

# EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

## Starting Grants Information and Proposal Writing

### ERC-2013-StG Call

August / September 2012

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1



BIS | Department for Business  
Innovation & Skills

## Overview of Event

### Agenda

- **Introduction**
  - UKRO and UK ERC NCP
  - ERC Aims and Structure
  - Statistics
- **ERC Starting Grant**
- **Submission and Evaluation Process**
- **Writing your ERC Application**
  - Principal Investigator
  - Research Project (including Ethics)
  - Your Budget
  - Supporting Documentation
- **Granting Process and Grant Management**
- **Final Hints and Tips**

For reference only:

- Other Funding Sources to Explore
- Links

2



# ERC

## Introduction to UKRO and UK ERC NCP



3

## UK Research Office



- Based in Brussels
- Established in 1984
- Mission to facilitate effective UK participation in EU research, innovation and HE programmes
- Staff of 12
- Sponsored by the seven UK Research Councils
- Receives subscriptions from over 140 research organisations\*
- Range of services for sponsors and subscribers
- Research Council policy work
- Brussels liaison
- For more information see [www.ukro.ac.uk](http://www.ukro.ac.uk)

UK Research Office



4

\* check at <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/aboutukro/Pages/subscribers.aspx>

## UKRO's Services



'Core' subscriber* services	Open to non-subscribers
Query service	(Majority of) training courses and information events
Annual briefing visits (for UK subscribers)	Annual Conference
New UKRO Portal: Subscriber webpages + Latest news articles (email alerts) <a href="http://www.ukro.ac.uk">www.ukro.ac.uk</a>	Marie Curie Actions UK National Contact Point
	<b>European Research Council</b> <b>UK National Contact Point</b>
Meeting room in Brussels	British Council <i>European RTD Insight</i> publication

\* Subscribing institutions: <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/aboutukro/Pages/subscribers.aspx>

European Research Council  
National Contact Point Helpdesk

- **Website**  
<http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc>
- **ERC mailing list** for events and key updates  
(sign up at [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc\\_newsletter\\_registration.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc_newsletter_registration.aspx) )
- **Helpdesk** via email and telephone  
(email [erc-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:erc-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk) or phone 0032 2289 6121)
 

- Advice on applying for ERC actions
    - Eligibility
    - Application help
    - Results
    - Contractual issues
  - Advice to those with ERC grants
- Specialist **training** courses and information events



# ERC

## Introduction to the ERC: Aims and Structure



7

## What is the ERC?



### What is the European Research Council (ERC)?

- New pan-European funding organisation
- Supports the best in Europe - scientists, engineers and scholars
- Funding of €7.51 billion (2007-13)

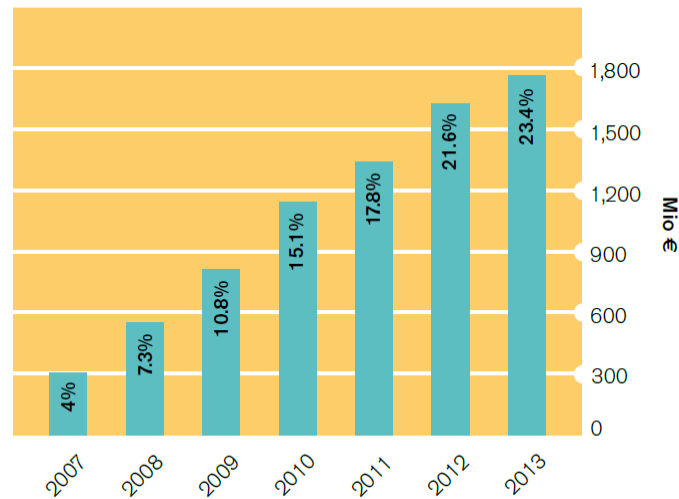
### What are the aims of the ERC?

- Encourage highest quality research in Europe (excellence is only criteria)
- Competitive, flexible funding
- Retain, repatriate and recruit (career support)



## ERC Spending Profile

ERC Grant schemes: Annual Budget Distribution  
2007-2013



## European Research Council Overview of Opportunities

- **Funds:**
  - A Principal Investigator (PI) and (if necessary) team members to do frontier research
  - No nationality or mobility requirements. PI must be based in an EU Member State or Associated Country.
- **Research areas:** Bottom-up, across all fields of research, on the basis of scientific excellence.
- **Project types:**
  - Starting Grants (PI normally 2-7yrs from PhD, up to €2m over 5 yrs)
  - Consolidator Grants (PI normally 7-12yrs from PhD, up to €2.75m over 5 yrs)
  - Advanced Grants (For leading investigators, up to €3.5m over 5 yrs)
  - Synergy Grants (new) (2-4 PIs, up to €15m over 6 yrs)
  - Proof of Concept (new, existing ERC grant holders only)
  - Co-ordination and Support Actions
- **Statistics at:** [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/results\\_stats.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/results_stats.aspx)



## ERC Calls in the 2013 Work Programme



Call	Acronym	Call Opens	Deadline	Other Info
<b>Starting Grants</b> (normally 2-7 yrs from PhD)	ERC-2013-StG	10 July 2012	17 October 2012	Single deadline for all research areas
<b>Consolidator Grants</b> (normally 7-12 yrs from PhD)	ERC-2013-CoG	7 November 2012	21 February 2013	Single deadline for all research areas
<b>Advanced Grants</b>	ERC-2013-AdG	10 July 2012	22 November 2012	Single deadline for all research areas
<b>Synergy Grants</b>	ERC-2013-SyG	10 October 2012	10 January 2013	Pilot call, with limited call budget, so likely to be very competitive.
<b>Proof of Concept</b>	ERC-2013-PoC	10 January 2013	24 April 2013 and 3 October 2013	Only for those who already have an ERC grant. The 2012 calls are still open*.
<b>CSA on Gender Issues</b>	ERC-2013-Support-1	2 October 2012	16 January 2013	Only of interest to researchers on gender

\*see [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/poc/Pages/open-future\\_calls.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/poc/Pages/open-future_calls.aspx)

## European Research Council



	ERC-2007-StG	ERC-2009-StG	ERC-2010-StG	ERC-2011-StG
<b>Funded ERC grants with UK HIs</b>	58 (20% of all grants)	43* (~18%* of grants)	79* (~19%* of grants)	124* (~26%* of grants)
<b>Success rate overall:</b>	3.3%	9.5%*	14.9%*	11.8%*
- success rate for grants with a UK HI	5.2%	12.4%*	17.3%*	15.6%*
	ERC-2008-AdG	ERC-2009-AdG	ERC-2010-AdG	ERC-2011-AdG
<b>Funded ERC grants with UK HIs</b>	58 (21% of all grants)	60 (25% of all grants)	53 (20% of all grants)	68 (23% of all grants)
<b>Success rate overall:</b>	12.7%	15.3%*	13.2%*	12.9%*
- success rate for grants with a UK HI	19.4%	19.6%*	13.6%*	14.3%*

\* provisional figure

Further statistics and access to information on funded projects on the UKRO website [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/results\\_stats.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/results_stats.aspx)

## ERC: Roles and Responsibilities



- **ERC Scientific Council (ScC)**
  - Policy setting part of the ERC
  - Responsible for:
    - Overall scientific strategy: Annual work programmes (including calls for proposals, evaluation criteria), peer review methodology, selection and accreditation of experts
    - Controlling quality of operations and management
    - Ensuring communication with the scientific community
  - 22 Members, nominated via an independent identification procedure
  - Members are:
    - Independent, respected scientists
    - Reflect the full scope of European research
    - Acting in their personal capacity
- **ERC Executive Agency (ERCEA)**
  - Executes ERC as designed by ScC: runs calls, peer review and grant administration
- **ERC Secretary General**
- **European Commission**
- **Role of EU Member States?**



