

## Equality Impact Assessment

Reference: EQIA224903277

Submitted: 06 July 2020 11:01 AM

### Executive summary

**Title of policy or decision:** Agreement to act as the Administrative Body for the I-Construct project on behalf of the Haven Gateway Partnership

**Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):** Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision)

I-Construct aims to improve the productivity of the construction sector and its supply chains and to will enable sustainable and high-quality growth through fostering innovation. Project Outcomes include:

- Safeguarding jobs during the COVID-19 crisis
- Job Creation – at least 130 new jobs
- 305 SMEs supported to improve productivity and business resilience
- £2.5m investment in and Innovation Hub/anchor building and legacy network in Braintree, Essex
- 130 New products/services launched to the market including internal process innovation and digitisation
- Productivity gains through off-site construction and BIM and digital adoption
- Housing and infrastructure delivery capacity in Essex and SELEP enhanced
- SMEs working with ICT/Clean Growth sectors to enable digitisation and CO2 reductions
- Improved perception of the sector amongst students and graduates through the project's FE/HE innovation programme

**What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?:** Enable inclusive economic growth, Help create great places to grow up, live and work

**Which strategic priorities does this support? - Enable inclusive economic growth:** Enable Essex to attract and grow large firms in high growth industries, Target economic development to areas of opportunity

**Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help create great places to grow up, live and work:** Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities, Facilitate growing communities and new homes

**Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?:** a change to an existing policy, practice or project

**Please provide a link to the document / website / resource to which this EqIA relates:** This is an enhancement to the business support landscape in Essex and the model of delivery exists already through the work of the Haven Gateway Partnership. This decision seeks to augment the support given to construction sector SMES to help them to survive the COVID Crisis and ultimately grow through innovating the way they do business.

**Please upload any documents which relate to this EqIA, for example decision documents:** This is an enhancement to the business support landscape in Essex and the model of delivery exists already through the work of the Haven Gateway Partnership. This decision seeks to augment the support given to construction sector SMES to help them to survive the COVID Crisis and ultimately grow through innovating the way they do business.

# Assessing the equality impact

**Use this section to record how you have assessed any potential impact on the communities likely to be affected by the policy (or decision):**

The gender imbalance in the sector is stark. ONS figures for end of 2016 show that only 12.8% of the construction workforce are female and only 4% of the self-employed in the sector are female. A survey of 16-25 years olds (800 female and 200 male) carried out by Keepmoat found that only 13% of female respondents would consider a career in construction and that 29% thought that opportunities were only available if you worked on site.

The project will help raise awareness amongst SMEs of the opportunities to improve gender balance through the adoption of innovative approaches such as BIM, off-site and new business model development and the HE/FE base enterprise readiness support will also show how the sector is changing and the opportunities for women to enter the industry in roles which are not necessarily construction site based which can put female entrants off. The project will operate in line with the Equality and Diversity policies of each of the project's delivery partners and the ERDF Equality and Diversity theme. The partners are actively committed to promoting equality and diversity and all will demonstrate leadership and commitment in promoting equality and freedom from discrimination.

The project will be aimed at SMEs who have a registered office in either the South East LEP area focusing on those in the construction sector or construction supply chain. However, businesses outside the two LEPs will not be excluded from the support provided by I-CONSTRUCT. We will work with key industry associations such as the Construction Leadership Council, Federation of Master Builders, RICS, RIBA and we will market this across the East of England so that all SMEs have the opportunity to apply for support.

We will work with organisations and networks aimed at groups that are underrepresented in the sector including National Association of Women in Construction which routinely has a better gender balance in attendance at events and this will enable us to reach female participants.

The project will not discriminate on grounds of gender, age, disability or ethnic origin and will treat all beneficiaries in an equal manner in accordance with all the latest guidelines and regulations.

The approach adopted by the project to address this cross-cutting theme will include:

- the recruitment of project staff in line with the Essex County Council Equality Strategy;
- providing staff with equality training;
- requiring grant applications to demonstrate how equality and diversity principles will be addressed in their projects;
- requiring grant beneficiaries to recruit to new roles supported by the project according to ERDF procurement regulations and Equality and Diversity principles.

In addition, all workshop venues will be DDA compliant and documentation will be available in multiple formats. The website and online content will be accessible by various different formats and meet the Equality Act 2010.

**Does or will the policy or decision affect:**

**Service users:** No

**Employees:** No

**The wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities:** No

**Which geographical areas of Essex does or will the policy or decision affect?:** All Essex

**Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?:** No

**Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?:** No

**Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies?:** Yes

**Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?:** No

## Description of impact

**Description of Impact.** If there is an impact on a specific protected group tick box, otherwise leave blank.  
**You will be given the opportunity to rate identified impacts as positive, negative or neutral on the next page:** Gender / sex

**I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics:** I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics

## **Gender / sex**

**Nature of impact:** Positive

**Please provide more details about the nature of impact:** I-Construct will encourage greater diversity in the construction sector and its supply chains

**Extent of impact:** Low

**Please provide more details about the extent of impact:** the project may encourage more women to enter the sector for career opportunities

## **Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts**

**Does your EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?:** No

## **Details of person completing the form**

**I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance:** I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

**Date EqIA completed:** 06/07/2020

**Name of person completing the EqIA:** Jessica Scotchbrook

**Email address of person completing the EqIA:** Jessica.Scotchbrook@essex.gov.uk

**Your function:** Finance and Technology

**Your service area:** Corporate

**Your team:** Major Programmes

**Are you submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?:** No

**Email address of Head of Service:** daniel.tooke@essex.gov.uk