



# Preparing for the New Tri-Agency CV

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Professor Joanna Harrington  
URIAC, 28 March 2025

# Note

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- A shorter version of this presentation will be given at URIAC
- The full slide deck is being shared for those who want the links to resources elsewhere
- A 7-minute video version is also available at: <https://ualberta.yuja.com/v/cssh-tri-agency-cv>

# Purpose of presentation

- Canada's three national granting agencies will, in future, require a new CV format for funding applications, replacing the much-hated Canadian Common CV (CCV), and embracing harmonization by having one CV format for all competitions
- We do not know when this will occur for all competitions, but the format for a new narrative-style "Tri-Agency CV" has been piloted in some competitions and then adjusted in response to feedback
- The new format will be – to quote the three agencies – "a major change"
- To get ready for this change, this presentation provides the background on what is a narrative or narrative-style CV, identifies what we know about the new "Tri-Agency CV" format, comments on supports already available, and identifies supports that will be needed

# Tri-Agency Announcements



# New narrative-style CV



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada

## Message from the Tri-agency Presidents: Granting councils transitioning to a new CV template

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The presidents of the granting councils are pleased to announce that we will be gradually transitioning away from the Canadian Common CV (CCV) to a new narrative-style CV for our competitions.

The transition to a new tri-agency CV complements the work underway on the Tri-agency grants management solution (TGMS), a project to modernize the granting councils' grants management systems to better support applicants, administrators, and reviewers. The new tri-agency CV will serve as the CV component of TGMS.

The tri-agency CV template was developed through extensive consultation with users and has been piloted by the granting councils in select funding opportunities. During TGMS journey-mapping exercises, users voiced support for a new CV template that would allow applicants to include a free-form narrative personal statement, aligning with trends seen in other funding agencies like the US National Institutes of Health and UK Research and Innovation.

The new CV will prioritize written descriptions of an applicant's research contributions, allowing users to highlight a wide range of research outputs and to describe their career trajectories in more detail. This format values societal research outcomes, such as influence on policy or mentorship, alongside more traditional research outputs like publications.

We know this move will be a major change for the research community. Rest assured that users will be provided with clear instructions and learning opportunities to understand how to navigate the new tri-agency CV.

Details about the TGMS implementation plan will be shared in the coming months. Funding opportunities launched on TGMS will include the new tri-agency CV. In the short term, the granting councils will continue to use the new tri-agency CV in select funding opportunities delivered through their respective legacy systems.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tammy Clifford

Acting President, Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Professor Alejandro Adem

President, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council

Dr. Ted Hewitt

President, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

**Date modified:**

2024-10-24

<https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/interagency-research-funding/other-collaborative-activities/interagency-news-announcements-and-statements/message-tri-agency-presidents-granting-councils-transitioning-new-cv-template>

November 2024

# CIHR

“CIHR will implement the new CV for the Project Grant program no earlier than the Fall 2025 Project Grant competition.”

<https://www.cihr.gc.ca/e/54116.html>

## CIHR is transitioning to a new CV template

Message from the Vice-President and Associate Vice-President, Research Programs (Operations)

November 5, 2024

The Presidents of the granting councils [recently announced](#) that the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) will be gradually transitioning to a new narrative-style tri-agency CV for our competitions.

CIHR is pleased to share that we will begin gradually transitioning to this new CV format starting with some funding competitions in January 2025. The Spring 2025 Project Grant competition will not be included (CIHR will implement the new CV for the Project Grant program no earlier than the Fall 2025 Project Grant competition.)

We have heard the community loud and clear: Issues with usability meant that the CCV was not a viable long-term solution for applicants and funders. The CCV also includes many different templates depending on the program, which can be burdensome for applicants. The transition to a new CV format complements the work underway on the [Tri-agency grants management solution](#) (TGMS), a project to modernize the granting councils' grants management systems to better support applicants, administrators and reviewers.

The new CV has been piloted by CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC in select funding opportunities. The feedback received from users following these pilots has helped to refine the new CV template to ensure that the data collected is what is needed for peer review and accommodates the diversity of applicants and their contributions. CIHR joins many other funders heading in this direction: Funding agencies such as the US National Institutes of Health and UK Research and Innovation have adopted narrative-style CVs.

