AI for Multiple Long-term Conditions
Research Support Facility
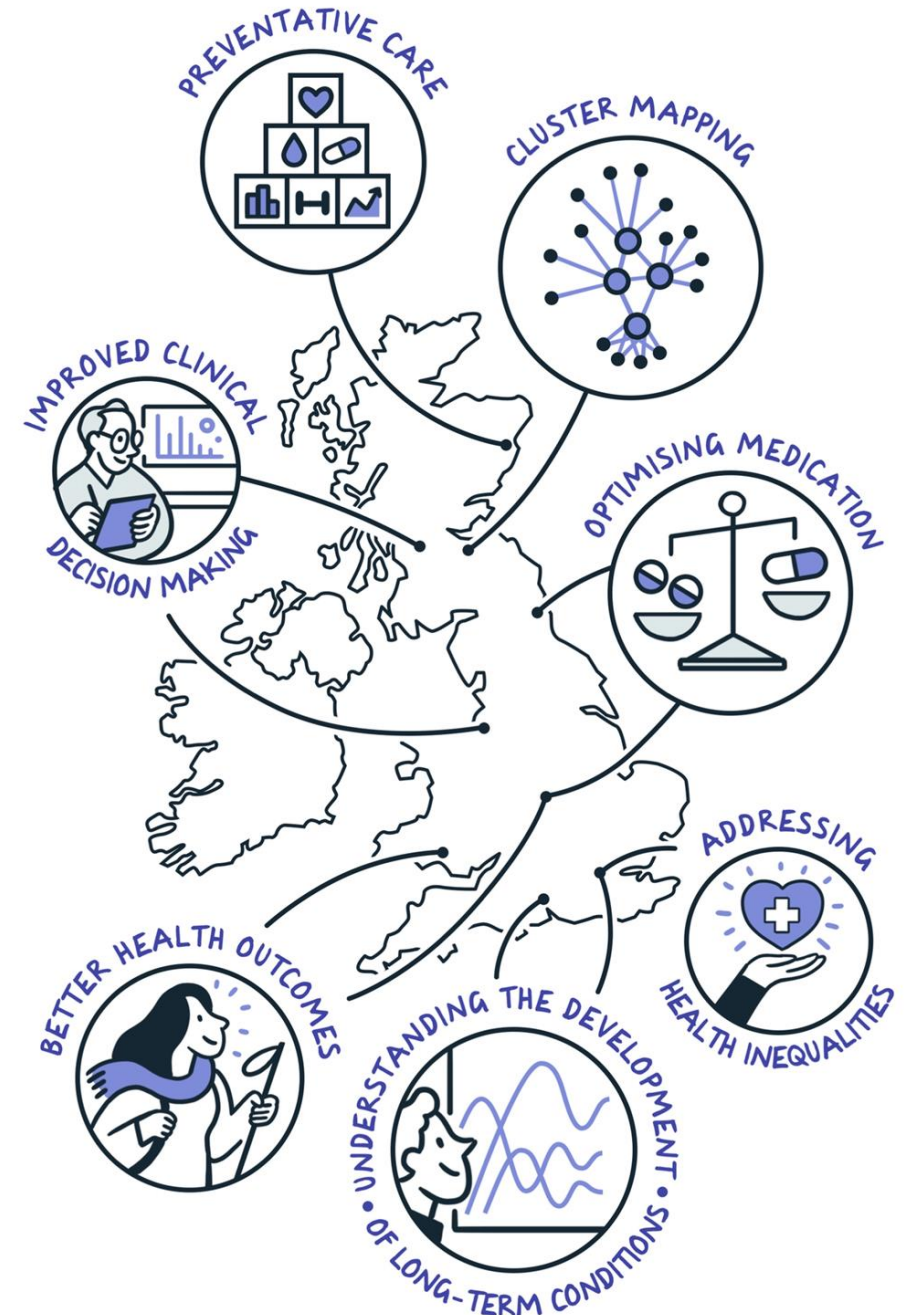
Track records and the R4RI

10/7/24

Jacqueline Aldridge

PREVENTATIVE CARE

CLUSTER MAPPING

IMPROVED CLINICAL DECISION MAKING

OPTIMISING MEDICATION

BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES

UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LONG-TERM CONDITIONS

ADDRESSING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

About me

- Nearly 20 years research funding support e.g. UKRI, European Research Council, Leverhulme Trust

- Lead author of 'The Research Funding Toolkit' (Sage, 2012)

- Extensive experience supporting early career academics e.g.

  - UKRI Future Leader Fellowships
  - ERC Starting Grants
  - ESRC New Investigator

https://www.linkedin.com/in/jacqueline-aldridge-11b9312b3/
https://jacquelinealdridge.com/

Previous session

Introduction to grant writing ('Your first funding bid')

Covers choosing a funder, planning a bid and writing a proposal

Available:

Video part 1   https://youtu.be/HwRvRo-LHLs

Video part 2   https://youtu.be/zkRQyBWnJ0U

And slides   https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12583402
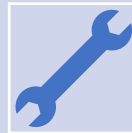
Overview of this session

