



SRUC Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy 2025-2030

Section A: Overview

1. Institutional context

Our SRUC Vision is to become a global tertiary powerhouse for the Natural Economy. Our KEIF strategy is a continuation of our commitment to achieve the best for our sector, our students and for society. It is a doubling-down on our core mission and an unapologetic expression of our identity as a different kind of institution that delivers economic, environmental and social impact, originates transformational innovation, nurtures brilliant talent and is a natural collaborator. With taught degree-awarding powers, SRUC will become a very distinctive tertiary university at the heart of the natural economy and characterised by a unique combination of education, research, innovation and enterprise, and commercial ventures. SRUC's position is as a top global institution for research impact in agriculture, food, and veterinary sciences.

We will retain our place-based mission, focused on natural capital to support a green recovery in the more rural parts of Scotland, while simultaneously thriving within the 'quadruple helix' of collaboration – driving imaginative new ways of working between business, government, communities and academia. Our strategy is driven by these over riding aspirations:

1. to create a high performing, just, inclusive and sustainable innovation and skills ecosystem that is built on the needs of a natural capital-based economy.
2. to actively champion new ways of working, and the focused mobilisation of resources across the Scottish and international natural economy ecosystem, to help address the big challenges that we face on a global basis.

2. Overview of strategic ambitions

SRUC has a distinct capacity to deliver the above mission and strategic goals because:

1. We have a unique tri-partite model with a greater interface with farming and land management businesses than any other college or university in the UK
2. Our network of regional campuses, innovation centres, farms and consulting offices gives unrivalled immediacy to our connections with stakeholders, businesses and communities.
3. Our tri-partite model is reflected in the creation of new academic schools covering Natural & Social Sciences and Veterinary Medicine & Biosciences.
4. We can connect education, skills, and training with cutting edge research and innovative technology.
5. Our global networks and presence, translates learning from Scotland to a global

audience.

Our 5-year approach will embrace innovation, drive inclusive entrepreneurial growth in the natural economy, creating new opportunities for rural communities, shaping global best practice in sustainable industries and creating new avenues to attract investment by:

1. Using our new Schools model to build a unique approach to internal knowledge integration, that enables rapid translation and access to world-class research and development potential for businesses in Scotland and globally.
2. Developing our Entrepreneurial Campus concept, and partnerships with Regional Development Agencies including HIE and SOSE.
3. Capitalising on our place-based initiatives to create a Scotland-wide network of innovation centres, tailored to regional opportunities and responsive to national needs.
4. Collaborating nationally and internationally to mobilise our resources around a mission-led agenda, responding directly to the SDGs in education, net zero, and the climate emergency.

3. Alignment to Scottish Government priorities

Our KEIF Strategy aligns with priorities eradicating child poverty, growing the economy, tackling the climate emergency, and ensuring high quality and sustainable public services. Responding to the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) vision for a Wellbeing Economy and a Just Transition to Net-Zero, our strategy is firmly targeted at stimulating entrepreneurship, increasing productivity and economic opportunities across Scotland, particularly harder to reach rural and island communities, capitalising on our research and educational strengths in the Natural Economy and our extended knowledge exchange and consultancy reach.

The recently published research on “The Importance of Natural Capital to the Scottish Economy” (November 2024), demonstrates the significant value of nature dependent sectors to deliver the ambitions of the NSET. The National Innovation Strategy (NIS) also identifies the need for innovation to support Scotland's approach to land use in support of our green recovery, the transition to net zero, and to address the climate change and biodiversity emergencies. SRUC's KEIF strategy will optimise activities to drive adoption and realisation of commercial opportunities, building on research outputs in areas like sustainable food production, ecosystem restoration and regenerative, climate-smart agriculture. We will continue to forge alliances with local and multi-national business partners to foster an enterprise culture and access to innovation through place-based initiatives and our distinctive capacity for KE, reaching more SMEs than any other college or university in the UK.

SRUC's focus on inclusive entrepreneurship and innovation aligns with the

recommendations in the Entrepreneurial Campus Blueprint, to bring the Entrepreneurial Campus to life.

Section B. KE&I Capacity

4. Platform Grant

SRUC confirms that it will provide match funding (both in cash and in-kind) for the Platform Grant, in line with KEIF requirements. SRUC commits to enhancing KE&I capacity and performance by providing programmes that facilitate inclusive collaborations, entrepreneurship and innovation. Detailed below, these complement Platform Grant support. KE&I is also supported through core resources including EDI, legal, contracts, policy, communications and marketing teams, all of whom contribute to programme success. SRUC confirms that it will provide match funding (both in cash and in-kind) for the Platform Grant, in line with KEIF requirements.

Entrepreneurship Programme: support staff, students and graduates to develop innovative products and services through training, mentoring, networking and technical support, including access to incubator facilities and specialist equipment. A cornerstone is our Orchard which commercialises in-house opportunities and develops spinout companies.

Enterprise Academy: support student enterprise acceleration through enabling and embedding enterprise within all our curricula and through the delivery of a wide range of extra curricula enterprise initiatives at all SRUC sites.

Knowledge Networks: leveraging our tripartite model, and new Schools model, Knowledge Networks link our consultants and academics and serve to enhance the technical excellence of our consultancy offer to industry and the relevance of our academic activities across our challenge themes.

A Knowledge Exchange for Enterprise Network (KEEN) supports SRUC's enterprise culture and encompasses its broad representation of colleagues by providing a platform to showcase and boost enterprise activity while improving our understanding of its impact and potential.

A new feature of our KE&I activity will be the coordinated function of our Innovation Centres supported by our Head of Commercial Services, working with designated Centre Leads (e.g. at SeedPod, RAVIC, etc.), supported by dedicated administrative and business development staff. Management structures will align with SRUC's new Academic Schools and regional strategic priorities

5. Overall capacity for KE&I

SRUC operates a consolidated model of KE&I activities within and across our two schools, providing innovation, enterprise, and entrepreneurship support for all employees and students. This includes executive level support from both the academic and commercial functions in SRUC and the deputy and vice principal level highlighting the importance SRUC places on promoting successful innovation,

entrepreneurship and commercialisation.

Additional directly supported staff include:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| KEIF Strategy Lead | 0.25 FTE |
| Commercial & Innovation Lead(s) | 1.0 FTE |
| Innovation Centre leads (aligned with Centres) | 1.5-2 FTE |
| Support for Commercialisation (contracts/legal) | 0.5 FTE |
| Knowledge Network Coordinators (aligned with commercial areas) | 1-1.5 FTE |
| Academic Schools Leads for Knowledge Exchange | 2 x 0.5 FTE |
| FTE Marketing and Communication Lead | 0.3 FTE |
| Alumni Relations Officer (Alumni contact and insight) | 0.2 FTE |
| Legal and contracts manager | 0.2 FTE |
| EDI Lead: | 0.1 FTE |

Staff with KE&I as a significant part of role include:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| SRUC Rural Policy Team | 4.0 FTE |
| Head of Consultancy | 1.0 FTE |
| Vet Services Lead | 1.0 FTE |
| Other Commercial services | 1.0 FTE |

Section C: Outcome Grant activities

6. KE metric activity

SRUC's KEIF will continue to build vibrant, sustainable and inclusive rural and island communities, now and for future generations by supporting activities that bridge research, commercialisation, and knowledge exchange, ensuring SRUC continues to transform local economies while leading global sustainability efforts.

We will establish a common framework and support for our Innovation Centre whose long-term strategy focuses on new IP generation, fostering new enterprises, and value creation. Working with the new Schools, it will facilitate the conversion of SRUC's research, innovation, and consultancy into successful ventures, generating economic growth, creating jobs, and attracting further investment. By engaging with Scotland's broader enterprise ecosystem, the Innovation Centres will provide valuable networking, coaching, and mentoring to staff, students, and affiliates, helping them launch new companies, products, and services. Within this, REG and KEIF will help establish a Research Accelerator Fund to co-invest with public and private partners in SRUC's most impactful projects. This fund will support applied research and commercialisation efforts, for scalable, market-ready solutions that address real-world problems.

KEIF enables SRUC to expand the scale and depth of our impact, supporting translational activities that would otherwise not be possible, such as piloting place-based innovation centres and co-investing in enterprise schemes. KEIF provides the flexibility and speed required to respond to partner and industry needs as they emerge.

Led by the Innovation Centres, future Outreach and Enterprise Schemes will support innovative technology, product, and service development, foster startup and spinout creation, and drive IP protection, commercialisation, and licensing. The Centres will also provide facilities and infrastructure support for SRUC start-ups and spin-out businesses, external entrepreneurs, SMEs and large companies.

