Horizon Europe

European Research Council (ERC)
Frontier Research Grants

Information for Applicants to the Advanced Grant Call

European Research Council
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission

Version 5.0
19/05/2025

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- ***Change included regarding additional funding for Principal Investigators in the Advanced Grant 2025 call who are re-locating to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere to take up their ERC grant (based on amended ERC Work Programme 2025 adopted on 16 May 2025). In this case, the maximum additional funding shall be EUR 2 000 000.***
- ***Additional clarification on full capitalised costs requests (p. 26).***
- ***Additional clarification on the calculation of person months for personnel cost requests (p. 27).***

IMPORTANT TO NOTE

The present document is based on the legal documents setting the rules and conditions for the ERC frontier research grants, in particular:

- the ERC Work Programme 2025 [1],
- the European Research Council rules of submission, and the related methods and procedures for peer review and proposal evaluation relevant to the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe (hereinafter ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe), and
- the HE ERC MGA Lump Sum actions — Multi & Mono[2].

This document complements and does not supersede the aforementioned documents, which are legally binding and prevail in case of discrepancies. The European Commission, the ERC Executive Agency or any person or body acting on their behalf cannot be held responsible for the use made of this document.

The Guide for ERC Peer Reviewers applicable to the Advanced Grant call provides practical information on the evaluation process.

National Contact Points (ERC NCPs) have been set up across Europe[3] by the national governments to provide information and personalised support to ERC applicants in their native language. The mission of the ERC NCPs is to raise awareness, inform and advise on ERC funding opportunities as well as to support potential applicants in the preparation, submission and follow-up of ERC grant applications. For details on the ERC NCPs in your country please consult the ERC website or the EU Funding & Tenders Portal.

For any questions related to the call, please contact the Advanced Grant call coordination team: ERC-2025-ADG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu.

Abbreviations

AC – Associated Country[4]

ADG – Advanced Grant

COG – Consolidator Grant

ERC – European Research Council

ERCEA – ERC Executive Agency

ERC NCPs – ERC National Contact Points

ERC panel – ERC peer review evaluation panel

EU MS – EU Member State

F&T Portal – EU Funding & Tenders Portal [Single Electronic Data Interchange Area (SEDIA)]

HE – Horizon Europe Framework Programme

HI – host institution

PI – Principal Investigator

PIC – Participant Identification Code

PM – Panel Member

SEP – Submission and Evaluation Platform

SYG – Synergy Grant

STG – Starting Grant

ScC – ERC Scientific Council

[1] European Commission C(2025) 2916 of 16 May 2025.

[2] Specific rules for ERC actions are detailed in Annex 5 of the Horizon Europe General Model Grant Agreement.

[3] This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some other countries also provide this service.

[4] Please check the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal for up-to-date information on the current position for Associated Countries.

Content

1. ERC ADVANCED GRANTS 2025

1.1 ERC FUNDING PRINCIPLES

The ERC Advanced Grants are part of the ERC main frontier research grants 2025 funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The ERC main frontier research grants aim to empower individual researchers and provide the best settings to foster their creativity. **Scientific excellence** is the sole criterion of evaluation. Please see below an overview of all ERC 2025 main frontier research grant calls.

***Except for Principal Investigators in the Advanced Grant call re-locating to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere to take up their ERC grant. In this case, the maximum additional funding shall be €2 Million.**

Single Principal Investigator (PI) heading a research team

The ERC Advanced Grants support individual researchers who are already established research leaders with a recognised track record of research achievements, and who can demonstrate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their research proposal. In certain fields (e.g. in the humanities and mathematics), where research is often performed individually, the 'team' may consist solely of the Principal Investigator.

Research fields – no predetermined priorities

The ERC frontier research grants operate on a 'bottom-up' basis and applications can be submitted in any field of research with an emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering[5]. In particular, the ERC welcomes proposals of interdisciplinary nature, which cross the boundaries between different fields of research, pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions. The focus is on the Principal Investigator and on the individual team. Support for consortia[6] is provided by other calls under Horizon Europe. Projects wholly or largely consisting in the collation and compilation of existing material in new databases, editions or collections are unlikely to constitute ground-breaking or 'frontier' research, however useful such resources might be to subsequent original research. Such projects are therefore unlikely to be recommended for funding by

[5] Research proposals within the scope of Annex I to the Euratom Treaty, namely those directed towards nuclear energy applications, must be submitted to relevant calls under the Euratom Research and Training Programme.

[6] Consortium agreements are not required for ERC multi-beneficiary grants, as the Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grants will support projects carried out by individual teams, which are headed by a single Principal Investigator. The ERC Synergy Grant Groups are neither networks nor consortia of undertakings, universities, research centres, or other legal entities. Even though Consortium agreements are not required, beneficiaries must have internal arrangements regarding their operation and coordination, to ensure that the action is implemented properly (article 7 of the MGA). These internal arrangements must cover the decision-making procedures for scientific and grant management issues, the distribution of the EU contribution, internal dispute settlement and division of responsibilities for cases of rejection of costs or reduction of the grant. Regarding Synergy grants, they must also cover settlement of disputes between the principal investigators and between them and the beneficiaries (Annex 5 of the MGA).

the ERC panels. As ERC funds frontier research, careful consideration should be given to propose truly novel ideas, not just continuations of ongoing projects or existing collaborations.

Evaluation and peer review

The ERC evaluation process is conducted by peer review panels composed of independent external experts who are renowned scientists and scholars. The panel chair and members are selected by the ERC Scientific Council on the basis of their scientific merits. The panels may be assisted by other independent external experts working remotely.

Open Science

Open science is a general principle of the Horizon Europe programme, and a core principle of the ERC. The ERC is committed to the principle of open access to the published output of research, including, in particular, peer-reviewed articles and monographs. It also supports the basic principle of open access to research data and data-related products such as computer code, algorithms, software, workflows, protocols, electronic notebooks or any other forms of research output. The ERC considers that providing free online access to all these materials can be the most effective way of ensuring that the results of the research it funds can be accessed, read and used as the basis for further advancement.

Under Horizon Europe, beneficiaries of ERC grants must ensure immediate open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications[7] relating to their results as set out in the Annex 5 of the applicable Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions. Open access has to be provided with full re-use rights[8]. Beneficiaries must ensure that they or the authors retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with their open access requirements and the grant agreement obligations[9]. Publishing costs can be considered as eligible costs provided that the publishing venue (e.g. journal, book) is fully open access.

In addition, beneficiaries of ERC frontier research grants funded under the ERC Work Programme 2025 will be covered by the provisions on research data management as set out in the Annex 5 of the applicable Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions. In particular, whenever a project generates research data, beneficiaries are required to manage it in line with the principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability as described by the FAIR principles initiative[10], and establish a data management plan within the first six months of project implementation. Open access to research data should be ensured under the principle 'as open as possible, as closed as necessary'. These provisions are designed to facilitate access, re-use and preservation of the research data generated during the ERC funded research work.

[7] This includes peer-reviewed book chapters and long-text publications such as monographs, edited collections, critical editions, scholarly exhibition catalogues, or PhD theses.

[8] For monographs and other long-text formats, commercial re-use and derivative works may be excluded (as set out in the Annex 5 of the applicable Model Grant Agreement used for ERC Actions).

[9] The granting authority may, up to four years after the end of the action, object to a transfer of ownership or to the exclusive licensing of results, as set out in the specific provision of Annex 5 of the applicable Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions. If requested by the granting authority, additional obligations to grant non-exclusive licences for the exploitation of results apply to the beneficiaries of ERC frontier research grants in case of a public emergency (applicable up to four years after the end of the action).

[10] The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship | Scientific Data (nature.com)

Funding

Advanced Grants will be awarded as a single lump sum contribution for the entirety of the project.

Advanced Grants can be up to a maximum of EUR 2 500 000 for a period of 5 years. **For projects of shorter duration, the maximum amount of the grant is reduced *pro rata temporis***[11] (e.g. for an Advanced Grant project of 48 months duration, the maximum requested EU contribution allowed is 2.000.000 €).

Additional funding up to EUR 1 000 000[12] can be requested in the proposal to cover the following eligible costs when these are necessary to carry out the proposed work[13]:

(a) "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or
(b) the purchase of major equipment and/or
(c) access to large facilities and/or
(d) other major experimental and field work costs.

Additional funding is not subject to *pro rata temporis* reduction for projects of shorter duration[14].

All funding requested is assessed during evaluation. The funding requested must be justified by a reliable estimation of the projected costs[15]. It must only include direct costs that are eligible plus a flat rate of 25% of the direct cost categories, for indirect costs (as per Horizon Europe rules). Under these rules, costs for subcontracting and for internally invoiced goods and services must be excluded from the calculation of the indirect costs ('overhead costs').

Research integrity

Breaches of research integrity, including scientific misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or misrepresentation of data[16], as well as contacts with any independent external expert involved in the peer review evaluation (peer reviewers) in the attempt to influence its outcome that may arise during the evaluation or the granting process, may result in rejection of proposals from evaluation or from the grant preparation as provided in the relevant ERC Work Programme[17]. Please also note that plagiarism detection software is used to analyse all submitted proposals to detect similar proposals submitted by different Principal Investigators. A procedure is in place to assess alleged or suspected cases of scientific misconduct.

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[11] That is in proportion to the project's duration. The *pro rata temporis* rule does not apply to ongoing projects.

[12] Principal Investigators who are currently based in non-associated third countries and plan to move to the EU or an associated country to take up their ERC grant can request up to EUR 2 000 000 in additional funding. Being "currently based in non-associated third countries" means having their "habitual residence in a non-associated third country".

[13] Where additional funding is awarded, during the implementation of the grant, that part of the lump sum contribution (i.e. up to EUR 1 000 000 or to EUR 2 000 000) can be used with the same flexibility as the rest of the contribution (i.e. up to EUR 2 500 000) provided that the initial decision awarding the Union contribution is not called into question.

[14] Additional funding to cover major one-off costs is not subject to pro rata temporis reduction for projects of shorter duration (e.g. with additional funding it is possible to request a maximum EU contribution of 3.000.000 € for a project of 48 months duration, or 4.000.000 € in case of re-location of the Principal Investigator to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere to take up their ERC grant with a duration of 48 months).

[15] Cost estimates must be reliable proxies for the actual costs of the project based upon participant(s) usual cost accounting practices, and in compliance with the basis eligibility conditions for EU actual costs grants. Each applicant organisation will be responsible for the information declared in their application; a relevant declaration will be submitted as part of the on-line submission form. Please note that in case of verification after the establishment of the lump sum contribution, false statements or incorrect information may lead to administrative sanctions under the EU Financial Regulation and, where applicable, the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

[16] For example, if (i) in the list of publications, the order of authors does not appear as indicated in the original publications; (ii) the written consent of all researchers mentioned in the proposal on their participation in the project (either as team member, collaborator or member of the advisory board) is not obtained by the call submission deadline.

[17] See section 3.11 of the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe.

Advanced Grant profile

A competitive Advanced Grant Principal Investigator is expected to be an active and established research leader with a track record of significant research achievements. No specific eligibility criteria with respect to the academic requirements are foreseen.

Principal Investigators must provide a list of achievements reflecting their track record. A short narrative describing the scientific importance of the research outputs, and the role played by the Principal Investigator in their production may also be included.

1.2 ADMISSIBILITY AND ELIGIBILITY

Admissible and eligible proposals

All proposals must be complete, readable, and accessible. They must be submitted by eligible Principal Investigators before the relevant call deadline. Please see section 2.1 for an overview of a complete ERC proposal. Proposals that do not meet these criteria may be declared inadmissible. All scientific fields are eligible for ERC funding[18].

All applications and the related supporting information are reviewed to ensure that all admissibility and eligibility criteria are met. The proposal's content should be related to the objectives of the Advanced Grant call and must meet all admissibility and eligibility requirements as defined in the ERC Work Programme 2025. Where there is a doubt about the admissibility or eligibility of a proposal, the peer review evaluation may proceed pending a decision of the Responsible Authorising Officer following the opinion of the admissibility and eligibility review committee. The fact that a proposal is evaluated in such circumstances does not constitute proof of its admissibility or eligibility. If it becomes clear before, during, or after the peer review evaluation phase, that one or more of the admissibility or eligibility criteria has not been met (for example, due to incorrect or misleading information), the proposal will be declared inadmissible or ineligible and it will be rejected.

Host institution

The host institution (applicant legal entity) must engage the Principal Investigator for at least the duration of the project, as defined in the grant agreement[19]. It must either be established in an EU Member State (EU MS) or Associated Country (AC)[20] as a legal entity created under national law, or it may be an international European research organisation (such as CERN, EMBL, etc.), or any other entity created under EU law. International organisations with headquarters in an EU MS or AC will be deemed to be established in this EU MS or AC. Any type of legal entity, public or private, including universities, research organisations and undertakings, can host Principal Investigators and their teams[21]. The ERC welcomes applications from Principal Investigators hosted by private for-profit

[18] Research proposals within the scope of Annex I to the Euratom Treaty, namely those directed towards nuclear energy applications, shall be submitted to relevant calls under the Euratom Research and Training Programme.

[19] As set out in the Annex 5 of the applicable Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions.

[20] See footnote 4.

[21] Applicant legal entities that are subject to the administrative sanction of exclusion or are in one of the exclusion situations set out in the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('the EU Financial Regulation') are banned from receiving EU grants and can NOT participate. Please see Articles 138 and 143 of the EU Financial Regulation, as well as important information on possible exclusion and registration of economic operators in the Commission's Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) on the final page of the ERC Work Programme 2025

research centres, including industrial laboratories. During the granting process, the financial capacity of the host institution will be assessed, if required[22].

Normally the Principal Investigator will be employed by the host institution, but cases where, for duly justified reasons, the Principal Investigator's employer cannot become the host institution, or where the Principal Investigator is self-employed, can be accommodated. The specific conditions of engagement will be subject to clarification and approval during the granting procedure or during the amendment procedure for a change of host institution.

To be eligible, legal entities from an EU MS or AC that are public bodies, research organisations or higher education institutions (including private research organisations and private higher education institutions) must have a gender equality plan (GEP) or an equivalent strategic document in place for the duration of the project. The gender equality plan or equivalent must fulfil the mandatory requirements listed in Annex 5 of the ERC Work Programme 2025.

Principal Investigator

ERC grants are open to researchers of any nationality who intend to conduct their research activity in any EU MS or an AC. The research team may be of national or trans-national character. The Principal Investigator does not need to be employed by the host institution at the time when the proposal is submitted. However, the Principal Investigator must be engaged by the host institution at least for the duration of the grant. Grant proposals are submitted by the Principal Investigator who takes scientific responsibility for the project, on behalf of the host institution.

