

ERC Starting Grant Call 2025

Notes and Tips for Applicants

Version September 2024

Disclaimer

The information provided in this compilation is based on several sources, in particular on key documents published by the ERC, such as the ERC Work Programme and Information for Applicants, as well as suggestions by ERC Panel members and evaluation comments.

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Quick Overview for Starting Grant Call 2025

Deadline: Oct 15, 2024 17:00 CET

The ERC Work Programme 2025 comes with a few **novelties, highlighted in blue**.

Proposal templates: Scientific excellence remains the sole criterion of evaluation for ERC frontier research grants. Please note that already since the previous ERC Work Programme (2024), there is explicit focus of the evaluation on the scientific project (groundbreaking nature, ambition and feasibility) compared to the past achievements of the PI.

The ERC's decision to sign the agreement on the reform of research assessment proposed by the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) had an impact on the templates for the Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal (B1) and the Scientific Proposal (B2), in particular on the way to present your CV and track record. The CV and the track record have meanwhile been merged into one section in B1. The Funding ID to indicate ongoing, submitted and previous grants is now an appendix of part B2.

- **A limit to proposals which can pass to step 2 and a new distinction of scoring A in step 1**
ERC panels will be able to admit at most 44 proposals to step 2 of the evaluation. Also, a distinction in the scoring for A at step 1 – excellent quality – will be made between proposals obtaining a score of A and invited to step 2 (the interview), and proposals obtaining a score of A but not ranked among the 44 proposals admitted to step 2. Applicants who scored A in step 1, but are not admitted to step 2 can submit a proposal in a call under the next ERC Work programme, i.e. they are not subject to resubmission restrictions.
- **Eligibility time window for the call under Work Programme 2025:** The reference date for the Starter and Consolidator eligibility window is January 1st, 2025. For the calculation of the eligibility time window, the certified date of the successful PhD defense is used.
- **Extension requests for the eligibility time window:** There are several circumstances to request an extension of the time window, e.g. maternity / paternity leave or long-term illness, clinical training, natural disaster and seeking asylum. With the ERC Work Programme 2025, **two (partially) new categories for eligibility extensions have been added: disability and major disasters (including geological, natural and human-caused disasters)**.
- **A template for requests concerning eligibility extensions** is provided in the Information for Applicants (p.58), which should be uploaded as a single PDF, as Annex 1 of the application.
- **MD/PhD-equivalency:** Please note that an M.D. degree plus clinical training alone does not render a M.D. degree a PhD-equivalent; a proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency is necessary in addition.
- **Waiting time for resubmission** of ERC proposals that failed **in step 1** of the evaluation: one year for proposals evaluated as category B, two years for category C proposals, except for the Synergy Grant Call (most likely). Proposals that proceed to **step 2** but are not funded can most probably be resubmitted “immediately” to ERC calls of Work programme 2026.
- **Additional funding of up to 1 Mio EUR** is possible in exceptional circumstances defined in the ERC Work Programme.
- **Minimum 50% of the PI's total working time** needs to be committed to the ERC project, and PIs need to spend minimum 50% of their total working time in Europe or a Horizon Europe-Associated Country, even if their salary is not charged to the project.
- **Written consent by all participants named in the proposal needs to be documented**, e.g. by an email dated before the call deadline (not to be submitted with the application).
- Request for **exclusion of up to three reviewers** is possible without justification (online submission form, section 5 – Other questions).

- A brief factual explanation on **career breaks, unconventional career paths and major life events** can be included in the CV and track record.
- Part B2 is limited to **14 pages**. The section to describe **resources/budget is part of the online submission form** (section 3, max. 2 pages/8000 characters in total).
- **Literature references do not count towards page limits** both in B1 and B2.
- There is a dedicated **textbox on the cover page to explain a cross-panel/cross-domain nature** of proposal – only to be used if a second panel is selected (on cover page of B1).
- **Open Access for peer-reviewed publications is mandatory** (without embargo period); related costs can be charged to the project.
- **Provisions on research data sharing apply** also for ERC grants. Therefore, a Data Management Plan (DMP) is a mandatory deliverable of the ERC grant (due 6 months after project start).
- **Ethical issues table** and **Security issues table** need to be completed online.

