

Imperial College London





# A Guide Through PhD Applications and Initial Research Findings: Novel Patient Safety Assessment Method for Ultra-High Field MRI

AMER AJANOVIC

IMPERIAL COLLEGE AND KING'S COLLEGE LONDON CDT IN SMART MEDICAL IMAGING

21-05-2021



### **OVERVIEW 1**

I How to start?

**Important Sites** 

Plan, Motive, Discipline

II PRIMARY (on-paper) APPLICATION

**Structure** 

References

**Diplomas** 

**Standardized Tests** 

CV

**Motivational Letter** 

<u>Timeline</u>

III INTERVIEW

**BEFORE** 

**STRUCTURE** 

**Primary Application Discussion** 

**Technical Part** 

Counter-Attack



<u>DURING</u> AFTER



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101008548

### **OVERVIEW 1**

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### How to Start: Important Sites



English EN European Commission > Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions > Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions How to... News & Events Resources Contact

> As a professional researcher, you may also be looking for work. The EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion portal holds details about thousands of jobs and opportunities for researchers, both inside and outside the EU. Register and use the portal to find posts on existing MSCA-funded projects.

How to find a job

As a professional researcher, you may also be looking for work

The database is easy to use. You can search by research field, sector or even by EU programme - allowing you to narrow your search down to MSCA posts only. Job offers come from across the EU and beyond, and you can even post your CV on the site

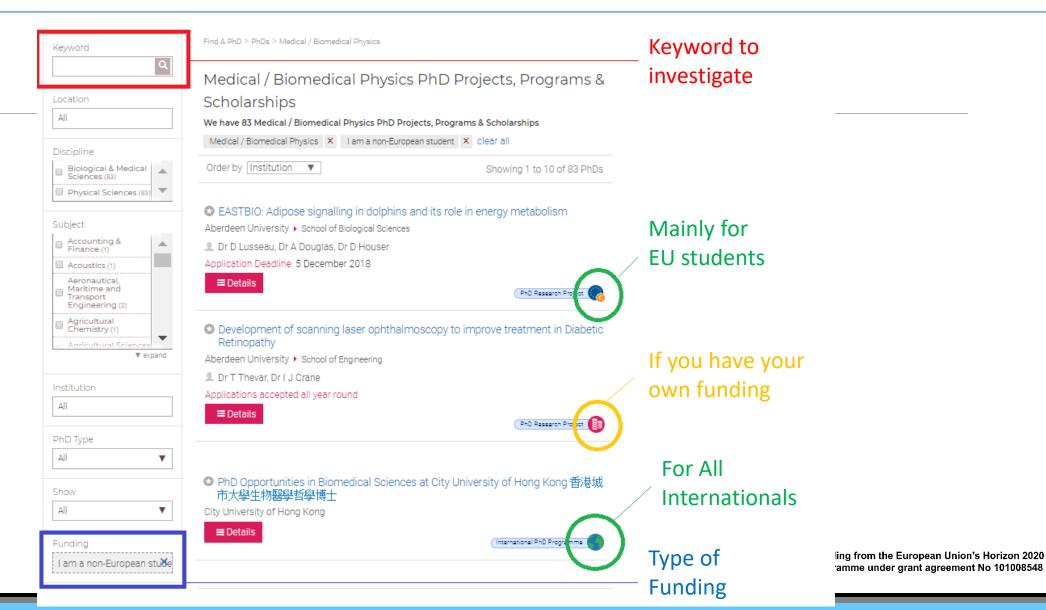
The portal is more than just a job service: you can find advice about visas, pensions, recognition of qualifications and other issues related to working as a researcher abroad.



Start Find jobs Find employers Career advice Advertise Sign up https://academicpositions.com/ ACADEMIC, RESEARCH AND SCIENCE JOBS Welcome to Academic Positions, the international career network for academics, researchers and scientists. European Union's Horizon 2020 arant agreement No 101008548

Home > Countries > United States

### How to Start: Important Sites – Best for The UK: www.findaphd.com



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Heavy Ion Therapy Research Integration

### How to Start: Important Sites – Best for The UK: www.findaphd.com



#### Centre for Doctoral Training in Fluid **Dynamics across Scales**

This newly established centre involves the Departments of Aeronautics, Bidengineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Earth Sciences and Engineering, Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering. The aim of the Centre is to provide an education across the different disciplines, that trains specialists in Fluid Mechanics with a highly transferable skillset.

The CDT offers a four-year training and research programme that combines a taught "Master of Research' year (of which 6 months are devoted to a research project) with a three-year PhD-level research programme. This is specifically designed to cultivate researchers with a broad range of expertise in Fluid Dynamics and Fluids Engineering, including transferable skills that are highly desirable elements in the grofile of scientists and engineers who asgire to be leaders in industry, commerce and academia. The creation of a vibrant, interactive student-cohort culture is one important aspect of the Centre's grogramme. There is a strong industrial participation in the Centre by companies such as Airbus, BP, McLaren, Siemens and TOTAL.

