PREPARING A COMPETITIVE ERC ADVANCED GRANT PROPOSAL 2024

FFG Academy, "ERC at 3" online sessions, February 2024
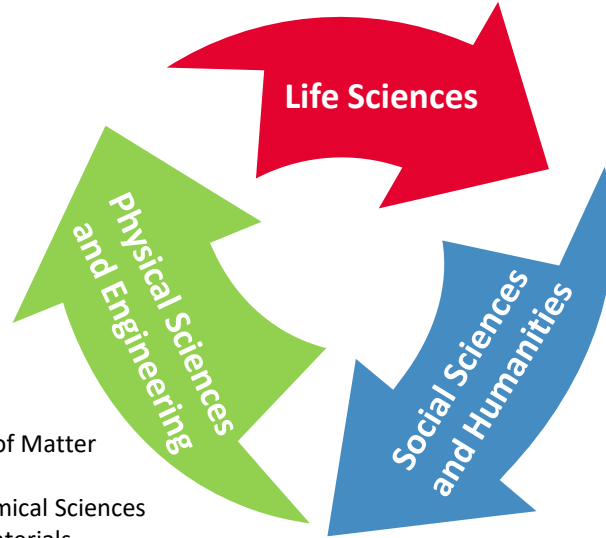
PRINCIPLES OF THE ERC´S EVALUATION PROCESS

- evaluation by generalist panel members (decision makers) and specialist remote referees
- whole science approach, but for organisational reasons 3 scientific domains, 28 evaluation panels
- budget share allocated to panels in proportion to budgetary demand of assigned proposals
- short and longer proposal version submitted at once, two-step evaluation with interview (Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant)
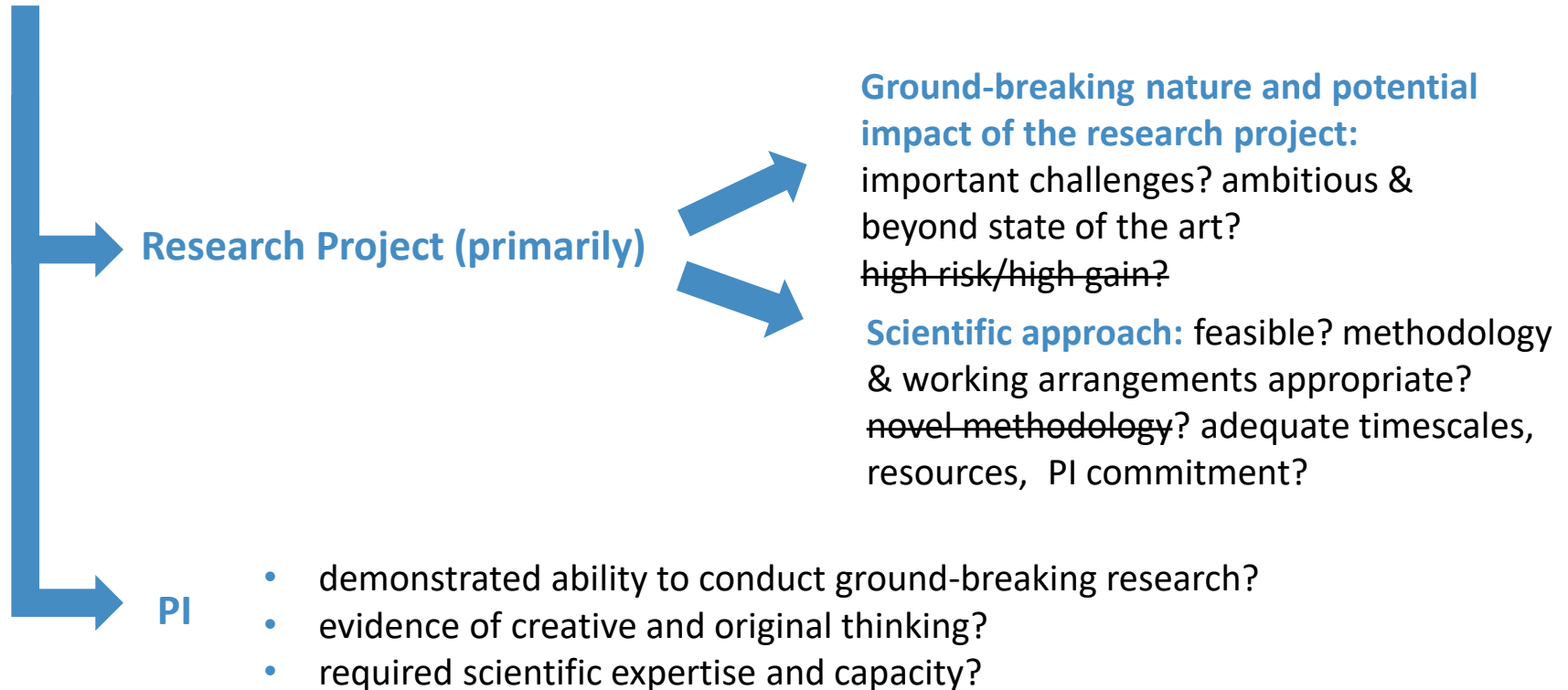
ERC PANEL STRUCTURE - WORK PROGRAMME 2024

- LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures & 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 Neurosciences 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

Life Sciences

Physical Sciences and 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

- 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 & Informatics
- PE7 Systems & Communication Engineering
- PE8 Products and Processes Engineering
- PE9 Universe Sciences
- PE10 Earth System Science
- PE11 Materials Engineering

Detailed panel structure available on the ERC website

SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE: EVALUATION QUESTIONS & CHANGES

Research Project (primarily)

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project: important challenges? ambitious & beyond state of the art? ~~high risk/high gain~~?

Scientific approach: feasible? methodology & working arrangements appropriate? ~~novel methodology~~? adequate timescales, resources, PI commitment?

PI
- demonstrated ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- evidence of creative and original thinking?
- required scientific expertise and capacity?

PROPOSAL

- Extended Synopsis (B1) – 5 pages
  plus CV and track record, 4 pages
  plus references

- Scientific Proposal (B2) – 14 pages
  plus references

- Administrative forms incl. Abstract, Panel
  descriptors, Resources section (more detailed
  due to lump sum approach as of Work
  programme 2024)

- Host Institution Commitment letter

„An ERC Advanced Grant Principle Investigator is expected to be an active researcher and to have a track record of significant research achievements"

revised CV/Track Record template:
achievements & context

Overview Evaluation Process

Evaluation Preparation:

