

Information for Applicants to the Starting and Consolidator Grant 2019 Calls



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HISTORY OF CHANGES			
Version	Publication Date	Change	Page
1.0	06.09.2018	▪ Initial version	1

IMPORTANT TO NOTE

The present document is based on the legal documents setting the rules and conditions for the ERC frontier research grants, in particular:

- the [ERC Work Programme 2019](#)¹,
- the revised ERC Rules for the submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the Specific Programme of H2020 – the Framework programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)² (hereinafter [ERC Rules for Submission](#)), and
- the [ERC Model Grant Agreement](#).

This document does not supersede the afore-mentioned documents, which are legally binding.

Should there be any discrepancies between the aforementioned legal documents and this document, the former will prevail.

The European Commission, the ERC Executive Agency or any person or body acting on their behalf cannot be held responsible for the use made of this document.

The [Guide for ERC Peer Reviewers](#) – applicable to Starting and Consolidator Grants, provides practical information on the evaluation process

National Contact Points (ERC NCPs) have been set up across Europe³ by the national governments to provide information and personalised support to ERC applicants in their native language. The mission of the ERC NCPs is to raise awareness, inform and advise on ERC funding opportunities as well as to support potential applicants in the preparation, submission and follow-up of ERC grant applications. For details on the ERC NCP in your country please consult the [ERC website](#) or the [Participant Portal](#).

Abbreviations

AC – [Associated Country](#)

ADG – [Advanced Grant](#)

COG – [Consolidator Grant](#)

EU MS – EU Member States

ERC WP – [ERC Work Programme 2019](#)

ERC panel – ERC peer review evaluation panel

ERC NCP – [ERC National Contact Points](#)

ERCEA – [European Research Council Executive Agency](#)

H2020 FP – [Horizon 2020 Framework Programme](#)

HI – Host Institution

PI – Principal Investigator

PM – Panel Member

PIC – [Participant Identification Code](#)

POC – [Proof of Concept Grant](#)

PPSS – [Participant Portal Submission System](#)

SEP – Submission and Evaluation of Proposals

STG – [Starting Grant](#)

SYG – [Synergy Grant](#)

¹ C(2018)5200 of 6 September 2018.

² C(2017) 4750 of 17 July 2017.

³ This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some other countries also provide this service.

Content

ERC STARTING AND CONSOLIDATOR GRANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

