

NATIONAL INFORMATION CAMPAIGN JOIN HORIZON EUROPE



Pillar 1: Excellent Science

8 March 2021

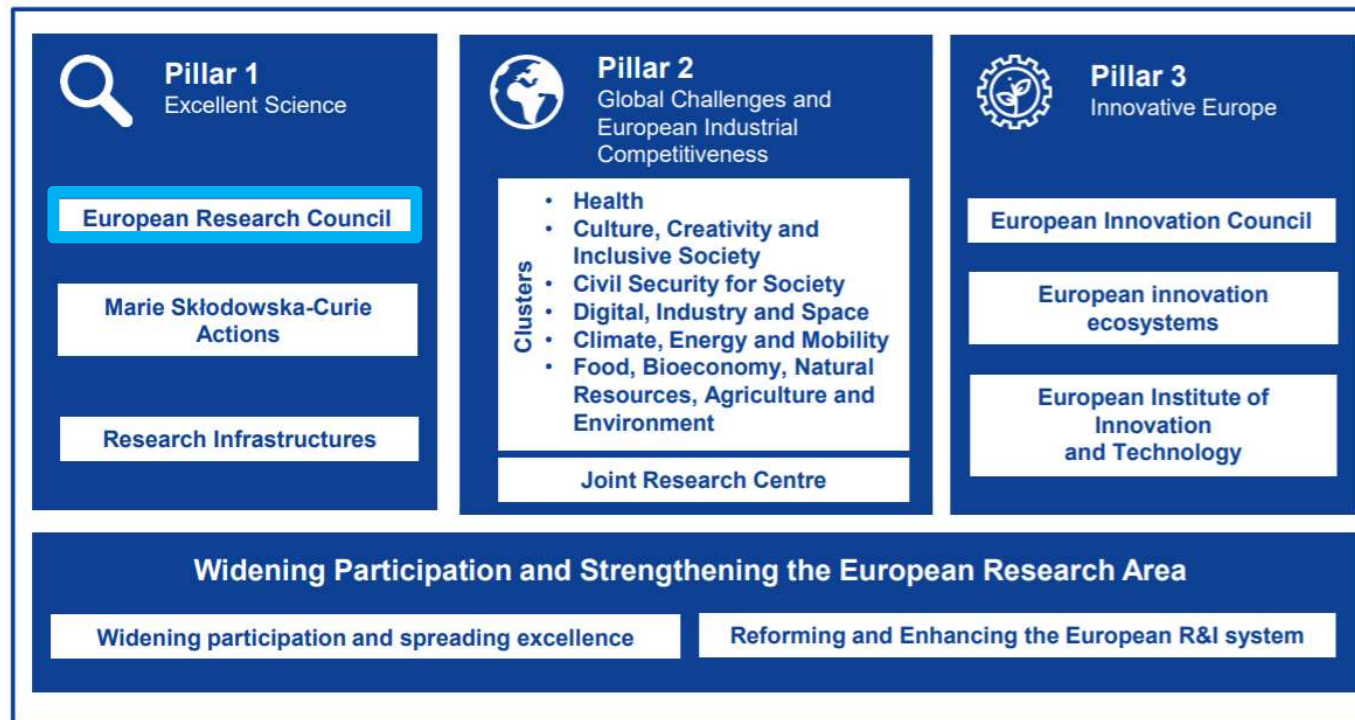


European Research Council

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European Research Council



Budget of over EUR 16 billion, increase of 22% vis-à-vis Horizon 2020, more than 2/3 earmarked for early- to mid-career scientists and researchers

European Research Council

- ERC funds ground-breaking ideas, high-risk and high-gain frontier research in Europe, offers independence, recognition and visibility
- **Who can apply?**
 - **Excellent** Researchers
 - **Any nationality, any age** or any current working place in the world
 - The Host Institution must be in a EU member state (MS) or an associated country (AC)
 - If granted, you need to spend at least 50% of your working time in a MS/AC
- **Principal Investigators**
 - Work on any research topic (bottom-up approach)
 - Gain financial autonomy for 5 years
 - Negotiate the best working conditions with the host institution
 - Attract top team members and collaborators (EU and non-EU), flexible team structure
 - Portability of grants
 - Attract additional funding and gain recognition: ERC is a quality label

