



# What can research funders do for researchers?

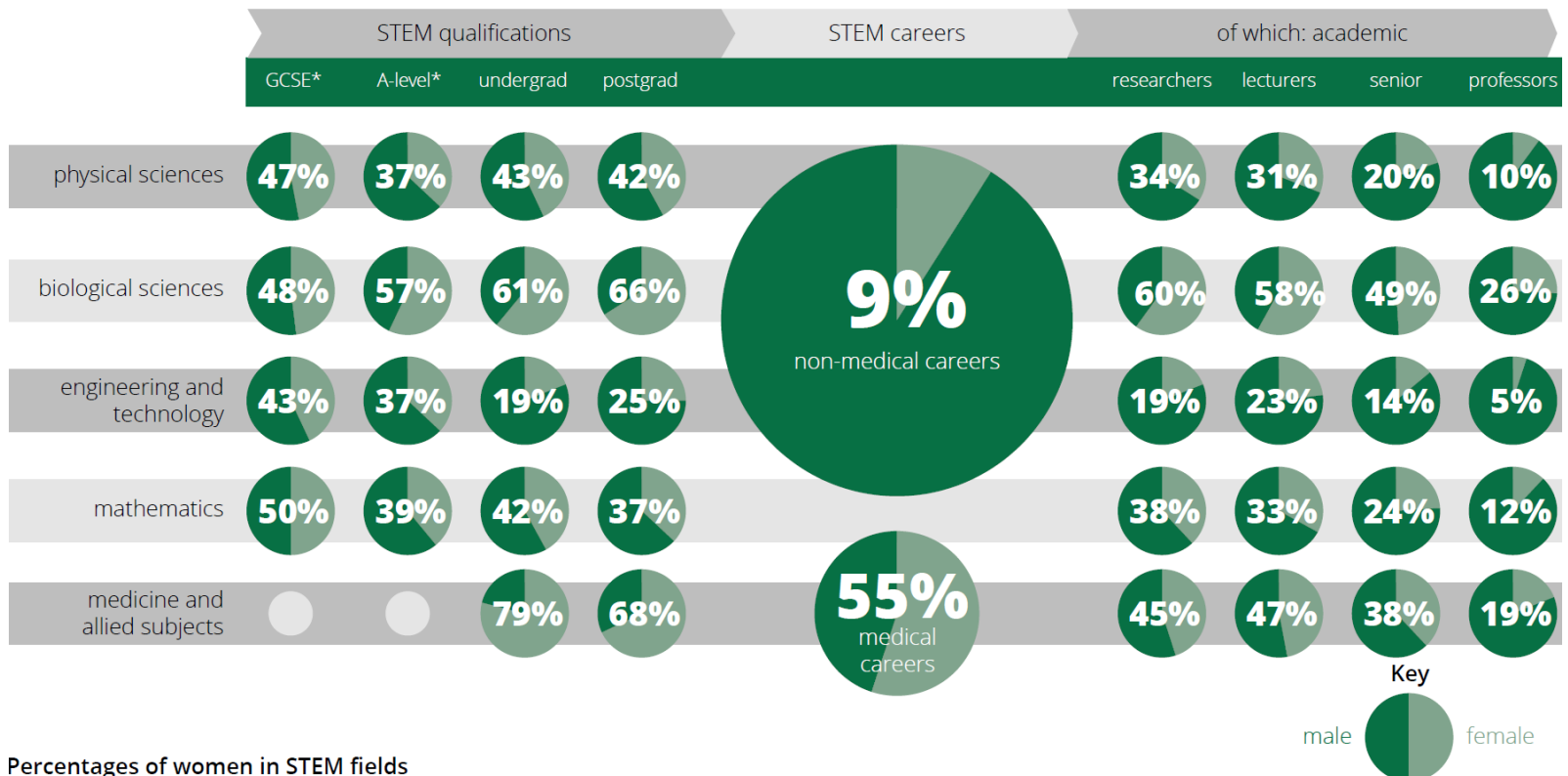
**Jackie Hunter, CE BBSRC**



# Diversity matters

- Research demonstrates that:
  - Women and men equally fit to lead
  - Increased diversity increases quality and robustness of decisions
  - Organisations with more diversity perform better financially, have less staff turnover and are more creative
- Nature of science is changing
  - More global
  - Different cultures involved
  - More collaborative – within and across institutions, academia and industry
- One style/behaviour isn't right or wrong – its about flexibility and adaptability and having a diverse repertoire

