



## ERC 2024 Advanced Grant Call Webinar

Session 2: Proposal submission and evaluation

12 June 2024 erc-uk@ukro.ac.uk







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## What will be covered in this webinar?





Recap about the ERC



Submission Process



How the proposal is evaluated



ERC Guest speakers: New 'lump sum' approach and Q&A



### **Guest speakers-Lump Sum Approach in AdG call**

## Line Fredslund Volkers

## **Catherine Merolla**



**European Research Council** 

Established by the European Commission



## Housekeeping

- All participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar.
- Please use the Q&A function to submit questions.
- A chat function is available and will be monitored.
- You can 'up vote' your favourite questions on Q&A.
- We will be recording this session.
- Slides will be shared after the webinar on the event page.







## Update on UK Participation in Horizon Europe

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## **UK Association to Horizon Europe**

- On 7 Sept 2023 the European Commission and UK Government reached an agreement about the UK's association to Horizon Europe.
- From 1 Jan 2024 UK organisations can bid into Horizon\*, certain that all successful UK applicants will be covered through the UK's association for the remainder of the programme.





## What does this mean?

All successful UK applicants to Horizon will be covered through the UK's association (or through the existing UK funding guarantee) for the rest of the programme.

#### Work Programme 2024

- Calls with a 2024 call identifier will be covered by association.
- Successful applicants will receive funding from the EC for the lifetime of their grant.
- Even if the deadline is in 2023.

#### Work Programme 2023

- Calls with a 2023 call identifier will be covered by the Horizon Europe Guarantee.
- Successful UK applicants will receive funding from the UKRI Guarantee for the lifetime of their grant.
- Even if the deadline is in 2024.
- Applicants must be included as a **beneficiary** in order to receive funding through the Horizon Europe Guarantee.
- UK applicants call continue to apply to calls in Work Programme 2023.

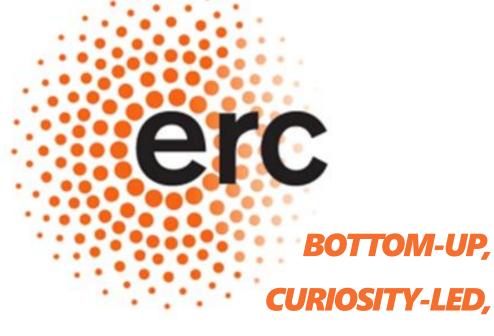
#### Current/On going Grants

- UK participants currently entering into, or going through, the grant agreement preparation phase will receive funding through the Horizon Europe Guarantee for the lifetime of their grant.
- Grants currently receiving guarantee funding, will continue to do so for the lifetime of their grant.



## Recap: brief overview presented in Session 1

## What is the European Research Council?



#### **EXCELLENT RESEARCH**

#### The ERC's mission:

- Support PI-driven frontier research across all fields
- Fund projects purely on the basis of scientific excellence
- Encourage the highest quality research in Europe

#### What makes the ERC unique:

- Excellence is the only criteria
- Funding is distributed on researcher demand
- Freedom given to PIs to lead their project with anyone in the world in their team



## **ERC Frontier Research Grant Schemes**

#### **The ERC funds**

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

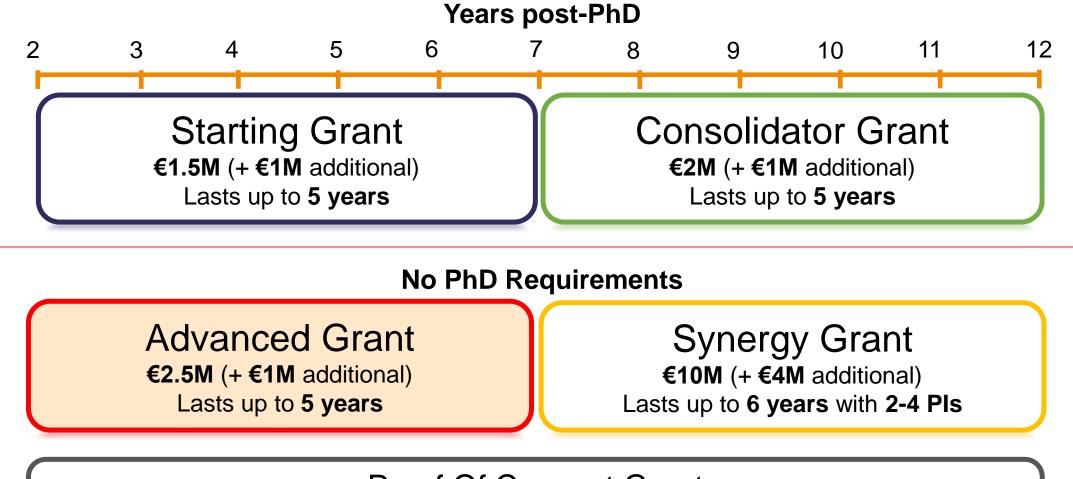
#### **Projects are led by a Principal Investigator**

plus team members (if required) NOT the same as a collaborative grant

#### Funds any field of research

- Evaluation by 28 expert panels under 3 domains:
  - Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE)
  - Life Sciences (LS)
  - Social Sciences and Humanities (SH)





