



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	What Works Centre for Local Employment Support (WWCLES)
Council/department/project team	ESRC – Work Education & Skills Team
Aims and objectives of the activity	The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are jointly inviting proposals for an independent, co-created What Works Centre (WWC) to identify, develop, test, and evaluate evidence-based locally delivered employment and labour market support to help people access, remain in, and thrive in work.
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	Applicants to the WWCLES opportunity Members of the Assessment Panel. UKRI staff, including ESRC employees carrying out the commissioning of the opportunity and staff members across other councils who will provide input throughout the process.
What data and consultation have you used?	The opportunity has been co-developed by the ESRC and the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). We have sought feedback on the specification from the Cabinet Office's Evaluation Task Force and the Cabinet Office's What Works Network Centre leads – and have drawn extensively on the findings of previous evaluations of the What Works Network and Centres, as well as published lessons learnt from individual What Works Centres. We have also engaged with NHS England and the NHS England All Staff Work & Health Network.

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	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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Early career researchers* may be disadvantaged as they don't have the same track record to draw on as an experienced researcher. (*It is assumed that early career researchers are generally younger than their more experienced peers, although this by no means always the case. This is why this point has been included under 'age').	<p>Applicants are not required to disclose their age at any point in the application process.</p> <p>The opportunity specification indicates that the core team should include people at different career stages.</p> <p>Assessment Panel members are briefed to make clear that they should be assessing the application in front of them and not reading between the lines. They should assess an individual's capability to deliver their proposed research.</p> <p>Use of a variety of different communication strategies, including hosting a webinar and using social media, to ensure that our messages reach the widest possible target audience.</p>

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Applicants should seek support from their own institution's research support office.</p> <p>Panel meeting attendees with disabilities may have difficulties if meeting venues cannot cater for their needs.</p> <p>Panel meeting attendees with neuro-disabilities may experience difficulties with concentration and focus during panel assessments.</p>	<p>The Funding Service and the UKRI Funding Finder have been designed to comply with disability access schemes.</p> <p>The commissioning exercise has been planned to allow the maximum possible time for applicants to develop their proposals.</p> <p>We will encourage applicants and participants to contact us to discuss any specific adjustments they may need.</p> <p>The opportunity specification has minimal use of colours and lighting that may trigger migraines and epilepsy.</p> <p>Opportunity documents are in dyslexia-friendly fonts.</p> <p>The commissioning exercise has been planned to allow the maximum possible time for Assessment Panel members to provide a review based on their expertise.</p> <p>Advocate for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate ESRC staff and Assessment Panel member participation.</p> <p>Solicit information from Panel meeting participants (in confidence) about any additional requirements they may require in order to fully participate.</p>
------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--	---

				<p>Ensure that the Panel meeting offer an accessible and inclusive environment for participants. Depending on the needs identified, considerations might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suitable measures in place for the hearing impaired and we will make sure the transcript option is available• Alternative document formatting and potential use of screen readers for the visually impaired. We will send power point slides ahead of time and make sure that images are described for use with text to talk, as well as making use of colours that are easier to read• Provision of documents in dyslexia-friendly fonts and dyslexia-friendly formats• Avoiding colours, lighting, and other formats that may trigger migraines, epilepsy• Ensuring that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda• Ensuring that any in person meetings are held in sufficiently bright and spacious rooms• Ensure that venues for any in person meetings are easily accessible to main transport links• Consider, on a case-by-case basis, paying T&S for carers or support workers to attend alongside the participant, where this is required
--	--	--	--	---

				<p>and not covered by the individual's own employment contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there are particular constraints consider opportunities for participants to engage in a different way (via video-link, Teams or tele-conference for instance) Scheduling regular breaks to allow and encourage Assessment panel members to step away from their screen
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Trans people may be absent from work due to transition.</p> <p>UKRI records may show the wrong gender.</p> <p>A person's pronouns may be used incorrectly in panel meetings or suitable options for titles (e.g. Mx) may not be available on funding opportunity documents.</p>	<p>UKRI terms and conditions are flexible in nature and absence as a result of medical treatment are positively considered. We would expect that absence related to transition would be covered by the Research Organisation's (RO) sick policy and strongly encourage ROs to treat absence relating to transition like any other medical absence.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given at UKRI level as to how records (including Gateway to Research and other communications materials) might be adjusted.</p> <p>Assessment Panellists will be invited to include pronouns in their MS Teams profile.</p> <p>Ensure use of gender-neutral language in opportunity specification, guidance, and other supporting documents.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Applicants' eligibility is not based on marriage or civil partnership basis.	N/A

Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>People may be absent from work due to parental leave or because medical appointments or health conditions related to pregnancy.</p> <p>Childcare responsibilities may be a barrier to attending panel meetings.</p>	<p>Applicants are not asked to disclose pregnancy at any stage of the application</p> <p>Provision for parental leave (including maternity leave, paternity leave and leave related to surrogacy and adoption) are covered in the UKRI terms and conditions</p> <p>The costs of additional childcare for grant-holders, beyond that required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the job, and that are directly related to the project, may be requested as a directly incurred cost if the institutional policy is to reimburse them.</p> <p>Dates will be agreed in advance to allow meeting attendees to make arrangements to attend.</p> <p>Advocate for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate ESRC staff and Assessment Panel member participation. If the Panel meeting is taking place virtually, breaks will be provided to provide opportunity for feeding children if necessary. This could include expressing/breastfeeding. If the meeting is in person consider whether the venue for the commissioning panel meeting is able to provide facilities for breastfeeding/expressing mothers if necessary.</p>
-------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--	---

				<p>A recording of the applicant webinar will be made available for those who are not able to attend on the day. Potential applicants can also email the commissioning team directly with questions, using the email address provided in the funding opportunity.</p>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>There could be potential bias or discrimination because somebody (either an assessment panel member, a research applicant or research participants) is from a particular ethnic background.</p>	<p>We will follow UKRI EDI Policy to ensure that all policy recommendations, including those covering assessment panel compositions are followed.</p> <p>Meeting participants will be asked to introduce themselves to ensure correct pronunciation of names.</p>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>There could be potential discrimination because it is known that somebody (either an assessment panel member, a research applicant or research participants) has a particular faith or belief.</p> <p>Religious holidays or practices may present a barrier to attending panel meetings.</p>	<p>Consider religious observances when planning panel meetings. This might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling meetings to avoid major religious festivals; (if impossible to avoid then consider mitigations. For example, during Ramadan ensure that meetings finish early so that participants are able to get home to break their fast, awareness of the sensitivities around offering Muslim's meals during periods of fasting • (In person panel meeting) Accommodating dietary restrictions. For example, ensuring that there is sufficient choice to allow all participants to eat – recognising that

				<p>some groups cannot eat pork or beef or shellfish, that others avoid caffeine, ensuring that vegetarian food is available if Kosher or Halal food is not provided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (In-person panel meeting) Not scheduling meetings such that they would require travel late on Friday evenings (for example Jewish Sabbath) or on Fridays (Friday prayer, Islam) • During the online panel meeting, breaks will be provided to allow prayer if requested.
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>There could be potential discrimination because it is known that somebody (either an assessment panel member, a research applicant or research participant) has a particular sexual orientation.</p>	<p>We will follow UKRI EDI Policy to ensure all policy recommendations are followed.</p>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Potential for discrimination because it is known to somebody (either panel member or a research applicant) has a particular gender.</p> <p>Use of language can present a barrier to participation, and it may be perceived that those with caring responsibilities are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Panel members may be disadvantaged and unable to attend meetings if they have caring responsibilities</p>	<p>Ensure use of gender-neutral language in opportunity specification, guidance, and other supporting documents.</p> <p>Ensure that the panel has balanced gender representation. Aim for at least 60:40 split.</p> <p>If the panel meeting is in person, ensure that the meeting location is suitable to allow easy return home.</p>

				Encourage successful ROs to adopt gender neutral language in all relevant documentation.
--	--	--	--	--

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"/>	Place is one of the requirements for this funding opportunity. -	<p>The WWCLES is intended to address local labour market outcomes. As such, applicants will be required to incorporate a robust place-based approach within their proposals. Applicants are strongly encouraged to co-create their proposals with Project Co-Leads from local businesses, local third-sector organisations, and local government. This place-based, collaborative partnership approach will be mirrored in the activities of the successful WWCLES.</p> <p>Ensure, as far as possible, that the Assessment Panel has a balanced geographical representation.</p> <p>Advocate for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where</p>

