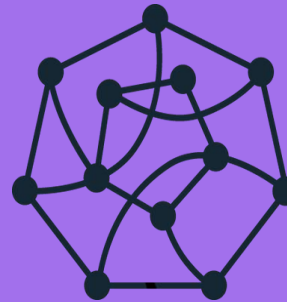




Introduction to Grant Writing

Emma Karoune, Emmy Bocaege and
Jacqueline Aldridge



AI for Multiple Long-term Conditions
Research Support Facility

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12583402>

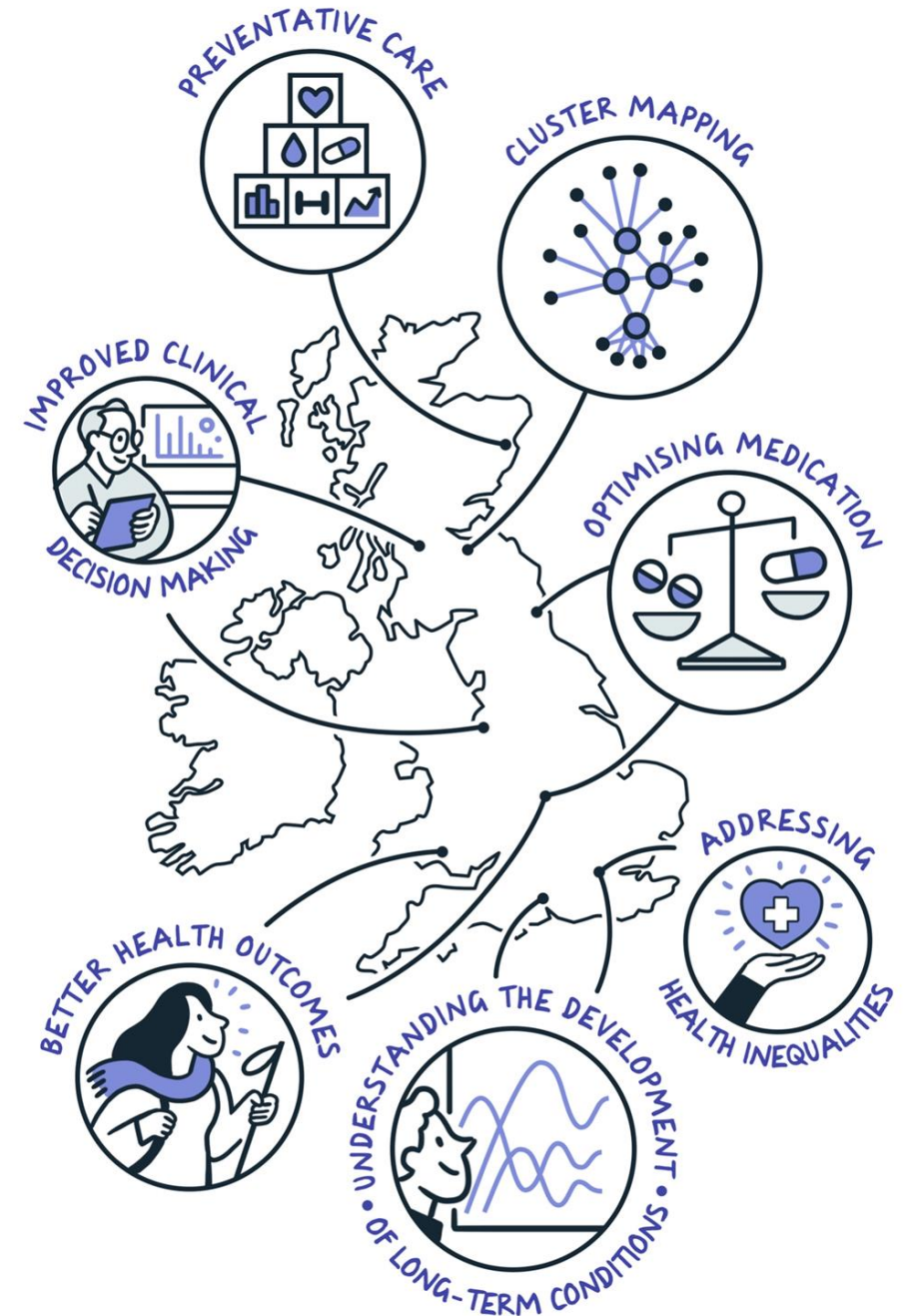
Workshop schedule

- 10:00 - 10:30 - Introduction to funding landscape for health and medical science research grants and fellowships - Emmy Bocaege
- 10:30 - 10:35 - Q & A
- 10:35 - 10:45 - My career in grants and fellowships - Emma Karoune
- 10:45 - 11:45 - Introduction to grant writing - Jacqueline Aldridge
- 11:45 - 12:00 - Break
- 12:00 - 13:00 - Writing process and abstract editing



Funding landscape

Emmy Bocaege
Turing research development manager



OVERVIEW

Why

Funding models

Who funds what?

Your research funding plan



AI for Multiple Long-term Conditions
Research Support Facility

**The
Alan Turing
Institute**



Swansea
University
Prifysgol
Abertawe



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



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YOUR MOTIVATION?

Developing your research profile

Impact (academic, conceptual, instrumental, capacity building)



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FUNDING MODELS

Responsive mode versus Challenge led

Solo vs Team



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Public Bodies

Department for Science
Innovation and Technology:

UKRI/ARIA

Department of Health and
Social Care: **NIHR**

Learned Societies

Royal Society

British Academy

Royal Society of Medicine

Charities

Wellcome

Cancer Research UK

British Heart Foundation

Leverhulme Trust

International

European Commission:

- ERC

- MSCA

- Horizon Europe

**Usual
suspects:
who funds
what?**

PUBLIC BODIES: UKRI

5 Year strategy (2022-2027):

build a green future

build a secure and resilient world

create opportunities and improve outcomes in communities across the country

secure better health, ageing and wellbeing for everyone

tackle infections

People and careers	Places	Ideas	Innovation	Impacts
Making the UK the most attractive destination for talented people and teams from the UK and around the world.	Securing the UK's position as a globally leading research and innovation nation with outstanding institutions, infrastructures, sectors and clusters across the breadth of the country.	Advancing the frontiers of human knowledge and innovation by enabling the UK to seize opportunities from emerging research trends, multidisciplinary approaches and new concepts and markets.	Delivering the government's vision for the UK as an innovation nation, through concerted action of Innovate UK and wider UKRI.	Focusing the UK's world class science and innovation to target global and national challenges, create and exploit tomorrow's technologies, and build the high-growth business sectors of the future.

