

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	UKRI Trustworthy Autonomous Systems (TAS) programme – Hub call
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	To allocate £11.7 to one coordination Hub for the TAS programme. The aims are to establish a multidisciplinary research programme in TAS via investment in a hub and a number of connected research nodes (i.e. via separate call).
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	A Town Hall meeting, held in October 2019 to raise awareness of the programme and upcoming funding opportunity, help facilitate engagement and broker new collaborations to ensure that multidisciplinary condition of the project is met. This included academics from different institutions, leading figures within the AI community and other disciplines. The workshop was also attended by representatives from industry and government.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	UK's research community and industrial sector concerned with all aspects of AI and autonomous systems; government representatives; UKRI staff.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>The call will be open to all, and applications will be welcome from any eligible UK-based research team.</p> <p>Outputs from the Town Hall meeting will be turned into a FAQ document and published alongside the call document.</p> <p>The outline applications for this call will be subject to short listing and peer review by the panel. Those that succeed through this stage, will be invited to submit a full proposal for peer review. UKRI will pay special attention to applicants that can demonstrate multi-disciplinary and collaborative teams and approaches.</p>

As a funder of research, EPSRC remains 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 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 flexible working of stakeholders
- Ensure diversity of peer review assessment and interview panels
- Abide by the principles of peer review
- Ensure EPSRC staff receive tailored unconscious Bias training for Peer Review processes and clear guidance for assessors to reduce the effects of unconscious bias in panel meetings
- 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	Potentially negative	Accessibility of the panel venue may have a negative impact on the participation.	Reasonable attempts will be made to ensure that venue is accessible for the panel. Enquiries made to ensure that, if possible, any circumstances that could affect the panel member's participation can be accommodated wherever possible.
Gender reassignment	None identified		
Marriage or civil partnership	None identified		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially negative	Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding may have concerns about facilities. Thus, not attend.	Support will be offered for people with caring responsibilities wherever possible.
Race	None identified		
Religion or belief	Potentially negative		Major religious holidays have been avoided when setting dates. All panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that may affect their ability to participate and how this can be accommodated.

Sexual orientation	None identified		
Sex (gender)	Potentially negative	Gender bias may be perceived.	In line with EPSRC policies both the shortlisting and interview panel will be mixed gender.
Age	None identified		
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	None identified		

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Potential negative impact has been identified. Reasonable adjustment will be made and by adhering to the standard peer review principles, this call would avoid discriminating or unfairly disadvantaging people.	
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	Reasonable adjustments will be made wherever possible
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	Yes
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(*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	
Date completed:	10/09/2019
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Alex Shevchuk	When published	1	Final version created