

ACTION PLAN TO SUPPORT RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM THE REVIEW OF PEER REVIEW

In December 2012 EPSRC Chair, Dr Paul Golby, commissioned a review of EPSRC's peer review process led by Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow, University of Kent. The review was conducted during 2013 and its conclusions and recommendations were presented to EPSRC Council in December. A sub-group of Council was convened to consider how best to prioritise and implement the recommendations and this sub-group presented its report to Council on 20 and 21 May 2014. Council agreed all the actions proposed by the sub-group and this action plan sets out how these actions will be implemented.

Recommendation	Agreed action to support recommendation	Timescales
<p>Recommendation 1: EPSRC should ensure that their communications and associated actions emphasise that peer review is seen as a shared endeavour. Moreover, these should emphasise the primary role that peer review plays in EPSRC decision making. Within EPSRC, Council and the Executive should ensure that those of its staff who are involved in peer review feel valued.</p>	<p>Biannual report on peer review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will produce a report on peer review, including information on reviewer selection statistics, which will be presented to Council biannually. The report will also be made available on the EPSRC website. <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC staff will continue to engage universities and the community in discussions on peer review as part of business as usual and will ensure that any issues raised are passed onto the peer review team to consider. • EPSRC will gather knowledge on the different practises of other Research Councils to engage grant holders in peer review and will agree a strategy to take forward. 	<p>The reports will be published in May and October each year, with the first report published in October 2014.</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>End of 2014</p>

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	<p>Budget allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will up-date its web pages to include information on how it receives and allocates its funding to help clarify the role of Theme leads in peer review. <p><i>See also actions against Recommendation 8.</i></p>	<p>End of August 2014.</p> <p>See Recommendation 8</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: EPSRC should think through more clearly how the strategic criteria are incorporated into the processes and documentation. In particular we recommend that the postal peer review form is changed to reflect a primary focus on quality of science and that the panel process in the use of strategic criteria is better defined and communicated.</p>	<p>Reviewer forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will make every effort to amend the reviewer form whilst recognising that this is a shared form that needs to be agreed across all Research Councils. <p><i>See also actions against Recommendations 1, 3 and 8.</i></p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>See Recommendations 1,3 and 8</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: EPSRC needs to articulate why postal peer review with right of reply is not being used for distribution of funds in specific cases and to manage the risks that it generates.</p>	<p>Peer review process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will up-date its web pages to clarify the different types of peer review that EPSRC uses and the rationale for selection. • All call documents will detail the peer review path being followed. <p><i>See also actions against</i></p>	<p>The funding pages of the website were up-dated and restructured as part of the web migration project and went live on 12 June 2014.</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>See Recommendations 1,2 and 8</p>

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	<i>Recommendations 1, 2 and 8.</i>	
<p>Recommendation 4: EPSRC should consider how the structure of the postal reviewers' form affects engagement from the community, including international reviewers, in order to maximise assessment of the proposals by the best and most appropriate experts.</p>	<p><i>See actions against Recommendations 1, 2 and 8.</i></p>	<p>See Recommendations 1, 2 and 8</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: EPSRC should reinvest the funds currently used for the incentive payments (£1M) into science.</p>	<p>Reviewer incentive scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will stop this scheme. <p><i>See also actions against Recommendations 2, 3 and 9.</i></p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>See Recommendations 2,3 and 9</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: EPSRC should work closely with HEIs to ensure greater participation in Peer Review by those who benefit from considerable funding.</p>	<p><i>See actions against Recommendations 1 and 8.</i></p>	<p>See Recommendations 1 and 8</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: EPSRC should consider the status of the College. The panel cannot see justification for its existence when so many reviewers are not chosen from the College.</p>	<p>College Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will establish a working group to address the issues identified with the current College model including the nomination process, performance and use of college members and diversity of membership. 	<p>Summer 2015</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: EPSRC needs to reassure the peer community that the choice of reviewers</p>	<p>Reviewer selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will refresh its information on the standard peer review 	<p>End of August 2014</p>

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<p>and panel members is transparent, appropriate with oversight and ownership by the peer community.</p>	<p>process, providing more detail on the selection of reviewers for all proposals.</p> <p><i>See also actions against Recommendations 1, 2 and 3.</i></p>	<p>See Recommendations 1, 2 and 3</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: EPSRC should work with the community to identify and capture efficiencies but also to maintain sufficient funds for an effective peer review process to take place.</p>	<p>Return for amendments policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will review the evidence and agree a policy that will reduce the staff resource needed. <p>Efficiency and effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC will continue to work with the community to identify and implement efficiencies in the process that do not compromise effectiveness. <p><i>See also actions against Recommendations 2, 3 and 5.</i></p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>See Recommendations 2,3 and 5</p>
<p>Recommendation 10: EPSRC should look to engender a far greater shared ownership in peer review giving the peer community more input, ownership and oversight into different aspects of the process.</p>	<p><i>See actions against Recommendations 1 and 8.</i></p>	<p>See Recommendations 1 and 8</p>