Expected time commitment[23]

With the support of the host institution, the successful Principal Investigators are expected to lead their individual teams and devote a significant amount of time to the project. They will be expected to dedicate a minimum of 30% of their working time to the ERC Advanced Grant project and spend a minimum of 50% of their working time in a European Union Member State or an Associated Country[24]. It is expected that the research project will be implemented within the territory of the Member States or Associated Countries. This does not exclude field work or other research activities in cases where these must necessarily be conducted outside the European Union or the Associated Countries in order to achieve the scientific objectives of the project/activity.

Submission restrictions

The ERC calls are highly competitive. Thousands of high-quality proposals are received each year and only outstanding proposals are likely to be funded. In order to maintain the quality and integrity of the ERC evaluation process, restrictions on applications have been put in place.

The following general restrictions apply for the ERC 2025 main frontier research calls (STG, COG, ADG and SYG):

- A researcher may participate as a Principal Investigator in only one ERC main frontier research project at any one time[25]. A new main frontier research project can only start after

[22] Applicant legal entities must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects. Information on financial capacity checks is provided in the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe.

[23] For further guidance, see the Annotated Grant Agreement on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (Annex 5, section Specific rules for ERC Grants (HE), point 5. PI time commitments).

[24] For Principal Investigators hosted and engaged by international European research organisations, any time spent working for these organisations may count as working time spent in an EU Member State or an Associated Country for the purpose of the Principal Investigator's time commitment.

[25] Including all Principal Investigators supported under a Synergy Grant.

the duration of the project fixed in a previous main frontier research grant agreement has ended;

- A researcher participating as a Principal Investigator in an ERC main frontier research project may not submit a proposal for another ERC main frontier research grant, unless the existing project ends less than two years after the call deadline[26];
- A researcher who is a serving panel member for an ERC 2025 call or who served as a panel member for an ERC 2023 call may not apply to an ERC 2025 call for the same type of grant[27];
- If a researcher applies to more than one ERC main frontier research grant calls published under the same Work Programme (i.e. from the same 'call year'), only the first eligible proposal will be evaluated;
- A researcher, whose proposal has been selected for funding and who is preparing a grant agreement under an ERC 2023 or 2024 call, may not apply for a Starting, Consolidator or Advanced or Synergy Grant under an ERC 2025 call.

Additional restrictions are related to the outcome of the evaluation of proposals submitted to previous calls (see table below). They have been designed to allow unsuccessful Principal Investigators the time necessary to develop a stronger proposal. Inadmissible, ineligible or withdrawn proposals do not count against any of the restrictions listed below.

Call to which the PI applied under previous ERC WPs and proposal evaluation outcome		**2025 calls to which the PI is *NOT* eligible**
2023 and 2024 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced or Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity	STG, COG, ADG, SYG
2023 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant	A or B at Step 2	No restrictions
	B at Step 1	No restrictions
	C at Step 1	STG, COG, ADG
2024 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	A or B at Step 2	No restrictions
	B or C at Step 1	STG, COG, ADG
2023 and 2024 Synergy Grant	A or B at Step 3	No restrictions
	B at Step 1 or 2	No restrictions
	C at Step 1	SYG

[26] According to the duration of the project defined in the previous grant agreement of a main frontier research grant (i.e. current grantees of an ERC main frontier research grant can apply to the ADG 2025 call only if their current grant ends by 28 August 2027 – two years after the ADG 2025 call submission deadline).

[27] The members of the ERC panels alternate to allow panel members to apply to the ERC calls in alternate years.

The year of an ERC call refers to the Work Programme under which the call was published and can be established by its call identifier. An ERC 2025 call is therefore one that was published under the ERC Work Programme 2025 and will have 2025 in the call identifier (for example ERC-2025-ADG).

1.3 EVALUATION PROCESS

The ERC peer review evaluation process has been carefully designed to identify scientific excellence irrespective of gender, age, nationality or institution of the Principal Investigator and other potential biases, and to take career breaks as well as diverse research career paths into account[28]. The evaluations are monitored to guarantee transparency, fairness and impartiality in the treatment of proposals.

A single submission of the full proposal is followed by a two-step evaluation.

ERC evaluation panels

The peer review is carried out by 28 peer review evaluation panels (ERC panels), covering all fields of science and scholarship (see panel details and ERC keywords in Annex 4.1). For operational reasons they are subdivided into three main research domains:

- Physical Sciences and Engineering (11 Panels),
- Life Sciences (9 Panels) and,
- Social Sciences and Humanities (8 Panels).

Before the deadline of a call, the names of the 28 panel chairs are published on the ERC website. The names of panel members are published after the call deadline and before the Step 1 evaluation on the ERC website, provided that their consent for this publication has been obtained.

No Contact allowed with peer reviewers

Please note that, in accordance with section 3.2 of the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe, any direct or indirect contact about the ERC peer review evaluation between an applicant legal entity or a Principal Investigator submitting a proposal on behalf of an applicant legal entity, and any independent external expert[29] involved in the peer review evaluation under the same call, in an attempt to influence the evaluation process, is strictly forbidden. Such contact may result in rejection of proposals from evaluation or from the grant preparation.

In addition, any contact with peer reviewers to obtain confidential information on the evaluation process is prohibited. ERC Peer Reviewers are bound to confidentiality during the evaluation and afterwards. Hence, they are not allowed to communicate about the evaluation and/or specific proposal(s) with the Principal Investigators or potential team members or persons linked to them, even after completion of the evaluation process.

[28] During the evaluation, the peer review panels will take into account unconventional research career paths and particularly noteworthy contributions to the research community, as well as possible breaks in the research career of the applicant and the effects of major life events or pandemic restrictions on the applicant's progression as a researcher.

[29] An independent external expert is an expert who is external to the ERC and the Commission, who is working impartially in a personal capacity and without conflict of interest. Exceptionally, in duly justified cases, when relevant specialised knowledge is held by staff of Union institutions or bodies, and provided that these are not implementing Horizon Europe as a funding body, such staff may work as independent external experts in compliance with Article 29(1) of the Horizon Europe Regulation.

Panel allocation and panel budgets

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant ERC panel ('primary evaluation panel') for the evaluation of the proposed research and to indicate one or more ERC keywords representing the research fields involved. The Principal Investigator may indicate a secondary evaluation panel.

When choosing the panel, please take careful note of the panel details and ERC keywords in Annex 4.1.

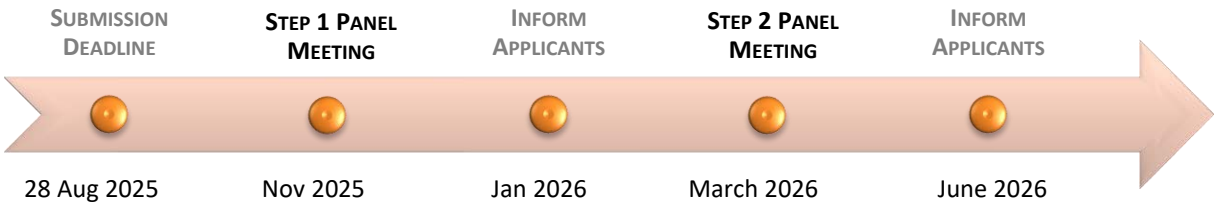
The initial allocation of the proposal to a panel will be based on the preference expressed by the applicant. However, when necessary due to the expertise required for the evaluation, a proposal may be reallocated to a different panel with the agreement of both panel chairs concerned. In such cases, applicants are informed of the reallocation of the proposal through the notification for the invitation to the interview (if applicable) or in the Evaluation Report attached to the information letter with the final outcome of the evaluation of their proposal.

The composition of the ERC evaluation panels is by nature multi-disciplinary. The evaluation panel will determine if additional reviews by appropriate members of other panel(s) or additional remote experts are needed to evaluate the proposal.

An indicative budget is allocated to each panel in proportion to the budgetary demand of its assigned proposals. **This important principle ensures comparable success rates between the individual panels regardless of how many proposals each panel evaluates.** Based on the outcome of the evaluation at Step 1, up to 44 proposals per panel can be retained for Step 2 of the evaluation. Only proposals ranked '*A invited*' at Step 1 will be further evaluated at Step 2. Following the Step 2 evaluation, only the proposals ranked 'A' will be invited for grant preparation in priority order based on their rank in the consolidated call rank list and until the call budget is spent. The remaining proposals recommended for funding may be funded by the ERC if additional funds become available.

Evaluation process and important dates

An indicative evaluation timeline is available for the Advanced Grant Call on the ERC website and outlined below.

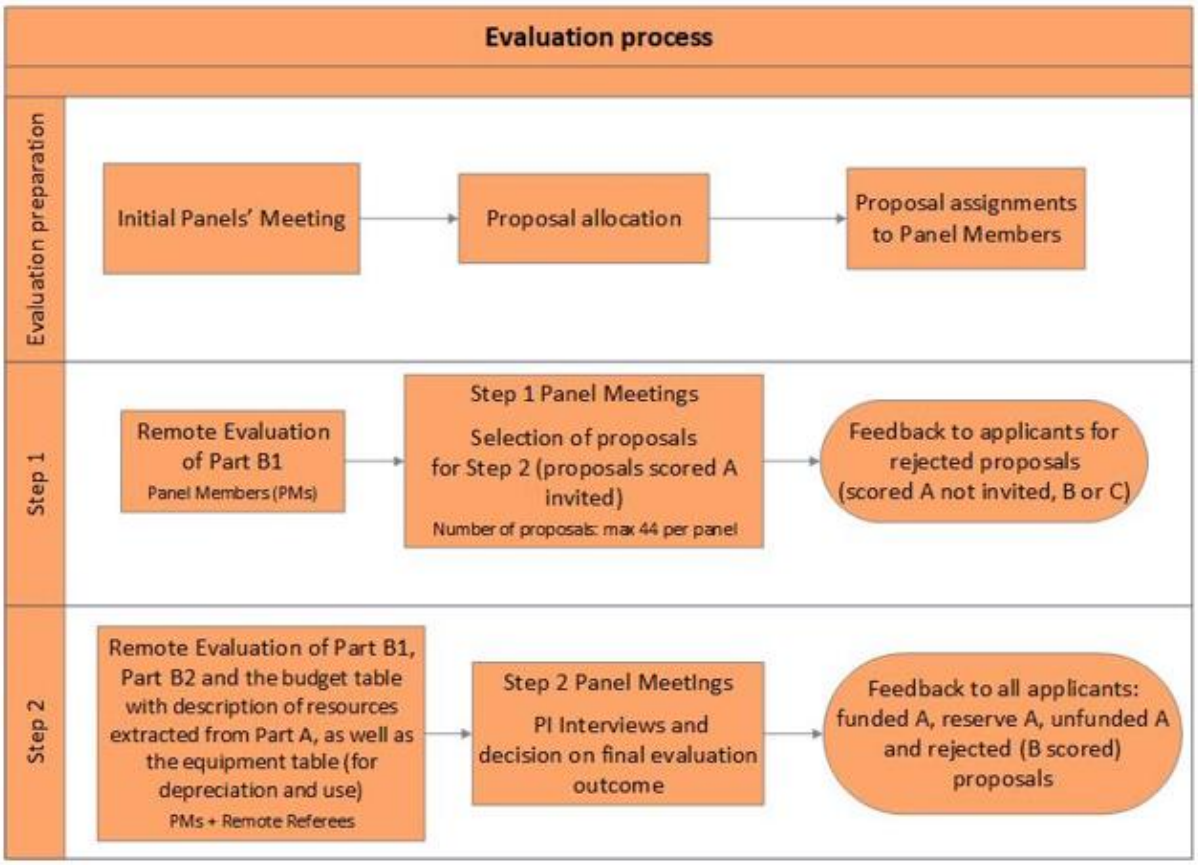


At both evaluation steps, every proposal will be evaluated for each of the two main elements of the proposal: the Research Project and the Principal Investigator. The panels will primarily evaluate the ground-breaking nature, ambition, and feasibility of the research project. At the same time, the panels will evaluate the intellectual capacity, creativity, and commitment of the Principal Investigator, with a focus on the extent to which the Principal Investigator has the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project.

The ERC independent external experts deliver individual reviews in a remote evaluation phase at both Step 1 and Step 2, which constitute the starting point for the panels' discussion. The ERC panels

assess and score the proposals based on these individual reviews and on the panels' overall appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal.

Resubmitted proposals are evaluated as new proposals, without any reference or comparison to the previous score and/or previous assessments. The score received by a proposal submitted in a previous ERC call will neither be considered in the current evaluation nor affect its outcome, as each ERC evaluation is independent from previous ones and the competition each year is different. In addition, the content of the reviews from an ERC evaluation will not be made available to reviewers of the resubmitted proposal in a subsequent ERC call.



STEP 1

At Step 1, the Extended Synopsis together with the Principal Investigator's CV and track record will be evaluated (Part B1 – see section 2.3). After the remote evaluation phase, each panel meets to discuss all proposals assigned to the panel. Proposals will proceed to Step 2 based on the outcome of the Step 1 evaluation. The maximum number of proposals evaluated at Step 2 may not exceed 44 proposals per panel. At the end of Step 1 of the evaluation, each proposal will receive one of the following scores:

A invited – the proposal is of excellent quality and ranked sufficiently high to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation;

A not invited – the proposal is of excellent quality but not ranked sufficiently high[30] to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation;

B – the proposal is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation[31];

C – the proposal is not of sufficient quality to pass to Step 2 of the evaluation[32].

[30] It exceeds the maximum threshold of proposals that can be passed to Step 2.

[31] The applicants may be subject to restrictions on submitting proposals to future ERC calls based on the outcome of the evaluation. Applicants will need to check the restrictions in place for each call.

The Step 1 evaluation outcome is provided to the applicants receiving an 'A not invited', a 'B' or a 'C' score through an information letter together with an evaluation report. It includes the score and the panel ranking range of their proposal, the panel comment explaining the panel decision as well as the individual comments given by each reviewer[33]. This communication is uploaded to the F&T Portal accounts of the Principal Investigator and host institution main contact person (see section 3.2).

Applicants who receive an 'A invited' score are invited for an interview to present their project at the Step 2 panel meeting. Each panel decides on the exact format of its interviews (duration, number of slides allowed – if applicable, time allocated to the presentation and to the questions and answers session), which will be communicated to the applicants after Step 1. Applicants who pass to Step 2 do not receive a Step 1 evaluation report.

STEP 2

At Step 2, the full proposal (Part B1, Part B2, Section 3 – Budget, included in the administrative form, and the equipment table, uploaded as a separate annex) will be evaluated. After a remote evaluation phase, the panels meet again. Step 2 includes an interview of approximately 30 minutes of each applicant during the panel meeting[34]. The Principal Investigators will be interviewed remotely, while the panel members will be present in the ERC premises[35].

