

ABOUT THE AWARD

The International Literacy Association (ILA) Elva Knight Research Grant provides a grant up to US\$5,000 biennially for promising research that addresses significant questions for the discipline of reading/literacy research and practice. The grant is intended to provide researchers with the opportunity to develop important perspectives on the reading/literacy field.

The grant study may be carried out using any research method or approach as long as the focus of the project is on research in literacy or literacy teacher preparation.

ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants for the Elva Knight Research Grant must be conducting research that fits the guidelines noted above.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following:

- Research question
- Rationale for the research
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Research significance
- Clarity, cohesion, and specificity of proposal
- Budget and timeline for project

To be eligible, all applicants (including coapplicants) must be ILA members in good standing and maintain active membership through **June 30, 2027**.

Please note that candidates may apply for more than one ILA research grant but are limited to accepting only one research award per year.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Several updates have been made to the application process. Please review carefully.

Applications are submitted through [an online process](#). A research description and reference list, prepared in strict adherence to the guidelines below, should be uploaded as one (1) document (preferably a PDF). Budget information detailing anticipated expenses is also required.

Because of the blind review process, applications must not include any identifying information, including names and institutional affiliations, except in the applicant information section. **Failure to remove all identifying information may result in disqualification.**

Research Description

The description of the proposed research should be as specific as possible (**up to 15 double-spaced pages, in 12-point Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier font, with 1-inch margins on all sides**) and include the following items *in the order listed below*:

Research Question. Identify the research question, problem, or hypothesis being studied.

Rationale for the Research. Provide a detailed rationale for the study. Relate the proposed research question to relevant, supporting research literature and data and indicate how previous research and theoretical frameworks inform and justify the proposed research. The rationale should address the potential significance of the research on reading research and practice.

Literature Review. What do you already know about the question from any professional literature and from your own experiences that will help you with the project? (Please include citations.)

Methodology. Describe the method to be applied and include a description of subjects, materials, and procedures where appropriate. Consider the following kinds of information:

1. Population or data resource
2. Sample methods (procedures and description as appropriate)
3. Data collection or observation procedures including instruments
4. Procedures (materials, detailed timeline, and work plan)
5. Data analysis (framework and method)

Research Significance. Discuss the potential impact of your work on research and practice in literacy, addressing what populations will benefit and in what ways.

References

Please provide complete bibliographic information for all sources cited in the proposal. References should be formatted using American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition style. To accommodate the blind review process, if the submitter's own publications are cited, the submitter should substitute the word Author in the citations (e.g., Author, 2019) and substitute all coauthor names with Coauthor (e.g., Author, Coauthor, 2019).

Budget

Applicants may request up to US\$5,000. Anticipated expenses should be submitted along with the rationale for each line item. Please note that institutional overhead or indirect costs are not covered under this grant.

SUBMISSION TIMELINE

To be considered for the 2026 Elva Knight Research Grant, **applications must be completed and all required materials submitted no later than February 2, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Applicants will be notified of the results before June 30, 2026. Those not selected may reapply for consideration the following year.

SELECTION PROCESS

A blind review will be conducted by members of the ILA Elva Knight Research Grant Committee.

Because this grant program was established to honor and carry on the work to which Dr. Elva Knight dedicated her academic life, proposal excellence will be a primary consideration in the selection process. Recommendations for funding will be made to the ILA Board of Directors for final approval.

The grant will be awarded only in years when the committee concludes there is a high-quality application that meets the rigorous standards outlined above.

GRANT RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDS

Proposed projects must be completed within two years of the award date. The grant recipient is expected to provide an interim report at the midpoint of the study and a final report at the completion of the study. The format for these reports will be supplied to grant recipients no later than July 1, 2026.

Grant funds will be distributed in three payments. The first installment (45% of grant) will be disbursed at the beginning of the study; the second installment (45%) when an interim report is submitted; and the final installment (10%) upon receipt of the final report. *ILA does not support any indirect costs associated with its grants.*

Upon completion of the project, the fellowship recipient is encouraged to submit an article for publication in one of ILA's three peer-reviewed journals. Please note that ILA reserves first rights of refusal to publish any material developed under this fellowship prior to the recipient submitting to a non-ILA publication.

Please direct any questions about eligibility, selection criteria, the application process, and/or the selection process to ILAAwards@reading.org.

FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

ILA and the Elva Knight Research Grant Committee recommend that applicants seek mentorship (such as from an academic advisor) to prepare the best possible submission. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help with preparing grant proposals including, but not limited to, the following:

- <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/grant-proposals-or-give-me-the-money/>
- https://extranet.who.int/kobe_centre/sites/default/files/pdf/WHO%20Guidance_Research%20Methods_Health-EDRM_6.3.pdf
- <https://www.ukri.org/blog/12-top-tips-for-writing-a-grant-application/>