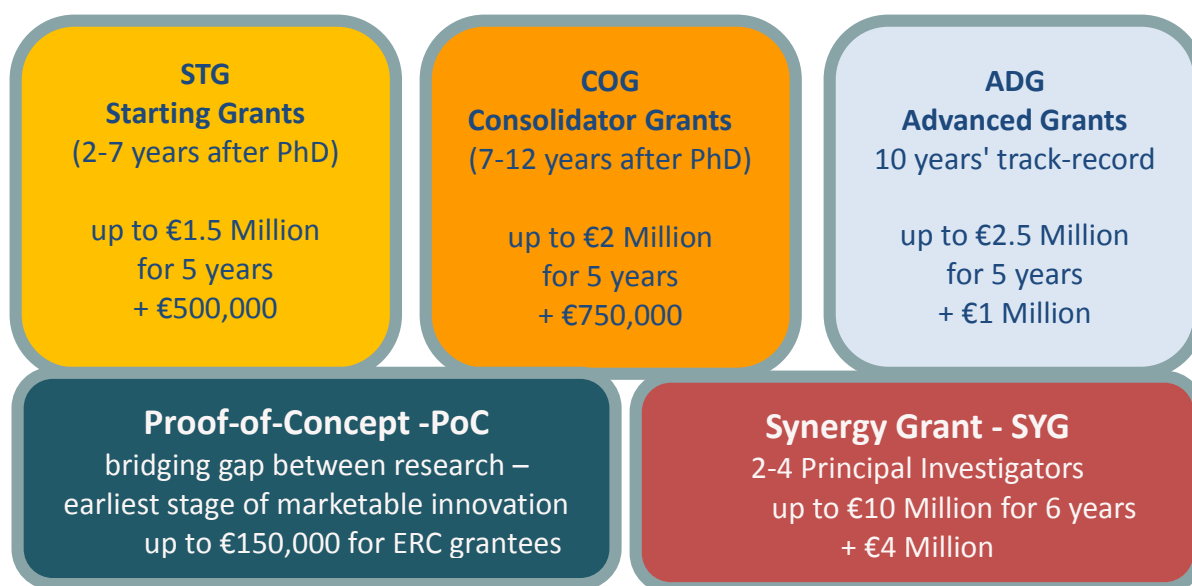
1. ERC STARTING AND CONSOLIDATOR GRANTS 2019	4
1.1 ERC FUNDING PRINCIPLES.....	4
1.2 ELIGIBILITY	6
1.3 EVALUATION PROCESS.....	9
1.4 ETHICS REVIEW	13
1.5 MEANS OF COMPLAINT	14
1.6 QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE CALL.....	15
 2. COMPLETING AN APPLICATION	16
2.1 OVERVIEW OF AN ERC APPLICATION.....	16
2.2 THE ADMINISTRATIVE FORM	16
2.3 THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL	17
2.4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION.....	20
 3. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION	21
3.1 IMPORTANT INFORMATION BEFORE YOU BEGIN.....	21
3.2 HOW TO APPLY.....	22
3.3 HOW TO WITHDRAW A PROPOSAL	24
 4. ANNEXES	25
4.1 ERC EVALUATION PANELS AND KEYWORDS.....	25
4.2 HOST INSTITUTION SUPPORT LETTER TEMPLATE 2019.....	34
4.3 PHD AND EQUIVALENT DOCTORAL DEGREES.....	37
4.4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR EXTENSION REQUESTS.....	40

1. ERC STARTING AND CONSOLIDATOR GRANTS 2019

1.1 ERC FUNDING PRINCIPLES

The ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants are part of the main ERC frontier research grants 2019 funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The ERC's main frontier research grants aim to empower individual researchers and provide the best settings to foster their creativity. **Scientific excellence** is the sole criterion of evaluation. Please see below an overview of all ERC 2019 calls.



Single Principal Investigator (PI) heading research teams

ERC STG and COG grants support individual researchers that are starting or consolidating their own independent research team or programme and who can demonstrate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their scientific proposal. In certain fields (e.g. in the humanities and mathematics), where research is often performed individually, the 'team' may consist solely of the Principal Investigator.

Research fields – no predetermined priorities

The ERC's frontier research grants operate on a 'bottom-up' basis and applications can be made in any field of research with an emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering⁴. In particular, the ERC encourages proposals of a multi- or interdisciplinary nature which cross the boundaries between different fields of research, pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions. The focus is on the PI and on the individual team. Support for consortia is provided by other calls under Horizon 2020. Projects wholly or largely consisting in the collation and compilation of existing material in new databases, editions or collections are unlikely to constitute ground-breaking or "frontier" research, however useful such resources might be to subsequent original research. Such projects are therefore unlikely to be recommended for funding by the ERC panels.

⁴ Research proposals within the scope of Annex I to the Euratom Treaty, namely those directed towards nuclear energy applications shall be submitted to relevant calls under the [Euratom Framework Programme](#).

Evaluation and peer review

The ERC's evaluation process is conducted by peer review panels composed of renowned scientists and scholars. The panels may be assisted by independent experts working remotely. The panel chair and members are selected by the ERC Scientific Council on the basis of their scientific merits.

Open Access

The ERC supports the principle of open access to the published output of research, including research data and data related products. Applicants should be aware that it is mandatory to provide Open Access (free of charge, online access for any user) to all peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to results from ERC projects funded through this call. In addition, the ERC recommends that all funded researchers follow best practice by retaining files of research data produced and used, and are prepared to share these data with other researchers when not bound by copyright restrictions, confidentiality requirements, or contractual clauses.

