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European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC 2023 Starting Grant Call Webinar

Session 1:

Overview of the ERC, eligibility and proposal development

22 June 2022

erc-uk@ukro.ac.uk

Who is who

Sean Rowlands

– European Advisor and ERC National Contact Point

Dr Phil Holliday

– European Advisor and ERC National Contact Point

Guest Presenter: Dr Natasha Barlow

- Associate Professor of Quaternary Environmental Change, School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds

- PI on 2018 ERC StG RISeR

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What will be covered in this webinar?

- Introduction to UKRO & UK Participation in Horizon Europe
- Overview of the ERC programme
- Eligibility criteria
- Proposal development
- Questions and answers session

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Housekeeping

- All participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar.
- We will be recording this session.
- Slides will be shared after the webinar on the event page.
- Please use the Q&A function to submit questions.
- You can ‘up vote’ your favourite questions in the Q&A
- A chat function is available and will be monitored.

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About UKRO

We support UK research intensive organisations

UK National Contact Point for
European Research Council and
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programmes

Unique partnership between UKRI and subscribing organisations

Provide a service to more than 140 subscribing organisations

A Brussels-based team of advisors

Part of UKRI's wider International team

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UK participation in Horizon Europe

On 24 December 2020, the negotiations on the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement concluded

The announcement sets out the UK's intention to **associate to Horizon Europe**

This includes **full participation in the programme** (with the exception of the EIC Accelerator Fund)

UK entities can participate in/coordinate projects and receive funding from Horizon Europe, incl. ERC grants

European Commission's Q&A confirms **UK eligibility to apply.**

UKRO website provides latest information on UK participation

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Commission Q&A Guidance

European Commission's Q&A confirms UK eligibility to apply:

"UK entities including universities, research centres, scientists, innovative businesses, industry, etc. can participate in the first calls for proposals of Horizon Europe as soon as they are published on the European Commission's website."

"…UK applicants are treated as if the UK is an associated country throughout the process, from admissibility and eligibility to evaluation, up until the preparation of grant agreements."

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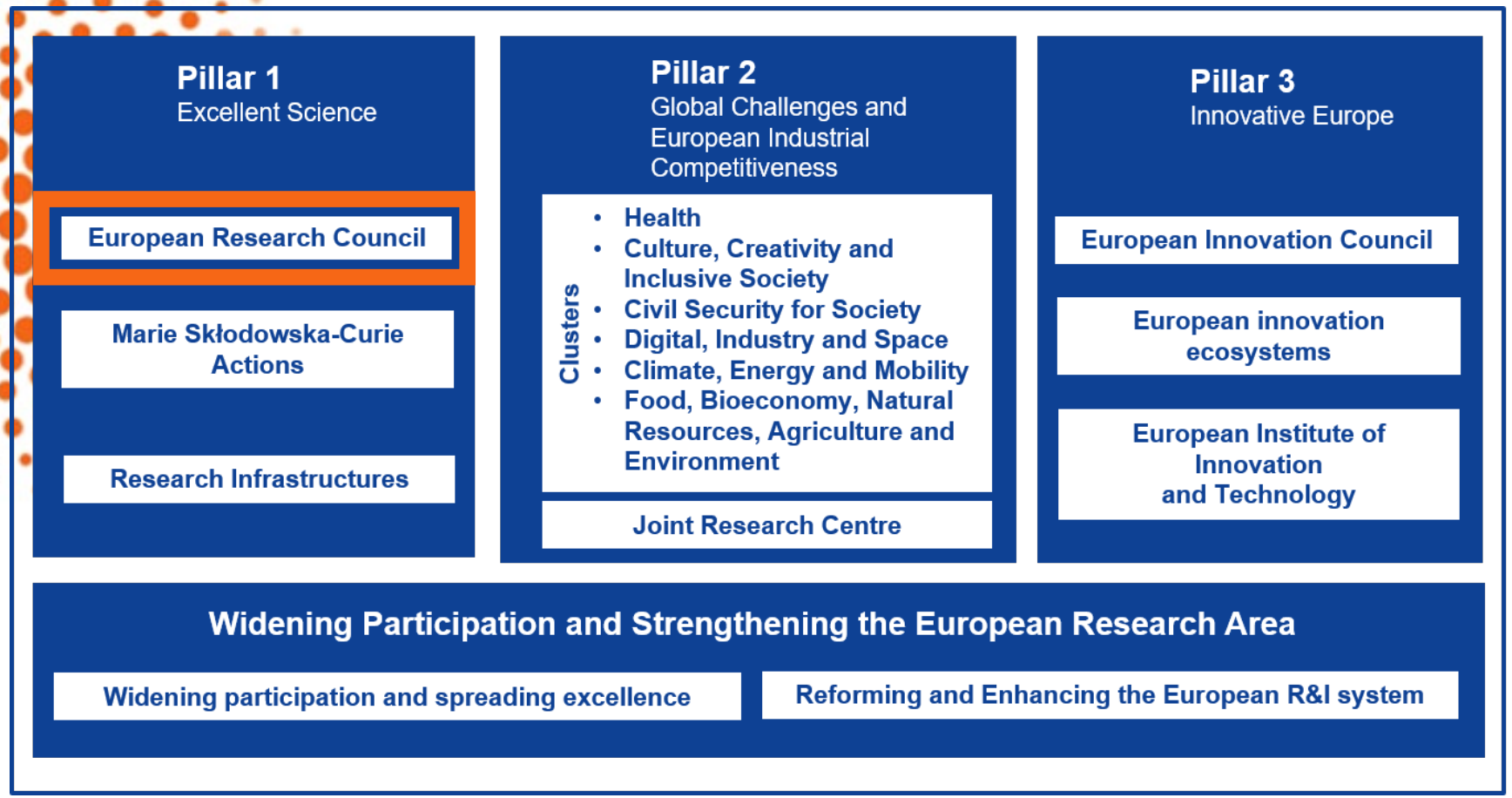
Overview of the ERC

How does it fit into the wider Horizon Europe and what is it about?

Horizon Europe structure



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What is the European Research Council?

BOTTOM-UP,

CURIOSITY-LED,

EXCELLENT RESEARCH

The ERC's mission:

- Support investigator-driven frontier research across all fields
- Fund projects purely on the basis of scientific excellence
- Encourage the highest quality research in Europe

What makes the ERC unique:

- Excellence is the only criteria
- Funding is distributed on researcher demand
- Freedom of PIs to lead their project with anyone in the world in their team

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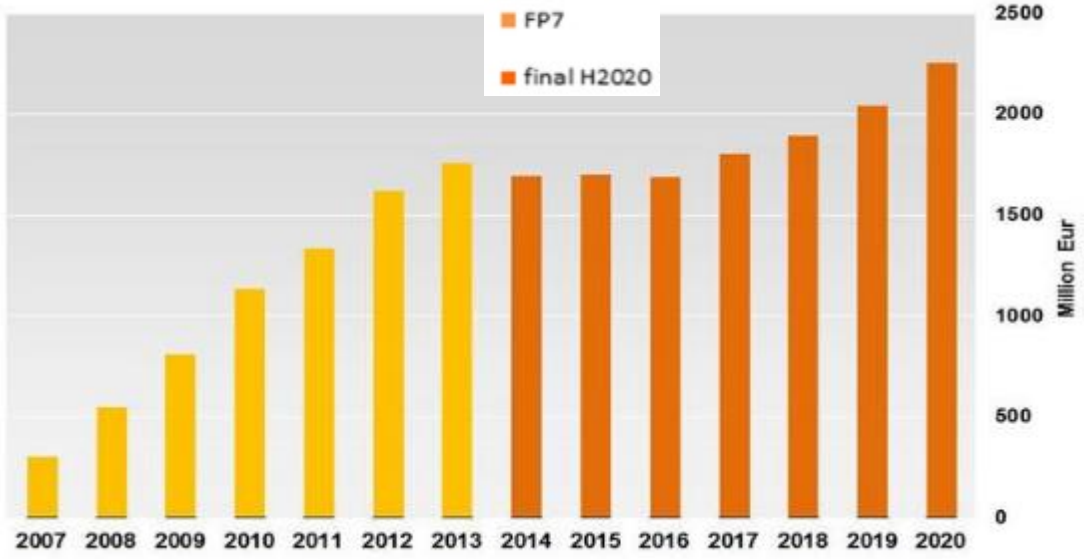
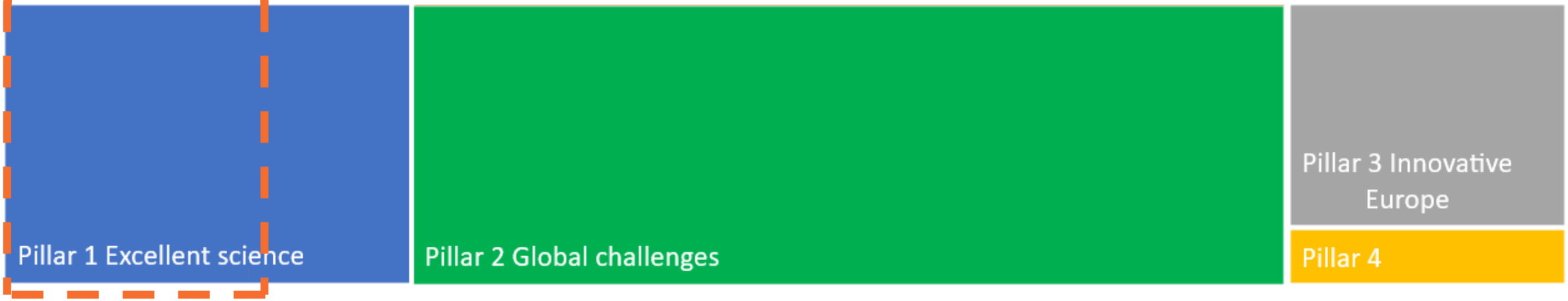
ERC Budget in Horizon Europe