Proof Of Concept Grant €150k Lump Sum, Lasts for 1.5 years Top-up grants for current ERC grantees



## **2024 Advanced Grant Call Details**

Call Identifier	ERC-2024-AdG
Budget	€578 Million
Estimated no. grants funded	237





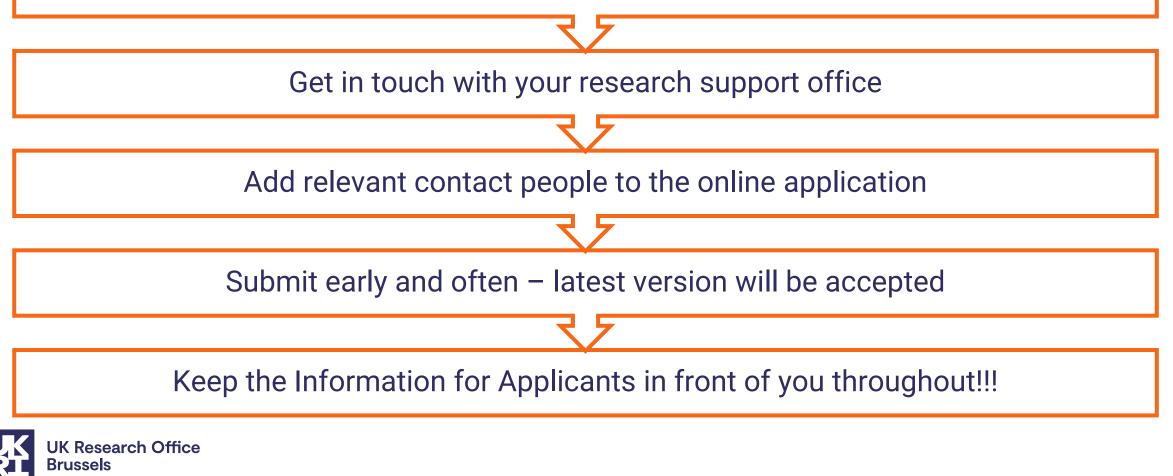
#### N.B – Deadline is 17:00 CET (Brussels time) Not BST.

## **ERC Submission Process**

- Online forms
- Documents to upload & application templates

## **Key Steps for Proposal Submission**

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



## **ERC Proposal Parts**

#### Part A

Administrative Forms
 and Abstract

#### Part B1

 Proposal Overview and PI Track Record

#### Part B2

 Detailed Research Proposal

#### Annexes

 Host Institution Letter, Ethics, Eligibility Documents

**1-step submission:** all parts of the proposal are 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.



A combined template of these forms is available on the EC website.

## Online forms on the EC Portal

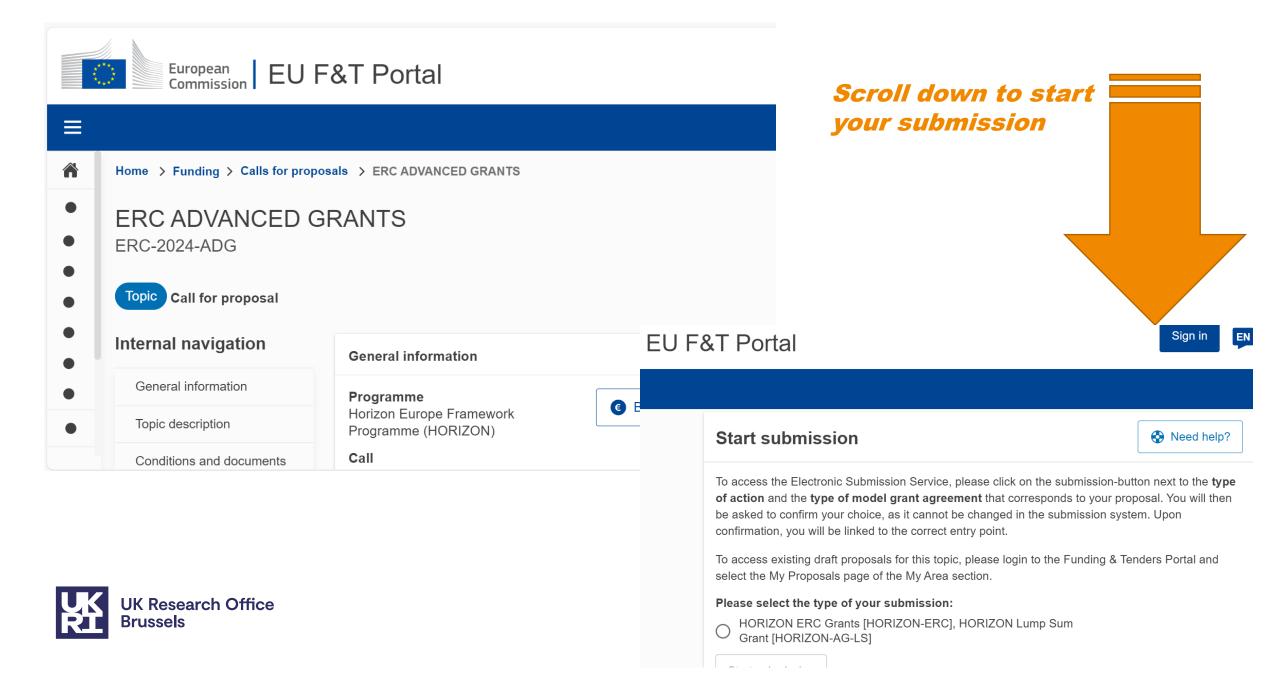
## **Find the call on the Funding & Tenders Portal**