# But change is glacial!!

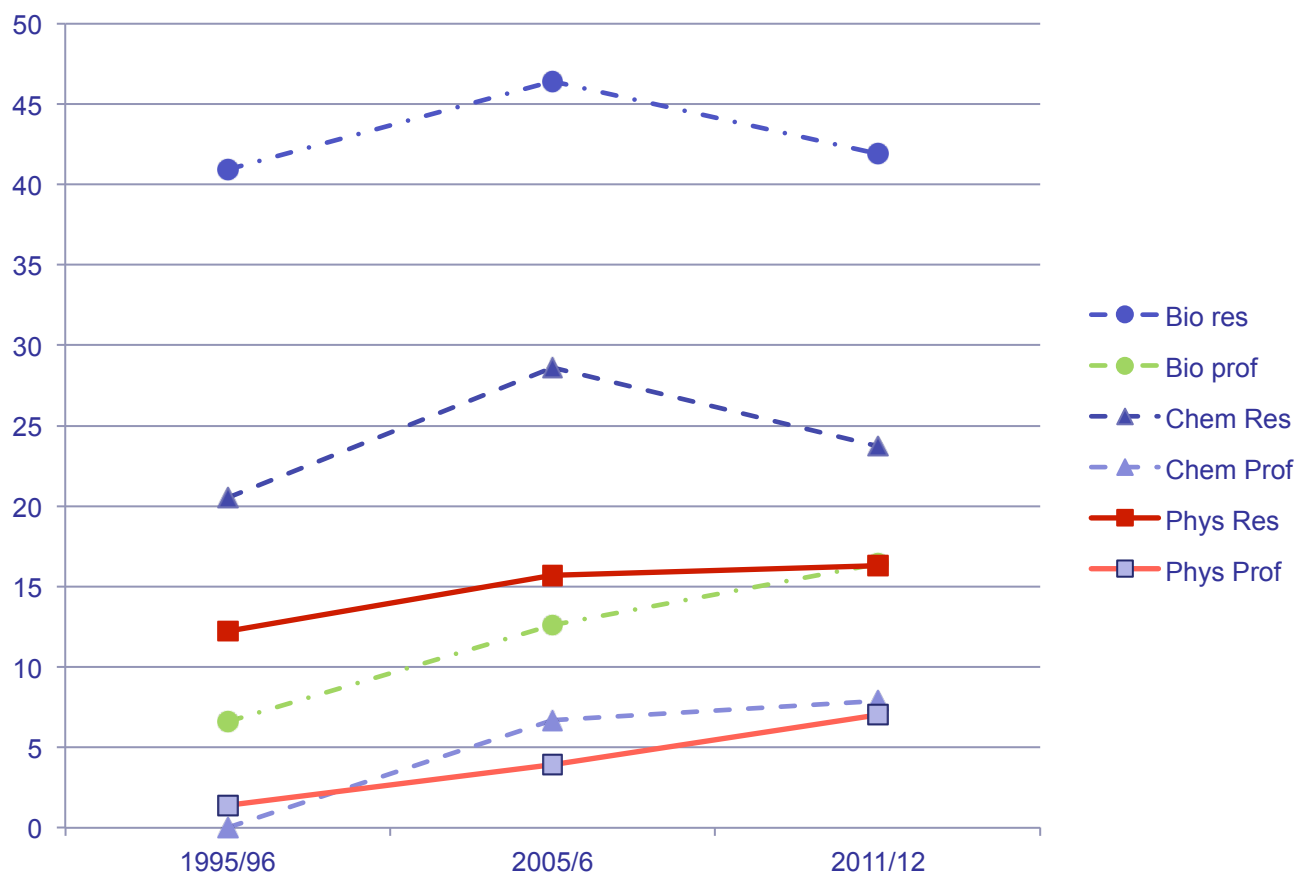


Percentages of women in STEM fields

