



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



European Research Council (ERC): Funding opportunities in the 2025 ERC work programme

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www.erc-germany.de



Today

- Your ERC experience
- Some ERC-related news
- Basics & snapshots
- Details on application & evaluation process, how-to-write, etc.



The promising news (long-term)...

Political priorities of the new EU Commission (2024-2029)

- *“We will increase our research spending to focus more on strategic priorities, on **groundbreaking fundamental research** and disruptive innovation, and on **scientific excellence**.*
- *To do this, we will **expand the European Research Council** and the **European Innovation Council**.”*



Recent news in the ERC Work Programme 2025

- **Expected additional funding** from Associated Countries (mostly UK) of some EUR 439m is **already included** in the provisional total budget
- Provisional total ERC Budget 2025 = EUR 2.7bn
- Still unresolved case of Switzerland (association to Horizon Europe)



Other novelties in the ERC Work Programme 2025

- Eligibility extensions (changes):
 - Extension on the grounds of **disability**
 - Major disasters: includes disasters caused by humans
- Evaluation of Synergy Grants:
 - More flexibility regarding the number (5-7) of panels in step 2
 - Budgetary cut-off (at step 2): 3x of panel budget (instead of 4)
- Revised PE6 descriptors: *“Theoretical & experimental...”*



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Basics & snapshots



Short recap...

StG

- 1.5 M€*/5 years
- PI: 2-7 years***
after PhD defence
- Potential for
research
independence
- 50% TC
- Grant portable

CoG

- 2 M€*/5 years
- PI: 7-12 years***
after PhD defence
- 1st proof of
research
independence
- 40% TC
- Grant portable

AdG

- 2.5 M€*/5 years
- PI: significant
research
achievements and
leadership
- 30% TC
- Grant portable
- Lump-sums (new)

SyG

- 10 M€**/6 years
- 2-4 PIs (1 outside
EU/AC)
- Ambitious
research goals
that can only be
achieved together
- 30% TC

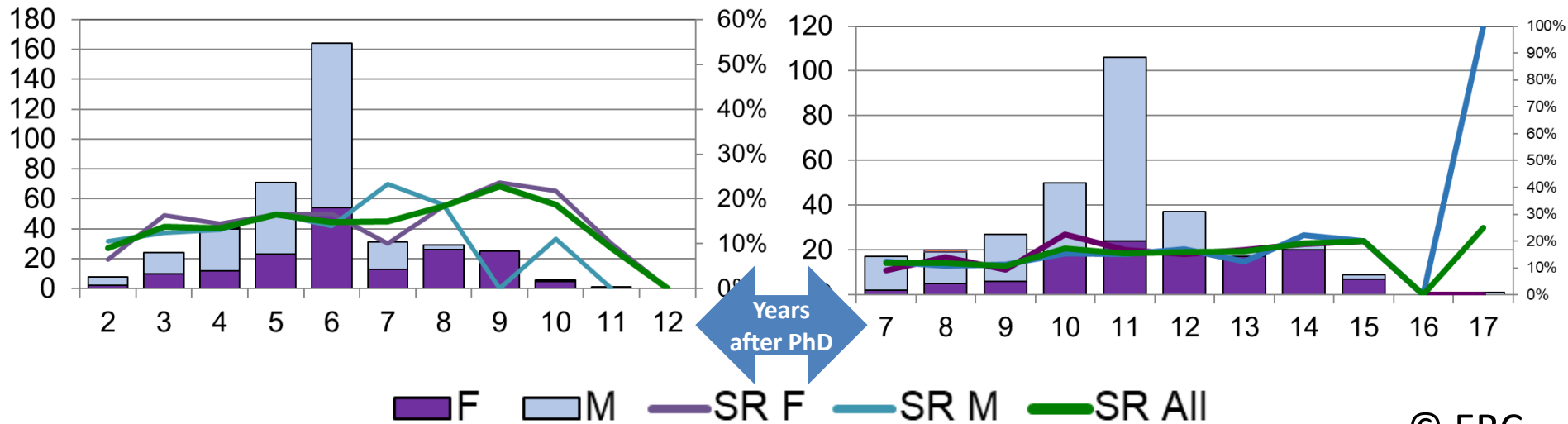
***up to 1 M€/**up to 4 M€ additional funding for major equipment, access to infrastructure, field work**
***** extensions: maternity/paternity, long-term illness, disability, etc.; specific rules for MDs**



ERC call calender (WP 2025)

