Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is committed to promoting equality and participation in all its 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 a public body, 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 to understand the potential impacts of the range of internal and external activities on different groups of people.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment and why does UKRI use it?

When developing a new scheme, or considering changes to an existing one, UKRI will carry out an equality impact assessment to review how it may affect particular groups or individuals and will take the findings into account. We expect that very rarely our actions will create barriers to participation. The assessment may however flag issues that are not of UKRI's making but we will, where it is in our remit to do so, recommend actions and adjustments. Some impacts are not exclusive to the scheme or change that is being evaluated and need to be addressed throughout our organisation. In some cases, we may not have enough expertise and we will consult with others.

Our leadership and building on good practice

It is our ambition to be recognised as a leader in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and to build on our record of achievements to date, following on from the UKRI EDI strategy and the AHRC EDI action plan. Equality Impact Assessments will help us to prioritise actions.

	Question	Response
1.	**Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed**	UKRI Innovation Scholars Programme: Second round of AHRC funded opportunity for research and innovation secondments in design
2.	**Councl/department/project team**	AHRC Skills Team
3.	**Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event**	**Overall purpose:** To support skills development and knowledge exchange between academia and industry, public and third sector in design, through funding individual secondments focused on research and innovation with networking events for the secondees. **Objectives of the call:** 1. Create porosity between sectors by enabling career mobility. 2. Boost the skills, knowledge, networking opportunities and therefore career development of secondees. 3. Intensify knowledge exchange between different sectors, resulting in innovative outputs. 4. Add value to the design sector and the UK economy.

4.	**What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this event/study ?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	The following consultations have taken place in relation to designing this call when the pilot was being developed in 2021: • internal: AHRC cross-team on 7 July 2021, ECDG on 26 May and 13 September 2021, AHRC & UKRI Innovation Scholars Programme Director (multiple dates) • external: on 17 and 18 August 2021 with 11 academic and non-academic stakeholders from across the sector We have also hosted an internal debrief after the round one assessment panel and have so far received six initial monitoring forms from round one secondees. Consideration of both has informed this EIA.
5.	**Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?**	**Within the AHRC:** This opportunity was designed by Skills and will be jointly delivered by the Skills, Operations, and The Funding Service (TFS) teams. Other teams in AHRC which will have an interest are the HCCA and AID teams due to domain expertise and connection to the design community, as well as the SIE team (at the point of evaluation). **Within UKRI:** UKRI Innovation Scholars Programme Director, Matt Lodge, and Helen Snaith at the central UKRI team. Also, UKRI Events who will assist with setting up and delivering our information webinars. **Academic and non-academic community:** • selected researchers at all career stages within and beyond academia in design • the employers of these researchers • selected research organisations (ROs), independent research organisations (IROs) and entities from private, public and third sector which will host the secondments
6.	**What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?**	A set of success measures for each objective listed under item two has been produced. Secondments will be evaluated against these success measures in stages: 1. An initial monitoring form should be completed by each secondee in the first quarter of the secondment period. It will set objectives for the secondment. 2. An interim survey will be circulated to secondees halfway through their secondment. 3. An end-of-award survey will be circulated to all secondees to capture insights once the awards have finished. They will be asked to complete it within a month from the end date of their secondment. Through this end-of-award evaluation process we will gather feedback about characteristics of the scheme, if/ how it met the applicant's needs, how it affected their career paths and what benefits have been realised, as well as gather comments on how AHRC and UKRI could improve the delivery of the scheme. Additionally, internal monitoring of success rates in round one and round two, conducted by the AHRC Data Team and Skills Team, is planned for the summer of 2024. We will collect EDI information on applicants through AHRC/ UKRI application processes on the TFS system and we will analyse and report on the data in due time.

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	Possible negative impact	The secondments may include working in facilities or using equipment and resources which are not accessible for people with a range of disabilities. Applicants may have a range of disabilities, health conditions and additional needs which might impact their ability to apply for the call within the designated time frame and/ or they might need to take unknown periods of leave in the delivery phase of projects. There is an extensive range of disabilities to consider and may include visual, hearing and mobility impairments/ neurodiversity/ chronic illness (any long-lasting disease or health condition). In case of direct (i.e., in-person) interactions, participants with specific accessibility constraints may be disinclined to participate unless	AHRC and UKRI give the applicants and partner organisations great flexibility to design the secondment to allow participation of people with disabilities. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and allow a wide period of six months to three years for the secondments with inclusivity in mind. The call will be live for seven months, a longer period than usual, which should allow applicants with disabilities time to obtain support in the application writing process at their organisation and to discuss suitable working arrangements for their proposed secondment. There is a risk of low representation of people with disabilities among the applicants and successful candidates. To try to mitigate this, we will advertise through UKRI channels which are designed with accessibility in mind, i.e. The Funding Finder. We will also share the opportunity with relevant organisations and stakeholders. We will use the EDI data we gather to consider if specific action could be undertaken for future AHRC Innovation Scholars calls to try to engage more candidates with disabilities to consider applying for this scheme. Online platforms of engagement and participation (e.g., Zoom) can remove barriers to participation for applicants with a diverse range of disabilities. The use of these platforms will be encouraged, but with due consideration to the needs of people who find videoconferencing challenging (e.g., due to being neurodivergent or other reasons).

