The European Research Council

ERC Grants

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Building ERC - Competitive Research:
Lessons from Croatia

European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

European Commission

ERC grant schemes



Starting Grants
Researchers (0-10 years after PhD)
up to €1.5 million for 5 years



Consolidator Grants
Researchers (5-15 years after PhD)
up to €2 million for 5 years



Advanced Grants
Researchers with track-record of significant research achievements. Lump Sum up to €2.5 million for 5 years



Synergy Grants
2-4 Principal investigators
up to €10 million for 6 years
1 PI can be based outside EU/Associated Countries



ERC Plus Grants
Principal investigators at all career stages with a vision for transformative research. Lump Sum up to €7 million over 4-7 years



Proof of Concept
For ERC grantees
bridging gap between research and earliest stage of marketable/social innovation.
Fixed Lump Sum of € 150 000 for 18 months



Get started

- **Register early** on the **Funding and Tenders Portal**
- Consult the **call documents** (Work Programme, Information for Applicants) → **ERC website**
- Look at **funded projects in your field** (search tool on ERC website), testimonials, tutorials
- Watch the **New ERC Classes videos** and **webinars** (YouTube)
- Talk to the grant/finance office of your proposed host institution
- Contact the **National Contact Point**
- Talk to **ERC grantees**

Choose your panel

Life Sciences

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

Physical Sciences & Engineering

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

Social Sciences and Humanities

- SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
- SH3 The Social World and Its Interactions
- SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- SH5 Texts and Concepts
- SH6 The Study of the Human Past
- SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and Space
- SH8 Studies of Cultures and Arts

Start writing

PART A – admin forms online

Section 1	Proposal and PI info
Section 2	Host Institution info
Section 3	**Budget**
Section 4	Ethics
Section 5	Call-specific questions

Annexes – submitted as .pdf

- Statement of support of HI
- Copy of PhD or equivalent (StG & CoG)

If applicable:

- Document for extension of eligibility window (StG & CoG)
- Explanatory info on ethical issues

Seen by the panel

PART B1 – submitted as .pdf

- Abstract and cross-panel explanation
- Extended Synopsis
- CV & Track Record

PART B2 – submitted as .pdf

- Scientific Proposal
- Funding ID

Scientific Proposal structure

Grant application

- Structure of the scientific proposal:
  - Scientific Proposal Part I (up to 5 pages) should describe the overall idea of the proposed research project;
  - Scientific Proposal Part II (up to 7 pages or 10 pages for Synergy Grant) should describe the implementation in detail: the research methodology, work plan, risk assessment etc.

The panels will use Part I for evaluation at Step 1 and both parts together for their evaluation at Step 2

Feasibility of the scientific approach is not assessed at Step 1. The proposed timescales and resources will be assessed at Step 2 of the evaluation. The PI time commitment will be verified during the eligibility checks

Evaluation Process – Individual Grants

Single submission but a **two-step** evaluation

StG CoG AdG

STEP 1

Remote assessment by **panel members** of **Part I, CV and Track Record**

Panel meeting

Proposal rejected — C B A — not invited

Proposal retained for step 2 — A — invited

Feedback to applicants

Max of 44 proposals per panel

STEP 2

Remote assessment by **panel members** and **remote reviewers** of **complete research proposal**

Panel meeting + interview

Proposal not funded — B

Proposal funded (score A) — A — Not Funded; A — Funded

Feedback to applicants

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Part B1

- In Step 1, **panel members** see only **Part B1** of the proposal (prepare it accordingly!)
- Part B1 gives the **first impression** of your project and will determine if you pass to Step 2

Part B1: find the right balance

- Is your project new, innovative, going beyond state of the art?
- What's the risk? Do you have a plan to manage it?
- Why are you the best/only person to carry this project out?
- Have you shown (potential for) scientific independence?
- Be concise and clear (panel members are generalists at Step 1)
- Make sure that there are proper legends to the figures/tables as well as that the figure axes are clearly visible

CV and Track Record

- **Personal details**: education and key qualifications, current position and relevant previous positions
- **Research achievements** (≤10) and **peer recognition** (short factual narrative)
  - demonstrating advancement in the field, emphasis on more recent achievements
  - prizes, fellowships, etc.
- **Additional information** (to provide context)
  - career breaks, diverse career paths, life events
  - other noteworthy contributions to research community

- **Rumour:** one needs publications in Nature/Science/High IF journals to succeed
- ✗ **NOT true:** publication record is not decisive in selection decisions

Part B2

- In Step 2, **Part B1 and B2 and Budget** are evaluated by **panel members & remote referees**

