

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Feasibility Study for an Early Life Cohort (ELC)
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	ESRC will commission a Feasibility Study in Autumn 2020 to demonstrate the feasibility of a full ELC study, test and develop novel innovations in data collection or other methodological issues which might be used to inform and design the full study. The ELC Feasibility Study will also collect data longitudinally through multiple data collection waves.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Internal meetings with Bridget Taylor, Josie McGregor, Sarah Honeybone, Rebecca Perring and Alex O'Connell. The equality impact assessment will also be submitted to the ESRC EIA subgroup for comment. Presented to the Early Life Advisory Group for comment, July 2020.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	The commissioning of the ELC Feasibility Study – interested parties. The LS community who will have an interest in a new cohort.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	To be reviewed by the ESRC Data Strategy and EIA subgroup team. Review of this document will be fed back to ESRC to help build inclusivity into research commissioning. This document will be reviewed in line with changing government guidance relating to Covid-19 and activities this will impact on.

GENERAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- We will aim to ensure that all activities relating to the ELC Feasibility Study are inclusive and take account of diversity;
- Whilst a Scientific and Delivery Team are appointed based on a competitive commissioning exercise, we will aim to attract a diverse team;
- *Our activities will consider trying to balance gender, ethnicity and geography and seek to ensure a diversity of institutions;
- *At this time all workshops and meetings will be held virtually. We will therefore take account of access needs and review this continuously;
- A tool has been developed which allows ESRC staff to assess the EDI characteristics of commissioning panels, and this will be used when appointing panels;
- We will develop guidance for those attending any large meetings or workshops which covers issues including fairness, objectivity and unconscious bias;
- * We will review our approach in line with changing government guidance relating to Covid-19 and activities this will impact on.
- * ESRC will continue to assess potential negative impacts as planning for the assessment of proposals continues and will identify mitigations where possible.

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 negative	See above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations	Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.

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)
		<p>Stakeholders with visual and hearing disabilities may have difficulties if virtual activities cannot cater for their needs. Stakeholders with neuro-disabilities may experience difficulties with concentration and focus during virtual activities.</p> <p>Thinking and developments of the ELC Feasibility Study may not include representation from experts who identify as disabled.</p>	<p>Solicit information from participants for online meetings and workshops (in confidence) about any additional requirements they may have in order to fully participate.</p> <p>Zoom offers an accessible and inclusive environment for participants. Depending on the needs identified, considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chat function can be enabled for hearing requirements; *Closed captioning to support those with hearing requirements; *Chairing of the meeting to be considered so that all participants can contribute; *Volume can be adjusted for hearing requirements; • Adequate lighting, alternative document formatting and potential use of screen readers for vision requirements; • Provision of documents in dyslexia-friendly fonts and dyslexia-friendly formats; • Avoiding colours, lighting etc that may trigger migraines, epilepsy; • Ensuring that plenty of breaks are built into the agenda; *Hard copies of papers and documents to be sent out in advance if required. <p>*Expert panels should represent members who identify as disabled. Where this is not possible, the panel should consider and draw on expert knowledge in the area of disability, such as studies that have engagement strategies to ensure disabled people are included.</p>
Gender reassignment	Potential negative	<p>See above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>The call takes place in Autumn 2020, meaning that a person undertaking gender reassignment may not be able to bid for the Feasibility Study.</p>	<p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>*The bidding can be done remotely;</p> <p>*Bidding is encouraged as part of a team, so a person may still have opportunities to feed in;</p>

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)
			<p>*The call has been pre-announced and is open for two months.</p> <p>*People will be invited to input in alternative ways to any pre-call meetings;</p> <p>*The use of Zoom will be helpful for people who would not be able to attend information in person.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	Probably not		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative	See above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.	<p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>Provide breaks in the virtual zoom meeting to provide breaks for breastfeeding/expressing mothers if necessary.</p>
Race	Potential negative	<p>See above under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>The pre-call activities and commissioned SLDT may not reflect the full ethnic diversity of the community.</p>	<p>See above, under General Equality and Diversity. Considerations (particularly in relation to activities and mitigations against unconscious bias)</p> <p>*To ensure that UKRI's 'Black Lives Matter' statement is considered when planning for activities;</p> <p>*To ensure events are communicated widely through various mediums, such as twitter and UKRI website.</p>
Religion or belief	Potential negative	<p>See above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.</p> <p>There could be potential discrimination because it is known that somebody (either a panel member, a research applicant or research participants) has a particular faith or belief.</p>	<p>Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations (particularly in relation to panel composition and mitigations against unconscious bias)</p> <p>Religious observances taken into account:</p> <p>*Avoid Fridays for the workshops;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting scheduled to avoid major religious festivals; • Consider building in breaks to allow time for prayer if requested.
Sexual orientation	Potential negative	See above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.	Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.

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Sex (gender)	Potential negative	See above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. Use of gendered language can present a barrier to participation and it may be perceived that those with caring responsibilities are disadvantaged. Panel members may be disadvantaged and unable to attend meetings if they have caring responsibilities	Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations. *Ensure use of gender-neutral language. *Take into account caring responsibilities due to Covid-19 and the summer holidays. Schedule alternative dates for workshops held in school holidays. *Ensure that expert groups and activities have balanced gender representation (aim for at least 60:40 split)
Age	Potential negative	Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations	Also see above, under General Equality and Diversity Considerations.

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	See the potential negative impacts outlined above. We have carried out the equality impact assessment to limit potential bias	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified; therefore, activity will proceed .		
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	✓	See the mitigations outlined above.
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* *EIAs should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events.	Yes
Date completed:	10/08/2020
Review date (if applicable):	