

## **BBSRC APPOINTMENTS (ADVISORY/OVERSIGHT) PANEL**

The BBSRC Appointments Panel operates through delegated authority from BBSRC Executive Chair. It reports to BBSRC Council *via* the Executive Chair on a 6-monthly basis.

The panel is responsible for providing advice to BBSRC Council and Executive on the robustness of the nomination and selection processes used to appoint members of BBSRC Committees and Panels and make recommendations as to the composition and membership of the Pool of Experts. The panel takes an active role in the selection and appointment of the chairs of committees and panels.

### **Terms of reference**

The Appointments Panel (AP), operating through delegated authority from BBSRC Executive Chair, will be responsible for:

- Assessment of applications for, and appointment to, chair positions on BBSRC committees and panels
- Oversight of the principles and strategy used to appoint members to committees convened to assess applications to:
  - Responsive mode
  - Fellowships
  - Follow-on Fund
  - Managed mode initiatives, especially those implemented at pace.
  - Training grant competitions
- Oversight of the strategy used to appoint members of BBSRC's Pool of Experts.
- Oversight of the strategy used to appoint members of BBSRC's Strategy Advisory Panels.
- Providing external assurance of the quality and diversity of appointments to the groups mentioned above, including disciplinary expertise, geographic, institutional and sectoral (i.e. academia versus institute versus industry) variety, as well as protected and other personal characteristics (as appropriate).
- Providing advice on emerging areas of research for the groups mentioned above
- Oversight of and feeding into BBSRC classifications on an ongoing basis to ensure they are fit for purpose
- Maintaining connectivity across UKRI on related activities

Members of the AP will be appointed by BBSRC's Executive Chair, ensuring appropriate balance and diversity, including across a range of bioscience disciplines, sectors and personal characteristics. The AP will be chaired by a member of BBSRC Council and will include a member of the BBSRC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Expert Advisory Group. Membership will be for three years in the first instance, with a further three year extension if needed. On the advice of the AP chair and secretariat, BBSRC may, on occasion, invite additional members.

Secretariat will be provided by BBSRC's Research and Innovation Funding Delivery team and include representation from BBSRC's EDI and culture team. The BBSRC Executive Director of Research Strategy and Programmes and Director of Talent and Funding Policy and Delivery (or their delegates) will be *ex-officio*, non-voting members of the Appointments Panel.

All panel members will be expected to uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life<sup>1</sup>: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

The group will report to BBSRC Council via the Executive Chair's Report and meet at least twice a year but can convene whenever deemed necessary by the secretariat, the Chair or a majority of the members. Other business can, as required and agreed with the panel, be undertaken via correspondence. For transparency purposes, a summary of the report will be made public alongside panel agendas; decisions taken by correspondence will also be recorded in the minutes of the subsequent meeting.

The panel will consider and review recommendations proposed by the executive; its role is not to assess individual applications but to provide assurance that open, inclusive and transparent nomination and selection processes have been followed, in line with BBSRC's commitments to diversity in all its forms. This assurance may take the form of providing feedback on individual committee or panel recruitment outcomes, or other means. The panel will, as necessary, raise exceptions to recommendations made to it, where, for example, it believes that the stated processes have not been followed.

On at least an annual basis, the panel will review the portfolio of appointments to BBSRC bodies, and make recommendations on future recruitment strategies, including principles and targets where necessary.

Updated 23 April 2024

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<sup>1</sup> [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/seven-principles-of-public-life)


**Overview of activity**

	<b>Response</b>
Name of activity being assessed	Appointments Panel meetings and associated ad hoc activities
Council/department/project team	BBSRC
Aims and objectives of the activity	<p>The Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council's (BBSRC) Appointments Panel operates through delegated authority from BBSRC Executive Chair. It reports to BBSRC Council via the Executive Chair on a 6-monthly basis.</p> <p>The panel is responsible for providing advice to BBSRC Council and Executive on the robustness of the nomination and selection processes used to appoint members of BBSRC Committees and Panels and make recommendations as to the composition and membership of the Pool of Experts. The panel takes an active role in the selection and appointment of the chairs of committees and panels.</p> <p>This EIA aims to cover the equality considerations associated with the activities of BBSRC's Appointments Panel, including pre- and post-meeting documentation and the running of biannual meetings.</p>
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bioscience community</li> <li>• The panel members</li> <li>• BBSRC Office staff</li> </ul>
What data and consultation have you used?	This EIA was developed using UKRI guidance, previous EIAs within UKRI, and consultation with the BBSRC EDI team.



