# UK Research and Innovation

# Equality Impact Assessment Form

\*See guidance document for detailed support.

\* Delete the guidance text in the response column when completing your EIA.

## Overview of activity

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|  | **Response** |
| Name of activity being assessed | Data sandpit for metascience.  The sandpit will be held in person and online. |
| Council/department/project team | Metascience Team |
| Aims and objectives of the activity | The overall aim of the sandpit is to commission novel research projects that use UKRI administrative data to answer metascience questions.  More widely, the sandpit will also support thought leadership and community building for metascience in the UK. We want to build new evidence, and draw together existing evidence from other disciplines, to develop solutions that optimise research processes and practices. |
| Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event? | * UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) data teams * UKRI Simpler Better Funding team * Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) research resilience team * Higher Education staff * Administrative Staff * Academics from across disciplines relevant to the funding opportunity * UKRI staff   Director and mentors that will make up our assessment panel |
| What data and consultation have you used? | We have reviewed other Equality Impact Assessments published for UKRI calls and consulted colleagues who have run successful sandpit funding processes to ensure the assessment is comprehensive.  External consultation around the call and specification has taken place with relevant identified external stakeholders. |

## Analysing your impact

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

## Protected characteristics

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| **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 |  |  | Potential negative or positive depending on scheme eligibility requirements.  There may be potential for bullying and harassment and/or exclusionary practices to occur during the in-person event and subsequent online events/follow up activities.    Early career researchers\* may be disadvantaged in the application process as they don’t have the same track record to draw on to demonstrate how they meet the assessment criteria.    (\*It is assumed that early career researchers are generally younger than their more experienced peers, although this is by no means always the case. This is why this point has been included under ‘age’). | We will encourage people from **diverse backgrounds** **to apply** for the sandpit and diversity of background will be considered when selecting participants **to attend**.  We will consider individuals from **different career stages** at the participant and mentor selection stages.  **Track record** is not an explicit criterion, given the likely relationship to career stage (indirectly age).  Mentors will be briefed to make clear that they should be **assessing the application according to criteria** and not reading between the lines. They should assess an individual’s capability to deliver their proposed research. |
| Disability |  |  | There could be potential bias or discrimination because somebody (either a panel member, a research applicant or research participants) has a disability.  Issues of access (to physical venue, to printed or visual materials and so on).  Panel meeting attendees with neuro-disabilities may experience difficulties with concentration and focus during panel assessments.  People with visual or hearing disabilities may find it difficult to access and view/ hear the online materials. | We will consider **venue** to ensure appropriate access.  Solicit information from sandpit participants (in confidence) about any **additional requirements** they may have to participate fully.  Consider **format and variety of materials** used to ensure they can be accessed and engaged with appropriately.  The virtual element of the sandpit will contain **appropriate breaks.** Frequent breaks will also be built into the agenda and we have spaced out 4 sessions out across 2 weeks.  We will ensure that it is possible to **print online documents** and they are in a form that text can be enlarged, and any information displayed by screen sharing can be zoomed as needed.  **Captions** will also be used for the hearing impaired.  We will avoid **lighting** that may trigger migraines and epilepsy. |
| Gender reassignment (Trans identity) |  |  | There could be potential bias or discrimination to a participant (either a panel member, a research applicant or research participants).  There may be potential for bullying and harassment and/or exclusionary practices to occur during the in-person event and subsequent online events/follow up activities.  Trans people may be absent from work because of transition and UKRI records may show the wrong gender. | **Expectations of professional and appropriate behaviour from all participants:** We will reiterate the expectations above and direct our facilitators to adhere to the principles of professionalism throughout the sandpit.  **Mentor selection:** we will strive to achieve a gender balance in mentor selection, with all considerations to ensure mentors are representative of the wider UK population.  **Inclusive practices:** For successful applications, we would expect any successful investments to ensure the use of inclusive practices in all of its operations.  **Medical Treatment:** UKRI terms and conditions are flexible in nature on absence due to medical treatment. We would expect that absence related to transition would be covered by the Research Organisation’s sick policy and strongly encourage research organisations to treat absence relating to transition like any other sick absence.  Consideration needs to be given at UKRI level as to how records (including Gateway to Research and other communications materials) might be adjusted. |
| Marriage or civil partnership |  |  | This is unlikely to affect the inclusion of those who are married or in civil partnerships.  If there are participants who are in a marriage or civil partnership who both attend, there may be caring responsibilities to manage which are impacted by the event.  There may be potential for bullying and harassment and/or exclusionary practices to occur during the in-person event and subsequent online events/follow up activities.  There may be bias (positive or negative) if participants are in or have been in a relationship with each other. | We will require participants to work in the spirit of **professionalism and inclusivity** throughout the process.    **Design of the sandpit** is such that in-person attendance is only required for two days, which is published in the call for expressions of interest. |
| Pregnancy and maternity |  |  | Participation in the sandpit may be negatively affected, if potential applicants or mentor reviewers are unavailable at key stages.  Inability to attend due to childcare commitments may affect who can participate.  Provision for parental leave (including maternity leave, paternity leave and leave related to surrogacy and adoption) are covered in the UKRI terms and conditions. | We should ensure **the use of gender-neutral language** during the sandpit.  Timelines of all events will be provided in advance, allowing early engagement with UKRI on specific mitigations. UKRI will do its best to accommodate adjustments.  **Childcare costs:** The costs of additional childcare for participants, beyond those required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the job may be requested as a directly incurred cost if the institutional policy is to reimburse them. However, childcare costs associated with normal working patterns may not be sought.  **Reimbursement of additional costs for childcare responsibilities:** The participant will be reimbursed for childcare costs for childcare at the venue or paying for a relative to travel to care for school age children.  **Breastfeeding/Expressing:**  On request, we will ensure facilities are provided at the sandpit venue. |
| Race |  |  | There could be potential bias or discrimination because somebody (either a panel member, a research applicant or research participants) is from a particular ethnic background. There may be opportunities for bullying and harassment during the sandpit or project.  We will encourage people from diverse background to apply for the sandpit and diversity of backgrounds will be considered when selecting participants to attend. We will also share guidance with mentors on unconscious bias | We will **encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply** for the sandpit.  We will also **share guidance with mentors on unconscious bias.**  We will require participants to work in the **spirit of professionalism and inclusivity** throughout the process.  We would expect any **successful investments to ensure the use of inclusive practices** in all of its operations. |
| Religion or belief |  |  | Participation in call may be affected, if potential applicants or mentors are unavailable at key assessment stages. (Activities could coincide with religious holidays, for example).  There could be potential bias or discrimination because somebody (either a panel member, a research applicant or research participants) has a particular faith or belief. | UKRI will ensure that religious observances are considered such as **prayer times and catering.** UKRI will do its best to accommodate adjustments and will seek input from participants and mentors.  We will ensure that religious observances are considered when planning the sandpit including catering to provide choice, accounting for religious considerations. Catering will include vegetarian food if kosher or halal food cannot be provided.  Prayer times will be accommodated for. |
| Sexual orientation |  |  | There may be potential for bullying and harassment and/or exclusionary practices to occur during the in-person event and subsequent online events/follow up activities. | We will encourage and remind attendees to be respectful and inclusive during the sandpit process. |
| Sex |  |  | Use of language in call for expressions of interest can present a barrier to participation.    Attendees may be disadvantaged and unable to attend meetings if they have caring responsibilities.    There may be potential for bullying and harassment and/or exclusionary practices to occur during the in-person event and subsequent online events/follow up activities. | We will encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for the sandpit.  We will encourage and remind attendees to be respectful and inclusive during the sandpit process.  We will ensure the use of gender-neutral language in the call specification, guidance documents and during delivery of the sandpit.  We will design the sandpit so that in-person attendance is only required on two days,and publish this in the call for expressions of interest.  In line with [UKRI policy](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/addressing-under-representation-and-active-participation/) we will aim to ensure fair representation across genders. We will aim for (at worst 60/40 split across our mentors). |