The new CV format will allow users flexibility to contextualize the research contributions that best highlight their expertise and impact. With the narrative style, applicants will be able to highlight a wide range of research outputs and to describe their career trajectories in more detail, allowing peer reviewers to get a better sense of the breadth of their contributions. Once all funding opportunities have transitioned to this new CV, there will be only one template, reducing the burden on applicants.

As we begin to transition funding opportunities to the new CV template, which CV to use will be clearly noted in funding opportunities, and users will be provided with clear instructions and learning opportunities to understand how to navigate the new CV.

In December, CIHR will be holding [Ask Me Anything webinar](#) sessions, where you will have a chance to ask questions about this and other topics.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Christian Baron**  
Vice-President, Research – Programs

**Adrian Mota**  
Associate Vice-President, Research – Programs (Operations)

Date modified: 2024-11-05



## Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

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[Home](#) → [News Room](#) → [Latest News](#) → SSHRC transitions to new, narrative-style CV template

### SSHRC transitions to new, narrative-style CV template

The presidents of the three federal research funding agencies—the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)—[recently announced](#) their gradual transition to a [new, narrative-style tri-agency CV](#) for their competitions.

SSHRC recognizes that using multiple types of CVs, including the Canadian Common CV (CCV), does not represent a viable long-term solution to meeting the needs of applicants, research administrators and funders. All SSHRC funding opportunities will gradually be moved to the new CV over the next few years as they are each onboarded to the [tri-agency grants management solution](#) (TGMS), a project to modernize the funding agencies' systems to better support applicants, administrators and reviewers.

SSHRC is pleased to share that it will begin the process by [gradually transitioning](#) funding opportunities that use the Convergence Portal to the new CV format, starting in December 2024. The first funding opportunity to use the new, tri-agency CV will be the 2025 Impact Awards competition.

Once all funding opportunities have transitioned to the tri-agency CV, there will be only one CV template in use across all opportunities. This will reduce the burden on both applicants and reviewers.

As SSHRC begins to transition its funding opportunities to the new tri-agency CV, it will clearly note for each funding opportunity which CV template to use. The agency will provide those using the new CV with clear instructions and learning opportunities to understand how to navigate it.

### Contact

#### Media relations

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

[medias@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca](mailto:medias@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca)

Date modified: 2024-11-28





You can follow CIHR and SSHRC on LinkedIn to receive agency updates on the transition.

11 January 2025



# **The Development of Narrative CVs for Research Funding Applications**

# What is a narrative CV?

A narrative CV format is a structured, but flexible, CV format that uses description to showcase (highlight) selected achievements, professional experiences, and skills.

# What do narrative CVs accomplish?

- A narrative CV does not require the listing of every past accomplishment
- Funding bodies are adopting narrative CV formats in response to criticism that the assessment of research has too often focused on lengthy lists of quantitative indicators (such as number of papers, number of talks, number of grants, number of students supervised)
- A narrative CV requires the crafting of sentences (story-telling) to provide both evidence and context that is tailored to meet the needs of the specific funding opportunity
- An NCV can also accommodate traditional and so-called non-traditional outputs, as well as both academic and non-academic researchers (such as clinical or industry co-investigators)
- And the selected contributions highlighted in the narrative can be of a broader range, with narrative CVs enabling value to be placed on a much wider range of achievements

