

## 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 series hosted by DZL!

This workshop will address persuasion skills in grant writing, focusing on the DFG/EU application formats as our baseline examples. We will discuss, in particular:

1. Strong structure in State of the Art, Objectives, and Methodological Programme: the key scientific sections in any research application.
2. How to provide clear, convincing answers to the project evaluation criteria of innovativeness, risk management, and added value.
3. Developing the Work Plan section with components such as milestones and deliverables, timeline and resource justification.
4. How to maximise information in the CV so as to respond to the complex candidate evaluation requirements at the early to mid-career stage: providing proof of emerging or established international recognition, demonstrating a diverse track record of relevant achievements, and conveying a compelling career vision with concrete future plans.

### **The workshop includes two components:**

- A podcast lecture series for self-study, available a la carte: you can listen at your own convenience within a month of attending the workshop, and you can select which lectures you wish to hear.
- Four live sessions of two hours each, held via Zoom. To accommodate clinicians, the live sessions are scheduled in the afternoon, at 16:00-18:00 Berlin time.

Please see next pages for details of the programme (p. 2) and the instructor's profile (p. 3).

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## Workshop Structure

Each live meeting takes two astronomical hours, with a 5-min break in the middle.

### Meeting 1: Focus on the proposal structure and analysis of typical evaluation criteria

#### Self-study materials following the opening lecture:

- **Podcast series:** you can listen *a la carte*, selecting which lectures interest you most. All lectures are supported by downloadable slides. Access to podcasts is officially retained until one full month after the workshop is completed.
  
- **Series 1: General grant-writing skill for junior and senior postdocs: ~155 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.** Writing skills: 36 mins
  
- **Series 2: Senior-level podcasts: ~105 mins**
  - Podcast 1.** Space management and structure in the FWO 10-page project outline: 30mins.
  - Podcast 2.** The grant CV, based on the standard format of a 2-page CV: 27 mins
  - Podcast 3.** How the project contributes to your longer-term research programme: 10 mins

### Meeting 2: Analysis and discussion of examples

**Topics: (1)** analysis of open-access examples from European funded grants; **(2)** analysis of your own proposal abstracts and examples of concrete funding instruments of interest to you, to ensure lessons learnt are transferred to other funding instruments.

### Meeting 3: The “Work Plan” in European and national funding applications

**Topic:** integrating milestones, deliverables, timelines and resources justification into a proposal.

### Meeting 4: The candidate evaluation: CV structure and typical evaluation criteria

**Topics: (1)** maximising information in the 2-4 page European research CV; **(2)** integrating a personal/motivation statement as a persuasion tool.

#### ATTENDANCE TRACKING

Your coordinators will receive a report confirming for each participant whether they have logged in to listen to the podcasts and participated in all sessions. For each Zoom meeting, a screenshot will be taken to verify who was present.

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## Julia Staykova-McKinnon, Ph.D.

### Scriptorium Founder, Consultant



#### Profile

Julia has over fifteen years of experience as a lecturer and consultant in grant writing, interviewing skills in research, and business proposals developed for private investors. She consults on proposals submitted to Horizon Europe (formerly Horizon 2020), including ERC (StG, CoG, AdG, SyG), Erasmus+ Actions (European University, EMJMD, SwafS), Marie S. Curie Actions (ITN/ETN, Doctoral Network, CoFund), and FET-Open/RIA. She also assists on proposals submitted to national agencies, such as DFG and Helmholtz Foundation (Germany), ANR, PIA3 (France), FWO/FNRS (Belgium).

**Consulting and teaching at EU academic institutions:** Julia regularly consults on proposals and teaches workshops for postdocs and junior and 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 (France), University of Zurich, and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (UZH, 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 U in 2007.