



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

# **UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form**



**Overview of activity**

	<b>Response</b>
Name of activity being assessed.	UKRI DRI: Championing Knowledge Exchange for UK Computational Science
Council/department/project team	EPSRC, Research Infrastructure
Aims and objectives of the activity.	<p>UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) welcomes applications for funding to support the development of one Knowledge Exchange and Communication (KEC) NetworkPlus.</p> <p>The objectives of the funding opportunity are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure co-ordination of the existing large-scale compute software community as well as integrating new communities in computational research</li> <li>• ensure effective knowledge exchange across the communities</li> <li>• provide leadership and maximise the opportunities for collaboration between national and international initiatives</li> <li>• set good practice for dissemination of software developments in UK science across the UKRI remit</li> </ul>
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals wishing to apply to develop the KEC NetworkPlus and scientific professionals who may be employed using the funding awarded. Applicants will comprise of individuals from broad disciplinary areas.</li> <li>• Members of the expert panel assessing the applications.</li> <li>• UKRI employees facilitating the funding process.</li> <li>• Research office staff</li> <li>• Members of the NetworkPlus</li> </ul>
What data and consultation have you undertaken?	Community consultation



### Analysing your impact

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

As a funder of research, UKRI remains committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers.

The overall impact of this funding opportunity on ED&I is expected to be positive.

For the general impacts, we will request and require the teams to consider all the necessary requirements for ED&I, such as for in-person visits, travel, and meetings, to meet statutory requirements and to adopt best practice.

For the specific impacts, we expect the NetworkPlus to take a proactive, leadership role on ED&I within their work on the grant and, where relevant, in the wider community, ensuring that they have a suitable ED&I plan and that it is implemented. The impacts of their ED&I plan should include their immediate team but should also extend well beyond that to include their influence to the UK large compute research base, and internationally.

As this is a UKRI opportunity, the expectation is that the team will include expertise covering various UKRI councils. It is also expected that the team will be made up of Computational Scientists at different career stages, providing the balance and opportunities to all career levels and paths to be part of the team, and the expectation is that they are well supported.

Any potential negative impacts on specific groups as part of the assessment and award process are expected to be minimised using relevant UKRI policies and good practice.

UKRI will aim to:

- Provide virtual assessment panels, providing sufficient breaks
- 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.
- 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 minimise opportunities for bias and improve transparency of the decision-making process. This includes 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 endeavour 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Potential for unconscious bias in panel process.</p> <p>Potential for RTPs to develop professionally by leading the funding application.</p>	<p>Panel members will be provided with an unconscious bias document and will be briefed by the panel convenor. UKRI members of staff assisting the process must have completed the unconscious bias training and will work to empower all panel members to challenge potential bias. There are no requirements for applicants to have a specific number of years of experience.</p> <p>RTPs are encouraged to lead application for this funding opportunity.</p> <p>Applicants must also provide opportunities which particularly benefit early career early career researchers. This will form part of the ongoing governance of grants.</p>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Applicants/panel members may find it difficult to participate in briefings/panels dependent on location selected.</p>	<p>The assessment panels are expected to take place virtually to reduce the barriers associated with in-person meetings and if any meetings are not held remotely, all venues selected will be accessible and</p>



			<p>Potential for unconscious bias.</p> <p>The NetworkPlus should be inclusive and should meet the needs of those with disability</p>	<p>reasonable adjustment made to logistics to support participation.</p> <p>For virtual meetings, the long period of screen time may be a problem for some. In this case, regular breaks will be included in the agenda. Panel members will be encouraged to request additional breaks.</p> <p>All panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that may affect their ability to participate and how this can be accommodated, although we are aware that some individuals may choose not to disclose this information.</p> <p>Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.</p> <p>More information on disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders can be <a href="#">found here</a>.</p> <p>Applicants will be asked for an ED&amp;I plan and strategy at full application stage.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment (Trans identity)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Potential for unconscious bias.</p>	<p>Panels are expected to be held virtually. This reduces the barriers associated with in-person meetings.</p>