SRUC's KEIF activities also aim to accelerate impact by leveraging our SAC Consultancy service for agriculture and the natural economy (supporting over 8000 businesses). Other commercial services include trials and laboratory testing services (with broad human and animal health impacts). KEIF support, via our unique knowledge linkage to relevant research specialisms in our two Academic Schools, will expand the technical depth and scope of services offered, focusing on sustainability, decarbonisation, and regenerative agriculture.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a growing component of SRUC's KE strategy. CPD income is forecast to increase through new course offerings and a broader audience. KEIF support will enable market research to align new CPD offerings with industry needs, targeting new audiences such as agricultural learners

and economies in Africa and Asia.

Through a number of different study modes to suit the modern learner, SRUC will continue to focus on upskilling the workforce, offering short courses and training for use of specialised equipment (both traditional and emerging technologies), including training the future workforce of vertical farms.

SRUC's Research addresses critical global challenges, including food security, climate change, animal and plant health, soils, agricultural systems, and environmental sustainability. Between 2020-2024, SRUC earned over £67.5M in research income, much of it derived from industry partnerships and KE activities. KEIF support will enhance collaboration across SRUC's Research, Consultancy, Outreach, and Enterprise Schemes, amplifying overall impact.

To increase access to academic innovations, SRUC will expand its IP generation and licensing, enabling access to technologies with real-world impact and commercial value. High-value opportunities will also be pursued through Venturing, whereby SRUC retains equity in new businesses supported through Venture capital partnerships. KEIF support will further enable IP scoping, value audits, protection, and licensing negotiations with external partners.

7. Graduate start-ups and spin-outs/Entrepreneurial Support

By working with students across our two schools, as well as staff and businesses, SRUC's Innovation and enterprise ecosystem will increase awareness of developmental opportunities in enterprise and inspire our graduates to be the sustainable entrepreneurs of the future.

Our award-winning learning approach challenges students to be future value creators for our natural economy, environment, and society. For students who want to build their enterprising mindset and entrepreneurial expertise further, we deliver an increasing range of extra curricula learning activities such as workshops, online training, challenges, competitions and introductions to eco-system partners - all with a core focus on developing innovative ideas to support solutions to our most challenging problems. Our approach equips SRUC graduates with a sustainable entrepreneurial approach and skills. They are often recruited into businesses in Scotland's natural economy or return home to their own family farming businesses. This progressive entrepreneurial approach therefore returns with them to positively impact those very family businesses.

With taught degree-awarding powers, increasing numbers of SRUC graduates will seek to develop businesses in the natural economy. Our ambition is to design a bespoke start-up support methodology for our diverse graduates which also meets the needs of our unique tertiary structure, rural character and scale.

SRUC Graduates will have access to the support and services offered by our

consolidated SRUC Innovation Centres which will work directly with graduates from SRUC Schools, providing links with place-based industry and the enterprise ecosystem. Through collaboration, creativity, planning, training and networking the centres will work towards the formation of new student and SRUC graduate companies, generating new business opportunities and creating a supportive environment for graduate start-ups and spin-outs to validate their technologies and flourish, to create new jobs, grow and contribute to the growth of the national economy and the protection of our natural environment. Using KEIF support, the centres will prioritise the identification of industry needs and development of solutions with clear and defined paths to commercialisation. SRUC will create a scaffolding with a dedicated business development function to support graduates access these services from inception. We take a broad definition of innovation, to include community and social innovation and we will work extensively with rural and island communities to generate innovation,

KEIF support will be used (alongside REG funding) to expand the SRUC Natural Economy Doctoral Academy to offer specialised funding and mentorship for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers from around the world, particularly in regions most affected by global challenges such as Sub-Saharan Africa. We will launch international recruitment campaigns and create scholarships that attract top talent focused on interdisciplinary research aligned with the natural economy.

Section D: Wider KE&I activities

8. Wider Societal Impact

SRUC's regional presence in Scotland and its focus on understanding local contexts, aims to create a more inclusive and resilient innovation system extending across Scotland and impacting globally. KEIF support will align SRUC's research and KEI activities with practical, real-world outcomes which add societal and economic value to Scotland and beyond by supporting activities that translate outputs into policy frameworks, community and industry solutions and innovations that benefit both regional and international stakeholders.

Economic, social and environmental changes are required to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies in socially just, inclusive and sustainable ways. KEIF will support the establishment of SRUC's Policy and Research Translation Lab, aimed at converting research outcomes into actionable frameworks that inform local and global policies on climate action, food security, and sustainable land use. We will help to achieve these changes through collaboration between policy-makers and politicians, society, businesses and science (the quadruple helix), in order to develop innovative solutions and inform policies oriented towards a just transition and an inclusive, sustainable and wellbeing focused natural economy.

SRUC staff will continue to support parliamentary committees and Cross-Party Groups, and key policy activities. We will review current and future policy priorities globally around the wellbeing economy (both blue and green), to guide our KE activities and ensure their relevance beyond Scotland. Through partnerships with organisations like the UN and World Bank, we will elevate SRUC's influence on international policy, ensuring the impact of its research is felt globally, ensuring real-world impact on policy, industry, and communities.

To make strategic use of our sectoral knowledge, we will uniquely link our academic, consultancy, and commercial networks through a Knowledge Network structure to address societal, economic and environmental challenges. SRUC experts will continue to lead on non-income earning activities such as community initiatives, industry, science and policy committees, industry working groups, boards and consultations. We will work with industry partners to stimulate positive change in production and natural capital systems.

Through our consultancy links, our students and graduates will benefit from work related teaching, industry links and real-life client based issue SRUC's Innovation Centres for the Natural Economy will add societal and economic value to Scotland by reinforcing and extending the culture of innovation. The centres will increase the critical mass of innovation by working directly with place-based industry and the enterprise ecosystem and creating a supportive environment for start-ups and spin-outs to validate their technologies and flourish, to create new jobs, grow and contribute to the growth of the national economy and the protection of our natural

environment. Using KEIF support, the Centes will prioritise the identification of industry needs and development of solutions with clear and defined paths to impact.

We will support and engage with public facing events such as local and national events and continue to develop our schools programme. We will engage in key international networking and conference opportunities which bring together business, researchers, investors, entrepreneurs and the public sector from Scotland, UK and overseas in this rapidly growing sector.

KEIF support ensures non-income generating activities, such as community engagement, policy translation, and public goods-focused innovation, are prioritised and sustained across our regions. These would be challenging to fund solely through core institutional or commercial income.

9. Collaboration

Our strategic ambition is to collaborate nationally and internationally to mobilise resources around a mission-led agenda for the natural economy, responding directly to the Scottish Government's priorities to grow the economy in sustainable and inclusive ways, and tackle the climate emergency.

Our aim is to continue developing our Entrepreneurial Campus concept through our educational programmes, Entrepreneurship Training, Enterprise Academy, and partnerships with Regional Development Agencies HIE and SOSE.

With support from, and in collaborating with, the rest of the ecosystem, we aim to develop a country-wide, sector specific scaffolding to support the development of start-ups in the natural economy and attract investment. This will include working closely with the international agencies to facilitate engagement in international markets to sell abroad and attract businesses to invest in Scotland.

We will achieve this by working closely with other EAs, HEIs, Converge, Interface and the SFC Innovation Centres to increase the critical mass and complementarity of expertise from the entire ecosystem infrastructure, essential for interdisciplinary co-creation and validation, as well as for sharing best practice with other actors operating in the system.

We would seek to use Converge to train our innovators and help them transition from academia into the commercial world. We will work with the innovation centres to support the development of businesses in the natural economy, no matter where they start their journey. We will work with Interface to support innovation that has the potential to impact the way we produce our food, preserving our natural resources.

In the coming years, SRUC intends to remain an active and supportive player within the ecosystem and extend its presence in many of its other parts, where it can help access our experts and facilities. Currently SRUC collaborates widely with industry and we will continue to co-develop programmes. SRUC actively participates in the KE and Innovation ecosystem e.g. Interface (Chair of the Board); Converge (Member

of Steering Group and Judge); IBioIC (Chair of Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Advisory Board); and has formed strategic partnerships (HIE and SOSE) and collaborations in bids for large funding grants (Digital Dairy Chain).

We intend to continue and enhance our presence in these crucial organisations to bring value, knowledge and expertise, and access to industry, where innovations can be tested in real settings. To ensure a more cohesive KE&I system and contribute to Scottish Government priorities, SRUC will continue to develop specific memorandums of understanding and collaboration agreements with institutions which have shared relevance to the rural and remote areas of Scotland and to the natural economy. Specific current examples include (i) HIE and SOSE MOUs, (ii) Borders College MOU and (iii) UHI MOU.