Indicative Evaluation Schedule for the Starting Grant Call 2025



<https://erc.europa.eu/apply-grant/timeframe-starting-grant-2025-evaluation>

Important Documents and Useful Links

Please read the following two documents:

[ERC Work Programme 2025 \(legally binding\)](#)

[Information for Applicants to the Starting and Consolidator Grant Call 2025](#)

→ includes details on the ERC panels and keywords

- **[Database of panel chairs and previous ERC panel members \(frequently generalists\)](#)**
This database includes panel members who took part in finished ERC grant competitions as well as panel chairs in the ongoing calls. We recommend to have a look at previous panel members to understand the different backgrounds and perspectives from which panel members may view your proposal. ERC panel members alternate between even and odd years, while several of the panel members will usually be replaced by new ones.
- **[ERC Dashboard of ERC evaluated and funded projects](#)**
Here you can search for ERC project summaries, Principle Investigators of ERC grants, funding amounts etc., with a variety of filters including panel and keywords from abstracts. Although panel configurations may have changed over the years, this tool can still be helpful for deciding on the most suitable evaluation panel.
- ERC webpage on **open access**:
<https://erc.europa.eu/funding-and-grants/managing-project/open-access>
- ERC Starting Grant 2025 **Applicant Mailbox** for queries related to the call:
ERC-2025-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu
- ERC Classes: String of videos on how to prepare an ERC proposal, generated by ERCEA Scientific Officers:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtv6FnsXqnXAYRk6HCErwMxwMLOZKoMcy>
- Report on the rationale for the recent changes in the ERC's evaluation procedure:
<https://erc.europa.eu/news-events/news/evaluation-research-proposals-why-and-what-ercs-recent-changes>

“Submit early, submit often”

Online submission of ERC proposals

*We strongly recommend submitting a first version of the proposal around 1 week before the deadline, in order to check for browser problems or other technical issues that may block proposal submission, or lead to layout changes in the submitted proposal. Up to the call deadline, you can **continuously modify your proposal** by submitting (not just uploading) a new version, which will overwrite the previous one.*

- In case of technical problems with the online submission system, please **contact your host institution** (grant management/researchers’ service), the National Contact Points for ERC at FFG (ylva.huber@ffg.at, copy lil.reif@ffg.at and erc@ffg.at) or **directly the Helpdesk: EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu** or **+32 (2) 29 92222**
- Information on how to use the online submission system is also available via the proposal submission service user manual:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/support/sep_usermanual.pdf
- Please ensure that all the **required supporting documents are obtained and submitted** via the submission tool in time (**Commitment letter of the Host Institution in the current template** [older versions are not accepted], ethical issues annex [ethical self-assessment and any additional documents related to ethics], other supporting documents as applicable)
- Also, please note the remark on “**consent obtained**” in the online forms (“other questions”):
*Please confirm that you (as PI) have the written consent of all participants on their involvement and the content of this proposal, as well as of any researcher mentioned in the proposal on their participation in the project (either as team member, collaborator, other PI or member of the advisory board). We may request you to provide proof of the written consent obtained at any time during the evaluation.**

The written consents should however not be submitted with the application. Consent can e.g. be documented by an **email** by the participant, which is **dated before the call deadline**.

Ethics and Security

- An **ethics issues table** has to be completed in the online submission forms. The page numbers in the ethics table refer to part B2. It is possible to indicate several page numbers divided by '/' (e.g. 12/14).
- If any of the ethics issues listed in the table applies to your proposal, an **ethics self-assessment** should be provided as well, within the corresponding online template (one text box each for Ethical dimension of the objectives, methodology and likely impact; and Compliance with ethical principles and relevant legislations). The ERCEA has provided some further explanation:

"The Ethics self-assessment text boxes have a character limit. The automatic limit is currently set to 5000 characters/box = 10000 in total. We suggest that PIs make use of the both boxes. If the detailed explanation goes beyond the limit (10000 characters), our recommendation is to provide the detailed explanation in a separated document and uploaded the pdf file as one of the optional annexes. Please inform PIs to make a reference to the annex in the Ethics text box (application form)."