Funding

Starting Grants can be up to a maximum of EUR 1 500 000 for a period of 5 years. Consolidator Grants can be up to a maximum of EUR 2 000 000 for a period of 5 years. For projects of shorter duration the maximum award is reduced pro rata.

However, up to an additional EUR 500 000 for STG and EUR 750 000 for COG can be requested to cover:

- (a) "start-up" costs for PIs moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or
- (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or
- (c) access to large facilities.

The ERC reimburses up to 100% of the total eligible and approved direct costs and a flat-rate of indirect costs corresponding to 25% of the total eligible direct costs⁵.

Research integrity

Cases of scientific misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or misrepresentation of data⁶ may result in the rejection of proposals in accordance with section 3.11 of the [ERC Rules for Submission](#). Please also note that plagiarism detection software is used to analyse all submitted proposals to detect similar proposals submitted by different PIs. A procedure has been put in place to assess alleged or suspected cases of scientific misconduct.

Starting and Consolidator grant profiles

Applicants are encouraged to evaluate their track-record and research independence against the below-mentioned benchmarks, in order to judge their likelihood for success and to avoid investing effort in proposals that are very unlikely to succeed.

⁵ Excluding the direct costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the host institution.

⁶ For example if in the list of publications, the order of authors does not appear as indicated in the original publications.

Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant
A competitive STG PI must have already shown the <u>potential</u> for research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced <u>at least one</u> important publication as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.	A competitive COG PI must have already shown research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced <u>several</u> important publications as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.
All PIs should also be able to demonstrate a promising track record of early achievements appropriate to their research field and career stage, including significant publications (as main author) in major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals, or in leading international peer-reviewed journals of their respective field. They may also demonstrate a record of invited presentations in well-established international conferences, granted patents, awards, prizes etc.	

1.2 ELIGIBILITY

Eligible proposals

All proposals must be complete and submitted by eligible Principal Investigators before the relevant call deadlines. Please see [section 2.1](#) for an overview of a complete ERC proposal. All scientific fields are eligible for ERC funding⁷.

All applications and the related supporting information are reviewed to ensure that all eligibility criteria are met. The proposal's content should be related to the objectives of the relevant ERC call and must meet all its eligibility requirements. Where there is a doubt about the eligibility of a proposal, the peer review evaluation may proceed pending a final decision by the eligibility review committee. The fact that a proposal is evaluated in such circumstances does not constitute proof of its eligibility. If it becomes clear before, during or after the peer review evaluation phase, that one or more of the eligibility criteria has not been met (for example, due to incorrect or misleading information), the proposal will be declared ineligible and not considered any further.

Host institution

The HI must engage the PI for at least the duration of the project, as defined in the grant agreement. It must either be established in an EU MS or an AC as a legal entity created under national law, or it may be an International European Interest Organisation (such as CERN, EMBL, etc.), the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) or any other entity created under EU law. Any type of legal entity, public or private, including universities, research organisations and undertakings can host Principal Investigators and their teams. The ERC welcomes applications from PIs hosted by private for-profit research centres, including industrial laboratories. Normally the PI will be employed by the HI, but cases where, for duly justified reasons, the PI's employer cannot become the HI, or where the PI is self-employed, can be accommodated. The specific conditions of engagement will be subject to clarification and approval during the granting procedure or during the amendment procedure for a change of HI.

⁷ Please see footnote 4.

Principal Investigator

ERC grants are open to researchers of any nationality who intend to conduct their research activity in any EU MS or an AC. The research team may be of national or trans-national character. The PI does not need to be employed by the HI at the time when the proposal is submitted. If not already employed by the HI, the PI must be engaged by the latter at least for the duration of the grant. Grant proposals are submitted by the PI taking scientific responsibility for the project, on behalf of the host institution.

The requirements in terms of PhD award date⁸ are as follows:

Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant
The first PhD shall have been awarded > 2 and ≤ 7 years prior to 1 January 2019 Cut-off dates: PhD awarded from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2016 (inclusive)	The first PhD shall have been awarded > 7 and ≤ 12 years prior to 1 January 2019 Cut-off dates: PhD awarded from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2011 (inclusive)

The effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD taken into consideration for eligibility can be reduced in certain properly documented circumstances such as for maternity and paternity leave, clinical training, long-term illness or national service (see [Annex 4.4](#) for further details).

