or potentially shared with NASS in some circumstances, where agreed explicitly with the school. When applying, please consider the ownership of your innovation. We cannot support the development of innovations that are commercially owned by an organisation outside of NASS membership.

10. Timescales

Application process

29 April - Applications open
 15 May, 10am - Q&A conference call for applicants
 7 June, 5pm - Deadline for applications
 2 and 4 July - Interviews for short-listed applicants
 By 11 July - All applicants informed of outcome

Dates for NASS SEND Incubator workshops for successful candidates

17 Sept 2019
 17 Oct 2019
 19 Nov 2019
 12 Dec 2019
 16 Jan 2020
 27 Feb 2020
 25 March 2020 (Showcasing event)

Workshops will be delivered from 10am-4pm, monthly at the Young Foundation offices in Bethnal Green, London. A final timeline and detailed curriculum will be shared with successful applicants as part of their welcome pack.

11. For further information

Contact Kate at kwilliams@nassschools.org.uk noting that Kate works Tuesdays - Thursdays.