UK Research and Innovation

UK Research and Innovation Equality Impact Assessment Form

About your activity

Title of your activity

Wearables and Observables: Understanding Children's Home Learning Environments

Council or business area

ESRC R&D Missions Accelerator Programme: Opportunities Mission

Aims and objectives

This funding opportunity aims to support innovative interdisciplinary research to develop, test and validate new approaches for measuring and understanding children's home learning environments. Research is expected to involve engagement with children, parents, carers and families, and may also involve researchers, practitioners, educators and community organisations. Activities may take place within participants' homes and community settings to generate methodological advances and new insights into how experiences outside formal education and care settings influence learning, development, school readiness and educational outcomes.

Through this, the opportunity seeks to improve understanding of the factors shaping children's development, establish robust, scalable and inclusive measurement approaches, and generate evidence on outcomes and trajectories, particularly for those facing the greatest barriers to opportunity. It also aims to ensure that research is designed and delivered in ways that support participation from diverse children, families and communities by taking account of accessibility, communication and language needs, safeguarding, and the provision of appropriate support and reasonable adjustments where required. The opportunity will create resources, datasets and frameworks that support future research, practice and policy development and reflect the experiences of children and families from a broad range of backgrounds and circumstances.

This EIA will need to cover equality as part of

- Advertising the funding opportunity
- The application process
- The review process (done internally)

Who is affected?

Applicants, research office staff, internal and external moderators and members of the public and communities who may participate in the funded research.

What data and consultation have you used?

The funding opportunity has been developed through the ESRC R&D Missions Accelerator Programmes. Within UKRI, the R&D Missions Accelerator Programme will work with the ESRC Grants Delivery Team to ensure that relevant policies are being followed in the design of the opportunity.

In designing the opportunity, we have considered:

- the approved Commitment to Spend for the Home Learning Environment challenge, including the scope and objectives of this opportunity;
- UKRI and ESRC equality, diversity and inclusion policies and guidance;
- UKRI organisational eligibility requirements and assessment processes;
- feedback from UKRI Funding Service and Grants Delivery colleagues on opportunity design and delivery.

Impact on specific groups

Are there general impacts on multiple groups?

ESRC's research commissioning processes are designed with fairness in mind.

Eligibility and criteria

The opportunity is open to all eligible standard and non-standard organisations (ROs) in the UK.

ESRC will make use of a range of different communication strategies to ensure that our messages reach a broad audience.

All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support.

Applicants are advised to contact us as early as possible with any reasonable adjustments that are required.

If in-person meetings present a barrier for participation, we will consider hybrid or virtual meetings where required.

- If in-person, we will facilitate travel and logistics, ensuring that the location of the meeting and the venue meets accessibility requirements for participants.
- If hybrid or virtual, we will facilitate logistics including travel (if applicable) and the use of personal equipment to join virtual meetings. We will solicit information from participants about their requirements ahead of any meetings and/or communication and adjust accordingly.

The funding opportunity will follow UKRI guidance and style guidance to ensure that it is inclusive.

Standard Grant Terms and Conditions

• UKRI standard Grant Terms and Conditions comply with UK equality legislation and include provisions designed to mitigate against potential negative impacts (e.g. sick pay, parental and adoption leave, the possibility of part-time and flexible working, and grant extensions).

• Research Organisations are subject to equality legislation and have a duty to comply with it. RGC 8 states that 'The Research Organisation must assume full responsibility for staff funded from the grant and, in consequence, accept all duties owed to and responsibilities for these staff, including, without limitation, their terms and conditions of employment and their training and supervision, arising from the employer/employee relationship.' Universities are therefore required to make reasonable adjustments as required to support their staff.

Process

• All reviewers will receive the code of practice and guidance which covers issues including fairness, objectivity and unconscious bias.

• It is the role of moderators to corroborate final scores for each proposal. Moderators will be briefed on unconscious bias and must constructively challenge potential bias where they identify it. An implementation intention statement will be read out at the beginning of the commissioning panel meeting which sets the tone for discussions and requires that moderators pay close attention to the scoring criteria and definitions.

