

Participatory Research Fund Project

Visual Impairment: Social Skills Training in the Classroom



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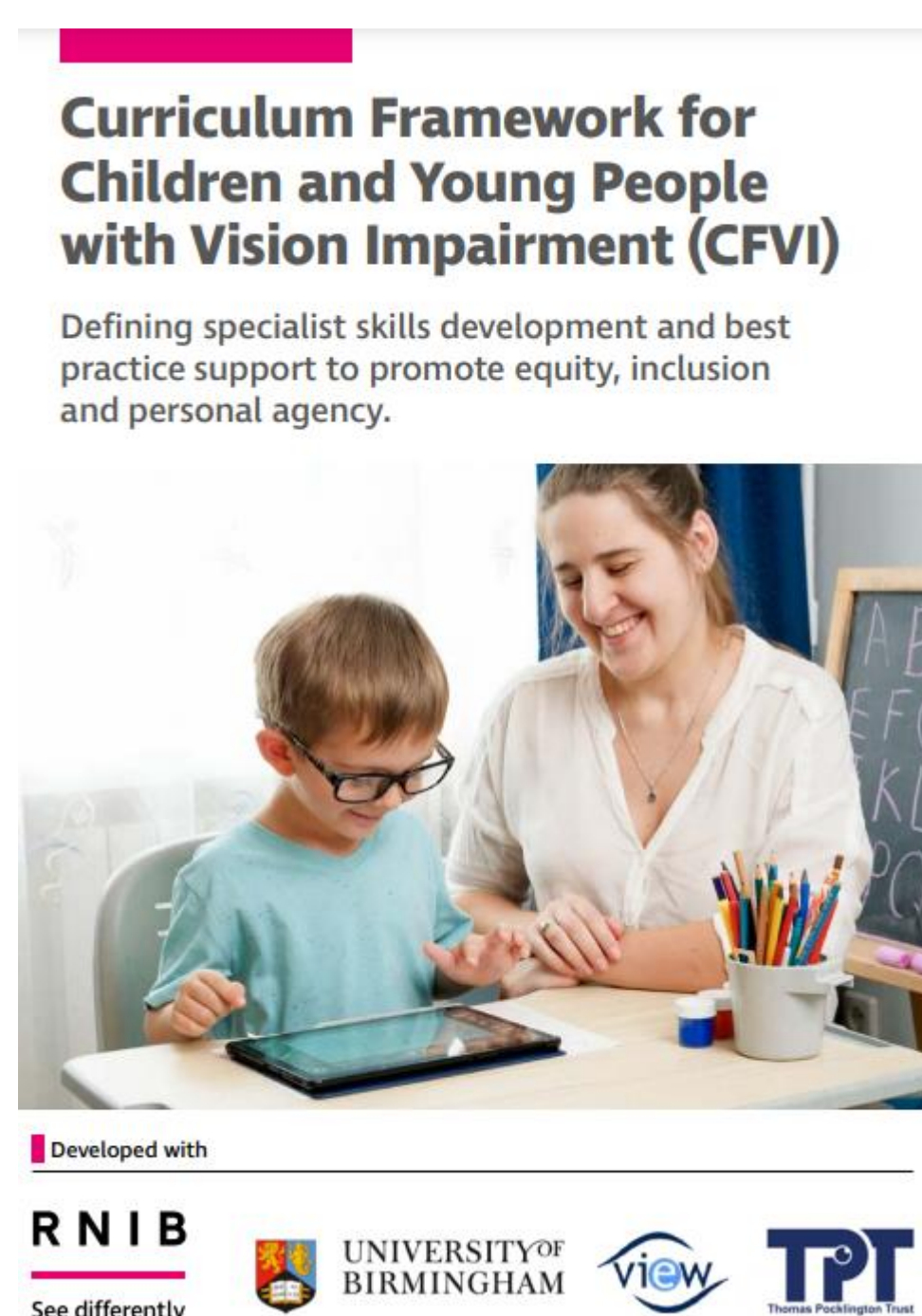
Overview:

Severe visual impairment (VI)/blindness can have a profound impact on a child's development, imposing significant limitations and preventing children from reaching their full potential. Children with VI often face unique challenges in school settings, including difficulties with social skills, building and maintaining friendships, and emotional resilience. These challenges can contribute to anxiety and poor mental wellbeing.

Recently, a consortium of charities including RNIB and VIEW (Vision Impairment Education Workforce) published the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment (CFVI).

The CFVI has identified 11 areas requiring support in school settings, including the areas of Communication, Social, Emotional development and Wellbeing.

The CFVI recognises that children with VI need targeted help to develop social-skills, self-advocacy, self-esteem, and resilience, to aid successful integration in the school environment and general life outcomes.



