

Make this presentation accessible

Headings

- use headings to help people navigate through your content
- for headings, use a font size that is at least 20% larger than the normal text
- use **bold** for further emphasis
- add extra space around headings and between paragraphs
- ensure hyperlinks look different from headings and normal text



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council

EPSRC Peer Review Panel Briefing

Friday 26 June 2020



Panel Meeting Agenda

1 Agenda title

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2 Agenda title

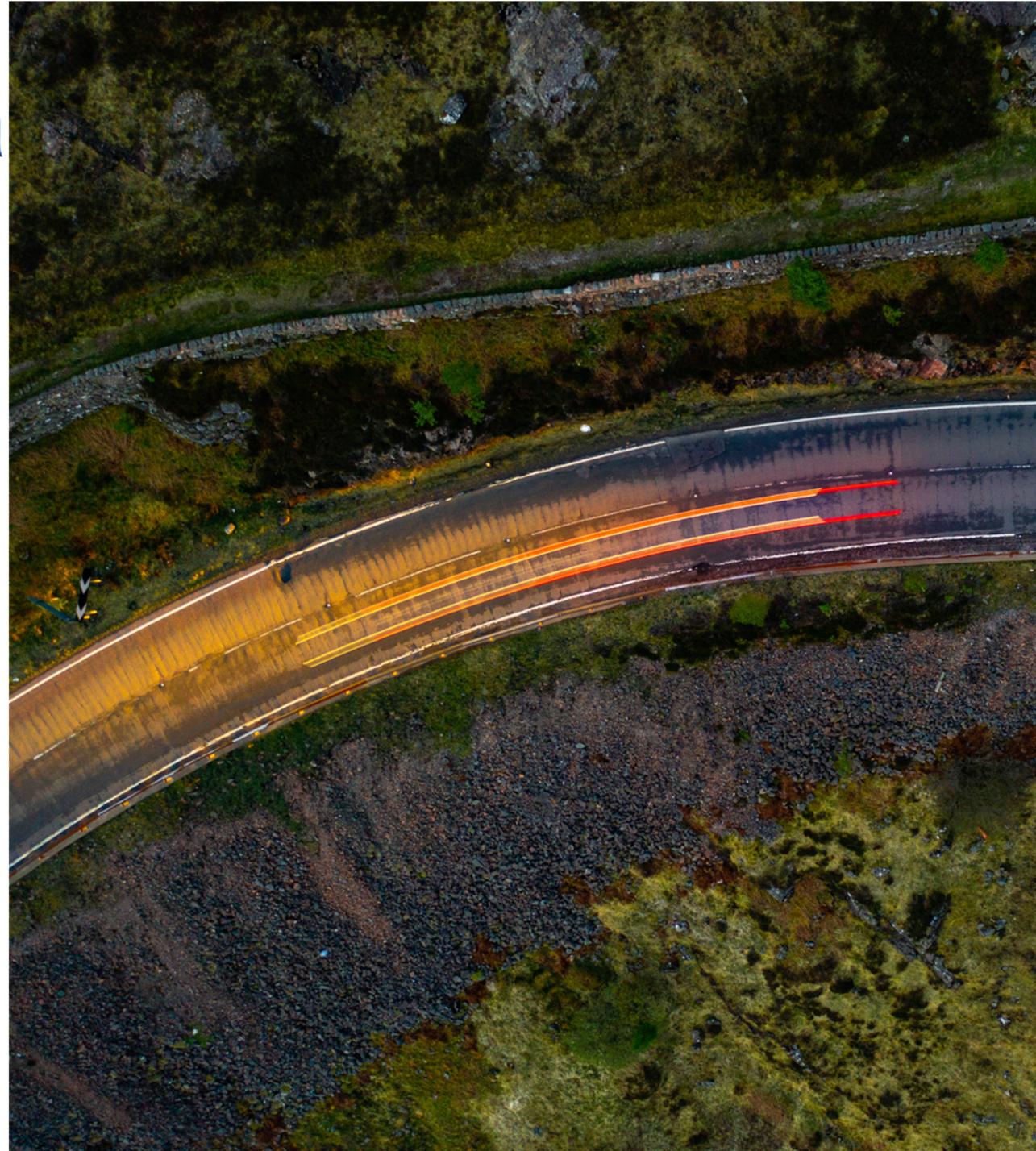
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3 Agenda title

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4 Agenda title

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Purpose of the Meeting

To generate a rank ordered list of research proposals in priority order for funding

- Panel should act as a 'jury', discussing and weighing up the evidence based on the reviewer reports and the Principle Investigator (PI) Response
- Panel has responsibility to assess strategic factors related to proposals under consideration:
 - National Importance is a key assessment criterion
 - Funding recommendation must complement the current portfolio
- Panel will receive contextual briefing to aid assessment:
 - Details of relevant research areas, and links to full rationales on web
 - Any additional information relevant to proposals under consideration e.g. theme priorities; fit to Call

Balancing Capability Strategy

EPSRC's Balancing Capability strategy helps us continue to actively manage our research and training portfolio in order to maintain the UK's world-leading position in engineering, the physical sciences and computational and mathematical sciences research.

Aims of the strategy:

- Maintain the quality and international standing of UK research within a competitive international research environment, by focusing our investments to ensure that we use resources effectively and gain the most long term benefit for the UK.
- Realign our support towards the published aspirations for the portfolio
- Continue to invest in creative and ambitious research that has a high impact for the UK

Balancing Capability Strategy

As a Panel member you should:

- Read both the [Panel member guidance and protocols](#) and the information on [Balancing Capability and Peer Review Panels](#) on our website
- Use our strategies to inform your assessment of the proposals before you, making a relative judgement on the reviewers' comments regarding the national importance of the research proposed

Information relating to our portfolio and strategy is publically available on our website, particularly:

[Our portfolio](#) - especially the sub-sections:

- [Research Areas](#)
- [Themes](#)

[Grants on the Web](#) (*click on the GoW link from 'Grant and outcomes data' page*)

[Visualising Our Portfolio](#)

Managing our Portfolio



Managing our portfolio and priorities

We actively manage our investments to maintain the UK's world-leading position in engineering and physical sciences



Open Call for
Evidence

Community
Engagement

Funding Data and
Horizon Scanning



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Councils

Relevant contextual information

Include information on the main priorities of the themes relevant to the panel meeting, and to any other strategic and contextual information that may be relevant, e.g. Industrial Strategy; links to Advanced Materials Leadership Council etc. See notes for details of what to include.

