

UK Research and Innovation

Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<p>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</p>	<p>Methodology for implementing the cut in funding to United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI) by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for the Official Development Assistance (ODA) for the Financial Year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</p>	<p>UKRI must deliver the required reduction in ODA commitments in FY 2021/22, in order to meet the revised UKRI ODA allocation.</p> <p>This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) assesses the methodology UKRI will use to implement the required cuts, focusing on its processes and decisions. The aims and objectives of this methodology are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure UKRI uses a fair and transparent decision-making process for achieving the required reduction in ODA expenditure; - To ensure that the methodology adheres to the spirit of the UKRI process while taking into account the different needs and structure of the UKRI's community. <p>The need for this methodology is a direct result of the communication by BEIS on 10th February 2021 that UKRI would be receiving £125 million in ODA funding for the FY 2021/22 compared to its legal commitments of £230 million. ODA funding is capped and so non-ODA funds cannot be used to fund ODA projects.</p> <p>There are more than 800 live projects affected and we are working to establish the options across this diverse portfolio to support detailed discussions with stakeholders about the best way forward, which we will begin as soon as possible.</p> <p>UKRI will do a before and after data check. We plan to do continuous checks through the process that will add to this live and evolving document.</p>
<p>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</p>	<p>Our aim now is to work closely with stakeholders to try to maximise the benefits from the limited funding we have available, and ensure that we are making the best use of the funding we have available for 2021/22. This may involve terminating, reprofiling and reducing grants, with a view to supporting current longer-term awards to remain active during this challenging year and to continue to operate into future years. The reduction in ODA spend also means that we</p>

are unable to initiate any new awards where proposals have been submitted but have not reached the grant award stage.

There has been limited opportunity to formally consult with those who may be impacted by the application of this policy. However, UKRI has undertaken informal consultation using a variety of opportunities and channels.

Actions to date:

- We are still working through what this means for the ODA projects funded by UKRI and we will shortly provide a briefing detailing the impact on the various grant types.
- We have written to partners to set out what options are available and ask for their input in seeing how far we can work together to manage within the budgetary limit we have been set. We will discuss their individual portfolio of ODA grants and any possible mitigating actions.
- UKRI is working with a range of stakeholders including through the Russell Group, Universities UK and our international networks as well as directly with grant holders and funding partners. UKRI expects to be making some very difficult decisions – including issuing grant termination notices. As far as possible we want to work with the research and innovation community to mitigate these cuts.
- We have held webinars at which partners have been able to ask questions and raise concerns.
- We have responded to questions via email
- We have published information on the UKRI website, including FAQs.
- We have communicated directly with those affected, setting out the processes and timetable for each stage

The methodology outlined in this paper has been approved in principle by the Silver Group within UKRI's crisis management structure for the ODA cuts process. The methodology has been informed by the EIA and mitigations identified.

UKRI Finance modelled the figures, concluding that there was only sufficient funding to finance existing grant and contract commitments up to end July 2021. Consequently, it appeared likely that some grants would be terminated as a result of lack of funds. The grant terms and conditions provide for a reasonable termination notice period. Taking into account the need for any termination to be effective by the end of July 2021, a reasonable termination notice period was considered to be a minimum of three months. Given the

	<p>funding constraint outlined above, this meant that termination letters for those grants/contracts being terminated completely, must be issued by 30 April 2021.</p> <p>The methodology for making the cuts, subject of this EIA, was devised on 10/03/2021. The Accounting Officer advice was presented to the CEO of UKRI on 19/03/21.</p> <p>On 11 March 2021, a letter was sent to all ODA grant holders, informing them that there would be a cut to ODA funded grants and contracts. Given that the proposed methodology had not yet been considered by the CEO of UKRI at this point, it was still not possible to consult grant and contract holders on its potential EDI impacts. The grantholders were notified that UKRI would write again when the processes had been finalised.</p> <p>Higher education institutes HEIs and grant holders have been reminded that they must take into consideration their public sector equality duty in implementing the ODA budget cuts to projects.</p> <p>UKRI is mindful of its public sector equality duty (PSED) and will maintain dynamic oversight of the assessment process and shall carry out an equality impact assessment in relation to the impact of the cut in ODA funding.</p>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>UKRI has given consideration as to how its application of the government’s decision on funding cuts will impact on its ability to comply with the PSED.</p> <p>Further details of the programmes affected and their intended impacts are outlined below:</p> <p><u>Global Challenges Research (GCRF) and Newton Funds</u></p> <p>Through GCRF and the Newton Fund, UKRI is committed to both the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and to equitable partnerships. UKRI has asked partners to be mindful of these principles when developing their proposals. On the template, UKRI has required partners to confirm that they have given these principles appropriate consideration and noted that they may be required to provide written evidence to support its proposals. In particular, partners were asked to review Gender Equality Statements to ensure their continued validity and consider policies and guidance relating to safeguarding, preventing harm and bullying and harassment.</p>

