Grant Application Writing Workshop

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Programme

Morning:

- Fellowships 101
- Have you got a fundable Project
- Application-Writing Strategy
- The Sales Pitch
- Aims and Objectives
- What is a Sub-project?
- What a Grant Application has to Achieve
- The Magic Formula

Afternoon:

- Recipe for a Case-for Support
- Key Sentences and Structure
- Talks and Interviews
- Fellowship Criteria
- Writing Guidelines
- First Sentence Exercise
- Elevator Pitch Exercise

Introduction

The workshop is designed to start you thinking productively and pro-actively about writing Research Grant and Fellowship applications. It starts from the fundamental questions about the differences between grants and fellowships. Then it discusses how decisions are made about grants and fellowships and gets you to think about what you may need to do to turn yourself into a strong applicant and to prepare yourself to apply.

My delivery style is interactive, so feel free to ask questions throughout the day. This handout contains all the visual material to be used during the day with clickable links to the main sections in the programme (above) and to the full contents slide-by-slide (below).

Andrew Derrington

Contents

End   24

What is a Fellowship?

. . .

- Personal support for an individual (The Fellow)
    - How much?
    - For how long?
    - To do what?

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- Research expenses
    - Travel?
    - Slush?
    - Project Funding
        * Equipment?
        * Staff?
        * Research Costs

Who offers Fellowships and Why?

Who? . . .

- Universities
- Research Institutions
- Funding agencies
- Charities

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Why?

. . .

- To develop talent
    - MSCA, Research Councils, Wellcome Trust

. . .

- To attract talent
    - Institutions

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- To steer talent
    - MSCA

- Discipline-hopping
- Industry -> Academia

. . .

- To exploit/reward talent
  - Superstar Fellowships

What kind of person are they looking for?

- Exceptional research talent
  - How can you make your talent exceptional?

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- Discuss with your neighbour(s)
  - What are you looking for?
  - What kind of fellowship might provide it?

Do you have a fundable project?

1. How many aims or research questions do you have? (The correct answer is 3).
2. For each aim or question:-
   - State the aim or question
   - Describe how the research will answer this question or meet this aim.
   - Say what makes it important to answer this question or meet this aim in the context of your project.
3. Say what your project aims to achieve in terms intelligible outside your research field.
4. How will your project achieve its overall aim?
5. Give an example of your success with this research approach.
6. What makes the project for the funder (and scheme) you are targeting?
7. Impact
   - Who will benefit most from this research?
   - How will they benefit?
   - What will you do to ensure that they benefit?

If you start writing a grant application without answering these questions, you might never finish.

Strategy

Your strategy must accommodate the likelihood of rejection

- Most well-written grant applications get rejected.
- Rejection can be a devastating experience

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- If you need a grant, you should plan to write 5 or 6 based on the same set of ideas
- Never get down to your last rejection.
- If you get 6 rejections, it's time to develop a new set of ideas.

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- You need to be able to multiplex grant applications
  - Different Outcomes?
  - Different Datasets?
  - Different Objectives, Same Aims?
- You need to be able to write well and quickly.

Back to Programme

Should I use a successful application as an example to copy?

- About 75% of funded applications are very badly written

- Apply the following test

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- Can you find single-sentence answers to the following questions in 10 minutes:-

1. What is the overall aim of the project?
2. What makes the aim important?
3. What are the overall research methods?
4. For each aim or research question (there should be 3 or 4):-
   1. What is the aim or question?
   2. How will the research will answer this question or meet this aim.
   3. What makes it important to answer this question or meet this aim in the context of your project.

. . .

- If you can't, it's a bad example to follow.

Back to Programme

Case for Support as Sales Pitch

- Introduction
  - Tell them the Outcome & how important it is.
  - Tell them everything that is to come

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-

- Background/Literature review

  - Explains how 3 research outcomes are really important.
    * You can call these the "AIMS"
    * You can also call them "RESEARCH QUESTIONS"
    * And describe them in KS 3-5

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-

- Description of Project/Methods/Research Plan

- Describes the research activities in each of 3 sub-projects and makes it clear that they will produce the 3 important outcomes.
    * You can call these the "OBJECTIVES"
    * And describe them in KS 7-10

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- ▪
- Form-Only schemes (NIHR)

    - Case for support consists of answers to questions.
    - Make sure Background/Motivation answer maps onto Research Plan answer.