"Applicants should only respond to the questions as displayed in the online submission form – they prevail over the ones presented in the general guidelines".

- As stated in the ERC Information for Applicants, the **ethical issues section will not be evaluated** during proposal evaluation. For proposals with immediate ethics issues, it is nonetheless *"advisable to include a short paragraph summarising how they will be dealt with and refer to the ethics self-assessment"*, according to the ERCEA.
- In Horizon Europe, applicants are also requested to identify if the proposed activity will use and/or generate information which might raise **security concerns**. This occurs by completing a **security issues table** in the online proposal submission form. If applicable, available supporting documentation should be provided as well (as separate annexes). For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage.
- For further guidance on ethics issues, please consult <https://erc.europa.eu/manage-your-project/ethics-guidance>.
- Questions on ethics issues of your proposal can be addressed directly to the **ERC's Ethics Support team** at ERC-ETHICS-REVIEW@ec.europa.eu.

Evaluating Scientific Excellence: Questions that ERC Starting Grant Reviewers Need to Answer

Source: ERC Work Programme 2025, p. 36-37 and Information for Applicants 2025, p. 15

Research Project – 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 between or across disciplines)?

Scientific Approach

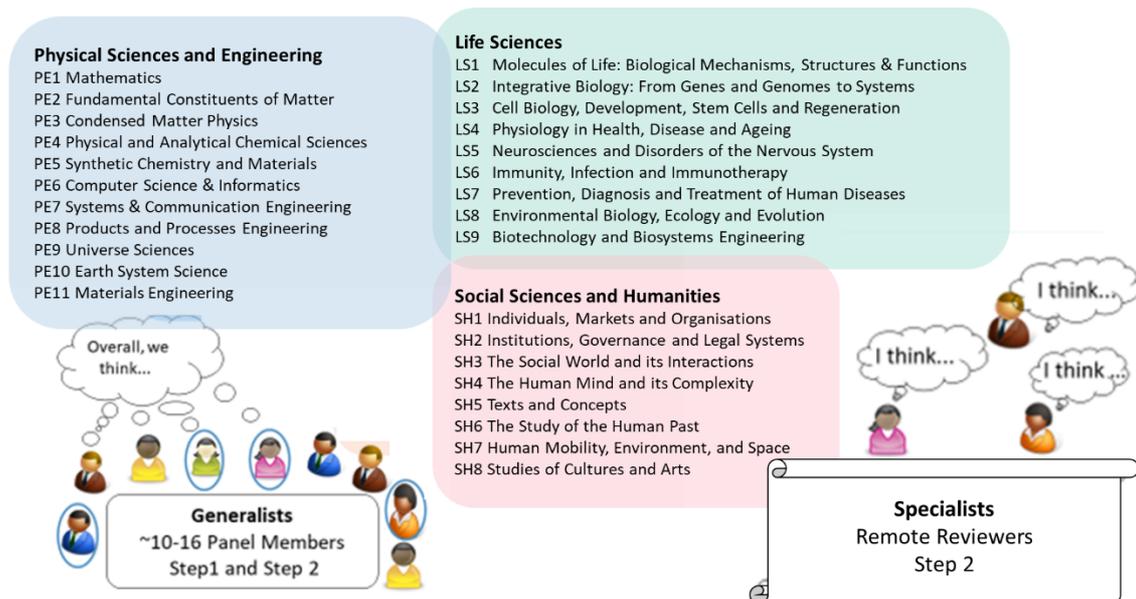
- To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the ground-breaking nature and ambition of the proposed research (based on the Extended Synopsis)?
- To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (based on the research proposal)?
- To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources, and PI commitment adequate and properly justified (based on the research proposal)?