Analysing your impact

In addition to data gathering and consultation, the guidance materials should be used to assist in identifying impacts on different groups.

<p>Are there <b>general or overarching impacts on multiple groups</b>? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact?</p>	<p>All efforts will be made to ensure members can participate fully regardless of protected characteristics and any accessibility requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Panel members will be asked to inform BBSRC office staff if they have any additional requirements to enable attendance or participation, and reasonable adjustments will be pursued where possible.</p>
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Protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit	Negative impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
	Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown			
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Members of the panel, older and younger members of the community, may be concerned about ageism or bias.	Retirements within the group will be based on length of membership and not career stage or age.
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Individuals with a physical impairment may need additional facilities for in-person or virtual meetings. For example, individuals with seeing or hearing impairment, may need additional software such as text to speech software or speech to text software. Individuals who use a wheelchair may need ground floor facilities, lifts and ramps and accessible toilets.</p> <p>Individuals who are neurodivergent may find standard documentation inaccessible due to formatting.</p> <p>Individuals who are neurodivergent may struggle with in-person meetings due to overwhelming or distracting stimuli.</p>	<p>Ensure that meeting invites include a request to alert staff members to any additional accessibility requests. Ensure venues are accessible. Provide access information where appropriate. Closed captions will be available in Zoom meetings, hearing loops can be used in-person.</p> <p>Ensure documentation is compatible with assistive technology and adhering to <a href="#">UKRI guidance on creating accessible documentation</a>.</p> <p>Ensure breaks are scheduled regularly during meetings and make it clear that individuals may request additional breaks if necessary. Provide quiet spaces for individuals that may need to decompress. Do not acknowledge stimming behaviours unless invited to do so.</p>
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individuals identifying as Trans may wish to use facilities at meeting locations that are gender neutral.	Gender neutral language will be used on all documentation and correspondence with the panel members and invited experts.

			<p>Individuals may have differing gender identity and gender expression.</p> <p>Individuals may wish to change their personal information during their membership term, some of which may be related to their gender identity or gender expression.</p>	<p>Members will be asked ahead of the meeting whether there are any additional requirements. Ensure office staff responsible for organising in-person events are aware of any additional requests. Where possible, source venues that have gender neutral facilities regardless of whether specific requests have been made.</p> <p>Individuals can display their preferred pronouns if they wish to, minimising the risk of misgendering. No dress code will be requested for in-person meetings.</p> <p>Gender neutral pronouns will be used when requested and all efforts will be made to avoid deadnaming individuals.</p> <p>Confidentiality will be maintained at all times between panel members and BBSRC office staff, should individuals wish to disclose any information regarding their gender expression or identity.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Panel members may change their name following a marriage or civil partnership.	All documentation and correspondence between panel members and BBSRC office staff will be updated with any name change.
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The ability of panel members to participate in meetings may be affected by parental leave arrangements.</p> <p>Individuals who are pregnant may have additional accessibility requests such as ground floor facilities, lifts or require more frequent breaks and additional dietary requirements.</p>	<p>Disclosure is voluntary and will be treated as confidential. Pregnancy or plans to take parental leave will not impact term extension decisions.</p> <p>Those on parental leave will be offered a membership extension equivalent to their leave.</p> <p>Pregnancy risk assessments can be conducted on a case-by-case basis. Ensure any in-person meeting venues provide private spaces for nursing/needling to express or store milk and ensure that meeting rooms</p>

				located close to toilet facilities if necessary. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Members of the panel may be concerned about racism or bias.	BBSRC office staff will, where possible, balance the characteristics and representation to ensure many viewpoints are included in the meetings.
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individuals celebrating certain religious holidays may have less time to prepare for and attend meetings.  For in-person meetings, some individuals may request access to spaces for worship and appropriate washing facilities. Individuals may also request specific dietary requirements such as Halal, Kosher or vegan food.	BBSRC office staff will where possible avoid religious holidays.  BBSRC office staff will enquire before in-person meetings whether there are any additional requirements.
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Panel members may feel uncomfortable sharing personal information related to their sexual orientation.	Disclosure of any protected characteristic is voluntary. BBSRC will always ensure confidentiality and trust between panel members and BBSRC office staff. Inclusive language will be used during meetings, documentation and correspondence.
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Caring responsibilities fall disproportionately on women and therefore may have less time to prepare for applications or for meetings.  Documentation often include gender-coded language.	Meetings dates and times will be shared in advance to allow for planning and preparation for those with caring responsibilities.  Documentation will be assessed using text analyses software such as Gender-Decoder or Textio to remove unconscious bias.