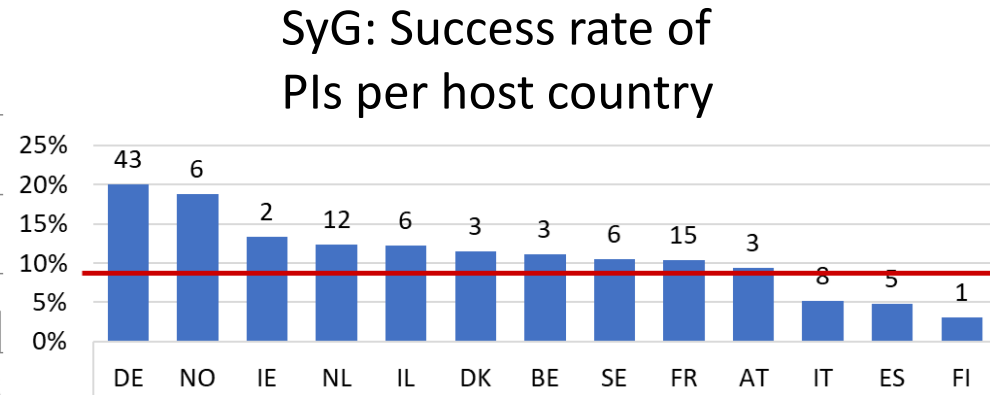
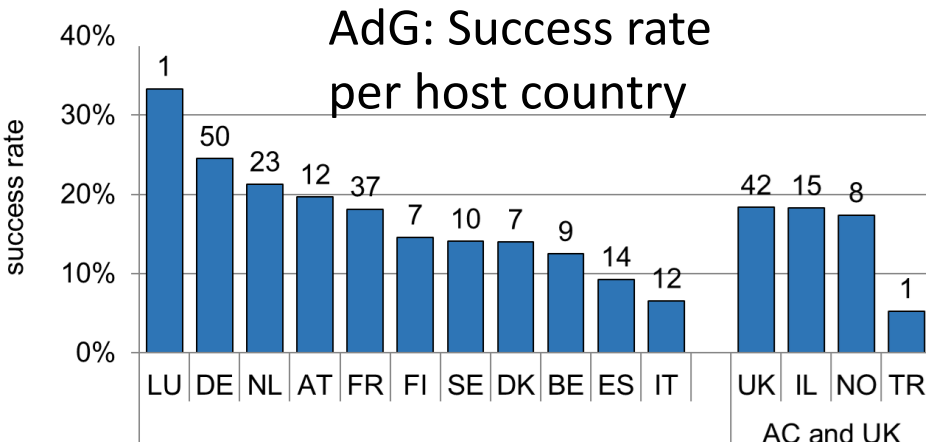
	StG	CoG	AdG	SyG
Call opens	10 July 2024	26 Sept. 2024	22 May 2025	11 July 2024
Call deadline	15 October 2024	14 January 2025	28 August 2025	6 Nov. 2024
Budget (≈)	€ 751 mio.	€ 719 mio.	€ 683 mio.	€ 500 mio.
Grants (≈)	483	354	276	48
Info to applicants (≈)	5 May 2025 22 August 2025	18 July 2025 12 Dec. 2025	30 January 2026 12 June 2026	14 April 2025 15 August 2025 27 Oct. 2025
GA (≈)	21 Dec. 2025	12 April 2026	17 Nov. 2026	24 March 2026

Success rates (StG/CoG 2023) in relation to „academic age“ – waiting doesn't pay of (mostly)





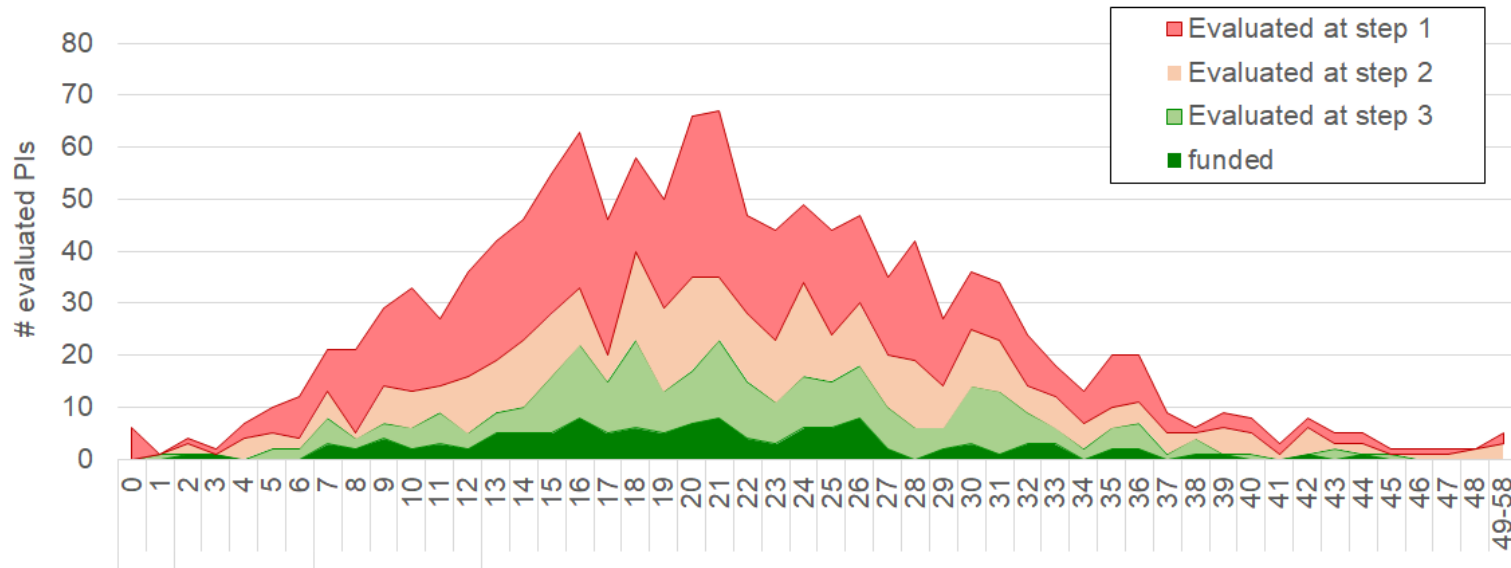
Success rates (AdG/SyG 2023): Competitive, but not impossible – in particular for applicants in Germany