The first part of the interview will consist of a presentation of the research project by the Principal Investigator. The remaining time will be devoted to a questions and answers session. The Principal Investigator may expect questions also related to the budget table, resources section and equipment table, including cost estimates, which are part of the application. The evaluation panels will review the requested lump sum contribution on the basis of the budget of those proposals recommended for funding and, if necessary, recommend adjustments.

In view of the confidentiality of the evaluation process, applicants should not share the identity of panel members within their scientific communities until the panel members' names have been published on the ERC website.

The assessment by the panels will take into account the interview alongside the individual reviews. At the end of Step 2, following the timeline described above, applicants will be informed of the outcome of the evaluation. The score of their proposal can be either A or B:

A – the proposal fully meets the ERC's excellence criterion and is recommended for funding. The project will be funded on a priority order based on its rank, if sufficient funds are available. This means that it is very likely that not all proposals scored 'A' will eventually be funded by the ERC;
B – the proposal meets some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded.

[32] See footnote 31.
[33] The pre-defined responses related to the questions regarding the Principal Investigator can be the following: Exceptional/ Excellent/Very Good/Good/Non-competitive.
[34] Should a planned interview not be possible for reasons beyond the control of the ERCEA, the panel will have to take its decision based on the written proposal.
[35] In exceptional and justified cases such as illness, maternity or force majeure, if unable to attend a physical meeting in person, a panel member may participate in the panel meeting remotely by electronic means (video-conferencing or telephone-conferencing), subject to ERCEA's agreement.

The Step 2 evaluation outcome is provided to all applicants through an information letter together with an evaluation report. It includes the score and the panel ranking range of their proposal, the panel comment explaining the panel decision as well as the individual comments given by each reviewer. This communication is uploaded to the F&T Portal accounts of the Principal Investigator and host institution main contact person (see section 3.2).

Panel comments

Comments by the individual reviewers may reflect divergent views. Differences of opinions about the proposal are part of the scientific debate and are legitimate. Furthermore, the ERC panel may take a position that is different from what could be inferred from the individual reviews. A panel discussion could reveal an important weakness that was not identified by the individual reviewers. The panel comment reflects the final decision taken by the panel either by consensus decision or by majority vote based on the individual assessments and the discussion within the panel.

Evaluation criterion and elements

Scientific excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation.

The panels will primarily evaluate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project. At the same time, the panels will evaluate the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the Principal Investigator, with a focus on the extent to which the Principal Investigator has the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project. The detailed evaluation elements applying to these two categories are set out below.

1. 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's commitment adequate and properly justified *(based on the research proposal)?*
2. 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?

Information to Programme Committee and NCPs

After each peer review evaluation, a report is prepared by the ERCEA services and made available to the Programme Committee. The report provides information on the proposals received: it includes names of host institutions and personal data (i.e. names of applicant Principal Investigators), evaluation scores of proposals, as well as panel comments and individual reviews. A subset of information is also made available to the National Contact Points. The NCP report provides names of host institutions and personal data (i.e. names of applicant Principal Investigators) and evaluation scores of proposals. Applicants have various rights as regards the processing of their personal data[36].

1.4 ETHICS AND SECURITY

Ethics

Every project funded or placed on a reserve list by the ERC under Horizon Europe is subject to an ethics review process. The ethics review process is independent from the scientific evaluation.

Please see Annex A to the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe for a detailed description of the ERC Ethics Review procedure.

The process is aimed at ensuring that all the research and innovation activities under Horizon Europe comply with ethics principles and relevant national, Union and international legislation, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols.

The main areas that are addressed during the ethics review process include:

1. Human embryonic stem cells and human embryos
2. Human participants
3. Human cells/tissues
4. Personal data
5. Animals
6. Non-EU countries
7. Environment, health and safety
8. Artificial Intelligence

Other ethics issues may be identified as new ethical issues, or issues not fully covered by the above questions.

When submitting their proposal, applicants must complete the ethics issues table as part of the on-line proposal submission form (Section 4), and if applicable, provide an ethics self-assessment (in the same section of the form) and upload supporting documentation as separate annex(es). Please see the How to Complete your Ethics Self-Assessment document for guidance. In order to determine whether your proposal contains serious and complex ethics issues, please consult the domain-specific guidance documents available at the following link: Ethics guidance | ERC (europa.eu). In case the proposal involves the use of human embryonic stem cells, applicants may pay particular attention to the Statement by the Commission on ethics/stem cells that sets out a specific ethics framework.

[36] Applicants have the right to access their personal data, the right to rectify them, if necessary, and/or to restrict their processing or erase them. They are also entitled to object to the processing of their personal data, where applicable. If they would like to exercise their rights under the Regulation 2018/1725, if they have comments, questions or concerns, regarding the collection and use of their personal data, applicants are free to contact the ERCEA Controller at ERCEA-B2-CALL-COORDINATION@ec.europa.eu.

It is important to provide a complete overview of all ethics issues during the submission phase in order to speed up the ethics review process (please also see section 2.2 of this document for further details). Additional information or documents may be requested from the applicants to finalise the ethics review. Applicants should be aware that no grant agreement can be signed by ERCEA prior to a satisfactory conclusion of the ethics review procedure.

Security

The security review procedure is managed by the Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME).

Its main scope is to ensure both that EU-funded research is conducted in line with applicable security rules and principles and that beneficiaries comply with applicable security rules, as established in national and EU law (in line with Article 20 of the Horizon Europe Regulation[37]).

The procedure is designed to help applicants and their institutions to identify and manage possible security risks linked to three main aspects[38]:

- the generation and/or handling of classified information;
- the generation of knowledge, materials and technologies that could be channelled into activities that could pose a security threat for the EU and its Member States (misuse);
- the identification of research activities that may involve information and/or materials subject to national security restrictions.

Under Horizon Europe, applicants are requested to identify if the proposed activity will use and/or generate information which might raise security concerns. When submitting their proposal, applicants must complete the security issues table as part of the online proposal submission form (Section 4), and provide, if applicable, available supporting documentation as separate annex(es).

For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage[39] (for further information see Annex 4 to the ERC Work Programme 2025).

1.5 MEANS OF REDRESS, ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

Please see section 3.9 of the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe for a detailed description of the admissibility, eligibility and evaluation review procedures and enquiries and complaints.

Means of redress

Upon receiving the information letter with the evaluation report or with the results of the admissibility and eligibility checks, the Principal Investigator and/or the host institution (applicant legal entity) may request an admissibility, eligibility or evaluation review, if there is an indication that the results of the admissibility or eligibility checks were incorrect or that there has been a procedural shortcoming or a manifest error of assessment in the evaluation.

[37] Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013.

[38] For a detailed overview of how to handle security issues in Horizon Europe programmes please consult the guide How to handle security-sensitive projects.

[39] Further guidance on tackling various security aspects and mitigating associated risks in research has been published by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation: Tackling R&I Foreign Interference: Staff Working Document, 2022.

A request for evaluation review can be made if the Principal Investigator and/or the host institution consider that the applicable evaluation procedure has not been correctly applied to the proposal. The evaluation review procedure is not meant to call into question the scientific judgement made by the peer review panel. It will look into procedural shortcomings and – in rare cases – into factual errors.

The information letter will provide information on the means of redress and how to introduce the request. The letter will specify a deadline for the receipt of any such requests, which will be 30 calendar days from the date of receiving the information letter[40]. A formal notification is considered to have been accessed by the applicant 10 calendar days after sending, if not accessed before in the system[41].

Requests must be:

- related to the evaluation process, or admissibility/eligibility checks, for the call and grant in question;
- set out using the online form, including a clear description of the grounds for complaint;
- received within the time limit specified in the information letter;
- sent by the Principal Investigator and/or the host institution.

Requests that do not meet the above-mentioned conditions, or do not deal with the admissibility, eligibility or evaluation of a specific proposal, will not be admitted.

A redress committee may be convened to examine the request for the review of the admissibility, eligibility or evaluation process. The redress committee will bring together staff of the ERC Executive Agency with the requisite scientific, technical and legal expertise. The committee shall be chaired by and include staff of ERCEA who were not involved in the evaluation of the proposal. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of the requests, based on all available information related to the proposal and its evaluation, and fair and equal treatment of all applicants.

In the case of the evaluation review procedure, the committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the committee may review the evaluation report, the individual comments and examine the profile and expertise of the experts. The committee may also contact the panel chair/panel member(s) concerned. **The committee will not call into question the scientific judgement of appropriately qualified panels of experts.** In light of its review, the committee will recommend a course of action to the Responsible Authorising Officer (RAO) for the call. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could have affected the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- a partial or total re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality of the assessment of a proposal;
- the committee may confirm the initial outcome if it concludes that the errors identified would not substantially have affected the outcome of the evaluation nor the ranking of the proposal;
- the evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score;
- only one request at a time for evaluation review per proposal will be considered by the committee;
- all requests for evaluation review will be treated in confidence.

[40] Applicants of proposals selected for funding will normally not receive information on the means of redress in their information letter but if the applicants consider that there are grounds for such request, they can redress.

[41] Evaluation result letters are formal notifications. This means that deadlines triggered by these letters (evaluation review request, etc.) must be counted accordingly (i.e. access date + 1 day (event) + 30 days (deadline) OR sending date + 1 day (event) + 10 days (embargo period) + 30 days (deadline), if the letter was not accessed in the system).

The above procedure does not prevent the applicants from resorting to any other means of redress such as:

- requesting a legal review of the Agency decision under Article 22 of Council Regulation 58/2003[42] ('Article 22 request'), within 1 month of receiving the ERCEA's letter; or
- bringing an action for annulment under Article 263 of the TFEU[43] ('Article 263 action') against the Agency, within 2 months of receiving the ERCEA's letter.

Applicants may choose which means of redress they wish to pursue[44]. Applicants are asked not to take more than one formal action at a time. Once the Agency/Commission communicates the final decision on an action, applicants can take a further action against that decision. Deadlines for a further action will start to run from when applicants receive the final decision[45].

Other types of complaints on decisions affecting the involvement of applicants in the programme

Any other complaint against a decision affecting the involvement of applicants in Horizon Europe shall be addressed to the Agency Director within 30 calendar days from the receipt of the communication of the Agency decision[46].

1.6 QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE CALL

Useful information can be found on the ERC website and more specifically on the pages dedicated to the Advanced Grant Call.

An extended set of Frequently Asked Questions for the ERC calls is available on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal on the call page of ERC-2025-ADG. They can be filtered by calls or categories, and answer the most common questions on how to prepare and submit an ERC application.

A series of explanatory videos giving information about the ERC application process (drafting the proposal, its evaluation steps and Principal Investigator's interview) is available on the funding page of the ERC website.

For additional questions related to the call, please contact the relevant Call coordination team: ERC-2025-ADG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu.

For questions related to the ethics issues of the proposal, please contact the Ethics Support team: ERC-ETHICS-REVIEW@ec.europa.eu.

For questions on open access to scientific publications and research data management, please see the section on Open Science in the General Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions under Horizon Europe or contact ERC-OPEN-ACCESS@ec.europa.eu.

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[42] Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes (OJ L 11, 16.01.2003, p.1).

[43] Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 47–390).

[44] Even though applicants may freely choose which means of redress to pursue, submitting first a request for evaluation review will ensure that the applicants' case can be heard on all the above-mentioned possible instances.

[45] Please be aware that, as per Article 22 of Regulation 58/2003, reaching a final decision on an Article 22 request may generally take more than 30 days. Therefore, if you first file an Article 22 request you may not be able afterwards to submit an evaluation review request within the 30 days deadline. Please note as well that applicants of proposals included on the reserve list may not file an Article 22 request because their information letter does NOT constitute a final position concerning funding.

[46] A formal notification is considered to have been accessed by the applicant 10 calendar days after sending, if not accessed before in the system.

2. COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

2.1 OVERVIEW OF AN ERC APPLICATION

An ERC application is composed of:

- the administrative form (Part A) **including the budget table, description of resources (Section 3 – Budget) and time commitment (Section 5 – Other questions);**
- the completed Part B1 template (Extended Synopsis, Curriculum Vitae and Track Record);
- the completed Part B2 template (Scientific Proposal);
- the equipment table: an Excel table with complete information on depreciation and usage of all equipment items (if no equipment costs are budgeted, an empty equipment table needs to be uploaded);
- the completed host institution support letter;
- if applicable, additional supporting documentation related to ethics and security issues.

2.2 THE ADMINISTRATIVE FORM

The online submission form is accessed via the call submission link in the F&T Portal. The electronic form has 5 sections (approximately 25 pages in total), which need to be completed before a submission can take place. Many fields are mandatory and specific to the ERC calls and we therefore advise to create the draft proposal well in advance of the submission deadline. **All mandatory fields are marked in red if left empty. Failure to fill in any mandatory field will block submission (see Annex 4.7).**

1 – General Information. This section contains information about the research proposal, including the project acronym, title, duration and abstract. Furthermore, in this section you will select the ERC evaluation panel which you believe is best suited to evaluate the research proposal (for further details, see section 1.3). If the proposal covers several scientific disciplines, you may indicate a 'secondary review panel'. You may indicate up to four ERC keywords as listed in Annex 4.1 that cover your proposal subject. The abstract should provide a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as a short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process. Please note that in case your proposal is funded the abstract will be published. It must therefore be short and precise, it should be a maximum of 2000 characters, and it should not contain confidential information.

The section 'General Information' also contains general declarations related to the proposal and participation in Horizon Europe[47]. The declarations must be filled in by the Principal Investigator on behalf of the host institution and "We" has to be understood as both "the Principal Investigator" and "the host institution". This includes the mandatory declaration 10, which applies to the Advanced Grant 2025 call, where you must declare that cost estimates were established in line with your institution's usual accounting practices and with principles of sound financial management.

2 – Participants. This section contains information about the Principal Investigator and the host institution, and additional beneficiaries where relevant[48]. One section will appear for each

[47] Please note that the ERCEA may at any time during the evaluation process request the applicants to provide the written consents mentioned in the declarations. These consents should not be submitted with the application, but the applicant must ensure the written consent from all participants prior to the call submission deadline.

[48] Where they bring scientific added value to the project, additional team members may also be hosted by additional legal entities, which may be established anywhere, including outside the European Union or Associated Countries, or international organisations, subject to any restrictions provided in Annex 3 to the ERC Work Programme 2025.

beneficiary. The name and e-mail of contact persons - including the Principal Investigator and host institution contact - are **read-only.** Further details such as ORCID number, researcher ID, other ID, last name at birth, gender, nationality, etc., should be provided for the Principal Investigator as well as the address and telephone number of each contact person. The Principal Investigator's mobile number is an essential information for the Step 2 interview logistics.