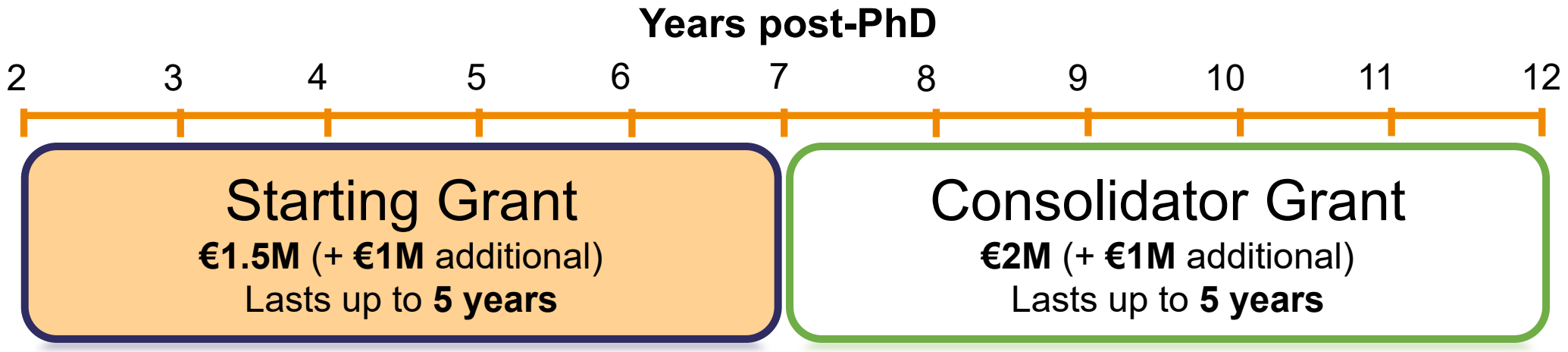
26% increase in real terms compared to Horizon 2020.

Horizon Europe structure is represented below proportionate to budget allocation.



ERC BUDGET: €16 Billion





No PhD Requirements

Advanced Grant

€2.5M (+ **€1M** additional)
Lasts up to **5 years**

Synergy Grant

€10M (+ **€4M** additional)
Lasts up to **6 years** with **2-4 PIs**

Proof Of Concept Grant

€150k Lump Sum, Lasts for **1.5 years**
Top-up grants for current ERC grantees

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Tentative ERC 2023 Calls

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant	Synergy Grant	Proof of Concept
Call Type	**ERC-2023-StG**	ERC-2023-CoG	ERC-2023-AdG	ERC-2023-SyG	ERC-2023-PoC
Call Opens	**12/07/2022**	28/09/2022	08/12/2022	13/07/2022	20/10/2022
Deadline	**25/10/2022**	02/02/2023	23/05/2023	08/11/2022	24/01/2023 20/04/2023 14/09/2023

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ERC Panel Structure
Open to any field of research

More guidance on this later in today's session

Physical Sciences & Engineering	Life Sciences*	Social Sciences & Humanities
PE1 Mathematics	**LS1** Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures & Functions	**SH1** Individuals, Markets and Organisations
PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter Particle	**LS2** Integrative Biology: Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems	**SH2** Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
PE3 Condensed Matter Physics	**LS3** Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology	**SH3** The Social World and its Diversity
PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences	**LS4** Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing	**SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials	**LS5** Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System	**SH5** Cultures and Cultural Production
PE6 Computer Science and Informatics	**LS6** Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy	**SH6** The Study of the Human Past
PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering	**LS7** Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases	**SH7** Human Mobility, Environment, and Space*
PE8 Products and Processes Engineering	**LS8** Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution	
PE9 Universe Sciences	**LS9** Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering	
PE10 Earth System Science		
PE11 Materials Engineering*		

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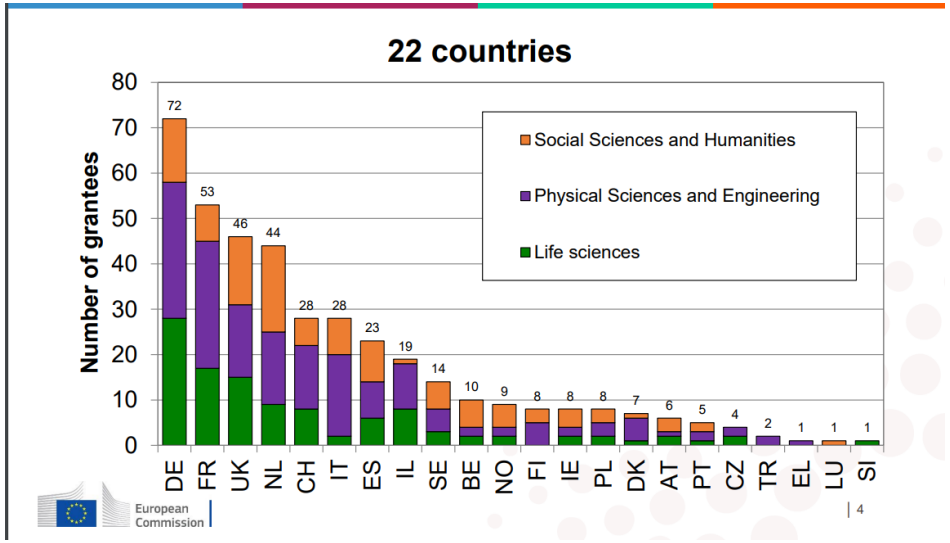
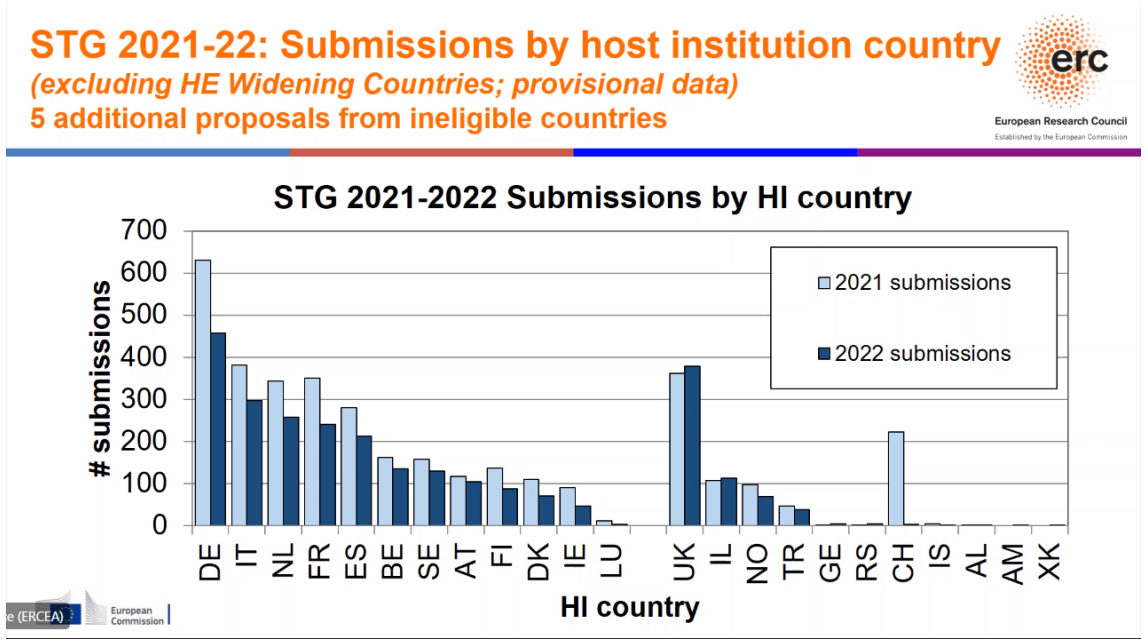
**Since 2021 all domains have changed slightly, check again to find your proposal's best fit!*

