



EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Digital Manufacturing - Call
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	Aim of this call is to fund awards focused on Digital manufacturing research. It will be a two-stage process: outlines assessed by expert panel followed by full proposals assessed by prioritisation panel.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing the Future Team • Manufacturing the Future Strategic Advisory Team (SAT) • Manufacturing community workshops
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who work within the manufacturing research community • Research office/institutions and staff • Research councils and staff • External reviewers (outline panel, postal peer reviewers, prioritisation panel)
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	The result of this call will be reviewed within the team and the SAT. Researchfish and other outputs could also be used for an impact study if appropriate.

As a funder of research, EPSRC remains committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. 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. This includes for applicants, reviewers, panel members and staff. Included in the interview invitation letter is a request for any access issues to be notified.
- All participants in the process are asked to inform staff if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation.
- Offer support for people with caring responsibilities, further details are available [here](#).
- Clearly communicate the timeline and key milestones for funding activities, advertise these widely to reach the largest possible audience.
- Support and encourage panel members to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. Staff will work closely with the Panel Chair(s) to agree approaches that are designed to minimize opportunities for bias and improve transparency of the decision making process. This includes managing environmental conditions, such as providing appropriate breaks.
- Support flexible working of stakeholders.

- Ensure diversity of peer review assessment and interview panels. Staff will adhere to a mixed panel policy and endeavor to achieve the minimum 30% for the underrepresented gender on the panel.
- Abide by the principles of peer review
- Provide EPSRC staff with tailored unconscious bias training for Peer Review processes 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	Potentially Negative	All information provided is in written format. Travel may be a barrier for any in-person panels	Any reasonable adjustments for specific requirements will be made. Documents will be produced in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines. Panels are likely to be virtual. Where not fully virtual, the option to attend virtually will be available. Accessibility will be considered when choosing a physical venue.
Gender reassignment	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed
Marriage or civil partnership	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially Negative	Participation in activity could be restricted by lack of availability due to parental leave/caring responsibilities/pregnancy	Accommodations will be made for individuals if required at all stages of the process. Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists in advance as early as possible.

			<p>EPSRC policies for offering support to those support with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and applicants will be made aware of these.</p> <p>Panellists will be informed if a panel meeting is to be held virtually as far in advance as possible. If this happens we reserve the right to change the timetable of the meeting to take into account individual circumstances and allow additional time for breaks and technical issues.</p>
Race	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed
Religion or belief	Potentially Negative		<p>Dates for deadlines and panels will be checked and chosen to avoid clashes with major religious events where possible.</p> <p>Breaks can be scheduled to coincide with any prayer times.</p> <p>Panels are likely to be virtual. If held in person, dietary requirements will be catered for and a prayer room available on request.</p>
Sexual orientation	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed
Sex (gender)	None Identified		Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at panel meetings.

			Efforts will be made to select gender diverse panellists and reviewers.
Age	None identified		Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	<p>Caring Responsibilities – Potentially Negative</p> <p>Using a new system and potentially changing application route between stages</p>	<p>Panellists and applicants may have reduced availability due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, for example if they have to care for a vulnerable person or child.</p> <p>Applicants may find using a new system challenging and confusing if the application route changes at the full stage.</p>	<p>Dates for panels will be outside of school holidays wherever possible.</p> <p>Panellists will be informed in advance if a panel meeting is to be held virtually.</p> <p>Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists as far in advance as possible.</p> <p>We will endeavour to provide additional support to anyone who needs it through TFS helpdesk.</p> <p>Further support will be provided through a series of webinar for both Research Offices and Applicants.</p>
	Zoom Panel Meetings – Potentially Negative		<p>Guidance will be provided to panellists – best practice and tools that can be used such as the hand raising and mute functions.</p> <p>‘Test runs’ will be offered to those who have not used Zoom before.</p> <p>Extra time will be allowed to assist with cognitive load and</p>

			<p>'short term' technical difficulties</p> <p>Contingency plans will be put in place if Zoom cannot be used</p> <p>Learning from virtual panels held prior to this, will be incorporated to improve the process.</p>
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Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	There is a potential, as outlined above, that some individuals may be disadvantaged.	
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.	✓	This activity needs to proceed at this time. Everything has been done to be as fair and flexible as possible to all applicants. We will promote and inform as early as possible, and take circumstances into due account when necessary.

Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
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Date completed:	22/11/21
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
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