

# **GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP**

**ERASMUS+ FRAME / HEI ICI CLIDEV, PART II**

**Vanessa L Fuller**

**LANGUAGE SERVICES / LANGUAGE CENTRE**

**[www.helsinki.fi/languageservices](http://www.helsinki.fi/languageservices)**



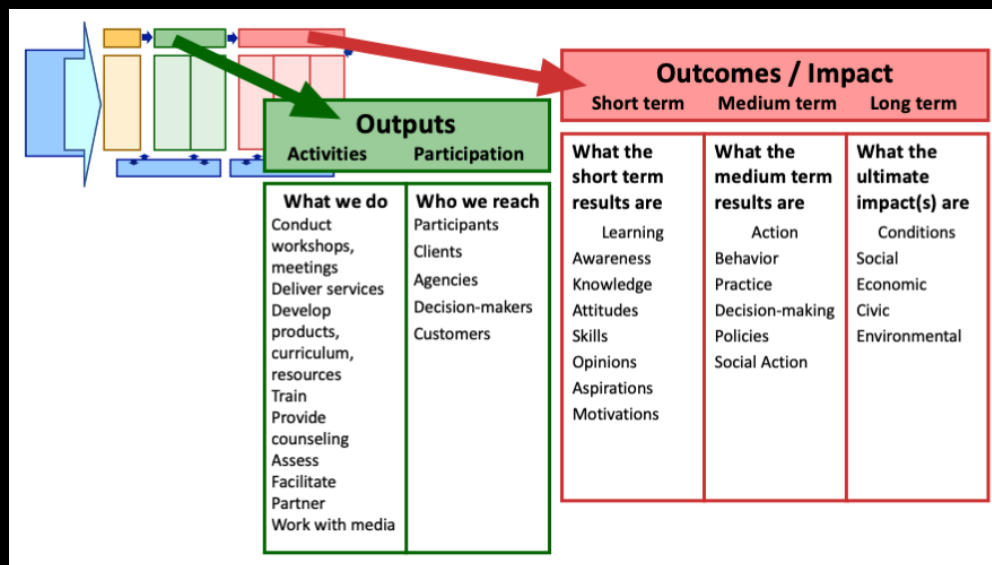
## OUTLINE FOR DAY 2

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- Outputs vs Outcomes
- Planning & Targeting Your Applications
  - The Review Process
  - Real-World Examples

# SECTION I: OUTPUT VS OUTCOMES

## OUTPUT VS. OUTCOMES



# SECTION I: OUTPUTS VS OUTCOMES

## ■ Outputs:

- What is created, what we do
- Typically, numerical value or a count
  - # of training seminars, training participants
  - # of guidelines produced / manuscripts drafted
  - # of interviews completed
- **Not** an indication of achieving your aim(s)

## ■ Outcomes:

- What we achieve, what difference results from we do
  - Did participants learn something new?
  - Have skills improved?
- Did you achieve your aim?

\*<https://measurementresourcesco.com/2014/02/02/outputs-vs-outcomes-matters/>

## SECTION II: PLANNING & TARGETING WISELY

# PLANNING & TARGETED GRANT WRITING

- Improving your odds
  - What you need to know about RFPs
    - Planning your applications
      - Identifying donors

# IMPROVING YOUR CHANCES: TARGETING WISELY

## ■ Know what donors want

### ■ What are review committees looking for:

- Is your track record appropriate?
- Is your research question / plan compelling?
- Is your project well designed?
- Is your application well prepared and crafted?

## ■ Expect to submit **multiple** applications

- Improves your odds
- **Overlap** in ideas / larger project → **less overall work** to draft new proposals

# HOW TO MANAGE A ROLLING CYCLE OF PROPOSALS

## ■ What you need to know:

- Which funding schemes do you want to target and when?
- How long will it take to prepare a single application?
- How do you create economies of scale?
- Where do you turn to for help with proposals?
- When do you give up on an idea?

***This requires you to plan your applications!***



## PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS, CONT.

■ How **often** do you want to submit applications?

- More often → more work

■ How will you fit this **additional work** in amongst your regular duties?

