

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Sustainable Aquaculture Partnerships for Innovation
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<i>Sustainable Aquaculture Partnerships for Innovation</i> aims to develop solutions to key challenges impacting upon the sustainable growth of UK aquaculture as part of a sustainable, productive, diverse, resilient, and healthy agri-food system. The initiative will bring academia and businesses together to co-create and co-develop pilot and feasibility studies. It will strengthen the collaboration between UK's bioscience research base and the UK aquaculture sector, whilst enabling activities to de-risk and test innovations that are more sustainable, increase biodiversity and stimulate growth in UK aquaculture sector.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	This investment has been developed in collaboration with a range of key stakeholders across the breadth of aquaculture research and industry, together with consulting a range of sector reports and landscaping documents which have been published in the past five years, and via consultation with the Sustainable Agriculture and Food team's Strategic Advisory Panel.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	Short term – Applicants, panel members to the funding call and UKRI-BBSRC employees working on the opportunity Long-term – Public, Businesses, Policymakers, NGOs, project staff and students, and other related research users who may be involved as Project Partners and collaborators.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual	UKRI-BBSRC is committed to ensuring that the processes for funding are open, transparent and inclusive. Those persons engaged in the processes endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner and without prejudice or bias. There are three aspects to this equality impact assessment:

**impact of the
policy/funding
activity/event?**

- Ensuring that the submission, peer review and awarding processes are free from unintentional bias
- Ensuring the process enables rigorous assessment of this investment
- Identifying and addressing any potential barriers to attendance and participation in the peer review process by a diverse range of people.

In line with this we adopt the following principles:

For applicants

- The call is advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience
- A series of webinars are held prior to call launch and the closing date of the Registration Stage to inform potential applicants of the opportunity
- The call text and guidance clearly state the eligibility and assessment criteria and the key dates for applications and panel assessment
- 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
- UKRI-BBSRC and TFS provides support and advice to applicants both before and after submission and throughout the peer review process, if needed, to assist them in the application and assessment process

For assessors (panel members)

- UKRI-BBSRC ensures that the membership of the panel is diverse and is representative of relevant stakeholders and regions
- Everyone involved in the decision-making process will receive training in Unconscious Bias to raise awareness of conditions that may impact on their decision-making
- UKRI-BBSRC provides briefing to panel members throughout the assessment process about good practice in objective and safeguarding decision making
- UKRI-BBSRC ensures that the format, duration and location of the assessment meeting and the venue itself (if face-to-face) are conducive to participation by a diverse range of people
- Assessment meetings are structured and managed to ensure that the approach is consistent with appropriately scheduled breaks
- Virtual meetings are arranged using an appropriate platform that can be accessed by all panel members (Teams, Zoom)
- Where applicable, UKRI-BBSRC provides a geographic spread of meeting locations as much as possible

- UKRI-BBSRC is committed to enabling participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours
- Panel members are asked to inform UKRI-BBSRC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation
- UKRI-BBSRC provides regular training and guidance on new or revised ways of working, such as webinars, induction training, one-to-one training, Zoom/Teams functionality
- UKRI-BBSRC ensures that caring responsibilities are considered when organising panel meetings, for example not scheduling them during school holidays.

The activity will be monitored by the Business Interaction Unit in BBSRC. Award holder diversity data will be collected via TFS. Research outcomes will be collected via ResearchFish.

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	<p>This funding opportunity will be run on TFS, which is partially compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1. UKRI is currently assessing how best to fix the non-compliance issues of TFS. Read the full accessibility statement for TFS here.</p> <p>People with disabilities are under-represented in HESA academic staff (5%) compared to the general labour population (13%) and represent a smaller number of BBSRC grant applications. For BBSRC, UKRI diversity data suggests that applicants with known disabilities are no less likely than those without a disability to be awarded a grant as a PI, but slightly less likely as a</p>	<p>UKRI diversity data suggests that there are groups who are under-represented in BBSRC applicants and awards. Therefore, the call text will include reference to encouraging applicants from a diverse range of researchers and this will also be highlighted again at the webinar. Applicant data covering age, disability, gender and ethnicity are requested at the application stage. This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process but is used to monitor the inclusivity of the award.</p> <p>UKRI-BBSRC will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the use of a virtual meeting and the platforms used to facilitate this • We will ensure that closed captions are available for virtual meetings • ensure that electronic information is accessible • gather information from meeting participants about any access requirements they may have in order to fully participate • respond to individual support needs on a case-by-case basis. • ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda • allow for potential use of screen readers for participants who are visually impaired. <p>BBSRC panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. All BBSRC staff working on this funding opportunity will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process.</p>

