**Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

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| **Question** | **Response** |
| 1. **Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed** | AHRC ECR Fellowships in Cultural and Heritage Institutions Phase 1: Advertising of Fellowship Opportunity, Expression of Interest and Fellowship Selection. |
| 1. **Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event** | **Overall purpose:** To support skills development and knowledge exchange between academia, cultural and heritage Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and the wider galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) sector through funding individual Fellowships focused on collaborative research and innovation, with a complementary programme of leadership and skills development events and mentoring for the fellowship cohort.  **Objectives of Phase 1:**  1. Advertise ECR Fellowship opportunity to as wide a range of potential applicants as possible.  2. Ensure prospective applicants can meet with representatives from Scheme Coordinator/AHRC/IROs either in person, or online, to discuss their fellowship proposals.  3. Conduct a robust expression of interest (EoI) phase, enabling selected fellows to co-develop full fellowship proposals with host IROs.  4. Submission of full fellowship proposals via Je-S for review by AHRC selection panel. |
| 1. **What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this event/study?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)* | The following consultations have taken place in relation to designing this funding opportunity:   * Consultation with AHRC/UKRI. * Consultation with V&A Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead and Data Protection and Governance Lead. * Consultation with IROC. |
| 1. **Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?** | **Within the Scheme Coordination and Development Team:** PI (Joanna Norman), Co-I (Dr Oliver Cox), Project Coordinator (to be appointed) and wider Victoria & Albert Museum Research Institute (VARI) ecosystem.  **Within the AHRC:** The Skills and Operations Teams  **Within UKRI:** Central Grants & Schemes team and Je-S helpdesk.Also, UKRI Events who will assist with setting up and delivering our information webinars.  **Academic and non-academic community:**   * Selected early career researchers within and beyond academia in disciplines related to the strategic priorities of IROs. * The employers of these researchers. * Academic supervisors of researchers (e.g. those supporting completing PhD students). * IROC and the wider Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museum (GLAM) sector.   There are two aspects to this equality impact assessment:   * Ensuring that the publicity and awareness raising, submission of EoI forms, and awarding processes are free from unintentional bias. * Identifying and mitigating against any potential barriers to attendance and participation in the funding opportunity and its associated activities.   The scheme coordination and development team, working with AHRC and the IRO community, is committed to ensuring that the processes for the fellowship funding are open and inclusive. Those engaged in the process endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner and without prejudice or bias.  In line with this we adopt the following principles.  For applicants:   * The funding opportunity and its associated network-building activities are advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience within the relevant communities. * Participation in the scheduled townhall events and online matchmaking activities will be strongly encouraged but not mandatory, to ensure participation in the funding opportunity is not limited by applicant availability on specific days. A recording of at least one in person event will be made so that applicants who are unable to attend are not disadvantaged. * Named contacts for applicants at each participating IRO are identified, and their contact details made public, to ensure potential applicants receive a response to any questions or queries. * The funding opportunity text and guidance clearly state the eligibility and assessment criteria and the dates for townhall meetings, online matchmaking, deadlines for submissions of EoIs, deadline for submission to AHRC via a completed Je-S form. * All online materials conform to accessibility requirements for websites, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page. * All in person events conform to accessibility requirements of the attendees with clear opportunities at registration for attendees to make organisers aware of specific requirements. E.g. physical access; captioning/British Sign Language. * Virtual meetings are arranged using an appropriate platform that can be accessed by all potential attendees at no cost to them. * The cohort coordination and development team, AHRC and participating IROs provide support and advice to applicants both before and after submission of EoIs and full applications. Key contact details and respective roles and responsibilities are clearly accessible to ensure any additional needs to enable attendance or participation are met.   For Expression of Interest assessors (panel members at IROs):   * The cohort coordination and development team will ensure that processes adopted are consistent across all participating IROs. * The cohort coordination and development team will work closely with participating IROs to ensure that the membership of IRO EoI selection panels is diverse and is representative of the relevant stakeholders. * Everyone involved in the decision-making process will receive training in unconscious bias (delivered either locally through participating IROs or through scheme coordination and development team) to raise awareness of conditions that may impact on their decision making. * Panel members will be briefed throughout the EoI process about good practice in objective and safeguarding decision making. * The scheme coordination and development team will work closely with participating IROs to ensure that the format, duration and location of the assessment meetings and the venue itself (if face-to-face) are conducive to participation by a diverse range of people. * Virtual meetings are arranged using an appropriate platform that can be accessed by all panel members (Teams, Zoom) * Participation for people with flexible work patterns, including reduced working hours, will be facilitated.   For full application peer reviewers and moderating panel members:   * Full applications will be assessed by an AHRC-appointed peer-review and moderation panel process. For further details see AHRC-authored Equality Impact Assessment. |
| 1. **What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?** | The scheme coordination and development team will work with AHRC to monitor, analyse and publish data to better understand the diversity of our applicant community. During Phase 1 of the Fellowship the following actions will be taken:  1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion monitoring forms completed at three milestones: a) attendance at in person/online townhall events; b) submission of EoIs to Scheme Coordinator; c) submission of selected fellowship projects via Je-S. These milestones may be subject to revision during the project. This will be noted in Version Control below.  2. Post-event evaluation forms will be circulated to all in-person and online townhall attendees (December 2022 – January 2023).  3. An end-of-Phase 1 survey will be circulated to fellowship applicants and IROs to capture insights from all involved parties once the Expression of Interest phase has concluded, and Fellowships have been awarded. Through this end-of-phase evaluation process we will gather feedback about characteristics of the application process, if/how it met the applicants’ needs, as well as gather comments on how AHRC and the Scheme Coordinator could improve delivery of the scheme.  This data will be subject to a data-sharing agreement between the Scheme Coordinator, AHRC and participating IROs. We will analyse and report on the data following the completion of the Phase 1 (Q1 2023) and as a part of evaluating the fellowship scheme in its entirety (Q1 2026). |

