



EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	2022 Refresh of the Mathematical Science Early Career Forum
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>The Mathematical Sciences Early Career Forum (ECF) is an established long-term informal advisory structure, with an evolving membership that reflects the early career mathematical sciences community. The Forum are consulted on strategic issues and, in turn, encouraged to act as advocates for EPSRC, sharing their awareness of EPSRC strategy and operations with the wider research community.</p> <p>To enable the ECF to have a membership that represents early career members of the Mathematical Sciences, Early Career Forum (ECF) hold the position for three years. As such each year a refresh of the members takes place to continue to represent the views of Early Career Researchers from a range of backgrounds.</p> <p>To enable this refresh to take place EPSRC is seeking applications from Early Career industrialists, academics and from individuals working in the third sector and government organisations to join the ECF in the Mathematical Sciences theme.</p>
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	<p>Internal Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided advice and guidance for the Mathematical Science Theme Lead and Team members – to enable shortlisting of the applicants <p>External stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing the call for new members across the mathematical science community
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	EPSRC Mathematical Sciences research community.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	The assessment process has been designed to ensure unconscious bias is minimised and managed.

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	Potential Negative Impact	For applicants – all information provided is in a written format. Access requirement for meetings	Application form produced in black and white and in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines. Venues to be chosen with accessibility facilities for disabled participants. If held remotely, reasonable adjustments made to logistics to support participation (e.g. live transcript during virtual meeting)
Gender reassignment	Potential negative impact	Gender specific language within communications	Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will

		Access requirement for meetings	be encouraged at meetings. Venues to be chosen which have access to gender neutral toilets where possible
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impact		
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative impact	Effect on ability to participate if on parental leave Additional requirements for those with caring responsibilities or pregnancy for meetings.	EPSRC have considered the time frames for this activity and it will remain open for the longest time possible. The refresh must be conducted in this time. This refresh occurs on an annual basis so there will be future opportunities. Additional care requirements could occur if individuals are required to: Participate in events on what would normally be a non-working day or work extended hours on a normal working day. It is an individual's responsibility to check with EPSRC and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at a panel. Further details on the support EPSRC will offer for those with caring responsibilities can be found here .
Race	No known negative impact.		
Religion or belief	Potentially negative impact	Participation could be affected by	EPSRC endeavours to select meeting dates

		coincidence with religious holidays	that are cognisant of major holidays.
Sexual orientation	No known negative impact		
Sex (gender)	Potentially negative impact	Gender diversity of the forum	Efforts will be made to increase gender diversity in line with EPSRC peer review guidance.
Age	Potential Positive	No time based eligibility criteria will allow for greater flexibility in acceptance to the Early Career Forum	
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)			

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	<p>Several risks and potential biases have been identified that could potentially have a negative impact on the applicants, predominantly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability - Parental or other caring responsibilities <p>Several risks and potential biases have been considered when designing the call and have been mitigated as far as possible. There has been no evidence found to show that this call would discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people.</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	✓	Possible risks and biases associated with the call have been identified and mitigation has been put in place. ED&I aspects will be considered throughout the lifetime of the scheme and this EIA will be reviewed accordingly.
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.		

<p>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:</p>	Yes
<p>Date completed:</p>	17/01/2022
<p>Review date (if applicable):</p>	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Nishtha Agarwal	When published	1	