

**EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment**

Question	Response
<p><b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b></p>	<p>Hardware for Efficient Computing – Call (ICT)</p> <p>Call live 15 May 2020 Call closes 16:00 23 July 2020 Funding Decision December 2020</p>
<p><b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b></p>	<p>This is a targeted call to invest up to £3 million to support novel research projects developing hardware solutions looking to increase computing efficiency.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a strong UK computer hardware community</li> <li>• Develop solutions to unsustainable levels of energy consumption in computing</li> <li>• Grow technologies based on non-Von Neumann architectures</li> <li>• Develop “unconventional” forms of computing</li> <li>• Promote long term sustained growth across the electronics research area</li> <li>• Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the electronics research area</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b></p>	<p>Scoping of call content was conducted January-April 2020 through phone interviews with key hardware (and software) academics. Participants were identified through portfolio knowledge, previous EPSRC engagement and recommendation from the research community.</p>
<p><b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>Researchers in hardware development at research institutions and business (through project partners). The research funded through this call could also have an impact on society as a whole. Applicants are expected to work within the EPSRC framework for responsible innovation (<a href="https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/framework/">https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/framework/</a>).</p>
<p><b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>The number of high quality proposals submitted to this call will be evaluated along with future proposals submitted under standard mode. Looking to the future, the impact of the call will be assessed as part of future strategic interventions at UKRI.</p>

As a funder of research, EPSRC remain committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. The Research Councils have together developed the

ambitious [RCUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#) to outline our collective aspirations for working with the research community, and partners throughout the sector. For policy changes, funding activities and events EPSRC will aim to:

- Select venues that are accessible and where possible accommodate any specific requirement in our planning and organisation of an initiative to support wider participation.
- Offer support available for people with caring responsibilities, further details are available [here](#)
- Clearly communicate the timeline and key milestones for funding activities
- Ensure attendees have an opportunity to raise any specific requirements in advance e.g. cover letter and joining instructions
- Support for flexible working of stakeholders
- Ensure diversity of peer review assessment and interview panels
- Abide by the Principles of peer review
- Unconscious Bias training for EPSRC staff and clear guidance for assessors
- Handle personal sensitive information in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation 2018

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	Negative	For applicants - all information provided is in written format  For panel members – potential travel restrictions, access requirements for panel meeting	Documents provided (call document) produced in black and white and in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines  Panel date set internally in advance and potential panel members will be contacted over the summer allowing time to identify additional requirements (travel, access or other) for panel members. Panel members can also attend the panel virtually.
Gender reassignment	Negative	Gender specific language within communications	Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings and within reviewer comments.
Marriage or civil partnership	None	No disclosure of marital status required for any stage of the process.	

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Negative	<p>For applicants – consideration of parental leave during the application process or grant (if funded)</p> <p>For panel members – additional requirements for those with caring responsibilities or pregnancy.</p>	<p>Details of the EPSRC parental leave policy will be made available within the call document. Details of the timelines for the call will be made available within the call document to allow alternative arrangements for applicants on parental leave (for example to allow PI response).</p> <p>All panel members will be made aware of EPSRC caring responsibilities policy.</p>
<b>Race</b>	Negative	Potential risk –lack of diversity of ethnicity and race of panel members and/or applicants	Efforts will be made to select panel membership which is ethnically diverse in line with EPSRC peer review guidance. The call is open to all eligible UK research organisations.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Negative	Potential dietary requirements or other requirements (access to prayer facilities) for panel members.	All panel members will be asked for dietary or other requirements in advance of the date.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	None		
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Negative		<p>Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings and within reviewer comments.</p> <p>Efforts will be made to select panel membership which is gender diverse.</p>

<b>Age</b>	None	Proposals will be reviewed and panel members selected irrespective of age.	
<b>Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</b>	Caring responsibilities	Call is live over the COVID-19 lockdown period where many have additional caring responsibilities.	Efforts to advertise the call in advance of call live date were made (visits, pre-call announcement) and the call left open for a sufficient length of time (10 weeks)

**Evaluation:**

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Yes. There have been several cases identified whereby the proposed activity could unfairly disadvantage some people. However, appropriate steps have been taken to mitigate this – such as the publication of a pre-call announcement (24/04/2020) to reduce impact of submission timescale and the communication of childcare policy to prospective panel members. The decision was made to close the call prior to the UK summer holidays (23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2020) however the situation with COVID-19, at the time of writing, has led to many families having to take up childcare responsibilities. To mitigate this, the call is open for submission of proposals for 10 week and was advertised prior to going live through SAT members, the efutures network and during visits. We will continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19 to ensure we can support anyone who wishes to apply to this call.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .		
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can <b>adapt or change</b> 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 <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	X	

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	<b>Yes</b>
---	------------

<b>Date completed:</b>	<b>21 April 2020</b>
<b>Review date (if applicable):</b>	

**Change log**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Change</b>
James Coombs OBrien	21 April 2020	1	