This section contains also the following fields:

- Gender Equality Plan (GEP): 'yes/no' tick box question to be filled in by the host institution contact person. Only Public bodies, Higher education institutions and Research organisations (including private Higher education institutions and private Research organisations) must answer this question. This answer and the absence of GEP at submission stage will not affect the evaluation of the proposal. In case the proposal is selected for funding, the host institution must have a Gender Equality Plan or an equivalent strategic document in place for the duration of the project. The GEP or equivalent must fulfil the mandatory requirements[49] listed in Annex 5 of the ERC Work Programme 2025 and will be necessary before the signature of the grant agreement.
- Departments carrying out the proposed work: the data field 'Links with other proposal participating organisations' is optional and only to be filled if there are dependencies with other participating host institutions (for example, team members from another host institution). This field should not to be filled for mono-beneficiary grants.
- Person in charge of the proposal (Principal Investigator): on this page, there is a field on the 'career stage' of the Principal Investigator. This information will not be provided to the evaluators and it will not be evaluated. The field on the career stage refers to the ones defined in the Frascati 2015 manual (see below). Please choose the appropriate option:

  Category A – Top grade researcher: the single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted. Examples: 'full professor' or 'director of research'.

  Category B – Senior researcher: researchers working in positions not as senior as top positions but more senior than newly qualified doctoral graduates (IsCED level 8). Examples: 'associate professor', 'senior researcher' or 'principal investigator'.

  Category C – Recognised researcher: the first grade/post into which a newly qualified doctoral graduate would normally be recruited. Examples: 'assistant professor', 'investigator' or 'post-doctoral fellow'.

  Category D – First stage researcher: either doctoral students at the IsCED level 8 who are engaged as researchers, or researchers working in posts that do not normally require a doctorate degree. Examples: 'PhD students' or 'junior researchers' (without a PhD).

[49] A Gender Equality Plan of an Applicant Legal Entity must cover the following minimum process-related requirements:
- publication: formal document published on the institution's website and signed by the top management;
- dedicated resources: commitment of resources and gender expertise to implement it;
- data collection and monitoring: sex/gender disaggregated data on personnel (and students for institutions concerned) and annual reporting based on indicators;
- training: awareness raising/training on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.

Content-wise, recommended areas to be covered and addressed via concrete measures and targets are the following:
- work-life balance and organisational culture;
- gender balance in leadership and decision-making;
- gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
- integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content;
- measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment.

Other strategic documents such as a development plan, an inclusion strategy or a diversity strategy, are considered as equivalent if they meet the requirements listed above.

3 – Budget. This section contains the proposal budget including the total estimated eligible project costs and the requested EU contribution for the project. The costs are given in whole Euros (not kilo Euros). A description and justification of the resources should be provided in the relevant text boxes (Section C. Resources) under the budget table. The Section "C. Resources" comprises six text boxes:

- A. Personnel – 2.500 characters max
- B. Subcontracting (if applicable) – 1.000 characters max
- C. Purchase costs – 3.500 characters max
- D. Internally invoiced goods and services (if applicable) – 1.000 characters max
- Request for additional funding (if applicable) – 1.000 characters max
- Funding from other sources (if applicable) – 1.000 characters max

The budget table, the description of resources and the equipment table (uploaded as a separate annex) will be made available at Step 2 to the experts evaluating the proposal. The Section "C. Resources" has a maximum length of 10.000 characters (including spaces), but please make sure this section is concise while providing clear justifications for the projected expenses. Please refer to section 2.3 for further instructions on how to draw up the budget.

4 – Ethics and security. This section has two parts: the ethics issues table and the security issues table.

The ethics issues table serves to identify any ethical aspects of the proposed work. This table has to be completed even if there are no issues (simply confirm that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal). In case you answer YES to any of the questions, you are requested to provide an ethics self-assessment as part of the online form and supporting documentation as separate annexes, if available at the time of submission, as detailed in the How to Complete your Ethics Self-Assessment guidance document. Please refer to section 1.4 for further details.

The security issues table serves to identify if the proposed activity will use and/or generate information which might raise security concerns. The table must be completed by answering YES or NO to all questions. Where necessary and applicable, you are requested to provide available documentation as separate annexes. For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage.

5 – Other questions. This section contains information on the academic training of the Principal Investigator (collected for statistical purposes only) as well as declarations related to eligibility and expected working time spent in an EU MS or an AC and dedicated to the ERC project. Advanced Grant applicants are expected to spend a minimum of 50% of their working time in an EU MS or an AC and to commit a minimum of 30% of their working time to the ERC project. The personnel cost for the Principal Investigator provided in section '3 – Budget' cannot be higher than the cost calculated based on the percentage indicated in this section. This information will be provided to the experts at Step 2 together with section '3 – Budget' (see Annex 4.5).

This section also contains permission statements on sharing evaluation data. These data-related consents are entirely voluntary.

In addition, this section comprises a specific declaration regarding the written consent of all participants and researchers mentioned in the proposal. **The Principal Investigator will have to declare that, at the time of submission, they have the written consent of all participants on their involvement and on the content of the proposal, as well as of any researcher mentioned in the proposal on their participation in the project** (either as team member, collaborator or member of the advisory board). Please note that the ERCEA may request the Principal Investigator at any time

during the evaluation, to provide proof of the written consent obtained prior to the call submission deadline.

Finally, as established in section 3.3 of the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe and specified in the ERC Work Programme 2025, Principal Investigators may identify up to three reviewers to be excluded from the evaluation of their proposal and indicate their details in this section. Applicants must complete all the required information in relation to the reviewer concerned (first and last name, institution, town, country, webpage) in the electronic submission form (Form A, section 5 "other related questions") for their request to be considered. This information must be complete and correct, otherwise the request for the reviewers' exclusion may not be considered.

2.3 THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The research proposal (Part B) consists of:

- Part B1;
- Part B2;
- Section 3 – Budget and time commitment from Section 5 – Other questions (present in the online submission form – Part A);
- The equipment table.

Experts have no access to other parts and sections of the submitted application.

The templates of Part B1, Part B2 and the equipment table that are provided in the submission system (zip-file) should be used. Each proposal page shall carry a **header** presenting the **Principal Investigator's last name**, the **acronym of the proposal**, and the reference to the respective proposal section (**Part B1** or **Part B2**).

The following parameters **must** be respected for the layout:

Page Format	Font Type	Font Size	Line Spacing	Margins
A4	Times New Roman Arial or similar	At least 11	Single	2 cm side 1.5 cm top and bottom

In fairness to all applicants, the **page limits will be strictly applied**[50]. Only the material that is presented within these limits will be evaluated. Peer reviewers will be asked to read the material presented within the page limits only (provided that the instructions regarding font type and size are respected) and will not be under any obligation to read beyond them, or to read any information provided by the links to webpages[51].

Be aware that at **Step 1 only Part B1** is evaluated by the panel members (they have no access to other parts and sections). At **Step 2, Part B1, Part B2, Section 3 – Budget together with the equipment table, and the time commitment extracted from Section 5,** are evaluated by panel members and remote reviewers.

When drafting Part B1, pay particular attention to the Extended Synopsis (section a) and do not think of it as simply complementing Part B2. It is important that Part B1 contains all essential information.

[50] References and the funding ID section are not counted towards these page limits.

[51] An application can be submitted in any official language of the EU. The working language of the ERC evaluation panels is English. Therefore, the evaluation reports will be available in English only. If the proposal is not in English, the ERCEA will provide the evaluation panels with a raw machine translation version of the proposal. An English translation of the abstract must be included in the proposal.

During the Step 1 evaluation the panel members' expertise covers a wide range of proposals within a research field. The panel members are asked to act as generalists when evaluating the proposals. Further expertise on each proposal retained to Step 2 is brought to the evaluation by remote reviewers. Remote reviewers are scientists and scholars who do not participate in the panel meetings and who deliver their individual reviews before the Step 2 panel meeting.

Part B1 (References should be included – they do not count towards the page limit)

The Part B1 cover page should list the name of the Principal Investigator and the host institution, the title, acronym and abstract of the proposal as well as the project duration (in months). The abstract must be a copy/paste of the abstract from the submission form (section 1 – General Information). For inter-disciplinary/cross-panel proposals, please indicate the additional ERC review panel(s) and explain why the proposal needs to be considered by more than one panel.

The **Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal** (max. **5** pages) should be a 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. It should contain all essential information including the feasibility of the scientific proposal since at Step 1 the panel will only evaluate Part B1. References should be included (they do not count towards the page limits).

Curriculum Vitae and Track Record are presented in one single template of up to four pages. The Principal Investigator is expected to include their personal details, education, key qualifications, current position(s) and relevant previous positions, as well as a list of up to ten research outputs that demonstrate how the applicant has advanced knowledge in their field, with an emphasis on more recent achievements, and a list of selected examples of significant peer recognition (for example, prizes). The applicant may include a short, **factual** explanation of the significance of the selected outputs, the applicant's role in producing each of them, and how they demonstrate the applicant's capacity to successfully carry out the proposed project, as well as a short explanation of the importance of the listed examples of significant peer recognition.

The applicant may also include relevant additional information on career breaks, unconventional career paths, and life events, as well as any particularly noteworthy contributions to the research community they have made other than research achievements and peer recognition, and a short explanation of these contributions. The purpose of this section is to allow the panels to take a more rounded view of the applicant's career and achievements and to ensure that any additional responsibilities, commitments, and leadership roles that the applicants have taken on beyond their individual research activities are recognised and taken into account.

Applicants are expected to report their publications, patents and any other research outputs correctly, including all authors in the same order as published[52]. Joint authorships (e.g. co-first authors, multiple corresponding authors) must also be properly indicated (see section 1.1 on research integrity).

Part B2 (References should be included – they do not count towards the page limit)

The limit of 14 pages for the 'Scientific Proposal' as per the ERC Work Programme 2025 applies to Part B2.

Section a: State-of-the-art and objectives. Specify the proposal objectives in the context of the state of the art in the research field. It should be clear how and why the proposed work is important for the field, and what impact it will have if successful, such as how it may open up new horizons or

[52] Preprints should be freely available from a preprint server; they should be properly referenced and either a link to the preprint or a DOI should be provided.

opportunities for science, technology or scholarship. Highlight any particularly challenging or unconventional aspects of the proposal, including multi- or inter-disciplinary aspects.

Section b: Methodology. Describe the proposed methodology in detail including any key intermediate goals. Explain and justify the methodology in relation to the state of the art. Highlight any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to the project planning. In case you ask that team members are engaged by another host institution, their participation has to be fully justified by the scientific added value they bring to the project.

Part B2 should also include a succinct '**funding ID**'[53], which must specify any current research grants and their subject, and any on-going application for work related to the proposal[54].

Section 3 – Budget (included in the online submission form)

PLEASE NOTE:

The budget table and description of resources are part of the online form (Section 3 – Budget). The equipment table must be uploaded as a separate annex.

The description of resources (Section "C. Resources", text boxes under the budget table) should provide a concise and clear description of the estimated costs and justification of the proposal budget and, if applicable, of the additional funding. If additional funding is requested, the costs must be included in the budget table under the appropriate cost category.

With the exception of clear mistakes (detected cases of obvious clerical errors[55]), in case of inconsistency between the budget table and the description of resources, the figures entered in the budget table will prevail.

Budget table

The ERC lump sum may cover up to 100% of the total estimated eligible costs for the full project duration[56]. This includes the estimated direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs ('overhead costs') calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct costs, excluding costs that already include indirect costs, such as costs for subcontracting and for internally invoiced goods and services. The flat rate is automatically calculated by the system. Only Euro integers should be used when preparing the budget table.

The budget table is subdivided in different cost categories:

A. **Personnel costs** (Principal Investigator, senior staff, post docs, students, other personnel costs).
B. **Subcontracting costs** (no indirect costs).
C. **Purchase costs** [travel and subsistence, equipment (including major equipment), consumables (including fieldwork and animal costs), publications (including any costs related to Open Access fees) and dissemination, and other additional direct costs].
D. **Internally invoiced goods and services** (no indirect costs).
E. **Indirect costs**.

[53] The funding ID section does not count towards the page limit.
[54] Please note that also grants where the applicant's participation is *pro bono*, i.e. no funds are received, should be listed.
[55] See Articles 154 and 203(3) of the Financial Regulation and section 2.3 of ERC Rules of Submission and Evaluation under Horizon Europe.
[56] See Section 1.1 - Funding.

Purchases of equipment, including major equipment, infrastructure or other assets used for the project, can only be budgeted on the ERC grant up to the total depreciation costs in relation to the percentage and months of use of the equipment for the proposed research activity, according to the accounting policy of the host institution.

The information on depreciation of equipment should be provided as a separate annex in Excel format (the "equipment table"). Please note that even if the proposal budget does not include any equipment items, an empty equipment table must be uploaded for the proposal to be complete. The template Excel file that is available with the proposal templates to be downloaded from the submission system must be used. A template of the equipment table is provided with the relevant instructions as Annex 4.3 to this document.

For all main grants, the purchase of equipment, infrastructure, or other assets used for the action must normally be budgeted as depreciation costs, in line with the beneficiary's usual accounting practices. However, at the request of the applicant, equipment, infrastructure, or other assets purchased specifically for the action (or developed as part of the action tasks) may, exceptionally, be included as full capitalised costs.[57] These items should be clearly listed and justified in the proposal.

The request for full capitalised costs refers to the exceptional need to charge to the project the full purchase/development costs specific for the action that the beneficiary would not be able to charge by applying its depreciation rules. Costs that can be fully charged to the project by applying the depreciation rules are not to be claimed as full capitalised costs. For example, if you intend to charge the entire cost of the item to the project but in compliance with your depreciation rules, its useful life is within its 60 months of the project duration, this cost shall not be included in the request for full capitalised costs. This is because even if this item is depreciated the entire cost is charged to the ERC project. The request for full capitalised costs is exceptional and needs to be approved by the Agency. In case of approved full capitalised costs, the beneficiary may charge the item at full cost regardless of the depreciation time.

Specific equipment, infrastructure or other assets that are to be purchased specifically for the project (or to be developed as part of the project itself) and declared as full capitalised costs must be clearly identified in the separate equipment table and justified in Section C. Resources, in the text box dedicated to Purchase costs.

Additional funding[58] above the ceiling of 2.500.000 € may be requested for

(a) covering eligible 'start-up' costs for a Principal Investigator moving from another country to the EU or an Associated Country as a consequence of receiving an ERC grant; and/or

(b) the purchase of major equipment and/or

(c) access to large facilities; and/or

(d) other major experimental and field work costs.

For any of these cases, the request has to be **fully justified in Section C. Resources**, in the text box dedicated to additional funding, **and the figures included in the budget table**, under the corresponding cost categories.