1. The fundable team

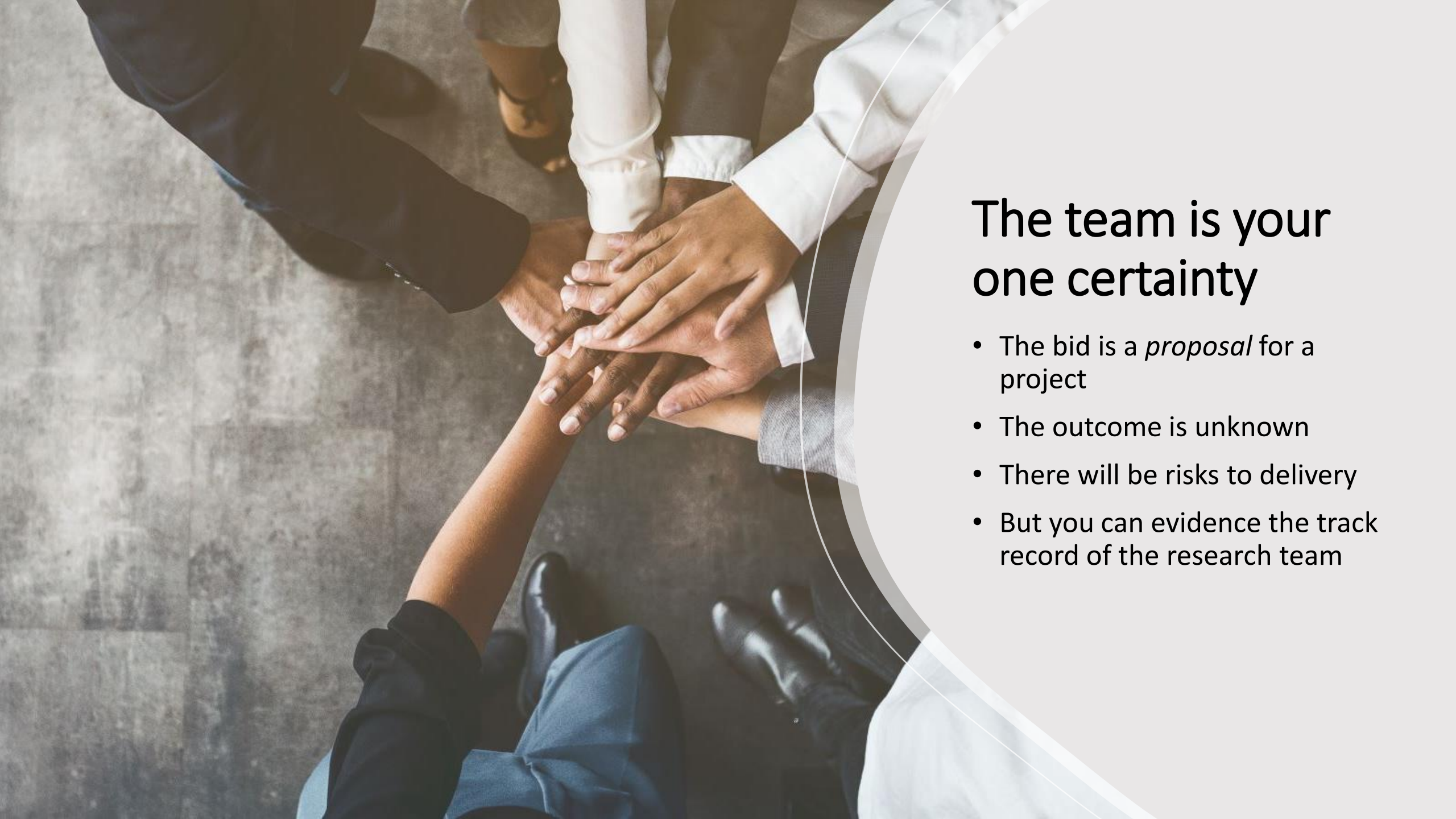3. Evidencing your track record

3. Creating an R4RI

4. Build your own R4RI

The fundable research team

The only known quantity in a funding proposal

The team is your one certainty

- The bid is a *proposal* for a project

- The outcome is unknown

- There will be risks to delivery

- But you can evidence the track record of the research team

The research team and funding bids

- The strength of your team is a key part of assessment

- Funding bids are not reviewed blind – assessors know who you all are

- The assessors consider your likely competence when awarding grants

- The team is a project resource – is the team value for money?

- Excellence is the key criterion, even for the early career schemes

- Funding agencies don't exist to provide struggling academics with a helping hand - although EDI considerations are always acknowledged

The team and your research design

Question or problem
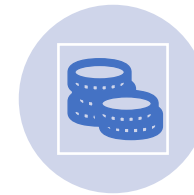
RESEARCH TEAM

Methodology

Feasibility, risk and management

Outputs and outcomes

Budget and justification

Also see *Introduction to Grant Writing*

Underlying evaluation criteria

➡ Important and relevant questions

➡ High chance of successful delivery

➡ **Competent research teams**

➡ Excellent value investments

Also see *Introduction to grant writing*

Underlying evaluation criteria and the team

➡️ Important and relevant questions

Does this team ask important questions?

➡️ High chance of successful delivery

Can this team pull the project off?

➡️ Competent research teams

Are all members excellent researchers?

➡️ Excellent value investments

Is this team worth the money?

Assembling a fundable team

Sole applicant bids are increasingly rare (apart from Fellowships)

Types of collaborator/partner vary between schemes and funding agencies

Specific schemes have specific requirements or preferences re. the team

Every member must be excellent, have complementary skills and pull their weight

Check eligibility requirements before you build your team

Don't commit too early - the wrong team can sink your bid

Don't forget EDI issues...

Also see *Introduction to grant writing*

10 things your team needs to deliver

1. Ability to generate rigorous academic knowledge
2. Capacity to ask and answer important questions
3. Relevant methodological skills and expertise
4. Experience with relevant populations, user groups and other stakeholders
5. Successful academic dissemination
6. Supporting researcher development
7. Meeting ethical or data management challenges
8. Relevant non-academic skills e.g. languages
9. Staff, project and financial management
10. Appropriate funding track record for grant requested

Evidencing your track record

What, where and how

Justifying and selling your team

- Selling you and your team is an important part of the entire application

- The CVs or R4RI may not be read closely if the case for support does its job well

- Reviewers may bring respect, curiosity, animosity, jealousy, ignorance or indifference to their task

- They may never have heard of you…

The 'traditional' research funding CV

Not the same CV you use for job applications but similar

The focus is on your own research career

Research funding CVs can often be updated/tweaked and used for different bids

Funders may have specific templates or formatting requirements

But there is a move towards a narrative approach

New track record formats

European Research Council: Track record and CV for 'broad assessment'

https://erc.europa.eu/news-events/news/evaluation-erc-grant-proposals-what-expect-2024

Royal Society: Résumé for Researchers

https://royalsociety.org/-/media/policy/projects/research-culture-images/2019-10-research-culture-resume-for-researchers-template.pdf

UKRI: Résumé for Research and Innovation

- Narrative team CV
- 1000 words (variable) plus 500 words for personal circumstances
- Includes all team members on project who would normally submit a CV (generally Leads and Co-Leads)
- Can also include project partners and 'professional enabling staff'
- Digital upload rather than attachment
- Four sub-headings (called 'Modules')

https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/how-to-apply/resume-for-research-and-innovation-r4ri-guidance/