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Calls for proposals			
Calls for proposals are funding opportunities issued by the European Union institutions, agencies and bodies. These are direct financial contributions, known as grants, that are awarded to third-party beneficiaries (e.g., rese organisations, public entities, non-governmental organisations, and private companies) to engage in activities that serve EU policies.	arch		
More details 🗠			ſ
Filters 1 item(s) found	Dpening date / Publication da	te	~ ↓
Quick search			
Select Programme (Horizon Europe (HORIZON) (8)			
Programming period V ERC-2024-ADG   Call for proposal		Open For Sub	mission
Horizon Europe (HORIZON) V Opening date: 29 May 2024   Next deadline: 29 August 2024   Single-stage			
ERC-2024-ADG ~       Programme: Horizon Europe (HORIZON)   Type of action: HORIZON ERC Grants			
Submission status ✓ Items per page: 50 ▼ Showing 1–1 of 1		K (	1 • •
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Share this page			





Use the topic search

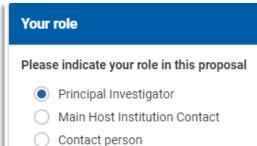


# First page of the submission platform

#### IDENTIFY THE HOST INSTITUTION (<u>PIC number</u>)

Find your organisation			
PIC 9	Short name		250
Search for your organisation Organisations you have been previou	usly associated with.	. (Click to select)	

#### WHAT IS YOUR ROLE ON THE PROPOSAL?





#### **BASIC DETAILS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL**

<u>.</u>

## Select your primary evaluation panel (e.g. LS3/SH1/PE4 etc)

See a full list of ERC panels and keywords in <u>Annex 4 of the Information</u> <u>for Applicants</u> document (from page 30)

Anything you enter in this part of the form can be edited later!

## **ERC Panel Structure Open to any field of research**

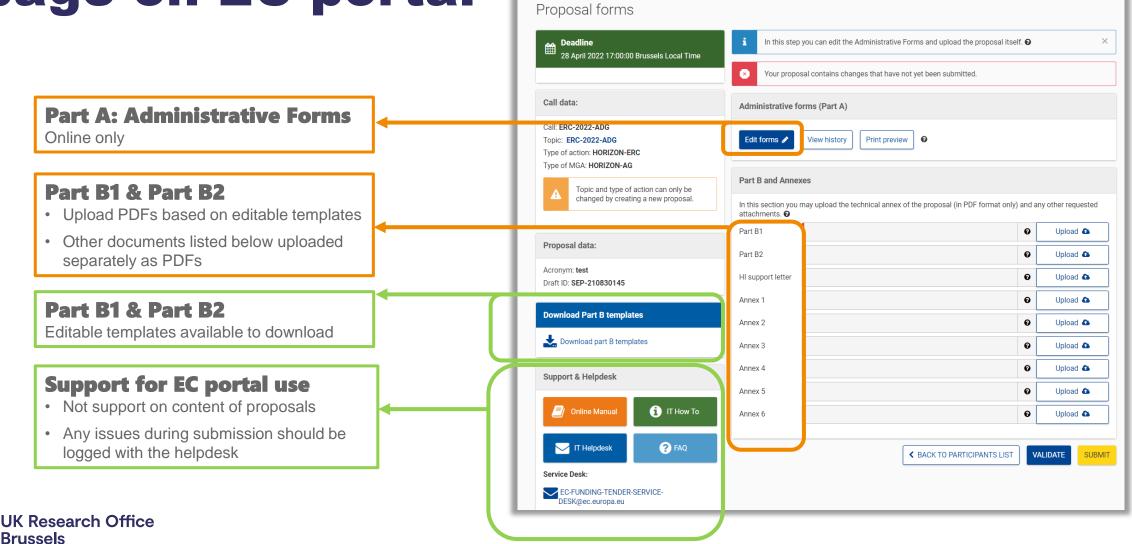
<b>Physical Sciences &amp; Engineering</b>	Life Sciences*	Social Sciences & Humanities
PE1 Mathematics	LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms,	SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations
<b>PE2</b> Fundamental Constituents of Matter	Structures & Functions	<b>SH2</b> Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
Particle	<b>LS2</b> Integrative Biology: Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems	SH3 The Social World and its Diversity
<b>PE3</b> Condensed Matter Physics		SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
<b>PE4</b> Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences	<b>LS3</b> Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology	SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production
<b>PE5</b> Synthetic Chemistry and Materials	<b>LS4</b> Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing	<b>SH6</b> The Study of the Human Past
<b>PE6</b> Computer Science and Informatics	<b>LS5</b> Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous	<b>SH7</b> Human Mobility, Environment, and Space*
<b>PE7</b> Systems and Communication Engineering	System	SH8 Studies of Cultures and Arts*
<b>PE8</b> Products and Processes Engineering	LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy	
PE9 Universe Sciences	LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of	
PE10 Earth System Science	Human Diseases	
PE11 Materials Engineering*	<b>LS8</b> Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution	
	<b>LS9</b> Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering	



\*Since 2021 all domains have changed slightly, check again to find your proposal's best fit!