Calls

If this is a managed Call then these slides will be based largely on the Call document. For managed Calls, please assist the panel by outlining how the Call aligns with strategic priorities, including the complementarity to research area strategies where appropriate.

Fellowships

If this is a Fellowship prioritisation panel, please assist the panel by outlining the complementarity to Balancing Capability and how the priority areas under consideration align with our research area strategies (where appropriate)

Delivery Plan Framework

Delivering economic impact and social prosperity



Productive
Catalysing growth



Connected
Enhancing future digital technologies



Healthy
Transforming healthcare



Resilient
Ensuring adaptable solutions

Realising the potential of engineering and physical sciences



Promoting excellence in research



Realising excellence in people



Connecting the research landscape to accelerate impact



Enhancing business engagement

Enabling the engineering and physical sciences to deliver



Managing our portfolio and priorities



Future-proofing state-of-the-art research infrastructure



Accessing talent through equality, diversity and inclusion



Inspiring, informing, and interacting with the public

**Discovery Research
in Engineering and Physical Sciences**

EPSRC strategy and Delivery Plan

Please watch this animated video to understand how applicants can connect their research ideas to our strategies, and how research that is funded through community-led activities contributes to larger research challenges and to the aspirations in our Delivery Plan:

- [Connecting your ideas to our strategies](#)
- [Delivery Plan 2019 Overview](#)

For more information on the EPSRC Delivery Plan and the four Prosperity Outcomes, please see this video:

- [UKRI Delivery Plans](#)
- [EPSRC Delivery Plan 2019](#)

Seven Principles of Public Life

1. Selflessness Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

2. Integrity Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

3. Objectivity In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

4. Accountability Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

5. Openness Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

6. Honesty Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

7. Leadership Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making

UKRI has adopted a set of Principles of Assessment and Decision Making, matching those upheld by EPSRC.

Impartiality

Confidentiality

Expert Assessment

Separation of duties

Integrity and Ethics

Transparency

Appropriateness

**Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion**

Peer review processes used will be unbiased and not influenced by gender, ethnicity or any other protected characteristic¹.

Taking positive steps to safeguard our funding decisions

EPSRC is committed to ensuring that those who participate in the peer review process recognise the factors that introduce bias into decision making. To do this, it is important to raise awareness of, and take steps to remove the opportunities for unconscious bias in all aspects of our decision making processes.

All those involved in peer review must help us safeguard our decision making by taking the following steps:

- All applications must be assessed on equal terms and assessed using the published criteria.
- Question and challenge cultural stereotypes and bias in any EPSRC meetings and be prepared to be challenged.
- Be aware that working with a high cognitive load, with time pressures and the need to make quick decisions, creates conditions for bias which could have an impact on what we fund.

Considering the Impact of Flexible Working

It is important that researchers and their research teams are able to work flexibly and in a way that meets their personal circumstances.

EPSRC allows applicants to tailor the support that they request in order to facilitate flexible working. When requesting support for flexible working applicants should:

- **Describe the support required** rather than their personal circumstances resulting in the need for this support

Additional guidance has been published on our website for applicants, reviewers and panel members on how to include and assess requests for support for flexible working in grant applications.

Considering the impact of COVID-19

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities.

We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career(s) such as:

- Breaks and delays
- Disruptive working patterns and conditions
- The loss of ongoing work
- Role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

We acknowledge that COVID-19 will have an unequal impact on career paths and we have published guidance on our website for applicants, reviewers and panel members on how to take account of this when writing and assessing grant applications.

Proposal assessment criteria

Grant Type	Core Criteria	Weighting	Additional Criteria	Rank Ordered List
Standard Grant	Research Quality	Primary	None	Main
	National Importance	Secondary (Major)		
	Impact	Secondary		
	Resources and management	Secondary		
	Applicant(s) ability	Secondary		
Overseas Travel Grant	As above	As above	None – assessed as per standard grant	Main
Network	As above	As above	Proposal assessment: Added value & self-sufficiency beyond EPSRC support	Main
New Investigator Award	As above, except Applicant is defined as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to deliver • Research Independence 	As above	Proposal assessment: Commitment from university	New Investigator Award
Fellowship	As above, except Applicant is defined track record	As above, additional criteria are all secondary	Proposal Assessment: Research Environment	Fellowship

EPSRC Immediate Actions: Panel Process

- New peer review and panel processes regarding the assessment of Impact have been implemented since 1 March 2020
- For submissions prior to this date being assess at panel:
 - Panels should continue to assess Impact through our ‘Impact’ criterion using all evidence provided
 - Pathways to Impact documents no longer need to be noted as satisfactory / unsatisfactory
 - Staff no longer need to return unsatisfactory Ptl for amendment nor get them signed off by the panel chair prior to grant authorisation

Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Quality (Primary) The degree of research excellence of the application making reference to:

- The novelty, relationship to the context, and timeliness;
- The ambition, adventure, and transformative aspects identified;
- The appropriateness of the proposed methodology.

National Importance (Secondary Major) How the research:

- Contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other disciplines, contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges and/or contributes to future UK economic success and development of emerging industry(s)
- Meets national needs by establishing and maintaining a unique world leading activity
- Complements other UK research funded in the area, including any relationship to the EPSRC portfolio

Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Impact (Secondary) Please comment on the pathway to impact identified for this work particularly:

- How complete and realistic are the impacts identified for this work
- The effectiveness of the activities identified to help realise these impacts, including the resources requested for this purpose
- The relevance and appropriateness of any beneficiaries or collaborators

Applicant(s)' ability (Secondary) to deliver the proposed project making reference to

