

# The European Research Council

## ERC Starting and Consolidator Grant Calls 2025

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Consolidator Grant Call Co-Coordinator  
02 Octobre 2024  
Swiss NCP



**European Research Council**

Established by the European Commission

# Overview

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- **ERC and ERC Grant Schemes**
- Eligibility
- Submission and Evaluation Process (including Work Programme 2025 changes)
- Tips and Tricks



# ERC is part of Horizon Europe

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**EUR 16 billion**  
ERC budget in Horizon Europe



**17%**  
of the entire  
Horizon Europe budget

# About the ERC

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## Scientific governance

- Independent **Scientific Council** with 22 members including the ERC President, with full authority over strategy.
- Supported by a Dedicated Implementation Structure, the **ERC Executive Agency**.

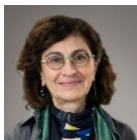
## Scientific freedom

- Scientific **excellence** as the sole criterion
- Support to the **individual scientist** – *no consortia!*
- No predetermined subjects – “**bottom-up**”
- Support for frontier research in **all fields** of science and humanities
- **International peer-review**



# ERC Scientific Council

## Life Sciences



Geneviève  
ALMOUZI  
(Molecular Cell Biology)



Liselotte  
HØJGAARD  
(Medicine)



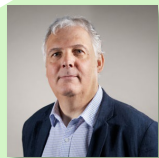
Leszek  
KACZMAREK  
(Neurobiology)



Dirk  
INZÉ  
(Plant Biology)



Luke  
O'NEILL  
(Biochemistry & Immunology)



Jesper  
SVEJSTRUP  
Vice-President  
(Biochemistry)



Maria  
LEPTIN  
ERC President  
(Cell Biology)



Gerd  
GIGERENZER  
(Psychology)

## Social Sciences and Humanities



Harriet  
BULKELEY  
(Geography)



Mercedes  
GARCÍA-ARENAL  
(History)



Torsten  
PERSSON  
(Economics)



Giovanni  
SARTOR  
(Law)



Milena  
ŽIC FUCHS  
(Linguistics)

Eystein  
JANSEN  
Vice-President  
(Earth Science)



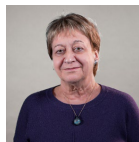
## Physical Sciences and Engineering



Ben  
FERINGER  
(Organic Chemistry)



Tom  
HENZINGER  
(Computer Science)



Chryssa  
KOUVELIOTOU  
(High-Energy Astrophysics)



Sylvie  
LORENTE  
(Mechanical Engineering)



László  
LOVÁSZ  
(Mathematics)



Björn  
OTTERSTEN  
(Electric Engineering)



Nicola  
SPALDIN  
(Materials Theory)



Alice  
VALKÁROVÁ  
(Physics)



# ERC in Figures



Over **12,000**  
top researchers funded since  
the ERC creation in 2007



Over **80,000**  
researchers and other professionals  
employed in ERC research teams



Over **2,200**  
patents and other IPR applications  
generated by ERC funding



Over **400**  
start-ups identified as founded  
or co-founded by ERC grantees



Over **200,000**  
articles from ERC projects published  
in scientific journals



Over **900** research institutions hosting  
ERC grantees – universities, public or  
private research centres in the EU or  
Associated Countries



**87**  
nationalities of  
grant holders

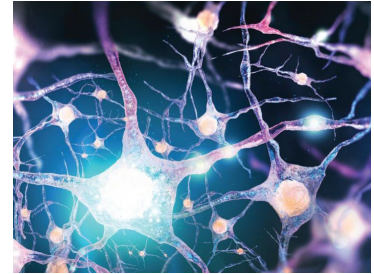
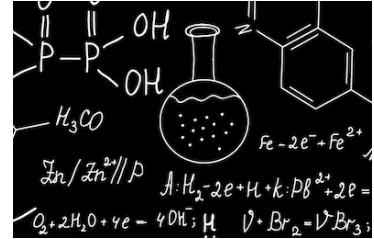


