

Equality Impact Assessment

| Question | Response |
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| 1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed | Education Research Director Call 2021 |
| 2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event | The aim of this call is to appoint a Research Director for the Education Research Priority Programme which will commission a body of research to meet the relevant priority of the 2019 Delivery Plan. The Research Director's role will be to lead and coordinate the education research programme, assist with the scoping of this call and provide a coherent structure to the research once commissioned. The Research Director will need to have a strong understanding of the education research environment, particularly on the specific themes of the priority. They will have existing networks relevant to the call and be able to call on these connections when scoping the call. Once appointed, the Research Director will work with ESRC to scope the research programme call, and they will work together to create a coherent body of research which fits with the ESRC's Delivery Plan priorities. |
| 3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders) | This call has been developed over a period of almost two years speaking with academic and user communities; with a focussed stakeholder engagement activity in the last six months. |
| 4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event? | Applicants to the Education Research Director Call 2021 Panel members for the Education Research Director Call 2021 ESRC staff delivering and attending the sift panel meeting for the Education Research Director Call 2021 ESRC staff conducting interviews for the Education Research Director Call 2021 |
| 5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event? | Monitoring will be an iterative process throughout the lifetime of the grant. The impact of the grant will be assessed along with the research programme that will be funded in due course. |

GENERAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

ESRC's research commissioning processes are designed with fairness in mind.

Eligibility and criteria

- The Education Research Director Call 2021 is open to all eligible research organisations (RO). Applicants are eligible for funding if they are established members of a recognised RO.

Standard Grant Terms and Conditions:

- UKRI standard Grant Terms and Conditions comply with UK equality legislation and include provisions designed to mitigate against potential negative impacts (e.g. sick pay, parental and adoption leave, the possibility of part-time and flexible working, and grant extensions).
- Research Organisations are subject to equality legislation and have a duty to comply with it. RGC 8 states that ‘The Research Organisation must assume full responsibility for staff funded from the grant and, in consequence, accept all duties owed to and responsibilities for these staff, including, without limitation, their terms and conditions of employment and their training and supervision, arising from the employer/employee relationship.’ Universities are therefore required to make reasonable adjustments as required to support their staff.



Panel recruitment:

- We will aim to ensure that the composition of the commissioning panel is diverse, with at least a 60:40 gender balance.
- We will ensure (if possible) that the chair and vice chair of the commissioning panel are not the same gender.
- Whilst panel members are appointed, first and foremost, based on expertise, we will aim to appoint a diverse panel membership. Final decisions take into account trying to balance the panels by gender and geography and seek to ensure a diversity of career stage and institutions. We will only make recruitment decisions which compromise diversity when it is objectively justified by the necessity to ensure the required breadth of subject expertise with high quality candidates.
- A tool has been developed which allows ESRC staff to assess the EDI characteristics of commissioning panels, and this will be used when appointing panels.

Process

- All panel members will receive guidance which covers issues including fairness, objectivity and unconscious bias.
- It is the role of panel members to shift and assess to agree final scores for each proposal. Panel members will be briefed on unconscious bias and encouraged to feel empowered to constructively challenge potential bias where they identify it. The Panel Chair and Secretary play a particularly important role in this respect. An implementation intention statement will be read out at the beginning of the shift and final panel meeting which sets the tone for discussions and requires that panel members pay close attention to the scoring criteria and definitions.

| 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) |
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| Disability | Potential Negative | Also see above, under General Equality and | Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. |

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| | | <p>Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Je-S does not currently comply with disability accessibility schemes. This will be picked up by the Funding Service (TFS_ project.</p> <p>Applicants should seek support form their RO's research support office.</p> | <p>Solicit information from panel participants (in confidence) about any additional requirements they may have in order to fully participate.</p> <p>Under current COVID-19 restrictions, all meetings will take place virtually via Zoom and will include closed captions for those who are hearing impaired. The considerations listed below will be taken into account only if working conditions change which means that meetings take place in person.</p> <p>Depending on the needs identified, considerations might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility for wheelchair users and people with impaired mobility; • Induction loops for the hearing impaired; • Adequate lighting, alternative document formatting and potential use of screen readers for the visually impaired; • Dietary restrictions for those with coeliac, diabetes etc. |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of documents in sans-serif, dyslexia-friendly fonts; and dyslexia-friendly formats; • Avoiding colours, lighting etc that may trigger migraines, epilepsy; • Ensuring that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda; • Ensuring sufficiently bright and spacious rooms; • Ensure that venues are easily accessible to main transport links. • Consider (on a case by case basis) paying T&S for carers or support workers to attend alongside the participant, where this is required and not covered by the Individual's own employment contract. • Where there are particular constraints consider opportunities for participants to engage in a different way (via video-link, |