The four R4RI modules

Module 1: Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies or knowledge

Module 2: The development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships

Module 3: Contributions to the wider research and innovation community

Module 4: Contributions to broader research or innovation-users and audiences, and towards wider societal benefit

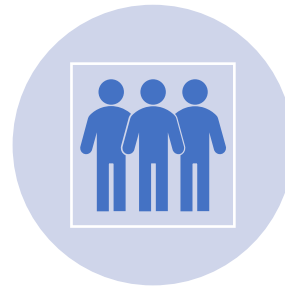# What the R4RI prioritises
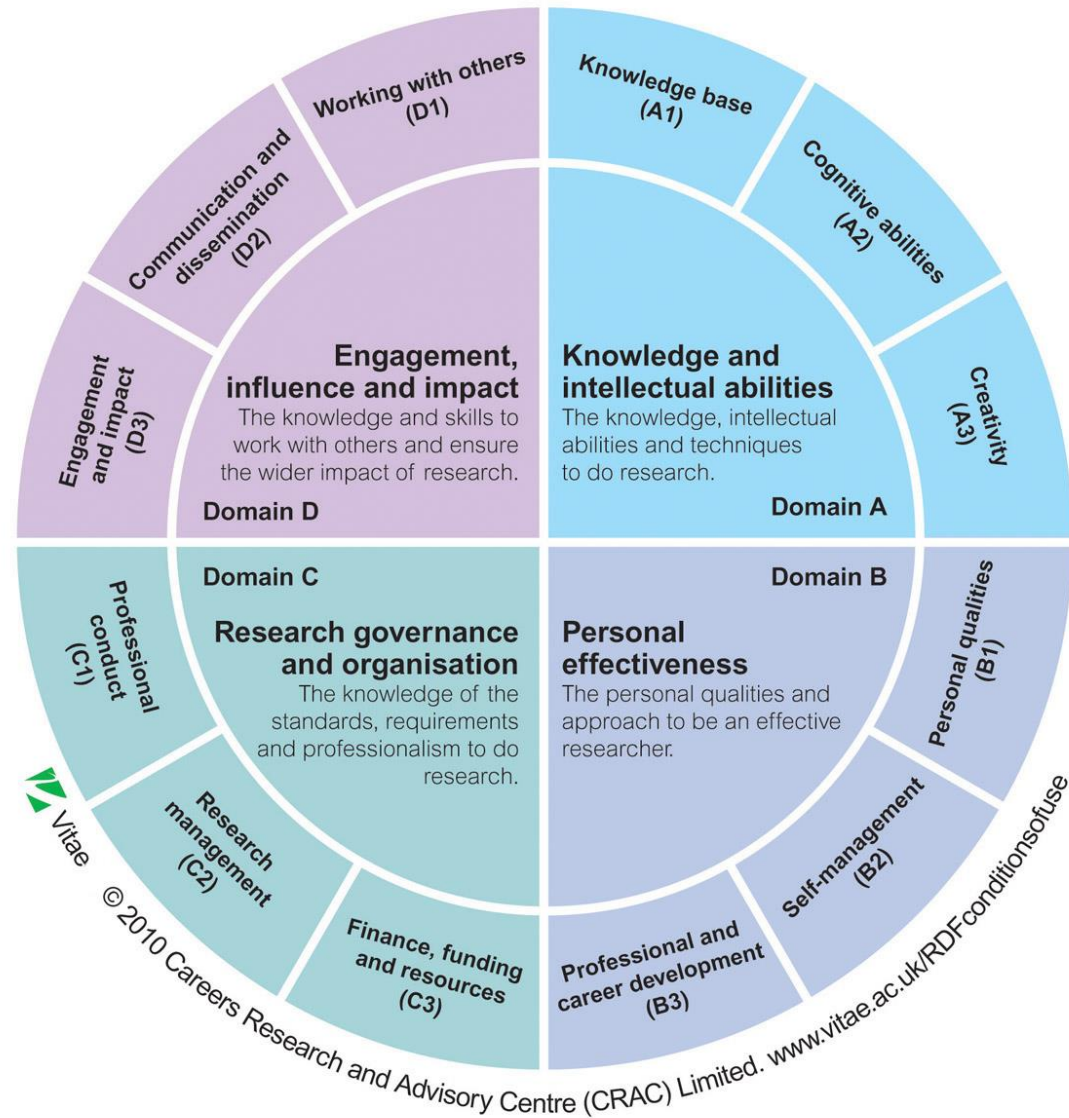
 Module 1: Contribution

 Module 2:Collaboration

 Module 3: Citizenship

 Module 4: Community

Vitae Researcher Development Framework

Advantages of the R4RI

Suits portfolio careers and research all rounders

A strong team will shine through

R4RI always customised to specific projects

Allows space for 'adjacent' experience and skills

Disadvantages of the R4RI

Highlights 'window dressing' Co-Leads who only bring star value

Highlights Co-Leads who do not make a distinctive contribution

Makes more work for Project Lead and requires coordination

The wordcount is the same, however big the team

Easier to miss out important information

Extracts from the R4RI guidance

The team R4RI should describe only a selection of their past contributions that best evidence their ability to carry out the proposed project.

An individual's specific achievements can be fore fronted where appropriate, but the contributions described across the modules should demonstrate the appropriateness of the overall team. Different team members may be able to demonstrate complementary skills.

Traditional CVs tend to focus on a narrow range of outputs, such as publications and successful funding. In your Résumé for Research and Innovation, we encourage you to share a wider range of skills and experience.

Primarily, your R4RI should focus on evidencing your ability and potential to carry out the proposal. This could mean using examples of previous outputs to demonstrate how you have been successful before or that you have expertise in a critical methodology.

You should also describe other relevant skills, such as experience of managing collaborations or teams.