SyG Principal Investigators: Experience matters (mostly)

SYG 2023 PIs in evaluation by years since PhD





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Evaluation & application process



Follow the rules/guidance

- ERC Work Programme 2025
- Proposal templates – call specific
- Information for Applicants – call specific
- ERC rules for submission and evaluation
- Funding and Tenders Portal
<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>



Horizon Europe European Research Council (ERC) Frontier Research Grants

Information for Applicants to the
Starting and Cc

^{EN}
ANNEX
European Commission Decision C(2024) 4430



ERC Work Programme 2025



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission



Horizon Europe

Research Council (ERC) ier Research Grants

e for Peer Reviewers
id Consolidator Grant Calls



European Research Council
Executive Agency
Established by the European Commission

Version 4.0
10.10.2023



One evaluation criteria: Excellence

1. Research Project

Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

- Address important scientific challenges
- Ambitious objectives & beyond the state of the art

Scientific Approach

- Feasibility
- Appropriateness of research methodology to achieve goals
- Timescales, resources & time commitment

2. Principal Investigator

- Ability to conduct ground-breaking research
- Evidence of creative and original thinking
- Scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project



Evaluation Criteria **PI** - Intellectual capacity and creativity

- To what extent has the PI(s) demonstrated the ability to conduct **ground-breaking research**?
- To what extent does/do the PI(s) provide evidence of creative and **original thinking**?
- To what extent does/do the PI(s) have the **required scientific expertise** and **capacity** to successfully execute the project?
- **Synergy Grant:** To what extent does the Synergy Grant Group successfully demonstrate in the proposal that it **brings together the know-how – such as skills, experience, expertise, disciplines, teams** – necessary to address the proposed research question (based on the Extended Synopsis)?



Evaluation Criteria **Research Project** - Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

- To what extent does the proposed research **address important scientific 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**)?

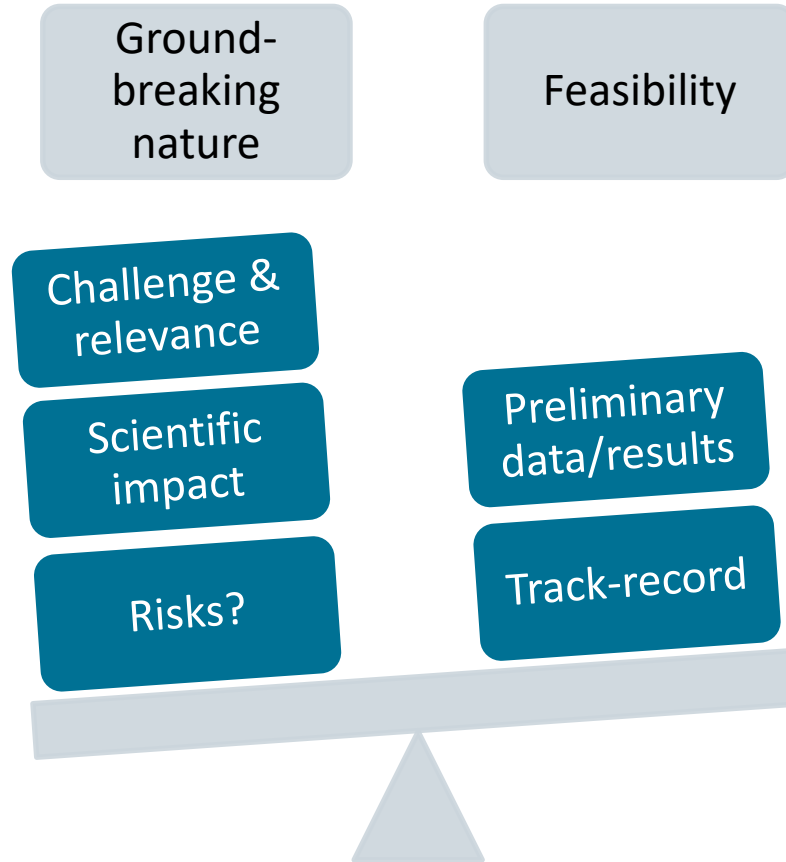


Evaluation Criteria **Scientific Approach** – Scientific Approach

- To what extent is the outlined scientific approach **feasible** bearing in mind the ground-breaking nature and ambition of the proposed research (based on the Extended Synopsis)?
- To what extent does the proposal go **beyond what the individual Principal Investigators could achieve alone** (**for Synergy Grants**, based on the Extended Synopsis)?
- To what extent do the Principal Investigators succeed in proposing a **combination of scientific approaches** that are crucial to address the scope and complexity of the research questions to be tackled (**for Synergy Grants**, 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 research proposal)?
- To what extent are the proposed **timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified** (based on the research proposal)?