European Research Council

Starting Grants (StG)

(2-7 years after PhD)
up to EUR 1.5 Mill
for 5 years

Consolidator Grants (CoG)

(7-12 years after PhD)
up to EUR 2 Mill
for 5 years

Advanced Grants (AdG)

track-record of significant
research achievements
in the last 10 years
up to EUR 2.5 Mill
for 5 years

Proof-of-Concept (PoC)

to explore the commercial or
societal potential
of your ERC project
up to EUR 150,000
only for ERC grant holders

ERC Synergy Grants (SyG)

to enable 2 to 4 PIs to promote substantial
advances at the frontiers of knowledge that
would not be possible by the individual
Principal Investigators working alone
up to EUR 10 + 4 Mill for 6 years

Additional funding
up to EUR 1 Mill for
ERC StG, CoG, AdG

Relocation expenses
Major equipment
Access to large facilities
Major experimental costs

No SyG Call in 2021,
1st call in 2022



ERC Calls 2021

	<i>Starting Grant</i>	<i>Consolidator Grant</i>	<i>Advanced Grant</i>
<i>Call Opens</i>	25/02/2021	11/03/2021	20/05/2021
<i>Call closes</i>	8/04/2021	20/04/2021	31/08/2021
<i>Budget million EUR (estimated number of grants)</i>	619 (413)	633 (317)	626 (250)
<i>Planned dates to inform applicants of final results</i>	20/12/2021	28/03/2022	13/05/2022

Summary of main features in 2021 (I)

- The eligibility windows for Starting and Consolidator Grant applicants follow the standard pattern, with **1 January 2021 as the reference date**.
- **Synergy Grants will not be available under this work programme**. Nonetheless, the ERC Scientific Council is expecting to be able to open the first Synergy Grant call of Horizon Europe still this summer, with funding to be provided under the next work programme.
- Similarly, the **Proof of Concept Grants are not available under this work programme**, but a call is expected to open in the second half of this year under the next work programme.
- The Scientific Council expects the **call schedule to be back to more familiar opening and closing timeframes by mid-2022**. These shifts in the calls timetable will not affect the eligibility periods of candidates applying to Starting and Consolidator Grants.

Summary of main features in 2021 (II)

- **Interviews for Advanced Grant applicants**
 - Researchers whose proposals reach the second step of the Advanced Grant evaluation will now be invited to present their proposal to the evaluation panel in an interview.
- **ERC panel structure redefined**
 - **Two entirely new evaluation panels** have been added to the ERC Panel Structure. The introduction of these two new panels is part of a broader review of the panel structure by the ERC Scientific Council, redefining the contours of all panels, enriching their **descriptors** and taking into account the balance between panels in terms of the number of proposals assessed in each call.
- **Open science**
 - As required by the new Horizon Europe regulation, researchers who benefit from ERC funding under the Horizon Europe programme will now be required to submit a **data management plan within the first six months of their project implementation**.

Summary of main features in 2021 (III)

- **Associated countries**

- Applicants established in countries associated to the previous Framework Programme, Horizon 2020, and in countries that are negotiating association agreements with the European Union, including the United Kingdom, may apply to the calls under this work programme.
- The funding of successful applicants based in countries outside of the European Union will depend on whether an association agreement between their country and the European Union will be in place at the time of the signature of the grant agreements for the call to which they applied.
- Potential applicants based outside of the European Union should refer to the text in the Work Programme, on page 3 and Annex 3, as well as to the calls calendar for the indicative dates for the signature of the grant agreements of each call.