**Additional characteristics**

Additional characteristics	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit	Negative impact	Please explain the impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible).
	Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown			
Geographical location and place (consider UK and international offices)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Due to the location of the BBSRC office and inconsistent travel accessibility across the country, in-person meetings are usually held in London. Individuals located throughout the rest of the UK may need to travel considerable distances to participate.</p> <p>Panel members or invited experts may be living in areas of the UK with less efficient internet infrastructure (digital/bandwidth inequality), such as rural areas. This could affect their ability to engage virtually during meetings.</p>	<p>Ensure where possible, that meetings are virtual or hybrid. BBSRC office staff will avoid starting in-person meetings before 09.30 and if necessary, offer accommodation for the previous evening.</p> <p>Ensure travel and accommodation can be expensed for in-person meetings to encourage participation.</p> <p>Ensure, where possible, the meetings and documentation does not require any programmes or software that depend on fast broadband.</p> <p>Individuals will be allowed to turn their cameras off to reduce the load on internet infrastructure if required.</p>
Socio-economic status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Panel members may be unable to rely on post-meeting reimbursement of expenses to fund their travel and accommodation due to their personal financial resources. This may also interact with geographic location, caring responsibilities and other protected characteristics. This may also affect their remote working abilities due to reliance on effective internet infrastructure.</p>	<p>Ensure where possible, meetings are virtual or hybrid. Instances where individuals are unable to pay for their own travel and accommodation (before expenses can be made) will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</p>



Education background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Panel members may have varying education backgrounds.	BBSRC will define acronyms and scientific language in meetings and related documentation where necessary and avoid redundant jargon. The <a href="#">UKRI style guide</a> will be followed when writing documentation.
Parent/guardian responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Individuals with caring responsibilities may need additional time to review the pre-meeting documentation.</p> <p>Individuals with caring responsibilities may not be able to attend in-person meetings.</p> <p>Caring responsibilities fall disproportionately on women and therefore this is likely to interact with gender.</p>	<p>Meeting documentation will be sent to panel members at least one week before the meeting to ensure sufficient time for review.</p> <p>Wherever possible, school holidays will be considered and avoided when scheduling meetings.</p> <p>Wherever possible, meetings will be virtual or hybrid. Childcare costs incurred due to attending an in-person meeting can be claimed by members.</p> <p>Members will be provided with dates of meetings in advance to allow them to prepare and meetings will take place during standard working hours.</p>
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As described in Parent/guardian responsibilities	As described in Parent/guardian responsibilities
Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Panel members who do not have English as their first language may experience challenges participating.	<p>Meetings held virtually will have closed captioning enabled.</p> <p>All acronyms used will be fully explained in the relevant meeting or documentation.</p> <p>For hybrid meetings, suitable AV equipment will be used to ensure poor audio quality does not exacerbate language barriers.</p>



Final Decision:	Select the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No negative or positive impact identified; therefore, activity will <b>proceed</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. <b>Adapt or change</b> the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The activity has been adapted following the actions described in the previous section.
3. <b>Stop</b> the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the activity (e.g. in <b>extreme cases</b> or where <b>positive action</b> is taken). Therefore, you are going to <b>proceed with caution</b> with this activity knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	



**Review and sign off**

<b>What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?</b>	The EIA will be reviewed on an annual basis
<b>Next review date:</b>	November 2025

<b>Will this EIA be published? * Yes/Not required</b>	Yes
<b>Point of contact</b>	Jane Hammond
<b>Accountable owner:</b>	Avril Jellings
<b>Signed off by (name and date):</b>	Avril Jellings (28 November 2024)

**Change log**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Change</b>
Jane Hammond	When published	1	