

CREATING A COMPELLING NARRATIVE CV

A Hands-On Workshop for UWinnipeg Researchers

August 27, 2025



WHY ARE WE HERE?

The Tri-Agency is transitioning to a new narrative CV.

We're going to help you make a narrative CV.

GOALS FOR TODAY

Understand the new format.

Get hands-on experience creating your narrative CV.



WHAT IS THE NARRATIVE CV?

- **Prioritizes written descriptions** of an applicant's research contributions.
- Allows users to **highlight a wide range of research outputs**.
- Allows users to **describe their career trajectories** in more detail.
- Provides the opportunity to explain the relevance of certain achievements to a specific proposal.
- **Values societal research outcomes**, such as influence on policy or mentorship, alongside more traditional research outputs.

A narrative CV puts the person behind the papers.

Narrative CV let you be more than a list — it lets you be a story.



FAST FACTS

- Narrative CVs are used by many other funding agencies worldwide
- In Canada, narrative CVs have already been used for:
 - CIHR Operating Grants
 - NSERC Discovery Horizon
 - SSHRC Impact Awards
- Narrative CVs are a step toward pan agency harmonization
 - Tri-Agency Grant Management System: one submission portal for all Tri-Agency grants



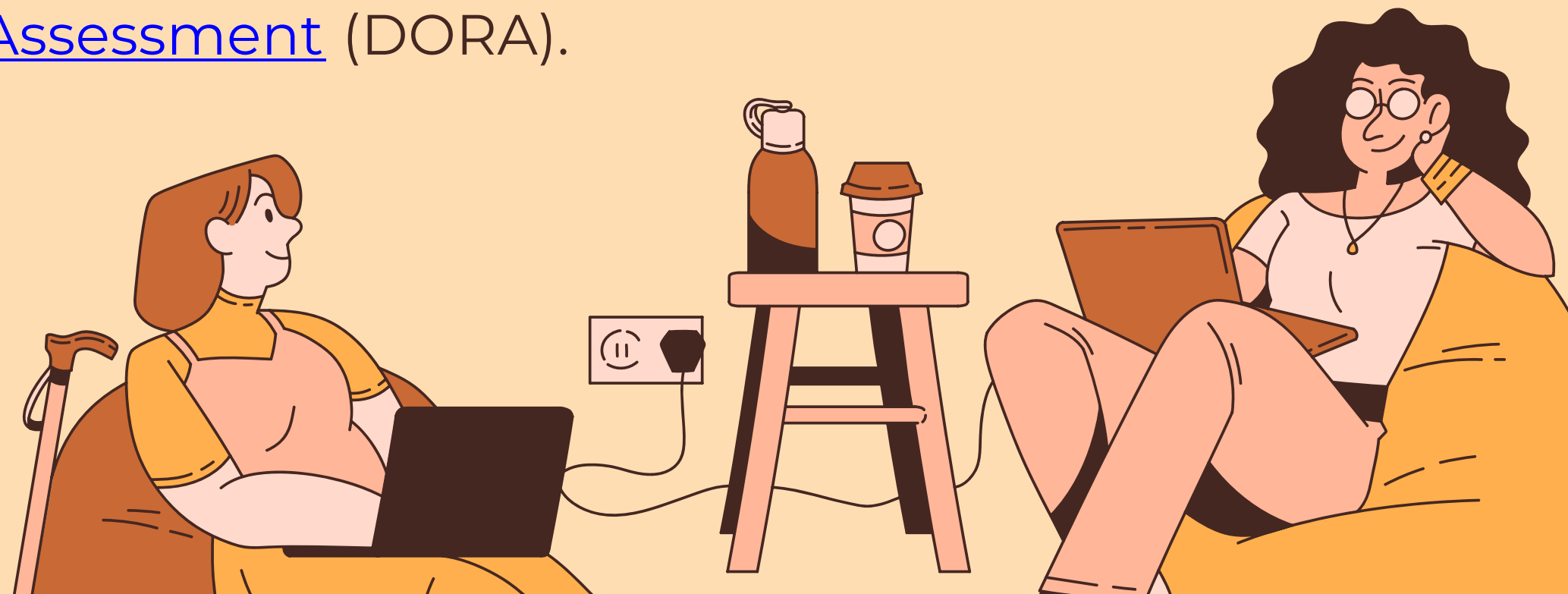
WHY THE CHANGE?