10. Regional approaches

SRUC is exceptionally well positioned to promote regional KE&I activities for accelerating Scotland's sustainable natural economy. This is due to our regional presence and connections to local communities via consulting offices, regional innovation centres and experimental farms across our two Schools structure. This provides SRUC with a unique opportunity to work directly with a greater number of SMEs and communities than any other Scottish university, delivering access to shared knowledge and expertise, infrastructure, and facilities regardless of location.

We will develop SRUC's network of Innovation Centres (e.g. RAVIC, SeedPod, Digital Dairy Chain) and capitalise on our new Academic Schools and place-based initiatives to create a Scotland-wide network of innovation centres, each tailored to regional opportunities and responsive to national needs. We will leverage our regional presence to offer bespoke soapbox and collaborative working events.

At each of our campuses we will develop our Entrepreneurial Campus concept through our educational programmes, Entrepreneurship Training, Enterprise Academy, and partnerships with Regional Development Agencies including HIE and SOSE.

Specifically, our regional presence of consulting teams, particularly in remote and island communities, accelerates SRUC's research innovations into practice in a way which appropriately recognises local specific challenges and opportunities, and ensures that the latest knowledge and innovations in the natural economy, and in farming practice are disseminated to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of the businesses across Scotland.

Section E: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

11. Embedding and promoting EDI

Our KEIF Strategies aim to drive inclusive collaborative and strategic efforts that build our enterprise culture through boosted cross-institution activity and a drive to widen equality, diversity and inclusion within the natural economy sector, working to support positive actions. Our strategy aims to help to reduce barriers for enrolment and to drive diversity within agricultural and rural industries. We will collaborate with comparable HEI/colleges to identify existing innovation and best practice to enhance and support diversity.

For KEIF activities SRUC will collect metrics on protected characteristics and make evidence-based recommendations to enhance our own actions to improve relevant engagement in KEIF activities and across programmes. SRUC will ensure we have equality impact assessments in place for KEIF activities (including measures of success).

Rural/island businesses/communities/households are often disadvantaged by approaches designed by urban-based stakeholders, so we will develop activities in flexible ways which are reactive to issues such as digital connectivity, travel times and the pressures on small businesses (often sole traders). We will also design programmes that address additional challenges e.g. age, dyslexia etc. Rural poverty can be masked in current metrics that define deprived areas and we will work with other HEIs to identify/pilot alternative approaches.

We suggest national equality outcomes for Universities / Colleges as follows:-

- Gender and race balance on KEIF activities (as set out in Sections C and D)
- Representation on KEIF programmes across staff and students
- KEIF outcomes by disability, race, gender, age etc
- KEIF outcomes by newly defined metrics on deprivation

12. EIA

An EIA has been completed and used to inform the development of SRUC's KEIF strategy. As a consequence of the EIA we have prioritised entrepreneurial opportunities for students and recognised and sought to enhance diversity in land-based industries, and rural-proof policies. SRUC's KEIF strategy aims to help to reduce barriers for enrolment and employment for ethnic minorities and to drive gender equality within agricultural and rural industries, for example by working with employers to support positive actions. We have also prioritised collaborative activities with other HEIs / colleges to identify existing innovation and best practices to enhance, encourage and support diversity.

Section F: KE&I Culture

13. Promoting positive KE&I culture

Widely distributed across Scotland, our KEIF strategy will focus on driving an even greater culture of integration and innovation, optimising opportunities for interactions and breaking down boundaries. To embed EDI we will record and react to protected characteristic metrics for the KPIs below.

1: Foundations for future enterprise: Students engaged with enterprise training and support; enterprise and innovation ideas submitted; invention disclosures; projects funded through internal funds; innovations that attract external funding; students supported with access to facilities.

2: Consolidating the network of entrepreneurs who have acquired basic knowledge of business creation: people trained (including staff and student); attendees at innovation showcase events / seminars.

3: Raising awareness of innovation mindset and business behaviours, we will survey innovation trainees through: Assessment of impact through confidence surveys; Feedback gathered post training; testimonials.

4: Achieving wider innovation processes/outcomes, we will survey no's of businesses but also no's of communities engaged with, and develop KPIs for outcomes which reduce poverty, promote inclusion and support a just transition.

5: To understand the impact of activities: follow up interviews with staff with emphasis on commercialisation success; amount / source of income generated through innovation projects; timescales for return on investment; additionality of activities; new collaborations.

To support a positive KE&I culture over the next five years, SRUC will invest in staff development and institutional structures that connect research, consultancy, and enterprise. We will provide training on commercialisation and community innovation, create mentoring schemes for students and staff entrepreneurs, and embed innovation as a core element of institutional performance review and promotion criteria. We will continue to celebrate and reward enterprise success stories to reinforce positive cultural change.

14. Knowledge Exchange Concordat principles

SRUC is committed to the principles of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat, and will align this with other relevant concordats, namely the Research Integrity Concordat; Career Development Concordat Principles: Athena Swan: Environmental Sustainability in Research. SRUC has additional Entrepreneurial Campus ambitions and would look to develop a Concordat in line with these.

G: Any other information

SRUC commitment to knowledge exchange and impact is evidenced through several key awards and programmes. As examples:-

- In 2023 SRUC won a second Queen's Award for the excellence, innovation and public benefit, this time for our Vet Services. With around 7300 farmers and livestock keeper members, SRUC Veterinary Services is the largest provider of livestock health schemes in the UK, transforming animal health and welfare and contributing hundreds of millions of pounds to the economy through improved productivity.
- The research power of Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Sciences at SRUC and the University of Edinburgh was been ranked as number one in the UK based on the quality and breadth of work (REF2021).
- SRUC has attracted over £60M investment for its collaborative Regional Innovation Centres which include RAVIC (Rural and Veterinary Innovation Centre), GreenShed, SeedPod, Digital Dairy Chain, Dairy Nexus and a Vertical Farm.
- SRUC's consulting offer provides national and island coverage for KE to over 8000 clients. It also provides a specialist natural capital consulting service, connecting our land managers with the agrifood supply chain, providing evidence led solutions to their legislative and consumer driven scrutinies of their supply chain.
- Via its Scotland-wide Farm Advisory Service (FAS) programme of KE, SRUC, through our evidence led approach, has a unique position in bringing knowledge and innovation in agricultural practice via our consulting work, to Scotland's agricultural workforce of 67,000.

H: Court/Board approval

This KEIF strategy has been agreed at Court/Board level.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

| | |
|---|--|
| Policy, practice, process or service title: | SRUC's Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KEIF) Strategy, 2025 to 2030 |
| Policy, practice, process or service lead/ owner: | [REDACTED] |
| Others involved in EqlA assessment group | Assessment group included: [REDACTED] y |
| Policy, practice, process or service implementation date: | 31/01/2025 |

1 Framing the policy, practice, process or service

1.1 Briefly describe the outcomes, aims and purpose of the policy, practice, process or service:



This EqIA covers SRUC's Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KEIF) Strategy, 2025 to 2030. The KEIF strategy is a continuation of our commitment to achieve the best for our sector, our students and for society by delivering economic impact, originating transformational innovation, nurturing brilliant talent and by being a natural collaborator. The strategy is driven by over-riding aspirations. Firstly to create a high performing innovation and skills ecosystem that is built on the needs of a natural capital-based economy. Secondly to actively champion new ways of working, and the focused mobilisation and leveraging of resources across the Scottish and international natural economy ecosystem, to help address the big challenges that we face on a global basis. With our focus on the natural economy we wish to ensure that the strategy is rural-proofed and that the stakeholders listed below have fair and equal access. Our goal is that businesses and communities across Scotland's rural and island communities will be effectively supported to achieve economic transformation in ways that are appropriate to their circumstances and which recognise and seek to tackle existing structural inequalities (relating to age, gender, business size and geography, for example) and to maximise opportunities. We will continue to develop and review our KEIF strategy over its 5-year term and will continually review and amend the EqIA over this period.

1.2 Is the policy, practice, process or service new or being changed, reviewed or stopped?

This is a new five year strategy, to be reviewed annually

1.3 Who is affected by this policy, practice, process or service?

This strategy affects a wide range of stakeholders:-

- Staff – add impact to their area of activity
- Students – access to knowledge and industry expertise and case studies
- Graduates – access to activities to gain knowledge, experience and networks
- Businesses / SMEs / external bodies - to enable understanding and adoption of research and innovations in line with SFC priority areas and which tackle structural inequalities identified in NSET: [Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation: Equality Impact Assessment \(Record and Results\)](#)
- Policy makers - add impact and evidence to their area of activity and raise economic performance and tackle structural inequalities to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic prosperity for all people and places across Scotland
- Public – through economic growth tackle issues such as fair access to healthy food, poverty and other structural inequalities to achieve economic prosperity for all people and places across Scotland



1.4 Are there any other SRUC policies that may be affected by this policy, practice, process or service?

List here any other policies that may be affected by changes you make to this policy, practice, process or service, so that any equality impacts found here can be shared with those policy, practice, process or service leads. You may need to consider where there might be cumulative impacts across several policies, practices, processes or services.