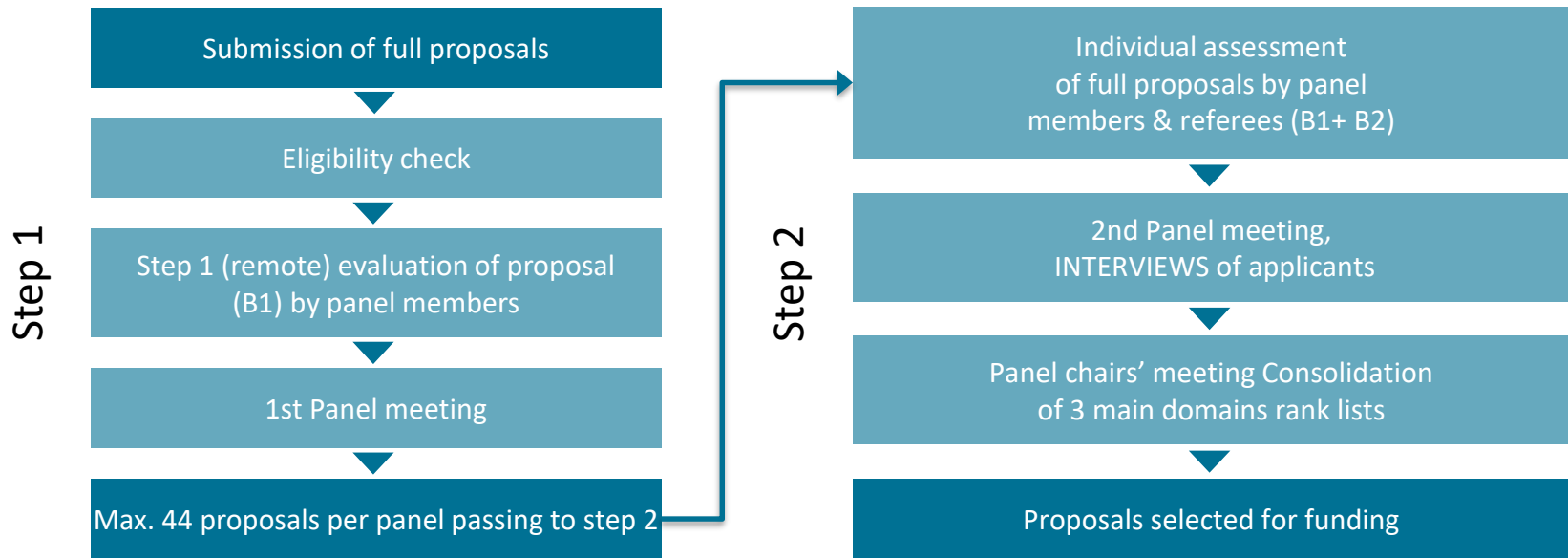


Getting the right balance





Keep in mind the evaluation process – StG/CoG/AdG



Panel structure: StG/CoG/AdG (WP 2025)

Physical Sciences & Engineering

- PE1 Mathematics**
All areas of mathematics, pure and applied, plus mathematical foundations of computer science, mathematical physics, and statistics.
- PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter**
Particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics.
- PE3 Condensed Matter Physics**
Structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences, biological physics.
- PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences**
Analytical chemistry, chemical theory, physical chemistry/chemical physics.
- PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials**
New materials and new synthetic approaches, structure-properties relations, solid state chemistry, molecular architecture, organic chemistry.
- PE6 Computer Science and Informatics**
Theoretical and experimental computer science, information processing, intelligent systems.
- PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering**
Electrical, electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering.
- PE8 Products and Processes Engineering**
Product and process design, chemical, civil, environmental, mechanical, vehicle engineering, energy processes and relevant computational methods.
- PE9 Universe Sciences**
Astro-physics/-chemistry/-biology; solar system; planetary systems; stellar, galactic and extragalactic astronomy; cosmology; space sciences; astronomical instrumentation and data.
- PE10 Earth System Science**
Physical geography, geology, geophysics, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, cryology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management.
- PE11 Materials Engineering**
Advanced materials development: performance enhancement, modelling, large-scale preparation, modification, tailoring, optimisation, novel and combined use of materials, etc.