Principal Investigator – Intellectual capacity and creativity

- To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative and original thinking?
- To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Evaluation procedure: Generalists and Specialists

- Consider **which panel** is likely in the best position to understand the ground-breaking contribution of your project.
- If you consider your proposal to be interdisciplinary (cross-panel/cross-domain), you can indicate a secondary panel in the online submission system. In this case, please explain the cross-panel/cross-domain nature in the dedicated text box on the B1 cover page. However, we recommend to give some **extra thought before choosing a second panel**. The ERC welcomes interdisciplinary projects, but they pose a challenge for the evaluation process. To be successful, proposals need to be rated as excellent in every discipline they cover. According to the ERCEA, the success rate of explicitly cross-panel proposals has been lower in the first step of the evaluation, but higher in the second step. One reason for the lower success rate at step 1 may be that a panel member from the secondary panel (usually one panel member) will not participate in panel meetings, but only submit their written comments to the primary panel. In case of critical comments, there is apparently no opportunity to discuss them in the panel. As an alternative to selecting two panels, you can choose only one panel, and add keywords from other relevant panels (as well as free keywords). Also in this case, however, it is possible that a member from another panel is asked to review the proposal.
- Exceptionally, panel chairs may also decide allocate a proposal to a different panel than the one indicated by the PI.



Evaluation step 1

Usually **four Panel Members** (out of approximately 14-16) **read part B1 only**. The majority may often be **generalists rather than specialists** in the area(s) of your project. Please note that since the Work Programme 2024, a new distinction in the scoring at step 1 will be made between proposals obtaining a score of A and invited to step 2 of the evaluation (a maximum of 44 proposals per panel), and proposals obtaining a score of A but not ranked sufficiently high to be invited to step 2. The latter proposals will not be subject to resubmission restrictions.

Evaluation step 2

The **full proposal (B1 and B2) becomes accessible** to the **panel members and to specialist remote reviewers** (the latter are selected by the panel members based on part B1 only). The final decision on the recommendation of a project for funding lies with the panel members.

Evaluation Report

Below you find an example structure of an evaluation report for an ERC proposal, as sent to applicants following the conclusion of the evaluation. For proposals not successful in step 1 (evaluation category A-not invited, B or C), approximately 4-5 individual reviews conducted by Panel Members are included in addition to the panel comment. For proposals that proceed to step 2 (and are eventually funded or not funded), the number of individual reviews (reviews by Panel Members and Remote Reviewers) can range from approximately 8 to more than 12.

PANEL SCORE AND RANKING RANGE

Final panel score: B (is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation. Please note that you may also be subject to resubmission limitations in the next call)	Ranking range*: 27%-36% For your information, only the top 26% of the proposals evaluated in panel SH1 were retained for Step 2.
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* Ranking range of your proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panel in Step 1, in percent, from 1% for the highest ranked proposals to 100% for the lowest ranked.

PANEL COMMENT (approximately ¼ - ½ page)

Standard sentences: This evaluation report contains the final score awarded by the ERC review panel during the first step of the ERC Starting Grant review and the ranking range. The discussion of the panel was conducted within the context of the individual reviews submitted by ERC panel members.

The panel closely examined all the individual review reports and, while not necessarily subscribing to each and every opinion expressed, found that they provide a fair overall assessment. The comments of the individual reviewers were the basis for the discussion and the final recommendation of the panel, and are included in this report.

Specific panel comments: The panel agreed that...
(...)

Standard sentence: Overall the panel considers this proposal to be of good quality. However, based on the combined set of criteria used in the assessment it was not ranked highly enough to be retained for Step 2. The panel therefore recommends that the proposal should not be retained for Step 2 and should not be considered for funding

REVIEWER COMMENTS

The following individual reviews have been carried out independently prior to the panel meeting and do not necessarily reflect the panel's final opinion

Reviewer 1

Research project
(...)

Here, reviewers give a qualitative assessment for each question, ranging from exceptional to non-competitive

Principal Investigator

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?

To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?

To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Optional textbox is available for comments on the Principal Investigator.

Comments (optional for reviewers)

Reviewer 1, 2, 3, ...