## Additional characteristics

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| **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) |  |  |  | The opportunity is open to academia, research organisations, eligible organisations, individuals operating in the field with suitable expertise and experience, and independent research organisations across the UK who meet the eligibility requirements.  Participants’ accommodation and subsistence will be paid to ensure participation is not hampered by costs.  Swindon is selected as a venue because of the data requirements for the sandpit. Travel and subsistence from any UK location will be covered in line with UKRI policy to minimise negative impact of this southeast England location. |
| Socio-economic status |  |  |  | Paid accommodation, travel, and subsistence will support participants’ attendance on the in-person days. |
| Education background |  |  |  | The requirement for participating is that individuals have the expertise and experience in the subject matter. There is no requirement to hold a post-graduate degree or have links to higher education. It is also open to UK-based researchers in the UK from other nationalities who meet the requirements. |
| Parent/guardian responsibilities |  |  | Dependent on individual circumstances | As this is a hybrid meeting, it is hoped that the event’s impact on caring responsibilities is minimised through the option of participating remotely from home for part of the event.  UKRI can offer support for people with caring responsibilities. It is an individual’s responsibility to check with UKRI and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at an event. Further details are available at this link [here](https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-support/). |
| Carer/parent carer responsibilities |  |  | Dependent on individual circumstances | UKRI can offer support for people with caring responsibilities. It is an individual’s responsibility to check with UKRI and confirm what costs can be reimbursed prior to attendance at an event. Further details [here](https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-support/). |
| Political opinion (Northern Ireland only) |  |  |  | The sandpit will focus on data and research questions. Political opinion or discourse will not apply. |
| Other characteristics |  |  | Dependent on individual circumstances | Reasonable adjustments and accommodations will be provided upon request. Materials, equipment and resources will be designed to accommodate or be adapted to varying needs.  The sandpit will contain appropriate breaks. We will ensure that it is possible to print the online documents, and they are in a form that text can be enlarged, and any information displayed by screen sharing can be zoomed as needed.  Captions will also be used for the hearing impaired.  We will avoid colours and lighting that may trigger migraines and/or epilepsy.  Sandpits are intense with a high cognitive load. Sufficient rest time will be allocated in the sandpit agenda, and any specific requirements for rest can be taken into consideration by UKRI.  We have also spaced our 4 sessions out across 2 weeks. |

