



### EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	EPSRC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Sharing Hub. This activity is a call for applications.
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>To allocate up to £1.25m for one Network Plus – EDI Sharing hub. The Hub will provide leadership and coordination to the collective knowledge sharing of EDI good practices and ‘what works’ across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences.</p> <p>In addition to the EPSRC standard eligibility rules, EPSRC are accepting wider eligibility for the roles of project leads and project co-lead applicants for this funding opportunity to support different career paths within the research and innovation community.</p> <p>EPSRC are piloting a flexible leadership model that allows for one or more project leads to lead the grant. This enables people to bring different knowledge, skills, and experience to the leadership team. Allowing more than one project lead also enables the leadership of the funding opportunity to be performed as a job share.</p>
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	<p>Portfolio managers BIT UKRI Policy UKRI funding team SBF team and Business partner EPSRC EDI Strategic Advisory Group</p>
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>Institutions Applicants Panel members UKRI Engineering, physical sciences and mathematical sciences researchers at all career stages</p>
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>EPSRC will obtain feedback from members and EPSRC attendees about the format of the meeting. EPSRC will take action following this feedback to improve our processes for future funding opportunities.</p> <p>The sharing hub leadership team will be supported by an advisory group.</p>

	<p>The sharing hub will be developing a set of KPI/metrics to understand the impact of the activity whilst 'in flight'.</p> <p>UKRI will evaluate the flexible leadership model that this call will be piloting.</p>
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As a funder of research, EPSRC remains 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. 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	<p>The sharing hub assessment process involves an interview stage which may lead to challenges in accessibility and increases the risk of unconscious bias.</p> <p>The sift panel meeting may lead to challenges in accessibility for some</p>	<p>Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.</p> <p>All applicants and panel members will be asked whether they need any reasonable adjustments, which will be made to enable attendance</p>

	Potentially positive:	<p>panel members with disabilities.</p> <p>The flexible leadership model may benefit some applicants with disabilities who might not be able to work as many hours and/or work flexibly.</p>	<p>to interviews and/or panel meetings, to make the process as inclusive as possible. Virtual interviews will also be offered when required.</p> <p>Being aware that some attendees may require partial attendance of the event.</p> <p>Make the schedule and expectations of the day clear well in advance.</p> <p>Ensure there is a separate room or quiet space for a break for panel members or interviewees, who might need this before or after the interview.</p> <p>Ensure there are sufficient breaks throughout the duration of the meeting.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Potentially Negative	<p>If an applicant or panel members is in the middle of the gender transition process (e.g. having operations, trying different hormonal medications), this could have a negative impact if this arises around the time of interviews/meeting dates.</p>	<p>Adjustments will be offered to everyone and will be made to enable attendance to interviews/panel meeting and make the process more inclusive. Virtual interviews will be offered when required.</p> <p>Be aware that some attendees may require partial</p>



			be requested for all panel members.
<b>Race</b>	No known negative impact		
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Potentially negative	Key dates (open call closing, interview) coinciding with specific religious festivals/ events could disadvantage specific religious groups  Panel members may have specific religious dietary requirements	Ensure religious observances are considered when meeting dates are chosen, and where possible that there is a prayer room available  Dietary requirements will be requested for all panel members.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No known negative impact		
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Potentially positive	The flexible leadership model that may benefit women with caring responsibilities and/or who are part time or work flexibly to enable them to be joint Project Leads.	
<b>Age</b>	Potentially Negative          Potentially Positive:	Older applicants or panel members might have additional needs that align with some mobility related challenges during the panel meeting and/or interviews.  The flexible leadership model may benefit some older applicants who have chosen to reduce their working hours.	Adjustments will be offered to everyone and will be made to enable attendance to interviews/panel meeting and make the process more inclusive. Virtual interviews will be offered when required.  Ensure there are sufficient breaks throughout the duration of the meeting.

**Commented [RREU1]:** Should we change this to 'ethnicity' now to follow the same terminology as captured during data collection?