Eligibility criteria

Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant
<p>> 2 and \leq 7 years</p> <p>prior to 1 January 2021</p> <p>Cut-off dates: PhD awarded* from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2018 (inclusive)</p>	<p>> 7 and \leq 12 years</p> <p>prior to 1 January 2021</p> <p>Cut-off dates: PhD awarded* from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2013 (inclusive)</p>	<p>No specific criteria</p>

*The date of the actual award according to the national rules in the country where the degree was awarded (generally, the date of successful defense/viva). For the calculation of the eligibility period the date of the first PhD is considered.

Extension of eligibility periods

- **Eligibility periods can be extended beyond 7 and 12 years for ERC StG and CoG for certain properly documented circumstances**
 - **Maternity** – 18 months per child (before or after PhD) or longer
 - **Paternity** – actual time taken off (before or after PhD)
 - **Military service** (after PhD award)
 - **Clinical training** (after PhD award, up to 4 years maximum)
 - **Long-term illness** – over 90 days for the PI or a close family member (child, spouse, parent or sibling) after PhD award

Minimum time commitment

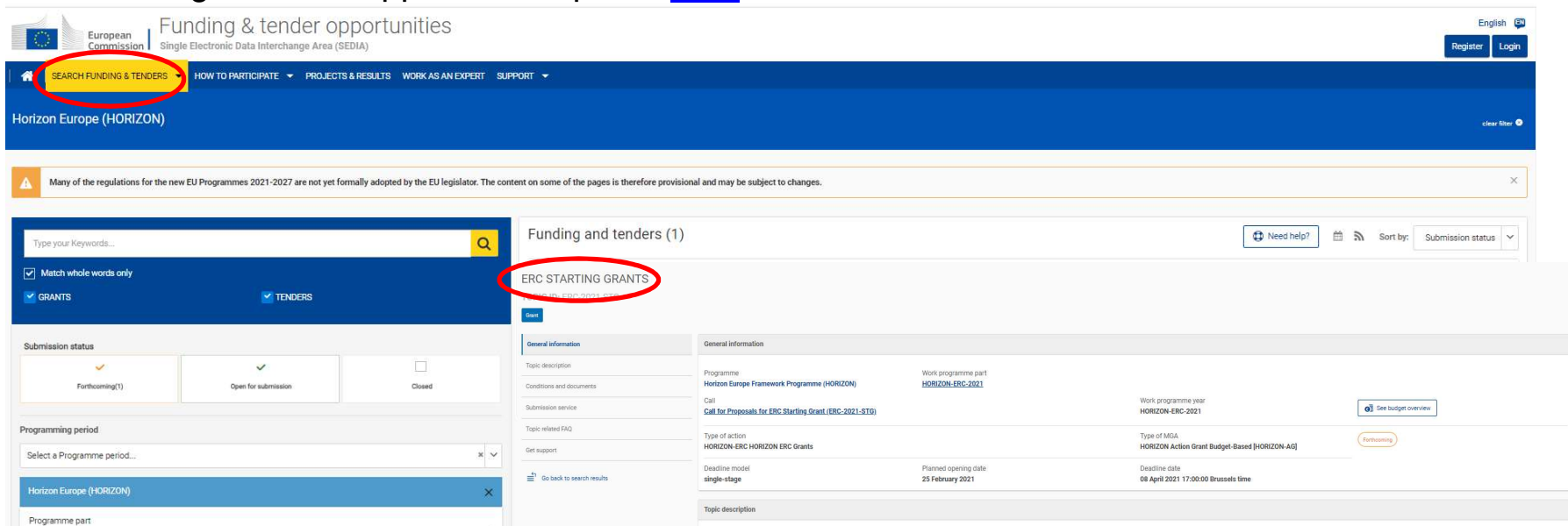
Minimum % of the working time of a PI that shall be spent on the ERC project	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant
	50%	40%	30%

Restrictions on resubmission

Call to which the Principal Investigator applied under previous ERC Work Programmes and proposal evaluation outcome		2021 ERC calls to which a Principal Investigator is <u>not</u> eligible
2019 and 2020 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant or Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant
	C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant
2019 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	A, or B at Step 2	No restriction
	B, or C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant
2020 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	A, or B at Step 3	No restriction
	B at Step 2	No restriction
	C at Step 1	Advanced Grant

How to register and submit your proposal?

