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Brussels



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC Synergy Grant 2023 Call

UK NCP Information Event Session 2:
Submission and evaluation processes
and other elements to consider

29 June 2022

ERC-UK@ukro.ac.uk



What will be covered in this session?



Introductions to UKRO & UK Participation



Brief recap about the ERC



Submission Process



Evaluation process



Other considerations for your proposal




Q&A

Housekeeping


 All participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar.

 A chat function is available and will be monitored.

 Please use the Q&A function to submit questions.

 You can 'up vote' your favourite questions.

 We will be recording this session.

 Slides will be shared after the webinar on the event page.



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Moderator

- *Dr Phil Holliday*
 - European Advisor and ERC NCP

Presenter

- *Sean Rowlands*
 - European Advisor and ERC NCP



About UKRO

**We support UK organisations
involved in EU R&I funding**

UK National Contact Point for
ERC and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

Unique partnership between UKRI and subscribing
organisations

Provide a service to more than 140 subscribing
organisations

A Brussels-based team of advisors

Part of UKRI's wider International team

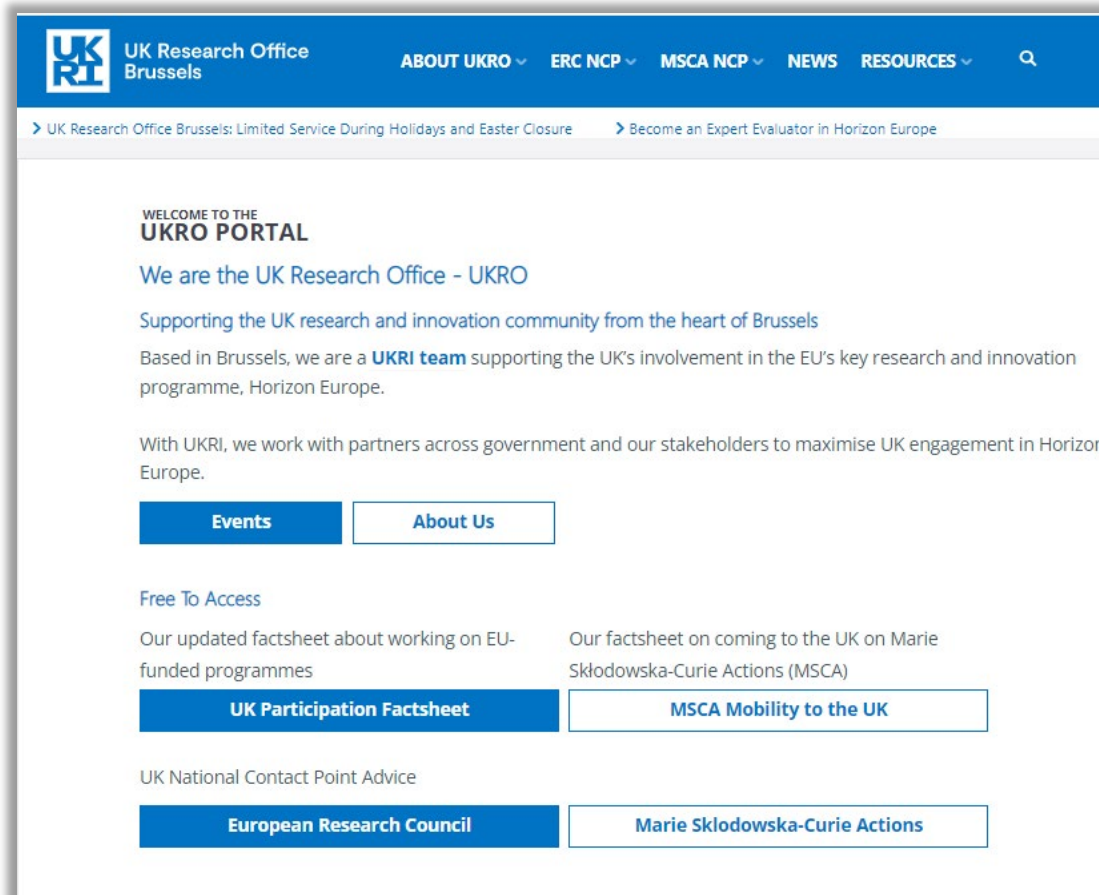


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- Personalised daily or weekly alerts to your inbox.
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UK Participation in Horizon Europe

UK-EU Trade and
Cooperation Agreement



UK participation in Horizon Europe

In December 2020, the negotiations on the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement were concluded

The [announcement](#) sets out the UK's intention to **associate to Horizon Europe**

Includes **full participation in the programme** with only exception of the EIC Accelerator Fund*

*non-mandatory equity element of one EIC scheme

UK entities can participate in/coordinate projects and receive funding from Horizon Europe, incl. ERC

UKRO [website](#) provides latest info on UK participation



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UK participation in Horizon Europe

European Commission's Q&A confirms UK eligibility to apply:

"UK entities including universities, research centres, scientists, innovative businesses, industry, etc. can participate in the first calls for proposals of Horizon Europe as soon as they are published on the European Commission's website."

"...UK applicants are treated as if the UK is an associated country throughout the process, from admissibility and eligibility to evaluation, up until the preparation of grant agreements."



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Resources to help navigate delays

Use [UKRI Guarantee guidance documents](#) and send any queries about this funding to eugrantsfunding@ukri.org

UKRO can help with the European side, for example the rules for the Grant Agreement or managing changes of status within a consortium if necessary.

- UKRO's [UK Participation Factsheet](#) and the [EC Q&A on UK participation](#) to inform yourself and your partners.
- UKRO's [MSCA](#) and [ERC](#) National Contact Point mailboxes



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ERC 2023 Synergy Grant Call

- Brief recap about the scheme



ERC Frontier Research Grant Schemes

The ERC funds

- the best 'frontier research' proposals
- submitted by excellent researchers
- in the research field of their choice

Projects led by Principal Investigators

- PIs are central to the grant, not the Host Institution
- PIs build teams around them (if required)
- A Synergy Grant Group is still distinct from a traditional consortium on a research project

Open to all disciplines

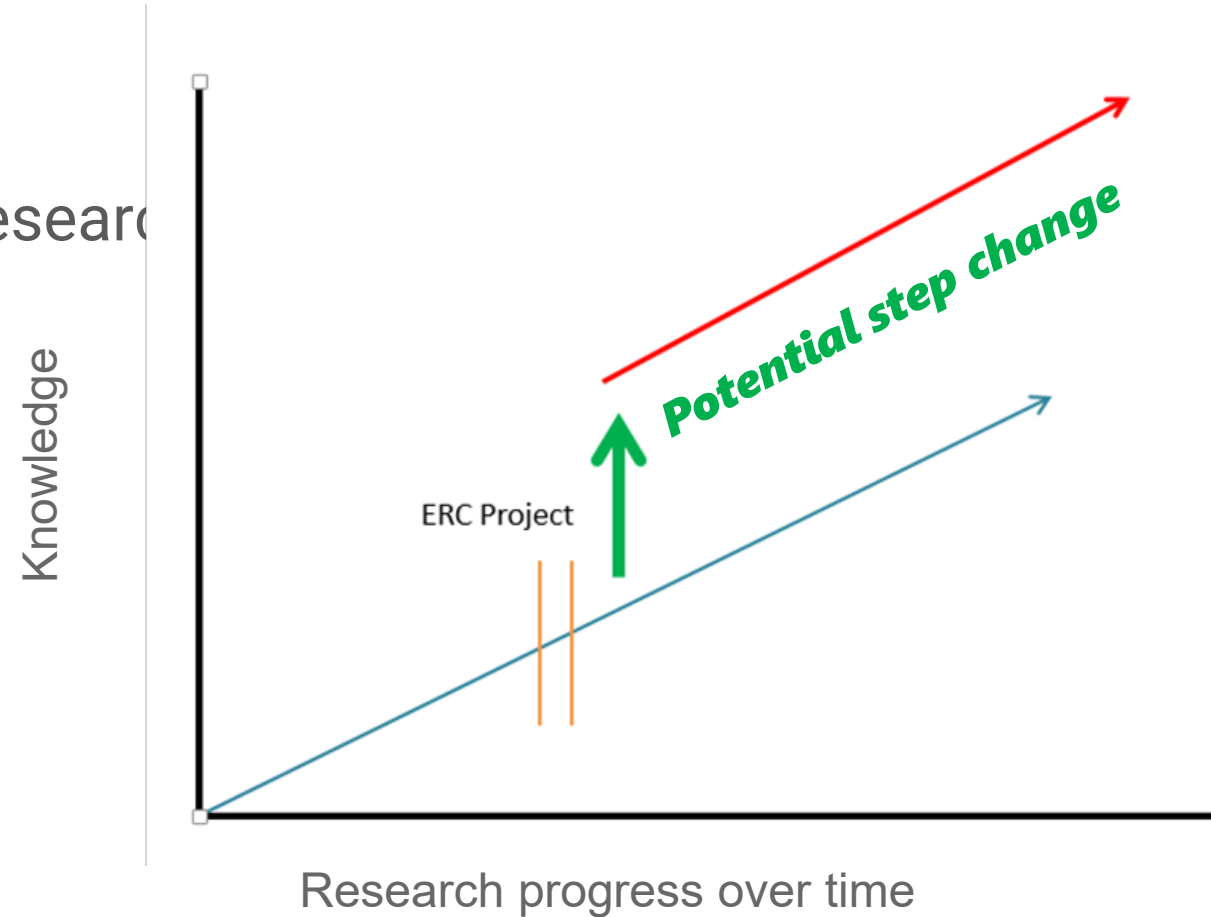
- Expert evaluators from all over the world
- Scientific Council leadership of the ERC
- Encouragement of interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary



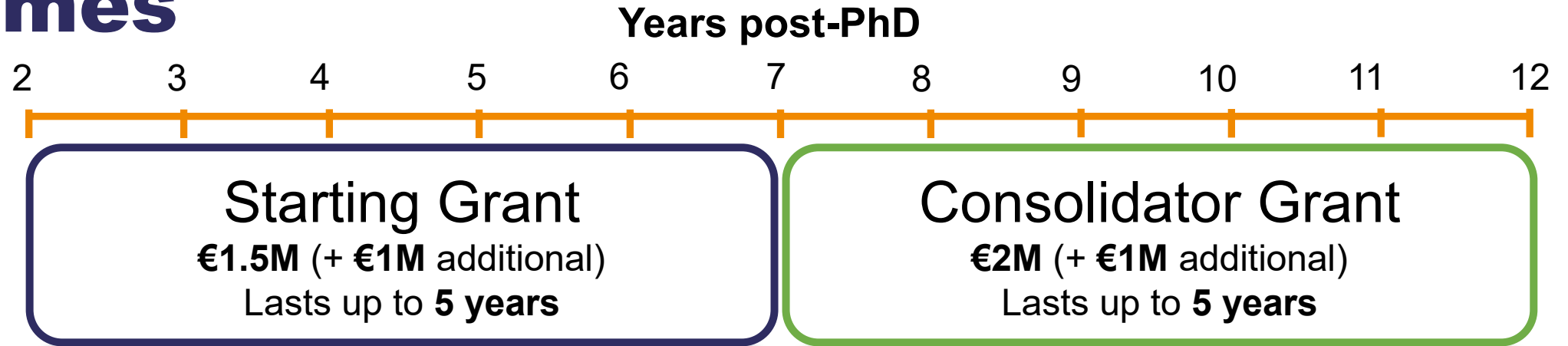
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What Do We Mean by Frontier Research?

