

Equality Impact Assessment guidance, template and prompts for applicant guidance





Equality Impact Assessment guidance, template and prompts/potential considerations for Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI)-like narrative CV applicant guidance

Purpose

This document provides guidance for completing a UKRI Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). In addition, an EIA template containing prompts/potential considerations for Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI)-like narrative CV Applicant Guidance informed by members of the [Joint Funders Group](#) can be found at the end of this document.

Guidance background

UKRI are committed to promoting equality and participation in all their activities, whether this is related to the work we do with external stakeholders or our responsibilities as an employer. As public authorities, we are required to have due regard for 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 (EIA) and why do we need to complete one?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation. This covers both strategic and operational activities.

The term 'policy', as used throughout this document, covers the range of functions, activities and decisions for which your organisation is responsible. For example, strategic decision-making, arranging strategy and funding panels, conferences, training courses and employment policies.

An EIA will help to ensure:

- we understand the potential effects of a policy by assessing the impacts on different groups, both external and internal

- any adverse impacts are identified and actions identified to remove or mitigate them
- decisions are transparent and based on evidence with clear reasoning.

When might I need to complete an EIA?

The need for an EIA depends on the likely impact a policy may have and relevance of the activity to equality. An EIA should be done when the need for a new policy or practice is identified or when an existing one is reviewed. Depending on the type of policy or activity, advice can be sought from either your HR team, your Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team, your Peer Review Policy team or their equivalents.

Ideally, an EIA should form part of any new policy, event or funding activity. It should be included as early as other considerations, such as risk, budget or health and safety.

Who is responsible for completing and signing off an EIA?

Who completes the assessment, who should be consulted, and who signs off the EIA varies depending on the nature of the policy, event or funding activity. Ultimate responsibility for whether an EIA is required and the evaluation decision(s) made after completing an EIA lie with the Senior Responsible Officer, budget holder, project board or the most relevant senior manager. Further advice is available from your EDI contact.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is where someone is treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage because of their protected characteristic. The different groups covered by the Equality Act are referred to as protected characteristics: disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), and age.



Discrimination is usually unintended and can often remain undetected until there is a complaint. Improving or promoting equality is when you identify ways to remove barriers and improve participation for people or groups with a protected characteristic.

Building the evidence, making a judgement

In cases of new policies or management decisions there may be little evidence of the potential effect on how protected characteristic groups may be affected. In such cases you should make a judgement that is as reliable as possible. Consultation will strengthen these value judgements by building a consensus that can avoid obvious prejudices or assumptions.

Consultation

Consultation can add evidence to the EIA. Consultation is very important and key to demonstrating that organisations are meeting equality duties, but it also needs to be proportionate and relevant. Consider the degree and range of consultation to avoid over-consultation on a small policy or practice and under-consultation on a significant policy or an activity that has the potential to create barriers to participation.

Provisional assessment

During initial stages, you may not have all the evidence required so you can conduct a provisional assessment. Where a provisional assessment has been carried out, there must be plans to gather the required data so that a full assessment can be completed after a reasonable time. The scale of these plans should be proportionate to the activity at hand. When there is enough evidence a full impact assessment should be prepared. Only one EIA should be created for each policy, as more evidence becomes available the provisional assessment should be built upon.

Valuing differences

EIAs are about making comparisons between groups of employees, service users or stakeholders to identify differences in their needs and/or requirements. If the difference is disproportionate, then the policy may have a detrimental impact on some and not others.

‘You are looking for bias that can occur when there are significant differences (disproportionate difference) between groups of people in the way a policy or practice has impacted on them, asking the question “Why?” and investigating further’.¹

Evaluation decision

There are four options open to you:

1. No barriers or impact identified, therefore activity will **proceed**.
2. You can decide to **stop** the policy or practice at some point because the evidence 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, or
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.

In most cases where disproportionate disadvantage is found by carrying out EIAs, policies and practices are changed or adapted. In these cases, or when a change has been justified, you should consider making a record on the project risk register.

¹ http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/s/n/Acas_managers_guide_to_equality_assessments.pdf



Equality Impact Assessment prompts/potential considerations

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	<u>Résumé for Researchers (R4R)</u> -like narrative CV Applicant Guidance
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	Explain your organisation's motivation and objectives for taking this approach. For example, aligning to the principles of <u>DORA</u> ; broadening the types of achievements that can be seen as relevant for the advancement of research and innovation; allowing an applicant to be more fairly evaluated on their vision, appropriate experience, and contributions to research, innovation, and society, instead of narrow set of criteria.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Involve relevant stakeholders – such as applicants, reviewers, call support staff, research support staff, EDI professional staff, organisation development staff, Human Resources staff, research centres – in guidance development to ensure it is informed.
4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	Consider who will be affected, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Funding Managers → Applicants → Professional services supporting applicants → Assessors – reviewers, panel/committee members, panel/committee chairs.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	It is best practice to evaluate new interventions and processes to ensure they are not creating unintended consequences. This is critical in culture change. It is strongly recommended that you build in an evaluation phase to your introduction/use of your guidance and funding management. This can cover many aspects of the documentation and process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Consider asking what applicants think of your guidance. You might use the <u>Shared Evaluation Framework</u> questions and then use the feedback to improve and enhance the guidance. → Share your anonymous evaluation findings with other funders via The Joint Funders Group to build the evidence base and help improve the research and innovation landscape.



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)
General	Potential for positive or negative impact	→ Applicant has flexibility to disclose protected characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Consider if any information will be blinded for reviewers and inform the applicant of this prior to their completion of the CV → Consider appropriate guidance for applicants on how information/data is processed and stored, including how information may be redacted, removed or the R4R-like narrative CV returned for amendment → Consider permitting applicants to include ORCID which will contain all outputs under all names → Make it clear to the applicant how and when career break information will be taken into account during the assessment process, including eligibility compliance checks by the funder → Consider different ways to provide the guidance to applicants, for example videos, training sessions, or briefings.
Disability	Potential for positive impact	→ Consider if your grants management system will enable the R4RI-like narrative CV, applicant guidance and associated training to be e-reader enabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → It is best for guidance to be written in an accessible and structured way, using clear and concise language → Guidance should be accessible for neurodiversity and immersive readers.
Gender reassignment	Potential for positive impact	→ The R4RI-like narrative CV template enables less focus on outputs which require author name	
Marriage or civil partnership	Potential for positive impact	→ The R4RI-like narrative CV template enables less focus on outputs which require author name	



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)
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential for positive impact	→ The additions section enables applicants to better describe the impact of a career break than a traditional CV, or the option to not declare a break at all as they are not be required to include a chronological list.	
Race	No known potential impact*		
Religion or belief	No known potential impact*		
Sexual orientation	No known potential impact*		
Sex (gender)	No known potential impact*		
Age	No known potential impact*		

*There is an aspiration for the Joint Funders Group to revisit the EIA prompts/potential considerations with updated information in light of reviews and evaluations to better understand any possible impacts.

Version Number	Status	Revision Date	Author(s)	Summary of Changes
1.0	Complete	March 2022	Joint Funders Group	New resource created
2.0	Complete	May 2023	Joint Funders Group	Proof-edited and designed