- Be flexible enough to allow for **parallel** and **complementary** applications
- But, also ensure ***high-quality applications***
- **Do not** submit multiple poorly drafted applications

# PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS, CONT.

- For **each agency** on your list, consider
  - Is your research question **appropriate** to the donor?
  - Their funding **priorities**?
  - Timing:
    - When are RFPs opened?
    - When are the deadlines for submission?
    - When are funds disbursed?
  - Financial parameters / considerations:
    - Funding limits?
    - Reporting requirements?
  - Application template / requirements:
    - Template?
    - Additional information?

# PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS: CREATING A TIMELINE

- At least **6 weeks** for each application
- First application = **hardest** and most **time-consuming**
- Review application guidelines and list **all requirements**
  - Identify what will require **more** time
  - Determine where you need **input from others**
  - If you can, find a **successful proposal** funded by the agency

# PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS: A ROUGH TIMELINE (GOING SOLO)

## Days to deadline

## Activity

51

- Check feasibility of project
- Start design
- Literature review
- Alert Research Office / colleagues of the application plan

36

- Start writing the application document\*

28

- Start preparing budget with Research / Finance depts

25

- First draft written

21–18

- Complete draft and budget produced (incl **entire** app)

18

- Distribute for informal review (peers, outside readers)

14–7

- Final revisions

7

- Internal approval process

2

- Final corrections made, any letters of support / references

1

- Submit\*

# PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS: A ROUGH TIMELINE (COLLABORATIVE)

## Days to deadline

## Activity

56

- Check feasibility of project
- Start design
- Literature review
- Alert Research Office / colleagues of the application plan

51

- Open discussions with partners

37

- All partners agree to participate and start writing application

32

- Initial draft / plan circulated to partners for input
- Each partner starts preparing budget with Research / Finance dept

25

- First draft produced

# PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS: A ROUGH TIMELINE (COLL., CONT.)

## Days to deadline

## Activity

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 21–18 | ■ Complete draft and budget produced (incl <b>entire</b> application) |
| 18    | ■ Distributed for informal review (peers, outside readers)            |
| 14–7  | ■ Final revisions   |
| 7     | ■ Internal approval   |
| 2     | ■ Final corrections made, any letters of support / references         |
| 1     | ■ Submit*   |

# PLANNING YOUR PROPOSALS: A ROUGH TIMELINE, CONT.

## ■ Additional considerations:

- Input from others → agree on timeline with them **ASAP**

- Each additional component requires **more time**

- Allow **extra time** for:

- # collaborators & partners
- International / inter-institutional partners
- Complex budgets
- Creation of steering committees / review boards
- Letters of support / cooperation
- Complicated methodologies

## SECTION II: AFTER SUBMISSION

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU SUBMIT





# AFTER SUBMISSION

- Two aims of funding agencies
  - Investing in the best research
  - Application supports the agency's aims
- Four stages to application evaluations
  - Application template
  - Referee reports
  - Designated member presentations
  - Committee discussion

# AFTER SUBMISSION, CONT.

## ■ *Stage 1: Application template*

- All applicants provide the information required
- All applicants provide the same quantity of information
- Referees & committee members can identify each category of info quickly

## ■ *Stage 2: Referee reports*

- Expert review
  - Demonstrate
    - Importance
    - Contribution to agency's declared priorities
    - Originality, timeliness & novelty
    - Contribution to theory, knowledge or methods
    - Likely health, social, economic benefit
- |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| Capability or competence of applicant |
| Appropriateness of design / methods   |
| Value for money                       |
| Outputs, dissemination                |
| Risk, etc.                            |

## **AFTER SUBMISSION, CONT.**

### **■ *Stage 3: Designated member presentations***

- Be easy to read, especially speed-read
- Be easy for non-specialists to remember, understand and summarise
- Make it easy to reconstruct
- Provide at a glance overview

### **■ *Stage 4: Grants' committee discussion & ranking***

- Scored and ranked
- Make it possible for strong and favourable impression within few hasty glances

# REJECTION OR ACCEPTANCE?

## ■ Rejections hurt:

- Incredibly common (1 in 10 proposals are successful)
- Take a look at your proposal to see if you missed anything / could have done something better
- Call the donor agency:
  - Politely ask for reviewer comments / possible reasons for rejection
    - Possible problem with programme?
    - Did proposal match the guidelines?
    - Should I apply again?
    - Any suggestions for strengthening the programme?
  - Thank the donor



