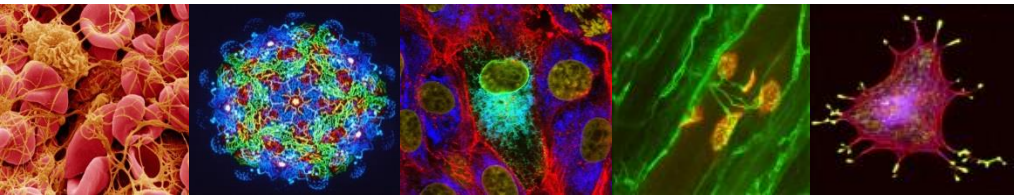


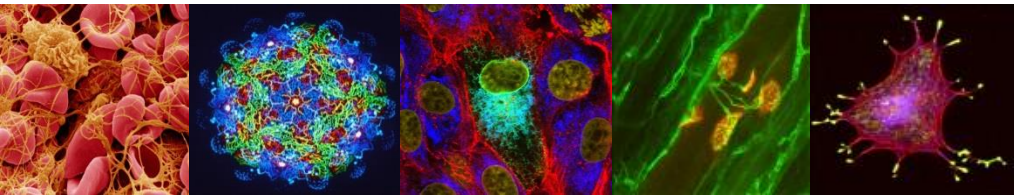
University College London
6 May 2015

ACF Workshop: a Wellcome Trust perspective

James Harden
Clinical Activities Manager
The Wellcome Trust



Introduction



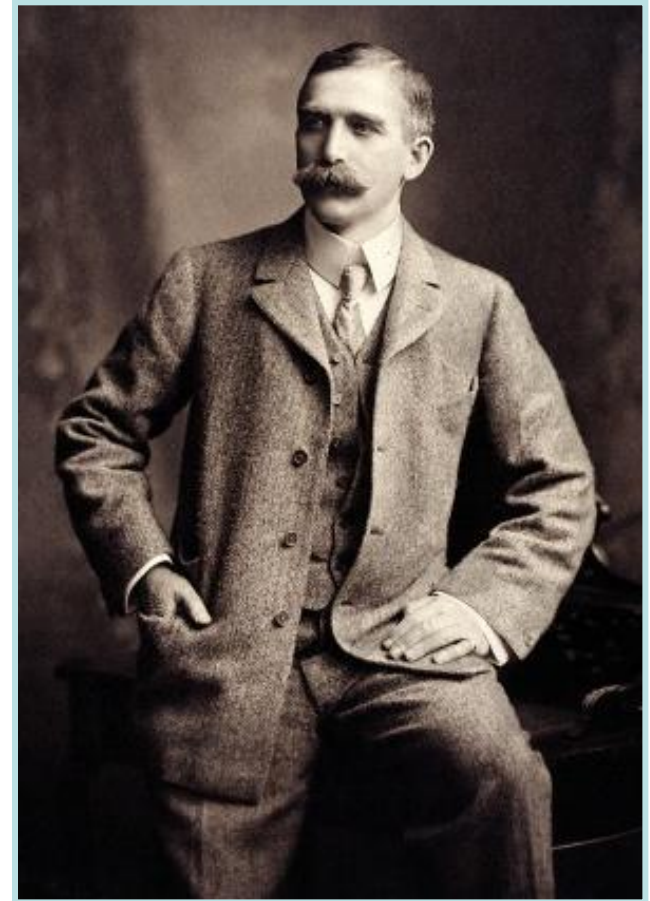
The Wellcome Trust

- We are a global charitable foundation dedicated to achieving extraordinary improvements in human and animal health.
- Our interests range from science, to the history of medicine, to public engagement.
- We are independent of both political and commercial interests.



