Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

	Question	Response
	Question	**Response**
1.	**Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed**	AHRC Collaborative Landscape Awards (previously known as Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs).
2.	**Council/Department/Project Team**	AHRC Skills Team
3.	**Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event**	This assessment relates to supporting opportunities for doctoral training in collaboration with individual and consortia non-Higher Education Institutions (non-HEI).

Collaborative research training will be supported through Collaborative Landscape awards which aim to:

1. Give non-HEI organisations greater autonomy in the selection of doctoral projects they would like to support and supervise.
2. Provide non-HEI organisations or consortia with a firm funding horizon of collaborative doctoral landscape awards to support their research training strategy, and to enable the development of enhanced programmes of doctoral study that provide students with career development opportunities outside the standard academic route.
3. Foster collaboration between collaborative landscape award holding organisations and consortia in the development of wider training and development opportunities for the doctoral students they support.

AHRC will undertake a competitive assessment process open to individual and consortia non-HEIs. AHRC intends to award 50 studentships each year over a four-year period through this opportunity.

Applications are welcome from non-Higher Education Institutions (non-HEIs) located within the UK. These can be any type of organisation that has the research capacity to host arts and humanities doctoral students. Examples of the type of organisations include creative and cultural organisations contributing to Arts and Humanities research e.g. Galleries, Libraries, Museums and Archives, the creative industries, public and third sector organisations.

Applications will be assessed against a set of criteria published with the funding opportunity on the UKRI funding finder. The final assessment will be moderated by a specially convened panel. Successful applicants will then be responsible for developing doctoral projects in collaboration with UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

We will also be supporting collective activity for Collaborative Landscape students through the provision of funding for the Cohort Development Programme to be delivered by a Coordination Group. The Coordination group works closely with the collaborative landscape consortium and the AHRC to drive, oversee and coordinate the delivery of the cohort development programme through the provision of additional development

		opportunities for AHRC collaborative students with the aim of building lasting relationships between the consortium, students and alumni and the AHRC.
4.	**What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?** *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	The opportunity is part of the implementation of AHRC's Future Doctoral Provision (FDP) programme which aims to deliver against a set of principles which are in line with the findings of the CRAC/Vitae: doctoral training in the arts and humanities [report](#). These principles are as follows: • Widen opportunities and welcome innovative and diverse routes to doctoral training • Enable collaborative learning and peer support • Enable professional development and expand skills capacity • Reduce bureaucracy • Support and advocate for A&H doctoral students within UKRI Collective Talent Fund to deliver training in accordance with the AHRC Vision. Additionally, targeted stakeholder engagement with current CDP award holders took place in November 2024 via a consultation meeting and additional email correspondence to formally gather feedback in the form of questions to understand weaknesses and strengths of the current scheme and how we can improve it. **Internal:** Consultation took place with AHRC colleagues across the organisation including the Skills team and the Executive Chair and Directors Group (ECDG).
5.	**Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?**	• non-HEIs in receipt of current CDP awards • non-HEIs offered and/or in receipt of collaborative landscape awards • Coordination Group • Candidates for future studentships within the awards • Supervisors and funded students • Assessment panel members • AHRC and UKRI staff developing and managing the approach and working with award holders, throughout its lifetime.
6.	**What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?**	AHRC will ensure that assessment and decision making of Collaborative Landscape applications are fair, open and transparent and we will ensure there are panel assessors who come from a diverse range of backgrounds and, most notably, who are from both HEI and non–HEI backgrounds. To encourage a diverse range of organisations to apply we are enabling non–HEIs who have less experience of supporting postgraduate research, or which are smaller institutions, to partner with a HEI in the application stage. The HEI partner can act as a mentor and support. The non–HEI will act as the lead partner but will be supported by a HEI. AHRC needs to ensure that award holders put in place measures to enable access to doctoral funding for students from a diverse range of backgrounds. Award holders need to mitigate any barriers to participation,

| | ensuring that opportunities are promoted across a diverse range of platforms, and recruitment practices and adhere to rigorous Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles.

It is important that we encourage a diverse range of organisations to apply to this funding opportunity and ensure successful applicants demonstrate their commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles in all that they do.

AHRC will require Collaborative Landscape applicants to submit an EDI action plan which will set out a strategy for ensuring EDI principles are upheld in all aspects of being a Collaborative Landscape award holder in terms of recruitment of students, ongoing support of students, training, decision making, governance and management of awards.

Collaborative Landscape award holders need to ensure their EDI plans are compliant with the 2010 Equality Act and UKRI's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion vision. These plans will be considered as part of the assessment process.

