

Résumé for Researchers (R4R)-like Narrative CV: Shared Evaluation Framework

1. Introduction

Background

The [Joint Funders Group](#) is contributing to the Research & Innovation (R&I) Community roll out of a narrative CV, based on the Royal Society's '[Résumé for Researchers](#)' (R4R)¹, through exploring shared approaches.

As a group of organisations who fund research and innovation activity in a variety of ways we share many attributes and principles in terms of funding the best projects, the best ideas, and the best people.

Purpose and Principles

We have developed the shared evaluation framework for potential use by all funders who are considering, piloting or using an R4R-like CV approach, as we believe in the transformative power of collective effort. We are developing this for anyone who is planning an evaluation of an R4R-like CV implementation. Making this framework open and available will facilitate sharing and comparison of anonymised findings across evaluations, help build the global evidence base for the value of the R4R-like CV and support the ongoing adoption and evolution of the R4R-like CV approach across the R&I sector.

While we are at different stages of the R4R-like narrative CV journey – be it implementing or considering implementing – and may be driven by a range of ambitions, operating to varying timescales, and using different formats and different processes, we do share a number of key objectives which we expect the R4R-like CV will help us achieve. These objectives have informed the development of this shared evaluation framework:

- A. Demonstrating funder's commitment to a positive research culture and inclusion
 - Thinking about what kind of people doing research and innovation we fund
 - Broadening what we see as important
- B. Responsible assessment
 - Redefining 'excellence'
 - Moving away from linear assessment
 - Focus on both qualitative (quality, significance, and impact) and quantitative (metrics) assessment of researchers and innovators
 - Facilitating the decision-making of reviewers and panels by offering them a broader view of applicants' experience
- C. Creating an inclusive process, which reduces barriers and broadens the scope of who can apply for funding and undertake research
 - Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
 - Supporting non-linear research career paths

¹ Across the Joint Funders Group, we are using multiple different approaches to a 'Résumé for Researchers' (R4R) or 'narrative-based' CV. We therefore use the term 'R4R-like CV' in a broad sense to include all formats of CV that aim to capture a broader experience through a narrative approach.

- Supporting early-/mid-career researchers and innovators for whom a traditional CV may not be well suited
 - Response to Covid-19: focusing on key achievements / research active years, rather than productivity / time since PhD to account for those who experienced an unequal loss of time
- D. Creating the right incentives (incentives that align with the organisations strategic priorities)
- Incentivising researchers and innovators to broaden outputs
 - Plan S / Open access publishing: move away from a focus on venue of publication
 - Mitigating bias
- E. Reducing barriers across disciplines and sectors
- F. Time saving / making processes easier for applicants
- Through internal alignment / consistency
 - Through alignment with others
 - In long-term

How to use this framework

This framework offers a minimum common product, by suggesting a basic approach to evaluation which we hope many, or even all, organisations using the R4R-like CV will be able to adopt in their own evaluation. However, we recognise that this answers only a fraction of potential evaluation questions: notably, the current approach provides very limited or no evidence on the impact of the R4R-like CV on key system-level outcomes such as EDI. We therefore strongly encourage organisations to expand on this - by expanding the list of survey questions or adding other, perhaps more qualitative, evaluation approaches² - and to share their broader evaluation approaches both across the Joint Funders Group and with the wider community.

This evaluation framework might be implemented as soon as an organisation begins to pilot an R4R-like CV, and on an iterative basis as the R4R-like CV is rolled out. We encourage organisations to use it on a repeated basis to provide longitudinal data on how attitudes and experiences of the R4R-like CV change, both as formats and guidance are adapted in line with feedback, and as the community become more experienced with the approach.

Given that we are implementing the R4R-like CV to different timescales, and using different approaches, we recognise that not all of the activities or focus areas proposed in this shared evaluation framework will be relevant to all funders. However, we feel it is important to suggest opportunities for alignment which we encourage funders to adopt where possible.