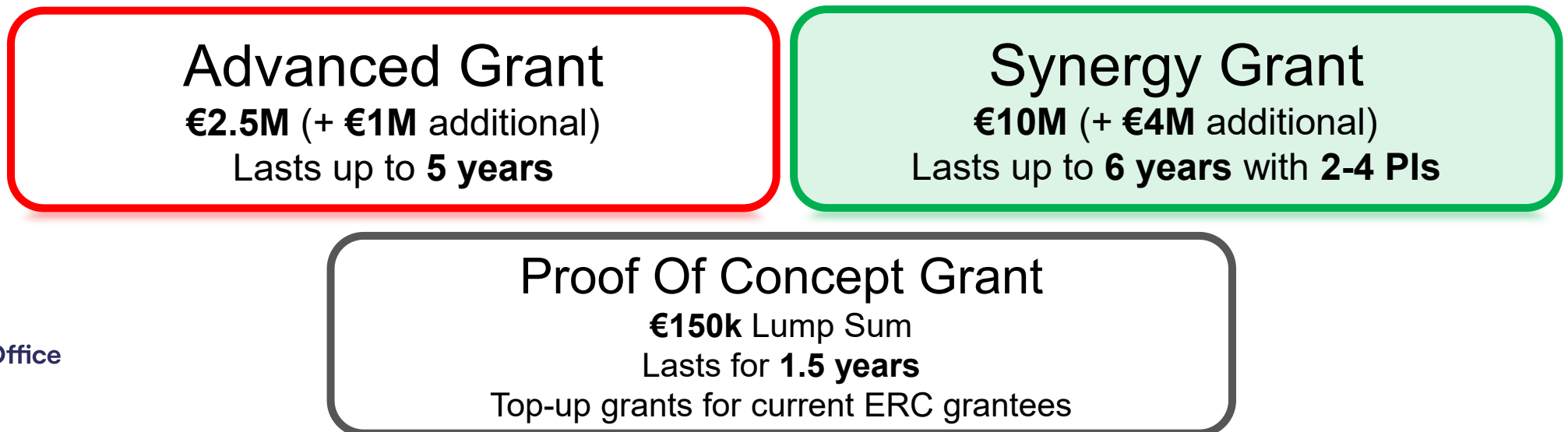
- Ground-breaking research
- Going **beyond current limits** of your research
- Development of **new horizons**
- **New solutions to old problems**
- **Exciting**



ERC Grant Schemes



No PhD Requirements



What is special about Synergy?

Synergy: Integrated, complementary know-how and approaches contributed by PIs in the group

Joint effort to achieve something the PIs could not on their own

Small, flexible group:
PI's decide who they need to work with.

Any PI can join with others as equals
to carry out excellent Frontier research,
any career stage/discipline



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Synergy Group Eligibility

2, 3 or 4 PI's

1 designated as
“corresponding PI”.
*Nothing added in their role,
they communicate with EC*

PI group
can be a mix of
different career
stages

Max. 1 PI
can be hosted
outside
EU/Associated
Countries

PIs are evaluated
individually
and
as a group

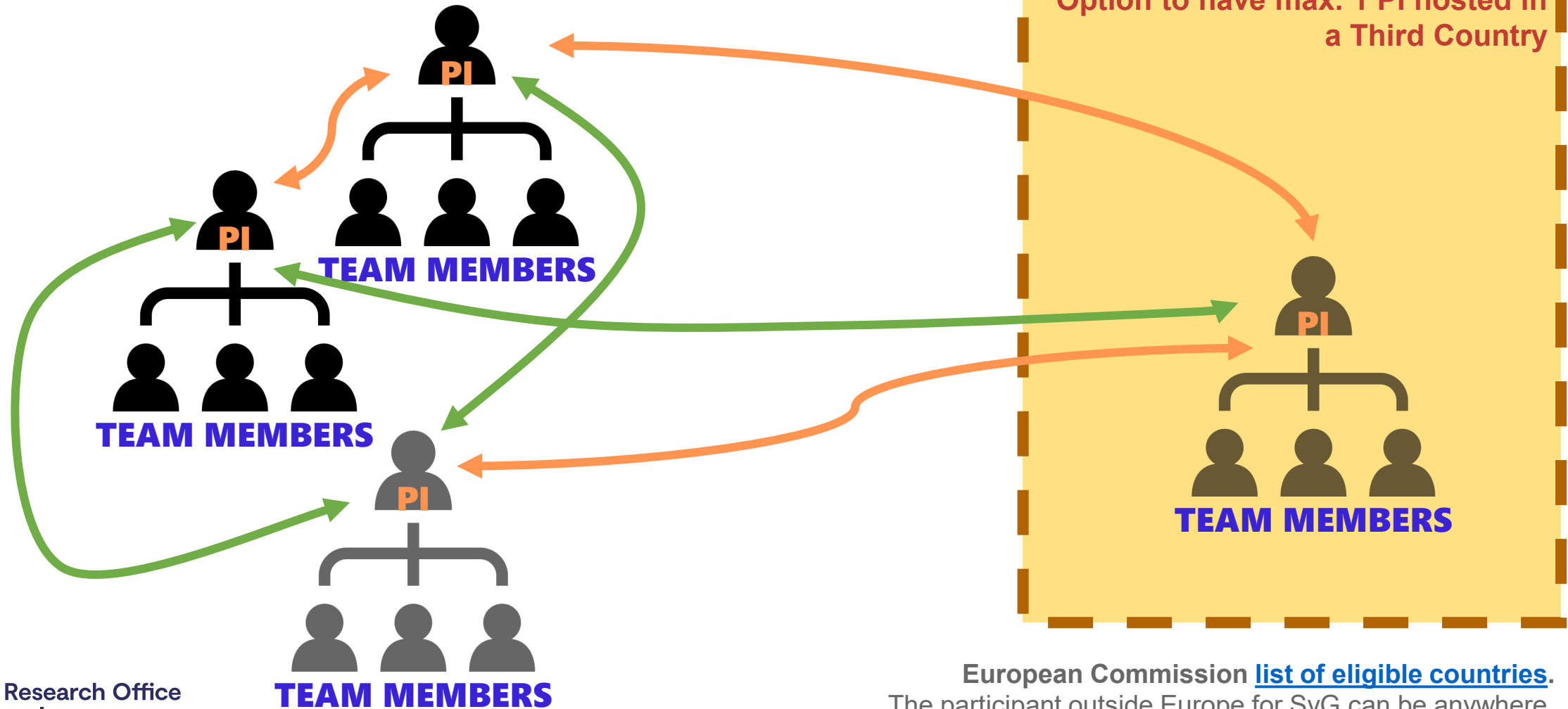
If one PI cannot
carry out the
project, they
cannot be replaced

Remember the [European Commission's Q&A](#) sets
that the UK is treated as an associated country.



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Principal Investigators in Synergy Grant Groups



Submission Process

- Practical tips for the online submission system and which documents to upload



2023 Call Resubmission Restrictions

	Call to which the Principal Investigator applied under previous ERC Work Programmes and proposal evaluation outcome	2023 ERC calls to which a Principal Investigator is <u>not</u> eligible
*	2021 and 2022 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant or 2022 Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity Starting, Consolidator, Advanced, and Synergy Grant
	2021 Starting, Consolidator, or Advanced Grant	C at Step 1 Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grant
	2022 Synergy Grant	A or B at Step 3 No restrictions
		B at Step 1 or 2 No restrictions
*		C at Step 1 Advanced and Synergy Grant
	2022 Starting, Consolidator, or Advanced Grant	A or B at Step 2 No restrictions
		B or C at Step 1 Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grant

More lenient restrictions for Synergy Grant

Score-based Restrictions only apply to Synergy calls from previous Synergy calls

- Potential restriction **from** Synergy proposals can only apply to future Synergy and Advanced Calls.
- No restrictions **for** Synergy proposals from prior Starting or Consolidator calls
- If you are eligible for Starting or Consolidator calls, currently there is no jeopardy submitting a Synergy call (other than in cases of research integrity issues).

Approaching Proposal Submission

Register in the Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal and create an ECAS account



Get in touch with your research support office



Add relevant contact people to the online application



Submit early and often – latest version will be accepted



Keep the Information for Applicants in front of you!!!



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ERC Proposal Submission

Part A

- Administrative Forms,
- Abstract,
- Budget and Description of Resources

Part B1

- Extended synopsis
- PI Track Records

Part B2

- Detailed Research Proposal

Annexes

- Host Institution Letter,
- Ethics,
- Eligibility Documents

- 1-step submission all parts submitted together at deadline.
- Part A is **filled in online** on the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#).
- Part B1, Part B2 and the Annexes are **uploaded as PDFs** to the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#).



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Template PDF incl.
all parts of the
Synergy application
form [available
here.](#)

Using the EC Portal

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

European Commission | Funding & tender opportunities
Single Electronic Data Interchange Area (SEDIA)

English EN Register Login

SEARCH FUNDING & TENDERS HOW TO PARTICIPATE PROJECTS & RESULTS WORK AS AN EXPERT SUPPORT

Horizon Europe (HORIZON) clear filter

ERC

☒ Match whole words only

☒ GRANTS ☐ TENDERS

Submission status

Forthcoming Open for submission Closed (2)

Programming period

2021 - 2027 (2)

Funding and tenders (2)

Need help?

Sort by: Submission status

Grant ERC STARTING GRANTS

Closed

Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)	Deadline model	single-stage
ID	ERC-2021-STG	Opening date	25 February 2021
Types of action	HORIZON ERC Grants	Deadline date	12 April 2021 17:00:00 Brussels time

Grant ERC CONSOLIDATOR GRANTS

Closed

Programme	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)	Deadline model	single-stage
ID	ERC-2021-COG	Opening date	11 March 2021
Types of action	HORIZON ERC Grants	Deadline date	20 April 2021 17:00:00 Brussels time

First page of proposal submission

IDENTIFY THE HOST INSTITUTION (PIC number)

Find your organisation

PIC Short name

Search for your organisation

Organisations you have been previously associated with. (Click to select)

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE ON THE PROPOSAL?

