Preparing for and writing an early career fellowship application

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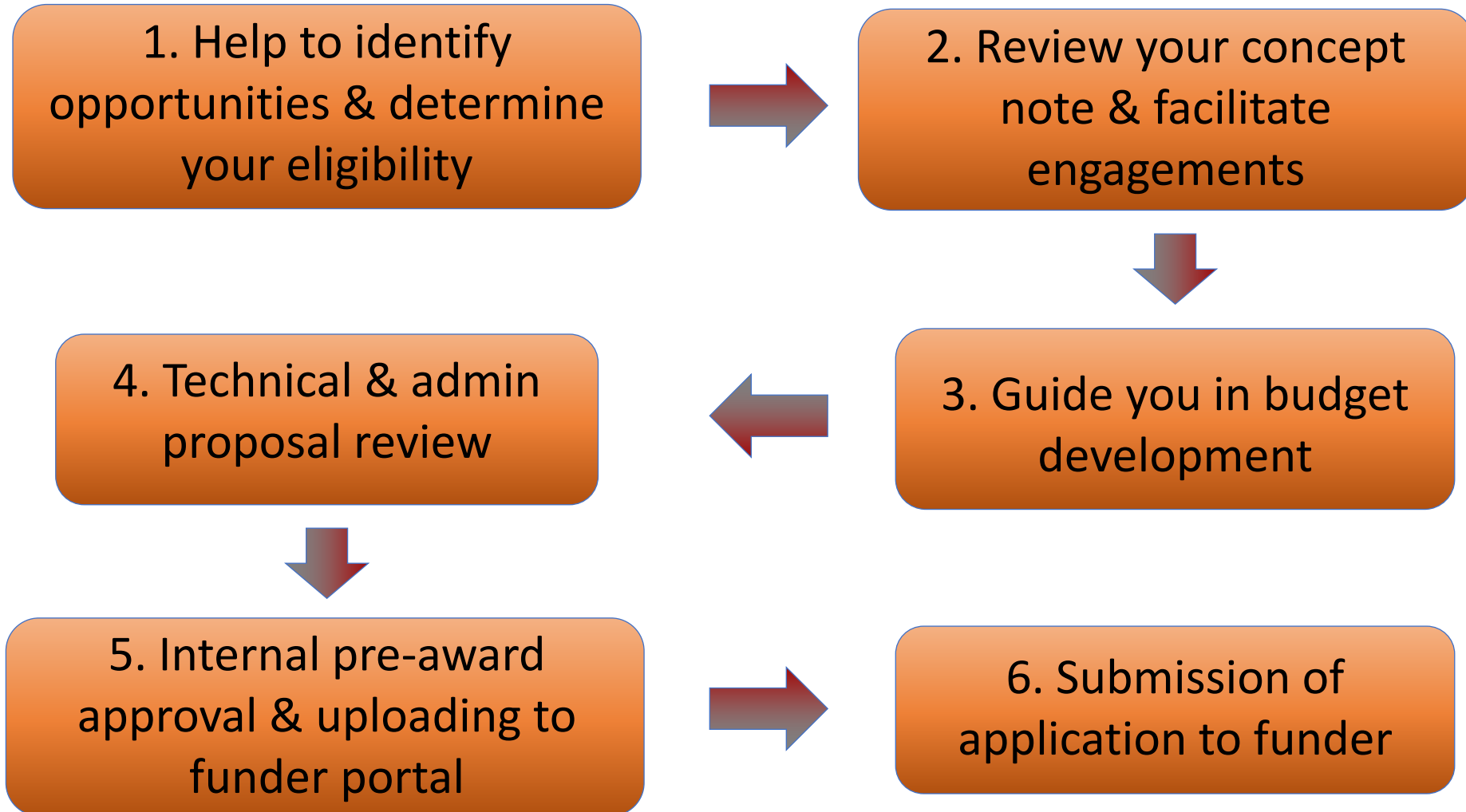

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ResDev's involvement in the Application Process

