

CRAFTING YOUR STORY

The Art of the Narrative CV

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1:00-2:00 pm

Kristen (Reilly) Firth (she/her) | kreill2@uwo.ca
Knowledge Mobilization & Research Impact Specialist
Inclusive Research Excellence & Impact Team
Western Research



Land Acknowledgement

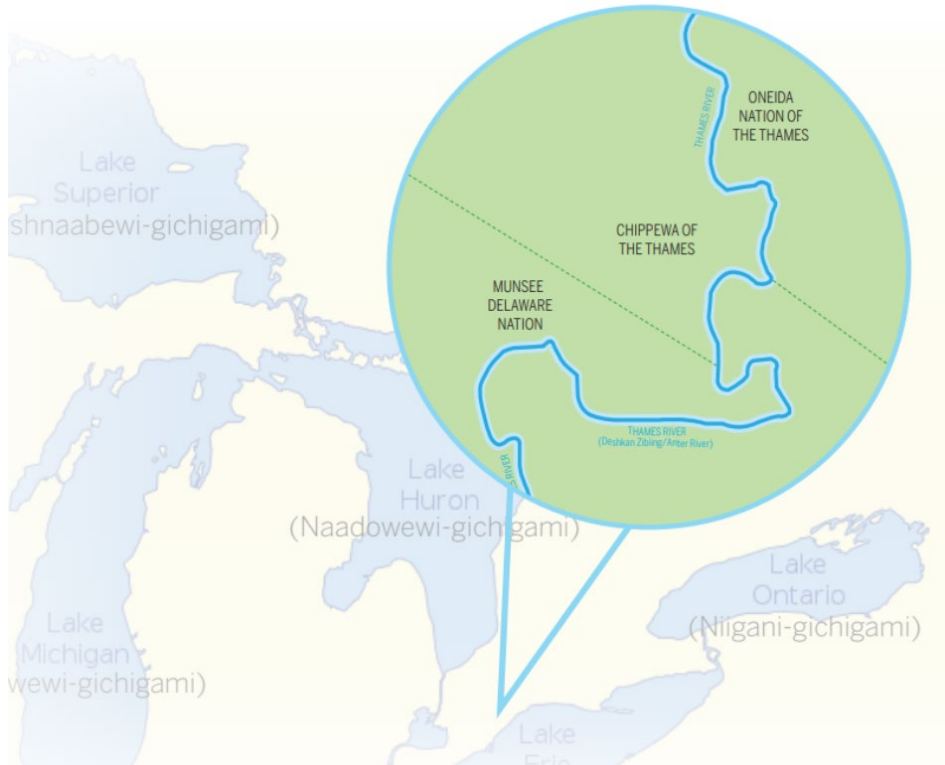


Image from "More than Words: A Guide to Land Acknowledgements at Western University" <https://express.adobe.com/page/Aolk6ZyoJa3qD/>



Image of the Wampum Learning Lodge from https://wampumlearninglodge.uwo.ca/engaging_with_us/explore_the_space/index.html

What are we covering today?

- Introduction to Narrative CVs
- Overview of the New Tri-Agency CV
- Guide to Writing Narrative CVs
- Tips and Examples
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Closing thoughts
- Resources

Please note we are recording this session. The video and slides will be available on our website.

Please direct all questions to the Q&A.

Close captions available.

What is a narrative CV?

A structured description of a researcher's contributions and achievements that reflect a broader range of skills and experiences beyond publications and funding record.

Values diverse contributions and career paths

Improves equity, diversity, and inclusion

Emphasizes wide range of skills, experiences, and impacts.

