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erc European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC 2022 Consolidator Call Webinar

Session 2:

Submitting your proposal and how it is evaluated by the ERC

20 October 2021

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

Dr Branwen Hide

– Senior European Advisor and NCP coordinator for the ERC & MSCA

Guest Presenter: Prof. Bhismadev Chakrabarti, University of Reading

ERC Consolidator Grantee 2019

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What will be covered in this webinar?

- UKRO & UK Participation in Horizon Europe
- Recap about the ERC
- Submission Process
- How the proposal is evaluated
- Guest speaker and Q&A

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Housekeeping

- All participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar.

- Please use the Q&A function to submit questions.

- A chat function is available and will be monitored.

- You can 'up vote' your favourite questions on Q&A.

- We will be recording this session.

- Slides will be shared after the webinar on the event page.

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About UKRO

We support UK research intensive organisations

UK National Contact Point for the
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 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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UK-EU TRADE AND COOPERATION AGREEMENT

Summary

December 2020

Recap about the ERC

Brief recap of the overview presented previously in Session 1

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 Frontier Research Grant Schemes

The ERC funds

- the best 'frontier research' proposals
- submitted by excellent researchers
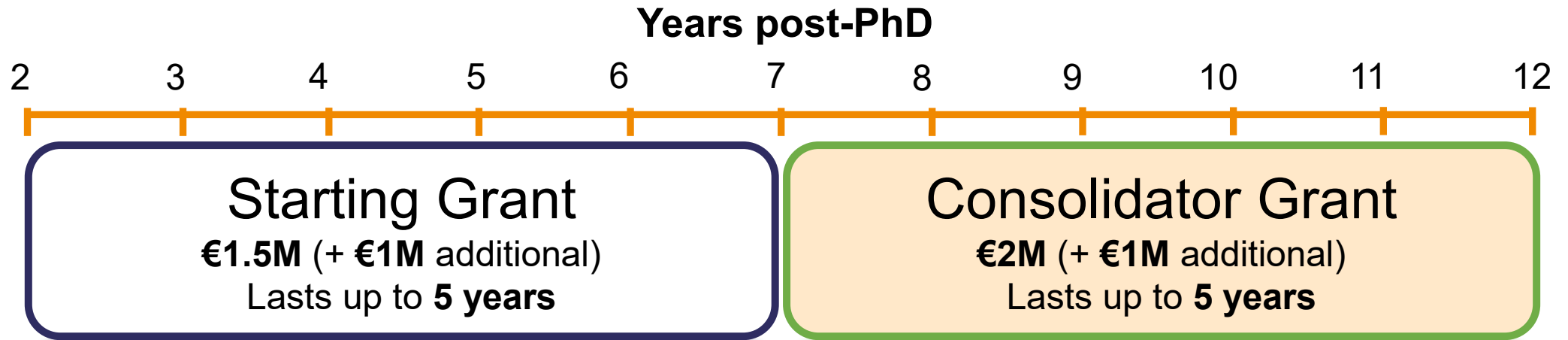- in the research field of their choice

Projects are led by a Principal Investigator

- plus team members (if required)
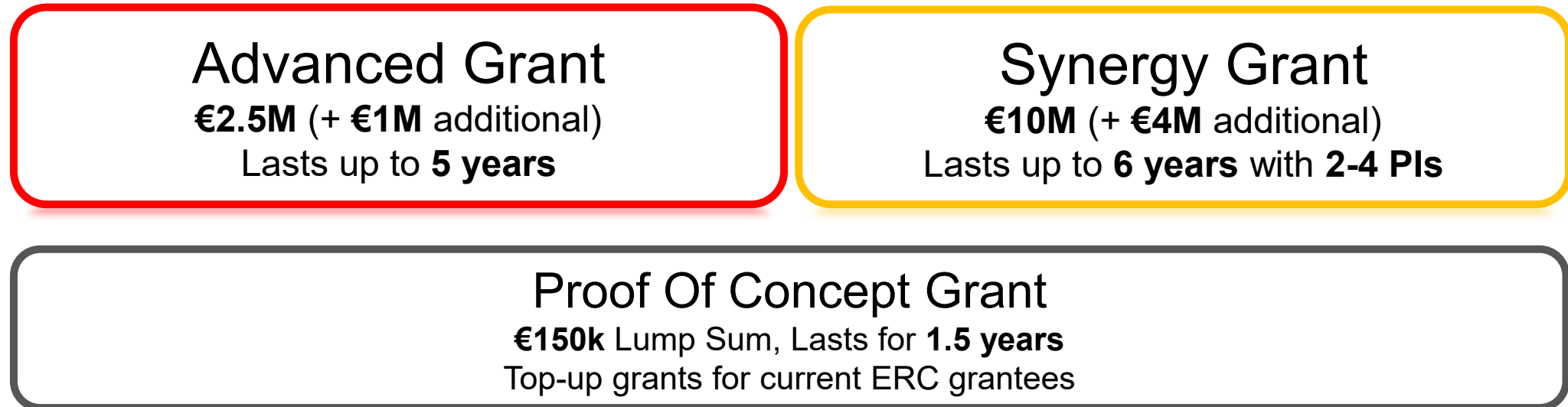- NOT the same as a collaborative grant

Funds any field of research

- Evaluation by 27 expert panels under 3 domains:
  - Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE)
  - Life Sciences (LS)
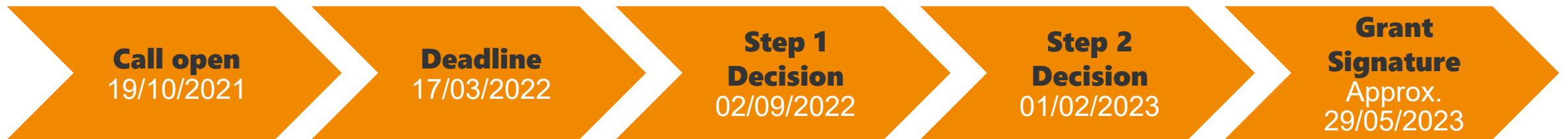 - Social Sciences and Humanities (SH)

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2022 Consolidator Grant call details