An additional funding request may include 25% overhead costs unless it falls under subcontracting or internally invoiced goods and services.

[57] Where needed for the viability of the action (including its financial viability) and recorded under a fixed asset account of the beneficiary in compliance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices.
[58] Additional funding costs of ERC frontier research grants are a separate cost category in the Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions. These costs will be eligible if they fulfil the eligibility conditions set out in the Model Grant Agreement for this cost category, if they are estimated for the activities and objectives for which the additional funding may be awarded, and if they are in line with the specific eligibility conditions for the other relevant cost categories as set out in the Model Grant Agreement (e.g. costs related to a purchase of major equipment must also fulfil the specific eligibility conditions for the cost category for "Equipment").

Additional funding is meant to cover large costs that would exceed the normal grant maximum. Any cost requested under additional funding must be necessary for the implementation of the proposed research activities.

Please note that for relocation costs under the 'start-up' costs category, the cost of the Principal Investigator's one-way ticket to the EU or an AC may be requested only if this is in line with the normal practice and the accounting policy of the host institution, and within the duration of the project; other personal costs (e.g. tickets of family members and all relocation costs related to them) linked to the move to the EU or an AC cannot be budgeted on the grant.

In case the total estimated eligible costs differ from the 'requested EU contribution', please specify what is funded from other sources in Section "C. Resources", in the text box dedicated to funding from other sources.

Carefully check all values of the budget table and use only Euro integers when preparing the budget table. **Please note that while the 'total eligible costs' in the budget table are calculated automatically based on the figures inserted in the individual cost categories, the 'requested EU contribution' has to be filled in manually. Please make sure to update the 'requested EU contribution' if changes are made in any of the cost categories.**

For more information on eligible and non-eligible direct and indirect costs as well as the different cost categories, applicants should consult the Model Grant Agreement used for ERC Actual Costs actions. See also Annex 4.4 for examples of ineligible cost items.

Section C. Resources (Text boxes below the budget table – maximum 10.000 characters allowed including spaces)

In this section, please state the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the research objectives. The project cost estimates should be as accurate as possible. The requested budget should be concisely but fully justified and reflect the actual needs. Describe all the cost categories considered necessary for the project. The evaluation panels will assess the estimated costs: **unjustified budgets may be reduced**.

A. Personnel

Please specify your commitment in terms of the percentage of working time you will be devoting to the proposed project[59] and, if applicable, the percentage of your personnel costs budgeted on the grant.

Please also describe the composition of the team, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles. In case any team members are affiliated to another host institution, their participation must be explained in terms of the added scientific value they bring to the project. When estimating the personnel costs, please take into account the working time dedicated to the project.

To calculate the person-months of the PI or other staff members, applicants should multiply the percentage of time commitment by the number of months the person will be working on the project.

- For personnel working throughout the full project duration:
  Multiply the percentage of time commitment by the total number of months of the project.
  Example: If the PI is committed at 50% for a project with a duration of 60 months, the number of person-months should be 0.5 × 60 = 30.
- For personnel working for only part of the project duration:
  Multiply the percentage of time commitment by the number of months the person is actually employed on the project.
  Example: If a staff member works 50% for 24 months, the person-months should be 0.5 × 24 = 12

[59] You are expected to dedicate as a minimum 30% of your working time to the ERC project.

The number of person months[60] per staff category must equal the figures entered in the budget table for each beneficiary. If applicable, describe the staff included under the 'Other personnel costs' category (e.g. technician, etc.).

Please note that, to facilitate the assessment of personnel costs, the ERCEA provides the panels with statistical information on historical ERC personnel cost data per staff category and country (also publicly available on the ERC website and in the F&T Portal). Current personnel costs may well be higher than in past years due to inflation or pay rises, and there may be substantial variation in the personnel costs of a specific staff category between host institutions of the same country, and even within a single host institution. It is therefore understood that personnel costs significantly higher than historical costs may well be justified and acceptable (e.g. by the nature of the tasks, by the need for senior or highly qualified staff, or by significant increases in personnel costs). In case of unusually high personnel costs, please include a brief justification as necessary information for the evaluation.

B. Subcontracting
Please briefly describe the tasks that will be subcontracted and why subcontracting is required. If several tasks need to be subcontracted, please indicate the estimated cost of each subcontract.

C. Purchase costs
Please describe the resources requested under purchase costs (Travel - Equipment - Consumables - Field work - Animal costs - Publications - Other additional direct costs), as applicable.

Include a brief technical description of any requested equipment, why it is needed and how you plan to use it for the project. Please remember to fill in the equipment table detailing the items requested (template provided in Annex 4.3).

Include an approximate estimate for the anticipated costs for Open Access to project outputs. Please note that costs for providing immediate Open Access to publications (including article processing charges, book processing charges) are only eligible if the publishing venue is fully open access (i.e. fully open access journal, book or platform) and if the costs are incurred during the lifetime of the project. This also applies to other publishing fees, such as page charges or colour charges.

If applicable, also specify any cost items included under the 'Other additional direct costs' category.

D. Internally invoiced goods and services
Please describe internally invoiced goods and services that the host institution will produce or provide for the project.

Request for additional funding
Please briefly explain and describe any additional funding requested for the project.

It is important that this is well justified and that you clearly indicate under which of the cost categories your request falls: (a) "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant, and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment, and/or (c) access to large facilities, and/ or (d) other major experimental and field work costs.

The requested additional funding must be included in the budget table under the appropriate cost category.

[60] To calculate the person months, one should multiply the percentage of one's commitment in the project by the total number of months for which this person is employed on the project. For example, if a person would be employed half-time (50%) on the project for a total duration of 2 years (24 months), the person months should be 12.

Funding from other sources
If the total requested budget is lower than the total eligible costs, please briefly specify which items or resources will be covered by the host institution from its own resources, or by other external sources.

The information entered in Section 3 – Budget (including Section C. Resources) of the administrative submission form (Part A) together with the time commitment entered in section 5 of the administrative submission form (Part A) and the equipment table will be provided at Step 2 to the independent external experts in the form of a Proposal Budget Report for their assessment. An example of Proposal Budget Report is shown in Annex 4.5.

2.4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

A scanned copy of the following supporting documentation needs to be submitted with the proposal by uploading them electronically in PDF format:

- **Host institution support letter.** As the applicant legal entity, the host institution must confirm its support to the project and to the Principal Investigator. As part of the application, the host institution must provide a binding statement that the conditions of independence are already fulfilled or will be provided to the Principal Investigator if the application is successful. The template letter is part of the zip-file available in the submission system (see Annex 4.2). The complete text should be printed on paper with the official letterhead of the host institution, blue-inked signed, stamped and dated by the institution's legal representative. In case the host institution support letter is digitally signed, there is no need to stamp it[61]. A PDF version must be uploaded in the submission system. **Proposals that do not include this institutional statement may be declared inadmissible.**
- Documents related to the **ethics** issues (i.e. supporting documentation). Where necessary, Principal Investigators shall provide any available documentation, such as: (a) favourable opinion(s) of the relevant ethics committee(s); (b) regulatory approval(s) or authorization(s) of the competent national or local authority(ies) in the country(ies) in which the research is to be carried out; (c) templates of information sheets and informed consent forms, etc. The supporting documentation must be provided to the ERCEA at the latest during the ethics review. If such documentation is available and provided with the application at submission stage, it may help speed up the ethics review process following the evaluation. **Please note that the ethics self-assessment is included in Section 4 of the online proposal submission form.**
- Documents related to the **security** issues (i.e. supporting documentation). Where necessary, Principal Investigators shall provide available documentation at submission stage. For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage. **Please note that the security self-assessment is included in section 4 of the online proposal submission form.**

Copies of official documents can be submitted in any of the EU official languages. **Document(s) in any other language must be provided together with a certified translation into English or into any other official EU language**.

Please provide only the documents requested above. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, support letters, reports, audio, video, multimedia, etc.) will be disregarded. Experts will not have access to any supporting documentation during the evaluation.

[61] If digitally signed, the host institution letter should NOT be locked.

The supporting documentation, i.e. the host institution support letter and, where relevant, documentation already available related to ethics and security issues, should be provided and uploaded as separate PDF documents. These annexes do not count towards the maximum page limits of the proposal. **Experts will not have access to any supporting documentation during the evaluation.**

3. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

3.1 IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Regularly consult the EU F&T Portal call page for updated information on the call.

- Make sure that the personal information added in the online proposal submission form is accurate as this information is used for communication with applicants and in the Evaluation Reports.

- In case of technical problems with the submission system please contact EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu or get in touch with the **Helpdesk** directly on **+32 (2) 29 92222** to receive immediate assistance.

- Registration and submission via the F&T Portal submission system should be done as early as possible and well in advance of the call deadline**. Applicants, who wait until shortly before the closing of the call to start uploading their proposal, take a serious risk that the uploading will not be concluded in time and that the 'SUBMIT' button will not be active anymore in order to conclude the submission process.**

- Only the person creating the draft proposal will have the right to manage the access rights of other people to the proposal and will be able to modify any parts of the proposal and to submit it. The other contacts will only be able to edit the parts related to their personal data.

- Be aware that only one person should work on the forms at any given time. If two persons work on the forms at the same time, in case of a save conflict, the last save wins, which means that you risk overwriting changes made by another person if you are working in parallel. We therefore recommend that you give 'read-only' access to your partners/additional contact persons (other contacts) unless it is absolutely necessary to grant full access. Remember that the host institution main contact person has full access – it is not possible to grant them 'read-only' access.

- Up to the call deadline it is possible to re-edit, download or withdraw a proposal. **ONLY the last updated version of your proposal submitted before the deadline will be evaluated**; no later version can be accepted and no earlier version can be recovered from the submission system. Once the deadline has passed, no further additions, corrections or resubmissions are accepted. However, a read-only access to the submitted proposal is available for 90 days after the call deadline.

- **Submit your proposal as early as possible** (at least 48 hours prior to the deadline of the call) to avoid being confronted with last minute issues shortly before the call deadline. There is no reason in delaying the submission for confidentiality concerns as the system does not allow any access to the proposals before the call deadline (other than to selected data that is part of the Submission and Evaluation of Proposals Assent Disclaimer).

- In some rare occasions the proposal may be altered while being converted into a PDF file. Before uploading the file, please check that everything is correct. Additionally, please download and verify all uploaded files in due time before the submission deadline.

Submission is deemed to occur only if the submission sequence described in point 3.2 below has been followed and not when the applicant starts uploading the proposal.

3.2 HOW TO APPLY

ERC grant applications can only be submitted in response to a 'call for proposals' and only via the Electronic Submission Service. Calls announced in the ERC Work Programme 2025 are published on the ERC website and the EU F&T Portal.

USER GUIDANCE

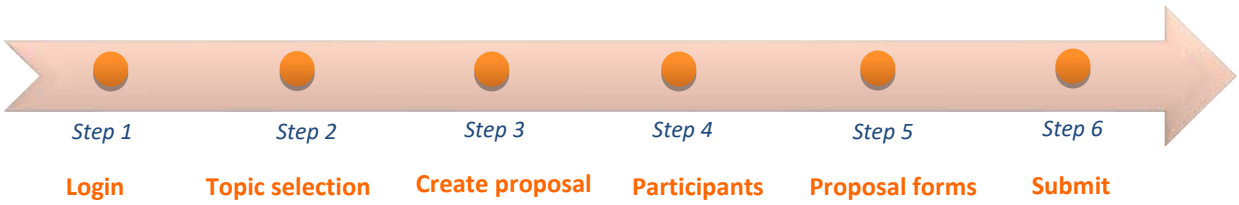
- proposals must be submitted electronically using the Electronic Submission Service of the web-based F&T Portal[62];

- the User Manual of the Submission Service is available online;

- the IT How To page on the F&T Portal provides an online IT manual with screenshots;

- the F&T Portal Online Manual describes the standard process of proposal submission.

The Electronic Submission Service is an online wizard that guides applicants step-by-step through the preparation of their proposal. The submission of an ERC proposal includes 6 steps as described below.



Steps 1 and 2 – Login and Topic selection

To be able to create and submit a proposal and, in general, to log in to the F&T Portal, you must first register an EU Login account (Step 1)[63]. Each time you access the proposal for editing, this user ID (EU Login) is requested. The same user ID is used for all later interactions with the ERCEA, including notification of the results of the evaluation.

Under 'Search Topics', you may search for 'ERC' to select an open ERC call (Step 2). Soon after the opening of the call, you will be able to access the Electronic Submission Service via the F&T Portal call page. The 'Start Submission' button is available under the 'Submission Service' section of the call. When you click 'Start Submission' and confirm the call selection, you will move to Step 3 – Create a Draft proposal.

Step 3 – Create a draft proposal

At this step, you fill in pre-registration data for the proposal. These data will be used by the ERCEA in order to plan the evaluation. Once this page is completed and you have progressed to the next step, you will not be able to return to this page, but certain data, such as the Acronym (maximum 20 characters) and the Short Summary (abstract), can be modified at a later stage (at Step 5, when

[62] In duly justified exceptional circumstances, the ERCEA may authorise submission by other means than the electronic submission system.

[63] Further details are available here: EU Login - Online Manual – EU Funding & Tenders Portal (europa.eu)

editing the submission form). **Be careful to choose the correct Participant Identification Code (PIC) number for your host institution.** An online tool is available to search for existing PICs and the related organisations. Organisations not yet having a PIC must self-register (via the same page) before starting the application process.

Step 4 – Participants (manage your partners and/or edit contact details)

At this step, you MUST enter the name and e-mail of the Principal Investigator and the main host institution contact person[64]. You may also add the LEAR as a contact person (e.g. as a team member with 'read-only' rights). In case you foresee partner organizations in your proposal, their contact details must also be entered. **Please note that these contact details are saved directly from this step into the administrative form. Hence, this data is not editable in the submission form itself. Still you can, at any time before submission, return to Step 4 to add or delete any contact person and/or change the access rights. Remember to save the data before leaving Step 4 and to open and save the administrative form as well (Step 5 below)**. Once the changes are saved, an automatic invitation is sent to all contacts' e-mail addresses. The persons invited as participants can access the proposal after logging in to the F&T Portal – with the EU Login account linked to the given e-mail address – under the 'My Proposals' tab.

If they have not yet registered an EU Login account, the Principal Investigator or the main host institution contact person will receive an activation e-mail inviting them to activate their EU Login account. Following this first activation, the EU Login account will be maintained for subsequent communications or feedback. **In order to be able to submit your proposal after saving changes made in Step 4 (e.g. editing participants' details, adding a partner to the proposal), you have to re-open the administrative form ('edit forms' button), revise the changes, and validate and save the form.** Failure to do so will prevent you from submitting your proposal. Further details are available in the F&T Portal Online Manual and the Submission Service User Manual.