				<p>Panel members will be provided with an unconscious bias document and will be briefed by the panel conveners. UKRI members of staff assisting the process must have completed the unconscious bias training.</p> <p>Applicants are not asked to disclose whether they have undergone gender reassignment. Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No known impact	
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Participation in the application process may be negatively affected if potential applicants or panel members are unavailable at key assessment stages.	EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments, such as virtual presence or deputising for panel members.
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Potential for unconscious bias in panel process	<p>Panel members will be provided with an unconscious bias document and will be briefed by the panel conveners. UKRI members of staff assisting the process must have completed the unconscious bias training.</p> <p>EPSRC have undertaken analysis to better understand the disparity of gender and race in our funding portfolio. Our aim is to ensure that the ethnic diversity in our grant portfolio and of those who engage in our peer review, advisory and governance processes is at least as representative of the engineering and physical sciences academic researcher population and our award rates across</p>

				<p>different ethnicities show no disparity. More information is available at <a href="https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/edi-at-epsrc/ethnicity-and-race-equality/">https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/edi-at-epsrc/ethnicity-and-race-equality/</a>.</p> <p>Aim for diversity in the panels.</p>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Potential for unconscious bias in panel process.</p> <p>Participation could be affected by religious holidays.</p>	<p>As much detail as possible on key dates will be provided in advance, allowing early engagement with UKRI on specific mitigations. UKRI will do its best to accommodate adjustments. UKRI has checked for and avoided significant dates.</p> <p>Aim for diversity in the panels.</p> <p>Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.</p>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Potential for unconscious bias in panel process.	Unconscious bias awareness, as above.
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Potential Unconscious Bias of panel members may affect the decision process.	<p>Unconscious bias awareness, as above.</p> <p>In line with EPSRC policies, the assessment panel will have balanced gender representation. The protected characteristics of applicants will not be shared with panel members. Panel members will be required to abide with EPSRC's principle on removing</p>





				<p>Unconscious Bias with relevant documents shared with panel members.</p> <p>Ensure use of gender-neutral language in call specification, guidance, etc.</p>
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**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This opportunity is an effort to enhance knowledge exchange across the UK. This may involve some consideration of place and it is therefore expected that the overall impact of the work will be positive.	UKRI will undertake good practice in this area as part of the assessment process, including aiming to achieve good geographic diversity in panel membership. The successful team will be expected to consider the geographical location and place aspects.
Socio-economic status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The overall impact of this investment on diversity in socio-economic status is expected to be positive in the long term. This is because it aims to facilitate knowledge between UK computational scientists, UKRI and policymakers, showcasing the best of UK computational research and how we can create productivity and economic value throughout the UK. The NetworkPlus is expected to be inclusive.</p> <p>There may be barriers to participation in particular in-person activities for those with more limited financial resources.</p>	<p>The management team will be expected to have an active EDI plan at full application stage.</p> <p>There is the option within UKRI policies to meet travel costs for some participants, where needed.</p> <p>The funding opportunity webinar will be held virtually. Panel members' travel and subsistence costs are met by UKRI.</p> <p>The investment will aim to provide thought leadership and improved levels of understanding on how to reduce the chances of people being excluded from opportunities, including based on their socio-economic status. The NetworkPlus</p>

				team will need to consider how to reach out to those that could inform their thinking, taking into account the potential disparities in engagement levels across various groups.
Education background	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The general impact of the investment is likely to be positive because the aim is to enhance knowledge exchange between different stakeholders and maximising the value of research outcomes. This should create productivity and economic value for the UK. The network itself is expected to be inclusive.</p> <p>Eligibility for and successful application to this opportunity is likely to correlate strongly with educational background, as only those with academic appointments are eligible to apply.</p>	<p>The purpose of this investment is to lead the development of NetworkPlus that will be inclusive of the wide computational science community; therefore, the eligibility criteria we have used are appropriate. The assessors are expected to assess the applicants' ability to deliver based on their relevant experience and skills, rather than focusing unduly on their education backgrounds.</p> <p>The team should consider how to reach out to those that could inform their thinking, taking into account the potential disparities in engagement levels across various stakeholder groups.</p>
Parent/guardian responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Participation in the application process may be negatively affected if potential applicants or panel members are unavailable at key assessment stages.</p>	<p>EPSRC will do its best to accommodate adjustments, such as virtual presence or deputising for panel members.</p> <p>Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to: Participate in events on what would normally be a non-working day, work extended hours on a normal working day, attend meetings with overnight stays and/or travel overseas. Further, details on the support EPSRC will</p>