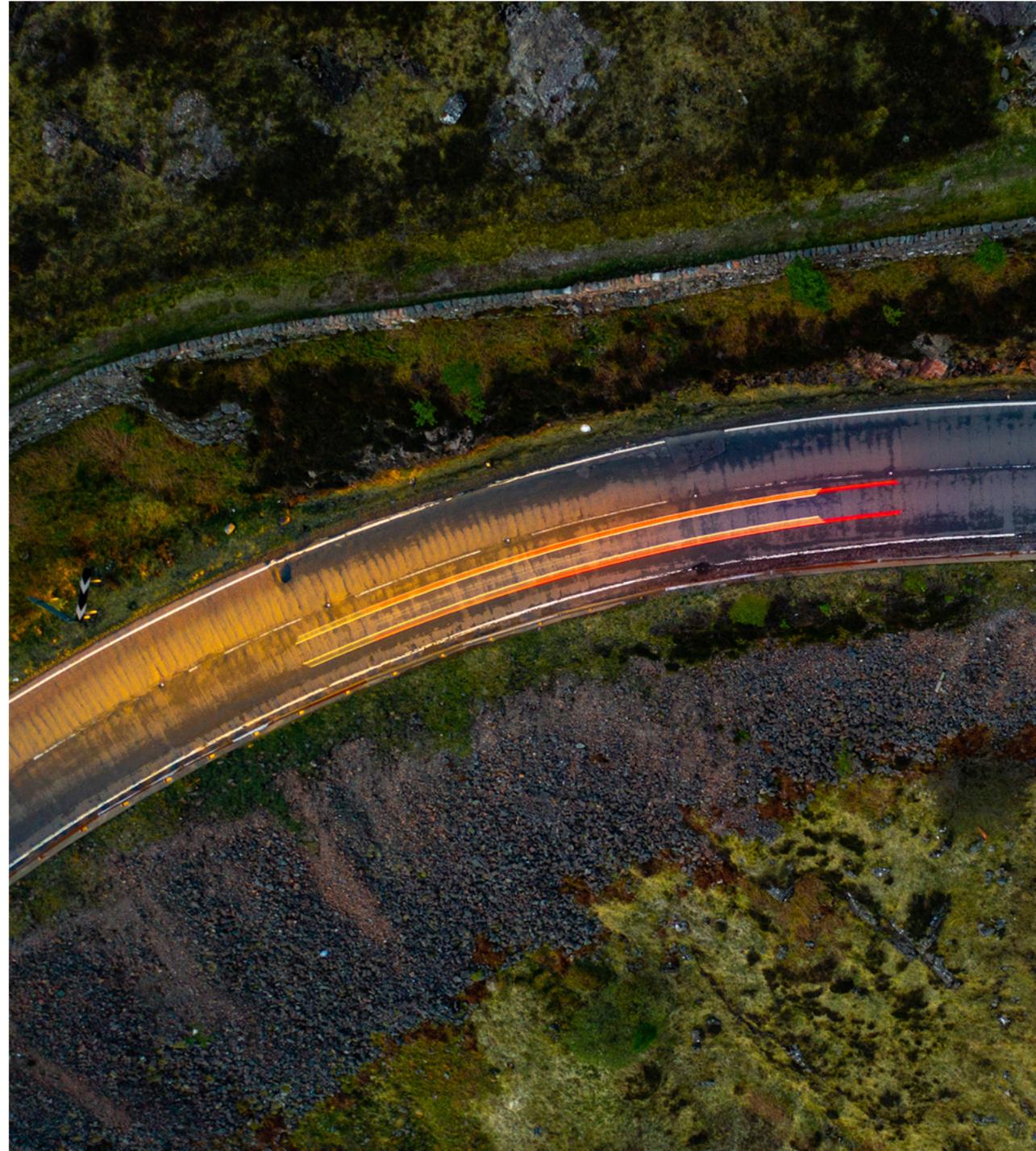
- Appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s)
- Balance of skills of the project team, including academic partners.

Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Resources and Management (Secondary)

- The effectiveness of the proposed planning and management and on whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified. Please comment explicitly on the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third party contribution.

Managing panels where different fellowship schemes are being considered



Additional Criteria – Fellowships

Prioritisation panel

At this panel two different fellowship schemes are being considered:

- Post-doctoral, Open and Open Plus opportunities (Launched December 2020)
- Postdoctoral, Early and Established career stages (2011 scheme, closed December 2020)

2011 Fellowship scheme

At this panel, the assessment criteria is the same as for standard mode proposals. If successful in getting through to the interview panel, the applicant will **then** be assessed against the following criteria:

- Fellowship Vision
- Research Leadership
- Communication and Ambassadorship
- Personal Development

