

NARRATIVE CVs MAY BE LIMITED IN SHIFTING DIMENSIONS OF RESEARCH CULTURE IN POSTDOCTORAL RECRUITMENT

Luisa Ciampi¹, Becky Ioppolo¹, Noam Tal-Perry¹, Lara Abel¹, Mollie Etheridge¹, Adrian Barnett², Timothy R. Johnson³, Debbie Birkett¹ & Steven Wooding¹
⁽¹⁾ University of Cambridge, UK ⁽²⁾ Queensland University of Technology, Australia ⁽³⁾ University of Idaho, United States

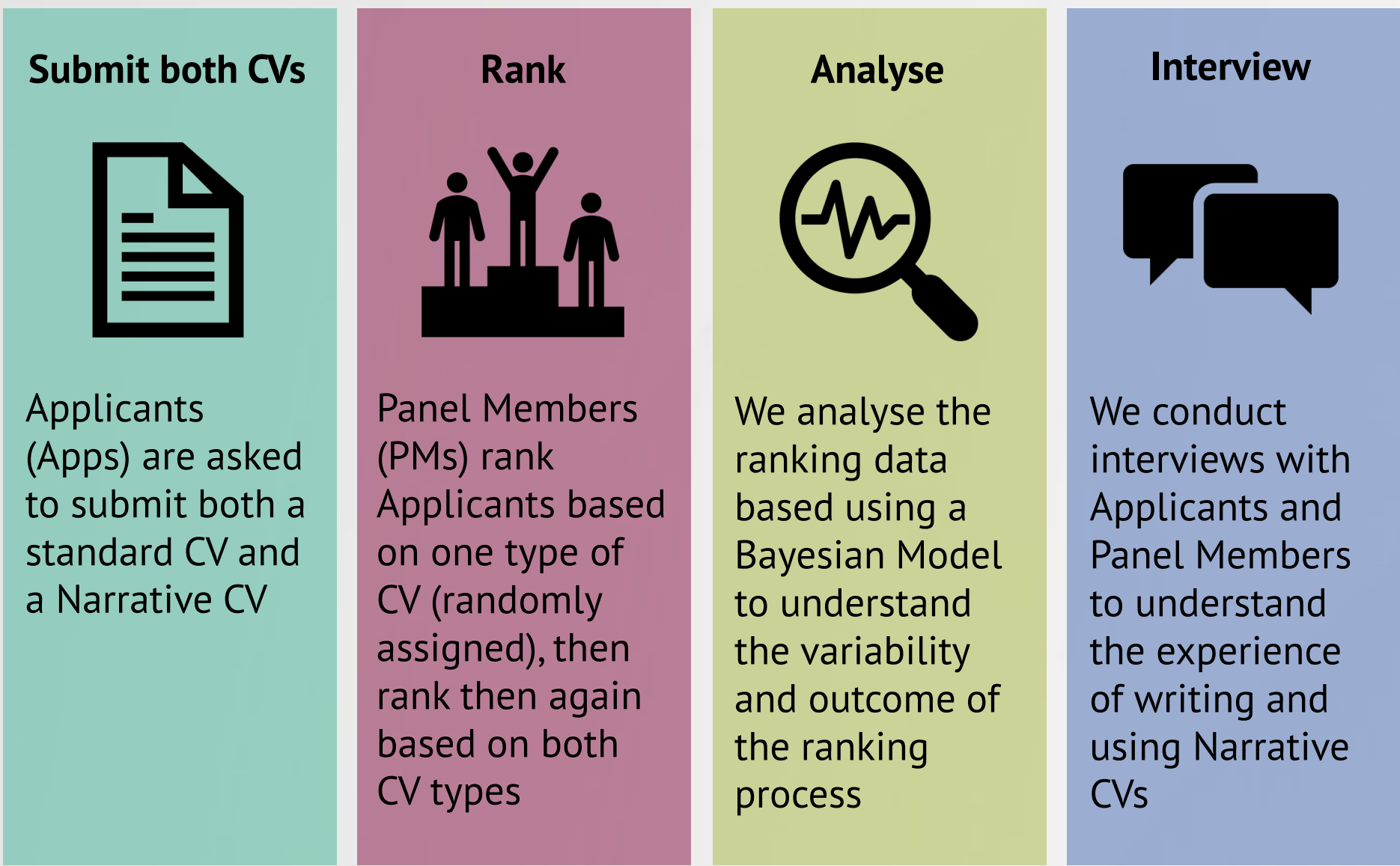
The effects of Narrative CVs in postdoctoral recruitment

Research question:

Do Narrative CVs (based on R4RI Narrative CV template) change the application experience and shortlisting outcomes in postdoctoral recruitments at Cambridge University?

