

Communicating Recognition & Rewards experiences:

Tips and tricks

Who can primarily benefit from this tool?

Individuals involved in creating communication materials, such as communications or marketing employees. This can also be anyone who wants to communicate about [Recognition & Rewards](#) through digital channels.

In which context is this tool useful?

This tool supports the preparation and execution stages of creating a story about someone's experiences with Recognition & Rewards (R&R) principles and themes. It can also be useful for highlighting and promoting one or several pillars of R&R through the lens of someone's personal experience.

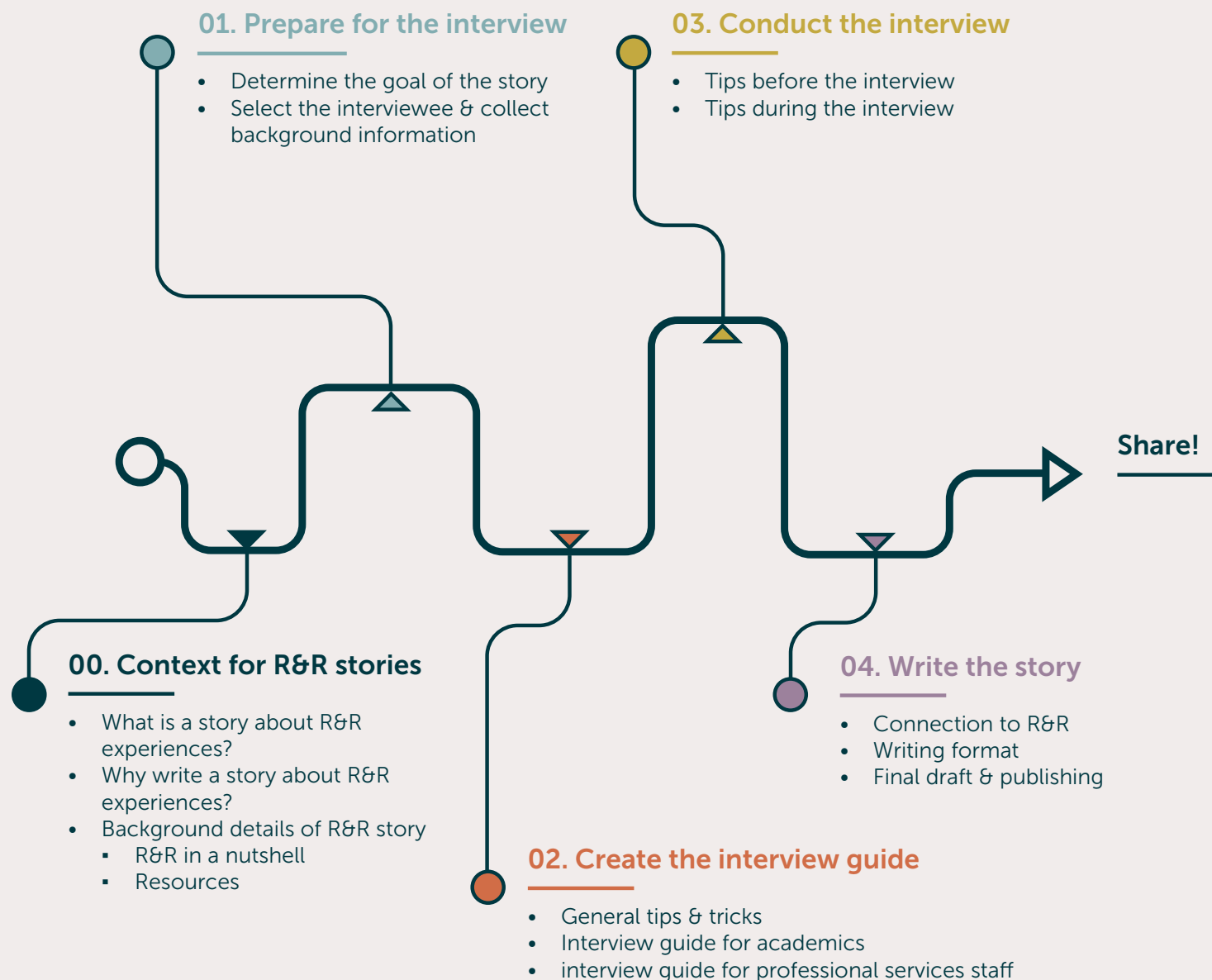
The main steps

Follow these steps to create an R&R story.