Call Identifier	ERC-2022-CoG
Budget	€776 Million
Estimated no. grants funded	388

Call open
19/10/2021

Deadline
17/03/2022

Step 1 Decision
02/09/2022

Step 2 Decision
01/02/2023

Grant Signature
Approx. 29/05/2023

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ERC Submission Process

Approaching Proposal Submission

Register in the Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal and create an ECAS account

Get in touch with your research support office

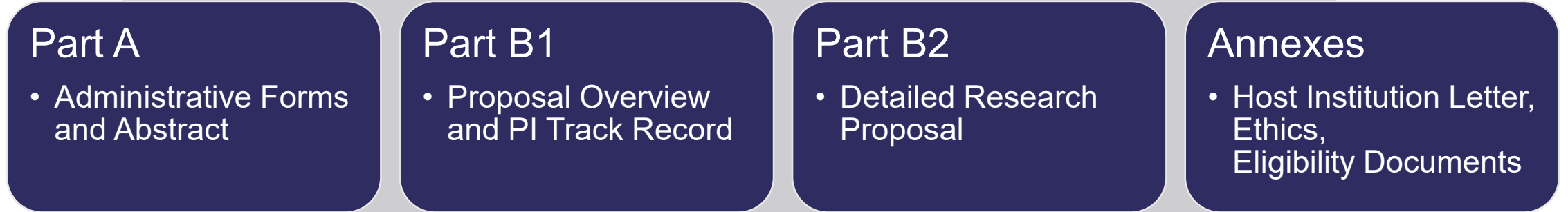Add relevant contact people to the online application

Submit early and often – latest version will be accepted

Keep the Information for Applicants in front of you throughout!!!

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ERC Proposal Submission

Part A
- Administrative Forms and Abstract

Part B1
- Proposal Overview and PI Track Record

Part B2
- Detailed Research Proposal

Annexes
- Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents

1-step submission: all parts of the proposal are submitted together at deadline

- Part A is filled in online on the Funding and Tenders Portal
- Part B1, Part B2 and the Annexes are uploaded as PDFs to the Funding and Tenders Portal.

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A combined template of these forms is available on the EC website.

Find the call on the Funding & Tenders Portal

Use the [topic search](#)

ERC CONSOLIDATOR GRANTS

TOPIC ID: ERC-2022-COG

Grant

General information	**General information**
Topic updates	
Topic description	
Conditions and documents	
Partner search	
Submission service	
Topic related FAQ	

Programme
Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON)

Work programme part
HORIZON-ERC-2022

Call
Call for Proposals for ERC Consolidator Grant (ERC-2022-COG)

Work programme year
HORIZON-ERC-2022

See budget overview

Type of action
HORIZON-ERC HORIZON ERC Grants

Type of MGA
HORIZON Action Grant Budget-Based [HORIZON-AG]

Forthcoming

Call listed as forthcoming

Until the submission link is available, key documents are available on the ERC website.

PDF of the Consolidator Grant application template is available Incl. Part A, B1 & B2 – use it before the call opens on the portal.

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First page of proposal submission

IDENTIFY THE HOST INSTITUTION (PIC number)

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE ON THE PROPOSAL?

BASIC DETAILS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Select your primary evaluation panel (e.g. LS3/SH1/PE4 etc)

See a full list of ERC panels and keywords in Annex 4 of the Information for Applicants document (from page 31)

Anything you enter in this part of the form **can be edited later**!

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The Abstract

First thing that everyone looks at

Used by the panel chair to choose which panel members will undertake the Step 1 review
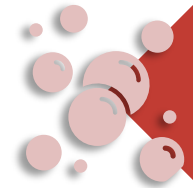
Mention interdisciplinary elements

Public facing – a version will be available on CORDIS if your project is selected

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Don't forget to add excellence to the abstract

Most of Part A is not evaluated by experts but the evaluators do get a cover page using information from that online form.

Make sure it's exciting and memorable for panellists!

Your abstract is an important first glimpse of your proposal, and also their short, digest point of reference to what you want to do.

Getting your abstract right is a great way to improve your chances of standing out for the expert panel.

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ERC Panel Structure

Must choose a primary evaluation panel	Optional secondary evaluation panel	Optional free key words	Applicants can flag their proposal as interdisciplinary

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: 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		

https://erc.europa.eu/document-category/evaluation-panels

Query on trans/interdisciplinary ERC proposals

Could you please elaborate on a transdisciplinary approach and its potentials as you are talking much about a disciplinary approach?

- The advice we provided yesterday was meant to apply broadly to those with proposal that fit into one discipline, involve more than one discipline or cut across disciplines (and everything in between)

- There is no competitive edge to any kind of disciplinary approach so long as it is excellent

- Applicants still need to choose the best fit of evaluation panels for their project and profile

- There is a specific option available to "flag their proposal as interdisciplinary" so that panel chairs take that into account when planning for it's evaluation – on top of your panel choices, keywords etc.

From the Information for Applicants:

"the ERC encourages proposals of a multi- or interdisciplinary nature which cross the boundaries between different fields of research, pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions"

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Main proposal page

Part A: Administrative Forms
online only

Part B1 & Part B2
Upload PDFs based on editable templates
Other documents listed below uploaded separately as PDFs

Part B1 & Part B2
Editable templates available to download

Support for using the EC portal
- Not support on content of proposals
- Any issues during submission should be logged with the helpdesk

Proposal forms

Deadline
13 January 2022 17:00:00 Brussels Local Time

In this step you can edit the Administrative Forms and upload the proposal itself. ❓ ✕

Your proposal contains changes that have not yet been submitted.

Call data:

Call: **ERC-2022-STG**
Topic: **ERC-2022-STG**
Type of action: **HORIZON-ERC**
Type of MGA: **HORIZON-AG**

⚠ Topic and type of action can only be changed by creating a new proposal.