Logistical differences: CV vs R4RI
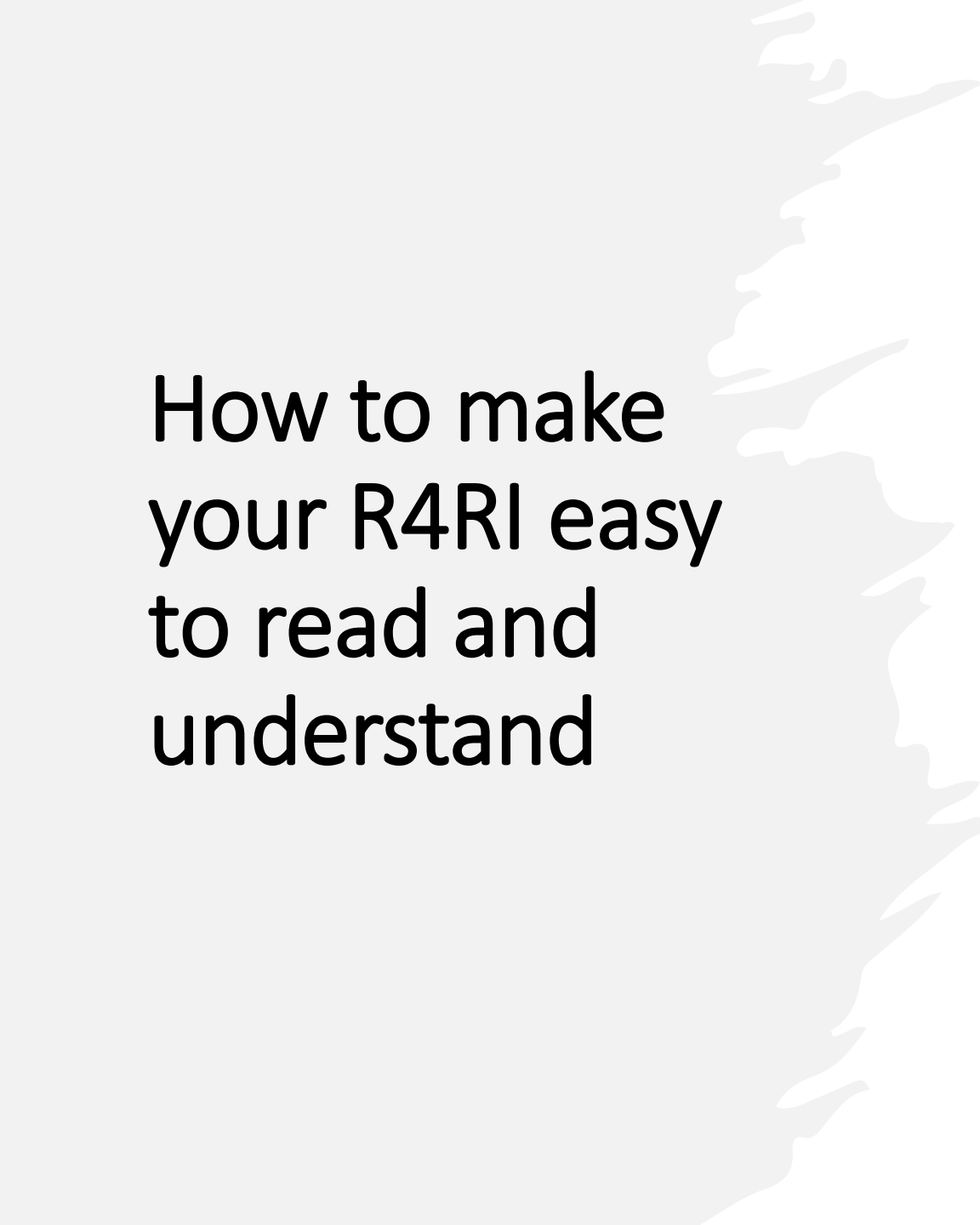
Individual CV

1. Each team member creates their own
2. More flexible
3. You can use a similar CV for each new bid
4. Not much coordination required
5. More wordcount and flexibility
6. A series of lists for the reviewers to work through

R4RI

1. It's a group effort…and takes more effort
2. Set template – gaps show
3. Needs crafting from scratch for each project
4. Needs project management
5. More restricted and concise
6. It tells a story to the reviewer

Creating an R4RI

What, where and how

How to make your R4RI easy to read and understand

- Create a cohesive narrative – think about your reader
- Use interesting and relevant content
- The content must be self-explanatory
- Evidence each claim
- Check that each team member is appropriately represented in final draft (using 'find' function to identify references to them)
- One person needs to check and proof the final version

The R4RI narrative

Theme each module around one or main key claims (250 words approx.)

Collate potential evidence for each claim/module across entire team

Allocate the best evidence to each module, ensuring all team members are appropriately represented

Don't rely on long lists of examples –select a few

Avoid meaningless acronyms or any information that your assessors won't understand out of context (and you can't use links besides DOIs)

What types of evidence to use

Academic publications – use DOIs rather than references

Previously funded projects and formal collaborations

Awards, prizes and honours

Service to your academic or professional community

PhD and Postdoc supervisions

Knowledge transfer, impact activity, public engagement, consultancy, policy work

Relevant leadership and management roles (including outside academia e.g. deputy head teacher)

How to present your evidence: examples

"All team members have engaged with national policy communities through parliamentary working groups, consultancies and select committees.   For example, Alpha and Beta…."
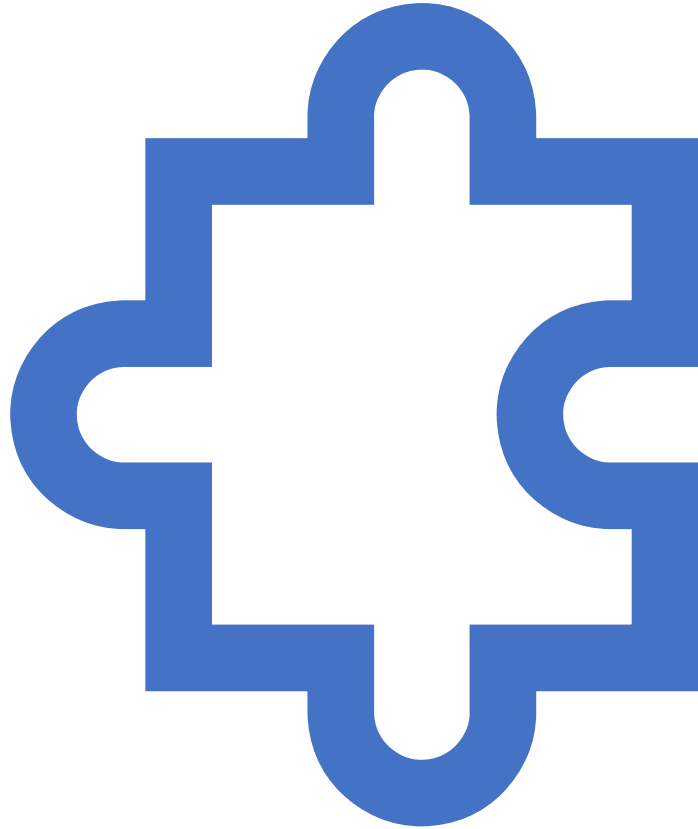
"Between them, project leads have supervised 25 PhD students to on-time completion with 12 going on to post-doctoral academic positions."

