

Welcome to
the launch of

Hashtag today
#IOPFundingGuide

Navigating the Funding Landscape

A Guide





Navigating the Funding Landscape

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Resources

All links are on the web....

www.shintonconsulting.com/physics

Slides to follow

The guide

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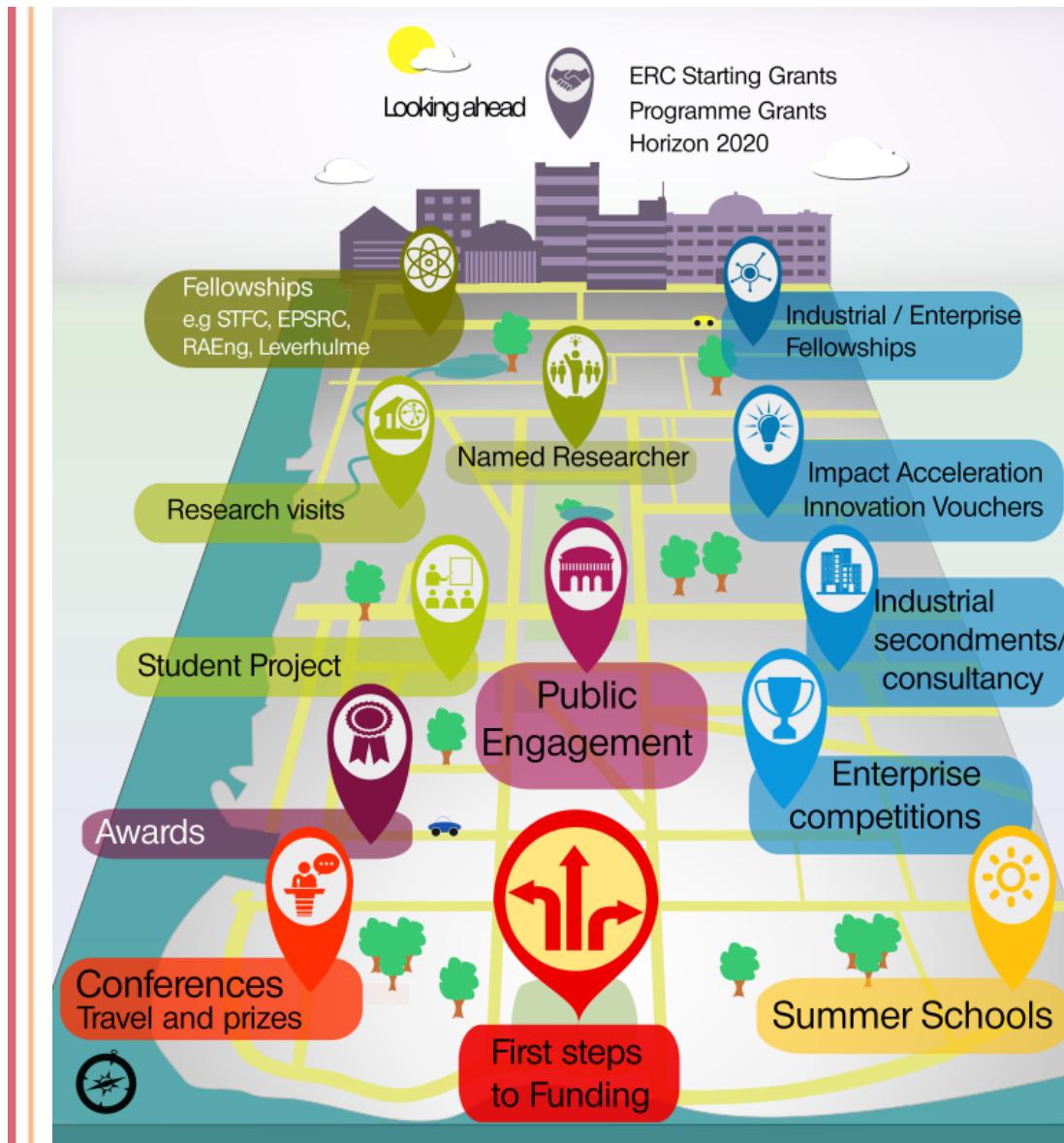




- List of suggested funding/research themed streams to follow on the website
- Hashtag today #IOPFundingGuide

Why?