## SECTION III: DEFENDING YOUR CORNER

# DEFENDING YOUR CORNER

(OR SUPPORT FOR THE COMPETENCE PROPOSITION)

- Elevator pitches
- Biographical sketches
- CVs

# Defending Your Corner: Demonstrating your competence

- Most funders require **applicants demonstrate their skills**
  - Supporting the ***competence proposition***
- ***How?***
  - Establish your credentials
  - Demonstrate your track record
  - Demonstrate your ability to carry out proposed programme
  - Illustrate your 'fundability'

***The larger the sum you request, the higher the bar is set.***

# Defending Your Corner

Develop an elevator pitch



Develop a biographical sketch



Build your CV

***You may have multiple versions to serve multiple purposes.***

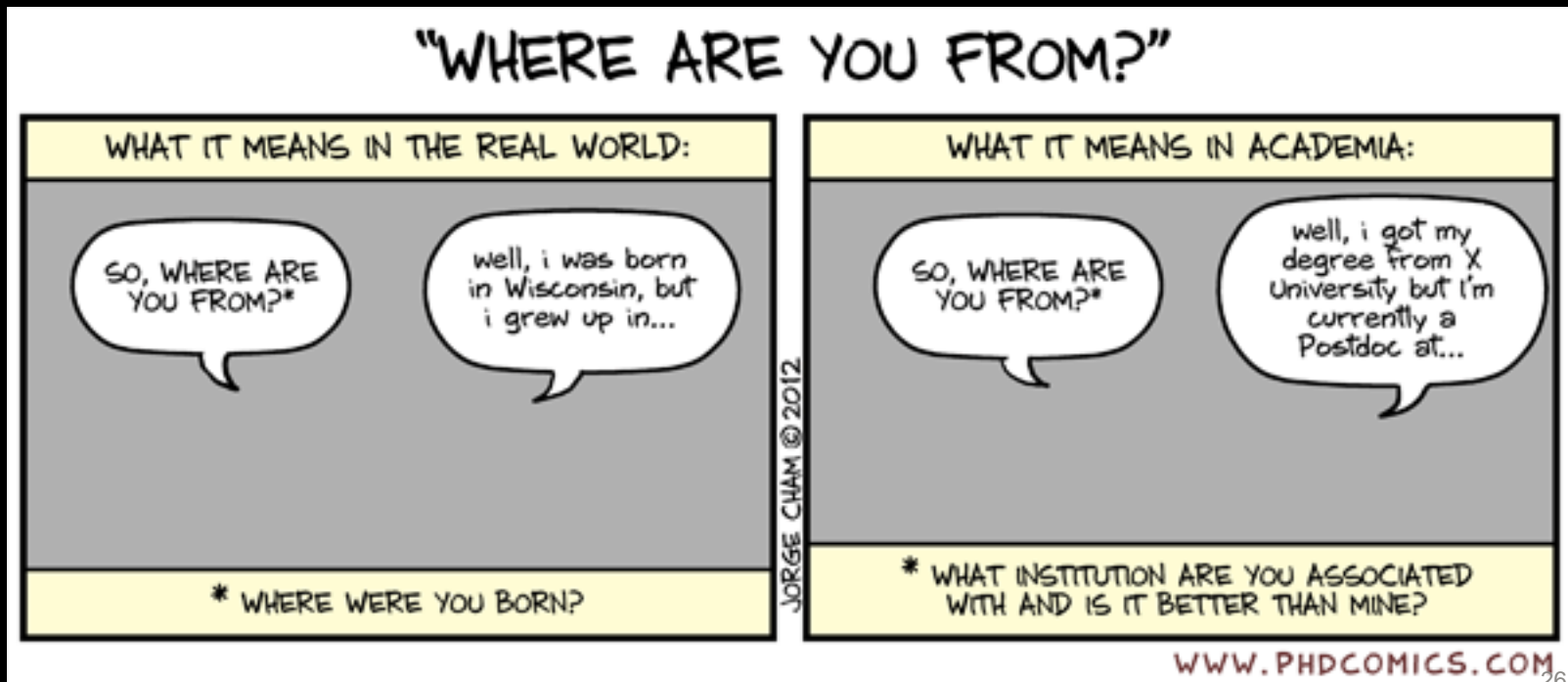


## Defending Your Corner: What is an Elevator Pitch?, cont.



# Defending Your Corner: What is an Elevator Pitch?, cont.

- An introduction your granny understands
- Identifies:
  - Academic affiliation
  - Goal or objective of your research
  - Implications / application of your research