**14** Nobel Prizes, **6** Fields Medals, **11** Wolf Prizes  
and other prizes awarded to ERC grantees



# Why should you apply? ERC grants provide independence, recognition & visibility.

- Work on a research topic of your **own choice**, with a team of your **own choice**.
- Gain true **financial autonomy** for 5 years.
- Negotiate the **best conditions** with the Host Institution.
- Attract **excellent team members** and **collaborators**. (Team members can be funded outside EU/AC if well justified and supported by the evaluation panel)
- Move with the grant to any place in Europe (**portability**) if desired.
- Attract **additional funding** and gain **recognition** (quality label).



# ERC funding schemes



## Starting Grant

Size of the grant: up to €1.5 million (+ up to €1 million)

Duration: up to 5 years

2-7 years of experience since PhD defence



## Consolidator Grant

Size of the grant: up to €2 million (+ up to €1 million)

Duration: up to 5 years

7-12 years of experience since PhD defence



## Advanced Grant

Size of the grant: up to €2.5 million (+ up to €1 million)

Duration: up to 5 years

An excellent scientific track record of recognized achievements



# ERC funding schemes

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## Synergy grant

Size of the grant: €10 million (+ up to €4 million)

Duration: up to 6 years

Team composed of 2 to 4 researchers and their research groups  
(one researcher can be based outside EU/AC)



## Proof of Concept

Size of the grant: €150 000

Duration: up to 18 months

Demonstrate that the idea funded by the original ERC grant has innovation potential and significant economic or societal benefits

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- Tips and Tricks



# Preparing your proposal...

*Make sure you are eligible*

## 1. Eligibility window is measured from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the year of the Call

**Extensions of eligibility window possible** for documented cases of:

- Maternity – 18 months per child (**before or after PhD**)
- Paternity – actual time taken off
- Military national service
- Clinical training (up to 4 years)
- Long-term illness of the PI/ Caring for seriously ill family members
- **Disability**
- **Major Disaster**
- Request Asylum

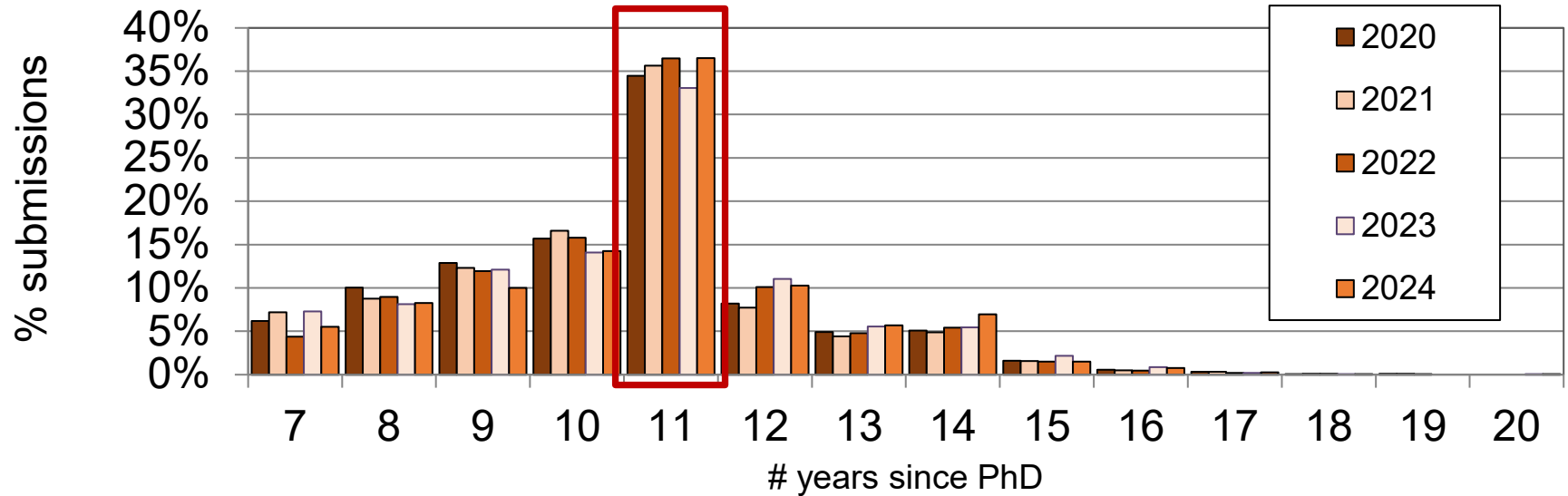
**2. Time commitment:** Min. 50% (StG), **40% (CoG)**, 30% (AdG)

