



UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form

About your activity

Title of your activity

Future Computing Paradigms Network Plus

Council or business area

EPSRC, ICT

Aims and objectives

EPSRC ICT plans to launch an open call for applicants to apply for funding to build a multidisciplinary Network Plus, initially charged with analysing emerging computing paradigms through UK research mapping, international benchmarking and horizon scanning to develop evidence-based recommendations for UKRI and government to shape national research priorities. The Network Plus will then coordinate the research community to begin to deliver on these recommendations.

The funding opportunity may require considering equality as part of the application process, expert peer review, building a panel, hosting meetings etc

Who is affected?

- Individuals eligible to apply for this funding and others who may be employed using funding awarded as a result of this call
- Research office/institutions and staff
- External expert panel reviewers and panel members
- There may be significant interaction with government, national security and defence experts, industry, academia and multidisciplinary engagement with expertise from the social, biological and environmental sciences as well as business and the wider innovation ecosystem
- UKRI staff running and involved in the opportunity



What data and consultation have you used?

Previous EIA conducted on similar activity (EPSRC Future Connectivity Hubs Evolution Programme TFS Call)

Impact on specific groups

Are there general impacts on multiple groups?

In-person panel meetings and applicant interviews can present negative barriers for a wide range of people such as those with disabilities and with parental or caring responsibilities. EPSRC will mitigate this by allowing hybrid or virtual attendance to avoid access issues, travel, overnight stay requirements etc.

EPSRC takes steps to minimise the risk of bias across application submission, review and assessment. These include providing clear guidance on unconscious bias, applying consistent assessment criteria and ensuring trained panel chairs promote fair and inclusive discussion.

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	No known impact		
Disability	Potential negative impact	Access to interview panel venue could potentially have a negative impact on participation.	EPSRC will ensure the interview space selected within Polaris House is as accessible as possible. Considerations will include proximity to accessible toilets, lift access, suitable lighting and reduced noise. All interviewees and panel members will be asked to highlight



			circumstances which may affect their ability to participate and how this can be accommodated. A virtual attendance option will be accommodated for those who face barriers or difficulties attending in person.
Gender reassignment	No known impact		Single, Gender-neutral toilets are available at Polaris House EPSRC is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants, that includes UKRI gender equality plan, which is part of the equality, diversity and inclusion work, EDI strategy and action plans. EPSRC and UKRI emphasise that anyone can apply for this opportunity regardless of gender or identified gender.
Marriage or civil partnership	No known impact		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative impact		The call is an open call with key dates for outlines and full proposals published via Funding Finder. EPSRC will endeavour to accommodate adjustments and be flexible, if possible, with regard timings of applicant interviews. EPSRC will offer support for people with caring responsibilities.
Race	Potential negative impact	Potential unconscious bias of panel members and chair	EPSRC will provide clear unconscious bias guidance at all assessment stages including interview. EPSRC is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants, that includes UKRI gender equality plan, which is part of the

			equality, diversity and inclusion work, EDI strategy and action plans. EPSRC and UKRI emphasise that anyone can apply for this opportunity regardless of their race In line with EPSRC EDI policy, the protected characteristic of the individual is never part of the assessment process, rather the assessment is focused on the institutions and countries with which the applicant(s) are linked.
Religion or belief	Potential negative impact	People with certain beliefs may be negatively impact by the timing of the meeting (time of day or date in year, due to prayer time, fasting, religious festivals etc) Religious practice may involve access to spaces for worship and appropriate washing facilities. Dietary requirements may need to be considered	EPSRC will endeavour to avoid days of religious significance to enable participation from people of different faiths. EPSRC will endeavour to accommodate adjustments for religious practices. EPSRC will have a point of contact for people who need to discuss their specific requirements and endeavour to accommodate these.
Sex	Potential negative impact	Potential unconscious bias of panel members	EPSRC will provide clear unconscious bias guidance at all stages of the assessment.
Sexual orientation	No known impact	There are no inherent or direct negative impacts relating to sexual orientation in this activity as sexual orientation will not	



		be known against any stakeholders.	
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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	Potential negative impact	Stakeholders located a significant distance from UKRI base may be negatively impacted (time, cost, ability to travel) by the panel and interview being held at a UKRI base	EPSRC will offer hybrid or virtual options to promote inclusion for those in different geographical locations, when needed. Panel members will be reimbursed for travel and accommodation costs, if applicable.
Socio-economic status	No known impact		
Education background	No known impact		
Parent or guardian responsibilities	Potential negative impact	Stakeholders with parental responsibilities may be impacted by issues such as school term dates and subsequent caring responsibilities. The funding opportunity is open over the summer school holidays.	EPSRC will endeavour to accommodate requirements around these needs and aim to organise interview panel outside school holidays. We have extended the time the call is open by two weeks to help reduce the impact on this group.
Carer responsibilities	Potential negative impact	Stakeholders with carer responsibilities may be impacted by additional	EPSRC will endeavour to accommodate requirements around these needs and aim to



		requirements and lack of flexibility around e.g. travel	offer hybrid/virtual interview panel option if required.
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)			
Other characteristics	No known impact		

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

The activities will be adapted or changed further to details above, in a way to reduce negative impact and promote inclusivity and equality.

Review and sign off

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

- Plan regular reviews of the EIA and action plan
- Review the EIA as part of closure or any lessons learned activity
- Continue to consult with stakeholders affected by the activity and use new insights to review and update EIA

What is the EIA review date?



3rd November 2026

Contact

Jan.Donnelly@esprc.ukri.org

Will the EIA be published?

Yes

Who has this been signed off by?

Glenn Goodall, Head of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Research Portfolio

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?
Review panel venue accessibility	Prior to interview date	Funding Opportunity Lead	Checklist completed	Interviews held in an inclusive environment
Offer hybrid/virtual participation options, if required	At panel / interview planning stages	Funding Opportunity Lead	Requested recorded and liaison with those requesting this option	Increased participation from those with caring / disability needs
Provide unconscious bias briefing to panel	Prior to panel meeting	Funding Opportunity Lead	Included in written panel briefing	Reduced risk bias