1. Help to identify opportunities & determine your eligibility

2. Review your concept note & facilitate engagements

3. Guide you in budget development

4. Technical & admin proposal review

5. Internal pre-award approval & uploading to funder portal

6. Submission of application to funder

Preparing for and writing an early career fellowship application

Identify Funding Opportunity → Establish Internal Deadlines → Request Supporting Docs → Compile Proposal → Submit

Funders

Local Funders: SAMRC

- SA Medical Research Council (SAMRC; [Funding](#))
  - Early Investigators Programme (EIP)
  - Self-Initiated Research (SIR) Grants
  - Targeted / Topic specific Calls (e.g. COVID-19 Call in 2021)
  - Extramural Research Unit (EMU)

- Early Investigators Programme (EIP)
  - The purpose of the Early Investigators Programme is to
    - Support the career development of South African scientists at the end of their early postdoctoral stage,
    - Facilitate their transition to the next level of established Mid-Career Scientists, and
    - Foster their retention in the public sector in areas of strategic interest to the National Department of Health and the SAMRC for a solid scientific and academic leadership in the country.
  - Awards of up to R500 000.00 per year for five years. The grant is used for research purposes.

Local Funders: NRF

- National Research Foundation (NRF; Funding)
  - Application for funding from NRF programmes must be in response to a call.
    - Expect most NRF calls for funding to open in February and early March of the <u>year before</u>
  - At UCT:
    - NRF scholarships are managed and administered through the Postgraduate Funding Office (Pgfunding@uct.ac.za)
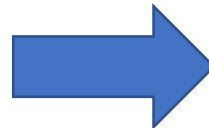   - NRF research funding is managed and administered through the Central Research Office (researchfunding@uct.ac.za)

- Consult the Research Support Hub's [Current Funding Opportunities](#) page for updated calls, contact person(s) and UCT internal deadlines:

NRF Call: Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) – 2nd Call

For Scientific Events / Travel taking place between
1 January and 30 June 2023

Please direct all queries to Amanda Raman (Amanda.Raman@uct.ac.za)

It is of utmost importance that applicants consult the Funding Guide document for more detailed information about the programme.

Please be advised that applications cannot be created or submitted after the NRF closing date – Tuesday, 23 August 2022, 09h00.

Only applications endorsed by UCT Research Office by **Tuesday, 23 August 2022** will be considered for funding by NRF in 2022 (Review Period 2).

For further details: link to UCT announcement

Local Funders: Poliomyelitis Research Foundation (PRF)

- [PRF](#) are the major funder of virology research in SA
- PG bursary / Fellowship opportunities* (28 Feb, 15 Sept):
  - BSc(Hons)
  - MSc
  - PhD
  - James Gear International Fellowship
- Research Funding Opportunities** (28 Feb):
  - Research Grants
  - Major Impact Project (MIP) Grants

* Managed and administered through the Postgraduate Funding Office (Pgfunding@uct.ac.za)
** For FHS these applications are managed and administered by ResDev (FHS.researchfunding@uct.ac.za) in conjunction with the International grants Hub (IGH; internationalgrants@uct.ac.za)

James Gear International Fellowship

- Prestigious award for early-career researchers to develop their research careers in overseas academic institutions.
- Eligibility: SA postgraduates with at least a medical degree or a doctorate in the sciences or equivalents.
- Award value: R 350,000 + flight (one year only)
- On return to South Africa, the applicant can apply for an amount of R 250,000 for a 1-year post-fellowship research grant at an approved South African Institution.

International Funders

- Wellcome Trust

- NIH
  - In 2021, UCT had 35 active NIH grants totalling US$17,398,016 (Source: NIH RePORT)

- UKRI/UK MRC
  - ARL 2023

- AAS
  - APTI

Funders:
International Funders

Grant funding   What we do   Who we are

wellcome

Science to solve the urgent health challenges facing everyone

Wellcome is a global charitable foundation. We want everyone to benefit from science's potential to improve health and save lives.

Find out more about who we are ⟶

A resident sits in his room with his feet up to avoid floodwater. His neighbourhood in Nigeria suffers annual flooding as sea levels rise due to climate change.