Your role

Please indicate your role in this proposal

☒ Principal Investigator
☐ Main Host Institution Contact
☐ Contact person

Fill in each role per organisation before going to the next step to avoid technical issues.
Can be changed later on but should be completed, if even if tentatively.

BASIC DETAILS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Anything you enter in this part of the form can be edited later up until submission

Your proposal

Please choose an acronym for your proposal.
It will appear also in the "General Information" section of the Application Form Part A and can also be updated there.

Acronym Enter value

Short Summary Enter value

ERC Panel

SAVE AND GO TO NEXT STEP

Choose keywords only, there are no pre-existing panels for Synergy
Full list of ERC's keywords in [Annex 4 of the Information for Applicants](#) (page 31)

Synergy Grant dynamic panels

Due to the collaborative nature of Synergy grants, the call's evaluation process **does not have a disciplinary panel schema**

Instead...

...bespoke panels with a variety of experts are set up during the evaluation to match the unique profile of submitted proposals



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Defining discipline(s) of an ERC Synergy proposal

Corresponding PI indicates **four to six ‘fixed keywords’** along with other ‘free keywords’

Applicants can **mix and match keywords** regardless of [the panel heading](#) listing

Keywords + abstract analysed by panel chairs to set best-fit evaluation group for each proposal

Physical Sciences & Engineering	Life Sciences	Social Sciences & Humanities
<p>PE1 Mathematics</p> <p>PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter Particle</p> <p>PE3 Condensed Matter Physics</p> <p>PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences</p> <p>PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials</p> <p>PE6 Computer Science and Informatics</p> <p>PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering</p> <p>PE8 Products and Processes Engineering</p> <p>PE9 Universe Sciences</p> <p>PE10 Earth System Science</p> <p>PE11 Materials Engineering*</p>	<p>LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures & Functions</p> <p>LS2 Integrative Biology: Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems</p> <p>LS3 Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology</p> <p>LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing</p> <p>LS5 Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System</p> <p>LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy</p> <p>LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases</p> <p>LS8 Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution</p> <p>LS9 Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering</p>	<p>SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations</p> <p>SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems</p> <p>SH3 The Social World and its Diversity</p> <p>SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity</p> <p>SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production</p> <p>SH6 The Study of the Human Past</p> <p>SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and Space*</p>

Successes for different disciplinary domains

ERC SyG 2022 Overview of the proposals received

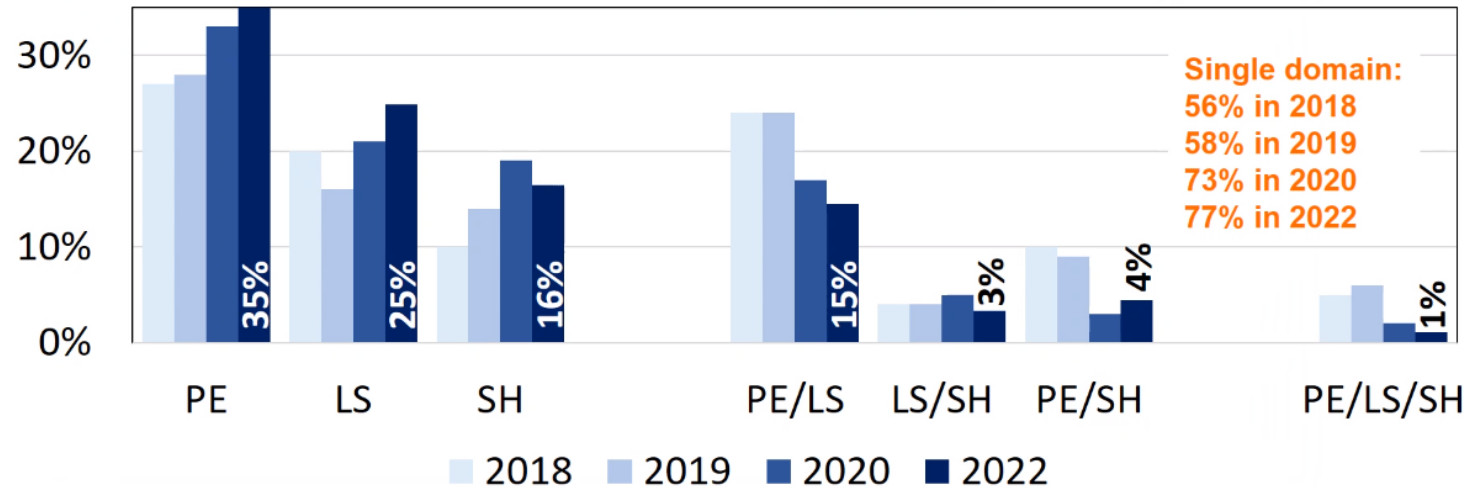
Submissions by domain classification

based on proposals' analysis - provisional data - data on 358 proposals



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SYG 2018 to 2022 Submissions by domain



It is not easy to separate proposals into one domain or another in Synergy because they are not linked to specific evaluation panels under each domain.

Note the small sample size

You can use the [ERC Information Service](#) to do more qualitative searches filtering for the Synergy Schema and for domain specific keywords.

Main proposal page

Part A: Administrative Forms
online only

Part B1 & Part B2
*Upload PDFs based on
editable templates
Other documents listed below
uploaded separately as PDFs*

Part B1 & Part B2
*Editable templates available to
download*

**Support for using the EC
portal**

- *Not support on content of proposals*
- *Any issues during submission should be logged with the helpdesk*

The screenshot displays the 'Proposal forms' page with a progress bar at the top indicating the steps: Login, Topic selection, Create proposal, Participants, Proposal Forms (current), and Submit. The page is divided into several sections:

- Deadline:** 08 April 2021 17:00:00 Brussels Local Time. 26 days left until closure.
- Call data:** Call: ERC-2021-STG, Topic: ERC-2021-STG, Type of action: HORIZON-ERC, Type of MGA: HORIZON-AG. A warning states: 'Topic and type of action can only be changed by creating a new proposal.'
- Proposal data:** Acronym: FAD, Draft ID: SEP-210732071.
- Administrative forms:** Includes buttons for 'Edit forms', 'View history', and 'Print preview'.
- Part B and Annexes:** A list of items to be uploaded, each with an 'Upload' button: Part B1, Part B2, HI support letter, PhD certificate, Annex 1, Annex 2, Annex 3, Annex 4, Annex 5, and Annex 6.
- Download Part B templates:** A button to download the templates.
- Support & Helpdesk:** Includes links for 'Online Manual', 'IT How To', 'IT Helpdesk', and 'FAQ'. A 'Service Desk' contact is provided: EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu and +32 2 29 92222.
- Buttons:** 'BACK TO PARTICIPANTS LIST', 'VALIDATE', and 'SUBMIT'.

Orange arrows point from the 'Part A: Administrative Forms online only' box to the 'Administrative forms' section. Orange arrows point from the 'Part B1 & Part B2 Upload PDFs...' box to the 'Part B and Annexes' section. A green arrow points from the 'Part B1 & Part B2 Editable templates...' box to the 'Download Part B templates' button. A green arrow points from the 'Support for using the EC portal' box to the 'Support & Helpdesk' section.

Part A – Administrative forms

Navigate by chapter or pages

How to fill in the forms

The screenshot shows the 'Application forms' section of a submission system. At the top, there are navigation links: '< Proposal forms', 'Table of contents', and 'General Information >'. Below this, a sub-header 'Application forms' is followed by a 'Table Of Contents' button, a 'Save' button, and a 'Save&Close' button. The main content area displays the following information:

- HORIZON**
- Call: ERC-2021-STG**
(Call for Proposals for ERC Starting Grant)
- Topic: ERC-2021-STG**
- Type of Action: HORIZON-ERC**
(HORIZON ERC Grants)
- Proposal number: SEP-210732071**
- Proposal acronym: FAD**
- Type of Model Grant Agreement: HORIZON Action Grant Budget-Based**

Below this information is a 'Table of contents' link. A table lists the sections of the form:

Section	Title	Action
1	General information	Show
2	Participants	Show
3	Budget	Show
4	Ethics and security	Show
5	Other questions	Show

At the bottom, there is a section titled 'How to fill in the forms' with a 'Read more' button. The text in this section states: 'The administrative forms must be filled in for each proposal using the templates available in the submission system. Some data fields in the administrative forms are pre-filled based on the steps in the submission wizard.'

Orange arrows point from the 'Table of contents' link and the 'Table Of Contents' button to the 'Navigate by chapter or pages' box. A green arrow points from the 'How to fill in the forms' section to the 'How to fill in the forms' box.

Part A – PI Declaration of Consent

- Written consent **should not be submitted with the application**
- The applicants must ensure they **have written consent from all participants on file** prior to the call submission deadline.
- ERC Executive Agency **may request the applicants to provide the written consent** mentioned in the declarations at any time during the evaluation process

Application forms

[Table Of Contents](#)[Validate Form](#)[Save](#)[Save&Close](#)

Proposal ID **SEP-210732071**
Acronym **FAD**

Declarations

?

Field(s) marked * are mandatory to fill.

1) We declare to have the explicit consent of all applicants on their participation and on the content of this proposal. * ☐

Part A - Budget & Resources

3 - Budget

Please indicate the costs for each cost category as accurate as possible using only Euro integers. The 'Total eligible costs' of the project will be automatically calculated based on the figures inserted in the individual columns. The 'Requested EU contribution' has to be filled in manually. Please make sure to update the 'Requested EU contribution' if updates are made in any of the cost categories.

PI: When calculating the salary, please take into account the percentage of your working time dedicated to the ERC project.

Other personnel costs and Other additional direct costs:
If applicable, please specify this cost category in the Resources section (textbox below).

Internally invoiced goods and services:
Costs for host institution invoices and invoices for other entities should be included here, e.g. access to large facilities, access to other services that are charged as unit costs.
For more details on the budget table, please consult the ERC Information for Applicants document applicable to the call and year. Please note that the budget table and the description of resources below will be made available to the experts evaluating the proposal at Step 2.

Beneficiary Short Name	PI	Senior Staff	Postdocs	Students	Other Personnel costs	A. Total personnel costs €	B. Subcontracting Costs € (No indirect costs)	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment - including major equipment	Consumables incl. fieldwork and animal costs	Publications (incl. Open Access fees) and dissemination	Other additional direct costs	C.3 Total other goods, works and services	Total Purchase costs €	D. Internally invoiced goods and services € (No indirect costs)	E. Indirect Cost €	Total Eligible Costs	Requested EU contribution €
Ukri	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00

Make sure the figures are in whole Euros, not 1000s

Make sure the figures match between the table and the description.