Additional Criteria – Fellowships

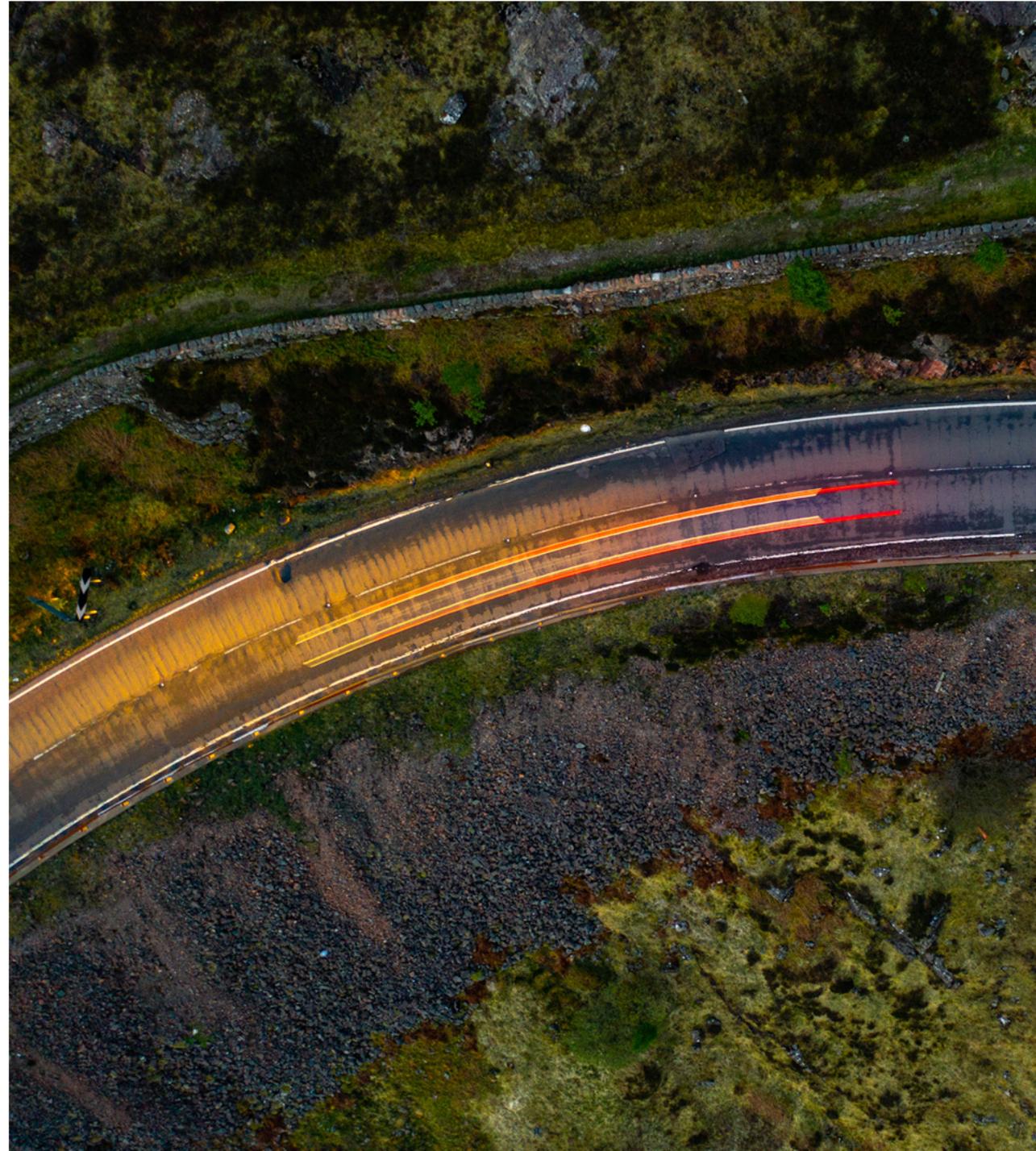
2020 Fellowship scheme

At this panel the assessment criteria is the same as for standard mode proposals, however the weighting of the assessment criteria differs. **Applicant and Partnerships** is **Secondary Major** and National Importance is Secondary.

If the applicant is successful and invited to the interview stage, they will **then** be assessed against the following criteria:

- Post-doctoral fellowships will be assessed against: Fellowship Vision, Continual Professional Development, and Project Delivery.
- Open fellowships will be assessed against: Fellowship Vision, Community Leadership, Team Leadership, and Continual Professional Development
- Open Plus fellowships will have the same criteria as the Open fellowships, with the additional criteria of Community Champion.

Assessing Impact at panel during the transition of EPSRC assessment criteria



Proposal assessment criteria

Grant Type	Core Criteria	Weighting	Additional Criteria	Rank Ordered List
Standard Grant	Research Quality	Primary	None	Main
	National Importance	Secondary (Major)		
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Network	As above	As above	Proposal assessment: Added value & self-sufficiency beyond EPSRC support	Main
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Fellowship	As above, except Applicant is defined track record	As above, additional criteria are all secondary	Proposal Assessment: Research Environment	Fellowship

Pathways to Impact changes

UKRI Statement:

- Applicants to UKRI will no longer be required to provide a 'Pathways to Impact' plan or complete an 'Impact Summary' within grant applications **from 1 March 2020**.
- The impact agenda is vital - UK Research and Innovation exists to fund the researchers who generate the knowledge that society needs, and the innovators who can turn this knowledge into public benefit.
- Impact is now a core consideration throughout the grant application process.

Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Quality (Primary) the research excellence, making reference to:

- The novelty, relationship to the context, timeliness **and relevance to identified stakeholders**
- The ambition, adventure, transformative aspects or **potential outcomes**;
- The suitability of the proposed methodology **and the appropriateness of the approach to achieving impact.** (For multi-disciplinary proposals please state which aspects of the proposal you feel qualified to assess)

National Importance (Secondary Major) how the research:

- Contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other disciplines contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges and/or contributes to future UK economic success and development of emerging industry(s);
- Meets national needs by establishing/maintaining a unique world leading activity;
- Complements other UK research funded in the area, including any relationship to the EPSRC portfolio.

Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Impact (Secondary) Please comment on the pathway to impact identified for this work particularly:

- How complete and realistic are the impacts identified for this work
- The effectiveness of the activities identified to help realise these impacts, including the resources requested for this purpose
- The relevance and appropriateness of any beneficiaries or collaborators

Applicant and Partnerships (Secondary) ability to deliver the proposed project, making reference to:

- Appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s);
- Balance of skills of the project team, including **academic partner collaborators**.

Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Resources and Management (Secondary) the effectiveness of the proposed planning and management and whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified, **making reference to:**

- **Please comment explicitly on the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third party contribution.**
- **Any equipment requested, or the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third-party contribution;**
- **Any resources requested for activities to either increase impact, for public engagement or to support responsible innovation.**

Panels assessing mixed submissions

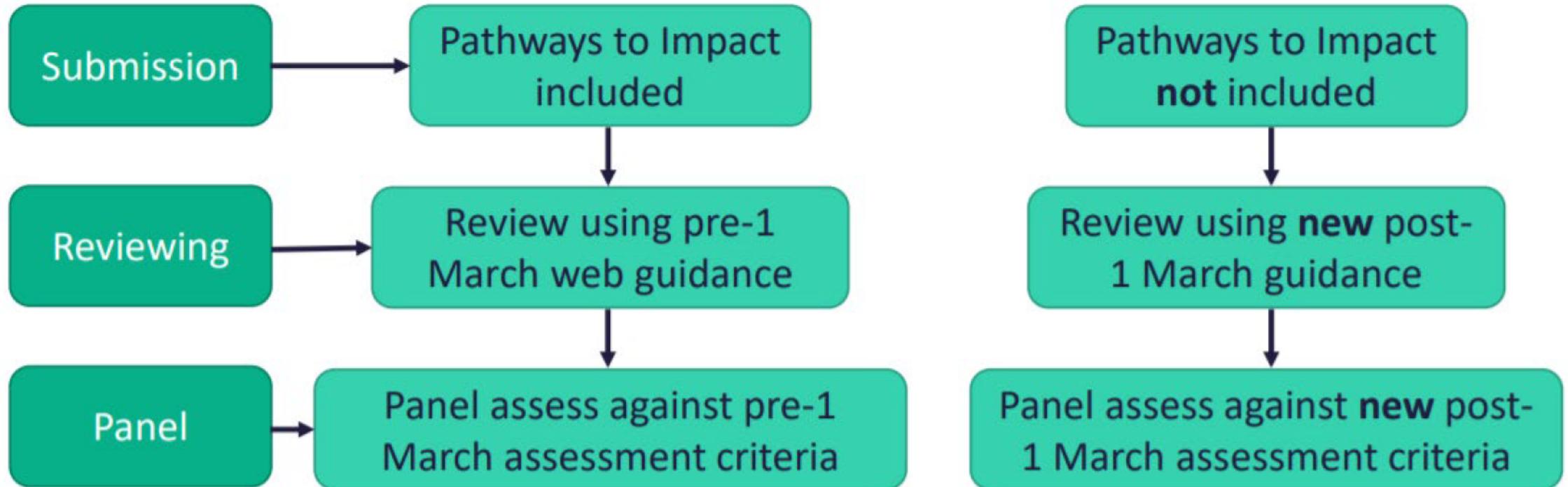
General Principles

- The weighting or relevance of impact, or any other criteria has **not** changed
- Our aim is to fund the highest quality science and engineering and that should include **appropriate** planning for impact
- No advantage should be gained depending on which system the application was submitted under
- Proposals should be assessed against the relevant criteria and not compared to each other

