

Judith Krauss 1/29/2025 ↻

## YES! ECR grant incubator - questions and best tips and tricks!

Before and during this two-hour session, we collected guidance from principal investigators, grant evaluators, research services staff on attendees' questions.

↻ JUDITH KRAUSS 1/29/25 8:10AM

! My top tip on designing, writing, submitting grants!

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Jon P 3/31/25 5:37PM

Pretend it's an exam, because you're probably good at them. There will be criteria to meet, so make sure you make it easy for a busy bored reviewer to see you have met these criteria.

↻ JUDITH KRAUSS 3/20/25 10:19AM

A grant application is a marathon, not a sprint

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Robert Marchant 3/27/25 5:11PM

Agree, this is why it is really important to start early with a grant application. Worth noting that the UoY deadlines are often several weeks ahead of the funder deadline, sometimes months if a large complex grant

Jon P 3/31/25 5:46PM

A marathon. With a diversion through an uphill swamp at about mile 24. And then a sprint finish so murderous that you end up being sick down your vest and passing out as you cross the line. And when you wake up, there's a bloke in an orange tabard with a clipboard saying that the rules have been updated and the finishing positions have all been changed. (Mind, I've never done a marathon.)

↻ JUDITH KRAUSS 3/20/25 10:19AM

How have you repurposed failed grant applications in the past?

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Robert Marchant 3/27/25 5:14PM

Many times, sometimes three of four times. This repurposing is not so much 'try and try again but evolved to fit the call

Jon P 3/31/25 5:42PM

Yes, as Rob says. Even just little ideas (graphics, structures, phrases). Reviewing grants, internally and for funders, also helps here.

↻ JUDITH KRAUSS 3/20/25 10:20AM

How do I find a balance between co-production and asking for an unreasonable amount of collaborators' unpaid labour?

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Jon P 3/31/25 5:45PM

If I'm PI, I expect to do nearly everything. I expect to have to tell people quite directly what I need from them. That keeps it efficient for them, and they usually go above-and-beyond in their responses - a nice surprise.

↻ JUDITH KRAUSS 3/31/25 9:28AM

Where do you find inspiration for a grant proposal? Do you start from your idea, from your existing collaborations, from the call, ...?

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Rob Marchant 3/31/25 9:39AM

I often find inspiration comes from two main sources. 1. Things that I would like to do and then look for opportunities to fund these. 2. Grant calls that come out and then I think how my research can contribute into these...

Jon P 3/31/25 5:36PM

I agree with Rob. For me, Type 1 is mentally easier to write but harder to get funded. Type 2 brings added constraints and extra criteria (e.g. forcing you to work across disciplines) but it can take your brain to interesting places.

↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 3/31/25 9:29AM

What was your greatest surprise when it comes to submitting a grant proposal?

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↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 3/31/25 9:32AM

What do you see as the greatest challenge when it comes to writing and submitting grants as early-career people?

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↩ ROBERT MARCHANT 3/31/25 11:30AM

### Collaborative teams

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Robert Marchant 3/31/25 11:35AM

How as an ECR can I develop my research network and contribute into a collaborative group? There are finder sites out there, most notable is the EU where you can 'find an expert' and register yourself. I think the best way is just reaching out to people you are keen on collaborating with. This can be a direct contact or via various channels such as Blue Sky, LinkedIn...

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↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 4/2/25 11:23AM

### Costing?

How do you work out how much something will cost?

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Judith Krauss 4/2/25 11:24AM

Research services/pre-award team are very good at knowing what different things cost, what is/not eligible under certain schemes, what maximums there are etc. Start with ideal, then trim down - be open to that possibility from the start, and think about: what areas might you be able to cut? People's time is normally most expensive.

Judith Krauss 4/2/25 11:26AM

Different funders do (not) allow overheads etc - important to watch out for this! Ask pre-award teams/colleagues for successful previous examples. Talk to colleagues, especially research services to justify resources/ensure value for money. Creativity - can any costs be subsumed through cooperation with a community/industry partner? Value-added

Judith Krauss 4/2/25 11:30AM

Ring-fence what is most essential. Work backwards from key outputs - what will it take to deliver this? Don't promise the world, just something amazing

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↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 4/2/25 11:32AM

### **Ambition vs. feasibility**

How do you balance 'promising the world' with what will be realistic?