- SRUC Executive Strategy
- Research Assurance and Accountability Return
- Research Excellence Grant Strategy
- Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Staff progression and promotion policies
- Work Load Allocation models

2 Evidence relevant to the policy, practice, process or service including consultation

The information you gather in this section will include:

- Student surveys
- Graduate survey
- Input gathered from our Rural Policy Centre, where staff are working on relevant issues including rural and island business and community resilience and change, poverty, demographics, and rural and island proofing and other policies
- HR staff data
- Internal staff surveys
- Farm and rural business surveys



- Demographic information on rural and island communities NSET: Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation: Equality Impact Assessment (Record and Results)

2.1 Evidence: Set out in the table what you know about the experiences of people in terms of each equality group. Consider the diversity within each group (e.g. experiences of people from different religions or faiths) as well as the differences between groups. There may also be cumulative barriers experienced by people when you look at more than one group together (e.g. experiences of women of different minority ethnic groups, so the intersectional impact of sex and race).

Introduction to the approach taken to SRUC's EqIA on our KEIF strategy:

SRUC's focus is on the natural economy and on rural and rural-urban linkages (e.g. through exploring supply chain linkages, migration of people, etc.), This EqIA works through the protected characteristics (PCs) of particular relevance to our sector while also recognising the potential additional impacts of a rural or island location on how students, staff, businesses, communities and other stakeholders operate (i.e. rural or island proofing). We acknowledge the intersectionality of issues e.g. geography plus age leading to particular challenges of remoteness and isolation and note how rural communities/businesses are often themselves regarded as a marginalised group as a result of the traditional focus of urban-based policy-makers on urban issues and locations. This approach aligns with the Scottish Government's recent commitment to apply a rural lens to its policy-making, and the existing legislative commitment through the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 to undertake island proofing through Island Community Impact Assessments (see Section 3.3 for more information). (Ministerial working group on the Rural Delivery Plan which regularly discusses the rural lens toolkit [Rural Delivery Plan: Ministerial Working Group minutes - June 2023 - gov.scot](#))

Impact of age, gender, and part time working status within Scotland's agricultural workforce:

As described in our KEIF strategy (through its SAC Consulting activities) SRUC is a significant point of contact for Scotland's agricultural workforce to embrace innovation. Figure 1, below, is illustrative of the age and gender imbalance within the industry. SRUC's engagement includes the delivery of the Farm Advisory Services programme which allows for equality of opportunity to access innovation and knowledge exchange in agricultural practice for all ages and genders in that workforce, and also for members of that workforce who work part time. Part-time working, although not a protected characteristic, represents a significant majority of the agricultural workforce (68%) and is an often hard to reach demographic due to their time pressure for learning. Programmes are devised in such a manner to embrace that pressure, by offering many learning opportunities in the form of local evening meetings and webinars, videos and podcasts



in digital format ensuring equality of access to learning resources regardless of geography. These statistics are an important source of information on medium to longer term (10+ years) demographic changes in impact. Connecting the FAS programme evaluation and these statistics is the source of further discussion between SRUC and RESAS and shall be monitored closely over the course of the lifetime of this KEIF strategy.

Breakdown of occupiers by age and gender in 2024

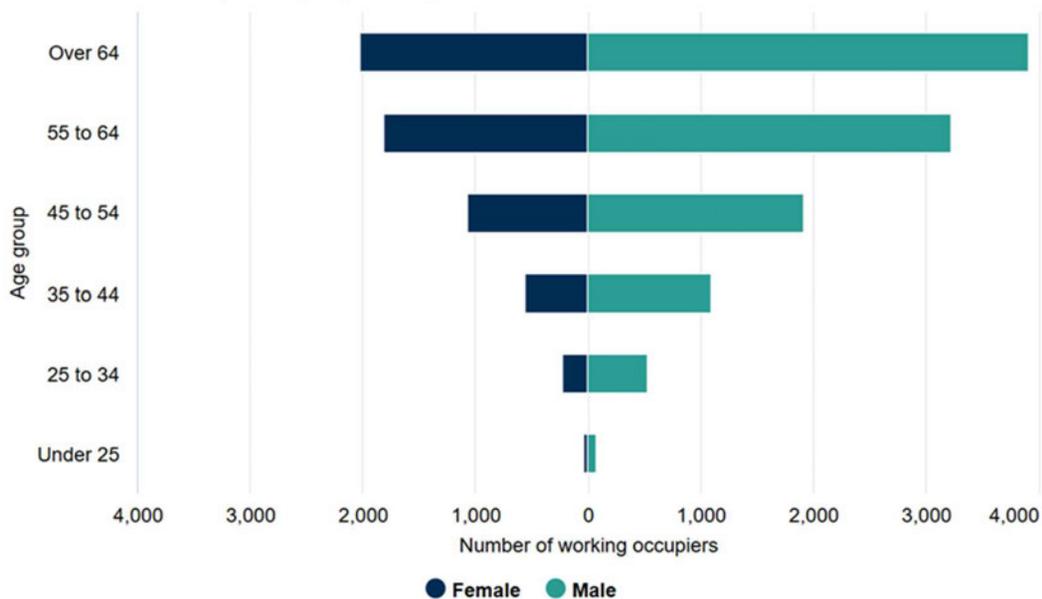


Figure 1: The breakdown of farm occupiers by age and gender in 2024 Farm Business survey