Life Sciences

- LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions**
For all organisms: Molecular biology, biochemistry, structural biology, molecular biophysics, synthetic and chemical biology, drug design, innovative methods and modelling.
- LS2 Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems**
For all organisms: Genetics, epigenetics, genomics and other 'omics studies, bioinformatics, systems biology, genetic diseases, gene editing, innovative methods and modelling, 'omics for personalised medicine.
- LS3 Cell Biology, Development, Stem Cells and Regeneration**
For all organisms: Structure and function of the cell, cell-cell communication, embryogenesis, tissue differentiation, organogenesis, growth, development, evolution of development, organoids, stem cells, regeneration, therapeutic approaches.
- LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing**
Organ and tissue physiology, comparative physiology, physiology of ageing, pathophysiology, inter-organ and tissue communication, endocrinology, nutrition, metabolism, interaction with the microbiome, non-communicable diseases including cancer (and except disorders of the nervous system and immunity-related diseases).
- LS5 Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System**
Nervous system development, homeostasis and ageing, nervous system function and dysfunction, systems neuroscience and modelling, biological basis of cognitive processes and of behaviour, neurological and mental disorders.
– *In humans and all other organisms*
- LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy**
The immune system, related disorders and their mechanisms, biology of infectious agents and infection, biological basis of prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, innovative immunological tools and approaches, including therapies.
- LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases**
Medical technologies and tools for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human diseases, therapeutic approaches and interventions, pharmacology, preventative medicine, epidemiology and public health, digital medicine.

LS8 Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution

For all organisms: Ecology, biodiversity, environmental change, evolutionary biology, behavioural ecology, microbial ecology, marine biology, ecophysiology, theoretical developments and modelling.

LS9 Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering

Biotechnology using all organisms, biotechnology for environment and food applications, applied plant and animal sciences, bioengineering and synthetic biology, biomass and biofuels, biohazards.

Social Sciences & Humanities

SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations
Economics, finance, management.

SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
Political science, international relations, law.

SH3 The Social World and Its Interactions
Sociology, social psychology, education sciences, communication studies.

SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
Cognitive science, psychology, linguistics.

SH5 Texts and Concepts
Literary studies, literature, philosophy.

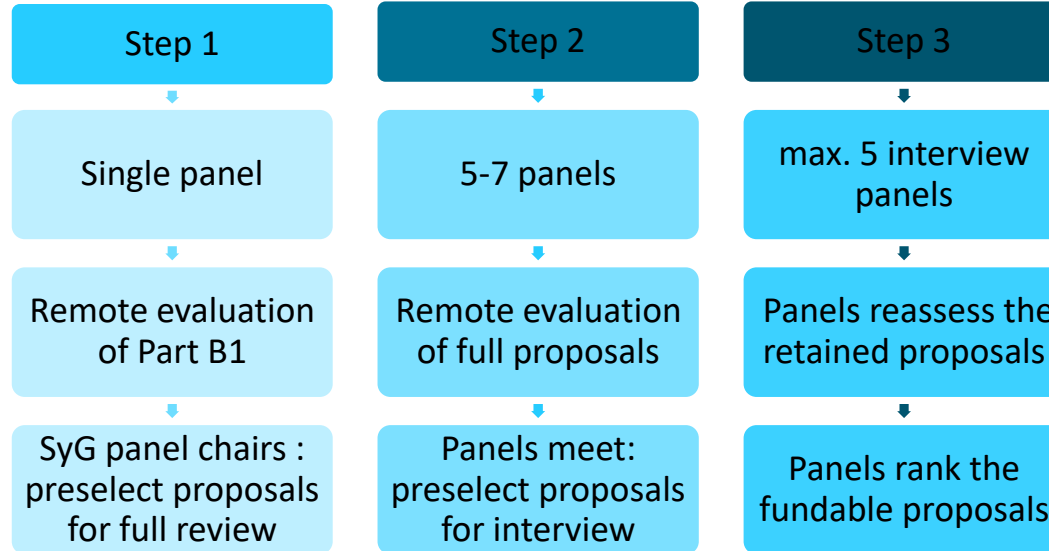
SH6 The Study of the Human Past
Archaeology and history.

SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and Space
Human geography, demography, health, sustainability science, territorial planning, spatial analysis.

SH8 Studies of Cultures and Arts
Social anthropology, studies of cultures, studies of arts.



Keep in mind the evaluation process - *Synergy Grant*





Scores & re-application rules (StG/CoG/AdG)

Evaluation Step 1

A = excellent quality

B = high quality but not sufficient

C = insufficient

A – invited: moves on to evaluation step 2

A – not invited: no restrictions for re-submissions

B: suspended for one call year

C: suspended for two call years

Evaluation Step 2

A = recommended for funding

B = not funded

Unfunded A & B:
no resubmission restrictions



Proposal parts → bear in mind the evaluation process

- Administrative Forms/
Proposal Submission Forms (online)
- 1 - General Information
- 2 - Participants & Contacts
- 3 - Budget
- 4 - Ethics
- 5 - Call-specific questions

B1

Extended synopsis (5 p.)

CV & Track record (4 p.)