Works best with a magic formula

Aims & Objectives

. . .

- Nobody is sure what Aims & Objectives mean, so you can hijack them to reiterate the sales pitch.

. . .

- Background/Literature review

    - Explains how 3 research outcomes are really important.
    - Make achieving the outcomes the AIMS

- Description of Project/Methods/Research Plan

    - Describes the research activities in each of 3 sub-projects and makes it clear that they will produce the 3 important outcomes.
    - Make the subprojects the OBJECTIVES.

. . .

- The AIMS and OBJECTIVES deliver the sales pitch.

    - Use Tag Phrases so Aims match Objectives
    - Order them so they match the structure and the wording of the case for support.
    - Always try and give both, even if you are only asked for one.

Subprojects

What is a sub-project?

- You break your project into components (subprojects) to make it easier to explain.
    - The sub-projects can be sequential
    - Or parallel
    - Or even different analyses of the same data
    - The only requirement is they produce different, important outcomes.

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- Each sub-project produces an important outcome

- – The outcomes map onto the aims or research questions.
    - * Which you use to structure the background section of the case for support.
  - – That way the explainer will give your sales pitch.
  - – Because they will have read the background before the description of the project.

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- The perfect number of sub-projects is 3, but 4 is OK.

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- Don't create dependencies on uncertain outcomes (hostages)

Back to Programme

What a Grant Application has to Achieve

Why you need a magic Formula

Andrew Derrington

Back to Programme

A good case for support is designed for the decision process

1. What do funders want to know?

2. How do funders make decisions

    - What are the implications?
    - The Case for Support as Sales Pitch
    - The Magic Formula

Back to Programme

Grant Funders Focus on the Project

1. IS THE PROJECT IMPORTANT (to Them)?

    - Direct Outcomes (discoveries)
    - Indirect Outcomes (training, career development, mobility…)

2. WILL THE PROJECT BE SUCCESSFUL?

    - Will it produce the direct outcomes?
      - – Will they be put to use?
    - Will it produce the indirect outcomes?

3. ARE THE APPLICANTS COMPETENT?

    - Can they carry out the project?
    - Can their institution support it?

4. WOULD A GRANT BE VALUE for MONEY?

    - Are the resources requested Necessary, Sufficient, and Proportionate (for the project)

Answers to Funders' Questions

- IMPORTANCE (evidence)

    - Evidence about direct outcomes in literature review
    - Evidence about indirect outcomes in details of project, institutions, & investigators

- SUCCESS (project details)

    - Research activities in relation to outcomes?
    - Impact and dissemination plans..

- COMPETENCE (evidence)

    - Evidence that the team has the necessary skills in publications (quality and authorship).
    - Evidence that PI and institution can deliver the project in track record & facilites.

- VALUE for MONEY (project details)

    - Mention how grant resources will be used in the project.
    - Mention institutional resources needed for the project.

Which question do you start with?

- IMPORTANCE?

    - Pick an important question

        * Start the literature review

        * ……

That's how you write a zombie grant...

If the description of the research is less than 50% of the case for support it is probably a 'zombie'.

Back to Programme

Always start with the competence question

- Design a project that you can deliver
  - Do you have appropriate quality publications
  - Do they demonstrate all relevant Skills?
- Don't make the project much bigger than your past funded projects.
  - Big projects go to those who have too many little projects
  - Think about a cost ladder

         * £10K/£30K/£100K /£300K/ £1M /£3M/ £10M
  - Don't try to jump to the top of the ladder

Fellowship Funders are looking for Four Things

1. A good PERSON

- Fellows are future research stars.
  - Potential
  - Achievements
  - Creativity

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- Which of your achievements make you look like a future star?
  - What could you change to make yourself appear more stellar?

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2. A suitable PROJECT
   - As a vehicle for your development
   - As a flagship for the funder.

. . .