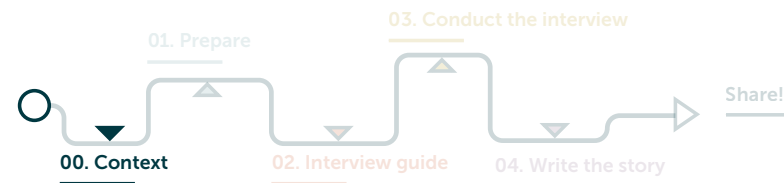
Keep in mind that you do not need to follow every step: these guidelines are a comprehensive overview of all possible steps, but you can pick and choose the ones that suit you.

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00. Context for R&R stories



What is a story about R&R experiences?

A story about R&R experiences is an article in the format of a personal story, based on an interview. It tells one's (career) experience that reflects or is connected to one or more aspects of R&R, such as R&R pillars and themes. This tool supports internal and external communications professionals in creating such story. Individuals involved in creating communication materials, such as communications or marketing employees. This can also be anyone who wants to communicate about Recognition & Rewards through digital channels.

Why write a story about R&R experiences?

R&R is a culture change taking place at all universities in the Netherlands, with many internal and external stakeholders involved.

Internally, these are both academic and professional services staff. While some of them might be familiar with R&R or the general R&R principles, a story allows to present the programme in a positive light and showcase R&R as an asset and an opportunity to embrace.

Writing such story is also a chance to introduce audience to the background and main pillars of R&R, to educate and give context to the themes discussed in the interview. The story can be aimed both at internal and external audiences.

[R&R on eur.nl](#)

Read some examples of published R&R stories:



Enabling Recognition & Rewards at EUR Schools >

Linda van Klink, Senior Policy Advisor at Erasmus Schools of Economics (ESE), and Celinka Roovers-Werkman, Coordinator of HR Strategy team and R&R assignment...

Thursday 19 Dec 2024 Interview

News EUR



Putting Recognition & Rewards changemakers in the spotlight: Christien Bakker >

Senior HR Policy Advisor Christien Bakker tells what motivated her to work on implementing Recognition & Rewards at EUR for the past five years.

Tuesday 27 Aug 2024 Interview

News EUR



"Follow your radar and make it transmit beyond this place." >

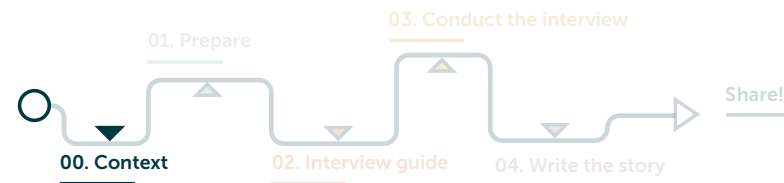
Assistant professor sociology of music at EUR dr. Julian Schaap shares his experience with Recognition & Rewards.

Monday 25 Mar 2024 General

News EUR



00. Context for R&R stories



Background details of R&R story

For writing a story focused on R&R, it is important to familiarise yourself with the main facts and background of the R&R programme. These are the main concepts, themes, and pillars of R&R, and how the careers/activities of potential interviewee(s) relate to this.

Conducting desk research about interviewees' career and activities through the lens of R&R themes will allow for a deeper discussion and to delve into the motivations, values, and personal experiences related to R&R.

Knowing background information about R&R programme also allows to illustrate points that the interviewee(s) will be making. It will help contextualising individual opinions and experiences into wider R&R developments.

What is Recognition & Rewards (in a nutshell)?

Recognition & Rewards is a Dutch [programme](#) creating a **culture change** in academia, which began with the publication of a [position paper](#) titled "Room for Everyone's Talent" in November 2019. Through this paper, Dutch knowledge institutions and research funding bodies set a course to **revise** the current system for recognising and rewarding academics, and to move towards valuing academic work from a broader perspective.

This means less emphasis on the number of publications and more attention for performance in other core areas such as **education**, **research**, societal **impact**, good **leadership** and, in the case of University Medical Centres, also **patient care**.

The change takes action along several lines: introducing diversified career paths; acknowledging the accomplishments of both individuals and teams; emphasising the quality of work rather than purely the quantity; encouraging the practice of all aspects of open science and promoting academic leadership.