Additional funding:

- In budget table dispersed across fitting cost categories
- In resources section described altogether, separate from rest of the budget

ERC ver 1.00 2021

Section C: Resources (Maximum 8000 characters allowed)

This section and the budget table will be made available to the experts evaluating the proposal at Step 2. Important: your description of resources will be truncated once it exceeds the maximum allowed characters. Please make sure that your description is complete before submitting.

State and fully justify the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the objectives for the duration of the project. The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. The evaluation panels assess the estimated costs carefully; unjustified budgets will be consequently reduced. Please specify if you will use third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action.

If applicable, please specify the cost items covered by your 'Other personnel costs' category and the cost items covered by your 'Other additional direct costs' category.

Request for additional funding if applicable (All items MUST be included in the overall budget table above): (Cost in EUR)

Justification:

Part A – SyG Budget

Budget and Resources description are seen by evaluators but no longer count towards B2 Page limit (moved to Part A, the online form)

- Four main sections:
 - Personnel,
 - Subcontracting
 - Purchase
 - Internally invoiced good and services
- All **'Additional Funding'** requested must be
 - included in the overall budget table,
 - tallied with normal costs in appropriate cost category
 - For example fieldwork travel would go under Travel & Subsistence in a sum including 'normal' costs not related to fieldwork).*
- If funding is requested for **Other personnel costs & Other additional direct costs (see highlights)**
 - Should be entered as a total figure on the budget table
 - Unpacked in the Resource section with each item briefly described

One column per Principal Investigator and their team

Cost category		Corresponding PI	2 nd PI	3 rd PI	4 th PI	Total in euro (no decimals)
PI name						
Host Institution						
A. Direct personnel costs/€	PI ²					
	Senior Staff					
	Post docs					
	Students					
	Other personnel costs					
	Total personnel costs/€					
B. Subcontracting Costs/€ (No indirect costs)						
C. Purchase Costs/€	C.1 Travel and subsistence					
	C.2 Equipment - including major equipment					
	Consumables incl. fieldwork and animal costs					
	C.3 Other goods, works and services					
	Publications (incl. Open Access fees) and dissemination					
	Other additional direct costs					
	C.3 Total other goods, works and services					
Total Purchase costs/€ (C.1 + C.2 + C.3)						
D. Internally invoiced goods and services/€ (No indirect costs) ³						
E. Indirect Cost/€ e= 25% * (A + C1 + C2 + C3)						
Total eligible costs/€						
Requested EU contribution/€						

Eligible costs

The ERC funds up to 100% of the total eligible costs with a 25% flat rate for indirect costs

The budget is subdivided into

**Personnel
costs**

Purchasing costs
(incl. travel, equipment,
consumable etc.)

Publications
(including any costs
related to Open Access)

Indirect cost

**internally
invoiced goods
and services**

**Subcontracting
costs**



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Work with your Host Institution to cost the budget properly

Part A – Description of Resources

Specify the resources required and justify them against the needs of the project.

Unjustified budget lines may be reduced or missing budget lines that are deemed necessary by evaluators could count against the proposal.

Some elements that should be briefly described and justified:

- **Each PI's working time commitment.**
- **Each cost category with items considered necessary**
- **Size and nature of the team**, indicating key team member(s) as named individuals or vacant roles
- Justify if team members are based elsewhere other than the Host Institution.
- Requested **equipment**: why you need it and how much it will be used.
- Costs for **Open Access** to project outputs including data management
- Describe any **additional funding** requested for the project.
- Existing **resources needed for the project but do not require ERC funding**

Template for Resources Description (from [Information for Applicants](#) pg 53)

- “*I plan to allocate*” + Justification
- Max. 8000 characters
(equivalent to about 2 pages)
- Request for **additional funding** if applicable.
 - Provide a total figure (cost in EUR)
 - Address specific grounds for additional funding in justification.
 - Additional funding described separately in Resources section

**Budget and Resources description are seen by evaluators but
no longer count towards B2 Page limit**

Funding Levels

Grant Type	Maximum Base Grant Amount	Maximum “Additional Funding”
Starting	€1.5 M	€1.0 M
Consolidator	€2.0 M	€1.0 M
Advanced	€2.5 M	€1.0 M
Synergy	€10 M	€4.0 M

Additional Funding is available for the project if properly justified; it is not strictly split as €1 million per PI.

Additional funding covers:

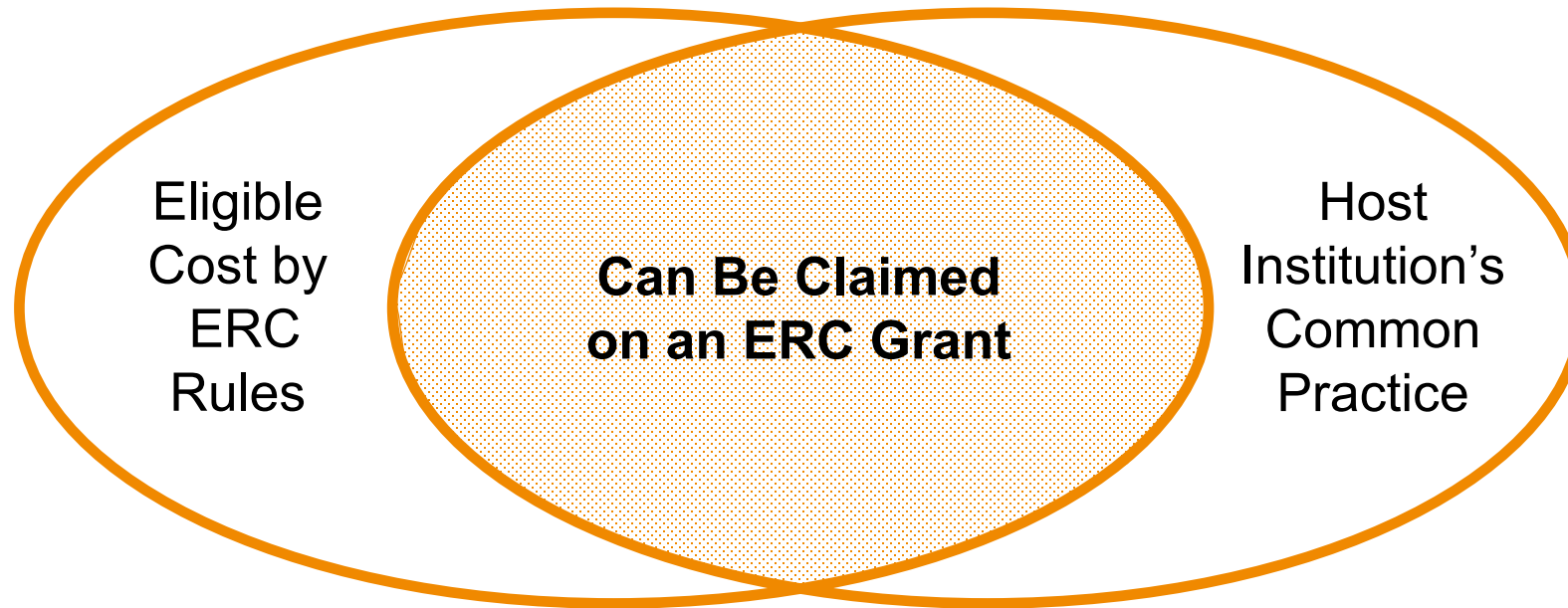
- eligible “start-up” costs for PIs moving from outside Europe
- the purchase of major equipment
- access to large facilities
- **major experimental/fieldwork costs (excluding personnel)**

There is no definition of “equipment” or “facilities”. Make the case for what is needed for your discipline.



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General tip on resources



Auditors will check that costs are both eligible by ERC rules and in keeping with the institution's standard accounting practices

- e.g. ERC allows hotel bookings in Paris for research trips from a UK institution, but a PI at a Paris institution would not be allowed to charge it to their grant due to institutional rules

Part A – Ethics & Security questions

- Follow Horizon Europe guidance document: [‘How to complete your ethics self-assessment’](#)
- UK-hosted applicants should answer ‘yes’ on questions about non-European activity. This will not affect eligibility.**
- Answering ‘yes’ on certain questions may require a brief text response from the applicant.
- Applicants may be requested to upload documents related to particular questions.
- If the existing character limit is too short the recommendation is to provide the detailed explanation in optional annex, uploaded as a PDF. Include references to theses annexes in the Ethics text box in the application form.



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Application forms

[Table Of Contents](#)[Validate Form](#)[Save](#)[Save&Close](#)

Proposal ID SEP-210732071

Acronym FAD

4 - Ethics & security

Ethics Issues Table

[?](#)

1. Human Embryonic Stem Cells and Human Embryos	Page
Does this activity involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Does this activity involve the use of human embryos?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
2. Humans	Page
Does this activity involve human participants?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Does this activity involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, etc.) on the study participants?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Does this activity involve conducting a clinical study as defined by the Clinical Trial Regulation (EU 536/2014) ? (using pharmaceuticals, biologicals, radiopharmaceuticals, or advanced therapy medicinal products)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
3. Human Cells / Tissues (not covered by section 1)	Page
Does this activity involve the use of human cells or tissues?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
4. Personal Data	Page
Does this activity involve processing of personal data?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Does this activity involve further processing of previously collected personal data (including use of preexisting data sets or sources, merging existing data sets)?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Is it planned to export personal data from the EU to non-EU countries? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Is it planned to import personal data from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No

Page references to relevant sections in Part B1 & B2
for each issue if you answer ‘Yes’

Annexes

About the Institution

- Host Institution **support letter**
 - Using the [NEW template](#)
 - On official headed letter
 - Can be digitally signed

About the Project

- **Ethics documents** if requested by Part A Ethics questionnaire (e.g. ethics committee decisions, licenses etc.)
- If the **character limit in Ethics self-assessment is too short**, upload appropriate responses as PDF annexes.
- Documents related to the **security issues** (i.e. supporting documentation)

4.2 HOST INSTITUTION SUPPORT LETTER TEMPLATE 2020
(Print on paper bearing the official letterhead of the host institution)

Commitment of the host institution for ERC Calls 2020^{10, 11, 12}

The applicant 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 successful¹³, which is the applicant legal entity,

confirms its intention to sign a supplementary agreement with the principal investigator¹⁴

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

Performance obligations of the applicant legal entity that will become H2020 ERC Grant Agreement (hereafter referred to as the Agreement) retained and the preparation of the Agreement be successfully concluded:

The applicant legal entity commits itself to hosting (and engaging) the principal investigator who is expected to devote:

a) ensure that the work will be performed under the scientific project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working State or Associated Country;

- in the case of a Consolidator Grant at least 40% of her/his working State or Associated Country;

b) carry out the work to be performed, as it will be identified in Annex 1 of the Agreement, taking into consideration the specific role of the principal investigator;

c) enter — before signature of the Agreement — 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's 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 project (action);

iv) selection and supervision of the other team members (hosted (and engaged) by the applicant legal entity or other legal entities), in line with the profiles needed to conduct the research and in accordance with the applicant legal entity's usual management practices;

f) possibility to apply independently for funding;

g) ensure that the team members send their reports;

h) ensure that the team members send their reports;

i) ensure that the team members send their reports;

j) ensure that the team members send their reports;

k) 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 Researchers¹⁵ - 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 project (action) are aware of them.

l) respect the fundamental principle of research integrity and ensure that persons carrying out research tasks follow the good research practices and refrain from the research integrity violations described in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity¹⁶. If any such violations or allegations occur, verify and pursue them and bring them to the attention of the Agency.