UKRI Research Councils

- Arts and Humanities Research Council [AHRC](#)
- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council [BBSRC](#)
- **Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council** [EPSRC](#)
- **Economic and Social Research Council** [ESRC](#)
- [Innovate UK](#)
- **Medical Research Council** [MRC](#)
- Natural Environment Research Council [NERC](#)
- [Research England](#)
- Science and Technology Facilities Council [STF](#)



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PUBLIC BODIES: NIHR

‘Innovation pathway’: early ‘translational’ -> clinical -> applied

strategic focus:

1. Build on learnings from COVID-19 research response and support recovery of health/social care system
2. Build capacity/capability in preventative, public health and social care research
3. Improve lives of people with multiple long-term conditions through research
4. Bring clinical/applied research to under-served regions/communities with major health needs
5. Embed EDI across NIHR's research, systems and culture
6. Strengthen research delivery staff careers/underrepresented disciplines/specialisms
7. Work with life sciences industry to improve health/economic prosperity

PUBLIC BODIES: NIHR

[Funding programmes](#) (multiple calls/year; researcher-led and commissioned)

Research training ([fellowships](#), professorships, integrated academic training, incubators, career recognition awards etc) and [NIHR academy](#)

Themed calls (Compound pressure)/Highlight Notices (Brain tumours, Motor neurone disease and dementia)

NIHR [research support service](#) can help with:

- identifying funding sources
- research design
- research methods
- involving patients and the public

NIHR [local clinical research networks](#) can support with projects that involve patients and staff at NHS trusts (AcoRD guidance and SoECAT completion)

CHARITIES: WELCOME

Challenge areas (impact awards, commissioned research, challenge-led funding):

- ✓ [Mental health](#)
- ✓ [Climate and health](#)
- ✓ [Infectious disease](#)

[Discovery research funding](#) ([early career](#), career development, discovery awards):

- ✓ fundamental processes that underpin biology
- ✓ complexities of human health and disease (clinical/population-based)
- ✓ burden of disease and its determinants
- ✓ development methodologies, conceptual frameworks, technologies, tools, techniques
- ✓ needs, values, priorities of people/communities affected by disease/health disparities
- ✓ social, ethical, cultural, political, economic, historical contexts of human health/disease.

LEARNED SOCIETIES

National bodies offering fellowships, informing debate, ensuring international engagement

British Academy

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- [Strategy 2022-2027](#)

Royal Society

- [Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Engineering, Earth Sciences, Biology, Neurosciences, Anatomy, Physiology, Evolutionary/Ecological science, Health and Human Sciences](#)
- [Strategy 2022-2027](#)

Also: Associations and Societies within your (sub)field often offer small grants for pilot projects

INTERNATIONAL

[Horizon Europe](#): EU's key R&I funding programme

Mission areas:

- Adaptation to climate change
- Cancer
- Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters
- Climate-neutral and smart cities
- Soil health and food

3 Pillars:

- Excellent Science, Global Challenges, Innovative Europe

[OSCARS](#)

[Training \(doctoral/postdoctoral\): Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions:](#)

Open Fellowship Calls : Apply Any Time

UKRI: [EPSRC postdoctoral fellowships-responsive-mode](#), [EPSRC open fellowships-responsive-mode](#), [EPSRC open plus fellowships-responsive-mode](#), [EPSRC new investigator award-responsive-mode](#), [ESRC new investigator grants](#), [ESRC secondary data analysis](#), [Daphne Jackson Fellowships](#)

July 2024

- 11th NIHR – [Advanced fellowship](#)

September 2024

- 10th Royal Society - [University Research Fellowship](#)
- 11th MRC – [Career development award](#)
- 11th MSCA – [Postdoctoral fellowships](#)
- 17th MRC – [Population and systems new investigator](#)

October 2024

- 1st Wellcome – [Early career awards](#)
- TBC NIHR – [Advanced Fellowships](#)
- 2nd BA – [Postdoctoral Fellowships](#)
- 11th (forecast) BA - [Innovation fellowships](#)
- 29nd (forecast) Royal Society - [Dorothy Hodgkin fellowships](#)

November 2024

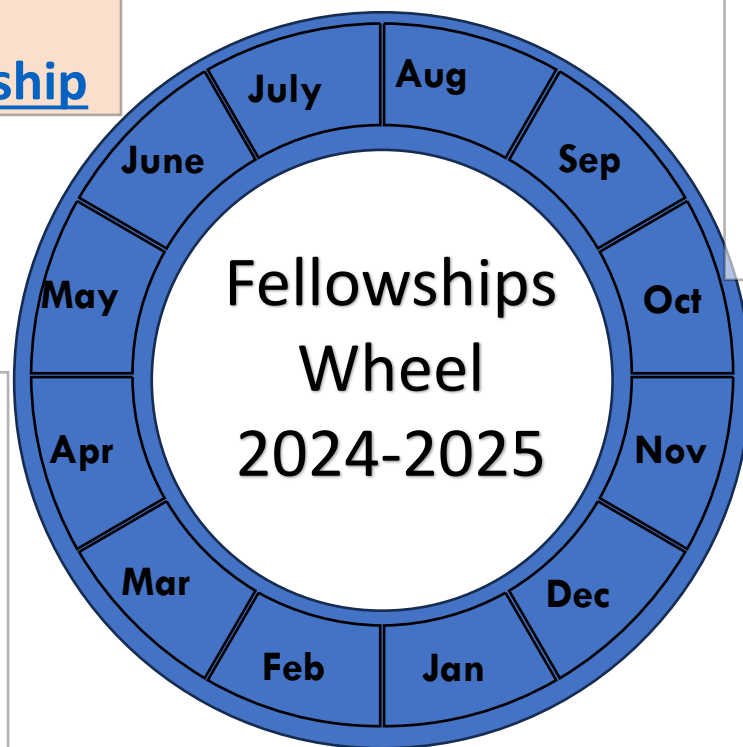
- 7th (forecast) ERC – [Starting Grant](#)
- TBC MRC – [Better methods/research new investigator](#)

April 2025

- 30th (forecast) ESRC - [adr uk research fellowships](#)

February 2025

- TBC – Leverhulme – [Early Career fellowships](#)



Funding plan

5 year plan

- Research Vision: what defines, what do you wish to be known for and why?
- Research Aims (key research questions)
- Research profile (outputs, impact, funding)
- Priorities (unfinished projects/publications)
- Support (training, network of collaborators, mentors)

Funding plans for coming year

- New bids
- Current/forthcoming projects
- Development of work/relationships towards new projects/forthcoming funding opportunities
- Work in progress (Outputs, Funding, Impact, Research Environment contributions)