- **PE11** and **SH7** panels are newly added, split off from pre-existing panels
- Descriptors under **Life Sciences reshuffled**, changing the remit of existing panels

Recent UK participation in ERC Starting Grant calls



UK Host Institutions were the third most popular for the 2021 Starting Grant call, **chosen by 46 successful applicants in 2021**



UK-hosted submissions were

- **3rd highest** in 2021
- **2nd highest** for 2022

Source: ERC statistics

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ERC-2021-StG Results in more detail

- **397** proposals selected for funding from a total of **4066** submitted
- Overall success rate of 9.8%, compared to 13.3% in 2020
- Breakdown by research domain:

	Physical Sciences and Engineering	Life Sciences	Social Sciences and Humanities
Proposals submitted	1762	1113	1191
Proposals selected	172	111	114

Further information available on the ERC website:

Highlighted research projects: Starting Grant 2021

ERC Starting grants 2021 - Statistics

Image from the ERC website

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Update: 2022 ERC Starting Call

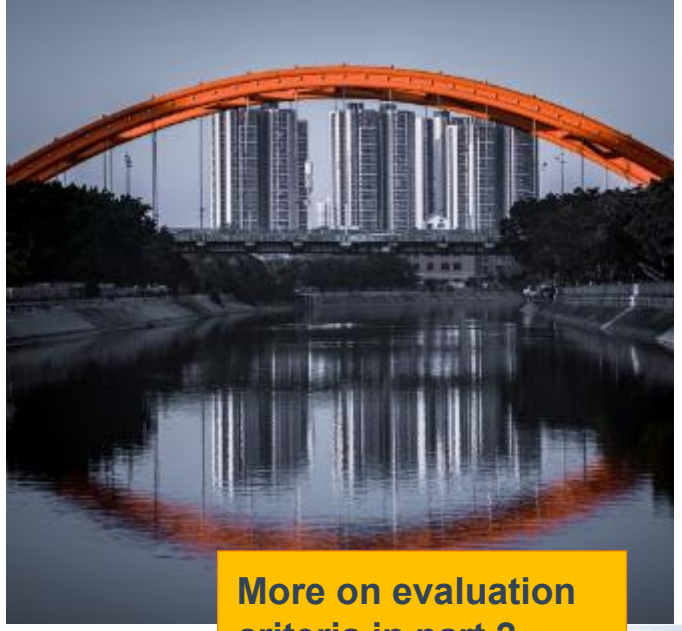
Update on 2022 call:

- 2932 proposals submitted.
- 502 grants are expected to be funded.
- Expected success rate ~ 165
- Starting Grant evaluation process now at Step 2.

ERC Eligibility Criteria

Types of research funded

- Can be in **ANY** field of research;
- Must be very **ambitious** in **risk** and in **scope;**
- **Principal Investigator** is central to the project, they can be supported by as many "team members" as they need;
- Must be **"frontier research",** and should not be incremental advances.



More on evaluation criteria in part 2 including how panels and external experts evaluate proposals

Judged* on the scientific excellence *of the project and PI

No need to aim for externally selected policies or research themes, it's up to the applicant!

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2023 Starting Grant call details

Call Identifier	ERC-2023-StG
Budget	€628 Million
Estimated no. grants funded	407

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2023 Starting Grant Eligibility window

NEW to 2023

Cut-off dates:

Successful defence of PhD between 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2020 (inclusive)

The date of the first PhD considered for the calculation of the eligibility period is the date of the actual award according to the national rules of the country where the degree was awarded.

Applicants should check with the awarding institution if there is any doubt on the date of actual award.

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Extending Eligibility window of an ERC applicant

No extensions for part time working, non-research careers, travel, Covid restrictions (e.g. home schooling) etc., unless linked to illness/maternity.

But evaluators do take these circumstance into account if you describe them in your track record.

Starting and Consolidator Grant eligibility window can be extended for:

Maternity leave
(18 months per child or longer if documented)

Paternity leave
(actual amount of documented leave taken)

Children born before or after the date of successful defence of PhD degree

National service
(Actual amount of documented leave taken)

Long-term illness
(lasting over 90 days)
Illness of PI/family member

Only occurrences after date of successful defence of PhD degree

Clinical training
Maximum 4 years

Only occurrences after award of first eligible degree

NEW to 2023

Seeking Asylum
(Actual amount of documented time)

Only occurrences after date of successful defence of PhD degree

Natural Disaster
(Actual amount of documented time, min. 30 days)

Only occurrences after date of successful defence of PhD degree

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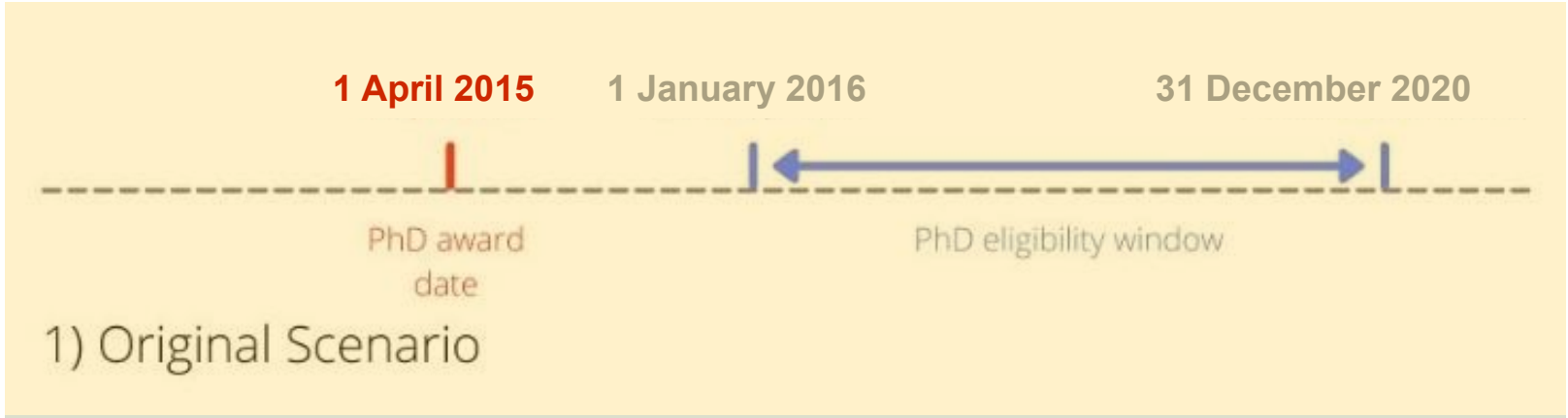
Example of an eligibility extension

An applicant successfully defended her PhD on 1 April 2015 so she is not covered by the default PhD eligibility window.

She has 1 child, so she is automatically entitled to an 18 month extension.

After the extension her PhD eligibility window is from 1 July 2015 - 31 Dec 2020

The extension makes her eligible to apply to the 2023 Starting grant call



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Am I a competitive candidate?

Compared to what?

- Constantly measure yourself against the Starting Grantee profile and the PI Evaluation Criteria in the 2022 ERC Work Programme
- Evaluators will benchmark you to your specific career age; 2 years PhD ≠ 7 years post PhD.
- Even distribution of success across eligible ages for Starting grant
- Think about what this profile looks like in your field of research.
- Look at previously funded Starting Grant PIs in your field, but remember you can present yourself on your own terms

What counts for a good track record?

- Prestigious achievements can matter but they aren't the only way to be successful. There are no blunt markers of an ERC grantee.
- Context matters, demonstrate what you did well and details that show your role so that evaluators can make a nuanced consideration

Don't forget to seek feedback!

Links here are for 2022 Work Programme & Guidance.

Use the 2023 call documents when they become available

Are you convinced you fit the profile? You will need to demonstrate enough to convince world-leading experts.

Early achievements track record

In the Track record (see "Proposal description"), the applicant Principal Investigator should list (if applicable, and in addition to any other scientific achievements deemed relevant by the applicant in relation to their research field and project):

*1. **Up to five publications** in **major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals** and/or in the **leading international peer-reviewed journals, peer-reviewed conferences proceedings and/or monographs** of their respective research fields, highlighting those as main author or without the presence as co-author of their PhD supervisor (properly referenced, field relevant bibliometric indicators[23] may also be included); preprints may be included, if freely available from a preprint server (preprints should be properly referenced and either a link to the preprint or a DOI should be provided);*

*2. **Research monographs and any translations thereof;***

*3. **Granted patent(s);***

*4. **Invited presentations to internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools;***

*5. **Prizes, awards, academy memberships.***

From the ERC Work Programme (pg. 20)

2023 Call Resubmission Restrictions

Call to which the Principal Investigator applied under previous ERC Work Programmes and proposal evaluation outcome		2023 ERC calls to which a Principal Investigator is *not* eligible
2021 and 2022 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant or 2022 Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity	Starting, Consolidator, Advanced, and Synergy Grant
2021 Starting, Consolidator, or Advanced Grant	C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grant
2022 Synergy Grant	A or B at Step 3	No restrictions
	B at Step 1 or 2	No restrictions
	C at Step 1	Advanced and Synergy Grant
2022 Starting, Consolidator, or Advanced Grant	A or B at Step 2	No restrictions
	B or C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grant

How are ERC proposals evaluated?

Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion, applied to:

Research Project

- Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility
- Scientific approach

Principal Investigator

- Intellectual capacity and creativity

Should I apply this year?

Have you planned ahead?

- It takes a long time and a lot of work to write an ERC proposal. Often projects are only funded after resubmission.

Have you compared yourself to the PI profile?

- If you have gaps, use the profile to Identify and aim to achieve before applying in a later year

Apply when you're ready

- The proposal should be the best it can be. Calls are annual, if you're not ready, then apply next year

Don't wait if you're ready: apply for any call year if you're eligible

- Success rates across each 'number of years of experience' for Starting grant call is more or less even.
- Applying with the minimum 2 years post-PhD can be a viable possibility.

Don't apply if you aren't ready just to use your Starting Grant eligibility

- If you prepare an extra year and apply for a Consolidator Grant you will be evaluated at your career level, not compared with applicants at the higher end of the eligibility window.

Don't forget there are resubmission restrictions for ERC calls…

- Don't rush your proposal and risk being excluded for up to two years

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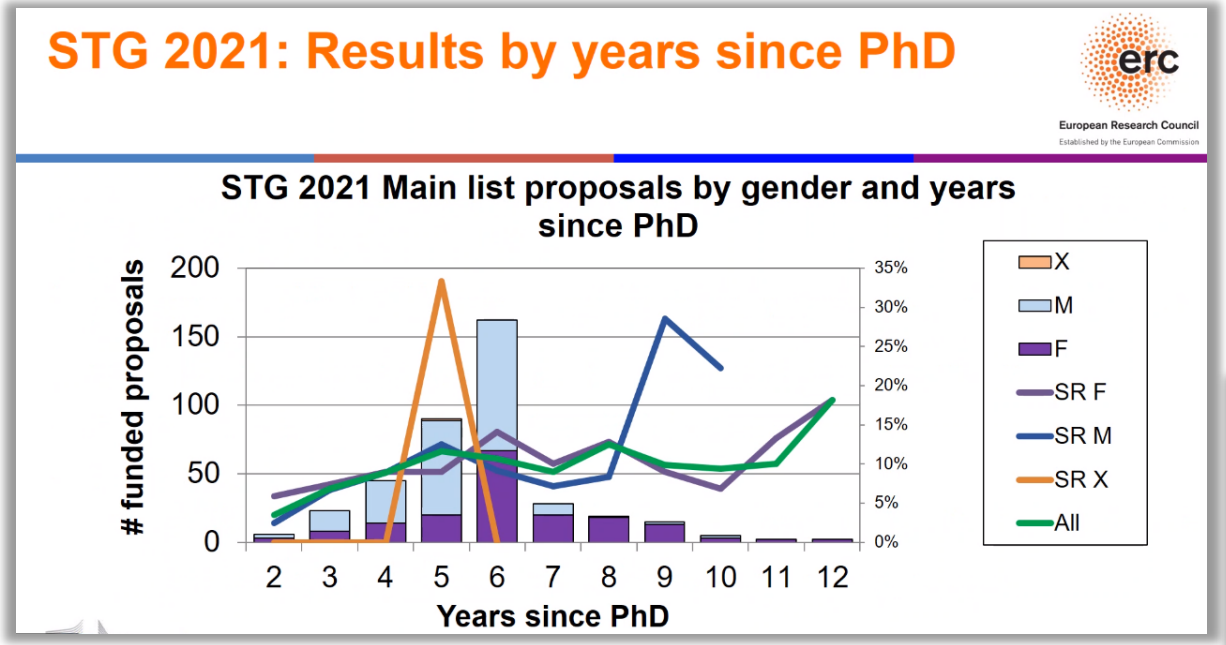
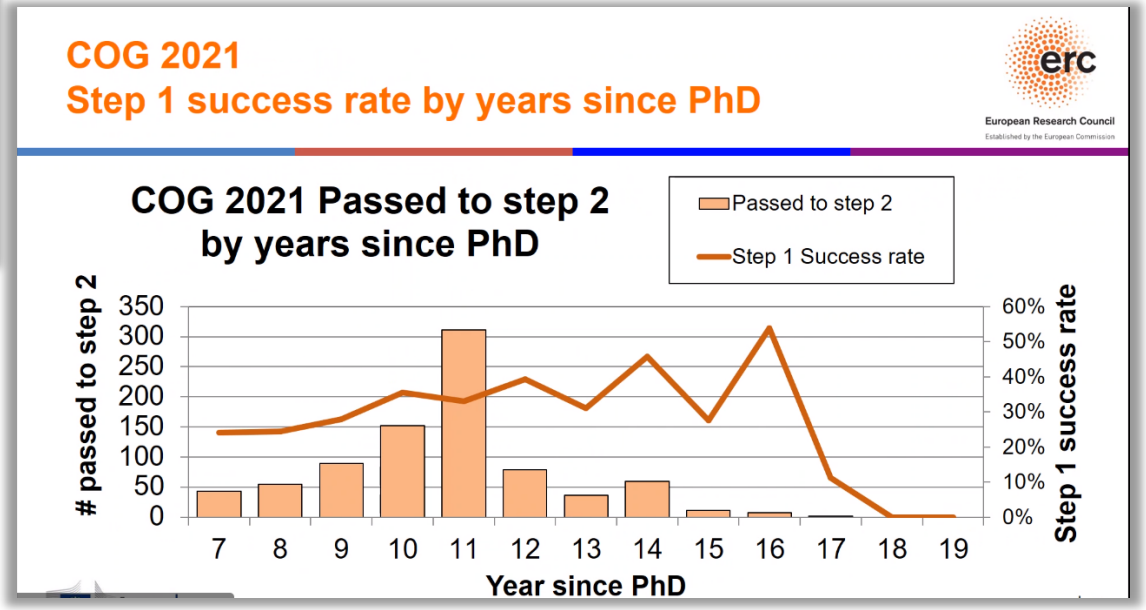
Should I apply this year?





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Principal Investigator Eligibility

Who?	Where?
No restrictions based on age, nationality, current location or current employment/contract status.	Must have an institution based in an EU member state or associated country willing to host them.

Calculated as an average across entire project duration, can vary to a degree year on year

Grant Type	Minimum % of Working Time on Grant	Minimum % of time* in EU Member State or Associated Country	Years since PhD Award
Starting	**50**	**50**	**2-7**
Consolidator	40	50	7-12
Advanced	30	50	N/A
Synergy	30	50	N/A

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* Fieldwork/work abroad related to the ERC project does not count against time commitment

Host Institution Eligibility

Can be any type of legal entity
(university, business, public body, NGO etc.)

Must be based in the territory of an
EU Member State or Associated Country

Has the infrastructure and capacity to allow the PI to independently direct the research and manage ERC funding

Must not constrain the PI to the institution's research strategy. PI has the right to transfer the grant to another institution.

Must 'engage' the PI for project duration, if grant is successful

Not assessed as a separate criterion during peer review but must sign a letter of commitment as part of application

If funded, the HI will:

- sign up to the **Grant Agreement**
- sign a **'Supplementary Agreement'** with the PI

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Working out the PI's time commitments

Minimum 50% working time working on the ERC grant

- All percentages are established by reference to the full time equivalent at the host institution (see below) or 1720 hours per year.

