

## UKRI BBSRC Equality and Inclusion Impact Assessment

UKRI uses equality and inclusion impact assessments as a tool to review funding mechanisms, processes and practices to ensure they are not inadvertently presenting barriers to participation and to reduce the potential for unintentional bias. This template sets out the key elements of an Equality and Inclusion Impact Assessment that need to be documented.

### Section 1

<p><b>1. Policy/activity being assessed</b></p>	<p>BBSRC Discovery Fellowships (DF) Scheme – the annual advertisement, selection process including the application, shortlisting and interview stages for the award of DFs.</p>
<p><b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/activity</b></p>	<p>DFs provide support for researchers wishing to undertake independent research and gain leadership skills. The DF will support the transition of early stage researchers to fully independent research leaders.</p> <p>The DF represents part of BBSRC’s commitment to the supply of highly skilled professional scientists to the UK.</p> <p>Proposals are assessed by BBSRC’s Committee E.</p> <p>The scheme is aimed at researchers who are in the early stages of their careers who have the desire to conduct their own independent research within a host laboratory. The Call is open to any individual who has completed a PhD including individuals who are current PhD students who are expected to have completed their PhD viva exam prior to announcement of the awarded DFs.</p>
<p><b>3. Is the policy/activity relevant to equality and diversity?</b></p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>BBSRC funds research across the entirety of the UK and across all geographical locations. This diversity results in the inclusion of a diverse population of individuals. Therefore, we must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any eligible individual can apply to the open call and is able to access the application process, with a candidate pool as representative of the wider population as possible.</li> <li>• The selection process upholds a process of integrity, equality, diversity and inclusion and that all decisions made during the shortlisting and application process adhere to equality legislation.</li> <li>• Those who apply for and receive our funds are as representative of the wider population as possible.</li> </ul>

<p><b>4. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant stakeholders)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with the BBSRC events management team to ensure that the committee meetings allow attendance and participation from as diverse a range of individuals as possible. <b>To note.</b> It is pertinent in the 2021 Call to recognise that as a result of the ‘New Ways of Working’ in COVID-19, there is potential for the committee meetings to take place over Zoom or an online platform.</li> <li>• Consultation with and meeting attendees (including staff and those assessing applications) to understand potential barriers and act, where possible, to enable attendance and full participation.</li> <li>• BBSRC in 2019 consulted with the EDI group TIGERinSTEMM to improve the inclusivity of the language used in call documentation to reduce barriers to application.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Who is affected by the policy?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DF applicants</li> <li>• Individuals involved in the reviewing and assessment of the applications – committee E and the BBSRC Office</li> </ul>

## Section 2 – Identifying Impact

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)
<b>Declared disabilities</b>	Potential negative impact	<p>Impact varies depending on types of disability which may include physical, visual, neurological and auditory.</p> <p>For example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with visual disabilities may find it difficult to access and view electronic documentation.</li> <li>• Individuals with disabilities may find it difficult to access the meeting venue and/or participate in the meeting.</li> <li>• Neurodiverse individuals encounter difficulties during the panel assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will aim to ensure that locations and venues for interviews are accessible and adapted for those with limited mobility and are supportive of individuals with cognitive impairment.</li> <li>• As a general principle, venues should be easily accessible from the main public transport and rail/air links.</li> <li>• Meeting rooms should be comfortable, light and well ventilated and meetings timetabled to allow for adequate breaks.</li> <li>• Electronic information should be accessible to all participants.</li> <li>• Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate e.g. regarding interview attendance to assist individual applicants. This may include e.g. the use of video conferencing.</li> <li>• At interview stage, Committee members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individuals with disabilities may find it difficult to engage with online platforms and virtual assessments both as applicants and the Committee members.</li><li>• Unintentional bias.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate e.g. ensure that applicants and/or Committee members who do not wish to use Zoom can use an alternative online platform.</li><li>• Training will be provided and documentation to help with using online platforms to ensure that all individuals are comfortable if online assessments/interviews are required.</li><li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</li></ul>
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<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Potential negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence may be required as a result of medical treatment or other absence relate to transition</li> <li>• Unintentional bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible terms and conditions are in place to appropriately support those individuals who require time to attend psychiatrist/psychologist appointments or who are undergoing gender reassignment involving medical interventions.</li> <li>• Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate e.g. regarding interview attendance to assist individual applicants. This may include e.g. the use of video conferencing.</li> <li>• Committee members' training is annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> <li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. If meetings are online, the presence of BBSRC Office will remain.</li> </ul>
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	None anticipated.	N/A	N/A

<b>Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity Leave</b>	Potential negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals who are pregnant or on maternity or paternity leave may find it difficult to access the venue and/or participate in Committee meetings</li> <li>• Individuals may be on parental leave whilst the Call is open, potentially affecting their awareness of this opportunity and ability to participate.</li> <li>• Unintentional bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate e.g. regarding interview attendance to assist individual applicants. This may include flexibility in the timing of interview or the use of video conferencing.</li> <li>• Throughout the process and particularly at interview stage, Committee members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> <li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	Potential negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unintentional bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At interview stage, committee members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> <li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</li> </ul>

<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potential negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Call may coincide with a religious holiday.</li> <li>• Participants may be unable to take part in Committee meetings due to religious observances.</li> <li>• Participants may have specific dietary requirements due to religious beliefs.</li> <li>• Unintentional bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration is given to the timing of interviews so that individuals from different religious communities can attend.</li> <li>• If catering is provided it should allow for religious observances.</li> <li>• Throughout the process and particularly at interview stage, committee members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> <li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Potential negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unintentional bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the process and particularly at interview stage, committee members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> <li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as additional</li> </ul>

			assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Potential negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring responsibilities disproportionately rest with women e.g. providing childcare during school holidays.</li> <li>• Unintentional bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate e.g. regarding interview attendance to assist individual applicants. This may include flexibility in the timing of interview or the use of video conferencing.</li> <li>• Throughout the process and particularly at interview stage, committee members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions and are annually refreshed regarding the conditions that can result in unintentional bias.</li> <li>• BBSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review.</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	Potential impact negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unintentional bias</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility rules stipulate that applicants must have less than 5 years of active research experience. However, career breaks, change of career etc. are considered throughout the process to ensure applicants are not penalised for following alternative career paths.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At interview stage, committee members are required to follow procedures in line with BBSRC annual unintentional bias training.</li><li>• BBSRC representation on interview panels acts as additional assurance that discrimination is not occurring.</li></ul>
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**January 2021**