Opportunities

UK Research Council funding finder ([Opportunities – UKRI](#))

[EU funding portal](#)

Learned societies/charities websites: British Academy, Royal Society, Royal Society of Medicine, Wellcome

Research Professional

Your research office



Other resources

- *Health funding landscape: [UK Health Research Analysis Report 2022 \(hrcsonline.net\)](https://hrcsonline.net)*
- *The Research Funding Toolkit (Jacqueline Aldridge/Andrew Derrington)*
- Phil Ward's blog
<http://fundermental.blogspot.co.uk/>:
- [Gateway to Research](#)
- Open Grants website: <https://www.ogrants.org/#>
- UKRI Research council website ([How to apply for research and innovation funding – UKRI](#))

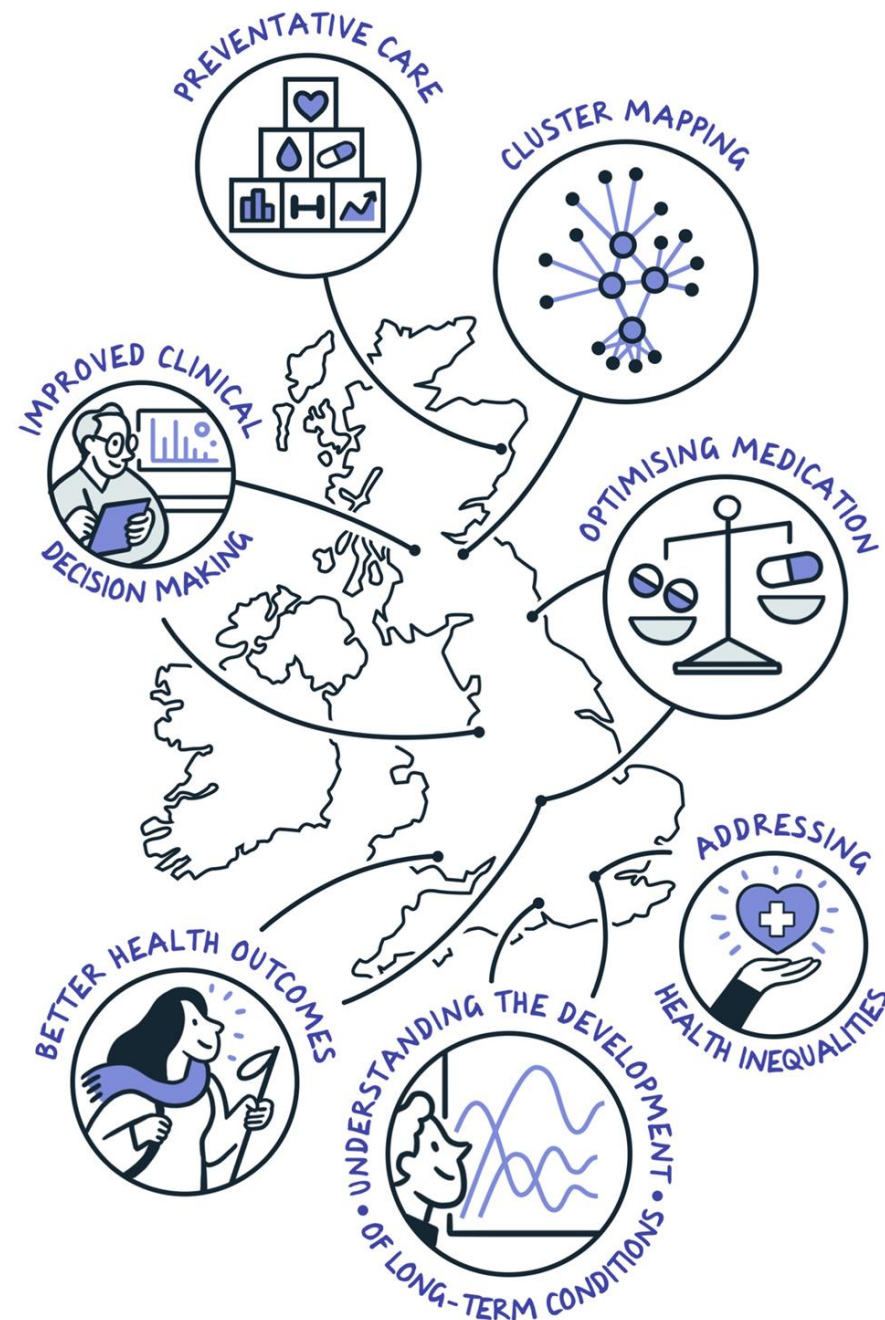




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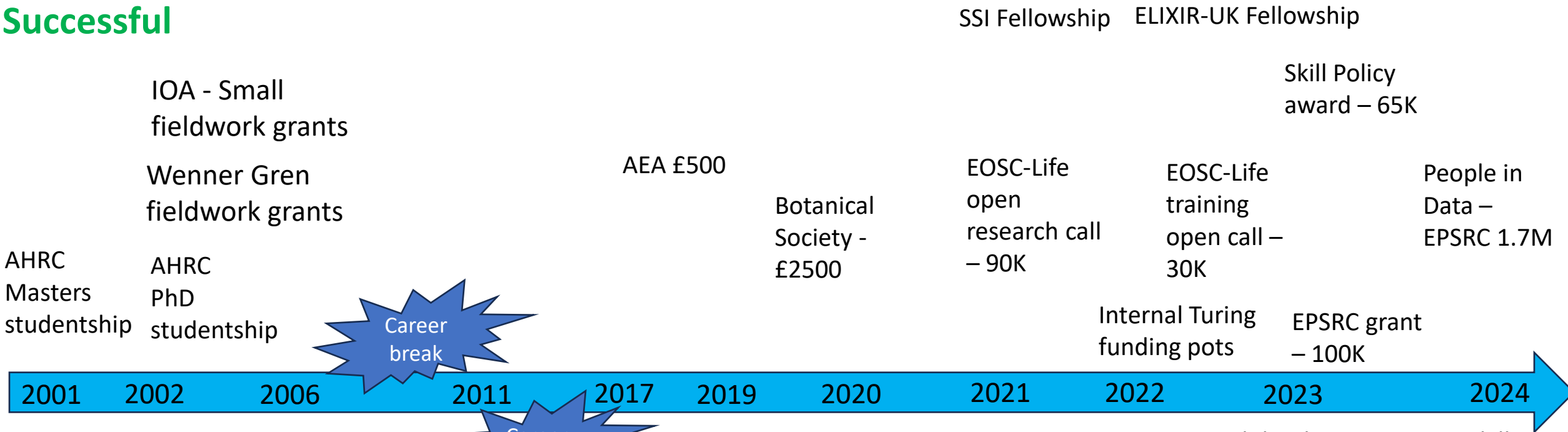
Researchers' perspective