Proposal data:

Acronym: **test**
Draft ID: **SEP-210804753**

Download Part B templates

⬇ Download part B templates

Support & Helpdesk

📖 Online Manual   ℹ IT How To

✉ IT Helpdesk   ❓ FAQ

Service Desk:

✉ EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu

📞 +32 2 29 92222

Administrative forms (Part A)

Edit forms ✏   View history   Print preview   ❓

Part B and Annexes

In this section you may upload the technical annex of the proposal (in PDF format only) and any other requested attachments. ❓

Part B1	❓	Upload ☁
Part B2	❓	Upload ☁
HI support letter	❓	Upload ☁
PhD certificate	❓	Upload ☁
Annex 1	❓	Upload ☁
Annex 2	❓	Upload ☁
Annex 3	❓	Upload ☁
Annex 4	❓	Upload ☁
Annex 5	❓	Upload ☁
Annex 6	❓	Upload ☁

◀ BACK TO PARTICIPANTS LIST   VALIDATE   SUBMIT

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IT issues on the Funding & Tenders Portal

Avoid issues by:

- Validate your proposal regularly

- Submit early and often. Only the most last submission will be evaluated

- You can always submit an improved draft later but if there are IT issues and you do not manage to make any submission before the deadline, the proposal is unlikely to be accepted

- Avoid using special characters for file upload. Only alphanumerical characters (A-Z, a-z, 0-9, _ (underscore), - (dash), . (dot) or space are allowed.

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Resolving IT issues

Contact the [EC's IT Helpdesk](link) ASAP
Send screenshots and clear description of the problem.

Log the problem!

Call them if it is urgent:+32 2299 2222

Once you have contact the helpdesk and your issue has been logged, you can try to resolve the issue with minor fixes, e.g.:

- Try using a different browser or computer.
- Try again at another time of day when traffic might be lower on the portal.

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Part A – Administrative forms

Navigate by chapter or pages

How to fill in the forms

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Part A – PI Declaration of Consent

- These consents **should not be submitted with the application**, but the applicant must ensure they have written consent from all participants prior to the call submission deadline.
- ERC Executive Agency **may request the applicants to provide the written consent** mentioned in the declarations at any time during the evaluation process

Part A - Gender Equality Plans (GEP)

The host institution will need a GEP in place to submit to the 2022 call

- **Not the responsibility of individual PI applicants,** it is meant for the organisation, approved by management.

- **Applies to public bodies, research organisations and HEIs,** not required for SMEs, industry, NGOs or civil society organisations.

GEP must have the following building blocks:

Publication	Dedicated resources	Data collection and monitoring	Training
• formal document published on the institution's website and signed by the top management	• commitment of resources and gender expertise to implement it	• sex/gender disaggregated data on personnel and students and annual reporting based on indicators	• Awareness raising/trainings on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and

Check with research support whether your host organisation is preparing for this eligibility criteria.

Part A - Budget & Resources

3 - Budget

Please indicate the costs for each cost category as accurate as possible using only Euro integers. The 'Total eligible costs' of the project will be automatically calculated based on the figures inserted in the individual columns. The 'Requested EU contribution' has to be filled in manually. Please make sure to update the 'Requested EU contribution' if updates are made in any of the cost categories.

PI: When calculating the salary, please take into account the percentage of your working time dedicated to the ERC project.

Other personnel costs and Other additional direct costs:
If applicable, please specify this cost category in the Resources section (textbox below).

Internally invoiced goods and services:
Costs for host institution invoices and invoices for other entities should be included here; e.g. access to large facilities, access to other services that are charged as unit costs.
For more details on the budget table, please consult the ERC Information for Applicants document applicable to the call and year. Please note that the budget table and the description of resources below will be made available to the experts evaluating the proposal at Step 2.

	PI	Senior Staff	Postdocs	Students	Other Personnel costs	A Total personnel costs €	B. Subcontracting Costs €	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment - including	Consum-ables incl fieldwork	Publications (incl. Open Access fees)	Other additional direct costs	C.3 Total other goods, works and	Total Purchase costs €	D. Internally invoiced goods and	E. Indirect Cost €	Total Eligible Costs	Re

Section C. Resources (Maximum 8000 characters allowed)

This section and the budget table will be made available to the experts evaluating the proposal at Step 2. Important: your description of resources will be truncated once it exceeds the maximum allowed characters. Please make sure that your description is complete before submitting.

State and fully justify the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the objectives for the duration of the project. The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. The evaluation panels assess the estimated costs carefully; unjustified budgets will be consequently reduced. Please specify if you will use third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action.

If applicable, please specify the cost items covered by your 'Other personnel costs' category and the cost items covered by your 'Other additional direct costs' category.

Request for additional funding if applicable (All items MUST be included in the overall budget table above): (Cost in EUR)

Justification:

Part A - Budget

Budget and Resources description [are seen by evaluators](#) but no longer count towards B2 Page limit

Four main sections:

- Personnel
- Subcontracting
- Purchase
- Internally invoiced good and services

All 'Additional Funding' requested must be

- Included in the overall budget table
- Added to sums under each appropriate cost category
- *For example fieldwork travel would go under Travel & Subsistence along with non-fieldwork travel like conferences*

If funding is requested for 'Other personnel costs' & 'Other additional direct costs'

- Should be entered as a total figure on your budget table
- Should be unpacked in the Resource section with each item briefly described

Budget summary

Beneficiary organisation(s)	Total cost (€)	Requested AMT (€)
1. Name of Institution, country	x,xxx,xxx.00	xxx,xxx.00

Budget details

Cost Category / Beneficiary			Name of Institution	Total
A. Personnel costs	PI		xx	xx
	Senior Staff		xx	xx
	Postdocs		xx	xx
	Students		xx	xx
	Other Personnel costs		xx	xx
Total Personnel costs			Xxx	Xxx
B. Subcontracting costs (no indirect costs)			xx	xx
C. Purchase costs	C.1 Travel and subsistence		xx	xx
	C.2. Equipment incl. major equipment		xx	xx
	C.3 Other goods, works and services	Consumables incl. fieldwork and animal costs	xx	xx
		Publications (incl. Open Access fees) and dissemination	xx	xx
		Other additional direct costs	xx	xx
		C.3 Total other goods, works and services	Xx	Xx
Total Purchase costs (C1 + C2 + C3)			Xxx	Xxx
D. Internally invoiced goods and services (no indirect costs)			Xx	Xx
E. Indirect costs (= 25% * (A + C1 + C2 + C3))			Xxx	Xxx
Total eligible costs (A + B + C + D + E)			X.xxx.xxx	X.xxx.xxx
Requested EU contribution			X.XXX.XXX	X.XXX.XXX

[53] This is an example of how the Proposal Budget Report looks like for the experts. Please note that the layout may be further adapted when needed.

