EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

	Question	Response
1.	**Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed**	Digital Economy (DE) NetworkPlus Webinar
2.	**Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event**	• Provide information about the DE NetworkPlus Call to potential applicants • To answer any queries via a panel session • To ensure high quality applications are submitted.
3.	**What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	The Digital Economy NetworkPlus call has been developed with the help of academic and industrial stakeholders within the Digital Economy community. The webinar has been organised by the EPSRC's Digital Eocnomy Theme and Events team.
4.	**Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?**	UK's research community, industrial sector and users of research in non-academic sectors who could potentially apply for funding.
5.	**What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?**	An Expression of Interest (EoI) for the webinar has been disseminated (via Smart Survey), and applications and contact details will be provided alongside the information relevant to the event to successful applicants. The webinar will be recorded and published on the EPSRC webpage, along with key outcomes from the webinar.

As a funder of research, EPSRC remains committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. 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 endeavor 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)
Disability	Potential positive impact – Participants with physical disabilities	• Virtual event reduces travel and level of physical activity required for workshop • Virtual event means attendee can remain at home with access to appropriate care or facilities	
	Potential negative impact – Participants with full/partial visual or auditory impairment	Difficulty participating fully in discussions online	• Zoom will be used to host the webinar – equipped with a range of accessibility features (e.g. supports many common screen readers; closed captioning options, etc.) • Visually impaired participants can request documents that will be used in

			screen sharing to be distributed to them in advance of the meeting • The key outcomes and webinar recording will be published online Applicants can highlight any accessibility requirements ahead of the meeting
Gender reassignment	None identified		
Marriage or civil partnership	None identified		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential positive impact	Virtual workshop reduces travel and level of physical activity required for workshop	
Race	None identified		
Religion or belief	None identified		
Sexual orientation	None identified		
Sex (gender)	None identified		
Age	None identified		
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	Potential negative impact - Internet access limitations/ technological issues	Issues due to technical problems, which may limit participation	• Facilitators will be present to help address technical issues during the webinar • Opportunities will be provided for attendees to share additional contributions offline after the virtual workshop Again, key outcomes, along with recording of the webinar will be made available.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification		
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Several factors have been identified that could potentially have a negative impact on the participation of prospective applicants. Potential issues have been identified and addressed.		
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	✓	A number of barriers have been identified and addressed. Due to the current lockdown as a result of COVID-19, holding an online event is the only viable option.	
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:	24/03/2021
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Afia Masood	When published	1	