

What is Camtree?

CAMTREE IS THE CAMBRIDGE TEACHER RESEARCH EXCHANGE



Camtree: The Cambridge Teacher Research Exchange

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Camtree, the Cambridge Teacher Research Exchange, is a new global online platform that supports communities of educators to reflect on, develop, and share their practice, through involvement in research in their own educational settings.

Camtree provides:

- Learning and professional development for educators wanting to conduct close-to-practice research in their own educational settings, whether these are formal or informal and ranging from early years to adult education. This includes online courses, downloadable guides, and webinars with experienced practitioners, University of Cambridge researchers and other experts.
- A unique, open and free-to-access digital library in which teachers can publish their research, and which enables and encourages sharing and development of practice as well as synthesis and application of research findings.
- A growing network of interconnected communities of inquiry, linking teachers and researchers worldwide.

The Camtree team is based at Hughes Hall, University of Cambridge, and works closely with the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, as well as other partner organisations. Camtree is part of DEFI, the [Digital Educational Futures Initiative](#), which in turn is part of [The Bridge](#).

The Camtree Team

The core Camtree team comprises:

- Dr. Pete Dudley (CEO, Camtree and Associate Professor of Education, University of Cambridge)
- Prof. Sara Hennessy (Deputy CEO, Camtree and Professor of Education, University of Cambridge)
- Dr. Patrick Carmichael (Managing Director, Camtree)
- Dr. Alison Twiner (Research Associate, Camtree)
- Maria McElroy (Senior Administrator, Camtree)

The core team is supported by a development group and an advisory board.

Why Teacher Inquiry?

Central to Camtree's approach is a recognition that collaborative teacher inquiry, supported by committed and enlightened leadership, can contribute to enhanced outcomes for learners; effective and enduring professional development for teachers; and wide-ranging school improvement.

Teachers can, through inquiry, create close-to-practice knowledge and establish themselves as experts and agents of change in their classroom. Through collaborative, inquiry-driven approaches, teachers develop a much greater and a shared awareness of how the curriculum and their teaching are affecting their pupils' learning and exactly what needs to be done to improve it.

Many teachers are already undertaking inquiry through courses, school improvement projects or continuing professional development: but the valuable knowledge they produce is only rarely shared beyond their own workplaces and local networks.

Camtree will be the world's first platform that helps teachers and educational leaders both to improve learning and share their knowledge. By developing a global community of active classroom practitioner-researchers and educational leaders, sharing their work, and learning from and with each other, it will promote improved outcomes in classrooms worldwide.

Learning at all Levels

Camtree supports learning and knowledge creation at all levels from the individual to the global.

Individual Practitioners

By supporting and promoting collaborative and close-to-practice research, Camtree helps develop the knowledge and understanding of practitioners about how their learners are learning, so they can make changes to their teaching and curriculum, and so improve educational experiences and outcomes.

Communities and Networks

Camtree supports learning within, beyond and between educational settings (whether these are nurseries, schools, colleges, universities, or workplaces), and networks of these settings. It recognises the networked nature of educational practice and provides virtual meeting spaces and shared resources for networked learning.

Societal and Global Effects

Camtree is a vital new source of information for education policy analysis and development. The knowledge base built from Camtree's library of practitioner research from around the world will make it easy for practitioners to contribute to, and learn from, collective knowledge about education.

The Camtree Platform

The Camtree website (<https://www.camtree.org>) offers a range of free and subscription services and resources to support and guide teachers and educational leaders, individually and together, as they plan, carry out, evaluate, and report on close-to-practice educational inquiries. Resources and models of inquiry are underpinned by world-leading research and illustrated by examples from expert teachers.

Camtree currently builds on existing work in two areas:

- [Research Lesson Study](#), a model of collaborative inquiry involving groups of teachers working together to plan, carrying out and evaluate classroom innovations
- The work of the [T-SEDA project](#), which provides tested tools and techniques to enable teachers to observe and develop the quality of dialogue between students and teachers

Camtree also supports models of close-to-practice research including action research, design-based research, case study, and studies of conceptual change; and library submissions may draw on any research tradition as long as they are focussed on solving specific educational problems and seek to make an impact on practice.

Camtree partner organisations may have their own 'domains': hosted, access-controlled web spaces equipped with community-building tools, learning content, and combinations of Camtree and domain-specific content.

Camtree enables teachers to publish the outcomes of their inquiries in a free-to-access digital library (<https://library.camtree.org>) which provides a permanent home for peer-reviewed reports, supporting data and educational materials from individual teachers, as well as collections of work by special interest groups, communities and organisations.

Research reports, which may be submitted in any language, are accompanied by a structured abstract in English. This allows library users easily to locate and assess the relevance of reports to their own work, as well as enabling synthesis of research, including that using machine-learning approaches. As well as offering advanced search tools, library contents will be indexed by Google Scholar and CORE (the international Open Archive metadata aggregator), and the reach and impact of each report will be measured using the same Altmetrics® as journal articles.

Who Benefits from Camtree?