The ERC policy on PhD and equivalent doctoral degrees, including specific provisions for holders of medical degrees, is provided in [Annex 4.3](#).

Expected time commitment

With the support of the HI, the successful PIs are expected to lead their individual teams and devote a significant amount of time to the project. They will be expected to spend as a minimum 50% for STG and 40% for COG of their working time on the ERC project and a minimum of 50% of their working time in an EU MS or an AC.

Submission restrictions

The ERC calls are highly competitive. Thousands of high quality proposals are received each year and only outstanding proposals are likely to be funded. In order to maintain the quality and integrity of ERC's evaluation process, restrictions on applications have been introduced as from 2009.

The following general restrictions apply:

- A researcher may participate as PI in only one ERC project at a time⁹. An ERC project can only start after the duration of the project fixed in a previous grant agreement has ended.

⁸ The reference date towards the calculation of the eligibility period should be the date of the actual award according to the national rules in the country where the degree was awarded (generally, the date of successful defense/viva).

- A researcher participating as PI in an ERC project may not submit a proposal for another ERC grant, unless the existing project ends no more than two years after the call deadline¹⁰.
- A PI who is a serving Panel Member for a 2019 ERC call or who served as a Panel Member for a 2017 ERC call may not apply to a 2019 ERC call for the same type of grant¹¹;
- A PI may submit proposals to different ERC grant calls published under the same Work Programme, but only the first eligible proposal will be evaluated.

Additional restrictions are related to the outcome of the evaluation in previous calls (see table below). They are designed to allow unsuccessful PIs the time necessary to develop a stronger proposal. Ineligible or withdrawn proposals do not count against any of the restrictions listed below.

Call to which the PI applied under previous ERC WP	Evaluation outcome	Calls to which a PI is <u>not</u> eligible under ERC WP 2019
2017 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant	Rejected for breach of research integrity	STG, COG, ADG, SYG
	C at Step 1	STG, COG, ADG
2018 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant	Rejected for breach of research integrity	STG, COG, ADG, SYG
	A, or B at Step 2	No restriction
	B at Step 1	STG, COG, ADG
	C at Step 1	
2018 Synergy Grant	Rejected for breach of research integrity	STG, COG, ADG, SYG
	A, or B at Step 3	No restriction
	B at Step 1 or 2	SYG
	C at Step 1	STG, COG, ADG, SYG

The year of an ERC call refers to the WP under which the call was published and can be established by its call identifier. A 2019 ERC call is therefore one that was published under the WP 2019 and will have 2019 in the call identifier (for example ERC-2019-StG).

⁹ Including all PIs supported under the Synergy Grant.

¹⁰ According to the duration of the project fixed in the previous frontier research grant agreement.

¹¹ The members of the ERC panels alternate to allow panel members to apply to the ERC calls in alternate years.

1.3 EVALUATION PROCESS

The ERC's evaluation process has been carefully designed to identify scientific excellence irrespective of gender, age, nationality or institution of the PI and other potential biases, and to take career breaks as well as unconventional research career paths into account. The evaluations are monitored to guarantee transparency, fairness and impartiality in the treatment of proposals.

A single submission of the full proposal is followed by a two-step evaluation.

ERC evaluation panels

The peer review evaluation is in the hands of 25 peer review evaluation panels (ERC panels), covering all fields of science, engineering and scholarship (see panel details and ERC keywords in [Annex 4.1](#)). For operational reasons they are subdivided into three main research domains:

- Physical Sciences and Engineering (10 Panels),
- Life Sciences (9 Panels) and,
- Social Sciences and Humanities (6 Panels).

Before the deadline of a call, the names of the 25 panel chairs are published on the ERC website. Similarly, the names of panel members are published, however, after the evaluation process is concluded.

