# 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

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|  | **Response** |
| Name of activity being assessed | International centre to centre research collaborations: Outline Proposals 2024  |
| Council/department/project team | EPSRC International Team |
| Aims and objectives of the activity | This EIA is being produced to cover a funding opportunity that requires us to consider equality as part of advertising, application process, external review, building a panel, hosting panel meetings and all other related activities.Research is an international endeavour and many challenges that we face are global. As well as maintaining the strength of UK research, we want UK researchers to be able to work with the best collaborators around the world. This opportunity is the fourth round of an EPSRC funding initiative, which aims to provide opportunities for leading UK research groups to work in partnership with the best international researchers for their research. The first round of this funding opportunity took place in 2018. A large change is [insert more information about funding if that changes].The objectives of this call are:* To enable high-profile, world-leading international collaborations focused on excellent research with impact
* To contribute to EPSRC’s strategy by supporting high-quality research collaborations which align with our research area strategies and address priorities related to our [strategic delivery plan](https://www.ukri.org/publications/epsrc-strategic-delivery-plan/)
* To further the UK’s strategic needs in international science and innovation partnerships
 |
| Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event? | This funding opportunity spans the whole EPSRC remit, therefore all members of the EPSRC community and those in related disciplines are affected.Applicants are required to hold a strategic research grant or a portfolio of grants over £3M. Established academic researchers are expected to form the core of applicant consortia. Applicants will be encouraged to create diverse consortia, which include early career researchers and, where appropriate, industrial partners. Postdocs will be employed on the grant.  Overseas partners at universities, public sector research organisations or publicly funded research institutes can be based in any country outside the UK and are an essential part of the application. |
| What data and consultation have you used?  | The first International Centre to Centre Call was developed with involvement from and in consultation with EPSRC Council, EPSRC Executive Leadership Team. EPSRC Peer Review Policy Team and EPSRC Themes.  This fourth round of the call has been updated based on feedback received during the third call process This funding opportunity was highlighted in EPSRC’s delivery plan for 2022-2025, which was designed in consultation with Council and EPSRC Strategic Leadership Board. There has been feedback from university engagement that this call is of significant interest to the research community. |

## Analysing your impact

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

## Protected characteristics

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| **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 |[ ] [x]  A track record of winning EPSRC funding is required across applicant consortia.  | No timescale is specified except that qualifying grants must be active on 09 March 2023. There is no requirement based on applicants’ years of experience. Not all the Investigators within the research consortia are required to be involved in existing research grants. |
| Disability |[x] [x]  **Applicants****Negative:** Typically, international collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally. This may discourage individuals with additional requirements relating to physical or mental impairments from applying. There may be differences in accessibility standards and provision in different countries.**Panellists****Positive:** The panel will be held virtually therefore this is a more accessible participation option. Panellists will not have to travel to an in-person venue which may not have accessibility measures.**Negative:** This may have a negative impact for those with hearing impairments and those who find a lot of sensory input overwhelming. | **Applicants**We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.  We will highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling.**Panellists**Breaks will be built into the panel schedule at regular intervals to prevent screen fatigue and overwhelm.Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that any circumstances which could affect participation can be accommodated wherever possible. |
| Gender reassignment (Trans identity) |[ ] [x]  Depending on the country there may be travel restrictions for transgender travellers. | We will encourage applicant to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.  There are no requirements within the call to collaborate with researchers in particular countries. |
| Marriage or civil partnership |[ ] [ ]  None identified |  |
| Pregnancy and maternity |[ ] [x]  Typically, international collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally. This may impact investigators or staff members who are pregnant or on parental leave.  Pregnant women are unable to travel by aeroplane during latter stages of pregnancy.A researcher on parental may not be able to apply or take part as a panel member. | We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.  Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling.Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that any circumstances which could affect participation to apply can be accommodated wherever possible.A timetable of key dates will be made available on the funding opportunity, including the Full Proposal stage.A timeline for the panel assessment will be provided to panel members as far in advance as possible. |
| Race |[ ] [x]  **Applicants:** [EPSRC’s Ethnicity report](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/EPSRC-100322-DetailedEthnicityAnalysisReport.pdf) found that ‘The award rate for PI, CI and Fellowship applicants who identify as White is higher than that of applicants from ethnic minority groups in most reporting years.The requirement that applicants have a strategic research portfolio of £3M/lead a strategic research grant may therefore mean that those from ethnic minorities are less likely to meet the eligibility criteria.Overseas research organisations may be in a (remote) location which may be unsafe for ethnic minority PIs (i.e. they may experience racism in these locations).**Panellists:**There is a risk of not having panel members who identify as an ethnic minority. | **Applicants:** We have kept the same eligibility criteria from the 2023 funding round. Prior to this, the PI of the International centre to centre grant needed to be the PI on the strategic grant that makes the project team eligible. This criterion was opened this up so that, providing the majority of the centre-to-centre project team were on the strategic grant, there were no requirements to who the PI is. This widens the eligibility pool. We will encourage researchers to accommodate the participation of their ethnic minority collaborators and colleagues in a way which prevents harm.**Panellists:** An unconscious bias briefing will be presented to the panel as part of the panel guidance presentation. EPSRC convenors will also carefully listen for instances of bias and step in where appropriate.Diversity will be taken into consideration when putting together the panel membership.  |
| Religion or belief |[ ] [x]  Travel dates – which could be tied to collaborator availability - could coincide with a religious holiday. Panel and application timeline dates could be affected by the same issue.This could negatively disadvantage those who practice particular faiths if this is not taken into account by researchers scheduling a visit and if panel dates clash with religious holidays. | We will encourage applicants to be considerate of their team’s beliefs and that reduce the need to travel if the trip would fall over a religious holiday – or to provide a hybrid attendance option.We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested. EPSRC will ensure to schedule panels on days which are not major religious holidays, and ask panel members to highlight circumstances which may affect their ability to participate in a panel and to specify accommodations which would enable them to participate. |
| Sexual orientation |[ ] [x]  Depending on the country which researchers plan to travel to, there may be travel restrictions for LGBTQ+ people. | We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.  There are no requirements within the call to collaborate with researchers in particular countries. |
| Sex  |[ ] [x]  Our gender report found that ‘Women are consistently under-represented in EPSRC’s Principal Investigator (PI) applicant pool across our portfolio’ and ‘Application numbers from women for large grants are particularly low’.The requirements for a £3M strategic research portfolio may mean women are less likely to be eligible.Overseas research organisations may be in a (remote) location which may be unsafe for PIs who identify as women (i.e. they may experience sexism in these locations). **Panellists:**There is a risk of not having panel members who identify as women. | **Applicants:** We have kept the same eligibility criteria from the 2023 funding round. Prior to this, the PI of the International centre to centre grant needed to be the PI on the strategic grant that makes the project team eligible. This criterion was opened this up so that, providing the majority of the centre-to-centre project team were on the strategic grant, there were no requirements to who the PI is. This widens the eligibility pool. We will encourage researchers to accommodate the participation of their women collaborators and colleagues in a way which prevents harm.**Panellists:** An unconscious bias briefing will be presented to the panel as part of the panel guidance presentation. EPSRC convenors will also carefully listen for instances of bias and step in where appropriate.Diversity will be taken into consideration when putting together the panel membership.Gender neutral language will be used throughout the assessment process. |