- Funding landscape is complex
- Best advice is in experts' heads (but this can aggravate unconscious bias)
- Competition for academic posts fierce, funding will help



Major Funding Bodies

Research Councils

Universities

Charities & Trusts

Industry

Professional Bodies
and Societies

Government
Departments



Illustration by
Miriam Gilbert
@MiriamRGilbert

How?

- Wrote the guide to "model" an approach for early career researchers
- Used the mechanisms and information available to you
- At times bewildering and confusing, but it does become clear!

How?

- Networking
- Build your own "Senior Common Room" (I use Twitter)
- Understand the "DNA" of your funder
 - Look at their websites and publications
 - Look at funded research
 - Help to understand culture, ethos and opportunities

What?

- Key information in one place
- Mentoring conversations
- Advice from funders, applicants and reviewers
- Stepping stone approach

Navigating the Funding Landscape

A Guide



Who?

A live version of the guide

- Funders Fiona Blighe, SFI
- Researchers, Sheila McBreen, UCD
- Reviewers and Panel members,
Eugene Kennedy, DCU

PLEASE NETWORK!

Who funds Physics?

Government

Key funders by type

SFI, IRC

Individual departments

Partnership initiatives

Horizon 2020, MSCA, ERC

Universities

Commercial

Diverse industrial base

International relevance

Charity and trusts

Royal Society

Key funding by theme

Individual development

Workshops
Conferences
Secondments
Travel and visits
Fellowships

Research funding

Projects and programmes
Fellowships

Challenge-led

Societal Challenges
Industrial collaboration

Early career researcher

Established researcher

Early career researcher

Research Leaders

Early career researcher

consulting



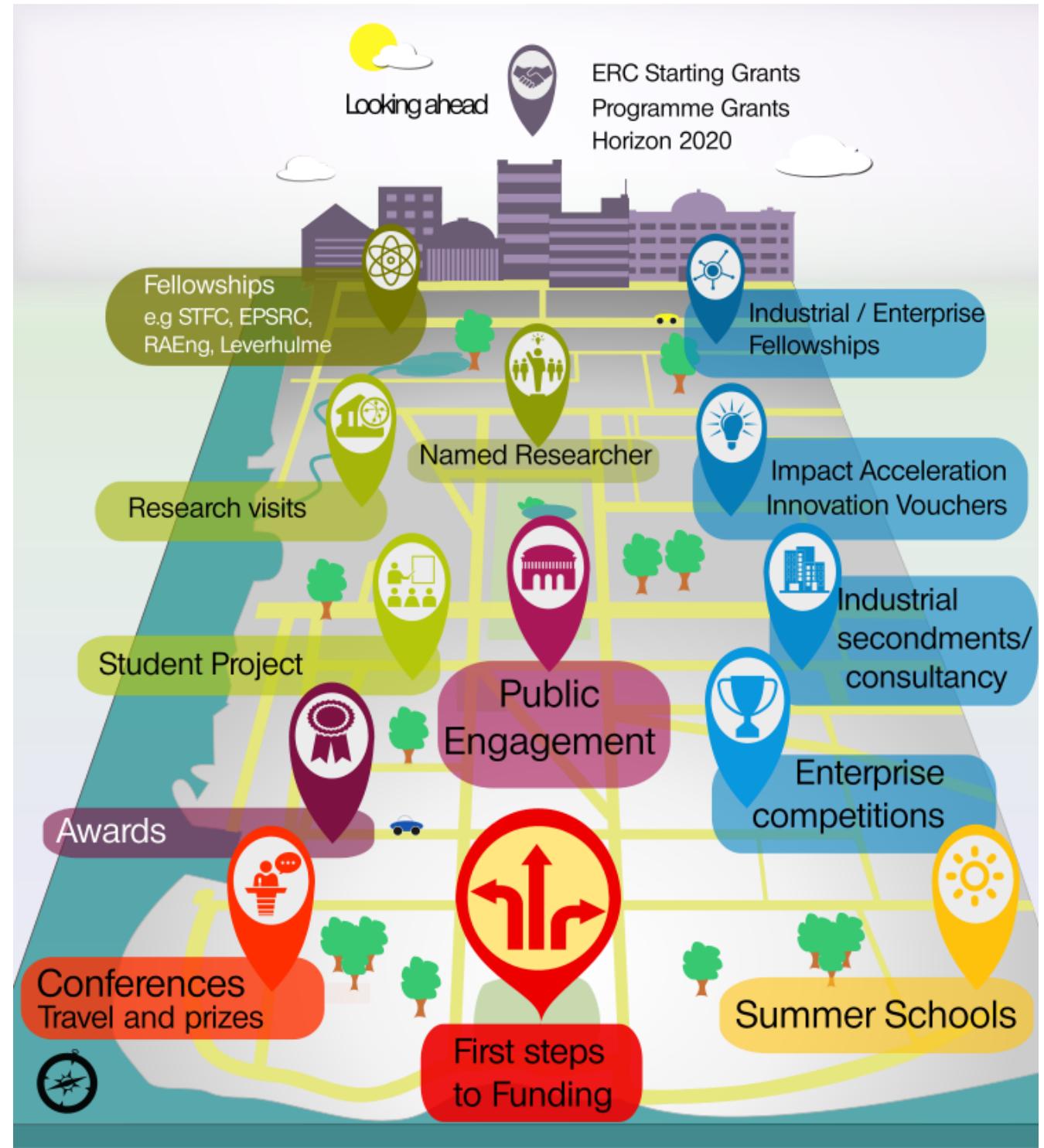


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Culture and mission

Government

Development of science base
Skills shortages/opportunities
Economic or societal benefits