In recognition of EPSRC's transparency principle of Peer Review, reviewers and panels will assess proposals against the criteria under which they were submitted

Transition of EPSRC's assessment criteria

Peer review assessment process after 1 March 2020



Differences panels might come across

Proposals

- Those with a Ptl statement as a separate attachment
- Those with a Ptl statement added as an additional 2 pages to CfS
- Those without reference to Ptl

Reviews

- Those using the old form (referencing Ptl and Impact criterion)
- Those using the new form (referencing Ptl and Impact criterion)
- Those using the new form (referencing new criteria)
- Those using the new form but incorrectly completed
 - completing Impact section where no Ptl is present or failing to review against Impact criterion

Handling 'mixed-economy' panels

Panel process

- Pre-scores of individual criteria should be used in advance to determine each proposal's score
- Overall scores will be used to determine running order
- Panel will discuss strengths and weaknesses identified
- Panel will rank based on an agreed overall score
- Score discrepancies should be resolved through consideration of the appropriateness of the supporting details and their contribution to the overall quality of the proposal

Handling 'mixed-economy' panels

Practicalities and actions for panel members

- Follow the instructions in your meeting schedule to establish the criteria you should assess each proposal against
 - Use your scores for the individual criteria to establish an overall score and submit these scores to EPSRC
- Reviews marked 'usable' that have anomalous impact comments will be identified in your meeting schedule and again before the discussion
 - Please only use comments of anomalous reviews, not scores, to make an assessment
- Discussions at panel should focus on evidence of the proposal's strengths and weaknesses using the criteria sub-categories for guidance
- The weighting of impact assessment should be considered equal in all cases when ranking

Links to additional guidance

- How to write a case for support
 - <https://epsrc.ukri.org/files/funding/calls/case-for-support-guidance/>
- Reviewer instructions
 - <https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/assessmentprocess/review/formsandguidancenotes/>
- Panel member guidance
 - <https://psuportal.ahrc.ac.uk/espace/wzones/Integrators/pr/Docs/Projects/8.Impact%20changes%202020/Web%20pages%20and%20document%20changes/9.%20panel%20member%20guidance.docx>
- Assessing proposals impacted by the Ptl changes (internal)
 - <https://psuportal.ahrc.ac.uk/espace/wzones/Integrators/pr/Docs/Projects/8.Impact%20changes%202020/Internal%20guidance/Peer%20Review%20Assessment%20following%20Ptl%20changes.docx>

Proposal assessment criteria

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- Impact is now a core consideration throughout the grant application process.

New Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Quality (Primary) the research excellence, making reference to:

- The novelty, relationship to the context, timeliness and relevance to identified stakeholders;
- The ambition, adventure, transformative aspects or potential outcomes;
- The suitability of the proposed methodology and the appropriateness of the approach to achieving impact. (For multi-disciplinary proposals please state which aspects of the proposal you feel qualified to assess)

National Importance (Secondary Major) how the research:

- Contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other disciplines contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges and/or contributes to future UK economic success and development of emerging industry(s);
- Meets national needs by establishing/maintaining a unique world leading activity;
- Complements other UK research funded in the area, including any relationship to the EPSRC portfolio.

New Assessment Criteria – Standard Grants

Applicant and Partnerships (Secondary) ability to deliver the proposed project, making reference to:

- Appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s);
- Balance of skills of the project team, including collaborators.

Resources and Management (Secondary) the effectiveness of the proposed planning and management and whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified, making reference to:

- Any equipment requested, or the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third-party contribution;
- Any resources requested for activities to either increase impact, for public engagement or to support responsible innovation.

Additional Criteria – New Investigator Award

Applicant (Secondary):

The applicants' ability to deliver the proposed project

- Appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s)
- Balance of skills of the project team, including academic partners

Research Independence

- Based on the proposal comment on the applicant's ability to lead original and independent research.

Proposal Assessment: Commitment from the University (Secondary)

- How appropriate is the level of support from the university in underpinning the New Investigator Award.

Additional Criteria – Fellowships

Prioritisation panel

At this panel Fellowships should be assessed in line with the standard mode proposals except Applicant (Secondary): Is defined as track record rather than ability to deliver

At the interview:

Fellowship Vision

Research Leadership

Communication and Ambassadorship

Personal Development

These criteria will cover the aspects of the applicant not assessed at this panel as well as relevant aspect of the proposal assessment section of the reviewer form.

Additional Criteria – Fellowships

Interview panel

At the interview panel the applicant will be assessed through the following criteria:

- Fellowship Vision
- Research Leadership
- Communication and Ambassadorship
- Personal Development

The interview will assess the aspects of the applicant not assessed at this panel alongside the relevant aspect of the proposal assessment section in the reviewer form.

