

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>UKRI COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation (CoA) / Additional COVID-19 Grant Extension awards (Additional CoA)</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>The aim of the UKRI COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation is to provide research organisations with resources to sustain UKRI grant-funded research and fellowships affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This can include support for research and technical staff and research infrastructures during the period of pandemic disruption and its immediate aftermath.</p> <p>UKRI recognised that some grants supported through the CoA may require extensions beyond 30 September 2021 to accommodate parental leave, sickness or in cases where staff have undertaken secondments to provide support for the UK Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, by working in the NHS Test & Trace Laboratories, vaccination services or where staff are undertaking clinical work directly related to the pandemic). In these cases, Research Organisations may request return of underspend of already allocated CoA funding, where that underspend has accrued against specific awards for the reasons stated above. This underspend will be returned in the form of an Additional CoA grant, which will be made under modified T&Cs. Additional CoA will only be available to utilise underspend of CoA that was allocated during the initial CoA period, following the processes set out in individual Governance Plans.</p>
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? <i>(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</i></p>	<p>The policy intent and delivery mechanism of the CoA has been discussed with sector mission groups and the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy as it has developed.</p>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>All institutions who are recipients of UKRI grant funding will be impacted by the policy. Institutions will determine how best to apply the policy, and all UKRI wholly-or partly funded research staff and activities could be affected.</p>

<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>Assurance would be through each institution providing a Governance Plan and detailed transactional reporting, based on the requirements set out in UKRI's Terms and Conditions accompanying guidance.</p>
---	--

Measures in the policy implementation

Protecting equality, diversity and inclusion is an important element of this allocation of funding to institutions. All institutions receiving this funding are asked to ensure continued diversity in the research population. The following measures are in place:

CoA offer letter

The offer letter contains the following request to institutions:

- the funding maintains the balance of your organisation's 2020/21 grant funding by protected characteristics, and seeks to mitigate disadvantages to protected groups incurred through the pandemic and its impacts

CoA Governance Plan

The requested Governance Plan includes the following section:

<p>Assurance mechanism to maintain the funding balance % split by protected characteristics</p> <p><i>Organisations are themselves best-placed to determine the balance by protected characteristics to mitigate disadvantages to protected groups incurred through the pandemic and its impacts. Please describe the mechanism by which your organisation will distribute the CoA funding making sure that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the CoA funding will maintain the balance of your organisation's 2020/21 grant funding by protected characteristics, seeking to mitigate disadvantages to protected groups incurred through the pandemic and its impacts.</i> • <i>you outline the balance by which your organisation will distribute the CoA by protected characteristics in line with the Equality Act 2010.</i>
--

CoA terms and conditions

The terms and conditions of the award contain two relevant sections:

- 3.7 Organisations are expected to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is considered and supported when allocating funds from this CoA towards disrupted grants. Therefore, the CoA needs to maintain the balance of an organisation's 2020/21 grant funding by protected characteristics and seek to mitigate disadvantages to protected groups incurred through the pandemic and its impacts.

5.2 Organisations may be asked to provide evidence of proportion funding distribution subject to Paragraphs 2.2 and 3.4. This may include the considerations taken to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is supported as described in Paragraph 3.7.

CoA reporting template

UKRI is asking for organisations to provide data to show that the balance of diversity is maintained and to explain any divergence.

Organisation funding allocation by protected characteristics (%) based on the information normally collected by your organisation.

Please describe the considerations on the decision-making process with which your organisation prioritised the use of the allocation.

As reported in your Governance Plan submitted before the start of the CoA award, please confirm that the CoA funding maintained overall:

the balance of your grant funding by protected characteristics groups and mitigated disadvantages to protected groups incurred through the pandemic and its impact.

FAQs

The following additional guidance is provided in the FAQs.

What are the expectations for ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion?

Our expectation is that the community of researchers (Investigators, postdoctoral researchers, technicians and software engineers, project managers and other research team members) supported by this additional funding will reflect the population funded through UKRI grants, whilst recognising some groups of people or individuals have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and so may need additional support.

If the population of researchers to which this additional funding is distributed is less diverse than the population usually funded by UKRI in your institution, please provide a rationale for this reduced diversity. If the population of researchers to which this additional funding is distributed is more diverse than the population usually funded by UKRI in your institution, or if this funding is targeted at researchers who have been disproportionately negatively affected by the pandemic, then there is no need to provide a rationale for this increased diversity.