## Who sits on the Scientific Council?



### Chair & ERC President:

- **Prof. Helga NOWOTNY (AT - Social Studies of Science)**

### Vice-Chairs & Vice Vice Presidents:

- Prof. Pavel EXNER (CZ - Applied Mathematics & Mathematical Physics)
- Prof. Carl-Henrik HELDIN (SE - Molecular Cell Biology)

### Other Members:

- Prof. Claudio BORDIGNON (IT - Medicine)
- Prof. Nicholas CANNY, (IE - History)
- Prof. Sierd A.P.L. CLOETINGH (NL - Earth Sciences)
- Prof. Mathias DEWATRIPONT (BE - Economics)
- Prof. Tomasz DIETL (PL - Physics)
- Prof. Daniel DOLEV (IL - Computer Sciences)
- Prof. Carlos M. DUARTE (ES - Biology)
- Prof. Daniel ESTEVE (FR - Physics)
- Prof. Hans-Joachim FREUND (DE - Physics & Physical Chemistry)
- **Prof. Timothy HUNT (UK - Biology)**
- Prof. Norbert KROO (HU - Physics)
- Prof. Maria Teresa LAGO (PT - Astrophysics)
- **Prof. Henrietta L. MOORE (UK - Social Anthropology)**
- Prof. Christiane NÜSSLEIN-VOLHARD (DE - Genetics)
- Prof. Alain PEYRAUBE (FR - Linguistics)
- Dr. Jens ROSTRUP-NIELSEN (DK - Chemistry)
- Prof. Mart SAARMA (EE - Biology)
- Prof. Anna TRAMONTANO (IT - Biochemistry)
- Prof. Isabelle VERNOS (ES - Molecular Biology)



Prof. Helga Nowotny, Scientific Council Chair  
Vienna Science and Technology Fund



Prof. Henrietta L. Moore  
University of Cambridge



Prof. Timothy Hunt  
Cancer Research UK



Biographies at: <http://erc.europa.eu/about-erc/organisation>

# ERC Starting Grants



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15

## Starting Grants



### Starting Grants

- Aim to provide appropriate and **adequate support**
- to excellent researchers
- at the stage where they are **starting** their own **independent** research team or programme.

Work Programme (published on)	ERC Action	Call Open	Call Deadlines	Call Value (€M)	Evaluation
2013 (10 July 2012)	ERC-2013-StG	10 July 2012	All domains (PE, LS and SH): 17 October 2012	398	Winter 12 – late Spring 13?

Please note that resubmission and multiple application rules apply



ERC – StG

16



## Aims and Types of Research Funded



### Aims of Starting Grant (StG) scheme:

- **Improve career opportunities and independence** at start of independent research career
- **Provide structure for transition** from working under a supervisor to independent research
- **Enable PIs to create excellent new teams** to bring energy and new ideas to their disciplines

### What kind of Research Can be Funded:

- **Excellent, innovative and investigator-initiated research projects**
  - can be **basic or applied** research, in **any field of research\***
- **Flexible projects to promote substantial advances in 'frontier research' such as:**
  - **questions at or beyond the frontiers of knowledge** without regard for established disciplinary boundaries
  - could be
    - **interdisciplinary proposals** crossing the boundaries between different research fields
    - pioneering proposals addressing **new and emerging fields of research**
    - proposals introducing **unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions**
  - reviewers understand the high-risk/high-gain profile

\*all fields of science and scholarship are eligible, except nuclear research



17 Information on previously funded StG and AdG on UKRO website

## PI Eligibility



### Am I Eligible as a PI for a Starting Grant?

- **2-7 yrs from date of award of first PhD or equivalent\***  
(as at 10 July 2012)
  - so those who obtained PhDs between (and including) 10 July 2005 and (including the) 10 July 2010
- **Extensions (up to 11.5 years in total) for properly documented eligible career breaks** only:
  - Maternity/paternity leave, national service, long-term illness and clinical qualifications
  - For other 'unavoidable statutory reasons' please contact us for advice
  - Eligible incidents that take place within the extension of the eligibility window may lead to further extensions
- **No extensions for part time working, non-research careers, travel...**
- Those who obtained their PhDs between (and including) the 10 July 2005 and (including the) 7 November 2005 are also eligible for the Consolidator Grant!

For more information, see

- Page 9 of the Guide for Applicants
- UKRO FAQs on Starting Grants at <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/faqs/Pages/stg.aspx>



\*ERC Policy on equivalent degrees in Annex 4 to Guide for Applicants

18

## Should I apply?

### Am I a Competitive Candidate?

- **Must** have already shown **potential for excellence** and **evidence of maturity**
- For example, it is **expected that**:
  - applicants will have produced **at least one important publication without the participation of their PhD supervisor**
- Should be able to demonstrate a of promising **track record early achievements** appropriate to their field and career stage, including:
  - **significant publications (as main author)** in major international peer-reviewed major multidisciplinary scientific journals or in leading international peer-reviewed journals in their field
- May have monographs, invited presentations, granted patents, awards, prizes
- Have good leadership potential

All this needs to be shown in your application....

...which will include:

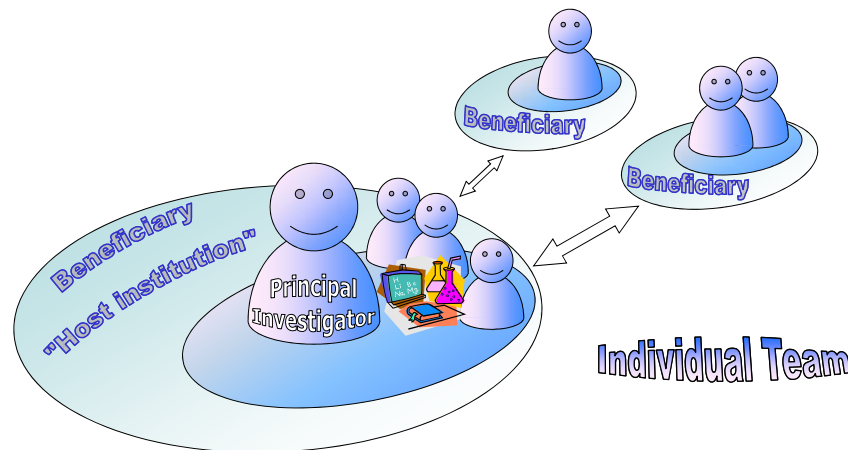
- a cv
- an early achievements track record

## PI Independence

### Host must give PI independence to:

- **Apply for funding independently**
  - **Manage the research and funding** for the project and make appropriate resource allocation decisions
  - **Publish as senior authors** and invite as co-authors only those who have contributed substantially to the reported work
  - **Supervise & recruit team members**, including research students, doctoral students and others
  - Have **access to reasonable facilities and space** for research
- Statement from Host (do not modify the set text!)
  - Does not apply to team members

## 'Individual Team' Concept Overview



Individual Team

Diagram provided by the European Commission



## 'Individual Team' Concept - PI

### Principal Investigator (PI) = Team Leader

- Central to the grant and review criteria
- Must have the potential to be a future independent research leader in their own right...
- Has the power to assemble a research group of team members
- Freedom to choose the research topic
- Expected to lead their team and be fully engaged in the running of the grant
- Expected to spend **a minimum 50% of their total working time on the ERC project** and a **minimum of 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country**
  - Evaluation criteria include "The PI is strongly committed to the project and demonstrates the willingness to devote a significant amount of time to the project (min 50% of the total working time on it and min 50% in an EU Member State or Associated Country) (based on Scientific Proposal)."
  - Does not exclude fieldwork/research outside EU/AC needed to achieve research objectives
- Can be of any age, nationality or current location
- Chooses a host institution in EU Member State or Associated Country\* (or an 'International European Interest Organisation')
- Applies in conjunction with host and (if funded) signs 'supplementary agreement' with the host
- Resubmission rules apply to PI

(\*currently Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Faroe Islands, FYR Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Moldova (new), Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.)