The plan will need to outline how the Collaborative Landscape award will work with the HEI partner and any other collaborators to ensure all recruited students have equitable access to opportunities and receive the support they need to successfully complete their studies and develop their careers.

Once Collaborative Landscape awards have been allocated, the award holders will report in line with the AHRC's FDP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework to ensure intentions are met.

Award holders will be expected to reflect on monitoring, governance, recruitment, training and development processes, as well as Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) issues and the health and well-being of their students. |
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GENERAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THIS SCHEME, RELEVANT ACROSS ALL PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The considerations below are applied across all protected characteristics and additional diversity characteristics within AHRC Collaborative Landscape awards to address negative impact.

Eligibility and Criteria

- The funding opportunity is open to all UK-based non-Higher Education Institutions (non-HEIs). These can be any type of organisation that has the research capacity to host doctoral students. Successful applicants will then be responsible for developing doctoral projects in collaboration with UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

- AHRC will require an EDI action plan from each applicant, outlining the strategy for ensuring EDI principles are upheld in all aspects of being an AHRC training grant award holder. Award holders are expected to use these plans to help inform their support for students and supervisors with protected characteristics and who have other EDI-based needs. We will require updates from the award holders on the delivery of the EDI action plans as part of our monitoring and evaluation framework. Award holders are expected to modify the EDI actions throughout the lifetime of the awards, to best address student needs and the awards' EDI ambitions.
- AHRC contact details will be provided on UKRI Funding Finder to support queries related to the scheme.

Standard training grant terms and conditions

- All training grant award holders are required to adhere to UKRI's Training Grant Terms and Conditions and guidance, and ensure they carry out their activities in accordance with all applicable ethical, legal and regulatory requirements. AHRC doctoral training grant investments will be expected to comply with this. In addition, they need to follow any additional conditions for the AHRC scheme and any guidance included in AHRC's Training Grant Funding Guide.
- All training grant award holders will need to put into effect changes to the UKRI's standard terms and conditions from the start of the 2025 and 2026 academic year as outlined in the policy statement available on the UKRI website.
- UKRI Training Grant Terms and Conditions comply with UK equality legislation and include provisions designed to mitigate potential negative impacts (e.g., sick pay, parental and adoption leave, the possibility of part-time and flexible working, and studentship extensions).
- Research Organisations are subject to equality legislations and have a duty to comply with it. UKRI's Training Grant Terms and Conditions 3.4 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".*
- The Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) framework sets out provision available for disabled students to support them to complete their studentship project and training programme.
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of students, in particular Research Organisations must ensure that supervisors are trained and supported in this area.
- When assessing applications, we expect studentships to be allocated through a fair and transparent competition, not based on internal quotas.
- All UKRI Training Grants are subject to the Equality Act 2010 and UKRI expects that the approaches used by training grant holders in supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion would adhere to all relevant legal obligations, including but not limited to those of the Equality Act 2010.

AHRC's research assessment processes are developed within a framework which supports equity and inclusion.

Panel Recruitment

- We will aim to ensure that the composition of the panel is diverse, with at least a 50:50 gender balance.
- We will ensure (if possible) that the chair and vice chair of the panel are not the same gender.
- Whilst panel members are appointed first and foremost based on experience, we will aim to appoint a diverse panel membership,.

Application Assessment Process

- The membership of the Peer Review College (PRC) aims to reflect the community it represents, and we will be seeking members with expertise in the delivery of doctoral training.
- All members of the AHRC Peer Review College and Panels complete the AHRC's online training for members prior to induction events and effective reviewing.
- AHRC Peer Review College training materials cover EDI, including unconscious bias. Any off-college reviewers are strongly encouraged to read AHRC EDI PRC training materials on our website.
- Peer reviewers are required to evidence their views and scores. AHRC staff conduct usability checks on all peer review comments and where there is evidence of bias, or a reviewer has failed to provided evidence for their scores the review will be marked as 'unusable'.
- All panel members will receive guidance which covers issues including fairness, objectivity, and unconscious bias.
- All proposals must be assessed on equal terms. Applications must be assessed on their merits, in accordance with the specified assessment criteria and the aims and objectives set for the scheme or funding call.
- It is the role of panel members to moderate and assess the quality of peer review to agree final scores for each proposal. Panel members will be briefed on unconscious bias and will be asked to constructively challenge potential bias where they identify it. The Panel Chairs and Panel Secretaries play a particularly important role in this respect. Secretaries will provide a meeting process overview at the beginning of the panel meeting which requires panel members to pay close attention to the scoring criteria and definitions.
- For each proposal we appoint three academic panel introducers who formally assess and score the proposals with all panel members then asked to participate in discussions to ensure that an open and transparent assessment process is undertaken, and a diverse range of views is represented.