## Additional characteristics

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| **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) |[x] [ ]  This funding opportunity actively promotes the inclusion of international collaborations. |  |
| Socio-economic status |[ ] [ ]   |  |
| Education background |[ ] [ ]   |  |
| Parent/guardian responsibilities |[ ] [x]  Typically, international collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally, this may impact investigators or staff members who have parent/guardian responsibilities.  | We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.  Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling. |
| Carer/parent carer responsibilities |[ ] [x]  Typically, international collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally, this may impact investigators or staff members who have carer/parent carer responsibilities. | We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.  Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling.  |
| Political opinion (Northern Ireland only) |[ ] [ ]   |  |
| Other characteristics |[ ] [ ]   |  |

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| Are there **general or overarching impacts on multiple groups**? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact? | In-person visits, travel and meetings can present as negative barriers for disabled people, those who identify as transgender, women, ethnic minorities as well as those with parental or caring responsibilities (and those who have intersectional identities of all of the aforementioned demographics). We will encourage hybrid and/or fully virtual meetings to avoid access issues, travel and overnight stay requirements, and facilitate the use of personal equipment (e.g. closed captioning or live transcript provision). We will encourage researchers from non marginalised backgrounds to accommodate the participation of their marginalised collaborators and colleagues who may experience discrimination in a way which prevents harm, and to learn from their lived experiences such that they will work together in a harmonious and inclusive way with a positive, understanding team research culture.An EDI plan is also requested at Full Stage in addition to encourage PIs to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into their research.  |

Continued below...

## Evaluation

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| **Final Decision:** | **Select the relevant box** | **Include any explanation / justification required** |
| 1. No negative or positive impact identified; therefore, activity will **proceed**.
 |[ ]   |
| 1. **Adapt or change** the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.
 |[x]  Possible risks associated with this call have been identified and the guidance and peer review protocols have been adapted accordingly. |
| 1. **Stop** the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups.
 |[ ]   |
| 1. 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.
 |[ ]   |

Continued below…

## Review and sign off

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| **What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?** | Research outcomes will be monitored via ResearchFish.EPSRC International Team staff will convene the prioritisation panel.We will conduct a review of the EIA for future opportunities of this call.We will review the EIA as part of a lessons learned activity at the end of the Outline and Full stage of this funding opportunity. We will use data from groups affected by this funding opportunity to inform future decisions and use new insights to review this EIA.  |
| **Next review date:** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Will this EIA be published? \* Yes/Not required** | Yes |
| **Point of contact**  | EPSRC International Team  |
| **Signed off by (name and date):** | Rehemat Bhatia, May 7th 2024 |
| **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. **Upload it to the UKRI central repository via [the EIA submission form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=juC3i6TajkqSfvyjjbBLfuzmJllr2UxPiagnQdB9dGBUMzFPRDY0RUJIRlpCRkwzN01WMTJWM1BKRCQlQCN0PWcu)**

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

## Change log

| **Name** | **Date** | **Version** | **Change** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rehemat Bhatia | 07/05/2023 | 2 | Revised to highlight round 3 eligibility criteria have been kept, some minor edits to reflect this is the 2024 round, added impact to religion or belief characteristic.  |
|  Ellen Guest | 24/02/2023 | 1 | Original written for Round 3 |

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).

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| **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 |
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