For the host institution (applicant legal entity):

Date

Name and Function

Email and Signature of legal entity

Stamp of the host institution

IMPORTANT NOTE: In order to be included in the commission, the documents must be submitted in any EU official language OR certified translation into any EU language

Proposal Formatting

Page limits will be strictly applied.

Page formatting will be systematically checked by the ERCEA.

References do not count towards page limit.

Templates:

- [2022 Synergy Grant B1 & B2 template](#) (PDF version)
- Editable templates not yet available, download them from the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#)



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Page Format:
A4

Header: [PI surname], [Project acronym] & [Proposal section (Part B1 or Part B2)]

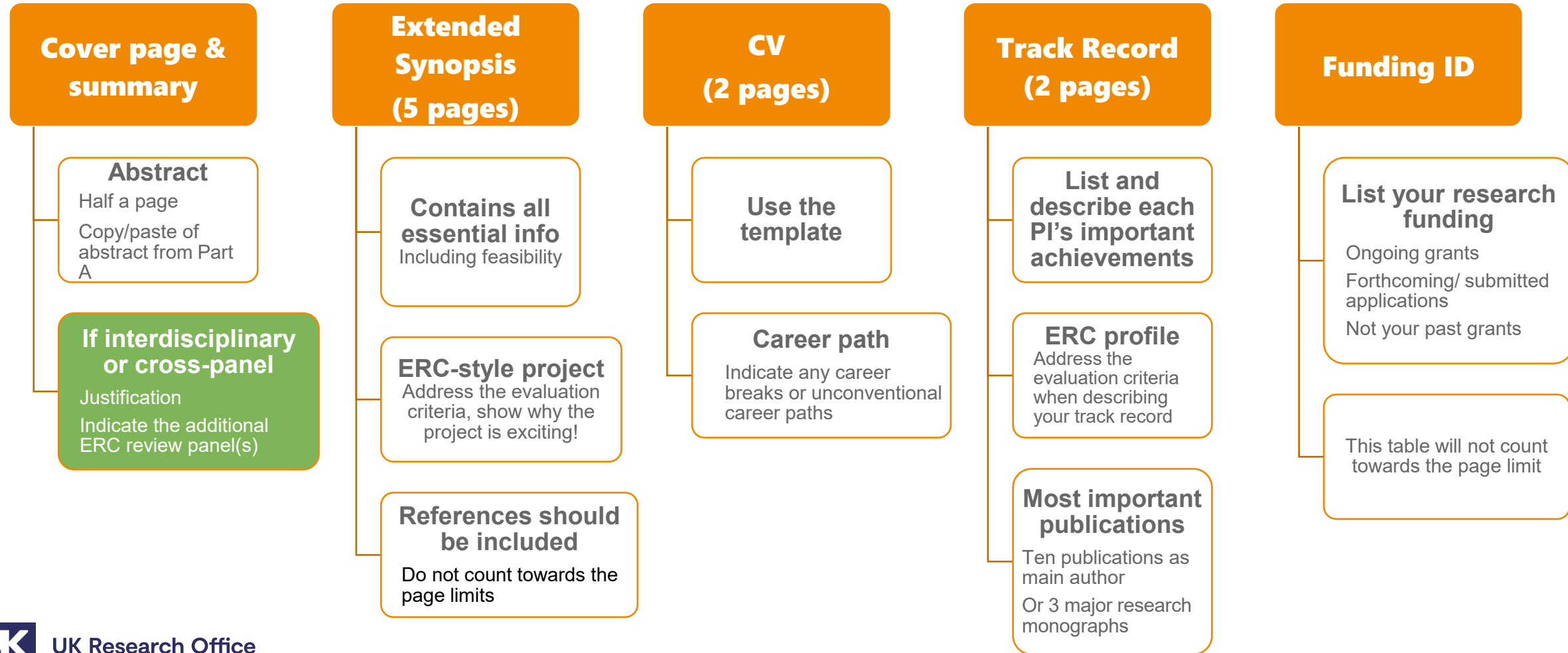
Font:

- Times New Roman, Arial or Similar
- At least font size 11,
- Single line spacing

Side margin:
2 cm

Bottom margin:
1.5 cm

Part B1: Evaluated at Step 1, Step 2 and Step 3



Part B2: only evaluated from Step 2 onwards

Scientific Proposal

Maximum 15 pages*

***Different from StG, CoG & AdG 2021**

ERC Work Programme (page 34):

“For Synergy Grant proposals page limits above apply except that the page limit for the Scientific Proposal is 15 pages.”

Information for Applicants (page 25)

Section c ‘Resources and time commitment’ are not limited to 2 pages and do not count towards the page limit.

State of the art

Objectives & Methodology

Address the 'high-risk/high-gain' balance

Milestones & Deliverables

Risk & mitigation

References should be included
(not counted towards the page limits)

Evaluation

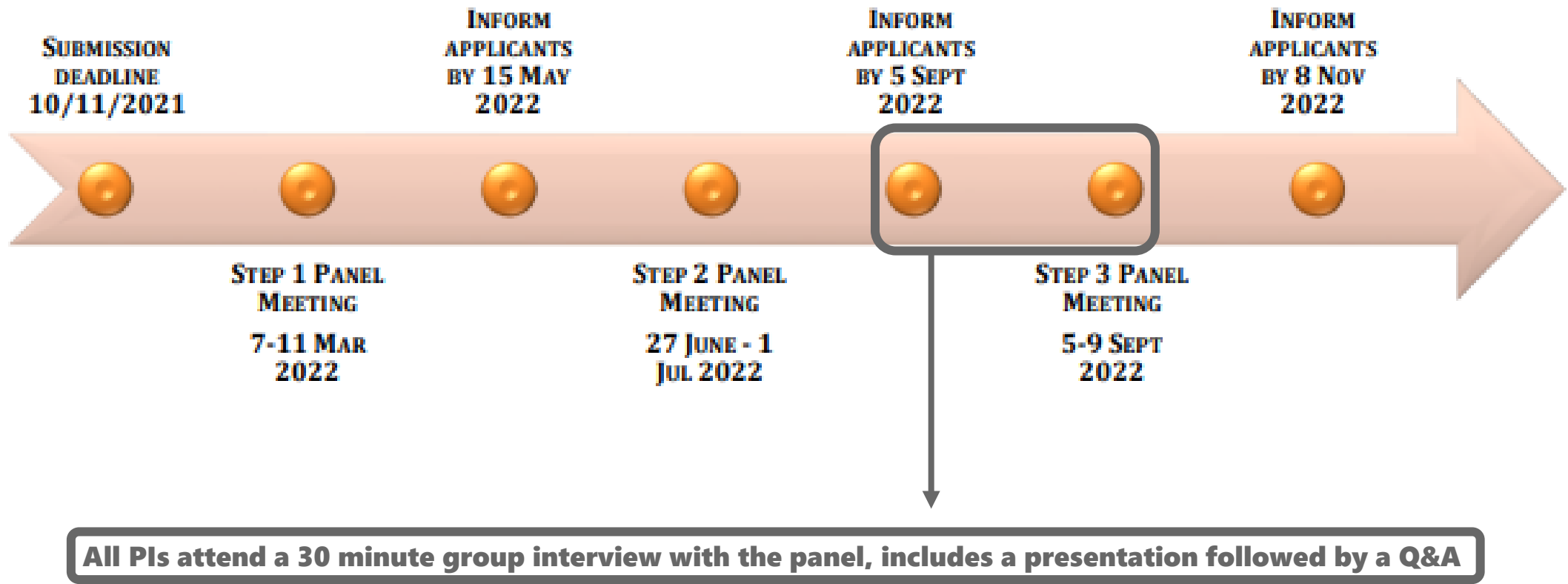
- The Process



Evaluation Process Timeframe (2022 call)

*This diagram will be updated
in the 2023 SyG Information
for Applicants*

*Use the 2023 call
documents when they
become available*



Evaluation Outcomes

Proposal Grading	Stage	Funded?	Reapplication Restrictions?
A	3	If sufficient budget	None
B	3	No	None
B	2	No	None
B	1	No	None
C	1	No	1 Year

Proposals which do not progress to Step 2 have “demand management” restrictions

- Synergy Grant calls only produce restrictions for future Advanced Grant Calls
- Restrictions from Horizon 2020 apply in Horizon Europe.



2023 Call Resubmission Restrictions

Call to which the Principal Investigator applied under previous ERC Work Programmes and proposal evaluation outcome	2023 ERC calls to which a Principal Investigator is <u>not</u> eligible
* 2021 and 2022 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant or 2022 Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity Starting, Consolidator, Advanced, and Synergy Grant
2021 Starting, Consolidator, or Advanced Grant	C at Step 1 Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grant
* 2022 Synergy Grant	A or B at Step 3 No restrictions
	B at Step 1 or 2 No restrictions
	C at Step 1 Advanced and Synergy Grant
2022 Starting, Consolidator, or Advanced Grant	A or B at Step 2 No restrictions
	B or C at Step 1 Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grant

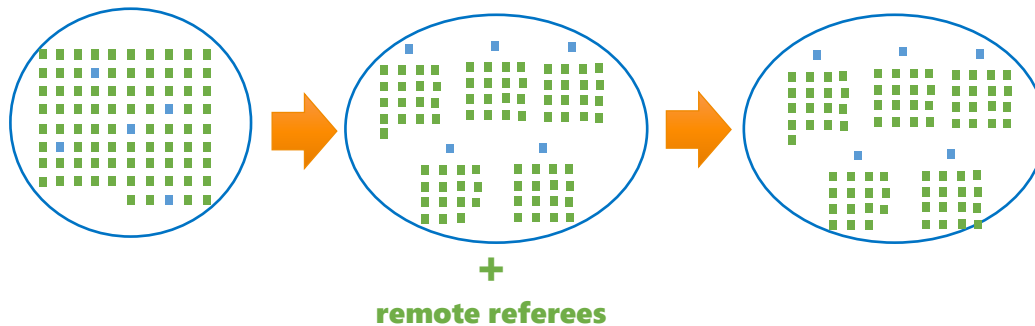
More lenient restrictions for Synergy Grant

Score-based Restrictions only apply to Synergy calls from previous Synergy calls

- Potential restriction **from** Synergy proposals can only apply to future Synergy and Advanced Calls.
- No restrictions **for** Synergy proposals from prior Starting or Consolidator calls
- If you are eligible for Starting or Consolidator calls, currently there is no jeopardy submitting a Synergy call (other than in cases of research integrity issues).

