Guidance for Narrative CVs for Canada Research Chair Applications

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to provide information on how to write a narrative CV for Canada Research Chair applications at The University of Winnipeg.

2.0 Background

To ensure a more equitable and inclusive assessment process for determining nominees for UWinnipeg Canada Research Chairs, a four-page narrative CV is a required element of the internal application package as of June 2024. A narrative CV is defined by the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) as a CV format that provides a structured written description of a person's contributions and achievements that reflects a broad range of relevant skills and experiences, more than can often be seen in a traditional academic CV. The narrative CV is an opportunity for applicants to describe the quality, originality, and impact of their past and current research in relation to their disciplinary norms, context-specific methodologies and epistemologies, and labour or outputs that may not be readily visible in a traditional academic CV.

3.0 General Guidance on Writing Narrative CVs[1]

Be selective: The narrative CV format is intended to shift the focus from quantity to quality:

- Don't overwhelm reviewers with long lists, or dilute the communication of your key achievements.
- Think about your strongest contributions, and those that are most relevant to the call you are applying for.
- Focus on what you have achieved rather than what you plan to do in the future.

Provide evidence: When choosing material to include, think about how you are going to evidence quality and importance. Describe outcomes and how you enabled them, rather than just stating activities.

- You can include both qualitative and quantitative evidence.
- You can include examples from beyond academia, if they are relevant for your application.
- Don't overlook collaborative activities. For a team project, mention your specific contributions and the skills that you used or developed.
- To reference a publication, use a digital object identifier (DOI) hyperlinked to the publication. To save space, don't include the title or a full citation unless requested by the call/funder.
- Avoid journal-based metrics, such as impact factors, when describing the quality of individual publications.

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[1] Some of this content has been adapted from the University of Oxford *Narrative CVs: a Guide for Applicants* (2023).

Provide context: Unlike a traditional CV, a narrative CV allows you to explain how the activities enhanced your skills or were important at your career stage, and the rationale for undertaking those activities. As many research adjudication committees are interdisciplinary, you may also want to describe how your achievements align with or exceed the norms of your discipline and/or research field.

- Different researchers will have had different opportunities in their careers; focus on what you did with the opportunities that were available to you.
- Most funders provide an optional 'Additions' section where you can describe factors that may help reviewers understand the context for your narrative CV, such as career breaks.

Write concisely and clearly: For each section of your narrative CV, you should avoid jargon and present a clear case for the quality of your contributions and impacts. Consider the following structure:

1. **Summary sentence:** start with the main message that you want a reviewer to notice, or refer back to, which could be a unifying theme of the examples that follow.
2. **Succinct descriptions of your strongest contributions**: what you did and why it is important, with evidence. This could be in sentences or bullet points. You could group entries that are supported by the same evidence.
3. **Sentence summarizing additional contributions:** end with a brief mention of other activities or contributions that you do not have space to describe fully but you feel are important for this funding application.

See the examples below.

Example sentence structure: Description of your role and skills in [project/hypothesis/method A], the means by which it came about or was developed further, and the importance of it, as shown by [evidence B, showing significance for the field and/or societal impact, e.g. basis for future collaboration or ongoing work of others, awards, or outcomes for communities].

Example: "I carried out the data integration using [method A] and co-wrote an early analysis of the effects of [B and C] on health outcomes [DOI]. This study (cited XXX times since X year) was the basis of a series of community workshops, co-organized with [partner institution D], which led to [key health changes/improvements for community E] and a [funder] grant for the [F] research partnership ($ amount)."

Example sentence structure: I have supervised/line-managed/mentored [numbers of students, staff roles, team members, community members/practitioners, etc.] who went on to [example achievements of supervisees and mentees]. I supported their development through [examples of specific ways you supported development, such as providing equitable opportunities (e.g. through sponsorship, resources, sharing of contacts, offering roles with responsibilities) for learning skill A or experiencing B].

Example: "As a member of the department of X early career researcher committee, I co-organized a career development seminar series; I invited speakers from the pharmaceutical industry and university professional services to share experiences of their career pathways and

roles (~30 ECRs attended per seminar; feedback received that the seminars were informative and inspiring)".

Example: In [year], I co-organised the first stakeholder engagement day in Canada (XX attendees) for [public interest topic A], which included a panel discussion at which campaigners spoke about their experiences and break-out groups discussed research priorities. Evidence submitted as part of public consultation led to changes in local policy, leading to [XX%] decline in the effect of [A] on the affected population group.