No Contact allowed with Peer Reviewers

Please, note that in accordance with section 3.2 of the ERC Rules for Submission, any direct or indirect contact about the ERC peer review evaluation between an applicant legal entity or a PI submitting a proposal on behalf of an applicant legal entity, and any independent expert involved in the peer review evaluation under the same call, in view of attempting to influence the evaluation process, is strictly forbidden. Such contact can constitute an exclusion situation and, if this situation is established in accordance with Article 106 of the Financial Regulation, will result in the decision to reject the proposal concerned from the call in question.

Panel allocation and panel budgets

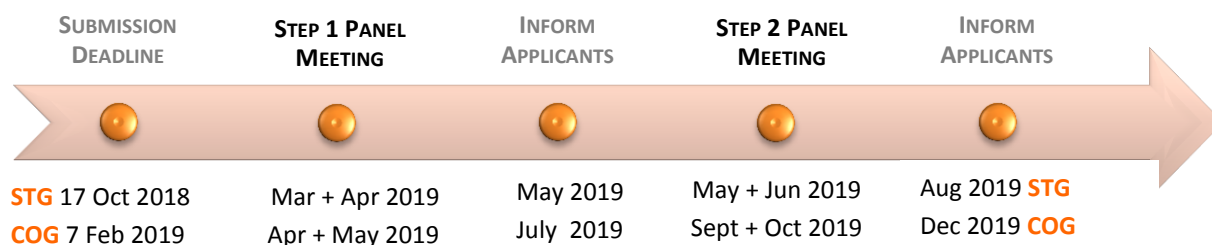
It is the applicant's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant ERC panel ('primary evaluation panel') for the evaluation of the proposed research and to indicate one or more ERC keywords representing the research fields involved. The PI may indicate a secondary evaluation panel.

The initial allocation of the proposal to a panel will be based on the preference expressed by the applicant. However, when necessary due to the expertise required for the evaluation, a proposal may be reallocated to a different panel with the agreement of both panel chairs concerned. The composition of the ERC evaluation panels are by nature multi-disciplinary. The primary panel will determine if additional reviews by appropriate members of other panel(s) or additional remote experts are needed.