Visit www.imperial.ac.uk/fluidsoft for a full list of industrial partners







Fluid Dynamics plays a vital role in a wide range of modern devices, industrial processes and natural phenomena - including Aeronautics, vehicle aerodynamics (e.g. F1, high-speed trains and cars), atmospheric and aquatic systems, food and chemical manufacturing the production of oil and gas and the flows that govern our cardiovascular systems and the planet's oceans. Hence, researchers graduating from the Centre will be highly marketable.

Talented and motivated students passionate about doing research are invited to apply. For more

www.imperial.ac.uk/fluidscdt or smail fluids@imperial.ac.uk.

Applications for 2018 are currently closed.



#### Deeping Learning Opto-physiological Monitoring and Assessment o

Loughborough University | Wolfson School of Mechanical, Electrical and Manufacturing Engineering |



#### About This PhD Project

Project Description Funding Notes Email Now

#### Project Description

#### Overview

Loughborough's opto-physiological interaction rese multiplexed opto-electronic sensor technology (mO mOEPS offers a flexible, biomedical monitoring eng demands, from clinicians to individual, which outpe sign monitoring. However, the present state of opto sophisticated, dynamic solutions to deal with comp this PhD aims to research how effectively to monito system, integrating the smart approach of Deep Lei measurement environments.

### More info +

#### Entry requirements

Applicants should have, or expect to achieve, at least a 2:1 Honours degree (or equivalent) in Physical sciences (Applied Physics) or Engineering (Electronic Engineering, Computer Programming, Biomedical Engineering).

A relevant Master's degree and / or experience in one or more of the following will be an advantage: Embedded Software, Electronics, Signal processing, opto-physiological monitoring.





UK/EU Fee band \* TBC

International Fee band \* £21.100



Related Subjects

Biomedical Engineering

Medical / Biomedical Physics

Electrical & Electronic

Optical Physics

Apply Online Institution Profile

Guarantees there is funding for the international students

-VIPI

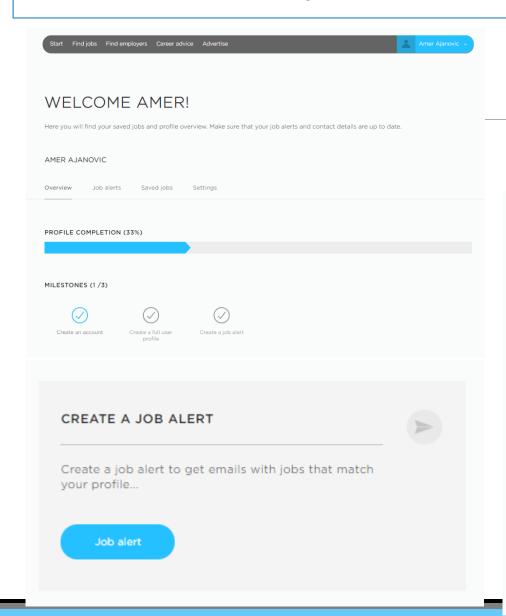
Link for the ONLINE application

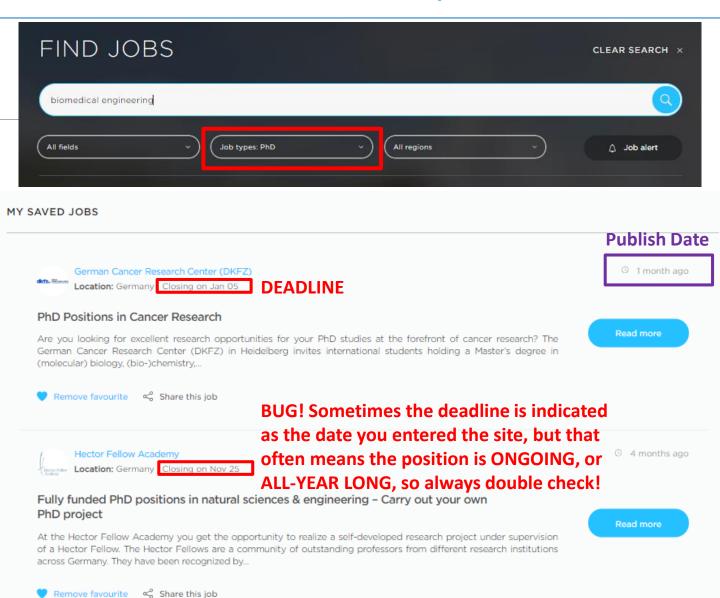
Use only if there is no contact indicated at the top of the page

### contact

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### How to Start: Important Sites – Best for EU: <a href="https://www.academicpositions.com">www.academicpositions.com</a>





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### **How to Start:** Important Sites – Best for EU 2: <a href="https://www.euraxess.ec.europa.eu">www.euraxess.ec.europa.eu</a>

### Your favorites

Keep interesting jobs, hostings, fundings and events in mind and mark them as your favorites.

Jobs Hostings Fundings Events Members Organisations

10 days before the deadline, you get notified via email!

uropean Union's Horizon 2020 rant agreement No 101008548

Want to delete a favorite? Click on the title below and choose "Remove from favorites".