Follow the requested format/template: If the call to which you are applying has supplied specific instructions or templates (e.g., section headings, font size, margins, etc.), adhere to them. By following the correct format, you will make easier for reviewers to identify all of the key sections as they relate to evaluation criteria.

4.0 Specific Guidance on Writing Narrative CVs for Canada Research Chair Applications

Applicants for UWinnipeg Canada Research Chair positions should organize their narrative CVs using the following headings:

For Tier 1 CRCs:

1. Research Excellence:
   a. Describe the quality of your most significant research contributions/outputs (e.g., publications [peer-reviewed or not], resources for end users/practitioners/community, policy briefs, key presentations/workshops, exhibitions, datasets, patents/designs, evidence synthesis, etc.).
   b. Demonstrate the soundness of your research.
   c. Demonstrate your commitment to open and transparent research practices, including in how you manage and share data, methods, and findings.
   d. Demonstrate your commitment to ethical and appropriate community engagement within your research (if applicable).
2. Research Innovation:
   a. Describe how your research developed or used new methods and/or applied existing methods in a new way.
   b. Describe how your research proposed new questions.
   c. Describe how you used new ways of addressing an existing research question
   d. Describe any new knowledge that was produced through your research.
   e. Describe any new kinds of outputs that were produced through your research.
   f. Describe any new ways that you mobilized knowledge generated from your research.
3. Research Impact:
   a. Describe the relevance, utility, and accessibility of your research for its intended audience/users.
   b. Demonstrate the impact of your research on the field/industry/public discourse/societal problems or questions.
   c. Describe how audiences and/or intended users have engaged with your research and findings.
4. International Recognition:

    a. Describe the significance of leadership roles you have held or are holding and/or your professional involvement in the field (e.g., in scholarly associations, conference organizing, etc.). Focus on international organizations or experiences if possible.

    b. Describe the nature and impact of your involvement in any past or present international research collaborations and/or networks.

    c. Highlight the most significant awards and/or community recognition you have received as a result of your research. You may also include any nominations for awards/recognition even if you did not receive the award.

5. Training Record:

    a. Highlight significant/impactful outcomes of your training/mentorship of individuals (e.g., students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty researchers, community members, practitioners, etc.).

    b. Describe the most significant and/or useful skills/experiences you have provided to trainees and demonstrate how your trainees have used them to advance their own career/educational trajectory.

    c. Describe any equity, diversity, and inclusion practices or principles you use in your training and mentorship activities (e.g., in recruitment, teamwork, research environment, research/training opportunities, etc.).

For Tier 2 CRCS:

1. Research Excellence:

    a. Describe the quality of your most significant research contributions/outputs (e.g., publications [peer-reviewed or not], resources for end users/practitioners/community, policy briefs, key presentations/workshops, exhibitions, datasets, patents/designs, evidence synthesis, etc.).

    b. Describe the relevance, utility, and accessibility of your research for its intended audience/users.

    c. Demonstrate the impact of your research on the field/industry/public discourse/societal problems or questions.

    d. Demonstrate the soundness of your research.

    e. Demonstrate your commitment to open and transparent research practices, including in how you manage and share data, methods, and findings.

    f. Demonstrate your commitment to ethical and appropriate community engagement within your research (if applicable).

    g. Highlight significant/impactful outcomes of your training/mentorship of individuals (e.g., students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty researchers, community members, practitioners, etc.).

    h. Describe any equity, diversity, and inclusion practices or principles you use in your training and mentorship activities (e.g., in recruitment, teamwork, research environment, research/training opportunities, etc.).

2. Research Creativity:

    a. Describe how your research activities, methods, and/or achievements have been novel for the field.

    b. Describe how you have taken risks in your research activities, methods, and/or achievements. If a particular activity or method failed or produced unintended impacts/findings, describe what you learned from this experience and how it was valuable.

3. Potential for International Recognition:

    a. Describe the significance of leadership roles you have held or are holding and/or your professional involvement in the field (e.g., in scholarly associations, conference organizing, etc.).

    b. Describe the nature and impact of your involvement in any past or present international research collaborations and/or networks.

    c. Highlight the most significant awards and/or community recognition you have received as a result of your research. You may also include any nominations for awards/recognition even if you did not receive the award.

Read the current [UWinnipeg CRC Assessment Criteria and Merit Indicators](#) for more details about what criteria the CRC Nomination Review Committee will be using to evaluate applications.