Wellcome's three new research schemes:

- [Early-Career Awards](#)
  - Eligibility: ≤3 yrs post-PhD
- [Career Development Awards](#)
  - Eligibility: ≤2 substantial periods of research activities
- [Discovery Awards](#)
  - Large collaborative grant

Support discovery research into 3 health challenges:

1. Mental health
   - Improve research, understanding and treatment of mental health
2. Infectious disease
   - Working with communities affected by escalating infectious diseases
3. Climate
   - Working with the communities most affected by climate change to develop new ways of protecting people's health

* Please review the information provided by the Wellcome Trust for more detailed descriptions of research that is, or <u>is not</u>, supported under these schemes.

Deadlines	Early-Career Award	Career Development Award
Contact your Departmental Finance Officer	6 September 2022	20 October 2022
eRA Finance Approver	6 October 2022	21 November 2022
Funder due date	18 October 2022 (17:00 GMT)	1 December 2022 (17:00 GMT)

ResDev will be hosting an information session/webinar on Tuesday, 23 August (14:00-15:30). Please click here to register for the webinar.

ResDev will be hosting a workshop on Tuesday, 6 September (09:00-15:00). Please click here to register for the workshop.

National Institutes of Health NIH

- NIH uses activity codes to differentiate the wide variety of research-related programs
  - Fogarty Emerging Global Leader Award (K43)
    - Provides research support and protected time to a research scientist from a LMIC
    - Applicants should propose both critically needed career development activities and a research project that is highly relevant to the health priorities of their country
      - FOAs: PAR-21-251 and PAR-21-252
      - 3-5 years of funding
      - $75,000 per year toward the salary of the award recipient
      - $30,000 per year toward research development costs
    - Deadlines: 3 November 2022 (all types of non-AIDS related applications) and 9 December 2022 (AIDS related applications)

Deadlines	General	AIDS
Contact your Departmental Finance Officer*	Friday, 23 September 2022	Friday, 28 October 2022
eRA Finance Approver	Friday, 22 October 2022	Tuesday, 29 November 2022
Funder due date	Thursday, 3 November 2022 (17:00 SAST)	Friday, 9 December 2022 (17:00 SAST)

* No later than…

To assist early career researchers in developing their proposal, the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Development team will be hosting an information session/webinar on Tuesday, 13 September. Please click here to register for the webinar.

Contacting a Budget Reviewer

You can reach out to the Senior Finance Manager linked to your hub and they will assign you a budget reviewer

Research Finance Campus Hub:
joy.joachims@uct.ac.za

Research Finance RXH/OMB Hub:

rukshana.champion@uct.ac.za

&

nabeelah.mohamed@uct.ac.za

Internal Deadlines for UCT Approvals

Contact your Budget Reviewer	=	>1 month prior to funder deadline
eRA Finance Approver Deadline	=	8 working days
RC&I Deadline	=	5 working days
Funder Deadline	=	Funder Deadline

Budget Reviewer: Budget Development

Budgeting for Research

- Each research study should have a budget
- A budget is a detailed statement outlining estimated project costs
  - Helps provide a realistic evaluation of the cost of undertaking the research
- Note: different funders have different rules and allowable costs

saMRC advancing**life**

GRANTS INNOVATION AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Terms and Conditions for the Acceptance, Utilization and Management of MRC Self-initiated Research Grants

- Also need to align with institutional rules

Budgeting for Research

- When drawing up a research budget, you must specify each item of expenditure required to conduct the study
  - The proposal budget should be derived <u>directly from</u> the research strategy & workplan