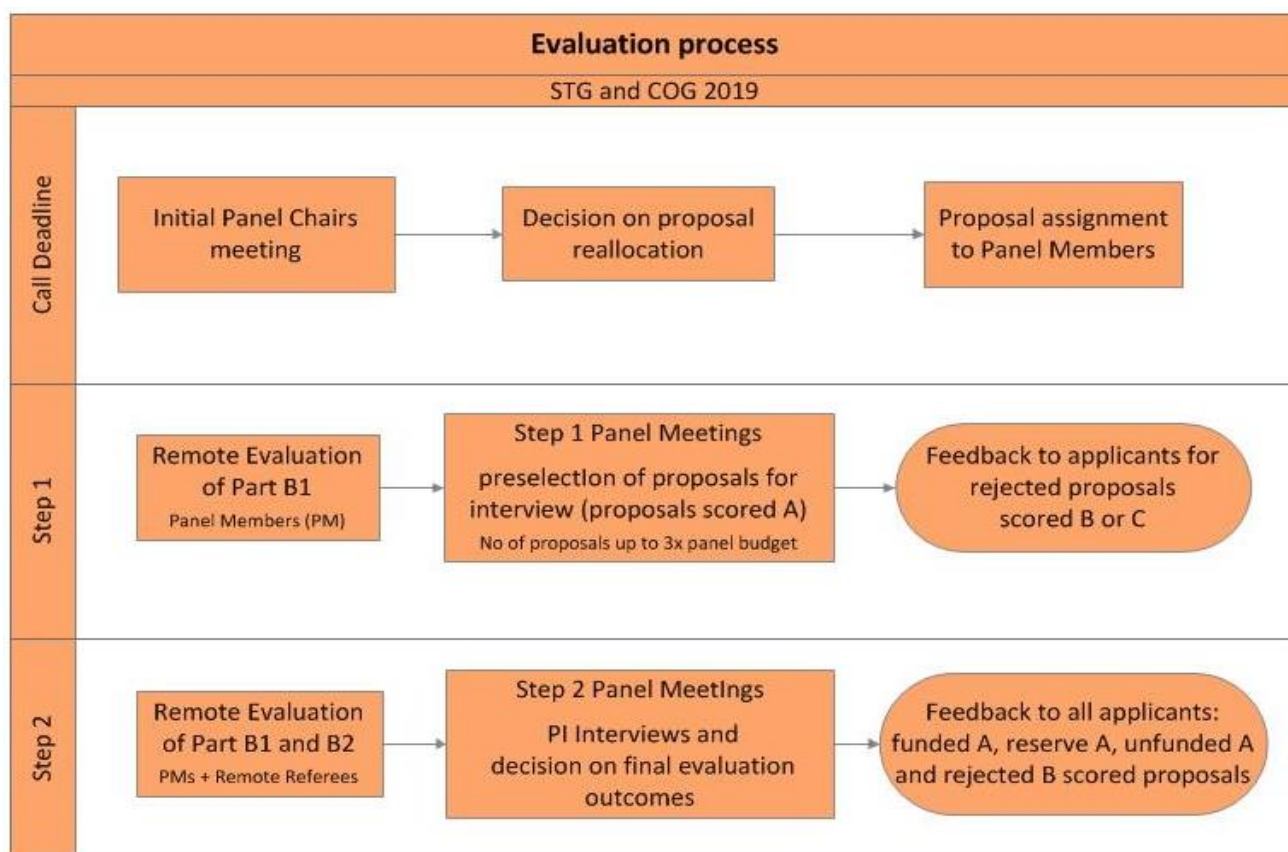
An indicative budget is allocated to each panel in proportion to the budgetary demand of its assigned proposals. Depending on the budget available for the call, a budgetary cut-off applies to the call ranking list. This means that only the highest ranked A-scoring proposals will be invited for grant preparation until the call budget is consumed.

Evaluation process and important dates

An indicative evaluation timeline is available for the [Starting Grant](#) and [Consolidator Grant](#) Call at the ERC web-site.



At both evaluation steps, every proposal will be evaluated for each of the two main elements of the proposal: Research Project and Principal Investigator. Individual proposal reviews are delivered by the ERC experts in a remote evaluation phase at both step 1 and step 2. The ERC panels assess and score the proposals on the basis of the individual reviews they have received and on the basis of the panels' overall appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses.



STEP 1

At step 1 the extended synopsis together with the PI's track record and CV will be evaluated (Part B1 – see [section 2](#)). After the remote evaluation phase each panel meets in Brussels to discuss all proposals assigned to the panel. Proposals will be retained for step 2 based on the outcome of the step 1 evaluation and a budgetary cut-off of up to three times the panel's indicative budget. Following the timeline described above, applicants will be informed about the outcome of the step 1 evaluation and the score of their proposal:

A score - is of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation,

B score - is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 2 of the evaluation¹²,

C score - is not of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation¹⁰.

The step 1 evaluation outcome is provided to the applicants receiving a B or a C score through an information letter together with an evaluation report. It includes the panel ranking range of their proposal, the panel comment explaining the panel decision as well as the individual comments given by each reviewer. This communication is uploaded to the Participant Portal accounts of the PI and HI contacts (see [section 3.2](#)). Applicants who receive an A score are invited for an interview to present their project at the step 2 panel meeting in Brussels¹³. Each panel decides on the exact format of its interviews (duration, number of slides allowed, time allocated to the presentation and the question and answer session) which will be communicated to the applicants after step 1. Applicants who pass to step 2 do not receive a step 1 evaluation report.

STEP 2

At step 2 the full scientific proposal (Part B1 and Part B2) will be evaluated. After a remote evaluation phase the panels meet again in Brussels. Step 2 includes an interview of approximately 30 minutes of each applicant. The first part will be devoted to a presentation on the outline of the research project by the PI. The remaining time will be devoted to a question and answer session. The PI may expect questions also related to the detailed budget table and resources, which is part of the application. The evaluation panels will review the requested budget for proposals recommended for funding and, if appropriate, recommend adjustments.