Via Funding & tender opportunities portal [FTO](#)



The screenshot shows the 'Funding & tender opportunities' portal. The 'SEARCH FUNDING & TENDERS' button is highlighted with a red circle. Below the search bar, the 'ERC STARTING GRANTS' result is highlighted with a red circle. The search results table shows the following details:

General information	
Topic description	Programme: Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON)
Conditions and documents	Work programme part: HORIZON-ERC-2021
Submission service	Call: Call for Proposals for ERC Starting Grant (ERC-2021-STG)
Topic related FAQ	Work programme year: HORIZON-ERC-2021
Get support	Type of MGA: HORIZON Action Grant Budget-Based (HORIZON-AG)
Go back to search results	Deadline date: 08 April 2021 17:00:00 Brussels time
Topic description	

Search Funding and Tenders → filter by Programme → select the ERC call
Topic conditions and documents: Work Programme, Information for Applicants (guide), proposal templates, Model grant agreement (MGA)..., rules for participation, Online manual



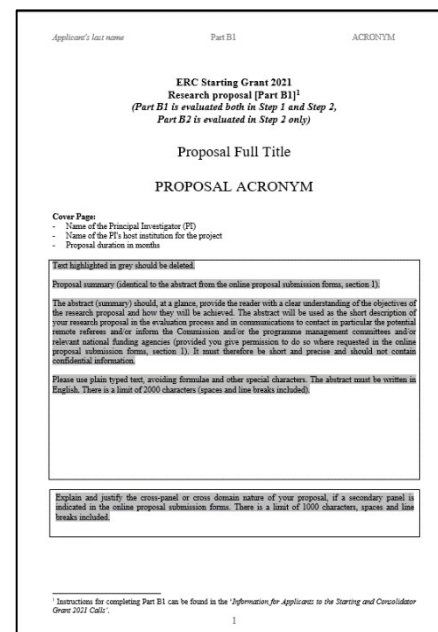
Supporting documentation



[Work Programme](#)



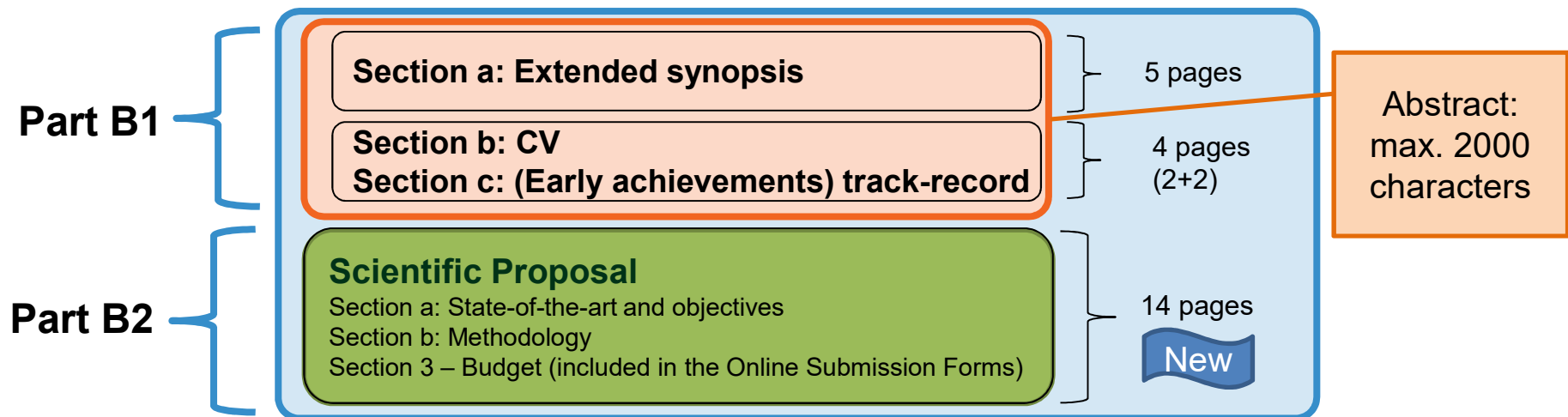
[Information for Applicants](#)