## 'Individual Team' Concept - PI's Host Institution



### PI's Host Institution

- Can be any type of legal entity
- Must be in the territory of an EU Member State or Associated Country
- The PI does not have to be based there at the time of application
- Has the infrastructure and capacity to carry out frontier research project
- Must not constrain the PI to the research strategy of the institution
- Must provide appropriate conditions for the PI to
  - direct independently the research and manage the ERC funding
- But now no longer assessed as a separate criterion during Peer Review
- Normally employs the PI
- Is the 'applicant legal entity'
- Signs a Supporting Statement as part of application
- If funded signs up to the Grant Agreement
- If funded, signs a 'Supplementary Agreement' with the PI
- Host institution should not really be changed during review process but researchers can move once funded under certain conditions



## 'Individual Team' Concept - Team Members



### Team Members (if needed)

- **Constitution of individual research team is flexible**, commonly includes:
  - other researchers from the PI's research group or institution (senior researchers, post docs, graduate and PhD students...)
  - non-academic staff such as technicians/support staff can also be funded
- **Normally, the PI's host institution will be the only institution**
  - But could have team members from other institutions in the same or different countries
    - will be eligible for funding and may be established anywhere, including outside the European Union or Associated Countries
    - No longer specifically assessed during peer review – used to say "is their participation fully justified by the scientific added value they bring to the project?"
- **Individual research team headed by a single PI (including any team members at other institutions) so NOT a traditional network or research consortium**
- PI has freedom to choose appropriate team members
- Team members can be of any age, nationality & country of residence (not just EU/AC)
- Team members do not need to be independent
- Smaller role in application forms and review than the PI
- Named v's un-named?
- Resubmission rules do not apply to team members
- Institution (s) where team based sign up to Grant Agreement



(No 'Co-Investigator' concept, only used in previous Advanced Grants calls, but now discontinued)

## Funding Levels and Duration of Grant



### Normally

- **maximum grant EUR 1.5 million over 5 years** ERC contribution (or pro-rata for shorter projects)

### Can have an additional EUR 0.5 million (not pro rata), but **only** to cover:

- eligible “start-up” costs for **PIs moving from a third country** to the EU or an Associated Country as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant;
- **the purchase of major equipment; or**
- **access to large facilities (new).**

This additional funding requested must be justified in Part B Section 2c.

### Limits includes direct and indirect costs!

#### Direct Costs

- **100%** of eligible and approved direct costs funded

#### Indirect Costs:

- **20%** flat rate (of the total direct costs excluding subcontracting and third party resources not used on premises)
- Is allocated and charged (for all institutions no proof needed of how spent)



## ERC Starting Grants Submission and Evaluation Process



## Peer Review Structure and Funding Levels



### Submission

- **Single Stage Submission, but 2-Step Peer Review (with interviews)**
- **Electronic Submission** via EPSS

### Peer Review

- **3 research domains\***
- **25 panels** (StG - 2 separate sets of panel members (new-ish), AdG - 2 separate sets)

Domain	Panels	Budget	Deadline
Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE)	10	44%	Single deadline (new) for all research domains: 17 October 2012*
Life Sciences (LS)	9	39%	
Social Sciences and Humanities (SH)	6	17%	

*\*\*Strictly 17.00, Brussels time!*



## Structure of Application Forms



### Part A – Administrative and Summary Forms (completed directly onto EPSS)

- **A1 Proposal & PI information & HI Legal Representative** (including abstract)
- **A2 Host Institution(s) information & PIC** (one A2 form per institution)
- **A3 Budget** (summary financial information)

### Part B1 – Proposal Details (template from EPSS, submitted as .pdf)

- **Cover page & proposal summary**
- **Section 1a: Extended Synopsis** (5 pages)
- **Section 1b-c: The PI**
  - 1b) CV, including Funding ID (2 pages)
  - 1c) Early Achievement Track Record (2 pages)

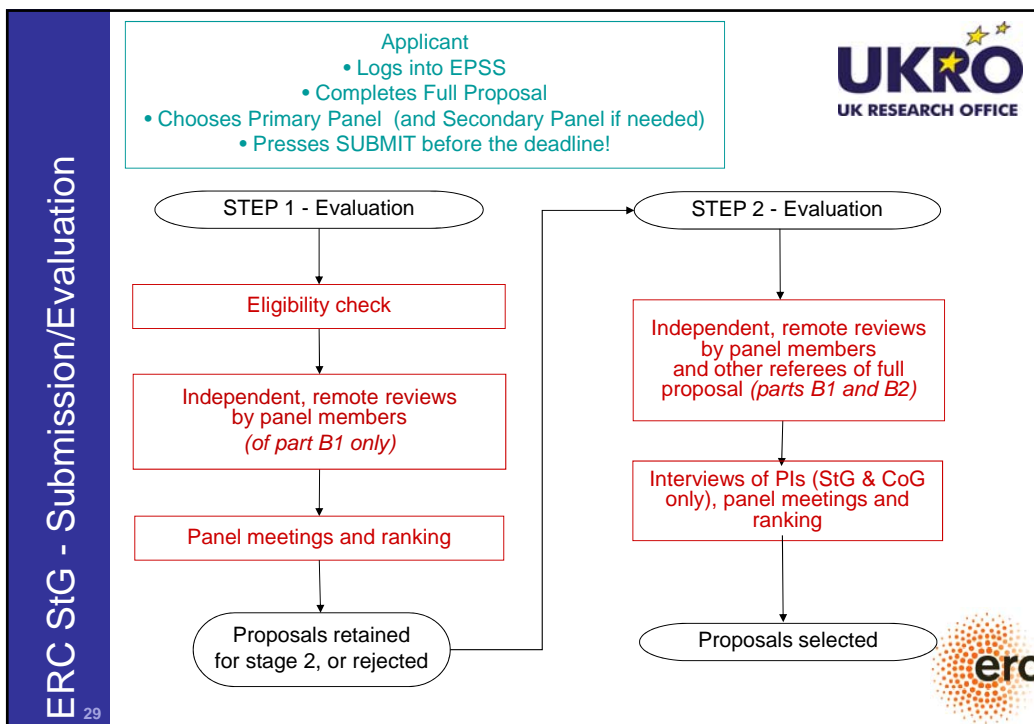
### Part B2 – Research Proposal (template from EPSS, submitted as .pdf)

- **Section 2 - Research Proposal** (15 pages, excluding ethical issues table and annex)
  - a) State-of-the-art and objectives
  - b) Methodology
  - c) Resources (including project costs)
  - d) Ethical and security sensitive issues (including ethics table)


### Annexes

- **Commitment of the Host Institution** (template from EPSS, submitted as .pdf)
- PhD Certificate, and (if applicable) evidence of extensions (as .pdf)
- Ethical Issues Annex (if applicable) (template on EPSS, 2 pages, excl. copies of authorisations)
- Security Issues Annex (if applicable) (template on EPSS)





ERC StG - Submission/Evaluation




## Peer Review Panels

**Examples:**

- **PE10 - Earth System Science**  
physical geography, geology, geophysics, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management
- **LS8 - Evolutionary, Population & Environmental Biology**  
evolution, ecology, animal behaviour, population biology, biodiversity, biogeography, marine biology, ecotoxicology, microbial biology
- **SH3 – Environment, Space and Population**  
environmental studies, geography, demography, migration, regional and urban studies

*For full list of all 25 panels and keywords see the Guide for Applicants*

*If resubmitting, please note there many changes to panel descriptions!*



30



Peer Review Panels - Example of Titles and Keywords



**SH1 Individuals, Institutions and Markets:** Economics, finance and management

- SH1\_1 Macroeconomics
- SH1\_2 Development, economic growth
- SH1\_3 Microeconomics, behavioural economics
- SH1\_4 Marketing
- SH1\_5 Political economy, institutional economics, law and economics
- SH1\_6 Econometrics, statistical methods
- SH1\_7 Financial markets, asset prices, international finance
- SH1\_8 Banking, corporate finance, accounting
- SH1\_9 Competitiveness, innovation, research and development
- SH1\_10 Organization studies: theory & strategy, industrial organization
- SH1\_11 Labour economics, income distribution and poverty
- SH1\_12 Public economics
- SH1\_13 International trade
- SH1\_14 History of economic thought and quantitative economic history

