

## Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
<b>1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed</b>	Allocation of Telescope Time Panel or PATT, meets twice a year by telecom.
<b>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event</b>	<p>The Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time (PATT) is an advisory body set up to consider the allocation of telescope time and associated travel and subsistence costs in support of those allocations for a range of astronomy facilities for the UK community. The awarded T&amp;S funds can be used by the RO for costs associated with any time allocated for observing at any telescope facility in the subsequent two years. Allocations of the actual facility access time is carried out independently to this scheme by time allocation panels. These include those where the UK Community has priority access to time via an agreement (such as the ING, LT and e-MERLIN) and those where the UK community is able to compete via open access (such as facilities owned and operated within the US, Chile or Australia).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advise the executive on the award of travel and subsistence expenses consistent with allocated telescope time</li> <li>• Take account, as appropriate, of any strategic advice provided by STFC</li> <li>• Take account, as appropriate, of the recommendations of external reviewers</li> <li>• Provide clear concise feedback to Applicants</li> <li>• Advise the Executive as required on all issues relating to PATT</li> <li>• Liaise with other bodies as necessary</li> </ul> <p>Applications for telescope time are assessed by the PATT panel on a twice annual basis. There is no reviewer stage.</p>
<b>3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</b>	The Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time (PATT) advises on the policy related to PATT and regularly reviews the scheme and its processes.

	<p>This EIA has been reviewed by a member of STFC's Equality and Diversity policy group.</p> <p>STFC is dedicated to ensuring that our processes for funding are open and inclusive. Individuals engaged with our funding processes endeavour to conduct each stage in a fair manner, without prejudice or bias. In line with this, STFC adheres to the seven principles of public life. In addition, we adopt the following principles for PATT awards:</p> <p><b>For applicants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bi-annual calls for PATT is advertised on the STFC website</li> <li>• The call text and guidance clearly states the eligibility and assessment criteria</li> <li>• The STFC website conforms to accessibility requirements for websites, including the ability to adjust the text size or use a text reader on the page</li> <li>• STFC will provide support to applicants before and after submission in order to assist them in the application and assessment process</li> </ul> <p><b>For Panel Members:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STFC staff will work with the Panel Chair to agree approaches that are designed to minimise opportunities for bias and improve the transparency of decision-making</li> <li>• STFC enable participation for people with alternative work patterns, including reduced working hours</li> <li>• Panel members are asked to inform STFC if they have any additional needs to enable participation at the teleconference</li> <li>• STFC will provide appropriate breaks if required</li> </ul> <p><b>For STFC staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>Applicants who apply for PATT grants or anyone involved in the assessment process.</p>

<p><b>5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b></p>	<p>STFC will review this equality impact assessment annually to identify any further actions or interventions that are required to improve the process.</p> <p>STFC monitors, analyses and publishes data to better understand the diversity of our applicant and assessor community. STFC recognises the need to increase the diversity of its panel membership and takes a pro-active approach to meeting this requirement. Membership is made up of just three individuals with one of these currently being female so meeting the STFC target of 30% under-represented gender.</p> <p>During the last five financial years (13/14 – 17/18) there have been 88 PATT travel applications with 26% being female and 69% male. Success rates are high for these awards with 100% of female applicants receiving awards and 93% of males. Award values are not always the full amount requested with 13% of females receiving less and 25% of the successful males. The population of females applying for PATT grants is larger than that when looking at overall STFC proposal numbers, as is the success rate.</p>
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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	Negative	<p>Applicants and/or panel members with visual disabilities or impairments may find it difficult to access and review electronic documentation.</p> <p>Panel members with hearing disabilities may face difficulties in engaging in discussions</p>	<p>STFC takes all necessary steps to ensure that electronic information is accessible. STFC will respond to individual support needs on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>STFC will work with individuals to understand what help can be provided. This could entail arranging a face-to-face meeting</p>

			rather than a teleconference  There is flexibility to make adjustments throughout the assessment process where appropriate
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Negative	Information regarding gender reassignment 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 the teleconference. STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	Negative	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 the teleconference. STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Negative	Panel members who are pregnant or on maternity leave may find it difficult to participate in the teleconference or require changes to be made to enable their participation	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

		<p>Nursing mothers may need additional support in terms of childcare.</p>	<p>bias during the teleconference.</p> <p>As this is a telecom and in their own institution or home nursing mothers should have less of a problem so have more flexibility and know the facilities available to them. Meetings are only a couple of hours in duration and no travel is required.</p> <p>STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review STFC will liaise with panel members to identify and address barriers that may prevent their participation in the process.</p>
<b>Race</b>	Negative	<p>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.</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 the teleconference. STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Negative		<p>Panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding</p>

			<p>decisions and are reminded of the conditions that may lead to unconscious bias during the teleconference.</p> <p>STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p> <p>Consideration would be given to the timing of the teleconference so that panel members from different religious communities can participate</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Negative	<p>Information regarding sexual orientation 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.</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 the teleconference. STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p>
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Negative	<p>Panel members with caring responsibilities may face difficulties in participating in the teleconference</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</p>

			<p>lead to unconscious bias during the teleconference. STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p> <p>Whenever possible, the teleconference will be scheduled to avoid school holidays.</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>Information regarding age 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.</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 the teleconference.</p> <p>STFC staff presence at the teleconference acts as an additional assurance to ensure unbiased peer review.</p>