

ERC Interview: Maximize your opportunities for success

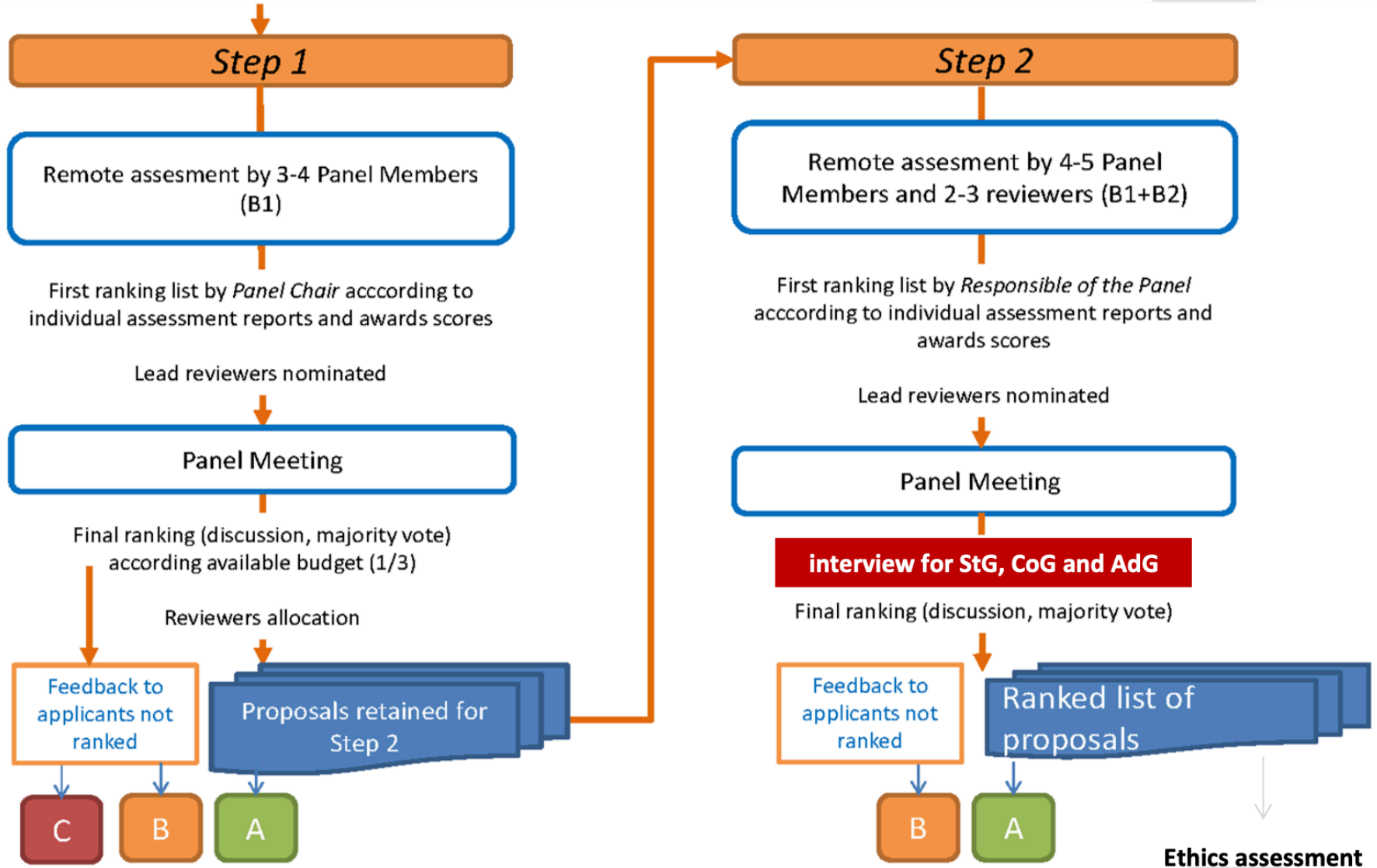
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- IP ERC Adv Grant HECTOR
- IP ERC Adv Grant CADENCE
- IP POC Grant LABORIOUS
- Remote evaluator ERC (different calls: AdG, CoG, StG, SyG)
- Panel evaluator ERC StG (3 times)