Dr Emma Karoune

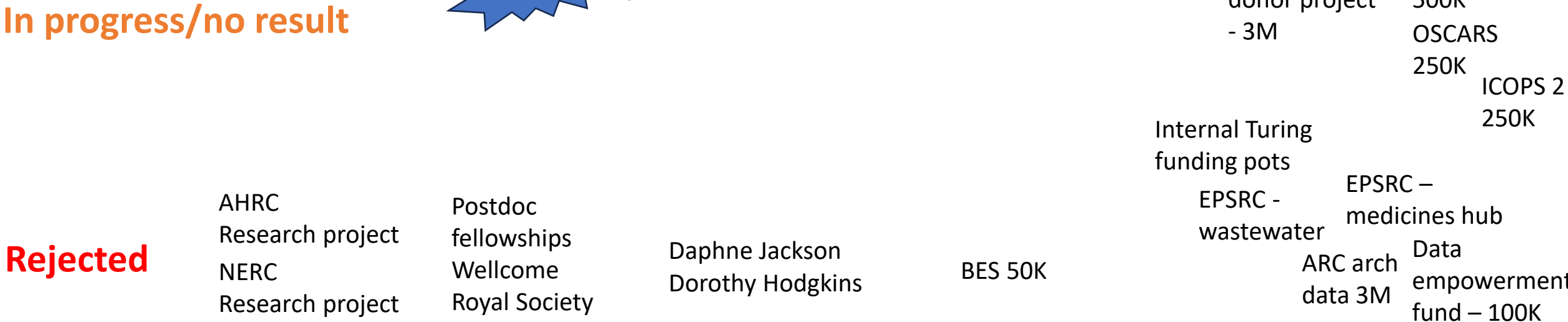


My career in grants and fellowships – Dr Emma Karoune

Successful



In progress/no result



Rejected



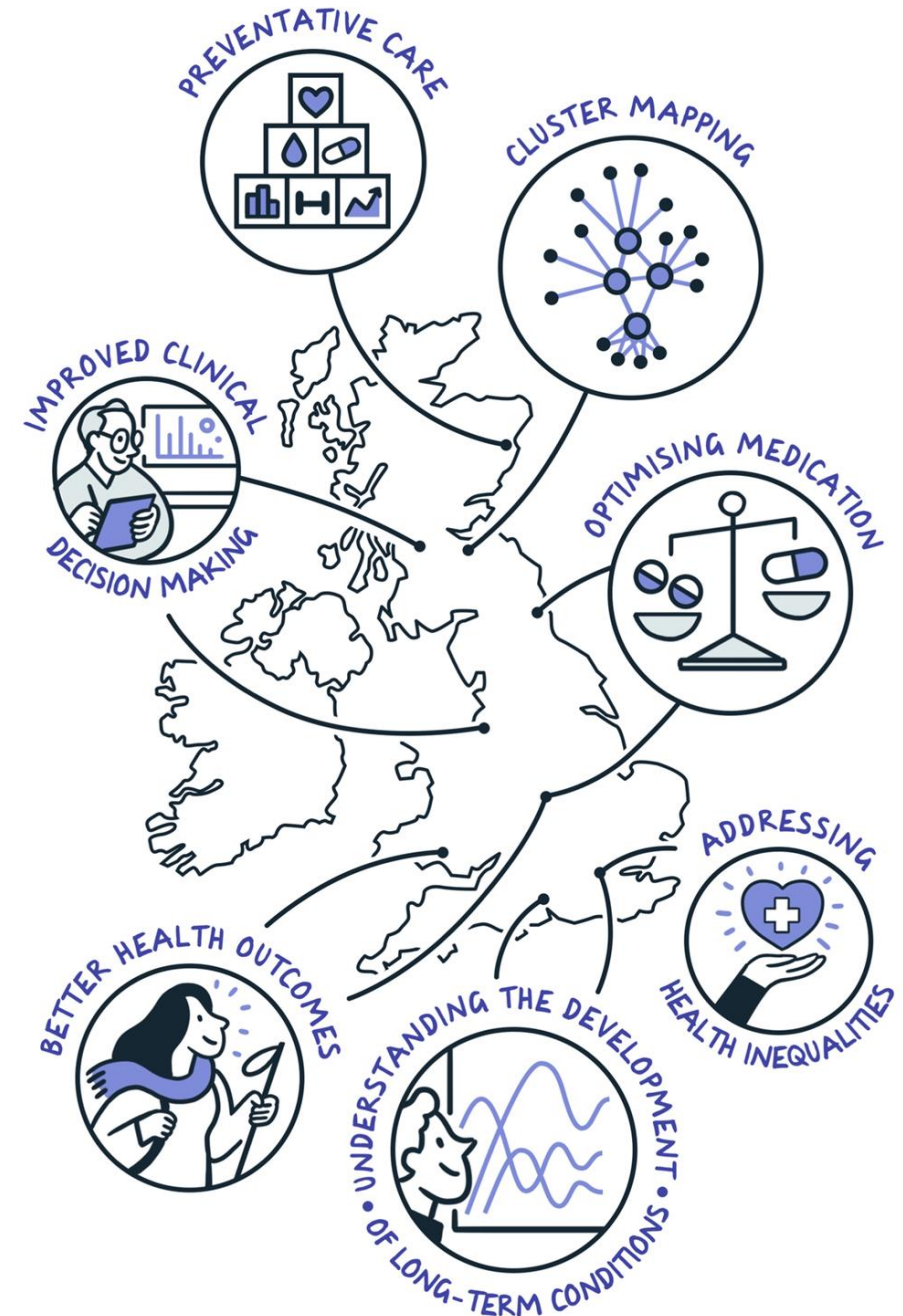
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Your first research funding bid

planning, writing and winning

29/6/24

Dr. Jacqueline Aldridge



ABOUT ME

Nearly 20 years research funding support e.g. UKRI, European Research Council, Leverhulme Trust

Lead author of 'The Research Funding Toolkit' (Sage, 2012)

Extensive experience supporting early career academics e.g.

