

**STFC ERNEST RUTHERFORD FELLOWSHIPS**

**ED&I STATEMENT**

Following the STFC review of fellowships we piloted introducing an ED&I statement from departments submitting ERF applications in 2023. The intention of this statement is to better understand the process by which departments are selecting candidates and to identify examples of best practice.

People are at the core of R&D - there is nothing more important than how we attract, develop, and retain talented people within research and innovation, to cement our position as a global science superpower. Including and valuing a broader range of people and talent will help us achieve the extraordinary potential of research and innovation.

Please complete the survey to include details about the inclusivity of your department ERF candidate selection processes using the link or QR code below. Please also include any recruitment strategy your department use and provide us with insight to any innovative processes you use in your selection process.

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/stfc/stfc-ernest-rutherford-fellowships-ed-i-statement>



Submissions should provide sufficient detail for assessment.

A sub-panel of the Education, Training and Careers Committee (ETCC) will review the responses to ensure satisfactory processes are in place and to highlight best practice. This statement is mandatory.

The deadline for submitting responses will be **1 October 2025**.

Please find in the table below a list of the questions in the survey along with examples of some good practice:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Examples of some good practice but not limited to** |
| How was the ERF opportunity promoted internally, nationally and internationally? How did you encourage diverse applicants? | * Academic networks;
* websites;
* Inspire;
* Social media;
* Workshops;
* Fellowship and funding opportunity awareness sessions
* Use welcoming and supportive language in adverts encouraging underrepresented groups.
 |
| How does the department promote and take action to address equality at all levels and foster a more inclusive working environment? | This could, for example, include the processes you adopt and/or holding of charter marks, such as Athena SWAN or Project Juno awards. |
| How were the applicants assessed? | * Panel members score applicants ahead of selection meeting;
* Anonymised shortlisting;
* Experts allocated to introduce each application;
* Staff provide comments on each applicant for panel;
* Shortlisted candidates are interviewed;
* Adjustments to the process to be more inclusive.
* Shortlisting candidates against the ERF criteria
 |
| How diverse was the membership of any selection panel used in your process? | * Diverse panel of research experts;
* Consider all protected characteristics for panel;
* Inclusion of someone with ED&I expertise;
* HoD on panel;
* Panel member not from STFC background.
 |
| Please provide examples of how applicants were supported through the internal selection process? | * Assign research staff mentor;
* Mentor matched to expertise;
* Assignment of administrative/costing support;
* All applicants receive same information;
* One to one feedback offered to each candidate;
* Applicants encouraged to make links within the group;
* Grant writing support;
* Outcomes communicated promptly to every candidate;
* Unsuccessful applicants provided support to apply for other more suitable funding opportunities.
 |
| What processes were used to identify potential and final candidates? | * Those reviewing the applications feedback comments to panel for final decision;
* Agreement made collectively by group/panel;
* Head of Department gives final endorsement.
 |
| Tell us about any examples of good practice you took to select candidates. | * Following guidance in internal or independent reports e.g. [Equity and Inclusivity in Research Funding (ox.ac.uk)](https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/files/equityandinclusivityinresearchfundingpdf)
 |
| What steps were taken to mitigate unconscious bias in the selection process?  | * Training for those responsible for selection;
* ED&I training;
* Recruitment and selection training;
* Unconscious bias training;
* Data protection and information security training;
* Bystander training.
 |
| What support or consideration of flexible working including part-time working, career breaks and caring responsibilities will you give, and will you accommodate inclusion of candidates with different career paths? | * Consideration given to range of technologies to stay connected
* Have guidance to adjust criteria to assess career breaks / caring responsibilities. Assessed separately and adjustment agreed by two independent members of panel.
* Advice given to candidates on flexible working arrangements
* Support provided through maternity/adoption/shared parental leave
* Keeping in touch days during leave
* ED&I newsletter featuring part time staff
* Childcare support
 |
| Please tell us about any updates or improvements you have made to your selection processes this year. |  |
| How many applicants were returning to research from a career break, and did they require additional support? |  |
| How many applications / expressions of interest did you receive for the ERF in your department? |  |
| Can you specify how many applicants were internal, external, and international detailing how successful they were in the process. |  |

Data Collection at UKRI

When research organisations submit ERF applications to STFC, the application system collects personal data including date of birth, ethnic origin, gender and disability. UKRI use this personal data to:

Inform analysis to investigate if applicants to the scheme who share a protected characteristic:

a. suffer a disadvantage linked to that characteristic

b. have different needs to other groups, or

c. have a disproportionately low level of participation

If this results in an evidenced need then STFC may make appropriate and proportionate interventions, including in final funding decisions. This is in accordance with STFCs duty to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Data collection at academic research organisations

As Higher Education Institutions have a responsibility under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to advance equality of opportunity, the collection and reporting of data at a scheme level will provide hosts with insights/evidence to demonstrate compliance with this duty alongside providing insights into how effective their current attraction and selection policies and procedures are. Data collection is an early and vital step in the process of designing initiatives to tackle issues related to inequality, checking that an initiative is having the desired effects and making changes to an initiative, if required.