Equality Impact Assessment

	Question	Response
1.	**Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed**	*AHRC CoSTAR (Convergent Screen Technologies And performance in Realtime)* *National capability for R&D in screen and performance*
2.	**Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event**	This is an invitation to apply for CoSTAR funding to host national R&D facilities to drive innovation and creativity in the UK's screen and performance industries. All eligible institutions are welcome to apply. There are two strands of funding under this call: - Lot 1: £51.1m over six years, to design, build, develop and test the CoSTAR National Lab: a state-of-the-art RD&I facility for the screen and performance. Also, to provide a KE and Enterprise function and Demonstrator/Pilot programme. - Lot 2: £12.6m over six years for the delivery of (up to) three CoSTAR Network Labs. These may be upgrades or enhancements of existing facilities. This is a six-year capital programme to design, develop and build state-of-the-art facilities, resources and expertise to underpin the long-term competitiveness of the UK screen and performance sector by providing a highly capable R&D infrastructure that enables researchers, companies and institutions across the UK to access to the facilities, capabilities and insight necessary to ensure that they can conduct world class R&D in the application of current and future waves of advanced computing technologies to transform the means of production across the screen, performance and allied sectors of the Creative Industries. The CoSTAR infrastructure and facilities will also - lead and coordinate the technological development of the UK screen and performance sectors developing new methods, solutions, processes, products and experiences - build, strengthen and deepen the UK creative technology ecosystem including the pipeline for research talent and skills - maximise arising economic opportunities: to support the commercialisation of creative technology and creative content IP, products and services; and to support the formation and growth of highly capable Creative Technology firms.

		• make a positive long-term contribution to the development of the UK Screen and performance industries across the UK
3.	**What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	CoSTAR has progressed through a robust HM Treasury Green Book Business Case approvals process, including several stages of review within UKRI, a Gateway 2 Review and final approval from HM Treasury. Considerable community engagement has taken place, with two Policy and Engagement fellows undertaking a Prior Information Notice (PIN) scoping study, and CoSTAR has had further stakeholder and industry engagement through an Advisory Forum, Project Board and series of roundtable discussions and events.
4.	**Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?**	AHRC academic community, IROs, RTOs, commercial studios/partners, local authorities.
5.	**What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?**	The grants awarded across the two strands will be monitored by AHRC throughout the duration of the programme. AHRC has recently recruited an Impact & Delivery lead for CoSTAR, who will monitor the impact of the programme. The provision of a data, insight and foresight unit to complete the infrastructure will be the subject of a future AHRC call; this strand will assist with the collection, compilation and analysis of data, to contribute to impact reviews. As robust Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) plan was required as an annexe of the CoSTAR Outline Business Case, which will be further developed. The plan clearly sets out the reporting responsibilities at each phase of activity, and a robust governance structure has been identified for CoSTAR.

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	Possible negative impact	The projects may include working in facilities or using equipment and resources which aren't adapted for people with disabilities. In case of direct (i.e. in-person) interactions, participants with specific accessibility constraints may be disinclined to participate unless reasonable adjustments are made.	AHRC and UKRI gives the applicants and partner organisation a great flexibility to design the project to allow participation of disabled people. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements. AHRC strongly encourages all applicants to design their projects/prepare

| | | | Documents and materials need to be accessible. | their applications with accessibility and inclusivity in mind, making sure reasonable adjustment for current and future users are included in the design of proposed facilities and equipment.

The call will be live for three months, which should allow applicants with disabilities time to obtain support in the application writing process at their organisations and to discuss suitable working arrangements for their proposed project.

There is a risk of low representation of people with disabilities among the applicants and successful candidates. To avoid this, we will advertise through UKRI channels which are designed with accessibility in mind. We will also share the opportunity with relevant organisations and stakeholders. As this is a new funding opportunity, we will monitor outcomes. We will use lessons learned from the call to decide if positive action should be undertaken within any future AHRC calls to attract candidates with disabilities.

