Joint Funders Group

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Developing guidance for reviewers – a starter guide

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

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 your reviewers (peer reviewers and panel/committee members) – and applicants – have 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 reviewers.

Overall considerations

- Involve relevant stakeholders – such as, reviewers, panel/committee members and chairs, applicants, call support staff, research support staff, EDI professional staff, organisation development staff, Human Resources staff, research centres, public contributors, etc – in the guidance development to ensure it is informed.

- Include 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 narrow set of criteria.

- Ensure assessment criteria provided to reviewers reflects your organisation's motivations for adopting the R4RI-like narrative CV.

- Determine a consistent location for guidance, such as within the reviewer form or a separate reviewer guidance document.

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

- Steer reviewers to consider the information submitted in the R4RI-like narrative CV, rather than rely heavily on an applicant's publication record. Consider how it will be used as a document in support of an application, for example, how will the R4RI-like narrative CV be assessed/scored/weighted in the overall application assessment.

- Outline information applicants have been directed to leave out of an application and, therefore, what should not be considered by reviewers. For example, reference to metrics such as journal impact factor, h-index and total number of publications.

- Be clear how the R4RI-like narrative CV will be used within the context of the application i.e. as a tool that helps evidence to reviewers an applicant's experience and/or potential to undertake the submitted proposed work.

- Ensure guidance is provided for reviewers to take into account 'Additions' and Career Break information.

- Consider the different reviewer roles – such as peer reviewers, panel/committee members and panel/committee chairs – and ensure guidance reflects the remit of their role and contribution to the assessment of the application.

- Wherever possible, consider linking or directing to call- or scheme-specific guidance as appropriate.

- Outline information accessible to reviewers, such as the ORCID profile and CV, and how they can access these materials.

- Where an applicant has been provided with examples or list of topics they might address, be clear to reviewers whether the applicants is required to address all or some of these topics, and whether they can include additional topics.

- Inform reviewers if applicants are permitted to highlight only past activity or whether they can include future and planned activities.

- Consider providing reviewers a named contact within your organisation for specific questions.

Training and support

■ Consider any additional resources/tools that your reviewers might need to accompany the guidance and how this could be provided. For example, webinars, FAQs, videos, signposting to other materials and support, or specialist panel member roles/responsibilities.

■ The Résumé Resource Library has some materials and information to help with training.

■ Ensure you inform reviewers of any training materials to be completed, briefing videos to be watched in full or documents to be signed and returned in advance of their undertaking of the reviews or attending a panel/committee meeting.

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 your R4RI-like narrative CV and funding management. This can cover many aspects of the documentation and process.

■ Consider asking what reviewers 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 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