3. A suitable PLACE
   - Facilities
   - Mentors
   - Support

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4. A good PROGRAMME
   - New Techniques & Skills for the Fellow (and the Host)
   - Experience
   - Connections

The Decision

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- Who decides?

. . .

- Committee of successful researchers

  - Very busy people

  - Very successful

    - Have their own grants
    - And research groups
    - And jobs

- Not knowledgeable about your particular research area.

- May have 'user' representation
- Supported by secretariat

The Decision: what is the process?

- Designated members report on the proposal

    - Usually less than 5 minutes
    - Who, what, why, how, outcomes, strengths, weaknesses, summary of referees, how important and exciting, suggested score
    - One person may have to do this for 10 or more grants in a day.
    - Probably based on 30-60 minutes preparation.

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- Discussion by all members of the committee.

    - Even though some of them may be reading it for the first time during the discussion.
        * They will probably have read the summary beforehand.

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- All members in the discussion can influence the score.

    - No matter how little they know.
    - And how little time they have spent reading your proposal.

Implications of the decision process?

- Referees will analyse your grant in detail but:-

    - Most of the committee won't read it.
    - The ones who do read it won't know the field.
    - There will be about 100 other applications.
    - This imposes requirements on the case for support.

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- It must be a very good sales pitch

    - Easy to analyse at a deep level (Referee).
    - Know what's in it by skimming it (Committee Member).
    - Learn the subject by reading it (Committee Member).
    - Memorable and Distinctive (Designated Member).

. . .

- These properties need a magic formula

Back to Programme

The Decision: what information do they have?

- Applications
    - Usually a set of 50-100 per meeting.
    - Arrive 3-6 weeks before meeting.
    - Everybody delays reading them as long as possible.

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- Expert referees' reports
    - Written reports with evaluation and score.
    - Usually 2-5 per application
    - Usually arrive before the meeting but often after the applications
    - Often conflicting

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- Designated members' reports
    - Oral report by 2 or 3 members who have read the application.
    - Usually lasts < 5 minutes

The Magic Formula

- Key Statements

- Layout

- Tag Phrases

- Repetition

The Skeleton

10 statements define a (grant application) case for support

- KS1 States the overall aim, the specific approach & an example of success with that approach
- KS2 Says what makes the overall aim important
- KS3,4&5 Say that we need the sub-project outcomes (AIMS) & why.
- KS6 Introduces the project
- KS7,8&9 Summarise the research activities in the sub-projects (OBJECTIVES) and their outcomes.
- KS10 Says what will happen when research is done (Impact?)

. . .

- Use the key statements as the summary.

. . .

- Re-use the key statements to introduce the case for support

. . .

- Use a key statement to begin each subsection
- Then follow it with the detail

   – that convinces the referee

Magic Formula

Key Statements

Fellowship Key Statements Cover Different topics depending on the fellowship

- Outcome
- Institution's Strengths
- Fellow's Strengths
- Importance of Project
- 3 Research Aims and why we need them 'We need to know"
- Project summary
- 3 Research Objectives to deliver Aims "This will tell us"
- Dissemination / Impact
- Developmental Programme (How many parts?)
- Developmental value of Project

. . .

- Start every section with a key statement that summarises it

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- They introduce the detail
  - that convinces the referee /detail reader
- Re-use them in the summary

Use Layout to Communicate with Skimmers and Speed-Readers

- Message on first line of paragraph (ASSERT then JUSTIFY)
  - First sentence of para ASSERTS (topic sentence)
  - Remainder of para JUSTIFIES
    * This is where you cite literature
    * This is how you avoid citing too much literature.

. . .

- White space above each paragraph

. . .

- Readers' eye movements land on blank lines.
  - Speed-readers will read first line of every paragraph.
  - Browsers will only read first lines.
  - Detail readers will know what to expect in each para

Magic Formula

Teach Terminology with Tag Phrases

KeySentences 3,4 & 5

- 'We need to know' + tag phrase because….

- We need to know the relationship between the performance of single neurons and the performance of the whole visual system in order to establish the likely contribution of single neurons to perception. . . .