Research Strategy

Budget Justification

Budget

Alignment
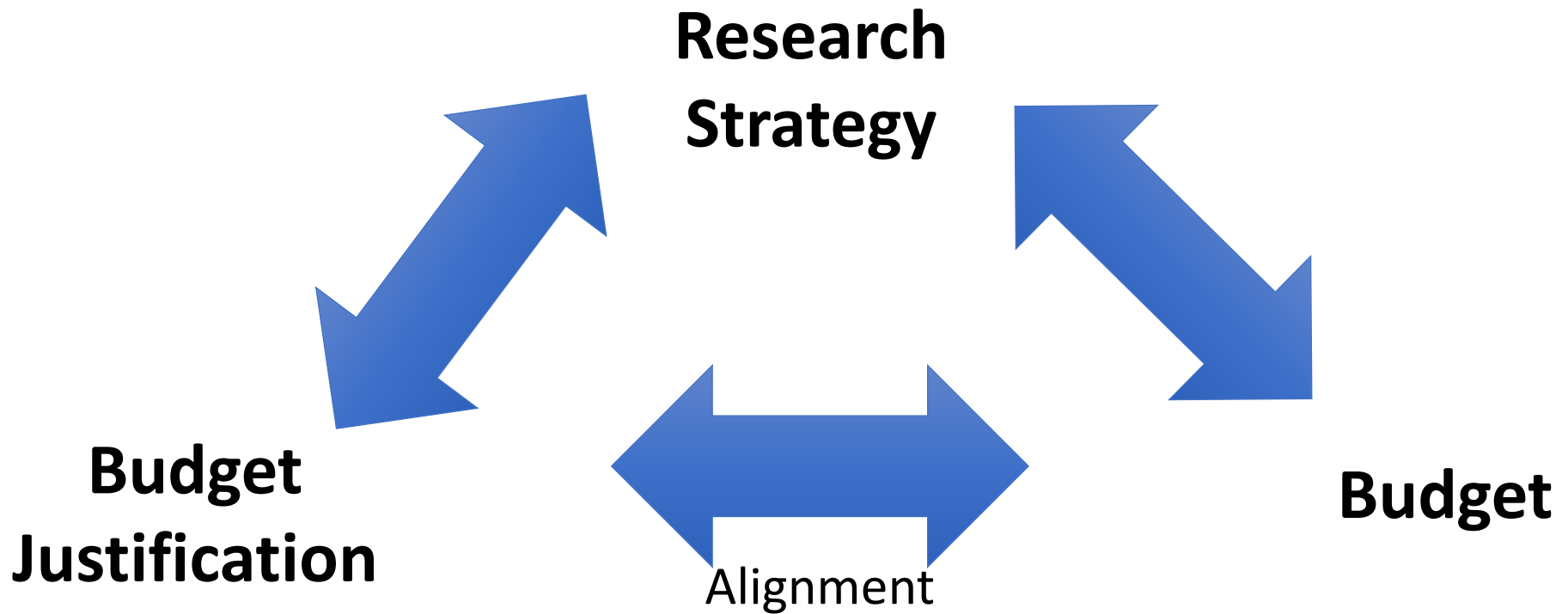
Budgeting for Research

Should include all **Direct Costs**, as well as the calculated **Indirect costs** (Overheads) required to carry out the project objectives

- Direct Costs (DC): Those directly incurred by the project
- Indirect Costs (IC) refer to the central costs that cannot easily or cost effectively be allocated directly to individual projects, incl.: Finance, Personnel (Human Resources), IT, Legal, Library services and Facilities (P&S)

Calculating ICR

- At UCT: We calculate the Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) for the project by applying a university wide ICR Rate (ICRR) to the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) of the project:

ICR = MTDC x 28%*

* UCT's ICRR for actual costs is 28%

Funder Rules:
- SAMRC generally only allows 5% overheads;
- NIH allows foreign institutions to request 8% indirects; &
- Wellcome allows us to request up to a max 20% overheads.

Exchange Rate Risk

- Foreign exchange (forex) risk, is an unavoidable risk of applying for international funding **when receiving the award in the foreign currency**:
  - Apply to the funder for £1,000,000
  - Budgeted (at R14:£1): R14,000,000
  - Exchange rate changes to R13.5:£1 at the time of award
  - Awarded: £1,000,000, but only effectively have R13,500,000 (**R500,000 shortfall**)
- At UCT managing that risk falls to the PI
- Foreign exchange risk can be mitigated considerably by:
  - Using a conservative exchange rate (NIH) <u>or</u>
  - By requesting the award in your local currency (Wellcome)

