



**UK Research
and Innovation**

UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form



*See guidance document for detailed support.

* Delete the guidance text in the response column when completing your EIA.

Overview of activity

	Response
Name of activity being assessed	Follow on Funding for Impact and Engagement: QTFP
Council/department/project team	STFC Programmes Directorate – Cross-cutting and International Programmes team
Aims and objectives of the activity	<p>This funding opportunity is to promote impact and engagement activities leading from a previously funded QTFP project.</p> <p>The objectives of the QTFP Programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish a new community to exploit quantum technology for fundamental physics • To generate research outputs deemed excellent by international peer review • To become an active part of the National Quantum Technology Programme (NQTP) • To create the opportunity in the UK for new patents, new products and start-up companies as a result of developing new or improved equipment that will be needed to support the scientific work programme <p>STFC is dedicated to ensuring that the peer review process is open and inclusive. Those engaged in the process endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner, without prejudice or bias, In line with this we follow the Nolan Principles. Additionally, comments and suggestions received as part of the peer review survey are implemented where possible to improve the process.</p> <p>The activities for running this opportunity in STFC are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advertising • application process, • building a panel • hosting panel meetings/interviews • Post award management <p>The following are the considerations/actions that we will take as standard Advertising:</p>

- The call is advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience including publishing on the UKRI Funding Finder
- The UKRI website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites
- The call will be advertised as soon as the key dates are known to allow applicants time to prepare ahead of the opening date, wherever possible

Application process:

- Guidance is provided to make the process for application clear. Assessment criteria is clearly identified.
- STFC will make available hard copies of documents when required
- STFC will support Applicants throughout the process, from pre-submission right through to informing them of the outcome.
- The UKRI Funding Service conforms to accessibility standards
- The call is open for a minimum of 8 weeks
- The call does not close over weekends and avoids closing soon after school holidays.

Building a panel:

- New panel members will be recruited for this call. Best practice from the EIA for STFC’s annual panel membership exercise will be followed.
- STFC will aim to achieve a gender balance which includes 30% of the under-represented group and will justify where this hasn’t been possible.

Hosting panel meetings/interviews:

- Pre-meeting discussions take place, STFC staff will work closely with the Panel Chair to agree approaches that are designed to minimise opportunities for bias and improve transparency of the decision making process
- A presentation on Objective Decision making will be presented reminding panel members of the roles and responsibilities required for them and office staff and to highlight best practice.
- STFC will ensure that assessment criteria are clear and easily accessible throughout the process, including at the meeting.
- Everyone involved in the decision-making process, including STFC staff, is aware of Unconscious Bias and encouraged to undertake training.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STFC endeavours to achieve the minimum 30% female participation on a panel. The panel membership for this call is not yet determined • STFC enables participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours • Panel members are asked to inform STFC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation including the option to join remotely • STFC will schedule appropriate breaks and provide refreshments for Panel members • STFC will take all care to avoid dates which might not be suitable eg due to religious celebrations to support diverse representation • Venue arrangements when required will be selected for ease of accessibility and will offer a full range of sensory accessibility relating to visual and hearing impairments. • Catering will be arranged with clear labelling and be appropriate to those who have specific cultural, religious, health or disability needs • STFC will reimburse additional caring costs, above any beyond that required during normal working hours. <p>Post award management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STFC/UKRI terms and conditions allow for flexibility such as extensions to awards to support individual who might, for example, need to take a period of extended leave • STFC/UKRI terms and conditions allow for additional funds to be sought at the end of an award to cover costs incurred above the grant award for parental leave and sickness. • STFC/UKRI terms and conditions allow for a grant holder to change organisations, where agreement can be made, to support career moves or personal need to relocate.
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	Staff, applicants, panel members, awardees, wider external and internal stakeholders
What data and consultation have you used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many UKRI policies and processes in place to ensure that our decision making process is robust and objective so there is generally not a need to consult where the standard process is being applied. • STFC panel members are asked to complete a survey after the peer review meeting which includes questions on bias and objective decision making. Any comments received (either

positive or negative) can be used to amend a process to improve the robustness of our decision making.