- **PE11** and **SH7** and **SH8** panels are newly added, split off from pre-existing panels
- Descriptors under Life Sciences reshuffled, changing the remit of existing panels

# Main proposal page on EC portal



## **Avoid IT issues on the Funding & Tenders Portal**

$\checkmark$
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Validate your proposal regularly



Avoid using special characters for filenames Only alphanumerical characters (A-Z, a-z, 0-9), \_ (underscore), -(dash), . (dot) or space are allowed.



#### Submit early and often

Each submission overwrites the last, so only your final version will go to evaluators



EC unlikely to accept anything after deadline if there are IT issues and no submission at all

#### Having a problems? Contact the <u>EC's IT Helpdesk</u> ASAP

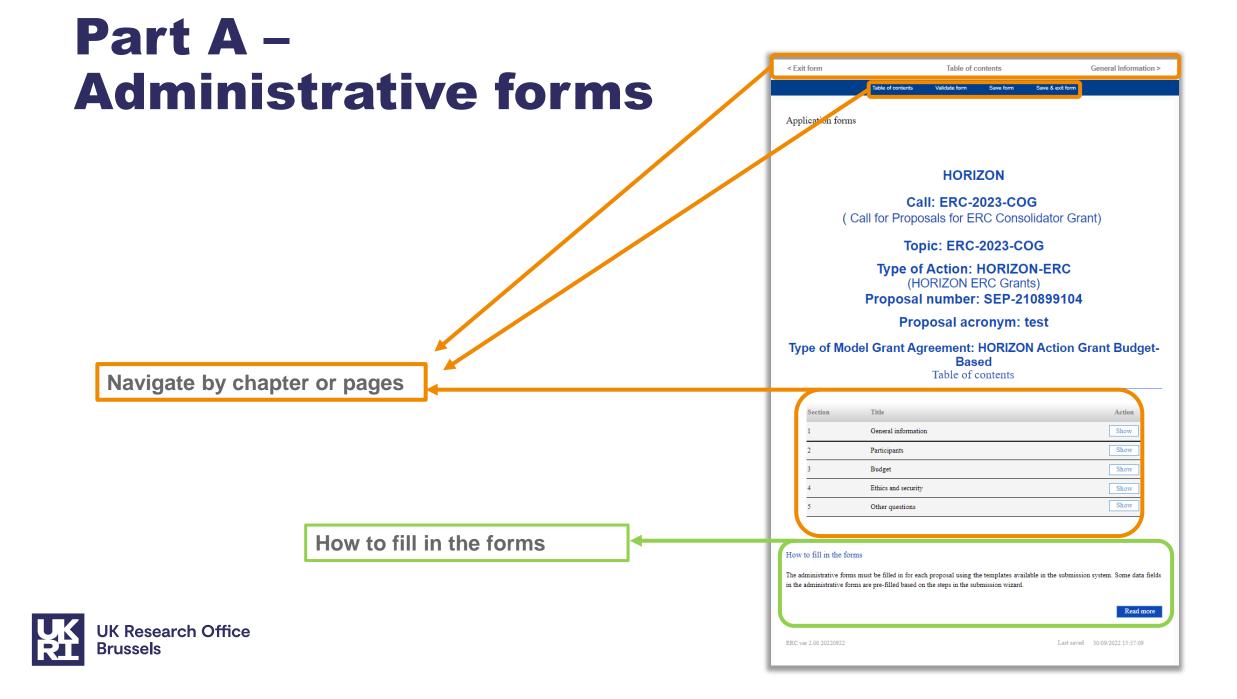
Log the problem with screenshots and clear description of the problem.

Once you have contacted the helpdesk and your issue has been logged, you can try to resolve the issue with minor fixes, e.g.:

- Try using a different browser or computer.
- Try again at another time of day when traffic might be lower on the portal.