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**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:33AM

Grant evaluation panels look out for whether you can deliver what you are promising. Be exciting, novel, world-changing (for UKRI), but it has to be something that deliverables can realistically produce.

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:34AM

Climate projects: have to be high-risk in the sense that it is exciting, but it has to be potentially possible. Maybe you are using data in a different way, deploying models differently? Find sweet spot between risk and feasibility. Linchpin of your programme needs to be de-risked/safe as much as possible, so also about where does risk lie?

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:35AM

Be convincing in your writing: find sweet spot between aspiring for brilliance, but also ensuring that you can deliver this. How can you best make the case?

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:37AM

With £1m, you will not change the world. But: how will your work with this limited pot of money address the wider issue? You have to be able to explain why what you are doing may produce ripple effects and in the end change the world (for UKRI - less required for other funders)

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:40AM

EU level: not always most innovative ideas that get funded, but with good balance between risk and outcomes. Pathway statement should show long-term innovation strategy - have to show how you are de-risking. Reviewers have to be accountable - make it easy for reviewers to score you up

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↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 4/2/25 11:41AM

### **Primary data?**

Should unpublished, primary data be included in grant applications?

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**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:43AM

If unproven methods - can be pushed back by reviewers; possibly more scope to use this in response to reviewers (later stage)

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:44AM

Can give a running start if theoretical foundation is already published as that can help with justifying empirical implementation

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:45AM

Don't put all the very risky stuff in - good to build research base systematically

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:46AM

Some funders: happy for high-risk, blue-sky work - important to look at specific call, funder (UKRI mean by 'high risk' - highly moderated risk)

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↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 4/2/25 11:50AM

### **Risk in fellowships?**

For fellowships which are much more about individuals, what should the risk profile look like?

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**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:51AM

Have to demonstrate that you are already on a leadership trajectory - led people, led conference panels, organised a conference etc to show how you will build & manage the team as a leader. Both yourself and the science has to be de-risked

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:53AM

URF - scope to go further? All fellowships want someone who has managed something before, who knows how to build a team. URF may have more risk scope on science, but not on individuals. Individuals on panels may not be experts on your topic - need to spell out fully how what you are proposing matters

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↩ JUDITH KRAUSS 4/2/25 11:54AM

### **Fellowship panels**

Are fellowship panels looking for people who are a bit like those on the panel?

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**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:56AM

There will always be cognitive, unconscious bias (have to go through bias training, so much better than it was). Experts on panels will have more post-docs/PGRs also submitting in that space, so some disciplinary bias. May also fund someone who has previously proved their track record

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 11:57AM

Accountability very important - enable reviewers/evaluators to be positive about your work. Expert panels will seek consistency in terms of evaluation on panels, grants.

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 12:00PM

This is an investment decision - how do you take away reasons to be sceptical, how do you make a good case (what are you saying, what are you doing, etc)? Get non-experts to read/copy-edit them. Make friends with people who understand the power of storytelling

⇒ **JUDITH KRAUSS** 4/2/25 12:01PM

### Starting?

Where do you start, how do I find the team, how do I initiate the grant process? (collaborators, idea, scheme, ...)

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**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 12:03PM

Talk to research services, talk to different colleagues also outside of your department (does this make sense to you)? Need to create a repository/network of what people to talk to, but also take time to ensure you all have the same values

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 12:05PM

Power of the ask! Do ask people :-)

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 12:07PM

Write it down - then you can work out if this is a project for a Master's student, a PhD project, or a larger grant application?

**Judith Krauss** 4/2/25 12:08PM

Visualise as much as possible - pictures are very powerful. Collaborate with those who are good with visuals

⇒ **JUDITH KRAUSS** 4/2/25 12:12PM

Example of a visualisation - Centre for Doctoral Training proposal and how it ties in with existing centres

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