Analysing your impact

In addition to data gathering and consultation, the guidance materials should be used to assist in identifying impacts on different groups.

Are there **general or overarching impacts on multiple groups**? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact?

Although we will not share information on protected characteristics, in person meetings can inadvertently lead to stereotyping based on assumptions made regarding an individual's appearance etc. To help alleviate this, panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during panel meetings and interview acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.

To help enable inclusive participation in all elements of the process we will respond to specific requests from individuals wherever possible and encourage them to do so. General considerations that we will make are ensuring accessible venues, planning in regular breaks in meetings, allowing participation via Zoom, thinking about the timing of closing dates and meetings to avoid times which would be unfavourable to certain groups of people for example during religious festivals or over school holidays. It may be that this is not always possible but STFC will work with individuals to try and find solutions to allow participation.

We do not always have data available to support whether there are unintended impacts, negative or positive, relating to all of the characteristics so do not have evidence of whether these are happening. Our general approach, as detailed in the paragraph above, is intended to minimise impacts and improve EDI in our funding processes. Ensuring that we try to remove barriers should hopefully improve the inclusivity of our funding process and lead to a more diverse pool of applicants and those involved in the review period which is beneficial to all. It is, however, recognised that there is a need to engage with under-represented groups from a much earlier age which is less in our control and limits the impact that we can have.

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Protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit	Negative impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
	Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown			
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Panel members or reviewers may cite age in terms of lack of experience or in terms of near retirement which can bias discussions.</p> <p>UKRI diversity data for the FYs 2016/17 – 2021 show very few applicants to STFC under the age of 29, with the exception of Fellowships.</p> <p>The strategic nature of STFC funding and the mechanisms used can be complex and potentially off-putting for less experienced applicants.</p>	<p>See general impacts above. This funding opportunity allows early career researchers to lead projects.</p> <p>We also allow applicants who are retired to continue to lead projects where the host RO provides evidence that they agree to provide the required on-going support.</p>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The proportion of individuals applying for STFC funding that have disclosed a disability is small and the year-to-year success rate of those that have disclosed is very variable but generally in line with those that haven't disclosed or have stated that they do not have a disability. It's hard, therefore, to determine whether our process has an impact on disabled applicants.</p>	<p>There are a number of ways in which we support disabled individuals to be able to participate in meetings/interviews for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of video conferencing or equivalent tools, tailored timing of the meeting schedule, or provision of specific facilities to enable an applicant

				<p>or panel member to be comfortable in the meeting environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic information is accessible and STFC will investigate the ability for the potential use of screen readers for personnel who are visually impaired. STFC will respond to individual support needs on a case-by-case basis. • STFC will ensure the meeting venue is compatible with the use of hearing aid loops and will work with individuals to understand what other help can be provided. • STFC will select a room that is light and airy, ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda and ensure that colours chosen don't trigger migraines, different colours may assist in this if personnel don't bring their own laptops. <p>For virtual meetings this can also include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of screen readers, closed captioning, automatic transcripts and keyboard accessibility. Zoom follows the latest accessibility standards to ensure it is fully accessible for the latest screen readers. • More frequent breaks will be scheduled into the agenda to allow adequate time away from the screen. <p>STFC will also consult with all Panel members/interviewees/other attendees to</p>
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				understand any specific requirements for participation and will accommodate where required.
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We do not have data to evidence any impacts	See general impacts above
Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We do not have data to evidence any impacts	See general impacts above
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>We do not have data to provide evidence but are aware that there can be negative impacts in terms of participation in physical meetings or in meeting opportunity deadlines which fall within the period of maternity leave.</p> <p>An applicant's career path and track record may be criticised due to the existence of a number of career breaks due to maternity/paternity.</p>	<p>STFC allows part time working and extensions to awards to support periods of pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>STFC allows additional costs for childcare to be claimed for attending meetings and will also enable participation at meetings via Zoom, wherever possible.</p>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We do not have data to evidence any impacts	See general impacts above
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We do not have data to evidence any impacts	See general impacts above
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We do not have data to evidence any impacts	See general impacts above
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Although UKRI diversity data shows that the pool of female applicants is much smaller than that of males for STFC, the overall success rates between the sexes is not so significant with females and those who have chosen not to disclose having higher success rates than males in 2020/21.	See general impacts above