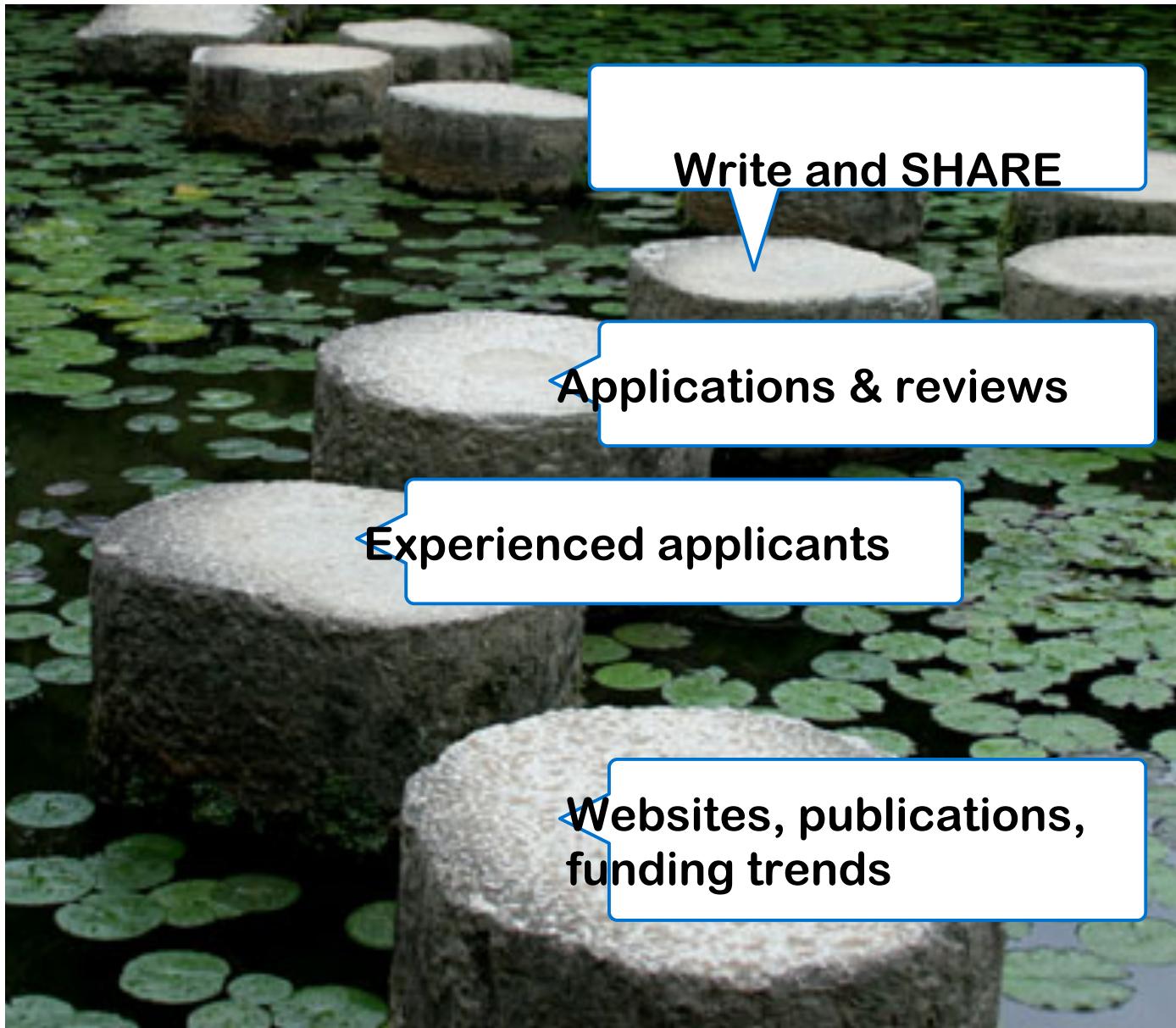
Commercial

Solving problems with different approaches
Focus on market and profit

Charity and trust

Societal
Filling gaps
Often individual focus

Digging deeper



Talk to funders
Go to their events
Email programme managers

...and talk to Fiona today!

Making a plan

*What convinces the panel
someone is in the top 5%?

5%

Combination of factors

Person



Project



Time



Place



In their shoes

- Funders always have an objective