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| *Are there* ***general or overarching impacts on multiple groups****? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact?* | ***For general impacts and actions that affect more than one protected characteristic, please use this space.*** *For example, in-person meetings can present as negative barriers for disabled people, as well as those with parental or caring responsibilities. You may wish to mitigate this by allowing hybrid or fully virtual meetings to avoid access issues, travel and overnight stay requirements, and facilitate the use of personal equipment (e.g. allowing caption use).*  A number of risks have been identified and actively considered as part of the sandpit call design and internal management processes for call delivery. These risks have been mitigated as far as possible. These include:   * Making the sandpit a hybrid event over 2 weeks to reduce digital fatigue * Covering travel and accommodation for the in-person component * Running the event outside of school holidays in UK where possible * Running the between event 10-4pm, Tues and Thursday to accommodate flexible working as much as possible.   A satisfaction survey will be sent out to all participants to gather feedback about the event, its facilitation, organisation and the participants’ experience of the sandpit for the in-person and virtual sessions. The survey will also measure how each particular event met its outcomes and outputs from the stakeholder, participant, mentor and funder viewpoints. |

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## Evaluation

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| **Final Decision:** | **Select the relevant box** | **Include any explanation / justification required** |
| 1. No negative or positive impact identified; therefore, activity will **proceed**. |  |  |
| 1. **Adapt or change** the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality. |  | See the mitigations outlined above. Further risks that are brought to the attention of UKRI as the process proceeds will be addressed and this policy updated. |
| 1. **Stop** the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups. |  |  |
| 1. 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 **extreme cases** or where **positive action** is taken). Therefore, you are going to **proceed with caution** with this activity knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision. |  |  |

Continued below…

## Review and sign off

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| **What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity?** | An EIA is a live document and should regularly be reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity  We will re-evaluate prior to the participant selection to check for EDI and again at the end of the sandpit to cover any lessons learned to feed into future calls. |
| **Next review date:** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Will this EIA be published? \* Yes/Not required** | Yes |
| **Point of contact** |  |
| **Signed off by (name and date):** | For example, project board, committee, budget holder, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)  *Suzie Wallace*  *Strategic Lead for Metascience*  *ESRC* |
| **Before publishing or archiving your EIA, please remove any sensitive or confidential information such as personal identifiable data.**  **Once your EIA is completed or updated:**   1. **Upload it to the UKRI central repository via [the EIA submission form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=juC3i6TajkqSfvyjjbBLfuzmJllr2UxPiagnQdB9dGBUMzFPRDY0RUJIRlpCRkwzN01WMTJWM1BKRCQlQCN0PWcu)**   **EIAs for ODA and non-ODA ISPF programmes should be emailed to: ISPF@ukri.org** | |

## Change log

| **Name** | **Date** | **Version** | **Change** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | 1 | E.g. Based on input received from consultation groups at the **business case** stage, added actions under the gender section |
|  |  | 2 | E.g. Based on input received from x at the **announcement of opportunity** stage, added/removed/edited x |
|  |  | 3 | E.g. Based on input received from x at the **investment authorisation** stage, added/removed/edited x |

Continued below…

## Action plan

Use the table below to define the actions you intend to take (or have taken) to address the indications of negative impact you have identified or to promote equality. Actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

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| **Action** | **Deadline** | **Owner** | **How will it be monitored?** | **What is/will be the impact/outcome?** |
| e.g. Update application form to include questions on additional support and reasonable adjustments | December 2023 | Applications manager | Updated form published and submissions reflect individual needs | Individual needs can be addressed.  Inform inclusive design of the activity |
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