# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

**Not all projects require a full impact assessment. Please ensure you have completed the** [**Project Development Mandatory Actions Form**](https://scotent.sharepoint.com/%3Ax%3A/s/Intranet/Corporate/Net-pols-procs/P-project_life_cycle_mgt/EfODkeNLmV9ArV6_pZvTCocBH1h3dmMc5v_n_r0wTQuD6Q?e=2Us4XI) **which defines this requirement.**

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| **Name of Business Unit** | Digital Economy / Scaling Innovation  |
| **Name/designation of person(s) responsible for managing/ conducting this process** | Sarah Forbes  |

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| **Name of Policy / Function / Service / Strategy / Action Plan / Programme / Project etc.** | TRUST Blockchain Centre of Excellence  |
| **Is it (Delete as applicable)** | New |  |
| **Is the policy contracted out? (Delete as applicable)** | No |  |
| **If yes, who delivers this policy for the organisation?** |  |
| **Is responsibility for delivery shared with others? (Delete as applicable)** |  | Yes |
| **If yes, who are your partners?** | Edinburgh Napier Industry funders TBC  |

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| **Could there be possible impacts or effects in respect of the following protected groups? (Delete as applicable)** |
| **Age**  |  **Yes** | **Disability** |  **Yes** |
| **Gender Re-Assignment**  | **No** | **Marriage & Civil Partnership** | **No** |
| **Pregnancy & Maternity** | **No** | **Race**  | **Yes** |
| **Religion or Belief** | **No** | **Sex**  | **Yes** |
| **Sexual Orientation**  | **No**  | **Human Rights** | **No** |

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| **Timescale for** **Assessment** |  | **Timescale for Involvement/Consultation** |  |
| **Start Date** | 14/02/204 | **Completion Date** | 14/02/24 |
| **EO Champion review by** | Kim Robertson | **Date** | 28/02/24 |
| **SRO name and email approval on file** | Graeme Rennison  | **Date** | 27/02/24 |

## 1. Identify ALL the Aims of the Policy/Project (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What is the purpose of the policy/project? (consider explicit and implicit aims)2. Who does the policy/project affect?3. Who does the policy/project benefit directly? (e.g. employees/service users; equality groups, other stakeholders)4. What results/outcomes are intended? |

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| 1.This project will support the delivery of a Scottish Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Distributed Ledger Technology which will enable new and scalable innovations to be developed in the Financial Services and Fintech sector using blockchain and other web3 / Trust technologies as well as a leading research infrastructure for knowledge exchange, high-impact company creation, and skills development that translates into increased jobs, talent, innovation, and economic development in Scotland. The key aims of the CoE are: * Use academic and industry collaborations to develop scalable innovations using new and emerging distributed ledger technologies that will transform the finance sector in Scotland.
* Increase private and public sector adoption of blockchain, web3 and post quantum cryptography technologies to drive forward new and disruptive innovations in Scotland.
* Create a world leading research and innovation hub that will attract talent and investment into Scotland.
* Develop Innovation challenges co-funded by Industry which respond directly to the emerging needs to the financial services and Fintech sector.
* Increase the talent pipeline in emerging technologies such as blockchain and web 3 through the development of a skills hub and actionable roadmap with a focus on post-graduate students and CPD courses.
* Create advanced demonstration (sandbox) areas for blockchain integration within a range of application areas related to finance, such as those related to tokenization, digital currencies, and supply chain applications.