Step 5 – Proposal forms (edit and complete the proposal)

This step is the core of the submission process, as from this step, you can **edit the online administrative form** ('edit forms' button), go back to the 'Participants' step, view the 'history', 'print preview' the draft proposal, **'download' templates**, **'upload' files, 'validate' the form** and **'submit' the proposal** by clicking on the relevant buttons. Guidance on how to fill in the administrative form is provided directly in the form as ghost text for the single entries or as additional help text hidden behind question-marks . Some parts of the form will be prefilled based on the data entered at pre-registration or in the Beneficiary Register. Please use the **'Validate' button to check the validity and completeness of your data**. Any warning or blocking error will be listed at the end of the validated form. Please see Annex 4.7 for a list of mandatory fields. **If one or several mandatory fields are not filled, the submission of your proposal will fail.**

Further information on the preparation of the application (the online administrative form and Proposal Parts B1 and B2) is given in section 2 of this document.

- **Part B1, Part B2 and the supporting documentation must be uploaded in the submission system as PDF ('portable document format'). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system.** Irrespective of any page limits specified in this document, there is an **overall limit of 10 Mbytes to the size of each uploaded document (Part B1, Part B2, and supporting documentation)**. However, it is advised to limit the size of Parts B1 and B2 to 2 Mbytes each.

[64] Be careful to type the correct e-mail address of the Principal Investigator and all contact persons at this step. Please note that if the Principal Investigator and the administrative contact person are the same person (because the Principal Investigator is self-employed), you must use two different e-mail addresses as the system does not allow two identical e-mail addresses to be entered.

- **The equipment table must be uploaded in Excel format.**

- Unless specified in the call, **embedded material and any other documents** (company brochures, scientific papers, reports, audio, video, multimedia, links etc.) sent either electronically or by post to the ERCEA or uploaded directly in the F&T Portal **will be disregarded**.

There are restrictions to the name given to the Part B files: use alphanumeric characters; special characters and spaces must be avoided. You are advised to clean your document before converting it to PDF (e.g. accept all tracked changes, delete notes). Check that your conversion software has successfully converted all the pages of your original document (e.g. there is no problem with page limits or page view), and that captions and labels have not been lost from your diagrams.

Completing the Proposal submission forms in the submission system and uploading all the necessary files does not yet mean that your proposal is submitted (mandatory files: Part B1, Part B2, equipment table, host institution support letter and, if applicable, supporting documentation for ethics and/or security issues). Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal, **the 'submit' button must be pressed**. The system performs a limited automatic validation of the proposal. Any problems such as missing data, wrong file format or excessive file size will appear as a list of warnings and/or errors on the screen. You may submit your proposal with warnings (marked in yellow), but it is not possible to submit a proposal until all errors (marked in red) are corrected**.** Please note that the electronic checks by the submission system do not replace the formal admissibility and eligibility review and do not confirm that the contents of these files respond to the requirements of the call.

Step 6 – Submit

By hitting the 'Submit' button, the proposal is submitted (i.e. sent to the ERCEA for evaluation). It does not mean that the proposal is valid, admissible and eligible in all respects. Within a few minutes after submission, your proposal will be available for download with an e-receipt in the system. You will receive a confirmation e-mail with the summary data of the submitted proposal. Please, note that this e-mail may end up in the spam folder or be blocked by the anti-spam system of your organisation. This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt.

At this step, you can re-edit the proposal (by clicking on 'Edit forms' or uploading revised Part B1 and B2) and update the information in the 'Participants List' (Steps 4 and 5). **You may continue to modify the proposal and submit revised versions overwriting the previous one until the call deadline.** The sequence above must be repeated each time. The last version of your proposal submitted before the deadline is the one that will be reviewed for admissibility and eligibility and evaluated. No earlier version can be recovered from the submission system.

Check if the proposal is complete. Once submitted, it is recommended to verify the proposal and its content by downloading all submitted files. The ERCEA strongly advises to submit a first version of the proposal at least 48 hours prior to the call deadline. Incomplete proposals (where parts or sections of the proposal and/or the host institution's support letter are missing) may be declared inadmissible and will not be evaluated[65]. The proposal must be submitted **before the deadline of the call** to the appropriate ERC panel (i.e. the panel that covers the main scientific areas of the research proposed).

Warning: Please note that in the last hours prior to the call closure, the download option for checking your submitted proposal may be disabled due to a high pressure on the system. In this

[65] See also section 2.4 'Admissibility and eligibility checks' in the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe and section 'Proposal submission and description' of the ERC Work Programme 2025.

case, the ERCEA will inform the applicants via the call page on the F&T Portal (under 'call summary') that the function has been disabled. **If the e-receipt and download options have been disabled, you may review your submitted proposal by going back to Step 5 in order to check the data in the administrative form and clicking on 'View History' to verify which attachments have been uploaded.**

3.3 HOW TO WITHDRAW A PROPOSAL

To withdraw a proposal **before the call deadline,** use the 'withdraw proposal' button from the 'My proposals' tab when logged in to the F&T Portal. After the call deadline, proposals may be withdrawn at any moment **until the day preceding the panel meetings** when a final decision on the outcome of the evaluation of the proposal is established. A withdrawn proposal will not be considered for evaluation nor count against possible re-application restrictions as set out in the ERC Work Programme 2025.

To withdraw a proposal **after the call deadline,** please send a message/letter stating a clear and unambiguous intention to withdraw the proposal, to the call-specific mailbox ERC-2025-ADG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu. The message/letter should mention the name of the Principal Investigator, the number and the acronym of the proposal as well as the call identifier (for example ERC-2025-ADG). The Principal Investigator should use the email-address indicated in their application. If the message/letter is sent by the host institution representative, the Principal Investigator should be in copy of the e-mail containing such a message/letter.

In the case of two or more proposals submitted by the same Principal Investigator, the ERCEA services may ask the Principal Investigator to withdraw one or more of those proposals. In case of no reaction by the Principal Investigator to this request, only the first eligible submitted proposal will be evaluated.

4. ANNEXES

4.1 ERC EVALUATION PANELS AND KEYWORDS

ERC panels cover all fields of research in three domains: Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE), Life Sciences (LS), and Social Sciences and Humanities (SH).

The list of keywords and descriptors associated to each panel is indicative and not exhaustive; applications are welcomed from all fields and disciplines even if not specifically mentioned under a given panel.

Physical Sciences and Engineering

PE1 Mathematics

All areas of mathematics, pure and applied, plus mathematical foundations of computer science, mathematical physics and statistics

PE1_1 Logic and foundations
PE1_2 Algebra
PE1_3 Number theory
PE1_4 Algebraic and complex geometry
PE1_5 Lie groups, Lie algebras
PE1_6 Geometry and global analysis
PE1_7 Topology
PE1_8 Analysis
PE1_9 Operator algebras and functional analysis
PE1_10 ODE and dynamical systems
PE1_11 Theoretical aspects of partial differential equations
PE1_12 Mathematical physics
PE1_13 Probability
PE1_14 Mathematical statistics
PE1_15 Generic statistical methodology and modelling
PE1_16 Discrete mathematics and combinatorics
PE1_17 Mathematical aspects of computer science
PE1_18 Numerical analysis
PE1_19 Scientific computing and data processing
PE1_20 Control theory, optimisation and operational research
PE1_21 Application of mathematics in sciences
PE1_22 Application of mathematics in industry and society

PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter

Particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics

PE2_1 Theory of fundamental interactions
PE2_2 Phenomenology of fundamental interactions
PE2_3 Experimental particle physics with accelerators
PE2_4 Experimental particle physics without accelerators
PE2_5 Classical and quantum physics of gravitational interactions
PE2_6 Nuclear, hadron and heavy ion physics
PE2_7 Nuclear and particle astrophysics
PE2_8 Gas and plasma physics
PE2_9 Electromagnetism
PE2_10 Atomic, molecular physics
PE2_11 Ultra-cold atoms and molecules
PE2_12 Optics, non-linear optics and nano-optics

PE2_13 Quantum optics and quantum information
PE2_14 Lasers, ultra-short lasers and laser physics
PE2_15 Thermodynamics
PE2_16 Non-linear physics
PE2_17 Metrology and measurement
PE2_18 Equilibrium and non-equilibrium statistical mechanics: steady states and dynamics

PE3 Condensed Matter Physics

Structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences, biological physics

PE3_1 Structure of solids, material growth and characterisation
PE3_2 Mechanical and acoustical properties of condensed matter, lattice dynamics
PE3_3 Transport properties of condensed matter
PE3_4 Electronic properties of materials, surfaces, interfaces, nanostructures
PE3_5 Physical properties of semiconductors and insulators
PE3_6 Macroscopic quantum phenomena, e.g. superconductivity, superfluidity, quantum Hall effect
PE3_7 Spintronics
PE3_8 Magnetism and strongly correlated systems
PE3_9 Condensed matter – beam interactions (photons, electrons, etc.)
PE3_10 Nanophysics, e.g. nanoelectronics, nanophotonics, nanomagnetism, nanoelectromechanics
PE3_11 Mesoscopic quantum physics and solid-state quantum technologies
PE3_12 Molecular electronics
PE3_13 Structure and dynamics of disordered systems, e.g. soft matter (gels, colloids, liquid crystals), granular matter, liquids, glasses, defects
PE3_14 Fluid dynamics (physics)
PE3_15 Statistical physics: phase transitions, condensed matter systems, models of complex systems, interdisciplinary applications
PE3_16 Physics of biological systems

PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences

Analytical chemistry, chemical theory, physical chemistry/chemical physics

PE4_1 Physical chemistry
PE4_2 Spectroscopic and spectrometric techniques
PE4_3 Molecular architecture and Structure
PE4_4 Surface science and nanostructures
PE4_5 Analytical chemistry
PE4_6 Chemical physics
PE4_7 Chemical instrumentation
PE4_8 Electrochemistry, electrodialysis, microfluidics, sensors
PE4_9 Method development in chemistry
PE4_10 Heterogeneous catalysis
PE4_11 Physical chemistry of biological systems
PE4_12 Chemical reactions: mechanisms, dynamics, kinetics and catalytic reactions
PE4_13 Theoretical and computational chemistry
PE4_14 Radiation and Nuclear chemistry
PE4_15 Photochemistry
PE4_16 Corrosion
PE4_17 Characterisation methods of materials
PE4_18 Environment chemistry

PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials

New materials and new synthetic approaches, structure-properties relations, solid state chemistry, molecular architecture, organic chemistry

PE5_1 Structural properties of materials
PE5_2 Solid state materials chemistry
PE5_3 Surface modification
PE5_4 Thin films
PE5_5 Ionic liquids
PE5_6 New materials: oxides, alloys, composite, organic-inorganic hybrid, nanoparticles
PE5_7 Biomaterials synthesis
PE5_8 Intelligent materials synthesis – self assembled materials
PE5_9 Coordination chemistry
PE5_10 Colloid chemistry
PE5_11 Biological chemistry and chemical biology
PE5_12 Chemistry of condensed matter
PE5_13 Homogeneous catalysis
PE5_14 Macromolecular chemistry
PE5_15 Polymer chemistry
PE5_16 Supramolecular chemistry
PE5_17 Organic chemistry
PE5_18 Medicinal chemistry

PE6 Computer Science and Informatics

Theoretical and experimental computer science, information processing, intelligent systems

PE6_1 Computer architecture, high-performance computing, real-time and embedded systems
PE6_2 Operating and distributed systems, computer networks and performance evaluation, mobile computing
PE6_3 Software engineering, programming languages
PE6_4 Theory of computation, semantics of computation, formal methods
PE6_5 Algorithms, complexity theory, algorithmic game theory and computational economics
PE6_6 Security, privacy, cryptology
PE6_7 Databases, web and information systems, information retrieval
PE6_8 Artificial intelligence, autonomous agents, knowledge representation
PE6_9 Machine learning, statistical data processing, computing with artificial neural networks
PE6_10 Natural language processing, large language and other foundation models
PE6_11 Computer vision, computer graphics, visualization
PE6_12 Human computer interaction, multimedia and virtual reality, computer games
PE6_13 Numerical and scientific computing, computational modelling and simulation methods, bioinformatics
PE6_14 New computational paradigms, quantum computing, bio-inspired computing

PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering

Electrical, electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering

PE7_1 Control engineering
PE7_2 Electrical engineering: power components and/or systems
PE7_3 Simulation engineering and modelling
PE7_4 (Micro- and nano-) systems engineering
PE7_5 (Micro- and nano-) electronic, optoelectronic and photonic components
PE7_6 Communication systems, wireless technology, high-frequency technology
PE7_7 Signal processing
PE7_8 Networks, e.g. communication networks and nodes, Internet of Things, sensor networks, networks of robots
PE7_9 Man-machine interfaces
PE7_10 Robotics

PE7_11 Components and systems for applications (in e.g. medicine, biology, environment)
PE7_12 Electrical energy production, distribution, applications

PE8 Products and Processes Engineering

Product and process design, chemical, civil, environmental, mechanical, vehicle engineering, energy processes and relevant computational methods

PE8_1 Aerospace engineering
PE8_2 Chemical engineering, technical chemistry
PE8_3 Civil engineering, architecture, offshore construction, lightweight construction, geotechnics
PE8_4 Computational engineering
PE8_5 Fluid mechanics
PE8_6 Energy processes engineering
PE8_7 Mechanical engineering
PE8_8 Propulsion engineering, e.g. hydraulic, turbo, piston, hybrid engines
PE8_9 Production technology, process engineering
PE8_10 Manufacturing engineering and industrial design
PE8_11 Environmental engineering, e.g. sustainable design, waste and water treatment, recycling, regeneration or recovery of compounds, carbon capture & storage
PE8_12 Naval/marine engineering
PE8_13 Automotive and rail engineering; multi-/inter-modal transport engineering

PE9 Universe Sciences

Astro-physics/-chemistry/-biology; solar system; planetary systems; stellar, galactic and extragalactic astronomy; cosmology; space sciences; astronomical instrumentation and data

PE9_1 Solar physics – the Sun and the heliosphere
PE9_2 Solar system science
PE9_3 Exoplanetary science, formation and characterization of extrasolar planets
PE9_4 Astrobiology
PE9_5 Interstellar medium and star formation
PE9_6 Stars – stellar physics, stellar systems
PE9_7 The Milky Way
PE9_8 Galaxies – formation, evolution, clusters
PE9_9 Cosmology and large-scale structure, dark matter, dark energy
PE9_10 Relativistic astrophysics and compact objects
PE9_11 Gravitational wave astronomy
PE9_12 High-energy and particle astronomy
PE9_13 Astronomical instrumentation and data, e.g. telescopes, detectors, techniques, archives, analyses

PE10 Earth System Science

Physical geography, geology, geophysics, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, cryology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management

PE10_1 Atmospheric chemistry, atmospheric composition, air pollution
PE10_2 Meteorology, atmospheric physics and dynamics
PE10_3 Climatology and climate change
PE10_4 Terrestrial ecology, land cover change
PE10_5 Geology, tectonics, volcanology
PE10_6 Palaeoclimatology, palaeoecology
PE10_7 Physics of earth's interior, seismology, geodynamics
PE10_8 Oceanography (physical, chemical, biological, geological)
PE10_9 Biogeochemistry, biogeochemical cycles, environmental chemistry
PE10_10 Mineralogy, petrology, igneous petrology, metamorphic petrology

PE10_11 Geochemistry, cosmochemistry, crystal chemistry, isotope geochemistry, thermodynamics
PE10_12 Sedimentology, soil science, palaeontology, earth evolution
PE10_13 Physical geography, geomorphology
PE10_14 Earth observations from space/remote sensing
PE10_15 Geomagnetism, palaeomagnetism
PE10_16 Ozone, upper atmosphere, ionosphere
PE10_17 Hydrology, hydrogeology, engineering and environmental geology, water and soil pollution
PE10_18 Cryosphere, dynamics of snow and ice cover, sea ice, permafrosts and ice sheets
PE10_19 Planetary geology and geophysics
PE10_20 Geohazards
PE10_21 Earth system modelling and interactions

PE11 Materials Engineering

Advanced materials development: performance enhancement, modelling, large-scale preparation, modification, tailoring, optimisation, novel and combined use of materials, etc.

