

**EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment**

Question	Response
<b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b>	Responsive Manufacturing – Call
<b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b>	Aim of this call is to fund awards focused on responsive manufacturing research. It will be a two-stage process: outlines assessed by expert panel followed by full proposals assessed by prioritisation panel.
<b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b>	Input has been sought from the Manufacturing the Future Team and a subgroup of the Manufacturing the Future Strategic Advisory Team. This call was developed with recommendations from the SAT, building on community engagement as part of the evolution of the strategic priorities of Manufacturing the Future theme.
<b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals who work within the manufacturing research community</li> <li>• Research office/institutions and staff</li> <li>• Research councils and staff</li> <li>• External reviewers (outline panel, postal peer reviewers, prioritisation panel)</li> </ul>
<b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	The result of this call will be reviewed within the team and the SAT. Researchfish and other outputs could also be used for an impact study if appropriate.

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)
<b>Disability</b>	Potentially Negative	All information provided is in written format. For in-person panels, travel may be a barrier.	Any reasonable adjustments for specific requirements will be made. Documents will be produced in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines. Panels are likely to be virtual. If not fully virtual, the option to attend virtually will be available. Accessibility will be considered when choosing physical venue.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	None Identified		Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings. Efforts will be made to select gender diverse panellists.
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Potentially Negative	Depends on individual circumstances. Applicants may be on parental leave during the application process or grant. Panel members may have additional requirements associated with caring responsibilities or pregnancy.	Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists as far in advance as possible.  Arrangements have been made for call windows to be as long as possible  EPSRC policies for offering support to

			those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members will be made aware of these.
<b>Race</b>	None identified		Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potentially Negative	Depends on individual circumstances. Panel members may have dietary requirements or require access to prayer facilities.	Key dates have been checked and chosen to avoid clashes with major religious events where possible. The only exception to this, is the Peer review period which will run through the Christmas holiday. However, we have plans in place to approach reviewers in advance in order to allocate review periods which do not coincide with the Christmas holiday. Panels are likely to be virtual. If held in person, dietary requirements will be catered for and a prayer room available on request.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	None Identified		Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings. Efforts will be made to select gender diverse panellists and reviewers.
<b>Age</b>	None identified		Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed. All staff are trained in unconscious bias, and the

			principles of this training upheld in panel discussions.
<b>Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</b>	<p>Caring Responsibilities – Potentially Negative</p> <p>There might be a reduction in the ability of applicants with caring responsibility to apply.</p>	<p>Panellists and applicants may have reduced availability due to COVID-19 pandemic if they have to care for a vulnerable person or schools remain closed as part of Government Guideline.</p> <p>Panellists and applicants may have reduced availability due to summer holidays.</p>	<p>The Outline Call closing date falls within the summer holiday. However, applicants would have eight (8) weeks for submission at the Outline stage. A pre-announcement has been used to further extend the time period for awareness of the activity.</p> <p>Other key dates have been checked and chosen to avoid clashes with school holidays.</p> <p>Panellists will be informed if a panel meeting is to be held virtually in advance.</p> <p>Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists as far in advance as possible by inclusion in the call document.</p>
	<p>Zoom Panel Meetings – Potentially Negative effect on ability of panels to uphold principles of peer review</p>	<p>Panellists may experience higher cognitive load than at an in-person panel. This could increase the likelihood of unconscious bias.</p> <p>Panellists may find it difficult to engage with panel process due to unfamiliarity with the technology.</p>	<p>Guidance will be provided to panellists – best practice and tools that can be used such as the hand raising and mute functions.</p> <p>‘Test runs’ will be offered to those who have not used Zoom before.</p> <p>Extra time will be allowed for panel to assist with ‘short</p>

			<p>term' technical difficulties</p> <p>Contingency plans will be put in place if Zoom cannot be used</p> <p>Learning from virtual panels held prior to this, will be incorporated to improve the process.</p>
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## Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	There is a potential, as outlined above, that some individuals may be disadvantaged.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .		
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards 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.	✓	This activity must go ahead and so everything has been done to be as fair and flexible as possible to all applicants. We will promote and inform as early as possible, and take circumstances into due account when necessary.

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
<b>Date completed:</b>	03/06/2020
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	

## Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Tochukwu Ajare	When published	1	N/A