Call the EC IT Helpdesk if it is urgent: +32 2299 2222

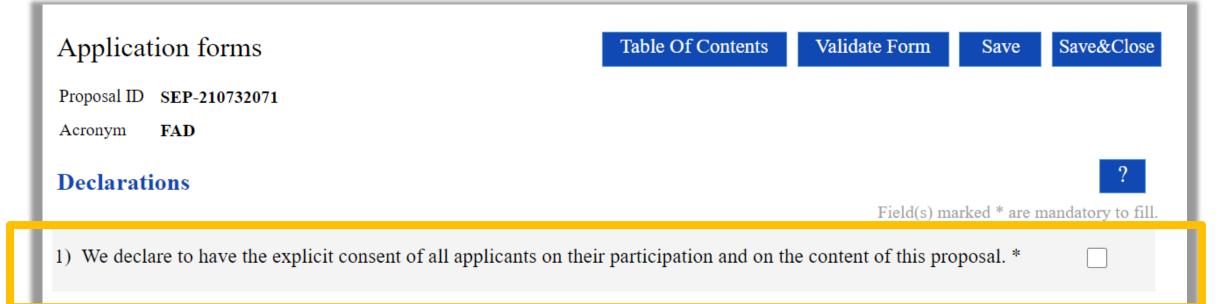




## Part A – PI Declaration of Consent

Declaration in the online form, Keep your written consents on file

- Written consents should not be submitted with the application, but the applicant must ensure they have written consent from all participants prior to the call submission deadline.
- The written consent **doesn't need to be an official letter**, our understand is that an email with the essential info and clear consent would work.
- **ERC Executive Agency may request the written consent after the deadline,** as evidence of research integrity, any time during the call process.



## **Part A - Abstract**

First thing that everyone looks at

Used by the panel chair to choose which panel members will undertake the Step 1 review



Mention interdisciplinary elements



IK Research Office grussels Public facing – a version will be available on CORDIS if your project is selected

## Part A- Other questions

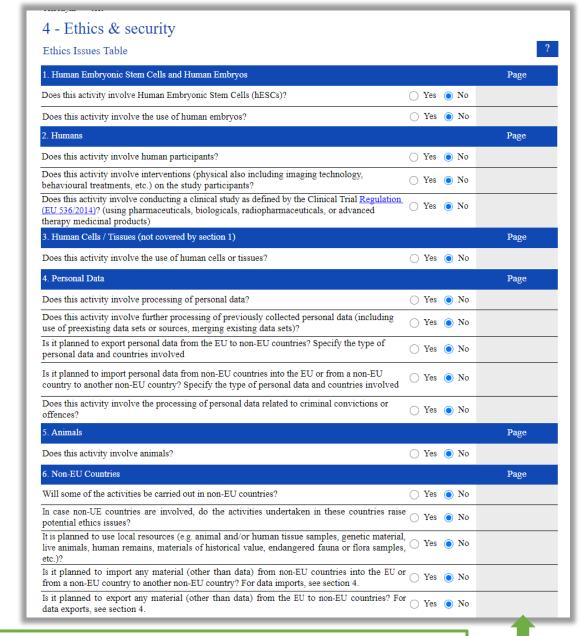
- Working time commitment
- Eligibility requirements
- Consent
- Sharing data
- Excluded reviewers



5 - Other questions	?
Academic data	
PhD reference date	?
Earliest date of PhD or equivalent - DD/MM/YYYY	Ľ:
Working time commitment	
Please indicate your percentage of working time in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country over the period of the grant. Please note that you are expected to spend a minimum of 50% of your total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.*	
Please indicate the % of working time you (as PI) will dedicate to the project over the period of the grant. Please note that PIs are expected to dedicate a minimum of working time to the project (30% for AdG, 40% for CoG and 50% for StG). The personnel cost for the PI provided in section 3-Budget cannot be higher than the percentage indicated here. This information will be provided to the experts at Step 2 together with the section 3-Budget.*	
ERC eligibility requirements	
Please acknowledge that you are aware of the eligibility requirements for applying for this ERC call as specified in the ERC Annual Work Programme, and please certify that, to the best of your knowledge your application is in compliance with all these requirements. Please note that your proposal may be declared ineligible at any point during the evaluation or granting process if it is found not to be compliant with these eligibility criteria.*	
Consent obtained from participants and researchers	
Please confirm that you (as PI) have the written consent of all participants on their involvement and the content of this proposal, as well as of any researcher mentioned in the proposal on their participation in the project (either as team member, collaborator, other PI or member of the advisory board). We may request you to provide proof of the written consent obtained at any time during the evaluation.*	
Sharing evaluation data	

## Part A – Ethics & Security questions

- Follow Horizon Europe guidance document: <u>'How to complete your ethics self-assessment'</u>
- UK applicants should **answer 'yes' on questions about non-EU activity.** This will not affect eligibility.
- Answering 'yes' on certain questions may require a **brief text response** from the applicant.
- Applicants can **upload documents** related to some questions.
- Free text character limits: 5000 per text box
- If the character limit is too short, we recommend using a separate document uploaded as an optional PDF annex on the main submission page. Make a reference to the annex in the Ethics text box in the application form.



Include page references to relevant sections in Part B1 & B2 for each issue if you answer 'Yes'



# Part B & supporting documentation

## **Supporting Documents**

#### UPLOAD AS PDF DOCUMENTS

## About the Applicant

- Documentation to support extension of the eligibility window (if relevant)
- ➢Birth certificates
- ≻Doctor's letters
- ➢ Proof of leave from an employer or previous employer➢ Etc.