Part A – Description of Resources

Specify all the resources required and justify them against the needs of the project.

Unjustified budget lines may be reduced or count against your proposal.

Suggested elements to briefly describe and justify:

- Describe **your commitment** to the project
- Describe **all the cost categories** considered necessary for the project
- Describe the **size and nature of the team**, indicating the key team member(s) and their roles, or key vacant roles, specify and justify if they based at organisations other than the Host
- Describe any requested **equipment**, justify why you need it and how much it will be used
- Include the costs for **Open Access** to project outputs including data management
- Describe any **additional funding** requested for the project
- Describe any **existing resources that will be used but don't require funding**

Template for Resources Description (from Information for Applicants page 53)

- "*I plan to allocate ….*" +Justification

- Max. 8000 characters (equivalent to about 2 pages)

- Request for **additional funding** if applicable.
  - Provide a total figure (cost in EUR)
  - Address specific grounds for additional funding in justification..
  - Additional funding described separately in Resources section

Query on how much funding to request out of the €2M

Does the amount of money requested affect chances of success (beyond whether reviewers think it's justified)

- There is no 'special number' or bias towards cheaper/more expensive proposals

- It's about having the right amount in the eyes of the expert panel to cover what is needed to carry out the work

- Requesting too little or too much can be a factor in a proposal not being successful

Tips for developing your funding request:

- Base it on your project

- *Seek support from your Host Institution as soon as possible! Without their advice your costing might have problems*

- Get feedback on your budget from those who read your Part B2

- Don't worry too much about the finest details. An ERC PI has a great degree of freedom and flexibility with there budget, so your proposal is an estimate which can be adjusted and adapted over the 5 year project

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Final Ranked List Calculation

Budgets are set by researchers' demand

$$\frac{\text{Requested EU Contribution (Panel)}}{\text{Requested EU Contribution (Total)}} \times \text{Available Budget} = \text{Panel Budget}$$

Normalised Accumulated Budget (NAB)

$$\frac{\text{Funding Requested} + \text{(Funding for Higher Ranked Proposals)}}{\text{Panel Budget}} \times 100 = \text{NAB}$$

Evaluators make a ranking list, then the cut off is decided automatically

Example: If a Panel has a €6 million budget:
- 3 projects selected
- 1 on reserve list

Rank	Funding	Score	NAB	Funded?
1	€2M	A	1/3 x 100 = 33%	Yes
2	€2M	A	(1+1)/3 x 100 = 67%	Yes
3	€2M	A	(1+1+1)/3 x 100 = 100%	Yes
4	€2M	A	(1+1+1+1)/3 x 100 = 133%	Reserve?
5	€2M	B	(1+1+1+1+1)/3 x 100 = 168%	No
6	€2M	B	(1+1+1+1+1+1)/3 x 100 = 200%	No

Proposals with a NAB between 0% and 100% are funded.

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ERC Additional funding

Additional funding up to €1 million (incl. 25% indirect costs) can be requested to cover the following eligible costs when these are necessary to carry out the proposed work:

"Start-up" costs for PIs moving to the EU or an AC from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant

AND/OR

The purchase of major equipment

AND/OR

Access to large facilities

AND/OR

Other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs
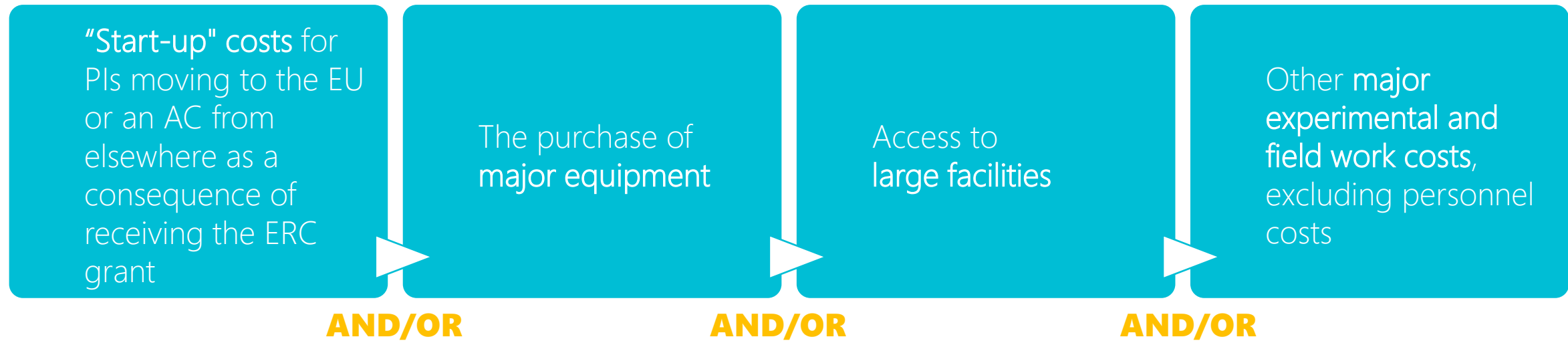
Special features of Additional Funding:

- What fits into the 4 categories in your field will vary from other fields
- If this additional part of the budget is not spent it cannot be transferred
- Same amount available to all ERC schemes

Part A – Ethics & Security questions

- Follow Horizon Europe guidance document: **'How to complete your ethics self-assessment'**

- UK applicants should **answer 'yes' on questions about non-EU activity.** This will not affect eligibility.

- Answering 'yes' on certain questions may require a **brief text response** from the applicant.

- Applicants may be requested to **upload documents** related to particular questions.

- **Free text character limits:** 5000 per text box

- If the character limit is too short, we recommend using a separate document **uploaded as one of the optional PDF annexes.** Make a reference to the annex in the Ethics text box in the application form.

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4 - Ethics & security

Ethics Issues Table [?]

