

Equality Impact Assessment

| Question | Response |
|---|--|
| 1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed | Mid-range equipment for biosciences research: ALERT 2023 |
| 2. Council/department/project team | BBSRC Research Infrastructure Team |
| 3. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event | <p>BBSRC is awarding significant capital investment into the research equipment and capability through the investment in equipment and technologies. This funding call is aimed at researchers and eligible institutions.</p> <p>The process involves a multidisciplinary panel-only peer review and assessment, which will lead to the awarding of funding to successful applicants and institutions. Additional considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALERT 2023 being publicised widely through accessible channels for example, social media platforms and on our website. • The UKRI website conforms to accessibility requirements, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page. • UKRI and BBSRC supports applicants as much as possible, both before and after submission, to assist them in the application and assessment process. • The new UKRI funding service has been designed with the aim of providing a more accessible, user-centred application process. |
| 4. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders) Provide a brief summary of the consultation, methods and outcomes. Detailed Outcomes for each group can be detailed in under the protected characteristic table. | <p>ALERT 2023 is directly linked to ALERT calls that have been held in previous years. Consultation with members of BBSRC Equality and Inclusion Policy Group on barriers to inclusion, participation, and potential bias in the decision-making process. Consultation with the BBSRC events management team will occur as there is potential for a “hybrid” panel meeting allowing both physical participation and virtual participation.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>5. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p> | <p>BBSRC's eligible Research Community wishing to apply to this opportunity. All external panel members and BBSRC staff taking part in the assessment process.</p> |
| <p>6. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p> | <p>BBSRC is dedicated to ensuring that the processes for all funding opportunities are open and inclusive. Those engaged in the processes endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner and without prejudice or bias.</p> <p>Consultations to adopt best practices in equality have been incorporated from other UKRI/BBSRC reviews, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKRI People and Teams action plan, which addresses how UKRI will deliver on our support for technicians and RTPs as a signatory of the Technician Commitment. • BBSRC's EDI Strategy, where a key action is to promote diverse representation in our assessment panels. <p>Other consultations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with the BBSRC events management team to ensure that the panel meetings allow attendance and participation from a diverse range of people. • Consultation with the UKRI Simpler and Better Funding (SBF) programme business partner for BBSRC on accessibility using the new UKRI funding service. <p>Panel members will receive a briefing on Methods of Working and objective decision making (for example, by webinar). Panel members will also be invited to inform BBSRC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation, and reasonable adjustments will be pursued where possible.</p> <p>For further information please visit our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion site</p> |

| Protected Characteristic Group | Is there a potential for positive or negative impact? | Please explain the impact including details of any evidence/data used | Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy) |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Disability | Potential for negative impact | <p>BBSRC recognises that disability has a diverse spectrum. Specific examples of barriers are provided below but are not intended to cover this spectrum in its entirety.</p> <p>Difficulties attending the launch webinar, meetings, or panels.</p> <p>Individuals who have a visual disability may find it difficult to access and view the electronic adverts, attend the webinar/meetings/panels, view online documentation, and/or complete the online application form.</p> <p>Potential for difficulties with concentration for individuals with neuro-disabilities.</p> <p>Potential difficulties for individuals with Dyslexia in terms of accessibility of written documents.</p> | <p>BBSRC encourages individuals to communicate their needs and will make reasonable adjustments where possible.</p> <p>The webinar/meetings/panels will be held on zoom as an alternative option for those not able to travel, preventing any venue-based limitations. The panel meeting venue (Polaris House) offers disability access and those with a disability who chose to attend the physical meeting are able to do so.</p> <p>Arrangement of closed captioning for those with hearing impairments at virtual meetings/events.</p> <p>Arrangement of appropriate colour/text will be arranged for those with visual impairments.</p> <p>Alternatively, BBSRC will provide a printed version of documentation or guidance to anyone who is unable to view/complete it online.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the communications (for example, from the launch webinar) will be recorded and shared online and modified versions can be shared upon request (cc, alternative font, font size, font colour)</p> <p>BBSRC will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into each activity (for example,</p> |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|---|
| | | | <p>comfort breaks and a substantial lunch break).</p> <p>Arrangements can be made upon request to provide documents in a format accessible to individuals with Dyslexia, for example written in the Dyslexie font.</p> |
| Gender reassignment (Trans identity) | No known negative impact | | |
| Marriage or civil partnership | No known negative impact | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Potentially negative impact | <p>Difficulties attending the webinar/meetings/panels.</p> <p>Requirement for regular breaks.</p> <p>Applicants may feel uncomfortable applying knowing that they are going on parental leave soon.</p> | <p>The panel webinar, and any other preliminary meetings will be available to join on zoom, preventing any venue-based limitations.</p> <p>The panel meetings will adopt a hybrid approach to maximise participation either virtually or in person.</p> <p>BBSRC will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into each activity (for example, comfort breaks and a substantial lunch break). Applicants can request a comfort break if required.</p> <p>UKRI policy ensures that grant extensions, and movement of start dates are available to individuals who have been on leave.</p> |
| Race | Potentially negative impact | It is important that selection of panel members is from a diverse community which represents the community and UK. | Diversity of panel members will be monitored to ensure representation of the community and a diversity of opinion. |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Religion or belief | Potential for negative impact | Key dates for the call could coincide with religious holidays. | Care has been taken to ensure that key call dates do not fall on cultural and religious holidays where possible. When applicable, BBSRC ensures that the panel meeting venue caters for all dietary requirements. |
| Sexual orientation | No known negative impact | | |
| Sex (gender) | Potentially negative impact | It is important that selection of panel members is from a diverse community which represents the community and UK. | Diversity of panel members will be monitored to ensure representation of the community and a diversity of opinion. To avoid potential unconscious bias, first names and titles of applicants will not be used during virtual meeting discussions |
| Age | No known negative impact | | |