Proposal template
[Part B1](#), [Part B2](#)
[HI support letter](#)

Proposal structure

PART A: On-line Submission Forms = administrative part through FTO including detailed budget table, description of resources (Section 3 – Budget, max. 8000 characters, incl. spaces), ethics and security issues tables, time commitment (section 5 – Other questions), etc.



- Mandatory supporting documentation (PhD certificate, HI support letter, and, if relevant, any documentation needed on eligibility)
- If applicable, additional supporting documentation related to ethics and security issues

Applicants' profiles

- **ERC Starting and Consolidator grants**
 - Promising track-record of early achievements
 - Significant publications contributing to the field (up to 5 publications for StG, up to 10 for CoG)
 - At least one (StG) /several (CoG) publications without participation of PhD supervisor
- **ERC Advanced grants**
 - Track-record of significant research achievements in the last 10 years
 - Exceptional leaders and mentors
 - 10 publications as senior author in major scientific journals
 - Monographs

For all: invited presentations to conferences, prizes/awards, academy membership, granted patents etc.

Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

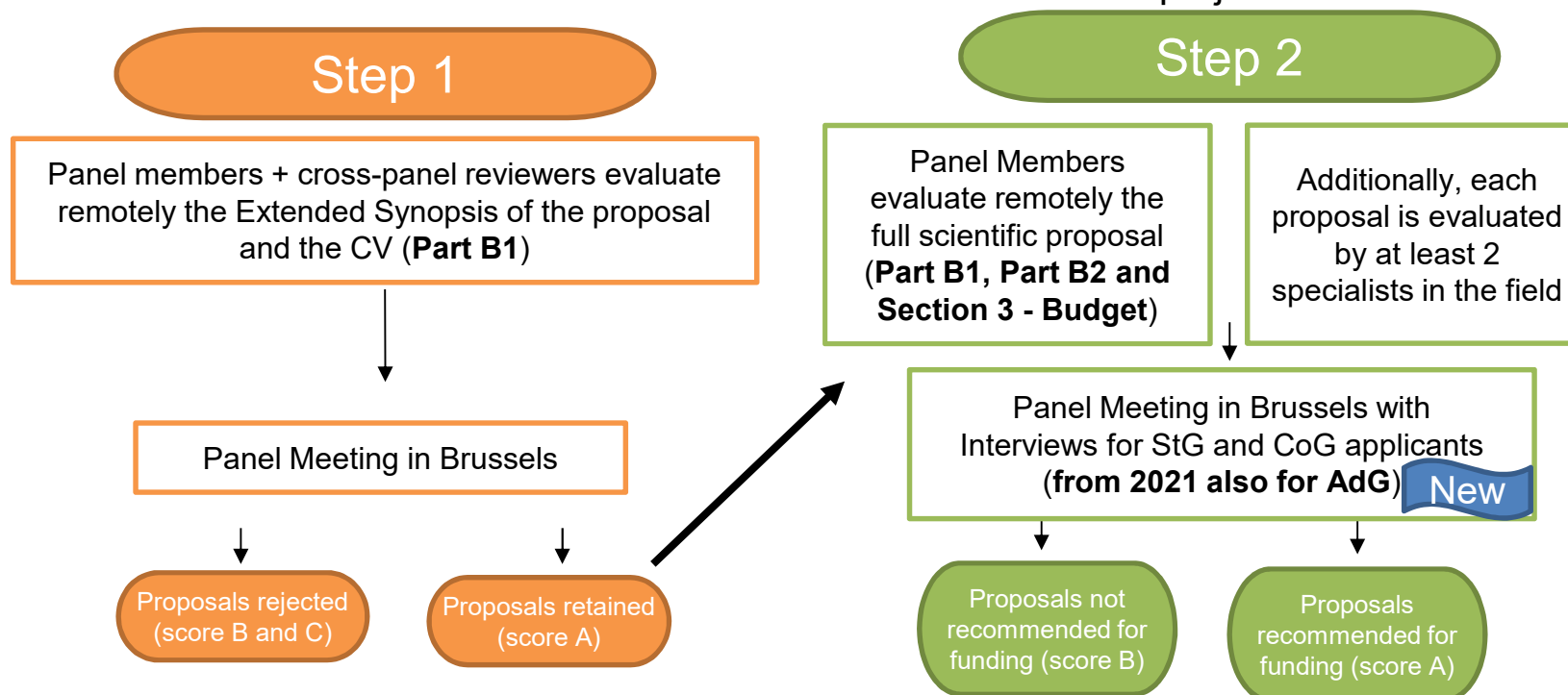
- 'Yes/No' tick box question to be filled in by the HI contact person
- Only public bodies, higher education establishments and research organisations must answer this question
- This answer will not affect the evaluation of the project
- In case the proposal is selected for funding, having a Gender Equality Plan (with minimum requirements) will be necessary before the grant signature
- a new field on the 'career stage' of the PI has to be completed, it refers to the career stages defined in Frascati 2015 manual :
 - **Category A – Top grade researcher:** the single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted. Example: 'Full professor' or 'Director of research'.
 - **Category B – Senior researcher:** Researchers working in positions not as senior as top position but more senior than newly qualified doctoral graduates (IsCED level 8). Examples: 'associate professor' or 'senior researcher' or 'principal investigator'.
 - **Category C – Recognised researcher:** the first grade/post into which a newly qualified doctoral graduate would normally be recruited. Examples: 'assistant professor', 'investigator' or 'post-doctoral fellow'.