	<p>Given that all of these projects are funded through ODA, this means that they are ‘administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective’. Necessarily therefore, they must benefit disadvantaged communities. Moreover, in accordance with section 1(1A) International Development Act 2002 due regard must be given to gender inequality.</p> <p>Higher education institutes In respect of grants made to HEIs, the duty to comply with PSED falls mainly on the institution.</p> <p>Special consideration In order to minimise and mitigate harm, all cases for special consideration will be assessed on the basis of their fit against the key categories which UKRI has prioritised for the small amount of exceptional funding available. Cases will then be evaluated on the basis of the evidence provided and ranked according to the strength of the case for funding.</p> <p>The categories which have been prioritised for exceptional funding are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical trials or animal research currently underway - where there is a need to comply with specific ethical or legal frameworks or obligations which would not be possible in the event of termination/reprofiling; • Interventions where curtailment/termination of funding could result in risk of serious harm to vulnerable individuals or groups. <p>Not all grants which can demonstrate any of the above will necessarily receive exceptional funding. The submissions which fall within one or both of the above key categories will be ranked according to the strength of their case based on evidence provided and the funds allocated to them until exhausted. That means that some grant submissions which arguably meet the above requirements may nonetheless not receive funding.</p> <p>Where a case for special consideration is supported, this should result in a small amount of additional funding to allow a specific activity or intervention which is underway to conclude. No new activity can be funded via an exception unless its primary purpose is to draw the existing treatment / intervention to an ethical or safe closure.</p>
<p>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>UKRI will do a before and after data check. We plan to do continuous checks through the process that will add to this live and evolving document.</p>

All these grants are ODA funded and therefore it should be expected that *all* of the projects will not negatively impact on the following groups with protected characteristics: gender, race and ethnicity (given that they must have their primary impact in a developing country). Therefore, the reduction or cessation of funding to *any* of these projects will have an EDI impact. This is unavoidable given the level of funding cuts; however, UKRI is trying to minimise the impact of these changes, reduce any possible harm and support future learning. Below we have shown further analysis of projects that have an additional specific focus on targeting groups with protected characteristics.

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			
Gender reassignment			
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Potential negative.</p> <p>UKRI has no relationship with the grantholder under which a claim for statutory maternity or paternity pay may be claimed, but the grant terms permit a project to be extended in order to accommodate maternity or paternity leave for the grantholder. The methodology being assessed here, could disproportionately impact on this group, as it is more likely to terminate projects with end dates further into the future.</p>	<p>The methodology chooses between projects according to the amount of funding that has already been invested in them. The higher the proportion of a projects' total grant that has already been claimed, the more likely it is that that project will NOT be terminated, in order to protect the embedded value. Therefore, if for reasons of pregnancy or maternity a project has been slow in implementation, the methodology could discriminate against this group.</p>	<p>Given the limited timeline in which the decisions must be made and for the reasons set out above, consultation was limited to requesting that grant holders identify any specific EDI issues related to reducing or terminating their grant that we did not already know about through their initial equality statements.</p> <p>No projects identified impacts on this particular group.</p>
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sexual orientation			
Sex (gender)	Negative	The International Development Act 2002 (as amended) requires that all	Given the limited timeline in which the decisions must be made and for the

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>ODA spend has regard to gender equality.</p> <p>Competition applicants are required to take gender equality into account (exemplified through their gender equality statements) when applying to UKRI competitions funded through ODA. Therefore, we would expect all projects to be sensitive and inclusive to gender throughout the project lifecycle where gender equality is applicable. The implication is therefore that reducing or terminating funding <i>could</i> have an impact on this group.</p>	<p>reasons set out above, consultation was limited to requesting that grant holders identify any specific EDI issues related to reducing or terminating their grant that we did not already know about through their initial gender equality statements.</p> <p>Given the very considerable savings that need to be made, projects were given the opportunity to highlight and demonstrate any cases for special consideration. Exceptional funding through the special considerations may assist the project to anticipate, address and mitigate the impact of budget reduction or termination on gender inequalities for the rest of the financial year.</p>
Age			

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	<p>As outlined above, it is possible that the proposed methodology for cutting ODA funding will have a considerable impact on those with a number of protected characteristics: most notably sex, race disability and age.</p> <p>The best way to mitigate against this would be to identify the projects affected, and to monitor the impact of the policy on those with a protected characteristic to minimise any disproportionate impact on a particular group.</p>

	<p>Grantholders were asked when considering Value for Money to factor in the highest levels of embedded value for money (ie projects with high levels of previous investment and small amounts of completion funding required), having regard to the principles for managing public money.' As projects will have positive impacts on the following groups with protected characteristics: gender, race and ethnicity (given that they must have their primary impact in a developing country), the methodology itself protects the delivery of benefits to those with protected characteristics.</p>	
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		
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.	X	<p>As outlined above, it is likely that the cuts to ODA funding will have significant negative impacts of groups of people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>However, given: the significant number of projects which are delivering benefits to groups with protected characteristics; the very short timeline in which to make decisions (as dictated by the overall level of funding and necessary notice periods); and the very significant size of the total savings that must be found; there appear to be no other proportionate ways to make the required level of cuts.</p> <p>As such, we will proceed to use the proposed methodology with caution.</p>

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

Review date (if applicable):	
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Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
	When published	1	