The evaluation process

Eligibility check / panel



Now you are closer... **But still need to overcome 2/3 of remaining applicants**

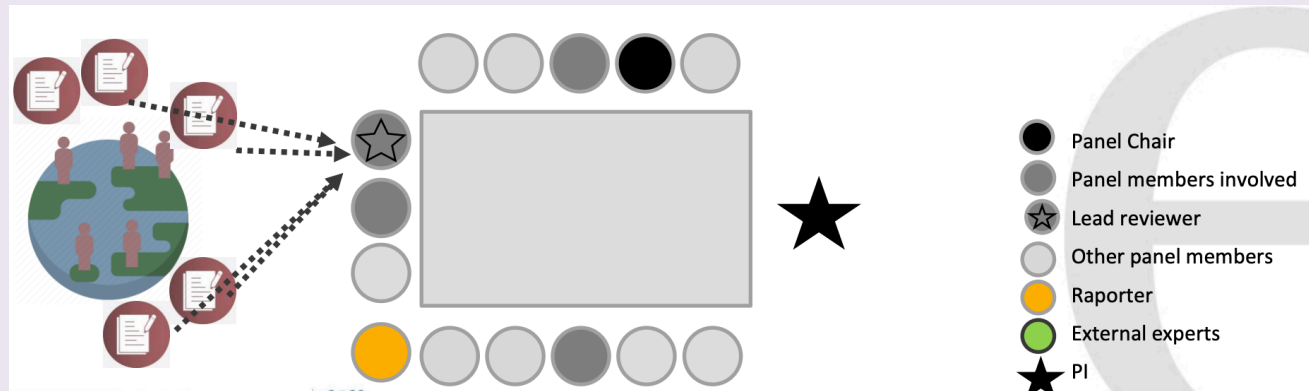
- Overall success rate of recent ERC calls: 13-15%
 - Typically about **one third** of applicants remain after the 1st stage
 - Of these about **one third** will be granted
- This means that you have already passed the first stage evaluation by **panel members** (and already discarded 2/3 of the competition)
 - B1 Extended scientific synopsis (5 pages) + CV
 - So far: **the general interest of your proposal** has already been established and also **your CV** is considered good enough

The second stage... **Similar, but different**

- In the second stage there is **new content** for evaluation: B2 Scientific proposal (14 pages).
- In the second stage: **new evaluation reports** (5-10 evaluation reports by remote referees who are **specialists** in your subject).
- The specialist questions plus the general questions/ concerns from the previous meeting of the panel will be raised during the interview
- There is a score from the 1st stage but you have no way to know it, so do not worry about it.
- And this score can be (and will often be) radically changed by the interview

The interview is key!