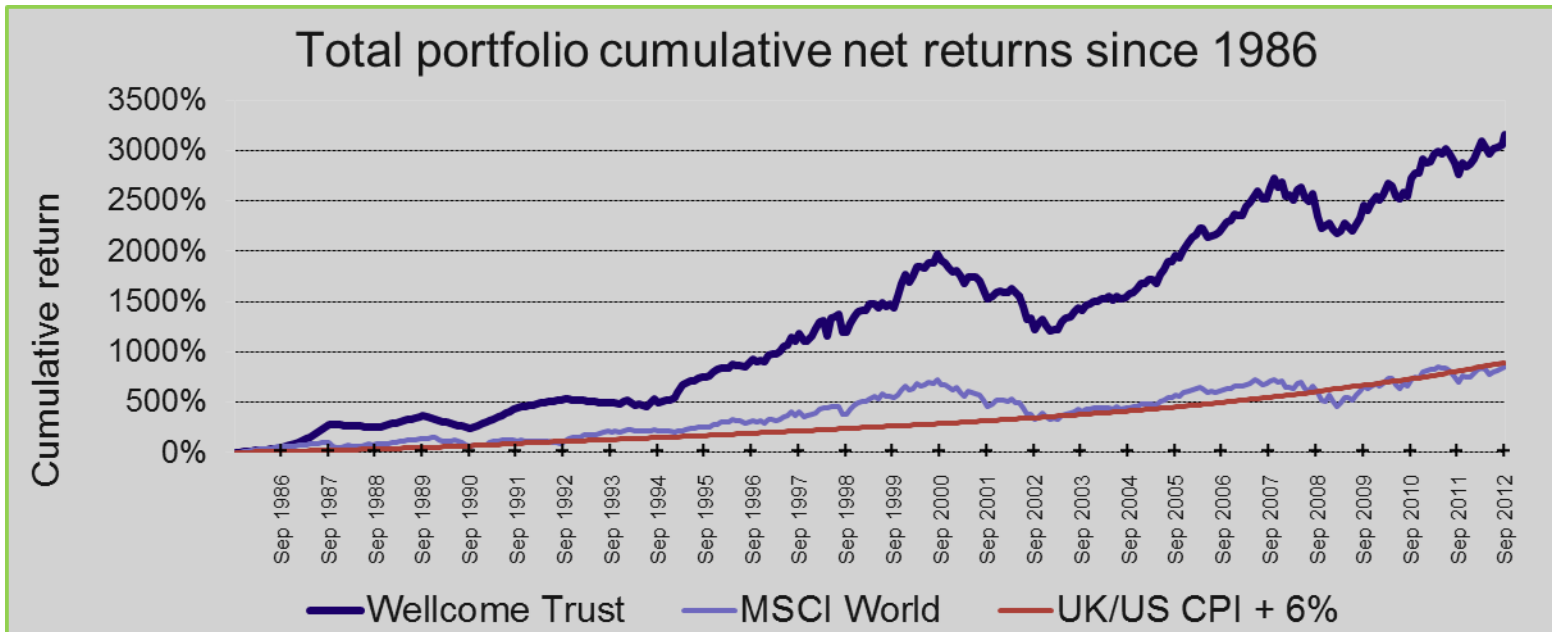
Our History

- The Wellcome Trust was set up in 1936 under the will of Sir Henry Wellcome, vested the entire share of his pharmaceutical company, The Wellcome Foundation, in a charitable trust.
- The income from the Trust must be used to:
 - Advance medical and scientific research to improve mankind's wellbeing
 - Increase the understanding of the history of medicine
- The Trustees began work in 1937 with **£73,048** in their deposit account.



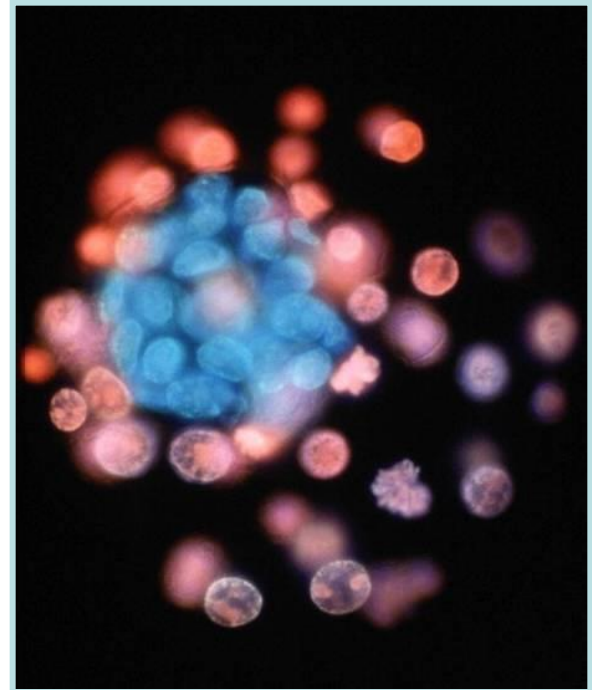
Our Income

- Our Invested Endowment is currently worth around £18bn.
- Investments in property, public and private equities, hedge funds, property and cash.
- We spend over **£700 million** on charitable activities per year.



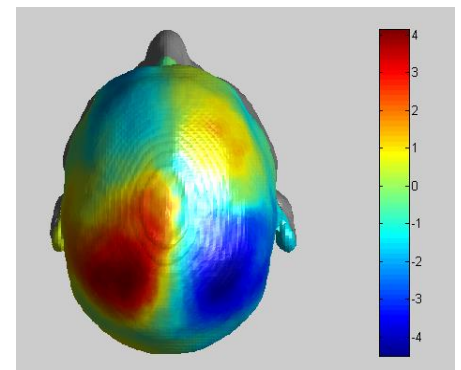
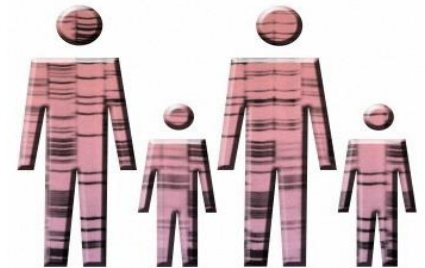
Our vision and mission

- Our **vision** is to achieve extraordinary improvements in human and animal health
- Our **mission** is to support the brightest minds in biomedical research and the medical humanities



Why should I consider doing a PhD?

- It represents a chance to think in a different way... Ideal for those with curious minds!
- Research may inform your clinical practice
- A better structured landscape:
 - UK CRC/NIHR
 - Integrated Academic Training Pathway
 - Favourable CSR
- Infrastructure
 - Clinical Research Facilities
 - Biomedical Research Centres
- There is some exciting science to be undertaken
- Flexibility of a career in academic medicine
- It might be fun!