- If they think you are going to help them achieve this, they are more likely to fund you



Plan starts with...

Strategy to understand the funder....

How does your proposed project fit with your proposed funder?

Imagine them standing in front of you with a chequebook – why should they give you THEIR money?

Not just about you – about them as well

**How will this project boost
your career?**

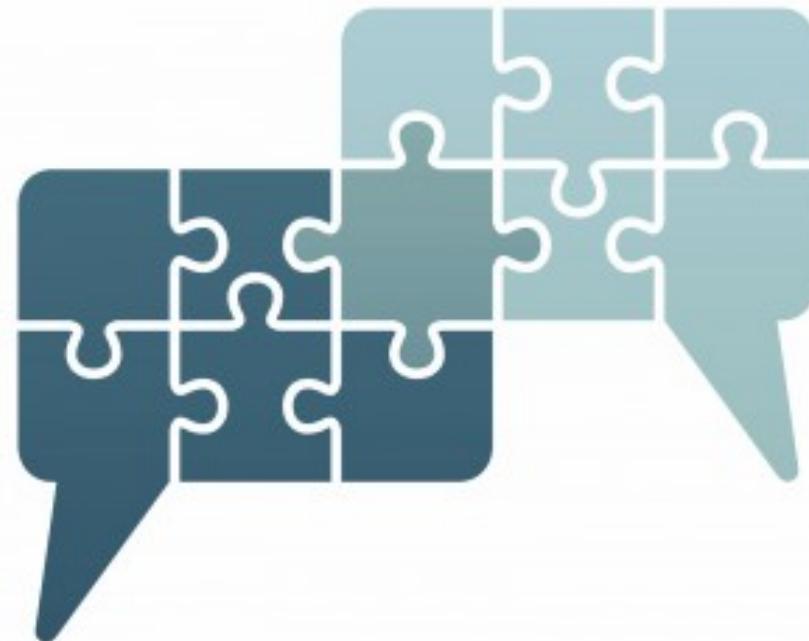
**Why are you the only
person who can do it?**

Why is it a “good risk”?

