Equality Impact Assessment

	Question	Response
1.	**Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed**	AHRC Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science (RICHeS) Call Host collections as part of our heritage science infrastructure
2.	**Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event**	This is an opportunity to apply for funding to support access to reference collections as part of the national research infrastructure. All eligible institutions are welcome to apply. Successful applicants will enable access to collections of objects, samples, records and data for a wide range of users, to catalyse new collaborative research projects and amplify the impact of heritage science research. Users of reference collections and data will be able to bid for funding to support the costs associated with accessing the infrastructure, including travel and subsistence, lab costs and consumables, and insurance for moving objects or equipment. Successful candidates to this call will receive applications from users bidding for this funding and will be asked to comment on the feasibility of the proposed research, and its appropriateness to their facilities, collections and expertise. In addition to this opportunity, two additional calls for RICHeS have been launched concurrently. These consist of a call to host facilities as part of the RICHeS infrastructure, and a call to develop digital research services. These opportunities can be found on the UKRI Funding Finder.
3.	**What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	RICHeS 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 an Expression of Interest stage and scoping work/analysis undertaken by two policy and evidence fellows. RICHeS has had further stakeholder engagement, including regular meetings with the National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF), a Project Board and series of community engagement events. RICHeS also builds on the achievements of AHRC's Capability for Collections (CapCo) and Creative Research Capability (CResCa) programmes, which have increased heritage

		science capabilities within individual institutions. Through creating a headquarters for strategic leadership, building a network of facilities and expertise and building a digital portal, RICHeS now seeks to build on this success to drive a step-change in UK heritage science capability.
4.	**Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?**	Heritage science and conservation community, namely HEIs, IROs, GLAM sector organisations, as well as their users and stakeholders.
5.	**What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?**	Monitoring will be undertaken by the Infrastructure Headquarters (IHQ), based at Daresbury Laboratory. The IHQ will provide operational and programme management, as well as administrative support to RICHeS. Due to the scale and complexity of this funding opportunity, additional guidance and support will be given by IHQ to ensure the delivery of the Digital research Service. Monitoring activities are designed to provide assurance that the project is being implemented and operating as planned. Initially, monthly reporting against agreed milestones and specifications will be expected. This will eventually move to quarterly reporting against agreed KPIs to track the type and quantum of inputs, activities and outputs associated with each project component.

Additionally, AHRC is commissioning a process evaluation, to evaluates the processes used to commission and implement the project, enabling lessons to be learnt regarding effectiveness and efficiency. An external Impact evaluation to evaluate what impact the project might have had, where, for whom, when and how is also planned, alongside a baseline assessment of the heritage science community, in terms of funding, collaboration, innovation and access.

Monitoring will be the responsibility of IHQ (in conjunction with AHRC) which will then report to the Programme Board. Evaluation will be undertaken by external experts, to coincide with when the main project components have been awarded and approvals granted. |

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	AHRC and UKRI gives the applicants and partner organisation a great flexibility to design the

		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. Documents and materials need to be accessible.	project to allow participation of disabled people. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements. AHRC strongly encourages all applicants to design their projects/prepare 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. Improvements to the findability, usability and interoperability of data and resources may benefit users with disabilities by providing greater levels of access, including virtual or digital access to collections and data. 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	AHRC will use gender-neutral language, e.g.

| | | 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. | 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 | 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. |

		and partner. Data on participant's marital or partnership status will not be sourced.	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 maternity 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.	AHRC and UKRI gives the applicants a great flexibility to design the project to allow participation of pregnant persons. Principal Investigators and staff involved in the project will be entitled to maternity 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 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	Every UKRI funding opportunity 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. heritage science and aaisk 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. 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 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, and to a wide range of potential project partners. 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.

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**.	x	
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	We are aware that some potential applicants may miss the deadline for the funding opportunity due to maternity leave or religious reasons, however we have tried to mitigate this by having the call remain open for three months. There is no other proportionate way to manage this, so we will proceed with caution.

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:	23.06.23
Review date (if applicable):	01.09.23

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