

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Prosperity Partnership Round Four
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	To fund a set of business lead projects that co-created with a main academic partner will bring benefits to the research base strategy of EPSRC and wider benefits to the UK economy.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	This is a yearly EPSRC competition. The process is being modified in comparison with previous competition previous consultation with key stakeholders, previous awarded project members and senior EPSRC member of staff.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	Wide research community including business – for the changes in the process. Panel members and applicants- for their involvement in the process. EPSRC staff - running and helping in the competition, Business Relationship Managers and main University contacts.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	An evaluation survey will be given to panel members and they will be actively encouraged to fill these out and return them. At the end of each stage the facilitators will meet to review the event and plan for future events, including the feedback from panel members.

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>Possible negatives:</p> <p>Venue accessibility issues for those with limited mobility.</p> <p>Long distances for some representatives to travel.</p> <p>Pre-work for panel members may affect those with anxiety.</p> <p>During panels, the speaker volume may affect those with sight or hearing impairments.</p> <p>Initial 3 minutes pith during the interview panel may affect those with anxiety.</p>	<p>DST support coordinating the process will request details of any mobility concerns so that provisions can be made where required, but we will also be aware that some individuals may choose not to disclose this information.</p>	<p>Internal and Prioritisation panels will be held in Polaris House, Swindon where there are clear provisions for those with mobility concerns. Interview panel will be held in London (venue still to be determined). All efforts will be made to find one with clear provisions for those with mobility concers.</p> <p>Make the schedule and expectations of the panel process and agenda for the panel days well in advance to support neurodiverse individuals or those with anxiety.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Possible Negative:</p> <p>Availability of non-gender specific bathroom facilities</p> <p>Panel members may be bias affecting their decision making based on gender.</p>		<p>Ensure we provide the location of non-gender specific bathroom facilities within Polaris House</p> <p>Panel members will be provided with a unconscious bias document and will be brief by the panel conwinors. EPSRC member of staff assisting process specially panel conwinors must have completed the unconscious bias and will be brief by the master panel conwinor to assure decisions are made according to the assessment criteria.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	None Identified		

Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Possible Negative:</p> <p>Some attendees may have breastfeeding schedules.</p> <p>Some attendees may have parenting responsibilities (see below for caring responsibilities).</p> <p>Pregnant attendees may have specific dietary requirements or need more breaks than those scheduled in the agenda.</p>	<p>DST support coordinating the process will request details of any dietary requirements, but we will be aware that some individuals may choose not to disclose this information</p>	<p>Ensure there are sufficient breaks built into the schedule and ensure that an adequate room is available for any breastfeeding requirements.</p> <p>Chose a easily access place to run the panels so that attendees travel a reasonable length and can return on the same day.</p> <p>Ensure the panel agendas have an appropriated starting and finishing time for attendees to arrive and return home on the same day.</p>
Race	<p>Possible negative:</p> <p>Panel members can be bias by the race of Applicants</p> <p>None that we have any control over: specific attendees/representatives are to be chosen by the universities</p>		<p>Panel members will be provided with a unconscious bias document and will be brief by the panel coninvors. EPSRC member of staff assisting process specially panel coninvors must have completed the unconscious bias and will be brief by the master panel coninvor to assure decisions are made according to the assessment criteria.</p>
Religion or belief	<p>Possible negative:</p> <p>Ramadan (23th April – 23th May 2020) and Half Term holidays (including Easter 6th -13th April) will happen during the competition.</p>		<p>Panels will be strategically allocated avoiding those dates.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>Applicants: None that we have any control over: specific attendees/representatives are to be chosen by the projects.</p>		

Sex (gender)	<p>Panel members: male may be the gender</p> <p>Applicants: None that we have any control over: specific attendees/representatives are to be chosen by the projects.</p>		<p>EPSRC to make sure the panels are tailored with at least a 30% female.</p>
Age	<p>Applicants, panel members or EPSRC expertise may be affected but none that we have any control over. Specific attendees/representatives are to be chosen by the project members or based on relevant expertise</p>		
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	<p>Possible negative:</p> <p>Some individuals have care giving responsibilities that may coincide with the panels.</p> <p>Some attendees may have dietary requirements for health or lifestyle reasons.</p> <p>All considerations above should be applied to both panel members or applicants or EPSRC member of staff.</p>	<p>DST support coordinating will request details of any dietary requirements, but we will be aware that some individuals may choose not to disclose this information.</p>	<p>Leave sufficient travelling time at the end of the panels and be aware that some attendees may require leave sooner.</p> <p>Ensure there are good provisions for those with dietary requirements.</p>

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	This is a competition run yearly during few months. It will be held in venues with good accessibility and connection, the panel agendas will be tailor making sure attendees can return on the same day. The date have been chosen because it does not coincide with any school or bank holidays that might affect the childcare responsibilities of attendees. Attendees will be given as much notice as possible.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed .	X	
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.		

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:	13/12/2019
Review date (if applicable):	13/12/2019

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Ana Martinez	20 December	1	