



EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Quantum Computing Algorithms, Verification and Theory
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>This call aims to develop the theoretical capabilities required to develop improved quantum computing architectures to ensure that the UK has the capabilities required to exploit these technologies effectively.</p> <p>Up to £6,000,000 is available to fund research projects up to 22 months in duration.</p>
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Alignment with National Quantum Technology Programme strategy, consultation within the EPSRC Quantum Technology team and the NQCC, consultation with the research community.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	Quantum Technology research community
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>There will be annual reporting requirements for all grants funded through this activity.</p> <p>The assessment process has been designed to ensure unconscious bias is minimised and managed.</p>

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	Potential Negative Impact	<p>For applicants – all information provided is in a written format.</p> <p>Short deadlines</p> <p>Attendance of panel meeting</p>	<p>Application form produced in black and white and in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines.</p> <p>All key dates will be provided in advance.</p> <p>Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling.</p> <p>EPSRC presence at assessment meetings acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</p>
Gender reassignment	Potential negative impact	Gender specific language within communications.	<p>Gender neutral language will be used throughout call documentation.</p> <p>Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation.</p> <p>EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</p>

Marriage or civil partnership	No known positive or negative impact		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative impact	<p>Fixed end date</p> <p>Short deadlines</p> <p>Additional requirements for those with caring responsibilities or pregnancy for application/ peer review/ panel meetings.</p>	<p>Standard Research Council Terms and conditions will apply with regards to parental leave. Applicants may request extensions in exceptional circumstances line with the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>EPSRC have considered the time frames for this activity and it will remain open for the longest time possible. The call must be conducted in this time. Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to participate in panel meetings on what would normally be a non-working day or work extended hours on a normal working day. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at a panel. Further details on the support EPSRC will offer for those with caring responsibilities can be found here.</p> <p>Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or</p>

			caregivers when travelling.
Race	No known positive or negative impact.		
Religion or belief	Potentially negative impact	Participation could be affected by coincidence with religious holidays	<p>EPSRC have considered the time frames for this activity and it will remain open for the longest time possible to allow for those observing major religious holidays.</p> <p>EPSRC endeavours to select meeting dates that are cognisant of major holidays.</p>
Sexual orientation	No known positive or negative impact.		
Sex (gender)	No known positive or negative impact	Statistically more females have caring responsibilities and may be more affected by the short time scales involved in this call.	<p>Where caring responsibilities affect the return of reviews, PI response or interview attendance, extensions and adjustments will be made where possible.</p> <p>There will be at least a 30% membership of the under-represented gender for all panels occurring during this call.</p> <p>EPSRC have considered the time frames for this activity and it will remain open for the longest time possible. The call must be conducted in this time.</p>

			Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to participate in panel meetings on what would normally be a non-working day or work extended hours on a normal working day. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at a panel. Further details on the support EPSRC will offer for those with caring responsibilities can be found here .
Age	No known positive or negative impact	Track record section is required as part of the proposal, which could potentially be a disadvantage to early career researchers. More established researchers may already have a wider network than early career researchers.	This opportunity is open and equally available to any researchers eligible for funding with the relevant expertise regardless of their age or career stage. Peer review process and guidance for reviewers/panel members aims to prevent bias against protected characteristics.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	no		

Additional comment: EPSRC recognises that we are in an unprecedented situation as a result of COVID-19. There is awareness that this situation is rapidly evolving, and we will do our best to accommodate any changes as they occur.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification
----------	-----------------------------

Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Several risks have been identified that could potentially have a negative impact on the applicants, however, the proposed mitigating actions have sought to address these to minimise any unfair disadvantage.	
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	✓	Possible risks and biases associated with the call have been identified and mitigation has been put in place. ED&I aspects will be considered throughout the lifetime of the scheme and this EIA will be reviewed accordingly. Proposed mitigating actions have sought to minimise and remove bias where possible.
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 (*EIAs should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
Date completed:	21/11/2022
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Liam Boyle	When published	1	