

Libor Barto @ National Information Day on ERC Grants

15 Nov 2023

ERC Consolidator **CoCoSym** Symmetry in Computational Complexity
2018 - 2023 ~ 1.200.000 EUR

ERC Synergy **POCOCOP** Polynomial-time computation:
Opening the Blackboxes
in Constraint Problems
2023 - 2029 ~ 8.000.000 EUR

PIs: CU: LB
TU Dresden: Manuel Bodirsky
TU Wien: Michael Pinsker

How to write a competitive proposal

- You just clearly and concisely describe the "What, Why, How" so that everyone becomes enthusiastic about your project already after reading the abstract.

understandable
substantiated claims, no phrases

What? Exciting, original
nice story
Why? Why important? Why now?
Why me/us?
How? Novel ideas & methods

everyone in the target audience

... and you : independence

gain attention, don't lose it

- Understand the selection process

What does ERC want?

- scientific excellence (project, PI)
- no predetermined priorities
- [- outstanding synergy effect]

How is it evaluated

Our proposal

before

- clarified goals on all levels + why, how, ~~where is the synergy~~
long term vision - - - (understanding efficient computation)
↓
general goals - - - (unified algorithms, descriptions, reductions
for a large class of problems)
↓
more concrete goals - - - - -
- clarified where the synergy is (e.g. in concrete problems, research background of PIs...)
- clarified how we will manage it (e.g. joint hiring, meetings ...)

proposal

B1

- acronym, title
- abstract
- 5p extended synopsis
- CV, track record

B2

- 15p objectives & methodology
- resources

Step 1 B1, ~ 85 panel members: whole science

Step 2 B1 + B2, ~ 85/5 panel members

Step 3 external reviews
interview

↑
process

interview

- interview: 10min talk + 35min interview
- slides: 2 slides goals, 2 slides methods, 2 slides synergy, hired graphic designer
- practised a lot + 2 mock interviews, specialist in rhetoric
- wrote down ± 100 answers to questions we may get

Advice

- clarify to yourself :
 - goals on various levels of generality
 - why, how
 - why you want to apply
- independence, no alibism
- understand the process
- take it seriously