



EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Microscale Systems, Sensors & Devices and Machines - a Community Engagement Workshop
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>Aims: Engineering research in microscale systems, sensors & devices, and machines, collectively known as microsystems, is incredibly diverse and delivers key enabling technologies underpinning a broad range of sectors. It encompasses the development of microfluidic, microelectromechanical systems (MEMS), micro-structured and micro-fabricated devices; the research of which can be of a generic nature or focused on the development of a specific device targeted at a particular end use.</p> <p>EPSRC will be holding a workshop in May 2022 with the aim of bringing the microsystems community together to explore the current state of microsystems research, future directions of microsystems engineering, and how best the community can be supported to deliver positive impact across various sectors and the UK R&D landscape.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conduct a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of microsystems engineering to assess the current state of the discipline and identify common research challenges. • To consider the future direction of microsystems engineering. • To develop a greater understanding of the support needed across the microsystems ecosystem to ensure that research in the area delivers maximum impact. • To encourage interaction and networking between a wide range of stakeholders in microsystems research.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Consultations with the EPSRC Events Team, EPSRC Engineering Strategic Advisory Team, engineering institutions, leading microsystems academics from across the community.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsystems research community • Guest Speakers • UKRI staff • SLB (if choose to attend)
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual	The outputs from this workshop will be reviewed internally by EPSRC and with appropriate advisory

<p>impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>bodies; relevant outcomes will be passed onto senior members of EPSRC. Key outputs will be shared with the community.</p> <p>Grant applications submitted to EPSRC post-workshop will be monitored annually against criteria including quality, success rates, number of new collaborations and nature of research (fundamental or application-based). This will help identify any trends across the microsystems research ecosystem.</p> <p>To measure research community interests towards microsystems, the pre-workshop questionnaire may be sent to workshop attendees every 6 months to monitor whether scores change (for example, do perceptions towards the “level of collaboration amongst peers across the microsystems community” improve and/or do priorities for the community change?)</p> <p>Outputs and data will feed into ongoing microsystems portfolio strategy development.</p>
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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	Potentially negative	Access to events for applicants could have a negative impact on participation, dependent on individual circumstances.	<p>EPSRC will select venues that are accessible and where possible accommodate any specific requirement in our planning and organisation of an initiative to support wider participation.</p> <p>Selected venue will also have adequate set up for a hybrid meeting so that all participants, in-person and remote, can feel included in discussions, breakout sessions and breaks.</p> <p>All attendees will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support.</p> <p>EPSRC can offer support for people with caring responsibilities. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at an event. Further details here. As this is a hybrid meeting, it is hoped that the event's impact on caring responsibilities is minimised through the option of participants to participate remotely from home.</p>
Gender reassignment	It is not expected that this activity will have any particular impact.	-	<p>Currently it is not possible to guarantee a venue with gender neutral toilets.</p> <p>We will aim to accommodate the individual circumstances of all invitees where possible.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	It is not expected that this activity will have any particular impact.		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially negative	Inability to attend due to childcare commitments	EPSRC can offer support for people with caring responsibilities. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs

		may affect who can participate. Dietary restrictions related to pregnancy.	can be reimbursed prior to attendance at event. Hybrid meeting could allow individuals with childcare responsibilities work from home. Further details can be found here .
Race	It is not expected that this activity will have any particular impact.		
Religion or belief	Potentially negative	Activity could coincide with religious holidays. Faith related dietary restrictions.	Where possible we will endeavour to select dates that avoid major religious holidays. If the event is held on a major religious holiday, concessions will be made to accommodate faith related dietary restrictions.
Sexual orientation	It is not expected that this activity will have any particular impact.		
Sex (gender)	Potentially positive	Attendee selection – It is important that the event is attended by a diverse community.	Attendees will apply to attend workshop through a smart survey. Advertisement through Twitter, website, LinkedIn and academic contacts – this will ensure broad reach and encourage attendees from outside the pool of the “usual suspects” of academics. EPSRC will look to manage attendee selection in line with EPSRC policy.
Age	As above	As above	As discussed in the call document, attendees will be selected based on a “ <i>Relevance of expertise and/or future research aspirations to the scope of the workshop</i> ”. This criterion will allow for attendees ranging from early career academics with fresh perspectives, to established academics with extensive knowledge

			of the community, to attend the workshop.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	<p>Regional Affiliation – potentially positive</p> <p>Nationality – both positive and negative impacts</p>	<p>As above</p> <p>Timezone differences Immigration restrictions.</p>	<p>As above. Also, an option for in-person or online attendance will be provided. Smart survey will ask this in advance of the workshop.</p> <p>Hybrid working will allow for international dial-in; any international academics will be pooled from European locations (max +1 hour timzone difference) and will be strongly encouraged to participate online. Relevant academics who have expertise appropriate for this workshop have been identified in advance and will be approached outside of smart survey – they are from regions within a +1 hour timezone.</p> <p>Where possible we will endeavour to select dates that avoid the school holidays.</p>

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	We have considered ways that we think may disadvantage individuals and have adapted our process to mitigate and reduce the potential for discrimination.	
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		
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.	✓	Action has been taken to eliminate barriers for attendees with protected characteristics. We will try and encourage broad representation at the workshop, and allow for in-person and remote attendees. The only exceptions are EPSRC representatives.

Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Will be published on webpage with acknowledgement that there will be no funding opportunities arising from the event.
Date completed:	12/02/2022
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Will Gompertz	12/02/22	1	