

EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	UK-US Nuclear Energy University Program 2022
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	To allocate up to £2.5m for up to 6 projects (£400K each, 80% fEC) for 36 months to facilitate joint research projects with the US via the nuclear universities energy programme (NEUP)
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Consulted with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSRC HoT • EPSRC SPMs and PMs
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	The EPSRC eligible UK research community working in the area nuclear fission research who may be employed as a result of EPSRC funding. It is expected that those applying will comprise predominantly existing members of the nuclear research community and other individuals working in the engineering and physical sciences disciplines.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	The call will be open to all, and applications will be welcome from any eligible UK-based researchers. EPSRC will engage with all grant holders to monitor the projects and learn from the challenges and successes. Researchfish and other outputs could also be used for an impact study if appropriate.

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	None identified – Peer review will be carried out by the department of energy (DoE; US)	N/A	N/A
Gender reassignment	Potentially negative (if there is a ratification panel)	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage individuals who have undergone gender reassignment or whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth, if an applicant's possession of such protected characteristics is known to the panel.	Applicants are not asked to disclose whether they have undergone gender reassignment. Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process.
Marriage or civil partnership	None identified.	N/A	Applicants are not asked to disclose their marital status. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially negative	A researcher on parental leave during the open call maybe unable to apply.	<p>Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists in advance as early possible.</p> <p>EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and (possible) panel members and applicants will be made aware of these.</p> <p>Applicants are not asked to disclose pregnancy</p>

Race	Potentially negative (if there is a ratification panel)	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage specific racial or ethnic groups, where applicant ethnicity is known to the panel.	Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation. EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased assessment.
Religion or belief	Potentially negative (if there is a ratification panel)	<p>Key dates (open call closing, interview) coinciding with specific religious festivals/ events could disadvantage specific religious groups.</p> <p>Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage specific religious groups, if applicants' religious affiliation/ belief is known to the panel.</p>	<p>Key dates will be checked and chosen to avoid clashes with major religious events wherever possible.</p> <p>Applicants are not asked to disclose their religious beliefs. Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process.</p> <p>All panel members will be asked to highlight any personal circumstances that may affect their ability to participate and how this can be accommodated.</p>
Sexual orientation	Potentially negative (if there is a ratification panel)	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage individuals of specific sexual orientations, if this is known to the panel.	Applicants are not asked to disclose their sexual orientation. Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.

Sex (gender)	Potentially negative (if there is a ratification panel)	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage applicants on the basis of gender.	Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. In line with EPSRC policies, the assessment panel will be mixed gender.
Age	Potentially negative (if there is a ratification panel)	Unconscious bias on the part of panel members may disadvantage applicants from specific age groups.	Anonymity is not practical at interview, but standard EPSRC policies will be followed at all stages of the process. Unconscious bias briefing will be given as part of the panel guidance and panel presentation. EPSRC presence at assessment meetings and during interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased assessment.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	None identified.		

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	A number of risks and potential negative impacts have been identified and considered as part of the call design. Reasonable adjustments will be made and by adhering to the standard peer review principles, the risks have been mitigated as far as possible.	
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>Barriers have been identified but all actions to address negative impact have been highlighted above and all alternative options have been carefully considered.</p> <p>Possible risks and bias associated with this activity have been identified and activities adapted accordingly. ED&I aspects will be considered throughout the activity and EPSRC will review this EIA accordingly. Reasonable adjustments will also be made wherever possible</p>

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:	11/08/2021
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Andrew Eustace	When published	1	