KeySentences 7,8 & 9

- 'We will do this sub-project in order to discover' + tag phrase

- We will record single neurons during perceptual tasks and calculate sensitivity functions for neural responses and for task performance in order to characterise the relationship between the performance of single neurons and the performance of the whole visual system.

. . .

- Tag phrases provide meaning - link between aims and objectives
- Use them in headings (make them short enough)

Magic Formula

Tag Phrases in Use

The perceptual capabilities of single neurons

We need to know the perceptual capabilities of single neurons in cortical area V1 in order to establish the potential contribution of V1 to perception. The potential contribution can be assessed using a range of perceptual tasks, such as visual pattern discrimination, object discrimination, and motion-detection. For any such task, we can infer the contribution of cortical area V1 to that task from the relationship between the perceptual capabilities of single neurons and the perceptual capabilities of the individual.

This is the start of a sub-section of the background. There will be a couple of pages of text (at least 3 subsections, each with its own heading) between it and the start of the corresponding sub-section of the description of the project, which follows here.

Measuring the perceptual capabilities of single neurons

We will record in cortical area V1 during perceptual tasks and analyse how neural response varies with stimulus strength in order to measure the perceptual capabilities of single neurons. Stimuli from a set that covers a range of strengths will be presented repeatedly in random sequences under computer control. The computer will record responses during the presentations, and during equivalent periods when no stimulus is presented, for off-line spike sorting and analysis…….

Magic Formula

Re-cycle Text From Case for Support

Case for Support	Technical Summary	Lay Summary
(Track Record)		
Introduction (<20%)		
Background (<30%)	Aims & Objectives	Impact Summary
Description of Project (>50%)		
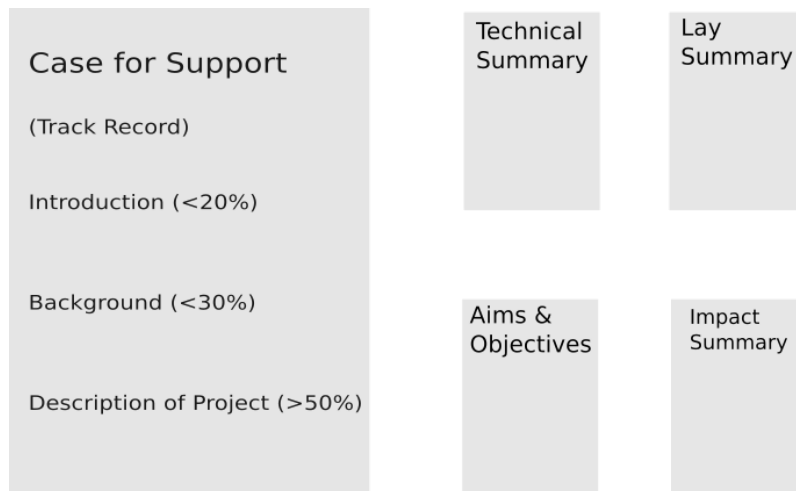
- Repeat key sentences and tag phrases
  - to provide common structure, and
  - to link
- Maintain structure and order

Magic Formula

Resources

What's been funded?

- Research Council Project Summaries

  - http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk

- ERC Summaries

- Leverhulme Awards 2016

Advice on writing:- www.parkerderrington.com/blog

- How to construct a project

- The key sentences

- Catalogue

Magic Formula

Back to Start

The Recipe

- Make sure you have a fundable project

- Prepare your Ingredients

  - Sales Pitch

- Project Intro & Outtro
- The Elevator Pitch
- Build the Structure

The Key Statements

Sentences 7, 8 & 9 and 3, 4 & 5

The Sales pitch:- We need to know" & "This will tell us"

- Sentences 7, 8 & 9: "This will tell us" (One per Subproject)

  - Summarise the research activities and state the outcome of a sub-project.
  - "We will do X and this will tell us Y"
  - Structures the Research Plan/Methodology. Introduces a subsection.
  - States an OBJECTIVE (and the aim it will deliver).

-

. . .