1. Human Embryonic Stem Cells and Human Embryos		Page
Does this activity involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?	○ Yes ● No	
Does this activity involve the use of human embryos?	○ Yes ● No	

2. Humans		Page
Does this activity involve human participants?	○ Yes ● No	
Does this activity involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, etc.) on the study participants?	○ Yes ● No	
Does this activity involve conducting a clinical study as defined by the Clinical Trial Regulation (EU 536/2014)? (using pharmaceuticals, biologicals, radiopharmaceuticals, or advanced therapy medicinal products)	○ Yes ● No	

3. Human Cells / Tissues (not covered by section 1)		Page
Does this activity involve the use of human cells or tissues?	○ Yes ● No	

4. Personal Data		Page
Does this activity involve processing of personal data?	○ Yes ● No	
Does this activity involve further processing of previously collected personal data (including use of preexisting data sets or sources, merging existing data sets)?	○ Yes ● No	
Is it planned to export personal data from the EU to non-EU countries? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	○ Yes ● No	
Is it planned to import personal data from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	○ Yes ● No	
Does this activity involve the processing of personal data related to criminal convictions or offences?	○ Yes ● No	

5. Animals		Page
Does this activity involve animals?	○ Yes ● No	

6. Non-EU Countries		Page
Will some of the activities be carried out in non-EU countries?	○ Yes ● No	
In case non-UE countries are involved, do the activities undertaken in these countries raise potential ethics issues?	○ Yes ● No	
It is planned to use local resources (e.g. animal and/or human tissue samples, genetic material, live animals, human remains, materials of historical value, endangered fauna or flora samples, etc.)?	○ Yes ● No	
Is it planned to import any material (other than data) from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? For data imports, see section 4.	○ Yes ● No	
Is it planned to export any material (other than data) from the EU to non-EU countries? For data exports, see section 4.	○ Yes ● No	

Page references to relevant sections in Part B1 & B2 for each issue if you answer 'Yes'

Part A – Responses on non-EU activity

Ethics Section 6, Non-EU countries – *"Will some of the activities be carried out in non-EU countries?"*

- Answer **yes for UK activity** and cite relevant points in the proposal.
- Similarly if there are any other activities outside EU member states.

Ethics Section 4, Personal data – *"Is it planned to export personal data from the EU to non-EU countries?"*

- Explain how these exports are **in accordance with GDPR** (Chapter V of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679).
- Mention the **EU Adequacy Decisions for the UK** on the protection of individuals regarding the processing of personal data and free movement of such data from the EU to the UK.

Security Section 1 EU classified information – *"Does this activity involve non-EU countries?"*

- You need to answer **yes for UK activity if the project involves EU classified information** (EUCI; see Article 3 definition)

Read the Commission's step-by-step guidance on how to complete the ethics self-assessment

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Supporting Documents

About the Applicant

- Evidence of **degree & date of award**

- Documentation to support **extension of the eligibility window** (if relevant)
  - Birth certificates
  - Doctor's letters
  - Proof of leave from an employer/previous employer
  - Etc.

About the Institution

- Host Institution **support letter**
  (using the NEW template, on official headed letter)

- Documentation to support extension of the eligibility window for applicant (if relevant)

About the Project

- **Ethics documents** if requested by the Part A Ethics questionnaire (e.g. ethics committee decisions, licenses etc.)

- If the **character limit in the Ethics questionnaire is too short,** upload appropriate responses as PDF annexes.
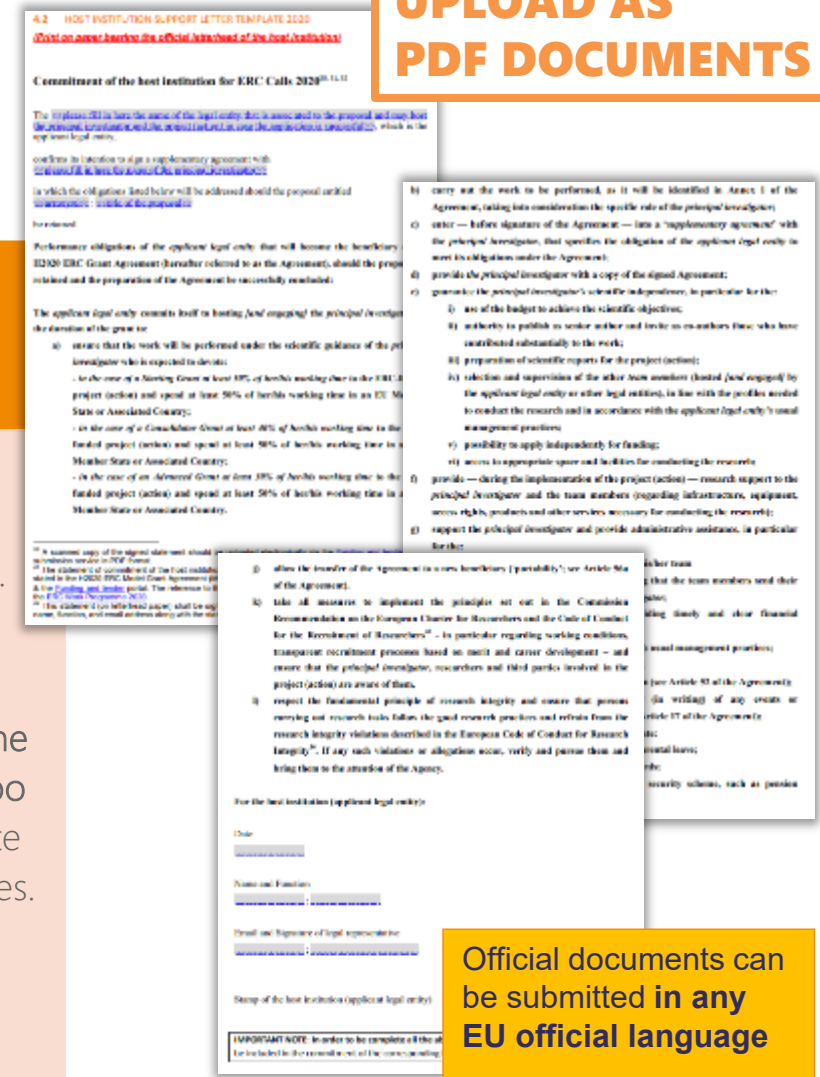
Official documents can be submitted **in any EU official language**

OR

certified translation into any EU language

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Data Management Plan (DMP)

Every ERC grantee must submit a DMP within 6 months of the start of their ERC project.