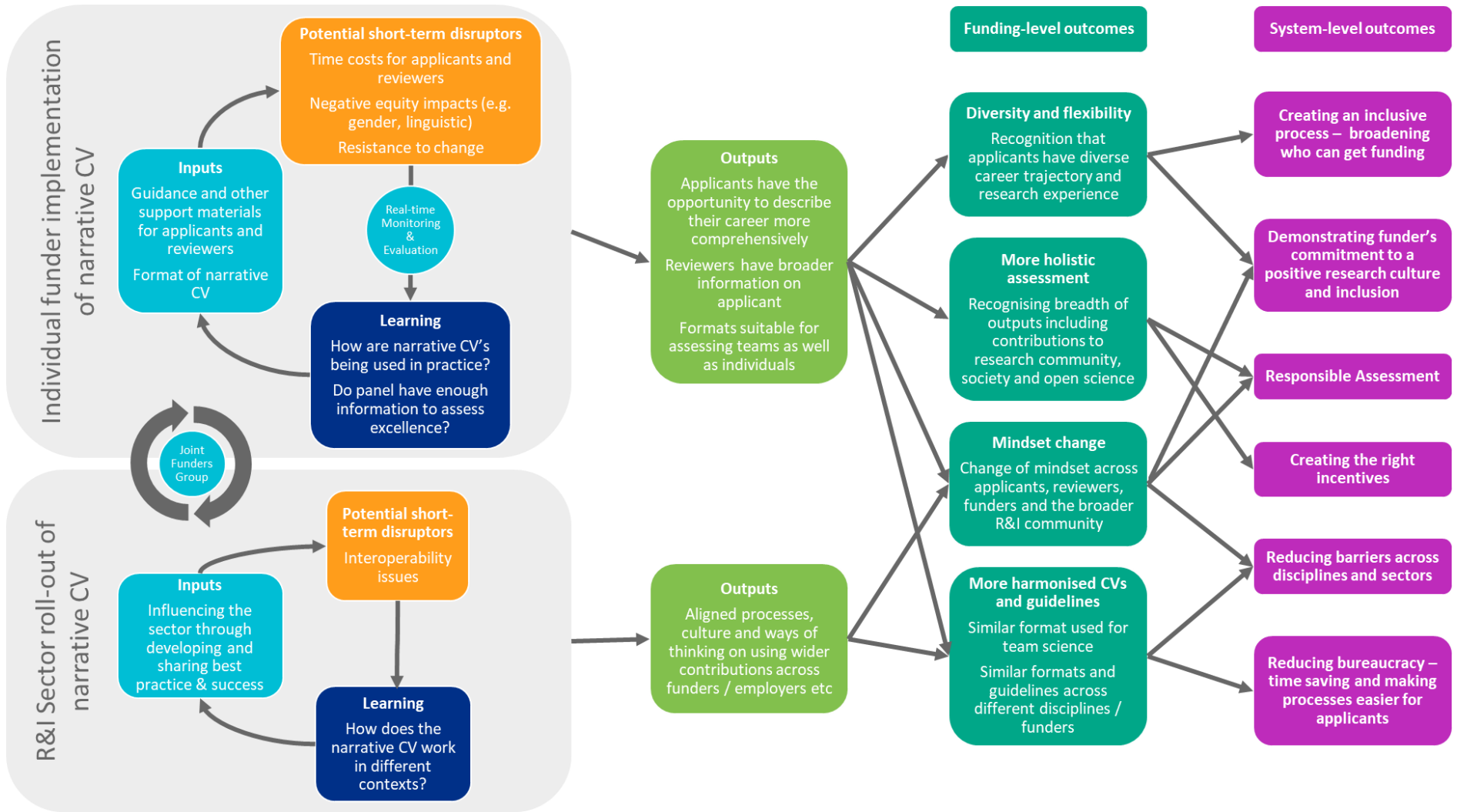
This does mean that, in analysing across our individual findings, we need to be cautious that we are not necessarily comparing like-for-like. Nonetheless, our collective findings will allow us to compare different approaches and provide an evidence base of how the R4R-like CV is working at a community level.

