

The European Research Council

An Introduction to the ERC



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

European Commission and ERC



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Directorate-General
Research and
Innovation (RTD)



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ERC is....

1. Funding: it is part of Horizon Europe



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EUR 16 billion
ERC budget in Horizon Europe



17%
of the entire
Horizon Europe budget

ERC is....

2. The Scientific Council



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Prof. Jean-Pierre
BOURGUIGNON
(Mathematics)
ERC President ad interim



Prof. Eveline
CRONE
(Psychology)
Vice-President



Prof. Andrzej
JAJSZCZYK
(Electronics and Communication Engineering)
Vice-President



Prof. Nektarios
TAVERNARAKIS
(Molecular Systems Biology)
Vice-President



Prof. Geneviève
ALMOUZNI
(Biology)



Prof. Manuel
ARELLANO
(Economics)



Prof. Paola
BOVOLENTA
(Neurobiology)



Prof. Margaret
BUCKINGHAM
(Biology)



Prof. Ben
FERINGA
(Organic Chemistry)



Prof. Mercedes
GARCÍA-ARENAL
(History)



Prof. Gerd
GIGERENZER
(Psychology)



Prof. Liselotte
HØJGAARD
(Medicine)



Prof. Dirk
INZÉ
(Plant Biology)



Prof. Eystein
JANSEN
(Earth Science)



Prof. Michael
KRAMER
(Astrophysics)



Prof. Rodrigo
MARTINS
(Materials, Nanotechnologies, Electronics)



Prof. Kurt
MEHLHORN
(Computer Science)



Prof. Barbara
ROMANOWICZ
(Geophysics)



Prof. Nicola
SPALDIN
(Materials Theory)



Prof. Jesper
SVEJSTRUP
(Biology)



Prof. Alice
VALKÁROVÁ
(Physics)



Prof. Milena
ŽIČ FUCHS
(Linguistics)

ERC is....

3. The ERCEA



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INDIVIDUAL RESEARCHERS
FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD
**LONG TERM
GRANTS**
TO HIGH-RISK/HIGH-GAIN PIONEERING PROJECTS
IN ANY FIELD OF FRONTIER RESEARCH



Life Sciences



Physical Sciences and Engineering



Social Sciences and Humanities

ERC funding schemes



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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 completion of their PhD



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 completion of their PhD



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 in the last 10 years

PIs from all over the World Can Apply to ERC



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Opportunities for non ERA* researchers:

- Additional “start-up” funding for researchers moving to Europe (1 M€ irrespective of call scheme)
- Grantee can keep affiliation with home institute outside Europe (“significant part” of work time in Europe, at least 50%)
- Team members can be based outside Europe
- Grantee can move within Europe with the grant

*

ERA = European Research Area (EU + Associated Countries)

ERC in figures



10,500+

Total projects funded by
ERC



82

Nationalities
(ERC grantees)



34

EU and Associated
Countries hosting ERC
projects



125,000+

publications reported
by ERC projects



1,300+

prestigious prizes
awarded to
ERC grantees



75,000

researchers and other
professionals
hired in ERC teams

ERC in figures



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7,440

proposals submitted in 2019
to ERC core schemes



520

proposals submitted in 2019
to the PoC scheme



288

proposals submitted to
SyG 2019



+18%

increase in submissions
compared to 2018



746

projects selected for funding in StG,
CoG and SyG 2019 *



199

projects selected for
funding in PoC 2019



2,343

proposals submitted by female
applicants



+3%

proposals submitted to StG
and CoG in 2019



-11%

Proposals submitted to AdG in 2019



3,500+

Panel members



56

Countries hosting ERC
panel members



35,000+

External reviewers

2021 Call Calendar



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ERC calls	Call Opening	Submission Deadline
Starting Grants ERC-2021-StG	25/02/2021	24/03/2021
Consolidator Grants ERC-2021-CoG	11/03/2021	20/04/2021
Advanced Grants ERC-2021-AdG	20/05/2021	31/08/2021
Proof of Concept ERC-2021-PoC	No Proof of Concept call in 2021	
Synergy Grants ERC-2021-SyG	No Synergy Grant call in 2021	

ERC Panel structure



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Life Sciences (LS)

- LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions
- LS2 Integrative Biology: from Genes and Genomes to Systems
- LS3 Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Aging
- 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

- 3 Domains / 27 Panels
- Operated by the Scientific Department B

Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH)