We expect monitoring to be in line with data you currently hold and in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Additional CoA awards

The Additional CoA awards will enable Research Organisations to request return of CoA underspend accrued against specific grants, where those grants will be unable to fully utilise their CoA allocation by the end date of the original awards (30 September 2021) due to the grants being extended to accommodate parental leave, sickness or in cases where staff have undertaken secondments to

provide support for the UK Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, by working in the NHS Test & Trace Laboratories, vaccination services or where staff are undertaking clinical work directly related to the pandemic). As an Additional CoA award can only comprise of underspend of previously allocated CoA, then the above considerations remain relevant.

Summary of issues that may lead to disadvantage

UKRI considers organisations are best placed to identify the issues leading to disadvantage in the pandemic, but the following is an initial illustrative list of the issues UKRI is expecting organisations to consider.

Disruption of research activities through, for example, loss of access to labs, field work, data gathering, specialist computing and facilities, travel to work with collaborators, in the UK or internationally. The amount of work possible from home will vary and the possibilities to return to a normal research environment will vary.

While working at home, research-related staff will experience different household environments with some finding it difficult to find quiet or private space to work. They may have less access to equipment to support home working.

Those with caring responsibilities may have less or no time available to continue their research work.

Vulnerable and very vulnerable groups may be shielding or otherwise more cautious about engaging with research work in shared environments.

Research-related staff may have family members more likely to be at risk of Covid-19 through working in public-facing roles.

Some research staff or their families may have a period of illness with Covid-19.

Some research-related staff may be marginalised or less connected with their research groups, research organisation and research communities.

Potential greater impact of the pandemic on lower income families.

Potential loss of co-funding and participation from some partner organisations.

Loss of access to medical support for long-term health conditions.

Mental health issues arising or increased by the pandemic.

Staff on fixed term contracts less able to complete work to help them progress their careers.

Loss of opportunities for staff on fixed term contracts.



Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used
Disability	Possible	<p>There is potential for a negative impact on those that may be subject to shielding and/or more susceptible to COVID-19 or need different assistance to work from home or in changed work environment. There is the potential to mitigate these issues and they should be addressed in the CoA in the Organisational Governance plan.</p> <p>Where grants have had to be extended due to ill-health, the Additional CoA awards will enable grants that have accrued underspend for these reasons additional time to utilise their originally allocated CoA funding.</p>
Gender reassignment	Unlikely	It is not expected that this will have an impact, although some people may be marginalised in the research environment.
Marriage or civil partnership	Unlikely	It is not expected that this will have an impact.
Pregnancy and maternity	Possible	<p>It is possible that there may be a negative impact on those staff who are pregnant or are expecting during the period of the extension.</p> <p>It is possible that there may be a positive impact on those who are pregnant that may now receive maternity pay owing to the extension which they might not have received if their award completed as planned.</p> <p>The Additional CoA awards will enable grants that have accrued underspend due to parental leave additional time to utilise their originally allocated CoA funding.</p>
Race	Possible	Researchers from a minority ethnic background, or their families, may be more likely to suffer serious ill health due to Covid-19, in part due to more likely to work in public-facing roles.

		It is possible there may be a negative impact on those with cultural differences to remain engaged with their research team/community.
Religion or belief	Unlikely	It is not expected that this will have an impact, although some people may be marginalised in the research environment.
Sexual orientation	Unlikely	It is not expected that this will have an impact, although some people may be marginalised in the research environment.
Sex (gender)	Possible – likely	It is possible that there will be a negative impact on women who are more likely to have caring/childcare responsibilities. There is the potential to mitigate these issues and they should be addressed in the CoA in the Organisational Governance plan.
Age	Possible - likely	There is a possible negative impact to those who are older if they are needing to shield at home or otherwise more vulnerable.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	<p>Yes, but the organisations receiving the funding are requested to mitigate this.</p> <p>The Additional CoA awards will enable grants that have accrued underspend some additional time to utilise the originally allocated CoA funding, where that underspend has accrued due to parental leave, sickness or in cases where staff have undertaken secondments to support the UK Government response to the pandemic.</p>	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified; therefore, activity will proceed .	X	With the diversity requirements for research organisations

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		
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: 23 June 2020 Date updated: 15 September 2021	Initial EIA carried out by members of UKRI Strategy Team and the EDI Implementation Group Updates to EIA to include reference to the Additional CoA awards, completed by members of the UKRI policy team
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
	When published	2	KS and CG sign off
	October 2021	3	CH sign off