Minimum 50% time spent in Europe (Member State or Associated Country)

Fieldwork/work abroad related to the ERC project does not count against time commitment

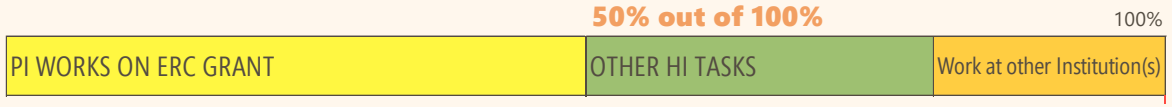
Starting PI with FTE Contract

Starting PI working more than the 100% (FTE) ceiling

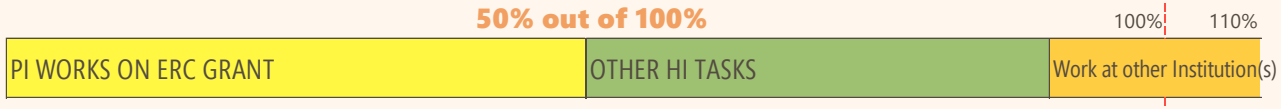
Starting PI working part-time - time commitments are pro-rata (% of P/T contract)

Consolidator PI with FTE Contract split between the HI and other institutions

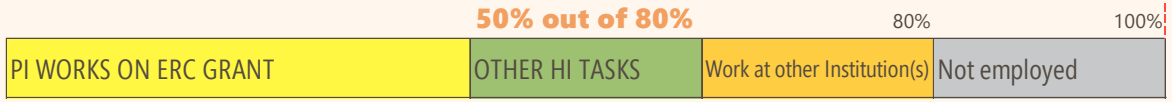
Starting PI with FTE Contract split between the HI and other institutions



Starting PI working more than the 100% (FTE) ceiling split between the HI and other institutions

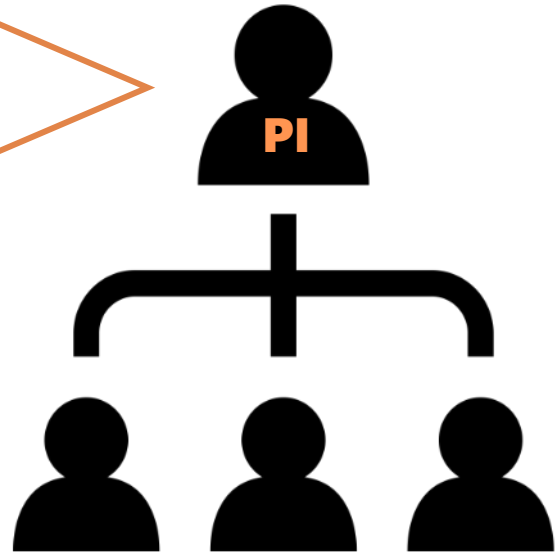


Starting PI working part-time, split between the HI and other institutions



Principal Investigators leading Team Members

- PI **leads** the research project, they are not collaborating as equals with their team
- PI has the **freedom to choose** how many team members are included in the project
- PI **names individuals or roles** that will be recruited in the proposal
- PI must **justify the team** and its composition and contribution
- Evaluators reject proposals where the PI is overshadowed by any team members



- **Cannot be co-investigators**
- **Assigned to specific project outputs/tasks**
- Do activities the PI can't do by themselves
- Should not have purely supervisory/mentor roles
- Can be **research staff at any level** (including technicians and project managers)
- Think about career path of employees
- Of any age, nationality or country of residence
- Can be based **at the Host Institution or any other organisation** in the world
- **EU funded**, even outside member states or associated countries

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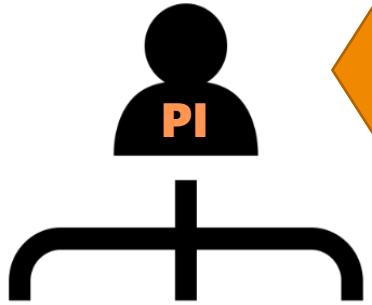
What kind of team members can be in an ERC project?

The constitution of the research teams is flexible.
2022 ERC Work Programme

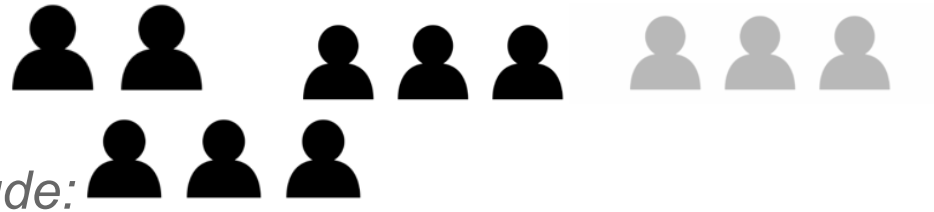
Depending on the nature of a project the research team may involve team members from other research organisations situated in the same or a different country.
2022 ERC Work Programme



Only one PI
evaluated in proposal according to the broadly defined work programme (no prescribed job title)

Only one Host Institution
(although a PI can transfer or be based at multiple organisations)

PI designs and chooses their team according to the needs of the project



Can my team include:

Researchers at any career stage?
YES, from PhD to Professor etc, as long as the PI is clearly leading the project.

Non-academic/administrative team-members?
YES, if they are justified and help to carry out the objectives

Team members based in other organisations?
YES, if they are justified and help to carry out the objectives

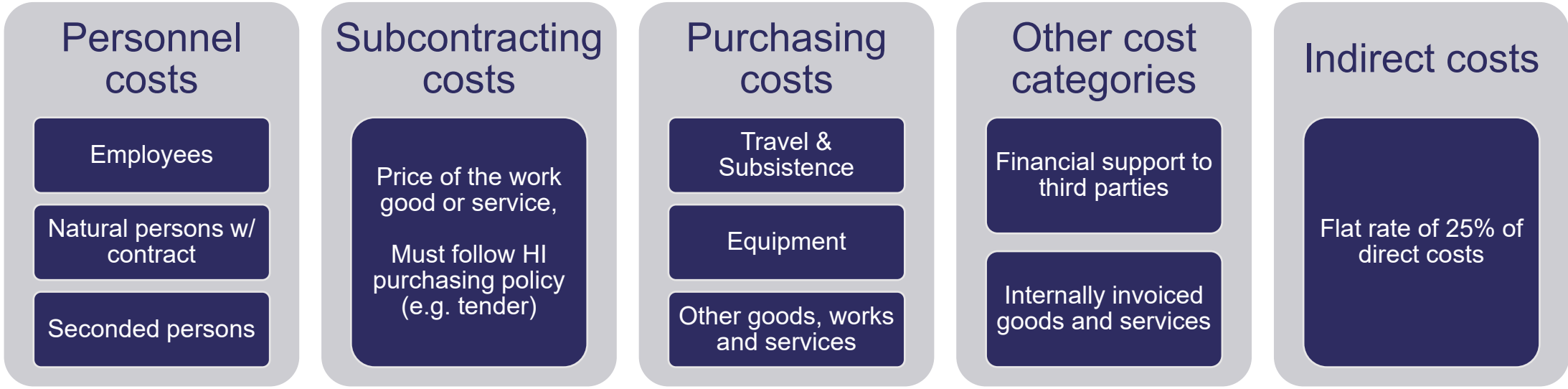
More in Session 2
about adding organisations other than the Host Institution on the EC portal (other beneficiaries or third parties)

Eligible costs for ERC projects

The ERC funds up to **100% of the total eligible costs with a 25% flat rate of indirect costs on top.**

- Same as most EU grants – based on actual cost reporting
- The budget covers the full project duration,
- It can be adjusted with budget transfers from one category to another, but the overall grant amount cannot be increased after start date.

The budget is subdivided into:



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Ask for support from your Host Institution's research support or finance team as early as possible,
The ERC project costing must follow Host Institution rules as well!

Whose rules?

Auditors will check that costs are both eligible by ERC rules **and** in keeping with the standard accounting practices of the Host Institution.

e.g. ERC allows hotel bookings in Paris for research trips, but a PI at a Paris host institution would not be allowed to charge it to their grant due to institutional rules

Funding Levels

Grant Type	Main Grant Amount up to:	"Additional Funding" up to:
Starting	**€1.5 M**	**€1.0 M**
Consolidator	€2.0 M	€1.0 M
Advanced	€2.5 M	€1.0 M
Synergy	€10 M	€4.0 M

ERC's Additional Funding:

- eligible "start-up" costs for PIs moving from outside Europe
- the purchase of major equipment
- access to large facilities
- major experimental/fieldwork costs (excluding personnel)

Additional funding requests are **mixed into the main budget table** but **written separately** in the justification of resources text

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Recap on what makes a quality ERC project

- You need to have a strong research question
  - ✓ *Interesting, significant, novel, exciting*
  - ✓ *Clearly define what the state of the art is and how your project goes beyond this*
- Need to have an excellent methodology
  - ✓ *Multidisciplinary research is strongly encouraged – as the PI you are not expected to be the expert in everything, but the best person to make the project succeed*
  - ✓ *As the PI, it's up to you to decide the structure to best solve your research question*
- Have realistic and well-defined research objectives
- Dedicate a lot of time to write an ERC proposal, plan wisely

What Do We Mean by Frontier Research?