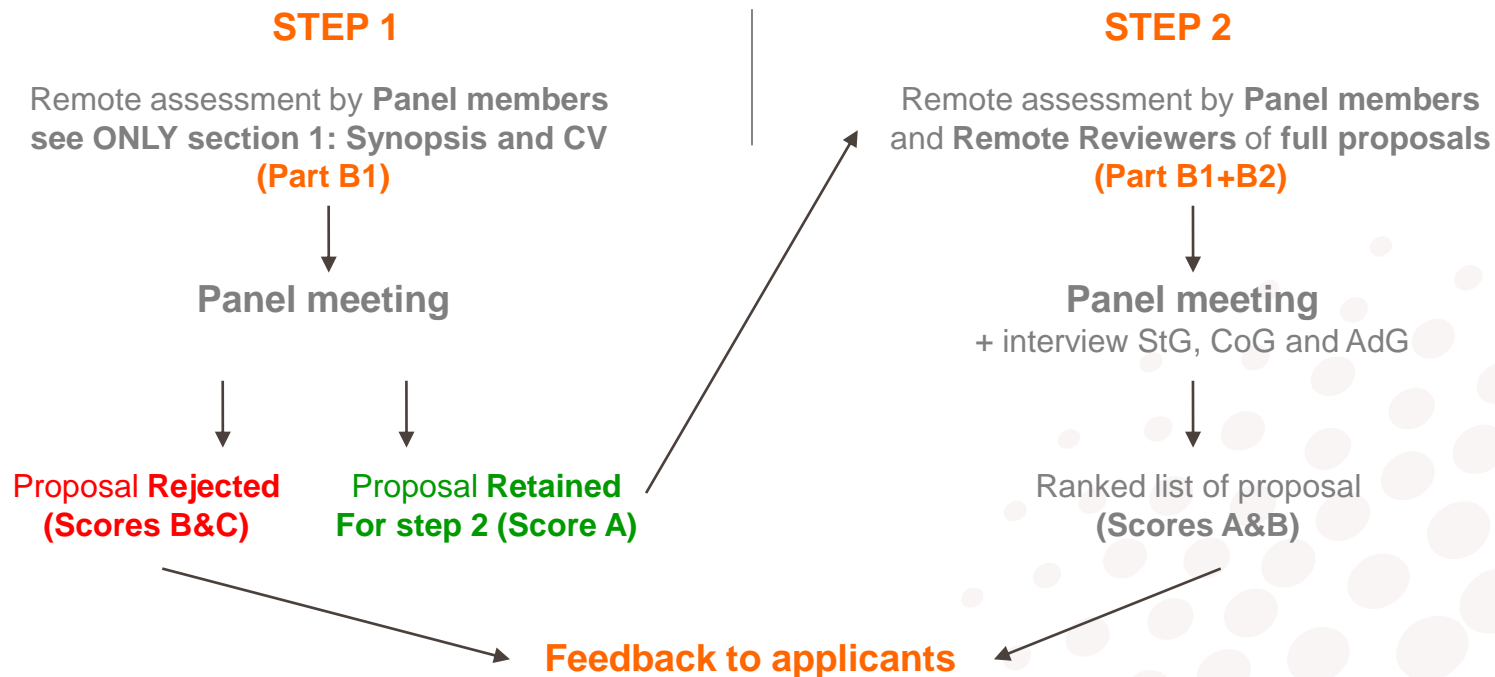
- SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
- SH3 The Social World and Its Diversity
- SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production
- SH6 The Study of the Human Past
- SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and Space

Physical Sciences & Engineering (PSE)

- PE1 Mathematics
- PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- PE3 Condensed Matter Physics
- PE4 Physical & 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

How are the ERC proposal evaluated

For individuals calls: a single submission but a two step evaluation



Contrary to what you may think



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- ERC funds "frontier research", including applied research.
- The budget is distributed among the scientific panels as a function of demand.
- The panel descriptors do not represent ERC scientific priorities.
- The success rate is virtually flat across the eligibility window (StG, CoG).
- Publication record is not decisive in selection decisions.
- The Host Institution is not an evaluation criterion.





Excellence

is the sole evaluation criterion

Excellence of the Research Project

- Ground breaking nature
- Potential impact
- Scientific Approach

Excellence of the Principal Investigator

- Intellectual capacity
- Creativity
- Commitment

Some rumours



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Rumour 1: You can only apply for an ERC grant if you are a highly accomplished scientist.

✗ **NOT true:** Accomplishments are appreciated in relation to your stage/seniority as giving some evidence of your capacity to conduct the research you propose and of creativity within the past 10-12 years of your career.