What we value  
in research

Publications  
Awards & prizes  
Leadership

Invited talks

Successful grants

What  
research needs

Management

Building  
collaborations

Panels &  
committees

Peer review

Mentorship  
& supervision

Integrity,  
openness,  
transparency

Team-working

Inclusivity

Participatory research

Societal impact



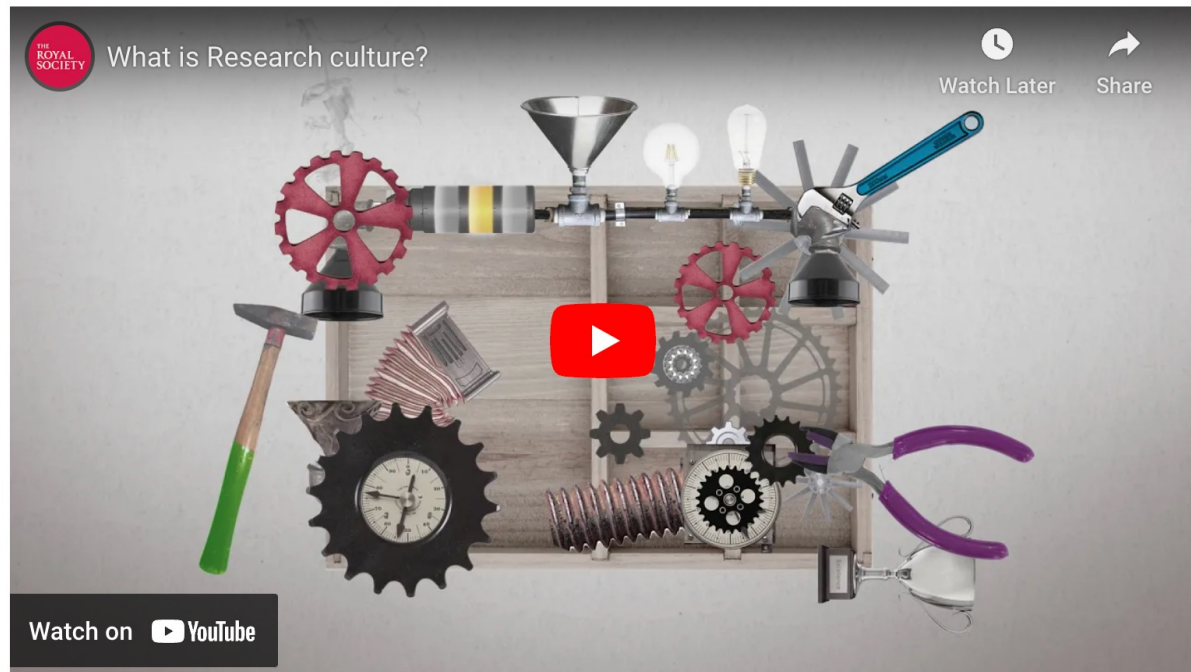
UK Research  
and Innovation

# Why is the narrative CV being embraced

- Critics of the traditional academic CV, with its lists of past achievements, have expressed concern about the emphasis that format places on a narrow set of performance indicators
- Narrative CVs counter the quantity-over-quality complaint by encouraging the selection of key achievements and the tailoring of CV content to meet the specifics of a funding call
- An NCV supports the contextualization of achievements, and allows for a more diverse collection of information, with the aim of providing a more rounded picture of the applicant
- The adoption of a narrative CV format also serves to discourage the over-reliance on the bare citation of bibliometrics and the misuse, or abuse, of journal impact factors
- Narrative CVs are seen as a tool to change research culture, and are supportive of inclusion goals, by playing a role in shifting what is visible and valued in research and innovation



NCVs are seen as part of the effort to change research culture, to change the way we reward and celebrate.