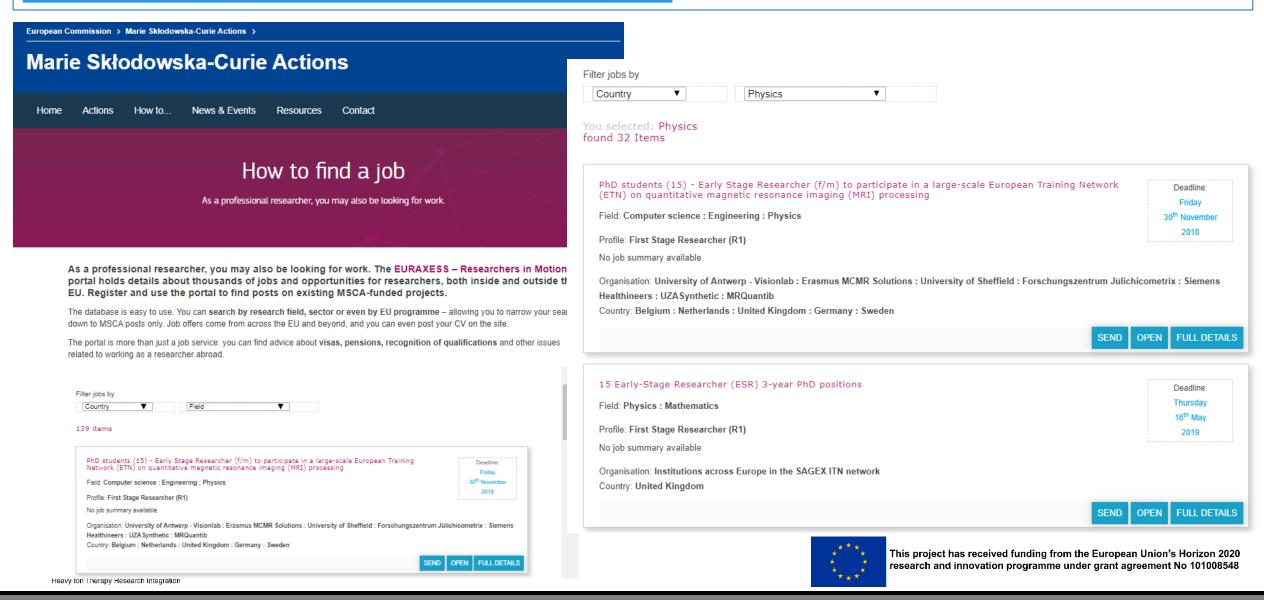
Displaying 10 of 42

Heavy Ion Therapy Research Integ

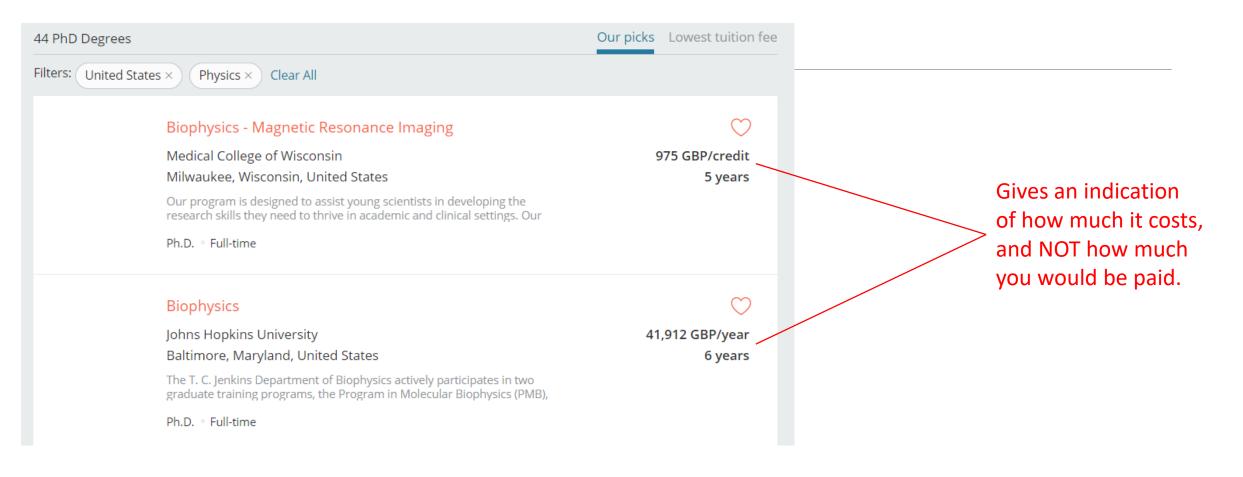
Title	Organisation/Company	Application Deadline	Starting Date	Action
Researcher: Developing the Next Generation PET/MRI m/f, vacancy number 2018/0102	University Medical Center Utrecht (UMC Utrecht)	27/02/2018 23:00 - Europe/London		☆ Remove from favorites
Postdoctoral position (3 years) and PhD position (3 years) for acoustic / ultrasound imaging	Ludwig-Maximilians- Universität	28/02/2018 23:00 - Europe/Brussels	01/06/2018	☆ Remove from favorites

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## How to Start: Important Sites — Good for EU: ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/how-to/find-job\_en



### How to Start: Important Sites – Good for The US: <a href="www.phdportal.com">www.phdportal.com</a>







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### How to Start: Important Sites – Other Scholarships: www.scholarships.com



