

UKRI Gender Equality Statement Guidance for Applicants

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1. International Development Funding

UKRI delivers Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding on behalf of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

The UK's Official Development Assistance commitment is monitored by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). ODA-funded activity focuses on outcomes that promote the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the [OECD Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\)](#) list and is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

UK aid is governed by the [International Development Act 2002](#), which requires that aid must be “*likely to contribute to a reduction in poverty*”. The [International Development \(Gender Equality\) Act 2014](#) amends the 2002 Act by inserting new duties requiring that development assistance is “*likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender*”. Therefore, UKRI's ODA activities must adhere to both the International Development Act 2002 and the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014.

2. What is Gender and Gender Equality?

Currently, the definition for sex is that it is biologically determined, while gender is socially and culturally defined, meaning gender is not necessarily fixed and can change.¹ This can cause differences in understanding experiences of gender across different countries, cultures, and contexts. UN Women defines gender as the ‘*social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys*’.² While many gender-equality considerations relate to women and men, applicants should also consider, where relevant to the research context, the experiences and needs of people with diverse gender identities

¹ Department for International Development (2008): The Gender Manual (p. 51). Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/dfid-gender-manual-2008.pdf> (Accessed 14.08.2026).

² UN Women: Concepts and definitions. Available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm> (Accessed 14.08.2026).

(e.g., non-binary, gender-diverse, transgender or other locally recognised gender identities). Consideration of gender equality should therefore be informed by the cultural, social and legal context in which the research takes place, while recognising that gender identities and experiences may extend beyond a binary understanding of gender.

The current definition of gender equality is that people of different gender should have equal rights and entitlements to human, social, economic, and cultural development, and an equal voice in civil and political rights.³ However, equality does not mean that everyone must have the same needs, priorities or desired outcomes. Experiences of inequality may also vary within the same gender group due to factors such as ethnicity, disability, age, socioeconomic background or sexual orientation. The aim of strengthening compliance with the [International Development \(Gender Equality\) Act 2014](#) is to take these intersecting factors into account, helping to ensure that inequality is not perpetuated, that the different rights and needs of people of different gender are recognised and addressed, and that the opportunities and benefits arising from research and innovation are shared equitably.

3. Gender Equality Statements

It is mandatory for all applications to UK Research and Innovation ODA opportunities to provide a Gender Equality Statement (GES). This statement must outline how applicants have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities (see ➡ [section 3.1](#)), as required under the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014.

The Gender Equality Statement should be no longer than 400 words and is included in a free-text box within the application. For further guidance around applying through TFS, please see [here](#).

It is expected that some projects will have a greater impact on gender equality and gender relations than others. Applicants should exercise professional judgement when preparing their GES, taking into account the context and intended aims of the project. All applicants should demonstrate that gender equality has been considered. Where a project is expected to have limited impact on gender equality, the rationale for this assessment should be explained within the statement. Applicants can reference other parts of their application within this statement, if relevant.

Applicants are required to address the below criteria listed in [section 3.1](#), with an understanding that, depending on the nature of their research and innovation, not all questions will be applicable to the same degree in every project.

UKRI has provided further guidance on the [Good Research Resource Hub](#).

3.1. Addressing the Gender Equality Impact of a Proposed Project

The Gender Equality Statement should address the following questions to outline the expected gender equality impact of the proposed research and innovation:

- What measures have been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different gender to be involved throughout the project? *This includes the development of the project, the participants and the beneficiaries of the research and innovation.*
- What is the expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on people of different gender, both throughout the project and beyond?
- What is the expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on the relations between

³ Department for International Development (2008): The Gender Manual (p. 9). Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/dfid-gender-manual-2008.pdf> (Accessed 14.08.2026).

people of different gender and people of the same gender? *For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc.*

- What risks and/or unintended negative consequences on gender equality could arise from the project? How will those be avoided or mitigated and monitored?
- How are relevant outputs and outcomes being measured, and will data be disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed)?

3.2. Additional Considerations

Where relevant, applicants may choose to consider some or all of the early-stage actions listed in [Table 1](#) when addressing the criteria listed in [section 3.1](#) in their GES to strengthen the gender equality aspects of their application.