"Gamma and Delta have led eight funded projects worth £6.5 million in total, including the ESRC Centre for Design Research (2016-21)"

"Alpha, Beta and Gamma are all elected fellows of learned societies e.g. CD is a Fellow of the British Academy."

The R4RI Challenge

- Lots of overlap between modules – one piece of evidence may be relevant to several modules

- Your writing must be very clear and concise, especially when the team is large with lots of evidence to include

- Every team member needs to be represented – this might mean picking out some weaker examples
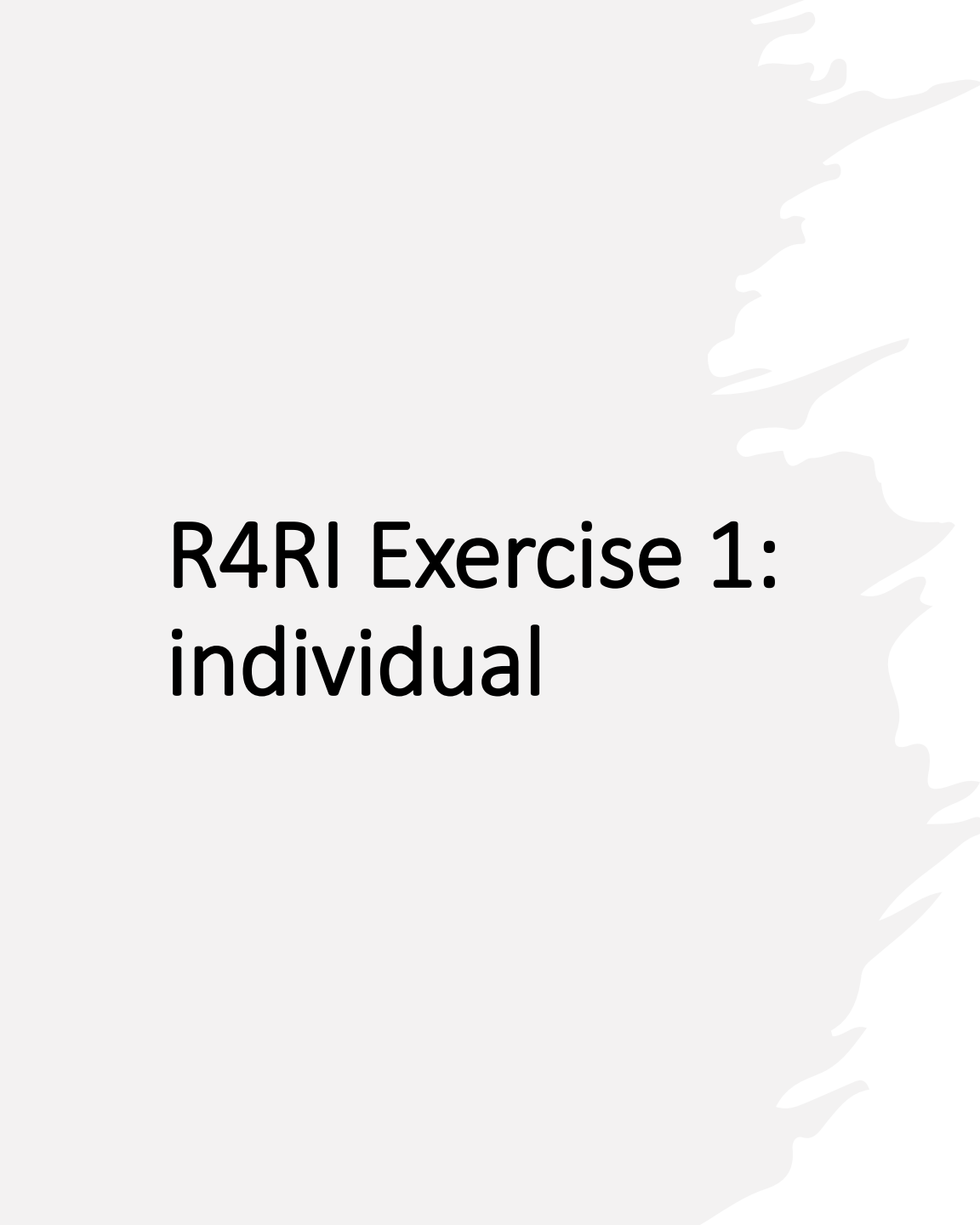
- Look at the R4RI as a jigsaw puzzle

Sources of advice and support

- https://www.surrey.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/R4R-like-CV-annotated-for-guidance-purposes.pdf

- https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/researchsupport/documents/media/narrative_cv_guide_oxford_june_2023_0.pdf

- https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/support-for-staff/scholarly-communication/bibliometrics/narrative-cvs/

Build-your-own R4RI

The individual and collective challenges

R4RI Exercise 1: individual

- Create a compelling narrative about your research track record.

- Assemble your evidence for a single applicant R4RI

- **EPSRC New Investigator Award**

- https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/types-of-funding-we-offer/new-investigator-award/

- *If that scheme doesn't work for you, then feel free to keep it generic*

EPSRC: New Investigator

- The New Investigator Award (NIA) scheme is intended to support individuals who hold an appropriate academic position (lectureship or equivalent) and have not previously led a research group.

- We do not consider years post-PhD or job title to be a marker of career progression, for eligibility we consider overall funding history and portfolio. We recognise alternative career paths and value the diversity of career experiences

- Eligibility criteria are based on the objectives of the scheme, that is, to give applicants the opportunity to build their first research project, manage a team, establish research independence and build their own personal and professional development.