**SH2 Institutions, Values, Beliefs and Behaviour:** Sociology, social anthropology, political science, law, communication, social studies of science and technology

- SH2\_1 Social structure, inequalities, social mobility, interethnic relations
- SH2\_2 Social policies, work and welfare
- SH2\_3 Kinship, cultural dimensions of classification and cognition, identity, gender
- SH2\_4 Myth, ritual, symbolic representations, religious studies
- SH2\_5 Democratization, social movements
- SH2\_6 Violence, conflict and conflict resolution
- SH2\_7 Political systems and institutions, governance



**New (for StG):  
Request for Exclusion of Reviewers**



- Can now request to exclude up to **THREE** peer reviewers
- **Must specify one of the following reasons:**
  - **Direct scientific rivalry**
  - **Professional hostility**
  - **Or a similar situation which would impair or put in doubt the objectivity of the potential evaluator**

- **Specify people on the A1 form:**

Family Name	First Name(s)	Institution	City	Country	Webpage	Reason for exclusion

- **The ERC may exclude the evaluator as long as the ERC remains in the position to evaluate your proposal**





## Restrictions on Submission of Proposals (Rules for ERC-2013-StG Call)



**Apply to:** PIs (and Co-Is of existing Advanced Grants, but not to team members)

### Current restrictions on submission of proposals for Starting Grants:

- A PI may submit only one proposal to the ERC for ERC frontier research grant (StG, CoG, AdG and SyG) calls made under the same **Work Programme**.
- A PI who has submitted an **eligible proposal** to a 2012 ERC call may not apply to a 2013 ERC call for any ERC frontier research grant if the proposal was evaluated as of insufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation (**category C**).  
As an exception to this rule, a **PI who has submitted an eligible proposal to the 2012 Synergy Grant call** may apply to the 2013 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant calls (but not Synergy Grant) even if the proposal was evaluated as of insufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation (category C).
- A PI or Co-I may hold **only one frontier research grant from the ERC at any one time**
- A PI who holds an ERC frontier research grant cannot submit a proposal for another ERC Grant unless the existing grant expires no more than two years after the call deadline
- A PI who is a **serving Panel Member** for a 2013 ERC call or who served as a Panel Member for a 2011 ERC call may not apply to a 2013 ERC call for the same type of grant.

33

## Registering on the Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS)



Participant Portal – ERC Open Calls page:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/ideas&state=open>

The screenshot shows the 'Participant Portal' interface for 'RESEARCH & INNOVATION'. It features a navigation menu with 'Home', 'FP7 Calls', 'FP7 Doc', 'My Organisations', 'Experts', and '?'. Below the menu, there are tabs for 'Latest Info', 'Cooperation', 'Ideas', 'People', 'Capacities', 'Euratom', and 'Search Calls'. The 'IDEAS' section is active, showing 'ERC / 3 open calls'. A table lists the following calls:

Call Identifier	Call Title	Publication Date	Deadline
ERC-2013-StG	Call for proposals for ERC Starting Grant	2012-07-10	2012-10-17
ERC-2013-AdG	Call for proposals for ERC Advanced Grant	2012-07-10	2012-11-22
ERC-2012-PoC	Call for proposals for ERC Proof of Concept	2012-02-02	2012-10-03

34

Home FP7 Calls FP7 Doc My Organisations Experts ?

Latest Info Cooperation Ideas People Capacities Euratom Search Calls

IDEAS

Open Closed Forthcoming

Call for proposals for ERC Starting Grant

Return to calls

Identifier: ERC 2013 StG  
 Publication Date: 10 July 2012  
 Budget: € 398 000 000  
 Deadline: 17 October 2012 at 17:00:00 (Brussels local time)  
 OJ Reference: OJ C 202 of 10 July 2012  
 Specific Programme(s): IDEAS  
 Theme(s): ERC

...

...

Electronic Proposal Submission

To access the Electronic Submission Service of the call, please select the funding scheme or objective corresponding to the work programme topic that is most relevant to your proposal from the list below. You will then be linked to the correct entry point.

Available funding scheme(s):

ERC Starting Grant[ERC-SG] Go

2. Go down the page until "Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS)"

3. Click in the box then click on "Go"

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## Using EPSS



- EPSS is already available
- Forms should be completed online, but
  - available for reference on our website at [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/open-future\\_calls.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/open-future_calls.aspx)
- PI registers on EPSS and will be sent password and access details
  - Passes on access to other participants
- Once registered, you can access EPSS directly at: <https://www.epss-fp7.org>
  - Complete A forms online
  - Download, complete and upload .pdf files of Part B (10Mb limit) & Annexes
- Format of name of pdf file given in Guide for Applicants
- Proposal formats and page numbers are strictly limited
- No additional documents allowed but reviewers can look at websites in order to further assess applicant's previous work
- Automated check of some things only
- Checklist given in section 1.2.4 of the Guide for Applicants



## Using EPSS



### EPSS Tips

- Start in plenty of time, and check you can save as .pdf!
- Double check all details
- Can revise and resubmit up to deadline (submit often!)
- **Remember to press 'submit' button!**
- **Deadline strictly enforced**
- Check email acknowledgement contains all parts of your proposal

### EPSS Help and Support

- EPSS Helpdesk (technical problems)
  - E-mail: [support@epss-fp7.org](mailto:support@epss-fp7.org)
  - Tel: +32 2 233 3760
- EPSS User Guide  
(linked to from the bottom of the EPSS helpdesk page)



## Key Documents



Focus	Call Fiche (call specific) <b>Use the ERC-2013-StG Fiche!</b>
	Work Programme (annual) <b>Use the 2013 Work Programme!</b>
Submission	ERC Guide for Applicants (call specific) <b>Use the 14 August 2012 version and check for updates!</b>
	EPSS Guide
	FAQs
	Ethics Guidance
Background	Guide for Peer Reviewers
	ERC Rules on Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Award
	Model Grant Agreement
	Guidance Notes for preparing the ERC Grant Agreement
	Guide for ERC Grant Holders
	FP7 Rules of Participation

# ERC Starting Grants Writing Your Application



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39

## Evaluation Criteria



### Principal Investigator

- Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment

### Research Project (Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility)

- Ground-breaking nature & potential impact of research project
- Scientific Approach

#### At the end of step 1 (based on Part B1 of proposal)

- Proposals split into three groups:
  - A. is of sufficient quality to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation;
  - B. is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation; and
  - C. is not of sufficient quality to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation. The applicant may also be subject to resubmission limitations in future ERC calls.
- Applicants not passing to step 2 will also told the ranking range of their proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panel

#### At the end of step 2 (based on the full proposal)

- Proposals can be:
  - A. fully meets the ERC's excellence criterion and is recommended for funding **if sufficient funds are available**; and
  - B. meets some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded.
- Panels may review the level of the requested budget and suggest adjustments
- Applicants told the ranking range of their proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panel

ERC StG – Writing Your Application

40

## Structure of Application Forms



### Part A – Administrative and Summary Forms (completed directly onto EPSS)

- **A1 Proposal & PI information & HI Legal Representative** (including abstract)
- **A2 Host Institution(s) information & PIC** (one A2 form per institution)
- **A3 Budget** (summary financial information)

---

### Part B1 – Proposal Details (template from EPSS, submitted as .pdf)

- **Cover page & proposal summary**
- **Section 1a: Extended Synopsis** (5 pages)
- **Section 1b-c: The PI**
  - 1b) CV, including Funding ID (2 pages)
  - 1c) Early Achievement Track Record (2 pages)

