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**EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment**

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| **Question** | **Response** |
| 1. **Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed** | Siemens/EPSRC Call for Feasibility Studies: Digital Solutions for Energy Demand Reduction and Carbon Production |
| 1. **Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event** |  |
| 1. **What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)* | The call for studies has been developed through discussion with Siemens. |
| 1. **Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?** | EPSRC Energy and Decarbonisation research community. |
| 1. **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 compliance with UKRI’s principles for peer review.  Research outcomes are collected through  Researchfish, and standard mode will be monitored  for subsequent submissions. |

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 [RCUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](https://epsrc.ukri.org/links/councils/uk-research-and-innovation-ukri/diversity-ukri/) 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](https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/basics/caringresponsibilities/)
* 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
* Abide by the Principles of peer review
* Unconscious Bias training for EPSRC staff and clear guidance for assessors
* Handle personal sensitive information in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation 2018

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| **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 Negative Impact | For applicants – all information provided is in a written format.  For panel members – access requirements for panel meeting.  Relatively short timescales for opening of the call may affect ability to participate e.g. if on sick leave or reduced hours. | Funding opportunity pavaialle on ewebsite provided (scheme call document) produced in black and white and in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines.  External panel to be held remotely and reasonable adjustments made to logistics to support participation (e.g. live transcript during virtual panel). To minimse the impact, the panel will be held remotely and be less than a whole working day in duration.  Alongisde call going live, frequent comms using social media channels and netowks will be prioritised to enhance the visibility of this activity. The scope of the call is for feasiblity stufdies. As such, proposals can still be submitted through standard mode on an ongoing basis. |
| **Gender reassignment** | Potential negative impact | Gender specific language within communications | Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encourages at panel meetings.  Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Marriage or civil partnership** | No known negative impact | No disclosure of marital status required for any stage of the process | Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Pregnancy and maternity** | Potential negative impact | For applicants – relatively short timescales for opening of the call affect ability to participate e.g. if on parental leave.  For panel members – additional requirements for those with caring responsibilities or pregnancy. | Alongisde call going live, frequent comms using social media channels and netowks will be prioritised to enhance the visibility of this activity. The scope of the call is for feasiblity stufdies. As such, proposals can still be submitted through standard mode on an ongoing basis.  Expert panels to be held remotely to remove travel requirements.  EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and applicants will be made aware of these.  Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Race** | No known negative impact | Potential risk – lack of diversity of ethnicity and race of panel members and/or applicants | Efforts will be made to convene an external panel which is ethnically diverse in line with EPSRC peer review guidance. The scheme is open to all eligible UK researcher organisations.  Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Religion or belief** | Potentially negative impact | Participation could be affected by coincidence with religious holidays | EPSRC endeavours to select panel dates and proposal batching dates that are cognisant of major holidays. The scope of the call is for feasiblity studies. As such, proposals can still be submitted through standard mode on an ongoing basis. |
| **Sexual orientation** | No known negative impact | No disclosure of sexual orientation required for any stage of the process | Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Sex (gender)** | Potentially negative impact | Gender diversity of the assessment panels. | Efforts will be made to convene and external panel which mixed gender in line with EPSRC peer review guidance.  Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Age** | No known negative impact | No disclosure of age required for any stage of the process. | Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |
| **Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)** | Potential positive impact | Potential mitigation of sensory/cognitive overload by holding panel virtually rather than in person (dependent on individual circumstances) | Standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. |

**Evaluation:**

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| **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 that could potentially have a negative impact on both the applicants and the panel, predominantly:   * Disability * Parental or other caring responsibilities   Several risks and potential biases have been considered when designing the call and 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 **proceed**. |  |  |
| 1. You can decide to **stop** the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups |  |  |
| 1. You can **adapt or change** the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias |  |  |
| 1. 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. | x | We have taken steps to mitigate the barriers we have identified, but there is no way to mitigate further given the funding time constraints. |

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| **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:** | **23/08/2021** |
| **Review date** (if applicable): |  |

**Change log**

| **Name** | **Date** | **Version** | **Change** |
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| Ruqaiyah Patel | When published | 1 |  |