

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	New Horizons call
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	The call's aim is to ensure the continued flow and support of novel, adventurous research ideas into the EPSRC portfolio, beginning with this call using a new streamlined, anonymous peer review process for the Mathematical and Physical sciences communities.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Due to the nature of the funding, it was not possible to run significant external consultation before the call was launched (although the work is based on previous consultations involved during the drafting of the EPSRC Delivery Plan). There has been significant internal consultation with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EPSRC Business Improvement team - EPSRC Executive Leadership team
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	EPSRC Mathematical Sciences and Physical Sciences research community
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	The assessment process has been designed to ensure unconscious bias is minimised and managed. Research outcomes are collected through Researchfish, and standard mode will be monitored for subsequent submissions. New Horizons is a new scheme with anonymous and streamlined peer review to benefit higher risk research proposals. Following funding of the projects a complete internal review of the call will be carried out for lessons learnt.

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 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
- 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)
Disability	Access for panel members could have a negative impact	<p>Panel members may not be able to participate in panels dependent on location selected.</p> <p>Relatively short timescales for the call may affect ability to participate e.g. if on sick leave or reduced hours.</p>	<p>All venues selected will be accessible and reasonable adjustment made to logistics to support participation.</p> <p>Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to: Participate in events on what would normally be a nonworking day, work extended hours on a normal working day, attend meetings with overnight stays and/or travel overseas. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at a panel. Further details on the support EPSRC will offer for those with caring responsibilities can be found here.</p> <p>A pre-launch announcement published on the website to maximise the time applicants have to draw up proposals.</p>
Gender reassignment	No known negative impact		
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impact		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative impact	Panel members may not be able to	All venues selected will be accessible and

		<p>participate in panels due to accessibility issues or maternity leave.</p> <p>Relatively short timescales for the call may affect ability to participate e.g. if on parental leave</p>	<p>reasonable adjustment made to logistics to support participation.</p> <p>Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to: Participate in events on what would normally be a nonworking day, work extended hours on a normal working day, attend meetings with overnight stays and/or travel overseas. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at a panel. Further details on the support EPSRC will offer for those with caring responsibilities can be found here.</p> <p>A pre-launch announcement was published on the website to maximise the time applicants have to draw up proposals.</p>
Race	<p>No known negative impact</p> <p>Potential positive impact</p>		<p>Peer-review assessment is a double-blind process so no applicant identities will be revealed.</p>
Religion or belief	<p>Potentially negative impact</p>	<p>Participation could be affected by coincidence with religious holidays</p>	<p>A full timeline is provided in the call document. EPSRC endeavours to select dates that a cognisant of major holidays (e.g.</p>

			deadlines have been extended to avoid full proposal closure over Easter, Passover and Christmas).
Sexual orientation	No known negative impact		
Sex (gender)	Potentially negative impact	Gender diversity of peer review panels, in line with EPSRC policy.	EPSRC endeavours to convene mixed gender panels.
Age	No known negative impact		
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)			

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Several risks and potential biases have been identified and considered when designing the call. Those risks have been mitigated as far as possible. There has been no evidence found to show that this call would discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed .		
2. You can decide to stop the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias	x	Possible risks and biases associated with the call have been identified and activities adapted accordingly. Given the pilot nature of this call, ED&I aspects will be considered throughout the process and lifetime of the grants, and this EIA will be reviewed accordingly.
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 proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
Date completed:	20/20/2020
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Marianne Rolph	02/03/2020	1	