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| **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 scheme coordination and development team recognize the broad spectrum of disability and as such appreciate that not every barrier can be anticipated.  In case of direct (i.e. in-person) interactions, participants with specific accessibility constraints may be disinclined to participate unless reasonable adjustments are made.  Neurodivergent participants may experience difficulties with concentration or when using electronic documentation.  Participants with disabilities may have specific dietary requirements. | The Scheme Coordinator and AHRC has designed the activities within Phase 1 to allow participation of disabled people. All venues selected for Townhall meetings will be physically accessible, and extra provision made available to any attendee with specific access requirements.  Online platforms of engagement and participation (e.g. Zoom/Teams) can remove physical constraints and enable greater accessibility for people with mobility issues. At least one in person townhall meetings will be livestreamed through such a platform during Phase 1, alongside three online only sessions. Due consideration will be given to the needs of people who find videoconferencing challenging (e.g. due to being neurodivergent or other reasons), and to any access requirement for proprietary/subscription-based software platforms.    Any travel and subsistence expenses which are incurred due to a disability can be requested from, and covered by, the scheme coordination and development team.  For in person events the scheme coordinator will ensure that:   * As a general principle, venues are easily accessible to main rail/air/bus links and easy to navigate * Meeting rooms are comfortable, and sessions are timetabled to allow for adequate breaks. * Venues are physically accessible, e.g. with level access   The scheme coordination and development team, AHRC and participating IROs will ensure that documentation produced during phase 1 (Townhall agendas; EoI forms; Assessment Criteria) is available in multiple formats e.g. Large font, captioning, audio description.  Venues will cater for all dietary requirements if notified in advance. |
| **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. | The scheme coordination and development team, AHRC and participating IROs will use gender-neutral language, e.g. pronouns such as ‘they’ or ‘you’ instead of ‘he/she’, in the funding opportunity documents, in the interim reporting and in the end-of-award reporting.  By publishing this EIA, we will also encourage participating IROs to use gender neutral language throughout their interactions.  We will ensure gender neutral facilities are available at townhall locations.  We encourage participating IROs 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](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/484855/The_recruitment_and_retention_of_transgender_staff-_guidance_for_employers.pdf)’.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| **Marriage or civil partnership** | No impact | The funding opportunity 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 their fellowship and temporarily live away from their home and partner. | Applicants and their host organisations should agree if there is a need to relocate in a way that’s sensitive to their family situation and civil partnership/marriage.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| **Pregnancy and parental/caring responsibilities.** | Possible negative  impact | Pregnant persons who are on parental leave, persons on parental leave, and persons who have a child/children or other caring responsibilities may miss the townhall meetings, online matchmaking events and application deadlines.  Pregnant persons and persons with caring responsibilities may require additional adjustments to enable participation in the fellowship scheme.  Career breaks in applicant track records due to parental leave or caring responsibilities may be seen as negative by assessment panels.  On the other hand, the flexible nature of the scheme makes it inclusive and might appeal particularly to persons with caring responsibilities or pregnant.  Dietary requirements may not be suitable for pregnant persons. | The scheme coordination and development team will provide clear details for participants to provide details of additional requirements for participation.  School holidays are taken into account where possible when timetabling the activities for this funding opportunity.  Expectations and dates for all aspects of the process are set out as far in advance as possible, allowing for preparation to cover any parental/caring responsibilities. A mix of online and in person events is planned to enable flexibility.  For in person events the scheme coordinator will ensure that:   * As a general principle, venues are easily accessible to main rail/air/bus links and easy to navigate. * Meeting rooms are comfortable, and sessions are timetabled to allow for adequate breaks.   Guidance is provided to panels to ensure appropriate assessment of applicant track record without bias against career breaks due to parental leave/caring responsibilities. Part-time fellowships will be offered.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.    Venues will cater for all dietary requirements if notified in advance. |
| **Race** | No impact | This funding opportunity is open to candidates of all ethnic backgrounds. The scheme coordination and development team, AHRC and participating IROs designed the funding opportunity to be flexible to make it inclusive and accessible. We are aware of under-representation of some minority ethnic groups in the fields covered by this pilot funding opportunity and a risk that the awards might reflect this under-representation. | There is a risk of low representation of minority ethnic groups among the applicants and successful candidates. This might occur due to the channels used to advertise the funding opportunity and is impossible to predict as this is a pilot. 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.  At the EoI stage, host IROs will be able to select a second project to take forward to a full application if:  “the additional application is being submitted as a part of efforts to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), for example applications involving high quality candidates with characteristics that are under-represented in the sector”.  The additional application will be required to meet the quality criteria outlined in the EoI selection criteria.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, the scheme coordination and development team will support host organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| **Religion or belief** | Possible negative  impact | Potential candidates or participating IRO staff 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. | The scheme coordinator and development team, AHRC and participating IROs ensures that religious observances are considered as much as possible when timetabling major activities.  Venues will cater for all dietary requirements if notified in advance.  Townhall meetings will be recorded, and a recording published online for the benefit of candidates unable to watch the webinars live, including candidates who might be on leave due to religious events.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host 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. | The scheme coordinator and development team, AHRC and participating IROs give a great flexibility to design fellowship projects to allow participation of persons of all sexual orientations.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| **Sex (gender)** | Potential negative impact | See ‘Pregnancy and maternity’.  Another gender-specific barrier might occur if a candidate is going through the menopause at the point of applying, 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 funding opportunity being live – five months – is generous and should allow inclusivity. We have also published a pre-announcement in May 2022 to inform any potential applicants about this opportunity in advance. Applicants and participating IROs have a great flexibility to design the fellowship project to allow participation of all sexes and genders. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and we set up a generous bracket of 1 to 3 years.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.  The scheme coordination and development team, AHRC and participating IROs will use gender-neutral pronouns such as ‘you/they’ instead of ‘he/she’ in the funding opportunity documents and reporting. By publishing this EIA, we also want to encourage secondees and their receiving 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 who qualify as Early Career Researchers. | The scheme is open to early career researchers from a wide range of adult age groups. We do not define early career by age. Applicants are encouraged to consult the definition of ECR in the Funding Finder call description.  Applicants and their host organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the host organisation and inspired by UKRI’s policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |

**Evaluation:**

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| **Question** | **Explanation / justification** | |
| Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people? | It is the first time the fellowship scheme has run. Therefore, there is a risk of unanticipated/ unintended issues arising, which is a part of the rationale for treating this funding opportunity as a pilot. A risk exists because the scheme is open for a wide range of candidates who qualify as early career researchers, who will be working with a wide range of organisations, and IROs and GLAM sector organisations who will host the fellows and be fellowship partners may have varying levels of experience in supporting EDI.  This risk is mitigated as follows:   * Through the pre-announcement, information townhalls and online matchmaking, and advertising through a wide range of channels * Through the use of standard UKRI fEC Grants Terms and Conditions which provide flexibility. * Through the piloting of the narrative CV (‘Resume for researchers’) instead of standard CVs in order to provide applicants from diverse backgrounds and career histories with opportunities to highlight their achievements of relevance to the role (in line with the [‘Funders Joint Statement: Exploring a Shared Approach Towards a Narrative CV’](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/UKRI-230721-4995CommsResumeJointFundersStatement-Final.pdf) signed by UKRI in 2021) * Through the assessment panel process which will work according to UKRI’s equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) guidelines, and ensure that all proposed secondments are in line with EDI principles * Assessors at the EoI and full application stage will attend mandatory AHRC Peer Review College training materials covering EDI, which uses the Royal Society's unconscious bias training. Any off-college reviewers are required to read AHRC EDI PRC training materials on [our website](https://ahrc.ukri.org/peerreview/peer-review-resources/). * When assessment panel meetings at IROs are organised, the scheme coordination and development team will make the panellists aware of unconscious bias and empower everyone in attendance to challenge cases of bias.   The scheme coordination and development team and the AHRC expects the participating IROs to support potential and successful fellowship applicants with diverse needs before and at the point of application. | |
| **Final Decision:** | **Tick the relevant box** | **Include any explanation / justification required** |
| 1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will **proceed**. |  |  |
| 1. You can decide to **stop** the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups |  |  |
| 1. You can **adapt or change** the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias | X | The opportunity advertised through this funding opportunity has been designed to be flexible to accommodate diverse needs.  Possible barriers have been identified and activities have been adapted as far as possible. The scheme coordination and development team welcome engagement from the affected community to understand further barriers and will make reasonable adjustments where possible.  The scheme coordination and development team will provide reasonable adjustments during the seven planned networking events if needed, and a separate EIA for events will be produced if attendees have specific needs.  The Scheme Coordinator will review this EIA at quarterly intervals for the duration of the project and make adjustments where required. |
| 1. 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. |  |  |

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| **Will this EIA be published\* Yes/Not required**  (\*EIA’s should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. funding opportunity and events) | **Yes** |
| **Date completed:** | 19/10/2022 |
| **Review date** (if applicable): | **N/A** |

**Change log/version control**

| **Name** | **Date** | **Version** | **Change** |
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| Dr Oliver Cox on behalf of the Cohort Coordination and Development Team. | 19/10/2022 | 1 | First publication |