

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary Circular Economy Centres call</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>To build an interdisciplinary circular economy research and innovation community.</p> <p>This specific call aims to fund 5 interdisciplinary Centres, each focused on a particular resource flow (e.g. construction materials, textiles, agriculture). Each Centre will receive approx. £4.5m from UKRI.</p>
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</p>	<p>Due to the nature of the funding, it was not possible to run significant external consultation (although the work is based on previous consultations e.g. with Strategic Advisory Teams).</p> <p>There has been significant internal consultation, including with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All involved UKRI Councils - EPSRC Business Improvement team - EPSRC Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I)
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>UK universities, primarily academics across UKRI's remit</p> <p>The funding will also influence UK industry (especially SMEs who will engage with the proposed Centres), UKRI and central Government, all of whom will engage with the investments once made.</p>
<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>During the call process, questions will be monitored and an FAQ document will be published with answers to key questions. Contact details will be available to answer external queries.</p> <p>Applicants' consideration of ED&I aspects will be considered as part of the application process, within the third criterion of the outline call, and within the full proposal call (to be confirmed exactly how).</p> <p>Once funded, a monitoring and evaluation framework will be agreed to monitor the circular economy investments over their lifetime. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each investment having a UKRI contact who will attend steering committee meetings to provide support and guidance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly reporting by projects to ensure compliance with the funding terms and conditions, and the objectives of the programme - A mid-term review process to provide similar assurance, including against the original assessment criteria - A final programme evaluation activity
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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	Potential negative impact	<p>Panel members (and at full stage, applicants) may not be able to participate in panels due to accessibility issues.</p> <p>Accessibility issues could affect ability to participate in consortium building workshops.</p> <p>Relatively short timescales for calls may affect ability to participate e.g. if on sick leave or reduced hours.</p>	<p>All panel members (and interviewees) will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support or reasonable adjustments. EPSRC will select venues that are accessible and where possible accommodate any specific requirement in our planning and organisation of an initiative to support wider participation.</p> <p>A full timeline will be provided in the call document of all key milestones. EPSRC will do its best to accommodate reasonable adjustments. Timeline for outline stage is longer than required, to allow participation.</p>
Gender reassignment	No known negative impact		
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impact		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative impact	Panel members (and at full stage, applicants) may not be able to participate in panels due to accessibility issues or maternity leave.	EPSRC will select venues that are accessible and where possible accommodate any specific requirement in our planning and organisation of an initiative to support wider participation.

		<p>Relatively short timescales for calls may affect ability to participate e.g. if on maternity leave.</p>	<p>All panel members and interviewees will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support or reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>EPSRC offers support available for people with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>A full timeline will be provided in the call document of all key milestones, allowing early engagement with EPSRC on specific mitigations. EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments, such as virtual presence or deputising. Timeline for outline stage is longer than required, to allow participation.</p>
Race	<p>Potentially negative impact</p> <p>Potentially positive impact</p>	<p>Differences in university diversity of populations – size of funding and requirement of leverage may lead universities to reduce number of applications</p> <p>Assessment criterion to demonstrate ED&I during consortium building approach may encourage wider participation</p>	<p>No formal demand management policy (e.g. limits on applications).</p>
Religion or belief	<p>Potentially negative impact</p>	<p>Participation could be affected by coincidence with religious holidays</p>	<p>A full timeline will be published in the call document of all key milestones. We will endeavour to select dates that are</p>

			cogniscent of major religious holidays (e.g. deadlines have been extended to avoid full proposal closure over Easter and Passover).
Sexual orientation	No known negative impact		
Sex (gender)	Potentially negative impact Potentially positive impact	Differences in university diversity of populations – size of funding and requirement of leverage may lead universities to reduce number of applications Assessment criterion to demonstrate ED&I during consortium building approach may encourage wider participation Gender diversity of peer review panels, in line with EPSRC policy	No formal demand management policy (e.g. limits on applications).
Age	Potentially positive impact	Assessment criterion to demonstrate ED&I during consortium building approach may encourage wider participation	
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	Potentially negative impact Potential positive impact	Fixed timescales for grant Interdisciplinary Centres allow for participation from across UKRI disciplines. Focus within the calls on a management team rather than a single PI.	Calls open for longer than required. Flexibility within Centres due to their size and scope.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	A number of risks and potential biases have been identified and considered when designing the call. These risks have been mitigated as far as possible. Further risks could arise once the investments are active, and we will continue to actively monitor ED&I aspects during the lifetime of the investments.	
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	x	Possible risks and biases associated with this activity have been identified and activities have been adapted accordingly. Given the flagship nature of the investments, ED&I aspects will be considered throughout the lifetime of the investments, and this EIA will be reviewed accordingly.
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.		

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:	02.09.2019
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Nick Cooper	When published	1	N/A