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Age (Staff) | In 2023, 13.5 % of employees are aged 50-54 years. This is closely followed by employees aged 40 to 44 years at 13% in 2023. Number of employees aged between 16 to 19 is 1.6% in 2023. | Details of the KEIF strategy and opportunities to engage in funded activities will be equally and fairly communicated across all staff with FAQs available to all with support offered to early career staff. Any decision making processes will be made against transparent criteria, guided by SRUC's IKE Committee. Feedback from reviewers will be given to applicants on request. All staff have undergone EDI training. |
| Disability (Staff) | The number of employees declaring as non-disabled (83.3% in 2021, 83.6% in 2022, 83.9% in 2023). | We will carry out accessibility assessment on text using appropriate software going forward, and carry out accessibility assessments for KEIF funded activities |
| Race (Staff) | Most employees identify as UK White (79.6% in 2023). Employees identifying as Black, Asian and minority ethnic were 3.0% in 2023. Employees identifying as Other Ethnic Background is 5.2% in 2023. Employees identifying as Other White, is 5.3% in 2023. | Our KEIF strategy recognises this lack of diversity as a potential issue and seeks to drive positive change. We plan to promote positive examples and includes collaborating with others who have experience in this. |
| Sex (Staff) | 58.7% of the workforce are female in 2023 and 39.1% of employees are male. | Our KEIF strategy seeks to drive inclusivity and positive change. We plan to promote positive examples and includes collaborating with others who have experience in driving gender equality. |
| Gender Reassignment (Staff) | Numbers remain too low to report. | Staff numbers are low, however but we will aim to be inclusive. We still need to be mindful of this as a characteristic of some of SRUC's workforce. The strategy has potential for positive impact. |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| Sexual orientation (Staff) | Most employees identify as heterosexual (78.4% in 2023). | Details of the KEIF strategy and opportunities to engage in funded activities will be equally and fairly communicated across all staff with FAQs available to all with support offered to early career staff. Any decision making processes will be made against transparent criteria. Feedback from reviewers will be given to applicants on request. All staff have undergone EDI training. |
| Religion or Belief (Staff) | The largest proportion of employees declare having no religion or belief = 41.3% in 2023. | This proportion declaring no religion is somewhat lower than the general population and the SRUC student population. The KEIF strategy seeks to drive inclusivity and positive change. We will plan activities being sensitive to faith calendars. |
| Pregnancy or maternity (Staff) | In the year ending March 2021 paternity/partner leave accounted for almost half (43.75%) of the total leave that year but has decreased in both 2022 and again in 2023. | Staff on parental leave will have equal opportunity to information on KEIF activities. |
| Age (general population) | National Records of Scotland data in Scottish Government's Rural Data Dashboard (Rural Scotland Data Dashboard - Infogram , slide 77-78) | In Scotland's remote rural areas, over a quarter (27%) of the population is now aged 65 and over, compared to 16% in large urban areas. One quarter of the population in remote small towns is also aged 65 and over and 22% in accessible small towns and accessible rural locations. Remote rural areas had the highest median age across Scotland (51 years), compared to 38 years in large urban areas, for example. |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | | We will continue to monitor demographic data for different geographical areas of Scotland and ensure that we promote equality of opportunity for people of all ages in our programmes. |
| Age (business population) | SRUC's Rural Business Survey 2018-9: 2018_19_Rural_Report_Published_ST_Updated.pdf | This recent SRUC survey found that the age profile of rural business owners was similar to agriculture: over a third were over the age of 60, with 72% being 50 years old or older and only 9% under 40 years. We will ensure that our work with businesses recognises the implications of the high average age of rural business owners, for example in terms of their digital skill levels, and is not solely tailored to younger owners. |
| Disability (Business population) | A.Smith_Farming_Dyslexia_1_.pdf Mental health in Scottish farming - Change Mental Health | Dyslexia is particularly prevalent in farming and rural stakeholder groups. Around 25% of Scotland's farmers are estimated to have dyslexia, according to research undertaken several years ago by Dyslexia Scotland working with farming organisations. However, one of the challenges is that many farmers, particularly those over 40 years old, may never have been formally assessed for dyslexia and may even be unaware that they have dyslexia. 92% of farmers under the age of 40 suggest poor mental health is the biggest hidden problem facing farmers today. Client facing Consulting staff at SRUC are given mental health first aid training. All events and material will follow accessibility protocols. |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| Size (business population) | Scottish Government Businesses in Scotland 2024 publication | <p>SMEs account for a much higher share of employment in rural local authorities (82% of private sector employment in Orkney for example compared to 38% in Glasgow City).</p> <p>We will continue to monitor data on the size of rural businesses and ensure that our programmes etc are accessible to, and recognise the specific needs of, small business owners, and particularly those small business owners who may be working (sometimes as sole traders and often from home) in remote rural locations. Challenges may include the time/cost to attend sessions in-person or slow or unreliable digital connections which may mean attending online sessions is prohibitive.</p> |
| Gender (business population) | <p>Small Business Survey Scotland (2021): Scottish+Small+Business+Survey+2021+-+Data+Tables+-+Businesses+with+Employees.xlsx SRUC's Rural Business Survey 2018-19 (2018_19_Rural_Report_Published_S_T_Updated.pdf)</p> | <p>Women-led businesses account for a higher proportion of businesses in rural Scotland (26%) compared to 22% in urban Scotland.</p> <p>In SRUC's survey, 33% of businesses in remote rural areas in the survey sample were women-led, compared to 26% in accessible rural locations and 22% in urban locations.</p> <p>There are well-documented gender-related issues in the agriculture sector and we will ensure that responses to this challenge remain at the forefront of our work.</p> <p>Somewhat in contrast, the evidence appears to suggest a different picture amongst the wider rural business population with slightly more</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | | gender diversity amongst small business owners. We will endeavour to build this diversity further in our work through adopting inclusive practices. |
| Poverty and deprivation (General population) | Shucksmith, M., Glass, J., Chapman, P. and Atterton, J. (2023) Rural Poverty Today, Cambridge University Press (Rural Poverty Today); Rural Poverty in Scotland Evidence Review (Poverty in rural Scotland: evidence review - gov.scot); Scottish Government data on poverty and inequality (Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2020-23) | <p>Poverty is often regarded as an urban problem. This is in part because the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (as an area-based tool to measure deprivation rather than an individual-based tool) tends to underestimate rural deprivation which may be experienced in smaller pockets (within larger datazones) and interspersed with more affluent households/areas. It is also because of greater stigma being attached to poverty in a rural context, and a lower take-up of welfare support.</p> <p>We will be mindful in all of our work of the potential for rural poverty and deprivation to be hidden and the need to be aware of stigma concerns in small communities.</p> <p>We will seek to continue to work with HEI partners to design more appropriate ways of identifying poverty and deprivation amongst the rural communities and individuals (including the student population) with whom we work. One consideration is the potential to use qualitative as well as quantitative data to highlight these issues.</p> |
| Ethnicity (general population) | 2022 Census (Home Scotland's Census) | Just 2.1% of the rural population in Scotland came from a black/minority ethnic background. As such we will need to work hard |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | | to drive inclusivity and seek positive examples. Our strategy includes collaborating with others who have experience in this and we think we can have a positive effect. |
| Age (Students / graduates) | <p>Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (FE only), SRUC-Wide Survey (HE and PGT), National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All); Student Demographics (All), Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data (All), College Leavers Destinations Survey (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> <p>In 2023/24, 54% of SRUC learners were 20 and under, 14% aged 21-24, 10% aged 25-29, and 22% 30+. There are differences according to level: FE level, 63% of learners were 20 and under, 10% aged 21-24, 9% aged 25-29, and 18% 30+. The proportions for 21-29 are commensurate with Scottish FE institutions (data from 2022/23). The proportions for either side of that are different, with Scottish FE</p> | <p>These surveys identify that mature learners (21+) are less likely to return positive satisfaction scores and that learners aged 24 and under were significantly less likely to feel comfortable speaking up and expressing their opinions than those over 25.</p> <p>Learners aged 30+ studying at FE level were more likely to complete successfully than those 29 and under; learners aged 21+ studying at HE level were more likely to complete successfully than those 20 and Learners aged 21-29 were slightly more likely to complete if studying full time rather than part time. Those aged 25 and above are substantially less likely to be in a positive destination (further study / work) than those aged 16-24</p> <p>A 2023 survey (based on SRUC learners graduating in 2020/21) reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of SRUC graduates aged 21-25 in full-time employment is in line with the Scottish and UK average, those aged 20 and under working full-time is slightly higher than UK providers and 10 percentage points higher than Scottish providers. However, those aged 25-29 is behind both Scottish and UK averages (55% vs 68%). |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>institutions seeing 47% of learners aged 20 and under and 36% of learners aged 30 and over.</p> <p>HE level, 44% of learners were 20 and under, 18% aged 21-24, 12% aged 25-29, and 26% 30+. The proportion of learners aged 30 and over is higher than both the Scottish and rUK sector averages (18% and 16% respectively; data from 2021/22).</p> <p>PG level, 17% of learners were 21-24, 20% 25-29, and 62% 30+. The proportion of learners aged 30 and over is substantially higher than the Scottish and rUK sector averages (38% and 36% respectively), and those aged 21-24 substantially lower (17% vs 36% and 39%).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduates aged 21-24 and 30 and over were substantially more likely to be in part time employment than the UK and Scotland averages. • SRUC remains behind the Scottish and UK average for graduates entering further education for all age groups apart from graduates aged 25-29. • Unemployment rates for SRUC graduates are below the UK and Scottish averages for all age groups apart from the age group 25-29. <p>Using the KEIF strategy we can make targeted approached to specific age groups and recognise that we have a higher proportion of mature students than the average.</p> |
| Disability (students / graduates) | <p>Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (FE only), SRUC-Wide Survey (HE and PGT), National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All); Student Demographics (All),</p> | <p>In 2022/23, attainment data saw minor, but no substantial difference with respect to Disability overall. Differences appear at the study and mode level. Learners disclosing a disability and studying at FE level were slightly more likely to succeed than those who did not, whereas those at the PG level disclosing a disability were less likely to</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data (All), College Leavers Destinations Survey (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> <p>In 2023/24, 28% of SRUC learners disclosed a disability, 30% at FE level, 24% at HE level and 23% at PG level. This is commensurate with sector averages at the FE level, higher than sector averages for HE level (Scotland and rUK 2021/22 data: 18%) and substantially higher for PG level (Scotland = 9%, rUK = 10%). This varies by Board of Study with the highest percentage of learners disclosing a disability sitting in the Horticulture and Landscape Board, and the lowest percentage sitting in Golf, Food and Drink.</p> <p>A 2023 survey (based on SRUC learners graduating in 2020/21) reported that: The percentage of SRUC graduates disclosing a disability in full-time employment is 10 percentage</p> | <p>succeed. Those disclosing a disability and studying part time were more likely to succeed.</p> <p>Data differs every year, with some years those respondents disclosing as disabled more likely to be in a positive destination those who did not disclose. In 2018/19 and 2021/22, those disclosing an SpLD were less likely to be in a positive destination, but this was not seen in 2019/20. In 2019/20 and 2021/22, those disclosing a social impairment were less likely to be in a positive destination, but this was not seen in 2018/19.</p> <p>Unemployment rates for SRUC graduates disclosing a disability are in line with UK and Scottish Respondents disclosing as disabled generally returned higher positive measures than those who did not in the NSS. The 2024 Speak Week reported a call for more and more consistent support for learners disclosing as disabled. Learners disclosing as disabled were significantly less likely to feel their mental health and/or wellbeing are being supported and that they feel confident in asking for mental health and/or wellbeing support than those who did not disclose. The qualitative analysis also highlighted lack of appropriate / adequate support for learners with disabilities in teaching and learning, lack of access and/or awareness of support for disability (mainly with reference to physical disabilities, mental health issues, and neurodivergence) and lack of resources and/or training for particular groups, including learners with disabilities. The EDI audit</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>points lower than those graduates who did not disclose a disability and 17 percentage points lower than the UK average. However, this is in line with Scottish average. SRUC graduates disclosing a disability recorded much higher rates of part-time employment than seen in UK and Scottish averages.</p> <p>SRUC remains behind the Scottish and UK average for graduates disclosing a disability entering further education</p> | <p>recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners with disabilities which is set out in SRUC Learning and Teaching Strategy.</p> <p>The KEIF strategy has potential to have positive impact and staff leading KEIF activities for students and graduates will undergo this training.</p> |
