UK Research and Innovation

Equality Impact Assessment Form

UK Research and Innovation

*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	2025 Transformative Research Technologies (25TRT)
Council/department/project team	BBSRC – Transformative Technologies
Aims and objectives of the activity	BBSRC will support early-stage technology development projects with potential for transformative impacts across bioscience research. The awards will be relatively small and short duration and support pilot studies of new research technologies. The design of 25TRT has been influenced by BBSRC's review of technology development for the biosciences, and therefore aims to implement its recommendations. Proposed changes relevant to this EIA include: • clarifying the scope and aims of 25TRT as an opportunity that is inclusive of early-stage technology development across BBSRC's remit for this year's round. • additional guidance has been provided on what BBSRC are looking for in applications. This is aided by the applicant question set on TFS directly reflecting the assessment criteria, making it easier for applicants to address the key points. • Adopting the R4RI document instead of traditional CVs; giving a broader range of applicants a better chance of effectively demonstrating their capability to deliver their project. • Promoting awareness of the eligibility of communities who have previously lacked visibility and recognition for their skills and experience, for example Research Technology Professionals. • Embedding consideration of EDI principles in the project design as a criterion used to assess applications. Additional considerations include:

	- 25TRT being advertised widely and through accessible channels, e.g. 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 - 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, compared to the old Je-S system.
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	BBSRC's eligible Research Community wishing to apply to this opportunity. All external panel members and BBSRC staff taking part in the assessment process.
What data and consultation have you used?	Consultations to adopt best practices in equality have been incorporated from other UKRI/BBSRC reviews, for example: - 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. The equality impact of this activity has also been assessed against previous consultations of similar BBSRC funding opportunities such as BBSRC's ALERT scheme for mid-range equipment, and the previous 23TRT and 24TRT which follows a similar, panel-only, assessment process used by 25TRT and aims to promote eligibility awareness of a broader range of potential applicants. Other consultations include:

	- 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. - Learning from good practice in objective decision making and interview processes from across UKRI, supported by external independent advice Consultation with a member of UKRI-BBSRC's Equality and Inclusion Policy Group to review the EIA	

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

Protected characteristic	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown	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.
Age	☐	☒	If an applicant's age became known to the panel or reviewers, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to reviewers or panel members	Before assessment begins, the panel will receive guidance on unconscious bias. The pre-assessment workshop will also allow panel members to share experiences and expertise. Chairs and BBSRC Office staff will oversee the assessment to be a fair process, with reviews and panel comments

				being considered fairly and equally irrespective of who provides them.
Disability	☐	☒	BBSRC recognises that disability has a diverse spectrum and includes individuals with long term health conditions. Specific examples of barriers are provided below but are not intended to cover this spectrum in its entirety. • Difficulties attending the launch webinar, meetings, or panels. • 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. Panel members with physical disabilities may find it difficult to access a physical meeting venue and / or participate in the meeting if the assessment venue cannot cater for their needs. • Potential for difficulties with concentration for individuals with neuro-disabilities. • Potential difficulties for individuals with Dyslexia in terms of accessibility of written documents If an applicant's disability became known to the panel or reviewers, there is the potential for unconscious bias but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to	General issues regarding UKRI's grant application systems and provisions for flexibility are addressed through policies designed to apply across our organisation. We encourage individuals to communicate their needs and will make reasonable adjustments where possible, for example • Arrangement of appropriate colour/text will be arranged for those with visual impairments. • Allow for potential use of screen readers for participants of panel meetings who are visually impaired. • Alternatively, BBSRC will provide a printed version of documentation or guidance to anyone who is unable to view/complete it online. Arrangements can be made upon request to provide documents in a format accessible to individuals with Dyslexia, for example written in the Dyslexie font. Applicants with a disability (inclusive of physical or neurological) can cost for additional support required that is directly related to the grant. Where appropriate, the communications (for example, from the launch webinar) will be recorded and shared online and modified

