

# **Supporting Guidance for applicants applying during the removal period of the ‘Pathways to Impact’ and ‘Impact Summary’ for applications to UK Research and Innovation (up to 01 March 2020)**

*This document provides additional information and general guidance for applicants during the removal period for ‘Pathways to Impact’ and ‘Impact Summary’ for UKRI calls (up to 01 March 2020).*

*Guidance within this document complements the specific guidance for each call. In the event of differing guidance, please follow that contained within the call guidance in all cases as this will supersede the content of this document.*

## **1. I have already submitted my application, what do I do?**

Do not worry – your application will not be disadvantaged. Please consult the updated guidance from the awarding Research Council.

## **2. When will the new call guidance be made available? Will you provide links to the new guidance for each RC?**

We are updating guidance in order of priority for calls closing around the implementation date and will be publishing this as soon as possible. Guidance will be replaced and clearly signposted through the relevant sections of the UKRI and Research Council websites and we will also link to updated guidance on Je-S once published.

## **3. Will Pathways to Impact/the Impact Summary have been removed across all calls, for all Research Councils by the implementation date?**

Yes. Although how Impact will be considered within each call may vary, so please consult the specific call guidance. We are harmonizing practice as much as possible, but differing objectives between calls may require impact to be assessed differently in some instances.

## **4. Can I still request funding to undertake impact activities within my application? For example, any plans to generate impact by involving stakeholders in the research design, factoring in outreach activities, budgeting for events designed to generate impact, etc.?**

The impact agenda remains incredibly important. UK Research and Innovation exists to fund the researchers who generate the knowledge that society needs, and the

innovators who can turn this knowledge into public benefit. This change embeds impact more centrally within our application and assessment processes to reflect this.

We encourage you to detail these activities and the resources you require within your application - please consult the updated call guidance from the awarding Research Council as this will detail how this information should be provided and will be assessed for your application.

### **5. What is UKRI putting in place to replace Pathways to Impact?**

We are not replacing the Pathways to Impact document within our application processes but taking steps to embed impact more centrally within our application and assessment processes. The exact requirements will therefore vary depending on the objectives of each opportunity.

Throughout 2020, UKRI will be strengthening our strategy, our operations and the systems we use. We have made it a priority to ensure these systems and processes free up researchers and innovators to focus on their work, whilst at the same time supporting us to make the best funding decisions. In doing this, we will be driven by the expertise across our communities.

### **6. How will applications already in the peer review system that include Pathways to Impact be considered?**

In addition to updating the guidance for applicants, we are updating guidance for reviewers and panel members to reflect this change and ensure no applications are disadvantaged as this change is implemented, regardless of when they submitted.

Our staff will also manage the review process in light of this change to ensure that any potential issues within the peer review process are handled appropriately during this change period.

### **7. Will calls that have been announced with a Pathways to Impact requirement, no longer need one? Are case for support documents going to be longer to account for impact?**

The impact agenda remains incredibly important. UKRI exists to fund the researchers who generate the knowledge that society needs, and the innovators who can turn this knowledge into public benefit. Staff across the Research Councils are updating their processes and call-specific guidance to reflect the changes and ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to manage the transition.

We are working towards a more consistent approach, but exact requirements will always vary between calls reflecting their differing objectives. We advise you consult the

updated call guidance and/or the responsible programme manager if you have any questions.

**8. What will Je-S look like following the removal of 'Pathways to Impact' and the 'Impact Summary'?**

We are rolling out these changes the week February 24<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> to ensure that the change has been implemented for all schemes from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Je-S will not be shut down to implement these changes.

Following implementation, applicants will no longer have the functionality to upload a 'Pathways to Impact' attachment and the 'Impact Summary' section of the Je-S form will be removed. In all cases, consult the guidance for the specific call to which you are applying as this will detail how this change will be managed for your application.

**9. Should I avoid submitting during the week that this change is being implemented (February 24th-29th)?**

We advise applicants, particularly to calls that do not have a specific deadline, to avoid submitting during the implementation week (between 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020).

We cannot say with certainty when the changes will be made for specific calls during this period and the system may require you to remove previously completed documentation. If you have attempted to submit a proposal during the implementation week and are concerned about an error message you have received asking you to remove the Pathways to Impact attachment and Impact summary section, you may contact us for further guidance. Once these sections have been removed you will no longer be able to access them for future reference so please ensure you keep a record of their content.

**10. Previously when changes have been made to the Je-S form this has resulted in the scheme being briefly closed to applications whilst the changes are made – will this happen in this case?**

Je-S will not be closed to implement these changes. However, we advise applicants, particularly to calls that do not have a specific deadline, to avoid submitting during the implementation week (between 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020).

**11. If an applicant has started drafting an application in February with a view to submit in March how will they be affected? I.e. will they have to create a new application?**

The Pathways to Impact section will be removed by the 1<sup>st</sup> March implementation date. If you are midway through completing an application at the point of change, these sections will be removed but your application will otherwise remain as before (see above).

Any application submitted following the change will be subject to the updated guidance and assessment criteria. Applicants are advised to ensure applications submitted from this point are prepared according to these requirements.

Please consult the updated call guidance from the awarding Research Council as this will detail how this change will be managed specific to your application.

**12. If a PI is intending to submit in February do you advise them to wait until March (if there are no knock-on time implications)?**

Applicants will not be disadvantaged regardless of when they submit, so please do not inconvenience yourself by waiting until after the implementation date if you intend to submit ahead of then. The point of submission will impact the information you can submit and its format so please bear this in mind when preparing your application, and there is specific guidance above (9 & 10) detailing potential issues during the implementation week (Feb 24<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>).

Please consult the updated call guidance from the awarding Research Council as this will contain guidance specific to your application that may impact how you present information within your application.

**13. Why is the timescale for this change so short?**

Reflecting our commitment to reduce the administration for all applicants to UKRI and improve the processes directly impacting the applicant experience, we are keen to move quickly and implement opportunities for improvement as they arise.

**Contact**

- General queries: [UKRIRoB@ukri.org](mailto:UKRIRoB@ukri.org)
- Call-specific queries: please contact the awarding Research Council using the details provided within the specific guidance.
- Je-S queries: [JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org)