



**EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment**

Question	Response
<b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b>	EPSRC Strategic Technical Platforms. This is a call for full proposals following an outline stage.
<b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b>	To allocate up to £6.5m for up to 5 projects to provide structured support for the training, development and wider outreach of Research Technical Professionals within the RTP remit.
<b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b>	This call and panel are the first phase of an activity to promote RTPs and their development. EPSRC has had active engagement with the RTP Community for the last four years, and the plans for this call were discussed with the Capital Infrastructure SAT, who endorsed them.
<b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	RTPs in the UK research community working within the EPSRC remit. EPSRC staff.
<b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	<p>The call will be open to applicants who successfully passed through the initial outline stage.</p> <p>Applications are welcome from any eligible UK-based researcher, though we would strongly encourage these activities to be RTP-led.</p> <p>Contact details will be provided alongside the call document.</p> <p>EPSRC will engage with all grant holders to identify successful outcomes.</p>

As a funder of research, EPSRC remains committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. The Research Councils have together developed the ambitious [RCUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#) to outline our collective aspirations for working with the research community, and partners throughout the sector. 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)
<b>Disability</b>	None identified		Applicants are not asked to disclose whether they have a disability. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	None identified		Applicants are not asked to disclose whether they have undergone gender reassignment.
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	None identified		Applicants are not asked to disclose their marital status. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Potentially negative	The outline process does not require virtual interview attendance, so there would not be any immediate issue, but successful outlines would be assessed at a virtual interview panel.	Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists in advance as early possible.  EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and

		Also a researcher on parental leave during the open call maybe unable to apply.	applicants will be made aware of these. Applicants are not asked to disclose pregnancy
<b>Race</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage individuals of specific race, if this is known to the panel.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their ethnicities; however panel members may be able to infer race through information that is provided, such as the applicant name.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potentially negative	Key dates (open call closing, interview) coinciding with specific religious festivals/ events could disadvantage specific religious groups	Ensure religious observances are taken into account when meeting dates are chosen. Ramadan will have finished once the call opens.  Applicants are not asked to disclose their religious beliefs
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	None identified	The outline panel will be based on prioritisation only. Unconscious bias on the part of panel members could potentially occur at the subsequent interview stage.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their sexual orientation. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage applicants on the basis of gender.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their gender. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.  In line with EPSRC policies, the assessment panel will be mixed gender.
<b>Age</b>	Potentially negative	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage applicants from specific age groups.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their age. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.  Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel

			<p>guidance and panel presentation.</p> <p>EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased assessment.</p>
<p><b>Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</b></p>	<p>Potentially negative</p>	<p>Due to the large number of outlines received, we will not be providing written feedback at the outline stage. A lot of applicants will be new to this process and may be disillusioned if their outline is unsuccessful</p>	<p>Run a fair, transparent outline process. Offer generic feedback to all applicants. Continue to engage with the community post panel, through visits, calls etc.</p>

## Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	No/unlikely. As this is an outline prioritisation panel there is little potential that issues around unconscious bias may be evident. All panels are briefed on unconscious bias and the situations in which bias can become more prevalent as a standard procedure.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .	Y	Ensure religious observances are taken into account when meeting dates are chosen. Ramadan will have finished once the call opens. There will be extra bank holidays in May due to the coronation
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		
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>	22/03/2023
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	n/a

## Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Tony Chapman	22/03/2023	1.0	Initial version