Tips for a Convincing ERC Starting Grant Proposal

General Remarks

It is important that your proposal effectively communicates:

- The research problem/question, intractable until now
- The fundamental nature of the current knowledge gap
- What has prevented the scientific community from solving the research problem until now
- The novelty of your approach to solving it
- Why your project promises a breakthrough that will change the field
- That you have the expertise and means to succeed with the project
- The criteria/reasons for key choices for your project, e.g. focus, case studies, methods
- How you will validate the results of the project
- What the key contribution of your project to the field will be

Questions and critical comments of colleagues (both within and beyond your research field, ideally with a background similar to that of potential panel members) on the proposal will be highly valuable.

Well-chosen scope and focus for your project

- ERC projects should be ambitious, but their scope should not be too broad for achieving a breakthrough.

Novelty and unique features

- Explain clearly the ground-breaking nature of the project. What is the core novelty that will change the field?
- It should be evident for reviewers that your project is genuinely new, taking your research to a higher level. It is not an incremental extension of (your) previous research.
- Explain the advantages and unique features of your approach compared to competing approaches.
- We suggest to also briefly outline your more long-term scientific vision beyond the project (e.g. with a time-frame of 5-10 years from now). This can further underline the significance of your project.
- As far as possible in the limited space, underpin your statements, so that every claim comes across as well-founded (“Show me, don’t tell me”).
- When explaining the limitations of current literature and/or competing approaches in order to position your new approach, we suggest to write this in a balanced manner that recognizes previous work or other approaches, while effectively demonstrating the need for your new approach. Setting the right tone can underline that the PI is truly in command of the current literature and gives a fair account, which may help to convince also potentially sceptic reviewers.

Research questions/Hypotheses

- While there can be differences between research fields, ERC reviewers frequently comment positively on the fact that a project is hypothesis-driven. At any rate, we recommend to present the research questions driving the proposal. Proposals that lack such question(s) and come across as largely technology- or methods-driven will likely be at a disadvantage.

Collaborations well explained

- Strive for a good balance when describing collaborations for the project: explain their importance for the project, but without giving the impression of the PI being overly dependent on them. Messages: Due to the excellent network of the PI, they will have access to all required complementary expertise and infrastructure. The collaborations are well-defined and targeted. This should avoid a potential impression of a project based on a consortium, rather than an individual investigator-driven project (the ERC explicitly does not fund consortia, see ERC Work Programme). If you think your project would actually require several PIs, the ERC Synergy Grant call (for a group of 2-4 PIs) could be an interesting option.

Excellent reading experience: Structure, clarity, impeccable layout

- Provide a clear, coherent structure in your proposal narrative (panel Member quote: “Don’t let me think”).
- Your proposal should read compelling and authentic. It should be well accessible also for reviewers who are not experts in your research field/topic.
- Put the research you propose into a broader context (big picture). This will help to motivate your research goals and to capture also the interest of non-specialist reviewers.
- We suggest to frequently use active voice/first person (I/We) in the proposal. This can support a confident, authentic impression and a more direct connection to the reader.
- Scientific substance is key. Buzzwordish proposals will likely irritate reviewers.
- The introduction motivation at the beginning is important, but it should not dominate the proposal. The major part of the grant application should explain your novel approach and the planned work.
- Present the aims of your project rather early and in a highly visible manner (e.g. bullet points, bold fonts, text box).
- The match between aims/objectives, the methodology and the workplan of the project should be easy to perceive. For instance, you can refer to aim(s) 1,2 when describing method x or research line/workpackage y). This will support the impression of a coherent proposal.
- Ensure there are no loose ends in the proposal. (Panel Member quote: “The proposal should go full circle”).
- Important: Precise wording/descriptions, clear (working) definitions, concrete examples to illustrate your statements, high quality figures (for preliminary data)
- Charts can be very helpful to convey key information on your project in a succinct and well-understandable way.
- Ensure a reader-friendly layout. It can be helpful to highlight key messages, e.g. by a short summary of a section in a text box, bullet points, selective use of bold fonts.