2. The project impacts Scottish SMEs and companies developing new innovations using blockchain technology, researchers, PHD students, academia and members from the digital tech and financial services / Fintech industries. The project also impacts applicants to the innovation challenges and possible speakers at events. In order to ensure we attract a fully diverse pool of participants in any CoE activity we will mandate, through CoE communication channels, that activity welcomes all participants and use existing channels that represent disadvantaged groups in digital to highlight the opportunity further e.g. Scotland Women in Technology, Digital Economy Skills Group, Barclays Eagle Labs Black Founders programme and Asian Founders Meet up. 3. The project will benefit supply side digital tech companies who are able to scale by developing new and innovative solutions in response to industry led demand and challenges in the financial services sector. The project will also benefit the Fintech / Financial services ecosystem and academia involved I the project. 4. New collaborative R&D projects finding solutions to challenges in the financial services sector, development of a blockchain / DLT skills hub and testing environment. Attraction of international talent and investment to Scotland. New company and job creation.  |

## 2. Consider the Evidence (data and information) - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What information or data would it be useful to have? What data (quantitative and qualitative) is available? (in-house/external) How reliable/valid/up-to-date is it?2. What does the data/information tell you about* Different needs?
* Different experiences?
* Different access to services, information or opportunities?
* Different impacts/different outcomes?

3. Are there any gaps that you should fill now/later by further evidence gathering/commissioning or by secondary analysis of existing data?4. Are there any experts or stakeholders you should involve/consult now? Have you involved/consulted any experts already? What were their views? |

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| 1.The CoE will be inclusive of all companies and business leaders expressing an interest to innovate and / or upskill in blockchain and DLT technologies. There is a known under-representation of women in digital tech, particularly deep tech such as blockchain therefore the CoE model should consider how it will attract and upskill this group in its activities. Likewise the SE Equalities data pack highlights that ethnic minority workers are disproportionately concentrated in the service sector and Tech UK highlighted in a sample of the UK’s top 16 technology companies of the 152 board positions, only 4 were held by someone from an ethnic minority background and of 39 positions held by a woman, only 1 of these was from an ethnic minority. 2. There are a number of initiatives ongoing to encourage women and ethnic minority groups into tech and therefore existing channels and networks can be utilised to explore ways to encourage these groups to engage with the CoE. Examples of the type of groups the CoE can engage with include AccelerateHER, Scotland Women in Technology, The Data Kirk, Scottish Black Talent Summit, Barclays Eagle Lab programmes for minority groups and The Data Lab. Tech UK also sponsors the Tech Talent Charter which is a commitment by organisations to a set of undertakings that aim to deliver greater diversity in the tech workforce.3. SE has a stated ambition on equality to ‘shift our client base to reflect Scotland’s population focusing on women, disabled, young and minority ethnic led companies’.  Whilst this is primarily focused on SE, there are also opportunities to encourage this in working with/through our partners.  As the CoE is new, there could be a good opportunity to record/’baseline’ initial use to help build an ongoing picture of data on breakdown of users/diversity and inform future planning/action and support development of the facility,4. Engage with global organisations such as GBBC to understand how they are attracting disadvantaged groups and model this with the work of the CoE.  |

## 3. Assess the likely impact on different groups - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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|  1. Does your analysis of the evidence indicate any possible adverse impact on a particular group (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) or does it breach human rights legislation. 2.If it is adverse,* Does this amount to unlawful discrimination? (See guidance)

3. In what areas does it have an impact? E.g. access to information, experience of services?**4. Even if there is no evidence of adverse impact, is there an opportunity to** **actively promote equality or foster good relations between different groups?** |

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| 1.No 2. N/A3. Opportunity to promote equality - Possible impact on inclusivity of women in the CoE but this is due to lack of knowledge, interest and / or skills to take part as opposed to unlawful discrimination. Experience, knowledge, skills, access to develop skills and knowledge, interest.  |

## 4. Consider alternatives - (use these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. How can you change your proposal in a way that is proportionate, and will* Remove unlawful discrimination or comply with human rights?
* Reduce any adverse impact?
* Advance/promote equality?
* Foster good relations between different groups?
* Help us achieve our published equality outcomes (See guidance)?