- Sentences 3, 4 & 5: 'We need to know' (One per subproject)

  - Say why we need the outcome of the sub-project.
  - "We need to know Y because Z"
  - Structures the Background: Introduces a subsection
  - States an AIM
  - Can be paraphrased as a Research Question

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. . .

- Rookie mistakes
  - Failing to mention research activities in 7, 8 & 9
  - Describing the research activities instead of outcomes in 3, 4 & 5

Sentences 6 & 10

Sentence 6 (Project Intro)

- Sentence 6 introduces the introductory part of the description of the project.

  - Summarise the distinctive aspects of the project in fewer than 40 words.

Sentence 10 (Project Outtro)

- Sentence 10 introduces your discussion of what will happen after the research is complete

- It will depend to a certain extent on whether the importance is academic or practical or both.

  - State in about 40 words what you will do to maximise the benefit from the project.

Sentence 1 & 2

The Elevator Pitch

1. Sentence 1 should have 3 parts:-

   1. What the project will achieve, in 'big picture' terms.
   2. How it will achieve it (your research approach).
   3. An example of your achievements using that approach, to show you are competent.

. . .

2. Sentence 2 says what it is that makes the outcome important. For example….

   1. Quantify the real-world problem it will help to solve.
   2. Say what it will allow us to do that we can't do now.
   3. Prepare to say which named priorities of your funder it contributes to, and how?

Build the Structure with Key Sentences

Standard Structure: Key sentences as Introduction and Skeleton

Alternative Structure for BBSRC

EPSRC Structure

Standard Structure

Key Sentences form the Intro and the Skeleton

1. Introduction - Key Sentences 1-10
   - May structure KS 3-5 as research questions or aims
   - May structure KS 7-9 (6 and 10 optional) as Objectives.

   -

2. Background - 4 subsections - sells the project outcomes.
   - KS2 Say what makes the overall outcome important.
     - Then justify in detail
   - KS3,4,5 Say why we need each research outcome (AIMS) & add detail after each

   -

3. Methods. Describes the Project
   - KS6 Summarise the project. Then add detail.
   - KS7,8,9 Summarise each sub-project (OBJECTIVE) & the AIM it achieves. Add detail after each.
   - KS10 Say what happens after the project (impact?). Then add detail.

Alternative Structure

Aim and Objectives introduce the Programme (BBSRC requirement)

1. Background - 5 subsections - sells the project outcomes.

17

- Introduction to Background
  - Key Sentences 1-5
- KS2 Say what makes the outcome important. Then justify in detail.
- KS3,4,5 Say why we need each research outcome (AIMS) & add detail after each

-

2. Programme and Methodology - 5 Subsections - Describes the Project.
   - Introduction to Project
     - KS1 & 6-10; then link to project.
   - KS7,8,9 Summarise each sub-project (OBJECTIVE) & the AIM it achieves. Add detail after each.
   - KS10 Say what happens after the project (impact?). Then add detail.

EPSRC Guidance

- Previous Track Record (up to 2 sides)
- Description of proposed research and its context (6 sides)
  - Background
    * Introduce topic and explain academic and industrial context
    * Demonstrate understanding of related work
  - National importance
    * Contribution to other disciplines, economy & society.
    * Long term effects; relation to national strategic needs.
    * Fit with UK research & EPSRC's portfolio, research areas & strategy.
  - Academic impact
    * Describe academic impact
    * Explain collaborations; justify Visiting Researchers
  - Research hypothesis and objectives
    * Set out your research idea or hypothesis
    * Explain why the proposed project is novel and timely
    * Identify the overall aims of the project, and the measurable objectives
  - Programme and methodology
    * Detail and justify research methodology
    * Describe the work programme & milestones for each member of the team,
    * Explain how the project will be managed.

AMD's Suggested Structure for EPSRC

- Track Record
  - You have 2 pages: use some of it for pilot data
- Background
  1. Introduce topic and explain academic and industrial context
  - Research hypothesis and objectives
    * Set out your research aim, idea or hypothesis (KS-1)
    * State the aims and / or objectives using KS 3-5 or 7-9 or both
  2. National importance
    - KS 2; followed by project-level specifics.
  3. KS 3; Why this aim is important & feasible
  4. KS 4; Why this aim is important & feasible
  5. KS 5; Why this aim is important & feasible
- Programme and methodology
  6. General intro; justify research methodology
  7. KS7; Details of subproject

  8. KS 8; Details of subproject

  9. KS 9; Details of subproject

  10. KS 10; This section can be about impact or follow on. Should tie up loose ends
      - Explain how the project will be managed.