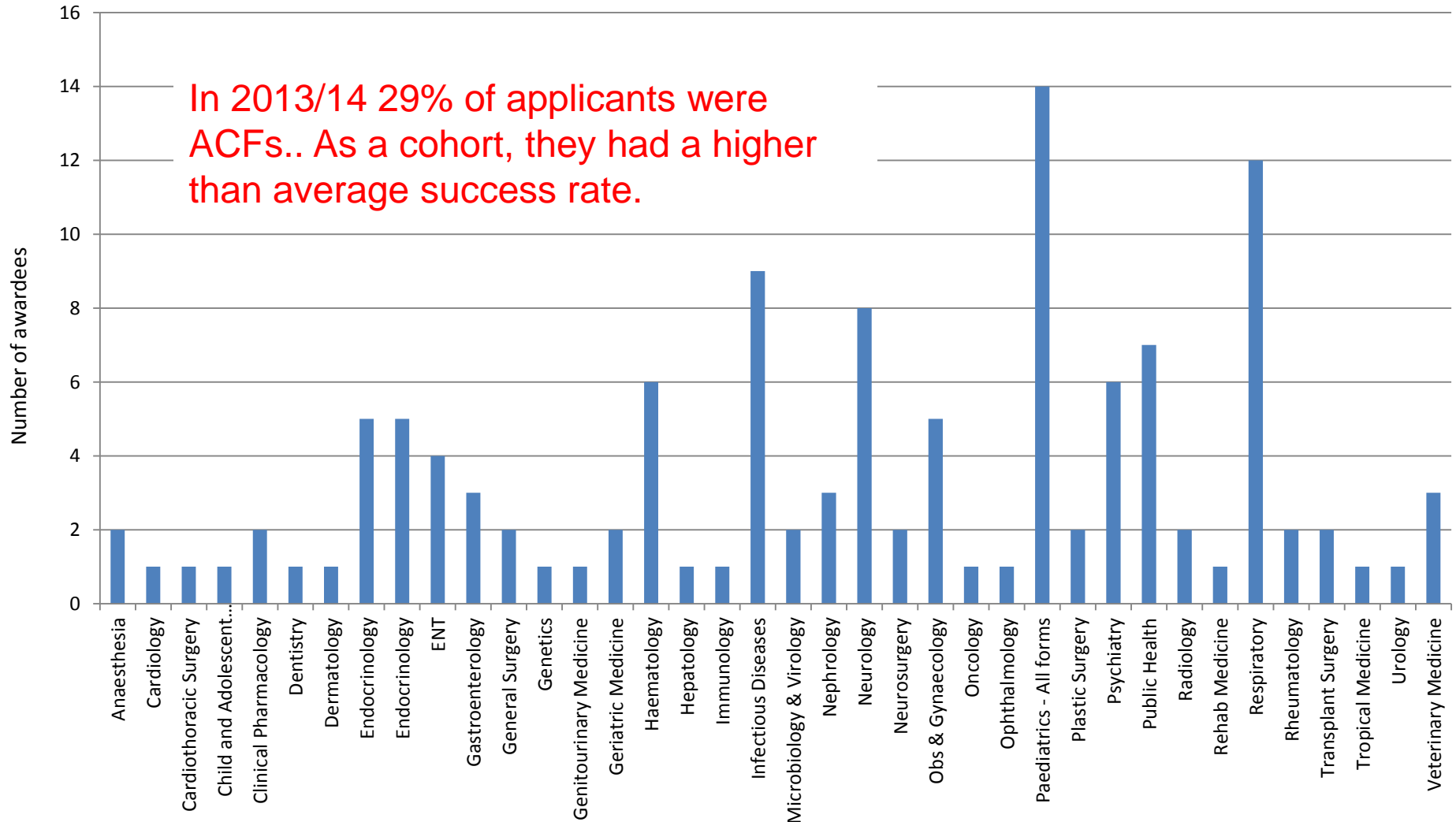


Why apply for a fellowship ?

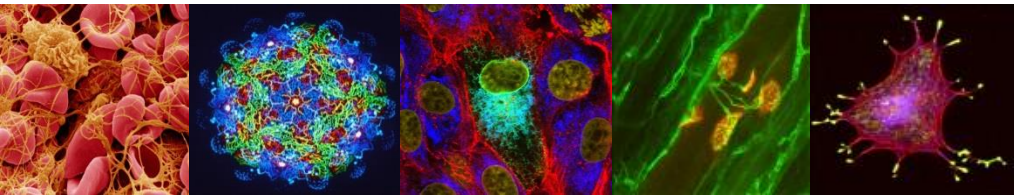
- Allows protected research time... Freedom from clinical and/or admin duties.
- Your own funding. A chance to develop yourself as an independent researcher.

Who has been successful?

In 2013/14 29% of applicants were ACFs.. As a cohort, they had a higher than average success rate.