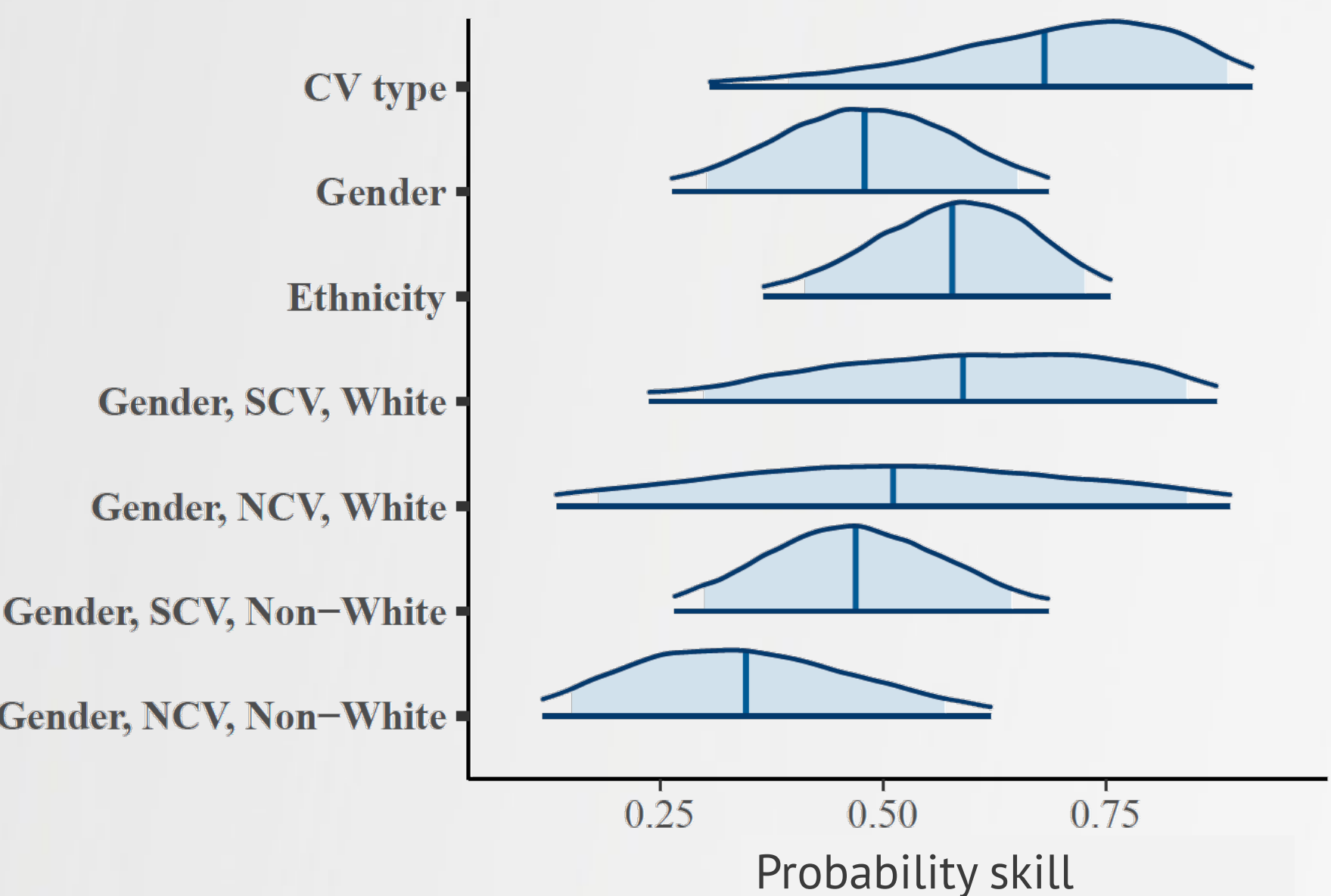
Methods:

Randomized control trial on live postdoc recruitments at Cambridge University (completed 13 of 40):



Preliminary quantitative results:

- Narrative CV (NCV) applications were generally ranked higher than standard CV (SCV) applications
- White applicants generally ranked higher than non-white, and no overall difference between genders
- Female applicants ranked lower in NCV than SCV for white and non-white ethnicities



Preliminary qualitative results:

Effects of CV format on shortlisting decisions
11 PMs reported no change in ranking, 3 reported change and 3 reported marginal change.

Skills identification
There may be disjoint between what skills Principal investigators want from postdocs vs the research culture shift as technical skills are generally seen as most important

Time and effort
Both PMs and Apps reported an increase in time and effort because of novelty, difficulty in finding information, and generally poor quality of the NCVs

Equality, diversity, and inclusion
The NCV favours those from a UK or European background due to English and writing skills, and lack of support for international applicants

NCV training and guidance
5 PMs asked for more NCV writing guidance, 1 PM and 1 App said that NCV examples were needed, and 2 PMs asked for additional NCV assessment guidance

So what?

Our data indicates that many of the challenges can be traced to the novelty of the CV type, and to clashing values of what skills are identified in the initial stages of recruiting postdocs. The so far limited change NCVs have on postdoctoral recruitment suggest that there may still be some work to do adapt the NCV format but also continue to work on shifting assessment norms and indicators throughout the academic system.

Limitations:

- Only studied STEM vacancies so far
- Only studied in Cambridge
- Only studied postdocs (not faculty academics, prof services, etc.)
- NCV use in funding applications could differ