Online platforms of engagement and participation (e.g. Zoom) can remove physical constraints and enable greater accessibility for people with mobility issues. The use of these platforms will be |

			encouraged, but with due consideration to the needs of people who find videoconferencing challenging (e.g. due to being neurodivergent or other reasons). Applicants should discuss any accessibility needs in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by the applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with 2010 Equality Act and EDI policies at receiving organisations, and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. Any travel and subsistence expenses beyond the most economic level which are incurred due to a disability can be requested in, and covered by, the project grant.
Gender reassignment	Possible negative impact	Applicants who have had/are in the process of gender reassignment may feel disinclined to apply if our language isn't sensitive. Therefore, gender neutral language is important to support inclusivity, equality and representation. Applicants who have had/are in the process of gender reassignment might feel more comfortable using gender-neutral facilities.	AHRC will use gender-neutral language, e.g. pronouns such as 'they' or 'you' instead of 'he/she', in the call documents, in the interim reporting and in the end-of-award reporting. By publishing this EIA, we will also encourage applicants to use gender neutral language throughout their interactions. We encourage applicants to meet best practice in

			relation to the employment of transgender staff such as that laid out in the Government Equalities Office guidance on 'The recruitment and retention of transgender staff'. Applicants should discuss any personal needs of staff involved in the project based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by the applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Marriage or civil partnership	No impact	The call is open to all eligible applicants and there are no barriers to those who are married or in a civil partnership apart from, potentially, the need to relocate for the duration of the project and temporarily live away from their home and partner. Data on participant's marital or partnership status will not be sourced.	Applicants should agree if there is a need to relocate their staff on a temporary basis with the staff , in a way that's sensitive to their family situation and civil partnership/marriage. Applicants and their staff should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by the applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality,

			diversity and inclusion. informed by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as EDI policies at receiving organisations.
Pregnancy and maternity	Possible negative impact	Pregnant persons, who are on parental leave, and persons on parental leave, may miss the application deadline whilst on leave. Pregnant persons and persons with caring responsibilities may require additional adjustments to enable participation in the projects. On the other hand, the flexible nature of the scheme makes it inclusive and might appeal particularly to persons with caring responsibilities or pregnant.	AHRC and UKRI gives the applicants a great flexibility to design the project to allow participation of pregnant persons and persons with caring responsibilities. Principal Investigators and staff involved in the project will be entitled to maternity and parental leave in line with their current terms and conditions of employment. UKRI standard Terms & Conditions of fEC Grants will apply to awards. UKRI will be flexible in considering requests to suspend or reschedule projects to account for periods of parental leave including maternity, paternity and adoption leave. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and we set up a wide period bracket of three months to 18 month for project durations under this call with inclusivity in mind. We leave working day arrangements to the applicants. We expect that scheduling sufficient breaks during in-person interactions (virtual and physical) will provide a greater comfort for pregnant participants;

			flexibility in the scheduling of projects may similarly improve participation.
			Applicants should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
			The call is going to be live for three months which is a generous duration. However, some potential candidates who are on maternity leave might miss the deadline.
Race	No impact	This call is open to candidates of all ethnic backgrounds. AHRC and UKRI designed the call to be flexible to make it inclusive and accessible. We are aware of under-representation of some BAME groups in the fields covered by this call (e.g. creative industries nd a risk that the awards might reflect this underrepresentation.	There is a risk of low representation of Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups among the applicants and successful candidates. This might occur due to the channels used to advertise the call, and is impossible to predict as this is a new call. To avoid underrepresentation, we will advertise through UKRI channels which are designed with accessibility in mind. We will also share the opportunity with relevant organisations and stakeholders.
			As this is a new funding opportunity, we will