Continued below...



Additional characteristics

Additional characteristics	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit	Negative impact	Please explain the impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible).
	Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown			
Geographical location and place (consider UK and international offices)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We do not have usable data or evidence but there may be impact on geographical spread based purely on where the groups that we support are based.	It is difficult for us to address place where we have small communities based at certain ROs.
Socio-economic status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Education background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UKRI eligibility rules require an applicant to have academic status which automatically excludes those have not reached the level of education to hold such a position.	STFC are bound by UKRI eligibility rules but there are reasons why we need individuals of a certain academic level to be able to deliver the research that we fund.
Parent/guardian responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We have no evidence or data to support any impact but we appreciate that having caring responsibilities can affect an individuals ability to attend meetings or meet deadlines.	See general impacts above We will also cover any additional costs of childcare above that required for the usual working day,
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We have no evidence or data to support any impact but we appreciate that having caring responsibilities can affect an individual's ability to attend meetings or meet deadlines.	See general impacts above
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

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Evaluation

Final Decision:	Select the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No negative or positive impact identified; therefore, activity will proceed .	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Adapt or change the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Stop the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the activity (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore, you are going to proceed with caution with this activity knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	STFC has considerable experience in running funding opportunities in a fair, equal and open manner, in-line with UKRI guidelines. This opportunity will follow (and where appropriate build upon) existing best practice in order to mitigate as far as possible against any of the potential negative impacts identified in this document.

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Review and sign off

<p>What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?</p>	<p>An EIA is a live document and will be regularly reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After each funding opportunity has completed, the panel will be asked to reflect on whether there were any unforeseen EDI issues that we should include in future EIAs, what worked well, whether there were things we said that we would do but didn't and any other thoughts. • The EIA will be reviewed by the Senior Responsible Officer for the QTFP programme after the activity is completed. Areas of failure will be recorded and where possible changes will be made to future similar activities. • Success rates for applicants will be monitored and reported to the QTFP governance board.
<p>Next review date:</p>	
<p>Will this EIA be published? * Yes/Not required</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities for example funding opportunities and events.</p>
<p>Point of contact</p>	<p>qtfp@stfc.ukri.org</p>
<p>Signed off by (name and date):</p>	<p>Senior Responsible Owner for QTFP</p>

Before publishing or archiving your EIA, please remove any sensitive or confidential information such as personal identifiable data.

Once your EIA is completed or updated:

1. Email it to your [council](#) EDI team and
2. Upload it to the UKRI central repository via [the EIA submission form](#)

EIAs for ODA and non-ODA ISPF programmes should be emailed to: ISPF@ukri.org

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
		1	E.g. Based on input received from consultation groups at the business case stage, added actions under the gender section
		2	E.g. Based on input received from x at the announcement of opportunity stage, added/removed/edited x
		3	E.g. Based on input received from x at the investment authorisation stage, added/removed/edited x

Continued below...



Action plan

Use the table below to define the actions you intend to take (or have taken) to address the indications of negative impact you have identified or to promote equality. Actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

Action	Deadline	Owner	How will it be monitored?	What is/will be the impact/outcome?
e.g. Update application form to include questions on additional support and reasonable adjustments	December 2023	Applications manager	Updated form published and submissions reflect individual needs	Individual needs can be addressed. Inform inclusive design of the activity