² See section 4 ('Future areas for development') for some ideas of the types of evaluation questions that may be considered as part of a more comprehensive approach.

2. Logic Model

We have developed a high-level Logic Model (see p.4) to underpin this shared evaluation framework, by describing how we expect the implementation of narrative CV to lead to the objectives described above. Within this, we also acknowledge that there may / will be some 'disruptors' or 'costs' in the short-term; we, as funders and implementers of an R4R-like CV, have a duty to minimise these disruptors where possible in order to maximise the positive outcomes for the R&I community as a whole.

High-level Logic Model for the R4R-like Narrative CV



3. Focus areas and approaches

As a starting point, this framework proposes a focus on two key areas for the shared evaluation framework:

- Process evaluation: understanding how the implementation of an R4R-like CV is working in practice so that we can adapt our implementation as needed, and compare how different approaches used across the Group are working.
- Impact on Responsible Assessment: understanding how the R4R-like CV is being used by reviewers and panels, and how this is changing the way research is assessed and funding awarded.

We have proposed below a number of questions which aim to elicit data from applicants and reviewers relevant to these aspects of an evaluation. When planning an evaluation, we suggest that funding organisations should consider including these questions as a minimum, where possible following this standardised format to allow for comparison across funders.

Suggested survey questions

Question	Answer Format	What does this question provide us with evidence for?
Questions for applicants		
How satisfied are you that the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV gives you a better opportunity to showcase your broader skills and experience, outside of your publication list?	Very satisfied Satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Maybe	Process evaluation; <i>Potentially some early evidence for impact on: Creating the right incentives; Creating an inclusive process</i>
What do you think of the length of the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV? Is there sufficient space to capture enough information on your contribution to knowledge generation, development of individuals, contribution to research community and wider society?	Too short About right Too long	Process evaluation
How clear and complete was the guidance from the funder for filling out the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV?	Very clear and complete Clear and complete OK /neutral Some things not clear or complete Not at all clear or complete	Process evaluation
What additional guidance or support would be helpful?	Open	Process evaluation

Did you receive support when completing the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV from your host / employing organisation, e.g. from research support services, a mentor etc.?	A lot of support A little support Support was available but I did not need or want it No support was available	Process evaluation; Impact on: Time saving / making processes easier for applicants
Compared to other experiences, how much time did the application with the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV take to complete?	>20% less time 0-19% less time about the same 0-19% more time >20% or more time not applicable (I haven't applied for a comparable scheme before)	Process evaluation; Impact on: Time saving / making processes easier for applicants
Please provide any additional comments you may have	Open	
Questions for reviewers		
Core questions		
How useful was the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV in providing you with the information you needed to make a well-informed decision?	Very useful Useful Neutral Not useful Not at all useful	
What did you find more or less useful?	Open	
Did you seek further information on the applicant e.g. via ORCID/PubMed/Google Scholar?	Yes No	
If yes to the above, please provide further details on which sources you used and what additional information you were looking for.	Open	
What do you think of the length of the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV?	Too short About right Too long	
How clear and complete was the guidance for assessing applications containing the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV?	Very clear and complete Clear and complete OK /neutral Some things not clear or complete Not at all clear or complete	

What additional guidance or support would have been helpful?	Open	
Please provide any additional comments you may have on the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV	Open	
Optional questions for reviewers <i>Note that the wording of these questions may need to be adapted to suit the organisational context – some suggestions are given.</i>		
Compared to an application with a traditional CV / Compared to other experiences, do you feel the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV gives you a broader view of an applicant's skills and experience?	Much broader A little broader About the same A little narrower A lot narrower	
What additional information included in the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV was most useful in your decision-making?	Open	
Compared to an application with a traditional CV / Compared to other experiences, do you feel the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV is more or less difficult to assess?	A lot more difficult A bit more difficult About the same A bit easier A lot easier	
Please provide further details	Open	
Compared to an application with a traditional CV / Compared to other experiences, how much time did the applications with the Résumé for Researchers like Narrative CV take to review?	>20% less time 0-19% less time about the same 0-19% more time >20% or more time not applicable (I haven't reviewed applications for a comparable scheme before)	