+ Local Government Scholarships, DAAD (Germany) + UNI-specific (check out each uni of interest and their internal pots of funding you can apply to — highly recommendable to get in touch with potential supervisors, as they will know the best)

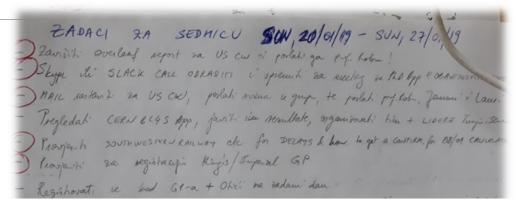
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### How to Start: Plan, Motive and Discipline

#### **PLAN**

Heavy Ion Therapy Research Integration

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```



#### Use EVERNOTE or alike

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FRE, 11/01: REC [1000 P G14, JCH6 (Watular)]: 2h

SAT, 12/01: Rest & Fermin's

SUN, 13/01: Do you put on Aca cw2 - US!

WON, 14/01: Meet ut pk alt Aca cw2 - US & finish he work! + EHAIL AND SHAINEN WTO-DO!

TVE, 15/01: Do Aca cw3 wm. + [AL & Green files & Fern wells for Pry 5]

WED, 16/01: -11- + -11-

THN, 17/01: -11- + -11-

SAT, 19/01:

SUN, 20/01: ACA CW2 DOLLINE

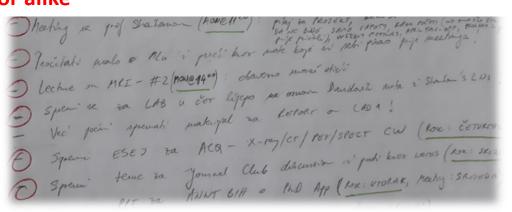
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### How to Start: Plan, Motive and Discipline

**MOTIVE** 

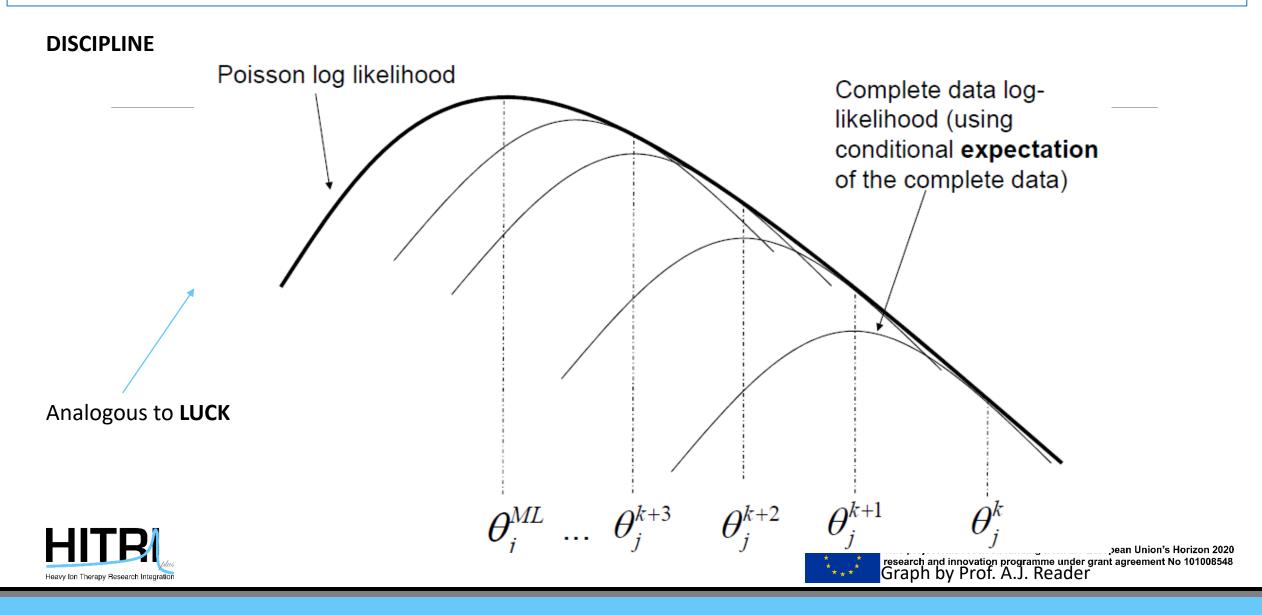
#### INNER PEACE





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### How to Start: Plan, Motive and Discipline



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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: REFERENCES

LOGO

DATF

- ✓ Do NOT write your own references!
- ✓ Ask 2 or 3 (or more) of your professors or others EARLY!
- ✓ A draft should be ready BEFORE THE DEADLINE!
- ✓ They usually receive a link where they upload the ref or sometimes you get a link.
- ✓ Let your referees know where and when you are applying (approximately).
- ✓ But also make them understand that there may be more positions you will be applying to!
- ✓ It should include a description of you as an academic personality (student, researcher), your main qualities and it would be particularly beneficial if they could write

WHERE, WHEN and HOW you specifically have demonstrated your abilities with respect to others.



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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCER!