Principles of short talks and interviews

Andrew Derrington

General Principles

- Decide what message you want your audience to take away.

  - Learn it

- Use a good communication approach to deliver that message

  - And Keep strictly to time.

- Be yourself!

  - Or a friendly approachable version of yourself!

What is a Good Communication Approach?

- Remember: It's human-to-human

  - Like your audience - it helps with the body language

- Look at your audience and expect them to look at you

  - Or to shift their gaze and look at what you are looking at

- Tell-Explain-Remind
    - Tell them what they are going to hear
        * Then explain it to them
    - Then remind them what you told them

Principles applied to Talks

- Message size is 1 short sentence
    - Expands into 3 or 4 short bullets

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- Learn the message
    - Then make it the first sentence of your talk
- The body of your talk expands the message into 3 or 4 points
    - Explains each one
- Then draws the conclusion (= the message)

. . .

- And thank the audience
- Don't expect slides or handouts to expand the message
    - No slides is fine
        * And impresses people
    - You can use 'prompt' slides on your phone

Slides, Handouts and Scripts

- Slides
    - Only show slides to demonstrate a point -
    - Must have very clear explanation of
        * What point the slide makes
        * What is on the slide - use a pointer
        * How it demonstrates the point
        * Which point it demonstrates.

. . .

- Handouts
    - Only if teaching.
    - Never to expand the message - write a book!

. . .

- Scripts
    - Never

Interviews

- It's like several short talks with the topics chosen by the panel

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- Prepare answers for the obvious questions
- If you think time is a problem offer a short answer and then say "would you like me to expand on that?"
    - Otherwise tell, explain, remind
- Practise speaking the short answers.
- Look mostly at the questioner but also at the chair and the other members of the panel

Exercise

- Imagine you are in an interview. The first question is "Would you tell us why you have applied for this fellowship?"
    - Write an answer in one sentence. . . .
- Compare notes with your neighbour.

Take Home Message

. . .

- Work out your message - and learn it

- Communicate it Human to Human

- Don't exceed your time

Thank you

Marie Curie Criteria

- Excellence 50%
    - Quality and credibility of the research/innovation action (level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects)
    - Quality and appropriateness of the training and of the two way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host
    - Quality of the supervision and of the integration in the team/institution
    - Capacity of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a position of professional maturity/independence

. . .

- Impact 30%
    - Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher
    - Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the action results
    - Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the action activities to different target audiences

. . .

- Implementation: 20%
    - Coherence and effectiveness of the Work Plan
    - Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
    - Appropriateness of the management & risk management structures and procedures
    - Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure)

. . .

- ▪
- ▪ Discuss with your neighbour the key sentences or headers you would need.

Writing Guidelines

- ▪ Should repetitions use the same words or different words?

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- ▪ Same words: NO SYNONYMS

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- ▪ Key statement at the start of every section
- ▪ Re-use tag phrases across key statements & in headlines

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- ▪ Punchline at top of para (~6 paras per page)

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- ▪ Strong Verbs (no adverbs, no nominalisations)

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- ▪ Short sentences
  - – Health Check

. . .

- ▪ Avoid value claims (state evidence instead)

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- ▪ Bullet lists good, lists in sentences bad.

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- ▪ NIUTEIISPOU

. . .

- ▪ – No initialisations unless the expansion is in the same paragraph (or unnecessary)

Back to Programme

Nominalisations

- ▪ A nominalisation is a noun phrase constructed from a verb,

. . .

- ▪ which can be used with a general purpose verb to create a flabby, pompous, long-winded way of saying something simple.

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- ▪ We will investigate X

   – We will carry out an investigation into X
- We will analyse
   – We will undertake an analysis of

First Sentence Exercise

Why is the first sentence important?

