

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p><b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b></p>	<p><b>International Centre-to-Centre Research Collaborations</b></p>
<p><b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b></p>	<p>Research is of course an international endeavour and many challenges that we face are global. As well as maintaining the strength of UK research, we want UK researchers to be able to work with the best collaborators around the world. This call is the second round of a new EPSRC funding initiative which aims to provide opportunities for leading UK research groups to work in partnership with the best international researchers. The objectives of this call are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To enable high-profile, best-with-best international collaborations focused on excellent research with impact</li> <li>ii. To contribute to EPSRC strategy by supporting high-quality research collaborations which align with our research area strategies and address the priorities related to Delivery Plan objectives <a href="https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/research/ourportfolio/researchareas/">https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/research/ourportfolio/researchareas/</a> <a href="https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/plans/dp2019/">https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/plans/dp2019/</a></li> <li>iii. To further the UK's strategic needs in international science and innovation partnerships.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b></p>	<p>The first International Centre to Centre Call was developed with involvement from and in consultation with EPSRC Council, EPSRC Executive Leadership Team, EPSRC Peer Review Policy Team and EPSRC Themes.</p> <p>This follow-up call has been updated based on feedback received during the first call process and was highlighted as a near term action within the 2019/20 delivery plan which was designed in consultation with Council and EPSRC Strategic Leadership Board.</p> <p>There has been feedback from university engagement that this call is of significant interest to the research community.</p>
<p><b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>Applicants are required to hold a strategic research grant or a portfolio of grants over £3M. Established academic researchers are expected to form the core of applicant consortia. Applicants will be encouraged to create diverse consortia, which include early career researchers and, where appropriate, industrial partners. Postdocs will be employed on the grant.</p> <p>Overseas partners at universities, public sector research organisations or publicly funded research institutes can be</p>

	based in any country outside the UK and are an essential part of the application.
<b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	<p>Research outcomes will be collected via ResearchFish. Additional monitoring of the international partnerships and overseas partners' funding arrangements will be carried out to inform future calls in this area.</p> <p>Once projects are more established, we will seek feedback from funding recipients on successes and barriers to the activity. We will analyse the call applicant diversity to inform future activities.</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. 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 endeavour 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)
<a href="#">Disability</a>	Potential negative impact	Typically, international collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally,	We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that

		<p>this may discourage individuals with additional requirements relating to physical or mental impairments from applying.</p> <p>There may be differences in accessibility standards and provision in international countries.</p>	<p>reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.</p> <p>Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling</p>
<a href="#">Gender reassignment</a>	Potential negative impact	Depending on the country there may be travel restrictions for transgender travellers	<p>We will encourage applicant to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.</p> <p>There are no requirements within the call to collaborate with researchers in particular countries.</p>
<a href="#">Marriage or civil partnership</a>	None identified		N/a
<a href="#">Pregnancy and maternity</a>	Potential negative impact	<p>Typically, international collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally, this may impact investigators or staff members who are pregnant or on parental leave.</p> <p>Pregnant women are unable to travel by aeroplane during latter stages of pregnancy.</p>	<p>We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.</p> <p>Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling</p>
<a href="#">Race</a>	None identified		N/a

<a href="#">Religion or belief</a>	None identified		N/a
<a href="#">Sexual orientation</a>	Potential negative impact	Depending on the country there may be travel restrictions for LGBTQ+ people.	<p>We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.</p> <p>There are no requirements within the call to collaborate with researchers in particular countries.</p>
<a href="#">Sex (gender)</a>	None identified		N/a
<a href="#">Age</a>	Potential negative impact	A track record of winning EPSRC funding is required across applicant consortia.	<p>No timescale is specified except that qualifying grants must be active on 8 September 2020. There is no requirement based on applicants' years of experience. Not all the Investigators within the research consortia are required to be involved in existing research grants.</p>
<a href="#">Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</a>	COVID 19 Pandemic	Potential applicants may be limited by other factors, including but not limited to caring responsibilities and contributing to the national response which may limit the time they have to respond to this call	<p>Prior to the publication of the call the planned deadline was extended from July to early September. We will also continue to review the call deadline over the coming months.</p>

**Evaluation:**

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the new/proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate against or unfairly disadvantage people?	<b>No</b>	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .	<b>Y</b>	Possible risks associated with this call have been identified and the guidance has been adapted accordingly.
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards/against one or more groups.		
3. You can <b>adapt or change</b> 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 <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Date completed:</b>	<b>30/04/2020</b>
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	

**Change log**

Name	Date	Version	Change
Clare Williamson	30/4/20	1.0	