- As such, your role and previous experience is taken into account in the eligibility criteria, particularly the degree of involvement in previous projects. While we recognise that there are many individual circumstances, we will reject applications that are not in the spirit or do not meet the overall aspirations of the scheme, or where previous experience would duplicate the objectives of the NIA scheme.

Exercise 1: individual R4RI

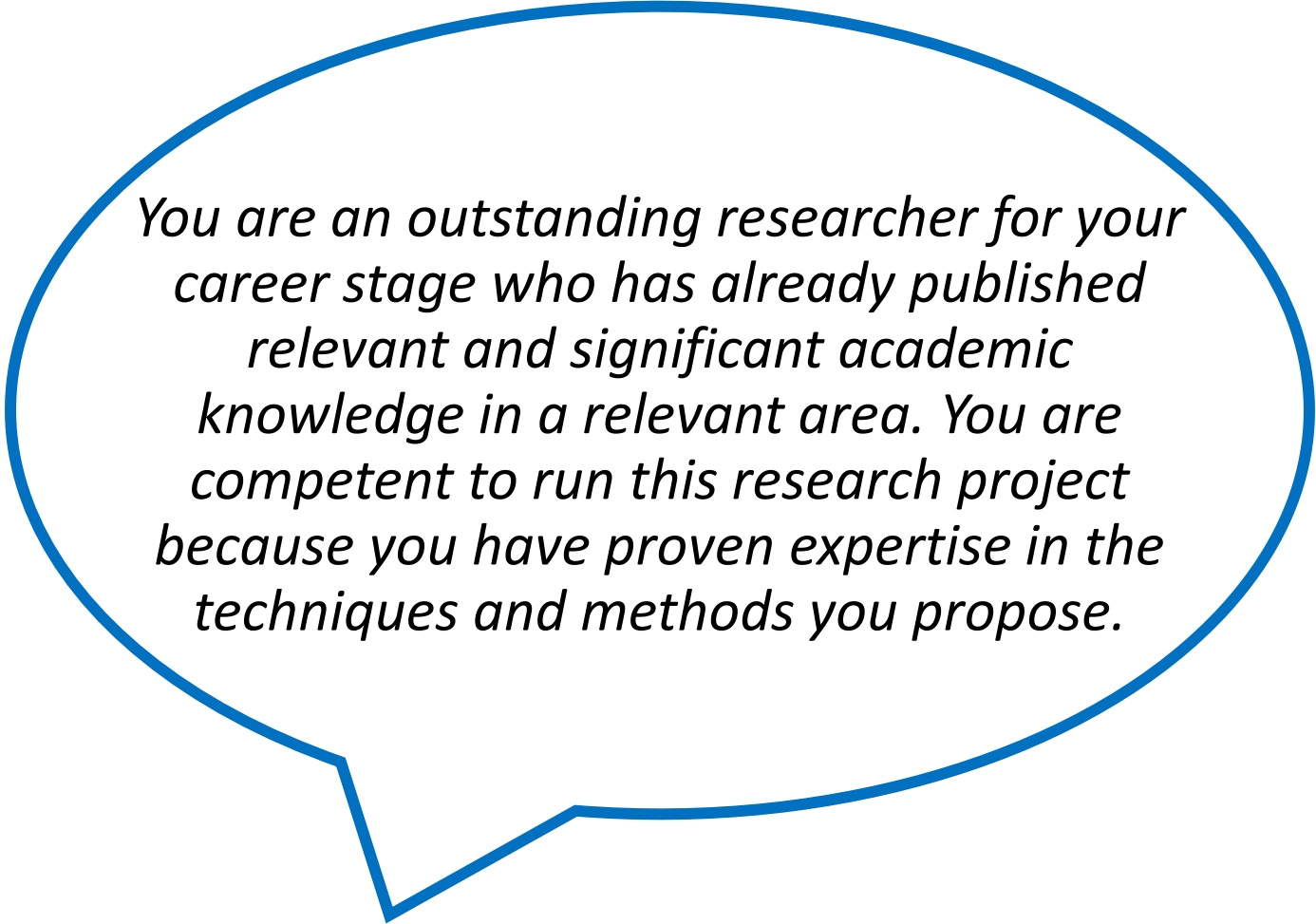Using your CV, build evidence against each module around specific claims.

As you work, consider the following?

- Do you have evidence that can be used in several places?
- If this were a team application, what would be your outstanding contribution?
- Is the right scheme for you?
- Do your strengths lie elsewhere?
- Where do you need to build your track record?

Take 10 minutes to work on each module in turn.

We re-convene to reflect after each 10-minute session.