Encourages responsible, limited use of metrics



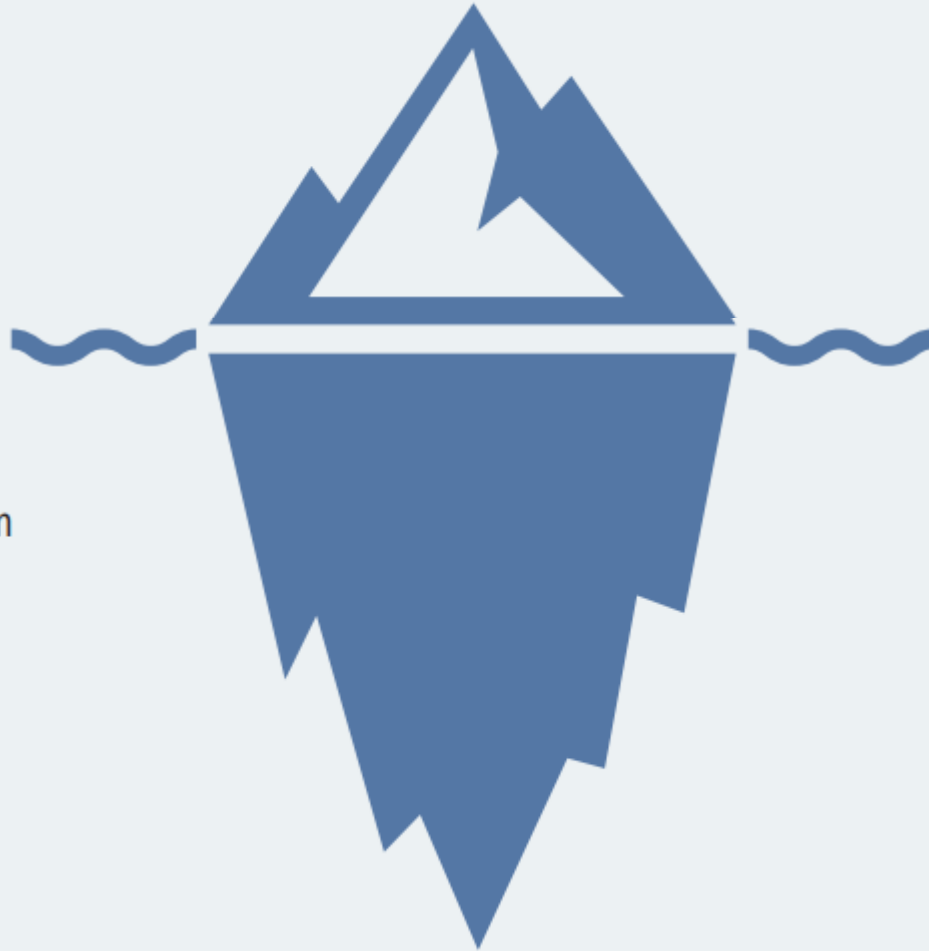
What is a narrative CV?

Historically valued

- Publications and citations
- Reports and books
- Prestigious awards
- Number/size of grants
- Knowledge mobilization outputs & activities

Other valuable research outputs

- Influence on policy and practice
- Public engagement (including public, patients, providers, policymakers/government, researchers, industry, mainstream and social media)
- Community-based participatory research
- Training & mentorship
- Volunteerism
- Guidelines, standards, software and tools
- Networks, collaborations and partnerships
- Datasets, code and infrastructure development
- Commercialized and open-access products



Transition to narrative CV

- Phased roll out of the new narrative-style tri-agency CV (TCV)
- All funding opportunities launched on Tri-Agency Grants Management Solution (TGMS)
- For now, agencies will transition to the TCV on select funding opportunities using legacy systems
 - Read the instructions on any application very carefully each time – requirements may change
 - Formatting guidelines may differ by agency (e.g., font)



TCV Overview

- 5 page maximum (six pages for French)
- 3 sections
 - No limits on each section – write as much as you need, as long as it is within the total page limit
- Consult funding opportunity details to determine if additional material or information is required
 - Appendix section(s) do not count towards the total page limit
- The information must be self-contained
- Use the TCV template and follow the formatting guidelines

1

Personal statement

2

Most significant contributions
and experiences

3

Supervisory and mentorship
activities

Personal statement

Describe why you are well suited for your proposed role relevant to the application.

Examples:

- Lived or living experience
- Expertise related to the specific topic or related topics
- Leadership activities and skills
- Collaborations or past performance in the field or related fields
- Previous work, progress, or productivity that provide context to the results of your research activities which support your current application
- Recognitions (e.g., prizes, awards, community letters)
- Impact of your research, and its benefits to society and science

Introduce yourself and describe why you are the best candidate for the role in the proposed project.

Tell reviewers what you most want them to know about you in the opening 2-3 sentences.

Think of it as a chance to say who you are (not just what you did).

Examples:

Career stage

Diverse career path or work history

Lived/living experience or diverse identities

Most significant contributions & experiences

Describe up to 10 important contributions or experiences that relate to your application and explain the impact, significance, and your role in each.

Examples:

- Articles and other publications
- Assessment and review activities
- Community service or involvement
- Contributions to Indigenous leadership, self-determination, and capacity-building in research
- Creative outputs
- Dataset creation, curation, sharing, or re-use
- EDI & accessibility advances in the research ecosystem
- Event and volunteer activities
- Intellectual property
- KMb with specialist or non-specialist audiences
- Methodologies, knowledge systems, cultural practices etc
- New companies/organizations to further use of research
- Partnerships or collaborations in research or with non-profit/public/private sector organizations
- Policies, guidelines, regulations, laws, or practices
- Products, technology, services, or advice useful to specific organizations, communities, or society
- Software or tool development

Describe your key achievements tailored to the current funding competition.