**3. Minimum 50% of PI working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country**

**4. If you previously applied to an ERC call, check resubmission restrictions.**

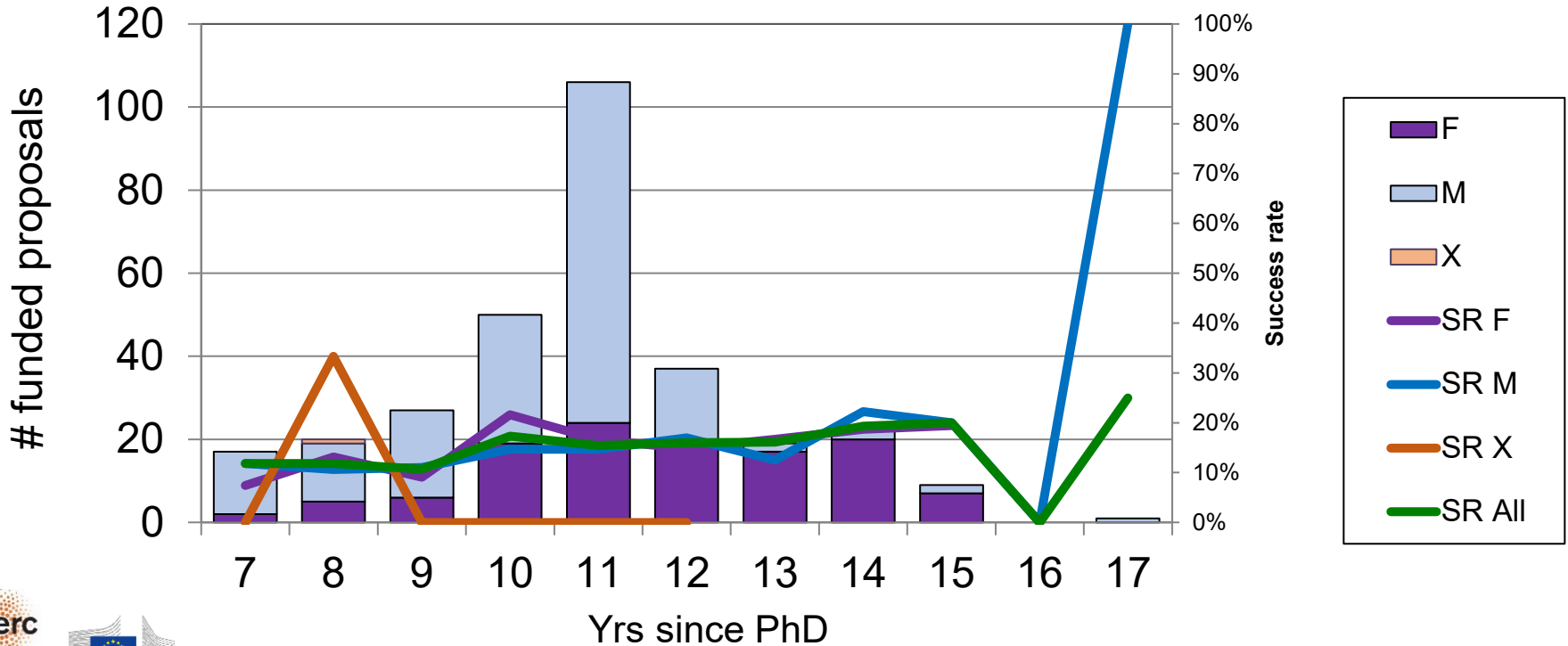


# COG 2020-2024: Submissions by years since PhD



# Shall I apply now or wait another year?

## COG 2023 - Results of step 2



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# 2025 Call Calendar

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant	Synergy Grant
Call identifier	ERC-2025-StG	ERC-2025-CoG	ERC-2025-AdG	ERC-2025-SyG
Call opens	10 July 2024	26 September 2024	22 May 2025	11 July 2024
Call deadline	15 October 2024	14 January 2025	28 August 2025	6 November 2024
Budget million EUR (estimated number of grants)	751 (483)	719 (354)	683 (276)	500 (48)



# Evaluation panel structure (2025) *Descriptors have been modified*

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## Life Sciences

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

## Physical Sciences & Engineering

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

## Social Sciences and Humanities

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





# Evaluation panel structure

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- Provide guidance to applicants