CONTENT

SIGNATURE, POSITION

**DESCRIPTION** 

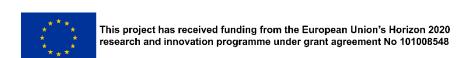


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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: DIPLOMAS

- ✓ Collect your diplomas, scan them and make them ready for upload (usually just a pdf document, all separated/together).
- ✓ If your certificates are not in English, translate them via a certified interpreters (court interpreters) and prepare them with the originals in pdf ready for upload!
- ✓ VIP! diplomas: **graduation diploma, interim grades transcript** so make sure to get them well before the application deadline! Get in touch with your universities (student affairs) early.
- ✓ If you cannot obtain the graduation diploma before the deadline, make sure to indicate in your u application that the process of obtaining the graduation diploma is ONGOING and add the expected graduation date + get a confirmation from the university that the program is still ongoing (or finalized), that you are still a student, but that you are expected to graduate at the certified time based on your current academic performance.
- ✓ Additional Diplomas (awards, special mentions, conferences, workshops, extracurricular programs, competitions, Olympiads): sort them out by relevance and/or date of obtaining them in a single pdf file.





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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: STANDARDIZED TESTS

- ✓ The most important ones for the **UK**, **EU** and the others: ENGLISH **TOEFL**, **IELTS**! Others: <a href="https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/uk-boards-overseas/english-language">https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/uk-boards-overseas/english-language</a>
- ✓ Register EARLY way BEFORE the deadline for application (but don't give up on applying just because you don't have the TOEFL score ready - sometimes they allow exceptions or time for you to complete them).
- ✓ They cost 170 GBP each!
- ✓ It costs extra to send the official score to the universities but usually that is not essential!

  In PhD applications, universities usually accept the non-official TOEFL/IELTS score in pdf,

  OR just the test ID number and your score (check the REQUIREMENTS part of the application).
- ✓ Some programs accept the official university confirmation letters stating that the program language of instruction is English. In that case you do not need TOEFL/IELTS.

Check the REQUIREMENTS part of the application before applying!

✓ For USA: depends on the program, but usually:



TOEFL/IELTS +
GRE GENERAL TEST + GRE SUBJECT TEST!

Test Dates	Mail-in Registration Deadline	Online Registration Deadline
13 Oct 2018	27 Aug 2018	14 Sep 2018
10 Nov 2018	24 Sep 2018	12 Oct 2018
9 Feb 2019	24 Dec 2018	11 Jan 2019
13 Apr 2019	25 Feb 2019	15 Mar 2019
	porting Dates	
	porting Dates Approximate Score Repo	ort Mailing Date
Test Dates		ort Mailing Date
	Approximate Score Repo	ort Mailing Date
Test Dates 13 Oct 2018	Approximate Score Repo	ort Mailing Date

Test date Test format January 2019 Thursday 17 January 2019 Academic Only Saturday 19 January 2019 Academic and General Training Saturday 2 February 2019 Academic Onl Book now Thursday 14 February 2019 Saturday 23 February 2019 March2019 Saturday 2 March 2019 Academic and General Training Saturday 9 March 2019 Academic Only Book nov Thursday 14 March 2019 Academic Only Book now Saturday 23 March 2019 Academic and General Training April 2019 Saturday 6 April 2019 Saturday 13 April 2019 Saturday 27 April 2019 Academic and General Training May 2019 Saturday 4 May 2019 Academic Only Book now Academic and General Training Saturday 18 May 2019 Academic Only Thursday 23 May 2019 Academic and General Training

**IELTS:** 

https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/choose-ielts/global-test-dates

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FOEFL: https://www.ets.org/toefl/rpdt/register/centers\_dates/

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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: CV

✓ Make a high-quality, neat, good-on-paper CV using MINIMALISTIC and SPECIFIC APPROACH!

#### AMER AJANOVIĆ

Address: Ulica Hifzi Bjelevca 8/7, Ilidža, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina E-mail: ajan.amer@gmail.com Telephone: + 387 62 652 835;

#### Professional Profile

#### Education

2017 - 2018

2013 - 2017

2013 - 2017

2012 - 2013

2008 - 2012

#### GRANTS: ...

#### Events/Training Attended

 April International School on Nuclear Methods for Environmental and Life Science, Budva, Montenegro: selected participant scheduled to represent Faculty of Science, University of Sarajevo





#### Relevant Skills

IT SKILLS

programming skills with MATLAB, C and Python; itd itd

LANGUAGES Native: Bosnian;

Fluent: Turkish (C2), English (C2)

#### Accomplishments

Invited for an educational CERN tour after scoring one of the highest grades in Modern Physics (Phys207) class by

the instructor, Prof. Dr. Melahat Bilge Demirköz

#### Experience (Research, Professional and Teaching)

Jul - Aug 2018

Research Summer Student Full – time Intern

CERN, Geneva, Switzerland; Supervisors: Dr. Maurizio Vretenar, Prof. Ugo Amaldi, Dr. Yiota Foka

- Worked on design and comparisson of superconducting synchrotron (SS) and HF linacs for heavy ion therapy;
- Carried accompanying calculations for the magnetic field shield in SS using OPERA and FEMM softwares.
- Assessed the efficiency of the novel oblique raster scanner technique for SS in heavy ion therapy.