Explain your role and the specific contributions you made to team projects.

Tell reviewers why it matters. Think beyond outputs: highlight the outcomes and impacts of your work.

Examples:

Generated new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge

Enabled other discoveries or innovations

Provided tangible benefits for society

Fostered inclusive and equitable research culture

Responded to need/gap of importance to end users

Supervisory or mentorship activities

Instructions: Describe how you have helped mentor or train future generations. This can include the development of highly qualified personnel for careers within and outside of academia.

Examples:

- Creation of safe, equitable, and inclusive research environments, practices, and norms.
- Development and delivery of training workshops outside of research or course requirements.
- Mentorship (formal or informal) of highly qualified personnel, Early Career Researchers, colleagues, collaborators, relevant partners, other professionals, or community members.
- Outreach and engagement with students, youth, or members of the general public, including through in-person or online targeted activities or capacity building.
- Supervision of highly qualified personnel in the research process.
- Training in methodologies, knowledge systems, or cultural practices and approaches in the research context (e.g., Indigenous knowledge and science).

Highlight how you support the growth and development of others through supervision and mentorship.

Go beyond the numbers: emphasize how your input has been critical to the success of a team or team members.

Tell success stories of those you supervised or mentored – awards, scholarships, academic positions, industry employment (this is evidence!)

Getting started

- Check the funding opportunity instructions and use appropriate template/formatting guidelines
- Know your audience and how they will evaluate your application
- Allow time: it can take a day or more to get a first draft ready



Storytelling

Storytelling is a great tool to catch the attention of the reviewer and to stick in their memory. Stories connect us to people, shape how they see us and build trust.

Like stories, the examples in your narrative CV may describe the following elements:

- Setting (i.e. the context)
- Characters (i.e. people involved)
- Conflict (i.e. challenges), and
- Resolution (i.e. solutions and outputs).



Step by step

1. Create a long list of activities you could include in each section *or* work on one section at a time
2. Highlight the strongest and most relevant contributions, referring to the funding call
3. Describe the contribution, your role, and the impact with evidence

Contribution: Describe the research aim and objective. *What was done? What was found? What this means, allows, or leads to?*

Context and Role: Describe the research environment and your role(s). *How did you ensure work was high quality (e.g., credible, ethical, reproducible, innovative) and/or what was your role in ensuring the research had potential to impact end users?*

Impact: Describe the significance and reach of your contributions. *What was the: 1) Immediate scholarly impact (generation of new ideals, tools, methodologies, or knowledge); 2) Broad scholarly impact (influence beyond your field and toward inclusive research culture); 3) Societal Impact (importance and value to end users, health/technology/environment/economic benefits)*

Evidence: *What are appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators that support your impact claim?*

4. Draft a summary sentence to open each section: what do you want a reviewer to remember?
5. Get feedback: request a review from a peer, colleague, mentor, or research officer

Step by Step

Contribution: Describe the research aim and objective

Objectives and Methods (What was done?)

Results (What was found?)

Implications (What does this mean, allow or lead to?)

Example:

Synchrotron techniques were used to uncover carbon forms embedded deep within Martian rock. We were able to discover what kind of molecule or crystal the carbon forms belonged to.

This prevents the destruction of the samples and is highly desirable for other disciplines.

WRITING A NARRATIVE CV

Step by Step

Context and Role: Describe the research environment and your role(s).

How did you ensure work was high quality (e.g., credible, ethical, reproducible, innovative)?

Examples: Performed key experiments; Conceptualized method and design; Performed key analyses; Synthesized information across disciplines or topics; Acquired funding to support the work; Developed ethical protocols; Established research infrastructure, professional practice or creative practices; Led technical training to increase skills and capacity; Created open- source workflow processes, software/code, or data repositories.

**See CRediT tool.*

How did you ensure work had potential to impact end users?

Examples: Engaged researchers in different fields or disciplines; Engaged with industry, private or public sectors, policymakers; Knowledge mobilization activities; Brought in new collaborators (e.g., from other disciplines, sectors, industry etc.); Public outreach; Writing policy papers; Creation of educational resources based on research findings; Integrated/advocated for diverse viewpoints and knowledge systems; Creation of media (i.e., blogs or videos); Social media engagement; Media interviews.