---

### Part B2 – Research Proposal (template from EPSS, submitted as .pdf)

- **Section 2 - Research Proposal** (15 pages, excluding ethical issues table and annex)
  - a) State-of-the-art and objectives
  - b) Methodology
  - c) Resources (including project costs)
  - d) Ethical and security sensitive issues (including ethics table)

---

### Annexes

- **Commitment of the Host Institution** (template from EPSS, submitted as .pdf)
- PhD Certificate, and (if applicable) evidence of extensions (as .pdf)
- Ethical Issues Annex (if applicable) (template on EPSS, 2 pages, excl. copies of authorisations)
- Security Issues Annex (if applicable) (template on EPSS)



## ERC Starting Grants Writing Your Application

### - *Principal Investigator*



## Principal Investigator



### APPLICATION

- B1: Section 1b) CV, including 'Funding ID' (2 pages)  
1c) Early Achievements Track Record (2 pages)

### CRITERIA (For StG and CoG)

#### PI intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment

- The PI has **demonstrated the ability to propose and conduct ground-breaking research** and his/her achievements have typically **gone beyond the state-of-the-art**.
- The PI provides **abundant evidence of creative independent thinking**
- The **ERC Grant** would contribute significantly to the **establishment and/or further consolidation of the PI's independence**.
- The **PI is strongly committed to the project** and demonstrates the willingness to devote a significant amount of time to the project (min 50% of the total working time on it and min 50% in an EU Member State or Associated Country) (based on Scientific Proposal).

*Each is marked Fully agree / Agree partially / Disagree partially / Strongly disagree*



43

## Curriculum Vitae (2 pages max)



- **Academic record**
- **Research record**
- **Succinct 'Funding ID'**
  - **Current research grants** and their subject
  - **Ongoing applications** for work relating to the proposal
- Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained so that can be fairly assessed by the evaluation panels.



44

## Early Achievements Track Record (2 pages max)



### Benchmarks

- **Publications**
  - in **major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals** and/or
  - in the **leading international peer-reviewed journals** and/or
  - **peer-reviewed conferences proceedings** and/or
  - **research monographs** of their respective research fields.
  - Highlight
    - **5 representative publications** and
    - those **without the presence of your PhD supervisor** as co-author.
  - Also indicate the **number of citations** (excluding self-citations) they have attracted\*
- **Granted patent(s)\***
- **Invited presentations to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools\***
- **Prizes and Awards\***

(\*if applicable)



45

## Hints and Tips PI Criteria



- Sell yourself!
- Remember the Funding ID section in the CV is important
- Make sure you address the full requirements of the track record, and consider what makes you stand out
- Clarify specific points to strengthen your application and give additional relevant details
- Explain anything that is UK specific
- The evaluators will review the PI on the basis of their experience and information the PI provides on the application form!
- If you refer to journal impact factors, state which one you are using
- Add a link to your website, and then keep your website UP TO DATE!



46

**FAQ  
PI Criteria**



- Is there a set style for the CV and what should I include in the CV?
- What if I have changed research fields?
- I've mainly been teaching for the last 2 years, but before that I was an active researcher – can I still apply?
- Which publications are considered to be high quality?
- What about papers that are yet to be published?
- What if my experience does not match the profile of the PI?



**ERC Starting Grants  
Writing Your Application**

***- Research Project  
(including Ethical and Security Sensitive  
Issues)***





## Structure of the Proposal



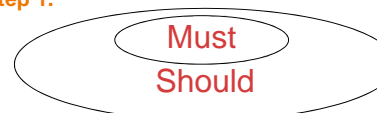
Download the templates from EPSS

**B1: Cover Page including half page summary** – can be same abstract as on A1 Form:

- Clear understanding of the objectives of the proposal and how they will be achieved
- Short description used in evaluation process and communication

**B1: Extended Synopsis:**

- **Concise presentation of the scientific proposal**, with particular attention to the
  - **ground-breaking nature of the research project** and
  - **the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach.**
- Describe the proposed **work in the context of the state of the art** of the field.
- **References to literature should be included.**
- **Panel will only evaluate Extended Synopsis at step 1.**



**B2: Scientific Proposal: detailed descriptions of the project's aim, planning, execution, and required resources** (only assessed at step 2)

- State of the art and objectives
- Methodology
- Resources (inc project costs)
- Ethical and security sensitive issues



## Research Project (1)



### APPLICATION

- **Part B1 (Section 1a) Extended Synopsis (5 pages):** concise presentation of the scientific proposal, with particular attention to the ground-breaking nature of the research project and the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. Include references.
- **Part B2 (Section 2): Scientific Proposal (15 pages):** detailed descriptions of the project's aim, planning, execution, and required resources.
  - 2a) State-of-the-art & Objectives, 2b) Methodology, 2c) Resources (incl. costs)

**CRITERIA: Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility:**

### 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 across disciplines)?*
- *How much is the proposed research **high risk/high gain**?*



## Research Project (2)

### APPLICATION

- **Part B1 (Section 1a) Extended Synopsis (5 pages)**
- **Part B2 (Section 2): Scientific Proposal (15 pages)**

### CRITERIA

- **Scientific Approach**

- *To what extent is the outlined **scientific approach** feasible (based on Extended Synopsis)?*
- *To what extent is the proposed research **methodology** **appropriate to achieve the goals of the project** (based on Scientific Proposal)?*
- *To what extent does the proposal involve the **development of novel methodology** (based on Scientific Proposal)?*
- *To what extent are the **proposed timescales and resources** **necessary and properly justified** (based on Scientific Proposal)?*



## Hints and Tips Research Project Criteria

- Consider what excites you about the research and convey this in your application (and at your interview!)
- Think about your audience and remember to explain UK specific terminology
- Explain how the research will open new horizons or opportunities
- Provide a clear, concise work-plan which gives details of the intermediate goals
- Explain what each team member is doing (and their background/ recruitment profile)
- Highlight any intermediate stages where you may need to adjust your project planning
- Clearly explain how you will manage and disseminate your project
- Justify the resources you need for your research proposal and ensure the resources are appropriate.
  - Have you included all staff costs?
  - Have you clearly shown the links between the costs and the research/methodology?



## FAQs Research Project Criteria



- Does it have to be a totally new project?
- What level of knowledge should I expect from the evaluators?
- Why do I need to provide a synopsis as well as the full proposal?
- Should I name my team members in my application?
- Should I include a Plan B?
- Do I have to carry out my research in the EU?
- Can I give links to information about my work?



## Ethical Issues Table and Annex



### APPLICATION

- **Part B2 (Section 2d – Ethical Issues Table)**
  - Ethical Issues Table (provided, doesn't count towards page limit for B2)
- **Annex** (only if answered Yes to any questions on ethical issues table)
  - Brief explanation the ethical issue(s) involved & how it will be dealt with appropriately. Benefit and burden of research. (2 pages max)
  - You may include supporting documentation, such as authorisations already received. (Not counted in page limit)

Research on Human Embryo/ Foetus	YES	Page
Does the proposed research involve human Embryos?		
Does the proposed research involve human Foetal Tissues/ Cells?		
Does the proposed research involve human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?		
Does the proposed research on human Embryonic Stem Cells involve cells in culture?		
Does the proposed research on Human Embryonic Stem Cells involve the derivation of cells from Embryos?		
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

Research on Humans	YES	Page
Does the proposed research involve children?		
Does the proposed research involve patients?		
Does the proposed research involve persons not able to give consent?		
Does the proposed research involve adult healthy volunteers?		
Does the proposed research involve Human genetic material?		

