



Bridge: A MindSport For All
Connects People, Challenges Minds

News Bulletin: Summer 2024

The BAMSA Youth Advisory Groups meet for the first time to co-produce and frame the research project

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Your vision for the project

Scotland	England	Norway	US
More children playing bridge	Energise the bridge community and bring bridge to a new generation	Show that bridge is good for children	Schools to understand the benefits of bridge and to become invested into bridge teaching
Retention during transitions	Learn from other countries that are doing well	Connect with parents; include teachers and educational partners	Intergenerationality – bring grandparents and grandchildren together
Evidence and resources (academic papers, toolkits, best practice guides, promotion materials aimed at other mind gamers, chess)	Focus not only on theory, but also on the practicalities of delivering the teaching in schools	Produce various outputs + we need to tailor outputs for promoting bridge to different social groups: parents, schools, youth, and policymakers	Ensure the longevity of young people's interest in bridge and create F2F opportunities for young people to play, learn, and socialise
Data from different social groups and tapping into new groups (e.g. psychotherapy)	Scale up the promotion of bridge in schools and ensure that there is a longevity to the bridge activities	Reduce drop-off in learning	Online bridge can present opportunities for engagement at the point/s at which people typically disengage, such as at the start of their working lives
	In addition to developing a sustainable system in schools, also develop a way for young people to practice at home/online	Inclusivity is important; bridge is too white (cultural diversity, gender and class) so need to consider exclusion too	Improve the way in which bridge is taught and identify the differences between teaching adults and young people
	Focus on both private and state schools	Bridge is more than just fun & maths & problem-solving; it is also about social skills, respecting one's opponents (ethics), and partnership/collaboration	Consider the standardisation of bridge teaching
		There needs to be a political argument for our activities; we need to link with the three overarching topics within Norwegian primary education	

Expectations for collaborating together

Scotland	England	Norway	US
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open to collaboration• Academic strands recognised as important – BAMSA leads, advisory group advises• Times of proactive contribution (e.g. when needing to produce outputs)• Spontaneous ideas and suggestions welcome over email too• Accept that positive outcomes may vary – small wins/big wins• Learning from failures; get a feel for what works through the fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening to each other, respecting each other's opinions, genuine collaboration• Using practical experience to inform the research, and in turn, using the research to inform practice and trial ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have regular meetings (monthly meetings for an hour in the beginning and maybe less frequent meetings in the future)• Learn from each other• Be open and critical when needed• Have different themes for each meeting	<p>We all agree that a F2F meeting the day before NABC would be great!</p>

Research objectives and interview questions

Scotland	England	Norway	US
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research what works well and what doesn't • What are the positive outcomes? • Need stakeholder mapping – who are the stakeholders + include politicians and educational decision-makers • Research questions will vary by group (different questions or same questions asked in different ways) • What are the benefits of bridge for schools/children/parents? What are the motivations for playing? • What is young people's home and bridge learning environment like – how often are cards played in the house? • What are the key motivations at the recruitment stage, and how do those change at the retention/drop-off stage? • Explore the process of learning as well as barriers and challenges • Where does bridge fit in the curriculum? • Links with mental health – young people want to engage and bridge is one way of doing that • Explore online vs offline playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop useful data on how bridge is perceived and what people think of online bridge • Understand why bridge teaching has failed in a particular school or region • Link with non-bridge opportunities (such as poker/chess) – identify low & high volume mindsport alternatives & approach their federations/organisational structures to see what has worked for them • Explore analogies in the sport world (e.g. creating successful clubs/competitions, success in primary & secondary schools) 	<p><u>Discuss at next meeting</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare the starting point of where young people currently are to where they ended up • What are teachers' goals for their students and what they will get out of it? How can bridge help with those goals? • Make it easier for schools to incorporate bridge into their teaching, make it an attractive option for them • What do parents think of how bridge has changed their children's lives? • Marketing: ask young people not only how they heard about bridge, but also what attracted them to bridge in particular • Find out why the percentage of Asian/Chinese/Indian/Japanese children signing up for bridge is higher than that of American children • If they're not playing bridge, what are the young people doing with their time, and why? Is it D&D, video games? • What can we learn from chess and the way that chess has lowered the barrier to entry?

Preferred research outputs

Scotland	England	Norway	US
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Text/visual/audio. A mixture of resource, variable format depending on what it is used for• Statistics/Youtube are the best• Which programmes of teaching work best? 360 view of the research setting – individual and group level• Test out resources and adapt in light of feedback and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find out the number of active youth bridge players (this can be tricky); develop metrics of school activities (taster sessions/bridge clubs)• A mix of digital/print resources to be developed – hard numbers, flyers, lots of data on one page, hard-hitting papers with lots of facts, video and textual resources, materials to attract investment• Social media engagement from famous people like Victoria Coren Mitchell to target non-bridge players	<p><u>Discuss at next meeting</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an infrastructure of competition• Bridge scholarships!• Emphasise teamwork and the social angle• For schools and parents – develop brochures and indicate that more information is available on the website• Young people prefer photos and videos

International priorities



Our main priority is to get **more young people playing bridge** at school, whilst remaining aware of the **challenges** surrounding this:

- In **Scotland** we are excited about the upcoming Festival of Bridge and our plans to open a Youth Bridge Academy in Glasgow but we recognise that more support for transitions into club play is needed
- In **Denmark** we have seen that motivating engagement with voluntary activities can be difficult
- In **Greece** we have seen that bridge instructors should ideally be schoolteachers
- In the **Netherlands and Denmark**, we would like to improve the image of the game and increase recognition through media coverage
- In **India**, successful bootcamps are run, but there are questions around their sustainability
- In the **Czech Republic**, we find that different groups and individuals require different approaches
- In the **US**, the ACBL has supported in-person and hybrid summer camps, but getting young people involved is a challenge

International priorities



Our other priorities are:

- The focus should be not only on creating professional players, but also on **casual enjoyment**
- We can **experiment with the format of the game** to improve the accessibility of bridge (e.g. young people can find it difficult that tournaments are time-consuming; innovative thinking is needed)
- Bidding is often perceived as difficult so we can **focus more on playing and winning tricks**, as well as quick and easy ways of learning
- **Teaching should not be too fast or too slow** – e.g. if it is too fast then learners can become intimidated



To facilitate open collaboration and co-production, we agreed to set up our very own WhatsApp group!