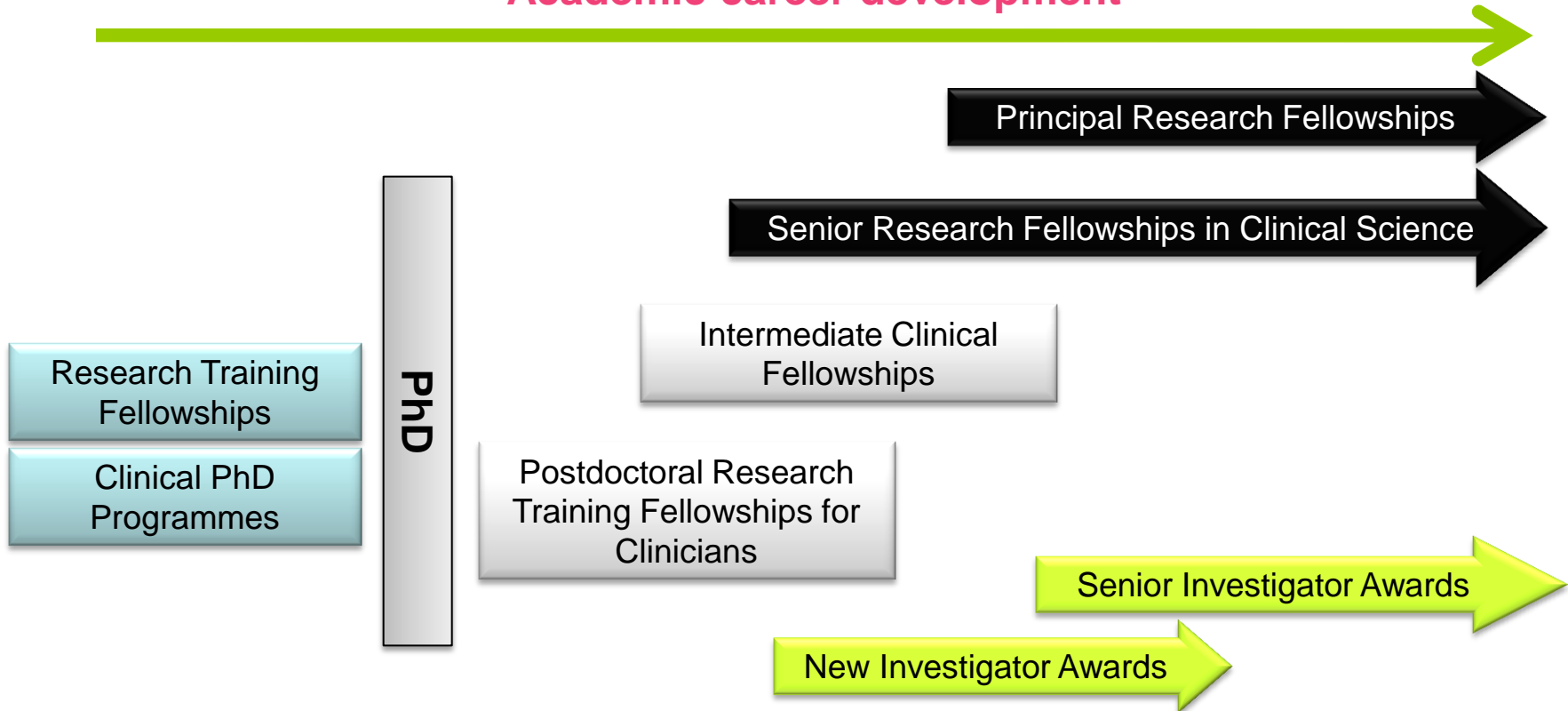
Our schemes



Clinical Fellowships:

support for clinicians at all stages of their career

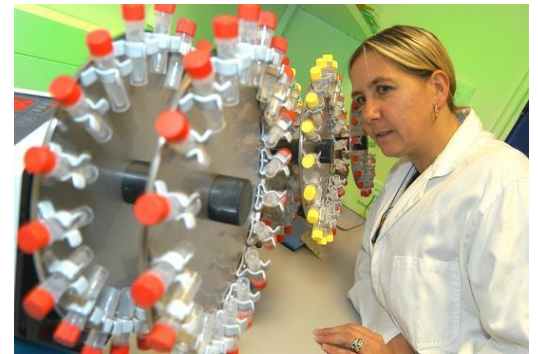
Academic career development



Research Training Fellowships

- For medical, dental, clinical psychology and veterinary graduates with limited research experience, wishing to undertake a PhD.
- Candidates should have MRCP or equivalent and typically be within 10 years of their initial medical qualification
- A high quality, hypothesis-driven project will need to be identified
- Funding for 2-3 years, including provision of a clinical salary and research expenses

Considered three times a year with interviews in November, March and June - no preliminary application.



PhD Programmes for Clinicians

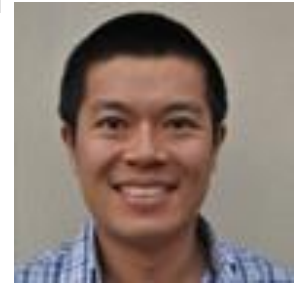


- Complement Research Training Fellowships
- Tailored to the unique needs of Clinician Scientists
- Programmes provide:
 - Structured, well-mentored training
 - Access to high-quality research environments
- Provision for 200 training slots in six years since inception of scheme...
- There are five Programmes currently recruiting:
 - University College London
 - University of Cambridge
 - University of Edinburgh
 - University of Liverpool
 - University of Oxford



Postdoctoral Research Training Fellowship for Clinicians

- A chance to gain an initial postdoctoral training in the best environments in the UK and overseas. The scheme is aimed at:
 - Individuals within 24 months of having obtained their PhD; **OR**
 - Those who achieved a PhD during or prior to obtaining their medical degree
- Offers an opportunity to:
 - Refine research skills or change direction
 - Explore new research environments
 - Re-engage with a research agenda
- A flexible scheme that allow candidates to combine clinical training with research
- Three decision points *per annum*