| Additional diversity characteristics | Is there a potential for positive or negative impact? | Please explain the impact including details of any evidence/data used | Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy) |
|--|--|--|--|
| Geographical location (consider UK and international offices) | No known negative impact | | |
| Socio-economic status | No known negative impact | | |
| Education background | No known negative impact | | |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Parent/guardian responsibilities</p> | <p>Potential for negative impact</p> | <p>Potential difficulties with application preparation, meeting/panel preparation/attendance, completion of peer review activities, due to school holidays.</p> <p>Childcare management during webinar/meetings/panels, application writing, and preparation for panels.</p> | <p>Where possible meetings are scheduled within the times of a normal working day and outside of school holidays. Timings at meetings will be strictly adhered to.</p> <p>Features of the panel assessment period, such as the online discussion boards, have been implemented to allow for flexible working patterns required by our panel.</p> <p>UKRI Policy states that the cost of additional caring responsibilities while on BBSRC business can be reclaimed.</p> <p>Within the confines of the budget spend requirements, the funding opportunity has been designed to allow the maximum possible time during the application phase, whilst safeguarding robust and transparent peer review.</p> <p>The peer review stage is scheduled to take place within term time, with substantial time allocated for reviews to be completed</p> |
| <p>Carer/parent carer responsibilities</p> | <p>Potential for negative impact</p> | <p>Potential difficulties with application preparation, meeting/panel preparation/attendance, completion of peer review activities, due to school holidays.</p> <p>Childcare management during webinar/meetings/panels, application writing, and preparation for panels.</p> | <p>Where possible meetings are scheduled within the times of a normal working day and outside of school holidays. Timings at meetings will be strictly adhered to.</p> <p>Features of the panel assessment period, such as the online discussion boards, have been implemented to</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|---|
| | | | <p>allow for flexible working patterns required by our panel.</p> <p>UKRI Policy states that the cost of additional caring responsibilities while on BBSRC business can be reclaimed.</p> <p>Within the confines of the budget spend requirements, the funding opportunity has been designed to allow the maximum possible time during the application phase, whilst safeguarding robust and transparent peer review.</p> <p>The peer review stage is scheduled to take place within term time, with substantial time allocated for reviews to be completed</p> |
| Political opinion (Northern Ireland) | No known negative impact | | |

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. (See Annex 1 for template action plan) |
| 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 | Potential for negative impact has been evaluated. Actions to address negative impacts identified are being applied as per the previous section. |
| 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. | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events. Consider whether data might need to be redacted before publication) | Yes |
| Person completing EIA | Dr Tim Shuttleworth Dr Amelia Townley-Taylor |
| Responsible owner: | Dr Tim Shuttleworth |
| Date signed off by owner: | 9 November 2023 |
| Review date (if applicable): (An EIA is a live document and should regularly be reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity) | |

Change log

| Name | Date | Version | Change |
|---------------------|----------------|---------|--------|
| Dr Tim Shuttleworth | When published | 1 | |