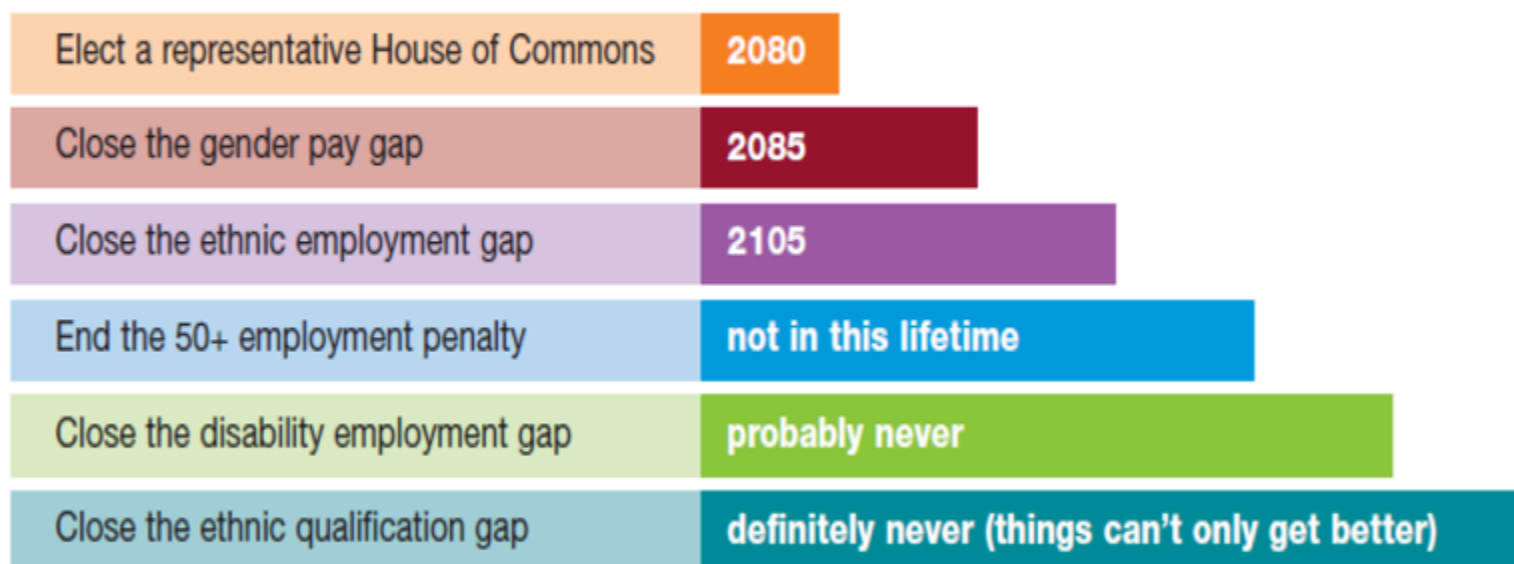
Sources: WISE Campaign; Higher Education Statistics Agency