# Defending Your Corner: What is an Elevator Pitch?, cont.

## ■ The 60-s list

### ■ Your name

### ■ Your affiliation

- University and/or research group or institute
- Specific school or department
- Year of programme / status (e.g., faculty, post-doc, PhD / graduate student, etc)

### ■ One sentence describing your research

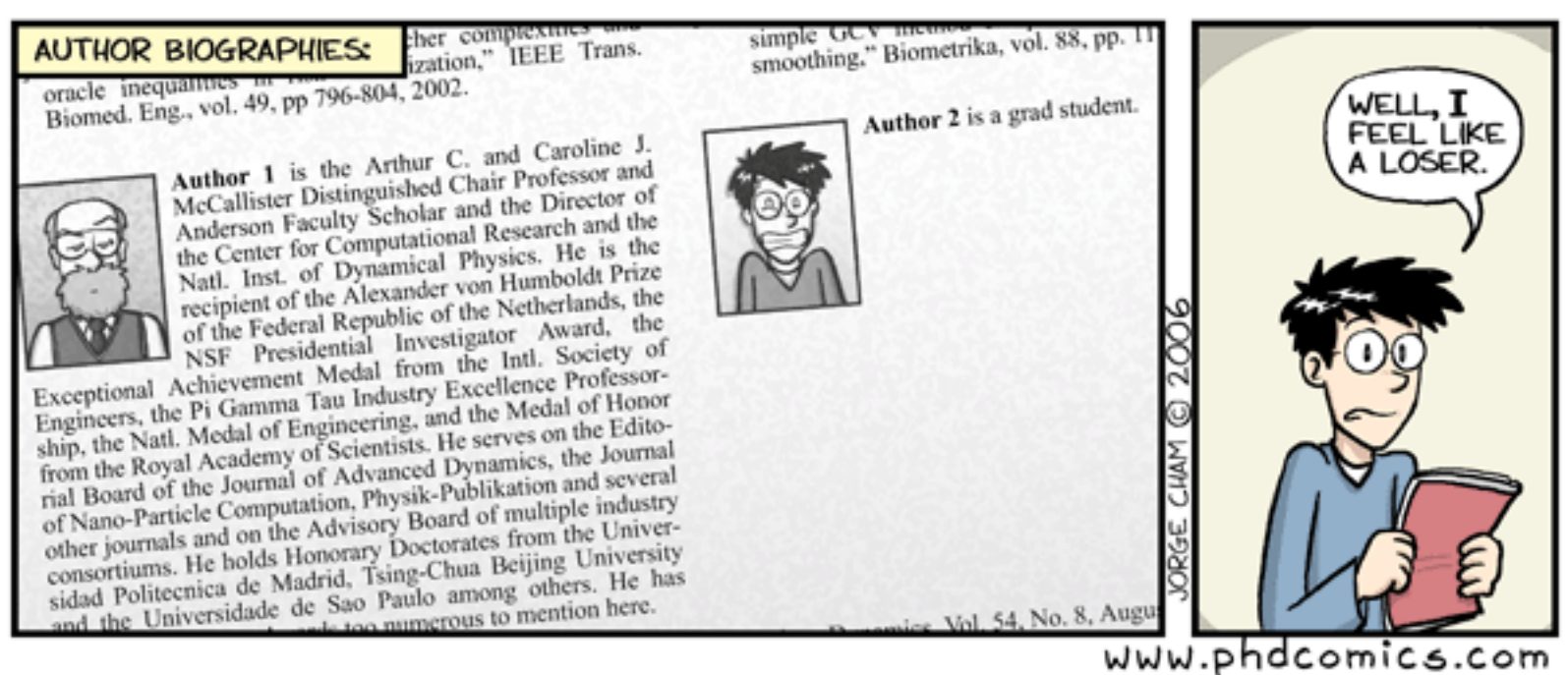
- Hypothesis or objective
- Expected conclusions / findings
- Application or implication of your findings

# Defending Your Corner: What is an Elevator Pitch?, cont.

- Developing a scripted, yet natural pitch:
  - Think of a question that frames your work
  - Then, provide a solution / way to approach that question
    - Use language that initially is a bit more generic and accessible
    - Adjust what you say / detail depending upon your interaction with the individual
    - Use a combination of layperson and specialised language
- The Three-Minute Thesis

# Defending Your Corner: The Biographical Sketch

- Expanded elevator pitch
- Focused on results and accomplishments
- On average ~250 words





# Defending Your Corner: The Biographical Sketch, cont.

- **Context**

- Where will this be used?

