EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

	Question	Response
1.	**Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed**	EPSRC Strategic Package in Quantum Computing. This activity is a call for proposals.
2.	**Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event**	EPSRC plan to allocate up to £2 million (at 80% FEC) to support research into quantum computing software and algorithms. The call aims to fund 1 successful candidate to carry out an ambitious programme of research in quantum computing software and algorithms, aligned to the vision for the National Quantum Computing Centre (NQCC). In addition the candidate will undertake a secondment with the NQCC. This award will provide academic outputs to support the NQCC's programme and to provide strategic steer on the most promising new technological developments to meet to overall aim for the Centre. The successful candidate will demonstrate leadership characteristics to influence and build the UK's profile in Quantum Computing and further strengthen linkages between academic and industrial work in Quantum Computing. The call is an open call to all qualifying individuals and groups
3.	**What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	Strategic Packages for Quantum Technologies have been endorsed by the NQTP Strategic Advisory Board and detailed in the NQTP Strategic Intent. They have had sign off from EPSRC SLB. The National Quantum Computing Centre's Programme Advisory Committee have been engaged in discussions around talent recruitment and retention.
4.	**Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?**	This is a funding opportunity for academic researchers in Quantum Computing to carry out an ambitious research programme and undertake a secondment with the NQCC. This will influence and impact the broader Quantum Computing agenda for the UK, affecting academic, industrial and government stakeholders.
5.	**What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual**	The assessment process has been designed to ensure unconscious bias is minimised and managed.

impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	All panel members will receive an unconscious bias briefing. The award will be subject to a mid-term review and updates will be provided to the National Quantum Computing Centre's Programme Advisory Committee.

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 endeavour 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	None identified		
Gender reassignment	None identified		
Marriage or civil partnership	None identified		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially negative	Potential applicants currently on maternity leave or with caring responsibilities may be unable to apply.	We have extended the time that the call is open for Reimbursement of additional childcare costs if required and flexibility around

			meeting timings to allow for any caring responsibilities we are made aware of on a case-by-case basis
Race	None identified		
Religion or belief	None identified		We have tried to avoid major religious holidays when setting dates. All panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that may affect their ability to participate and how this can be accommodated.
Sexual orientation	None identified		
Sex (gender)	Potentially negative		In line with EPSRC policies, the assessment panel will be mixed gender.
Age	Potentially negative		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 peer review
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	Potentially negative		

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	It is possible; however, we are taking clear steps towards ensuring that the call and panel processes are as inclusive as possible.

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.	x	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.

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:	**21st February 2022**
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Katharine Dunn	21st February 2022	1	Version created