The interview: Mechanism

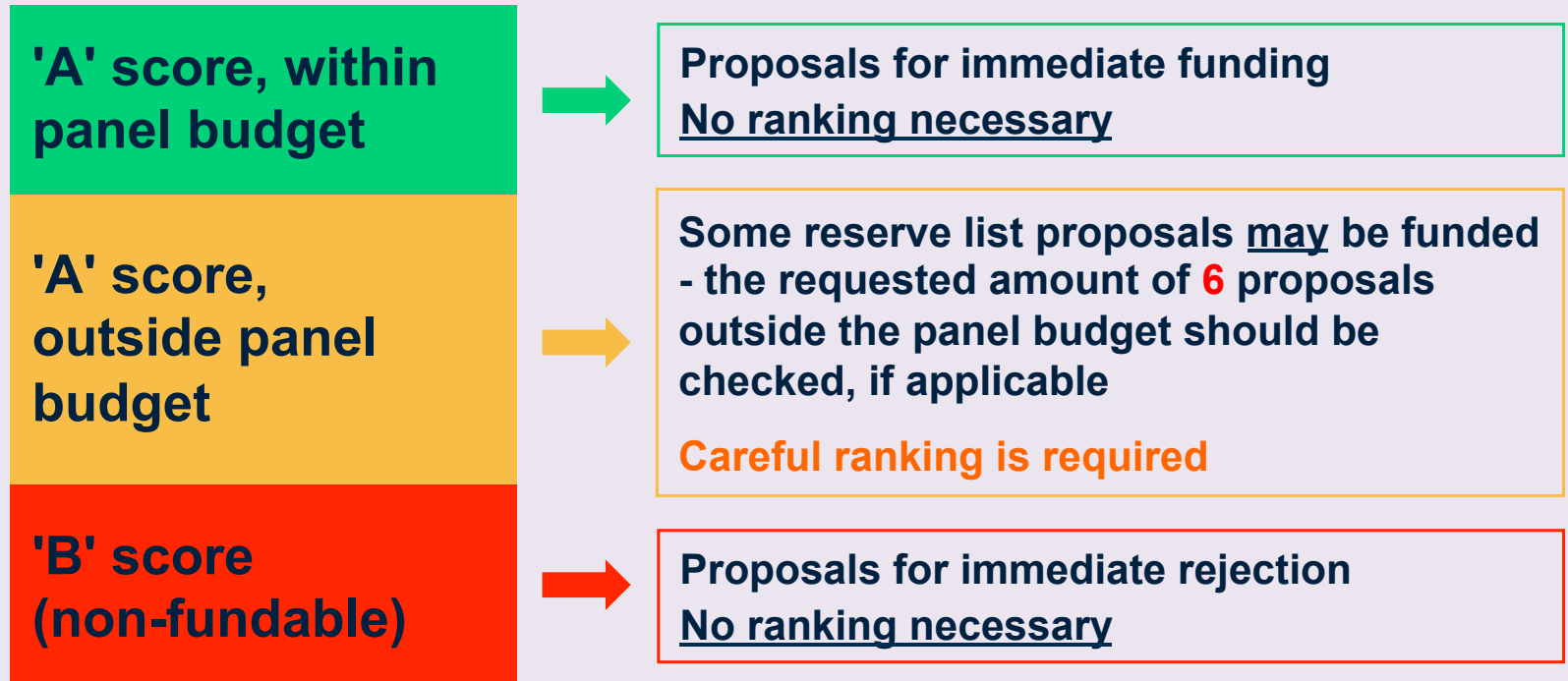


Presentation (3-10 min.) + Question (15 min) = Total 30min
Panel members: Top Science Experts , but possibly no expert in your field
Reports from Top Science Experts in your field
Consensus must be reached

- **2 minutes of preparation:**
 - 1:30 min = Lead Reviewer's (LR) introduction – any remark by reviewers/the panel
 - 30s: the applicant gets in and is greeted by the panel chair.
- **5 minutes of oral presentation by the PI.**
- **20 minutes of Questions and Answers by the panel:**
 - The LR starts with their questions+ any relevant concerns out of the RR (MAX. 7 minutes)
 - The LR gives the floor to the other reviewers. Approx. 3 minutes per panel member.
 - For the remaining time (approx. 3 minutes if there are 4 reviewers), reviewers should raise their “name tags” vertically to indicate they wish to ask a question.
- **3 minutes of short debrief:** the reviewers can exchange their first impressions, before a longer discussion (which will take place after a batch of 3 or 2 interviews— as per the agenda).

At the end of the evaluation

Scoring and Final Panel Ranked List



The interview. 1) Presentation

PREPARATION AND FORMAL ASPECTS

- You only have a few minutes (5-6?). Do not waste time. Go straight to the point.
- **Rehearse.** Rehearse a lot. Not only time, also English. Must be understood by people from any continent and origin
- The setting: Background. Light. Graphics. Record yourself and correct problems.
- **How important are the aesthetics?** What if I do not have a graphic designer to help me? It is still OK. The people who will judge you are scientists. Aesthetics are only important as a way to convey the message to them.

The interview. 1) Presentation

PREPARATION AND FORMAL ASPECTS

- Rehearse with colleagues (not only from your field!) acting as public.
 - Colleagues in the same the general panel area. Test their understanding. Ask them to criticise things that are not clear, graphics and schemes
 - Specialists in the research subject. Questions from them. As many as possible to help you anticipate the real questions.

The interview. 1) Presentation

CONTENT – condense the essentials

- 5-6 slides? You only have time to go for the essentials. Remember, they have already read your project, this presentation is only to remind the board of the main aspects and to clarify.
- A brief introduction. State of the art, explaining the “big” problem to be solved
- Go briefly through objectives and methodology
- Go briefly through risks and contingency (time permitting)

The interview. 1) Presentation

CONTENT – the Why's are the most important

- **Why** your project important/relevant/necessary. **Why** is it new.
- **Why** THE PROBLEM has not been solved until now and **why** it is you who can do it
 - Specific experience
 - Achievements, your silver bullet
- The **high gain** side. What will be gained at the end of the project. End in a positive note.

The interview. 2) Questions

- You will be asked different types of questions by the lead reviewer (50-60% and also by other members):
 - Clarify aspects of your proposal
 - Answer specific points raised by the specialists regarding **novelty**, technical aspects and so on
 - Risks. They will raise doubts about **feasibility**.
- **TRANSMIT**: Confidence (you have a good project, and you know the risks involved) + Enthusiasm (the project is so exciting!)
- Relax, you do not need to know everything
 - Be honest with what you do not know. After all, this is a **high risk** proposal and some answers will come from the research itself
 - You have a network of **collaborators** for things outside your direct expertise



Be yourself and go for it.
It is worth the effort!

Thanks for your attention
and good luck!



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