B2

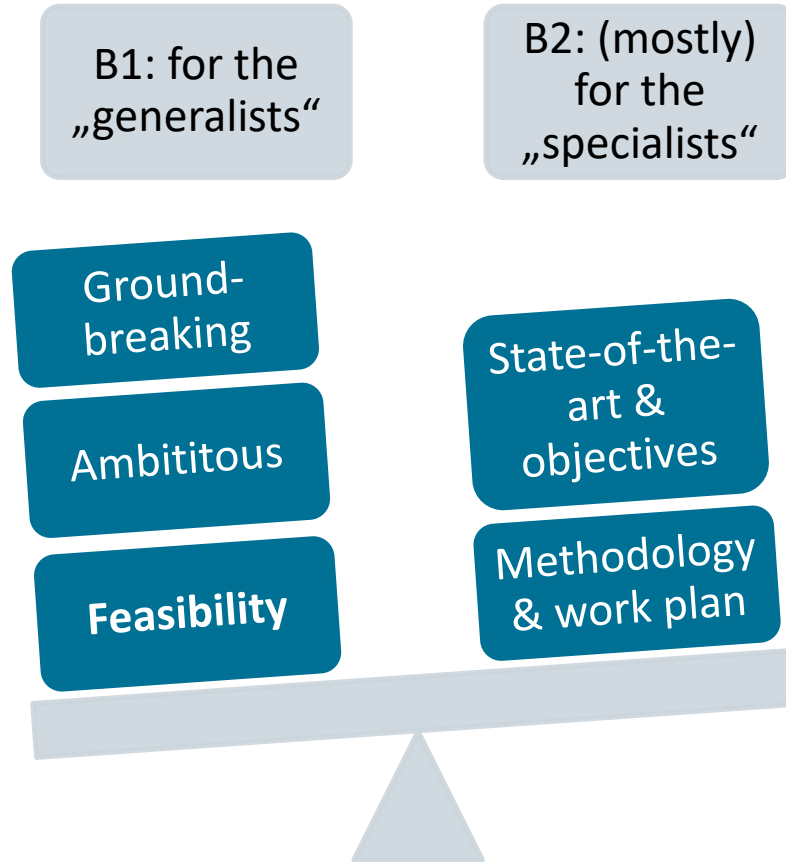
Scientific
Proposal
(14 p./SyG: 15 p.)

Annexes

- Resources and time commitment (SyG)
- Host Institution support letter (Binding statement of support)
- PhD-certificate (StG/CoG)
- Further documentation (e.g. on ethics, etc. – if applicable)



Getting the right balance



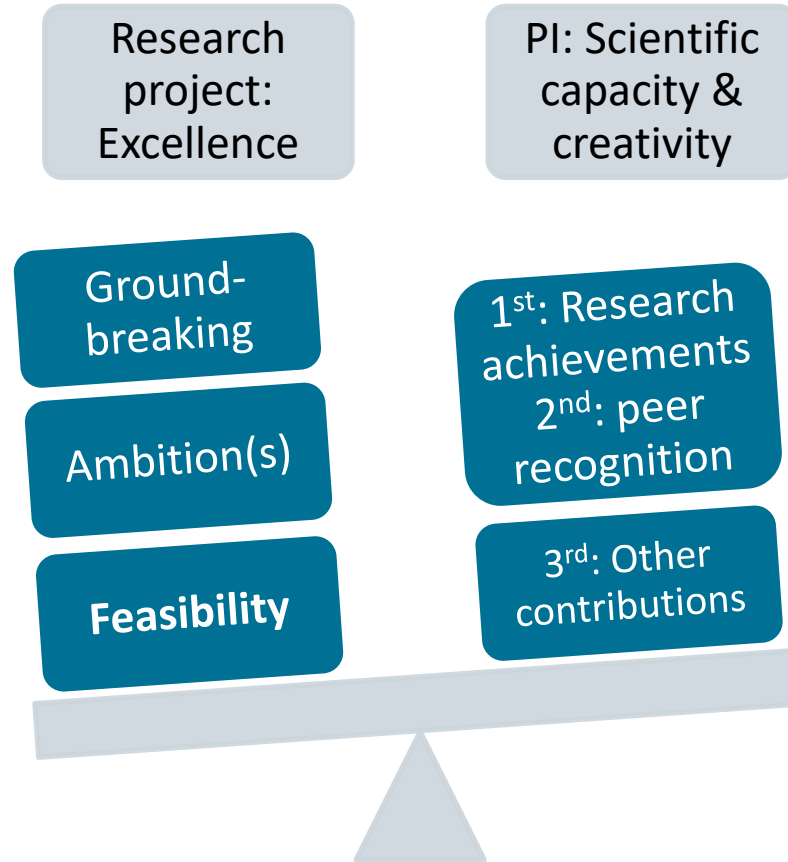


(Rather) new template for CV and track record: more flexibility

- No longer prescriptive PI profiles, single template (4 p.) for CV & track record
- The usual personal details: education, key qualifications, employment positions
- Research achievements (up to 10): demonstrating advancement in the field
 - emphasis on more recent achievements
 - short (factual) narrative on significance of achievements
- Peer recognition: prizes, fellowships, academy membership, etc.
- Additional information:
 - career breaks, diverse career paths, life events
 - other contributions to research community