| Race (Students / Graduates) | <p>Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (FE only), SRUC-Wide Survey (HE and PGT), National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All); Student Demographics (All), Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data (All), College Leavers Destinations Survey (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> | <p>Learners from White ethnic backgrounds were substantially more likely to be satisfied with their college experience in 2024 than those from BAME backgrounds, though this is not the case in previous years. On a more positive note, learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds felt significantly more strongly that people really care about them at SRUC and that they are comfortable speaking up and expressing opinions than learners from White ethnic backgrounds. Learners from BAME backgrounds were also significantly more likely to feel that their mental health and/or wellbeing are supported than learners from White ethnic backgrounds. However, the qualitative analysis highlighted the impact of a visible lack of ethnic diversity at SRUC, and the need to fit around</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>The data identifies the underrepresentation of learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. In 2023/24, 97% of SRUC learners were from White ethnic backgrounds. This is substantially higher than sector averages for UK domiciled learners at the HE/PG level (Scotland and rUK 2021/22 data: 89.1% and 71.2% respectively), higher than Scotland FE levels (91.5% FT and 84.1% PT in 2021/22) and higher than the Scottish population according to the 2022 census (92.9%). It is also higher than UK domiciled learners at the HE/PG level studying agriculture, food and related studies (93%), engineering and technology (88.4%), geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences) (88.9%), veterinary sciences (92.2%), and business and management (68.4%), though it is commensurate with FE learners in Scotland's colleges studying</p> | <p>the culture of the dominant majority. The EDI audit recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and support the increase in staff and learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>In 2022/23, attainment data saw differences with respect to Race overall, with learners from BAME backgrounds less likely to succeed than those from White ethnic backgrounds (69% and 75% respectively). Differences appear at the study and module level for learners from BAME backgrounds only. Learners from BAME backgrounds studying at HE level were less likely to succeed than those studying at FE or PG level; and learners studying part-time were more likely to succeed than those studying full time.</p> <p>Respondents from BAME backgrounds were less likely to report being in a positive destination than those from white backgrounds across the latest three years for which we have data. However, numbers are very low (n = 5-10).</p> <p>SRUC's EDI audit recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and support the increase in staff and learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The KEIF strategy has potential to have positive impact</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | agriculture, horticulture and animal care (98.2% in 2021/22) | and staff leading KEIF activities for students and graduates will undergo this training. |
| Sex (Students / Graduates) | <p>Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (FE only), SRUC-Wide Survey (HE and PGT), National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All); Student Demographics (All), Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data (All), College Leavers Destinations Survey (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> <p>In 2023/24, 53% of SRUC learners were female and 46% male. There are differences according to level: FE level, 46% of learners were female, 53% male. This is different to the Scottish FE sector overall (data from 2022/23) which saw 51% female learners and 49% male learners. HE level, 62% of learners were female, 37% male. This is slightly different to Scottish and rUK sector</p> | <p>The data sources show few substantial differences in overarching responses between female and male learners; however, “other” learners returned substantially lower positive satisfaction scores.</p> <p>Female learners were significantly more positive in their rating of people being treated equally at SRUC than male learners. Male learners felt more involved in the social life at SRUC than female learners. Elsewise, no significant differences were found in the EDI audit with regard to Sex.</p> <p>Similarly attainment data from 2022/23 shows no substantial difference with respect to Sex overall. Differences appear at the study level for male learners, who were more likely to succeed if studying at HE level, than FE level and PG level (77%, 73% and 70% respectively). There was no difference according to mode of study.</p> <p>In a 2023 survey (based on SRUC learners graduating in 2020/21) Male SRUC graduates show higher rates of full-time employment than female graduates. This is in line with Scottish and UK trends. SRUC remains below UK and Scottish averages for male graduates entering full-time employment (SRUC 59%; Scotland 63%; UK 62%),</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>averages (within 2 percentage points of Scotland average and 5 percentage points of rUK; data from 2021/22). PG level, 59% of learners were female, 40% male. This is commensurate with Scottish and rUK sector averages (data from 2021/22). This varies extensively by Board of Study, with the highest percentage of female learners sitting within Veterinary Sciences (95%), and the highest percentage of male learners sitting within Golf, Food and Drink (97%), followed by Forestry, Forgework and Engineering (88%). In comparison, at the HE/PG level (data as of 2021/22), 63.8% of learners studying agriculture, food and related studies were female, 20.5% of learners studying engineering and technology, 53.3% of learners studying geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences), 82.9% of learners studying veterinary sciences</p> | <p>as well as for female graduates (SRUC 47%; Scotland 61%; UK 60%).SRUC graduates find themselves in part-time employment at higher proportions than seen across the sector, with 20% female graduates and 13% of male graduates in part-time work (Scotland: 11% and 8%; UK: 11% and 9%).SRUC female graduates taking up further study was 18%, close to the Scottish and UK average of 17%. Male graduates taking up further study was 13%, remaining consistently below the UK and Scottish averages for the fourth survey in a row.3% of male graduates said they were unemployed at the time of survey, below UK and Scottish provider averages (6% and 5% respectively). 4% of female graduates said they were unemployed at the time of survey, the same as the Scottish average, and close to the UK average (4% and 5% respectively).</p> <p>The KEIF strategy has potential to have positive impact. The business data on Sex quoted above shows that, particularly in the agricultural workforce, men are over represented so plans to show case positive examples and give access to networks for female graduates are likely to be helpful.</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | and 47.1% of learners studying business and management. | |
| Gender Reassignment | <p>Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (FE only), SRUC-Wide Survey (HE and PGT), National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All); Student Demographics (All), Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data (All), College Leavers Destinations Survey (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> <p>From 2023/24 student demographics, just over 1% of learners reported being transgender, equivalent to the sector average. This figure must be understood in the context of under-disclosure emphasised in the EDI audit report. In the EDI survey 12.3% of learners identified as trans / trans status.</p> | <p>Numbers are low in student surveys and we have no data for graduate attainment for the PC. The qualitative research indicated that for some student participants, their personal characteristics including gender identity made them feel othered at SRUC and the EDI report recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners in relation to gender (including transgender) and sexual orientation. We will ensure that staff engaging in KEIF funded activities will be part of this.</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| <p>Sexual orientation (Students / Graduates)</p> | <p>Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (FE only), SRUC-Wide Survey (HE and PGT), National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All); Student Demographics (All), Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data (All), College Leavers Destinations Survey (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> <p>In 2023/24, 82% of learners reported being heterosexual. 8% reported being gay, lesbian or bisexual. 7% chose not to disclose. There are differences according to level with 6% of FE learners being gay, lesbian or bisexual, 10% of HE learners, and 14% of PG learners. Sector average (as of 2021/22) is 7.7% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2.3% other, and 16.2% either refusing the information or leaving the field blank.</p> | <p>Across several surveys gay, lesbian or bisexual learners returned lower positive scores than those who are heterosexual with variability on this between surveys and years. As for the previous category, the qualitative research indicated that for some participants, their personal characteristics including sexual orientation made them feel othered at SRUC, causing a barrier to their sense of belonging. In 2022/23, attainment data saw differences with respect to Sexual Orientation overall with gay or lesbian learners less likely to succeed than heterosexual or bisexual learners. Differences appear at the study and mode level for bisexual learners, who were more likely to succeed at HE level than FE and slightly less likely to succeed if studying full time rather than part time.</p> <p>The EDI report highlighted the lack of resources and/or training on support for particular groups (including LGBTQ+). The report recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners in relation to gender and sexual orientation.</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | We have no data for leaver destinations or graduate outcomes for the PC. | |
| Religion or Belief (Students / Graduates) | <p>EDI Audit (All), Student Demographics (All), Attainment Data (All)</p> <p>Equality Challenge Unit's 2011 <i>Religion or belief in higher education: the experiences of staff and students</i></p> <p>NUS's 2012 <i>No Place for Hate: Hate Crimes and Incidents in Further and Higher Education</i>.</p> <p>University UK's 2016 <i>Report of the UUK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students</i>.</p> | <p>Religion and belief data is not returned by the SSES, SWS, NSS, Speak week, CLD or GOS, or in complaints and appeals data . In lieu of the paucity of internal data, external research on religion or belief in tertiary education has been included. More than half of the learners who participated in the survey reported having no religious belief system (63.8%). For SRUC student demographics, 78% of learners did not belong to any religious denomination. 17% of learners reported being of Christian faith. This is higher than the sector average (as of 2021/22) which saw 43.8% learners claim no religion, increasing to 54.7% in Scotland. This is also higher than subject averages (at HE/PG level), which saw 52.3% agriculture, food and related studies learners claiming no religion, 42.2% engineering and technology learners, 58.3% geography, earth and environment studies (natural sciences), 54.9% veterinary sciences and 30.5% business and management learners. In 2022/23, attainment data saw no differences with respect to Religion or Belief overall with only minimal differences according to mode or level of study.</p> <p>Many events and calendars are still planned around western / Christian, a finding of relevance to the planning of KEIF funded activities and our strategy has potential to have positive impact.</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>Advance HE's 2020 <i>Research Insight: Religion and Belief in UK Higher Education</i></p> | |
| <p>Pregnancy or maternity (Students / Graduates)</p> | <p>EDI Audit (All), ECU's 2010 <i>Student pregnancy and maternity</i>.</p> <p>Reports NUS 2009 research based on interviews with 2,167 learners in higher and further education with children. 29% of these respondents became pregnant during their course (sector data on this is not available). Of these, 59% did not feel supported by their college or university.</p> | <p>There was an insufficient number of learner participants reporting any type of leave of absence from their course related to a pregnancy or partner's pregnancy to consider any differences for learners according to this protected characteristic. And there is no data on graduate destinations. Issues facing pregnant learners included being forced to withdraw from their course, taking longer out of their course after giving birth than they would like, and being prevented from sitting exams.</p> <p>The number of learners who become pregnant during their studies is likely to increase as data from Scotland and other European countries show a positive correlation between the increasing age profile of learners and the likelihood of their having a child.</p> |
| <p>Poverty and deprivation (Students / Graduates)</p> | <p>National Student Satisfaction Survey (Final Year HE only), Speak Week (All), EDI Audit (All), Student Demographics (All), Complaints and Appeals Data (All), Attainment Data</p> | <p>SIMD data is not gathered for SSES or SWS</p> <p>Learners from deprived backgrounds (SMID20) returned substantially lower overall satisfaction scores than other learners in 2024. However, this is not the case in previous years where they have</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
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| | <p>(All), College Leavers Destinations (FE), Graduate Outcomes Survey (HE)</p> <p>In 2023/24, 6% of learners were from SIMD10 areas and 12% from SIMD20. Numbers were too small to disaggregate at level or Board of Study. The Scottish Government's ambition is that by 2030 learners from the most deprived 20% backgrounds (SIMD20) should represent 20% entrants to higher education.</p> | <p>either returned in the highest overall satisfaction scores (2023 and 2021) or equivalent to other learners. Speak Week in 2024 highlighted that finance was one of the most mentioned themes in the survey returns. The majority of comments focused on food and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and rising canteen costs, followed by transport costs, and then a lack of financial support.</p> <p>In 2022/23, attainment data saw differences with respect to SIMD overall, with learners from SIMD20 backgrounds being least likely to succeed and likelihood of success increasing as the SIMD progresses from most to least deprived. Differences appear at the study and mode level. SIMD20 learners were substantially more likely to succeed if studying at FE level, and if studying part time. This difference by study level begins to flip as you progress through the SIMD levels. Difference by mode varies.</p> <p>2019/20 and 2021/22 saw learners from both the most deprived (SIMD10/20) and least deprived (SIMD90/100) least likely to be in positive destinations. 2018/19 saw minimal differences between the SIMD classifications. The SIMD does not identify rural (or island) poverty well so the SIMD20 figures may under-represent the actual % of SRUC's students that are from more deprived households. The strategy has potential to have positive impact so we will keep this under review.</p> |