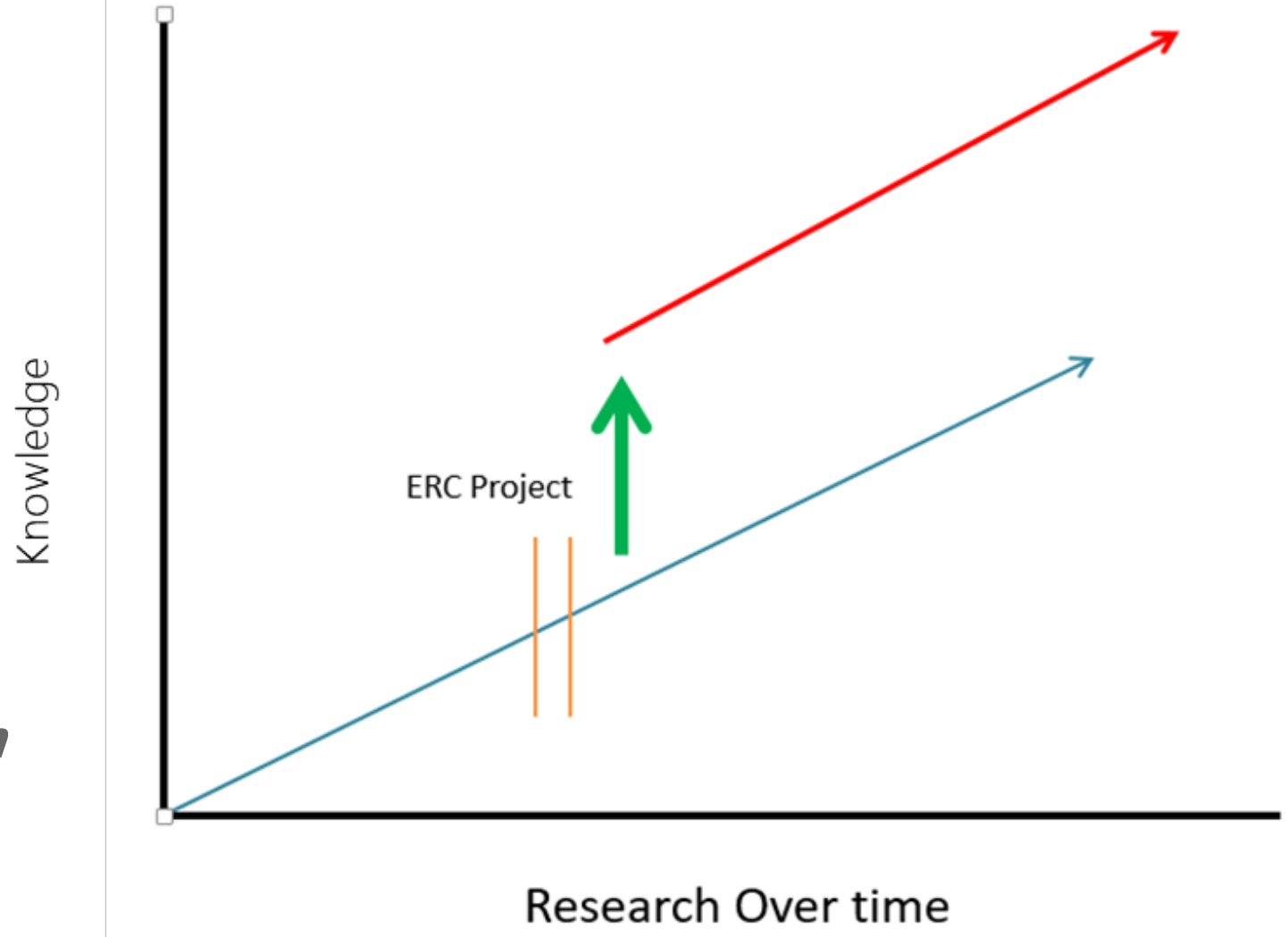
Groundbreaking research

Goes beyond current limits of your research area

Develops new horizons

New solutions to old problems

Exciting, high risk-high gain



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Short break

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ERC Proposal Development

Part B1 & B2

Part A is addressed in Friday's session

ERC Panel Structure
Open to any field of research

Physical Sciences & Engineering	Life Sciences*	Social Sciences & Humanities
PE1 Mathematics	**LS1** Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures & Functions	**SH1** Individuals, Markets and Organisations
PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter Particle	**LS2** Integrative Biology: Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems	**SH2** Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
PE3 Condensed Matter Physics	**LS3** Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology	**SH3** The Social World and its Diversity
PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences	**LS4** Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing	**SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials	**LS5** Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System	**SH5** Cultures and Cultural Production
PE6 Computer Science and Informatics	**LS6** Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy	**SH6** The Study of the Human Past
PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering	**LS7** Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases	**SH7** Human Mobility, Environment, and Space*
PE8 Products and Processes Engineering	**LS8** Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution	
PE9 Universe Sciences	**LS9** Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering	
PE10 Earth System Science		
PE11 Materials Engineering*		

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***Since 2021 all domains have changed slightly**, *check again to find your proposal's best fit!*

- **PE11** and **SH7** panels are newly added, split off from pre-existing panels
- Descriptors under **Life Sciences reshuffled**, changing the remit of existing panels

How do I pick the right panel for me and my project?

Make the right choice/configuration

You must choose a **best fit primary panel – might not be perfect**

You can choose a **secondary panel** – indicate where other panellists could help the primary panel to evaluate your proposal

Choose **Panel Descriptor**– this helps the Panel Chair to identify your proposal's main readers ahead of the panel meeting.

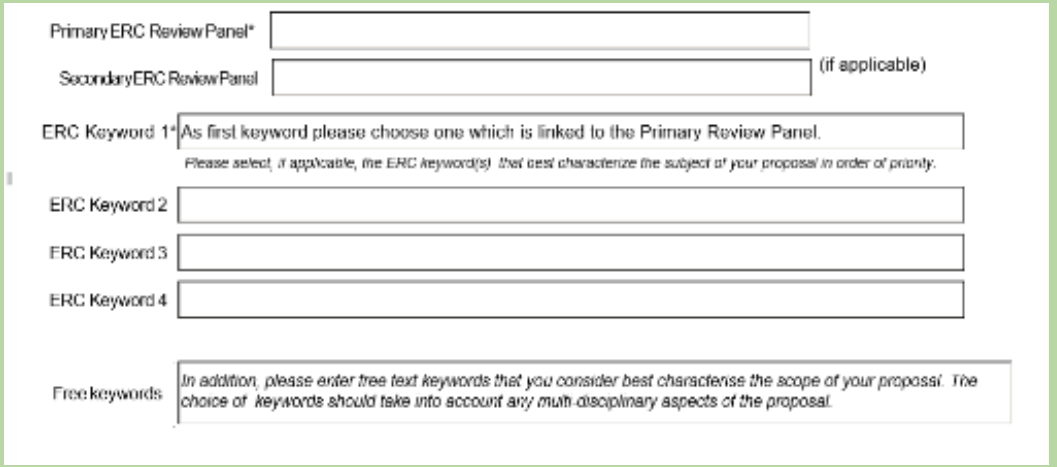
Choose **ERC-listed keywords from primary/secondary panel** in order of priority

Choose **Free keywords** that complement your selected ERC keywords.

Keywords in your abstract – try to use keywords that define your project because they are used by the ERC to find the right remote expert reviewers.

You can change your chosen panel right up to the deadline.

Evaluation panel section in Part A form



Do your homework to judge which panel best matches your proposal.

Read panel descriptors & keywords in the ERC Work Programme to get an idea of the best-fit panel for you – they align with the kinds of experts on the panel.

Search for previously funded projects from your potential panel choices to see examples of projects.
Use the ERC Information System

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Avoid mistakes with your panel selection

What doesn't work…

Don't try to refit your proposal to a more "generous panel" based on previous call statistics.

Why?

- Funding is allocated to panels demand and the ERC aims is for comparable success rates between panels
- That means heavily subscribed panels will have lots of unsuccessful applicants
- This year a panel call may be oversubscribed/undersubscribed compared to recent years, you don't know.
- In any case if you adapt your proposal to another panel, it is less likely to be excellent in the eyes of evaluators.

What if I pick the wrong panel?

Panel chairs can reallocate proposals if a better fit of expertise is on another evaluation panel.

But don't count on this:

- No guarantee that panel chairs will do this.
- A good reallocation might not be apparent to them, especially when they are working with a high volume of proposals
- Nobody knows your project like you do, you're best placed to choose the best-fit.

1-Step Submission

All parts submitted together by the call deadline.

Part A is filled in online.

B1, B2 & Annexes are uploaded as PDFs.