#### References

#### Assoc. Prof. Dr

Head of the Radiation Protection and Medical Physics Department, University of Sarajevo Clinical Center Associate Professor at the Physics Department, University of Sarajevo University of Sarajevo Clinical Center

Bolnic

71000 Tel: +3

E-mail



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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: MOTIVATIONAL LETTER

- ✓ In the letter you should answer the **3 VIP! questions**:
  - 1. WHY THE CHOSEN AREA (and how is it relevant for your further career plans)?
  - 2. WHY THIS PROGRAM (at this university, with this supervisor, on this project)?
  - 3. WHY YOU (your qualities, what you can contribute to, what you can learn, etc.)?
- ✓ Make them see from the way you write that you are enthusiastic, eager to learn and determined!
- ✓ Avoid being vague, **be specific with clear examples** and avoid using subjective sentences.





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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: MOTIVATIONAL LETTER

Please tell us why you would like to apply to our EPSRC King's and Imperial College London Medical Imaging Centre for Doctoral Training. Why are you interested in the research areas you have chosen? What would you say makes you a good candidate?

(Maximum 500 words)

Why the chosen areas? My ideas for the future revolve around investigating special numerical and imaging

Why me? I believe I am the right person for the position for three main reasons. First, I have the extensive

Why Medical Imaging at CDT? I recently developed a research proposal that involves utilizing imaging



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### II Primary (on-paper) Application – Structure: THE TIMELINE

- ✓ Organize yourselves to collect all the right documents in time, APPLY EARLY, and practice and train ahead of the interview!
  - 1. Do the English tests (if necessary), and all other relevant standardized tests.
  - Search the sites + plan + contact the relevant person (usually your future supervisor(s)).
  - 3. Select the position(s) you wish to apply for.
  - 4. Contact your referees.
  - 5. Collect the diplomas.
  - Prepare the "good-on-paper" CV.
  - 7. Prepare the Motivational Letter for the selected position.
  - 8. Apply for the selected position.
  - Modify all of the above for the next position(s) you selected.
  - 10. Repeat!
  - 11. Interview.
  - 12. Accept and reject.
  - 13. Enjoy the iterative process!





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#### **OVERVIEW 1**

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Important Sites: findaphd, euraxess, academic positions etc.

<u>Plan, Motive, Discipline</u>: yearly-monthly-weekly-daily plans + inner peace + luck optimisation!

#### II PRIMARY (on-paper) APPLICATION

#### **Structure**

References: contact 2 or 3 professors/referees early;

Diplomas: graduation diploma/confirmation you are still a student + interim grades transcript;

Standardized Tests: English – TOEFL and IELTS;

CV: neat + specific + minimalistic approach;

Motivational Letter: 3 VIP pitanja – why the chosen areas + why this program + why me!

<u>Timeline</u>: plan ahead and be ready to modify your applications!

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### **III Interview – THE BEFORE**

✓ Send emails of enquiry and contact the potential supervisors about their research and your interests!





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### **III Interview – THE BEFORE**

#### ✓ Ask about the interview itself!

Dear Professor,

Many thanks for that kind assessment of our interview! And, of course, thank you for giving me another opportunity with the additional one. I will be available on Wednesday, 13th June, at 10.00 am (CET) for the interview, and am already looking forward to it.

I would again appreciate if we, the candidates, could learn more about this 2nd interview - would it be of the similar format as the first one (I expect it should be a little bit different this time around)?

Again, thank you for the opportunity and your time.

Yours sincerely, Amer Ajanović Dear Amer,

Good to hear that you will be available for the second interview on Wednesday.

The interview will be similar to the first but our discussion this time will be more focused on two questions:

- 1) What is diffusion tensor imaging (DTI)
- 2) What is tractography?

Best regards,

Tim





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### **III Interview – THE BEFORE**

✓ TRAIN!





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### III Interview – STRUCTURE: Discussion of your primary application

✓ Be ready to discuss your CV and Motivational Letter!

#### 5 MAGIC TERMS YOU ARE USING TO ASSESS THE GROUP TOO:

INTERDISCIPLINARITY

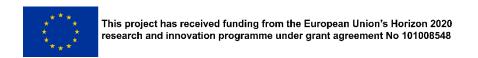
GROUP ACTIVITY: research output + citations

**COLLEGIALITY** 

**GREAT STUDENT-PROFESSOR INTERACTION** 

EAGER TO LEARN/STUDY THIS ... WORK ON THAT... IMPROVE/GROW





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Simple Questions from the Field,

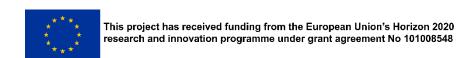
Questions on the Technicalities From Your CV,

Discussion of a Project You Did,

Discussion of a Scientific Paper,

Your Future Tasks.