 - **Category D – First stage researcher:** Either doctoral students at the IsCED level 8 who are engaged as researchers, or researchers working in posts that do not normally require a doctorate degree. Examples: 'PhD students' or 'junior researchers' (without a PhD).

ERC budget

- **The budget is subdivided in different cost categories**
 - **A. Direct personnel costs** (PI, senior staff, post docs, students, other personnel costs)
 - **B. Subcontracting costs** (no indirect costs)
 - **C. Purchase costs** [travel and subsistence, equipment (including major equipment), consumables (including fieldwork and animal costs), publications (including any costs related to Open Access fees) and dissemination, and other additional direct costs]
 - **D. Internally invoiced goods and services** (no indirect costs)
- The 'requested EU contribution' has to be filled manually
- All the cost categories considered necessary for the project are supposed to be described
- If additional funding requested, it must be fully justified in the description of resources
- The size and nature of the team has to be also stated

Evaluation process

SOLE SELECTION CRITERION: scientific excellence of the PI and the project



Evaluation criteria for StG/CoG/AdG

1. Research Project

Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Starting, Consolidator, Advanced

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?

To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?

To what extent is the proposed research high risk-high gain (i.e. if successful the payoffs will be very significant, but there is a high risk that the research project does not entirely fulfil its aims)?

Scientific Approach

To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high risk/high gain (based on the Extended Synopsis)?

To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

Evaluation criteria for StG/CoG/AdG

2. Principal Investigator(s)

Intellectual capacity and creativity

Starting and Consolidator

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?

To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?

To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Intellectual capacity and creativity

Advanced

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?

To what extent does the PI has/have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

To what extent has the PI demonstrated sound leadership in the training and advancement of young scientists?


