

Tips for a successful fellowship application to the Wellcome Trust

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What makes a strong application?



The P's Process

- Person
- Place
- Project
- Preparation



Person

- Good basic knowledge
- Demonstrable potential
- Show how the fellowship is a career step
- Closely involved in formulating and writing the proposal



Place

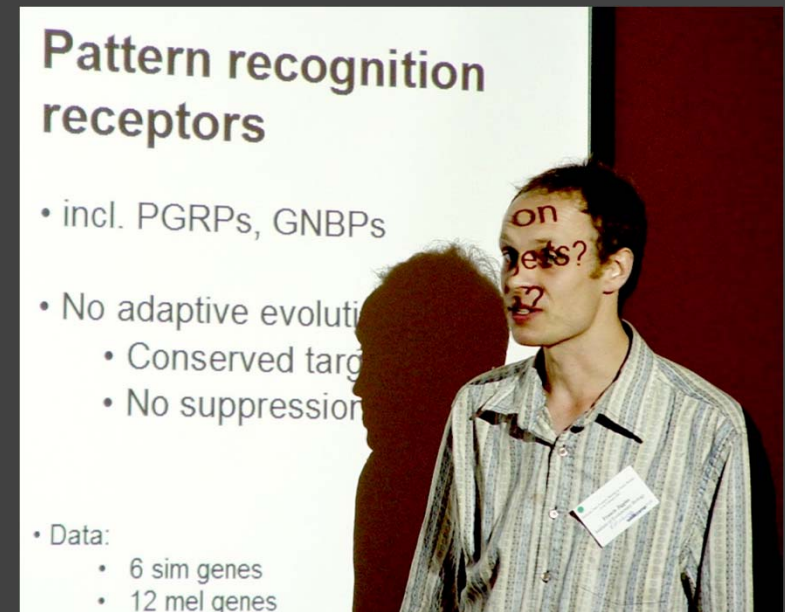
- Quality of host institution / group
- Supervision - expertise, facilities
- Additional skills, new ideas, fresh challenges
- Training acquired – generic, specific



- Additional training in visiting labs / institutions
- Mentorship – monitoring progress, assessment
- Record of supervision and sponsorship

Project

- Novel, interesting, relevant, asking the right questions
- High scientific merit
- Clear aims, objectives, study design
- Realistic, achievable
- Risks, contingencies
- Must provide valid training; not an extra pair of hands
- Guidance from supervisor is critical



Preparation

- Give yourself enough time
- Check remit and eligibility
- Provide all information
- Follow instructions closely
- Check, and check again
- Everything should fit together, with no gaps
- Do this with your supervisor and/or mentor



Assessment criteria checklist

The Committee must make a decision based on a number of distinct criteria

Written proposal

- Importance of research question
- Feasibility of methods
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Track record
- Resources requested
- Comparison with other grants

Interview

- Your understanding of the science in and around your proposal
- Your aptitude and enthusiasm for a research career
- Your ability to address issues raised by reviewers
- Ability to “think on your feet”

Masters and Training fellowships

- Quality of the training obtained through the research project.
- Quality of the laboratory where you will be based.
- Record of strong mentorship by your supervisor or sponsor.
- Must be a genuine training vehicle.
- The Committee will want to be assured you get good supervision, training and support from your supervisor and his/her laboratory
- You must be able to convince the Committee that you have been closely involved in developing the project and writing the proposal



Why projects fail!

“...it involves techniques with which the applicant appears to have no prior experience and for which no preliminary data are proposed.”

“...the work described in this application is over-ambitious, it could not be achieved in the life-time of the investigator.”

“The poor writing, referencing and proof reading of this application significantly detract from its overall quality.”

“I had only one problem with this application, I had no idea what they were trying to do...”

Final 'TIPs'

T – Time, Technique

I – Instructions, Interview

P – Project, Preparation

Luck favours the prepared mind!

- Louis Pasteur



Good luck!