An extract from the ethics table



## Resources on Research Ethics



EU Website - [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html)

- Guide to Ethics in FP7 - FP7 Ethics for Researchers
- Ethics check-list
  - Informed Consent
  - Research on Human embryos/foetus
  - Privacy
  - Research on Animals
  - Research Involving Developing Countries
  - Dual Use
- Also various other guidance notes and useful documents on various issues
- Contact point at the Commission for questions



## FAQs Ethical Issues



- Does everyone need to complete the ethical issues table?
- Where do I describe the ethically sensitive issues?
- Do I need to attach national legislation documents?
- Who looks at ethics during Peer Review and what feedback will I get?
- Can I start my grant before the ethical review is finished?
- What is an 'ethical audit'?



## Security Sensitive Issue



### APPLICATION

- **Part B2 (Section 2d – security sensitive issues)**
    - (Information in section B2d does not count towards the page limit)
    - If your proposal is security sensitive, describe why, which are the participants concerned by the sensitivity and what are the measures foreseen to cope with it.
    - Describe your experience in managing security sensitive projects, if relevant.
  - **Security Sensitive Issues Annex** (if applicable)
    - Include a first version of the Security Aspects Letter (SAL) and the Security Classification Guide (SCG) using the template provided in Annex 5 of the Guide for Applicants
- 
- Proposal can be considered security-sensitive for a variety of reasons, most notably:
    - if it **handles or produces classified** information,
    - if some foreground is planned to be classified
  - A proposal may also be sensitive, independently of any security classification, if it plans to exchange material subject to transfer or export licensing.
    - If export licences (or intra EU licences) are required for carrying out the planned work, applicants must clarify the requirement to have such export or transfer licences and must provide a copy of export or transfer licences (or of the requests).



## ERC Starting Grants Writing Your Application

### - *ERC Finances – Your Project Budget*



## Background Finance information (1)

- **Direct costs:** up to 100% of eligible costs
- **Indirect costs:** Flat rate of 20%\* (of eligible direct costs)  
(\*excludes subcontracting & third party resources not used on premises)
- Overall level of grant offered determined by peer review panels

### Direct eligible costs

are those which support all the research, management, training and dissemination activities necessary for the conduct of the project such as  
*Personnel, Equipment, Consumables, Travel and Subsistence & Publication Costs*

How are **eligible costs** defined?

- Actual
- Incurred by the beneficiary during the project
- Determined according to hosts usual accounting and management principles
- Used solely for project objectives
- Consistent with principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- Recorded in accounts
- Exclusive of non-eligible costs



## Background Finance information (2)

**Non-eligible costs**, in particular:

- Any identifiable indirect taxes, including VAT or duties
- Interest owed
- Provisions for possible future losses or charges
- Exchange losses
- Costs declared, incurred or reimbursed in respect of another EU project
- Costs related to return on capita
- Debt and debt service charges
- Excessive or reckless expenditure
- Any costs not related to the project
- Others? ...



## Background Finance information (3)



### Indirect eligible costs

are those which cannot be identified as directly attributable to the project, but which are incurred in direct relationship with the project's direct eligible costs, such as:

- Costs related to general administration and management
- Costs of office or laboratory space, including rent or depreciation of buildings and equipment, and related expenditure such as water, heating, electricity
- Maintenance, insurance and safety costs
- Communication expenses, network connection charges, postal charges and office supplies
- Common office equipment such as PCs, laptops, office software
- Miscellaneous recurring consumables

*Indirect costs are allocated and charged as a 20% flat rate.*



61

## A3 Budget Form



- **A3 Form** provides an overview of the budget, broken down into
  - Personnel costs, other direct costs (excluding subcontracts), indirect costs, subcontracts, eligible costs, and requested grant

**Proposal Submission Form**

EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
 7th Framework Programme on  
 Research, Technological  
 Development and Demonstration

**A3: Budget**

Proposal Number  Proposal Acronym

---

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION-WHOLE DURATION OF THE PROJECT**

Participant number in this proposal	Organisation short name	Organisation country	Personnel costs (in €)	Other direct costs (excluding sub-contracting) (in €)	Indirect costs (in €)	Subcontracting (in €)	Eligible costs (in €)	Requested grant (in €)
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>								0

- Each institution involved (other than subcontractors) will have a line on this form
- Budget must be in whole Euros (not thousands) and exclude VAT
- **Important!** – The figures must match in the A3 and B2 forms (otherwise the figure from the A3 form will be used!)



62

## Part B2, Section (2c) Research Project – Resources (including project costs)

### Section c. Resources (incl. project costs)<sup>1</sup>

(Note: To facilitate the assessment of resources by the panels, the use of the following costing table is strongly suggested.)

Cost Category	Month 1-18	Month 19-36	Month 37-54	Month 55-60	Total (M1-60)
<b>Direct Costs:</b>					
<i>Personnel:</i>					
PI <sup>2</sup>					
Senior Staff					
Post docs					
Students					
Other					
Total Personnel					
<i>Other Direct Costs:</i>					
Equipment					
Consumables					
Travel					
Publications, etc					
Other					
Total Other Direct Costs					
Total Direct Costs					
<b>Indirect Costs (overheads):</b>					
Max 20% of Direct Costs					
<b>Subcontracting Costs:</b>					
(No overheads)					
<b>Total Costs of project:</b>					
(by reporting period and total)					
<b>Requested Grant<sup>3</sup>:</b>					
(by reporting period and total)					

For the above cost table, please indicate the % of working time the PI dedicates to the project over the period of the grant:  %



## Part B2, Section (2c) Research Project – Resources (including project costs)



### Part B2, Section (2c) Research Project – Resources (including project costs):

- Describe the **size and nature of the team**, key team members and their roles.
- **Participation of team members at other host institutions**
  - Should be justified in relation to the additional financial cost it may impose
- Describe other **necessary resources**, such as infrastructure and equipment.
- Resources requested should be **reasonable and fully justified** in the proposal
- **Justify if asking for > €1.5 million** (PI moving to MS/AC or major equipment)
- Specify any **existing resources that will contribute to the project**.
- It is advisable to include a **short technical description of the equipment** requested, a justification of its need as well as the intensity of its planned use.
- Specify briefly your **commitment to the project and how much time you are willing to devote to the proposed project**. Please note that you are expected to devote at least 50% of your total working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of your total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.





## Part B2, Section (2c) Research Project – Resources (including project costs)



### Part B2, Section (2c) Research Project – Resources (including project costs) cont'd

- State the **amount of funding considered necessary** to fulfil the objectives:
  - Should be a **reasoned estimate** of the project costs.
  - Take into account the percentage of your dedicated time to run the ERC funded activity when calculating your **personnel costs**.
- Include the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs of **20% of the total eligible direct costs (excluding subcontracting) towards overheads**.
- State how the **costs will be distributed over 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.**
- There is **no minimum contribution per year**; the requested contribution should be in proportion to the actual needs to fulfil the objectives of the project.



## Hints and Tips Budgets



- The overall level of the grant offered is determined by the peer review panels
- **Work Closely with your European Officer or Finance Office!**
- If your team members are at other institutions, those institutions will need to be involved in costing their part of the proposal
- **All costs must be calculated and claimed according to your host organisations own accounting rules.**
- Remember you can only budget for costs directly related to carrying out the project
- Link your budgets clearly to your activities
- Financial rules are in the new ERC Guide to Grant Holders (dated July 2012) at [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/legal\\_financial/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/legal_financial/Pages/index.aspx)



## FAQs Budgets

- Is there a list of standard costs published anywhere?
- How do I handle inflation?
- How do I handle exchange rates?
- What about my salary – what level will this be?
- What rules apply to subcontracting?
- Should I include patent costs and audit costs?
- Can the evaluators cut my budget?
- Can I claim my salary from the grant, and what % time is reasonable?  
What about claiming salary for a team member, technicians...? And what % time?
- How does the flat rate work for indirect costs in the ERC?
- If I have teaching activities can the ERC grant pay someone for teaching in my place?
- How do I cost equipment?
- Can I attach quotes for equipment, or proof of pay scales?



