



UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form

About your activity

Title of your activity

UK – Japan civil nuclear research programme 2026

Council or business area

EPSRC

Aims and objectives

This EIA is being produced to cover a funding opportunity that requires us to consider equality as part of advertising, application process, expert review, building a panel, hosting panel meetings and all other related activities.

This programme aims to support projects focused on the decommissioning of Fukushima and Sellafield. Two sites critical to the sustainability of nuclear power.

This is part of an ongoing collaboration with Japan on nuclear decommissioning and will represent the 12th phase of the collaboration.

Who is affected?

This funding opportunity spans the nuclear fission research area of EPSRCs remit, therefore members of the EPSRC community in these disciplines are affected.

Project partners, comprising for example overseas universities, industry, local authorities or devolved administration, could be impacted by the funding decisions and resulting research outcomes.



Applicants, panel members, awardees, members of the research community, research council staff, stakeholders of any successful programmes.

What data and consultation have you used?

This work builds on Community engagement events held by EPSRC (in particular from the Energy & Decarbonisation theme). Agreement of Research Areas builds on work undertaken by the Network we funded in the area, JUNO: A Network for Japan - UK Nuclear Opportunities - <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=EP%2FP013600%2F1>) that facilitated technical discussions between the UK and Japanese research communities. It also builds on Key Aspects of the UK-Japan Nuclear Relationship, such as;

- **The Hiroshima Accord (2023):** A [major agreement](#) reinforcing commitment to clean energy transition, net-zero by 2050, and collaboration on advanced nuclear technologies, including SMRs.
- **Annual Nuclear Dialogue:** A senior-level forum established in 2012 to strengthen cooperation, with the [14th meeting](#) held in December 2025 in Manchester.
- **Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA):** Originally from 1998, this agreement was updated to ensure legal frameworks for nuclear trade and safety continue after the UK left Euratom, according to a [2021 UK-Japan Protocol on nuclear energy](#).

Impact on specific groups

Are there general impacts on multiple groups?

In-person visits, travel and meetings can present as negative barriers for disabled people, those who identify as transgender, women, ethnic minorities as well as those with parental or caring responsibilities (and those who have intersectional identities of all of the aforementioned demographics). We will encourage hybrid and/or fully virtual meetings to avoid access issues, travel and overnight stay requirements, and facilitate the use of personal equipment (e.g. closed captioning or live transcript provision).

We will encourage researchers from non-marginalised backgrounds to accommodate the participation of their marginalised collaborators and colleagues who may experience discrimination in a way which prevents harm, and to learn from their lived experiences such that they will work together in a harmonious and inclusive way with a positive, understanding team research culture

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	Potential for both positive and negative	<p>Positive: The call is open to all. Researchers with expertise in relevant research areas for the funding opportunity can apply. There is no request for a CV or extensive description of expertise that would allude to biological age of applicants.</p> <p>Negative: For a variety of reasons individuals can face stigma and discrimination in society and assessment processes for their relative youth, or their relative age and the perceived experience or energy associated with these assumptions. If an applicant's age became known to the panel or reviewers, there is the potential for unconscious bias, but in no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to reviewers or panel members. This same effect could happen during co-creation and engagement activities.</p>	<p>EPSRC's panel members receive a briefing on unconscious bias in advance of the panel. EPSRC panel convenors will remain vigilant to, and address, any bias during the assessment process, both at postal peer review and panel stage. Reviewers who are part of the peer review college also receive information about unconscious bias as part of their training. Applicants are encouraged to raise any issues with reviews in advance of the panel so that they can be addressed.</p> <p>More information about EPSRC's commitment to ensuring fairness in peer review can be found here. EPSRC have recently published a 3 year EDI action plan which includes actions related to peer review to reduce the likelihood of bias impacting on decision making</p>
Disability	Potential for both positive and negative	<p>Applicants</p> <p>Negative: This opportunity may require those involved in the project to travel</p>	<p>Applicants</p> <p>We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration with</p>



	<p>nationally and internationally. This may discourage individuals with additional requirements relating to physical or mental impairments from applying. There may be differences in accessibility standards and provision in different countries.</p> <p>Individuals who identify as having a disability could be subject to unconscious bias, and their voices may not be heard as strongly during co-creation and engagement activities.</p> <p>Panellists</p> <p>Positive: The panel will be held virtually therefore this is a more accessible participation option. Panellists will not have to travel to an in-person venue which may not have accessibility measures.</p> <p>Negative: This may have a negative impact for those with hearing impairments and those who find a lot of sensory input overwhelming.</p> <p>The joint panel with Japan needs to held at a time of day mutually acceptable to both UK & Japanese panel members. This means it starts early in the day UK</p>	<p>their collaborators that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested. We will highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling.</p> <p>Panellists</p> <p>Breaks will be built into the panel schedule at regular intervals to prevent screen fatigue and overwhelm. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that any circumstances which could affect participation can be accommodated wherever possible, e.g. Closed Captions</p>
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		times (as well as late in the day Japanese time).	
Gender reassignment	Negative	If international travel is involved with the project: depending on the country there may be travel restrictions for transgender travellers. Individuals identifying as transgender could be subject to unconscious bias, and their voices may not be heard as strongly during cocreation and engagement activities.	We will encourage applicant to explore options to build and maintain international collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested. We will also encourage travel to the UK to ensure an inclusive approach to collaboration for transgender individuals.
Marriage or civil partnership	None	At no point during the assessment process is this disclosed to reviewers or panel members.	
Pregnancy and maternity	Negative	Research collaboration may require those involved in a project to travel nationally and internationally. This may impact investigators or staff members who are pregnant or on parental leave. Pregnant women are unable to travel by aeroplane during latter stages of pregnancy. A researcher on parental leave may not be able to apply or take part as a panel member or in cocreation or stakeholder engagement activities.	We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested. Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that any circumstances which could affect participation to apply can be accommodated wherever possible