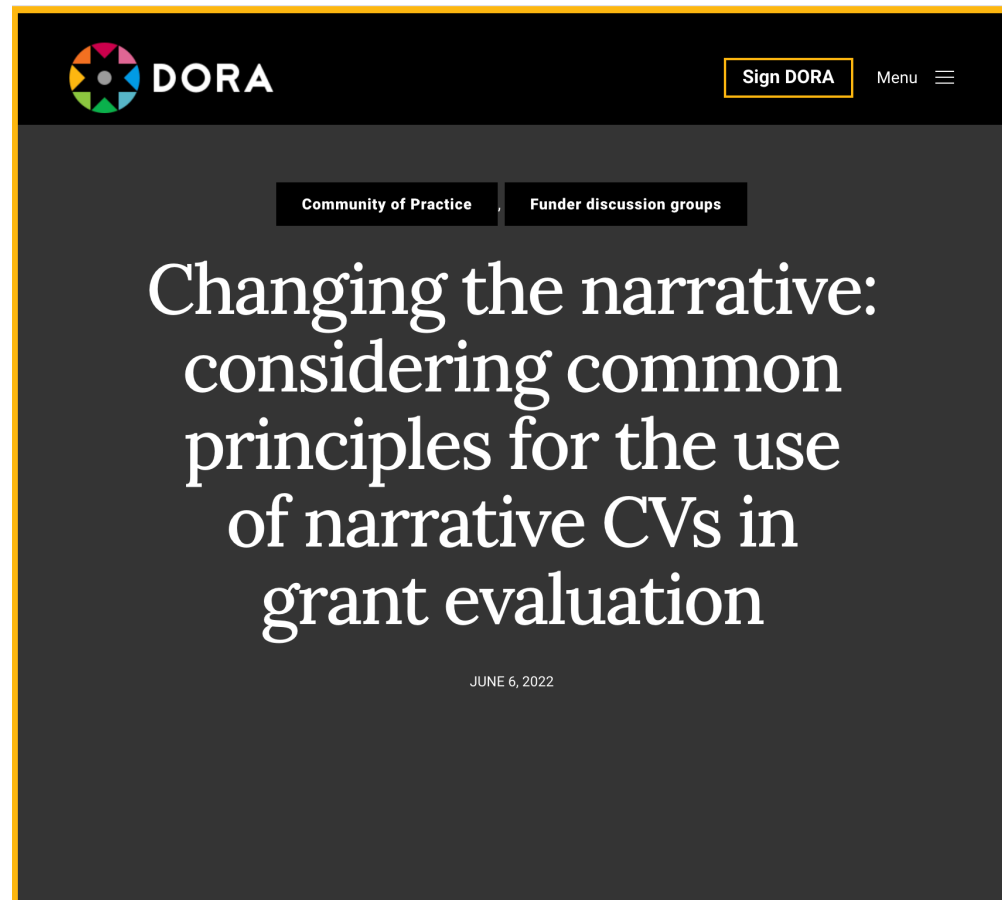
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ3bdTmjPKg&t=4s>

# DORA-compliant

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Canada's three funding agencies signed on to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in 2019.

The Canada Research Coordinating Committee linked the piloting of a narrative-style Tri-Agency CV with the implementation of DORA in its 2023-24 annual progress summary.





# The comparative context

- Canada is not the first to adopt a narrative style CV for grant applications
- Which means that faculty who have worked with international partners may already have a narrative CV
- Health researchers may also be ready to adapt, with the use of narrative elements in grant applications dating back to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics in the UK in 2014, and the use of a biosketch by the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation
- A leading role was then taken by the Royal Society in 2017 which came to embrace the use of a narrative CV as part of its “Changing Expectations on Research Culture” programme
- This work led to the co-creation in the UK of the narrative “Résumé for Researchers” (R4R) in 2019, which in 2020, became the “Résumé for Research and Innovation” (R4RI)
- In 2021, the UK Government announced its support for the R4RI to be used “across the sector”

# International trend

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**Dutch Research Council (NWO)** first piloted the use of a narrative CV in 2018

**Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)** introduced a narrative CV for all funding calls in 2019

**Swiss National Science Foundation (FNSNF)** tested a new SciCV in 2020 (a hybrid version combining some narrative with some retention of lists)

**Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR)** opted for a narrative CV format in 2021

European Union's **European Research Council (ERC)** opted for a narrative CV format in December 2022

**German Research Foundation (DFG)** introduced a new mandatory narrative-style CV in March 2023

# French National Research Agency (ANR)

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From an interview with Thierry Damerval, President and CEO of ANR, and Member of the Science Europe Governing Board when asked in March 2022 about the main characteristics of an interdisciplinary research programme targeting the green and digital transition:

The proposals are assessed by multidisciplinary panels of experts, of which one third comes from outside France. We use the so-called 'narrative CV' to assess the qualities of a researcher, and the panel only assesses their five most relevant publications. No consideration is given to quantitative indicators, such as the Journal Impact Factor or h-index.

