Joint Funders Group

Developing guidance for applicants – a starter guide

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Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI)-like narrative CV: developing guidance for applicants – a starter guide

Contents

Background and purpose

The aim of an R4RI-like narrative CV is to broaden the range of information and contributions provided and considered during an application process. This approach is likely different to application processes an applicant has previously experienced, so it is important to provide clear guidance.

This guide is primarily informed by observations of commonalities and best practice by Joint Funders Group members. Its aim is to help identify considerations and aspirations in the development of your own guidance for applicants.

Overall considerations

■ Involve relevant stakeholders in the guidance development – such as, applicants, reviewers, call support staff, research support staff, EDI professional staff, organisation development staff, Human Resources staff, research centres, etc – to ensure it is informed.

■ Be explicit about its use, where people can find information about it, and why as an organisation you are taking this approach.

■ Determine a consistent location of the guidance across all funding calls, such as within the CV template, a separate applicant guidance document, or within the call/scheme guidance document.

■ Ensure guidance for reviewers, committee/panel members is aligned with applicant guidance.

■ Applicant guidance should be written in an accessible and structured way using clear and concise language. It should be inclusive and accessible for neurodiversity and immersive readers.

■ Be clear how the CV will be used within the context of the application i.e. as a tool that helps evidence an

applicant's experience and/or potential to undertake the submitted proposed work.

■ Be clear about who is required to complete the CV, for example, CVs are only required for the Principal Investigator(PI) and co-PI.

■ Make it clear if there are any linked or adjoined requirements to the CV which will be checked or viewed by reviewers as part of the application process, such as an updated personal details document or updated ORCID profile.

■ Outline what should not be included, for example, reference to metrics such as journal impact factor, h-index and total number of publications are not permitted. It is also useful to briefly explain why such information should not be included, for example, that your organisation has committed to responsible research assessment. Consider the appropriate process for checking for information not permitted and necessary actions, for example if you choose not to return for amendment, ensure you have clear guidance on how this information is to be managed by the applicant, reviewers, and call managers.

■ Include maximum word counts for modules/sections and specify the font types, sizes, and page margins limits. Be clear about what can and cannot be deleted from the CV template. Make applicants aware if you are using a system/process that automatically rejects items outside of these parameters.

■ Outline to applicants what reviewers (peer reviewers and committee/panel members) will be informed about and have access to during the assessment process, such as ORCID profile and CV. If there is no guarantee for reviewers to access the links, highlight that information vital to the application should not be included solely within such links.

■ Wherever possible, ensure applicants have access to all interlinked information, such as call or scheme-specific guidance, to enable consistency and prevent confusion.

■ Consider providing applicants with a named contact within your organisation for specific questions.

Layout of the CV

Whether built into applications or as an attachment to the application form, it is a good idea to maintain a list of key information relating to the layout of the CV.

■ Start with an explanation of what an R4RI-like narrative CV is and your organisation's motivation for taking this

approach. For example, aligning to the principles of DORA; the commitments of CoARA; broadening the types of achievements that can be seen as relevant for the advancement of research and innovation; allowing an applicant to be more fairly evaluated on their vision, appropriate experience, and contributions to science and society, instead of a narrow set of criteria.

■ Maintain a consistent order of the R4RI-like narrative CV headers and modules, as applicants and reviewers will develop familiarity with this format across funders.

Based on the Royal Society's Résumé for Researchers (R4R) the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) headers are:

● Personal details

● Module 1 – Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge

● Module 2 – The development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships

● Module 3 – Contributions to the wider research and innovation community

● Module 4 – Contributions to broader research/ innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

● Additions

Guidance text

■ Using R4RI-like narrative CV as a base, you can adapt the language and supporting guidance to your landscape and existing guidance documents. This can be done either in the template itself, in a separate guidance document, with additional resources, or all the aforementioned. Ensure that these are aligned, with a clear plan for updates across all documents.

■ Explain to the applicant what you are looking for – some funders use examples or lists of topics the applicant might address. Be clear whether an applicant needs to address some or all topics listed or if the list is not exhaustive i.e. they can include something they consider of value but that is not on the list.

■ Be clear if points or examples of contributions can be displayed in bullet point form by the applicant to improve readability/align with an applicant's preferred style and consider implications with word/page length restrictions.

■ Specify whether an applicant needs to only highlight past activity and contributions or should include future and planned activities and contributions.

Module 1 – Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge

Figure 1: R4RI-like narrative CV prompts to frame contributions to Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge

... the generation and flow of new ideas, hypotheses, tools or knowledge

e.g. skills acquired from past research projects, key outputs such as data sets, software, and research and policy publications.

Figure 2: R4R guidance to 'How have you contributed to the generation of knowledge?'

This module can be used to explain how you have contributed to the generation of new ideas and hypotheses and which key skills you have used to develop ideas and test hypotheses. It can be used to highlight how you have communicated on your ideas and research results, both written and verbally, the funding you have won and any awards that you have received. It can include a small selection of outputs, with a description of why they are of particular relevance and why they are considered in the context of knowledge generation. Outputs can include open data sets, software, publications, commercial, entrepreneurial or industrial products, clinical practice developments, educational products, policy publications, evidence synthesis pieces and conference publications that you have generated. Where outputs have a DOI please only include this.

- Guidance can be adapted to reflect your organisational and the call/ scheme specific priorities.

- Questions could be expanded depending on your organisational priorities. For example, how have you contributed to the generation and communication of new ideas, hypotheses, tools or knowledge?

- If you have specific panel requirements for the call, such as data sets, consider collecting this on a separate form.

- Be clear what you do not expect to see in this section. Be conscious that prohibiting something may require checking, editing and returning.

