



Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>UKRI ECR Forum</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>The objectives of the ECR Forum are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give Early Career Researchers (ECRs) a voice in UKRI strategy, policy development and decision making; • enable teams from across UKRI and its partners to hear from and engage with early career researchers; • pilot ways of connecting with our diverse communities; • build a community for ECRs, enabling them to benefit from peer interactions, support and opportunities. <p>This equality impact assessment only covers activities related to the forum that will be delivered by the UKRI ECR Forum leads including recruitment, induction and specific engagement activities run by the forum leads. It does not cover engagement activities run by other teams across UKRI and/or UKRI's partners. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will need to be completed for each of these activities.</p> <p>The ECR Forum leads are: the Senior Talent Programme Manager, the Senior Talent Engagement Manager, and the Talent Programme Manager</p>
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</p>	<p>UKRI's <u>Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers action plan (July 2020)</u> commits to a 'stronger researcher voice represented in UKRI concordat activity and greater engagement with our community'. The action plan was approved by UKRI Executive Committee in 2020.</p> <p>UKRI does not currently have routes for engaging with ECRs across its whole remit. UKRI's ECR Forum will provide a route for this. Once formed, the forum membership will be consulted on how</p>

	<p>the UKRI ECR Forum can most effectively engage with and benefit ECRs.</p> <p>In September 2020, UKRI co-facilitated a roundtable (~20 attendees) engaging with ECRs. When asked how funders, government and other policy organisations can best engage with early career researchers and innovators, attendees noted that funders need to consider how they can incentivise a diverse range of early career researchers to fully participate in developing solutions. The importance of gaining a diverse range of perspectives and viewpoints was highlighted. It was noted that ECRs are likely to be more eager to engage and have more to contribute if they are given the opportunity to work together in structuring a problem and developing solutions.</p> <p>Research council skills experts and strategic teams across UKRI (including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), research culture, research integrity and open research) have been engaged with to understand existing routes that UKRI has to engage with ECRs and to identify areas of work across UKRI where the UKRI ECR forum can be used to give ECRs a voice in strategy, policy and decision making. UKRI's Research Careers Network (RCN) have also provided input to the policy.</p> <p>Forum leads have engaged with the organising committee for the UK National Postdoc Appreciation Week to discuss the need for and design of the forum.</p>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>All individuals who identify as early career researchers and who have been employed in a research and/or innovation role within the last 12 months will be eligible to join the forum. The UKRI ECR forum aims to have broad and diverse representation of early career researchers and innovators, considering the full range of characteristics, disciplines and geography across the UK. We welcome applications from academia and other sectors including, for example, early career researchers working within industry or the public sector.</p>

	<p>The ECR Forum will give early career researchers a voice in UKRI strategy, policy development and decision making, particularly ECRs who until now have had fewer routes to engage such as postdoctoral researchers, research associates and other staff whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and are employed specifically for this purpose.</p> <p>The forum is a pilot activity intended to benefit eligible ECRs across UKRI's remit. The forum will be reviewed after its first year to assess whether it is meeting its objectives including how members have benefitted from participating in the UKRI ECR Forum.</p>
<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>The UKRI ECR Forum is a pilot activity, a review will be conducted after the first year to ascertain whether the forum is meeting its objectives.</p> <p>A key aim of the forum is to have broad and diverse representation of early career researchers and innovators therefore monitoring data will be collected during recruitment and compared to available data sources, such as Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), to inform further recruitment effort for groups which are underrepresented in forum membership. This will consider a range of factors such as protected characteristics, research discipline, place and institution type. UKRI will work with its partners to strongly encourage ECRs from under-represented groups to join the forum. Other ECRs will still be able to join the forum.</p>

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, Race/ethnicity, Sex, Sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, caring responsibilities.	Potential positive impact	A key objective of the forum is to have broad and diverse representation of early career researchers and innovators therefore monitoring data will be collected during recruitment and compared to available data sources, such as Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), to inform further recruitment effort for groups which are underrepresented in forum membership. This will consider a range of factors including these protected characteristics and is therefore intended to positively impact the ability of under-represented groups to engage with UKRI. UKRI ECR Forum recruitment will also use inclusive language and imagery as well as targeted recruitment for groups who are identified to be under-represented within the forum to ensure a diverse forum membership.	
Disability	Potential positive (please see first row) and negative impacts	Individuals with physical disabilities may require reasonable adjustments to participate in and/or may face additional barriers to participating in in-person events.	The ECR Forum induction and many of the initial engagement activities will be held virtually and are therefore likely to be more accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. Where the ECR Forum leads organise in-person events they will ensure that venues have the necessary