Further information:

- [Information for ERC Grantees on DMP](#)

- [Data Management Plan](#)

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Proposal Formatting & Templates

Page limits will be strictly applied

Page formatting will be systematically checked by the ERCEA

References do not count towards page limit

Templates:
- [2022 Consolidator Grant application form template](link) (PDF version)

Header: [PI surname], [Project acronym] & [Proposal section (Part B1 or Part B2)]

Font:
- Times New Roman, Arial or Similar
- At least font size 11,
- Single line spacing

Side margin: 2 cm

Bottom margin: 1.5 cm

Page Format: A4

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Part B1: Evaluated at Step 1 and Step 2

Cover page & summary

Abstract

Half a page

Copy/paste of abstract from Part A

If interdisciplinary or cross-panel

Justification

Indicate the additional ERC review panel(s)

Extended Synopsis (5 pages)

Contains all essential info about scientific proposal

Including feasibility

ERC-style project

Address the evaluation criteria, show why the project is exciting!

References should be included

Do not count towards the page limits

CV (2 pages)

Use the template

Career path

Indicate any career breaks or unconventional career paths or Covid impact to scientific productivity

Track Record (2 pages)

List and describe your important achievements to date

ERC profile

Address the evaluation criteria when describing your track record

Most important publications

Up to 10, can be fewer

Should have several publications as main author and/or without your PhD supervisor

Funding ID

List your research funding

Ongoing grants

Forthcoming/submitted applications

Not your past grants

This table will not count towards the page limit

Correction from yesterday's session on B1 Track Record

How many "important publications"?

Someone noticed an error in the guidance we communicated.

The expectations of independence and maturity are higher than we conveyed, as set out in the guidance below (with Starting Profile included for comparison).

Do monographs count as well?

Publications can mean articles, monographs etc.

The ERC leaves it open, so the lists that competitive candidates include will vary depending on what is expected in the relevant field.

Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant
A competitive STG PI must have already shown the potential for research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced at least one important publication as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.	A competitive COG PI must have already shown research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced several important publications as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.
All PIs should also be able to demonstrate a promising track record of early achievements appropriate to their research field and career stage, including significant publications (as main author) in major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals, or in leading international peer-reviewed journals of their respective field. Publications may be listed with their field relevant bibliometric indicators, however without mentioning the Journal Impact Factor. They may also demonstrate a record of invited presentations in well-established international conferences, granted patents, awards, prizes etc.	

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Bibliometrics and Impact Factors

ERC has formally endorsed the **San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)**:

> *Do not use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist's contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions*

What does this mean for applicants?

- Publications listed in the "track record" (Part B1) **can have contextual details** incl. field-relevant bibliometric indicators

- **Journal Impact Factor will be disregarded** anywhere in the proposal

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Part B2: only evaluated if proposal is selected for Step 2

Scientific Proposal

Maximum 14 pages

Must contain the following sections:

State of the art

Objectives & Methodology

Address the 'high-risk/high-gain' balance

Milestones & Deliverables

Risk & mitigation

References should be included
(they do not count towards the page limits)
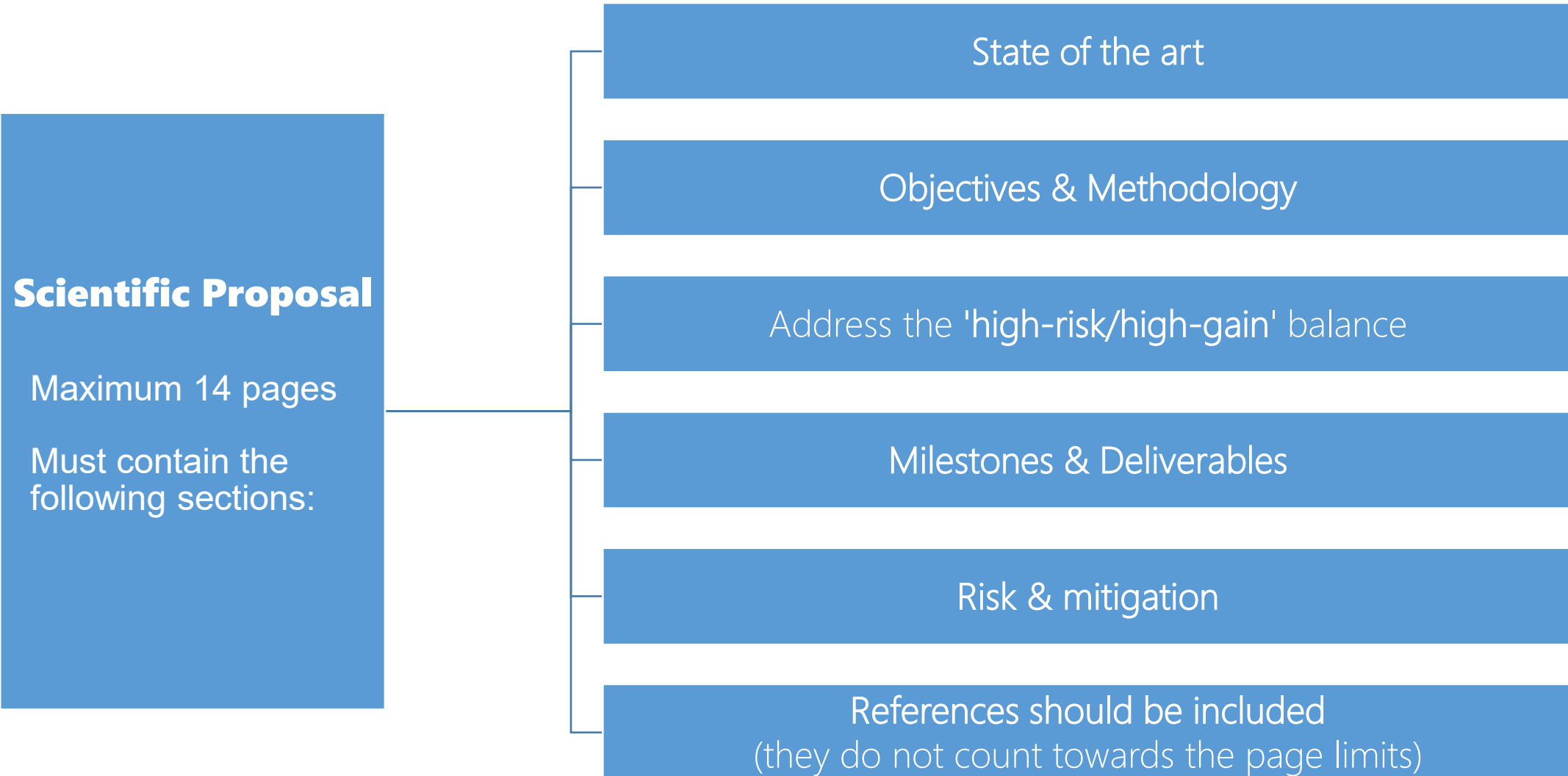
Should I describe my team in Part B1 or B2?