Getting the right balance





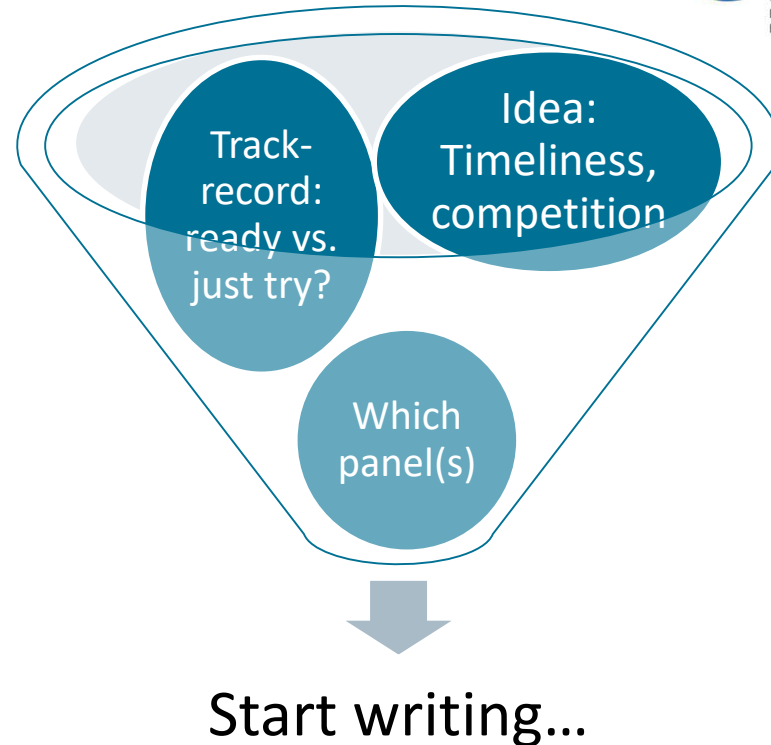
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Orientation: How to prepare, how to write



Before you start writing: some strategic choices to be made (despite possible randomness)





Some testing questions...

- Which **important challenges** will you tackle?
- What are **ground-breaking** or novel aspects?
- Are the **objectives** clear from the beginning?
- What makes the project both **ambitious & feasible**?
- How would the expected **scientific impact** change your research field?
- Why are you the **perfect candidate** to carry out the project?



Meet the panel's expectations...

“The PI has an excellent track record of publishing in high impact journals and is first author on a significant number of these papers”

“Ground-breaking project that if successful could have a huge impact in the field”

“scientific approach is feasible but clearly ambitious”

“The PI is an eclectic, original thinker”

“incredibly ambitious proposal”

“highly sophisticated and inventive technology underlying this proposal”

“methods are on the cutting edge of work in this area”

“originality and importance of the proposal”



Avoid typical weaknesses

“solid track record ... however, was not considered as internationally competitive”

“neither the lead question nor the approaches are clearly defined”

“the principal investigator does not seem to have the **capacity** and is not prepared to execute the outlined project”

“Feasibility is hard to judge based on the information provided”

“rather incremental than groundbreaking”

“serious doubts about the independence of the PI”

“There is hardly any form of work plan”

“Confusingly written proposal”

“The novelty of insights is not always clear”



Potential reasons for rejection

Based on the research project

- X Scope too narrow vs. too broad
- X Incremental and/or collaborative research approach
- X Hypothesis/objectives unclear
- X Work plan not detailed enough
- X Insufficient risk management (strategy)

Based on the research profile

- X Insufficient track record
- X Lacking potential/proof of independence
- X Insufficient leadership experience
- X Poor interview performance