#### About the Institution

- Host Institution support
   letter
- Documentation to support track record (if applicable)

#### About the Project

- Ethics documents if requested by the Part A Ethics questionnaire (e.g. ethics committee decisions, licenses etc.)
- If the character limit in the Ethics questionnaire is too short, upload appropriate responses as PDF annexes.

#### b) carry wat the work to be performed, as it will be identified in Amer. I all the Agreement, rating into consideration the quotile rate of the principal kernedgeter;

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- meet its chilg does under the Agreement.
- gravitational principal investigators with a copy of the signed Agroement;
   gravitation the principal investigator's scientific independence, in particular for the
- are of the budget to achieve the scientific objectives;
   anthorize to publish as senior author and invite as examples these who have
  - contributed cabstantially to the work;
  - 80 preparation of scientific reports for the project (action): b) selection and supervision of the actor two assessment (based /actioners) for
  - The applyance legal earlies or other legal entities), in him with the profiles acceled to conduct the research and in accordance with the appleant legal early 's small
  - management practices,
     symptotic to apply independently for funding;
- r) processing or apply interpretation for training.
   ri) access to appropriate space and healthins for conducting the research
- previde during the implementation of the project (action) research support to the principal investigator and the trans members (regarding infrastructure, equipment;
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   are not in the electronic evolution y system (see Activity 31 all the Agreement);
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- ansare that the principal investigator enjoys alogants:
   a conditions for annual, sistance and parental leave;
   acceptational books and universe simulation.
  - (i) incurate order the general social security scheme, each as pension rights:

Official documents can be submitted **in any EU official language** 

OR

certified translation into any EU language



# **Proposal Formatting & Templates**

Page limits will be strictly applied

Page formatting will be systematically checked by the ERCEA

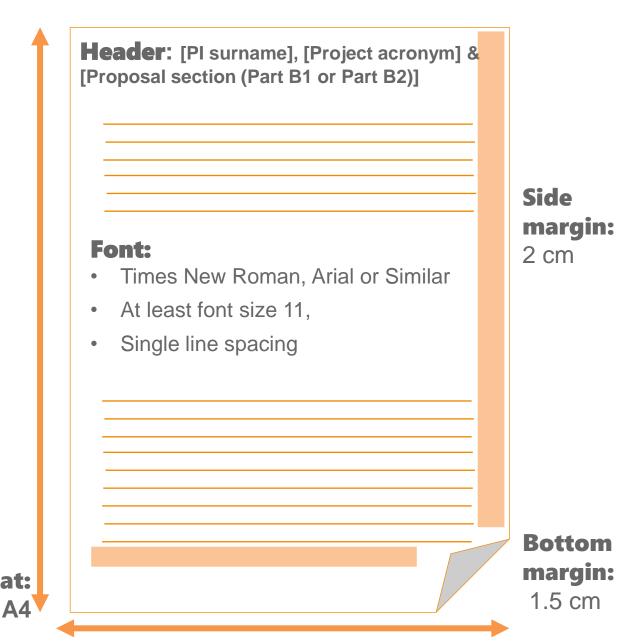
## **References** do not count towards page limit

#### **Templates**:

• <u>2024 Advanced Grant application</u> form template (PDF version)

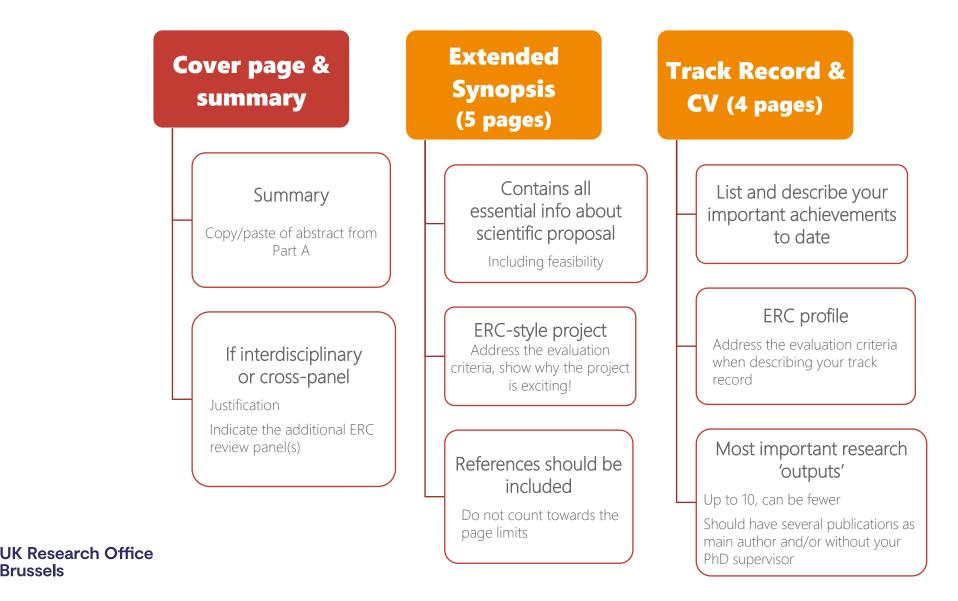


**Page Format:** 



## Part B1: Evaluated at Step 1 & Step 2

Brussels



## Writing your CV and Track Record

• Curriculum Vitae and Track Record will be merged into one single template of up to four pages.