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	None/Unknown	Applicants are not asked to disclose their age. We no longer ask for information such as a CV containing information on the year of graduation etc. This information can be included in application sections covering applicant suitability for award though. The funding opportunity is expected to have a positive impact in relation to age through research that advances understanding of the factors shaping young people's opportunities and life chances.	• Experience and track record are not explicitly included in the criteria. • Guidance provided to reviewers will make it clear that all applications should be assessed on the merit of the application. The team's delivery capability should be assessed and not their or any individual within the team's previous experience/track record. • Applicants will be encouraged to demonstrate how children, young people and, where appropriate, their families and communities have informed, or will inform, the design and delivery of the proposed research • No direct negative impact based on age is anticipated.
Disability	Negative	1. Potential limited access to reviewer meetings for those with mobility issues 2. (Panel/comms) potential difficulties understanding discussion for those	• All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support. • Meeting could be held online via Teams if mobility issues are raised

		with hearing/visual impairment 3. (Panel/comms) potential difficulties with concentration for attendees with neuro-disabilities	(limiting venue-based accessibility issues) but we will endeavour to seek out and use an accessible venue for any meeting. • Closed captioning (cc) can be arranged for hearing impaired panel members. Additional support can be provided to visually impaired panel members – including appropriate use of colour/text size in all guidance documents/ presentations. • ESRC will ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda if required. • Supporting communications will be recorded and/or shared online, with capacity to share modified versions for specific needs at request (cc/changed colour/text size) o Business Disability Forum Inclusive Communication Toolkit o Understanding WCAG 2.2 - Service Manual - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Other considerations could include, but are not limited to: • Provision of documents in sans-serif dyslexia friendly fonts; and dyslexia-friendly formats. • Avoiding colours, lighting etc. that may trigger migraines, epilepsy etc.

Gender reassignment	Negative	Trans people may be absent from work because of transition and UKRI records may show the wrong gender. Risk of bias against an applicant by reviewers.	• We will work to ensure the use of gender-neutral language in our documents. • We will ask attendees to any meetings to share pronouns if they feel comfortable and ensure that we have the correct names for participants. All documentation will use gender neutral language. • If required, we will provide updates to reflect changes to identity and ensure that we maintain confidentiality throughout the process. • UKRI terms and conditions are flexible in nature and allow for absence because of medical treatment. We would expect that absence related to transition would be covered by the Research Organisation's absence policy and strongly encourage ROs to treat absence relating to transition like any other medical absence. • Reviewers will receive guidance on fair and objective assessment. • ESRC staff will safeguard the integrity of the assessment process by watching for bias and raising any concerns. • Clear guidelines on reporting bullying and harassment will be provided.

			• Consideration needs to be given at UKRI level as to how records (including Gateway to Research and other communications materials) might be adjusted.
Marriage or civil partnership	None/Unknown	Applicants are not asked to disclose their marital status.	
Pregnancy and maternity	Negative	**Reviewers** Potential difficulties attending funding meeting. Potential difficulties in managing early childcare responsibilities during meeting	• Provision for parental leave (including maternity leave, paternity leave and leave related to surrogacy and adoption) are covered in the UKRI terms and conditions. • We should ensure the use of gender-neutral language – parental leave, irrespective of sexual orientation. • ESRC can ensure that panel member participation is scheduled according to childcare responsibilities if required. • Timelines will be agreed and publicised in advance to allow meeting attendees to make arrangements to attend. This will also ensure applicants have advanced notice of deadlines and key dates related to the funding opportunity. All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support.

			• The costs of additional childcare for reviewers, beyond that required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the job, and that are directly related to the project, may be requested as a directly incurred cost if the institutional policy is to reimburse them. However, childcare costs associated with normal working patterns may not be sought.
Race	Negative	Diversity considerations	• ESRC will ensure that, where possible, the recruitment of reviewers reflect diversity and representation from those with lived experience. • During reviewer meetings, ask people to introduce themselves to check correct pronunciation of name. • Selection criteria used will be objective, transparent and robust. • We will provide guidance and remind all reviewers about not bringing in personal biases and provide a briefing in objective decision making.
Religion or belief	None/Unknown	Risk of discrimination because it is known that somebody (either a research applicant or research participants) has a	• Ensure that religious observances are considered when planning panel meetings. Considerations might include:

		particular faith or belief. Risk of bias by scheduling key dates on or around religious holidays.	• Scheduling meetings to avoid major religious festivals; (if impossible to avoid then consider mitigations – i.e. during Ramadan ensuring that meetings finish early so that participants are able to get home to break their fast); • Not scheduling meetings when they would conflict with religious attendance or observance. • Care will be taken to ensure that key call dates do not fall on cultural and religious holidays where possible.
Sex	None/Unknown	Use of language can present a barrier to participation	• Ensure use of gender-neutral language in call specification, guidance, etc. • Ensure that the panel has balanced gender representation • Caring responsibilities may have direct and indirect impact on sex as a protected characteristic. • People with caring responsibilities (which falls disproportionately on women) may have less time to attend a panel meeting, therefore we will give panel members the opportunity to attend virtually if required.
Sexual orientation	None/Unknown	Applicants are not asked to disclose their sexual orientation.	• Comments referencing the sexual orientation of the applicant or displaying

		However, there may be potential for bias, bullying or harassment if the sexual orientation of an applicant is known or assumed.	bias will be explicitly forbidden.