| Equality characteristics | Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint) | What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3). |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| | | |

2.2 Consultation and stakeholder involvement: Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy, practice, process or service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups. Describe below what you learned from the consultation/ involvement. Consultation can take time so make sure that you build this into your policy, practice, process or service review/ development timeline.

Note who you consulted with, when you consulted with them, and what they told you about the impact of your proposed policy, practice, process or service.

Staff leading on this EqlA consulted with researchers within SRUC's Rural Policy Centre (RPC) during its preparation. The Centre includes rural sociologists, geographers and planners who work with a range of data that is critical to undertaking a robust EqlA, including from Scotland's Census and business surveys. In two current projects as part of the Scottish Government's Strategic Research Programme, RPC researchers are exploring the characteristics of rural and island businesses in more depth through analysis of existing data, and also exploring persistent challenges affecting rural communities, including poverty, deprivation and the marginalisation of particular groups including those with protected characteristics. Both of these research projects will feed evidence into this EqlA on an ongoing basis. Staff leading on this EqlA also consulted with SRUC's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the data and findings pertaining to students and graduates align closely with the EqlA prepared for the Learning and Teaching Strategy, with recommendations on staff training on EDI being pertinent to staff engaging in KEIF funded activities.



We propose to set up an external stakeholder group to review our KEIF strategy on an ongoing basis including from an EqIA perspective. This could include education/business as well as rural/island stakeholders e.g. Equality Network, Scottish Rural Action, a representative of another academic institution working with rural businesses/communities (for example, the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE) at Newcastle University who have experience of delivering community-led innovation), and representation from of Enterprise Agencies such as HIE and SOSE.

2.3 Record here if you need to undertake a full equality impact assessment based on your evidence above.

| Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics | Yes/ No (Y or N) | Next steps |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| There is no relevance to equality | | Proceed to sign off (step 5) to agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence |
| There is relevance to some or all of the equality groups | Y | Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA |
| It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the equality groups | | Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA |

3 Impact on equality groups and changes to policy, practice, process or service

You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?** How will this be mitigated?

- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not?**
How can this be achieved?
- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?

3.1 Does the policy, practice, process or service have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) on any of the equality characteristics? In the tables below, record the impact of the policy, practice, process or service, as it is planned or as it operates, might have on each equality characteristic and describe what changes in policy, practice, process or service or actions will be required to mitigate that impact or to take advantage of a positive impact.

| Equality group | Public sector equality duty | Place 'X' in the relevant box(es) | | | Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact. |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|--|
| | | Positive impact | Negative impact | No impact | |
| Age | Potential for discrimination | x | | | Communicate call and process openly and transparently Pure as standard Postgrad students to be included in open funding call Progress reports and narratives communicated internally and externally Analyse current and previous project portfolios Action plan on any issues identified. |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | x | | | |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| Disability | Potential for discrimination | x | | | |

| Equality group | Public sector equality duty | Place 'X' in the relevant box(es) | | | Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact. |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|---|
| | | Positive impact | Negative impact | No impact | |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | x | | | Dyslexia is particularly prevalent in farming and rural stakeholder groups. We will use appropriate software to ensure accessibility of text and use a diverse range of communication and KE methods. Client and student facing staff at SRUC are given mental health first aid training. All KEIF events and material will follow accessibility protocols. |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| Race | Potential for discrimination | x | | | We identify the very limited race diversity in our stakeholders and will champion successful examples in progress reports and narratives. We will look externally for good practice examples and include EDI training for staff. We will apply principles of public life and public service to KEIF activities and strategic planning. |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | X | | | |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| Sex | Potential for discrimination | x | | | The business data on Sex shows that, particularly in the agricultural workforce, men are over represented so plans to show case positive examples and give access to networks for female graduates are likely to be helpful. |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | x | | | |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| | Potential for discrimination | | | x | |

| Equality group | Public sector equality duty | Place 'X' in the relevant box(es) | | | Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact. |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|--|
| | | Positive impact | Negative impact | No impact | |
| Gender Reassignment | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | x | | | Data on this PC is limited. Staff training on EDI should drive inclusivity. |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| Sexual orientation | Potential for discrimination | | | x | Staff training on EDI should drive inclusivity. We will seek positive examples and collaborate with others in the sector to develop best practice. |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | | x | | |
| | Potential to foster good relations | | x | | |
| Religion or Belief | Potential for discrimination | | | x | Staff training on EDI should drive inclusivity. We will seek positive examples and collaborate with others in the sector to develop best practice. We will organise KEIF activity with due regard to multi-faith calendars. We will recognise the role of religion/faith amongst our wider stakeholders in rural and island communities. |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | x | | | |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| Pregnancy or maternity | Potential for discrimination | | | x | Data on this PC is limited for student / graduate stakeholders. Staff training on EDI should drive inclusivity. Staff on leave will be given equal access to KEIF funded activities and we will engage in examples such as Women in Agriculture to explore issues and improve access to knowledge where we can. |
| | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | x | | | |
| | Potential to foster good relations | x | | | |
| | Potential for discrimination | | | x | |

| Equality group | Public sector equality duty | Place 'X' in the relevant box(es) | | | Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact. |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|--|
| | | Positive impact | Negative impact | No impact | |
| Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only) | Potential to advance equality of opportunity | | | X | Data on this PC is limited. Staff training on EDI should drive inclusivity. |
| | Potential to foster good relations | | | X | |