WRITING A NARRATIVE CV

Step by Step

Impact: Describe the significance and reach of your contributions.

Immediate scholarly impact

Examples: Findings led to new areas of research or new independent collaborations, findings challenged dominant thinking or approach in the field, findings enhanced theory or research method, work was highly cited or accessed by scholars in your field, invitations to give talks/seminars or other presentations in conferences, invitations to contribute to edited collections/review papers, you or your team received research grants/awards/prizes based on research findings; recognition from peers (e.g., quotes from peer-review reports, references in scholarly literature, acknowledgment of a publication or report, selection/appointment as a leader of a scholarly society etc.)

Broad scholarly impact

Examples: Positive contributions to research team environment, contributions to the research development of others, contributions to the research development of equity-deserving groups, contributions to advancing equitable and inclusive participation in the research ecosystem, contributions to open science and democratization of knowledge, contributions to networks or steering groups, positive feedback from trainees or acknowledgment, whether you received invitations within your sector to deliver seminars or other presentations, selection or appointment as a leader of a scholarly society.

Societal impact

Examples: Influenced policy, affected professional practice, enriched public discourse, enhanced collaborations or partnerships, commercialization, translation of your research into policy (governmental or industrial), industrial/biomedical applications, launched spin-out companies, adoption of research findings to create new technologies, patents research findings, advanced SDGs, facilitated international collaboration with lower income countries, promoted societal equity; work highly accessed/cited by the public/industry/ community; Explicit references in professional and public domains; Non-academic prizes/honors for scholarly achievements; requests for consultancy/advice)

WRITING A NARRATIVE CV

Step by Step

Evidence: *What are appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators that support your impact claim?*

Indicators	Examples
Books	Authored chapters, editor, citation, award, courseware
Change in understanding or awareness	Paradigm shifting, expands knowledge, leads to new terminology, approach, practice, or research direction, translational research, usability, policy, societal benefits, standards
Collaborations	Type of relationship, new/enduring, sector, institutions, location
Conferences	Meeting types, papers, posters, invited, keynote, panel, organized by the researcher
Curriculum	Courseware, training materials, best practices
Data	Research data repository, made public, shared data, databases
Economic benefits	Leads to cost-effectiveness, savings, profit, production, growth, a spin-off or start-up
Funding	Secured, invited to submit, featured by funding agency
Grey literature	Reports, policy, trade pubs, slides, videos, supplements
Intellectual property	Devices, tools, techniques, instruments, software, licenses, patents, formulations, repurposing, material transfer agreements, proof of concept, coding
Media	News releases, broadcast, interviews, profile, social media activity
Methodologies	Algorithms, frameworks, analysis, approaches, novel uses
Outreach	Speaking engagements, expert advice, testimony, partnerships, KT
Publications	Citations: quality (meta-analysis/systematic review, new field, soundness, foundational), quantity, leading journal in field, fast-track, editorial, open access (most downloaded, accessed)
Research	Leads to additional, new or renewed research, trials
Resources	Leads to new or enhanced resources or expertise
Trainees	Involvement, HQP training program, awards, degrees, career advancement

WRITING A NARRATIVE CV

Step by Step

Evidence: What are appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators that support your impact claim?

Document impact can demonstrate the use and uptake of individual publications based on citation count.

Limitations: Some fields/disciplines have limited or poor coverage of citation data (e.g., arts, humanities, social sciences); the number of citations varies by data (e.g. Web of Science vs Scopus)

Good practice: Contextualize document-level metrics by providing qualitative details like quotes from peer-review reports, references in scholarly literature, acknowledgement of publication by end user, geographical uptake, applied in education/training etc.

Altmetrics demonstrate the reach and impact of scholarship through online engagement with outputs.

Limitations: Lack standard definition of what is truly measures, older works may have limited altmetric activity despite being impactful, can be difficult to track items without DOI

Good practice: Provide details such as the original mentions and references that contribute to the altmetric scores rather than the score alone and

***Tri-agency reviewers are asked avoid using journal-based metrics (e.g., journal impact factors) and h-index as surrogate measures of quality and impact**

Examples: Impact Claim and Evidence

Impact claim

The successful conservation initiative, the Biodiversity Protection Standard, was developed as a result of my research and collaboration with the Nature-Based Solutions Foundation [ref].

Evidence

The National Programs Manager at the Nature-Based Solutions Foundation said: "Prof XX provided key evidence based on his research, that informed and shaped the groundbreaking initiative, the Biodiversity Protection Standard, which can help Canada meaningfully reach its 30% by 2030 protected areas targets" [ref].