Part A

Administrative Forms and Abstract

- General Info
- Participating Institutions
- Budget & Description of Resources
- Ethics Check

Part B1

Proposal Overview and PI Track Record

- Cover page and summary
- Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
- CV (2 pages)
- Funding ID
- Track Record (2 pages)

Part B2

Detailed Research Proposal

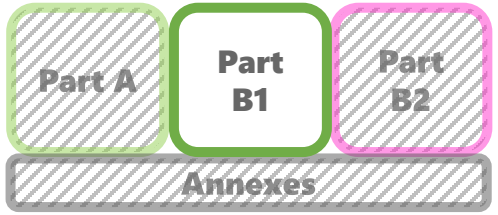
- State of the art
- Objectives
- Methodology

(Total of 14 pages)

Annexes

Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents

Part B1 –
Step 1 of the Evaluation



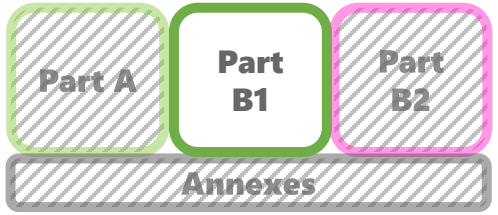
Strict formatting requirements:

Page Format	Font Type	Font Size	Line Spacing	Margins
A4	Times New Roman, Arial or similar	At least 11	Single	2cm Side 1.5cm Bottom

Part B1 includes:

- Cover Page (info repeated from Part A)
- Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
- CV (2 pages)
- Track Record (2 pages)
- Funding ID (not counted towards page limit)

Writing the Extended Synopsis



Self-contained

- All the essential info about your idea in 5 pages.
- Describe where the novelty lies – what is the state-of-the-art and how does this proposal go further?
- Your synopsis should be referenced, these won't count towards page limits – using end-notes is recommended.

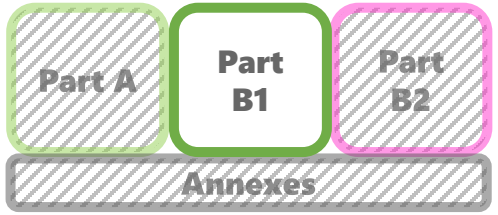
Persuasive to generalists

- A variety of experts decide collectively whether to pass the proposal to Step 2.
- Be clear and don't use specialist jargon because the panel are generalists as a whole, some will be less familiar with your field.
- Applicants need to persuade the whole panel – include just enough info and don't give any reasons to reject!

Entertaining!

- Sell your idea and yourself - the synopsis should grab the panellists' attention
- Your idea should be ambitious – be explicit about high risk and potentially high gain.
- The description of novelty and ambition should leave them curious to find out more detail in Part B2 and the interview at Step 2.

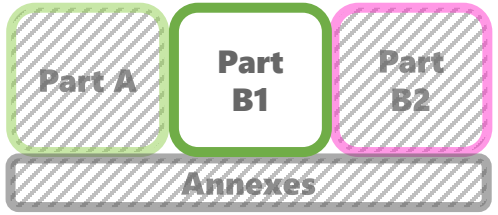
Things to think about: Extended Synopsis



- **Dual role:** key text in stand-alone B1, then goes hand-in hand with the B2 full proposal. Make it work in both ways, not as a summary of the full proposal
- **What excites you about your research?** Convey that in your application
- **Scientific Impact –** how can you change your field of research and make progress beyond the current state-of-the-art.
  - Does the research open new lines of research and/or enquiry
  - Will it lead to new scientific activity and further questions beyond the current frontier?
  - Be positive about achievements made by others thus far then demonstrate you have something new and different to offer.

- **Timeliness and relevance of the work during the project,** not just at the deadline but throughout the project's five years. Scientific impact can also be made at anytime of the project, not just at the end
- **Research Aims, should clearly link to the research objectives,** which should clearly link to research methodology(ies)

Writing your CV and filling in your Funding ID



Use the suggested template

- 2 page limit
- Be concise and make sure the CV is laid out clearly. Choose additional highlights wisely.
- CV template can also give you an indication of how to build your track record for future ERC bids.

Career breaks, reduced capacity or unconventional careers

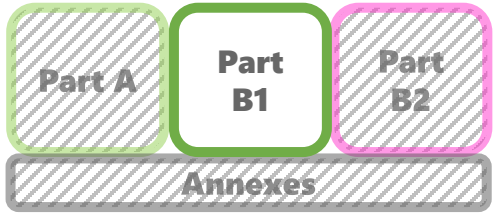
- Complement any eligibility extensions with descriptions of career circumstances, incl. how/when you have been restricted.
- What were able to achieve despite these restrictions or via this unconventional path?
- New since 2022 – Covid-19 Impact to scientific productivity (300 characters)

Describe significance

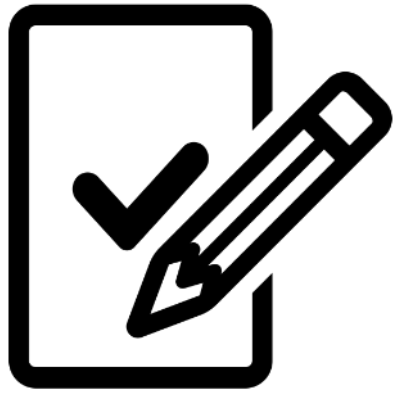
- Add concise descriptive captions to explain why an entry is significant
- What can you flag as demonstrating independence, maturity or showing leadership?
- Significance evaluated for your career level, not compared to the average/highest levels
- Your story will be laid out in the track record, but you can lay the groundwork in the CV.

Funding ID table lists your current grants and on-going/submitted grant applications. You also have to briefly outline any scientific overlap with the ERC proposal. (This table will not count towards the page limits).

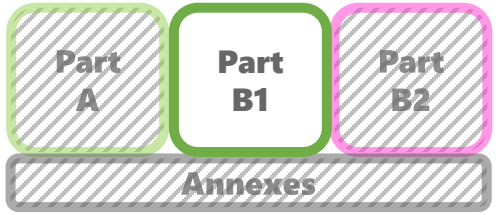
Things to think about: Your CV



- **Make your CV bespoke** and well-suited to the ERC evaluation criteria. Use the template but also include any kind of relevant activities
- Make sure the CV is **easy to read**, and information is easy to find
- Each CV entry can be **linked explicitly to the ERC's PI evaluation criterion with caption descriptions** about how you fit the profile given the context of your field and career context.
- **Highlight details of activities** that show your research independence and evidence of maturity. E.g. speaking role, experiment leader etc.
- **Briefly explain context** such as any career breaks or unusual pathways
- What was **your contribution** to key publications/activities?



Writing your Early Achievements Track-Record



Track Record

- 2 pages
- **Tell your story** - provide a brief explanation of what each entry on the CV & Funding ID indicates about you as an excellent potential Principal Investigator.
- Use these to relate points directly to the PI evaluation criterion.

5 publications for Starting Grant

- **At least one important publication as main author** or without the participation of their PhD supervisor. Include field relevant bibliometric indicators but NOT the Journal Impact Factor.
- Add **descriptive captions** if helpful to set the context for the authorship and impact of a publication.
- These publications will be judged on the basis of expectations in your field, but make sure their significance comes across to generalists.

Highlight independent research

- How and when have you distinguished yourself from your supervisor(s)
- What activity demonstrated self-organisation or leading of others?
- When did you activity attract the attention or participation of important figures in your field?

Early achievements

- Starting Grant sets expectations appropriate for an early career stage – but the applicant still has to demonstrate they are outstanding.
- Patents granted
- Invited presentations
- Prizes/awards/academy memberships

Part A

Administrative Forms and Abstract

- General Info
- Participating Institutions
- Budget & Resources
- Ethics Check

Part B1

Proposal Overview and PI Track Record

- Cover page and summary
- Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
- CV (2 pages)
- Funding ID
- Track Record (2 pages)

Part B2

Detailed Research Proposal

- State of the art
- Objectives
- Methodology

(Total of 14 pages)

Annexes

Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents

At Step 2 there is also a ~30 min interview with your panel (presentation and Q&A)

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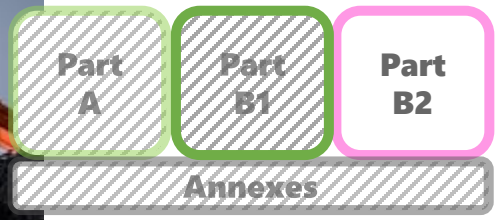
Part B2



- **State of the art and objectives**
  - Objectives here become grant agreement objectives

- **Methodology**
  - Proposed methodology
  - Milestones and alternatives
  - Risk and mitigation
  - Project Management
  - Publication & Exploitation of results

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Writing your State of the Art and Objectives

Coherence with Part B1

- Elaborate Part B1 coherently: Explain precisely how you plan to achieve what you promised.
- A remote expert review will be provided to the generalist panel, add technical detail that someone much closer to your field would need to know.
- Don't copy & paste from Part B1. Both looked at together at Step 2, so make them complementary.

State of the art

- It should be clear how and why the proposed work is important for the field.
- What scientific impact will your project have if successful? What new horizons or opportunities for science, technology or scholarship?

Objectives

- Objectives should fit the context of the state-of-the-art – they should match the ambition to go past the current frontier.
- These objectives will become part of the Grant Agreement if successful – so the need to be feasible.

Writing your Methodology

Methodology

- Should be **extensive**, include the essential detail that an expert in your field would need to know.
- Don't leave any reasons for experts to raise doubts for the panel
- Work plan should also be clear and **persuade evaluators that you can carry out the logistics** of a long term project.