PE11_1 Engineering of biomaterials, biomimetic, bioinspired and bio-enabled materials
PE11_2 Engineering of metals and alloys
PE11_3 Engineering of ceramics and glasses
PE11_4 Engineering of polymers and plastics
PE11_5 Engineering of composites and hybrid materials
PE11_6 Engineering of carbon materials
PE11_7 Engineering of metal oxides
PE11_8 Engineering of alternative established or emergent materials
PE11_9 Nanomaterials engineering, e.g. nanoparticles, nanoporous materials, 1D & 2D nanomaterials
PE11_10 Soft materials engineering, e.g. gels, foams, colloids
PE11_11 Porous materials engineering, e.g. covalent-organic, metal-organic, porous aromatic frameworks
PE11_12 Semi-conducting and magnetic materials engineering
PE11_13 Metamaterials engineering
PE11_14 Computational methods for materials engineering

Life Sciences

LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions

For all organisms:

Molecular biology, biochemistry, structural biology, molecular biophysics, synthetic and chemical biology, drug design, innovative methods and modelling

LS1_1 Macromolecular complexes including interactions involving nucleic acids, proteins, lipids and carbohydrates
LS1_2 Biochemistry
LS1_3 DNA and RNA biology
LS1_4 Protein biology
LS1_5 Lipid biology
LS1_6 Glycobiology
LS1_7 Molecular biophysics, biomechanics, bioenergetics
LS1_8 Structural biology
LS1_9 Molecular mechanisms of signalling processes
LS1_10 Synthetic biology
LS1_11 Chemical biology
LS1_12 Protein design
LS1_13 Early translational research and drug design
LS1_14 Innovative methods and modelling in molecular, structural and synthetic biology

LS2 Integrative Biology: from Genes and Genomes to Systems

For all organisms:

Genetics, epigenetics, genomics and other 'omics studies, bioinformatics, systems biology, genetic diseases, gene editing, innovative methods and modelling, 'omics for personalised medicine

LS2_1 Genetics
LS2_2 Gene editing
LS2_3 Epigenetics
LS2_4 Gene regulation
LS2_5 Genomics
LS2_6 Metagenomics
LS2_7 Transcriptomics
LS2_8 Proteomics
LS2_9 Metabolomics
LS2_10 Glycomics/Lipidomics
LS2_11 Bioinformatics and computational biology
LS2_12 Biostatistics
LS2_13 Systems biology
LS2_14 Genetic diseases
LS2_15 Integrative biology for personalised medicine
LS2_16 Innovative methods and modelling in integrative biology

LS3 Cell Biology, Development, Stem Cells and Regeneration

For all organisms:

Structure and function of the cell, cell-cell communication, embryogenesis, tissue differentiation, organogenesis, growth, development, evolution of development, organoids, stem cells, regeneration, therapeutic approaches

LS3_1 Cell cycle, cell division and growth
LS3_2 Cell senescence, cell death, autophagy, cell ageing
LS3_3 Cell behaviour, including control of cell shape, cell migration

LS3_4 Cell junctions, cell adhesion, the extracellular matrix, cell communication
LS3_5 Cell signalling and signal transduction, exosome biology
LS3_6 Organelle biology and trafficking
LS3_7 Mechanobiology of cells, tissues and organs
LS3_8 Embryogenesis, pattern formation, morphogenesis
LS3_9 Cell differentiation, formation of tissues and organs
LS3_10 Developmental genetics
LS3_11 Evolution of developmental strategies
LS3_12 Organoids
LS3_13 Stem cells
LS3_14 Regeneration
LS3_15 Development of cell-based therapeutic approaches for tissue regeneration
LS3_16 Functional imaging of cells and tissues
LS3_17 Theoretical modelling in cellular, developmental and regenerative biology

LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing

Organ and tissue physiology, comparative physiology, physiology of ageing, pathophysiology, inter-organ and tissue communication, endocrinology, nutrition, metabolism, interaction with the microbiome, non-communicable diseases including cancer (and except disorders of the nervous system and immunity-related diseases)

LS4_1 Organ and tissue physiology and pathophysiology
LS4_2 Comparative physiology
LS4_3 Physiology of ageing
LS4_4 Endocrinology
LS4_5 Non-hormonal mechanisms of inter-organ and tissue communication
LS4_6 Microbiome and host physiology
LS4_7 Nutrition and exercise physiology
LS4_8 Impact of stress (including environmental stress) on physiology
LS4_9 Metabolism and metabolic disorders, including diabetes and obesity
LS4_10 The cardiovascular system and cardiovascular diseases
LS4_11 Haematopoiesis and blood diseases
LS4_12 Cancer
LS4_13 Other non-communicable diseases (except disorders of the nervous system and immunity-related diseases)

LS5 Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System

Nervous system development, homeostasis and ageing, nervous system function and dysfunction, systems neuroscience and modelling, biological basis of cognitive processes and of behaviour, neurological and mental disorders
– *In humans and all other organisms*

LS5_1 Neuronal cells
LS5_2 Glial cells and neuronal-glial communication
LS5_3 Neural development and related disorders
LS5_4 Neural stem cells
LS5_5 Neural networks and plasticity
LS5_6 Neurovascular biology and blood-brain barrier
LS5_7 Sensory systems, sensation and perception, including pain
LS5_8 Neural basis of behaviour (e.g. sleep, consciousness, addiction)
LS5_9 Neural basis of cognition (e.g. learning, memory, attention, emotions, speech)
LS5_10 Ageing of the nervous system
LS5_11 Neurological and neurodegenerative disorders
LS5_12 Mental disorders

LS5_13 Nervous system injuries and trauma, stroke
LS5_14 Repair and regeneration of the nervous system
LS5_15 Neuroimmunology, neuroinflammation
LS5_16 Systems and computational neuroscience (e.g. modelling, simulation, brain oscillations, connectomics)
LS5_17 Imaging in neuroscience
LS5_18 Innovative methods and tools for neuroscience

LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy

The immune system, related disorders and their mechanisms, biology of infectious agents and infection, biological basis of prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, innovative immunological tools and approaches, including therapies

LS6_1 Innate immunity
LS6_2 Adaptive immunity
LS6_3 Regulation of the immune response
LS6_4 Immune-related diseases
LS6_5 Biology of pathogens (e.g. bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi)
LS6_6 Infectious diseases
LS6_7 Mechanism of infection
LS6_8 Biological basis of prevention and treatment of infection
LS6_9 Antimicrobials, antimicrobial resistance
LS6_10 Vaccine development
LS6_11 Innovative immunological tools and approaches, including therapies

LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases

Medical technologies and tools for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human diseases, therapeutic approaches and interventions, pharmacology, preventative medicine, epidemiology and public health, digital medicine

LS7_1 Medical imaging for prevention, diagnosis and monitoring of diseases
LS7_2 Medical technologies and tools (including genetic tools and biomarkers) for prevention, diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of diseases
LS7_3 Nanomedicine
LS7_4 Regenerative medicine
LS7_5 Applied gene, cell and immune therapies
LS7_6 Other medical therapeutic interventions, including transplantation
LS7_7 Pharmacology and toxicology
LS7_8 Effectiveness of interventions, including resistance to therapies
LS7_9 Public health and epidemiology
LS7_10 Preventative and prognostic medicine
LS7_11 Environmental health, occupational medicine
LS7_12 Health care, including care for the ageing population
LS7_13 Palliative medicine
LS7_14 Digital medicine, e-medicine, medical applications of artificial intelligence
LS7_15 Medical ethics

LS8 Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution

For all organisms:

Ecology, biodiversity, environmental change, evolutionary biology, behavioural ecology, microbial ecology, marine biology, ecophysiology, theoretical developments and modelling

LS8_1 Ecosystem and community ecology, macroecology
LS8_2 Biodiversity

LS8_3 Conservation biology
LS8_4 Population biology, population dynamics, population genetics
LS8_5 Biological aspects of environmental change, including climate change
LS8_6 Evolutionary ecology
LS8_7 Evolutionary genetics
LS8_8 Phylogenetics, systematics, comparative biology
LS8_9 Macroevolution and paleobiology
LS8_10 Ecology and evolution of species interactions
LS8_11 Behavioural ecology and evolution
LS8_12 Microbial ecology and evolution
LS8_13 Marine biology and ecology
LS8_14 Ecophysiology, from organisms to ecosystems
LS8_15 Theoretical developments and modelling in environmental biology, ecology, and evolution

LS9 Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering

Biotechnology using all organisms, biotechnology for environment and food applications, applied plant and animal sciences, bioengineering and synthetic biology, biomass and biofuels, biohazards

LS9_1 Bioengineering for synthetic and chemical biology
LS9_2 Applied genetics, gene editing and transgenic organisms
LS9_3 Bioengineering of cells, tissues, organs and organisms
LS9_4 Microbial biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_5 Food biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_6 Marine biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_7 Environmental biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_8 Applied plant sciences, plant breeding, agroecology and soil biology
LS9_9 Plant pathology and pest resistance
LS9_10 Veterinary and applied animal sciences
LS9_11 Biomass production and utilisation, biofuels
LS9_12 Ecotoxicology, biohazards and biosafety

Social Sciences and Humanities

SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations

Economics, finance and management

SH1_1 Macroeconomics; monetary economics; economic growth, labour economics
SH1_2 International trade; international business; spatial economics
SH1_3 Development economics; political economics
SH1_4 Finance; financial markets
SH1_5 Corporate finance; international finance
SH1_6 Banking, insurance
SH1_7 Accounting, asset prices, auditing
SH1_8 Econometrics, game theory, decision theory
SH1_9 Behavioural economics; experimental economics; neuro-economics
SH1_10 Microeconomics, industrial organisation, applied microeconomics
SH1_11 Innovation, research & development, entrepreneurship
SH1_12 Management; operations management, international management
SH1_13 Human resource management; organisational behaviour
SH1_14 Strategy, operation research
SH1_15 Marketing, consumer behaviour
SH1_16 Quantitative economic history, economic systems, institutional economics

SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems

Political science, international relations, law

SH2_1 Political systems, governance
SH2_2 Democratisation and social movements
SH2_3 Conflict resolution, war, peace building
SH2_4 Legal studies, comparative law, law and economics
SH2_5 Constitutions, human rights, international law
SH2_6 International relations, global and transnational governance
SH2_7 Humanitarian assistance and development
SH2_8 Political and legal philosophy
SH2_9 Digital approaches to political science and law

SH3 The Social World and Its Interactions

Sociology, social psychology, education sciences, communication studies

SH3_1 Social structure, social mobility, social innovation
SH3_2 Inequalities, discrimination, prejudice
SH3_3 Aggression and violence, antisocial behaviour, crime
SH3_4 Social integration, exclusion, prosocial behaviour
SH3_5 Social attitudes and beliefs
SH3_6 Social influence; power and group behaviour
SH3_7 Social policies, welfare, work and employment
SH3_8 Poverty and poverty alleviation
SH3_9 Social aspects of teaching and learning, curriculum studies, education and educational policies
SH3_10 Communication and information, networks, media
SH3_11 Digital social research
SH3_12 Social studies of science and technology

SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity

Cognitive science, psychology, linguistics

SH4_1 Cognitive basis of human development, developmental disorders; comparative cognition
SH4_2 Personality and social cognition; emotion
SH4_3 Clinical and health psychology

SH4_4 Neurocognitive psychology
SH4_5 Attention, perception, action, consciousness
SH4_6 Learning, memory; cognition in ageing
SH4_7 Reasoning, decision-making; intelligence
SH4_8 Language learning and processing (first and second languages)
SH4_9 Theoretical linguistics; computational linguistics
SH4_10 Language typology; historical linguistics
SH4_11 Pragmatics, sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, discourse analysis

SH5 Texts and Concepts

Literary studies, literature, philosophy

SH5_1 Classics, ancient literature
SH5_2 Theory and history of literature, comparative literature
SH5_3 Book studies
SH5_4 Philology; text and image studies
SH5_5 Palaeography and codicology
SH5_6 Philosophy of mind, philosophy of language
SH5_7 Philosophy of science, epistemology, logic
SH5_8 Metaphysics, philosophical anthropology; aesthetics
SH5_9 Ethics and its applications; social philosophy
SH5_10 History of philosophy
SH5_11 Digital humanities; digital approaches to literary studies and philosophy

SH6 The Study of the Human Past

Archaeology and history

SH6_1 Archaeological methods and theory, history of archaeology
SH6_2 Prehistoric archaeology, archaeology of non-literate societies
SH6_3 Archaeology of early literate societies and early civilizations
SH6_4 Medieval and post-medieval archaeologies
SH6_5 Archaeological science, bioarchaeology, environmental archaeology, geoarchaeology
SH6_6 Digital, computational, virtual and geospatial archaeologies
SH6_7 Historiography, theory and methods of history, including the analysis of digital data
SH6_8 Ancient history, medieval history
SH6_9 Early modern, modern, and contemporary history
SH6_10 Colonial and post-colonial history
SH6_11 Global, transnational, and comparative history
SH6_12 Social and economic history
SH6_13 Cultural history, intellectual history
SH6_14 History of science and technologies, environmental history

SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and Space

Human geography, demography, health, sustainability science, territorial planning, spatial analysis

SH7_1 Human, economic and social geography
SH7_2 Migration
SH7_3 Population dynamics: households, family and fertility
SH7_4 Social aspects of health, ageing and society
SH7_5 Sustainability sciences, environment and resources, ecosystem services
SH7_6 Environmental and climate change, societal impact and policy
SH7_7 Cities; urban, regional and rural studies
SH7_8 Land use and planning
SH7_9 Energy, transportation and mobility
SH7_10 GIS, spatial analysis; digital geography

SH8 Studies of Cultures and Arts

Social anthropology, studies of cultures, studies of arts

SH8_1 Kinship; diversity and identities, gender, interethnic relations
SH8_2 Religious studies, ritual; symbolic representation
SH8_3 Cultural studies and theory, cultural identities and memories, cultural heritage
SH8_4 Museums, exhibitions, conservation and restoration
SH8_5 History of art and of architecture
SH8_6 Architecture, design, craft, creative industries
SH8_7 Music and musicology; history of music
SH8_8 Visual and performing arts, screen, arts-based research
SH8_9 Digital approaches to anthropology, cultural studies and art

4.2 HOST INSTITUTION SUPPORT LETTER TEMPLATE 2025

Commitment of the host institution for ERC Calls 2025[66, 67, 68]

The <<please fill in here the name of the legal entity that is associated to the proposal and may host the principal investigator and the project (action) in case the application is successful>>, which is the applicant legal entity,

confirms its intention to sign a supplementary agreement with
<<please fill in here the name of the principal investigator>>

in which the obligations listed below will be addressed should the proposal be retained.