Impact claim

This discovery, first published in 2021 [ref], led to enriched public discourse about artificial intelligence and intellectual property.

Evidence

The findings were covered by more than 100 media outlets including The New York Times and The Guardian, and the original article was recommended on 12 research blogs and mentioned, bookmarked, or viewed in at least 43 countries according to Impactstory.

Examples: Impact Claim and Evidence

Impact claim

Multi-layered mentorship starts on day one in my lab. I mentor and co-publish with each of the students I supervise, grounded in initial one-on-one discussions about their career aspirations, work-life balance needs, and progress benchmarking. I ensure equitable and inclusive networking, conference, and professional development opportunities.

Evidence

I have supervised 1 Banting post-doc, and 5 PhD and 12 Master's students to completion. Two of these students won best conference paper awards, and among my former PhD students three are now professors at Canadian and international universities, and two were recruited as researchers for major pharmaceutical companies in the US and Germany.

Examples: Phrase Bank

1. Knowledge, expertise, and experience

- My expertise was recognized by...
- This led to an invited review/presentation...
- Committee membership on ...
- Funded by...
- Lead, pioneered, spearheaded, chaired...

2. Impact: Novelty and innovation

- This established for the first time...
- Our team made the unique observation...
- My team was the first to demonstrate...
- This led to the discovery of...
- This is the first use of [new methodology] in [field]

3. Impact: Advancement of knowledge

- Our work has provided a better understanding of [new theory/hypothesis]...
- This work was foundational for several current research projects...
- This is established as a superior...
- This complements...
- This confirms/substantiates previous findings and contributes additional evidence for...
- We can now...
- This suggests a role for [x] in [y]...
- This enhances our understanding of ...
- Can be applied to other ...
- This contribution was essential to I have extended my research program to [new territory]...

4. Quality of contributions

- This resulted in publications in [journals]...
- A top journal in [field]...
- A journal ranked [x] of [y] in [field]...
- This is now well accepted in the literature...
- This was highlighted/featured in a recent [editorial, letters, pre-publication, media coverage]...
- Most downloaded/accessed...
- Received media interest from...
- This body of work has been cited/used in [policy, reports, by user groups]...
- The article has been cited [quantity]...
- The article has been for cited for [quality/impact indicator]...

5. Importance to end users

- Results have important implications for...
- Our [new methodology, findings] are now used by others... [extensively/in a different field/applied]...
- This has helped [end users] reframe...
- This has led to research collaborations at/in/with [institution/country/community]...
- Leads to [cost-effectiveness, savings, value, production, growth, practice, policy]...
- Benefits [end user] in terms of...
- Can be applied to...
- Has generated interest/support/funding from [end user]...

Tips

Do

- ✓ Write in the first person – direct, concise, and can make it easier to convey passion and interest in what you do
- ✓ Use active language (led, delivered, managed, developed) to describe your own achievements
- ✓ Focus on the past: CVs are about detailing your previous experience to demonstrate your capability to deliver a future project

Don't

- × Overwhelm reviewers with long lists – it is not about cramming in as much as possible, focus on the striking examples that show your greatest achievements
- × Cite research metrics without providing context
- × Leave reviewers to guess what you mean (e.g., informal supervision vs informal supervision, including supporting students with their academic writing or with experimental design)

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: I'm at an early stage of my research career and I'm worried I don't have enough examples to include. What should I do?

Answer: You can identify yourself as an early career researcher in your personal statement and state how long you have been working in research, a particular field, or role. Make it easy for reviewers to assess your achievements in context.

Focus on your contributions to outcomes. Even if you didn't have a leadership role, how did you support the success of a team, project, or development of others?

Use examples from outside of academic research, such as leadership or mentoring others in a different sector or a voluntary context.