Risk Mitigation Strategy

- Where possible **cover every risk with a mitigation strategy**.
- ERC accepts high risk to hopefully reach high gain – so don't shy away
- But evaluators and external experts can be risk averse.
- Explicit but controlled risk

Your team

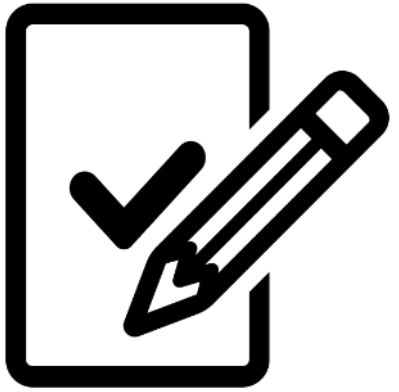
- Be sure to show **how you will be the leader** of the team and central figure for the project.
- **Explain what each team member will do** – these can be named people or roles specified for recruitment.

Justify resources

- Be **ambitious**, if you don't ask for something needed that can be a problem.
- Justify: budget lines must have place in the project and **be linked to objectives.**

Things to think about: The Scientific Proposal

- **Recap and expand** on Part B1 introductory Extended Synopsis.
- Detail the **current state of the art** in your field: highlight the achievements, challenges and gaps. How will your project go beyond these?
- Explain how, and why, your project is important to the field and what **impact** and **implications** it will have if successful. Timeliness should be shown throughout.
- Discuss the c**hallenges** and **unconventional aspects** of your project.
- **Coherence** and **clear linkages** throughout proposal text: linking aims to budget via research methodologies. The better your proposal is organised the more feasible the project work plan will appear.
- Any preliminary **data management plans** could add to the excellence of your scientific approach. The full data management plan is required by Month 6 if funded.



Other points to consider

Important aspects of proposal development that might not be immediately apparent.

Open Science

Under Horizon Europe, beneficiaries of ERC grants must ensure open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to their ERC project results.

- **Open access means accessible on:**
  - a trusted repository
  - under a CC BY (or equivalent) licence (either to the 'author accepted manuscript' or the published 'version of record').
- **For long-text publications like monographs**
  - a CC BY-NC / ND / NC-ND licence (or equivalent) is acceptable.
  - The ERC Scientific Council recommends the use of the OAPEN Open Books library (https://oapen.org) as repository for monographs and other books as well as book chapters.

- Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020
- www.openaire.eu
- https://www.fosteropenscience.eu/

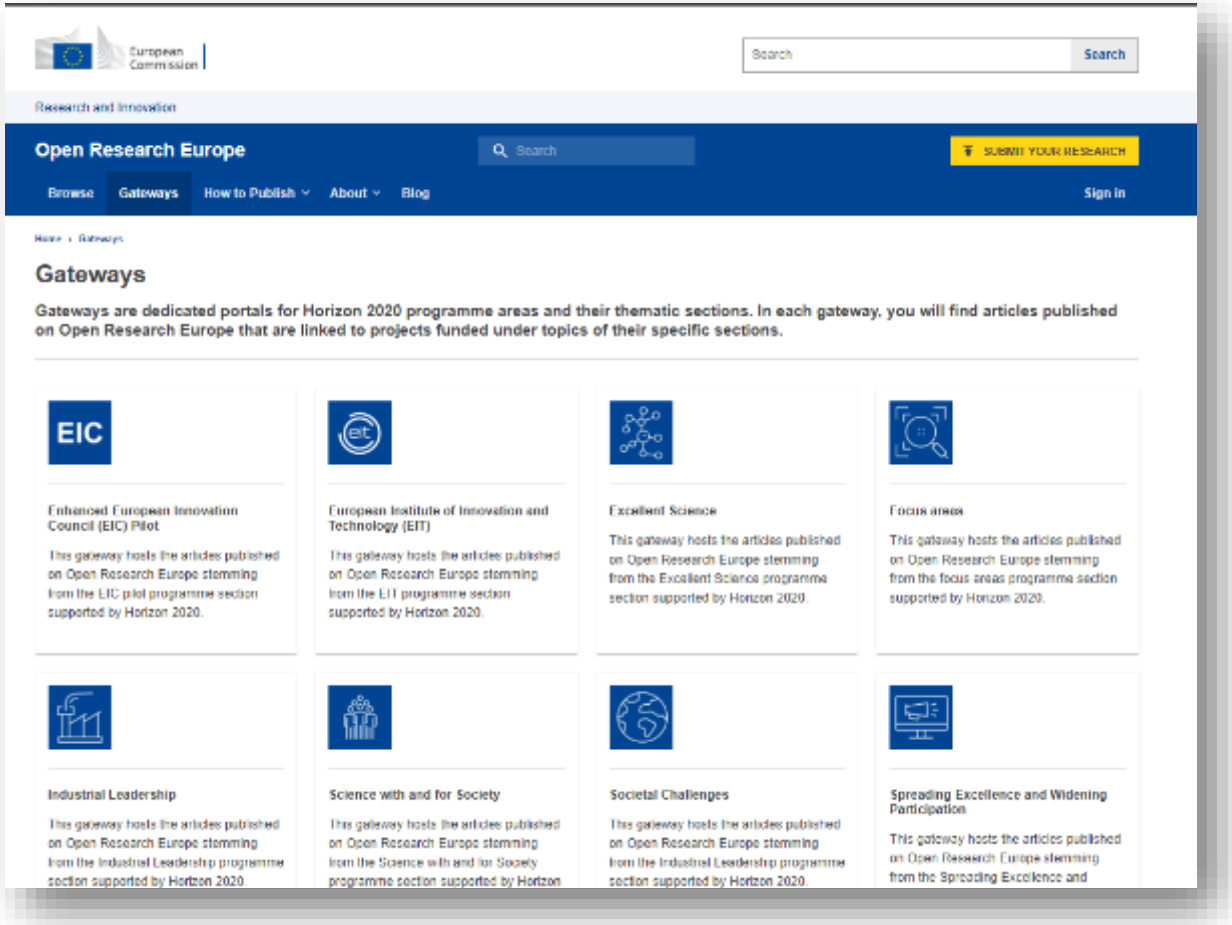
Publishing Fees

Will not be eligible for funding from the grant if the publication venue is not fully open access

(i.e. a fully open access journal or book, or an open access publishing platform like, e.g., Open Research Europe)

Provisions related to Open Science can be found on pages 107 – 109 of the Model Grant Agreement

Open Research Europe



Scholarly publishing platform that will provide Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe beneficiaries with a no-cost full open access peer-reviewed publishing service, across all fields of research

https://open-research-europe.ec.europa.eu/

Why Gender?

Sex & Gender is not an extra criteria, but it could have a lot to do with your proposal's scientific excellence.

Make sure you think about it in your research design relative your field/discipline, evaluators might see this as a gap in your proposal.

Click here to watch an ERC workshop

ERC grantees talking about how the ***Sex and Gender Dimension is involved in each ERC domain*** *(Physical Sciences & Engineering, Life Sciences and Social Sciences & Humanities)*

Some ideas to ponder:

- Integrating the gender dimension in R&I can be added value in terms of **excellence** and **creativity**
- S&G helps researchers question gender norms and stereotypes, to rethink standards and reference models – **improve methodology**
- It can **enhance** the **validity of results** and the **societal relevance** of the knowledge, technologies and innovations produced.
- It also contributes to the **production of goods and services** better suited to potential markets – not specifically important for winning an ERC but it could be a big deal further down the line.

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Covid-19 and the ERC

- Possible to postpone project start date by 6 months
- Possible to extend duration of project by 6 months or further on case by case basis
- Flexibility on teleworking and time commitments (notify ERCEA)
- **New since 2022** – Covid-19 Impact to scientific productivity (300 characters in CV)

Remember – EU financial contribution to the project cannot be raised

Click here for the ERC's up to date coronavirus measures

(covering submission, evaluation, interviews and implementation)

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The Next Session for this Webinar

Register for the 2nd Information Webinar
on Friday 24 June 10:00 – 12:00 UK time :
UKRO Events and Conference and find the specific session page.

In this next session, we will cover:

- Detailed explanation of how to submit the forms,
- How proposals are evaluated by the ERC

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Useful links

Links to 2022 Work Programmes & Guidance.

Use the 2023 call documents when they become available

- ERC 2023 StG call on the Funding and Tenders portal - Not yet available.
- ERC 2022 StG and CoG Information for Applicants
- Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement
- Part B1/B2, Host Institution Support Template (pdf)
- ERC Website, including the easy to use Project Database and the more in depth ERC Information System
- Novelties in the Horizon Europe MGA – Commission Stakeholder Workshop video

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Guest speaker

Dr Natasha Barlow

Associate Professor of Quaternary Environmental Change,
School of Earth and Environment,
University of Leeds

ERC Principal Investigator on RISeR
(2018 ERC Starting Grant)

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Thank you, any questions?

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