



[REDACTED]

12 July 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2024/00531

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 14 June in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I'm writing to submit a freedom of information request:

Was there an equality impact assessment prior to the EPSRC changing its assessment processes, so that instead of using primary and secondary criteria, prioritisation panels give equal weighting to a proposal's quality, importance, applicant and partnerships, and resources and management? If so, please provide an electronic copy of its findings.

Our response

I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) holds some information relevant to your request. Please see the information below.

EPSRC previously had primary and secondary criteria. However, on transition to the Funding Service (TFS) and UKRI harmonisation driven by the Simpler and Better Funding (SBF) Team a consistent set of application questions and assessment criteria have now been implemented across the research councils. Assessment criteria are no longer treated as primary and secondary, but this does not then mean they are equally weighted, in fact explicitly they are unweighted.

The new UKRI assessment criteria are considered together by reviewers and panel members, to formulate an overall score and in forming their rank ordered list and should be holistically balanced by the panel.

The introduction of the new application questions and core assessment criteria was a UKRI wide policy that was developed and implemented by a central UKRI team (with input from Councils). The removal of weighting was on the basis of UKRI policy changes.

As part of a consultancy an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed for the Simpler and Better Funding programme and an extract related to the assessment criteria policy is attached as document 'FOI2024/00531 Extract of EIA Assessment criteria policy'

EPSRC also published an [Equality Impact Assessment](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/EPSRC-230123-TransitionFundingOpportunitiesFundingService-EqualityImpactAssessment.pdf)¹ on the transition of EPSRC always open opportunities to The Funding Service (TFS).

If you have any queries regarding our response or you are unhappy with the outcome of your request and wish to seek an internal review of the decision, please contact within the next 40 working days:

Head of Information Governance

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/EPSRC-230123-TransitionFundingOpportunitiesFundingService-EqualityImpactAssessment.pdf>
UK Research and Innovation, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1FL www.ukri.org


Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: www.ico.org.uk.

If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see [UKRI's complaints policy](#)².

Yours sincerely,


Information Governance
Information Rights Team
UK Research and Innovation
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² <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>