# Equality Impact Assessment – Industrial Doctoral Landscape Award 2024

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| **Question** | **Response** |
| **1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed** | Funding Opportunity for the Industrial Doctoral Landscape award (iDLA) 2024 (BBRC).  The focus of this EIA is the funding opportunity process, the effects on potential applicants, applicants and the assessment panel.  Students are covered under the UKRI terms and conditions which have had a separate EIA - <https://www.ukri.org/publications/equality-impact-assessment-of-ukris-standard-training-grant-terms-and-conditions/> and actions addressed as part of the new deal for postgraduate research. |
| **2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event** | The funding opportunity is for the Industrial Doctoral Landscape award which will support funding for doctoral training for three annual cohort intakes from October 2026. Organisations typically ineligible for UKRI funding (e..g, businesses) will partner with eligible organisations (e.g., research organisations and institutes) to apply for this award. As a collaborative partnership, prospective applicants can apply for funding for studentships across BBSRC’s full remit.  This funding opportunity will be delivered as a competitive, open call.  Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:   * Vision * Approach * Student experience and EDI * Capability to deliver * Partnerships and governance |
| **3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)* | Changes are being introduced following the move towards collective talent funding across UKRI.  Internal consultation has taken place with the:   * Talent Strategy Leadership team * BBSRC People and Talent Strategy Advisory Panel (PAT SAP), BBSRC Council and senior leadership team   This work has been developed parallel with the move towards collective talent funding. The assessment criteria and process were originally co-developed with colleagues from AHRC, BBSRC and NERC. |
| **4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?** | Potential applicants (individuals and organisations) to the Funding Opportunity who may make a decision on whether to apply based on the timing and wording of the funding opportunity.  Applicants who apply to the Funding Opportunity.  Assessment panel members.  Partners and stakeholders within the Industrial Doctoral Landscape Award e.g., policy-makers, end-users. |
| **5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding**  **activity/event?** | All correspondence about the funding opportunity with the research community will be monitored by the programme managers and senior programme managers for any evidence of potential negative impacts/signs of bias being raised and, following discussions with the Associate Director and Senior Leadership team, they will be addressed accordingly.  Those involved in the assessment of proposals will be as diverse as possible. Panel guidance will be written to ensure bias is removed at the assessment stage. UKRI panel best practice guidelines will be followed at all times and the panel will be encouraged to identify potential bias with UKRI staff so it can be addressed appropriately. |

**General equality, diversity and inclusion considerations**

**Eligibility, criteria and funding opportunity**

* The funding opportunity is open to all UK-based organisations who apply to this funding opportunity in partnership with research organisations that are eligible to receive UKRI funding.
* Panels are instructed to conduct their assessment based only on the information provided within the application and the applicant’s response to any questions asked by the panel, e.g., during the applicant’s “right to reply” to questions of clarification. The panel should not use any other information to inform the assessment, including the reputation of the applicant and/or any organisation involved in any application, as this would be a form of confirmation bias.
* Every effort has been made to ensure that the assessment criteria are objective, transparent and robust.
* Inclusion ofspecific diversity, equity and inclusion wording on the funding opportunity.

**Standard Training Grant terms and conditions**

* UKRI Training Grant terms and conditions comply with UK equality legislation and include provisions designed to mitigate against potential negative impacts (e.g., sick pay, parental and adoption leave, provision of part-time and flexible working, and studentship extensions).
* Research Organisations are subject to equality legislation and have a duty to comply with this legislation. TGC3.4 states that the Research Organisation in receipt of the training grant must ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is considered and supported at all stages throughout the performance of the Training Grant.

**Panel recruitment**

* Whilst panel members are appointed first and foremost based on expertise, we will aim to appoint a diverse panel membership. We will try to balance the panel by gender, ethnicity, geography and career stage to ensure a diversity of panel members and institutions.
* We will ensure (if possible) that the chair and vice chair of the assessment panel are not the same gender.

**Process**

* All panel members will receive guidance which covers issues including fairness, objectivity and unconscious bias. This guidance will include a “safeguarding decision making” discussion, which includes a video prepared by the Royal Society on this topic.
* Panel members should be encouraged to feel empowered to constructively challenge potential bias where it is identified. The panel chair and Office play a particularly important role in this respect. Expectations will be outlined at the beginning of each panel meeting, which will set the tone for discussions, and require that each panel member pay close attention to the scoring criteria and definitions.
* For each proposal we will appoint a minimum of two panel introducers who will formally assess and score the proposal. All panel members will be asked to participate in discussions in order to ensure that an open and transparent assessment process is undertaken and a diverse range of views represented.

