

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

STFC Public Engagement Programme: Leadership Fellows Equality Impact Assessment - 2019

1. Policy / activity being assessed	STFC Leadership Fellows in Public Engagement – the annual process of making new Leadership Fellow awards, including application, short-listing, and interview stages.
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy / activity	<p>Leadership Fellows in Public Engagement are individuals working in Higher Education Institutions who combine a strong track record of research with demonstrable evidence of undertaking high quality public engagement activities.</p> <p>STFC Leadership Fellows in Public Engagement undertake high quality programmes of engagement and outreach while concurrently acting as champions for the value and practice of engagement with research in their host institution and research community.</p> <p>Proposals are assessed by written peer review, followed by an external interview panel. STFC makes funding decisions based upon the recommendations of this panel.</p> <p>Leadership Fellows in Public Engagement are flexible awards and can be tailored in line with STFC Fellowship terms and conditions, allowing a Leadership Fellow to vary their time commitment (e.g. to accommodate specific working patterns, career breaks, pregnancies, family or caring responsibilities).</p>
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?	<p>Leadership Fellows in Public Engagement were designed by STFC in response to a series of community and stakeholder workshops, held in 2017, which explored how STFC could operate a range of funding mechanisms to best meet the aims of the STFC public engagement strategy. The Leadership Fellow scheme was the result of a re-design of the previous Public Engagement Fellowship scheme, with a new focus on Fellows undertaking public engagement leadership and capacity building activities alongside a structured programme of engagement activities.</p> <p>STFC is dedicated to ensuring that the peer review process is open and inclusive. Those engaged in the process endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner, without prejudice or bias, In line with this we follow the Nolan Principles. Additionally, comments and</p>

suggestions received as part of the peer review survey are implemented where possible to improve the process.

For Applicants:

- The call is advertised widely to reach the largest possible audience
- The call text and guidance provides detailed guidelines to Applicants about the process and links to the Research Grants Handbook, which has clear eligibility and assessment criteria
- STFC will make available hard copies of documents when required
- The STFC website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites
- STFC will support Applicants throughout the process, from pre-submission right through to informing them of the outcome.
- STFC will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the requirements of any applicant who is selected to attend an interview, considering issues of accessibility, travel restrictions and alternative working patterns. The STFC team will request details of any such requirements when an applicant is invited for interview

For Reviewers:

- A wide range of reviewers are approached, and usage and spread is monitored each round
- Written guidance is available and reviewed annually
- Our guidance clearly states our expectations of reviewers
- STFC will provide all reasonable support to our reviewers in order to ensure they understand the aims, objectives, and processes of the 2019 call

For Panel Members:

- Pre-meeting discussions take place, STFC staff will work closely with the Panel Chair to agree approaches that are designed to minimise opportunities for bias and improve transparency of the decision making process
- Everyone involved in the decision-making process is aware of Unconscious Bias and encouraged to undertake training. It is planned that going forward such training will be mandatory
- STFC endeavour to achieve the minimum 30% female participation and will justify if this isn't the case. The 2019 panel membership is 60% female and 40% male.
- STFC enable participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours
- Panel members are asked to inform STFC if they have any additional needs to enable attendance or participation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STFC will schedule appropriate breaks and provide refreshments for Panel members <p>For STFC Staff:</p> <p>All STFC staff involved in the process will receive training in unconscious bias to raise awareness of conditions that may impact upon their decision making</p> <p>Venue arrangements when required will be selected for ease of accessibility; will not conflict with different cultures, religions or beliefs; and will offer a full range of sensory accessibility relating to visual and hearing impairments.</p> <p>Catering will be arranged with clear labelling and be appropriate to those who have specific cultural, religious, health or disability needs</p>
<p>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</p>	<p>Anyone who is applying for Leadership Fellowship in Public Engagement grant, panel members , external and internal stakeholders involved in the assessment process.</p>
<p>5. Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing actual impact of the policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STFC will review this equality impact assessment annually to identify any actions or interventions that are required to improve diversity and inclusion. • STFC monitors and analyses data to better understand the diversity of its Community • STFC holds an annual application exercise for Panel membership and when published provides guidance on diversity targets • Panel membership for each meeting is published on the website <p>There have been two full rounds of the Leadership Fellowships in Public Engagement scheme, 2017 and 2018. In total there have been 6 grants made, of these 4 have been to male candidates and 2 have been made to female candidates.</p> <p>Data on past Public Engagement Fellows is drawn from the previous iteration of the scheme (2006-2016), which did not include the same focus on 'leadership'. The total number of applicants to any individual Engagement Fellowship round is small (<10) and, as only 1-3 awards are typically made each year, small variations in application or award numbers can cause large shifts in the dataset. On</p>

average, ~75% of applicants to the scheme are male, and 75% of award holders are male. While 2015/16 HESA data for the UK physics community indicates that 14% of the staff population is female – and thus the gender balance of our Fellowships is favourable – a 25% female award holder population is the least favourable gender balance within STFC’s range of public engagement funding schemes. Thus, we will continue to monitor our application and award rates, and consider appropriate steps to better tailor and publicise the opportunity to female members of the community.