<https://www.scienceeurope.org/news/interview-with-thierry-damerval/>

# Why it matters what others are doing


- Short answer: international collaborations
- Canada's funding agencies are collaborating with other funding bodies, including ones that have embraced the use of narrative CVs
- A 2023 NFRF International Joint Initiative involved research funders from Brazil, Canada, Germany, Norway, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States
- In June 2024, NSERC and UKRI announced a collaborative research opportunity in quantum communications and quantum sensing
- SSHRC has engaged in what it calls "joint initiatives" with UKRI, the German Research Foundation, and the EU's European Commission

# Note that NCVs go by various names

- Not all funders use the term “narrative CV”
- And there is no internationally agreed definition of an NCV
- Some use the term “narrative-style CV” – others use the term “hybrid narrative CV” often when there is some retention of the use of lists – and some have narrative elements (ie biosketch)
- But all narrative CVs are much shorter than traditional academic CVs
- The UK R4RI is a 2-page CV, the German CV is 4 pages

# The Tri-Agency CV

**This is what it  
looks like:**

	Canadian Institutes of Health Research	Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada
	Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada	Conseil de recherches en sciences naturelles et en génie du Canada
	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada	Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

## Tri-agency CV

**Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**1. Personal statement**  
Click or tap here to enter text.

**2. Most significant contributions and experiences**  
Click or tap here to enter text.

**3. Supervisory and mentorship activities**  
Click or tap here to enter text.

## **CIHR had hosted an earlier pilot version on its website**

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Then consisted of six sections with an overall 5-page limit (6 pages in French):

- A. Personal Information (applicant answers a few specific questions)
- B. Personal Statement
- C. Most Significant Contributions
- D. Other Contributions to Knowledge (bulleted list)
- E. Supervisory and Mentorship Activities (combining narrative with a table)
- F. Other Relevant Information



## But the CIHR webpage changed in late November 2024

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The CV template now consists of three sections, with an overall 5-page limit (6 pages in French):

- 1. Personal statement
- 2. Most significant contributions and experiences
- 3. Supervisory and mentorship activities

\*SSHRC also posted the template to its website in November 2024; NSERC is directing site visitors to the specific funding opportunity

## All three agencies have published instructions

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<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29300.html>

[https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/tri-agency\\_cv-cv\\_des\\_trois\\_organismes-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/tri-agency_cv-cv_des_trois_organismes-eng.aspx)

[https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/onlineservices-servicesenligne/pdfatt2\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/onlineservices-servicesenligne/pdfatt2_eng.asp)

## **Both CIHR and SSHRC have also created FAQs pages**

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<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/53575.html>

[https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/tri-agency\\_cv\\_faq-cv\\_des\\_trois\\_organismes\\_faq-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/tri-agency_cv_faq-cv_des_trois_organismes_faq-eng.aspx)

## **Tips for Success**

**(in addition to following the agency's requirements)**

# Overarching approach

- Writing a narrative CV requires a change in approach
- We need to transition from **WHAT** to **HOW**
- A traditional academic CV takes a listing approach – listing everything that you have done
- That is the **WHAT** you have done approach
- For a narrative CV, an applicant needs to focus on explaining **HOW** their work and activities have contributed to their field or discipline, to the development of others (from students to team members), to research and innovation, and society more broadly – and provide examples
- In short, it's hard to answer a **HOW** question by simply providing a list

# Write it like a job applicant

- Think of the narrative CV as something in between a traditional CV and a cover letter
- Tell the reader a bit about yourself and your research competence (personal statement)
- Demonstrate to the reader why you are the right person for this specific funding opportunity (most significant contributions and experiences)
- Convey to the reader that you are keen to train students and build research teams and have the experience and skills to back that up (supervisory and mentorship activities)

# It will take time

- Writing a narrative CV also requires time
- It will be a new experience and very different from filling in drop-down menus and boxes
- Time is needed to think about what you want to present
- And time is also needed to revise, to shift things around, to decide what to emphasize
- You also need to provide examples for the contributions you made, or impact you generated
- And the more tangible and concrete the examples, the better
- Faculty need to factor in that time will be needed to prepare a narrative-style CV

# How you write matters

- A narrative CV calls for a first-person narrative
- For those concerned about too many sentences beginning with “I”, mention can be made of work done with others, such as students, research team members (if relevant), and research partners
- Consider also mentioning the beneficiaries of your research
- Make sure the text is easy to read and understand
- Shorter sentences are more powerful than long complicated sentences
- Use the active voice to present information directly