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| **Protected Characteristic Group/ Additional factors** | **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** | Negative    Positive | Applicants should seek support from their own institution’s research support office.  Materials are all online so those with neuro-disabilities or who are visually/phisically impaired may experience difficulties.  Panel meeting attendees with neuro-disabilities may experience difficulties with concentration or social expectations during the meeting.  Potential for unconscious bias during the selection/interview process  All materials are available online and accessible at any point during the call.  Panel process will be held virtually, removing the need for those with impairments to travel. | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations.  Work with Funding finder web team and TFS to produce content in accessible formats, e.g., Webinars which can be recorded and accessed at a later date  Ensure adequate breaks are built into the assessment process and during the agenda for panel meetings.  BBSRC staff to display a willingness to answer any queries and to provide timely responses to questions. |
| **Gender reassignment** | Negative | Potential for unconscious bias during the assessment process  Use of non-gender-neutral language in guidance and assessment processes may present a barrier to participation for applicants (to the call and also to students applying for studentships). | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations.  Ensure the usage of gender-neutral language within the funding opportunity and all associated documentation.  UKRI expects TGHs to check their communications and guidance for applicants to ensure gender neutrality and inclusive language, as per the BBSRC EDI action plan. |
| **Marriage or civil**  **partnership** | Negative | Potential for unconscious bias during the assessment process | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations. |
| **Pregnancy and**  **Maternity (Paternity)** | Negative  Positive | Call closes within or doesn’t account for public and school holidays  Individuals with childcare/other caring responsibilities may have less time to prepare applications, participate in the assessment process or attend meetings  Potential for unconscious bias during the selection/interview process  Applicants and panel members who are pregnant or have childcare responsibilities and unable travel will be able to participate remotely | Publish a clear timeline which is long enough to allow responses and accounts for public and school holidays (to include a pre-announcement stage of the funding opportunity).  Provide as much notice as possible for the funding opportunity.  The timing of meetings can be adjusted to accommodate applicants/panel members who have childcare responsibilities at certain times of the day.  We will seek to schedule panel meetings at a time that would avoid requiring additional childcare.  Reimbursement of additional childcare costs (over and above normal working hours) if the meeting participant is otherwise unable to attend.  See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations.  Provide as much notice as possible for the funding opportunity, including the use a pre-announcement stage to allow extra time for community response.  Gather information from meeting participants about any additional requirements they may need in order to fully participate in the virtual panel. Panel members may turn off their camera if they need to breastfeed.  Panel to schedule regular and adequate breaks. Schedule to avoid early and late hours (e.g., not starting before 9:00 or finishing after 17:00). |
| **Race** | Negative | Potential for unconscious bias during the selection/interview process | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations. |
| **Religion or belief** | Negative | Call closes/panel held within religious observances  Potential for unconscious bias during the selection and panel process | Publish a clear timeline which is long enough to allow responses and avoids/doesn’t include or close within religious observances, as far as possible. In addition, this needs to be considered when determining panel dates.  See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations. |
| **Sexual orientation** | Negative | Potential for unconscious bias during the selection and panel process | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations. |
| **Sex (gender)** | Negative  Positive | Potential for unconscious bias during the selection and panel process  People with caring responsibilities (which falls disproportionately on women) may have less time to prepare a proposal, attend a panel meeting/programme event  Potential panellists who have caring responsibilities are less likely to be disadvantaged and can participate remotely | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations.  Keep the Call open as long as possible (taking into consideration school holidays) to provide enough time to prepare proposals and give participants the opportunity to attend panel meetings/other events virtually. Provide early warning of planned meetings/events wherever possible.  Accommodate any requirements panellists may need in order to fully participate in the panel process. Schedule regular breaks into the agenda and avoid early and late hours (i.e., not starting before 09:00 or finishing after 17:00) |
| **Age** | Negative | Potential for unconscious bias during the selection and panel process  Applications are invited from researchers of all career stages. Panels may be inclined to look more favourably at late career researchers with a more established track record. | See above under General Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations.  Panels are reminded to assess applications for their merit against the assessment criteria and not to introduce bias by considering age of applicant and team members. |
| **Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)** |  |  |  |

**Evaluation:**

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| **Question** | **Explanation / justification** | |
| Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people? |  | |
| **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 | Checkmark with solid fill | The assessment process for the Industrial Doctoral Landscape award funding opportunity has considered aspects of bias and clear steps/guidance have been taken to mitigate this at each stage. |
| 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. |  |  |

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| **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:** | 08/10/24 |
| **Review date** (if applicable): |  |

**Change log**

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| **Name** | **Date** | **Version** | **Change** |
|  | When published | 1 |  |