The Canadian Common CV (CCV) is terrible:

Poor usability, high burden of work, the barriers to collaboration, unreliability.

The narrative CV:

- **More inclusive** of all applicant types
- **Responds to usability needs.**
- **Reduces the administrative burden** for applicants and reviewers.
- **Inclusive, diverse and holistic approach to excellence in research funding-**
[San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#) (DORA).



HOW IS THE NARRATIVE CV DIFFERENT FROM THE OLD CV?

Doesn't use the CCV website, SSHRC CV, or other confusing CV portals

- Thank goodness!

Structured yet flexible format

- Three Mandatory sections:
 1. Personal statement
 2. Most significant contributions and experiences
 3. Supervisory and mentorship activities
- 5-page limit (6 for French)
- Subject to funder's formatting rules for attachments
- Project-specific experience, capacity, and promise.



HOW IS THE NARRATIVE CV DIFFERENT FROM THE OLD CV?

Previous aspects of the UW internal grant Research and Publication History document:

- List of
 - Research Grants
 - Publications
 - Presentations
 - Other scholarship
- Documents range from 1-37 pages of uncontextualized content
- Difficult for Research Committee members to evaluate research excellence and impact, and consider both the qualitative measures alongside the quantitative CV content



KEY SECTIONS of the NARRATIVE CV:

Personal statement

Most significant contributions and experiences

Supervisory and mentorship activities



PERSONAL STATEMENT

- **RELEVANT EXPERTISE**
- **IMPACT OF YOUR RESEARCH**
- **LIVED OR LIVING EXPERIENCE**
- **PREVIOUS WORK, PROGRESS, AND PRODUCTIVITY**



PERSONAL STATEMENT

DESCRIBE WHY YOU ARE WELL SUITED FOR YOUR ROLE IN THE APPLICATION.
FOR EXAMPLE, YOU MAY INCLUDE:

Collaborations or past performance in the field or related fields.

Impact of your research, and its **benefits to society and science**.

Expertise related to the specific topic or related topics.

Leadership activities and skills.

Recognitions (e.g., prizes, awards, community letters).

Lived or living experience.

Previous work, progress, or productivity that **provide context** to the results of your research activities which support your current application.

PERSONAL STATEMENT SAMPLE

Expertise

I am a public health researcher with a background in health promotion, aging, and immigrant health. My work focuses on improving health equity for senior immigrants in Manitoba, particularly those who face barriers to care due to language, culture, or limited access to services. I collaborate with community organizations, healthcare providers, and immigrant support groups to co-create practical, culturally informed solutions. Together, we've developed translated health materials and support programs that help seniors better understand and navigate the healthcare system. This work has been recognized through a Community Engagement Award, and it continues to be guided by the experiences and needs of the communities I serve. My goal is to make health systems more inclusive and responsive for older adults from diverse backgrounds.

Collaboration

Recognition

Goal

Benefits
to end-
users

MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Describe **up to ten** important contributions or experiences that relate to your application.

Contributions described in the previous section can be used here.

Explain the impact, significance, usefulness, and your role in each contribution or experience.

A contribution does not have to be a single publication or report; it could be a *collection* of related publications.



MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

TIPS:

Select contributions that are **relevant** and be clear on why they are relevant

Don't limit yourself to just publications; note other activities of peer review, community service, etc.

Don't undersell yourself, it is your opportunity to shine!

Provide **evidence** and not a list.

It is okay to mention the number of times a publication has been **cited**.

Include examples from **beyond academia**, if relevant.

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

COULD INCLUDE

- **Articles and other publications**
- **Assessment and review activities** (e.g., journal review, conference review, funding assessment).
- **Community service** or involvement that leverages expertise (e.g., membership on expert/advisory committees, journal editorships, community sharing circles, community gatherings, engagement events).
- **Contributions to Indigenous leadership**, self-determination, and capacity-building in research.
- **Creative outputs** (e.g., art, exhibitions, performances, publications, presentations, film, video, and audio recordings).
- **Dataset** creation, curation, sharing, or re-use.
- **EDI advances** in the research ecosystem.
- **Event and volunteer activities.**
- **IP** (e.g., patents, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets).
- **KM**, including specialist or non-specialist audiences, including policymakers and the public (e.g., magazine/newspaper articles, media interviews, blogs, social media, policy briefs, public lectures).
- **Methodologies, knowledge systems, cultural practices/approaches** (e.g., Indigenous knowledge and science).
- **New companies or organizations** created to further the promotion/use of research.
- **Partnerships or collaborations** within or with Canadian or international research or non-research communities or non-profit / public / private sector organizations (e.g., through research networks, large collaborative projects, community-engaged research/citizen science, non-academic career information, voluntary work).
- **Policies, guidelines, regulations, laws, rights, standards or practices.**
- **Products, technology, processes, services, or advice useful to specific organizations** (from the private, public, or non-profit sectors), communities, or society.
- **Software or tool development** for use by researchers or others in the private or public domain.

