



**EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment**

Question	Response
<p><b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b></p>	<p>Energy Demand Research Centre Call</p>
<p><b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b></p>	<p>EPSRC and ESRC are looking to fund a new 'Energy Demand Research Centre' that will deliver world-leading interdisciplinary research to provide a range of energy demand solutions with communities which include e.g. technological, social, policy experts, those focussed on economics and business models etc. This investment will help inform the UK's transition to net zero by 2050.</p>
<p><b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b></p>	<p>An open call for an Energy Demand Research Champion has been completed resulting in the funding of a Champion and Co-Champion, who are invited to submit a proposal to this Centre Call</p> <p>The Champions are carrying out their own scoping and stakeholder engagement activities to inform and shape their applications with the support and input of EPSRC and ESRC.</p>
<p><b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>The Energy Demand Research champions, prospective co-investigators and their teams</p> <p>The interdisciplinary community of stakeholders with direct relevance to Energy Demand Research in the UK.</p>
<p><b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>The assessment process has been designed to ensure unconscious bias is minimised and managed.</p> <p>All panel members will receive an unconscious bias briefing document.</p> <p>The activity and Centre will be monitored by EPSRC and ESRC including through the Midterm review of the investment assessed against published criteria</p>

As a funder of research, UKRI 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	Potentially negative	An applicant's disability may impact their ability to perform at or attend interview	All applicants invited to interview will be asked to inform EPSRC if they have specific requirements and reasonable adjustments will be made (e.g. additional time)
	Potentially positive	There is potential and proven ability to hold interviews in a virtual setting if necessary.	The interview for this activity will be virtual, removing the need to travel to attend  Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation.  EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews

			acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased assessment.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage individuals who have undergone gender reassignment or whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth, if an applicant's possession of such protected characteristics is known to the panel.	Applicants are not asked to disclose whether they have undergone gender reassignment. Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process.
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	No known negative impact		Applicants are not asked to disclose their marital status. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Potentially negative	<p>The process requires interview attendance which may not be possible if an applicant is on parental leave</p> <p>A fixed start date may result in the award starting whilst some staff are on maternity / paternity leave</p>	<p>Virtual interviews and consideration of applicant availability when setting interview dates will address this.</p> <p>The fixed start date will be communicated well in advance to the Champions, and the Centre will commence without all posts recruited, which enables staggered recruitment timescales</p>
<b>Race</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage specific racial or ethnic groups, where applicant ethnicity is known to the panel.	<p>Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process.</p> <p>Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation.</p> <p>EPSRC presence at</p>

			assessment meetings and during interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased assessment.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potentially negative	Aspects of the peer review process could coincide with key religious dates.	Working with applicants and panel member availability to set the dates for assessment. Pre-warning of the timeline so that issues can be raised and adjustments made.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage individuals of specific sexual orientations, if this is known to the panel.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their sexual orientation. Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage applicants on the basis of gender.	Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process.  In line with EPSRC policies, the assessment panel will be mixed gender
<b>Age</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage applicants from specific age groups.	Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation. EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews
<b>Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</b>	None identified		

**Evaluation:**

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	A number of risks and potential negative impacts have been identified and considered as part of the call design. Reasonable adjustments will be made and by adhering to the standard peer review principles, the risks 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 <b>proceed</b> .		
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can <b>adapt or change</b> 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 <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	Y	Barriers have been identified but all actions to address negative impact have been highlighted above and all alternative options have been carefully considered. Possible risks and bias associated with this activity have been identified and activities adapted accordingly. ED&I aspects will be considered throughout the activity and EPSRC will review this EIA accordingly. Reasonable adjustments will also be made wherever possible.

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
<b>Date completed:</b>	31/10/2022
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	

**Change log**

Name	Date	Version	Change