Individual Assessment Criteria Scoring

- The following individual score indicator range has been developed to help you to determine the score of each of the assessment criteria. The score should be based on the evidence, using your judgement and interpretation of the reviewer comments and PI response to these

Individual Assessment Criteria Score Indicators	Score
Exceptional – World leading or of exceptional strategic importance	10
Excellent – Leading edge and internationally competitive	9
Very High Quality – Leading edge and internationally competitive	8
High Quality – Leading edge nationally and internationally competitive in parts	7
High Quality – Leading edge nationally, potentially internationally competitive	6
Good Quality – Nationally competitive	5
Potentially Useful – Requires significant improvement	4
Potentially Useful – Requires major improvements	3
Not competitive	2
Not suitable	1
Not ranked – Defer or invite resubmission	0

Overall Score Indicators

- Appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s)
- Balance of skills of the project team, including academic partners
- The overall scoring indicator range has been developed to help you to determine the overall score for each application, these are listed in full in the panel guidance
- The overall score should be based on the evidence, using your judgement and interpretation of the reviewer comments and PI response to these
- Please take into account the different weighting of individual criteria, the overall score should not be an average of all the individual scores, you should consider which indicator is the most appropriate

Role of Introducers

First Introducer (generalist) should:

- Identify discrepancies between reviewers' comments, highlight important issues, and address how well the PI has responded.
- Lead discussion on the proposal - based around assessment criteria and scores
- Focus on quality as the primary criterion, giving due consideration to the other criteria
- Comment on how the research fits with EPSRC's published strategy as part of the discussion of the National Importance criterion

Role of Introducers

Second Introducer (specialist) should:

- Add any additional comments to first introducer.
- Highlight reasons for any differences in scores between introducers
- Focus on quality as the primary criterion, giving due consideration to the other criteria
- Comment on how the research fits with EPSRC's published strategy as part of the discussion of the National Importance criterion

Role of Introducers

Third Introducer (generalist, context) should:

- Identify any discrepancies, particularly where there's disagreement between the first and second introducer.
- Focus on the major secondary criterion of National Importance, introducing any discussion that hasn't taken place.
- Raise any strategic issues based on the batch of proposals they are introducing (will be assigned proposals based on a grouping of research areas)

Collaboration with users

- EPSRC is keen to promote links between the science base and users, in order to enhance the commercial and social impact of its research.
- The input from project partners (financial, resource and/or intellectual) should enhance the progress and impact of research projects.
- The level of user involvement should be appropriate to the research e.g. greater collaboration for more applied research projects.
- Project partners can be large or small organisations, and do not need to be UK based; we specifically wish to enhance the attractiveness of UK research with global research intensive organisations.
- Collaborations with both single organisations and consortia are also equally valid, providing the collaboration(s) add value to the proposed research.

Matched University funding

- Unless specified in a call document, EPSRC does not require matched funding, either cash or in-kind to secure funding.
- EPSRC assessment processes including expert reviewing and panels may acknowledge the impact of university contributions, but should not consider the level of matched university funding as a factor on which to base funding decisions.
- Particularly with the increased pressures of Covid-19, EPSRC would like to stress to panel members that support from the university for a grant is regarded as a benefit to building partnerships but doesn't have to equate to cash or its equivalent (e.g. provision of studentships, secondments, training, access to equipment etc.).

Meeting Process

Panel members should:

- Identify any discrepancies, particularly where there's disagreement between the first and second introducer.
- Comment on the acceptability of the Pathway to Impact based on reviewer comments.
- Raise any strategic issues based on the batch of proposals they are introducing (will be assigned proposals based on a grouping of research areas)
- Agree an overall score based on the introducer scores and discussion
- Rank the proposal against the assessment criteria - taking into account relevant strategic factors
- Grade proposals as presented: programmes of work should not be changed
- Not re-review the proposals or adjust resources requested unless guided by reviewers

Remember:

- Raise all relevant information, including strategic factors, during discussions and ranking
- Discuss research area rationales as part of National Importance criterion – this should reflect the details in the case for support and reviewers' comments.
- It is not the role of the Panel to manage our portfolio; EPSRC Council, SAN and SATs provide advice on our research and training strategy.

Meeting Protocols

Conflicts of interest:

- Leave the room when a proposal from your institution is discussed
- Raise other potential conflicts

Confidentiality:

- Results and comments should not be discussed outside of the meeting

Challenge:

- It is important that all panel members uphold objective decision making processes. All panel members should ensure that the discussion is based the assessment criteria and the evidence provided. All panel members should challenge inappropriate comments or scores offered without clear and complete evidence to back them up.

Journal-based metrics:

- We encourage you to challenge research assessment practices that rely inappropriately on journal impact factors or conference rankings and promote and teach best practice that focuses on the value and influence of specific research outputs.

EPSRC Resubmission Policy

What is an invited resubmission?

When a simple change would make it highly competitive for funding in its revised form.

- Panel should raise the issue of the proposal being invited to resubmit as they work through the running order of the panel.
- Advice must be based on reviewers' and panel's moderation of reviewers' comments and not where the proposal falls in the rank ordered list.
- Theme Lead has final decision on invited resubmissions, based on the justification from the panel.
- In the case of New Investigator Awards EPSRC is more likely to invite a resubmission where minimal, simple changes would substantially improve the proposal in order to make it competitive for funding within the scheme

Transformative research

During this panel we are gathering data on levels of creativity and transformative research

Please grade each proposal A to D using the scale provided

This information has no bearing on the ranked position of the proposal or the funding decision

A	Builds on current work and is the accepted way forward.
B	Some work packages deviate from the accepted way forward and show elements of adventure and creativity.
C	The majority of the work packages show high levels of adventure and creativity; e.g. new methods, new techniques, bringing together existing approaches to form new directions.
D	Entire proposal presents high levels of adventure with a highly creative approach with the potential of the research to be transformative; e.g. creation of new area of research, paradigm shift, disrupting current approaching/methodology

Virtual Panel guidance and tips

Additional Slides and guidance to use when you are running a virtual panel on Zoom

If you are running a panel via zoom please use the link below to access templates to explain how the virtual meeting will be run and the etiquette expected during the meeting.

[Virtual Panel Guidance slide templates](#)

Useful virtual panel member guidance slides have been copied within this section below



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council

Virtual Panel Meetings: Guidance and Tips



Virtual Panel: Points to Be Aware Of

- The chat function has been disabled.
 - Please use the 'Raise Hand' function and you will be invited to talk by the Chair or Convenor.
- Please turn microphones off when you are not invited to talk to the panel to reduce background noise.
 - The Chair will invite people to speak in turn: this shall start from the 1st introducer and then to raised hands after the 3rd introducer, so everyone is able to comment on a proposal if they wish.
- Please have your video on if possible: this should enable clearer communication.
- If you are conflicted on a grant, the Convenor will put you on "Hold" temporarily, and invite you back once the grant has been discussed. If you discover you are conflicted, please message the Convenor on the Chat function.
- If you have any technical issues, please email [REDACTED] for assistance.

Virtual Meeting Management - tips

It is more difficult for Convenors or the panel chair to challenge panel members. Interjecting in a virtual panel meeting requires more persistence to be heard than in person – this may be due to how zoom manages volume control when multiple people are talking.

