

Scottish University Scale Up Project

School/ Directorate

University Executive Office

Person Responsible**Created**

8th July, 2019

Last Review

8th July, 2019

Status

Complete

Next Review

1st November, 2019

Screening Data

What is the name/title of the policy/activity?

Funding bid for Creating a Scottish University Scale-up programme

Describe the aim, objective and intended consequences of the policy/activity.

The aim is for a consortium of Scottish universities, working in collaboration with the Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, to deliver a world leading, entrepreneur-led and evidence based support programme to support Scottish businesses.

The programme will support Scottish businesses to scale up capacity and expertise, thereby promoting growth, increasing employment and productivity.

This need is supported by Scottish Government Enterprise and skills review : Report on phase 2 and the SFC outcome to 'help create an education system with entrepreneurship and innovation at its core'

Who is responsible for the policy/activity and who implements it?

A consortium of 14 Scottish Universities are responsible for the proposal and will have responsibility for implementing the project if supported.

These are: University of Dundee; Heriot Watt University; Robert Gordon University; The Open University; University of Aberdeen; University of Edinburgh; University of Glasgow; University of the Highlands and Islands; Abertay University; University of St Andrews University of Stirling; University of Strathclyde and University of the West of Scotland.

This is in response to a SFC call, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, to replace the CAN DO summer school , which ended in Summer 2019.

Who is effected by this policy?

The proposed programme will benefit business in Scotland to expand and grow, resulting in greater job creation, growth and productivity. With the consortium having representation from across the country, it is anticipated that communities across the country will benefit from this programme.

The nature of the planned programme will be developed with inclusivity in mind, enabling the programme to meet the needs of a diverse business audience, from start up to established companies with a wide diversity of staff and owners.

Is there any indication that this policy is relevant to equality and the protected characteristics or that those with any of the protected characteristics will have a different experience in relation to the intended outcomes of the policy?

At this time there is little evidence to reflect the nature of the businesses that the programme will support. However the benefits of the programme are designed to meet a range of needs, from small start up industries to established

businesses. A key learning has been in making the programme accessible for all. There is evidence of fewer women entrepreneurs and also of fewer entrepreneurs in our BME communities.

The programme has a potential to impact positively on these and all of the other protected groups and part of the project will be to drive the marketing widely across Scotland and through channels that will reach our minority communities.

The University of Strathclyde Business School Report 'Taking steps to combat barriers to ethnic minority enterprise in Scotland' highlights the contribution of minority ethnic led businesses in the face of areas of disadvantage, including financial management skills, low external investment, and low awareness of enterprise support. Womens Enterprise Scotland research in 2018 indicated that only 5.4% of women were likely to be self employed against 11% of men in Scotland. Scottish Government have also committed to investing £100,000 to increase support for women entrepreneurs.

These issues are reflected in many of the other protected groups with consistently lower levels of employment for disabled people, younger people, young disabled and BME disabled.

Recommend this EA for Full Analysis?

Yes

Comments

The programme is relevant to the protected characteristics and also to the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty. It has the potential to be a positive influence on all.

The learning gained from establishing the consortium and setting out the planning has allowed for the programme to be developed and delivered in a manner that will be inclusive. This will be reflected in the way in which the programme is marketed and also in the delivery mechanisms. Monitoring of effectiveness and reach will allow for any gaps to be redressed.

Rate this EA

Low

Impact Assessment Data

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Age?

- Yes

The programme is likely to have a positive influence in relation to age.

In relation to age, evidence suggests that many start ups are undertaken by older people who have experience and understanding of business. However at the other end of the age scale, there is evidence of young people finding it hard to get access to financial support and management guidance which would support a start up business.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Disability?

- Yes

The programme will have a positive influence on the protected characteristic of disability.

People with disabilities are still greatly underrepresented in the employment market. As a result increasing numbers of people with a disability are embarking on self employment. The availability of a programme that is accessible and widely known will be a positive step. It is important that the project monitors applications and obtains feedback on accessibility matters, from language used to IT systems used in delivery mechanisms. In particular these systems will support those in rural locations, however they must have compatible, assistive technology where appropriate.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment?

- Yes

The programme has the potential to have a positive impact on those who re-assign their gender and on wider matters of gender identity.

