

### EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b>	Strategic Equipment Process/Resource Only Strategic Equipment process
<b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b>	To fund items of equipment over £400K that enhance UK scientific capability and support a portfolio of high-quality, cutting-edge research of high priority to EPSRC.  To encourage a culture of equipment sharing as appropriate  To improve access to existing equipment in order to maximise its usage
<b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b>	Process in place since 2011. Any amendments to the scheme are implemented after consultation with the Capital Instructure Strategic Advisory Team.
<b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	Academics wishing to apply for equipment over £400K
<b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	SEP Updates are given at every Capital SAT and trends discussed. Universities are required to provide an annual equipment report for all items over £400K

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)
<b>Disability</b>	Potentially negative	Access to interview panel venue could potentially have a negative impact on participation	<p>Interview panels tend to be held at Polaris House, which is accessible, however if we do need to go outside of Polaris House, we will ensure the venue chosen for the panel meeting is accessible.</p> <p>EPSRC will offer support for people with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>All interviewees and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that may affect their ability to participate and how this can be accommodated</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No known negative impacts		
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	No known negative impacts		
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Potential negative impact - Participation in the call may be negatively affected if potential applicants, peer	Dependent on individual circumstances.	The call is an open call with key dates for outlines and full proposals published via <b>Funding Finder</b> allowing for early

	reviewers or panel members are unavailable at key assessment stages.		<p>engagement with EPSRC on specific personal impact from applicants.</p> <p>Interviewees are contacted in advance of the interview stage to schedule interviews on a preferred day/time (within the limitation of the interview dates)</p> <p>EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments, such as virtual presence or deputising.</p>
<b>Race</b>	No known negative impacts		
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potentially negative		<p>The timeline has been drawn up with due consideration of all religious festivals during the lifecycle of the activity.</p> <p>EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments, such as virtual presence or deputising.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No known negative impacts		
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Potentially negative	Potential Unconscious Bias of panel members and convenors may affect the decision process.	In line with EPSRC policies both the outline (internal EPSRC) and interview panel will be mixed gender.
<b>Age</b>	Potentially negative impact	The call is open to all career stages, however due to the	EPSRC will endeavour to have representation from

		size of equipment bids there may be unconscious bias towards applicants that are early career	across career stages on the interview panel.  Panel are briefed regarding Unconscious bias prior to the interview panel.
<b>Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</b>			

**Evaluation:**

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Potential negative impacts have been identified. Reasonable adjustment will be made and by adhering to the standard peer review principles. These risks have been mitigated as far as possible.	
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.	Y	

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Y
<b>Date completed:</b>	03/02/2020
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	

**Change log**

Name	Date	Version	Change
Claire Higlett	03/02/20	1	