Table 1: Optional Early-Stage Actions for Enhancing Gender-Equality Considerations in Research and Innovation

Category	Action	Rationale
Context & Analysis	Gender Equality Analysis	To understand gender equality issues and barriers in accessing economic opportunities and/or benefitting from the proposed intervention/innovation in relation to the sector and/or country.
	Gender Equality Action Plan	To consider the actions required (where applicable) to address identified gaps based on the outcomes of the gender equality analysis at the design stage.
Project Design & Implementation	Gender Equality Analysis	To inform the research rationale, design, and methodology, ensuring gender differences are systematically considered, reflected, and embedded, including through the use of gender-disaggregated data.
	Gender Equality Action Plan	To address systemic barriers to equal economic participation and outcomes for persons of different gender, e.g. employment, assets, labour force participation.
	Team Expertise, Budget Allocation	To ensure a project team has the necessary skills, representation, and resources to design and deliver a gender-sensitive intervention/innovation effectively.
Expected Impact	Gender Equality Impact Assessment	To demonstrate how the intervention/innovation will contribute to a relevant local priority, development policy, or emerging area of significance. To understand and explain the impact of an intervention/innovation (benefits & losses) on persons of different gender and how they will be shared across groups, with a plan in place to assess any gaps or uncertainties during inception or design review.
Gender Norms & Social Dynamics	Gender Equality Analysis	To address systemic gender equality barriers at household, community, institutional, and societal levels by analysing how existing gender norms influence - and may be influenced by - the intervention/innovation, including their potential to constrain or enable economic participation, productivity, and shifts in roles, power, and decision-making.

Minimum Compliance (Do no Harm)	Gender Equality Analysis	To identify basic and/or immediate practical needs of persons of different gender and any potential risks of doing harm or worsening discrimination or gender inequality as a result of the proposed intervention/innovation.
	Gender Equality Action Plan	To set out actions to address basic and/or immediate practical needs of persons of different gender as well as appropriate mitigation measures (where applicable) where potential negative impacts on gender equality have been identified.
Risks & Safeguards	Code of Conduct	To ensure that staff and partners have signed and been trained on the organisation's Code of Conduct with respect to gender discrimination and have general safe-guarding policies in place.
	Risk Matrix	To identify gender-related risks and unintended negative consequences (e.g., gender-based violence, reinforcement/worsening of stereotypes or unpaid care burden) as well as safeguarding risks (e.g., child protection, sexual exploitation/harassment, modern slavery).
	Risk Mitigation and Monitoring Plan	To include the implementation of social and environmental sustainability performance standards; social safeguards; risk mitigation and monitoring plans.
Empowerment	Intervention Design	To ensure gender equality and empowerment are meaningfully integrated across the proposal, including through research design and methodology that are sensitive to gender inequalities. To expand access to assets, resources, skills, and knowledge, and support equitable outcomes for persons of different gender.
Participation & Engagement	Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan	To strengthen leadership, decision-making and collective action through meaningful, inclusive and ongoing consultation with persons of different gender, gender-discriminated groups, Civil Society Organisations (incl. Disabled People's Organisations, Persons of Different Gender's Rights Organisations), SMEs owned by gender-discriminated groups and other relevant stakeholders, ensuring their active participation in decision-making, alongside appropriate voice and accountability mechanisms.
	Information Sharing	To share accurate, timely information with stakeholders through communication methods appropriate to the context and target audience.
Transformation	Gender Norms & Power Analysis	To identify and address underlying systemic barriers, including gender norms and power dynamics, and to inform changes in policies, institutions, and practices, while strengthening leadership, decision-making, and collective action for persons of different gender beyond immediate project-level constraints.

Measurement, Evidence & Learning	Gender Disaggregated Data, (Key Performance) Indicators	To define and use appropriate indicators, sex- and gender-disaggregated data to measure relevant expected outputs and outcomes from the intervention/innovation.
	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Approach	To put in place a sound MEL approach - incl. adequate staffing, expertise, and resources - to assess results and track contributions to reducing gender inequality and to supporting the economic empowerment of persons of different gender.

3.3. Illustrative Example of Gender Equality Statements

Applicants may find it helpful to review worked examples of Gender Equality Statements. The University of Edinburgh's Gender and Development Research Network has developed an [example](#) illustrating the differences between a stronger and weaker Gender Equality Statement and highlighting factors that can contribute to a more robust consideration of gender equality in research design and delivery. While the example is based on an agriculture project, the principles may be relevant across a wide range of research and innovation contexts.

The example is provided for illustrative purposes only and should not be used as a template. Applicants should consider the specific context, objectives and anticipated impacts of their own project and address only those gender equality considerations that are relevant and proportionate to the proposed research.

4. Assessment of the Gender Equality Statement

Gender Equality Statements will be shared with external peer reviewers alongside the application if the application goes through to the Peer Review stage. Peer reviewers will not be required to comment on the Gender Equality Statement when submitting their review. However, they will be able to view the document and comment on it should they wish to do so.

Gender Equality Statements are assessed by expert panels, alongside the scoring criteria for the application. The panel considers whether the statement sufficiently addresses the criteria considering the gender impact of a proposed project listed in ➡ [section 3.1](#).