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- It has to be good enough to make the reader read on
- They will have 99 other applications.

   – They know most of them are headed for the shredder.

- They also have a TV.
- What will make them want to read your application?

. . .

- Importance?
- Success?
- Competence?

The Perfect First Sentence

1. What the project will achieve, in 'big picture' terms.

2. How it will achieve it (your research approach).

3. An example of your achievements using that approach.

. . .

1. Importance
2. Success
3. Competence

The Exercise

1. Interview your neighbour (3 mins)

2. Swap roles and interview again (3 mins)

3. Write a sentence for your neighbour's project (2 mins)

4. Write a Sentence for your own Project (2 mins)

5. Optimise and discuss.

. . .

Remember

1. What the project will achieve, in 'big picture' terms.
2. How it will achieve it (your research approach).
3. An example of your achievements using that approach.

What should the elevator pitch say?

- Why is this a good Person?
- Why is this a good project?
    - Direct Outcome?
    - Training Outcome
- Why is this a good place?

Gathering information for the elevator pitch

Ask your neighbour about their project. Try to understand and remember:-

- What will their project achieve?
- Would that achievement be important? Why - objectively?
- Why would they be a good person to receive a fellowship -
    - Get evidence rather than value claims.
- How will the project develop their career?
- Why would their chosen organisation/lab be the best place to hold the fellowship - objectively?

After 5 minutes, change roles and repeat.

Writing the Elevator Pitch

1. Imagine that you are trying to persuade a committee to give your neighbour a fellowship.
    - Write a short statement that will convince them to do so.
    - You have 5 minutes.
2. Imagine that you are trying to persuade a committee to give you a fellowship.
    - Write a short statement that will convince them to do so.
    - You have 5 minutes.

End

Presenter

Andrew Derrington has in-depth experience of the research funding process. He obtained his first research grant, a Beit Memorial Fellowship for Medical Research, while he was writing his PhD. His research was continuously funded by fellowships, project and programme grants for the next 30 years. He served on research grant committees for The Science and Engineering Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust. His book, *The Research Funding Toolkit*, which he co-wrote with Jacqueline Aldridge, research and enterprise associate in the School of Psychology at the University of Kent, is the definitive guide to grant writing for early career academics and research professionals. It is based on Andrew's analysis of how grants committees make funding decisions.

Andrew has worked in eight Universities including two in the world top ten.

He has also worked as a journalist. Over several years he wrote two successful columns in the Financial Times. *The Nature of Things* covered science - from astrophysics to zoology. *Psych Yourself Up* was a guide to the different psychotherapies available in the UK.

Andrew set up Parker Derrington Ltd in 2013. He now works as a consultant, writing research grant applications and providing strategic advice and training to individuals and organizations.

Testimonials

I had a fantastically useful time attending your recent workshop at Leicester University. Writing the 10 key sentences was a very useful exercise and I have, since, worked on them to discover they are a fab tool for any kind of writing really.

Dr Ranjana Das, University of Leicester

Andrew blends easy authority and extensive experience with humour and approachability. The result is a workshop full of practical, memorable advice on how to compete more successfully for research funding.

Professor Peter Clegg, Institute Institute of Ageing and Chronic Disease, University of Liverpool

I attended one of Andrew's workshops when I was a senior lecturer. The hands on advice about how to structure my applications in a really appealing fashion enabled me to win a grant of nearly ¬£600K the next year. I still implement the advice that I received in that workshop, and pass it down to junior colleagues. I find that Andrew's advice has a high success rate!

Prof Theresa Gannon, University of Kent

I still use the tips you gave me for my successful Wellcome SRF application. Your advice on "12 key sentences" is spot-on and helps people focus on the aspects of the proposal that are critical to success instead of getting bogged down in reams of text.

Prof Mark Baxter, Mount Sinai School of Medicine

Andrew's grant-writing workshops teach you how to convince the world that it needs your research. They are the most useful training events I have ever attended. His advice about how to sell the big idea without compromising on the science was critical to the success of our ¬£9.3 million ESRC application.

Prof Julian Pine, University of Liverpool