- UKRI Future Leader Fellowships
- ERC Starting Grants
- ESRC New Investigator

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jacqueline-aldridge-11b9312b3/>

<https://jacquelinealdridge.com/>

OVERVIEW OF THIS WORKSHOP



Creating a 'fundable' research project



Planning your application



Writing the proposal

PUBLICATION SUCCESS VS. FUNDING SUCCESS

Publications

Findings of a research project

Disseminates knowledge

Many available journals

Publications are often specialist to discipline

Assessed on its own terms

Low-cost decision for publisher (they don't pay you)

Revise and resubmit is an option

Funding bids

Plan for a research project

Describes the research process

Few funding sources

Funding agencies are always more generalist

Assessed in competition

High cost and high risk for funder (they pay...and in advance)

Resubmissions are often prohibited

CREATING A FUNDABLE RESEARCH PROJECT

PART 1

WHY DO ORGANISATIONS FUND RESEARCH?

To meet their own charitable, political, economic, societal or cultural aims

To generate important knowledge (according to *their own definition* of importance)

This can include capacity building, a regional focus, addressing a specific health challenge, developing a set of tools and methods or supporting a particular type of researcher

WHY SHOULD A FUNDING AGENCY INVEST IN YOU?

Your talent and potential as a researcher

Your capacity to solve an important problem

Your knowledge of a particular health
condition

Methodological or technical expertise

Your capacity or potential to complete a
project successfully and within budget

YOUR FUNDABILITY 'AUDIT'

What currency can you offer a funding agency or collaboration?

1. Specialist methods and techniques
2. Knowledge of specific health conditions
3. Access to particular resources or facilities
4. Links with non-HEl project partners
5. Aspects of project management

To be developed further in the next workshop!

HOW TO FIND OUT ABOUT SPECIFIC FUNDING PRIORITIES



Criteria vary widely for different funders and schemes



Official guidance can be complex and confusing



...especially the case with the UKRI and government-sponsored schemes



It can be difficult to succeed by just reading the guidance

UNDERSTANDING WHICH PROJECTS GET FUNDED



1. Read eligibility and assessment criteria
2. Be prepared for misleading criteria
3. Don't ignore the assumed or unspoken criteria
4. Check what has already been funded
5. Understand the review process
6. Ask insiders

OFFICIAL ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA



Funding scheme web page



Funding agency website



'More information' section



Scheme guidance for applicants



Webinars



Strategic priority documents

LOOK OUT FOR MISLEADING CRITERIA

‘We welcome’ or ‘we encourage’

‘As an exception, ...’

‘Applicants may be eligible...’

‘We sometimes support...’

Any eligible costs that cannot easily be incorporated or justified

FUTURE LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIPS: JOB SHARE

Future Leaders Fellowships

Applying for a Fellowship on Job-Share Basis

Applications from those wishing to hold a Future Leaders Fellowship on a job-share basis are encouraged as one of the mechanisms through which UKRI supports applications from those wishing to combine the fellowship with personal responsibilities.

There may be times when an application for a fellowship as a job-share might be right for potential candidates.

Reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Timeliness i.e. where a full-time equivalent fellow is required to ensure that time-critical research and innovation can be completed within a shorter timescale than a part-time fellowship would allow.
- An existing job-share i.e. where researchers and/or innovators are already working within a job-share that they wish to maintain.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate why they and the proposed programme of research and/or innovation would not be better served by two part-time fellowships.

A job-share fellowship should not be considered because a PI does not currently have the full skill set to undertake the fellowship. In these instances, a Co-Investigator who brings complementary and different skills to the project can be included as part of the fellowship award for a time limited period while the fellow develops their skills in the areas covered.

1) Is the expectation that the two individuals job sharing a fellowship have very similar skills and experiences, or is the expectation that their experience and skills should be complementary?

Most job-shares are between individuals with similar skills and experience. Job-shares should not be used to upskill an applicant who requires complementary and different skills in order to complete the project. Such upskilling should be achieved through the fellowship and is supported through the ability to include a time-limited Co-Investigator.

The applicants should make clear in their application the skills and experience of both applicants, and why they are applying via a job-share arrangement and not two separate part-time applications. It must also be stated in the application Cover Letter that the fellowship is being applied for as a job-share.

Please note that the Je-S form will list job-share fellowship applicants as Principal and Co-Investigator. This is entirely due to the limitations of our systems and your status as Co-PIs will be highlighted to reviewers and Panel members. The Co-PIs should have equal responsibility for the overall fellowship and programme of research and/or innovation. In addition, the joint applicants should be able to demonstrate a clear plan to support their own (and if applicable, their team) training and development needs. A plan should be in place for each of the joint applicants as part of the proposal.

This does not mean that the Co-PIs both have to have involvement in every aspect of the programme of research and/or innovation. For example, in terms of publications or other outcomes that result from the fellowship it may be that one Co-PI has more involvement in particular aspects than the other so we would not mandate that both Co-PIs have to have identical credit for these.

2) How do we apply as a job-share fellowship?

We recommend that you contact the FLF team before applying on a job-share basis.

Only one application is required. Due to the limitations of Je-S it is not possible to have joint Principal Investigators (PIs) on the application so the joint applicants (Co-PIs) will be a notional PI (the 'Fellow') and a Co-I. Throughout the review and assessment process it will be made clear that the joint applicants should be treated as Co-PIs and as such the applicants will be considered on equal terms with neither candidate considered the 'lead' or 'primary' PI apart from for system administrative purposes.

3) What guidance do reviewers get when considering job-share proposals?

Noting that job-share fellowships are non-standard and that members of the research and innovation community may not have reviewed such proposals before, additional feedback is provided to those carrying out the external peer review of proposals and for those sitting on the Sift and Interview Assessment Panels. Additional guidance for reviewers on job-share applications can be found within the [Future Leaders Fellowships Reviewers Guidance](#). With regards to the FLF assessment criteria (found on the funding opportunity webpage), this guidance also:

- a. Makes it clear that applicants are joint Principal Investigators
- b. States that the:
 - i. consideration of the *Research & Innovation Excellence* and the *Impact & Strategic Relevance* assessment criteria need to include assessment of how the proposed project forms a single coherent programme rather than separate activities
 - ii. consideration of the *Applicant and their Development* assessment criteria needs to consider both applicants jointly
 - iii. consideration of the *Research and Innovation Environment & Costs* assessment criteria needs to consider the commitment of the host organisation to the development and establishment of both applicants, and how the host will support the proposed programme of work as a whole

Additional guidance for those sitting on Interview Panels will also be available. This will make clear that both applicants will be attending the interview and that questions should be addressed to both applicants. Furthermore, it will be stated that the applicant's joint Full Time Equivalent (FTE) spent on the Fellowship will be between the 0.5 and 1 required of a standard Fellowship.

