

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>BBSRC STFC Facility access funding for bioscience partnerships (Launch webinar, application process and peer review panel)</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>This proposal presents a £1.1m CR&D investment from BBSRC and STFC to facilitate access for bioscience business-academic partnerships to STFC facilities in the UK, to solve industrially relevant challenges.</p> <p>Overall, the ambition is to support businesses and academic researchers to undertake collaborative research and development (R&D) which is focused on solving industrially-relevant research and innovation challenges. This will be through engaging with the unique national capabilities and facilities at STFC.</p> <p>These collaborations will be supported in accessing and working with STFC's large scale facilities, advanced analytical technologies, and high-performance computing or data expertise.</p> <p>The programme provides support and access to advanced analytical technologies, expertise, and capabilities, located at STFC's large scale science facilities around the UK including Harwell, and Daresbury.</p>
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</p>	<p>This is a pilot programme which we plan to modify and improve in the future if we run future calls.</p> <p>Consultations were held with STFC to understand the baseline data of bioscience users of the facilities, identifying that they are underrepresented as users compared to other sectors.</p> <p>The call aligns with BBSRC and STFC strategic delivery plans (STFC – aim 6, BBSRC – innovations pillar and ambitions)</p> <p>We have consulted recent Equality Impact Assessments conducted for relevant BBSRC calls and schemes.</p>

	<p>For Applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The call is advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience</i> • <i>STFC/BBSRC will make available hard copies of documents when required</i> • <i>The STFC/BBSRC website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites</i> • <i>STFC/BBSRC will support Applicants throughout the process, from pre-submission right through to informing them of the outcome.</i> <p>For Panel Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-meeting discussions take place, STFC/BBSRC staff will work closely with the Panel Chair to agree approaches that are designed to minimise opportunities for bias and improve transparency of the decision making process</i> • <i>A presentation on Objective Decision making will be presented reminding panel members of the roles and responsibilities required for them and office staff and to highlight best practice.</i> • <i>STFC/BBSRC will ensure that assessment criteria are clear and easily accessible throughout the process, including at the meeting.</i> • <i>Everyone involved in the decision-making process is aware of Unconscious Bias and encouraged to undertake training.</i> • <i>STFC/BBSRC endeavour to achieve the minimum 30% female participation and will justify if this isn't the case.</i> • <i>STFC/BBSRC enable participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours</i> • <i>Panel members are asked to inform STFC/BBSRC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation</i> • <i>STFC/BBSRC will schedule appropriate breaks and provide refreshments for Panel members</i>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>Short term - Panel members and applicants to the funding call, reviewers, BBSRC/STFC/UKRI staff.</p> <p>Long-term – Public, Businesses, Academics, project staff and students.</p>

<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>Academic research outcomes and impacts will be collected through ResearchFish and gathered by the team within BBSRC and STFC.</p> <p>An independent evaluation of the initiative may be commissioned after all awards are completed</p> <p>The protected characteristics voluntarily submitted by applicants during the submission process will be monitored.</p>
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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)
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Potentially negative</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Launch event) potential difficulties understanding discussion for those with hearing/visual impairment. 2. (Panel/comms) potential difficulties with concentration for attendees with neuro-disabilities. 	<p>All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support. BBSRC will make reasonable adjustments, where possible, to support individual needs.</p> <p>We recognise that disability has a diverse spectrum, and provide the following as examples of reasonable adjustments that can be made.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch event will be held online via Zoom (limiting venue-based accessibility issues.) 2. Closed captioning (cc) can be arranged for hearing impaired panel members. <p>Additional support can be provided to visually impaired panel members upon request – including appropriate use of colour/text size in all guidance documents/presentations.</p>