## ERC Starting Grants Writing Your Application

### - *Supporting Documentation*



## Supporting Documentation



1. **Commitment of the Host Institution (.pdf)**
  - Binds Host to conditions of independence for PI
  - Template provided on EPSS
    - originally signed, stamped and dated by institute's **legal representative**
  - File name format:  
Host-letter\_[proposal-short-name].pdf
2. **Evidence of eligibility for grant (.pdf)**
  - Scanned copy of documents proving eligibility for grant, e.g.
    - **PhD certificate** (or equivalent degree) – with date of award/defence
    - If you requested **an extension of eligibility period**, the documentary evidence (e.g. maternity, paternity leave, national service, long-term illness, unavoidable leave for statutory reasons)
  - File name format: PhD\_[Proposal-Short-Name].pdf
3. **Ethical Issues Annex (.pdf) (if applicable)**
  - Template provided on EPSS
4. **Security Sensitive Issues Annex (.pdf) (if applicable)**
  - Template provided in Annex 5 of the Guide for Applicants

- 
- *Official documents can be submitted in any of the EU official languages.*
  - *Documents in any other language (including Latin) must be provided together with a certified translation into English.*
  - *All of these must be uploaded electronically on EPSS*



## FAQs Supporting Documentation



- Who should sign the Commitment of the Host letter?  
New: The legal representative signing this template should be the same person as the one mentioned in the A1 form.
- Can we/should we make any changes to the Commitment of the Host letter?
- Is the ERC looking for an explicit financial commitment from the host institution?
- What will happen if I do not attach the letter of Commitment from the Host Institution before the deadline?
- I had my viva on 4 May 08 and graduated on 2 October 08. Which date should I use?
- I don't have a copy of my PhD certificate - can I send it later?



## ERC Grants Granting Process and Grant Management



## What is a Grant Agreement?

- **Core Grant Agreement** (*between ERC and principal beneficiary*)
- **Description of work** (*Annex I*)  
(scientific/technical section taking into account panel's recommendations)
- **General Conditions** (*Annex II*)
- **Accession Form** (*if more than one beneficiary - Annex III*)
- **Financial Statement Form** (*Annex IV*)
- **Terms of reference for the certification of costs and on the methodology** (*Annex V*)
- **Supplementary Agreement** (*between PI and principal beneficiary*)
- *Special Clauses*

All at [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/legal\\_financial/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/legal_financial/Pages/index.aspx)  
along with:

- *Guidance Notes for preparing the ERC Grant Agreement*
- *ERC Guide for Grant Holders*



## Management Issues to consider when preparing your application



- Grant Agreement
  - Technical annex – description of work
- Flexibility
  - Scientific
  - Portability
- Progress reporting
  - Scientific – submitted by the PI
  - Financial – submitted by the beneficiary
- Publication and exploitation of results
  - Open Access
- European Charter for Researchers & Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers



## What Happens Next?



- **After review process**
  - Funding decision and feedback
  - (Redress? Seek advice from UKRO? Redress requests should be raised within one month of the date of the initial information letter, see [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ideas/redress\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ideas/redress_en.html))
  - Feedback from ethics review?
  - Preparation of the grant agreement between the host and the ERC
  - **No project negotiations as such**
  - Grant agreement based on the proposal and the peer review decision (budget)
  - Can accept/reject the offered grant
- **When the project starts**
  - Sign grant agreement
  - Also supplementary agreement between PI and host
  - Set up project account
  - Recruit staff onto project
  - “Expected that all projects start within 6 months from the award of the grant”



## Description of Work (DOW table)

“key intermediate goal” or work package	Estimated % of total requested grant	Detail* (optional)	Expected to be completed on month:	Comment
Key intermediate goal 1				
...				

\*If available, a detail by categories of costs (personnel, equipment, travel etc) may be provided here



## IPR in ERC Grant Agreement

### "background"

- Information which is held by *beneficiaries* prior to their accession to the grant agreement, as well as copyrights or other intellectual property rights pertaining to such information, the application for which has been filed before their accession to the agreement, and which is needed for carrying out the *project* or for using *foreground*.

### "foreground"

- The results, including information, whether or not they can be protected, which are generated under the *project*. Such results include rights related to copyright; design rights; patent rights; plant variety rights; or similar forms of protection.
  - Foreground shall be the property of the *beneficiary* carrying out the work and generating that foreground.
  - Employees or other personnel working for a *beneficiary* are entitled to claim rights to foreground.
  - Where foreground is capable of industrial or commercial application, its owner shall provide for its adequate and effective protection.
  - Access to foreground and background is royalty free if it is needed to carry out the work.

See Annex 2 of the Model ERC Grant Agreement for more information



## ERC Starting Grants Writing Your Application

### - Final Hints and Tips

77



## Lessons learned (StG)

- Often applicants did not **fully understand ERC concepts** (frontier research, 'individual team')
- Applicants often not **ambitious** enough
- Often applicants did not explain **why the research is important or what the impacts** would be
- Many StG applications resembled job description written by a supervisor rather than showing the PI's ideas
- ERC StGs have funded both fairly experienced (i.e. having UK fellowships/grants) PIs and those where the ERC grant is their first grant.
- Applicants should aim their proposal at generalist reviewers (panel members) in Step 1

ERC StG – Final Hints & Tips

78



## Things to consider if you are resubmitting



- **Changes to Call:** UKRO subscriber article on some of the main changes to the call.
- **Can I resubmit?**
- **Should I resubmit?**
- **When should I resubmit? Will the panel members be the same?**
- **How can I improve my proposal? Should I take into account feedback?**
- **Will the evaluators know it is a resubmission?**
- **Have resubmissions been funded in the past?**



## Tips on Writing your Application



1. Liaise with your HoD and Research Office
2. Use clear and concise language
3. Pay careful attention to each section
4. Be ambitious, but show awareness of cutting edge
5. Look at examples of successful applications
6. Read all the documentation, including the Grant Agreement
7. Be realistic with the budget, clearly link your budget to activities. Has your institution agreed your budget?
8. Proof read your application
9. Get application reviewed by colleagues?  
(StG/CoG - Mock Interview?)
10. Stick to page, font size, budget limits and format
11. Check submission checklist from Guide for Applicants
12. Remember you can submit your proposal on EPSS as many times as you wish before the deadline
13. Make sure you press submit on EPSS!





## Interviews



- PIs with proposals taken to the second step of the review process will be interviewed by the Peer Review Panel or Sub-Panel
- Must attend in person
  - although in very exceptional cases (pregnancy, immobility due to illness, out in research fieldwork) video or telephone conferencing are offered.
- Interviews last approximately 30 minutes (depending on panel)
  - Start with a presentation by the PI on the outline of the research project
  - Followed by a question and answer session
- Panels will take into account the results of the interviews alongside the individual reviews.
- Travel is reimbursed



## For reference

Sample evaluation comments for Starting Grants



**Positive ESR comments - PI Criteria**

Typical comments from highly-ranked, funded proposals



“his work has been rather influential in his field”

**“has been successful at raising funds for his work”**

**“PI has a strong publication record in high-quality journals”**

**“Is now recognised as an international leader”**

*“regularly published in the best journals in the field”*

**“the PI has established herself as one of the leading young researchers worldwide in the area of...”**

“there is no doubt that she is a first-class research leader”

*“papers emanating from the PIs group have been published in the most prestigious of journals”*

**“her work and that of her collaborators is highly respected indeed and very widely quoted”**

*“absolutely no doubt that the candidate is one of the World’s leading scientists in her field”*

**“has already supervised a number of PhD students”**

*“outstanding publication record (2 papers in Nature, 2 in Science...)”*

**Negative ESR comments - PI Criteria**

Typical comments from low-ranked, unfunded proposals



“The PI has a solid track record of good quality papers. These reports however, remain in the mainstream of the senior PIs in whose laboratories this work was carried out, and do not demonstrate the initiation of new lines of thinking”