# Practice by updating your directory entry

- One way to get ready now is to encourage faculty to update the “About” section in their entry in the Directory@UAlberta
- A well-crafted narrative used for the “About” section can serve as text to copy-and-paste into the sections of the new Tri-Agency CV
- Note that this also raises the question of whether to experiment with the use of generative AI tools to improve the wording of a draft text
- Please also encourage faculty to update their online presence on whatever platforms they use
- Merit review committee members have access to the internet – including access to ORCID, LinkedIn, Academia.edu etc – the story told on these platforms needs to be up-to-date and aligns with the narrative in a Tri-Agency CV

# What we need from the Tri-Agencies

# Tri-Agency guidance

- Tri-Agency guidance needs to state that the narrative must be written in the first person
- Some will worry about sentences that say “I did this” and “I did that” (and internal supports will need to address researcher reluctance to brag and fears of overstating/understating)
- Tri-Agency guidance is becoming available on what to include where (but many researchers will want to see examples of what serves to provide evidence of impact and wider contributions)
- We do need Tri-Agency guidance on what indicators will be considered good indicators
- And there remains a need for clear Tri-Agency guidance on what cannot be mentioned, most notably whether journal impact factors (or other bibliometrics) can be part of the narrative

# Also need guidance for merit review

- Merit review committee members will need guidance on how to evaluate the new CV to secure consistency
- And there will need to be guidance as to whether merit review committee members can look beyond the application (outside the narrative) to access on-line sources of quantitative data
- Until we know what the rules will be, applicants would be well advised to make sure their online profile (on whatever platforms) is up-to-date (including university directory, LinkedIn, ORCID, etc)
- We must also encourage faculty members to serve on these merit review committees to report back on how the new CV format was handled

# Researchers will ask for internal support

- Support may be needed for those whose first language is neither French nor English, given the need to write a persuasive narrative
- Generative AI tools may be of help with the polishing of a narrative
- Early career researchers will need reassurance as to what to write about their wider impact on research and/or society at their stage of career
- There will be a push for access to examples of narrative CVs, but note that the provision of examples runs counter to the message of tailoring a narrative CV to a specific funding call
- Note too that in designing supports, we are also seeing narrative CVs gaining traction for use on the teaching side of an academic's career

# Future possibility of team CVs?

- The UK's narrative CV (known as the R4RI - Résumé for Research and Innovation) can be completed on a team basis, rather than the funder requiring individual CVs for each team member
- The same narrative CV format is used, but the narrative reflects the team's contributions, showcasing that the team, collectively, has the experience and skills to deliver the project
- A table is then added to identify each team member with the inclusion of a short role descriptor (e.g. project lead, training lead, coordinator)
- We do not know whether Canada will, in future, embrace the general use of a team CV

# Help is available

- The Office of the Vice-President (Research & Innovation) (OVPRI) has developed a series of workshops to support faculty as the Tri-Agencies move to a new narrative-style CV
- Dr Paolo Mussone will comment on the work done by the Researcher Development and Success team within the OVPRI to offer workshops on a regular basis over the coming months
- The sessions are advertised in the “Employees Digest” email broadcast
- The College of Social Sciences and Humanities has a 7-minute video providing an on-demand overview for faculty, available from the Video Library on the CSSH website, or directly at:  
<https://ualberta.yuja.com/v/cssh-tri-agency-cv>

## Existing Supports Elsewhere



**Canada's new CV format is very similar to the UK narrative CV:**



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

**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**

# UK supports can help

- Because of the similarity with the UK's Résumé for Researchers (R4R, now called the R4RI), one can find useful guidance on how to write a narrative CV from UK universities and funding bodies
- UK template asks applicants to summarise their contributions in 4 sections (called "modules"):
  - 1) Generation of new knowledge, ideas, tools, methodologies
  - 2) Development of other individuals and research teams
  - 3) Involvement in the wider research and innovation community
  - 4) Impact beyond the scientific community for broader society
- The Royal Society recommended 500 words per module for a two-page CV

But determining what content goes in what section is a hurdle to overcome  
For example, here's some of the guidance taken from a 2023 "Starter Guide" for applicants  
prepared by the Joint Funders Group (a group of 54 funders)



**... 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.



**... research teams and the development of others**

e.g. management, supervision, or mentoring critical to the success of a team or its members, or strategic leadership in shaping the direction of a team, organisation, company or institution.