2. If there are no actions proposed, can the policy/project still be justified? 3. Can the aims be met in some other way? What can you do now/later?4. If the project involves procuring a service or product is there any scope to encourage suppliers to have a greater focus on equality for example signing up to the Business Pledge? Are there any positive action activities you could consider which might address disadvantage experienced by protected groups, like targeting women owned businesses or applying reserved contracts? Are there any other project specific actions you could state to help with our equality duties e.g. monitoring of uptake of the service to identify under-representation or encouraging certain groups to participate in the project (see guidance)?5. What are you recommending? |

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| 1.Include action within Scottish Blockchain and Trust Roadmap to upskill more women in the field of blockchain and DLT. The CoE will also have a Steering Group which will govern activities and progress on roadmap activities. The Steering Group will include a diverse range of key stakeholders from the ecosystem. 2. Host a Women in Blockchain Skills workshop through the CoE to attract more women to complete CPD courses. 3. Use existing Women in Tech groups to communicate opportunities of the CoE to.  |

## 5. Involve/Consult relevant stakeholders if appropriate - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What are the views of the people who are likely to be affected or who have an interest about * Whether you have identified the right issues?
* Whether you have proposed suitable modifications?
* Whether your proposals will meet their needs?

 2. Should you involve people in the re-design of the policy?3. How will you consult once changes have been made?4. Whom do you need to get views from?(internally/externally)5. What methods will you use? (consider “hard to reach” groups)6. What formats will you use for communicating with different groups? |

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| Input required from the Blockchain Taskforce and CoE to incorporate plans into the roadmap. Engagement with Skills Development Scotland to spotlight on blockchain and web 3 careers for all.  |

## 6. Decide whether to adopt this policy/project - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. What were your findings from the consultation/involvement?2. Taking into account all of the data, information, potential impact issues and consultation feedback, what will you recommend? (Choose & state one option)* **Reject the policy** – there is evidence of actual/potential unlawful discrimination or breach of human rights.
* **Accept the policy** – The EIA demonstrates the policy is robust with no adverse impacts and all opportunities to promote equality/foster good relations have been taken.
* **Modify the policy** – Adjust the policy to remove barriers or better promote equality
* **Continue with the policy** – Issues with the policy have been identified but you wish to continue with the policy. Clearly set out justification for doing this. Compelling reasons will be needed.

3. If the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is on a high level policy/strategy state here if further EqIAs need to be carried out on projects emanating from the policy/strategy  and inform project managers.  |

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| Accept the policy and work collaboratively with taskforce, CoE and key digital and skills stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity in the development of the project.  |

## 7. Make Monitoring (and review) Arrangements - (consider these questions to prompt answers)

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| 1. How will you know what the actual effect of the policy/project is?2. In what ways will you monitor? e.g. continuously or irregularly, quantitative methods such as surveys, qualitative methods such as interviews3. How often will monitoring information be analysed?4. When will you review the policy/project taking into account any monitoring information? |

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| Progress meeting will be set in place between SE and CoE over first 3 years to review progress against SMART objectives. E&I activities will be monitored as part of these meetings and lessons learned shared where applicable. Standard Fair Work First criteria will apply to the recipient organisation and be monitored/ reported on per internal process. |

**8. Equality Impact Assessment review**

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| Please forward the completed document to your equality champion for review. This should then be approved by the SRO and returned to your champion for publication on the Scottish Enterprise external website.  |

**9. Summary of Actions**

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| List any actions agreed and indicate dates for review. |

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| * Include actions in the CoE proposal to attract under-represented groups to develop skills in blockchain by completing CPD courses formed through the CoE skills hub. Obtain a copy of ENU Inclusion policies.
* Attract at least 2 more women in blockchain technology to join the taskforce to give a more balanced and inclusive viewpoint.
* The CoE model should consider how it will attract and upskill under-represented group in its activities.
* Explore existing channels and networks to encourage women (/other under-represented groups) to engage with the CoE.
* Engagement with Skills Development Scotland and other tech organisations in Scotland focussed on driving inclusivity in tech.
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