\* reflects number of qualifications obtained

# Percentage of academics in the UK that were female by subject and level (1996-2012)



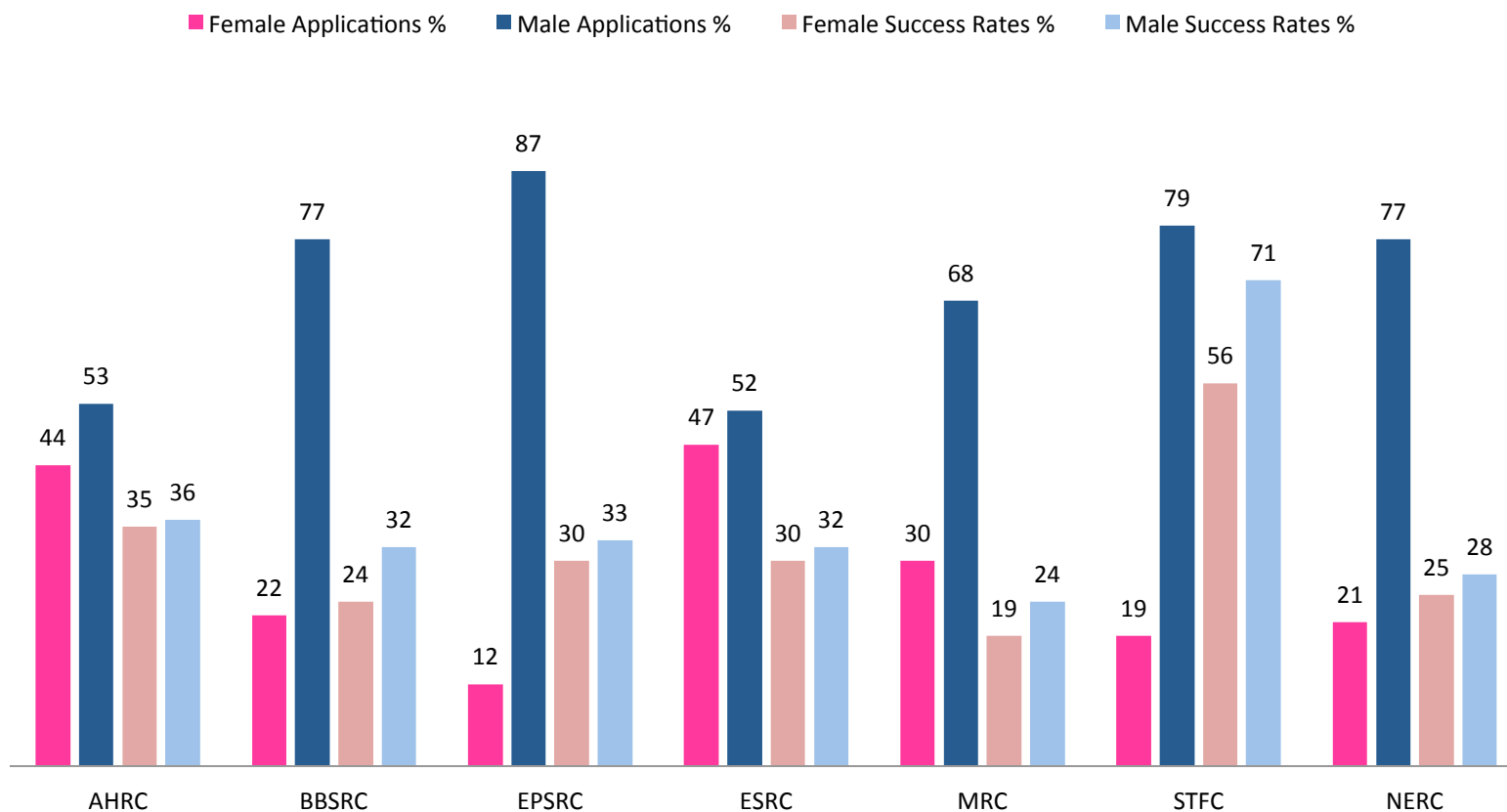
## At the current rate of change...



# What are UK Research Councils doing?

- Initial statement published in Jan 2013 and in 2015 RCs agreed principles to align with statement in Jan 2013
- 2014 publishing first set of common statistics on RCUK website
  - Committed to publishing these statistics annually (gender, age and consolidate ethnicity)
- 2015 Agreed to implement unconscious bias training across all key RCUK bodies/panels
- Methods for auditing institutions on their performance according to RC principles are being formulated
- Cross RC UK action plan in development for Ministerial approval by year end

# UK Research Council Grant Applications and Success Rates by Gender 2013/14





# What is BBSRC specifically doing?

- Initially obtained data and fed back to institutions
- Set target of 30% application rate by 2017 for grants or representative of department/institution eligible population
- Working with key university partners to:
  - Carry out root cause analysis on reasons for lack of application rates
  - Pilot interventions to increase applications
- Unconscious bias training for all internal BBSRC staff
- Work with BBSRC funded Institutes to help with Athena SWAN accreditation



# BBSRC annual letters to HEIs

5. BBSRC continues to monitor equality and diversity statistics. Success rates by gender are shown in Table 2, based on decisions made between April 2014 and March 2015.

