

**Equality Impact Assessment – Protected and Controlled Environment (PACE) Horticulture**

Question	Response
<p><b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b></p>	<p>Protected and Controlled Environment (PACE) Horticulture</p>
<p><b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b></p>	<p>The aim of the PACE Horticulture competition is to advance excellent bioscience related to the challenges facing the production of fruit, vegetable and fresh produce crops in protected and controlled environment. The competition will fund innovation-focused research grants that include in-kind and cash contributions from project partners.</p> <p>Applicants should address the challenge areas described on the competition funding page. Received proposals will progress to an assessment panel. Panel members use their own knowledge and experience to evaluate the proposal against set assessment criteria. Following this they rank the proposals to make funding recommendations.</p>
<p><b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g., with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b></p>	<p>Consultation with the academic and industry research community through workshops and meetings with individual stakeholders to understand research needs and generate ideas for the competition scope.</p> <p>Consultation with UKRI-BBSRC Strategy Advisory Panel for Sustainable Agriculture and Food to finalise the competition scope.</p> <p>Consultation with a member of UKRI-BBSRC's Equality and Inclusion Policy Group to review the EIA.</p> <p>Consultation with BBSRC Appointments Board to review the membership of the assessment panel to ensure a balance of appropriate expertise and representation.</p> <p>Consultation with UKRI-BBSRC teams that manage standard grant mechanisms, including Responsive Mode, to learn from good practice.</p> <p>Maintenance of two-way channels of communication between UKRI-BBSRC and stakeholders.</p> <p>Learning from good practice in objective decision making and interview processes from across UKRI, supported by external independent advice.</p>
<p><b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>Applicants to the PACE Horticulture competition, Assessment Panel Members and Chairs, the UKRI-BBSRC secretariat and employees working on the call.</p>
<p><b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>UKRI-BBSRC monitors, analyses and publishes data to better understand the diversity of our applicant and assessor community.</p> <p>UKRI-BBSRC is proactive in appointing a diversity of reviewers to our Assessment Panels. Panel membership for each meeting is published on the website after the funding decisions have been made.</p> <p>Further information: <a href="https://bbsrc.ukri.org/about/equality-diversity/">https://bbsrc.ukri.org/about/equality-diversity/</a>We welcome feedback from applicants and assessors on any unforeseen barriers to inclusion and we consider this when reviewing our EIAs.</p>
<p><b>6. Are there general or overarching impacts on multiple groups? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or</b></p>	<p>UKRI-BBSRC is dedicated to ensuring that the processes for Managed Mode funding are open and inclusive. Those engaged in the processes endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner and without prejudice or bias. In line with this we adopt the following principles:</p>

<b>reduce/mitigate negative impact?</b>	<p>For applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The call is advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience</li> <li>• The call text and guidance clearly state the eligibility and assessment criteria</li> <li>• The UKRI-BBSRC website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page</li> <li>• UKRI-BBSRC supports applicants as much as possible, both before and after submission, to assist them in the application and assessment process.</li> </ul> <p>For assessors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone involved in the decision-making process has had training in Unconscious Bias to raise awareness of conditions that may impact on their decision-making</li> <li>• UKRI-BBSRC is committed to enabling participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours</li> <li>• UKRI-BBSRC provides a geographic spread of meeting locations as much as possible when face-to-face meetings are held, rather than virtual meetings</li> <li>• Assessment Panel members are asked to inform UKRI-BBSRC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation</li> </ul> <p>UKRI-BBSRC provides regular training and guidance on new or revised ways of working.</p> <p><b>Unconscious bias</b></p> <p>In addition to the above, steps have been taken to minimise the potential impact of unconscious bias on the assessment processes. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair and deputies to attend briefing meeting, where unconscious bias will be covered</li> <li>• Panel to receive a briefing on Methods of Working and objective decision making (by webinar and documentation)</li> <li>• Note regarding unconscious bias included in the Chair's brief</li> <li>• Safeguarding decision making and unconscious bias are explained again at the beginning of the Virtual Meeting, and prior to the ranking session.</li> <li>• No applicant names are shown on the ranking list during the ranking session.</li> </ul>
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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)
<b>Disability</b>	Potential for negative impact	<p>Impact varies depending on types of disability which may include neurological, visual, auditory, or other physical disability.</p> <p>Appreciating the breadth of neurodiversity, we recognise that some applicants and panel members may find it difficult to access and view electronic documentation or experience difficulties with concentration</p>	<p>UKRI-BBSRC will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather information from meeting participants about any additional requirement they may need to fully participate</li> <li>• respond to individual support needs on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• ensure that electronic information is accessible</li> <li>• ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda</li> <li>• allow for potential use of screen readers for participants who are</li> </ul>
	Potential for negative impact		