Part B2: fill in the details

- No verbatim repetition of synopsis: go into details on your methodology and work plan
- Provide risk mitigation strategies
- Add/describe your timeline
- Explain involvement of team members
- Justify requested resources - Panels need to ensure that the requested resources are reasonable and well justified
- Check coherence of figures
- Use full space available

Interview

- **StG, CoG and AdG** interviews take place **remotely**
- **SyG** interviews take place in person **in Brussels**

  - Have clear and representative slides and **focus on your research project**
  - Don’t over explain your CV
  - Know the details of your proposal and methods, and your research area
  - Do you have **new data/results** since you submitted the proposal? **Present them**
  - **Anticipate questions** - Prepare also for cases where you do not have an answer
  - Keep to time
  - **Practice practice practice!**

Typical reasons for rejection

Research Project

- Scope is too narrow or too broad/unfocussed
- Incremental research
- Work plan not detailed enough/unclear
- Insufficient risk management

Principal Investigator

- Insufficient track-record and (potential for) independence
- Poor interview / not addressing the questions
- Panel not convinced it's their own idea/project

Avoid

- Typos
- Exceeding the page limits

Reapplications have a **higher success rate**

Use the **feedback** from evaluation reports

Restrictions on applications

Bear in mind you can only:

- Have **one proposal** under evaluation under any given time (except PoC)
- Submit one proposal per Work Programme
- Hold one Starting Grant or Consolidator Grant during your career
- Have one ERC main grant at any given time

Call Calendar 2027

ERC Call	Call Opens	Submission Deadline
Starting Grants ERC-2027-StG	22 July 2026	14 October 2026
Consolidator Grants ERC-2027-CoG	24 September 2026	12 January 2027
Synergy Grants ERC-2027-SyG	17 February 2027	11 May 2027
Advanced Grants ERC-2027-AdG	27 May 2027	26 August 2027
ERC Plus Grants ERC-2027-PLUS	1 June 2027	1 September 2027

Where to get assistance

- Talk to the grant/finance office of your proposed host institution
- Contact your National Contact Point (NCP) for advice and guidance
- Check the Funding & Tenders Portal FAQs for answers to frequently asked questions
- Visit the ERC website for information on ERC funding schemes, calls, application guidance and contact details for each call

Discover the ERC Classes videos for applicants

- Getting started with your ERC proposal
- Writing your proposal
- Understanding the evaluation process
- Preparing for the interview
- Complying with ethics requirements
- Explaining Synergy Grants



Watch the full playlist

Thank You!

More information: erc.europa.eu

Follow us on social media

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Evaluation Process – Individual Grants

Single submission but a **three-step** evaluation

SyG

STEP 1

Remote assessment by **panel members** of **Part I, CV and Track Record**

Panel meeting

Proposal rejected C B A — not invited

Proposal retained for step 2 A — invited

Feedback to applicants

7x call budget limit

STEP 2

Remote assessment by **panel members** and **remote reviewers** of **complete research proposal**

Panel meeting + interview

Proposal not retained B

Proposal retained to Step 3 A

Feedback to applicants

STEP 3

Preparation of interview questions and strategy

Panel meeting with **in person interviews**

Proposal not funded B

Proposal funded (score A) A

Feedback to applicants

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Evaluation

Step 1



- Part I of the Scientific Proposal and the Principal Investigators' CVs and Track Records are assessed by **panel members acting as generalists**. Proposals are retained for Step 2 based on the outcome of the evaluation at Step 1 and a budgetary cut-off level of up to seven times the panel's indicative budget

Step 2

- Complete Research Proposal is assessed **by panel members and remote reviewers**. Proposals are retained for Step 3 based on the outcome of the evaluation at Step 2 and a budgetary cut-off level of up to three times the Panel's indicative budget

Step 3

- Present proposals at the interview with the evaluation panel

Evaluation

Step 1



- Part I of the Scientific Proposal, the Principal Investigator's CV and Track Record, and the Statement of Vision are assessed.
- AdG panels evaluate and mark ERC Plus proposals as 'retained' (the proposal is of sufficient quality to pass to step 2) or 'not retained' (the quality may be high but not sufficient to pass to step 2).
- Only proposals of the **highest quality** will be retained for Step 2 of the evaluation

Step 2

- The complete research proposal is assessed by distinct ERC Plus panels.
- PI resents their proposal in an interview with the evaluation panel.
- Each proposal is recommended for funding if sufficient funds become available (score A) or not recommended for funding (score B).