		Individuals who are pregnant in the co-creation and/or engagement processes may be subject to unconscious bias by those leading the activities.	
Race	Negative	<p>Applicants: EPSRC's Ethnicity report found that 'The award rate for PL, CL and Fellowship applicants who identify as White is higher than that of applicants from ethnic minority groups in most reporting years.</p> <p>Overseas research organisations may be in a (remote) location which may be unsafe for ethnic minority PLs (i.e. they may experience racism in these locations).</p> <p>Ethnic minorities involved in the co-creation and/or engagement processes may be subject to unconscious bias by those leading the activities.</p> <p>Panellists: There is a risk of not having panel members who identify as an ethnic minority</p>	<p>Applicants: We will encourage researchers to accommodate the participation of their ethnic minority collaborators and colleagues in a way which prevents harm via consulting the UKRI Good Research Resource Hub (https://www.ukri.org/manage-youraward/good-research-resource-hub/), and to follow the policies their research organisation advocates around safe travel.</p> <p>Panellists: An unconscious bias briefing will be provided to the panel as part of the panel guidance. EPSRC convenors will also carefully listen for instances of bias and step in where appropriate. Diversity will be taken into consideration when putting together the panel membership.</p>
Religion or belief	Negative	Travel dates – which could be tied to collaborator availability - could coincide with a religious holiday. Panel and application	We will encourage applicants to be considerate of their team's beliefs and that reduce the need to travel if the trip would fall over a religious



		<p>timeline dates could be affected by the same issue.</p> <p>Co-creation activities could clash with religious holidays. This could negatively disadvantage those who practice particular faiths if this is not taken into account by researchers scheduling a visit and if panel dates clash with religious holidays.</p>	<p>holiday – or to provide a hybrid attendance option.</p> <p>We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.</p> <p>EPSRC will ensure to schedule panels on days which are not major religious holidays, and ask panel members to highlight circumstances which may affect their ability to participate in a panel and to specify accommodations which would enable them to participate.</p>
Sex	Negative	<p>Our gender report found that 'Women are consistently under-represented in EPSRC's Project lead (PL) applicant pool across our portfolio' and 'Application numbers from women for large grants are particularly low'.</p> <p>Research organisations included may be in a (remote) location which may be unsafe for PLs who identify as women (i.e. they may experience sexism in these locations).</p> <p>Women involved in the co-creation and/or engagement processes may be subject to</p>	<p>Applicants: We will encourage researchers to accommodate the participation of their women collaborators and colleagues in a way which prevents harm.</p> <p>Panellists: An unconscious bias briefing will be presented to the panel as part of the panel guidance presentation. EPSRC convenors will also carefully listen for instances of bias and step in where appropriate. Diversity will be taken into consideration when putting together the panel membership. Gender neutral language will be used throughout the assessment process.</p>



		unconscious bias by those leading the activities Panellists: There is a risk of not having panel members who identify as women.	
Sexual orientation	Negative	Research organisations included may be in a (remote) location which may be unsafe for PLs who identify as LGBTQ+. Individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ may also be subject to unconscious bias during co-creation and/or engagement processes.	We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.

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			
Socio-economic status			
Education background			



Parent or guardian responsibilities	Negative	Typically, research collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally, this may impact investigators or staff members who have parent/guardian responsibilities.	We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested. Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling
Carer responsibilities	Negative	Typically, research collaboration requires investigators and staff to travel nationally and internationally, this may impact investigators or staff members who have carer/parent carer responsibilities.	We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration that reduce the need to travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested. Highlight EPSRC guidance on support for carers or caregivers when travelling.
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)			
Other characteristics			

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.

1. No negative or positive impact identified therefore, activity will proceed
2. Adapt or change the activity in a way which will eliminate negative impact or promote equality
3. Stop the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups.



4. Barriers and impact identified, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the activity. Proceed with caution with this activity knowing the impact – This assessment has clearly identified the potential impacts and the actions identified in this assessment will help to minimise the negative impact.

Review and sign off

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

Research outcomes will be monitored via mechanisms such as ResearchFish.

EPSRC Clean Energy Team will convene the panels, ensuring that mitigations such as the unconscious bias guidance is put into practice.

We will review the EIA as part of a lessons learned activity at the end of the timeline for this funding opportunity and compare with data across the Theme and previous calls in this area.

We will use data from groups affected by this funding opportunity to inform future decisions and use new insights to review this EIA.

What is the EIA review date?

October 2026

Contact

Clean Energy Team, EPSRC

Will the EIA be published?

Yes

Who has this been signed off by?

Jim Fleming, Joint Head of Clean Energy theme, 21/05/26

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?
Provide unconscious bias guidance as part of peer review, and any biases during peer review are challenged	December 2026	Amanda Howes	Included in panel documentation and as part of panel process	Highlighting the importance of understanding bias, raising awareness and empowering challenge.
We will encourage applicants to explore options to build and maintain (inter)national collaboration that reduce the need to	September 2026	Amanda Howes	Through engagement with potential applicants	Provides opportunities for those with protected characteristics and other appropriate characteristics to be involved in the safest and



travel and make clear that associated resources can be requested.				most appropriate way for them
Review the process following the delivery of the funding opportunity to take lessons	January 2027	Ethan Tull	Post activity meeting arranged with EPSRC colleagues involved	Opportunity to adapt the process or funding opportunity for the next iteration of this funding opportunity in 2027