



UK Research
and Innovation

UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form

About your activity

Title of your activity

OPP1148 EPSRC Materials Innovation Programme Coordination Network Pluses

Council or business area

EPSRC - Advanced Materials Team

Aims and objectives

This funding forms part of the National Materials Innovation Programme (NMIP) announced as part of the Advanced Manufacturing Sector Plan in the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy.

The NMIP aims to establish a nationally coordinated approach to the UK advanced materials sector, driving the translation and adoption of materials across key industrial sectors. The UKRI NMIP is being developed in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology (DSIT) by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and Innovate UK.

Under the NMIP this activity aims to unite industry, government, and the materials research community to collaborate and cooperate for shared outcomes. The Network Plus initiative will link together and leverage capabilities across the UK materials ecosystem. Each investment will be required to coordinate across industry, academia, and government to accelerate translation, scale up, and deployment of materials innovation. Drawing out and building upon the UK's strength and expertise in materials research and development.

Key outcomes from this activity are to increase materials community knowledge and connectivity and to improve the UK's ability for new material capabilities to translate towards utilisation (further objectives can be found in the full call document).

The aspect of the activity that need to be covered by this EIA is to consider equality as part of advertising, application process, external review, building a panel, hosting panel meetings.



Who is affected?

Research council staff, members of the research community, applicants, panel members, awardees.

What data and consultation have you used?

This opportunity has been developed by EPSRC, in consultation with National Materials Innovation Programme Leadership Group, Innovate UK, and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

Previous equality impact consultations, outcomes or lessons learned from similar projects.

Impact on specific groups

Are there general impacts on multiple groups?

Positive Impacts:

The call will be open to all, and applications are welcome from any eligible UK-based organisations with relevant expertise. Contact details will be provided alongside the call document. EPSRC will engage with the successful grant holders to monitor the project and learn challenges and successes.

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

For this funding activity EPSRC will aim to:

- Ensure all participants in the process are asked to inform staff if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation.
- Clearly communicate the timeline and key milestones for funding activities and 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 managing environmental conditions, such as 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.

No impact



Applicants are not asked to disclose any information regarding their protected characteristics at any stage of the process. Standard EPSRC policies regarding protected characteristics will be followed.

Negative impact

Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage individuals of specific protective characteristics (e.g. race, sexual orientation, gender, age), if this is known to the panel.

Action

Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation. EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased assessment. EPSRC will utilise standard protocols and clearly published assessment criteria.

Impact on protected characteristics

Complete the table for all characteristics. You only need to add details if there is a positive or negative impact.

Protected characteristic	Impact (positive, negative, none or unknown)	Details of impact	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Age	None	None identified. We will follow Standard EPSRC/UKRI policies and there are no limitations around age in place on applications to this funding opportunity.	Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed. All staff are trained in unconscious bias, and the principles of this training upheld in panel discussions. This funding opportunity is open to all career stages.
Disability	Negative	There could be impacts on people with disability if action isn't taken for example accessibility of the written funding opportunity and attendance at in person panel meetings.	All applicants invited to interview will be asked to inform EPSRC if they have specific requirements and reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that any circumstances which could affect participation can be accommodated as far as possible. Unconscious bias will be covered as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation. EPSRC staff will be present during



		However, we will mitigate these issues (see actions).	<p>outline, invited assessment panels and interviews to act as additional assurance to help ensure that peer review is unbiased.</p> <p>Ensure all documents are suited for users who have accessibility modifications to their computer system. Also provide documents in a different format (e.g. larger or different font) if requested.</p> <p>Documents will be produced in line with EPSRC and UKRI formatting guidelines (put in place and checked by the UKRI web team)</p>
Gender reassignment	None	None identified. We will follow Standard EPSRC/UKRI policies and gender neutral language is used in our funding opportunities.	Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings.
Marriage or civil partnership	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their marital status. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
Pregnancy and maternity	Negative	Depends on individual circumstances. Applicants may be on parental leave when the funding opportunity is open and/or assessment takes place. Panel members may have additional requirements associated with caring responsibilities or pregnancy.	<p>EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and applicants will be made aware of these.</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>Any reasonable adjustments will be made in regard to attendance at in-person panels if required and fully justified.</p>
Race	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	Standard EPSRC Policies will be followed.



			All staff are trained in unconscious bias, and the principles of this training upheld in panel discussions.
Religion or belief	Negative	Depends on individual circumstance. Participation could be affected by coincidence with religious holidays.	EPSRC endeavours to select dates that a cognisant of major holidays (e.g., panel dates will try to avoid being held during religious holidays).
Sex	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings. Efforts will be made to select gender diverse panellists and reviewers.
Sexual orientation	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	Standard EPSRC Policies will be followed.

Impact on additional characteristics

Complete the table for all characteristics. You only need to add details if there is a positive or negative impact.

Additional characteristics	Impact (positive, negative, none or unknown)	Details of impact	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Geographical location and place	Negative	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed. Interviews are planned as in-person to be held at UKRI Swindon offices.	Assessment Criteria for the funding opportunity do not include geographical location as a factor. The application process is open to all. All assessment dates will be published up front. Reasonable adjustments will be made



			regarding interview attendance where possible and fully justified.
Socio-economic status	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	The application process is open to all who meet the EPSRC eligibility criteria.
Education background	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	The application process is open to all who meet the EPSRC eligibility criteria.
Parent or guardian responsibilities	Negative	Depends on individual circumstances. Applicants may have caring responsibilities when the funding opportunity is open and/or assessment takes place. Panel members may have additional requirements associated with caring responsibilities.	<p>EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and applicants will be made aware of these.</p> <p>Where possible we will not put funding opportunity deadlines in School holidays.</p> <p>We will openly advertise the funding opportunity, and it will be open for an extended period to account for national holidays and to allow applicants time to apply and open access to the funding.</p>
Carer responsibilities	Negative	Depends on individual circumstances. Applicants may have caring responsibilities when the funding opportunity is open and/or assessment takes place. Panel members may have additional requirements associated with caring responsibilities.	<p>EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and applicants will be made aware of these.</p> <p>Where possible we will not put funding opportunity deadlines in School holidays.</p> <p>We will openly advertise the funding opportunity, and it will be open for an extended period to account for national holidays and to allow applicants time to apply and open access to the funding.</p>
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	None	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.	None identified. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed



Other characteristics			
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Final decision

Make a decision on whether to proceed with the activity

State which one of the following outcomes applies and give a reason for your decision.

- Adapt or change the activity in a way which will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.

Possible risks and bias associated with this activity have been identified and activities adapted accordingly. We will ensure active consideration of ED&I aspects throughout the activity and will review this EIA accordingly.

Review and sign off

How will you monitor and review the impact of your activity?

We will review the EIA as part of any closure or lessons learned activity. We may also amend plans during the activity, if significant issues arose that had not been identified.

What is the EIA review date?

On or after 30 October 2026.

Contact

Advanced Materials Team in EPSRC, materials@epsrc.ukri.org

Will the EIA be published?

Yes

Who has this been signed off by?

Alex Broomsgrove (Head of Advanced Materials – EPSRC)

12 March 2026



Submitting the form

You need to [submit the form to the central repository](#)

EIAs for the International Science Partnership Funds should be emailed to: ISPF@ukri.org

Change log

Include changes as you've reviewed the EIA. For example, based on input received from x at the announcement of opportunity stage, x was added

Name	Date	Version	Change
		1	
		2	
		3	

Action plan

Add the actions you intend to take (or have taken) to address the negative impact you have identified. Actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

Action	Deadline	Owner	How will it be monitored?	What is the outcome?