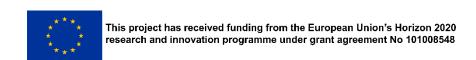
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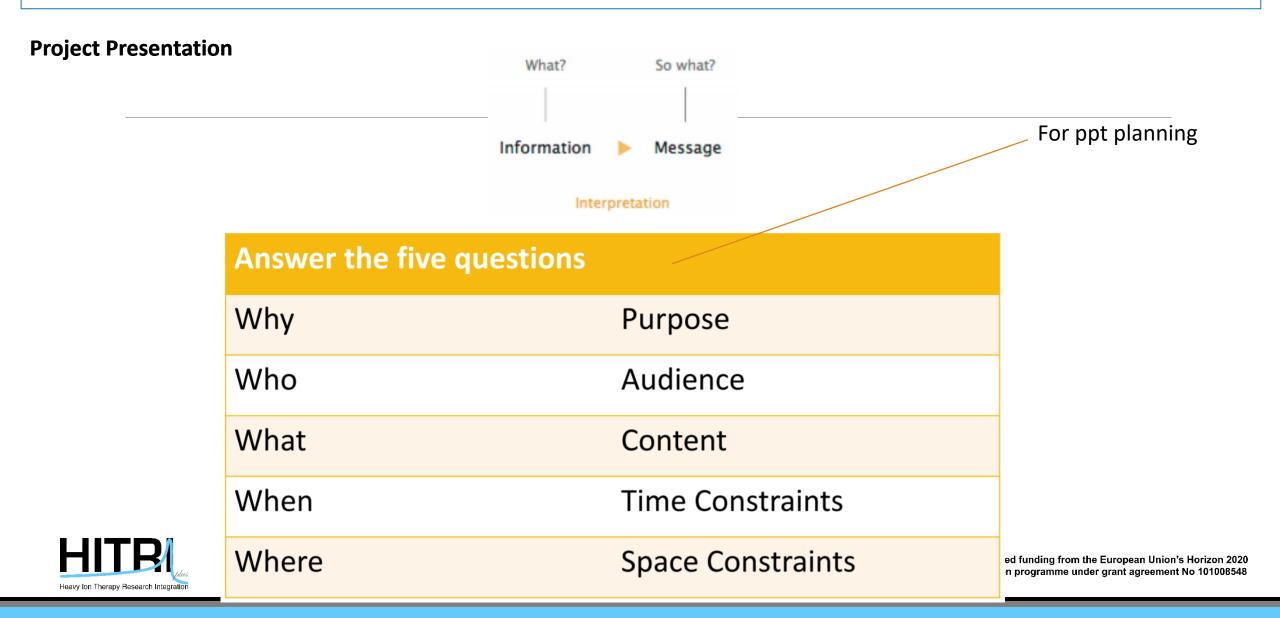
#### **Project Presentation**

- ✓ 1 slide = 1 min! Usually max time = 10 min + 5/10 min for questions (as in conferences) → Have max. 10-11 slides!
- ✓ Use little text, a lot of visuals!
- ✓ Present your results in graphs rather than tables, if possible!
- ✓ Presentations usually follow the same structure the scientific articles do: INTRO + METHODS + RESULTS + DISCUSSION + CONCLUSION, but do NOT name the slides using those terms...
- ✓ Choose to present the most relevant project for the position you are applying to.
- ✓ Think about the audience: do not underestimate them (no need to mention the trivial matters), but do not overestimate them either (avoid using jargon, abbreviations etc., because the aim of a scientific presentation is to communicate your research to the audience meaning they need to understand you regardless of what their criteria for judging you are).
- ✓ Can potentially use analogies to get a point across...



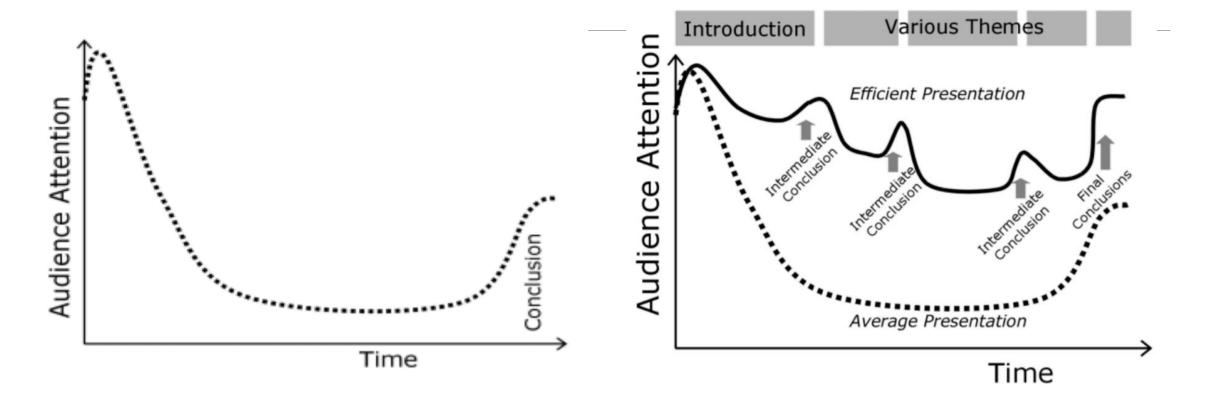
✓ AIM: what will your audience learn/gain from this, how is this beneficial for them?!