- **Audience**

- Who will be reviewing / reading your bio?
- Multiple audiences or tailored to a specific audience?

- **Purpose**

- What are you trying to communicate about yourself?

Include a **hook** – something to grab the interest of reviewer

# Defending Your Corner: The Biographical Sketch, cont.

- The **short** version (~35–50 words)

- Your name
- Your position
- Your department
- Your institution
- Research interests

- Example:

**Vanessa Fuller is an instructor and reviser for Language Services at the University of Helsinki. She divides her time between revising manuscripts intended for publication in peer-reviewed journals and assisting graduate students and academics to improve their English-language writing, conference presentation, and grant-writing skills.**

**[45 words]**

# Defending Your Corner: The Biographical Sketch, CONT.

- The '**middle-length**' version (~100 words)
- **Add** to the short length bio:
  - Degrees held
  - Recent or on-going scholarly projects
  - Notable awards and honours
  - Publications
  - Journals in which you've published or
  - Situate your research interests in a larger field of study



## **Defending Your Corner: Drafting a Biographical Sketch, cont.**

- **Middle-length bio, example:**

**Vanessa L Fuller graduated from Georgia State University (BA with honours, 1993), The University of Alabama (UA) at Tuscaloosa (MA with distinction, 1997), and is all-but-dissertation at the University of Connecticut (UConn, 1997–2005). She received the Outstanding Thesis Award from the UA College of Arts and Sciences and was named Burroughs Fellow at UConn. Ms Fuller has taught and mentored on writing and delivering presentations to international audiences, and served as a language and style editor for AIDS Foundation East-West, Health Connections International, the United Nations University, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the University of Helsinki.**

**[103 words]**

# Defending Your Corner: The Biographical Sketch, CONT.

- The '**long**' version (~200-400 words)
- **Add** to the middle-length bio:
  - More detailed information related to your background / experience
  - Non-academic interests and hobbies (optional)
- Structure
  - Broad → Narrow or **Narrow → Broad** (specificity or situated within discipline)?
  - Timeline or trajectory
  - Thematic (topic, theory or method)

# Biographical Sketch – An Example of the Long version

Vanessa L Fuller (Reviser and Instructor, University of Helsinki), born 21 May 1970 in Brenham, Texas, USA, is an applied medical anthropologist with over 20 years' experience in international public health settings and multi-disciplinary research teams. She holds degrees from Georgia State University (BA, 1993), The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa (MA, 1997), and consulted on state, regional and municipal reproductive health-related projects with the University of Connecticut (1997–2005), where she is all-but-dissertation (ABD) in Medical Anthropology and the Anthropology of Russia. Ms Fuller has worked in clinical settings on issues related to migrant health in the Southeastern US, doctor–patient communication in prenatal care, and on improving maternal and child health for the State of Connecticut. For 8 years, she lived in Moscow, Russian Federation, where she worked with *AIDS Foundation East-West (AFEW)*, as well as other agencies on issues related to HIV, tuberculosis, prison health, and harm reduction. As a consultant on projects in the Russian Federation, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Estonia, South Africa, and SE Asia, she served as lead architect for funding applications with awards amounting to more than €5 mln to fund organisations, programmes and research projects on a range health- and development-related topics. More recently, she returned to teaching, and now mentors graduate students and peers on writing journal articles and grant applications to donor agencies, and delivering presentations to international audiences. She and her husband currently live in Helsinki, Finland, and she enjoys charity knitting, social justice activism, and international travel to lesser-known locations in her spare time.