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| | | | Zoom or tele-conference for instance). |
| Gender reassignment | Potential negative | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>UKRI records may show the wrong gender.</p> <p>Trans people may be absent from work as a consequence of transition.</p> | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given at UKRI level as to how records (including Gateway to Research and other communications materials) might be adjusted.</p> <p>UKRI terms and conditions are flexible in nature and absence as a result of medical treatment. We would expect that absence related to transition would be covered by the RO's sick policy and strongly encourage Ros to treat absence relating to transition like any other sick absence.</p> |
| Marriage or civil partnership | Probably not | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Potential negative | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Provision for parental leave (including maternity leave, paternity leave, and leave related to surrogacy and adoption) are covered in the UKRI terms and conditions.</p> <p>We shall ensure the use of gender-neutral language – parental leave.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The costs of additional childcare for grant-holders, beyond that required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the job, and that are directly related to the project, may be requested as a directly incurred cost if the institutional policy is to reimburse them. However, childcare costs associated with normal working patterns may not be sought. (See RCUK FEC FAQs)</p> <p>If the Panel meeting is taking place via Zoom, breaks will be provided to provide breaks for breastfeeding/expressing mothers if necessary.</p> <p>If the Panel meeting is not taking place via Zoom, consider whether the venue for the commissioning panel meeting is able to provide facilities for breastfeeding/expressing mothers if necessary. If the Panel meeting is not taking place via Zoom, reimbursement of additional childcare costs (on a case by case basis) if the meeting participant is otherwise unable to attend (this could include childcare at the venue, additional hours of childcare in the child's usual setting or paying for a relative to</p> |

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| | | | travel to care for school age children) |
| Race | Potential negative | Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. | Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations, particularly in relation to panel composition and mitigations against unconscious bias. |
| Religion or belief | Potential negative | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>There could be potential for discrimination because it is known to somebody (either a peer reviewer, panel member, a research applicant) has a particular belief or faith.</p> | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Ensure that religious observances are taken into account when planning panel meetings. If the Panel meeting is not taking place via Zoom, considerations might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling meetings to avoid major religious festivals; (if impossible to avoid then consider mitigations – ie. during Ramadan ensuring that meetings finish early so that participants are able to get home to break their fast, awareness of the sensitivities around offering Muslims meals during periods of fasting); • Accommodating dietary |

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| | | | <p>restrictions (ensuring that there is sufficient choice to allow all participants to eat – recognising that some groups cannot eat pork or beef or shellfish, that others avoid caffeine, ensuring that vegetarian food is available if Kosher or Halal food is not provided) etc.;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not scheduling meetings such that they would require travel late on Friday evenings (Jewish Sabbath) or on Fridays (Friday prayer, Islam) • Allowing prayer breaks if requested |
| Sexual orientation | Potential negative | Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. | Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. |
| Sex (gender) | Potential negative | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Use of language can present a barrier to participation and it may be perceived that those with caring responsibilities are disadvantaged.</p> | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. Ensure use of gender-neutral language in call specification, guidance, etc.</p> <p>Ensure that the panel has balanced gender representation (aim for at least 60:40 split)</p> |

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| | | <p>Panel members may be disadvantaged and unable to attend meetings if they have caring responsibilities.</p> | <p>If the Panel meeting is not taking place via Zoom, ensure that the meeting location is suitable to allow easy return home</p> <p>If the Panel meeting is not taking place via Zoom, reimbursement of additional childcare costs (on a case by case basis) if the meeting participant is otherwise unable to attend (this could include childcare at the venue, additional hours of childcare in the child's usual setting or paying for a relative to travel to care for school age children)</p> |
| Age | <p>Potential positive or negative depending on the scheme eligibility requirements</p> | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Early career researchers* may be disadvantaged as they don't have the same track record to draw on as an experienced researcher.</p> <p>(*It is assumed that early career researchers are generally younger than their more experienced peers, although this by no means always the case. This is why this point has been included under 'age').</p> | <p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Panel members are briefed to make clear that they should be assessing the application in front of them and not reading between the lines. They should assess an individual's capability to deliver their proposed research.</p> <p>Use of a variety of different communication strategies including social media to ensure that our messages reach the widest possible target audience.</p> |

Note: Excessive use of repeated line breaks can make a document inaccessible for users of assistive technologies. To ensure inclusion, please ensure a new table row is inserted for each point if there is more than one consideration or impact for each group (please ensure you populate the “protected characteristic group” column e.g. “disability continued”); rather than using the same row for multiple points with repeated line breaks to separate points.

Evaluation:

| Question | Explanation / justification | |
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| Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people? | See the potential negative impacts outlined above. | |
| 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 | See the mitigations as outlined above |
| 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. | | |

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| Will this EIA be published* *EIAs should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events. | Yes |
| Date completed: | 24/3/21 |
| End date of activity: (if applicable) | |
| Review date (if applicable): | Annually, or if any significant changes are made to the scheme |