**Table 2: 2014/15 success rates by gender**

Gender	Funded	Not Funded	Total	Percentage of total	Success rate by number	Success rate by value
Female	2	12	14	15%	14%	26%
Male	30	49	79	85%	38%	46%
Not Disclosed / Unknown	0	0	0	0%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>44%</b>

6. The grants system is very competitive and active involvement of members of the research community is key to maintaining a robust system of peer review. BBSRC very much values the support provided by the academic community for peer review, in addition to service on our panels and advisory boards. BBSRC hopes that Institutions also recognise and value these examples of good citizenship and we would like to encourage you to continue to promote opportunities to serve on our panels and participate in peer review, to researchers within your organisation.

# BBSRC HEI Research Project

- Gain better understanding of issues affecting grant applications and success rates by female academics
- August/ September 2015 – focus groups were run at 7 HEIs looking at:
  - Competition for Funding
  - Application Processes
  - Support for Researchers
  - Science as a Social Construct
  - Societal Gender Issues
- Key finding: Women were equally successful at getting grants as men – the key challenge is to get women to apply in the first place!

## Root cause analysis work: Examples of contextual information gathered for each of the selected HEIs prior to the focus group activity

<b>Contextual Indicators of Existing Support for Academics</b>		
<b>A clear vision and rationale for gender equality and inclusion</b>	Robust data collection and statistics relating to women in research and leadership roles	Published data, targets and metrics, including 'softer' targets such as development and succession planning
<b>Gender equality policies, processes and practices, challenging discriminatory structures, gender impact assessments, audits and reviews</b>	Support networks for women	Coaching for women (early/ mid-career)
<b>Sponsorship programmes/ opportunities</b>	Mentoring programmes/ opportunities	Awareness of and training in unconscious bias
<b>Leadership at the top of the organisation</b>	Men as well as women engaged with actions	Membership or award of standard or benchmark

# Feedback

- Competition for Funding
  - Larger grants discriminate against women in several ways:- need for more competitive style, longer track record, most likely to be led by people at professorial level
- Application Processes
  - Many issues raised were gender neutral
  - Ideas for decreasing bias eg standardised cvs, focus on science case, fully anonymised peer review
- Support for Researchers
  - By employer
  - By funder
- Science as a Social Construct
  - Networking after hours
  - Dominance of PI
  - Career path expectations



## BBSRC Peer review cohort

- Between April 2012 and October 2015, 49,113 reviewer comments were requested
- Received 18,780 ( a response rate of 38%)
- Of those approached:
  - 69% were male
  - 19% were female
  - 12% not known
- Of those who responded:
  - 75% male
  - 22% female
  - 3% unknown
- Men had a response rate of 42%, with women responding at 44% (unknown 8%)