Module 1: Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies or knowledge
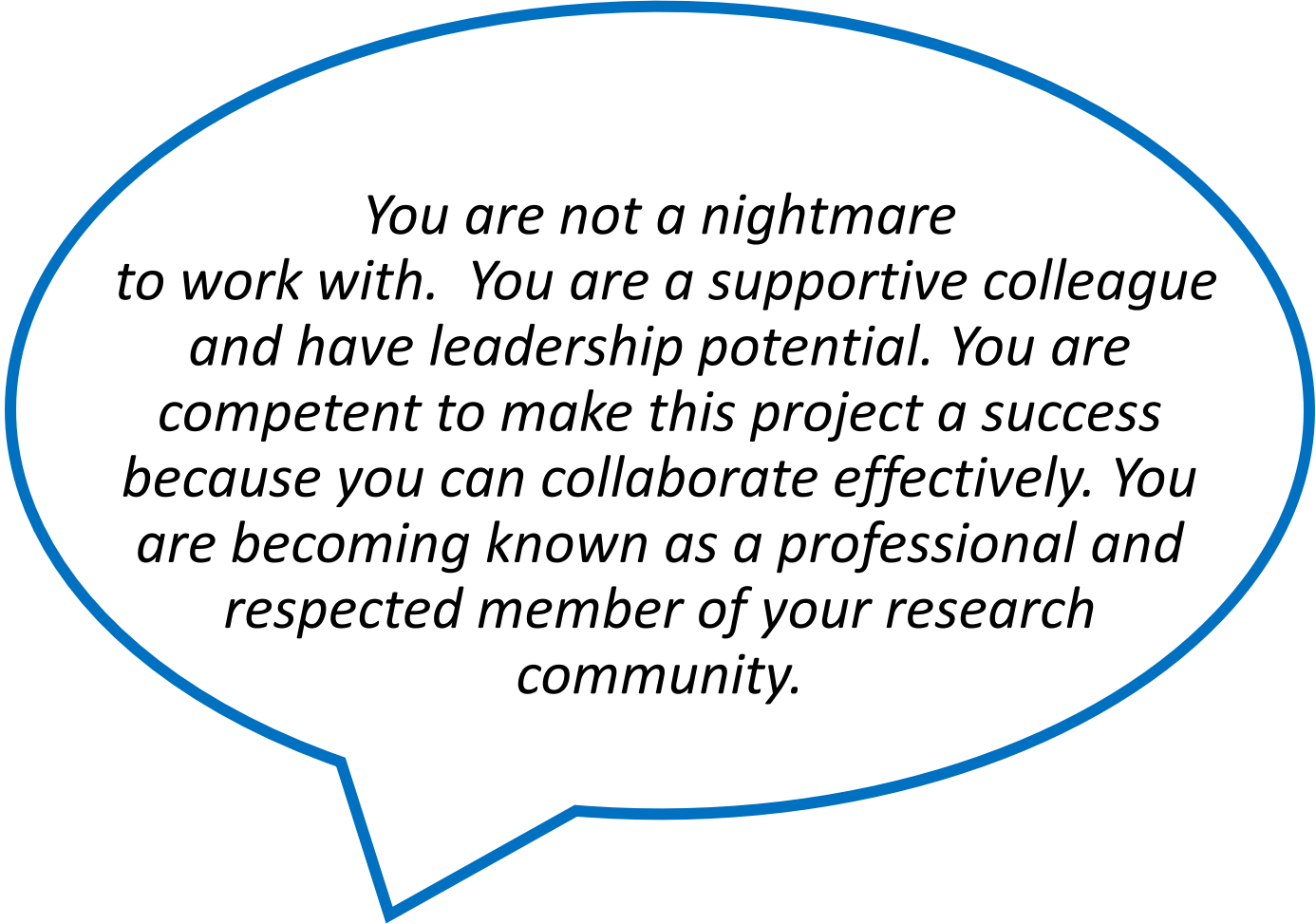
You are an outstanding researcher for your career stage who has already published relevant and significant academic knowledge in a relevant area. You are competent to run this research project because you have proven expertise in the techniques and methods you propose.

Questions, thoughts, feedback?

Module 2: the development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
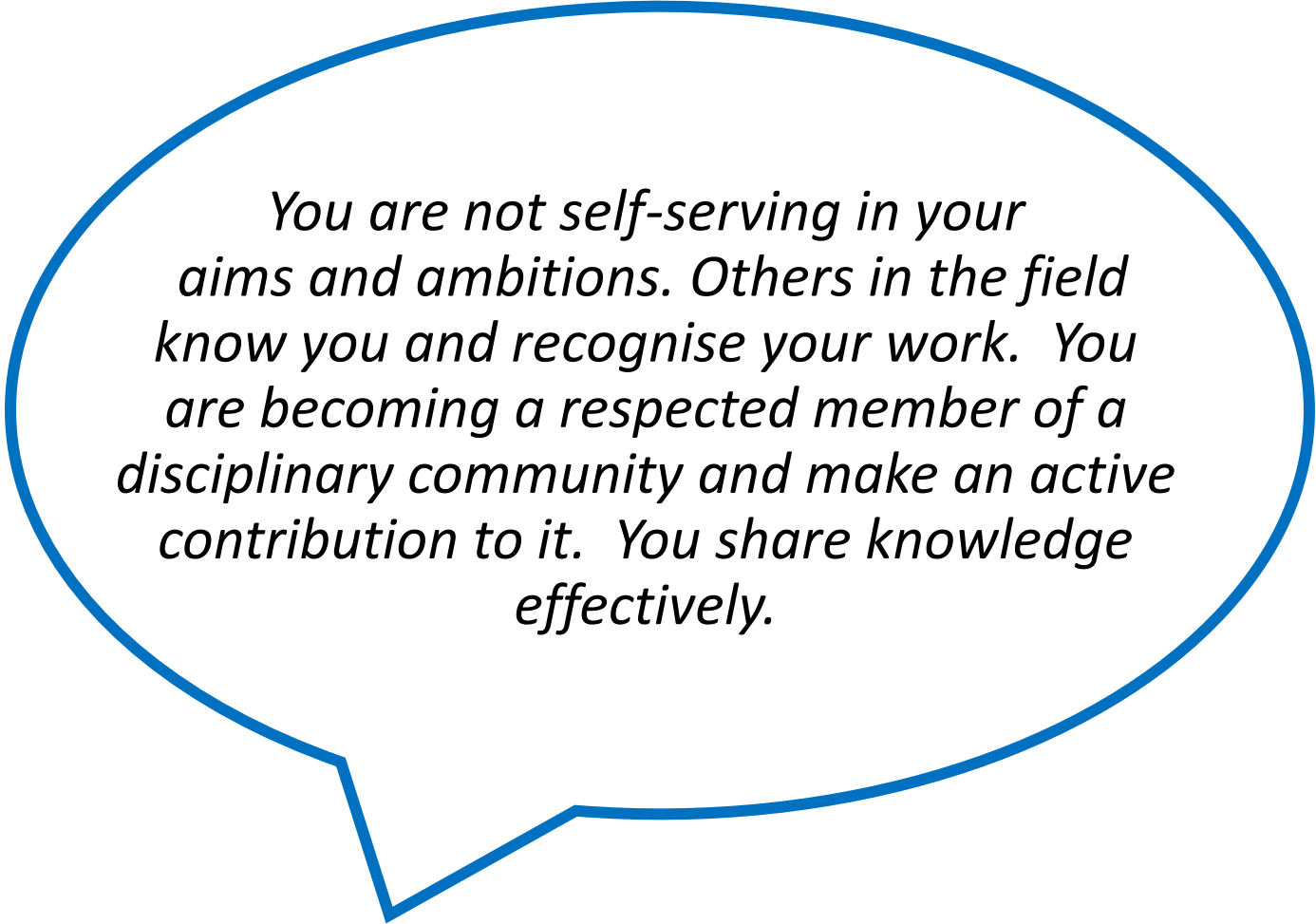
You are not a nightmare to work with. You are a supportive colleague and have leadership potential. You are competent to make this project a success because you can collaborate effectively. You are becoming known as a professional and respected member of your research community.