SUPERVISORY AND MENTORSHIP ACTIVITIES

Describe how you have helped mentor or train future generations.

This can include the development of highly qualified personnel (HQP) for careers within and outside of academia.



COULD INCLUDE:

Creation of **safe, equitable, and inclusive** research environments, practices, and norms.

Go beyond numbers. Share success stories.

Outreach and engagement with students, youth, or members of the general public, including through in-person or online targeted activities or capacity building.

Training in methodologies, knowledge systems, or cultural practices and approaches in the research context (e.g., Indigenous knowledge and science).

Mentorship (formal or informal) of highly qualified personnel, Early Career Researchers, colleagues, collaborators, relevant partners, other professionals, or community members.

Development and delivery of training workshops outside of research or course requirements.

IN ALL SECTIONS, DO NOT INCLUDE:

Lists.

Irrelevant Publications
and/or research projects.

Hyperlinks: This document should be self-contained and include all necessary descriptions, not pointing readers elsewhere.

Avoid **overly long explanations** of past projects. Focus on the key achievements and how they connect to the objectives of the grant you're applying for.

Do not overstate the impact of your research if it can't be demonstrated through clear outcomes.

Jargon or Technical Terms
(without Context)

Quantitative measures in isolation; always include holistic measures of quality alongside quantitative measures to show impact within and across publications

COMMON CHALLENGES & HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

UNFAMILIARITY

Use templates, review examples

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Start early. Refine over time. Get feedback.

SELECTING KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

What demonstrates why **YOU ARE** the best person for this work?

WRITING NARRATIVES

Follow a structured approach:
What, Why, So What?

**DON'T TRY TO RESHAPE A
TRADITIONAL CV**

**CHECK THE FUNDER'S
INSTRUCTION/TEMPLATE**



HOW IS THE NARRATIVE CV REVIEWED?

Reviewers are asked to consider examples and descriptions of the quality and impact of research contributions.

Quality indicators:

- Consideration of EDI in research process
- Novel, creative, innovative, and/or suitable and rigorous methodology
- Building capacity of trainees
- Responsible and ethical research conduct
- Transparency and accessibility of research results

Impact indicators:

- Use of research results by stakeholders
- Advances to reconciliation and decolonization of research
- Advances of new research/technology to readiness level
- Economic, environmental, societal contributions
- Increases to equitable and inclusive participation in research
- Increased public understanding of research
- Influence on policy

NARRATIVE CV AS JOB INTERVIEW

Narrative CVs are project-specific: Think of them like a cover letter for a job application or a written job interview

- Personal information = “Tell us about yourself.”
- Significant relevant contributions = “Tell us why you’re right for this job.”
- Supervision/mentorship = “Tell us about how you’ll lead your team. Provide examples of past success.”



HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Think of a project you'd like to pursue.

Jot down a brief description and notes to help you prepare for your interview.

Find a partner

Pick an interviewer and interviewee:

- Interviewer will ask questions, score, and jot down observations/feedback
- Interviewee will answer questions

Talk through these questions:

- Tell me about your project.
- Tell me about yourself.
- Tell me why you're right for this project.
- Tell me how you'll lead your team. Include examples of past success.

Provide scores and constructive feedback.

Switch roles and repeat!



Basic Principles

Be
selective

Only select contributions that are relevant to the proposed project

Include
Evidence

Substantiate the impact of your research work with evidence

Think
broadly

Don't limit your story of impact to the academic alone. Address both academic and non-academic impacts.

Provide
context to
your career

Describe how your research activities have enhanced your skills, shaped your career and are important at your career stage.



THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!

WEBSITE

[Resources for Researchers](#)

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