Provide evidence

- Funding research is risky
- Funders want to minimise risk where they can
- Evidence of successfully turning research funding into outputs helps them believe and trust you

Make sure your ambitions match your track record



Plan develops with...

- Clarity about criteria you will be judged against
- Evidence you are the right applicant

Why me?

X years experience

invited talks

patents or impactful publications

well connected

unique combination of industrial/research approach

unique combination of skills, knowledge, techniques

record of delivery

Objective of
fellowship is to
invest in talent

Demonstrate the need

- Funders fund researchers and research
- Why is your research needed?
- Why now?

Time



“Good” risk
previous experience
novel, high impact work
no-one else making significant investment
high chance of commercial investment when complete
room to grow a group around you
bring skills or knowledge to Ireland
high visibility in society

Funder
subject directly in funder's
hot topic list
roadmap industry

Objective of
fellowship is to
target funding
strategically

Plan must include...

- Case that supports your claim that this work is important
- Evidence from stakeholders that the work has value and you are the right person to do it

With these ideas in mind

- Get into groups - suggest two groups per table
- Come up with a list of five things that would boost an application in 12 months time
- I'll share my ideas after

- * Publish, with focus on high impact
- * Write a review article
- * Demonstrate that the idea will work - proof of concept
- * Raise personal profile and recognition across subject
 - * Look for committees to join, meet potential reviewers
- * Go to the right conferences, go to seminars
- * Get some smaller grants and awards
- * Start to develop leadership - supervise UG, Masters, PhD students
- * Bring international people here
- * Contribute to institution
 - * Seminar programme
 - * Teach on masters?

* 12 month plan

- * Secure more funding, do some pilot work, establish proof of concept (POC)
- * Build a plan/case for larger scale research
- * Build a group - identify students (get them working on POC)
- * Deliver to agreed milestones (establish credibility)
- * Collaborations - with other institutions, international, industrial
- * Start up commercialisation
- * Publication and patents
- * Get some training
- * Build independence

* 18 month plan



* 6 month plan

- * Be SEEN at conferences
- * Get your data out there
- * Write a review
- * Produce a good webpage - personal site if necessary (buy domain), blogs, social media
- * Be invited for seminars (approach organisers or departmental programmes)
- * If looking for funding for a charity look for ways to support them - fundraise?
- * Write a position paper - statement of intent
- * Get your papers out and connect with others (cite their work, email them PDFs, find short-term collaborations for papers)
- * Join (or start your own) subject network - get network development funding

Benchmarking

Comparing yourself to your peers and competitors

Will be “done” to you each time you apply for funding, particularly for fellowships, so “do it yourself” now

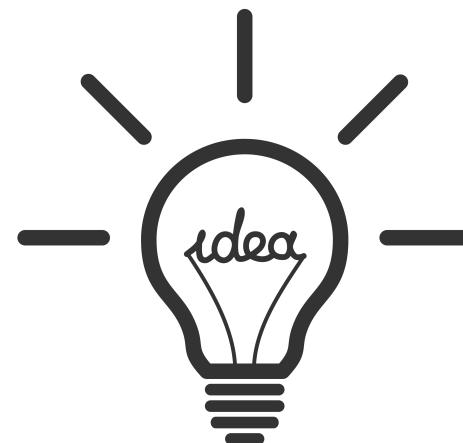
Fellowship interviews

The ethos of fellowships

Person



Project



Time



Place



Internal Review and Selection

External Review and Response



Panel interview and presentation

What do they want to see and hear?

