

Equality Impact Assessment – 2020 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	2020 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>The Bioinformatics and Biological Resources (BBR) Fund aims to facilitate the establishment, maintenance and enhancement of high-quality bioinformatics and biological resources to support the UK bioscience research community.</p> <p>This EIA covers the application and assessment process for this funding opportunity.</p>
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	<p>Consultation with BBSRC's EDI and peer review policy experts on barriers to inclusion, participation and potential bias in the decision making process.</p> <p>Consultation with the BBSRC events management team to ensure that participation in the assessment panel meeting is enabled through appropriate information gathering to understand requirements and that these requirements are managed appropriately.</p>
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	Applicants to the funding opportunity, external Panel members and UKRI employees who are taking part in the assessment process.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>There are three aspects to this equality impact assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the submission, peer review and awarding processes are free from unintentional bias • Ensuring the process enables rigorous assessment of this investment • Identifying and addressing any potential barriers to attendance and participation by a diverse range of people <p>Steps taken to address these issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the call and panel dates are conducive to participation by a diverse range of people • Ensuring that the membership of the panel is diverse and is representative of industry, academia and research institutes, and institutional and regional representation. • Ensuring that the panel make up is

	<p>diverse in respect to gender.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of the potential for unconscious bias to impact on the decision making. • Ensuring that the format, duration and location of the assessment panel meeting, and the venue itself, are conducive to participation by a diverse range of people.
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Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability	Potential for a negative impact	Attendees with physical disabilities may have difficulties if the assessment venue cannot cater for their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the use of a virtual meeting • Gather information from meeting participants about any additional requirements they may need in order to fully participate. • Ensure that the venue is easily accessible to main rail/air links. • Ensure that the room is light and airy.
	Potential for a negative impact	Attendees with neurodisabilities may experience difficulties with concentration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda. • Allow for the potential use of screen readers for personnel who are visually impaired. • Ensure that colours chosen and other visual stimuli do not trigger migraines or affect those with colour blindness; different colours may assist in this if

			personnel don't bring their own laptops.
Gender reassignment	Neutral	Neutral	n/a
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential for a negative impact	Panel members that are pregnant or have child care responsibilities may be discouraged from attending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the use of a virtual meeting • Ensure that the meeting venue is able to provide a babysitting service if requested. • Ensure panel members are aware that BBSRC will reimburse any additional child care costs. • Where possible meeting dates outside of the school holiday period are chosen
	Potential for a negative impact	Career breaks in applicant track records due to parental leave or caring responsibilities may be seen as negative by the panel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there are adequate breaks built into the agenda. • Provide guidance to the panel to ensure appropriate assessment of applicant track record without bias against career breaks due to parental leave/caring responsibilities/etc.
Race	Potential for a negative impact	It is important that selection of Panel members is from a diverse community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the diversity of panel members to ensure an accurate representation of the community and a diversity of opinion.
Religion or belief	Neutral	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKRI-BBSRC is aware of the calendar of religious observances.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Neutral	n/a

Sex (gender)	Negative	Potential panel members may be disadvantaged and unable to attend if they have caring responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the meeting venue is easily accessible to main rail/air links. • Agreement to pay for any additional costs for caring responsibilities to ensure panel members can attend.
	Negative	There is an uneven gender split in the community of applicants and Panel members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the diversity of panel members to ensure an accurate representation of the community and a diversity of opinion.
Age	Neutral	Neutral	n/a

Unconscious bias

In addition to the above, steps have been taken to minimise the potential impact of unconscious bias on the assessment processes. These include:

- Chair and deputy to attend briefing meeting, where unconscious bias will be covered.
- Panel to receive a briefing on Methods of Working and objective decision making (e.g. by webinar).
- Note regarding unconscious bias included in the Chair's brief.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Potential for discrimination or negative impact has been assessed, and actions to address negative impacts are being implemented.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed .	x	
2. You can decide to stop the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias		
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
Date completed:	4 September 2020
Review date (if applicable):	Annually