Characteristics of Collaborative Landscape Awards and their potential impact on award holders and students with protected characteristics

- There will be a limited number of Collaborative Landscape awards which may impact on the regional and national distribution of non-HEIs and HEIs participating. This could disadvantage potential students living within regions/nations not represented.
- Each HEI will receive a small number of studentships which may mean there is very little central management of the AHRC awards. This may mean there is no coordinated approach to support students and supervisors beyond the institution's own strategy.
- Awards will include a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) which can be used to support students' learning and development, as well as study visits and conferences.
- AHRC requires all training grants funded through the scheme to offer holistic doctoral training and development, preparing students for careers within and beyond academia and to be open to candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- Student recruitment will be managed by the HEIs in receipt of collaborative landscape training grants (in collaboration with the non-HEI partner). AHRC require HEIs to commit to, and work in accordance with, UKRI good practice principles in recruitment and training at a doctoral level – UKRI. This will apply not only to their recruitment processes but ensuring that successful students will study in an inclusive environment.
- AHRC training grant award holders are encouraged to recognise that the potential to undertake a PhD is not dependent on academic achievements.
- AHRC expects efforts to be made by HEIs and non-HEI partners to provide reasonable adjustments and a welcoming work culture. This should be compliant with the EDI action plan, adhering to UKRI's policies and approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and the EDI polices of the HEI and non-HEI.
- The AHRC will complete a separate equality impact assessment for the Coordination group opportunity. The coordination group will be expected to prepare an equality impact assessment for the activities they run.

The table below address the potential impact, explanation and additional action we will take to address negative impact, by protected characteristic and additional diversity characteristic.

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	Potential negative	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. Funding opportunity level – there might be barriers to participation in events and meetings for Collaborative Landscape applicants and panel members unless reasonable adjustments are made. Training grant level - The awards are for a small number of studentships which may mean there is very little central management of the awards. This may impact both recruitment for students with a disability and their support during the studentships.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. All documentation will adhere to UKRI accessibility guidelines and AHRC will take the necessary steps to ensure that electronic information is accessible to all participating within the application and assessment process. Participants at events and meetings and funding opportunity webinar will be asked if they have any specific needs to enable reasonable adjustments to be made. We will offer closed captioning at virtual events and accessible venues for in-person events. We will also offer slides (these could be provided before and after) and/or recordings for those attending and those unable to attend. Panels will be organised as a video conference to mitigate any barriers members might have accessing a meeting in person. AHRC will make all reasonable adjustments to support members with specific needs. Award holders will need to submit an EDI action plan which will be assessed as part of the application process and will be expected to cover recruitment and student support. Students need to be made aware of Disabled Students Allowance and given support to access it
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	Possible negative	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. Gender neutral language is important to avoid misrepresentation and support inclusivity.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC will use and encourage the use of gender-neutral language.

			We would expect that absence related to gender reassignment for supervisors would be covered by the Research Organisation's leave policy.
			We encourage ROs to meet best practice in relation to transgender staff such as that laid out in the Government Equalities Office guidance on 'The recruitment and retention of transgender staff'.
Marriage or civil partnership	Probably no impact	See also above, under General EDI Considerations.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations.
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential negative	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. Pregnant persons and persons on maternity leave, may miss the opportunity to be PIs of the new AHRC training grants – Collaborative Landscape whilst on leave. Those who are pregnant or on maternity leave or planning to start a family may be put off applying for an AHRC collaborative landscape studentship as they may not be aware of the support available.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. We will host an information webinar which will be recorded and published online for the benefit of candidates unable to watch the webinar live. Full timeline of all key milestones for collaborative landscape awards will be provided when launched. Assessment panels will be organised as a video conference to mitigate any barriers members might have accessing a meeting in person. AHRC will make all reasonable adjustments to support members with specific needs. Provision for parental leave (including maternity leave, paternity leave and leave related to surrogacy and adoption) are covered in the UKRI training grant terms and conditions.
Race	Potential negative	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. We are aware of under-representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in the A&H research community (based on UKRI Diversity Data).	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC collaborative landscape awards and studentships are open to candidates of all ethnic backgrounds. We will advertise the training grant opportunity through UKRI channels using inclusive language and share the opportunity with relevant organisations and stakeholders. AHRC will expect collaborative landscape award holders to ensure diversity of their studentship advertisement channels and recruitment panels as part of their EDI action plan.