In small groups

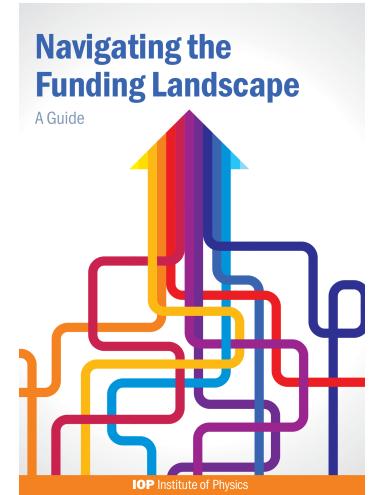
Quick summary of what you've heard and
what you think this means about the
characteristics of a strong candidate

What are
your key
messages
and
convincing
arguments?

Individual activity

Five minutes to
write down the
key points about
your idea

If you were about to
meet the funder,
what **MUST** they
know about you
before they make
the decision?



Questions...

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Person

- Why do you deserve this fellowship?
- What impact have you had in your professional community?
- If successful, what would the fellowship enable you to do? (this is a chance to talk about your career objectives)
- Whose work has influenced your research interests?
- Where do you hope to be in 10 years time?
- Tell me about your approach to managing research projects.

Project

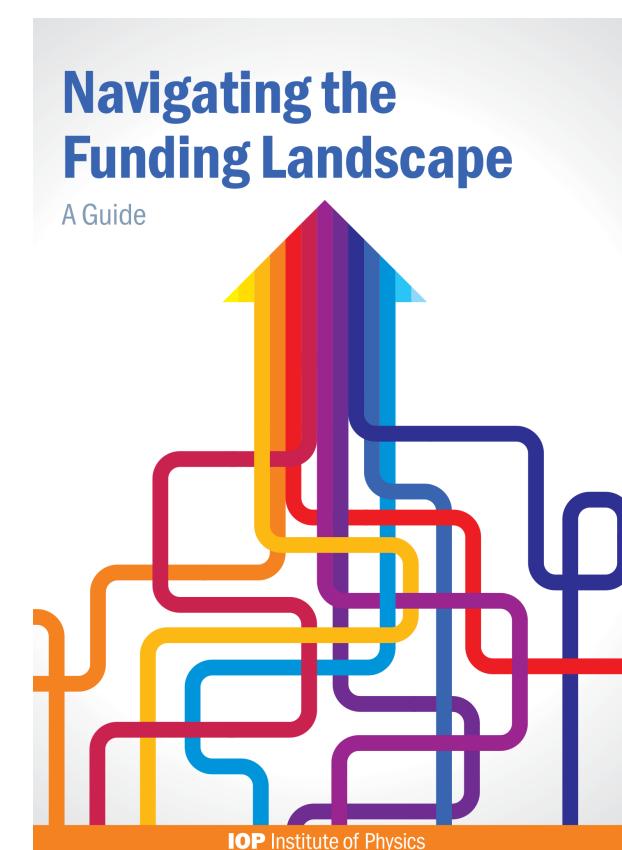
- What is the importance of this project?
- Why does your approach to this problem deserve this award?
- Convince me that your project is feasible
- If you could only do one experiment or study, which is key?
- What will you do if your hypothesis is proved wrong?
- What would the ideal outcome of this project be?
- Who are your main competitors? Can you compete with them?

Place

- Why have you chosen that department for your fellowship?
- How will you complement the existing departmental strengths?
- What value will you add to the department and institution?
- If you are staying in the same place:
 - Why are you staying in department X to do this project?
 - How will you ensure your independence?

Time

- Who else is active in this field & how does your work differ?
- What are the risks of not funding you immediately?



Mock interview time...

- What funding are you planning to go for?
- Conference or visit?
- Fellowship?
- Project?
- Industrial?

Key messages

People have the answers

It takes time (longer than you think)

You will face rejection

But...you can reduce your rejection rate
with good preparation