			<p>3. we will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the any proposed activity, including the launch event, and panel meetings. Supporting communications will be recorded and/or shared online, with capacity to share modified versions for specific needs at request (cc/changed colour/text size)</p> <p>4. Alternatively, BBSRC will provide a printed version of documentation/ guidance to anyone who is unable to view/complete it online.</p>
Gender reassignment	No known negative impact		<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC/BBSRC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impact		<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC/BBSRC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to</p>

			ensure unbiased peer review.
Pregnancy, maternity/paternity, parenting and childcare responsibilities	Potentially negative	<p>1. (Launch event) potential difficulties attending launch event</p> <p>2. (Panel) potential difficulties in managing early childcare responsibilities during in person Panel meetings. Panels not planned to be held in school holidays</p> <p>3. (Applicants) potential difficulties in preparing EOI application within the application period The call closes on January 6th – 3 working days after the end of national christmas holidays.</p> <p>4. Applicants may feel uncomfortable applying knowing that they are going on parental leave soon.</p>	<p>1. Launch event will be held online via Zoom (limiting venue-based accessibility issues.)</p> <p>2.a We will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the launch event and panel meetings, and can ensure that panel member participation is scheduled according to childcare responsibilities.</p> <p>2.b Financial support will be available to support childcare costs on the day of the panel meeting upon request</p> <p>3. Within the confines of the budget spend requirements, the funding opportunity has been designed to allow the maximum possible time application window. EOI stage is open for 6 weeks to allow extra time to write applications.</p> <p>4. UKRI policy ensures that grant extensions, and movement of start dates are available to individuals who have been on and/or are going on maternity/parental leave.</p>
Race	No known negative impact		Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC/BBSRC staff presence during meetings acts as an

			additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.
Religion or belief	Potentially negative	<p>Key dates for the call coincide with some religious (and public) holidays.</p> <p>The following holidays/observances fall whilst the EOI is open:</p> <p>30 Nov Wednesday St Andrew's Day Local Bank Holiday Scotland</p> <p>8 Dec Thursday Feast of the Immaculate Conception Observance, Christian</p> <p>19 Dec Monday First Day of Hanukkah Jewish Holiday</p> <p>21 Dec Wednesday December Solstice Season</p> <p>24 Dec Saturday Christmas Eve Observance, Christian</p> <p>25 Dec Sunday Christmas Day Bank Holiday</p> <p>26 Dec Monday Last day of Hanukkah Jewish Holiday</p> <p>26 Dec Monday Boxing Day Bank Holiday</p> <p>27 Dec Tuesday Substitute Bank Holiday for Christmas Day Bank Holiday</p>	Extra time has been allowed for the EOI stage to provide extra time around the holidays in December and January. EOI is a much shorter application - not as extensive as full stage.

		<p>31 Dec Saturday New Year's Eve Observance</p> <p>1 Jan Sunday New Year's Day Bank Holiday</p> <p>2 Jan Monday New Year's Day observed Bank Holiday</p> <p>3 Jan Tuesday 2nd January (substitute day) Local Bank Holiday Scotland</p> <p>5 Jan Thursday Twelfth Night Observance, Christian</p> <p>6 Jan Friday Epiphany Observance, Christian</p> <p>The following holidays/observances fall whilst the full stage is open:</p> <p>7 Jan Saturday Orthodox Christmas Day Observance, Orthodox</p> <p>14 Jan Saturday Orthodox New Year Observance, Orthodox</p> <p>22 Jan Sunday Lunar New Year Observance</p> <p>25 Jan Wednesday Burns Night Local Observation Scotland</p> <p>6 Feb Monday Tu B'Shevat (Arbor Day)</p>	
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Sexual orientation	No known negative impact		Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC/BBSRC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.
Sex (gender)	No known negative impact		Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are

			reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC/BBSRC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.
Age	No known negative impact		Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC/BBSRC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Some groups may be disadvantaged but mitigations have been put in place. Support will be provided to individuals where they are identified.	
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	This activity will include mitigating actions to attempt to eliminate bias. We have also discussed the potential barriers with Equality, Diversity and Inclusions teams within BBSRC to understand potential barriers before designing the processes.

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:	December 2022
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
	When published	1	