Ultimately, the most important beneficiaries - the primary stakeholders - of Camtree are learners in classrooms, schools, and other educational settings around the world. It is they who will benefit from having teachers who are reflective, who are committed to improving educational policy, practice and systems, and who are able to participate in networks where educational knowledge is readily accessible and widely shared.

Camtree will engage with a range of other participants in educational settings and systems to achieve improvements in educational practice that improve outcomes for these learners.

Camtree for Teachers

Camtree will support, advise, and guide individuals and groups who want to carry out high quality, high-impact inquiries in their own classrooms. In addition, Camtree will enable networks of school-based researchers and research leaders across the world who stimulate interest in classroom research in their schools and more widely, and recruit and support contributors of such research amongst their colleagues.

The Camtree Digital Library is designed to allow teachers to publish the results of their research inquiries and share the curriculum resources, research tools and outcomes that accompany them. The library will both remove barriers to publication of close-to-practice research in education, while ensuring its quality through peer-review, and significantly increasing its reach and impact.

Camtree for Educational Leaders

Effective leadership at school and system level is essential if the outcomes and benefits of teacher research are to be shared and inquiry-based approaches embedded in school cultures.

Camtree provides support for educational leaders to initiate and sustain communities of inquiry within and beyond their immediate settings, as well as webinars and in-person events bringing leaders together with leading practitioner-researchers, system leaders and academics.

Camtree for Researchers

Camtree provides support for research at all levels: for teachers undertaking research in their own classrooms for the first time; for postgraduate research students; and for established educational researchers. For newer researchers seeking to develop robust research designs, ethical frameworks, and approaches to research analysis, Camtree provides training resources and examples; while for those wishing to review the 'state of the art' in close-to-practice research in particular areas, the digital library will prove invaluable.

As the digital library evolves, its importance as a source for researchers wanting to carry out scoping and systematic reviews and the research synthesis that accompanies these will increase. Research reviews will be able to draw on the outcomes of teacher research, alongside other forms of knowledge emerging from academic research and large-scale evaluations and trials.

Camtree and Policy Formation

Policy formation will be improved by opportunities to review what close-to-practice teacher research has to say. Policymakers seeking to design or evaluate educational programmes or embark on curriculum reform will be able to determine the challenges that teachers are facing; what they are doing to address these; and what they have discovered that has impacted on their practices and learners' success.

By participating in Camtree and publishing their findings, individual teachers can not only contribute to teachers' collective knowledge but also play a role in setting the direction for local, national, and international educational policy.

Camtree will also provide commissioned analyses and research-informed advice, as well as publishing regular insight reports from syntheses of Camtree studies.

Becoming Involved in Camtree

There are several ways of becoming involved in Camtree.

Becoming a Camtree Member or Subscriber

Individuals can register as members of Camtree, free of charge, through the Camtree website at <https://www.camtree.org>. This will provide access to core Camtree resources, news and to the digital library. The library will be available for individual members to submit work for review and publication from early 2023. Prior to this date, library contributions must be made through a participating partner organisation or domain.

Additional content, learning modules, access to events and other services will be available on a subscription basis through the website.

Becoming a Camtree Research Lead or Affiliate

We are interested in recruiting individuals who would like to become local or regional *Camtree Research Leads*, able to develop Camtree domains in a particular locality or with a particular curriculum focus, and to lead and mentor teachers new to close-to-practice research as they plan, implement and report on their inquiries.

We will also be recruiting *Camtree Affiliates* to work on more specific, short-term projects (these would be ideal activities for teachers involved in close-to-practice research, students seeking placements or projects, or academic staff on research leave or 'mini-sabbaticals'). These might include:

- Reviewing submissions to the Camtree digital library
- Assisting with the management of the Camtree digital library
- Writing research digests and insight reports
- Contributing to learning materials, including the production and preparation of video content
- Translation and localisation of website content, training materials and other resources
- Organisation of online and face-to-face events such as workshops, seminars, and conferences.

Training will be provided for affiliates, who will be supported by the Camtree team and other experienced researchers.

Please contact us at camtree@hughes.cam.ac.uk to find out more about these roles.

Building a Domain in Camtree

Camtree works with partner organisations who may commission specific research, advice, or consultancy, or who may wish to become a Camtree domain.

Domains might be:

- An existing network of schools, other educational settings, or providers.
- A new network of individuals, schools or other educational providers who want to work together using Camtree as a common platform.
- A subject or professional organisation.
- A provider of initial teacher education, postgraduate learning, or CPD involving close-to-practice research.
- A commercial organisation providing training and supporting close-to-practice research.
- An individual or organisation responsible for the archiving or curation of existing collections of close-to-practice research reports or resources.
- A conference, network, journal, or other body wishing to archive, share or publish close-to-practice research in education.

No two Camtree domains will be alike: for some, the emphasis will be on supporting teachers to undertake effective classroom research; for others community building will be a priority. Others still may primarily be interested in the opportunities offered by the Camtree digital library. We are committed to a process of *co-design* by which Camtree works with domains to configure the combination of platform features and services that best addresses their needs and aspirations.

Contact Camtree

To find out more about working with Camtree or becoming a Camtree domain partner, please contact:

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