3.2 Think about and describe below how your assessment impacts on your policy, practice, process or service review or development timeline including but not limited to:

- Procurement criteria: do you need to include specific equality criteria as part of the technical specification ?
- Communication plan/ products: do you need to communicate with people affected by this policy, practice, process or service in a specific format (e.g. audio, subtitled video, different languages)?
- Cost: do you propose any actions because of this assessment which will incur additional cost?
- Resources: do the actions you propose require additional or specialist resource to deliver them?

3.3 Record the outcome of this assessment below having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy, practice, process or service on equality groups. Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):

Note: You must take action to remove barriers or take advantage of positive opportunities BEFORE the policy, practice, process or service goes live.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Please select (X) | Implications for the policy, practice, process or service |
|-------------------|---|

| | |
|---|--|
| | No major change: Your assessment demonstrates that the policy, practice, process or service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. |
| | Adjust the policy, practice, process or service: You need to take steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality of to foster good relations. You have set actions to address this and have clear ways of monitoring the impact of the policy, practice, process or service when implemented. |
| X | Continue the policy, practice, process or service: The policy, practice, process or service will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached. |
| | Stop and remove the policy, practice, process or service: The policy, practice, process or service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. |

SRUC's work on the natural economy means that many of the businesses, communities and individuals (including students) that we work with are located in (or are from) a rural (and sometimes an island) location. Rural communities (with less than 3,000 people) make up 98% of Scotland's land mass, 17% of its population and 34% of its businesses. These businesses and communities face particular challenges around distance from major centres, dispersed populations and markets, higher costs of doing business and travelling, often unreliable and slow digital connectivity, and a dominance of small businesses (and indeed micro businesses and sole traders) which may make accessing support and training more difficult. Scotland's rural economies are often characterised by a dominance of self-employment and part-time and seasonal working, with some individuals working multiple jobs, all of which are important contextual factors for SRUC's work.

At the same time, the opportunities associated with the natural economy are potentially hugely significant. In order to maximise these opportunities, in all of our work we will be cognizant of specific rural and island circumstances, ensuring that our programmes are accessible to all businesses, communities and individuals.



SRUC is not required by law to carry out Island Community Impact Assessments as a result of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 however we will always seek to ensure that we take account of particular challenges that may be faced with any island-based stakeholders we are working with, including the reliance on costly ferry services and the additional time and costs for businesses for example, of carrying people, goods and services on- and off-island. The reliance on ferries may also be important for our students in terms of travelling to and from our campus locations for study, particularly if these individuals are requiring to make the journey frequently to support the family croft or farm or provide care for family members.

For the last two decades, the Scottish Government's approach to rural issues has been to mainstream them in general policy development and delivery. In late 2022, two Cabinet Secretaries made a commitment to undertake rural proofing of projects funded as part of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation. As a result, a Rural Lens Toolkit has been developed to support Government policy-makers developing these NSET projects. This commitment has now been extended across Government and the Toolkit is being piloted across different departments.

SRUC is uniquely well placed to inform these new approaches to identifying and developing appropriate responses to specific island and rural circumstances. The work being proposed in SRUC's KEIF strategy will help support this rural proofing process by shining a light on, and developing ways to support, innovation and entrepreneurship by rural and island businesses, communities and individuals in ways that are inclusive, just and sustainable.

It is also worth acknowledging the need for different metrics to measure the impact of our KEIF work on rural and island areas. We have acknowledged in the table above one example of where existing data and measurements (in the form of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) may not be 'fit-for-purpose' for rural areas and issues. The evidence also suggests that traditional metrics for economic impact such as the number of jobs created, patents generated or the increase in GVA observed may not be as appropriate in rural locations where numbers are small. We will ensure that we build in alternative metrics and the use of qualitative data to measure the impacts of our work, including in terms of the wider socio-economic sustainability of communities. For example, the direct impact of supporting one or two new start-up businesses in a rural location may be the creation of 1-2 jobs which though only a small number may be hugely significant in that local economy, while the indirect impacts may include helping to support other local services such as the local school or library through the retention of local population.

4 Monitoring the policy, practice, process or service impact and further actions

It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy, practice, process or service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. Your monitoring information will also inform a future review of the policy, practice, process or service.

4.1 Record in the table below how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy, practice, process or service on equality groups. In the table below you should:

- list the relevant measures,
- Identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes
- Where the measure will be reported to (e.g. committee, ELT, Board) and how often.

| Measure | Lead department/ individual | Reporting (where/ frequency) |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Review PC metrics on staff leading or engaging in KEIF activity / project portfolio | KEIF Strategy Lead | Annually to ELT [REDACTED] |
| Review PC metrics for students engaging in KEIF activity | KEIF Student Enterprise Lead | Annually to ELT [REDACTED] |
| Review PC metrics for graduates leading or engaging in KEIF activity / project portfolio | KEIF Graduates Lead (to be appointed) | Within 6 months [REDACTED] |
| Track PC metrics for stakeholders engaging in KEIF funded activity | KEIF Strategy Lead | Annually to ELT [REDACTED] |
| Track outcomes such as no of innovation ideas / no of spin outs / no of new businesses metrics against PCs | Innovation Hub Lead | Annually to ELT [REDACTED] |

4.2 Record further actions or changes required after the policy, practice, process or service is implemented in the table below. Make it clear if there are no outstanding actions.

| Action | Lead department/ individual | Action target date |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Training – EDI training for SRUC staff, Innovation and KE committee and any reviewers or KIEF funded activities, as identified in SRUC's EDI Survey. | IKE Committee Lead | June 2025 |
| Continue to apply the Rural Lens toolkit when planning KEIF funded activities | ELT [REDACTED] | August 2025 |
| Develop an SRUC accessibility protocol for KEIF events and activities in collaboration with SRUC Communications | ELT [REDACTED] | June 2025 |
| Develop new metrics to measure the impact of our KEIF work on rural and island areas. For example, existing data and measurements (in the form of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation or traditional metrics for economic impact such as the number of jobs created, patents generated or the increase in GVA observed) may not be 'fit-for-purpose' for rural areas and issues. We will ensure that we build in alternative metrics and the use of qualitative data to measure the impacts of our work | [REDACTED] | December 2025 |
| Current SIMD20 figures may under-represent the actual % of SRUC's students that are from more deprived households . We will keep this under review and seek to ensure inclusion of SIMD20 students including through e.g. co-designing sensitive/appropriate research with students as they start with SRUC. | [REDACTED] | December 2025 |
| SRUC propose to set up an external stakeholder group to review our KEIF strategy on an ongoing | KEIF Strategy lead | August 2025 |



| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>basis including from an EqlA. This could include education/business and rural/island stakeholders e.g. Equality Network, Scottish Rural Action, , a representative of another academic institution working with rural businesses/communities (for example, the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE) at Newcastle University who have experience of delivering community-led innovation), and representation from of Enterprise Agencies such as HIE and SOSE.</p> | | |
|---|--|--|

5 Sign off and future review

Equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Head of Service/ Department, even where an EqlA is not required. Also note here when you plan to review the policy, practice, process or service and accompanying EqlA which should be no later than 5 years from policy, practice, process or service implementation.

5.1 Senior Responsible Owner/ Committee sign off.

[Redacted signature]

5.2 Equality impact assessment review date.

Date: 31/07/2025

Important: You must send the final version of this equality impact assessment to:



- the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Lead.
- the Communications team for publication on SRUC's equality page on the external website.



| Document control | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| Document control: | V0.1 | |
| Date policy, practice, process or service live from: | [1 February 2025] | |
| Review/ Approval Group: | IKE Committee | |
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