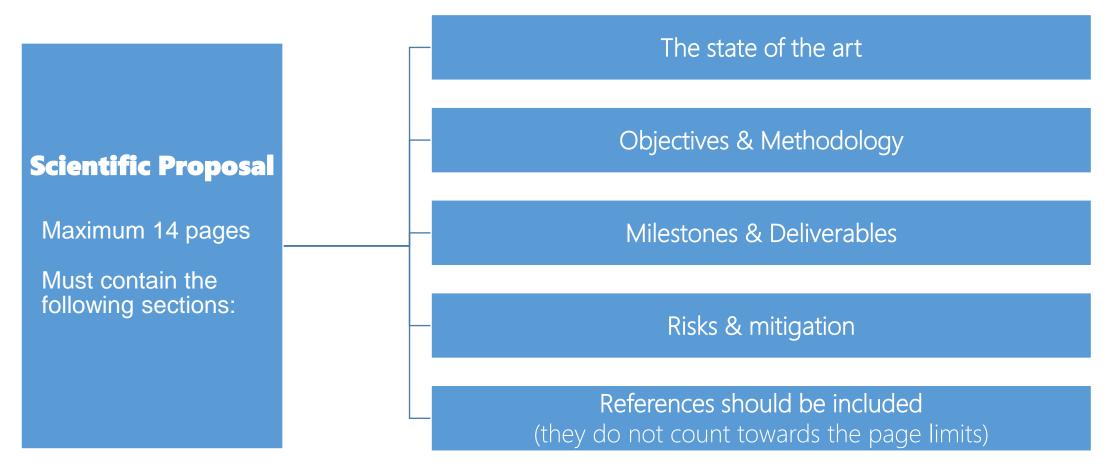
The applicant is expected to include their personal details, education, key qualifications, current position(s) and relevant previous positions, **as well as a list of up to ten research outputs** that demonstrate how the applicant has advanced knowledge in their field with an emphasis on more recent achievements and a list of selected examples of **significant peer recognition** (for example, prizes).

- A template for the CV part is provided but not mandatory.
- The applicant may include a short, factual explanation of the significance of the selected outputs, the applicant's role in producing each of them.
- The applicant may also include relevant additional information on career breaks, diverse 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.





# Part B2 - only seen if proposal is retained for Step 2



Funding I.D (does not count towards page limit)

## Describe the team in Part B1 or B2?

PIs should describe their team in Part B2, including how they fit in with the work plan and methodology

With Part B1's 5 page limit, it is unlikely there will be space for describing the team

The priority in Part B1 is an eye-catching presentation of:

- the Project and
- UK Research Office Brussels
- the Principal Investigator





## **ERC Evaluation Process & Criteria**

#### **Evaluation Process** 31 January 2025

Feedback to unsuccessful applicants about Step 1 evaluation.

Interview invitations sent to successful candidates passed to Step 2

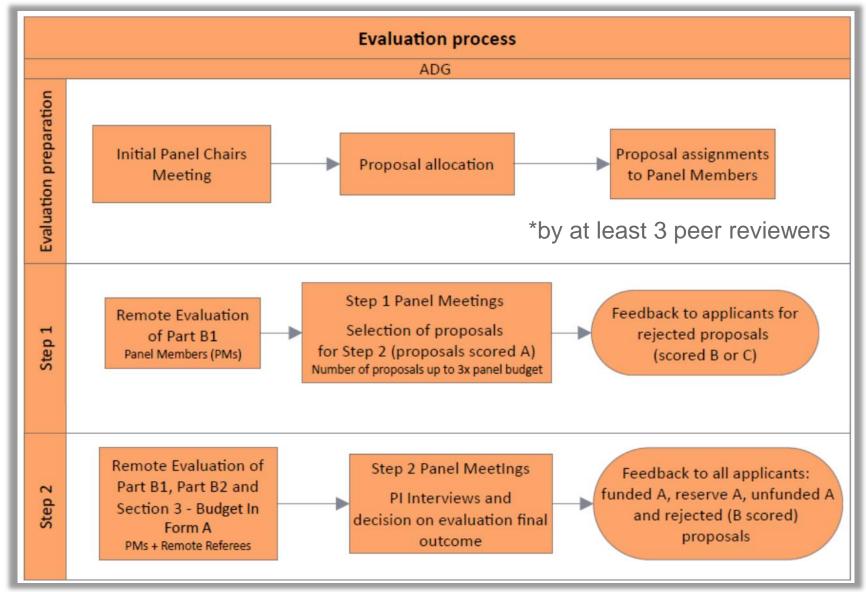
#### August 2025

All applicants informed about Step 2 evaluation

N.B- Now possible to get an 'A' but not proceed to second stage



UK Research Office Brussels



Advanced Grant applicants also have interviews at Step 2 (~30 min presentation and Q&A) WATCH OUR WEBINAR ON INTERVIEWS