Many who re-assign their gender experience discrimination in workplaces and so it may be that individuals will start up their own business to overcome this. Ensuring the programme is gender neutral in terms of the language used will show a commitment to inclusiveness for Trans entrepreneurs and staff. In addition, creating the culture and environment for workshops is important to continue to reflect inclusiveness.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership?

- Yes

Any impact is likely to be positive in relation to this protected characteristic, however overall the relevance is less significant than with other protected groups.

The protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership applies to employment rights. The programme is likely to be neutral in relation to this protected characteristic and the selection process for support will not have any indicator of marital status or civil partnership. Marriage and civil partnership may however have some relevance to the programme in terms of employment practices and there may be merit in considering this in its final content design.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Pregnancy and Maternity?

- Yes

Pregnancy and maternity are one of the biggest areas of discrimination in employment. A recent report from the Equality and Human Rights Commission reported that around 11% of mothers were either dismissed, made redundant or experienced behaviors that resulted in their leaving their jobs. 10% were discouraged from attending antenatal appointments and 46% of employers felt it was reasonable to ask women their plans for having children during the recruitment process. Many women do not disclose they are pregnant when applying for promotion. These findings come in a background of contributions to the economy by women increasing, with over 20% of women in Scotland self employed or leading businesses.

In its recruitment for posts and selection of companies for support and its programmes, it is important that matters relating to pregnancy and maternity play no part in decisions taken and that workshops, where appropriate, reflect the barriers that exist and how to address these.

With these steps in place the programme will be positive in relation to pregnancy and maternity.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Race?

- Yes

The programme is in a position to have a positive influence on race.

Research indicates that while minority ethnic led businesses contribute widely to our economy, there are significant barriers to accessing the support necessary for growth, with many businesses looking toward their community for support. Research by the University of Strathclyde Business School highlight 10 points of disadvantage from minority ethnic led business, including financial management skills, access to external funding streams, narrow focus of business and complex business support mechanisms.

'Taking steps to combat barriers to ethnic minority enterprise in Scotland' Dr Samuel Mwaura, Professor Jonathan Levie, Dr Stoyan Stoyanov, Dr Paul Lassalle and Professor Sara Carter.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Religion and Belief?

- Yes

Although the impact is less significant than with other protected groups, there is an opportunity for positive contribution to religion and belief.

One area where there may be impact relating to religion and belief would be where different faith groups have different procedures or expectations due to their faith. Sharia Law is an example of this.

In addition where workshops are held, where there is a diverse audience it is important to consider the timing and matters such as catering and venues.

These points should be taken into account when developing the programme and timetabling. When planning content consideration should be given to specific business cultures relating to religion and belief.

Asians make up the largest minority grouping in Scotland with Muslim, Pakistani and Bangladeshi owners and employees a significant portion of that group.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Sex?

- Yes

The programme has the opportunity to have a positive impact on the gender imbalance in the arena of entrepreneurs in Scotland.

Research indicates that women make up around 20% of the entrepreneurs in Scotland. However their contribution is significant in terms of the overall financial contribution to the country. A survey carried out by Women's Enterprise Scotland in 2017, 46% of women business owners said they faced discrimination because of their gender. The areas where this was felt most was in financial support and general business advice, where 85% of the women surveyed felt that business advisers should have a greater awareness of the differences between men and women entrepreneurs and the different challenges.

By ensuring the programme is reflective of both men and women owners and of the different issues that each group experience, as well as the commonalities, this programme should bridge that gap identified in the survey.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Sexual Orientation?

- Yes

In relation to sexuality, the programme presents the opportunity to have a positive impact.

Where sexuality is relevant will be in the selection of the companies to support and in the recruitment of staff for the project. There is still significant evidence of homophobic behaviours and cultures in workplaces. With this in mind it is also important that the leadership team consider the selection of business mentors and trainers, thinking about their public persona and reputation, as well as skills. This will provide confidence for those from LGBT communities when looking for support.

Taking account of the findings so far, is there a possibility that the implementation of this policy would result in a different experience or a detriment for those with protected characteristics?

- Yes

The programme is relevant to the protected characteristics in several ways;

1. In relation to the appointment of staff for the programme, it is important that the selection processes are transparent and diverse in order to reduce any risk of bias.
2. The programme should take heed of the evidence presented in this EIA of under representation of protected groups and the reasons and ensure that the content addresses some of the challenges faced by these groups
3. The selection of businesses to support should be transparent and take cognisance of the barriers that many face when seeking business support.
4. The selection of business mentors and trainers/facilitators needs to take account of professional skills and also of public persona and reputation. This is important to ensure anyone wanting to access the programme can feel confident of the support of the programme

Based on your findings so far, what recommendations or changes (if any) would you make in relation to the policy and how it is implemented?