Next preliminary application deadline: **18 May 2015**

Intermediate Clinical Fellowships

- For outstanding individuals to continue to develop their research career through a period of post doctoral research training
- Will hold a PhD/MD and established an excellent track record
- Four year award (fellowship salary and research expenses) for applicants who have completed, or are about to complete, their clinical training
- 'Clinician Scientist' five year award (fellowship salary and research expenses) allows applicant to complete clinical training
- Considered twice *per annum*



Next preliminary application deadline: **18 May 2015**

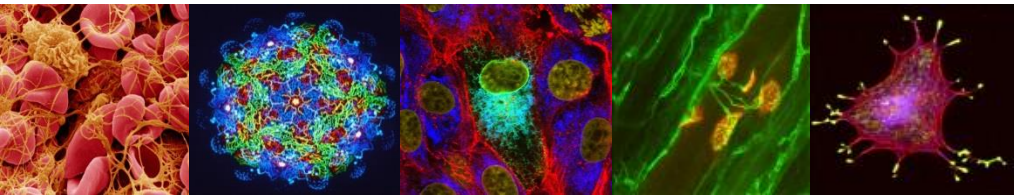
Senior Clinical Fellowships

- For outstanding individuals of exceptional ability to continue their independent programmes of research
- 4–~7 years' postdoctoral research experience
- 5-year award funded in full (fellowship salary and research expenses) by the Trust
- Renewable for five-year periods with 50% fellowship salary funded by the host institution
- Considered three times *per annum*

Next preliminary application deadline:
8 May 2015



Fellowships – the process





Application process for personal support schemes

Pick the best scheme for you and check details

- **Preliminary application**
 - Assess eligibility and suitability of person (and project) in relation to the scheme
 - Decision on whether to invite full application
- **Full application**
 - Detailed external peer review of person, project and place
 - Application and referees' reports assessed by appropriate Wellcome Trust Funding Committee
 - Decision on whether to invite candidate for interview
- **Interview**
 - Decision on whether to make an award

Assessment Criteria

Person

- the candidate's track record
- the candidate's vision of how the Fellowship will contribute to their career development
- the candidate's longer term aspirations.

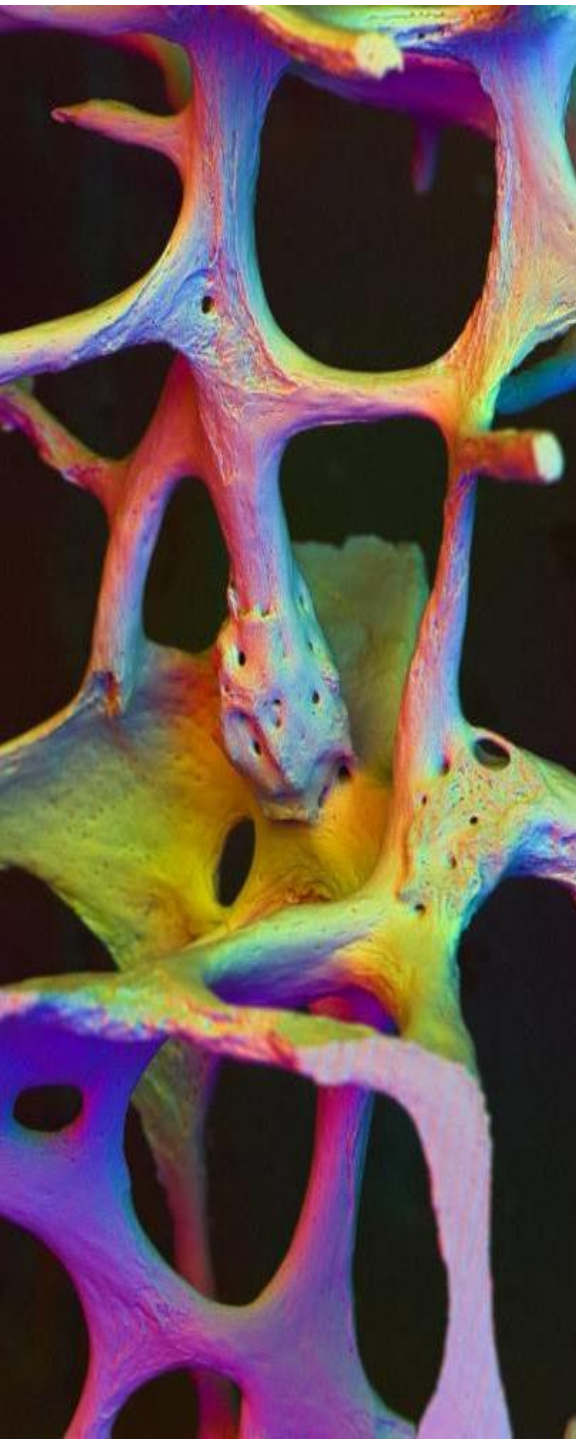
Project

- the importance of the research question
- relevant background information
- the feasibility of the approach
- resources requested – are they appropriate?

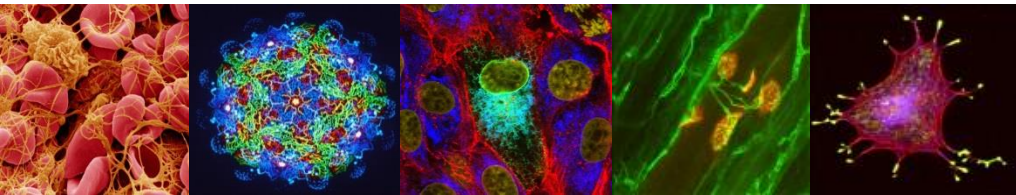
Place

- the candidate's choice of appropriate research sponsors
- Quality of research environment

Comparison with other applications of the same type
– *It is a competition.*



Tips on writing a good application



What do we mean by ‘Grantsmanship’?