		<p>Individuals with visual impairments will have additional challenges when engaging with written material.</p> <p>Individuals with auditory impairments will have additional challenges when participating in discussions and engaging with content where there is an auditory component.</p>	<p>access requirements and adjustments e.g. hearing loop availability. They will also ensure that, as much as possible, there are virtual participation options, for example, recording of in-person talks and running parallel zoom discussion sessions.</p> <p>The ECR Forum recruitment survey is compatible with screenreaders. Individuals are also able to request the survey in alternative formats by e-mailing talent@ukri.org. Where text content is provided to forum members, every effort will be made to ensure that this content is accessible and compatible with screenreaders.</p> <p>Zoom will be the virtual platform of choice for induction and networking events and engagement led by the ECR Forum leads. This offers closed captioning. For in-person events led by the ECR Forum leads reasonable adjustments for hearing impaired individuals will be explored including use of a BSL interpreter or captioner. Forum leads will follow good</p>
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			practice recommended by AbilityNet when hosting virtual sessions and will review this assessment when it becomes possible to host in person events.
Gender reassignment	Not likely to have a positive or negative impact		
Marriage or civil partnership	Unlikely to have a positive or negative impact		
Pregnancy, maternity and parental leave	Potential positive (please see first row) and negative impacts	<p>Those on parental leave could be excluded from participation in an ECR Forum if the eligibility criteria is limited to those who are currently actively working in research and innovation.</p> <p>Those on parental leave could face additional logistical challenges when attending in person events, for example needing to make additional childcare arrangements.</p>	<p>The ECR Forum eligibility criteria includes eligibility for anyone who identifies as an ECR and has been employed in a research and/or innovation role within the last 12 months.</p> <p>The ECR Forum induction and many of the initial engagement activities will be held virtually and are therefore likely to be more accessible to individuals with caring responsibilities. Where the ECR Forum leads organise in-person events they will ensure that, as much as possible, there are virtual participation options for example recording of in-person talks and running parallel zoom discussion sessions. The ECR Forum leads will explore routes to provide support for additional</p>

		Those on parental leave and/or those with caring responsibilities may have constraints on when they are able to attend either in-person or virtual events.	<p>childcare arrangements if an individual wishes to attend in person.</p> <p>The ECR Forum induction will be held virtually and will have asynchronous participation options including recorded content that can be viewed at any time and attendees being able to submit questions in advance for Q&A sessions which will also be recorded for those who are not able to attend. This should enable the engagement of those who are not available at certain times to participate in 'live' events.</p>
Race	Potential positive impact (please see first row)		
Religion or belief	Potential negative impact	If scheduled events conflict with religious holidays this could negatively impact the participation of certain groups.	The ECR forum induction and engagement events led by the ECR Forum leads will not be held on religious holidays.
Sexual orientation	Potential positive impact (please see first row)		
Sex (gender)	Potential positive impact (please see first row)		
Age	Potential negative impact	If the term 'early career' is associated with younger researchers this could	Communications around ECR forum recruitment will have

		lead to a lack of diversity within forum membership and reduced engagement with individuals who have not followed a 'traditional' more linear career pathway and/or those who have had career breaks	inclusive language and imagery and there will be no selection criteria based on length of time post-PhD or age.
Neurodiversity (disability)	Potential negative impact	Neurodiversity of forum members might inhibit their ability to engage through certain routes.	The ECR Forum induction and engagement events led by the ECR Forum Leads will use a variety of engagement tools and routes including surveys, small group discussions, webinars and Q&As to enable all members to have an effective route to engage with UKRI. Forum leads will follow good practice recommended by AbilityNet when hosting virtual sessions and will review this assessment when it becomes possible to host in person events.
Caring responsibilities	Potential negative impact	Those with caring responsibilities could face additional logistical challenges when attending in person events, for example needing to make additional caring arrangements.	The ECR Forum induction and many of the initial engagement activities will be held virtually and are therefore likely to be more accessible to individuals with caring responsibilities. Where the ECR Forum Leads organise in-person events they will ensure that, as much as possible, there are virtual participation options for example recording of in-person talks and running parallel zoom discussion sessions. The ECR Forum Leads will explore routes to be able to provide support for

		<p>Those with caring responsibilities may have constraints on when they are able to attend either in-person or virtual events.</p>	<p>additional childcare arrangements if an individual wishes to attend in person.</p> <p>The ECR Forum induction will be held virtually and will have asynchronous participation options including recorded content that can be viewed at any time and attendees being able to submit questions in advance for Q&A sessions which will also be recorded for those who are not able to attend. This should enable the engagement of those who are not available at certain times to participate in 'live' events.</p>
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Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the new/proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate against or unfairly disadvantage people?	There is potential for the UKRI ECR forum to discriminate against or unfairly disadvantage people this is why we have taken the mitigation steps outlined in this EIA and embedded EDI monitoring into our recruitment process which will be compared to available data sources, such as Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), to inform further recruitment effort for groups which are underrepresented in forum membership.	
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/against one or more groups.		
3. You can adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias.	X	Appropriate mitigations are in place which will eliminate identified biases, forum recruitment, induction and engagement activities will be kept under review to ensure that they are not disadvantaging certain groups and new mitigations will be developed as necessary.
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:	15/12/2020
Review date (if applicable):	09/12/2021

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Ellen Meek, Nik Ogryzko, Helen Snaith	09/12/2020	1.0	First version completed
Ellen Meek, Nik Ogryzko, Helen Snaith	15/12/2020	1.1	Reviewed and updated
Nik Ogryzko	18/03/2021	1.2	Added reference to AbilityNET guidelines on accessible virtual events.

If you have identified any additional impacts that you feel we should consider, we would appreciate your input. Please email talent@ukri.org with the subject line “Equality Impact Assessment” for review.”