**... 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.



**... 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.



# Examples of existing supports

- For written guidance, see the “Narrative CV Guide” prepared by the research support staff at the University of Oxford, June 2023:  
[https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/researchsupport/documents/media/narrative\\_cv\\_guide\\_oxford\\_june\\_2023\\_0.pdf](https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/researchsupport/documents/media/narrative_cv_guide_oxford_june_2023_0.pdf)
- For video assistance, see “How to write narrative CVs for funding applications,” a recorded webinar for research support staff, University of Oxford, 15 June 2023:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKk8oKM\\_kec](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKk8oKM_kec)
- There is also an online 25-minute course on writing a narrative CV from the Lab for Academic Culture at the University of Glasgow:  
[https://rise.articulate.com/share/NyPk\\_PNIENdfRS5R5catqqiJzs3woS3Y#/](https://rise.articulate.com/share/NyPk_PNIENdfRS5R5catqqiJzs3woS3Y#/)

researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/learn-more-about-developing-a-narrative-cv


ADMISSIONS
RESEARCH
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Staff Gateway
Oxford Students
Alumni

# Research Support

Facilitating world-class research

Funding Applying Costing & pricing Governance & integrity Contracts Managing awards Reporting Innovation & impact Training & support

Research culture More Contacts

> Developing a narrative CV: guidance for researchers

## Developing a narrative CV: guidance for researchers

Developing a narrative CV need not be daunting. These pages will give you what you need to get started and sign-post you to further information.

Researchers are increasingly being asked to write narrative CVs. Narrative CV formats, which UKRI call the [Résumé for Research and Innovation \(R4RI\)](#), prompt descriptions of contributions and achievements, allowing researchers to reflect a broader range of skills and experiences.

But some researchers, whatever their career stage, can lack confidence in using the new approach. These webpages provide guidance for individuals and teams on developing narrative CVs and should give you all you need to get started. Research facilitators may also find the resources useful.

- Download the [guide](#) to writing a narrative CV
- Download guidance on [writing a team CV](#)
- Watch a [webinar](#) on writing a narrative CV
- Review a [presentation](#) on writing narrative CVs
- Read our [case-studies](#) about developing a narrative CV

**Next steps**

- > Download the Guide for Applicants
- > Download guidance on Writing a Team CV
- > Download the PowerPoint presentation
- > Watch a webinar on Writing a Narrative CV
- > Attend a training session. Check this page for date of next session

**Further support**

- > Oxford University Researcher Hub
- > Oxford University Careers Service
- > Research and Innovation Support Network (RISN)
- > Research facilitators in your Division or Department

**Learn more about the who, why and what of narrative CVs**

University of Dundee  
Narrative CV Workbook

[https://discovery.dundee.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/114334931/Dundee\\_narrative\\_CV\\_workbook.pdf](https://discovery.dundee.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/114334931/Dundee_narrative_CV_workbook.pdf)



University  
of Dundee

### Writing a narrative CV


This workbook guides you through reflective questions to help you with a narrative CV. What you write here will probably be much longer than the word or space limit that you will ultimately have in a grant or Fellowship application. It's important that you read the call guidance each time.

Think of this as your 'master' narrative CV document. When it comes to writing the one for the actual application, you will be pulling out the key bits of information which support you to demonstrate that you are the right person (or part of the right team), with a unique set of experiences, to be able to deliver the grant you are applying to. The examples here are written from an ECR or PGR perspective but every answer will be unique.