Questions, thoughts, feedback?

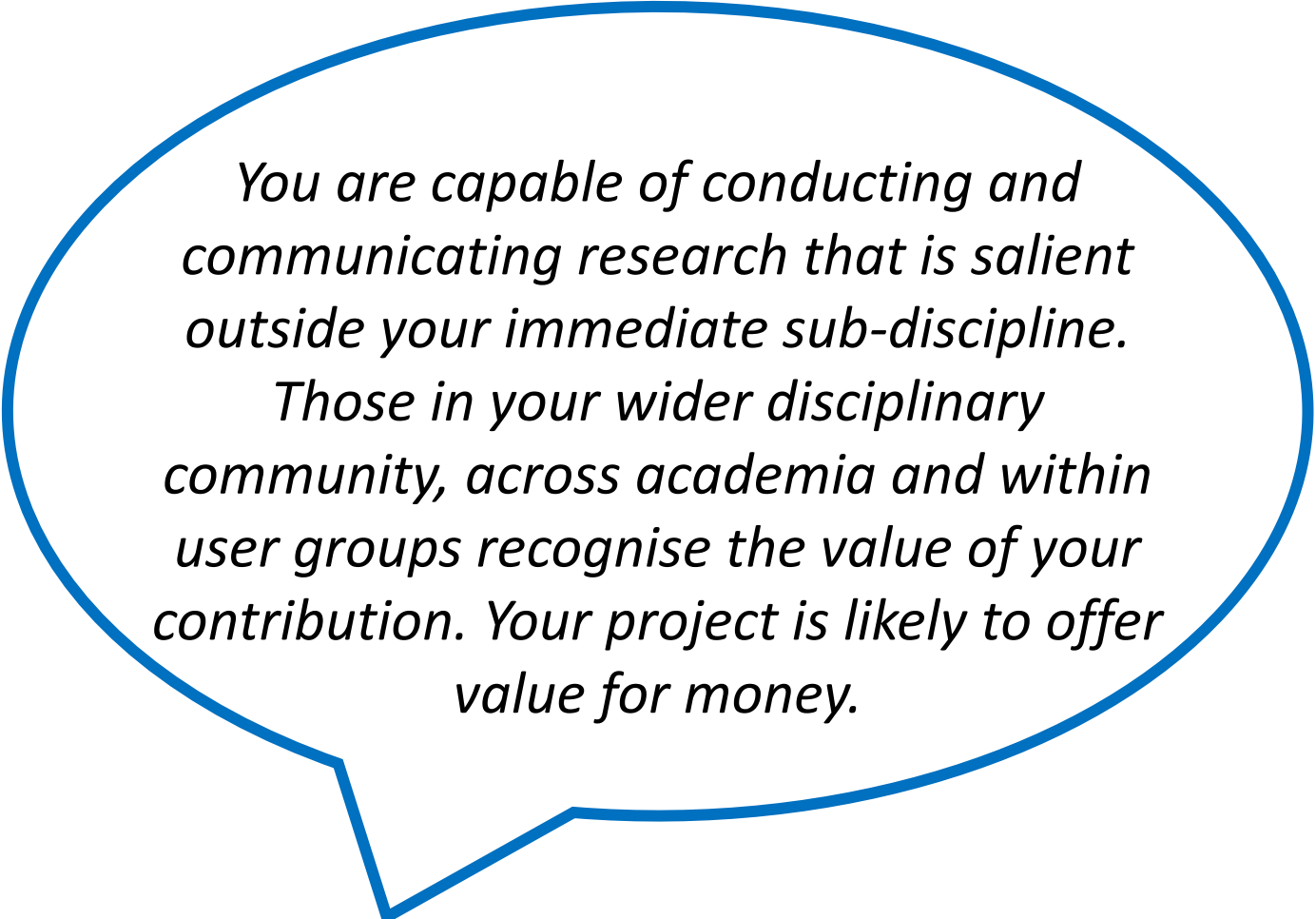# Module 3: contributions to the wider research and innovation community

You are not self-serving in your aims and ambitions. Others in the field know you and recognise your work. You are becoming a respected member of a disciplinary community and make an active contribution to it. You share knowledge effectively.

Questions, thoughts, feedback?

Module 4: contributions to broader research or innovation-users and audiences, and towards wider societal benefit

You are capable of conducting and communicating research that is salient outside your immediate sub-discipline. Those in your wider disciplinary community, across academia and within user groups recognise the value of your contribution. Your project is likely to offer value for money.

Questions, thoughts, feedback?

The team R4RI

- Template not designed for very large teams
- Politics emerge with multiple Co-Leads
- You may need to mention project partners and 'professional enabling staff'
- Logistical challenge to draft and approve

R4RI Logistics

1. Circulate requirements at start of application process
2. R4RI preparation benefits from a dedicated meeting of the project team
3. Project Lead (PL) acts as author
4. PL requests a list of evidenced claims under each module heading.
5. PL requests a list of directly relevant publications/projects/outcomes
6. Each publication submitted should have a DOI (where they exist)
7. You may need to go back to team members for additional information or clarification (or spend a lot of time on Google).
8. Check that each member gets enough mentions before circulating!
9. Team members will need time to review draft before submission.

Exercise 2: the team R4RI

- Create a collective Module 1 draft i.e. 'Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies or knowledge'

- For a fictional UKRI call 'Addressing urgent challenges in AI for multiple long-term health conditions'

- As you work, consider how to use and prioritise:
  - Evidence from researchers at different career stages
  - Recent vs historic evidence
  - The relevance of a 'contribution' versus its status in the field or impact
  - The different categories of evidence (publications, datasets, software, other research outputs, conferences, grants, formal collaborations, innovation)
  - What evidence you might also use for other modules
  - What counts as knowledge, skills, tools, methods

Questions, thoughts, feedback?