			AHRC will expect HEIs in receipt of collaborative landscape studentships to ensure diversity of their studentship advertisement channels and recruitment panels.
Religion or belief	Potential negative	See also above, under General EDI Considerations.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC will ensure that religious observations are considered when planning panel meetings.
Sexual orientation	No impact identified at present.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations.
Sex (gender)	Potential negative	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. Gender neutral language is important to support inclusivity.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC will use and encourage the use of gender-neutral language.
Age	No impact	See also above, under General EDI Considerations.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC collaborative landscape awards and studentships criteria do not include age related requirements. Panel members will be briefed to make clear that they should be assessing the application in front of them. They will assess an individual's capability to deliver the proposed activities. Age is not a criterion. Assessment panels will be organised as a video conference to mitigate any barriers members might have accessing a meeting in person. AHRC will make all reasonable adjustments to support members specific needs.

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)	Potential negative	The geographical distribution of collaborative landscape awards (non-HEIs) and training grant awards held by HEIs could	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC will review geographical coverage across all training grant schemes to ensure there is a regional and national balance across our training grant portfolio.

		disadvantage students living at a distance from the award holders.	
		Students allocated a collaborative landscape studentship are required to work at both the HEI and non-HEI organisations. These organisations may be geographically distant from each other, which can pose significant challenges for students who are less able to travel.	AHRC provides a small uplift to the award to assist with the additional costs associated with undertaking these studentships. Additionally, the non-HEI is required to make a financial commitment to students recruited, recognising the higher costs which doctoral student may incur in undertaking a collaborative project, especially where the HEI and non-HEI are geographically distant.
Socio-economic status	No impact identified at present.		
Education background	Potential negative	Potential disadvantage for students who do not have the academic qualifications required by the research organisations in receipt of AHRC training grants.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. AHRC will work with training grant investments to consider how they can actively support students without a Master's degree to undertake a PhD, as the requirement for a Master's can be a barrier to attracting candidates from a diverse background due to the cost of these courses.
Parent/guardian responsibilities	Potential negative	Parents or those with guardian responsibilities may find it more difficult to engage in a way which would enable them to make the case to be applicants for Collaborative Landscape awards. The time commitment needed to manage these awards over a long period of time might be a barrier for parents or those with guardian responsibilities e.g. if they work part-time.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. We expect both the non-HEI and HEI organisations to consider and implement arrangements that enable parents and guardians to engage effectively. It is anticipated that the non-HEI and HEI will manage these awards collaboratively which should create the flexibility to lead the awards alongside other responsibilities.
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	Potential negative	Carer/parent carers may find it more difficult to engage in a way which would enable them to make the case to be applicants for Collaborative Landscape awards.	See also above, under General EDI Considerations. We expect both the non-HEI and HEI organisations to consider and implement arrangements that enable parents and guardians to engage effectively.

		The time commitment needed to manage these awards over a long period of time might be a barrier for parents or those with carer/parent responsibilities e.g. if they work part-time. Students with parental/caring responsibilities may face challenges such as not being able to undertake full-time study, concerns about studying uninterrupted for a sustained period, and managing study alongside their caring responsibilities.	It is anticipated that the non-HEI and HEI will manage these awards collaboratively which should create the flexibility to lead the awards alongside other responsibilities. AHRC and UKRI studentships can be undertaken on a part-time or full-time basis, providing the flexibility needed to balance study with their responsibilities.
Political opinion (Northern Ireland)	No impact identified at present		

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	See the potential negative impacts outlined above for each protected characteristic and the information provided under General EDI Considerations.

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	√	Possible risks and bias associated with this activity have been identified and activities have been/will be adapted accordingly.

		Collaborative Landscape awards will be designed to accommodate diverse student needs. AHRC expects training grant award holders to organise and deliver doctoral training in a way which eliminates barriers and bias. AHRC gives ROs and their partner organisations the flexibility and ownership to meet diverse needs within UKRI's T&Cs and guidance. AHRC will continue to consider EDI throughout the activity and will review this EIA accordingly. Lessons learned from this programme, in line with our monitoring, evaluation and learning approach, will help us to make future doctoral training funding opportunities more inclusive.
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. Consider whether data might need to be redacted before publication)	Yes
Person completing EIA	Andrea Bond
Responsible owner (e.g. project board, committee):	Matthew McCallum, AHRC Associate Director Programmes
Date signed off by owner:	
Review date (if applicable): (An EIA is a live document and should regularly be reviewed throughout the lifecycle of an activity)	**04/03/2025**

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
	When published	1	First publication