IDENTIFYING HIDDEN CRITERIA

Funders may not state the obvious in their scheme criteria e.g.

- You usually need a PhD, an academic job and some publications (but this varies).
- You can't already know the answer to your research question.
- The project needs to be coherent and logical.
- Your topic needs to be of interest outside your discipline.

‘HIDDEN’ CRITERION EXAMPLE

[Home](#) > [Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council \(EPSRC\)](#) > [Guidance for applicants](#) > [Check if you're eligible for funding](#)

Check if you're eligible for funding



Eligibility of organisations

UKRI has standard organisational eligibility requirements. [Check your organisation's eligibility to apply.](#)

Eligibility of individuals

UKRI is introducing new role types for opportunities being run on the new UKRI Funding Service from 22 May 2023. For full details, see [eligibility as an individual](#).

Investigators must be academic employees – lecturer or equivalent – of an eligible organisation and must be resident in the UK, except under specific conditions, set out in the co-investigator section. Any fellows holding fellowships aimed primarily at the postdoctoral level are not eligible to apply.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) fellows, Royal Society fellows and Royal Academy of Engineering fellows holding fellowships aimed at later career stages are eligible to apply.

<https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/>

NAVIGATING YOUR WAY THROUGH



What has the agency funded previously?



Guidance for reviewers and review templates



Membership of assessments panel and panel chair



Understanding the review and selection process



Advice and informal review from those who understand the system

PREVIOUSLY FUNDED PROJECTS




[Home](#) [About this system](#) [Release history](#) [Contact us](#)

Welcome to the UKRI gateway to publicly funded research and innovation
Search for and analyse information on the latest innovative research in the UK

[Search](#)[All Data](#)[Help](#)

“AI CHRONIC HEALTH” SEARCH

**UK Research and Innovation**

Home About this system Release history Contact us

Search All Data Advanced

Please select the required search fields:

☒ ORCID ID☒ Project Abstract☒ Project Reference☒ Project Title

Projects (38849)

Publications (34133)

People (42497)

Organisations (1430)

Outcomes (86326)

Classifications (1739)

Start DateEnd DateFunded ValueRelevance

<<12345>>

CSV

2550100

Apply FilterClear AllHelp

Sep 16 - Apr 21

Among patients with chronic lung disease, how does severity and progression predict healthcare seeking treatment?
MRC award to Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

Sep 18 - Oct 22

Exploring neighbourhood effects, genetic characteristics and individual behaviours' influence on health disparities within a geographical context...
ESRC award to University of Bristol

Aug 20 - Sep 24

Understanding the neurobiological basis of co-morbid chronic pain and depression by integrating genomics, peripheral biomarkers and neuroimaging data.
MRC award to University of Edinburgh

Sep 23 - Sep 26

Co-design of a gamified, attention-based intervention for chronic pain and chronic dizziness
ESRC award to King's College London

£360,061
Mar 22 - Jun 24

FAB - Targeting cell senescence to treat chronic wounds
Innovate UK award to FIVE ALARM BIO LIMITED and William Bains

Refine by :

Project Status

☐ Active (10591)☐ Closed (28236)

Funded Amount

☐ Up to £100K (17419)☐ £100K to £1M (17834)☐ £1M to £10M (3487)☐ Above £10M (109)

Region

☐ East Midlands (2017)☐ East of England (3183)☐ London (8075)☐ North East (1378)☐ North West (3357)☐ Northern Ireland (610)☐ Scotland (4110)

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS



Administrative secretariat – eligibility checks but perhaps also assigning reviewers



Reviewers – varying levels of expertise, enthusiasm and positivity inform a ‘specialist’ assessment against the evaluation criteria



Panel introducers – less specialist, working under pressure, assigned several bids, diverse and high-quality applications, don’t want to look foolish



Panel members – non-specialist, large numbers of bids to process, need to ask intelligent questions and help rank all bids under consideration

AN EPSRC REVIEW TEMPLATE

EPSRC

Pioneering research and skills

EPSRC

Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, United Kingdom SN2 1ET

Telephone +44 (0) 1793 444000

Web <https://epsrc.ukri.org/>

Compliance with the UK data protection legislation and the EU General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (GDPR)

In accordance with UK data protection legislation and the EU General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (GDPR), the personal data provided on this form will be processed by EPSRC, as part of UKRI, and may be held on computerised databases and/or manual files. Further details can be found in the [guidance notes](#) and on the UK Research and Innovation Privacy Notice (<https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/>).

New Investigator Award Peer Review

EPSRC Reference:

Document Status:

New Investigator Award

Applicant Details

Applicant		Organisation	
-----------	--	--------------	--

Title of Research Project

Review Information

Response Due Date		Reviewer Reference:	
-------------------	--	---------------------	--

Quality

Primary criterion. Please comment on the degree of research excellence of the proposal, making reference to: (1) The novelty, relationship to the context, timeliness and relevance to identified stakeholders; (2) The ambition, adventure, transformative aspects or potential outcomes; (3) The suitability of the proposed methodology and the appropriateness of the approach to achieving impact. (For multi-disciplinary proposals please state which aspects of the proposal you feel qualified to assess.)

Importance

Secondary major criterion. Comment on the national importance of the research. How the research:(1) Contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other disciplines, contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges and/or contributes to future UK economic success and development of emerging industry(s); (2) Meets national needs by establishing/maintaining a unique world leading activity; (3) Complements other UK research funded in the area, including any relationship to the EPSRC portfolio.

Ability to deliver

Secondary criterion. Please comment on the applicant's ability to deliver the proposed project, making reference to: (1)

Page 1 of 3

Date Saved:
Date Printed:

Appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s); (2) Balance of skills of the project team, including collaborators.

Research independence

Secondary criterion. Based on the proposal, comment on the applicant's ability to lead original and independent research.

Resources and Management

Secondary Criterion.

Please comment on the effectiveness of the proposed planning and management and on whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified, making reference to: (1) Any equipment requested, or the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third-party contribution; (2) Any resources requested for activities to either increase impact, for public engagement or to support responsible innovation.

Host Organisation Support

Secondary Criterion.

Please comment on whether the training and development needs of the applicant and the route to meeting these needs are suitably identified in the host organisation statement and if it is clear that the support offered has been tailored to the aspirations of the applicant. Please also comment on the suitability of the mentoring arrangements proposed and the suitability of support mechanisms to ensure that all students/research associates supervised by the applicant have a good quality experience.