“Grantsmanship is the art of acquiring peer-reviewed research funding”

The art of grantsmanship will not turn mediocre science into a fundable grant proposal.

But poor grantsmanship will, and often does, turn very good science into an un-fundable grant proposal.

Good writing will not save bad ideas, but bad writing can kill good ones.

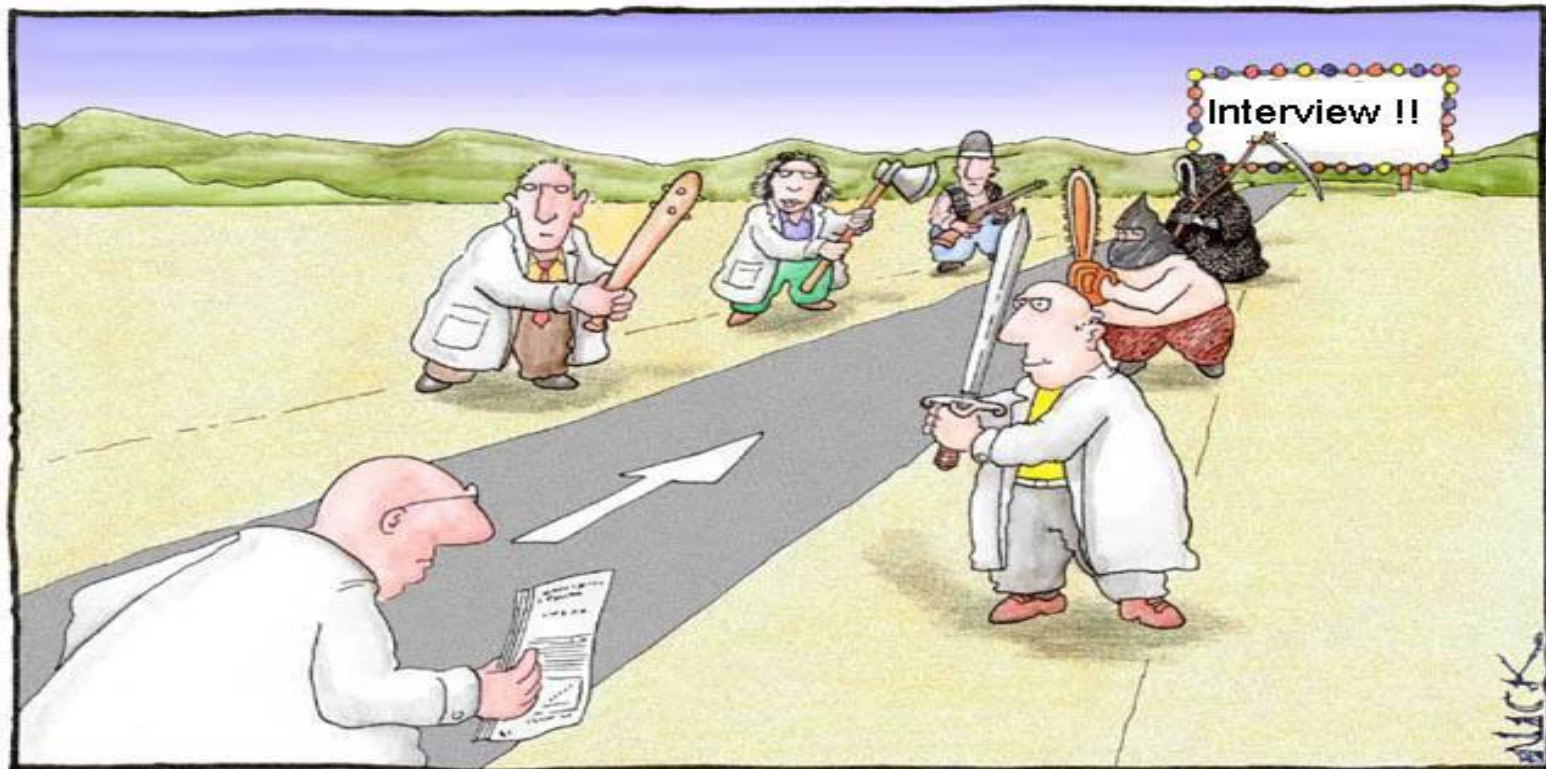
Jacob Kraicer





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

First hurdle: shortlisting



Most applicants regarded the new streamlined short listing process as 'quite an improvement.'