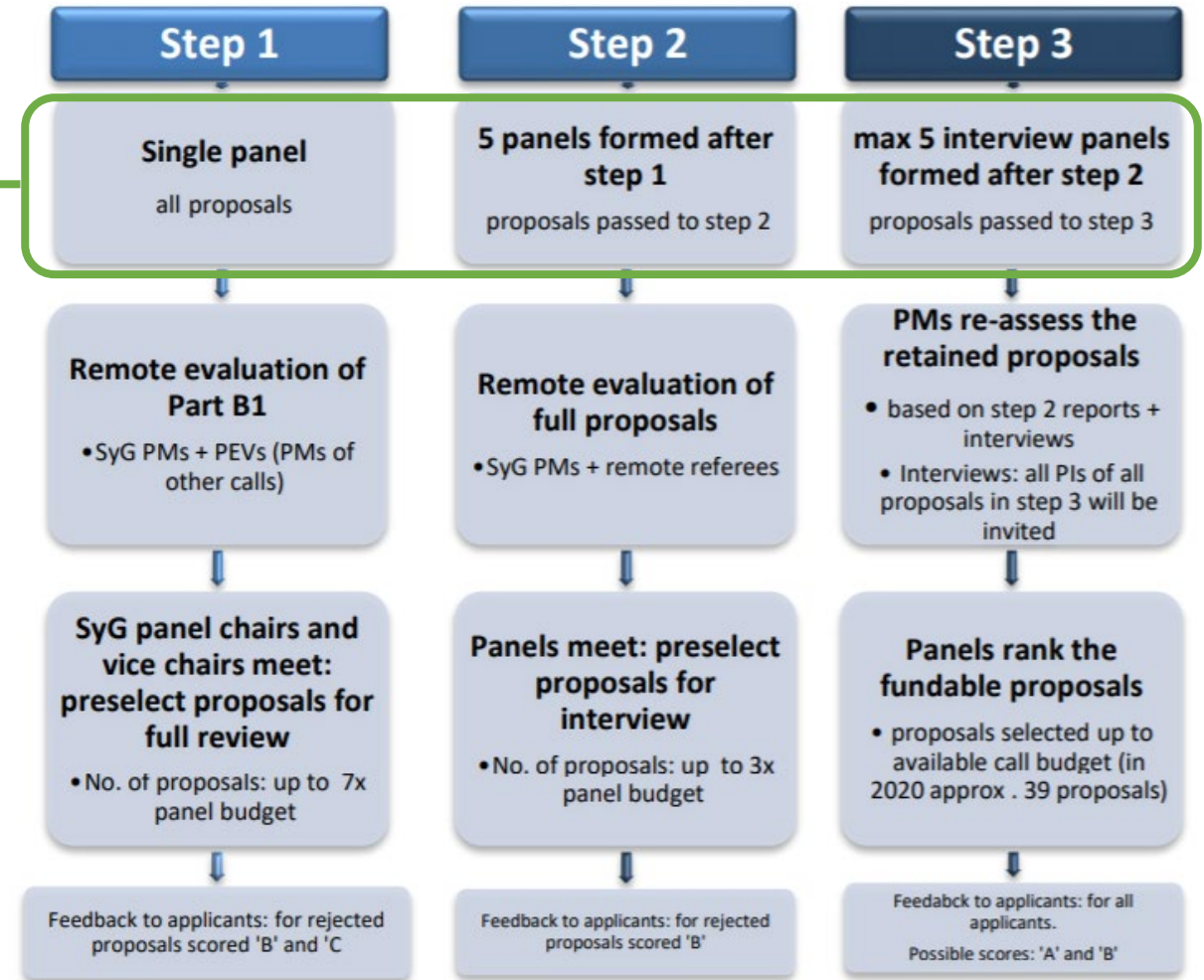
Evaluation process for Synergy Grant Calls

Dynamic panels reform at each step to adapt to multi-disciplinary submissions.



More detail on dynamic panel reconfigurations in:

- [Information for Applicants \(page 11\)](#)
- [Guidance to Peer Reviewers \(page 4\)](#)



Panels not
involved
yet

Eligibility Check

ERC Executive Agency and Eligibility Committee
ensure proposals are eligible for funding

Part A

*Administrative Forms
and Abstract*

- General Info
- Participating Institutions
- Budget & Description of Resources
- Ethics Check

Part B1

*Proposal Overview
and PI Track Record*

- Cover page and summary
- Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
- CV (2 pages)
- Funding ID
- Track Record (2 pages)

Part B2

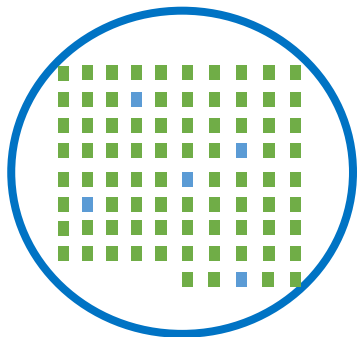
*Detailed Research
Proposal*

- State of the art
- Objectives
- Methodology

(Total of 14 pages)
+ Budget report from Part A

Annexes

Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents



Step 1 Evaluation

85 Panel Members and Chairs without any predefined structure remotely
They evaluate Part B1 from all the proposals submitted which passed the eligibility check

Part A

*Administrative Forms
and Abstract*

- General Info
- Participating Institutions
- Budget & Description of Resources
- Ethics Check

Part B1

*Proposal Overview
and PI Track Record*

- Cover page and summary
- Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
- CV (2 pages)
- Funding ID
- Track Record (2 pages)

Part B2

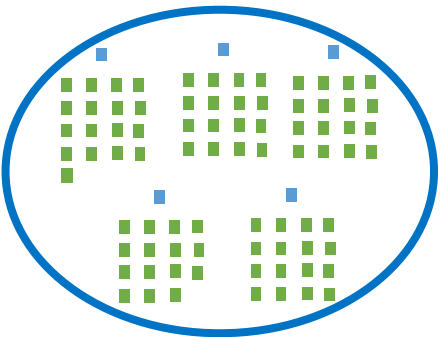
*Detailed Research
Proposal*

- State of the art
- Objectives
- Methodology

(Total of 14 pages)

Annexes

Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents



Step 2 Evaluation

Proposals passed to step 1 are split among 5 Panels of roughly 17 members. Panels are structured to fit the kinds of interdisciplinary proposals submitted. Remote evaluators' evaluation also contributed at this stage.

Part A

*Administrative Forms
and Abstract*

- General Info
- Participating Institutions
- Budget & Description of Resources
- Ethics Check

Part B1

*Proposal Overview
and PI Track Record*

- Cover page and summary
- Extended Synopsis (5 pages)
- CV (2 pages)
- Funding ID
- Track Record (2 pages)

Part B2

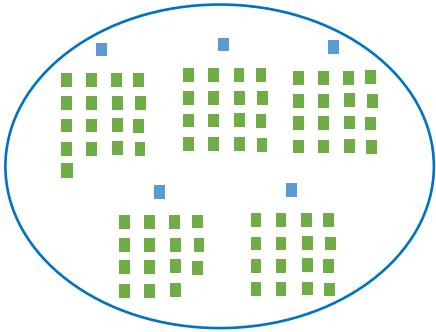
*Detailed Research
Proposal*

- State of the art
- Objectives
- Methodology

(Total of 14 pages)
+ Budget report from Part A

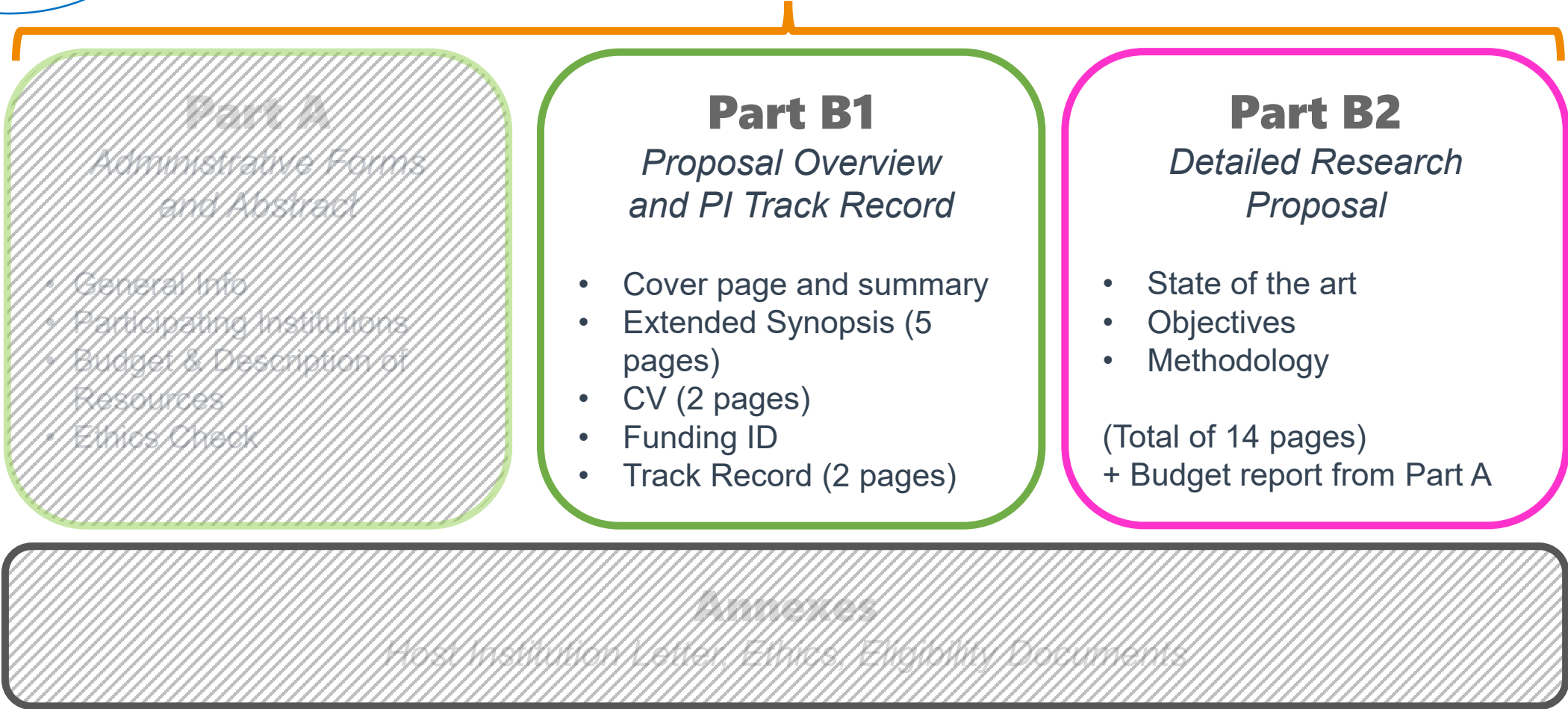
Annexes

Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents



Step 3 Interview

The same 5 Panels interview each applicant group for retained proposals.
Every Principal Investigator expected to attend
Panel then meets to re-assess full proposals in light of interview and make final ranking.