			reviewers or committee members, with the exception of prior consented disclosure in the application by the applicant.	versions can be shared upon request (cc, alternative font, font size, font colour). Arrangement of closed captioning for those with hearing impairments at virtual meetings/events. We strive to enable an accessible face-to-face panel meeting. In person is preferred for 25TRT due to business needs (quality of discussion) and in response to panel feedback. We will consider accessibility requirements a key requirement of the venue for the panel and we will put in place any reasonable adjustments to ensure that all panel members are able to participate at the meeting. BBSRC will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into each activity (e.g., comfort breaks and a substantial lunch break).
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	☐	☐	As per UKRI's policies we take care to adopt gender neutral language and protect applications personal details. If an applicant's gender reassignment became known to the panel, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed.	We will ensure to use gender neutral language in all call materials and engagement with the community. Panel members will be given the opportunity to choose to disclose their preferred pronouns at the start of the meeting, if they wish. Before assessment begins, the panel will receive guidance on unconscious bias.
Marriage or civil partnership	☐	☐	Applicants are not required to declare their marital or civil partnership status. Panel members are provided the opportunity to declare conflicts of interest, but never directly	Before assessment begins, the panel will receive guidance on unconscious bias.

			asked to provide their marital or civil partnership status. If an applicant or panel member's marital or civil partnership status became known to BBSRC, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed. UKRI's policies protect applicant and panel members' personal data, and UKRI's Conflict of Interest policy safeguards against undue influence.	
Pregnancy and maternity	☐	☒	Difficulties attending the webinar/meetings/panels.

Applicants may not apply knowing that they are going on parental leave soon.

Requirement for regular breaks.

Career breaks in applicant track records due to parental leave may result in the potential for unconscious bias. If an applicant's pregnancy or parental leave status became known to the committee or reviewers, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to panel members.

Panel members who are pregnant or on parental leave may be discouraged from participating in panel meetings. | Panel members are provided an outline of the key dates during the assessment period which will require their participation upon invitation to participate so they can make an informed decision on their involvement. The panel webinar, and any other preliminary meetings will be available to join on Microsoft Teams, preventing any venue-based limitations. The webinar will be recorded and made available on the funding finder shortly after. BBSRC will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into each activity (e.g., comfort breaks and a substantial lunch break). Applicants can request a comfort break if required.

Before assessment, the panel will receive guidance on unconscious bias. To ensure appropriate assessment of applicant track record without bias against career breaks due to parental leave/caring responsibilities and others, Chairs and BBSRC Office staff will oversee the assessment to be a fair process. Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI) has an optional additions |

				section, where applicants may provide context, such as details for career breaks. UKRI policy ensures that grant extensions, and movement of start dates are available to individuals who have been on leave. If individuals receive a funding decision during their parental leave period and are on leave for the start date of the grant, they can, as per UKRI's Grant Terms and Conditions RGC 6.1 extend the grant period by up to 12 months without additional funding subject to our prior written approval.
Race	☐	☒	It is important that selection of panel members and peer reviewers is from a diverse community which represents the community and UK. If an applicant's race or ethnicity became known to the panel, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to panel members. There is potential for bias against the contributions made by panel members from a minority ethnic group.	BBSRC will monitor the diversity of panel members to ensure representation of the community and a diversity of opinion. Prior to the assessment process, panel members will receive guidance on unconscious bias. To ensure appropriate assessment of applicant track record without bias against race, Chairs and BBSRC Office staff will oversee the assessment to be a fair process with reviews and panel comments being considered fairly and equally irrespective of who provides them.
Religion or belief	☐	☒	Key dates for the call could coincide with some religious holidays, specifically, 25TRT timetable runs over the winter festive period.	Care will be taken to ensure that key call dates do not fall on cultural and religious holidays where possible. Applicants are provided an outline of the key dates (e.g. closing date, webinar date) on the Funding Finder as soon as the call is open.