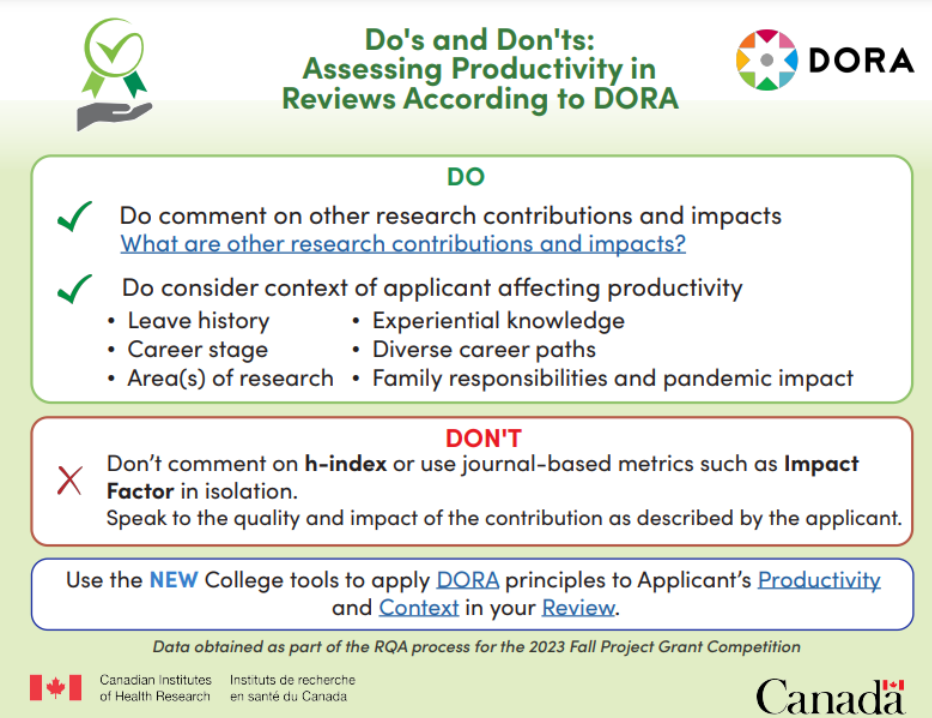
Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How will my narrative CV be evaluated?

Answer: In alignment with DORA, the tri-agencies want to ensure that peer reviewers look beyond the traditional indicators of productivity when assessing contributions and impacts. Peer reviewers are asked to **avoid using metrics (e.g., number of publications and citations; size/number of research grants) in isolation, and to avoid using journal-based metrics (e.g., journal impact factors) as surrogate measures of quality and impact.** The tri-agencies are developing general training and guidance material for reviewers to help them assess the TCV.

Some existing and relevant reviewer material include:

- [DORA at CIHR \(see Resources for peer reviewers\)](#)
- [Do's and Don'ts: Assessing Productivity in Reviews According to DORA Infographic & College Tools](#)
- [NSERC Guidelines on the assessment of contributions to research, training and mentoring](#)
- [SSHRC's Manual for Merit Review Committee Members \(see Research contributions\)](#)
- [SSHRC's Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research](#)



**Do's and Don'ts:
Assessing Productivity in
Reviews According to DORA**

DO


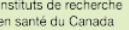

- ✓ Do comment on other research contributions and impacts
[What are other research contributions and impacts?](#)
- ✓ Do consider context of applicant affecting productivity
 - Leave history
 - Career stage
 - Area(s) of research
 - Experiential knowledge
 - Diverse career paths
 - Family responsibilities and pandemic impact

DON'T

- ✗ Don't comment on **h-index** or use journal-based metrics such as **Impact Factor** in isolation.
Speak to the quality and impact of the contribution as described by the applicant.

Use the **NEW** College tools to apply [DORA](#) principles to Applicant's [Productivity](#) and [Context](#) in your [Review](#).

Data obtained as part of the RQA process for the 2023 Fall Project Grant Competition

 Canadian Institutes of Health Research  Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada 

WRITING A NARRATIVE CV

Frequently Asked Questions

Examples from College training tools:

The following information was shared by the research applicant:

I am a passionate researcher who is focusing on mental health interventions. I applied for funding to expand my innovative study on depression in women.

However, the initial trajectory of my research has been complicated by personal circumstances. I was living with depression last year, which led me to take a leave of absence from my research responsibilities. During that time, my focus shifted from academic pursuits to prioritizing my mental health.

As a result, there is a significant gap in my research output, and my recent publication record is minimal. I have returned from my leave, and I bring additional insights and experiences to my work in this field.

GO TO QUESTION



True or False?

Kelly's leave of absence solely detracts from her application and there are no potential positive aspects or considerations, that should be taken into account.

- ☐ True
☐ False

SUBMIT

Your answer is correct.

Kelly's leave of absence resulted in a noticeable gap in her research output, however, it's crucial for reviewers to consider the broader context of her leave. Kelly's personal experience with depression could provide her with experiential knowledge that may inform her research in mental health interventions.

The following information was shared by the research applicant:

I am a dedicated researcher who applied for funding to advance my work in public health research.

My academic trajectory is not typical; I pursued a diverse career before entering academia. My journey includes experiences in healthcare administration, medical technology development, and community health outreach.