PIs should describe their team in Part B2, including how they fit in with the work plan and methodology

With Part B1's 5 page limit, it is unlikely there will be space for describing the team

The priority in Part B1 is an eye-catching presentation of:

- the **Project** and
- the **Principal Investigator**

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Short break

ERC Evaluation Process & Criteria

Evaluation Process

Tentative timeframe for CoG call feedback

- **September 2022**
  Feedback to unsuccessful applicants about Step 1 evaluation.
  Interview invitations sent to successful candidates passed to Step 2

- **February 2023**
  All applicants informed about Step 2 evaluation

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PI has approx. 30 minute interview that includes a presentation to the panel followed by a Q&A
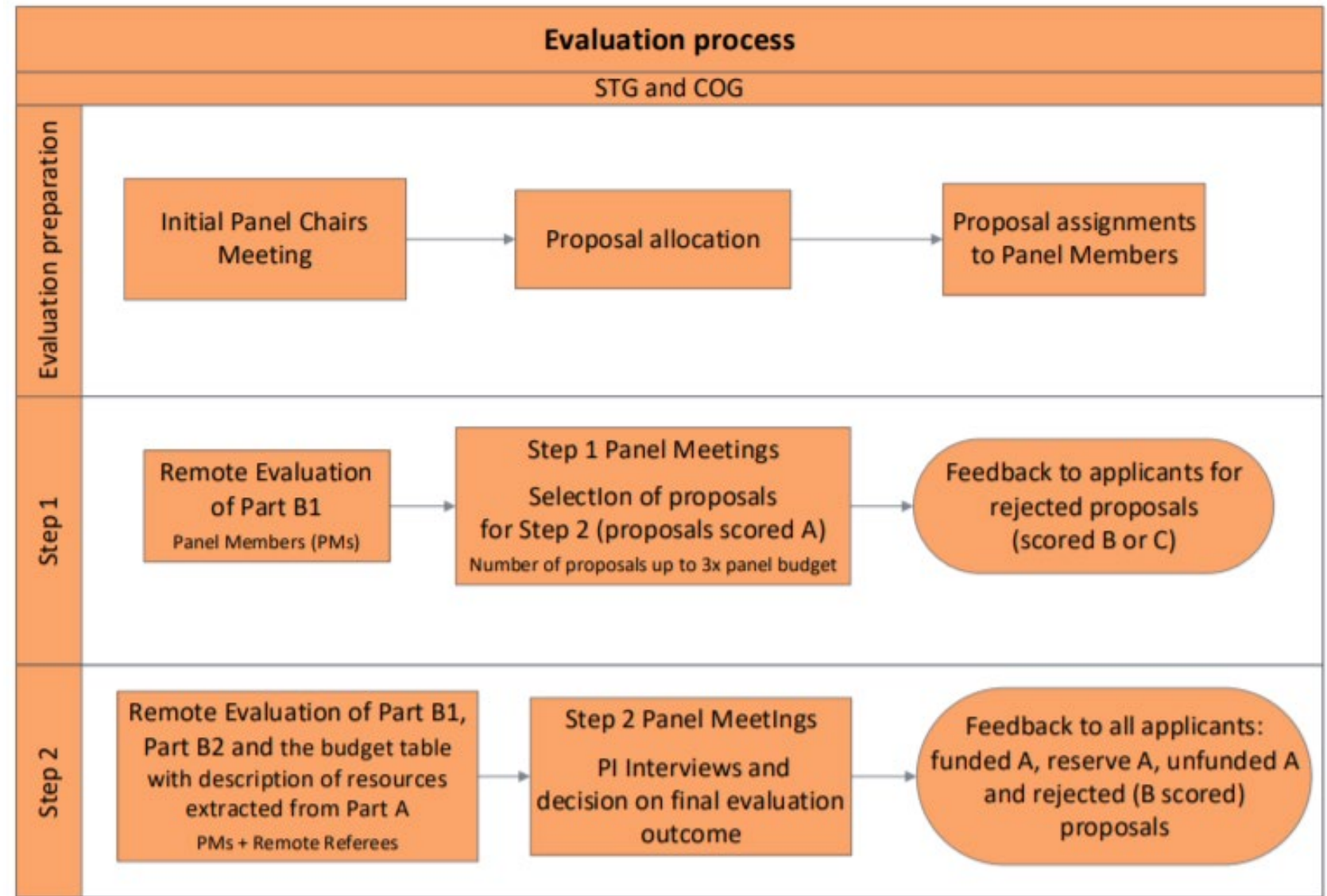
Evaluation Outcomes

Proposal Grading	Stage	Funded?	Reapplication Restrictions?
A	2	If sufficient budget	None
B	2	No	None
B	1	No	1 Year
C	1	No	2 Years

Proposals which do not progress to Step 2 have "demand management" restrictions

- Restrictions are produced from Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant calls

- Synergy Grant calls only produce restrictions for Advanced Call applicants

- Restrictions from Starting Grant calls apply to subsequent Consolidator Grant calls

