

UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form

About your activity

Title of your activity

What Works Centre for a Climate Resilient UK

Council or business area

Economic and Social Research Council; UK Research and Innovation

Aims and objectives

UKRI and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) are inviting applications for an independent What Works Centre which will work to transform how the UK adapts, and builds resilience to, the current and projected impacts of climate change. The centre will generate, synthesise and mobilise evidence to inform and accelerate adaptation pilots, interventions and actions. The Centre will be co-funded by Defra and UKRI, and will have devolved governments as partners (DAERA Northern Ireland, Welsh Government, Scottish Government).

Objectives for the centre include the following:

- To convene stakeholders and identify evidence needs
- To generate and synthesise trusted evidence
- To mobilise, test, accelerate and scale effective actions
- To advance adaptation evaluation practice
- To strengthen and build capacity

- **Who is affected?**

- Staff
- Applicants
- General public
- Communities
- Other public sector organisations
- Central and Devolved Governments – Defra, DAERA (Northern Ireland), Welsh Government, Scottish Government



What data and consultation have you used?

- UKRI EDI best practice and policies were followed in the creation of the opportunity. The equality impact assessment specific to this opportunity was developed with input and review from ESRC's dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) group. The assessment builds on learning from numerous previous relevant activities, such as the [ESRC/DWP What Works Centre for Local Employment](#).
- The ESRC funded ACCESS programme was consulted in the initial stages of the development of this opportunity to identify potential equality impacts.
- The What Works Network Cabinet Office Evaluation Task Force have also been consulted in the development of this funding opportunity.

Impact on specific groups

Are there general impacts on multiple groups?

N/A – all actions and impacts outlined in table below

Impact on protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Impact (positive, negative, none or unknown)	Details of impact	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Age	Potential Negative	There may be barriers for those that participate in the funding opportunity regarding age. Applications will not be assessed on age, however there is the potential of Early Career Researchers (ECR's) being excluded. Although not always the case, ECR's may be younger in age younger age than individuals with longer periods of experience.	Applicants will not need to disclose their age during the application process. Applications will primarily be assessed on how well they fit the assessment criteria which includes their vision, the fit to opportunity, capacity and capability of the Centre team, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and environmental sustainability. The funding finder offers applicants the chance to list project teams that comprise of individuals with ranging experience.



Disability	Potential negative	There may be barriers for those that participate in the funding opportunity regarding disability. In scoping activities, panel meetings, and the planned online webinar, attendees with visual/hearing impairments, physical disabilities, neuro-disabilities and/or other disabilities may face barriers when engaging. There may be barriers for disabled individuals participating in online meetings relating to scoping activities/ assessment and interview panels / the funding opportunity. Considerations need to be made to ensure that these online meetings are accessible and take varying needs into account.	Project Leads for this funding opportunity must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funding for the duration of the grant. Therefore, applicants should seek support from their research organisation's support office throughout the course of their application in the first instance; however, the funding finder states that UKRI can offer disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders during the application and assessment process, in the case applicants require this support. The funding finder also states the following: We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes: • career breaks • support for people with caring responsibilities • flexible working • alternative working patterns This ensures that those who have additional needs are aware that their application will not be negatively affected in the case that their working schedule has been adapted to their needs. Information text should be clear and legible in all communications, utilising contrasting colours and larger font sizes where appropriate.
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			We will advocate for collaborative activities (scoping/interview and assessment panels/ webinar) to be held online to remove any barriers pertaining to attending in person events. Individuals attending any online events/activities that are part of the development of this opportunity and once the opportunity opens (scoping/panels/webinar) should be asked about any accessibility requirements upon registration. Alternatively, event organisers will ensure that accessibility accommodations are factored into the event (e.g. ensuring closed captions are available during the webinar). UKRI and Defra staff members should ensure that this information is collected in sufficient time ahead of the event for awareness, and to ensure that identified requirements are accommodated for on the day. Staff convening events should also ensure that their microphones are working effectively and that any background noise is minimised. An appropriate number of breaks that are of an appropriate length should be built into the agenda of all online activities. It should be made clear that attendees can raise any comments regarding any disability requirements during these breaks (and throughout the day) to a member of UKRI staff. Breaks would ensure that any
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			attendees have an opportunity to process information and provide attendees and staff with the opportunity to alter their environment if necessary. Attendees should be made aware of break timings ahead of time.
Gender reassignment	Potential negative	There may be barriers for those that participate in the funding opportunity regarding gender reassignment (Trans identity). Trans individuals may be absent from work during transition/change and UKRI records may not accurately state an individual's chosen gender	Gender neutral language should be used in the funding finder guidance and any other supporting documents. All communications from ESRC/Defra staff should include gender neutral language. UKRI terms and conditions are flexible in nature and can include absence as a result of medical treatment. We would expect that absence related to transition would be covered by the Research Organisation's sick policy and strongly encourage Research Organisations to treat absence relating to transition like any other medical absence. Consideration must be given at UKRI level as to how records can be adjusted more flexibly (including Gateway to Research and other communication materials).
Marriage or civil partnership	None		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative	There may be barriers for those that participate in the funding opportunity regarding pregnancy and maternity.	All meetings should reflect the requirements of all attendees, including sufficient breaks for breastfeeding/expressing mothers if necessary. In line with information included in the funding finder, we support