B1 – Extended Synopsis

Part B1 is your “ticket to the interview”. It is important to write it in a clear, succinct manner attractive also to non-experts in the field - possibly a majority of the panel members. Only part B1 is read at step 1 of the evaluation. It should contain all essential information, and communicate the ambition and the feasibility of your project.

We suggest to consider in particular the following aspects:

- Anecdotal statements by panel members indicate that they appreciate if the first page of the extended synopsis already captures the essential information on the project: why, what, how.
- Tell a story. The first few sentences should already draw the reviewers into the text.
- Key preliminary data/results/proof of principle already obtained, e.g. in a pilot study, or a first publication demonstrating the high promise of your approach, can be helpful to demonstrate feasibility. At the same time, reviewers should not get the impression that a sizeable part of the work has already been done.
- Risks and contingency strategies: To show awareness of significant risks/challenges for the project and your readiness to address them with mitigation plans where possible.
- Explain how you will validate the results of your project. E.g. how will you determine causality, as opposed to “only” correlation? Information on statistical power can be very important also for part B1 (and in more detail for part B2). For clinical trials, it can be helpful to foresee an exploratory and an independent validation cohort. This is to show the explanatory power of your approach.
- Depending on the field, reviewers may also frequently ask whether the results obtained in the ERC project will be generalizable.
- How will you measure success of your project?
- One or a few high quality figure(s)/charts can be very helpful for B1 (and B2), e.g. a flowchart to illustrate your approach.
- Based on evaluation comments, we strongly recommend to also include a short paragraph/sentence on the team composition in B1 (message: the necessary expertise will be assembled in your team), as well as a brief timeplan (1-2 sentences, or putting timing information in brackets, e.g. “aim 1... [Year 1-3]” / “key intermediate goal x [Year 3]”). More details on these aspects should be provided in B2, including the resources section.
- References to literature should be included. They do not count towards the five pages-limit. The references in B1 may also support Panel Members in selecting the external reviewers to evaluate the proposal in step 2 of the evaluation.

B2 – Scientific Proposal

Part B2 should present the required details for the evaluation by specialist reviewers in step 2. This concerns in particular the methodology, preliminary data, and risks and contingency plans.

- We recommend to take particular care with the explanations on your approach and methodology in B2, with a view to the specialist remote reviewers, who join in step 2 of the evaluation. The key questions and critical comments of specialist reviewers are typically read out to the PI by panel members during the interview (PIs will not receive these questions beforehand). If major issues are raised in step 2 of the evaluation due to problems with B2, it can be difficult for a PI to dispel them entirely in a brief interview.
- Where applicable, present important intermediate goals and any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to your planning.
- Highlight any novel/unconventional methodology.
- Deal appropriately with significant risks (contingency plans, alternative strategies; promising preliminary data,..), in order to bolster the message of a favourable risk-gain-balance.
- We suggest to keep the overall structure of B2 provided for in the B2 template with two sections: a) State of the art and objectives; b) Methodology. (Below these overarching headings, further headings can be included to structure the narrative). Please note that the Funding ID is now an appendix to B2 (previously part of B1).
- Reviewers will likely expect a reasonable time plan for an ERC project. It has meanwhile become standard in part B2 of ERC proposals to present e.g. a Gantt chart or overview table on key intermediate goals/milestones (see a simple example in figure 1 below). However, the time plan should not be too detailed to be credible for a ground-breaking research agenda.

	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3
Years 1-2	Analysis of ... Publication 1 ...	Purify...	Visualize... Conference ...
Years 3-4	Maps...	Integration of...	...
Years 5	Model...	Correlation of findings...	...Publications, ...

Figure 1 Fictitious example table for key intermediate goals

- As the remote referees may focus more on part B2, we suggest to include key information from part B1, including the aims, also in part B2.
- Check for consistency between part B1 and B2.
- References to literature should be included, they will not count towards the 14 pages-limit.