- Not meant to be a complete scientific classification (not exhaustive)
- Panel titles, subtitles, descriptors do not reflect priorities
- Any topic/field is equally welcome, whether mentioned in panel structure or not
- The PI can flag one "Secondary Review Panel". If proposal is across panels: reviewers from both panels used. Explain why proposal is "cross-panel" in Part B1!



**Rumour:** Choose the panel "strategically" in order to increase chances of success  
**✗ NOT true:** The budget is distributed among the scientific panels as a function of demand → success rate is equal amongst panels → choose the Panel that is right for your proposal!



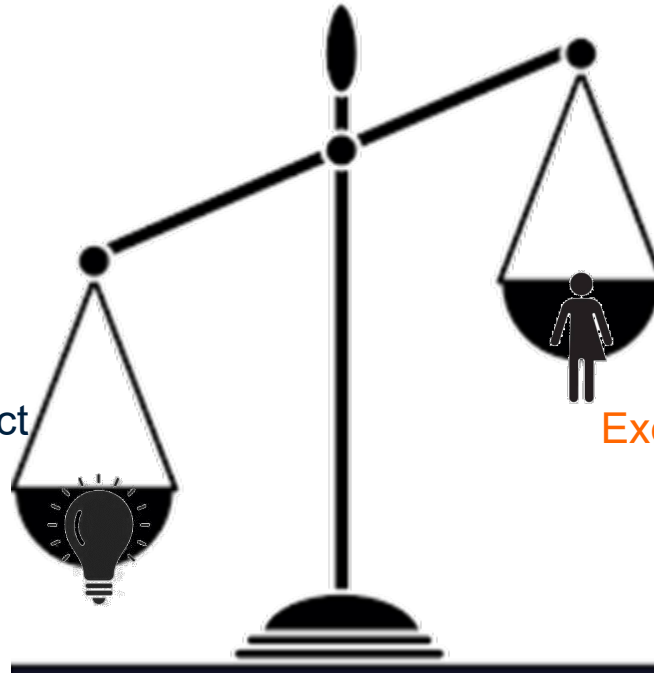
# Evaluation



Excellence

## Excellence of the Research Project

- Groundbreaking nature
- Potential scientific impact
- Scientific Approach



## Excellence of the Principal Investigator

- Ability
- Creativity
- Scientific expertise

**Panels will primarily evaluate the excellence of the project, while evaluating the above aspects of the PI**

ERC President, Prof. Maria Leptin, explains the background and rationale to the recent changes in the evaluation process of ERC grant proposals: [Evaluation of research proposals: The why and what of the ERC's recent changes | ERC \(europa.eu\)](#)