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	Negative	Potential difficulties attending panel or interviews due to distance or expense of travel required	• ESRC can ensure that reviewer participation is scheduled and provide reimbursements for any required and agreed travel requirements • All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support.
Socio-economic status	Negative	Potential financial difficulties attending panel or interviews due to distance or expense of travel required	• We will ensure that the meeting schedule is sent out with adequate time for participants to rearrange existing work commitments. • ESRC will pay travel, accommodation and subsistence costs incurred by reviewers • Applicants can contact ESRC directly to highlight

			any additional support required.
Education background	Negative	Potential difficulties understanding research jargon/language if attendee is from outside of academia	• Comments displaying bias based on educational background will be disallowed. • Ensure that unnecessary jargon and academic language are not used as these could provide a barrier.
Parent or guardian responsibilities	Negative	It may be perceived that those with caring responsibilities are disadvantaged Potential difficulties attending panel or interviews due to parent/guardian responsibilities	• Ensure that caring responsibilities are acknowledged as a consideration of time allocated in planning reviewer meetings • All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support.
Vulnerable young adults, and children.	Negative	We should ensure that any engagement with young people involves people with adequate and necessary training, knowledge of safeguarding and seek appropriate consent and adhere to relevant processes to minimise risk of harm	• Ensure that, where engagement involves vulnerable young people or individuals aged 15 and under, the intermediary or organisation demonstrates appropriate expertise in safeguarding and in working with children and young people. This should include understanding and adhering to relevant consent requirements, including those relating to parents, carers, or legal guardians, while taking account of the specific needs and circumstances of different groups of young people

Carer responsibilities	Negative	It may be perceived that those with caring responsibilities are disadvantaged Potential difficulties attending panel or interviews due to caring responsibilities	• Ensure that caring responsibilities are acknowledged as a consideration of time allocated for the reviewer meetings. • Ensure that reviewer members' participation considers and is scheduled as far as possible according to caring responsibilities. • All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that will need additional support.
Other characteristics Digital Inclusion and broadband access	Negative	We should avoid the assumption that everyone has equal access to technological devices or the internet	• All applicants and panel members will be asked to highlight any needs that will need additional support. • If relevant, we will provide alternative formats for information and/or make provisions for people to access information. We will ask participants about how they would prefer to access information and what tools they have access to. • Applicants and panel members should ask for assistance from their local council, educational institutions or research organisations when experiencing digital difficulties.

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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

Review and sign off

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

The EIA will be reviewed at key stages of the funding opportunity lifecycle:

- Following the funding competition assessment process and award decisions.
- During project mobilisation and early delivery.
- At project completion as part of programme learning and evaluation activities.

We will monitor:

- The diversity and range of organisations involved in applications and funded activities.
- Evidence (in the design and implementation) of meaningful involvement of children, families and communities in the development, testing and validation of research approaches.
- The extent to which applicants address equality, diversity and inclusion considerations in project design, in line with UKRI policy.
- Any accessibility, safeguarding or participation issues arising during delivery.
- Learning on the effectiveness of different approaches for understanding and measuring home learning environments, including any unintended negative

impacts.

Therefore, indicators of success include:

- Meaningful involvement of children, families and communities in research design, delivery and evaluation.
- Research approaches that appropriately capture the diversity of children's home learning environments, including those that are often underrepresented in research.
- Consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion within submitted and funded projects.
- Accessible, inclusive and safe participation in research activities.
- Identification and mitigation of any unintended negative impacts.
- Generation of evidence and methodological advances that improve understanding and measurement of children's home learning environments

What is the EIA review date?

17/November/2026

Contact

OpportunityMission@ukri.org

Jenny.daniel@esrc.ukri.org

Will the EIA be published?

Yes

Who has this been signed off by?

Include the name, date and job title

Michaela O'Connell- Associate Director –R&D MAP Opportunity Mission **14th October 2026**

Submitting the form

You need to submit the form to the central repository

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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
Jenny	01/10/2026	1	Additional notes made to the aims and objectives to ensure it is more specific
	05/10/2026	2	Reviews were made from the EIA team on the section (Review and Sign Off). Updates were done.
		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?