Panel discussions need to be much more clearly set out from the beginning.

- Clear structure set out for the chair and panel members in pre-panel briefing
 - Setting out the structure of what each introducer is supposed to say
- Chairs have found it is difficult to gauge the feeling of the panel and an explicitly set structure can help them manage the process.

Virtual Meeting Management - tips

Lack of casual interaction between panel members/chair/convenor in breaks

- Can't give guidance to panel members
- Potential for panel members to stew on decisions made prior

Slides for Panel Member Briefing

This panel will be run with the **same expectations of confidentiality** as those held in person. No recording is permitted or planned by EPSRC or any participant. All documents and discussions held during this virtual meeting remain strictly confidential.

Zoom Meeting

- **Business as usual:** please be prepared to discuss and comment on proposals as if it was a the face-to-face panel.
- To **facilitate discussion** please keep you **microphone unmuted** and **Video ON** whenever possible during the meeting.
- Please provide your **full name** when in Zoom.
- If you have a particular **aspect** of the **proposal** that you would like to **comment** on, please provide it **during the discussion**, do not carry it over for later. This will ensure **enriched and detailed discussion** of the proposal at the time that it is being discussed.

Zoom roles

Panel Chair

- Overseeing the running of the meeting and managing discussion
 - Watching for “Raised hands” and inviting panel members to speak

EPSRC Convenor

- Overseeing the running of the meeting and managing discussion
 - Watching for “Raised hands” and aiding the chair in unmuting and muting panel members
 - Watching for panel members flagging they need a break
 - Manage Polls if using

Zoom roles

EPSRC Co-convenor

- Managing the rank ordered list and taking notes of the meeting
- Adding grant reference and PI name to chat for each proposal being discussed

EPSRC “Technical help”

- Overseeing the technical aspects of the meeting – managing the chat, supporting panel members one-one with issues both within zoom or via email/telephone

Virtual Meeting: Process

- 20 minute connection testing/tech support session at the beginning of the panel
- The Grant being discussed will be announced verbally by the chair and in the chat (Grant reference and PI) and will be highlighted on the ROL)
- Each Introducer will be invited in turn to introduce the proposal
- Each introducer discusses the proposal – focusing on the **assessment criteria**

Virtual Meeting: Process

- Discussion opened up to all panel members – (Choose an option)
 - **Option 1** - All panel members unmuted and can speak freely – (allows free and open conversation and allows panel members to interject if something inappropriate is said)
 - **Option 2** - Raise hand to speak and are then invited by the panel chair – (can be used with panel members muted or unmuted, can be difficult to manage raised hands in larger meetings)
- Chair summarises and invites panel members to suggest a score/poll their score (if necessary)
 - Consensus - Move on to next proposal
 - Disagreement – Chair continues discussion

Virtual Meeting: Management

Video and Audio

- Video should be kept on for the meeting – this makes it more personal and keeps panel members more engaged
- Microphones should be kept unmuted –unmuting to speak can slow the process and cause disengagement and may prevent people challenging each other as the moment passes.
- If the chair or convenor notice a panel member has a noisy connection you may be asked to mute your microphone

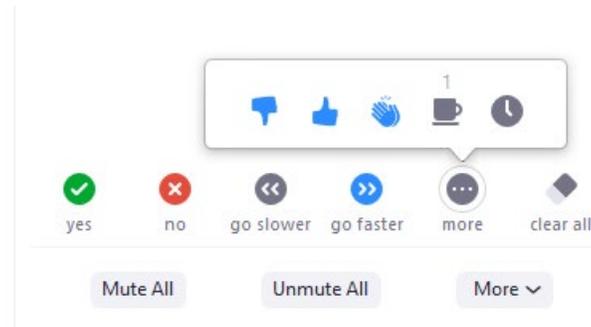
Virtual Meeting: Management

Challenging panel members

- There is more opportunity for unconscious bias due to the increased cognitive load of a remote panel. Therefore, it is important that you challenge each other and are prepared to be challenged
- It can be necessary to persistently talk over someone to be heard and to challenge an inappropriate comment

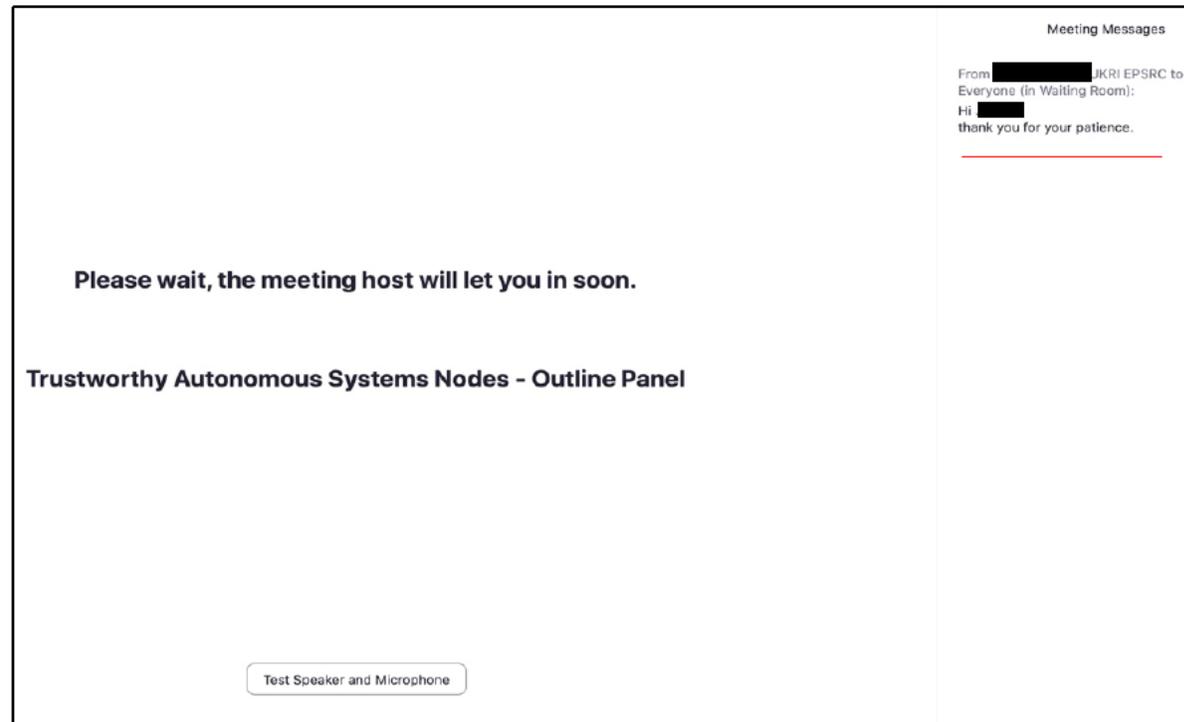
Virtual Meeting: Breaks

- Breaks – Remote panels come with an increased cognitive load. It is therefore important that frequent breaks are taken.
 - If at any point you feel you need a break use the coffee cup button.
 - The chair or convenor will suggest an additional break if necessary
- During comfort breaks and lunch please **do not** exit/close the meeting
- Please **mute** the microphone and turn off the video for the break
- This will help avoid connection issues



