

Grant-writing skills in life sciences: A workshop for early- and mid-career researchers



Dr. Julia Staykova-McKinnon for Scriptorium

Dear Participant, welcome to Scriptorium's annual grant-writing workshop hosted by Institut Curie!

In this workshop, we will address the art of persuasion in grant-writing, through a blend of lecture time, discussion, and analysis of examples. Specifically, we will focus on the following topics:

Proposal:

- How to structure the key sections of a proposal: State of the Art, Objectives, and Methodology.
- How to provide clear, convincing answers to the key evaluation criteria of originality/novelty, feasibility and added value/impact.
- How to present a detailed picture about the work plan, including a timetable, dissemination plans, milestones, and resources justification.

Applicant's profile:

- How to respond to the complex candidate evaluation requirements, which include a strong track record, growing international recognition, and emerging independence (for early-stage researchers).
- How to convey a compelling vision on your past and future research trajectory in a biosketch or narrative statement.

We will use two classic formats as our 'baseline' case studies: the ANR and the ERC application forms and evaluation criteria. Further examples of both clinical or fundamental research funding can be added based on your suggestions.

The workshop will be held as a blended format, with self-study materials complementing live meetings.

Self-study: access activated a week before the live meetings and remains open for a full month.

Meeting 1: 26 June, Monday, 13:30-17:30.

Session 1: The three tiers of persuasion in a grant proposal.

Session 2: Structuring the scientific proposal – state of the art, objectives, methodology sections.

Session 3: The work plan

Meeting 2: 27 June, Tuesday, 9:00-13:30

Topic 3: The funding CV and personal statement.

Topic 4: Analysis of examples based on open-access grants.

Please see p. 2 for the list of self-study materials and p. 3 for the instructor's profile.

Podcast lecture series for remote self-study

Access to the podcast series is retained for one full month after the workshop is completed.

Self-study series on general grant-writing: ~190 mins

Podcast 1. Persuasion in grant writing: 17.30 mins

Podcast 2. The State of the Art proposal section: 16 mins

Podcast 3. The Objectives section: 20 mins

Podcast 4. The Methodological Programme section: 26 mins

Podcast 5. Evaluation criteria - Novelty versus Feasibility: 26 mins

Podcast 6. Evaluation criteria – Impact: 13 mins

Podcast 7. The Abstract – 11 mins

Podcast 8: The CV and Personal Statement – 27 mins

Podcast 9: Writing skills: 36 mins

Julia Staykova-McKinnon, Ph.D.

Scriptorium Founder, Consultant



Profile

Julia has over fifteen years of experience as a lecturer and consultant in grant writing and interviewing skills in research. She consults on proposals submitted to Horizon Europe (formerly Horizon 2020), including ERC (with an average of 10-12 proposals in StG, CoG, AdG categories, and 2-3 SyG supported per year), Erasmus+ Actions (European University, EMJMD, SwafS) and Marie S. Curie Actions (ITN/ETN, Doctoral Network, CoFund), and FET-Open/RIA (2-3 per year). She also assists on proposals submitted to national agencies, for instance DFG and Helmholtz Foundation (Germany), ANR, PIA3, IHU calls (France), FWO/FNRS (Belgium).

Consulting and teaching at EU academic institutions: Julia regularly consults on proposals and teaches workshops for postdocs and junior to mid-career professors at leading universities and research institutes in the EU. A selection of her clients includes Charité-University Hospital Berlin, German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ), German Centre for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE), Grenoble Neurosciences Institute (GIN), Institut Curie and Institut Cervaux-Paris, Institute of Clinical and Experimental Research (IREC)-Brussels, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL), Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC)-Berlin, Max Planck-Potsdam, University of Bordeaux, University of Grenoble-Alpes (UGA), University of Cote-D'Azur (Nice), University of Zurich, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETHZ) Switzerland.

Industry: Julia has consulted and taught at Eli Lilly Pharmaceuticals, Hengeler Mueller Partners in Law, HVB Banking Group, KPMG, and Servier Laboratories. With Janssen Pharmaceutica, she developed an innovative training programme implemented at KULeuven's Doctoral School.

Academic Background

Assistant Professor in Language Studies, University of Amsterdam (2010-11)

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellow, Los Angeles, California (2009-10)

Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of British Columbia, Vancouver (2007-09)

Ph.D. on rhetoric in Renaissance culture, studies jointly at Oxford University and Sofia University, defended at Sofia in 2007.