



EPSRC - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	OPP742 – Research to Advance UK Recycling Capabilities
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	The aim of this opportunity is to fund research to accelerate UK recycling capabilities in order to support the development of more energy-efficient, scalable, environmentally sustainable, and economically viable recycling systems. The opportunity is open to any project addressing a research challenge related to advancing any section of the recycling system from collection, through sorting and separation, to material recycling in the UK.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing and Circular Economy Theme • Representatives from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Resources and waste science) and their counterparts in the devolved nations.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research office/institutions and staff • Research councils and staff • External reviewers (outline panel and expert panel) • PDRAs employed by the funded projects. • Support staff will also be employed on the grant. • industry and the wider innovation landscape. • Students may be aligned to the funded projects, although not directly funded through the grants.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	Research outcomes are collected through Researchfish. Feedback is sought from those involved in the process and policies are considered in light of feedback received.

As a funder of research, EPSRC remains committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. The Research Councils have together developed the ambitious [RCUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#) to outline our collective aspirations for

			line with EPSRC formatting guidelines. Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.
Gender reassignment	Potentially Negative	Potential for unconscious bias	Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.
Marriage or civil partnership	None Identified		Standard EPSRC policies will be followed.
Pregnancy and maternity	Potentially Negative	Participation in activity could be restricted by lack of availability due to parental leave/caring responsibilities/ pregnancy	Accommodations will be made for individuals if required at all stages of the process. Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists in advance as early possible. EPSRC policies for offering support to those with caring responsibilities will be followed and panel members and applicants will be made aware of these. Panellists will be informed if a panel meeting is to be held virtually as far in advance as possible. If this happens, we reserve the right to

		Potential for unconscious bias	<p>change the timetable of the meeting to take into account individual circumstances and allow additional time for breaks and technical issues.</p> <p>Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.</p>
Race	Potentially Negative	Potential for unconscious bias	Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.
Religion or belief	Potentially Negative	Potential for unconscious bias	Ensure religious observances are taken into account when panel dates are chosen, and where possible that there is a prayer room available for panels held in person.
Sexual orientation	Potentially negative	Potential for unconscious bias	Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.
Sex (gender)	Potentially Negative	Potential for unconscious bias	Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training

			materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.
Age	Potentially Negative	Potential for unconscious bias	Standard EPSRC policies will be followed, including providing training materials for panellists on unconscious bias and empowering all panellists to challenge potential bias.
Additional aspects (not covered by a protected characteristic)	Caring Responsibilities – Potentially Negative	Panellists and applicants may have reduced availability, if they are caring for a vulnerable person or due to unexpected school or childcare closures	Dates for panels will be outside of school holidays wherever possible. Panellists will be informed in advance that the panel meeting is to be held virtually. Timetable of key dates will be made available to applicants and panellists as far in advance as possible.
Teams Panel Meetings	Potentially Negative	Potential for screen use fatigue and increase to cognitive load as well as potential technical issues	Guidance will be provided to panellists – best practice and tools that can be used such as the hand raising and mute functions. ‘Test runs’ will be offered to those who have not used Teams before. Contingency plans will be put in place if Teams cannot be used. Learning from virtual panels held prior to this, will be incorporated to improve the process.
Intent to submit (ItS)	Potentially Negative	Applicants will have reduced time to complete the ItS as	Information required in the ItS is kept to a minimum. Information

		the deadline is two weeks earlier than the proposal submission deadline	provided on the ItS can be different to that submitted for the outline, for example draft research project title rather than research project title. The ItS is not assessed. An email address for the theme has been provided as part of the ItS in case of any queries relating to the ItS.
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Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed change in policy, funding activity or event could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	There is a potential, as outlined above, that some individuals may be disadvantaged. All efforts will be made to minimise this.	
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		
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.	✓	There are no alternative approaches available to meet the overall aims of the activity. All proportionate mitigations have been identified and adopted to ensure the process is as fair and flexible as possible to all applicants. We will promote and inform as early as possible, and take circumstances into due account when necessary

Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required	Yes
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(*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:	
Date completed:	05/12/2024
Review date (if applicable):	23/05/2025

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Emily Kruchek	When Published	1	
Emily Kruchek	06/02/25	2	Addition of Its to the EIA