Picture the interview/talk to non-specialists

- We recommend to also think about the interview situation from time to time when writing the proposal. This can help to ensure that the main messages you would pitch to generalist panel members in a 5-10 minutes presentation are well communicated in your proposal. In a similar vein, explaining the gist of your project to laypersons can be helpful to carve out the essential messages.

The Proposal Abstract

The abstract is an important part of the proposal, also during panel discussions. Therefore, it should not be underestimated.

- The majority of panel members may only read the abstract and possibly leaf through the proposals when they are discussed in the panel meetings. The abstract should therefore present the essence of your project, including the scientific challenge/knowledge gap, novel approach, objectives, potential impact, unique features.

The CV &Track Record section

The CV and track record sections have been merged into one single part of up to four pages.

The Curriculum Vitae & track record section saw some changes as of the calls in the ERC Work Programme 2024 and consists of the following elements (cf. ERC Work Programme and Information for Applicants 2025):

- Personal details, education, key qualifications, current position(s) and relevant previous positions
- **Research Achievements: a list of up to ten research outputs** that demonstrate how you have advanced knowledge in your field – with an emphasis on recent achievements (e.g. publications, articles deposited in a publicly available preprint server, books, book chapters, conference proceedings, data sets, software, patents, licenses, standards, start-up businesses or any other research outputs you deem relevant in relation to your research field and your project). We suggest to highlight publications as main author and/or without the co-authorship of your PhD supervisor in this section.
- **Peer Recognition:** a list of selected examples of significant peer recognition e.g. prizes, awards, fellowships, elected academy memberships, invited presentations to major conferences or any other examples of significant recognition you deem relevant in relation to your research field and project.

You can include short, factual explanations of the significance of the selected outputs, your role in producing each of them, and how they demonstrate your capacity to successfully carry out the proposed project. Also, a short explanation of the importance of the listed examples of significant peer recognition can be added. We recommend to make use of these opportunities.

- In the section for **additional information**, you can include relevant information on career breaks, diverse career paths (e.g. secondments, volunteering, part-time work, time spent in different sectors) or effects of major life events (e.g. long term illness or pandemic restrictions).
Furthermore, here you can also list particularly noteworthy contributions to the research community other than research achievements and peer recognition, along with a short explanation. The idea is to provide context to reviewers so that they can take a more rounded view when they evaluate your achievements and peer recognition in relation to your career stage – e.g. by taking into account additional responsibilities, commitments and leadership roles beyond individual research activities.
- The potential for research independence of the PI should be evident throughout the proposal, i.e. not only shown in the CV&Track Record section, but also in the extended synopsis and in B2, for instance when presenting preliminary work/data (e.g. “As we could show in [ref.x]...”).
- We suggest to consider also the following aspects for the CV/Track record section if applicable, although they are not mentioned (anymore) in the template: (co-)supervision experience; activities as reviewer for journals, functions in advisory boards; granted funding
- Ensure an impeccable and reader-friendly layout also of the CV and Track Record section.

The Funding ID

This part was previously an annex in part B1 and is now an appendix to the Scientific proposal (B2). This is mandatory information on all ongoing and submitted grants and funding of the PI and does not count towards page limits.

If several ongoing grants are listed which will temporally overlap with the ERC project, it is advisable to also demonstrate that the PI will be able to fulfil their time commitment to the ERC project, e.g. by indicating the percentage of time commitment of the PI for the other grants in the table.

For submitted grant proposals which **overlap with the content of the ERC, we recommend to add an explanatory sentence**, e.g.: “In case both the X grant application and the ERC Starting grant application are successful, I shall accept the ERC Grant and decline the X grant”.

You can also present the total amount of funding obtained by the PI so far in the CV/Track record section.