Overall Assessment

Please summarise your view of this proposal

My judgement is that:

- 1) This proposal is scientifically or technically flawed
- 2) This proposal does not meet one or more of the assessment criteria
- 3) This proposal meets all assessment criteria but with clear weaknesses
- 4) This is a good proposal that meets all assessment criteria but with minor weaknesses
- 5) This is a strong proposal that broadly meets all assessment criteria
- 6) This is a very strong proposal that fully meets all assessment criteria

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

My confidence level in assessing this is:

Low	Medium	High
-----	--------	------

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/EPSRC-10022022-NewInvestigatorAwardPeerReviewForm.pdf>

THE ROLE OF LUCK

Peer review may not be specialist, expert, considered or friendly

You cannot predict the competition in any round or panel member preferences

The process is subjective – panel members may advocate their preferred projects

One very brilliant (and expensive) project may consume the available funds

DEVELOPING A 'FUNDABLE' MINDSET

Funding bids are a research input not a research output

Some good ideas may not fit an available funding scheme

Grants are big, speculative investments: close scrutiny of your ideas is guaranteed

Writing funding bids is a sales and marketing job

Applications are technical documents with one purpose – to win a grant

THE UNDERLYING CRITERIA OF ALL FUNDING SCHEMES



Important and relevant questions



High chance of successful delivery



Competent research teams



Excellent value investments

HOW TO HELP YOUR ASSESSORS DO THEIR JOB



Make your proposal convincing



Make your application quick to read



Make your application easy to understand

**PLANNING YOUR
APPLICATION**

PART 2

ELIGIBLE
VS
FUNDABLE
VS
FUNDED

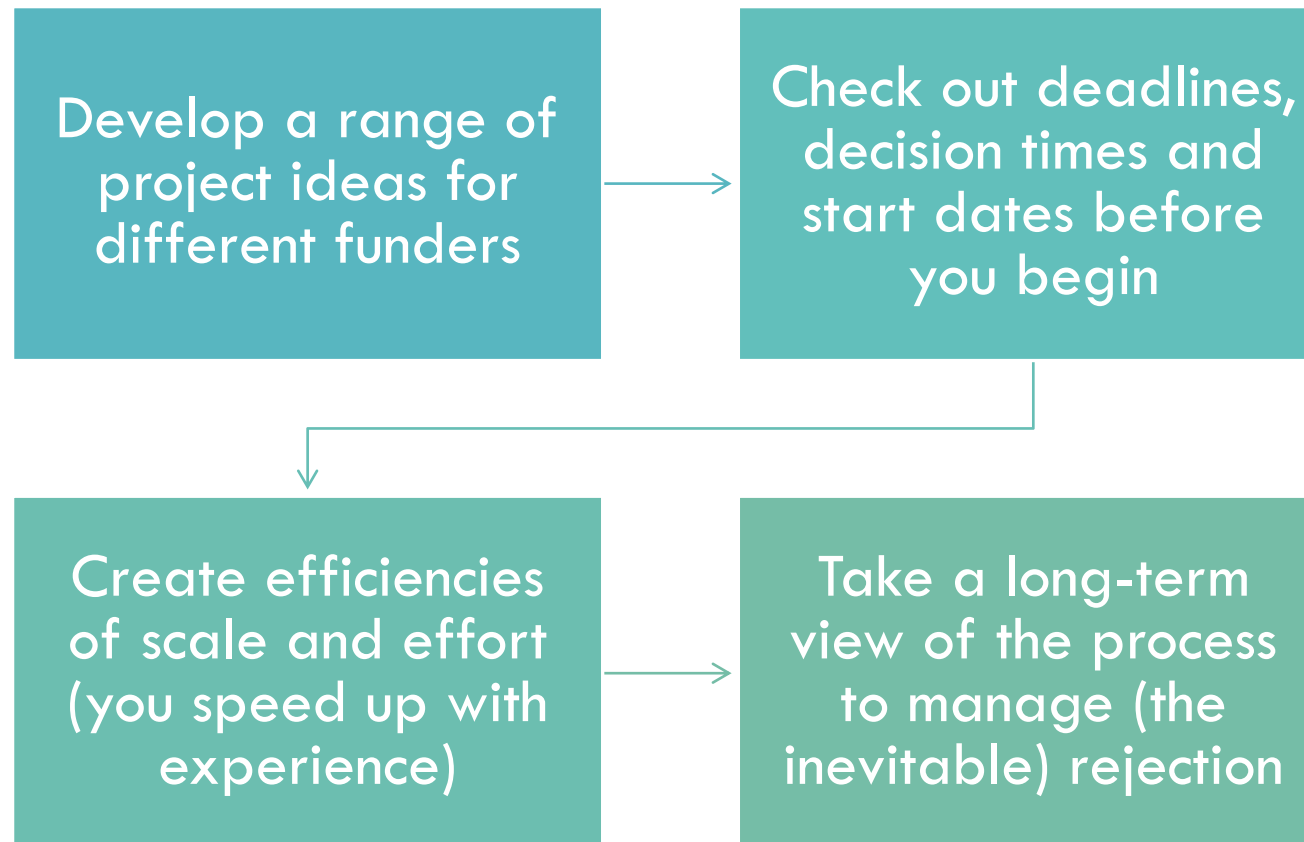
Most applications will be *eligible*

But success rates may be 10% or lower

Do your applications go to the panel/stage 2?

Are your projects 'worthy of funding' but rejected?

CREATE YOUR FUNDING STRATEGY



MAIN COMPONENTS OF EVERY PROPOSAL



The question or problem



The research team



The methodology



Feasibility, risk and management



Outcomes and outputs



The budget

THE TYPICAL UKRI APPLICATION

6pp/3000 wordcount (but this varies...always check)

Summary (abstract)

'Vision' section

'Approach' section

Capability to deliver: R4RI

Budget and Justification of Resources

THE BUREAUCRATIC SECTIONS

Ethics and research integrity

Risk management

Project management

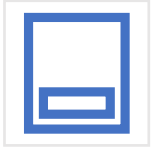
Timetable/GANTT chart

Beneficiaries and public engagement

EDI action plan

These sections can all be deal-breakers

THE BORING BUT IMPORTANT RULES



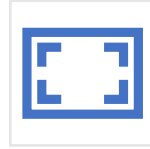
Word count
and page
length - 2 to
14



Font and
type size



Line spacing



Margin size



References



Figures and
tables

A TIMELINE TO SUBMISSION



1. Read the criteria and figure out what the funder wants to invest in.



2. Design the project and **scope budget**.



3. Scope your overall argument and structure/sub-headings (against the evaluation criteria and required content).



4. Make a list of the evidence you need to include under each sub-heading.



5. Create a full draft – starting with the methods section.



6. Write the first line, abstract and finalise the title.



7. Leave lots of time for feedback and multiple drafts.

WRITING YOUR
PROPOSAL

PART 3

FIVE KEY THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



1. Assume assessors are busy, non-expert and unenthusiastic.



2 Evidence every claim you make in the proposal.



3. See the wood for the trees - remember the four underlying criteria.



4. You can't do this alone – you need professional and academic help.



5. Rejection of good projects is inevitable – keep on applying.

WHICH PARTS OF THE BID DO ASSESSORS FOCUS ON?