[254 words]

# Defending Your Corner: The Biographical Sketch, cont.

- Is there a guideline?
  - NIH grant application
    - Follow instructions!!!!
    - Provide detail requested
- Tailor to your audience
  - US vs UK English?
  - Academic vs Non-academic?
  - Informational vs Potential employer?
- Review other bios

Program Director/Principal Investigator (Last, First, Middle): \_\_\_\_\_

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**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors in the order listed on Form Page 2.  
Follow this format for each person. **DO NOT EXCEED FOUR PAGES.**

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<small>NAME</small>	<small>POSITION TITLE</small>		
<small>eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login)</small>			

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EDUCATION/TRAINING (Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing. Include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable.)

<small>INSTITUTION AND LOCATION</small>	<small>DEGREE (if applicable)</small>	<small>MM/YY</small>	<small>FIELD OF STUDY</small>

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**NOTE:** The Biographical Sketch may not exceed four pages. Follow the formats and instructions below.

**A. Personal Statement**

Briefly describe why your experience and qualifications make you particularly well-suited for your role (e.g., PD/PI, mentor, participating faculty) in the project that is the subject of the application. Within this section you may, if you choose, briefly describe factors such as family care responsibilities, illness, disability, and active duty military service that may have affected your scientific advancement or productivity.

**B. Positions and Honors**

List in chronological order previous positions, concluding with the present position. List any honors. Include present membership on any Federal Government public advisory committee.

**C. Selected Peer-reviewed Publications**

NIH encourages applicants to limit the list of selected peer-reviewed publications or manuscripts in press to no more than 15. Do not include manuscripts submitted or in preparation. The individual may choose to include selected publications based on recency, importance to the field, and/or relevance to the proposed research. When citing articles that fall under the Public Access Policy, were authored or co-authored by the applicant and arose from NIH support, provide the NIH Manuscript Submission reference number (e.g., NIHMS97531) or the PubMed Central (PMC) reference number (e.g., PMCID234567) for each article. If the PMCID is not yet available because the Journal submits articles directly to PMC on behalf of their authors, indicate "PMC Journal - In Process." A list of these Journals is posted at: [http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit\\_process\\_journals.htm](http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm). Citations that are not covered by the Public Access Policy, but are publicly available in a free, online format may include URLs or PMCID numbers along with the full reference (note that copies of publicly available publications are not accepted as appendix material.)

**D. Research Support**

List both selected ongoing and completed research projects for the past three years (Federal or non-Federally-supported). *Begin with the projects that are most relevant to the research proposed in the application.* Briefly indicate the overall goals of the projects and responsibilities of the key person identified on the Biographical Sketch. Do not include number of person months or direct costs.

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0625-0001/0002 (Rev. 09/12)Page \_\_\_\_Biographical Sketch Format Page

# DEFENDING YOUR CORNER: BUILDING YOUR CV

- Make sure you CV reflects the ***qualifications necessary***
  - Does it demonstrate your **skills and experience**?
  - Do these support your **proposed plan**?
  - Are there **any omissions** which might cause funders to pause?
- The ***order of sections*** depends upon what's most important

# DEFENDING YOUR CORNER: BUILDING YOUR CV, CONT.

- Education:

- PhD, other professional training

- Brief employment history:

- Post held, dates, job title(s)

- Previous funding track record:

- Funding agency, title, dates and value of grant

- (Selected) publications:

- Impact factor and citation counts, if necessary

- Other dissemination of results:

- Conference presentations, invited talks and seminars

# DEFENDING YOUR CORNER: BUILDING YOUR CV, CONT.

- Other relevant training:
  - Media training, specialist research skills training, etc.
- Supervision of research students:
  - Post held, dates, job title(s)
- Relevant non-academic work experience:
  - User communities, as a practitioner / clinician, industry experience, with media, outreach work, etc.
- Project management experience:
  - Budget management, event organisation, line management experience
- Other key impact and esteem indicators

## SECTION IV: REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES

# REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES

- Previously submitted

- [Academy of Finland](#)





# ENGLISH-LANGUAGE STYLE GUIDES

- *The Elements of Style* (Strunk & White)
- *The Economist* Style Guide
  - <http://www.economist.com/styleguide/introduction>
- *The Guardian & Observer* Style Guide
  - <http://www.theguardian.com/info/series/guardian-and-observer-style-guide>
- *After Deadline: Newsroom Notes on Usage And Style* (NYTimes)
  - <http://afterdeadline.blogs.nytimes.com/>
- *National Geographic* Style Manual
  - <http://stylemanual.ngs.org/home>

# THANK YOU....

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