Budget Justification

- Opportunity to demonstrate alignment between the budget and your research plan

- Make use of the budget justification sections to explain your budgetary requirements
  - Incl. Salaries, travel and research expenses
  - Ensure, because the funder will, that the costs quoted in the budget match those described in the budget justification

- Be prepared to defend all items in your budget request if queried by the funder
  - NIH requires itemized cost breakdown and/or detailed justification for the cost basis of the request for any item/category over US$ 1,000.
  - The bottom line is that any lay person or non-scientific federal auditor should be able to understand at a glance how the total for the request in the detailed budget pages was derived

Planning to Apply: International Funders

Learn the schemes of major funders – **and their timelines**

NIH Fogarty International Center

Search... 🔍

Advancing Science for Global Health

| About Us | Funding | Grants | Global Health Resources | **Programs** | News |

Home > Programs > Emerging Global Leader Award (K43)

COVID-19: ❯ COVID-19 public health information from the US CDC | ❯ COVID-19 research information from the US NIH | Español | ❯ COVID-19 resources for global health researchers

❯ View all programs

Emerging Global Leader Award

Status: Accepting applications

❯ Multiple due dates, see announcement.

Announcement(s)

- Emerging Global Leader Award (K43 Independent Clinical Trial Required) (PAR-21-251)
- Emerging Global Leader Award (K43 Independent Clinical Trial Not Required) (PAR-21-252)

Deadlines

Upcoming application deadlines:

Applications closed:
- November 03, 2021
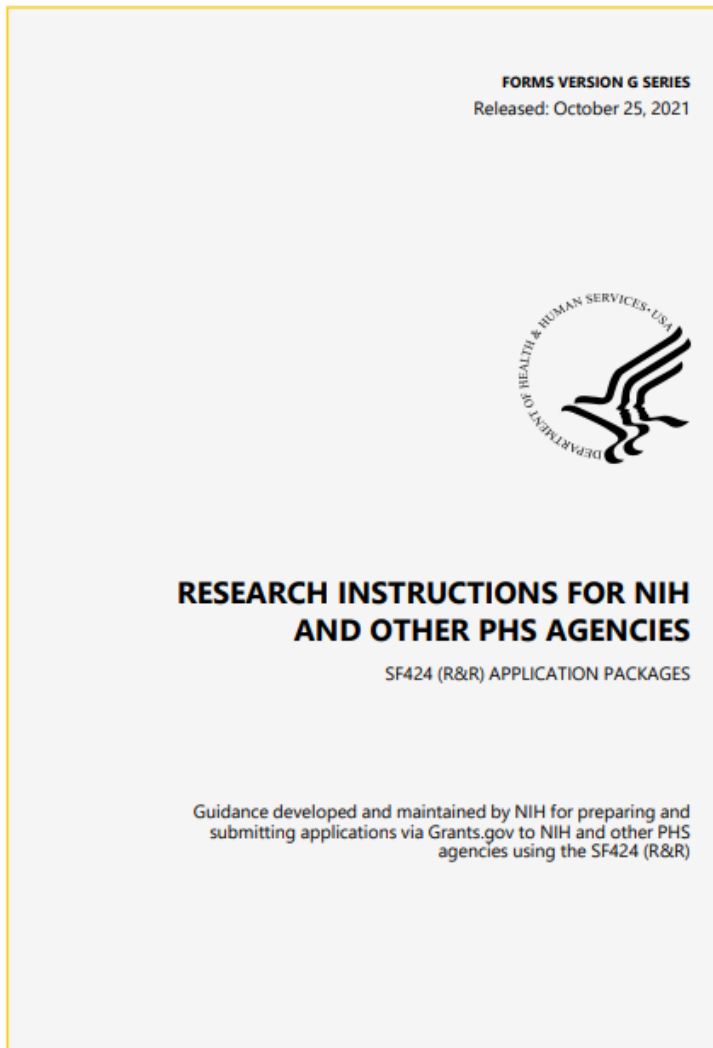- November 03, 2022

➡️

The 2023 deadline…?