		Panel members with physical disabilities may find it difficult to access a physical meeting venue and / or participate in the meeting if the assessment venue cannot cater for their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visually impaired</li> <li>ensure that colours chosen, and other visual stimuli do not trigger migraines or affect those with colour blindness; different colours may assist with this if participants do not bring their own laptops</li> <li>use a virtual meeting format and Discussion boards following UKRI's Virtual-first policy</li> <li>consider a return to accessible face-to-face meetings based on business needs, following UKRI's Virtual-first policy</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Neutral	<p>There are no UKRI-BBSRC data with which to assess this characteristic currently. UKRI is working to improve the data we hold on trans staff in our community.</p> <p>Some general impacts have been considered:</p> <p>Gender identities should not be assumed</p>	<p>Zoom meeting attendees can use the option to display their preferred pronouns if they feel comfortable to do so. Gender neutral pronouns (they/them) will be used when preferred pronouns have not been provided.</p> <p>Gender neutral language is used in materials.</p>
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	Neutral	Neutral	N/A
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Potential for negative impact	<p>Panel members who are pregnant/ on maternity or have child or other caring responsibilities may be discouraged from participating in Panel meetings.</p> <p>Career breaks in applicant track records due to parental leave or caring responsibilities may be seen as negative by the panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKRI-BBSRC will use a virtual meeting format and Discussion boards following UKRI's Virtual first policy</li> <li>UKRI-BBSRC consults with all participants to understand and cater for their requirements for participation</li> <li>UKRI-BBSRC allows panel members to claim expenses for reasonable childcare costs during the panel meeting</li> <li>Guidance to be provided to the panel to ensure appropriate assessment of applicant track record without bias against career breaks due to parental leave/caring responsibilities and others</li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	Potential for a negative impact	It is important that selection of panel members and peer reviewers is from a diverse community which represents the community and UK as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKRI-BBSRC will monitor the diversity of panel members to ensure representation of the community and a diversity of opinion</li> </ul>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potential for negative impact	Panel members may be unable to participate in panel meetings due to religious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKRI-BBSRC ensures that religious observances are considered as much as possible</li> </ul>

		observances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when timetabling major activities.</li> <li>When applicable, UKRI-BBSRC ensures that the venue caters for all dietary requirements</li> <li>We acknowledge that Eid al-Adha takes place during the application stage of the call, and have ensured sufficient time either side of this observance to enable submission of applications.</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Neutral	Neutral	N/A
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Potential for negative impact	There is an uneven gender split in the community of applicants and the Pool of Experts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKRI-BBSRC will monitor the diversity of panel members to ensure representation of the community and a diversity of opinion</li> <li>To avoid potential unconscious bias, first names and titles of applicants will not be used during virtual meeting discussions</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	Neutral	Neutral	N/A

<b>Additional Characteristic/Group</b>	<b>Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?</b>	<b>Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used</b>	<b>Action to address negative impact (e.g., adjustment to the policy)</b>
<b>Caring responsibilities</b>	Potential for negative impact	Panel members applicants and may find it difficult to participate if they have caring responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKRI-BBSRC ensures that school holidays are considered where possible when timetabling discussion boards and virtual meetings.</li> <li>Expectations and dates for all aspects of the process are set out as far in advance as possible, allowing for preparation for participants to cover any caring responsibilities.</li> <li>Where possible, UKRI-BBSRC aims to schedule meetings in standard working hours.</li> <li>UKRI-BBSRC will pay the cost of additional caring responsibilities incurred while on UKRI-BBSRC business.</li> </ul>

**Evaluation:**

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Potential for discrimination or negative impact has been assessed and actions to address negative impacts are being implemented	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .		
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can <b>adapt or change</b> the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias	✓	Care has been taken to mitigate identified barriers as indicated above. We encourage individuals to contact us with any unforeseen barriers and are prepared to make reasonable adjustments to our processes to mitigate their impact.
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 <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g., calls and events:	Yes
<b>Date completed:</b>	27/04/2023
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	27/04/2023

**Change log**

Name	Date	Version	Change
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