



UK Research  
and Innovation

# 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**

	<b>Response</b>
Name of activity being assessed	AI Supported Research Sandpit
Council/department/project team	ESRC, Data Strategy and Infrastructure
Aims and objectives of the activity	<p>The broad aims of the sandpit are to generate research proposals which can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a better understanding of what AI supported research using data from ESRC, ADR UK and SDR UK is being undertaken.</li> <li>• Deliver impactful and innovative AI supported research using data from ESRC data infrastructure, ADR UK and SDR UK.</li> <li>• Demonstrate where AI supported research can add value over and above more traditional analytical approaches.</li> <li>• Provide insights on the opportunity for and address some of the challenges on AI supported research using ESRC data infrastructure, ADR UK and or SDR UK.</li> </ul> <p>Outline the aspects of your activity that need to be covered by the EIA. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDI throughout the sandpit process, including participants selection, mentor selection, sandpit planning and guidance for our assessment panel.</li> <li>• Grant terms and conditions, including recognition for sick leave and all forms of parental leave</li> </ul>
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK HEIs</li> <li>• Admin Staff</li> <li>• Academics from across disciplines relevant to the funding opportunity</li> <li>• UKRI staff</li> <li>• Director and mentors that will make up our assessment panel</li> </ul>
What data and consultation have you used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have reviewed other Equality Impact Assessments published for UKRI calls, spoken to colleagues who have run successful programmes and consulted internally with the EDI group to ensure the assessment is comprehensive. External consultation around the call and specification has taken place with relevant identified external stakeholders.</li> </ul>



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"/>	Potential negative or positive depending on scheme eligibility requirements	We will encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for the sandpit and diversity of background will be considered when selecting participants to attend. We will also consider individuals from different career stages at the participants selection and mentor selection stage. Track record is not an explicit criterion, given the likely relationship to career stage (indirectly age). Mentors will be 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.

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	People with disability may find it difficult to attend due to location and the physical need to be in person for two days.	<p>We will endeavour to host the sandpit in a location that has disability access and ensure that the sandpit has appropriate breaks.</p> <p>We will ensure that it is possible to print the online documents and they are in a form that text can be enlarged, and any information displayed by screen sharing can be zoomed as needed. Image descriptions will also be made available. Captions will also be used for the hearing impaired. We will avoid colours, lighting that may trigger migraines, epilepsy. Frequent breaks will also be built into the two day agenda. Applicants will also be able to request materials ahead of the sandpit</p>
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UKRI records may show the wrong gender which could lead to accidental misgendering and discrimination.	We would engage with participants beforehand to understand their preferred pronouns and gender. We would expect that absence related to transition would be covered by the Research Organisation's sick policy and strongly encourage ROs to treat absence relating to transition like any other medical absence.
Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This is unlikely to influence the inclusion of those who are married or in civil partnerships.	
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Participation in the sandpit may be negatively affected if potential applicants or mentor reviewers are unavailable at key stages.</p> <p>Inability to attend due to childcare commitments may affect who can participate.</p>	<p>Full timeline provided of all key milestones, allowing early engagement with UKRI on specific mitigations. UKRI will do its best to accommodate adjustments.</p> <p>Sandpits are intense with a high cognitive load. Sufficient rest time will be allocated to the sandpit agenda, and any specific</p>



				requirements for rest can be taken into consideration by UKRI. Participants will also be able to leave the Sandpit to deal with any issues related to their pregnancy
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		We will encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for the sandpit and diversity of backgrounds will be considered when selecting participants to attend.
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Participation in <b>call</b> may be affected, if potential applicants or mentors are unavailable at key assessment stages. (Activities could coincide with religious holidays, for example).	UKRI will ensure that religious observances are considered. A full timeline will be provided of all key milestones, allowing early engagement with UKRI on specific mitigations. UKRI will do its best to accommodate adjustments.
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No known negative impact	
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<p>We will encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for the sandpit and diversity of background will be considered when selecting participants to attend.</p> <p>In line with UKRI policy we will aim to ensure fair representation across genders. We will aim for <b>Y</b> at worst 60/40 split across our mentors. We will also endeavour to ensure gender balance within participants at the sandpit</p>

**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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Participants may find it difficult to attend if the location of the sandpit is far away from them.	We will endeavour to find a “central” location that is accessible from as many areas of the country as possible.
Socio-economic status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	None known	
Education background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	None known	
Parent/guardian responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		UKRI offers support available for people with caring responsibilities and reimbursement of childcare costs if the participant is unable to attend. Individuals should get in contact with UKRI if they have any queries.  We should ensure the use of gender-neutral language – parental leave, irrespective of sexual orientation.
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		See above
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Event unlikely to be held in Northern Ireland	
Other characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		



<p>Are there <b>general or overarching impacts on multiple groups</b>? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact?</p>	<p>Mitigations outlined above</p>
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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 <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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	See the mitigations outlined above. Further risks that are brought to the attention of UKRI as the process proceeds will be addressed and this policy updated.
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 type="checkbox"/>	

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**Review and sign off**

<p><b>What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?</b></p>	<p>A Call for participant Expression of Interest (EoI) for the sandpit will be open via Survey Monkey, available on UKRI website and available to all interested parties to support their applications.</p> <p>Contact details will be provided alongside the information relevant to the sandpit to support queries related to the call.</p> <p>We will ensure that we publish the call as soon as possible to ensure that academics have time to apply to attend the sandpit and we will advertise the sandpit widely.</p> <p>The assessment process, of both the sandpit member selection and the peer review of the proposed projects, will be designed to ensure any unconscious bias will be identified, challenged and managed. We will share Unconscious Bias briefing information with the mentors/Director who will make up the assessment panel.</p> <p>We will also encourage people from a diverse range of backgrounds to attend the sandpit event. We will do this by including wording in the call document and including this as part of the selection process for selection of attendees</p>
<p><b>Next review date:</b></p>	

<p><b>Will this EIA be published? * Yes/Not required</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><b>Point of contact</b></p>	



Signed off by (name and date):	For example, project board, committee, budget holder, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)
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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](mailto:ISPF@ukri.org)

### Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
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**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?
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