Should the panel conclude that gender has been appropriately considered and addressed within the proposed research project, but that the GES itself is insufficient, it may recommend that funding be made conditional on submission of a revised GES that satisfactorily addresses the identified gaps. This is only applicable in cases where it is deemed that the GES could be amended to make it sufficient without requiring significant changes to the research proposal itself. The relevant Council will determine how revisions are managed, including any limits on the number of opportunities provided to amend a GES and the process for assessing revised statements.

If major changes to the Gender Equality Statement (and therefore the project) would be required to make it sufficient, or if there is any identified risk of exacerbating gender inequalities in the project, the application will not be funded even if it has scored as fundable across the other assessment criteria. In such cases, the overall score will be reviewed to ensure alignment with funding thresholds.

4.1. Sufficient responses

A satisfactory Gender Equality Statement will provide sufficient answers to the applicable criteria outlined in ➡ [section 3.1](#) and ➡ [section 3.2](#). The applicant will acknowledge where there is potential for direct or indirect impact on people of different gender as a result of their project, and how their project will contribute to reducing gender inequality during/throughout its design, implementation, and impact, should it be funded.

We recognise that some projects may have less impact on gender and gender relations than others. In such a case, applicants should thoroughly justify when they believe their project will have minimal impact on gender equality. A sufficient Gender Equality Statement will identify how it can enhance inclusion of all genders within a community, and address issues of under-representation. Due regard should be given to the specifics of the proposed research and/or innovation, and the statement must therefore be tailored accordingly.

4.2. Insufficient responses

A Gender Equality Statement will be deemed insufficient for the following reasons:

- It does not show how applicants have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities, as required under the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014.
- It does not address all the required criteria (☞ [section 3.1](#)) or is lacking in detail - with an understanding that, depending on the nature of the research or innovation, not all questions will be applicable.
- It does either not clearly identify or articulate all potential negative impacts, or where there are potential negative impacts, mitigation measurements are not sufficiently described or considered.
- The research proposal itself presents a potential to maintain or exacerbate gender inequalities and does not include any specific measure to reduce inequalities even though it provides an opportunity to do so. It therefore raises concerns about its ability to deliver ODA impact as required by the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014.

If you would like more information on this, please contact genderequality@ukri.org and/or the funding opportunity contact.

Annex

I. Additional Support and Guidance

External Resources

Included below are non-exhaustive external resources that may assist applicants and award holders in considering how gender equality, including sex and gender analysis, can be incorporated into research and innovation activities, where relevant and proportionate. The resources cover different stages of the research and innovation lifecycle (for further information see ➡ [Table 2](#)). They are provided for guidance and support, rather than as prescriptive requirements. The relevance of gender equality considerations will vary by discipline, research context, funding opportunity and geography. Not all resources will be applicable to all projects. Any links to external guidance are provided for information only. UKRI is not responsible for their content.

- [Gendered Innovations \(Stanford University / European Commission\)](#)

Gendered Innovations is one of the most authoritative state-of-the-art global resources on integrating sex, gender and intersectional analysis into research. It provides:

- Practical methods for incorporating gender across the research cycle
- Checklists and guiding questions
- Extensive case studies across STEM, health, environment, AI and engineering

- [Gender Equality in Academia and Research - GEAR tool \(European Institute for Gender Equality – EIGE\)](#)

This resource explains how to integrate sex and gender analysis throughout the research and innovation lifecycle. It provides a free toolkit and checklist and is explicitly designed for research-performing and research-funding organisations.

- [Gendered Innovations 2: How Inclusive Analysis Contributes to Research and Innovation - Policy Review \(European Commission, 2020\)](#)

An expert led policy review that explains key concepts (sex, gender, intersectionality), shows how inclusive analysis strengthens innovation outcomes and includes case studies providing concrete examples of how sex and/or gender analysis can lead to new insights, discovery and innovation across disciplines. An extensive document for background reading rather than step by step guidance.

- [Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion \(GEDSI\) Toolkit \(Carbon Trust / TEA platform\)](#)

A practical toolkit providing guidance, templates and training materials to help organisations integrate gender equality, disability and social inclusion considerations across the project lifecycle. It supports users at different stages of experience, offering step-by-step guidance, adaptable tools (e.g. checklists and risk assessments), and resources to embed inclusive practices in project design, implementation and evaluation.