				<p>offer for those with caring responsibilities can be <a href="#">found here</a>.</p> <p>We will not put funding opportunity deadlines in School holidays.</p> <p>Key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists in advance as early possible.</p>
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Participation in the application process may be negatively affected if potential applicants or panel members are unavailable at key assessment stages.	As above.
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable	
Other characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable	



Evaluation

Final Decision:	Select the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No negative or positive impact identified; therefore, activity will <b>proceed</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. <b>Adapt or change</b> the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. <b>Stop</b> 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 <b>extreme cases</b> or where <b>positive action</b> is taken). Therefore, you are going to <b>proceed with caution</b> with this activity knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Potential negative impacts have been identified. Reasonable adjustment will be made to minimize the negative impacts. The potential risks have been mitigated as far as possible.



**Review and sign off**

<p><b>What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?</b></p>	<p>The following arrangements will enable the monitoring and reviewing of the impact of this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to funding, active consideration of the impacts of the activity by discussing with experienced team members.</li> <li>• This UKRI activity is being led for UKRI by the EPSRC Research Infrastructure Theme. The NetworkPlus will be monitored by this theme from the set-up phase and through its life.</li> <li>• The grant holder will establish an Independent Advisory Board with an EPSRC Project Officer on the Board.</li> <li>• The grant will be required to submit progress reports to EPSRC detailing their progress against agreed non-financial performance metrics.</li> <li>• Research outcomes will be collected through Research fish and additional data through an annual data return.</li> <li>• The impact of this funding opportunity will be monitored and reviewed at the end of grant.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Next review date:</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p><b>Will this EIA be published?</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><b>Point of contact</b></p>	<p>Afia Masood Christian Oganbule</p>
<p><b>Signed off by (name and date):</b></p>	<p>Luke Davis, Head of EPSRC Research Infrastructure Theme 3 September 2024</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](mailto:ISPF@ukri.org)

## Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Christian Oganbule	02/09/2024	0.1	First draft of the EIA document.
Afia Masood	03/09/2024	1	Final version for publication

## Action plan

Action	Deadline	Owner	How will it be monitored?	What is/will be the impact/outcome?
Will provide unconscious bias document to panel members and this will be briefed by the panel conveners.	November 2024	Panel convenor	Panel convenors and Chair will actively encourage panellists to adhere to the policy while discussing proposals and to challenge potential bias.	Fair process.
Will request any details of disability requirements	November 2024	Panel convenor	Make reasonable adjustments and ensure	Empower all panel members to best decisions.

for those participating in panel process.			panellists feels comfortable.	
Ensure the assessment panel has balanced gender representation.	November 2024	Panel convenor	Updated spreadsheet with panel member list will be provided.	Empower all panel members to challenge potential bias.
Require and review successful team's ED&I plan. (full application stage)	Before grant start in 2025	EPSRC Research Infrastructure Theme	ED&I action plan document will be provided by successful teams.  EPSRC Research Infrastructure Theme to review the ED&I plan document.	Clear ED&I strategy established for the NetworkPlus to ensure it is inclusive and maximises value and impact.  This will form part of the ED&I impacts monitoring of the investment.
Require and review the successful team's engagement plan. (full application stage)	Before grant start in 2025	EPSRC Research Infrastructure Theme	Engagement plan document will be provided by successful teams.  EPSRC Research Infrastructure theme to review the engagement plan document.	Better engagement strategy addressed for the NetworkPlus leading to enhanced knowledge exchange and learnings from national and international initiatives that deliver or use digital research infrastructure for the benefit of computational science  This will form part of the engagement impacts/outcome monitoring of the investment.