Virtual Meeting: Handling Conflicts

- When conflict identified → the panel member will be virtually admitted to the waiting room.
- This will be for the period of given proposals discussion.
- When in the waiting room → you will be able to receive notifications of any delays.



Technical Issues

- The chat function will be used to manage technical issues
- EPSRC technical member of staff will be responsible for managing this
- Zoom meetings can be connected to via computer or telephone
 - Both options can be used to manage connection issues
 - Telephone-only use should be limited to ensure panel members can see the screen-shared rank ordered list
- Panel members will be able to email (**add generic email account**) or call a staff members work mobile in case of loss of connection
- If introducers are unavailable to introduce an assigned proposal due to technical issues move on to the next proposal

Zoom Usage

Please use Zoom desktop application if possible:

- Some user options are not available when using a browser (online) only mode.
- Better stability

Installation links for Zoom application:

- **Windows** [here](#)
- **Mac** [here](#) with additional guidance if needed [here](#)
- **Linux** instructions are [here](#)

In depth getting started guide for Zoom is available here:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started>

Zoom Usage

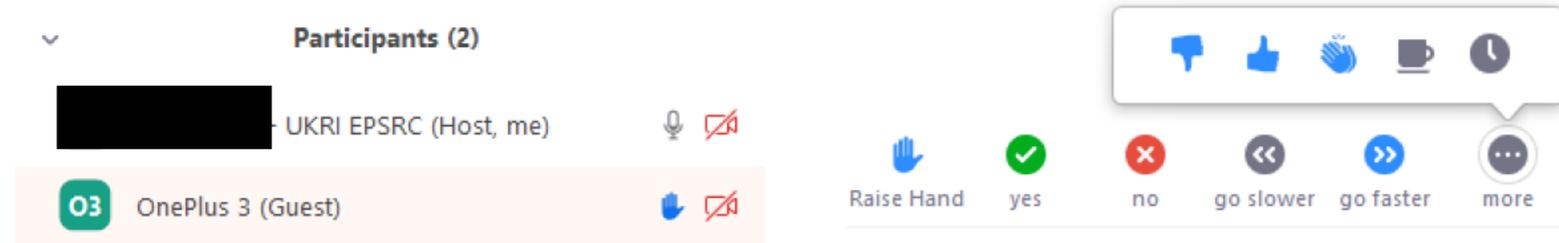
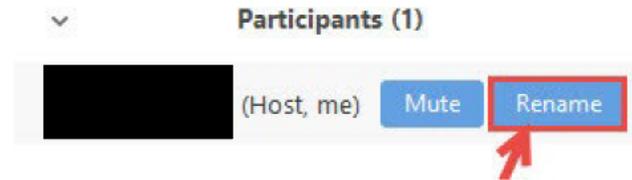
The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface with several key elements highlighted in red boxes:

- Speaker View:** A red box highlights the "Speaker View" button in the top right corner of the meeting window.
- Participant List:** A red box highlights the "Participants (2)" header in the right-hand sidebar.
- Participant List Items:** Two participant entries are visible in the sidebar: "JKRI EPSRC (Me)" and "Host".
- Meeting Controls:** A row of icons at the bottom of the meeting window is annotated with red boxes and text:
 - Mute on/off:** A red box highlights the microphone icon, with the text "Mute on/off" above it.
 - Camera on/off:** A red box highlights the video camera icon, with the text "Camera on/off" above it.
 - Participants list on/off:** A red box highlights the "Participants" icon (two people), with the text "View Participant list on/off" above it.
 - Chat on/off:** A red box highlights the "Chat" icon (speech bubble), with the text "View Chat on/off" above it.
 - Raise Hand:** A red box highlights the "Raise Hand" button in the bottom right corner of the sidebar, with the text "Notify Chair" above it.

Additional text in the meeting window includes a red instruction: "Switch to Gallery View from Speaker View to see the entire panel".

Zoom Usage

- Zoom software should be installed and used rather than using the browser version
- Please change your name to your full name and organisation
- Use raised hand if you would like to add a point (please remember to lower hand)
- Use coffee cup if you need a break



Zoom Usage

- Do not use the chat function for discussion of proposal
- Use the chat for any technical/process-based comments only. E.g. if you are having connection problems
- The dropdown menu can change who you message, everyone or the panel chair or convenor.

Zoom Group Chat

From Me to **Everyone**:
This message is seen by everyone in the meeting

From Me to **Panel member 1: (Privately)**
This message is seen by panel member 1 only

From **Panel member 1 to Everyone**:
this message is from panel member 1 to everyone

From **Panel member 1 to Me: (Privately)**
this message is from panel member 1 to the meeting host only

Everyone (in Meeting)
✓ Panel member 1
Panel member 2

To: **Panel member 1** (Privately)

Type message here.

Zoom Shortcuts

Mute/Unmute microphone

- Windows: Alt + A
- Mac: Shift + Command(⌘) + A

Enter or exit full screen

- Windows: Alt+F
- Mac: Command(⌘)+U

Display/hide In-Meeting Chat panel

- Windows: Alt+H
- Mac: Command(⌘)+Shift+H

Display/hide Participants panel

- Windows: Alt+U
- Mac: Command(⌘)+I

Raise/lower hand

- Windows: Alt+Y
- Mac: Option+Y

Panel Questionnaire

Please remember to complete the short Panel Feedback Questionnaire as this helps us to monitor the quality of our panels so that we can continually improve our processes.

A link to this can be found on the Peer Review Extranet under Meeting Specific Information



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Questions?



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Thank you



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