# BBSRC Institutes are committed to Athena SWAN Charter



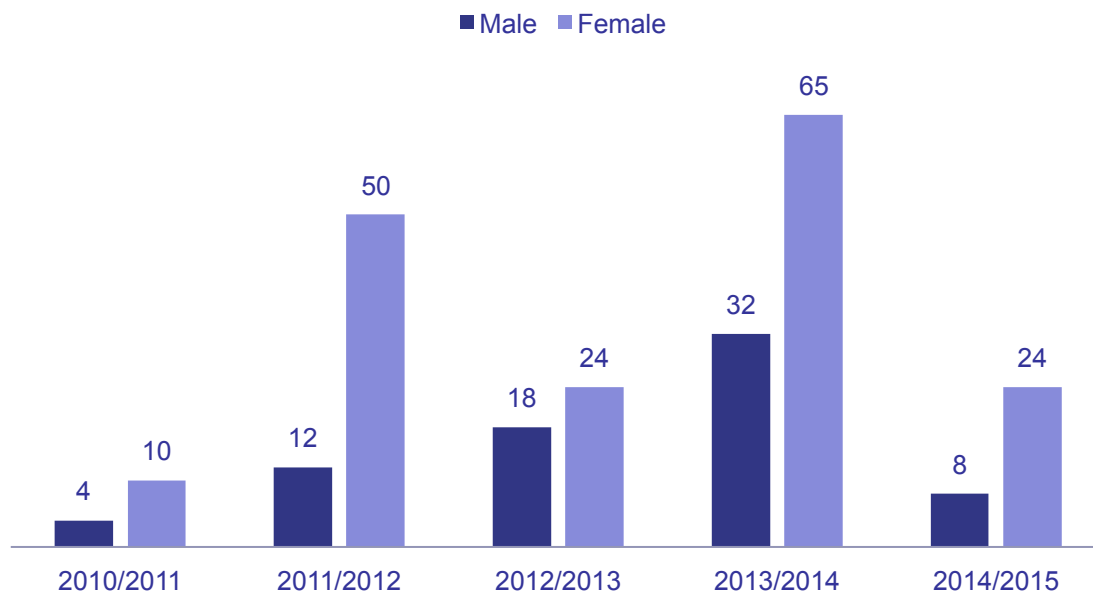


## Some other things for institutions to consider

- Visibility of women in department/institution
  - Gender balance of invited speakers
  - Gender balance of decision making committees
- Valuing additional activities & more even distribution of those that are not
- Role modelling from the top
  - Different leadership styles
  - Hold people accountable for diversity values
- Male and female attendance on gender awareness and unconscious bias training

# BBSRC internal data

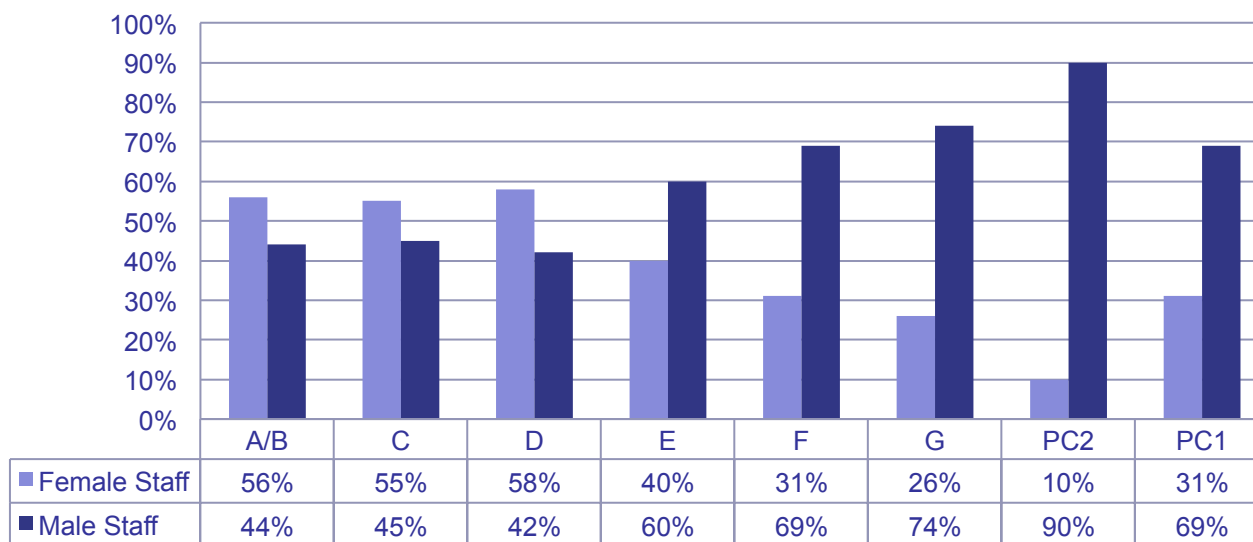
## Appointments - Gender





# BBSRC internal data

Gender Representation - BBSRC employees 2014/15



# Organisational Bias Control (ECU2013)

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/unconscious-bias-in-higher-education>

## Culture & Values

- Promote valuing diversity vs compliance
- Business case for Equality and Diversity
- Senior Leaders model valuing Diversity & Inclusion

## Associate the Positive

- Positive images
- Highlight success stories
- Focus on peoples similarities

## Positive role models

- Promote positive contact and friendship
- Positive and counter stereotypical exemplars
- Famous and everyday role models

## Bias Busting Thinking

- Challenge negative assumptions & stereotypes
- Manage pressure points
- Train recruiters and promoters to critically analyses decisions for UB



## Future work

- Explore further what can be done to increase application rates by BBSRC and institutions
- Extend work to other groups (BME etc)
- Work across Research Councils to deliver on Ministerial Action Plan
- Complete internal and panel unconscious bias training

# Questions?