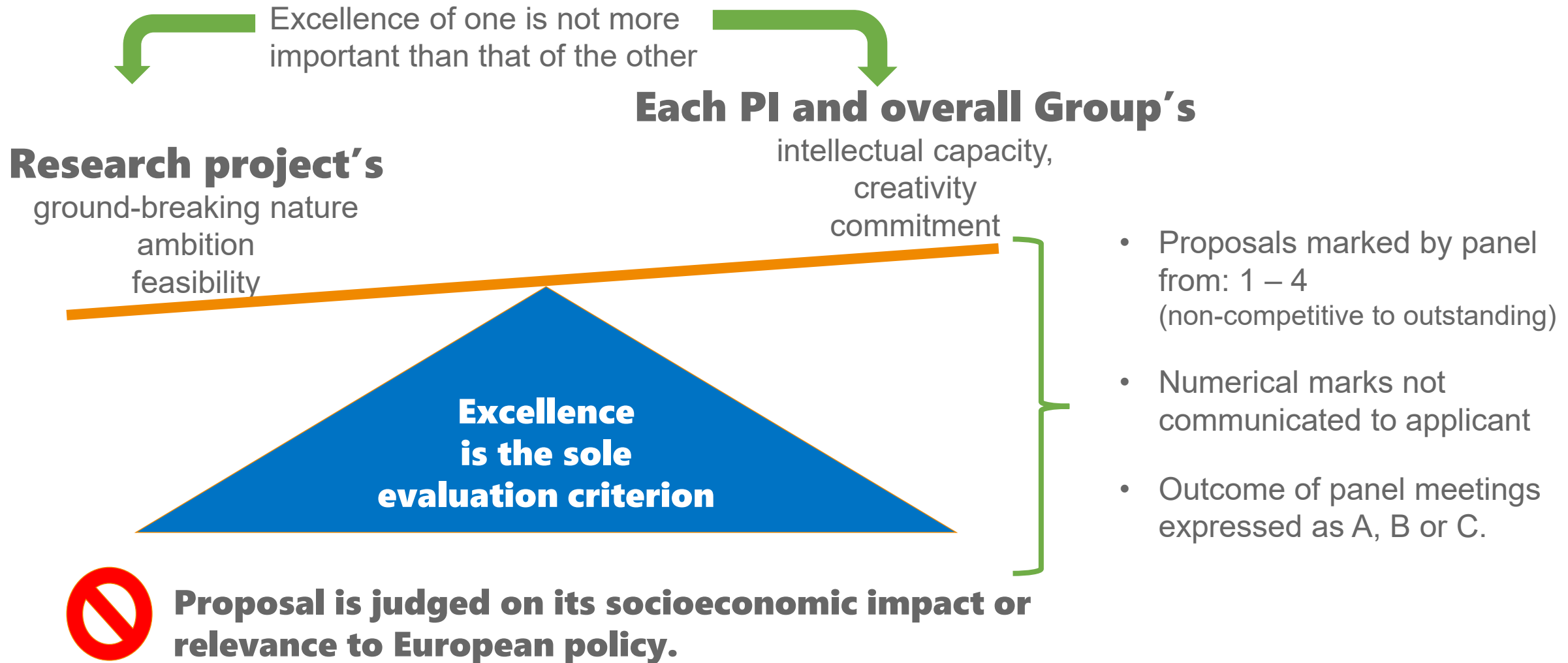


Evaluation

- The Criteria



ERC evaluation criteria



Research Project – Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

The project

To what extent:

- does the proposed **research** address important scientific challenges?
- are the objectives **ambitious** and **beyond the state of the art**
- is the proposed research **high risk/high gain**

The Scientific Approach

To what extent:

- is the outlined scientific approach **feasible** bearing in mind the high risk/high gain.
- are research methodology & working arrangements **appropriate to achieve project goals**
- the proposal involves the **development of novel methodology**
- are the **timescales, resources** and **PI commitment** **adequate** and properly justified.
- does the Group's proposal **go beyond what individual PIs could achieve**

Principal Investigator - Intellectual capacity and creativity

To what extent:

Each Principal Investigator (PI)

- has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- does the PI has/have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?
- Remember each Synergy PI must address the criteria of one ERC Grantee profile: Starting, Consolidator or Advanced.

To what extent:

Synergy Grant Group

- Has the group demonstrated they bring together the necessary know-how (skills, experience, disciplines and teams)
- What is necessary is defined by the project objectives – the project idea has to be a clear justification for group work.

Synergy PIs at different career stages

“Researchers of any age and career stage can apply for up to six years funding.

No specific eligibility criteria regarding the academic training are foreseen for PIs applying for ERC Synergy Grants.

*The Principal Investigators must **present an early achievement track-record or a ten-year track-record**, whichever is most appropriate for their career stage”*

2022 Synergy Information for Applicants



The 3 ERC track-record profiles are a scale of benchmarks for applicants (potential → independence → achievements) with different expectations for no. of publications

Profiles defined in ERC Work Programme

Starting Grant: Page 19

Consolidator Grant: Page 20

Advanced Grant: Page 21-22

PhD certificate/award date not strictly requested for any applicant in 2022

[SyG Information for Applicants](#)



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2023 Call PhD reference rule change

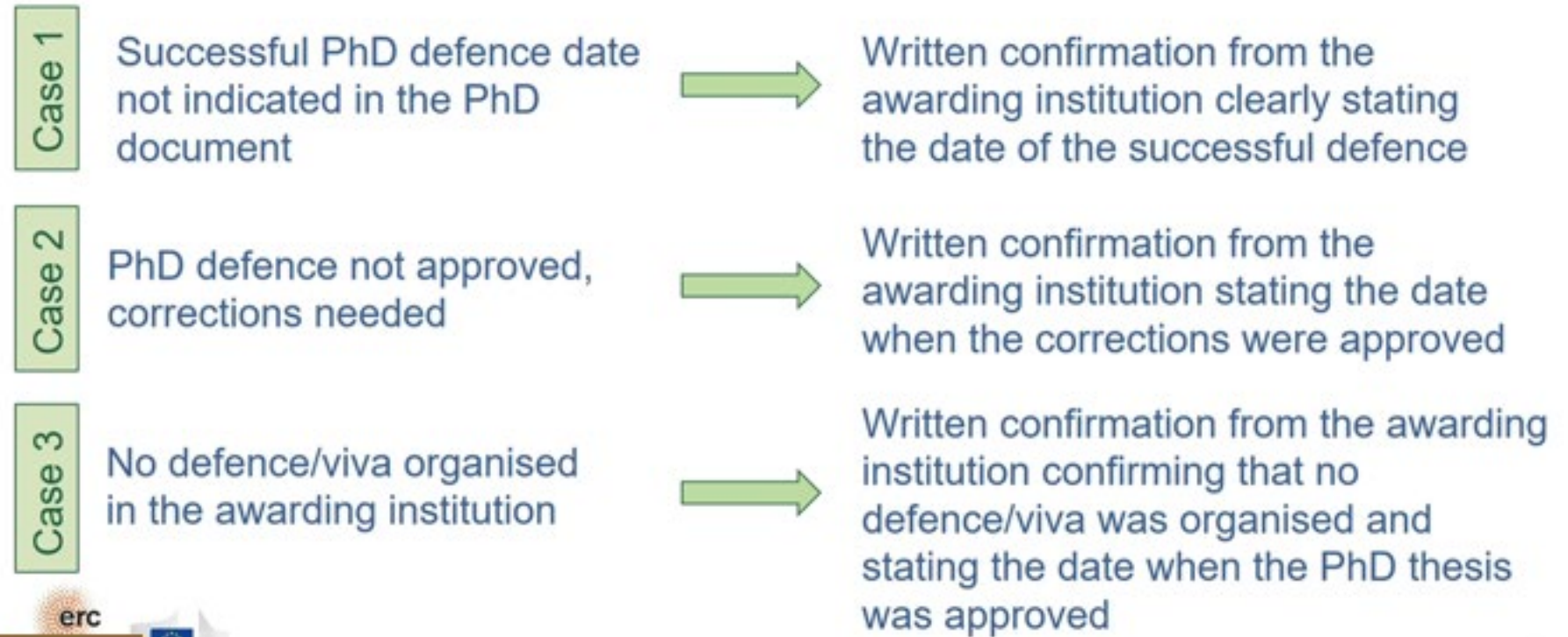
Links here are for 2022 Work Programme & Guidance.

Use the 2023 call documents when they become available

PhD certificate/award date not strictly requested for any applicant in [2022 Information for Applicants](#)

This may be useful for those looking at 2023 StG and 2024 CoG call

New features in 2023 PhD reference date for eligibility: Scenarios



Changes in the Evaluation Criteria – novelty since 2022



Guidance now asks for some description of how the Synergy Group will work as a team evaluated from as early as Step 1.

Guidance text with tracked changes from previous version

- **Evaluation of the Principal Investigators (previously evaluated only from step 2 onwards):**
 - To what extent does the Synergy Grant Group successfully **demonstrate in the proposal that it brings together the know-how elements**— such as skills, **knowledge**, experience, expertise, disciplines, **methods**, **approaches**, teams – **necessary to address the proposed research question?**
(see SyG Information for Applicants: page 16)
- **Evaluation of the Research Project – Scientific Approach:**
 - ‘To what extent do the Principal Investigators succeed in **proposing a combination of scientific approaches elements** ~~put forward in the proposal~~ that are crucial to address the scope and complexity of the research questions to be tackled?’