		reasonable adjustments are made. Documents and materials need to be accessible.	Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any accessibility needs in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the 2010 Equality Act and EDI policies at receiving organisations, and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. Any travel and subsistence expenses beyond the most economic level which are incurred due to a disability can be requested in, and covered by, the secondment grant.
Gender reassignment	Possible negative impact	A period of leave might be needed for reassignment/ recovery. This might impact the ability to apply within the specified timeframe and might require a period of leave in the delivery phase of a project. Misuse of pronouns - applicants who have had or are in the process of gender reassignment may feel disinclined to apply if language is not sensitive. Therefore, gender neutral language is important to support inclusivity, equality and representation. Applicants who have had or are in the process of gender reassignment might feel more comfortable in inclusive environments, such as those that have gender-neutral facilities.	The call will be live for seven months to reduce the impact. We have also published a pre-announcement in July 2023 to inform any potential applicants about this opportunity in advance. We will also host information webinars in October 2023 and February 2024. The first webinar will be recorded, and a recording published online for the benefit of candidates unable to watch the webinars live. UKRI will be flexible in considering requests to suspend or reschedule secondments to account for periods of leave. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and allow a wide period of six months to three years for secondments with inclusivity in mind. We leave working day arrangements to the secondees and their hosts. Flexibility in the scheduling of secondments will hopefully support participation. AHRC will use gender-neutral language, e.g., pronouns such as 'they' or 'you' instead of 'he/she' in the call specification on the UKRI Funding Finder, on TFS, during

| | | | webinars, in the interim reporting and in the end-of-award reporting. By publishing this EIA, we will also encourage secondees and their receiving organisations to use gender-neutral language throughout their interactions.

We encourage receiving organisations to meet best practice in relation to the employment of transgender staff such as that laid out in the Government Equalities Office guidance on [The recruitment and retention of transgender staff](). Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
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| **Marriage or civil partnership** | No impact: will continue to assess | The call is open to all eligible applicants and there are no known barriers to those who are married or in a civil partnership apart from, potentially, the need to relocate for the duration of the secondment and temporarily live away from their home and partner. | Receiving organisations should agree if there is a need to relocate the secondee on a temporary basis with the secondee, in a way that is sensitive to their family situation and civil partnership/ marriage. Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |

| Pregnancy and maternity | Possible negative impact | Pregnancy is an unpredictable time. When it comes to the management of pregnancy symptoms, unexpected periods of leave might be required – this might impact someone's ability to make the application deadline/ deliver within project timeframes. If someone is on maternity leave, they might be on leave within the application timeframe, or there might be anxiety about whether they are permitted to take maternity leave during the lifecycle of the grant. Pregnant persons and persons returning from maternity leave may require additional adjustments to enable participation in the secondments. | The call will be live for seven months to reduce this impact. We have also published a pre-announcement in July 2023 to inform any potential applicants about this opportunity in advance. We will also host information webinars in October 2023 and February 2024. The first webinar will be recorded, and a recording published online for the benefit of candidates unable to watch the webinars live.

UKRI will be flexible in considering requests to suspend or reschedule secondments to account for periods of leave related to pregnancy and parenthood. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and allow a wide period of six months to three years for secondments with inclusivity in mind. We leave working day arrangements to the secondees and their hosts. Flexibility in the scheduling of secondments will hopefully support participation.

The flexible nature of the scheme makes it inclusive and might appeal particularly to persons returning from maternity leave or pregnant, or those returning to employment after breaks such as parental leave, adoption leave, or special leave due to bereavement after miscarriage/ baby loss.

Secondees will be entitled to maternity and parental leave in line with their current terms and conditions of employment. UKRI standard Terms & Conditions of fEC Grants will apply to awards.
AHRC will meet any additional parental leave costs that cannot be met within the announced grant cash limit including Statutory Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Pay for secondees who are directly incurred staff. Costs for parental leave for secondees funded under the directly |
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| | | | allocated heading should be met by the employer.

Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
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| **Race** | No known impact: will continue to assess | This call is open to candidates of all ethnic backgrounds. AHRC and UKRI have designed the call to be flexible to make it as inclusive and accessible as possible. We are aware of underrepresentation of some groups in the fields covered by this call (e.g. black architects) and there is a risk that the awards might reflect this underrepresentation. | There is a risk of low representation of Global majority/ Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups among the applicants and successful candidates. To avoid underrepresentation, we will advertise through UKRI channels which are designed with accessibility in mind, and we will also share the opportunity with relevant organisations and stakeholders (for example, Black Females in Architecture).

We will monitor outcomes and use lessons learned from the call to decide if any specific action should be undertaken within any future Innovation Scholars calls in design to attract Global majority candidates.

Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |

| Religion or belief | Possible negative impact | Applicants who are observing certain faith festivals, celebrations, or practice might face challenges engaging with the application process and/ or delivering within certain grant timeframes.

Apart from the above, we do not anticipate a person's religion or belief will impact on their application. | The call will be live for seven months to reduce the impact of it clashing with any religious holidays or celebrations. We have also published a pre-announcement in July 2023 to inform any potential applicants about this opportunity in advance. We will also host information webinars in October 2023 and February 2024. The first webinar will be recorded, and a recording published online for the benefit of candidates unable to watch the webinars live.

Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |
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| Sexual orientation | No impact: will continue to assess | We do not anticipate a person's sexual orientation to impact on their application. | AHRC and UKRI give the applicants and partner organisations great flexibility to design the secondment to allow participation of persons of all sexual orientations.

Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. |

Sex (gender)	Possible negative impact	See relevant content under 'Pregnancy and maternity' and 'Gender reassignment' categories. A gender-specific barrier might occur if a candidate is impacted with a health implication caused by their sex, e.g., they experience menstrual health challenges/ menopausal symptoms/ prostate cancer or other types of cancer specific to male or female organs.	The call being live for an extended period of seven months should allow for inclusivity. We have also published a pre-announcement in July 2023 to inform any potential applicants about this opportunity in advance. AHRC and UKRI give the applicants and partner organisation great flexibility to design the secondment to allow participation of all sexes. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and allow a wide period of six months to three years for secondments with inclusivity in mind. We leave working day arrangements to the secondees and their hosts. Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Age	No impact	AHRC and UKRI have designed this flexible scheme to make it inclusive. The flexibility might appeal to and benefit persons across a wide range of age groups. The scheme is open for candidates at all career stages from early career to senior working professionals of all sectors, including academia.	The scheme is open for candidates from each career-level group above doctoral/ equivalent experience. Our reviewers/ assessors will be assessing applicants at all career stages/ of different ages with fairness and transparency, according to the same criteria and taking into consideration experience in the context of career stage. Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs based on this protected characteristic in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations

			to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Additional diversity characteristics	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain the impact including details of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Geographical location (consider UK and international offices)	Possible negative impact	Geographical location has no impact on the application process but in some cases, there may be a need to relocate for a part of or the entire duration of the secondment. This may incur additional expenses beyond eligible costs and may affect the candidate's wellbeing.	Receiving organisations should agree if there is a need to relocate the secondee on a temporary basis with the secondee, in a way that is sensitive to their situation. Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Socio-economic status	Possible negative impact	Eligibility requirements stipulate that candidates are in employment for the duration of the secondment therefore excluding unemployed candidates. Some unemployed candidates may come from lower socio-economic status backgrounds.	Due to how the funding is distributed (i.e., paying the employer of the candidate to buy out their time), it is not currently possible to amend this eligibility criterion.
Education background	Possible positive impact	Applicants do not require a PhD to be eligible.	We welcome candidates with equivalent work experience to a PhD, thereby making the opportunity more inclusive of people with diverse educational backgrounds.
Parent/ guardian responsibilities	Possible positive and negative impacts	Persons with parent/ guardian responsibilities may require additional adjustments to enable participation in the secondments. The flexible nature of the scheme (and the promotion of this) might appeal to candidates with parent/ guardian	AHRC and UKRI give the applicants and partner organisation great flexibility to design the secondment to allow participation of persons with parent/ guardian responsibilities. UKRI will be flexible in considering requests to suspend or reschedule secondments to account for periods of leave related to parental/ guardian responsibilities. We encourage part-

