Outline

• What is the ERC?
• What does ERC offer?
• How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?
• How ERC research proposals are evaluated?
• ERC achievements and participation of non-ERA nationals
What is the ERC?
What is the ERC?
ERC in the H2020 Structure

➢ The HORIZON 2020 main components:
  ▪ Excellent Science
    ➢ World class science is foundation of technologies, jobs, well-being
    ➢ Europe needs to develop, attract, retain research talent
    ➢ Researchers need access to the best infrastructures
  ▪ Industrial leadership
  ▪ Societal challenges

➢ Excellent Science:
  ▪ European Research Council
  ▪ Future and Emerging Technologies
  ▪ Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions
  ▪ Research Infrastructures
What is the ERC?
Horizon 2020 Budget € 77 billion
ERC Budget € 13 billion
What is the ERC?

ERC structure

The European Commission
- Provides financing through the EU framework programmes
- Guarantees autonomy of the ERC
- Assures the integrity and accountability of the ERC
- Adopts annual work programmes as established by the Scientific Council

The ERC Scientific Council
- 22 prominent researchers proposed by an independent identification committee
- Appointed by the Commission (4 years, renewable once)
- Establishes overall scientific strategy; annual work programmes (incl. calls for proposals, evaluation criteria); peer review methodology; selection and accreditation of experts
- Controls quality of operations and management
- Ensures communication with the scientific community

The ERC Executive Agency
- Executes annual work programme as established by the Scientific Council
- Implements calls for proposals and provides information and support to applicants
- Organises peer review evaluation
- Establishes and manages grant agreements
- Administers scientific and financial aspects and follow-up of grant agreements
- Carries out communications activities and ensures information dissemination to ERC stakeholders
What does ERC offer?
What does ERC offer?
Creative Freedom of the Individual Grantee

ERC offers independence, recognition & visibility

- to work on a research topic of **own choice**, with a team of **own choice**
- to gain true **financial autonomy** for 5 years
- to negotiate with the host institution the **best conditions** of work
- to attract **top team members** (EU and non-EU) and collaborators
- to move with the grant to any place in Europe if necessary (**portability of grants**)
- to attract additional funding and gain recognition; ERC is a quality label
What does ERC offer?
ERC Grant Schemes

Starting Grants
starters
(2-7 years after PhD)
up to € 2.0 Mio
for 5 years

Consolidator Grants
consolidators
(7-12 years after PhD)
up to € 2.75 Mio
for 5 years

Advanced Grants
track-record of
significant research
achievements in the
last 10 years
up to € 3.5 Mio
for 5 years

Proof-of-Concept
bridging gap between research - earliest
stage of marketable innovation
up to €150,000 for ERC grant holders
What does ERC offer?
ERC funding schemes

**Starting Grant (StG):** nurturing the next generation research leaders. To support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they are starting their own independent research team or programme.

**Consolidator Grant (CoG):** consolidating the next generation research leaders. To support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they may still be consolidating their own independent research team or programme.

**Advanced Grant (AdG):** attracting and rewarding established independent research leaders. To support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they are already established research leaders with a recognised track record of research achievements.

Applicant Principal Investigators must demonstrate the ground breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their scientific proposal.
What does ERC offer?
Principal investigator profile and commitment for StG

PI Profile:
- Any current place of work but working or moving to work in Europe (EU member state or FP7 Associated Country)
- Any nationality or age
- Over 2 and up to 7 years of experience after PhD
- Potential for independence and evidence of maturity
- Good track-record of early research achievements, appropriate to their research field and career stage

PI Commitment:
- Minimum 50% of PI working time on ERC project
- Minimum 50% of PI working time in a EU Member State or Associated Country
What does ERC offer?
Principal investigator profile and commitment for CoG

**PI Profile:**
- Any current place of work but working or moving to work in Europe (EU member state or FP7 Associated Country)
- Any nationality or age
- Over 7 and up to 12 years of experience after PhD
- Independence and evidence of maturity shown
- Promising track-record of early research achievements, appropriate to their research field and career stage