Make sure these questions are addressed in Part B1 already, as only the extended synopsis is evaluated at step 1.

Evaluation criteria about your Group

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)?
- To what extent is the proposed research high risk-high gain (i.e. if successful the payoffs will be very significant, but there is a high risk that the research project does not entirely fulfil its aims)?

Scientific Approach

- To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high risk/high gain? (based on the Extended Synopsis)
- To what extent does the proposal go beyond what the individual Principal Investigators could achieve alone? (based on the Extended Synopsis)
- To what extent do the Principal Investigators succeed in proposing a combination of scientific approaches that are crucial to address the scope and complexity of the research questions to be tackled? (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, evaluated only in step 2 and 3)?
- To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology (based on the research proposal, evaluated only in step 2 and 3)?
- To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified (based on the research proposal, evaluated only in step 2 and 3)?

2. Principal Investigators

Intellectual capacity and creativity

- To what extent have the PIs demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- To what extent do the PIs have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Synergy Grant Group

- To what extent does the Synergy Grant Group successfully demonstrate in the proposal that it brings together the know-how – such as skills, experience, expertise, disciplines, teams – necessary to address the proposed research question? (based on the Extended Synopsis)

“The ERC expects the composition of a Synergy Grant Group to remain unchanged throughout the lifetime of the grant. “

Taken from:
the [ERC 2022 Synergy Grant Information for Applicants](#)



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Brussels

Typical Reasons for Rejection

Proposed Project & Scientific Approach

- Scope: Too narrow or too broad or not focused enough
- Incremental research, not ground breaking
- Work plan not detailed enough or unclear.
- Collaboration approach is not suitable/creative
- Insufficient risk management

Principal investigator Groups

- Insufficient track-record
- Group is missing an element deemed necessary to carry out project objectives
- Insufficient synergies or complementarities between the PIs
- Insufficient experience in leading projects

Other Points for Consideration

- Including Open Science and gender dimension



Open Science

Under Horizon Europe, beneficiaries of ERC grants must **ensure open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications** relating to their ERC project results.

Open access means accessible on:

- a trusted repository
- under a CC BY (or equivalent) licence (either to the 'author accepted manuscript' or the published 'version of record').

For long-text publications like monographs

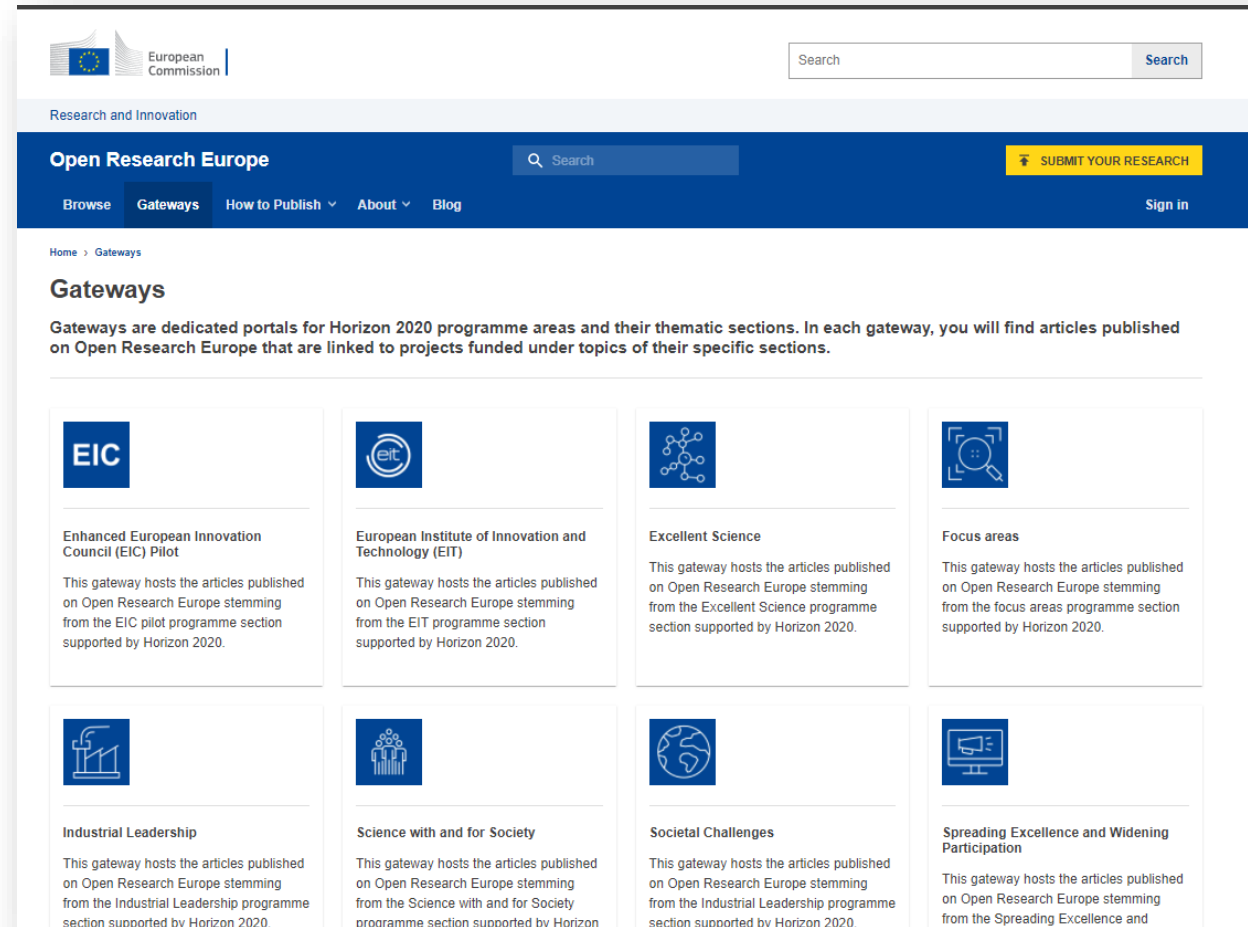
- a CC BY-NC / ND / NC-ND licence (or equivalent) is acceptable.
- The ERC Scientific Council recommends the use of the OAPEN Open Books library (<https://oapen.org>) as repository for monographs and other books as well as book chapters.



- ❖ [Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020](#)
- ❖ www.openaire.eu
- ❖ <https://www.fosteropenscience.eu/>

Publishing Fees will be eligible for funding if the venue is fully open access (i.e. a full open access journal or book, or an open access publishing platform like, e.g., Open Research Europe)

Open Research Europe



Scholarly publishing platform that will provide Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe beneficiaries with a no-cost full open access peer-reviewed publishing service, across all fields of research



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Brussels

<https://open-research-europe.ec.europa.eu/>

Why Gender?

Sex and Gender dimension of your project

- **Not a strict requirement in of itself, but..**
- **Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation can make your proposal more competitive**
- **Proper consideration of sex and gender in research design is often evaluated as added excellence to the research question and methodology.**
- **Some basic questions you can ask in project design:**
 - Are some of your findings going to be gender specific?
 - Do you justify your gender choices in the research design to peer reviewers?
 - If the topic is not relevant to Sex & gender, do you explicitly acknowledge that consideration?

Find more tips and guidance:

In a recent [ERC workshop](#) about how ERC-style excellence in different domains can be interrelated with the Sex and Gender Dimension.

Gender rules for eligibility and in the Part A form

- A Gender Equality Plan (GEP) has to be in place for the Host Institutions at point of submission
- GEPs are the Host Institution's responsibility, it is not the Principal Investigator's responsibility
- Proposal PI and team members' gender and career stage details requested in Part A are not seen by evaluators.
- These Part A personal details are used in a quantitative way by the Commission to monitor progress towards gender equality and better careers in the European research sector



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Things to remember



The Abstract



It's the first thing that everyone looks at



Panel chairs use key words in the abstract to choose the panel members who will carry out a closer review at Step 1



Mention interdisciplinary elements if they are relevant to your research question/approach



This text will become public if the proposal is successful



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ERC Proposal Advice

Ask yourself

Does the proposal go beyond the state of the art ?

Is it timely? (Why wasn't it done in the past? Is it feasible now?)

What is the risk? Is it justified by the potential gain? Do I have a plan for managing the risk?

Why our my proposal important?

Why are we the best/only people to carry it out?

Why am I the best person for my role in the group?

Am I internationally competitive as a researcher at my career stage and in my discipline?

Am I able to manage a 5-year project with a substantial budget?

Key points

Read all call documentation and evaluation criteria

Be specific and don't provide unsupported opinions or comments

Clearly address ALL of the evaluation criteria

Make it easy for evaluators to find the information

Pitch to generalists: evaluators will be experts, but not necessarily in your exact area

Use clear and concise language and explain country/research area specific jargon

Include diagrams, images, tables if appropriate and actually helpful

Research previous and current projects

Find colleagues to proof read drafts with the evaluation criteria



Resources

- [ERC 2022 SyG Information for Applicants](#)
- [PDF Application Form template](#)
incl. B1, B2, CV and Host Institution Letter (editable versions will be Funding and Tenders Portal when it opens)
- [Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement](#)
- [Novelties in the Horizon Europe MGA](#) – Commission Stakeholder Workshop video
- [ERC YouTube Channel](#) with explainer videos
- ERC FAQ <https://erc.europa.eu/funding/frequently-asked-questions>
- [ERC Information System](#) and [Project database](#) to search for examples of past Synergy Grant Projects
- Guide for Peer Reviewers on Synergy Calls ([latest available version, for 2020 call](#). Look out for the 2021 version which we expect to be published soon)

Remember Read the Information for Applicants and submit your proposal early and often!



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*Links here are for 2022 Work
Programme & Guidance.*

*Use the 2023 call
documents when they
become available*

Watch our 2022 guest presentation

Find the recording and slides on the [event page for the ERC 2022 Synergy Grant: Call Information Webinar 1 of 2](#) (UKRO Portal)

- Topic of research
- How the put the team and the proposal together
- Tips from their experience in the evaluation process

The project is due to start this week, find out more on [CORDIS](#)

MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester


Left to right:

Rob Lucas (Manchester);
Neuroscience

**Gebhard Schertler (PSI,
Switzerland);
(Lead)**
Structural Biology

Peter Hegemann (Humboldt
University, Berlin);
Photobiology/chemistry

Sonja Kleinlogel (Berne)
Physiology



PAUL
Robert Lucas

Gregor Cicchetti (PSI)
Scientific Relations Manager

Xavi Deupi (PSI)
Structural Biology

01:32:03 / 02:09:25

2.0x CC



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Any questions?



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