				Panel members are provided an outline of the key dates during the assessment period which will require their participation upon invitation to participate so they can make an informed decision on their involvement. When applicable, BBSRC ensures that the panel meeting venue caters for all dietary requirements.
Sexual orientation	☐	☐	If an applicant's sexual orientation became known to the panel there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to panel members.	Before assessment begins, the panel will receive guidance on unconscious bias.
Sex	☐	☐	If an applicant's sex became known to the panel, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to panel members. It is important that selection of panel members is from a diverse community which represents the community and UK. The awards are open to all eligible researchers. However, given the greater proportion of males at the mid and advanced career stages (HESA, 2022/23) this could result in an increased proportion of applications from male project leads to the scheme. During panel building in preparation for a meeting, gender is considered to ensure equal representation as far as practicable.	To avoid potential unconscious bias, first names and titles of applicants will not be used during virtual meeting discussions; but instead, application and extranet numbers are used for discussing applications. We will ensure to use gender neutral language in all call materials and engagement with the community. Panel members will be given the opportunity to choose to disclose their preferred pronouns at the start of the meeting, if they wish. Diversity of panel members will be monitored to ensure representation of the community and a diversity of opinion.

Additional characteristics

Additional characteristics	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown	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).
Geographical location and place (consider UK and international offices)	☐	☒	Panel members may be prevented from participating due to the travel requirement associated with in person meetings. During panel building in preparation for the meeting, geographical spread across the UK is considered as far as practicable to ensure representation.	Panel members are provided an outline of the key dates during the assessment period which will require their participation upon invitation to participate so they can make an informed decision on their involvement. The assessment process will use online discussion boards to allow robust participation in the assessment outside the panel meeting as required.
Socio-economic status	☐	☐	If an applicant's socio-economic status became known to the panel members, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to panel members.	Before assessment begins, the panel will receive guidance on unconscious bias.
Education background	☒	☒	Building on the Technician Commitment UKRI Action Plan and the UKRI people and teams action plan, applications are particularly encouraged from RTPs as either project leads or project co-leads (positive impact).	The Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI) enables applicants to describe their track record, and additionally to describe any factors that provide context, such as career breaks.

			Panel members are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds (academia, industry, early career researchers, RTPs, and those with a nontraditional background). However, some of these areas may be underrepresented	Steps have been taken to minimise the potential impact of unconscious bias in the assessment process see below for more information in general or overarching impacts section.
Parent/guardian responsibilities	☐	☒	Potential difficulties with application preparation, meeting/panel preparation/attendance, completion of peer review activities, due to school holidays. Childcare management during webinar/meetings/panels, application writing, and preparation for panels.	Application stage extended to 11 weeks to recognise that this period will cut across school holidays. Where possible meetings are scheduled within the times of a normal working day and outside of school holidays, and time schedules at meetings will be strictly adhered to. 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. Additionally, UKRI Policy states that the cost of additional caring responsibilities while on BBSRC business can be reclaimed. This will be highlighted to panel members. 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.

				The peer review stage is scheduled to take place within term time, with substantial time allocated for reviews to be completed.
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	☐	☒	Potential difficulties with application preparation, meeting/panel preparation/attendance, completion of peer review activities, due to school holidays. Childcare management during webinar/meetings/panels, application writing, and preparation for panels.	Applicants are provided an outline of the key dates (e.g. closing date, webinar date) on the Funding Finder as soon as the call is open. Submission dates and the webinar dates are scheduled within the times of a normal working day and outside of school holidays where possible. 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. The closing date of the call has been moved later into January to give additional time after the Christmas break after feedback form 25TRT applicants. Expectations and dates for all aspects of the panel process are set out as far in advance as possible, allowing for preparation for participants to cover any caring responsibilities. Where possible, BBSRC aims to schedule meetings in standard working hours. Features of the panel assessment period, such as the online discussion boards, have

				been implemented to allow for flexible working patterns. Members of the panel will be able to reclaim reasonable costs for additional caring responsibilities resulting from BBSRC business
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	☐	☐	If an applicant's political opinion became known to the panel members, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but at no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to panel members	
Other characteristics	☐	☐		

Are there **general or overarching impacts on multiple groups**? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact?	UKRI is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do, so that we can maximise the impact of our research and innovation to involve and benefit all parts of society. Everything we fund must embrace a diversity of thought, people and ideas. Applicants are signposted to our EDI policies and provisions, to include guidance for those who have taken career breaks or need 'reasonable adjustments' to support them in the application process. The Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI) has an optional additions section, where applicants may provide context, such as details for career breaks, alternative career paths, information about a disability or long-term health condition. The TRT scheme adopts the standard UKRI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants, and these are designed to support equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do. UKRI collates EDI data on grant applicants and publishes this annually. UKRI's Conflict of Interest policy sets out our expectations, alongside our commitment to the Nolan Principles and our Code of Conduct. In the case of exceptional demand for 25TRT, we reserve the right to ask research organisations to undertake further internal prioritisation. This may indirectly result in

negative impact to multiple groups and as such further assessment of the equality impacts and consultation will be undertaken if required.