## **Evaluation Outcomes**

	Proposal Grading	Stage	Funded?	Reapplication Restrictions?
NEW since 2024	Α	2	If sufficient budget	None
	В	2	No	None
	A invited	1	Invited to Step 2	None
	A not invited	1	No	None
	В	1	No	1 Year
	С	1	No	2 Years

**Proposals which score a B or C at Step 1 have "demand management" restrictions** 



#### **ERC** evaluation criterion Excellence of one aspect is not more important than that of the other **Principal Investigator's** intellectual capacity, **Research project's** creativity ground-breaking nature commitment ambition feasibility Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion Proposals are not judged on socioeconomic impact or relevance to European policy **UK Research Office**

**Brussels** 

- Proposals marked by panel from: 1 – 5 (non-competitive to outstanding)
- Numerical marks not communicated to applicant
- Outcome of panel meetings expressed as A, B or C



## The evaluation criteria

# **1. Research Project - Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility**

To what extent:

- does the proposed research address important scientific challenges?
- are the objectives **ambitious and beyond the state of the art?**

To what extent:

• is the outlined scientific approach **feasible** bearing in mind the high risk/high gain?

The Scientific Approach

**The Project** 

- are the research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve project goals?
- are the timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified?

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2024/wp\_horizon-erc-2024\_en.pdf

## 2. Principal Investigator -Intellectual capacity and creativity

The Principal Investigator (PI)



K Research russels To what extent:

- has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- does the PI provide evidence of creative and original thinking?
- does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Rules for submission and evaluation:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/erc-rules-for-submission-andevaluation\_he-erc\_en.pdf

## **Evaluation summary reports**

#### **These reports include:**

#### All ERC applicants receive evaluation summary reports, whether successful or unsuccessful



Panel score (A, B or C)
Ranking range (1% for the highest ranked - 100% for the lowest)
Panel comment Summary of decisive, collective final evaluation meeting by generalist panel of experts
Reviewer comments (proposals reaching Step 2)

Independent reviews by experts close to your field carried out before panel meeting Do not necessarily reflect the panel's final opinion

## **Points to Remember**

#### Speak with your Host Institution's Research Support

- Find colleagues to proofread drafts against evaluation criteria
- You need a strong CV (in relation to your career stage)

Read all call documentation and evaluation criteria

- Evaluators are experts, but not necessarily in your exact area
- Study previous ERC projects within your research area

## The best proposals take time to write

- Use clear and concise language, make it easy to find information in your proposal
- Explain jargon used in your country/research area
- Include diagrams, images, tables if appropriate



## **Proposal Advice**

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 is my proposal important?

Why am I the best/only person to carry it out?

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?

Read all call documentation and the evaluation criteria

oints

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Key

Be specific and don't provide unsupported opinions or comments

Clearly address ALL of the evaluation criteria

Make it easy for the 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

Research previous and current projects

Find colleagues to proof read drafts with the evaluation criteria

Brussels

## **Useful links**

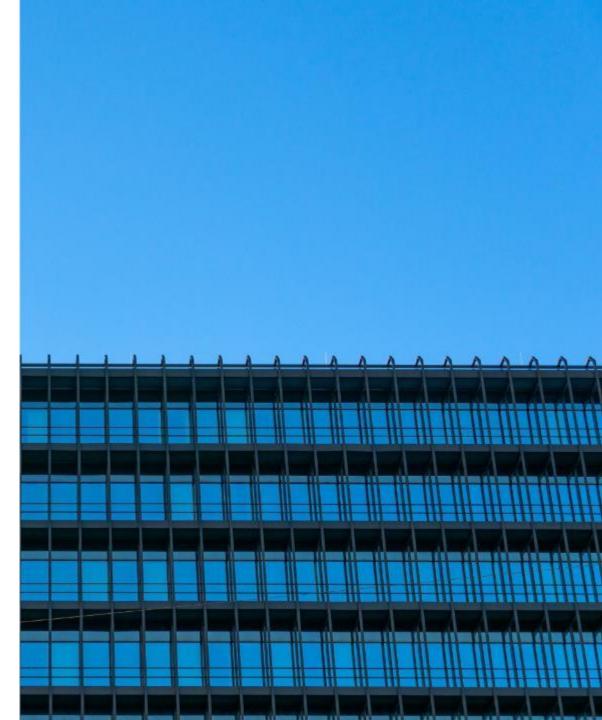
- ERC AdG 24 Call
- ERC work programme 2024
- Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement
- Part B1/B2, Host Institution Support Template (pdf)

#### • ERC Website,

including the easy to use <u>Project Database</u> and the more in depth <u>ERC Information System</u>

 <u>Novelties in the Horizon Europe MGA</u> – Commission Stakeholder Workshop video







#### **ERC Presentation on Lump Sum approach**



#### **Guest speakers-Lump Sum Approach in AdG call**

### Line Fredslund Volkers

### **Catherine Merolla**



**European Research Council** 

Established by the European Commission