Aim and objectives:

- Carry out PPIE work with experienced Qualified Teachers of Visual Impairment (QTVIs).
- To examine whether it is feasible to carry out a social skills intervention that can be delivered by teachers/QTVIs during school hours
- To understand what components an intervention programme tailored towards the unique needs of children of different ages may need to contain.
- To comprehend the challenges that may be faced in implementing such an intervention program in schools.
- To develop the networks needed to carry out a potential intervention project delivered by QTVIs in the future.

Do you want to know more or be involved?

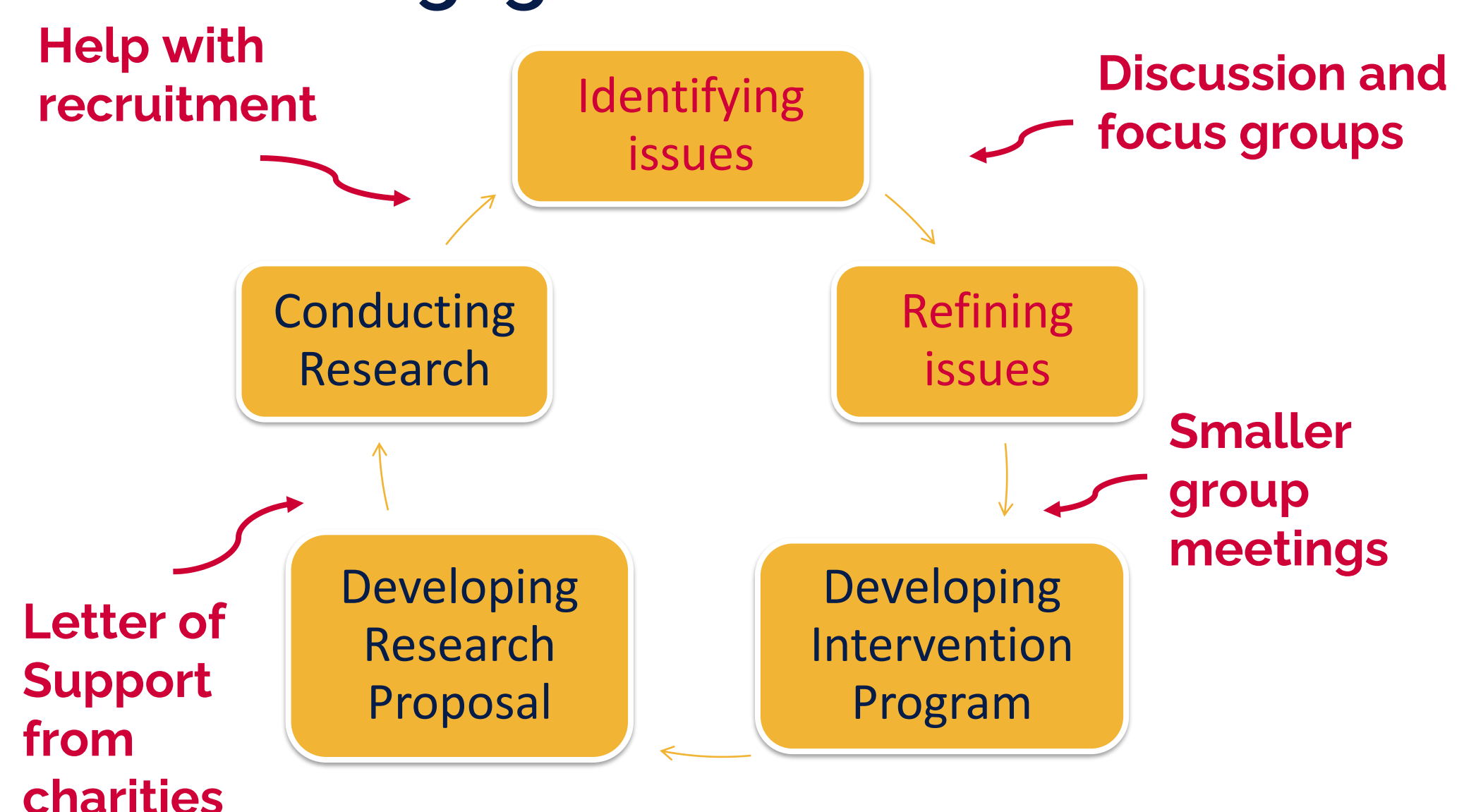
Funding of £4,960 is used for:

- £750 – Vouchers for QTVIs/Teachers participating in PPIE
- £3450 – For research assistant to organise sessions and code and analyse themes for potential publication
- £760 for consultancy with Senior QTVI

Stakeholders involved:

- Senior QTVI (consultant)
- VIEW charity
- QTVIs (Norfolk VI service and QTVIs from around the UK)

Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement elements:



Research outcomes:

Have identified some issues that seem to be barriers in implementing CFVI (social-communication areas)

- Time constraints in schools
- Untrained staff members in schools
- Not understanding the needs of children with VI

Next Steps:

- Run more focus groups to find alternative solutions to issues identified
- Begin to design aspects of the intervention programme
- Discuss its feasibility in a school setting
- Start looking for funding



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