In line with UKRI's reasonable adjustments guidance, where an application includes costs for reasonable adjustment, UKRI will ensure they are eligible, and these should be accepted without comment.

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.

Panel members must avoid any bias in their final reports due to gender, disability, age, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation and religious belief. Panel members' comments must not break this policy or be defamatory or otherwise actionable.

The new UKRI Funding Service contains an expanded set of questions asked of applicants, which includes some or all of the protected characteristics above. Data processing will be in line with data protection practice and use will be subject to the new UKRI Funding Service Data Protection Impact Assessment.

BBSRC is dedicated to ensuring that the processes for the TRT scheme are open and inclusive. Those engaged in the processes endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner and without prejudice or bias. In line with this we adopt the following principles:

For applicants
- The call is advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience
- The call text and guidance clearly state the eligibility and assessment criteria and ask questions in a clear and descriptive way
- The UKRI funding finder website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page.
- BBSRC supports applicants as much as possible, both before and after submission, to assist them in the application and assessment process.

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- Applicants can contact the funding opportunity lead to discuss individual needs and support in the application process
- Applicants can contact peer review support to provide sensitive information, for example unavailability due to parental leave.
- BBSRC consults with applicants regarding business improvements including a questionnaire sent after the call closes for feedback

For panel members
- Everyone involved in the decision-making process has had or will receive training in Unconscious Bias to raise awareness of conditions that may impact on their decision-making
- BBSRC is committed to enabling participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours
- Panel members are asked to inform BBSRC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation
- BBSRC consults with panel members on a regular basis regarding business improvements including a questionnaire sent after each meeting for feedback
- BBSRC consults with the panel chairs informally throughout the panel meeting period
- BBSRC provides regular training and guidance on new or revised ways of working.

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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**.	☐	
2. **Adapt or change** the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.	☒	Potential for negative impact has been evaluated. Actions to address negative impacts identified are being applied as per the previous section. Should additional impacts be identified throughout the 25TRT assessment process, ad hoc mitigations strategies will be discussed with EDI and peer review policy colleagues as required. These additional impacts will then be integrated into the EIA at its next revision point.
3. **Stop** the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups.	☐	
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.	☐	

Continued below…

Review and sign off

What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?	BBSRC will review this equality impact assessment before the call to identify any further actions or interventions that are required to improve the diversity and inclusion of 25TRT.
	BBSRC monitors, analyses and publishes data to better understand the diversity of our applicant and assessor community.
	BBSRC is proactive in increasing the diversity of our panel members. Panel membership for each meeting is published on the website after the funding decisions have been made.
	Further information: https://bbsrc.ukri.org/about/equality-diversity/
	BBSRC is dedicated to ensuring that the processes for the call are open and inclusive. Those engaged in the processes endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner and without prejudice or bias. In line with this we adopt the following principles:
	- The composition of the panel itself is monitored by our Appointments Board, who are responsible for ensuring good practice in equality, inclusion and diversity is embedded and promoted in all its activities. - During the assessment process, there will be monitoring in place to avoid conditions that may introduce bias into the process and create barriers to participation. - Panel to receive a briefing on Methods of Working, objective decision making and unconscious bias (e.g. by webinar). - Panel members are asked to inform BBSRC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation at the panel meeting, and reasonable adjustments will be pursued where possible. - Chair and deputy to attend briefing meeting, where unconscious bias will be covered.

	• Wash up following the assessment to identify lessons learned on how equality principles were adopted and how effective they were. Improvements will be shared across BBSRC teams carrying out similar activities and will be used to inform future TRT opportunities.
Next review date:	

Will this EIA be published? * Yes/Not required	Yes
Point of contact	Rose Kowalewski Richard Brown Ashleigh Bignell
Signed off by (name and date):	

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**

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

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Rose Kowalewski	27/10/2025	1	Based on 24TRT EIA

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