Evaluation Panel Structure since 2021

Life Sciences


- LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions
- LS2 Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems
- LS3 Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing
- LS5 Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System
- LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy
- LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases
- LS8 Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution
- LS9 Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering

Choice of primary evaluation
(and if needed secondary) **panel**
and up to 4 **keywords**

Physical Sciences and Engineering

- PE1 Mathematics
- PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- PE3 Condensed Matter Physics
- PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences
- PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- PE6 Computer Science and Informatics
- PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering
- PE8 Products and Process Engineering
- PE9 Universe Sciences
- PE10 Earth System Science
- **PE11 Materials Engineering** 

Social Sciences and Humanities

- SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
- SH3 The Social World and Its Diversity
- SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production
- SH6 The Study of the Human Past
- **SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and Space** 

Support to ERC applicants

- **National Information Day about the ERC**
 - **ERC Applicants' workshop on How to write a competitive proposal?**
 - **Mock interviews for ERC Starting and Consolidator Grant applicants** (newly also for ERC Advanced Grant applicants)
 - Ad hoc events or on demand
-
- Brochure on ERC in preparation (Vademecum)
 - Individual consultations and proposal pre-screening (non-scientific issues)
 - → **Collaboration with key stakeholders:** ERC grantees and evaluators ...
 - New Expert Group for support of the applicants to the ERC grant calls: coordinated by prof. Zdeněk Strakoš



ERC Mentoring Initiative

- To target countries where the levels of participation and success rates in ERC calls for proposals have been so far modest = Widening countries
- Support consists of identifying ERC grantees and former panel members who could serve as external mentors to help national programmes. Such support helps the selected candidates to strengthen the quality of their application.
- Local and regional offices providing support at national level are eligible to apply.
- 1st call for proposals: by 20 April 2021 through ERC NCP
- In the Czech Republic the proposal will be submitted by the newly established Expert group.

Visiting Research Fellowships

- Allow future ERC applicants to **visit current ERC principal investigators and their teams at a foreign institution**
- Funding covers all costs of the research visit including salary, travel and reasonable subsistence costs
- **Fellow must apply for an ERC grant after the visit** within a time specified in the funding agreement
- Currently in place via national or regional funding agencies:
 - Romania** – Politehnica University of Bucharest (UPB)
 - Croatia** – Croatian Science Foundation (HRZZ)
 - Czechia** – Czech Science Foundation (GA CR) [more information](#)
 - Estonia** – Estonia Research Council (ETag)
 - Flanders (Belgium)** – Research Foundation Flanders (FWO)
 - Georgia** – Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation (SRNSFG)
 - Republic of Serbia** – Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (MoESTD)
 - Slovak Republic** – Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) & Pavol Jozef Safarik University in Kosice (UPJS)
 - Slovenia** – Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)

Website: <https://erc.europa.eu/funding/additional-opportunities>



ERC CZ Programme

- National funding scheme (approx. 44,4 million EUR for 2012-2026)
- Aimed at **ERC applicants who obtained A or B in step 2 of the ERC Starting, Consolidator or Advanced grant evaluation** but were not funded under that call due to budgetary constraints (the results of the evaluation within the ERC are taken into account)
- The **researcher of any nationality** can choose any host institution in Czech Republic
- The proposal with the evaluation A is entitled to receive a 5-year grant, the proposal with the evaluation B will be funded for 2 years
- **ERC CZ holders are obliged to submit again an ERC proposal within 2 years** after starting their ERC CZ project
- Website: <https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/erc-cz> (in CZ)

Useful links

- **More information** (incl. abstracts of funded projects): <https://erc.europa.eu/>
- **ERC classess** (videos):
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtv6FnsXqnXAYRk6HCErwMxwML0ZKoMcy>
- **EURAXESS** (job offered in ERC teams): <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess>
- **On-line National Information Day about the ERC** (Presentations and record): 23 September 2020, [HERE](#)



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