



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Testing the effect of narrative CVs on Postdoc recruitment study

Principal Investigators: Dr Steven Wooding (Research Strategy Office)

Testing the effect of narrative CVs on Postdoc recruitment

Before you agree to take part in this study. Please review the information below which explains why the study is being carried out and what it will involve. If you are unsure whether you wish to take part, click 'No' to refuse consent.

Purpose of the study

Many people in research have concerns that scientific job applications place too much emphasis on publications and grants. Narrative CVs are being promoted as a way to reduce this emphasis – by giving applications space to directly expand on other skills and experiences. We are testing if Narrative CVs change how Principal Investigators (PI) select Applicants for interview.

Why have I been chosen?

You have approached us and expressed interest in the study; one of your colleagues suggested that you might be interested in the study; the PI you are recruiting with has agreed to take part in the study; we have randomly selected you from an area of the University where we do not have participating PIs; we became aware of your recruitment through the ROO grant system; or you were identified as a member of your faculty involved in the selection process of Leverhulme Early Career Fellowships.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part. If you agree to be interviewed and later change your mind about taking part you can withdraw from the study at any time by contacting arrcproject-consent@admin.cam.ac.uk, you do not need to provide a reason. You can withdraw from the study at any time by contacting arrcproject-consent@admin.cam.ac.uk, you do not need to provide a reason. If you withdraw, we will collect no further data about you, data you have already provided will be retained in the study.

What will happen to me if I take part?

A very brief survey will follow the consent questions below if you select "Yes" to express your consent in taking part in the study. The survey will collect data on your demographic characteristics.

Soon after your consent is received, the research team will:

Support you to ask for Narrative CVs alongside the Standard CV and covering letter for your

recruitment. We will then provide you, and those recruiting with you, with sets of applications with only one type of CV to rank along with pre-filled scoring sheets. Once these have been completed, we will provide you, and those recruiting with you, with the full set of documents submitted by all applicants which you should use for your final shortlisting. We will ask you to record your individual rankings and the final agreed ranking of all applicants. HR will later provide us with the details of the Applicant that is recruited.

The research team may:

Interview you for 30-60 mins on Zoom about your experience of the recruitment process using Narrative CVs.

Where interviewees are happy to be recorded will use Descript platform to transcribe those interview recordings. According to Descript's data security policy the data they hold is encrypted at rest and in transit and cannot be decrypted by Descript (<https://www.descript.com/security>).

All other personally identifiable data will be held on network drives operated by the University of Cambridge with access restricted to members of the research team. Researchers' computers accessing and storing personally identifiable data will be password protected and have up to date operating systems and fully encrypted storage. Only members of the research team will have access to personally identifiable data collected during the project.

All personally identifying data will be held securely by the project and deleted 2 years after the project ends. Anonymised data (i.e., with identifying information removed) will be retained and made available for re-use by others through being deposited in a public repository. Anonymised and aggregate data will be used in project publications, this may include anonymised quotes.

Other PIs in Cambridge who are considering participation in this study may want to ask questions of PIs who have already participated in this study. Please let us know if you would like to be put in direct email contact with a previous participant so you can ask them any questions. If you do participate and would be willing to answer questions from future PIs considering participation, please answer 'Yes' to the relevant question on the consent form.

What do I have to do?

You will rank and score the candidates twice. First, we will provide you with one CV per applicant (Narrative or standard) along with their covering letters and you will rank and score applicants based on the likelihood you would interview them. You will record these rankings and scores along with brief additional information on pre-prepared scoring sheets. Second, you will re-rank and re-score the candidates based on their full application bundle (both types of CVs) to select candidates for interview. You will then combine this ranking and scoring information with your fellow recruiters to produce a shortlist of candidates to interview and proceed with the recruitment as normal.

Are there possible disadvantages and/or risks to taking part?

It is possible that applications requesting a Narrative CV in addition to the standard application materials will deter some applicants, we will be exploring whether the requirement deters candidates who would have been viable candidates. You will have to do more work in the shortlisting phase and this may delay your recruitment process as a whole.

Are there possible benefits to taking part?

We hope there will be wider benefit to researchers as we will work to use the findings to improve research culture.

Because applicants will provide a Narrative CV in addition to their Standard CV we hope you will have more information on which to make shortlisting decisions.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

Your participation in the trial will be clear from the job advertisement so we cannot keep your participation in the study confidential. However, we will not attribute quotes to individuals and will anonymise quotes and data to prevent identification. We will check any quotes with you before including them in any written materials.

Will what I tell the researchers on the project team be kept confidential?

Everything that you tell our researchers will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law; unless we judge that your personal safety is at risk in which case we would alert Andi Hudson (University Director of HR) to suggest an appropriate course of action.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

We will work to ensure that the results of this study influence the recruitment policies of research funders and Universities. Alongside which results of the study will be written up and published as an academic papers and/or presented at conferences. If you wish to be kept up to date with the results of this study please tick the relevant box on the consent section below.

Who is organising the study?

The study is being organised by the University of Cambridge and funded by Research England, the Wellcome Trust and the University of Cambridge.

Who was responsible for the ethical review of the study?

The project has been reviewed by the University of Cambridge Psychology Research Ethics Committee.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you would like further information on the research project, please contact the research team by emailing arrcproject@admin.cam.ac.uk.

What do I do now?

If you are happy for your application to be used in the study please select 'Yes' on the relevant questions on the consent section below. If you are not happy to take part please select 'No'.

Resources to support you

We hope your engagement with the project has been interesting and thought provoking; however, if it has reminded you of unacceptable behaviour by members of the University or you feel upset by anything that has been discussed you may find these resources helpful:

Dignity @ Work Policy

<https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/dignity-work-policy>

Grievance and disciplinary matters <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/hr-staff/information-staff/staff-guide/terms-employment/grievances>

University Counselling Service

For students: <https://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk>

For staff: <https://staff.counselling.cam.ac.uk>

For more information on the University's data protection policy see:

<https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/research-participant-data>