**PI Commitment:**
- Minimum 40% of PI working time on ERC project
- Minimum 50% of PI working time in a EU Member State or Associated Country
What does ERC offer?
Principal investigator profile and commitment for AdG

PI Profile:
- Any current place of work but working or moving to work in Europe (EU member state, FP7 Associated Country)
- Any nationality or age
- Strong leadership profile (impact, recognition,…)
- Excellent track record in recent years (achievements during the last 10 years)

PI Commitment:
- Minimum 30% of PI working time on ERC project
- Minimum 50% of PI working time in a EU Member State or Associated Country
What does ERC offer?

Funding

**Starting Grant (StG):**
Up to 1.5 million € for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). Up to 0.5 million € additional

**Consolidator Grant (CoG):**
Up to 2.0 million € for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). Up to 0.75 million € additional

**Advanced Grant (AdG):**
Up to 2.5 million € for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). Up to 1.0 million € additional

additional

to cover (a) eligible "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving from a another country to the EU or an Associated Country as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or (c) access to large facilities.
What does ERC offer?
Role of the host institution

- Is located in an EU Member State or an Associated Country
- Hosts the PI for the duration of the project
- Is a legal entity: university, research center, business research unit, etc.
- Is committed to ensure that the PI may:
  - Apply for funding independently
  - Manage research and funding project
  - Publish independently as senior author
  - Have access to reasonable space and facilities
- Signs Grant Agreement
- Overhead: 25%
What does ERC offer?
Features of ERC grants

- No constraints on eligible costs as long as they are for the execution of the project
- Rules of the HI apply
- High flexibility: aims of the project can be modified through amendments to the grant agreement
- Grants have a light reporting along the project life-time: financial report every 18 months, scientific report at mid-term and end of the project
- Grants have 25-40% pre-financing
- PI is empowered to manage the research activity and the funds of the project
- Grants are portable
## What does ERC offer?

### ERC 2014 Work Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ERC calls</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Call Publication</th>
<th>Submission Deadline(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starting Grants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERC-2014-StG</td>
<td>485 M€</td>
<td>11 December 2013</td>
<td>25 March 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consolidator Grants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERC-2014-CoG</td>
<td>713 M€</td>
<td>11 December 2013</td>
<td>20 May 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Grants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERC-2014-AdG</td>
<td>450 M€</td>
<td>17 June 2014</td>
<td>21 October 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proof of Concept</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ERC-2014-PoC</td>
<td>15 M€</td>
<td>11 December 2013</td>
<td>DL1: 1 April 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DL2: 1 Oct. 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What does ERC offer?

### ERC 2015 Work Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ERC calls</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Call Opening</th>
<th>Submission Deadline(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starting Grants</strong>&lt;br&gt; ERC-2015-StG</td>
<td>430 M€</td>
<td>7 October 2014</td>
<td>3 February 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consolidator Grants</strong>&lt;br&gt; ERC-2015-CoG</td>
<td>585 M€</td>
<td>13 November 2014</td>
<td>12 March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Grants</strong>&lt;br&gt; ERC-2015-AdG</td>
<td>630 M€</td>
<td>10 February 2015</td>
<td>2 June 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?
How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?
Main considerations

- Have a ground-breaking idea
- Design a research project to implement the idea
- Convince yourself on the feasibility of the project
- Ask yourself if you have the capabilities to build and supervise a research team to carry out the project
- Contact a HI where the project will be developed (the HI must be located in EU or any of the H2020 associated countries)
- Get the support from the HI
- Write your research proposal
- Submit your research proposal within the deadline
# How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?