Demographic Data

Demographic data at a cohort level is important in understanding the variable impact of the R4R-like CV on different groups. In some instances, funders may have collected this information already (e.g. grant management database); if that is the case, data linking between the survey and relevant

databases might be used to minimise the burden on survey respondents in line with relevant data protection policies. In other instances, demographic questions might need to be added to the survey. Demographics that would be useful to collect could include:

- Institution / employing organisation (or type of organisation)
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Disability
- Career stage / length of research and innovation career to date

Sharing findings

A key objective of this shared evaluation framework is to allow for learning across organisations using an R4R-like CV. We therefore suggest a commitment to openly sharing anonymised data collected through evaluations and analysis. Wherever possible, this should include a full, anonymised dataset to allow for ease of comparison and analysis across funders. However, we recognise that in some instances, especially where sensitive data such as demographics are collected, it may be more appropriate to share a synthesis or an appropriately redacted dataset.

4. Future areas for development

We see this shared evaluation framework as a living document. This first iteration proposes a 'minimum common' approach which we hope that most funders will be able to implement as part of their own evaluation processes, whilst yielding valuable findings on how the R4R-like CV is working. Below, we suggest areas for further development in future iterations of the framework. Those designing their own evaluation plans may also want to consider how to incorporate these issues.

Impact on Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI)

One of our commonly agreed goals for the R4R-like CV is to enable a more diverse range of applicants to acquire funding. This diversity should encompass individual characteristics (gender, ethnicity, etc), research backgrounds/levels (career stage, disciplines, academic or industry career, etc), as well as diversity of thought / approach (type of project, interdisciplinary research, etc). To understand how the R4R-like CV meets (or doesn't) this goal, we need to: define and identify which areas of EDI we want to understand (with regards to the impact of the CV).

There are a number of ways to then evaluate this impact:

- Use funders' existing data (funding rates by gender/ethnicity/etc aligned with our target areas) to see how the R4R-like CV is affecting inclusivity/EDI in funding. *This requires collaboration and data sharing between funders, which might entail legal, technical, or other barriers.*
- Develop a set of questions to ask applicants, reviewers, and panel members around the impact of the R4R-like CV on EDI measures/targets. *This could especially help with aspects of EDI not easily captured in current data, e.g. research background.*
- Develop controlled experiments (within or between funding agencies) to understand how R4R-like CVs affect these measures/targets in funding schemes.

Impact on Research Culture

Research culture is a very broad topic, and to understand impact on research culture in general is too difficult. It would be important to specify targets/goals and focus on those. We suggest that focusing on “broadening incentives and rewards structures”, “recognizing a broader range of outputs” and similar concepts would be good initial targets.

In developing an evaluation to understand the impact on research culture, we need to recognise that culture change is a long-term process, and the impact evaluation would have to go over multiple years to track trends and changes over time in the target areas. We must also be aware of (or predict and try to measure) “off-target effects” and other impacts on culture that would arise from changing to a R4R-like CV.

This aspect of the R4R-like CV evaluation might best be addressed through a more in-depth, qualitative approach (e.g.interviews), seeking views from researchers of different career stages/institutions/disciplines to understand how they believe the R4R-like CV impacts research culture. The joint funders group might consider developing a common interview format to support a common approach to data collection.

Wider stakeholders

Our first iteration focuses on seeking the views of applicants and reviewers / panellists. However, it is worth recognising that in future iterations, we might consider including consultation with wider stakeholder groups, for example mentors or research and development staff who advise researchers on the development of an R4R-like CV and funding applications.

5. Version Control

<u>Version Number</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Revision Date</u>	<u>Author(s)</u>	<u>Summary of Changes</u>
1.0	Complete	March 2022	Joint Funders Group	New resource created