

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>Novel digital technologies for improved self-monitoring and health management Call for Participants and a three-day Sandpit event focused on Digital Technologies for Health and Care, followed by funding projects.</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>The broad aims of the sandpit are to generate research proposals which can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form new collaborations between researchers and innovators in diverse research areas; • Creation of new and innovative research ideas in digital healthcare based on clinical and social care challenges; • Allow researchers to pitch projects for seed funding to test ideas; • Address the key research challenges that are identified; • Identify a common language between disciplines; • Consider co-design with end-users; • Facilitate interactions between key researchers, innovators and users.
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</p>	<p>Consultation with UKRI, UKRI Digital Health Expert Group, UKRI strategy Committee and Executive Committee, EPSRC Strategic Advisory Teams, The Association of Medical Research Charities, Digital Health Grant holders.</p>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>UK HEIs; o Admin Staff o Academics (Social scientists, designers, engineers, computer scientists, healthcare professionals and innovators) UKRI staff</p>
<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>The call and all associated documents will be available on UKRI websites and available to all interested parties to support their applications. Contact details will be provided to support queries related to the call.</p> <p>We will ensure that we publish the call as soon as possible to ensure that academics have time to apply to attend the sandpit and we will advertise the sandpit widely.</p>

	<p>The assessment process, of both the sandpit member selection and the peer review of the proposed projects, will be designed to ensure any unconscious bias will be identified, challenged and managed. All EPSRC staff involved in the call have received unconscious bias training. We will share Unconscious Bias briefing information with peer reviewers.</p> <p>We will also encourage people from a diversity of backgrounds to attend the sandpit event. We will do this by including wording in the call document and including this as an assessment criteria for selection of attendees.</p>
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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. This includes for applicants, reviewers, panel members and staff. Included in the interview invitation letter is a request for any access issues to be notified.
- All participants in the process are asked to inform staff if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation.
- Offer support for people with caring responsibilities, further details are available [here](#).
- Clearly communicate the timeline and key milestones for funding activities, advertise these widely to reach the largest possible audience.
- Support and encourage panel members to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. Staff will work closely with the Panel Chair(s) to agree approaches that are designed to minimize opportunities for bias and improve transparency of the decision making process. This includes managing environmental conditions, such as providing appropriate breaks.
- Support flexible working of stakeholders.
- Ensure diversity of peer review assessment and interview panels. Staff will adhere to a mixed panel policy and endeavor to achieve the minimum 30% for the underrepresented gender on the panel.
- Abide by the principles of peer review
- Provide EPSRC staff with tailored unconscious bias training for Peer Review processes 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	<p>Access to events and panels for panel members, applicants, the director and mentors could have a negative impact on participation, especially given that this is a proposed 3 day sandpit with residential stay required.</p>	<p>Dependent on individual circumstances</p> <p>Dependent on location selected</p>	<p>All venues selected will be accessible and reasonable adjustments made to logistics and facilitation plans to support participation.</p> <p>EPSRC offers support for people with caring responsibilities on a case by case basis. Our expectation is that your employer is approached in the first instance to meet these costs. If your employer is unable to cover these additional costs then EPSRC may reimburse reasonable extra costs incurred. Please get in touch with the contact named on the call documents if you would like further guidance on this.</p> <p>Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to:</p> <p>Participate in events on what would normally be a non-working day. Work extended hours on a normal working day. Attend meetings with overnight stays. We encourage individual's to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at the sandpit.</p> <p>Sandpits are intense with a high cognitive load. Sufficient rest time will be allocated to the sandpit agenda, and any specific</p>

			requirements for rest can be taken into consideration by EPSRC.
Gender reassignment	No known negative impacts		
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impacts		
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Participation in the sandpit may be negatively affected, if potential applicants or peer reviewers are unavailable at key stages.</p> <p>Access to the event for panel members and applicants could have a negative impact on participation</p>	Dependent on individual circumstances	<p>Full timeline provided of all key milestones, allowing early engagement with EPSRC on specific mitigations. EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments.</p> <p>All venues selected will be accessible and reasonable adjustments made to logistics and facilitation plans to support participation.</p> <p>EPSRC offers support available for people with caring responsibilities. Individuals should get in contact with EPSRC if they have any queries.</p> <p>We will try to ensure that the sandpit is held outside of the school holidays, and will try to avoid Mondays or Fridays, (i.e. 30 June – 2 July 2020) however this will ultimately be guided by venue availability.</p> <p>Sandpits are intense with a high cognitive load. Sufficient rest time will be allocated to the sandpit agenda, and any specific requirements for rest can be taken into consideration by EPSRC</p>

Race	There may be a potentially negative impact due to the selection of sandpit attendees, director and mentors.	It is important that the assessment process is undertaken by a diverse community.	All eligible individuals can submit to the call, allowing a broad range of institutions and individuals to participate. The sandpit encourages participants with a diversity of perspectives. EPSRC encourages people from a variety of backgrounds to apply within the call document. The timescales of the pre-call announcement and the call itself allows all eligible organisations to submit to the call, allowing a broad range of individuals to participate.
Religion or belief	Participation in call may be affected, if potential applicants or peer reviewers are unavailable at key assessment stages. (Activities could coincide with religious holidays, for example).		A full timeline will be provided of all key milestones, allowing early engagement with EPSRC on specific mitigations. EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments.
Sexual orientation	No known negative impacts		
Sex (gender)	There may be a negative due to the selection of mentors and participants	There may be a negative due to the selection of mentors and participants	The diversity of the group will be actively considered in the selection process. In line with EPSRC policy we will aim for a 30% female representation for the panel members (mentors) at the sandpit.

Age	There may be a negative due to the selection of mentors and participants	It is important that the sandpit is undertaken by a diverse community.	We will encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for the sandpit and diversity of background will be considered when selecting participants to attend.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	People with caring responsibilities	Dependent on individual circumstances	EPSRC offers support available for people with caring responsibilities. Individuals should get in contact with EPSRC if they have any queries.

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 have been identified and actively considered as part of the sandpit call design and internal management processes for call delivery. These risks have been mitigated as far as possible.	
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	Due to the nature of a 3 day sandpit we must proceed with caution on decisions made, particularly related to days the sandpit will be held on (ideally 30 June till 2 July to avoid Mondays, Fridays and school holidays) We need to consider accessibility of the venue carefully We need to consider how we enable diversity of the participants
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:	15/01/2020
Review date (if applicable):	30/01/2020

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Katherine Freeman and Gemma Adams	15/01/2020	1	
Katherine Freeman	30/01/2020	1.1	Updated after feedback from acting head of ED&I at EPSRC.