Some resources for background information about R&R and related developments:

EUR resources

[R&R on my.eur.nl](#)

[R&R on eur.nl](#)

International resources

[DORA](#)

[CoARA](#)

[Advancing Teaching](#)

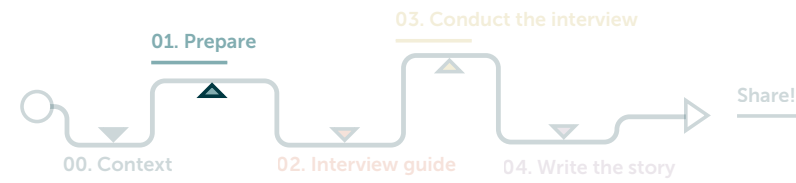
National resources

[R&R national programme](#)

[RRview platform](#)



01. Prepare for the interview



Determine the goal of the R&R story

When creating the story for internal audiences, the overarching goal is to **motivate** EUR academic and professional services staff to **embrace R&R** in all aspects. This can either be the essence of R&R programme in general, or specific themes/pillars of R&R.

For example, to **promote** the introduction of career paths or to inspire people to get involved in R&R implementation. This is done by showcasing experiences of individuals whose career and/or professional activities reflect the importance of and need for R&R at EUR and academia in general.

The R&R story is also an opportunity to celebrate employees who contribute to a thriving EUR and their School, and whose careers embody the R&R principles. The 'personal' aspect of the story aims to create **relatability**. It also highlights that R&R is not just an idea "on paper" but a lived experience of people in different areas and positions in academia. For the interviewee, the appeal to participate in a story could be an opportunity to showcase their career successes beyond the traditional focus on research or to add an angle to it (e.g. engaged research; research on education). It is also a chance to inspire earlier career academics as a role model for a certain career path and to contribute to a better academia where diverse talents are celebrated equally.

Select the interviewee

Potential interviewees come from two groups: **academics** and **professional services** colleagues. The interview can be with one or more individuals from these target groups. Please bear in mind that the guidelines in this tool, including proposed interview guides, are primarily aimed at individual and not group interviews.

It is advisable to select the interviewee(s) based on the specific **focus** of the story. For example, if the focus is on highlighting the benefits of diversified career paths, a good choice could be a) an academic who is in a career path or b) whose career has a distinct focus, or c) a professional services staff from EUR School/service who is involved with implementing career paths.

For academic staff, so far stories are often written about 'classic achievements' such as receiving a big grant. However, for R&R story, there is no need to 'wait for a special occasion' to celebrate someone's career and only focus on research-related successes. Consider academic staff who, for example are: engaged in educational innovation; impactfully involved with societal partners; great leaders. Inquire with department heads or HR about such 'candidates'.

Collect background information about the interviewee

Before creating the interview guide, it is recommended to collect relevant background information about the interviewee that will inform (some of the) questions in the interview guide and the line of questioning. This information can be:



Name, title, and organisational unit the interviewee is working in



Their **professional bio** on the Intranet (EUR general Intranet + organisational unit Intranet)



Any **previous articles/stories** the person was interviewed for, which were published on the Intranet and/or external media



Professional **social media profile** and posts, such as on LinkedIn



For academics: **published research**, books, white papers, etc.



Podcasts, television and radio programmes, **newspaper and magazine** articles, social media campaigns that the interviewee was involved in

02. Create an interview guide



General tips & tricks

The suggested interview type for the R&R story is **semi-structured**. This means that during the interview you can use the main questions and prompts to guide the discussion. Do not hesitate to pivot and include other questions/prompts that naturally emerge from the discussion in the moment.

In the interview guide, you can group questions based on common **themes**, such as "General introduction", "Team science", "Advice", etc. Depending on

whether you are interviewing an academic or a professional services staff member, the questions will differ, especially after the "general introduction" part.

Below you can find two interview guide ideas that can be used to interview a) an academic and b) a professional services staff. These guides contain a comprehensive list of questions and prompts, but not all of them will be applicable to every interviewee – this will depend on their background, position, experience, etc.

Topics to cover in the interview:

- Relationship with R&R
- R&R at EUR / EUR Schools
- Focus profile/career path
- R&R and earlier career academics
- Open science
- Impact and societal engagement
- Teamwork & team science

What would you like fellow academics to know about being in a career path/focus profile?

When you think of creating impact as an academic, what does it mean to you?

