

## Résumé for Researchers (R4R)-like Narrative CV: Applicant Guidance Starter Guide

### Background and purpose

This document provides an applicant guidance ‘starter’ for those embarking on the journey of adopting a [Résumé for Researchers](#) (R4R)-like narrative CV. This guide is primarily informed by observations of commonalities and best practice by [Joint Funders Group](#) members’, however some of the identified considerations are aspirations that members of the Joint Funders Group and you, as a funder, might find useful in developing your own R4R-Like CV applicant guidance.

As a funder developing applicant guidance for your R4R-Like CVs you might want to consider:

### Overall considerations

- Involve relevant stakeholders in the guidance development to ensure its informed, such as, applicants, reviewers, call support staff, research support staff, EDI professional staff, organisation development staff, Human Resources staff, research centres etc.
- Because this is a revised format of CV in an application, be explicit about its use, where people can find information about it, and why as an organisation you are taking this approach.
- It’s useful to 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 etc.
- Be clear about who is required to complete the CV, for example, CVs are only required for the PI and co-PI.
- Make it clear if there are any linked or adjoined requirements to the CV which will/may be checked or viewed by reviewers as part of the application process, such as an updated personal details document or updated ORCID profile etc.
- Explain what should not be included as appropriate, for example, reference to metrics such as journal impact factor, h-index and total number of publications are not permitted. It’s 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.
- Make it clear what the overall maximum page length of the CV or word counts for modules/sections are and specify the font types, sizes, and page margins limits. Make it clear what can and cannot be deleted from the CV template. If you are using a system/process which will automatically reject items outside of these parameters, be sure to highlight this to the applicant to manage expectations.
- With this being different approach, it’s useful to outline 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.
- Consider providing a named contact within your organisation for specific questions.
- Wherever possible, ensure applicants have access to all interlinked information, such as call or scheme-specific guidance, to enable consistency and prevent confusion.

- Recognising an overarching aim of a narrative CV is to broaden the range of information and contributions provided and considered when making decisions, consider the needs of your reviewers and committee/panel members and ensure their guidance is aligned with what applicants are informed about and expect.
- It's best for guidance to be written in an accessible and structured way using clear and concise language.
- Guidance should be inclusive for neurodiversity and immersive readers.
- This should also be 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 the applicants experience and/or potential to undertake the submitted proposed work.

## Layout of the CV

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

- start with an explanation of what a narrative CV is and your organisation's motivation for taking this approach, for example, aligning to the principles of [DORA](#); 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 narrow set of criteria.
- maintain a consistent order of the R4R headers and modules, as applicants and reviewers will develop familiarity with this format across funders.

The headers of the R4R are:

- Personal details
- Module 1 – How have you contributed to the generation of knowledge?
- Module 2 – How have you contributed to the development of individuals?
- Module 3 – How have you contributed to the wider research community?
- Module 4 – How have you contributed to broader society?
- Personal statement
- Additions

## Guidance text

- Using R4R as a base, you can adapt the language and supporting guidance to your landscape and existing guidance documents.
- This can either be done 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.
- Guidance can help to explain what the funder is looking for. Some funders use examples or lists of topics the applicant might address. Be clear if applicants do not need to address all topics listed or that the list itself is not exhaustive i.e. things not on the list are not considered outside of the scope of what is valued.
- Be clear if points or examples of contributions can be displayed in bullet point list form by the applicant to improve readability/align with applicants preferred style and consider implications with word/page length restrictions.
- Depending on the type of funding call you can specify whether applicants need to only highlight past activity and contributions or should include future and planned activities and contributions.

## Personal details

### Figure 1: R4R guidance

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.

## Module 1 – How have you contributed to the generation of knowledge?

### Figure 2: R4R guidance

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 – whilst being conscious that prohibiting something may require checking, editing, returning, rather than suggesting that it should not be included.
- Reassure applicants how a 'light' or 'empty' section will not be detrimental to their application.

## Module 2 – How have you contributed to the development of individuals?

### Figure 3: R4R guidance

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 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 – How have you contributed to the wider research community?

#### Figure 4: R4R guidance

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 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 4 – How have you contributed to broader society?

#### Figure 5: R4R guidance

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.

### Personal statement

#### Figure 6: R4R guidance

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.

## Additions

### Figure 7: R4R guidance

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 that applicants would disclose significant life events if they don't wish to.
- Guidance can highlight for the applicant to include reference to the impact of COVID-19 on their career progression, if appropriate.
- Make it clear to the applicant how and when this will be taken account in the assessment process.

## **Training and Support**

- Consider the additional resources/tools that your applicants might need to accompany the guidance and how this could be provided, such as webinars, FAQs, videos, signposting to other materials and support.
- Consider if a video/audio recording be made which covers your organisation's approach to the use of this CV published on your funding call pages.

## **Evaluation**

It's 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 your narrative CV and funding management. This can cover many aspects of the documentation and process:

- Consider finding out what your 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 other funders via The Joint Funders Group to build the evidence base and help improve the research and innovation landscape.

### Version Control

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