Resources

Online Submission Form Section 3: Budget Table and Text

- The budget table and description of resources are part of the online submission form (Section 3 – Budget table and text box Section C – resources). They should therefore not be included in Part B2.
- The budget table and description of resources will be made available to panel members and remote reviewers. The description of resources, without the budget table, is limited to 8.000 characters (corresponding to two pages). It does not count towards the 14 pages-limit for B2.
- Apart from explaining the project costs in the adequate detail, section 3 is also designed to present information on the "size and nature of the team, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles" (see ERC Information for Applicants). We recommend to include the expertise requirements for Post Docs and PhD students that will be hired for the project, as well as information on working arrangements (e.g. supervision of PhD students supported by Post Docs, overall supervision and guidance by PI).
- That said, we anticipate that an earlier note we received by ERCEA is still valid, confirming that some information regarding resources, i.e. *"regarding the role of team members and collaborators, may be added in the usual (B2) sections a and b"*. A typical example are Gantt charts, which also may include information on team members (no charts/graphic elements can be included in section 3).
- We also recommend to present relevant information on the host institution/research environment here, to strengthen the message of "the right project and team in the right place".
- Explain your **commitment** to the project as PI, including the percentage of total working time. If you think there could be reasonable doubts on whether you will be able to fulfil the time commitment due to other duties, describe your strategy up front.
- It is useful to double-check for plausibility of your planning. For instance, reviewers may question whether certain tasks could be "too demanding for a PhD student" and should rather be allocated to a Post Doc; or conversely, whether the presented tasks constitute a convincing PhD project.

Budget Table – Remarks on Specific Cost Categories

Please contact the grant management office at your ERC host institution for support.

- **Other goods, works and services** (with overhead flat rate): As explained in the [Model Grant Agreement](#), this category includes contracts to purchase goods, works or services, e.g. contract for a computer; for an audit certificate on the financial statements; for the publication of brochures; for the creation of a project website, for the organization of the rooms and catering for a meeting, for hiring IPR consultants/agents. These costs do not arise from directly implementing the action tasks of the ERC project, but they are necessary to implement these tasks. Overheads apply to these costs, as opposed to subcontracts.
- **Subcontracting costs** (without overheads): Costs for subcontracts arise from contracts for goods, works or services that are part of the action tasks.
- **Audit costs** should be included in the **other goods, works and services** category, subcategory "other additional direct costs" (see above). In Horizon Europe, only one audit (certificate of

the financial statement) is required at the end of the project, if the funding (direct costs) amounts to ≥ 430.000 EUR. A special threshold applies for beneficiaries with a systems and process audit (requested EU contribution \geq EUR 725 000).

- **Equipment:** Please note that typically, only **depreciation rates** (according to national rules) can be charged to the ERC for equipment. If the depreciation period of the equipment in question exceeds the duration of the ERC project, the remaining costs have to be carried by other means. Please contact your host institution in case of questions in this context. However, the ERC Work Programme 2025 also refers to the exceptional option of declaring **full capitalised costs** (p. 21), if the necessary conditions are met (e.g. fixed asset account)
- The category for **internally invoiced goods and services** refers e.g. to access to internal services that are charged as unit costs (no overheads apply).
- Do not forget the possibility to include costs for publications, including **open access fees**. In Horizon Europe, as each ERC beneficiary must ensure open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to its results. Also costs related to the management of research data / **open access to research data** can be charged.
- **Other direct costs with no overheads:** This category includes costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary (= host institution), e.g. access to large research facilities owned by a third party and not used on the premises of the beneficiaries.
- **PI salary:** As a PI, you may request funding for your salary corresponding to the percentage of total working time dedicated to the ERC project (or a smaller fraction of that amount), even if you already receive a salary by your host institution. Funding of (part of) the PI's salary can e.g. support the host institution in hiring a teaching replacement in case there is an agreement to reduce teaching obligations of a PI during the ERC project. Please consider, however, whether funding of the PI salary could negatively affect the composition of the team due to budget constraints.
- In case you consider a **100% time commitment as PI** to the ERC project, we recommend to give this some extra thought since it implies that for the duration of the project no time is foreseen for any other activities such as teaching, writing grant proposals, etc. A slight reduction of your time commitment can provide you with more flexibility, also for a possible transfer of the ERC grant to another host institution.
- While the administrative requirements for ERC projects are comparatively slim, please note that you also may include personnel costs for **administrative support**. This could be discussed with your host institution.