When you think about being recognised and rewarded for your work, what does it look like for you?

Topics to cover in the interview:

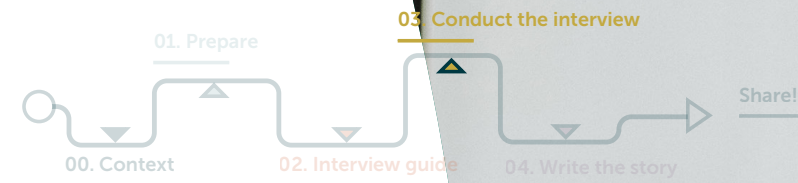
- Motivation & expectations
- R&R implementation
- Role of HR/professional services in R&R

What does Recognition & Rewards mean for you?

How well do you think EUR is doing in implementing R&R?

What are some of the proudest moments for you, in terms of working on R&R?

03. Conduct the interview



Tips before the interview

Before the start of the interview, it is good to introduce the **concept** of an R&R story. Also, to explain the **sequence of steps** for story to be published. This includes letting the interviewee know that they will be able to provide feedback on the final draft, and mentioning the translation and publishing process for my.eur.nl and/or eur.nl.

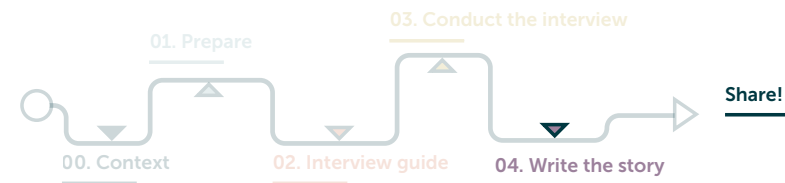
It is also good to mention how this story will be connected to the **communications goal** “to motivate EUR academic and professional services staff to embrace R&R in all aspects”. Remember to ask for permission to record the interview.

Tips during the interview

The average interview for an R&R story lasts between **45-60 minutes**. This includes introductions, disclaimers, questions-answers, and wrap-up. It is recommended to be flexible with the order of questions and to add off-script relevant questions/prompts where needed. Encourage interviewees to share experiences that are uniquely their own, as opposed to hearsay or very generalised examples.

At the end of the interview, remember to ask whether there is anything else that the interviewee feels is important to discuss or would still like to elaborate on more.

04. Write the story



Connection to R&R

Remember, an R&R story is intended to **highlight the themes** of R&R as reflected in someone's career, activities, and professional experiences. Writing such stories helps shine more light on the importance of R&R and the presence of its principles in people's professional life.

Where applicable, include **references** to R&R programme and developments internationally, nationally, and at the University. This will help to further **illustrate** examples given in the interview or concepts that are mentioned. Include **links** to internal and external sources about R&R where applicable.

Writing format

In terms of **tone-of-voice**, keep in mind the audience of the story. For example, for audience outside of your School consider adding extra context about internal developments or employees mentioned in the story. and avoid using jargon and unexplained EUR and R&R abbreviations. It is recommended to not exceed 1000-word limit. Use standard EUR format for online articles for **structuring** the text. Keep in mind that instead of a long story format you can opt to write the story directly as a LinkedIn post or create it as a short video.

Introduce the interviewee with their full title and highlight their role(s)/main activities in the first parts of the story. Do not aim to include everything that the interviewee has said during the interview. Select **quotes** that are most informative/inspirational.

Final draft & publishing

Once the final draft of the story is created, send it to the interviewee(s) with request for any potential **feedback**. Ask them to provide one or two **photos** of themselves that they feel will illustrate the story best. Incorporate any acquired feedback, and then the story can go through the **translation** and publishing process. If possible, publish the story through different channels: on MyEUR in the News section; on R&R pages on MyEUR and eur.nl; on the LinkedIn page of EUR; in your School's newsletters; in the HR News newsletter; IDEA Center newsletter; Impact Update newsletter of the Strategy Office. Distribute the story further according to your School's communications strategy and needs - e.g. you can use it during an event, include in a video, or transform into a poster or a banner.

Full interview guide for *academics*

General introduction

- Can you briefly introduce yourself?
- Tell us about your position at [EUR School]?
 - How long have you been in this position/role?
 - What are your main tasks/responsibilities?
- How did your journey towards [specific career focus; e.g. research which includes societal engagement and impact], began?
 - How did your passion for [pillar of R&R; e.g. education or societal impact/engagement] grow?
- How did your passion for [specific career focus] grow?

