



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

	Response
Name of activity being assessed	Advancing Sustainable AI Technology
Council/department/project team	Name of council, team or business area that owns your activity EPSRC – Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (AIR) on behalf of IS8 AI Priority Programme
Aims and objectives of the activity	This programme delivers a coordinated set of investments to: • support potentially transformative, highly novel technologies and tools with the potential to deliver a step change in the sustainability of future AI systems, laying the foundations for future societal, economic and technological benefits, including new market opportunities for the UK. • strengthen the UK’s capability to design and deploy bold, ambitious sustainable AI technologies, ensuring AI contributes positively to both economic growth and environmental sustainability • enable small-scale, rapid projects that generate foundational insights which can be built on in the future • deliver a faster process compared to current standard funding routes, whilst maintaining robust decision making that is proportionate to the level of risk The activity includes: Funding calls Distributed peer review (DPR) Assessment and portfolio balancing processes
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	• Applicants (early, mid, and established career researchers) • Reviewers (including applicants participating in DPR) • EPSRC and NERC staff and programme delivery teams • Panel and moderation contributors • Research organisations • Wider beneficiaries (industry, policymakers, citizens)

	The applicants will be affected during the application process, through distributed peer review and for the duration of funding.
What data and consultation have you used?	What scoping/consultation has taken place? • Internal UKRI and EPSRC EDI data and prior EIAs • Stakeholder consultations with: – AI research community – EDI teams and DEI champions – Senior leadership and delivery teams – Subject area specialists – The Royal Academy of Engineering • Lessons learned from comparable DPR-based funding calls • Sector-wide insights (e.g., barriers to participation, workload, diversity trends)

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

	Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown			you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
Age	☒	☒	Positive: This funding opportunity will encourage proposals to include early carer researchers, as well as more established researchers. Negative: None	• Ensure criteria are clearly justified and proportionate • Promote fairness in assessment regardless of career stage
Disability	☒	☒	Positive: DPR reduces travel barriers and enables flexible participation Negative: Online review processes may create challenges (e.g. screen fatigue, accessibility barriers) Complex documentation may be difficult to navigate.	• Provide accessible materials (plain English, readable fonts) • Offer adjustments on request • Provide recordings and FAQs for webinars
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	☐	☐	No specific differential impacts identified	• Ensure objective and bias-aware assessment • Promote inclusive culture and guidance
Marriage or civil partnership	☐	☐	No specific impacts identified	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	☒	☒	Positive: Flexible DPR participation supports varying schedules Negative:	• Maximise application window where possible • Provide advance notice of funding opportunity • Allow reasonable adjustments

			Short timelines may disadvantage those on leave or with caring responsibilities.	
Race	☐	☒	Potential for unconscious bias in reviewer scoring Language barriers in documentation	• Reviewer training and moderation • Clear, structured criteria • Webinars with FAQs
Religion or belief	☐	☒	Timing may overlap with religious holidays	• Avoid major conflicts where possible • Provide adequate time windows
Sexual orientation	☐	☐	No specific impacts identified	N/A
Sex	☐	☒	Disproportionate caring responsibilities may affect participation	• Flexible participation (DPR) • Sufficient application timelines

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)	☒	☐	Positive Wider participation enabled through remote processes	Outreach to underrepresented regions through regional engagement leads and publication through UKRI funding finder

Socio-economic status	☐	☒	Unequal access to institutional support	Clear guidance and accessible materials
Education background	☐	☒	Bias toward prestigious institutions	Narrative CVs and application anonymisation
Parent/guardian responsibilities	☒	☒	Positive: Applicants/panellists who are pregnant or have childcare responsibilities will be able to participate in distributed peer review according to their own schedule and will not be disadvantaged by not being able to attend an assessment panel. Negative: Tight timelines may present barriers	Timelines have been extended beyond 8 weeks to reflect the call being open during summer and October half term. Prior notification of call opening in August announced in June 2026
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	☐	☒	Positive: Applicants/panellists who are pregnant or have childcare/carer responsibilities will be able to participate in distributed peer review according to their own schedule and will not be disadvantaged by not being able to attend an assessment panel. Negative: Tight timelines may present barriers	Timelines have been extended beyond 8 weeks to reflect the call being open during summer and October half term. Prior notification of call opening in August announced in June 2026
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	☐	☐	No additional impacts identified	
Other characteristics	☐	☐	None	

Are there general or overarching impacts on multiple groups? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact?	• Workload from DPR process • Timing constraints (e.g., holidays) • Accessibility of online formats Mitigation actions: • Review process can be completed by up to two members of applicant teams, so as not to disadvantage applicants (e.g. those with caring responsibilities or a has a protected characteristic) • Ring fenced the maximum number of applications each applicant team will be invited to review and have included this within the guidance. • Extended period of call opening to reflect summer holidays and half term. • Reduce unnecessary requirements • Provide clear guidance and realistic expectations • Enable flexibility and reasonable adjustments • Monitor participation and outcomes
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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 proceed .	☐	
2. Adapt or change the activity in a way which you think 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, 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.	☒	• Some unavoidable structural constraints (e.g. timelines, DPR workload) • However, all reasonable mitigations have been applied • Benefits (diversification, accessibility, innovation) outweigh residual risks

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Review and sign off

What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?	An EIA is a live document and should regularly be reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity Consider how you monitor the impact identified in your EIA. Put a plan in place to ensure that the impact is being monitored throughout the activity and evaluate the outcomes of any actions identified in the EIA. For example, you could: • Plan regular reviews of the EIA and action plan • Review the EIA as part of any closure or lessons learned activity. • Be transparent: continue to consult with the groups affected by your activity and use new insights to review you EIA. The EIA will be reviewed at regular intervals during programme delivery – see action plan
Next review date:	1st July 2026
Will this EIA be published? * Yes/Not required	Yes/Not required *EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities for example funding opportunities and events.
Point of contact	For example, the person or group responsible for the EIA. This may or may not be the point of contact for the EIA. For example, workstream in a project or a team Emma Morgan / Sam Tailby, DTS NERC / EPSRC AI and Robotics team
Signed off by (name and date):	For example, project board, committee, budget holder, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

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

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
		1	E.g. Based on input received from consultation groups at the business case stage, added actions under the gender section
		2	E.g. Based on input received from x at the announcement of opportunity stage, added/removed/edited x
		3	E.g. Based on input received from x at the investment authorisation stage, added/removed/edited x

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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?
Provide accessible guidance and documentation	Before call launch	Programme team	Published materials	Improved accessibility
Deliver reviewer bias training	Before DPR begins	EPSRC team	Participation records	Reduced bias
Engage regional and underrepresented communities	During call promotion	Programme team	Application data	Increased diversity
Monitor and review EDI outcomes	Ongoing	Programme team	Reporting cycles	Evidence-based improvements
Provide reasonable adjustments process	Ongoing	Programme team	Feedback	Inclusive participation