# ERC & Research Assessment

Novelties as from WP2024

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- **CV & Track Record** templates (4 pages)
  - Short standard **biographical information**
  - List of up to ten **research outputs**
  - Applicants will be able to add **short narrative descriptions** to explain info provided
  - Applicants are invited to explain **career breaks or unconventional career paths** & to describe **exceptional contributions** to research community



# Proposal Structure

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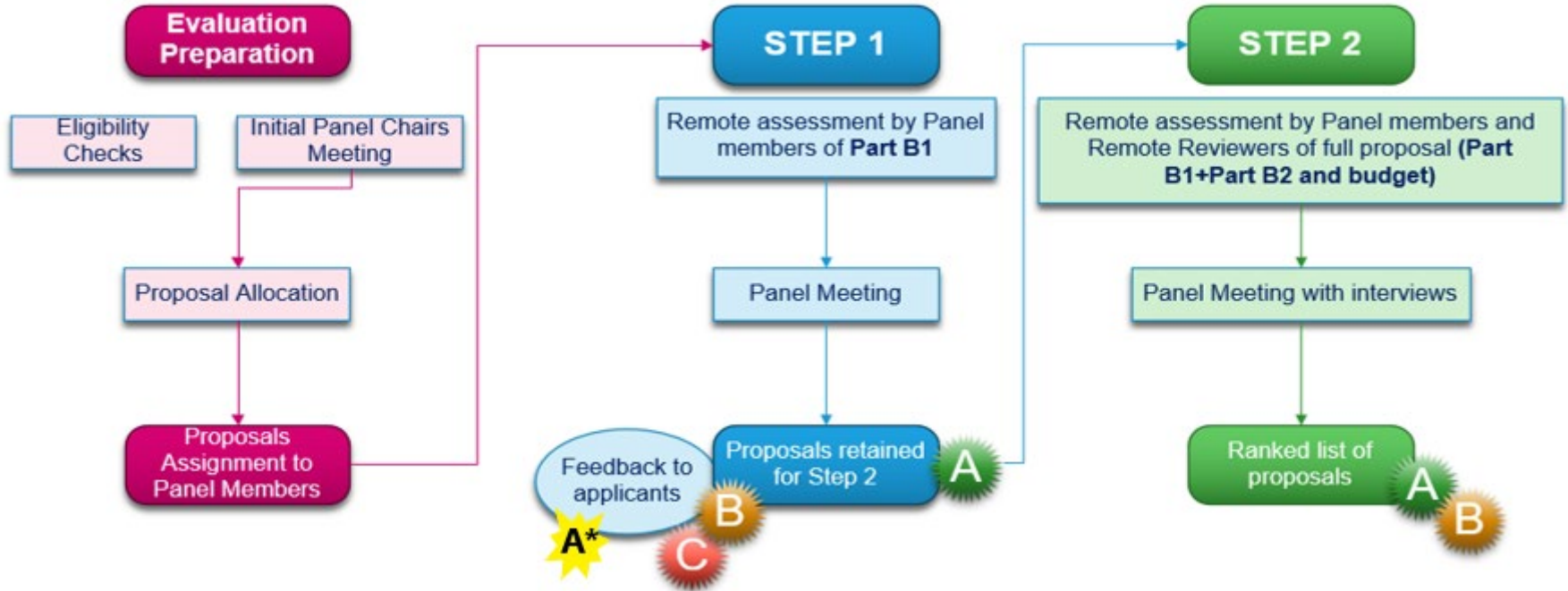
- **Part A:** Administrative form and Proposal Budget
- **Part B1** – Synopsis (5 pages) and **CV+Track Record (4 pages)**
- **Part B2** - Scientific proposal (14 pages) + Funding ID
  - State-of-the-art and objectives
  - Methodology
  - **Funding ID (not to assess the PI but potential funding overlap at GAP stage)**
- **Host Institution support Letter**
- **PhD certificate** (+ additional document to support PhD defence date if needed)

Annexes: **Extension request documents in 1 pdf, including cover page (new form)**, ethics, etc.