Relationship with R&R

- What does Recognition & Rewards mean to you?
- How would you describe Recognition & Rewards at [EUR School]?
- When you think about being recognised and rewarded for your work, what does it look like for you?
- In a nutshell, Recognition & Rewards programme is about creating more room for diversity of talents and ambitions of academics. In your career, has there always been room for your passions and ambitions?

R&R at EUR / EUR Schools

- Have you seen any changes at EUR in the recent years, in terms of appreciating and rewarding different activities of academics?
- How do you see Recognition & Rewards growing at EUR in the coming years?

- How would you describe Recognition & Rewards at [EUR School; e.g. ESHCC]?
- What impact (changes) has R&R had at [EUR School]?
- What impact (changes) would you like to see R&R bring to [EUR School]?
 - How would you like to see R&R reflected at [EUR School]?
- How do you see Recognition & Rewards growing at [EUR School] in the coming years?
- In terms of creating more room for diverse talents, where do you think EUR is going?
 - Where would you like it to go?

Focus profile/career path

- How have you been in [name of focus profile]?
- How did you decide to choose a [name of the focus profile]?
 - What led to this decision?
 - Were you considering any other profile?
- What was the process to get into the [name of the focus profile]?
- How has your daily work changed since having a focus profile?
- How is your work in the [name of the focus profile] assessed/evaluated?
- What would you like fellow academics to know about being in a career path/focus profile?
- What are some of the misconceptions you've heard about career paths/focus profiles?

Full interview guide for *academics*

R&R and earlier career academics

- How would you say R&R is relevant to early- and mid-career academics?

Open Science

- Why is this important to you, to make your work Open Access?

Impact and societal engagement

- When you think of creating impact as an academic, what does it mean to you?
- What does it mean for you, as a scientist, to be engaged with society?
 - What compels you to share your research actively with the general public?
- What is 'impactful research' to you?

Teamwork & team science

- What role does a team - being in a team, working in a team – play in your work as an academic?
- What benefits to working in a team rather than alone can you see?
- If applicable: How has working in trans-/interdisciplinary team(s) been for you?

Advice

- What would you like to say to [fellow early-to mid-career] academics about following their passion and talent?
- What would you like [early career] academics to know about following their passion in their careers?

Full interview guide for *professional services staff*

General introduction

- Can you please briefly introduce yourself?
- Can you tell how you are connected to R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?
- Since when have you been working on the implementation of R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?
- What exactly have you been working on, in terms of R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?

Motivation & expectations

- Why did you decide to join the R&R implementation?
- What were your expectations when you began working on R&R in 2020?
 - Which of these expectations came true?
 - Which did not?
- What does Recognition & Rewards mean for you?
- What is your favourite thing about working on R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?
- In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge about working on R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?

R&R implementation

- In terms of R&R, what kind of changes have you seen at EUR / EUR School/ service, since you started working on R&R implementation?
 - What are the most recent developments that you can share with us?

- How well do you think EUR is doing in implementing R&R?
- What do you feel have been the biggest challenges, in terms of implementing R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?
- What are some of the proudest moments for you, in terms of working on R&R?
- How do you see the implementation of R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service moving forward?
 - Is there anything you still want to do at EUR / EUR School/ service in the coming years, in terms of R&R?
- Is there any fun/funny story from this past time of working on R&R at EUR / EUR School/ service?
 - Something that maybe was not so funny back then, but now you look back on it with a smile?

Role of HR/professionals services in R&R

- What do you think is the role of professional services colleagues [specify – HR, Policy Advisors; as applicable to the interviewee's role] in implementing R&R at EUR / EUR Schools?
- What would you say to your fellow professional services colleagues [specify – HR, Policy Advisors; as applicable to the interviewee's role] who are working on R&R implementation at EUR / EUR Schools?

Colophon

These guidelines support communications and marketing employees in the preparation and execution stages of creating a story about someone's experiences with Recognition & Rewards (R&R) principles and themes. This guide provides background information about R&R and context for R&R stories, and details steps for preparing and conducting the interview, as well as writing and disseminating the story.

Contributors

Alise Scerbinina	Writing original draft
Anna Smulders	Writing review, Design
Dr. Bianca Langhout	Project management and Supervision



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**Erasmus
University
Rotterdam**