In the medical technology development field, I was part of a team that obtained patents for a groundbreaking colon cancer screening tool.

Despite my extensive experience, I do not have many research publications.

GO TO QUESTION



True or False?

Ibrahim's diverse career path adds valuable dimensions that should be considered in evaluating his potential contributions to public health research.

- ☐ True
☐ False

SUBMIT

Your answer is correct.

Ibrahim's diverse career path has equipped him with a unique perspective and a deeper understanding of real-world health care challenges. His diverse experience adds value that should be considered in evaluating his potential contributions to public health research.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Does one publication count as a one contribution?

Answer: A contribution does not have to be a single publication or report. This can include a collection of related publications.

Question: How do I cite a publication in my narrative CV?

Answer: The TCV instructions are as follows, if you are listing publications:

- Use any citation style common in your field.
- Add an asterisk (*) after each of your supervised highly qualified personnel (e.g., First Name Last Name*) if you are their supervisor.
- If the lead author is not listed first (e.g., if authorship is alphabetical), bold the lead author's name.



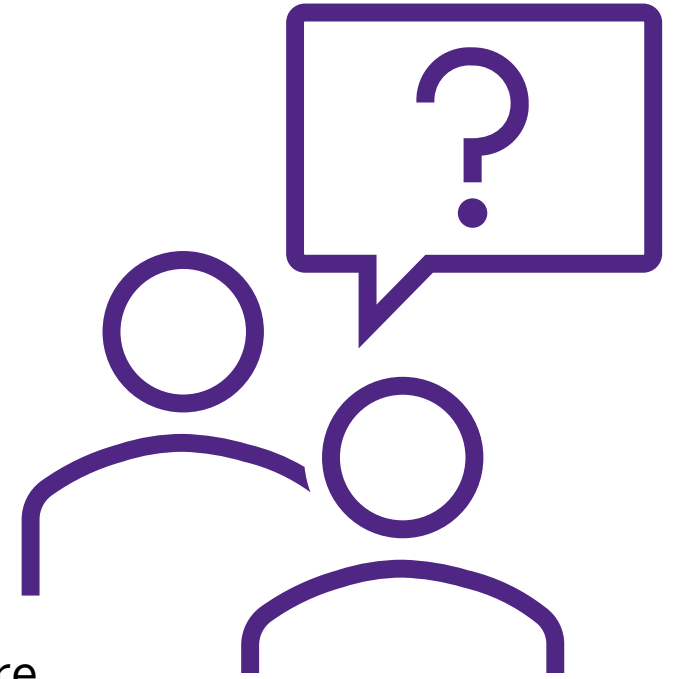
Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How do I talk about my accomplishments and competence without sounding like I'm bragging?

Answer: Balance your personal achievements by mentioning your team (especially HQP), collaborators, and beneficiaries, while ensuring your contribution and role are clear. You can also highlight how the skills, experience, partnerships/networks you gained set you up to lead.

Question: I find it difficult to craft elegant sentences, particularly in English. Will that disadvantage me?

Answer: Focus on stating what you have done and why it was important; the examples themselves matter more than in the choice of words or sentence structure. Ask a colleague and/or your faculty or institute research officer to read draft text.

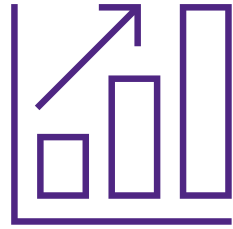


Closing thoughts



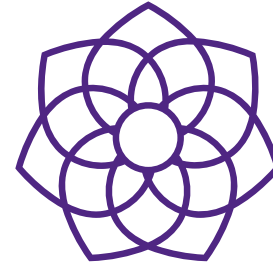
BE SELECTIVE

- Quality > quantity
- Avoid long lists, use qualitative descriptions of impact
- Focus on activities and contributions that are **most pertinent** to the grant opportunity