		responsibilities who might have a particular need to work flexibly, reduced hours and in a hybrid way, and are permitted to do secondments within a wide period of time e.g. six months to three years.	time and hybrid arrangements, and we allow a wide period of six months to three years for secondments with inclusivity in mind. We leave working day arrangements to the secondees and their hosts. Flexibility in the scheduling of secondments will hopefully support participation. Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Carer/ parent carer responsibilities	Possible positive and negative impacts	Persons with caring responsibilities may require additional adjustments to enable participation in the secondments. The flexible nature of the scheme (and the promotion of this) might appeal to candidates with carer/ parent carer responsibilities who might have a particular need to work flexibly, reduced hours and in a hybrid way, and are permitted to do secondments within a wide period of time e.g. six months to three years.	AHRC and UKRI give the applicants and partner organisation great flexibility to design the secondment to allow participation of persons with caring responsibilities. UKRI will be flexible in considering requests to suspend or reschedule secondments to account for periods of leave related to caring responsibilities. We encourage part-time and hybrid arrangements and allow a wide period of six months to three years for secondments with inclusivity in mind. We leave working day arrangements to the secondees and their hosts. Flexibility in the scheduling of secondments will hopefully support participation. Applicants and their receiving organisations should discuss any personal needs in confidence. Following such conversations, AHRC expects efforts to be made by receiving organisations to provide reasonable adjustments and an inclusive work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI policies at the

			receiving organisation and adhere to UKRI's policies and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Political opinion (Northern Ireland)	No impact: will continue to assess	This opportunity is open to secondees and hosts from across the UK, including Northern Ireland. The political opinion of applicants and assessment panel members has no impact on the application process or secondment.	n/a

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Such a risk exists because the scheme is open to a wide range of candidates from academic and non-academic backgrounds and a range of sectors, and the secondment environment will be provided by receiving organisations with varying levels of experience in supporting EDI. This risk is mitigated as follows: • Through the pre-announcement, the information webinars, the duration of the call being open for seven months, and the advertising of the call through a wide range of channels • UKRI encourages part-time and hybrid working arrangements and have established a wide period of time for the secondment to take place from six months to three years. We leave working day arrangements to the secondees and their hosts, so it suits the needs of the secondee • Using standard UKRI fEC Grants Terms and Conditions which provide flexibility, with an additional condition ensuring the secondments are not transferable which provides secondees with stability • Using The Funding Service as a platform to apply, in particular, the use of the narrative CV ('Resume for researchers') instead of standard CVs. This is to provide applicants from diverse backgrounds and career histories with opportunities to highlight their achievements of relevance to the role (in line with the 'Funders Joint Statement: Exploring a Shared Approach Towards a Narrative CV' signed by UKRI in 2021) • Through the assessment panel process which has been reliably tested during our pilot round and will work according to UKRI's equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) guidelines, and ensure that all proposed secondments are in line with EDI principles

	• Through only approaching those outside of the AHRC Peer Review College if we cannot find the necessary expertise to achieve balance. All assessors will be informed of EDI principles • The AHRC Peer Review College training material incorporates EDI and unconscious bias. Any assessors are strongly encouraged to read AHRC EDI PRC training materials on our website • When an assessment panel meeting is organised, AHRC will ensure the panellists are aware of unconscious bias and empower everyone in attendance to challenge cases of bias AHRC and UKRI expects the receiving organisations to support potential and successful secondees with diverse needs at the point of application and throughout their secondments, addressing their needs and providing a welcoming and inclusive work environment.

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	X	The opportunity advertised through this call has been designed to be flexible to accommodate diverse needs. AHRC expects successful applicants and receiving organisations to organise and deliver the secondments in a way which eliminates barriers and bias. AHRC gives secondees and their partner organisations the flexibility and ownership to meet diverse needs. AHRC and UKRI will provide reasonable adjustments during the two planned networking events if needed, and a separate EIA for events will be produced if appropriate, otherwise, the UKRI events checklist will be used to ensure events are as inclusive as possible. Lessons learned from this call will help us to make future Innovation Scholars calls (if there is funding available) more inclusive should an opportunity for more calls arise.
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**
Person completing EIA	**Agnieszka Siewicz, Senior Investment Manager**
Responsible owner (e.g. project board, committee)	**Ian Stanton, Team Head**
Date signed off by owner:	**10/08/2023**
Review date (if applicable): (An EIA is a live document and should regularly be reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity)	**30/05/2024 once the opportunity has closed for applications**

Change log/version control

Name	Date	Version	Change
Agnieszka Siewicz on behalf of AHRC Skills Team	06/09/2023	1	First version published on UKRI Funding Finder