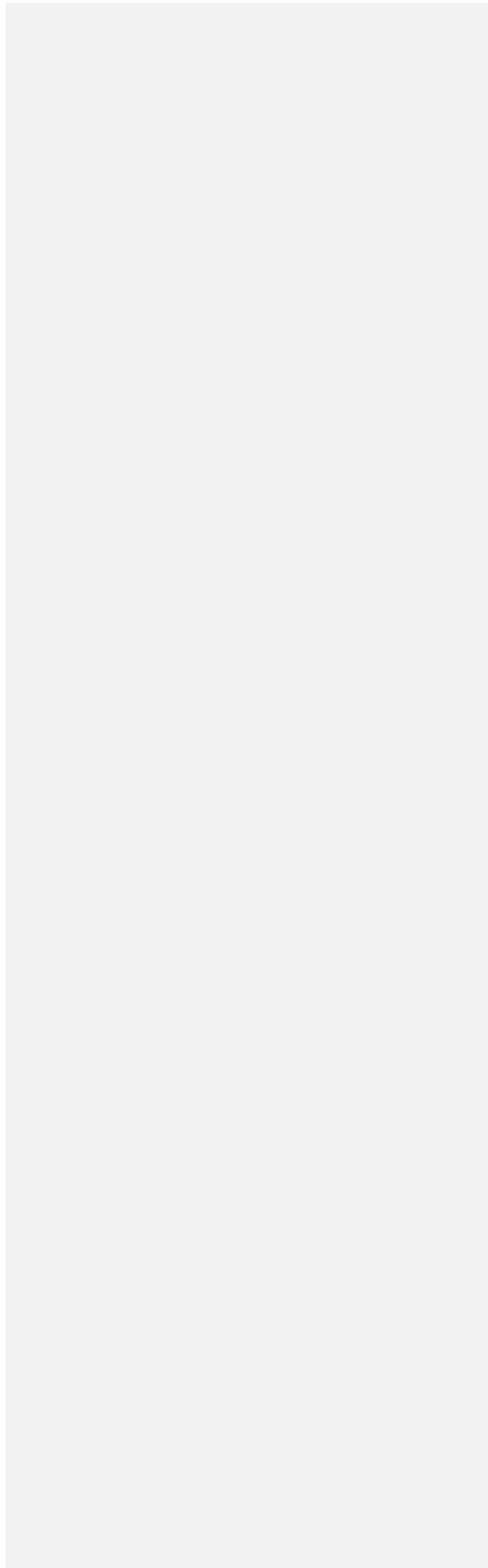
**Commented [CU2R1]:** Hi @Rachel Rothwell - EPSRC UKRI not sure as this is the standard template. @Paula Bailey - EPSRC UKRI should we change this?

**Commented [PBEU3R1]:** I'm expecting the new UKRI EIA template to make any relevant changes leave as is for now as the protected characteristic in the Equalities act is actually race.

<p><b>Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)</b></p>	<p>Potentially positive</p>	<p>An EDI plan is expected for all applications to ensure EDI is considered in all aspects of how the sharing hub will operate. The expectation is that the EDI plan will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How the leadership team will provide a psychologically safe environment</li> <li>- How the leadership team will ensure fair recruitment of any staff employed to support the hub, including career development opportunities and flexible working practices</li> <li>- details of your proposed approach and process to ensuring inclusive, fair, transparent and objective decision making when allocating funding</li> <li>- An outline of the mechanisms that the sharing hub will employ (e.g., Equality Impact Assessments and Codes of Conduct) to ensure the sharing hub embeds inclusive and accessible practices in the way that it operates, and</li> </ul>	
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**Commented [PBEU4]:** Is it worth adding in here about the expectation of an EDI plan by the applicants? Could mention what that will cover (could cut and paste section from my word table) We have focused more on our processes, would also like to focus on the grant when funded and our expectations / what we will require them to put in place.

		that EDI is embedded throughout all aspects of the sharing hub	
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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?	We have considered ways that we think may disadvantage individuals and have adapted our process to mitigate and reduce the potential for discrimination	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .		
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can <b>adapt or change</b> 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 <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	✓	Actions will be taken to reduce barriers.

<b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b> (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	Yes
<b>Date completed:</b>	01/08/2023
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	

**Change log**

Name	Date	Version	Change
Ciara McLoone	10/08/2023	1	