Funding Opportunities:
Thinking Strategically about your Future

- As soon as you have a grant/fellowship start looking for the next opportunity

- Apply for your own fellowships, but also co-apply on project grants

- Do not wait for somebody else to find the funding (esp. future research leaders) – build your own capacity

Request Supporting Documents & Compile the Proposal

FORMS VERSION G SERIES
Released: October 25, 2021

RESEARCH INSTRUCTIONS FOR NIH AND OTHER PHS AGENCIES

SF424 (R&R) APPLICATION PACKAGES

Guidance developed and maintained by NIH for preparing and submitting applications via Grants.gov to NIH and other PHS agencies using the SF424 (R&R)

- Review the funders guidelines
- Refer to it throughout!

NOTE: This is a 156 page document
Updated on a regular basis
(currently forms-g)

Supporting Documents: Biosketch

- The CV / Biosketch is a key component of any funding application
  - Use it to demonstrate the suitability of you (and your team*) to pursue the proposed project
- NIH Biosketch has a particular format (templates are available), incl. a personal statement
- Contribution(s) to your field
- Track record in securing funding, collaborating, awards, etc

OMB No. 0925-0001 and 0925-0002 (Rev. 12/2020 Approved Through 02/28/2023)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors.
Follow this format for each person. DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES.

NAME: Hunt, Morgan Casey

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): huntmc1

POSITION TITLE: Associate Professor of Psychology

EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of California, Berkeley	BS	05/2003	Psychology
University of Vermont	PHD	05/2009	Experimental Psychology
University of California, Berkeley	Postdoctoral	08/2013	Public Health and Epidemiology

A. Personal Statement

I am an Associate Professor of Psychology, and my research is focused on neuropsychological changes associated with substance use disorders. I have a broad background in psychology, with specific training and expertise in ethnographic and survey research and secondary data analysis on psychological aspects of substance use disorders. As PI or co-Investigator on several university- and NIH-funded grants, I laid the groundwork for the proposed research by developing effective measures of disability, depression, and other psychosocial factors relevant to older people with substance use disorders, and by establishing strong ties with community providers that will make it possible to recruit and track participants over time as documented in the following publications. In addition, I successfully administered the projects (e.g. staffing, research protections, budget), collaborated with other researchers, and produced several peer-reviewed publications from each project. As a result of these previous experiences, I am aware of the importance of frequent communication among project members and of constructing a realistic research plan, timeline, and budget. The current application builds logically on my prior work. During 2015-2016, my career was disrupted due to family obligations. However, upon returning to the field, I immediately resumed my research projects and collaborations and successfully competed for NIH support. In summary, I have the expertise, leadership, training, expertise, and motivation necessary to successfully carry out the proposed research project.

Ongoing and recently completed projects that I would like to highlight include:

R01 DA942367
Hunt (PI)
09/01/16-08/31/21
Health trajectories and behavioral interventions among older people with substance use disorders

R01 MH922731
Merryle (PI), Role: co-investigator
12/15/17-11/30/22
Physical disability, depression, and substance use among older adults

Career Contributions will be expected to be commensurate with career stage and need not necessarily be an extensive list.

Supporting Documents: LoS

The Discovery Foundation Sub-Specialist Awards

Aim to contribute to human resources for clinical and academic medicine by supporting further subspecialist training, research and development in health faculties in South Africa

<u>*Application process:*</u>

All applications must include letters of support from <u>both</u> the relevant department and the Dean of the faculty.

- Supporting documents that are required are detailed in the funding call guide

- Letters of Support (LoS)
  - Give advance notice of anything, such as LoS, you may need from your supervisor, HoD or Deputy Dean/Dean
 - Prepare a draft letter on their behalf

Final submission: Ready to Submit?

