



EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Innovation and Knowledge Centres in Digital Health and Care
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	The funding opportunity aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the transfer and sharing of skills and knowledge in digital health between business, across academic disciplines, with industry and with healthcare professionals. • Create new partnerships and encouraging co-creation between industry, academia, and healthcare professionals. • Enable an entrepreneurial environment for new digital technologies addressing unmet needs in health to be developed.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	A community survey was conducted in November 2022 to identify the challenges and opportunities in this space.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	UK Research Organisations (RO) Non-academic stakeholders Academics RO Admin Staff Local authorities NHS staff UKRI staff Expert panel members
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	Feedback is sought from those involved in the process. Research outcomes will be collected through ReserchFish. If centres are funded, ongoing monitoring will be requested. The call and all associated documents will be available on UKRI websites and available to all interested parties to support their applications. Contact details will be provided to support queries related to the call. 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	Potentially positive and negative	<p>Je-S does not currently comply with disability accessibility schemes. This will be picked up by the Research and Innovation Funding Service (RIFS) project</p> <p>Virtual panel meeting will reduce travel and level of physical activity required for event. Allows panel members to remain at home with access to appropriate care or facilities</p>	<p>Any reasonable adjustments for specific requirements will be made. Documents will be produced in line with EPSRC formatting guidelines.</p> <p>Accessibility will be considered if a physical meeting is deemed suitable. The option to attend virtually will also be available.</p>

Gender reassignment	No known negative impact		Gender neutral language will be used throughout and will be encouraged at the Panel meeting.
Marriage or civil partnership	No known negative impact		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially negative	Depends on individual circumstances. Applicants may be on parental leave when the call is open, assessment stage, and/or Panel meeting. Panel members may have additional requirements associated with caring responsibilities or pregnancy.	EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members will be made aware of these. Provision for parental leave (including maternity leave, paternity leave and leave related to surrogacy and adoption) are covered in the UKRI terms and conditions.
Race	No known negative impact		Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed
Religion or belief	Potentially negative	Depends on individual circumstances. If held as an in person meeting, Panel members may have dietary requirements or require access to prayer facilities. Participation could be affected by coincidence with religious holidays.	If held as an in person interview, dietary requirements will be catered for and a prayer room available on request if the meeting is a physical one. EPSRC endeavours to select dates that a cognisant of major holidays (e.g. panel dates will try to avoid being held during religious holidays.)
Sexual orientation	No known negative impact		Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed
Sex (gender)	No known negative impact		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	No known negative impact		Standard EPSRC policies will also be followed. All staff are trained in unconscious bias, and the principles of this training upheld in panel discussions.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	Caring Responsibilities – Potentially negative There might be a reduction in the ability of applicants with caring responsibilities to be able to apply and/or attend Panel meeting.	Panellists and applicants may have reduced availability due to caring responsibilities.	Efforts have been made to keep the call open for as long as feasible. EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members will be made aware of these.

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	✓	See the mitigations outlined above.
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.		

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:	10/02/2022
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Katherine Freeman	When published	1	NA