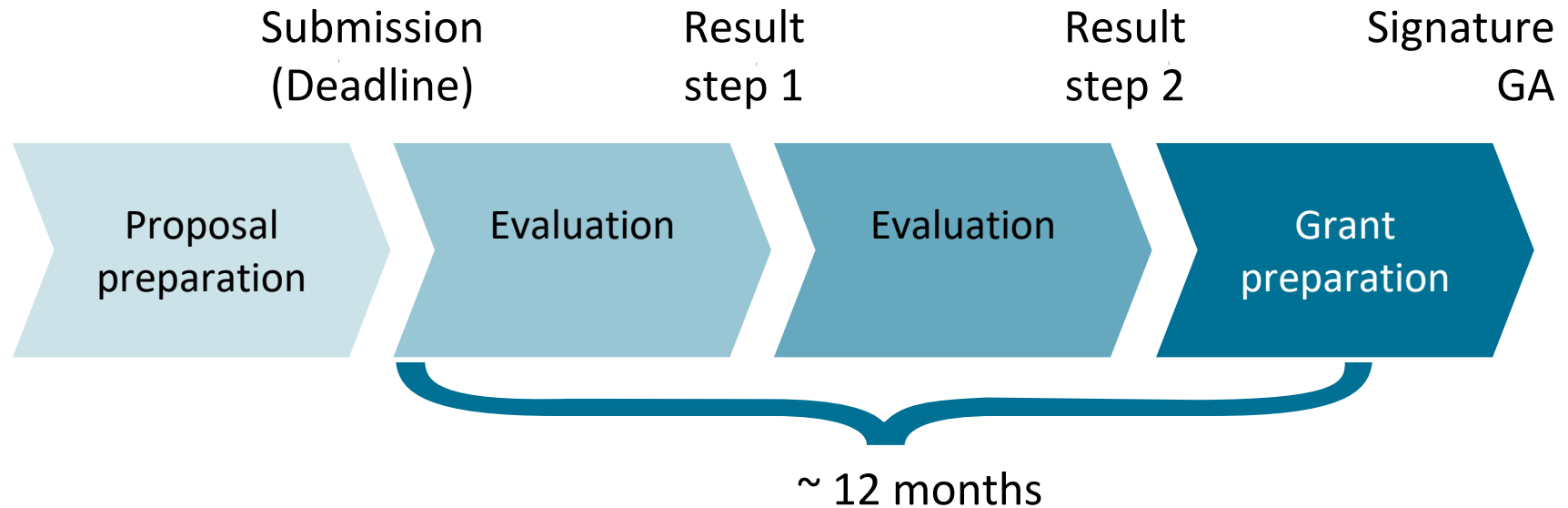
Don't forget operational aspects...

Yourself	Position / salary	Career prospects	Teaching
	Overhead 25%		
Team	Recruitment	Contract/ salary	Premises
Equipment	Depreciation	co-financing	purchase
	After the project		
Third Parties	Subcontracts	Associated Partners	

Get in touch with
your institution for
budget planning



From Submission to Funding





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Further information & support

Further information (sources)

ERC dashboard

Advanced analytics tool (ERIS)

Science stories

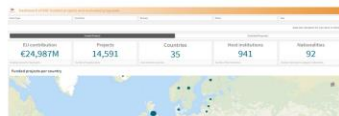
Mapping ERC frontier research

ERC dashboard

ERC Dashboard

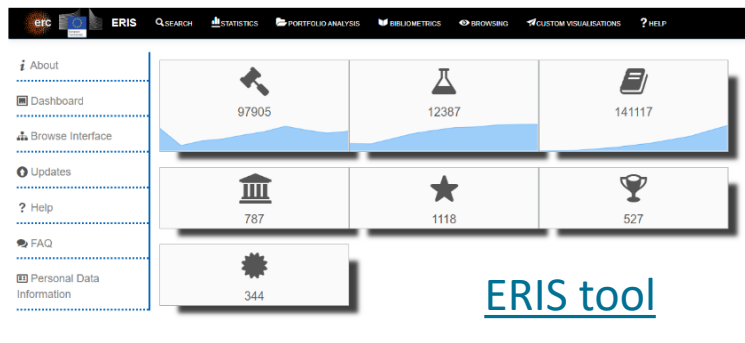
Need data on ERC grants? New dashboard is here

The dynamic platform for ERC funded projects and evaluated proposals is a user-friendly interface with powerful filter options. You can effortlessly filter by funding scheme, country, year, panel, and more. Plus, export results and graphs to further analyze and showcase your findings.



Share your experience

Please contact us at erc-webmaster@ec.europa.eu to share your feedback and suggestions regarding this new tool.



ERIS tool

CORDIS

Developing tools for planning diabetes treatments

Machine learning can help predict poor glycaemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes (T2D), according to new research.

Read the news article

HORIZON DASHBOARD
WELCOME TO THE R&I PROJECTS

Welcome | Scope and limitations | Target audience | More information

The dashboard presents data about signed grant agreements in Research and Innovation programmes: contribution, participation, number of projects.

This dashboard consists of 4 sheets you can navigate through by using the arrows top right:

- Key Figures
- Project Details
- Self-service BI - where you can build your own table and charts by selecting the elements you want to see
- Glossary

Horizon Dashboard



ERC Classes






Step by step to the ERC Application process

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbFbzkVWgCU>



ERC CLASSES
European Research Council - 1/7

-  **Step by Step to the ERC application process**
European Research Council
5:20
-  **How to get started with your ERC proposal**
European Research Council
11:36
-  **How to write part 1 of your ERC proposal**
European Research Council
14:31
-  **How to write part 2 of your ERC proposal**
European Research Council
8:16
-  **How do we evaluate your ERC proposal**
European Research Council
11:39



National Contact Point ERC

- Information on ERC funding schemes
- Advice on grant application and grant management
- Proposal checks (mind our internal deadlines)
- Information events & grant management workshops
- ERC interview trainings
- Newsletter & website ([DE](#))/([EN](#))

In close collaboration with EU
research managers of host
institutions



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