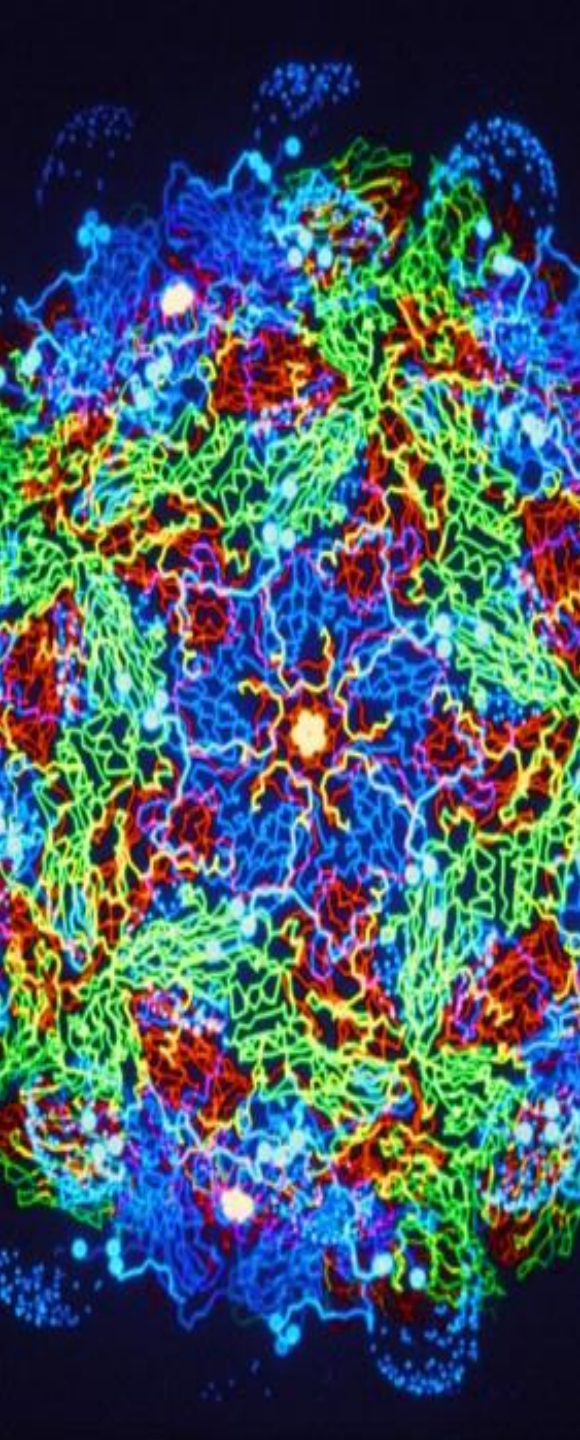


Before starting your application....

- Read the application form and guidance notes carefully and think about the answers to all the questions. With whom may you need to speak?
- Check deadlines to **avoid rushed applications** and accept what the word “deadline” means e.g. it’s not necessarily ready to submit when you have finished with it as it must have been through your **admin office** too
- Queries? Concerns? Contact the Trust for advice

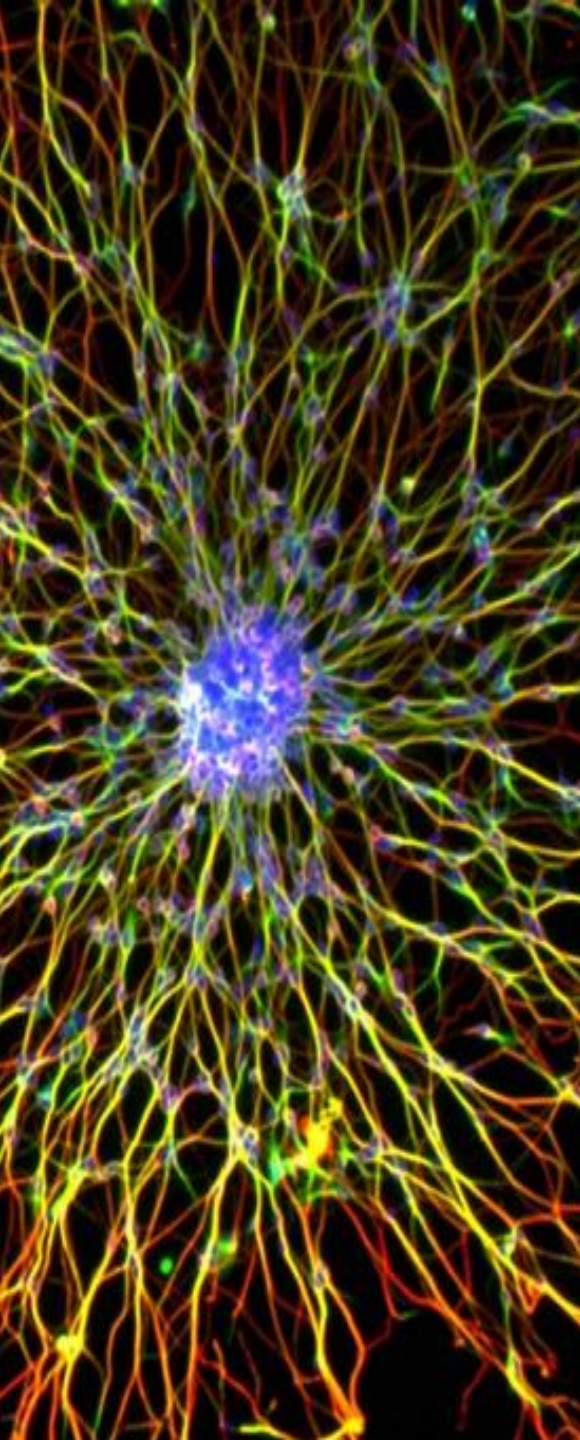
A 'Good' Application

- A strong and original **central hypothesis**
- Evident **knowledge** of the area
 - Consider what's already known, address conflicting opinions, use appropriate citations and references.
- Clear **research plan**
 - Is the technical approach feasible? Is the timescale realistic? What are the potential pitfalls and your fall-back plans? Are the requested resources appropriate?
- Convincing **preliminary data**
- Not over- or under- ambitious
- Appropriate **expertise**
 - Sponsors, co-applicants, collaborators and
 - research team.