Performance obligations of the *applicant legal entity* (Host Institution) that will become the coordinator of the HE ERC Grant Agreement (hereafter referred to as the Agreement), should the proposal be retained and the preparation of the Agreement be successfully concluded:

The applicant legal entity (Host Institution) commits itself to ensure that the action tasks described in Annex 1 of the Agreement are performed under the guidance of the principal investigator who is expected to devote:

- in the case of a Starting Grant at least 50% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country;
- in the case of a Consolidator Grant at least 40% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country;
- in the case of an Advanced Grant at least 30% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.

The applicant legal entity (Host Institution) commits itself to respect the following conditions for the principal investigator and their team:

a) host and engage the principal investigator for the whole duration of the action;

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[66] A scanned copy of the signed statement should be uploaded electronically via the Funding & Tenders Portal Submission Service in PDF format.

[67] The statement of commitment of the Host Institution refers to most obligations of the Host Institution, which are stated in the Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions (MGA). The MGA is available on the Funding & Tenders Portal. The reference to the time commitment of the Principal Investigator is stated in the ERC Work Programme 2025.

[68] This statement (on letterhead paper) shall be signed (in blue ink or digitally) by the institution's legal representative indicating their name, function, email address and, in case of blue ink signature, along with the stamp of the institution.

b) take all measures to implement the principles set out in the Commission recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers[69] — in particular regarding working conditions, transparent recruitment processes based on merit and career development — and ensure that the principal investigator, researchers and third parties involved in the action are aware of them;

c) enter — before grant signature— into a Supplementary Agreement with the principal investigator, that specifies the obligation of the applicant legal entity to meet its obligations under the Agreement;

d) provide the principal investigator with a copy of the signed Agreement;

e) guarantee the principal investigator scientific independence, in particular for the:
   i) use of the budget to achieve the scientific objectives;
   ii) authority to publish as senior author and invite as co-authors those who have contributed substantially to the work;
   iii) preparation of scientific reports for the action;
   iv) selection and supervision of the other team members, in line with the profiles needed to conduct the research and in accordance with the beneficiary's usual management practices;
   v) possibility to apply independently for funding;
   vi) access to appropriate space and facilities for conducting the research;

f) provide — during the implementation of the action — research support to the principal investigator and the team members (regarding infrastructure, equipment, access rights, products and other services necessary for conducting the research);

g) support the principal investigator and provide administrative assistance, in particular for the:
   i) general management of the work and their team;
   ii) scientific reporting, especially ensuring that the team members send their scientific results to the principal investigator;
   iii) financial reporting, especially providing timely and clear financial information;
   iv) application of the beneficiary's usual management practices;
   v) general logistics of the action;
   vi) access to the electronic exchange system;

h) inform the principal investigator immediately (in writing) of any events or circumstances likely to affect the Agreement;

i) ensure that the principal investigator enjoys adequate:
   i) conditions for annual, sickness and parental leave;
   ii) occupational health and safety standards;
   iii) insurance under the general social security scheme, such as pension rights;

j) allow the transfer of the Agreement to a new beneficiary, if requested by the principal investigator and provided that the objectives of the action remain achievable (portability; see Article 41 of the Agreement);

k) respect the fundamental principle of research integrity and ensure that persons carrying out research tasks under the action follow the good research practices and refrain from the research integrity violations described in the European Code of

[69] Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OJ L 75, 22.3.2005, p. 67).

Conduct for Research Integrity[70]. If any such violations or allegations occur, verify and pursue them and bring them to the attention of the Agency.

For the applicant legal entity (Host Institution):

Date

……

Name and Function

…… ; ……

Email and Signature (blue ink or digital) of legal representative

…… ; ……

Stamp of the applicant legal entity (Host Institution)[71]

IMPORTANT NOTE:

In order to be complete, all the above mentioned items are mandatory and shall be included in the commitment of the Host Institution.

If the letter is digitally signed, please do NOT lock it.

[70] The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity – Revised Edition 2023. All European Academies, Berlin. DOI 10.26356/ECOC

[71] No need to stamp this letter of support when it is digitally signed.

4.3 EQUIPMENT TABLE TEMPLATE WITH INSTRUCTIONS

Beneficiary's/ affiliated entity's short name	*Short name of the asset*	*Purchase cost per item (a)*	*Depreciation time (months) (b)*	*Expected percentage of usage for the grant (c)*	*Expected use time during the grant (months, cannot exceed the duration of the grant) (d)*	*Estimated depreciation cost per item (cannot exceed the purchase cost) (a/b)*c*d*	*Comments (e.g. depreciation policy, grouped items, full capitalized costs, etc.)*
						Calculated cell	
						Calculated cell	

Instructions

General guidance	Purchases of equipment, infrastructure or other assets used for the grant must be budgeted as depreciation costs, calculated on the basis of the estimated costs which will be written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices. Please note that only the portion of the costs that corresponds to the rate of expected use during the grant duration can be budgeted. **If no equipment is budgeted, please upload an empty table.**
1	Please list in the table all equipment items for which estimated depreciation costs are included in the budget of your proposal. The calculation of depreciation should be done in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices. The same principles apply to items whose costs are budgeted as full capitalised costs.
2	Attention: A justification for the budgeted equipment items in this table should be provided in the corresponding section of the administrative form (Part A, Section 3 - Budget, Section C. Resources >> C. Purchase costs).
3	To calculate the estimated depreciation costs, you need to: - Enter the estimated price of the equipment in column "*Purchase cost per item*" - Enter the depreciation time in months, in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices, in column "*Depreciation time (months)*" - Enter the estimated percentage of usage of the equipment for the grant in column "*Expected percentage of usage for the grant*". If the equipment item will not be used exclusively for the grant, only the portion to be used on the grant may be budgeted. For instance, if an equipment item will be used 50% for the grant and 50% for other activities, only 50% should be budgeted. - Enter the estimated months of use of the equipment during the grant in column "*Expected use time during the grant (months, cannot exceed the duration of the grant)*", for instance 24 months out of 60 months project total duration.
4	**The sum of all items in column G *"Estimated depreciation costs per item (cannot exceed the purchase cost)"* should match the total amount indicated in the budget table in the administrative form (under heading C.2 Equipment).**
5	Items/assets can be grouped in one row provided that they have the same *"Depreciation time (months)", "Expected percentage of usage for the grant" and "Expected use time during the grant (months, cannot exceed the duration of the*

	grant)". In case of grouped items, the total purchase costs of all grouped items should be indicated in the column *"Purchase cost per item",* while the quantity and type of the grouped items should be provided in column *"Comments"*.
6	If full capitalised costs are requested for an equipment item*: a) The months entered in columns *"Depreciation time"* and *"Expected use time during the grant (months, cannot exceed the duration of the grant)"* must be the same b) The % indicated in column *"Expected percentage of usage for the grant"* must be 100% c) Clearly indicate in column "*Comments*" that the full capitalised cost of the equipment item is requested ***A request for fully capitalised items should be exceptional**. Please note that the justification of any equipment item which is budgeted as full capitalised costs must be provided in the corresponding section of the administrative form (Part A, Section 3 - Budget, Section C. Resources >> C. Purchase costs).
7	If more than 20 lines are needed new lines can be added. Please do not forget to: - extend the formula in column *"Estimated depreciation cost per item (cannot exceed the purchase cost)"* so that the estimated depreciation cost per item is automatically calculated - modify the SUM formula for the TOTAL so that the new lines are taken into account.

4.4 LIST OF INELIGIBLE COSTS (EXAMPLES – NON-EXHAUSTIVE)

- VAT when it is deductible

- Audit fees (Certificate of Financial Statement)

- Depreciation of equipment beyond the project duration

- Office supplies (office desks and chairs, air conditioning machine for the office, pencils, paper, printer, etc.)

- Teaching buyouts

- Moving costs (travel tickets for family members, moving of furniture, storage costs)

- Retreat costs (teambuilding focused on management skills or reinforcement of the team)

- Academic fees (PhD fees) when the value of the waived fees are not included in the student's contract as part of their salary

If you have any questions on eligibility of cost items please contact the mailbox for applicants:

ERC-2025-ADG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu.

4.5 PROPOSAL BUDGET REPORT TEMPLATE[72]

Proposal number	999999999
Acronym	ERC proposal
Title	Title describing the ERC proposal
Evaluation panel	XXX
Principal Investigator	First Name, Last Name
Host Institution	Name of host Institution, country code
Project duration	xx months (this information will be extracted from the administrative submission form, Section 1 - General Information)
Time commitment of the PI to the project	xx % (this information will be extracted from the administrative submission form, Section 5 - Other questions)

Budget summary

Beneficiary organisation(s)	**Total cost (€)**	**Requested AMT (€)**
1. Name of Institution, country code	x,xxx,xxx.00	xxx,xxx.00

[72] This is an example of how the Proposal Budget Report looks like for the independent external experts. Please note that the layout may be further adapted when needed and in case of partner organisation(s).

Budget details

Cost Category / Beneficiary			Name of Institution	Total
A. Personnel	PI - Cost/€		xx	xx
	PI - Person months		xx	xx
	PI - Avg monthly cost		xx	xx
	Senior Staff - Cost/€		xx	xx
	Senior Staff - Person months		xx	xx
	Senior Staff - Avg monthly cost		xx	xx
	Postdocs - Cost/€		xx	xx
	Postdocs - Person months		xx	xx
	Postdocs - Avg monthly cost		xx	xx
	Students - Cost/€		xx	xx
	Students - Person months		xx	xx
	Students - Avg monthly cost		xx	xx
	Other Personnel costs - Cost/€		xx	xx
	Other Personnel costs - Person months		xx	xx
	Other Personnel costs - Avg monthly cost		xx	xx
A. Total Personnel costs			xxx	xx
B. Subcontracting costs (no indirect costs)			xx	xx
C. Purchase costs	**C.1 Travel and subsistence**		xx	xx
	C.2. Equipment including major equipment		xx	xx
	C.3 Other goods, works and services	Consumables incl. fieldwork and animal costs	xx	xx
		Publications (incl. Open Access fees) and dissemination	xx	xx
		Other additional direct costs	xx	xx
		C.3 Total other goods, works and services	Xx	Xx
Total Purchase costs (C1 + C2 + C3)			Xxx	Xxx
D. Internally invoiced goods and services (no indirect costs)			Xx	Xx
E. Indirect costs (= 25% * (A + C1 + C2 + C3))			Xxx	Xxx
Total eligible costs (A + B + C + D + E)			X.XXX.XXX	X.XXX.XXX
Requested EU contribution			X.XXX.XXX	X.XXX.XXX

(Link to the equipment table)

Beneficiary's/ affiliated entity's short name	*Short name of the asset*	*Purchase cost per item (a)*	*Depreciation time (months) (b)*	*Expected percentage of usage for the grant (c)*	*Expected use time during the grant (months, cannot exceed the duration of the grant) (d)*	*Expected depreciation cost per item (cannot exceed the purchase cost) (a/b)*c*d*	*Comments (e.g. depreciation policy, grouped items, full capitalized costs, etc.)*
						Calculated cell	
						Calculated cell	

Section C. Resources

A. Personnel – max 2.500 characters

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx

B. Subcontracting (if applicable) – max 1.000 characters

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx

C. Purchase costs – max 3.500 characters

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx

D. Internally invoiced goods and services (if applicable) – max 1.000 characters

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx

Request for additional funding (if applicable) – max 1.000 characters

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx

Funding from other sources (if applicable) – max 1.000 characters

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx

4.6 DATA PROTECTION NOTICE

All legal notices are accessible on the F&T Portal.

4.7 LIST OF BLOCKING FIELDS AND WARNINGS IN THE ONLINE FORM

BLOCKING FIELDS: The submission of the proposal will be blocked unless the error/missing entry is corrected

Section 1 – General Information

Acronym, Title, Duration, Primary ERC Review Panel, ERC Keyword 1, Abstract

Declaration on written consent of all participants on participation and content of the proposal

Section 2 – Participants

PI: First name, Last name and E-mail (can only be entered in the Participants section in the submission system)

PI: Nationality, Date of birth, Gender, Country of birth, Place of birth, Town, Country

Main contact person (for ERC HI contact person): First name, Last name and E-mail (can only be entered in the Participants section in the submission system)

Section 3 – Budget

The total Requested EU contribution must not be zero (0.00)

Section 4 – Ethics and security

No blocking fields

Section 5 – Other questions

Percentage of working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country over the period of the grant

Percentage of working time the PI dedicates to the project over the period of the grant

Declaration of acknowledgement of eligibility requirements

Confirmation of written consent obtained from participants and researchers

WARNINGS: The submission of the proposal will not be blocked

Section 1 – General Information

Previous submission of similar proposal

Non mandatory declarations

Section 2 – Participants

PI: ORCID number, Career Stage, Last name at Birth, Title, Country of residence, Contact address

Contact address of HI and contact person: Gender, Position in org., Department

Section 3 – Budget

Budget table: Field of Total Eligible Costs and Requested EU contribution per participant is zero (0.00)

Section 4 – Ethics and security

Declaration of assessment of ethics issues

Section 5 – Other questions

Date of earliest award (PhD or equivalent)

Sharing of evaluation data: consent to disclose the results, name and proposal details if not funded due to budget limitations; consent to publish name and proposal details if funded