- Restrictions from Horizon 2020 apply in Horizon Europe

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ERC evaluation criterion

Excellence of one is not more important than that of the other

Research project's
ground-breaking nature
ambition
feasibility

Principal Investigator's
intellectual capacity,
creativity
commitment

Excellence
is the sole evaluation criterion

- Proposals marked by panel from: 1 – 5 (non-competitive to outstanding)

- Numerical marks not communicated to applicant

- Outcome of panel meetings expressed as A, B or C
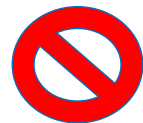
🚫 **Proposals are not judged on socioeconomic impact or relevance to European policy**

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1. Research Project - Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

The Project

To what extent:

- does the proposed **research address important scientific challenges?**
- are the objectives **ambitious and beyond the state of the art?**
- is the proposed research **high risk/high gain?**

The Scientific Approach

To what extent:

- is the outlined scientific approach **feasible** bearing in mind the high risk/high gain?
- are the research methodology and working arrangements **appropriate to achieve project goals?**
- the proposal involves the **development of novel methodology?**
- are the **timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate** and properly justified?

2. Principal Investigator - Intellectual capacity and creativity

The Principal Investigator (PI)

To what extent:

- has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?
- does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Typical Reasons for Rejection

Proposed Project and Scientific Approach

- Scope is too narrow or too broad or not focussed enough etc.

- Incremental research, not ground breaking

- Work plan not detailed enough or unclear

- Insufficient risk management

Principal investigator

- Insufficient track-record

- Insufficient (potential for) independence

- Insufficient experience in leading projects

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Reviewer comments about the Principal Investigator

Unsuccessful

PI has very good track record, yet, it is not entirely clear, what are their own original contributions their potential as an independent project leader (creativity, management) is to be demonstrated

Based on the available information about their track record, publication activity and scientific experience, the Principal Investigator does not seem to have the capacity and is not prepared to execute the outlined project

The PIs creativity and independent thinking are not appropriately demonstrated

The PI has been working in a specialized field and contributed to a respectable number of publications, although the impact of these publications is not particularly high

Successful

The PI has a strong track record, including various aspects of scientific service, and seems ready to establish their independent career

The PI has shown an excellent knowledge of their field and an amazing productive, including some real highlights

The PI made several significant contributions [to their field]

The PI has a strong track record

Reviewer comments about the Project

Unsuccessful

- The concepts are novel, but very ill described
- Only 5 lines of text to describe a complex set of experiments. Much more information is needed
- Is really high risk but whether it is high gain is not certain due to lack of elements
- Is an important challenge, but the proposed project is not going to make a significant contribution to it.
- There is no description of the expected outcome
- Could not find information whether the PI will have sufficient access [necessary infrastructures]
- The proposal is high risk and low return
- Less sure that the research design proposed will provide particularly convincing answers
- No novel methodology is involved

Successful

- The proposed research is based on a bold vision
- This project certainly has substantial risks with equally substantial payoffs if successful
- Addresses a very relevant research topic
- Proposed project is challenging and the objectives are certainly ambitious
- Approach seems feasible to address the questions
- Project is well grounded in supporting evidence
- Timescale of the project looks adequate
- Funding request is fully justified
- There is also no doubt that the PI would have the optimal working conditions to achieve these results
- The breakthrough of the timescales and resources described in the project by the PI is fully justified

Refer back to Session 1

Your understanding of the evaluation process and other guidance today should inform your proposal writing.

We covered proposal writing in Session 1, the slides and a recording are available here

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Slides to have with you while writing your proposal

Proposal Advice

Questions to ask yourself

Does the proposal go beyond the state of the art ?

Is it timely? (Why wasn't it done in the past? Is it feasible now?)

What is the risk? Is it justified by the potential gain? Do I have a plan for managing the risk?

Why is my proposal important?

Why am I the best/only person to carry it out?

Am I internationally competitive as a researcher at my career stage and in my discipline?

Am I able to manage a 5-year project with a substantial budget?

Key points

Read all call documentation and the evaluation criteria

Be specific and don't provide unsupported opinions or comments

Clearly address ALL of the evaluation criteria

Make it easy for the evaluators to find the information

Pitch to generalists: evaluators will be experts, but not necessarily in your exact area

Use clear and concise language and explain country/research area specific jargon

Include diagrams, images, tables if appropriate

Research previous and current projects

Find colleagues to proof read drafts with the evaluation criteria

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Check your proposal's coherence

Does my methodology support my scientific objectives/questions?

Do I have the right resources to carry this out?

Does the latest version of the B1 match the B2?

Evaluators are looking for feasibility in the proposal.

If something does not match up in the text, it raises concerns for the project.

Scientific Questions	Methodology 1	Methodology 2	Methodology 3	Methodology 4
Questions 1	X			
Question 2		X		
Question 3	X		X	
Questions 4				

Activity (Methodology)	Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3	Team Member 4
Activity 1	X			
Activity 2		X		
Activity 3	X		X	
Activity 4				

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Tips & Tricks to Remember

Speak ASAP with your HI Research Support colleagues

- Find colleagues to proofread drafts against evaluation criteria
- You need a strong CV (in relation to your career stage)

Read all call documentation and evaluation criteria

- Evaluators are experts, but not necessarily in your exact area
- Study previous ERC projects within your research area

The best proposals take time to write

- Use clear and concise language, make it easy to find information in your proposal
- Explain jargon used in your country/research area
- Include diagrams, images, tables if appropriate

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Useful links

- [2022 ERC Starting & Consolidator Grant Information for Applicants](#)

- [2022 ERC Work Programme](#)

- [ERC Youtube Channel- explainer videos](#)

- [Find out more about ERC Experts who review proposals](#)

- [ERC FAQ page](#)

- [ERC Information Service](#) – the best way to find out about previously funded projects

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Remember
Read the
Information for Applicants
&
Submit your proposal
early and often!

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Thank you

Q&A after our Guest Speaker:

ERC Consolidator Grantee Bhismadev Chakrabarti,
Professor of Neuroscience & Mental Health at the University of
Reading and Research Director at the Centre for Autism. He will
talk about his experience applying for ERC grants and eventually
being awarded funding for his project GutBrainGABA.

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