Reviewers

- Title and abstract
- Budget
- Team members
- Approach
- Other sections as needed for further detail

Panel members

- Title and abstract
- Budget
- Team members
- Vision
- Reviews
- *Wider panel may just look at abstract/vision, team and budget*

VISION (EPSRC)

1. is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
2. has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
3. is timely given current trends, context and needs
4. impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment
5. identifies the potential direct or indirect benefits and beneficiaries

VISION & 'IMPORTANCE'

1. is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
2. has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
3. is timely given current trends, context and needs
4. impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment
5. identifies the potential direct or indirect benefits and beneficiaries

APPROACH (EPSRC)

1. is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
2. is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
3. uses a clear and transparent methodology
4. summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
5. will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
6. describes how your, and if applicable your team's, research environment will contribute to the success of the work

APPROACH & 'SUCCESS'

1. is **effective** and appropriate to achieve your objectives
2. is **feasible**, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
3. uses a clear and transparent methodology
4. summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
5. will maximise translation of **outputs into outcomes and impacts**
6. describes how your, and if applicable your team's, research environment will contribute to the **success** of the work

HOW TO EVIDENCE COMPETENCE

Capability to Deliver (R4RI)

Team composition

Your choice of scheme

Self-citation

Justification of methods

Professionally presented proposal

HOW TO EVIDENCE VALUE

Budget and Justification

Conferences in the Seychelles?

Importance of topic vs price of project

Economical methods (e.g. secondary data)

CONVINCE YOUR ASSESSORS: VISION

Quality & Importance

- Why do we need to know the answer to your question?
- Why hasn't the question been asked before...or answered properly?
- What makes you and your team uniquely placed to answer it?
- How is your approach of the highest quality?

Knowledge

- What will the project tell us that we didn't already know?
- How will the findings and/or methodological development contribute to your field?
- How will your findings interest those outside your sub-discipline or academia?
- *'A gap in the literature' is not evidence or originality or contribution*

Impact & Timeliness

- Why now (i.e. the start date in 18 months!) is the best time to answer your question?
- What will your project change in the world?

Benefits & Beneficiaries

- Who will use your findings?
- In what ways will they find them useful?
- As with impact, what will your project change in the world?

CONVINCE YOUR ASSESSORS: APPROACH



Context

Selected, relevant research and evidence from a range of fields – not a full literature review of your field or sub-field

Demonstrate with evidence why the question needs answering now or needs a new answer



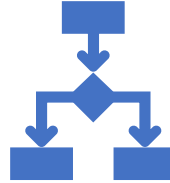
Design and methods

Evidence for why your question should be answered in the proposed way.

The limitations of previous methodological approaches and what have they failed to tell us.

Present your approach as an active choice not an assumption (your assessors may not know about your methods).

Give a detailed description of the research process itself – provide a blueprint not a sketch



CONVINCE YOUR ASSESSORS: APPROACH

Outputs, outcomes and impacts

- What will the project tell us that we didn't know already?
 - How will this change perception or practice in academia and beyond?
- Where will you publish your findings? You need to balance ambition with realism.
 - How will non-academic stakeholders find out about your project?
- Show how you and your team are competent to translate your findings.

CONVINCE YOUR ASSESSORS: APPROACH



Feasibility

Timings for each work programme and/or major activity.

Who carries out what and with which project resources – prime your budget and justification with logistics.

Risk and mitigation.



Environment

This is more important if facilities/labs are involved – or you work in a ‘backwater’ institution.

How will your existing work environment help you deliver and manage this project?

WRITE CONVINCINGLY

Aim for an air of effortless superiority (be neither apologetic nor boastful)

Do not parrot back the criteria to assessors – weave them in with subtlety.

Do not use hyperbole ('innovative', 'ground-breaking', 'esteemed', 'world-leading') – show don't tell.

Avoid adjectives and adverbs as far as possible.

If you can't submit a well-argued funding proposal, can you manage a £million + grant?

A research funding proposal is not a new business pitch or tender – it doesn't need gloss.

BEING EASY TO UNDERSTAND

Immediately tell panel members what your project does (avoid discursive introductions or quotes).

Use consistent terminology across objectives, research questions and Work Programme headings.

Assume your readers are non-specialist and avoid sub-disciplinary jargon.

Provide background information and short examples for non-specialists.

Logical layout: aim/objectives/research questions/research design/work programmes/outputs.

Only use recognisable acronyms, such as UN, UK, USA, DNA, NATO.

Include enough detail about your methods for specialist reviewers.

BEING QUICK TO READ

Short sentences

Short paragraphs

Active verbs in the present tense

Avoid too many clauses, sub-clauses, exceptions and nuanced statements

Avoid dense blocks of text – include plenty of line breaks

Also make use of short lists and bullet points

Packing in as many words as possible is a false economy

Headings and numbering help with orientation

Be careful about over-use of **bold**, underlining or *italics* within text. These interventions make your case for support much harder to read.



ABSTRACT EXERCISE — ‘COUGH INTO THE BOX’

The abstract needs to:

- Use plain English
- Provide all the basic information about the project (what, where, why, who, when, how...)
- Evidence importance and success
- Generate genuine interest amongst your reviewers
- Act as a prompt for the panellists who introduce your project to the other members

IS IT READY TO SUBMIT?

- Is the layout clear and easy on the eye?
- Does 50% of the wordcount describe the research process itself?
- Read it out loud to yourself – does it make sense?
- Are there gaps in your logic?
- Use the evaluation criteria and required content checklist you made at the start.
- Get non-specialist feedback from anyone with a bit of intellectual curiosity who writes well in English.
- Get specialist feedback from a fellow academic from your field with a funding track record (especially for the methods section).

SEVEN TAKE HOME MESSAGES

THE UNDERLYING CRITERIA

1. Important and relevant questions
2. High chance of successful delivery
3. Competent research teams
4. Excellent value investments

YOUR PROPOSAL MUST BE....

1. Convincing
2. Quick to read
3. Easy to understand

NEXT SESSION



Your track record and the narrative CV (R4RI)

Wednesday 10 July

10 am-1 pm.