		<p>Co-I.</p> <p>Impact varies depending on types of disability which may include neurological, visual, auditory, or other physical disability. Some examples of known barriers follow.</p> <p>Individuals with a visual disability may experience difficulty accessing call information</p> <p>Individuals with a physical disability may experience accessibility barriers in attending physical meetings</p> <p>Individuals with auditory disabilities should be supported to fully participate in assessment meetings</p>	<p>UKRI website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>potential negative</p>	<p>Call text and guidance should not be skewed towards a specific gender</p> <p>Action should be taken to avoid misgendering individuals</p>	<p>Gender neutral pronouns are used in text relating to the call and are expected to be used in applications.</p> <p>Panel members will be asked to display their preferred pronouns if they are comfortable to, minimising the risk of misgendering.</p>

			BBSRC will grant extensions to award holders in line with standard UKRI policies.
Marriage or civil partnership	No identified impact	Neutral	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential Negative	<p>Pregnant panel members may feel unable to attend an in-person panel meeting.</p> <p>Career breaks in an applicant's track record due to parental leave or caring responsibilities may be seen as negative.</p>	<p>For panel assessment: UKRI-BBSRC will use a virtual meeting format and Discussion Boards, following UKRI's Virtual first policy.</p> <p>BBSRC panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. All BBSRC staff working on this funding opportunity will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process.</p> <p>BBSRC will grant extensions to award holders in line with standard UKRI policies.</p> <p>Provision for parental leave are covered in the UKRI terms and conditions, and will be highlighted in the call document.</p>
Ethnicity	Potential negative	UKRI and BBSRC diversity data show that people identifying as black, Asian, mixed or other ethnicities represent a smaller number of applicants (although there are differences between whether ethnicities make up higher or lower than HESA or general labour average) and tend to have less successful	<p>UKRI diversity data suggests that there are groups who are under-represented in BBSRC applicants and awards. Therefore, the call text will include reference to encouraging applicants from a diverse range of researchers and this will also be highlighted again at the webinar. Applicant data covering age, disability, gender and ethnicity are requested at the application stage. This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process but is used to monitor the inclusivity of the award.</p> <p>BBSRC panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. All BBSRC staff working on this funding opportunity will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process.</p>

		award rates compared to those identifying as white	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Religious festivals have been considered in the timetable for this call.	UKRI-BBSRC ensures that religious observances are considered as much as possible when timetabling major activities and major religious holidays were checked in the development of the call's activities and timeline
Sexual orientation	Neutral	There are no UKRI data with which to assess this characteristic currently.	BBSRC panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. All BBSRC staff working on this funding opportunity will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process.
Sex (gender)	Potential negative	Women are under-represented in HESA academic staff compared to the general labour market and also have lower application rates, according to UKRI diversity data, compared to the HESA baseline. This appears to particularly be the case for BBSRC awards where on average, 26% of applicants are women compared to the HESA benchmark of 40%. Despite this under-representation of women at the application stage, there appears to be no difference in the award rate (30%) between men and women	UKRI diversity data suggests that there are groups who are under-represented in BBSRC applicants and awards. Therefore, the call text will include reference to encouraging applicants from a diverse range of researchers and this will also be highlighted again at the webinar. Applicant data covering age, disability, gender and ethnicity are requested at the application stage. This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process but is used to monitor the inclusivity of the award. BBSRC panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. All BBSRC staff working on this funding opportunity will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process.

<p>Age</p>	<p>Potential negative</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>UKRI diversity data suggests that there are groups who are under-represented in BBSRC applicants and awards. Therefore, the call text will include reference to encouraging applicants from a diverse range of researchers and this will also be highlighted again at the webinar. Applicant data covering age, disability, gender and ethnicity are requested at the application stage. This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process but is used to monitor the inclusivity of the award.</p> <p>BBSRC panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. All BBSRC staff working on this funding opportunity will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process.</p>
<p>Other (e.g. Parenting /Caring/ Guardianship responsibilities)</p>	<p>potentially negative</p>	<p>Reviewers, committee members and applicants may find it difficult to participate if they have caring responsibilities. Caring responsibilities fall disproportionately on women and therefore this is likely to interact with gender.</p>	<p>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. A pre-call announcement will be published in advance of the call opening, and the call launch webinar will be made available to view online after the event for anyone unable to attend live.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, UKRI-BBSRC aims to schedule meetings in standard working hours and this will be considered alongside time zone barriers. <p>The assessment panel will be held online to increase accessibility for panel members with caring responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For panel assessment: UKRI-BBSRC will pay the cost of reasonable caring responsibilities incurred while on UKRI-BBSRC business.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	A number of risks have been identified and considered in the process of developing this call. These risks have been mitigated as far as possible.	
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	X	Possible risks and bias have been identified and activities have been adapted as far as possible BBSRC acknowledges that there may be unforeseen barriers and encourage individuals to contact the office to arrange for further mitigations where appropriate
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		

<p>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.</p>		
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<p>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:</p>	<p>yes</p>
<p>Date completed:</p>	<p>05/09/2023</p>
<p>Review date (if applicable):</p>	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change