

My experience of applying for a BBSRC David Phillips Fellowship

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My career path

- BA Biological Sciences, University of Oxford
2006
- PhD, University of Birmingham, 2009
- Postdoc, University of Birmingham, 2009-2015
(5 ½ years)
- BBSRC David Phillips Fellowship, 2015

My CV when I applied

- 10 research papers – 5 as first author, 1 in PNAS, 1 as senior author.
- 3 Review articles – 1 in nature reviews microbiology
- Travel grants/prizes totaling ~£8000
- Three pieces of independent funding including a research grant from BSAC for £43,000.

Getting prepared to apply

Start thinking about it as soon as possible!

Get your CV in order...

- Publish papers
- Aim for high impact journals
- Present your work at conferences (posters/talks)
- Other experience: Public engagement, teaching, supervising students, reviewing papers, organise a meeting etc

Demonstrate Independence

- Apply for small grants to pursue your own ideas.
- Get undergraduate/masters students to work on your own project and generate preliminary data.
- Try to publish without your supervisor
- Write an independent review article
- Raise your profile in the field – publish, give talks, attend conferences, networking, social media etc

Putting together the application

My advice on putting together the application....

- Pitch the idea to a few people to see if it makes sense.
- Get lots of people to read it – experts and non-experts.
 - Is the big question/problem you are trying to address clearly articulated?
- Don't under estimate how long the “other bits” will take.

My interview

- Short presentation
 - Recap problem/question to be addressed and WHY it is important
 - Broadly what you are going to do
 - highlight achievements since your application
 - Follow on questions
- Defend choice of institution.
- How will you be independent and how will you appear independent?
- Training opportunities and collaborations
- Leadership - How you will manage your research team
- Career plans
- Future directions