

A GUIDE TO EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Introduction

The Research Councils are committed to promoting equality and inclusion in all their activities, whether this is related to the work we do with our external stakeholders or whether this is related to our responsibilities as an employer. As public authorities we are also required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations when making decisions and developing policies. To do this, it is necessary for us to understand the potential impacts of our internal and external activities on different groups of people.

What is an Equality and Inclusion Impact Assessment?

An EIIA is an evidence based tool that enables us to explore and determine any impact our activities and policies may have and enables them to be implemented, without discrimination, whilst helping us to also meet our public sector duties.

The term 'policy' covers the range of functions, activities and decisions for which the organisation is responsible, including for example, arranging scientific strategy panels, conferences and training courses. Whether an EIIA is needed or not will depend on the likely impacts that the policy may have and relevance of the activity to equality. The EIIA should be done when the need for a new policy or practice is identified, or when an existing one is reviewed. Advice can be sought from your Research Council HR team.

The EIIA will help to ensure that:

- we understand the potential effects of the policy by assessing the impacts on different groups
- any adverse impacts are identified and actions identified to remove or mitigate them
- decisions are transparent and based on evidence with clear reasoning.

Carrying out an EIIA

An EIIA template is attached an annex A. This covers:

- the purpose of the policy - what is the intention and/or what is it trying to achieve?
- who is affected by the policy?
- the likely impact on the different groups *
- what actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts

** the different groups covered by the Equality Act are referred to as protected characteristics: disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), and age*

Follow up action

Once actions have been identified consideration should be given to reviewing the actual impact of a new policy or changes to an existing policy (e.g. after it has been in place for a period of time).

Equality and Inclusion Impact Assessment Template- International Partnering Awards

The template below sets out the key elements of an EIIA that need to be documented.

Section 1

<p>1. Policy/activity being assessed</p>	<p>The BBSRC International Partnering Award Scheme has been set up to provide funding to support the development of long-term collaborations with overseas scientists in overseas countries.</p> <p>This is an annual call which is assessed internally by members of BBSRC office (from the International team, Science group, the Business Interaction Unit and the Skills and Careers Unit).</p>
<p>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/activity</p>	<p>The overarching aim of the International Partnering Award scheme is to provide resources to BBSRC supported grant holders which allow them to forge long-term relationships with international scientists in areas of research that are of direct relevance to BBSRC's current scientific strategy. It is hoped that the long-term partnerships established through Partnering Awards will lead to the development of new collaborative research programmes.</p> <p>The purpose of the Partnering Awards is to provide pump-priming funds for building new links with overseas scientists which will add value to existing BBSRC funded research grants. Specific objectives that underpin the Partnering Awards scheme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To set up partnership links between UK and overseas laboratories • To promote the exchange of scientists, particularly early career scientists • To promote access to facilities
<p>3. Is the policy/activity relevant to equality and diversity? <i>(Advice should be sought from HR. If not relevant, record reasons and evidence; the remainder of the form need not be completed)</i></p>	<p>Yes. It is generally accepted that diverse ideas, experiences, background and perspectives contribute to good collaborations. BBSRC's Equality and Diversity Strategy aims to embed diversity in all we do as an investor, employer and partner, fully reflecting the communities in which we work.</p> <p>BBSRC aims to ensure that the processes for our Calls are designed to be reflective of the needs and cultures that exist within the academic and industrial community. Those who are engaged with the processes need to operate these fairly and without prejudice or bias.</p> <p>For more information see BBSRC's Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan.</p>

<p>4. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? <i>(e.g. with relevant stakeholders)</i></p>	<p>Liaise with BBSRC Delivery to note any potential barriers to participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with the BBSRC Delivery team to ensure that the Panel meeting setup does not create barriers for attendance and participation from a diverse range of people. • Consultation with members of BBSRC’s Equality and Inclusion Policy Group on barriers to inclusion and potential bias from their perspective. <p>BBSRC is committed to equality and inclusion and to enable participation for everyone who applies to our schemes and those who are involved in reviewing and panel meetings. To facilitate this, we adopt the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that the call is advertised widely to reach the widest possible audience • The advert will clearly states the scope and assessment criteria for award. Awards will be made against these pre-published assessment criteria. • The BBSRC website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page. • The panel is composed of BBSRC staff members who have been trained in Unconscious Bias and have been briefed about the importance of objective decision making. • BBSRC is committed to enabling panel participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours. The panel meeting will avoid school holidays.
<p>5. Who is affected by the policy?</p>	<p>Applicants to the International Partnering Award Scheme. Members of the panel and reviewers who are assessing applications for the International Partnering Award scheme.</p>
<p>6. Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing actual impact of the policy</p>	<p>This equality impact assessment will be reviewed annually to determine if BBSRC can improve the diversity and inclusion of the Partnering Award Calls; the applications, the reviewers and the panel.</p> <p>The language of all documentation is reviewed annually and changes will be made where it would improve inclusivity of the document.</p>

Pregnancy/ maternity/ paternity and adoption	Negative		<p>We will take into account any maternity/paternity dates provided by the applicant if these are included in the proposal.</p> <p>Award extensions due to maternity / paternity /adoption leave will be considered according to conditions set out in the RCUK Grants guide.</p>
Race	Neutral		
Religion or belief	Negative		Ensure religious observances are taken into account.
Sexual orientation	Neutral		
Sex (gender)	Negative	Potential Panel members may be disadvantaged and unable to attend if they have caring responsibilities	<p>Expectations and dates for all aspects of the process are set out as far in advance as possible, allowing preparation for participants to cover caring and other responsibilities.</p> <p>School holiday dates will be taken into account.</p> <p>The panel will take into consideration family/caring responsibilities if travel has been adjusted to accommodate these (e.g. proposing multiple visits for a shorter period of time).</p>
Age	Neutral		

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