

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>Strategic Advisory Team recruitment 2020</p> <p>Open to applications: 1st June 2020 Closed to applications: 16:00 31 July 2020 Call reopening (if required due to lack of high quality applicants): September/October 2020 Decision: November 2020 Start date for new appointments: January 2021</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>This is the yearly recruitment exercise for the EPSRC’s advisory bodies. Heads of Theme are able to request new members to advise on theme activities, portfolios and strategy. Current vacancies are listed on the EPSRC website.</p> <p>Objectives of this event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To refresh theme advisory bodies where required • To fill gaps in theme level advisory boards (reflecting a developing portfolio and/or funding landscape etc) • To ensure Equality Diversity and Inclusion the advisory team
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</p>	<p>Internal consultation with theme leads and SAT convenors along with the Equality Diversity Inclusion and People team. EPSRC employees who previously led this exercise were also consulted for lessons learnt from previous years.</p>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>Applicants to the advisory teams, each EPSRC theme taking part in this exercise.</p>
<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>The number of high-quality applications submitted in this recruitment round. All vacancies being filled by suitable candidates. The appropriate diversity in applications in terms of discipline and under-represented groups.</p>

As a funder of research, EPSRC remain committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. The Research Councils have together developed the ambitious [RCUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#) to outline our collective aspirations for working with the research community, and partners throughout the sector. For policy changes, funding activities and events EPSRC will aim to:

- Select venues that are accessible and where possible accommodate any specific requirement in our planning and organisation of an initiative to support wider participation.

- Offer support available for people with caring responsibilities, further details are available [here](#)
- Clearly communicate the timeline and key milestones for funding activities
- Ensure attendees have an opportunity to raise any specific requirements in advance e.g. cover letter and joining instructions
- Support for flexible working of stakeholders
- Ensure diversity of peer review assessment and interview panels
- Abide by the Principles of peer review
- Unconscious Bias training for EPSRC staff and clear guidance for assessors
- Handle personal sensitive information in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation 2018

Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability	Negative	<p>For applicants - all information provided is in written format</p> <p>For applicants – Inability to attend SAT meetings, concerns about ability to attend SAT meetings may put them off applying.</p>	<p>Documents will be provided produced in black and white and in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines</p> <p>Dates of meetings set internally in advance and potential SAT members will be contacted before meetings to allow time to identify additional requirements (travel, access or other).</p> <p>Attendance at events is possible virtually. Applicants will be informed of this in the recruitment process.</p> <p>Timetables for virtual meetings will take into account individual circumstances.</p>
Gender reassignment	No known negative impact	<p>Gender neutral language will be used throughout.</p> <p>Application forms will be anonymised after submission.</p>	
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impact	No disclosure of marital status required for any stage of the process.	
Pregnancy and maternity	Negative	For applicants – availability to apply to vacancies.	Recruitment is open to applicants for 9 weeks (longer than usual).

		Availability to attend future meetings.	<p>SAT membership can be extended if members are unable to attend meetings due to being on leave from work. Attendance at events is also possible virtually.</p> <p>Timetables for virtual meetings will take into account individual circumstances.</p>
Race	Negative	Potential risk –lack of diversity of ethnicity and race of applicants and successful candidates.	<p>Anyone, irrespective of race, is eligible to apply.</p> <p>Ethnicity is recorded solely for the purpose of monitoring diversity of applicants and will not be made available to assessors. This will be made clear in the application. A candidate is not obligated to disclose their ethnicity.</p> <p>Applications will be anonymised after submission.</p> <p>After meeting the essential criteria and person specification diversity will be taken into account when selecting applicants.</p>
Religion or belief	Potentially Negative	<p>Potential dietary requirements or other requirements (access to prayer facilities) for meetings.</p> <p>Risk of key dates clashing with religious holidays. https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/2020</p>	<p>All panel members will be asked for dietary or other requirements in advance of meetings.</p> <p>Call deadlines will be made available when the call is opened and the call will be kept open for long enough (9 weeks) that applicants can plan around religious holidays. The dates of SAT meetings will be chosen to avoid religious holidays where possible.</p>
Sexual orientation	None	No disclosure of sexual orientation required for any stage of the process.	

Sex (gender)	Negative	Lack of diversity in applicants Risk of bias in selection process	Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at meetings Applications will be anonymised after submission. After meeting the essential criteria and person specification diversity will be taken into account when selecting applicants
Age	No known negative impact	Proposals will be reviewed and panel members selected irrespective of age. The age of applicants will be used solely for monitoring the diversity of applicants and will not be made available during the assessment process.	
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	Caring responsibilities	Recruitment is open over the COVID-19 lockdown period where many have additional caring responsibilities.	Efforts to advertise the vacancies through as many channels as possible will be made and the window for application left open for a sufficient length of time (9 weeks) Timetables for virtual meetings will take into account individual circumstances.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Yes. There have been several cases identified whereby the proposed activity could unfairly disadvantage some people. However, appropriate steps have been taken to mitigate this. COVID-19, at the time of writing, has led to many families having to take up childcare responsibilities. To mitigate this, the exercise is open for submission of application for 9 week and will be widely advertised through current SAT members, networks and external EPSRC channels. We will continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19 to ensure we can support anyone who wishes to apply.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed .		
2. You can decide to stop the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias		
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	X	

Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
Date completed:	21 May 2020
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
James Coombs OBrien	21 May 2020	1	