- Reassure applicants how a 'light' or 'empty' section will not be detrimental to their application.

Module 2 – The development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships

Figure 3: R4RI-like narrative CV prompts to frame contributions to 'The development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships'

Figure 4: R4R guidance to 'How have you contributed to the development of individuals?

> This module can be used to highlight expertise you provided which was critical to the success of a team or team members including project management, collaborative contributions, and team support. It can include your teaching activities, workshops or summer schools in which you were involved (for undergrads, grads and post-grads as well as junior colleagues), and the supervision of students and colleagues. It can be used to mention mentoring of members in your field and support you provided to the advancement of colleagues, be it junior or senior. It can be used to highlight the establishment of collaborations, from institutional (maybe interdisciplinary) to international. It can be used to describe where you exerted strategic leadership, how you shaped the direction of a team, organisation, company or institution.

- Language of the guidance can be adapted to be more direct. For example, please describe your role in the success of a team or team members.

- Be clear about what you do not expect to see in this section.

- Reassure applicants how a 'light' or 'empty' section will not be detrimental to their application.

Module 3 – Contributions to the wider research and innovation community

Figure 5: R4RI-like narrative CV prompts to frame contributions to 'Contributions to the wider research and innovation community'

... the R&I community

e.g. across disciplines, institutions, and / or countries, commitments such as editing, reviewing and committee work, positions of responsibility, aiding improvement of research integrity or culture, or strategic leadership in influencing a research agenda.

Figure 6: R4R guidance to 'How have you contributed to the wider research community?'

This module can include various activities you have engaged in to progress the research community. It can be used to mention commitments including editing, reviewing, refereeing, committee work and your contributions to the evaluation of researchers and research projects. It can be used to mention the organisation of events that have benefited your research community. It can highlight contributions to increasing research integrity, and improving research culture (gender equality, diversity, mobility of researchers, reward and recognition of researchers' various activities). It can be used to mention appointments to positions of responsibility such as committee membership and corporate roles within your department, institution or organisation, and recognition by invitation within your sector.

- Be clear about what you do not expect to see in this section.
- Reassure applicants how a 'light' or 'empty' section will not be detrimental to their application.

Module 5 – Contributions to broader research/innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

Figure 7: R4RI-like narrative CV prompts to frame contributions to 'Contributions to broader research/innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit'

... broader society

e.g. engagement across the public and/ or private sectors or with the wider public, research which has contributed to policy development or public understanding, other impacts across research, policy, practice and business, and other research users.

Figure 8: R4R guidance to 'How have you contributed to broader society?'

This module can include examples of societal engagement and knowledge exchange. It can include engagement with industry and the private sector. It can be used to mention engagement with the public sector, clients and the broader public. It can be used to highlight positive stakeholder feedback, inclusion of patients in processes and clinical trials, and other impacts across research, policy, practice and business. It can be used to mention efforts to collaborate with particular societal or patient groups. It can be used to highlight efforts to advise policy-makers at local, national or international level and provide information through the press and on social media.

- If using examples or lists of topics the applicant might address, it is important to be clear where lists are meant as guidance, and that applicants do not need to address all topics. You can also highlight that applicants may choose to include other topics.

Additions

Figure 10: R4RI-like narrative CV guidance to 'Additions'

> Provide any further details relevant to your application. This section does not count towards the page limit, and must not be used to describe additional skills, experiences or outputs.

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Figure 11: R4R guidance to 'Additions'

> Mention career breaks, secondments, volunteering, part-time work and other relevant experience (including in time spent in different sectors) that might have affected your progression as a researcher.

- This differs from the Personal Details section as applicants can provide details of any significant life events and how these events have influenced or impacted their work in research and innovation. It should be clear that there is no expectation for applicants to disclose significant life events.

- Guidance can highlight the potential impact of COVID-19 on an applicant's career progression, if appropriate.

- Make it clear to the applicant how and when this information will be taken account in the assessment process.

The Résumé for Researchers additionally included sections for 'personal details' and 'personal statement'. The guidance and prompts to consider are included below for information.

Personal details

Figure 12: R4R guidance to 'Personal details'

> Provide your personal details, your education, key qualifications and relevant positions you have held.

- Consider if this information is collected elsewhere within the application and prevent duplication where possible.

- Consider if this is required – some funders operate a 'blind' application process.

Personal statement

Figure 13: R4R guidance to 'Personal statement'

> Provide a personal statement that reflects on your overarching goals and motivation for the activities in which you have been involved.

- Guidance can highlight if this should be in relation to the specific proposal or whether this can be more generic.

- Be clear if the applicant should focus on past activity only, or also future activity/ long-term research and innovation vision and career objectives. This will depend on the type of application, for example, a research career or fellowship application.

Training and support

- Consider the additional resources/tools that an applicant might need to accompany the guidance and how this could be provided. For example, webinars, FAQs, videos, signposting to other materials and support.

- Consider creating a video/audio recording that covers your organisation's approach to the use of R4RI-like narrative CVs and feature it on your funding call pages.

Evaluation

It is best practice to evaluate new interventions and processes to ensure they are not creating any unintended consequences. This is critical in culture change. It is strongly recommended that you build in an evaluation phase to your introduction/use of R4RI-like narrative CVs and funding management. This can cover many aspects of the documentation and process:

- Consider asking what applicants thought of your guidance. You might use the Shared Evaluation Framework questions and then use the feedback to improve and enhance the guidance.

- Share your anonymous evaluation findings with others to build the evidence base and help improve the research and innovation landscape.

Version Number	Status	Revision Date	Author(s)	Summary of Changes
1.0	Complete	March 2022	Joint Funders Group	New resource created
2.0	Complete	May 2023	Joint Funders Group	Proof-edited and designed