**“Fairly good CV, but not competitive at this level”**

**“The publications are rather specialized in medium/good quality journal”**

**“The PI has group leader experience but the papers are not impressive”**

*“Good potential of this PI. However, the bulk of this persons research has been directed towards improving existing systems, rather than developing new ideas or concepts.”*

**“This PI has had a restricted background. He needs to benefit from visiting other institutions to expand his horizons”**

“Fair publication record with little impact on the field”

*“The applicant has no publication in a good journal. Hence, it is very unclear to which extent the applicant exhibits potential to do good research.”*

*“Their research has not yet lead to a distinct contribution in the research area”*



**Positive ESR comments - Research Criteria**

Typical comments from highly-ranked, funded proposals



“the proposal addresses fundamental questions”

*“an exciting proposal, which is at the cutting edge”*

**“the two elements would constitute major advances in the field, but together they would really set a new standard”**

“the implications of this work would be far reaching”

“the proposal addresses important questions...it will greatly contribute to increase our knowledge”

**“the proposal outlines original, important and ambitious research”**

“an appropriate mix of safe and risky research questions”

*“proposed research tackles important issues and is based on sound methodology”*

“project is ambitious and wide-ranging”

“will attract the interest of both the academic and policy communities”

**Negative ESR comments - Research Criteria**

Typical comments from low-ranked, unfunded proposals



“Well written proposal, but the questions asked are not original and innovative”

*“The proposal is unclear, unfocused, and the techniques to be applied are not very well defined. The road to success is vague.”*

**“The project is feasible, but not very original.”**

“The idea is rather original but overall the project remains generic and the link between the experimental steps is unclear”

“Methodology not tightly specified”

*“This would not be a major step forward in science and not develop new concepts or ideas, but rather lead to better application of XX technologies; and incremental step forward.”*

**“The subject matter is solid but the proposal did not make a case for it being topical and at the cutting edge of their field”**

*“Many of the essential experiments will be actually carried out in the collaborating laboratory and not in the PI's lab.”*

“Link between conceptual framework and case studies is a bit unclear”

“The project description is too vague and too generic to really evaluate the contributions to the field.”



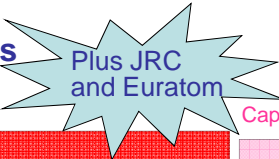
## Other FP7 Funding Sources to Explore (For reference only)



  
  


87

## FP7 Funding Opportunities





**Co-operation – collaborative research**

- Health
- Food, Agriculture, Fisheries, and Biotechnology (FAFB/KBBE)
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies (NMP)
- Energy
- Environment (including Climate Change)
- Transport
- Socio-Economic Sciences and the Humanities (SESH)
- Space
- Security

**Capacities**

- Research Infrastructures
- Research for the Benefit Of SMEs
- Regions of Knowledge
- Research Potential
- Science in Society
- Activities of International Co-operation
- Coherent Development of Policies

**Ideas – European Research Council**

- Starting Independent Researcher Grants
- Advanced Investigator Grants
- Proof of Concept: *new, for existing grant holders only*
- ERC Synergy Grants *new*
- CSAs / Calls for Tender on ERC

**People - Marie Curie**

- Individual Fellowships & Reintegration Grants
- Initial Training Networks, Innovative Doctoral Programmes, European Industrial Doctorates
- Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways
- International Research Staff Exchange Scheme
- COFUND and Researcher's Night

FP7 Overview


88

FP7 Programme	Research areas Types of activity	Key points
Co-operation	Aims to build research collaborations across Europe & beyond - <b>Top-down, priority driven research in 10 themes</b> - Research, training, technology transfer, dissemination, SMEs projects, networks...	- No requirement to move - Normally requires collaboration with other countries
Capacities	Aims to build research capacity - <b>Some top-down, some bottom up</b> - Research Infrastructures, Research for the Benefit of SMEs, Regions of Knowledge, Research Potential, Science in Society, Development of Policies, International Co-operation	- No requirement to move - Normally requires collaboration with other countries
Marie Curie Actions (People)	Aims to support training, careers development & knowledge transfer - <b>Bottom-up</b> - Individual Fellowships & Reintegration Grants - Initial Training Networks (ITNs), Innovative Doctoral Programmes, European Industrial Doctorates - Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPPs) - International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRESES) - COFUND, Researchers Night....	- Fellows required to move for most actions - IAPPs/ITNs/IRSES normally require a consortium across countries
European Research Council (Ideas)	Aims to support the best researchers and best research ideas in Europe - <b>Bottom-up, frontier research</b> - PI leads an independent research team - Starting, Advanced and Synergy Grants, Proof of Concept - Support Actions and Tenders analysing the ERC itself	- No requirement to move - No requirement for collaboration with other countries
Euratom	Aims to support nuclear research - <b>Some top-down, some bottom up</b> - Nuclear research (fission, fusion, uses of radiation..) - Research, training, technology transfer, dissemination...	- Nuclear research is not eligible under other FP7 Programmes and is only funded through Euratom

FP7 – Marie Curie Actions


## Marie Curie Actions

### Overview: Marie Curie Actions



Host Actions	Individual Actions
<p><b>Initial Training Networks (ITN)</b> <i>Including:</i> <i>Innovative Doctoral Programmes (new)</i> <i>European Industrial Doctorates (new)</i></p> <p><b>Industry Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPP)</b></p> <p><b>International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES)</b></p>	<p><b>Intra-European Fellowships</b></p> <p><b>Incoming International Fellowships</b></p> <p><b>Outgoing International Fellowships</b></p> <p><b>Career Integration Grants</b></p>

90 + Co-Fund, *Researchers Night*



## Definition of researchers



<p><b>Early-Stage Researchers</b></p>	<p><b>0 - 4 years (FTE)</b>  <i>from obtaining degree that qualified them to embark on a doctorate</i></p>
<p><b>Experienced Researchers</b></p>	<p>i) in possession of a PhD  or  i) at least 4 years experience (FTE)</p>



## Marie Curie National Contact Point Helpdesk



- **Website**  
<http://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie>
- **Helpdesk** via email and telephone  
(email [mariecurie-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:mariecurie-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk) or phone 0032 230 0318)

- Advice on applying for Marie Curie actions
  - Eligibility
  - Application help
  - Results
  - Contractual issues
- Advice to those with Marie Curie funding

- Specialist **training** courses and information events  
<http://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie/events/Pages/index.aspx>



## ERC Grants Further Information

93



BIS | Department for Business  
Innovation & Skills

## European Research Council National Contact Point Helpdesk



- **Website**  
<http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc>
- **ERC mailing list** for events and key updates  
(sign up at  
[http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc\\_newsletter\\_registration.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc_newsletter_registration.aspx) )
- **Helpdesk** via email and telephone  
(email [erc-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:erc-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk) or phone 0032 2289 6121)
  - Advice on applying for ERC actions
    - Eligibility
    - Application help
    - Results
    - Contractual issues
  - Advice to those with ERC grants
- Specialist **training** courses and information events



94

## Further Information (1)



- **UK ERC NCP Website**
  - <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc>
  - UK ERC NCP Newsletter
  - [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc\\_newsletter\\_registration.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc_newsletter_registration.aspx)
- **ERC Website**
  - <http://erc.europa.eu>
  - ERC Newsletter
  - <http://erc.europa.eu/newsletters-0>
  - ERC Europa Helpdesk
  - <http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?lg=en&pg=enquiries>
- **UKRO Portal including email updates and info on other EU funding (For UKRO subscribers)**
  - <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/Pages/UKRO.aspx>  
(can log on, or create profile, near top left of screen)



## Further Information (2)



- EPSS Helpdesk
  - E-mail: [support@epss-fp7.org](mailto:support@epss-fp7.org)
  - Tel: +32 2 233 3760
- IPR helpdesk Website
  - <http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org>
- European Commission FP7 Ethics Website
  - [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html)
- European Commission page on ERC redress process
  - [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ideas/redress\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ideas/redress_en.html)
- Cordis FP7 pages
  - [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html)