Rumour 2: To be successful, you need to continue on an established research line, to prove continuity and credibility

✗ **NOT true:** Generally, the opposite is true.

Rumour 3: If you have already obtained an ERC grant you are less/more likely to get another one.

✗ **NOT true:** Panels look at each proposal on its own merit and in comparison with the other applications, irrespectively of whether you have or have not obtained an ERC grant in the past. (Of course this does not apply for applications to a Proof of Concept grant.)

Rumour 4: The more socially or medically relevant a grant proposal is, the higher the chances of it getting funded.

✗ **NOT true:** ERC funds frontier research, not research that promises to be only an incremental advancement of knowledge. This is irrespectively of the field and whether it has societal, medical or clinical applications.

Particular emphasis on...



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Frontier of science, scholarship and engineering, i.e.

- Multi- or interdisciplinary proposals which cross boundaries between different fields of research, **or**
- Pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research, **or**
- Proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions.

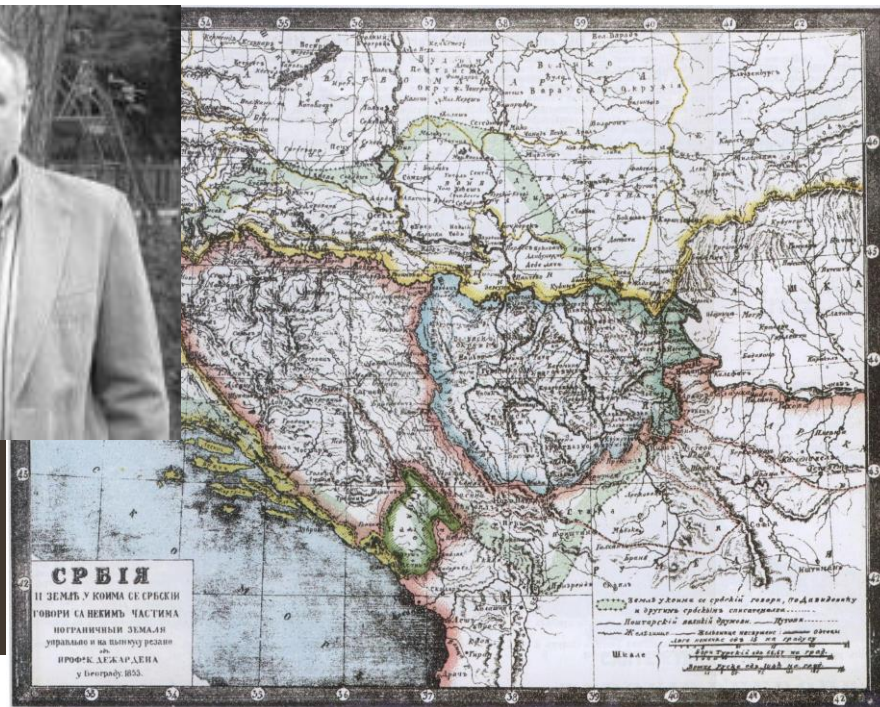
ENTANGLED BALKANS

Balkan Histories: Shared, Connected, Entangled

Researcher: Prof. Roumen Daskalov
ERC Advanced Grant 2008
HI: New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria



"I can imagine such research as promoting good neighbor relations rather than fostering divisiveness and separation".



BABE

Why is the world green

Researcher: Katerina Sam

ERC Starting Grant 2018

HI: Biologické centrum AV ČR, v. v. i.,
Czechia



"My advice would be that if you have a great idea for a project, just believe in it and go for the ERC. However, when I got my ERC grant some people came to me asking what to write about to get an ERC. This is not how it works – you need to have that really good idea first and then apply with it, not the other way around".

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EXPLORERS

Exploring epigenetic robotics:
raising intelligence in machines

Researcher: Dr Pierre-Yves Oudeyer
ERC Starting Grant 2009
HI: Institut National de Recherche en
Informatique et en Automatique, France

"My ERC grant was essential in developing new perspectives in the design and use of robotics. It has also enabled me to compose a multidisciplinary team of highly qualified experts."



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Where can you find more information?



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Videos - ERC Classes

- What to consider before applying
- How to fill in the application
(Part B1 and B2)
- The interview
- How the evaluation works

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x bFbzkVWgCU&list=PLtv6FnsXqnXA YRk6HCErwMxwML0ZKoMcy>

Where can you find more information?



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Our website:

erc.europa.eu

Our social media channels:



National Contact Points (NCP):

<https://erc.europa.eu/funding/national-contact-points>

Funding & Tender Opportunities:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>