- You have received institutional approval, completed the funder application form and uploaded all the required attachments
  - Generate a preview PDF and review it
  - Wellcome Grant Tracker: Review the application status
  - NIH ASSIST: Run a validation!
    - NIH's eRA systems check grant applications against application guide instructions and instructions found in the funding opportunity announcements (FOAs)
    - When an application fails to pass a validation (i.e., is found to be non-compliant with the instructions found in the application guide and the FOA), the eRA systems generate errors and/or warnings
    - Do this well in advance of the deadline so that there is time to correct any errors

Final submission

- For most major funders, incl. NIH and Wellcome, the PI does not action the final submission

- PI actions a pre-submission of the application via the funder's portal (NIH ASSIST / WT Grant Tracker).
  - This activates a notification for your institutional authority (UCT Research Contract & Innovation (RC&I)) that the application is 'Ready for Submission'
  - They will review the application, as captured on funder's application portal, and action the final submission to the funder
  - Request confirmation from your institutional authority that the application was submitted and received by the funder
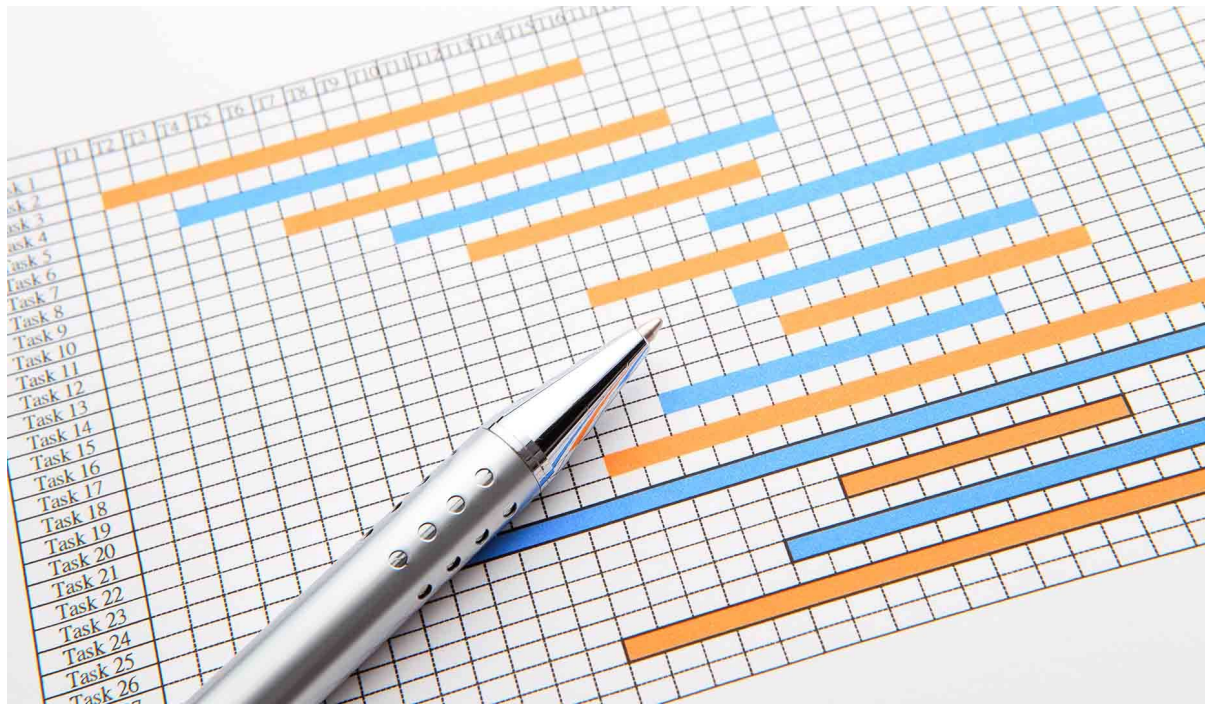
Peer-review
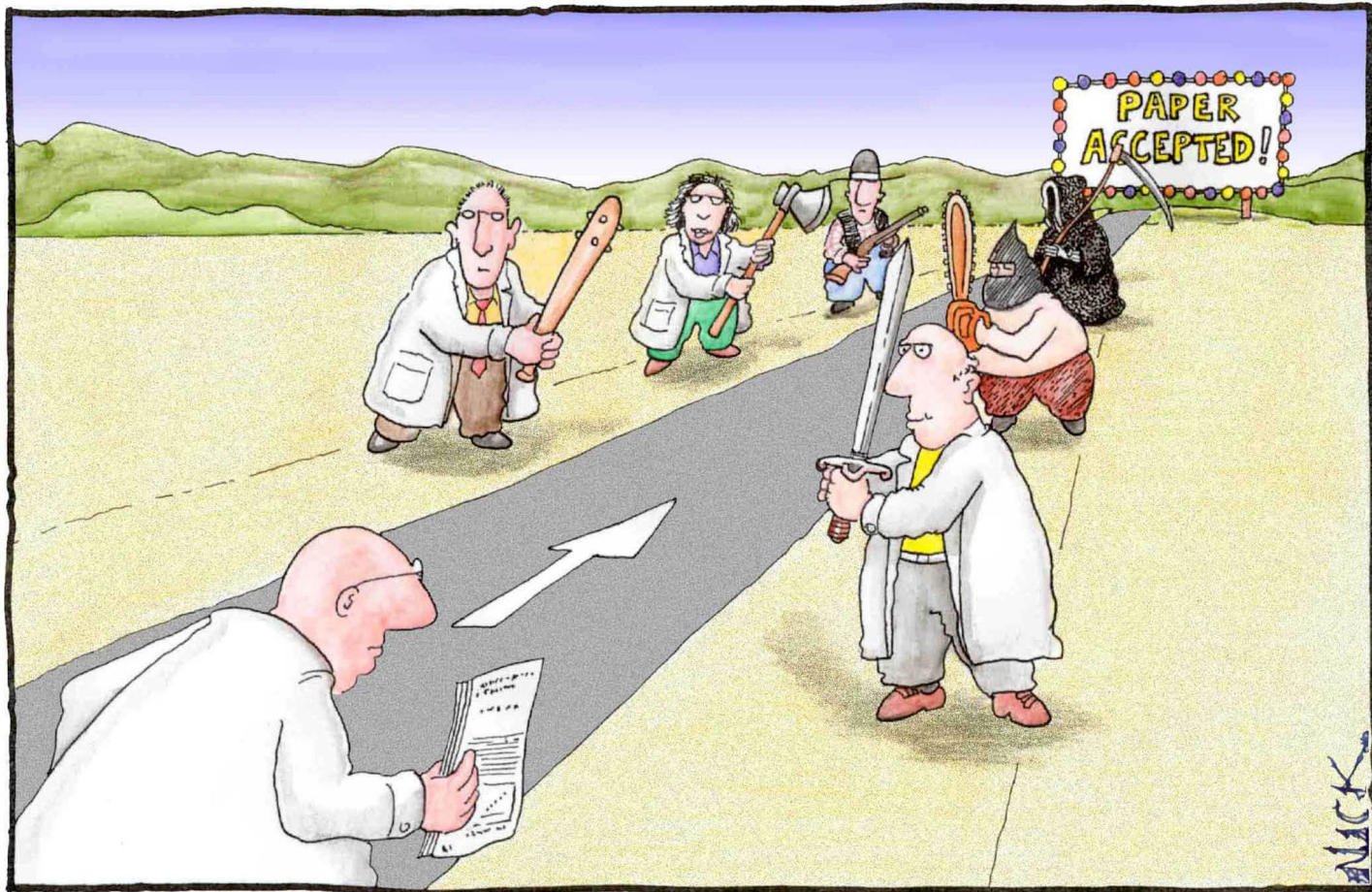
Most scientists regarded the new streamlined
peer-review process as 'quite an improvement.'

"…it involves techniques with which the applicant appears to have no prior experience and for which no preliminary data are proposed."

"...the work described in this application is over-ambitious, it could not be achieved in the life-time of the investigator."

"The poor writing, referencing and proof reading of this application significantly detract from its overall quality."

"I had only one problem with this application, I had no idea what they were trying to do..."

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Tips/reminders

- Start early!

- Ask for help when you need it

- Read the Funding Opportunity Announcement and Guidance provided, and address the funder's requirements/questions

- Get someone to proof-read your draft proposal for grammar/spelling as well as conducting an administrative and technical review

- Review and re-fine the proposal to match what the funder is looking for

- Accept requests to review grant applications

Thank you!