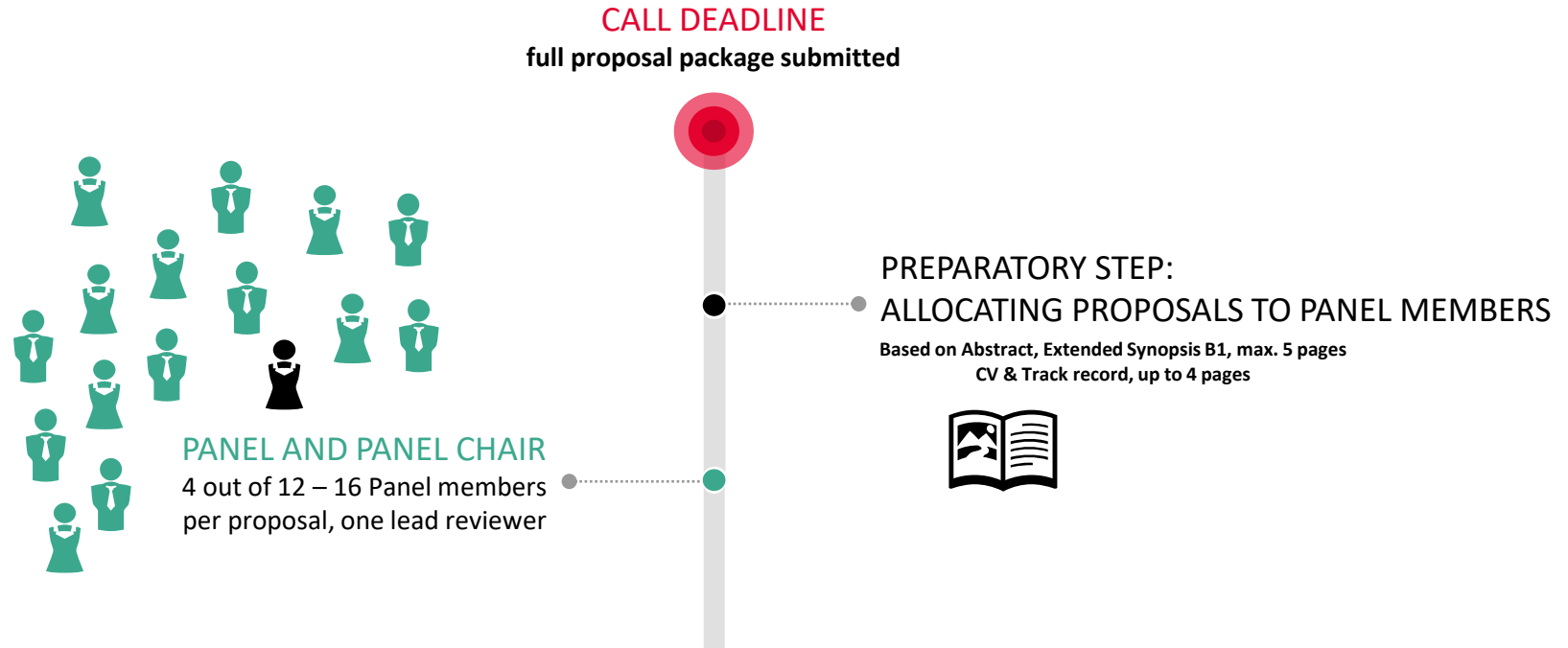Initial Panel Chairs meeting, proposals are assigned to panel members

Step 1:

Remote evaluation of part B1 by panel members; panel meeting to select proposals for step 2

Step 2:

Remote evaluation of part B1 & B2 by generalist panel members and specialist remote referees; panel meeting, interview

ERC EVALUATION STEP BY STEP

CALL DEADLINE
full proposal package submitted

PREPARATORY STEP:
ALLOCATING PROPOSALS TO PANEL MEMBERS

Based on Abstract, Extended Synopsis B1, max. 5 pages
CV & Track record, up to 4 pages

PANEL AND PANEL CHAIR
4 out of 12 – 16 Panel members
per proposal, one lead reviewer

usually 4 out of 12-16 Panel members, one lead reviewer
individual reading and individual reports

Abstract
Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
CV & Track record (4 pages)

DECISION ON STEP 1

panel meeting & discussion
new: max 44 proposals per panel proceed to step 2
evaluation categories:
step 1 A invited → step 2
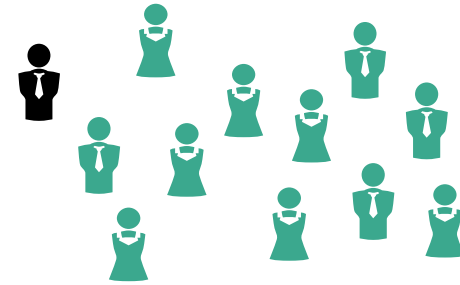*step 1 A not invited → PI can reapply in next call*
step 1 B → 1 year waiting window
step 1 C → 2 years waiting window

STEP 2 - including SPECIALISTS
panel members and at least 3 remote referees
individual evaluation comments and discussion

Abstract
Extended Synopsis
CV & Track record
Scientific proposal, 14 pages

PRELIMINARY RANKING
based on discussion and individual
evaluation comments

Interview with PI
online with panel members
using comments from the remote referees

FINAL RANKING
by panel members

INFO TO APPLICANTS

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