## ERC panel structure

### Social Sciences and Humanities
- **SH1** Markets, Individuals and Institutions
- **SH2** The Social World, Diversity and Common Ground
- **SH3** Environment, Space and Population
- **SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- **SH5** Cultures and Cultural Production
- **SH6** The Study of the Human Past

### Life Sciences
- **LS1** Molecular and Structural Biology and Biochemistry
- **LS2** Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics and Systems Biology
- **LS3** Cellular and Developmental Biology
- **LS4** Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology
- **LS5** Neurosciences and Neural Disorders
- **LS6** Immunity and Infection
- **LS7** Diagnostic Tools, Therapies & Public Health
- **LS8** Evolutionary, Population and Environmental Biology
- **LS9** Applied Life Sciences and Biotechnology

### Physical Sciences & Engineering
- **PE1** Mathematics
- **PE2** Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- **PE3** Condensed Matter Physics
- **PE4** Physical & Analytical Chemical Sciences
- **PE5** Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- **PE6** Computer Science & Informatics
- **PE7** Systems & Communication Engineering
- **PE8** Products & Process Engineering
- **PE9** Universe Sciences
- **PE10** Earth System Science
## How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?

### Proposal structure

**PART A – online forms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1</th>
<th>Proposal and PI info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Host Institution info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Budget</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annexes – submitted as .pdf**

- Statement of support of HI
- If applicable: explanatory information on ethical issues; copy of PhD (StG, CoG); document for extension of eligibility window (StG, CoG)

**PART B1 – submitted as .pdf**

- Extended Synopsis: 5 p.
- CV: 2 p.
- Early Achievements (StG and CoG) or 10-year Track Record (AdG): 2 p.

**PART B2 – submitted as .pdf**


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Read the Information to Applicants
How ERC research proposals are evaluated?
Goal of the evaluation: select the best frontier research proposals
Only evaluation criteria: excellence
Method: peer review
Structure: 25 panels distributed in 3 scientific domains (10 Physical Sciences, 9 Life sciences and 6 Social Sciences and Humanities)
Each panel consists of 1 panel chair and 12-16 panel members

What makes ERC evaluation exceptional?

Peers
Review procedure
How ERC research proposals are evaluated?

Peers

- **Panel members:** typically 375 / call
  - High-level scientists
  - Recruited by ScC from all over the world: ~14% from outside Europe
  - About 12-16 members plus a chair person

- **Referees:** typically 2000 / call
  - Evaluate only a small number of proposals
  - Similar to normal practise in peer-reviewed journals

![Pie chart showing the distribution of panel members by country: EU and Associated Countries (86%), US (7%), Other (7%)](chart.png)
How ERC research proposals are evaluated?
Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion

Evaluation of excellence at two levels:

- **Excellence of the Research Project**
  - Ground breaking nature
  - Potential impact
  - Scientific Approach

- **Excellence of the Principal Investigator**
  - Intellectual capacity
  - Creativity
  - Commitment
ERC basics
Evaluation of proposals: review procedure

STEP 1
Remote assessment by Panel members of section 1 – PI and synopsis
Panel meeting
Proposals retained for step 2

Feedback to applicants

STEP 2
Remote assessment by Panel members and reviewers of full proposals
Panel meeting + interview (StG and CoG)
Ranked list of proposals

- Right balance between generalist + specialized review
- Appropriate treatment of interdisciplinary proposals
- Good cost-benefit ratio
ERC achievements and non-ERA participation
ERC achievements and participation participation of non-ERA nationals
After 7 Years of Existence…

- Highly recognised by the research community
- Over 4 300 top researchers funded (60% are at an early-career stage); 64 nationalities represented
- **Highly competitive** (average success rate 12%)
- Working in almost 600 different institutions in 29 countries
- **Benchmarking** effect: impact on national programmes and agencies; national funding for best "runners-up"
- Efficient and fast grant management
- Over 20 000 publications acknowledging ERC funding
ERC achievements and participation of non-ERA nationals

ERC Grantees with a non-ERA Nationality*
ERC StG, CoG and AdG calls 2007-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Starting and Consolidator grants</th>
<th>Advanced grants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL number of grantees with non-ERA nationality: 208 StG/CoG and 102 AdG

*) nationality as last declared by the principal investigator

Data as of 26/05/2014
More information on

erc.europa.eu

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