Though the scheme is open across the whole of STFC’s remit, almost 70% of awards (and ~75% of applications) over the period 2006-2016 were from the fields of astronomy, solar physics, and space science. We have no specific targets for the disciplinary focus of Leadership Fellows in Public Engagement, though we will continue to review the disciplinary spread of our applications and awards, and consider how to promote the opportunity presented by these Fellowships across STFC’s community.

Group	Potential for positive or negative impact?	Examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability	Yes – negative impact	Applicants and/or reviewers with visual disabilities or impairments may find it difficult to access and review	<p>STFC will take all reasonable steps to make adjustments to the assessment process in order to enable participation. As examples, this may include the use of video conferencing or equivalent tools, tailored timing of the meeting schedule, or provision of specific facilities to enable an applicant or panel member to be comfortable in the meeting environment.</p> <p>Electronic information is accessible and STFC will investigate the ability for the potential use of screen readers for personnel who are visually impaired.</p>

		<p>electronic documentation.</p> <p>Applicants or panel members with mobility disabilities may face difficulties in attending the panel meetings.</p> <p>Panel members with hearing difficulties may find it hard to engage in discussions.</p> <p>Attendees with neuro-disabilities may experience difficulties with concentration during panel assessments.</p>	<p>STFC will respond to individual support needs on a case by case basis.</p> <p>STFC will ensure the meeting venue is compatible with the use of hearing aid loops and will work with individuals to understand what other help can be provided.</p> <p>STFC will select a room that is light and airy, ensure that plenty of breaks are built in to the agenda and ensure that colours chosen don't trigger migraines, different colours may assist in this if personnel don't bring their own laptops.</p> <p>STFC consult with all Panel members to understand any specific requirements for participation and will accommodate where required.</p>
Gender reassignment		<p>Information regarding gender reassignment is not made available throughout the peer review process. However, this may become apparent during the meeting stage or it may be possible that panel members already know this information or could endeavour to seek it out.</p>	<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during interview acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review</p>

Marriage or civil partnership	Yes – negative impact	Bias may be voiced in relation to new partners starting a family therefore not given as a high a priority	Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.
Pregnancy, Maternity, Paternity, Nursing mothers, Caring responsibilities?	Yes – negative impact	<p>Panel members who are pregnant or on parental leave may find it difficult to access the venue and /or participate in meetings.</p> <p>Nursing mothers may need additional support in terms of suitable accommodation or childcare</p> <p>An applicant’s career path and track record may be criticised due to the existence of a number of career breaks due to maternity/paternity.</p> <p>Panel members may face additional childcare costs if having to work outside of their normal hours.</p>	<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p> <p>STFC consult with all Panel members to understand and cater for their requirements for participation. As a general principle, venues are easily accessible to main rail links.</p> <p>Meetings are timetabled to allow for adequate breaks.</p> <p>Ensure suitable accommodation provided for nursing mothers and additional childcare.</p> <p>STFC recognise this issue and the potential impact and will consider as part of the review. The Chair will appropriately moderate discussions and ensure the objective application of the assessment criteria.</p> <p>STFC will reimburse additional childcare costs, above any beyond that required during normal working hours.</p>

Race	Yes – negative impact	Information regarding race is not made available throughout the peer review process. However, it may be possible that panel members already know this information or could endeavour to seek it out.	Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.
Religion or belief	Yes – negative impact	<p>Panel members may be unable to participate in meetings due to religious observances</p> <p>Panel members or attendees may have specific dietary requirements due to religious belief.</p>	<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to the timing of interviews/panel meetings so that Panel members (and applicants) from different religious communities can attend if requested.</p> <p>STFC consult with all Panel members to understand and cater for their requirements for participation. Ensure the venue caters for all dietary requirements.</p>
Sexual orientation	Yes – negative impact	Information regarding sexual orientation is not made available throughout the peer review process.	Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during

		<p>However, it may be possible that panel members already know this information or could endeavour to seek it out. It may also become apparent during the interview stage.</p>	<p>meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p>
Sex (gender)	Yes – negative impact	<p>Panel members, reviewers may criticise track record, publication history which could be as a result of extended maternity, paternity leave.</p> <p>Negative perceptions of an applicant’s gender may be expressed by a peer reviewer or a panel member.</p>	<p>STFC are committed to ensuring that Panel Chairs are briefed on how to handle such situations.</p> <p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p>
Age	Yes – negative impact	<p>Panel members, reviewers may cite age in terms of lack of experience or in terms of near retirement</p>	<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions, and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during each meeting. STFC staff presence during meetings acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p> <p>The Assessment criteria for 2019 call are not linked to age. There is, however,</p>

			acknowledgement of the career stages and relevant experiences.