- [Guide to addressing Gender Equality \(British Council, 2018\)](#) – Section 4 & 7
- [Improving Research with a Gender Sensitive Approach | GENDER.ED \(University of Edinburgh\)](#)
GENDER.ED is a cross-University hub for gender and sexualities studies from an interdisciplinary perspective.
- [Five Steps to a Gender Sensitive Engineering Project \(University of Edinburgh, 2022\)](#)

- [Gender-responsive implementation of research in development projects - World Agroforestry Guidance Note \(2021\)](#)

A concise guidance note focused on research for development contexts, addressing how research outputs affect women and men differently, moving beyond “do no harm” towards advancing gender equality. The document provides practical considerations for implementation in development projects.

- [Sex and Gender Equity in Research \(SAGER\) Guidelines \(2016\)](#)

The SAGER guidelines promote systematic inclusion and reporting of sex and gender in research design, analysis and dissemination.

Table 2: External Resources to Support Integration of Gender Equality Across the Research and Innovation Lifecycle

Research & Innovation Stage	How gender equality may be considered	Key external resources
Priority-setting and problem definition	Whether research priorities, objectives and problem framings reflect gendered needs, roles and impacts, and avoid gender bias or exclusion.	Gendered Innovations (Stanford University, European Commission): Methods for rethinking research priorities and outcomes using sex, gender and intersectional analysis. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit (Carbon Trust/TEA platform): Supports identification of inclusion gaps, stakeholder needs and systemic barriers at the outset.
Research design and research questions	Whether research questions, hypotheses and study designs consider relevant sex and/or gender differences and intersectional factors.	Gendered Innovations (Stanford University, European Commission): Guidance and case studies illustrating gender-aware research design. GEAR tool (EIGE): Guidance on embedding gender in concepts and design. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit (Carbon Trust/TEA platform): Provides guidance and checklists to integrate GEDSI considerations into project design and framing. Improving Research with a Gender-Sensitive Approach (Gender.Ed): Principles and practices for strengthening gender sensitivity from the outset. Five Steps to a Gender Sensitive Engineering Project: Concrete example of how to embed gender sensitivity into early-stage research formulation.
Methodology, data collection and analysis	Whether methods, indicators, sampling and analytical approaches are gender-sensitive, include sex-disaggregated data where relevant, and avoid bias.	GEAR tool (EIGE): Practical advice on gender-sensitive methodologies, data collection and analysis across the research cycle. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit (Carbon Trust/TEA platform): Includes tools to ensure inclusive data collection, appropriate indicators, and consideration of different groups. Improving Research with a Gender-Sensitive Approach (Gender.Ed): Includes methodological considerations and tools for equitable gender analysis. Five Steps to a Gender Sensitive Engineering Project:

Research & Innovation Stage	How gender equality may be considered	Key external resources
		Demonstrates application of gender considerations to methodological choices. Gender in Research Guide – Section 4 (British Council): Practical framing for gender-responsive early-stage analysis. SAGER Guidelines: International standards for integrating sex and gender into research design, analysis and reporting.
Implementation and participation	Whether research processes, partnerships and engagement mechanisms are inclusive and address gendered barriers to participation and benefit.	Gendered Innovations (Stanford University, European Commission): Guidance on inclusive research and innovation processes. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit (Carbon Trust/TEA platform): Offers practical tools (e.g. risk assessments, participation checklists) to ensure inclusive delivery and engagement. Improving Research with a Gender-Sensitive Approach (Gender.Ed): Framework for applying gender sensitivity throughout implementation. Gender-Responsive Implementation of Research in Development Projects: Practical guidance on inclusive implementation and participation in LMIC contexts.
Monitoring, evaluation, learning (MEL), interpretation of findings and knowledge production	Whether gender considerations have been meaningfully monitored and evaluated and whether findings have been interpreted with awareness of gendered contexts, with limitations acknowledged and differential impacts understood.	Gender in Research Guide – Section 7 (British Council): Practical guidance on designing a gender-sensitive MEL framework. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit (Carbon Trust/TEA platform): Includes frameworks and indicators for tracking GEDSI outcomes and learning from implementation. Gendered Innovations (Stanford University, European Commission): Case studies showing how gender analysis changes interpretation and strengthens findings. Gendered Innovations 2 (European Commission): Policy review illustrating how inclusive analysis strengthens research and innovation outcomes.
Dissemination, impact and use of research and	Whether outputs, outcomes and innovations are accessible to and beneficial for different genders, and	Gendered Innovations (Stanford University, European Commission): Guidance on designing research and innovation outputs that meet diverse user

Research & Innovation Stage	How gender equality may be considered	Key external resources
innovation	whether risks of reinforcing inequalities are mitigated.	needs. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit (Carbon Trust/TEA platform): Supports consideration of who benefits from outputs and how to ensure equitable access and impact. Gender in Research Guide – Section 8 (British Council): Covers communication, engagement and ensuring gender-equitable reach and benefit.