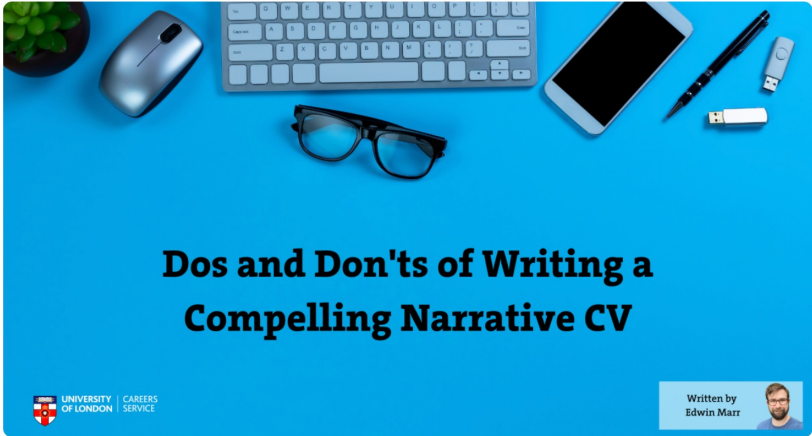
#### Key points:

- **Past focus:** CVs are about your past experience, in order to demonstrate that you are capable of delivering a future project. They are not a chance to describe how you will deliver that project, that belongs in other parts of the proposal.
- **Avoid vague and sweeping statements:** Your CV should be evidence-based wherever possible and demonstrate the impact of what you have done (think: why does this matter, what difference did it make?)
- **Be human:** Most people write in the first person ('I did this'). This may make it easier to convey your passion for the subject. Remember that your reviewers are still human (even 'reviewer 2') and are likely to respond well to something that is enjoyable to read and demonstrates you are interested in what you do.
- **Ask a friend:** It is often easier to understand your broader contributions to the research community or to mentoring when you talk to others around you.
- **Don't overthink the boxes:** There is no recipe or perfect way to write a narrative CV. Some researchers will have more for some sections than others, depending on the type of research they do and their career stage or experience. Some things might fit in more than one box, just choose the one where it makes most sense to you. For example, if you are describing a particular project in section one, it might make sense to mention an associate patent as part of this sentence, rather than 'saving' the patent for section 4.


And university careers services in the UK are advising PhD students and early career researchers on how to write a narrative CV




ArticlesPeopleLearningJobs




**Dos and Don'ts of Writing a Compelling Narrative CV**

 UNIVERSITY OF LONDON | CAREERS SERVICE

Written by Edwin Marr

## Dos and Don'ts of Writing a Compelling Narrative CV

 **University of London Careers Service**  
Employability support for students studying distance and flexible learning programmes with the University of London.  
Published Aug 8, 2023

+ Follow

Are you a PhD student or early career researcher? If so, you may have come across the Narrative CV – a new document used across parts of Europe and by the URKI to assess how your research has been impactful, and how you have contributed to innovation, rather than the raw metrics of your number of publications and journal impact factors.

# References



# Literature review

- Various blogposts and opinion pieces focusing on the introduction of a narrative CV exist, but to date, only one journal article analysis:
  - F Bordignon, L Chaignon & D Egret, “Promoting narrative CVs to improve research evaluation? A review of opinion pieces and experiments” (2023) 32:2 *Research Evaluation* 313-320, <https://enpc.hal.science/hal-04075515v1>
- There is also one journal article on the Swiss SciCV hybrid format:
  - M Strinzel, et al, “SciCV, the Swiss National Science Foundation’s new CV format” (2022) *bioRxiv*, [doi.org/10.1101/2022.03.16.484596](https://doi.org/10.1101/2022.03.16.484596)

# Studies of NCVs

- There is limited evidence, as yet, that NCVs have secured their goals
- The Research on Research Institute (RoRI) is undertaking a two-year project on the use and evaluation of narrative CVs that is scheduled to run to mid-2025:  
<https://researchonresearch.org/project/narratives/>
- RoRI **released a report this month (March 2025) on its website** making five recommendations to help funders create a supportive environment for the effective implementation of NCVs
- For an earlier effort, a 2021 workshop attracting 120 participants from 22 countries and 40 funding organizations has a report here: <https://zenodo.org/records/5799414#.YeM-41IOIPY>
- And the Lab for Academic Culture at the University of Glasgow also did an examination of the effectiveness of narrative CVs in 2021: [https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media\\_1059370\\_smxx.pdf](https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_1059370_smxx.pdf)