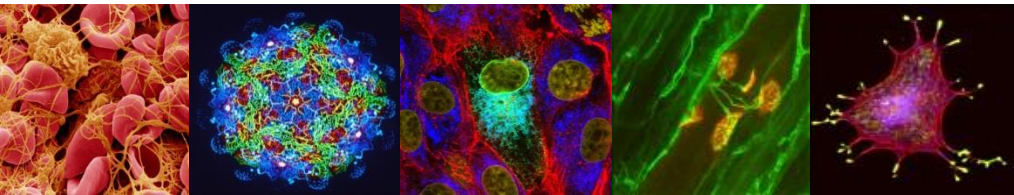


A 'Good' Application

- Easy to understand and read
 - Consider all readers, **avoid jargon** and abbreviations, check grammar and spelling
- All staff, equipment and materials & consumables should be **fully justified**
- Animal use should be carefully justified and **power calculations** provided, where appropriate
- Should offer the very best value for money

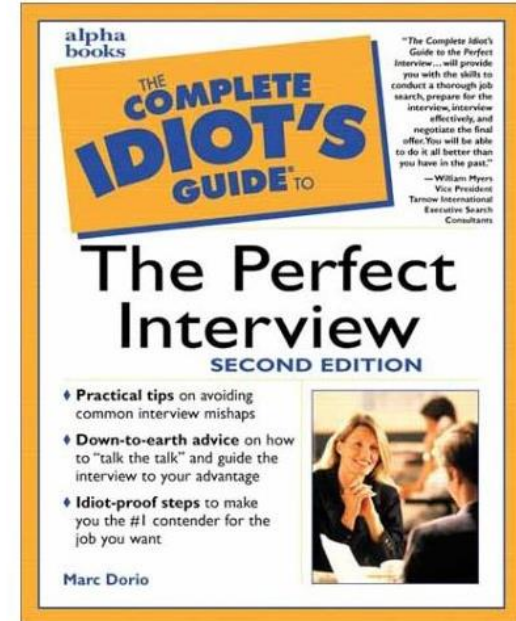


The Interview



Before the interview

- Practice, practice, practice! No substitute for mock interviews
- Know your application backwards
 - own the project!
- Know recent data in the field
- Be prepared to give a concise summary of your proposed project and your research career to date



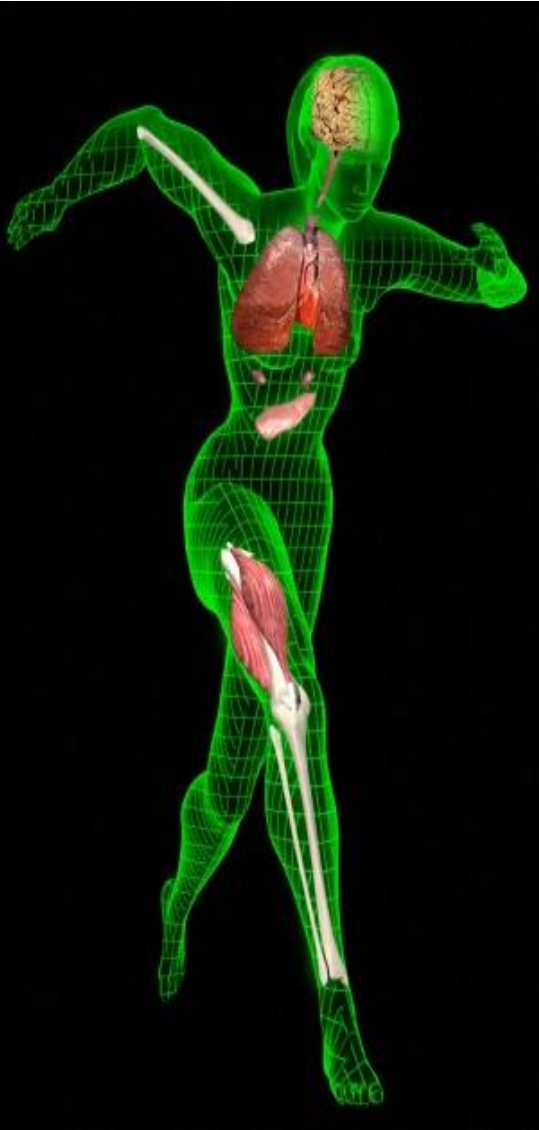
The interview itself

- **Practice, practice, practice!**
- Own the project. How does the project fit with wider landscape?
- Smile, make eye contact, remember to breath!
- Prepare a concise summary of your research and career to date
- No trick questions
- Listen carefully, and ensure you concisely answer the question posed
- Be prepared to defend, know when to concede



It was a mistake for Eric to wear a t-shirt to his job interview, and it was a bigger mistake to wear that particular t-shirt.

Final issues to consider



- Have I built a competitive CV?
- Do I have the right sponsor, supervisor and mentor?
- Is this the 'right' project for me?
- When is the best time in my career to do research?
- Am I being realistic?
- Will I enjoy it?

The last word

Check scheme details and deadlines well in advance.

Our website is a comprehensive source of information, but don't hesitate to contact the Trust Staff if you need advice.

www.wellcome.ac.uk

j.harden@wellcome.ac.uk

Good Luck!