USE EVIDENCE

- Describe outcomes and how you enabled them, rather than listing activities



THINK BROADLY

- Provide examples of academic and non-academic outreach and impact

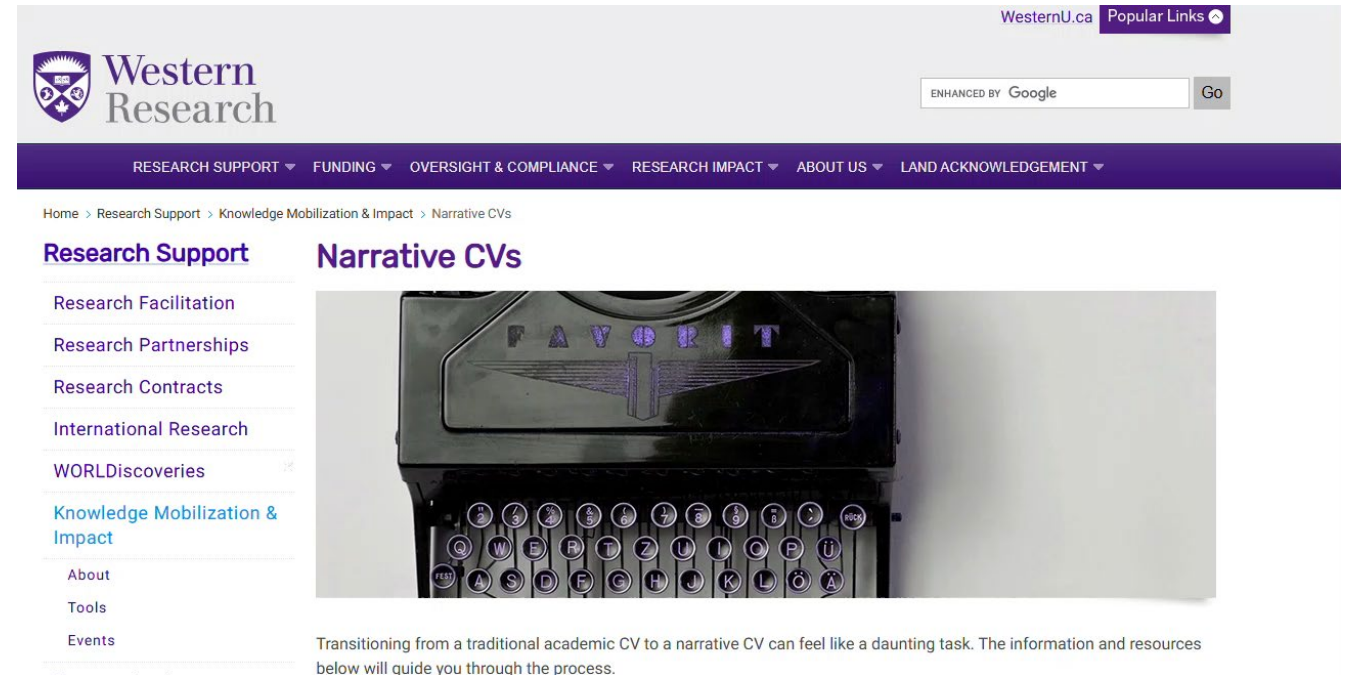


DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER PATH

- Whether traditional or non-traditional, describe your career context
- Explain what you did with the opportunities that were available to you

Narrative CV Resources and Updates

- We are in a transition phase –key changes, updates, and resources will be shared on our website.
- Always check the funding opportunity instructions to ensure you are using the correct template and including the most relevant information for that competition.



https://uwo.ca/research/services/kex/narrative_cvs.html

Support and Contact Information

Specialized Grant Support from the Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact Team

Request a consultation or support from the IREI Team here:



Kristen Reilly (she/her)

Knowledge Mobilization & Research Impact Specialist

kreill2@uwo.ca

[Link: Knowledge Mobilization in Research Resources](#)



Katie Big-Canoe (she/h)

Indigenous Research Specialist

katie.bigcanoe@uwo.ca

[Link: Indigenous Research Resources](#)



Mariam Hayward (she/her)

Director, Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact

Mariam.hayward@uwo.ca

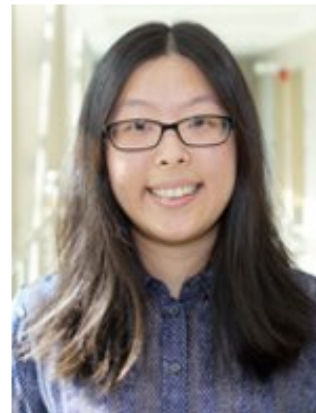


Alexandra Levine (she/her)

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization in Research Specialist

alevin23@uwo.ca

[Link: EDID in Research Resources](#)



Qing Liu (she/her)

Bibliometrics and Research Impact Analyst

qliu285@uwo.ca

Links:

Knowledge Mobilization and Impact

<https://uwo.ca/research/services/kex/tools.html>

Equity Diversity Inclusion & Decolonization in Research

https://uwo.ca/research/services/equity_diversity_inclusion__decolonization_.html

Indigenous Research

https://uwo.ca/research/services/indigenous_research.html