				<p>possible to facilitate ESRC staff and Assessment Panel member participation.</p> <p>The applicant webinar will be hosted virtually to enable the widest possible audience reach. Potential applicants can also email the commissioning team directly with questions, using the email address provided in the funding opportunity.</p>
Socio-economic status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>There is potential for those with different socio-economic statuses to be impacted differently by this opportunity</p>	<p>Advocate for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate ESRC staff and Assessment Panel member participation.</p> <p>We will follow UKRI Guidance on Business Travel Standards, Subsistence Costs and Expense Claims.</p> <p>We will follow UKRI EDI Policy.</p> <p>The applicant webinar will be hosted virtually to enable the widest possible audience reach. Potential applicants can also email the commissioning team directly with questions, using the email address provided in the funding opportunity.</p>
Education background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Potential for difficulties in understanding research jargon/language for assessment panel</p>	<p>Ensure that unnecessary jargon and academic language are not used as these could provide a barrier.</p>

			<p>member is from outside of academia or from another discipline.</p>	<p>The Opportunity specification will mandate participation from non-academic and practitioner partners so this would mitigate against any potential disadvantage</p> <p>We will brief the Chair to ensure that the meeting is organised to accommodate the needs of all Assessment panel members</p>
Parent/guardian responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Those with parent/guardian responsibilities may experience more obstacles in arranging alternative caring support.</p>	<p>The commissioning exercise has been planned to allow the maximum possible time for applicants to develop their proposals.</p> <p>We will ensure that access arrangements are provided for the Panel meeting and enable adequate time prior to the events for arrangements to be made by those involved.</p> <p>Advocate for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate ESRC staff and Assessment Panel member participation.</p> <p>During the panel meeting, adequate breaks would be provided so that those with parent or guardian responsibilities or other responsibilities would have time out.</p> <p>A recording of the applicant webinar will be made available for those who are not able to attend on the day. Potential applicants can also email the commissioning team</p>

				directly with questions, using the email address provided in the funding opportunity.
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>It may be perceived that those with caring responsibilities are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Those with carer/parent caring responsibilities may experience more obstacles in arranging alternative caring support</p>	<p>Advocate for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate ESRC staff and Assessment Panel member participation.</p> <p>Reimbursement of additional childcare or other caring costs if the meeting participant is otherwise unable to attend (this could include additional hours of childcare in the child's usual setting or paying for a relative to travel to care for school age children).</p> <p>A recording of the applicant webinar will be made available for those who are not able to attend on the day. Potential applicants can also email the commissioning team directly with questions, using the email address provided in the funding opportunity.</p>
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	
Other characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	

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

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

- career breaks
- support for people with caring responsibilities
- flexible working
- alternative working patterns
- joint lead applicants

UKRI can offer disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders during the application and assessment process if required.

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities. We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career, such as:

- breaks and delays
- disruptive working patterns and conditions
- the loss of ongoing work
- role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

Assessment panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the capability to deliver and career development of those individuals included in the application. They will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing.

Where disruptions have occurred, applicants can highlight this within their application if they wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

Applicants are required to set out what approaches and activities they have planned that will embed EDI into their proposed work and will be assessed on the quality of their plans.

We will advocate for fully virtual Assessment Panel meetings where possible and appropriate to mitigate the impact of in-person meetings on participants with disabilities and those with parental or caring responsibilities. We will facilitate the use of personal equipment, such as allowing caption use.

Continued below...

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, some potential barriers have been identified (see above). Activities have been adapted following the actions described in the previous section.
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 type="checkbox"/>	

Continued below...

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 should regularly be reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity.</p> <p>The EIA will be reviewed as part of the closure of the project and lessons learned activity. There will be an evaluation of the project every six months which will ensure that objectives are being met.</p> <p>If on reading this document, you have feedback or suggestion for any amendments, you can contact the ESRC team for this opportunity via WESGrants@esrc.ukri.org</p>
<p>Next review date:</p>	<p>TBC in 2026</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>WESGrants@esrc.ukri.org</p>
<p>Signed off by (name and date):</p>	<p>James Canton 15th October 2024</p>