			monitor outcomes. We will use lessons learned from this call to decide if positive action should be undertaken within any future AHRC calls to attract BAME candidates. Applicants should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Religion or belief	Possible negative impact	Potential candidates or receiving organisations members who may be on leave due to a religious celebration may miss the application deadline. Apart from the above, we do not anticipate a person's religion or belief would impact on their application. Data on religion or belief will not be sourced.	The call will be live for 3 months to reduce the impact of any clashes with religious holidays or celebrations. Applicants and their employers should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by the applicants and their employers to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Sexual orientation	No impact	We do not anticipate a person's sexual orientation would impact on their application. Data on applicants' sexual orientation will not be sourced.	AHRC and UKRI gives the applicants and partner organisations a great flexibility to design the project to allow participation of persons of all sexual orientations. Applicants and their employers should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by the applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Sex (gender)	Potential negative	See 'Pregnancy and maternity'. Another gender-specific barrier might occur if a candidate is going through the menopause at the point of applying or during a project, or is experiencing any sex-specific health issue, e.g. prostate cancer or ovarian cancer. The point about inclusive language made under 'Gender reassignment' is also important here due to persons who identify as non-binary/ gender-queer or transgender (irrespective of whether they had gender reassignment).	The duration of the call being live – three months – is generous and should allow inclusivity. AHRC and UKRI give the applicants a great flexibility to design the project to allow participation of all sexes and genders. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and we set up a generous brackets of 3 months Strand 1) to 18 months (Strand 3) We leave working day arrangements to the applicants . Applicants and their employers should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in

			confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by applicants to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. AHRC will use gender-neutral pronouns such as 'you/they' instead of 'he/she' in the call documents and reporting. By publishing this EIA, we also want to encourage applicants and their organisations to use gender neutral language throughout their interactions.
Age	No impact	AHRC and UKRI designed this flexible scheme to make it inclusive. The flexibility might appeal to and benefit persons across a wide range of adult age groups. The scheme is open for candidates at all career stages from early career to senior working professionals of all sectors, including academia.	The scheme is open for candidates from each career-level group above doctoral/equivalent experience. Our reviewers/assessors are going to assess applicants at all career stages/of different ages fairly and transparently, according to the same criteria and taking into consideration experience in the context of career stage. Applicants and their employers should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by applicants to provide reasonable adjustments

			and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and inspired by UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Additional diversity characteristics for IUK	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)
Regional location	Both	There could be regional or demographic issues, with either competing applications from prestigious HEIs to represent a region or only one viable institution to represent a region.	In both positive and negative cases, we will ensure that each application is assessed on individual merit and that, if awarded, the institution does solely meet it's own needs but the broader region, making sure that each region is fairly represented and that these services can be used by all HEIs large or small. M&E planning will also ensure fairness in reporting and governance once awards are established.
Education level	Both	Expertise for this call is specialised and may exclude parts of our academic community.	However, we will mitigate this through a fair assessment process, a panel for each strand offered – with tailored assessment panels for each to reflect the differences in requirements and scalability for the three funding strands.

			AHRC mandates that access to the proposed facilities won't be dependent on the users' HEI qualification at PhD level or above, but rather on experience and interest in the creative research capability of their institution.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	We cannot envisage such eventualities as the call will be judged and assessed on individual merit of applications, institutions and research teams. However additional T&Cs will be put in place to ensure some tangible adjustments. This call, in the nature of its design, is open to all arts and humanities researchers. There are no restrictions on discipline remit, provided that applications meet the criteria of this call and proposals are within or partially within AHRC's remit. AHRC will ensure that the infrastructure being built through this call across the strands is accessible and inclusive.	
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.		

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:	**10/10/2022**
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
	When published	1	

Annex 1: Examples of recently completed EIA templates

Council	Activity
EPSRC	Inclusion Matters Call
EPSRC	New Investigator Awards
EPSRC	Policy change: Limit to the number of applications at a standard panel
BBSRC	BBSRC Future Leader Fellowships (FLF) Scheme
BBSRC	BBSRC/STFC/Innovate UK Biofilms programme