			people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. As previously mentioned, this includes: • career breaks • support for people with caring responsibilities • flexible working • alternative working patterns
Race	Potential negative	There could be potential bias or discrimination because somebody (either an assessment panel member, a research applicant or research participants) is from a particular ethnic background.	We will follow UKRI EDI Policy to ensure that all policy recommendations, including those covering assessment panel composition, are followed. Meeting participants will be asked to introduce themselves to ensure correct pronunciation of names.
Religion or belief	Potential negative	There may be potential bias or discrimination if it becomes known that somebody holds a particular faith or belief.	Wherever possible, core funding opportunity activities should not coincide with any known religious observances such as major religious festivals or weekly religious observances. Breaks should be built into activities to allow for attendees to take prayer breaks where needed. Materials and discussions avoid bias or assumptions about beliefs.
Sex	Potential negative	The use of gendered language can present a barrier to participation.	Ensure use of gender-neutral language in opportunity specification, guidance, and other supporting documents. Ensure that the assessment and interview panels have as balanced gender representation as possible.



Sexual orientation	Potential negative	There could be potential discrimination if it becomes known that somebody (either an assessment panel member, a research applicant or research participant) has a particular sexual orientation.	We will follow UKRI EDI Policy to ensure all policy recommendations are followed. It will be ensured that all event communications use gender-neutral and inclusive language (e.g. avoid assumptions about partners or family structures).
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Impact on additional characteristics

Additional characteristics	Impact (positive, negative, none or unknown)	Details of impact	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Geographical location and place	Negative impact unlikely		We will follow UKRI EDI Policy, particularly in the consideration of panel composition. Advocating for virtual assessment and interview panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate funder, partner and assessment/interview panel engagement. The applicant information session will be hosted virtually as a webinar to enable the widest possible audience reach.
Socio-economic status	Negative impact unlikely		As above
Education background	Negative impact unlikely		Proposals must include team members and projects partners from outside academia, which will allow for a diverse representation of

			educational backgrounds in applications.
Parent or guardian responsibilities	Potential negative impact	Those with carer/parent carer responsibilities may experience more obstacles in arranging alternative caring support for different events (webinars, panels, etc).	Advocating for virtual Assessment Panel meetings over an in-person format where possible to facilitate funder, partner and assessment/interview panel engagement. We welcome applications from individuals who may work in a different way in line with their needs/personal circumstances. In line with information included in the funding finder, we support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes: • career breaks • support for people with caring responsibilities • flexible working • alternative working patterns
Carer responsibilities	Potential negative impact	As above	As above
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	N/A		
Other characteristics	N/A		



Final decision

Make a decision on whether to proceed with the activity

Decision: Adapt or change the activity in a way which will eliminate negative impact or promote equality

Activities will be carried out with UKRI EDI principles in mind and in a way that mitigates the possibility of negatively affecting individuals who align with the outlined protected and additional characteristics.

Review and sign off

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

The EIA will be regularly reviewed once the opportunity goes live. The activity will be evaluated through an evaluation process that will assess all aspects of the activity.

What is the EIA review date?

Date of first review to be confirmed – between December 2026 and March 2027.

Contact

ESRC Environment Team: Environment@esrc.ukri.org

Will the EIA be published?

Yes, as EIAs should be published alongside relevant funding activities for example funding opportunities and events .

Who has this been signed off by?

Name: Jen Gold

Date: 01/09/2026

Job Title: Executive Director of Research

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?
To continue to consider potential positive/negative EDI impacts throughout the duration of the development of this Centre	Present – Aug 2027 Ongoing action to conclude upon the start of the Centre.	ESRC / Defra team developing this opportunity	Continual monitoring of the EIA for this opportunity and updating it in the case of new identified risks.	



To ensure that the funded project adheres to inclusive research and innovation practice Guidance for inclusive research and innovation practice – UKRI	Aug 2027 – end of Centre funding period	ESRC	The centre will be evaluated throughout the course of its operation to ensure that core activities are being met. This may include assessing against EDI criteria.	
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