The programme is relevant to the protected characteristics and is an ideal opportunity to enhance the opportunities for business owners from underrepresented groups, addressing some of the gaps identified in existing support mechanisms.

In particular the relevance to gender, race and disability is significant with data reflecting lower numbers of business ownership and also lower numbers of those seeking support from those protected groups.

The programme fits with the Scottish Government agenda to provide a collaborative support mechanism that learns is clear, easy to access and well known and draws from the HE sector and from business itself.

At this time it is difficult to quantify the benefits, however by 'building' equality considerations into the programme those benefits will become apparent.

In addition to the protected groups the programme support Article 1 of the Human Rights Act, the right to be free and equal. It also supports Article 14 - Prohibition of discrimination.

For the programme to be fully inclusive, the following recommendations are made;

1. Promoting the programme - work with wider networks that currently work with businesses led by under represented groups e.g. Business Gateway, Women's Enterprise Scotland, Disability Equality Scotland and others.
2. Engagement and consultation - involving the underrepresented groups in the development of the programme and in consultation.
3. Recruitment - transparent process and diversity on selection panels for staff and consideration given to the public persona of staff who will be mentoring or delivering masterclasses and training.
4. Selection for support - transparency in the selection of businesses to support
5. Monitoring - the protected characteristics of those applying for posts and businesses seeking support and the successful candidates
6. Programme content and delivery - content should be in clear English. This supports individuals with learning disabilities and also those whose first language is not English. It also supports those who have not gone into business through University of formal business management structures. In addition the use of IT systems for delivery of the programme needs to be widely accessible and also compliant with assistive technology for disabilities i.e. screen readers.

The establishment of the system and operational plans will be completed by the 1 November 2019, while the recommendations will be enacted during the next year (to June 2010) and continuing

Where you have recommended actions/changes to the policy, what are the timescales for completion of these

31-07-2020

What monitoring arrangements do you have in place to identify changes in any impact or relevance?

Throughout the appointments for posts we will monitor the diversity of applicants from application to appointment, as well as the diversity of appointing committees.

We will capture information on the diversity of the consultation processes and involvement from underrepresented groups and we will use the findings and recommendation of this EIA when developing the programme content for delivery.

We will also monitor the diversity of the candidates we support through the programme and capture their feedback to inform and change that may be needed.

This process will provide us with the data to make more informed decisions on gaps in marketing, content and delivery.

Comments

The programme presents an ideal opportunity to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, where gaps are already recognised in the existence and support for businesses led by people from the protected groups. In addition the programme supports both Article 1 and Article 14 of the Human Rights Act.

Although this programme is in the early funding stages, recognition of equality and diversity at this early stage supports the 'writing in' of equality considerations in its further development rather than as an afterthought. There are six recommendations and these are linked to the marketing of the programme, the content and the selection of those to deliver and benefit from the programme.

These recommendations will ensure inclusion throughout the project.

Organisation Sign-off Data

Having read the EIA, do you approve its findings and recommendations?

Yes, I approve the findings and recommendations.

What are your reasons for approving/not approving the EIA?

The recommendations will see equality considerations 'written in' to the programme and also allow the collection of data and feedback to allow the gathering of project and programme specific evidence to inform any change or further development.

If you have approved the EIA, do you agree with the monitoring arrangements in place?

- Yes

Monitoring arrangements will contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of the programme and help to identify gaps that may need to be addressed.

Where you have not approved the monitoring process, what other steps do you require to be taken?

Not relevant in this case.

Comments

The project and proposed programme will have a positive impact in terms of the protected characteristics, the Public Sector Equality Duty and Articles 1 and 14 of the Human Rights Act.

The recommendations are for the delivery of the project and not in relation to the project application for further funding. These will ensure equality is an integral part of the programme, not only in terms of content but also in terms of the development of the programme, it's marketing and the businesses it will support. These all contribute to the Scottish Government commitment to partnership between business and the HE sector to support scale up for business.

Next Review Date

2019-11-01

Outstanding Actions

No outstanding actions