# ERC evaluation process

One time submission, Two steps evaluation (StG, CoG, AdG)



# Preparing your proposal

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**In Step 1: Panel members** see only **Part B1** of the proposal (prepare it accordingly!)

## **Part B1: Find the right balance**

- ✓ Innovative? Beyond state-of-art?  
Realistic/feasible?
- ✓ Outline state of play (incl. competition)
- ✓ Goals realistic? Think about risk mitigation
- ✓ Be concise & clear  
(also for generalists)
- ✓ Feasibility (scientific approach)

**In Step 2: Part B1 and B2** and **Budget section** are evaluated by Panel Members & Remote Referees

Part B2: Fill in the details

- ✓ No verbatim repetition of synopsis
- ✓ Detailed state-of-art
- ✓ Extensive methodology and work plan
- ✓ Provide risk mitigation strategies
- ✓ Explain involvement of team members
- ✓ Justify requested resources - Panels have to ensure that the requested resources are reasonable and well justified.



# I have been invited for an interview .. now what?

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- Have **clear** and **representative slides** and focus on **SCIENCE!** Don't try to make a business presentation – you are talking to scientists.
  - Get panel interested in **YOUR ideas** & proposal
  - Present & defend YOUR ideas (panels want to see that these are your ideas)
  - Don't over-explain your CV!
- **Anticipate questions**
- Know the **details of your proposal** and methods, as well as your **research area** – who are your main competitors/collaborators?
- **Practice** thoroughly, several (many?) times; **Keep the time**; typically a 5-10 minute presentation followed by 15-20 minutes of questions.



# Overview

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- **Tips and Tricks**





# Main tips, but no tricks!

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1. Consult call documents ([ERC Work Programme](#), the [Information for Applicants](#) and the [Guide for Peer Reviewers](#))
2. Register early on the F&T Portal
3. Have your documentation ready
4. Look at funded projects in your field (search tool on ERC website), testimonials, tutorials ([ERC homepage](#))
5. Contact the ERCEA and ask all your questions well ahead of the submission deadline:  
[ERC-2025-COG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ERC-2025-COG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu)  
[ERC-2025-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ERC-2025-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu)
6. Get the written consent of your collaborators before the submission deadline (a simple email exchange is OK)



# Key points:

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- Writing is hard and requires time: **devote plenty of time** to the “job”.
- Writing a proposal = **rewriting** it many times.
- **Proofread** and/or secondary read by a friend, colleague, family member (avoid: spelling mistakes, grammatical slips, exceeding the word and page limits).
- **Do not work right up to the deadline:** it can undo weeks/months of hard work (e.g. submission of early draft, connection failure, IT malfunctions).
- A submitted proposal can be revised until the call deadline by **submitting a new version and overwriting the previous one.**



## Key points:

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- The **Host Institution** is not an evaluation criterion, only the **excellence** of the proposal and the applicant.
- Proposals **shorter than five years** are welcome. The content of the proposed research determines its budget.
- Do not include unnecessary partners and collaborators; it is **not a "consortium"**.
- **Publication record is not decisive** in funding decisions.
- The **success rate is not linked to academic age**.



# Some final messages

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- Don't exclude yourself from participating in ERC calls;
- If you have an idea that you think will make a significant change in your field of research or some other area, consider writing it down and apply to ERC;
- Be ambitious, explain your project's high scientific impact if you reach your aims, and provide evidence that you can do it;
- Consider the balance between addressing generalists and specialists, and the difference between part B1 and part B2 of the written proposal;
- If you fail, try again! Gain experience from evaluation. Panel feedback is useful and resubmissions have higher success rate (typically 1.5 times higher).



# Where can you find more information?

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## Videos - ERC Classes

- What to consider before applying
- How to fill in the application
- The interview
- How the evaluation works.

[Click here to watch!](#)

# Thank You!

More information: [erc.europa.eu](https://erc.europa.eu)

National Contact Point: [erc.europa.eu/national-contact-points](https://erc.europa.eu/national-contact-points)

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