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#### **Project Presentation**







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### **III Interview – STRUCTURE: Counter-Attack**

- 1. Study well what your interviewers do.
- 2. Critically assess and discuss some of their research findings/articles/follow-ups.
- 3. Ask about the group rhythm, meetings, experiments, your tasks, how much is the project prone to change, etc.



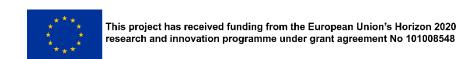


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### **III Interview – DURING**

- ✓ Be **CONFIDENT**, you've trained hard for this, now is the time to sell your best selves.
- ✓ Maximize Signal to Noise Ratio.
- ✓ Make sure your audience **understand** you and you are able to **keep their focus**.
- ✓ Accept all the feedback, particularly negative feedback, and encourage negative feedback.
- ✓ Always be courteous.





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### **III Interview – AFTER**

✓ Send email expressing gratitude within the 24h after the interview!

Dear Dr. De Marco,

Thank you for everything you have done in the past few weeks.

We had the great interview that ended about an hour ago and the panel made it highly enjoyable - for me at least it was. Near the end, I didn't want it to end actually.

Again, many thanks! Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Amer Ajanović





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### **III Interview – AFTER**

✓ Timely reject the positions you would not like to proceed with!





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### **III Interview – AFTER**

✓ Simply **ACCEPT** the one YOU would like to continue with. <sup>©</sup>





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Timeline: plan ahead and be ready to modify your applications!

#### Ш INTERVIEW

BEFORE: contact the supervisors for more information about the program and interview;

#### **STRUCTURE**

Primary Application Discussion: be ready to discuss motivation and CV;

5 magic words: interdisciplinarity + collegiality + active program + great prof-student interaction + very eager to work on this/study that

Technical Part: CV questions + Your Projects + Article/Their Project Discussion

Counter-Attack: Ask questions about the project, program, a scientific method...

DURING: be confident, determined, make them hear you, understand you, embra

AFTER: send thank-you email, reject timely, accept accordingly and keep it all un



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#### **OVERVIEW 1**

#### I How to start?

Important Sites: findaphd, euraxess, academic positions etc.

<u>Plan, Motive, Discipline</u>: yearly-monthly-weekly-daily plans + inner peace + luck optimisation!

#### II PRIMARY (on-paper) APPLICATION

#### **Structure**

References: contact 2 or 3 professors/referees early;

Diplomas: graduation diploma/confirmation you are still a student + interim grades transcript;

Standardized Tests: English – TOEFL and IELTS;

CV: neat + specific + minimalistic approach;

Motivational Letter: 3 VIP pitanja – why the chosen areas + why this program + why me!

<u>Timeline</u>: plan ahead and be ready to modify your applications!

#### III INTERVIEW

**BEFORE**: contact the supervisors for more information about the program and interview;

STRUCTURE

Primary Application Discussion: be ready to discuss motivation and CV;

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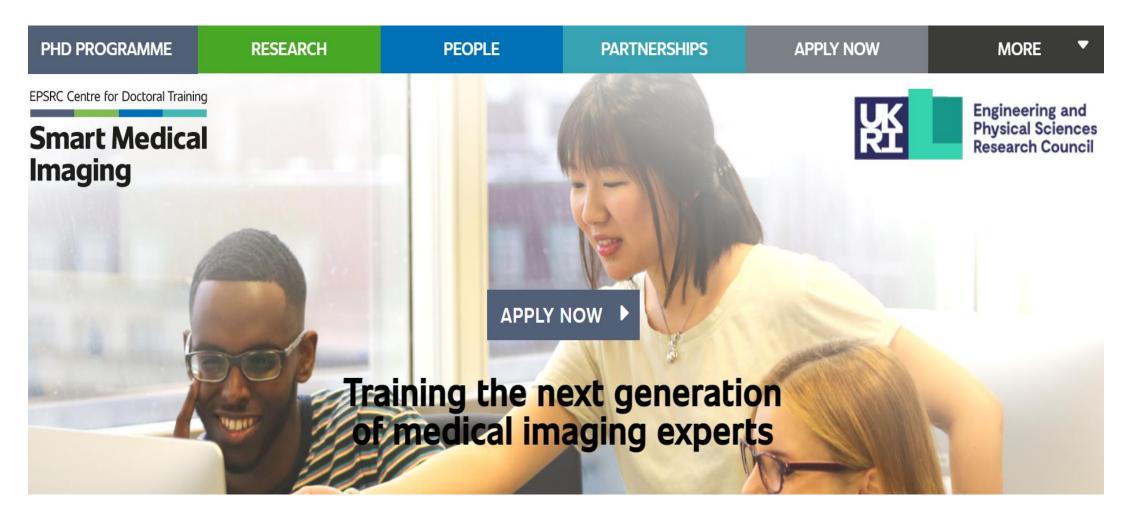
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### https://www.imagingcdt.com/







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### Conclusions

Potentially Important for the Emerging Field of MR-guided Hadron therapy.

### THANK YOU

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This material was prepared and presented within the HITRIplus Heavy Ion Therapy MasterClass School, and it is intended for educational purposes to facilitate students; people interested to use any of the material for any other purposes (such as other lectures, courses etc.) are kindly requested to please contact the author Amer Ajanovic at ajan.amer@gmail.com