*In view of the confidentiality of the evaluation process, applicants invited to a step 2 interview **should not share the identity of panel members** within their scientific communities until their names have been published on the ERC website.*

The assessment by the panels will take into account the interview alongside the individual reviews. At the end of step 2, following the timeline described above, applicants will be informed about the outcome of the evaluation. The score of their proposal can be either A or B.

A score proposals fully meet the ERC's excellence criterion and are recommended for funding. Such projects will be funded in priority order based on their rank if sufficient funds are available. This means that it is very likely that not all proposals scored 'A', will eventually be funded by the ERC.

¹² The applicants may be subject to restrictions on submitting proposals to future ERC calls based on the outcome of the evaluation. Applicants will need to check the restrictions in place for each call.

¹³ Please note that the ERC will reimburse the PI's travel expenditures for the interview in Brussels (see [Commission Decision C\(2007\) 5858](#)). Travel costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of the appropriate supporting documents. For travel >100 km, a flat rate will be paid to cover living expenses (including costs for overnight stay). Alternatives to interviews: For those candidates who are, in very exceptional cases, unable to attend the interviews (pregnancy, immobility due to illness, out in research fieldwork), two alternatives may be offered: i) video-conferencing, ii) telephone-conferencing. Once invited for an interview, such candidates are requested to indicate in due time to ERCEA in case they need to have recourse to one of these options. Should a planned interview not be possible for reasons beyond the control of the ERCEA, the panel will have to take its decision based on the information made available to it.

B score proposals meet some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded.

The step 2 evaluation outcome is provided to all applicants through an information letter together with an evaluation report. It includes the final score, the panel ranking range of their proposal, the panel comment explaining the panel decision as well as the individual comments given by each reviewer. This communication is uploaded to the Participant Portal accounts of the PI and HI contact (see [section 3.2](#)).

Panel comments

Comments by the individual reviewers may reflect divergent views. Differences of opinions about the proposal are part of scientific debate and are legitimate. Furthermore, the ERC panel may take a position that is different from what could be inferred from the individual reviews. A panel discussion could reveal an important weakness that was not identified by the individual reviewers. The panel comment reflects the final decision taken by the panel either by consensus decision or by majority vote based on the individual assessments and discussion in the panel.

Evaluation criteria

The "scientific excellence" evaluation criterion will be applied in conjunction of both: (i) the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project, and, (ii) the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI:

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 higher-than-normal 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 at step 1]*?
- To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project *[to be assessed at step 2 based on parts B1 and B2]*?
- To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology *[to be assessed at step 2 based on parts B1 and B]*?
- To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified *[to be assessed at step 2 based on parts B1 and B2]*?

2. Principal Investigator - Intellectual capacity and creativity

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

1.4 ETHICS REVIEW

Please see Annex A to [the ERC Rules for Submission](#) for a detailed description of the ERC Ethics Review procedure.

The ethics review process concerns all projects funded by the ERC in Horizon 2020. The applicants should pay particular attention to the ethical aspects of the proposed work and should submit all ethics documentation available for their proposal.

The process is aimed at ensuring that the Article 19 of [Horizon 2020 Framework Programme](#), and Articles 13 and 14 of the [Rules for Participation](#) are implemented and, in particular, that all the research and innovation activities under Horizon 2020 comply with ethics principles and relevant national, Union and international legislation, including the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#) and the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) and its Supplementary Protocols.

The main areas that are addressed during the ethics review process include:

1. Human protection (including study participants and researchers)
2. Animal protection and welfare
3. Data protection and privacy
4. Environment protection
5. Participation of non-EU countries
6. Malevolent use of research results

When submitting their proposal, applicants must complete the Ethics Issues Table which is section 4 of the online proposal submission forms and submit an ethics self-assessment (separate annex) if they answer yes to one or several questions in the Ethics Issues Table. Please see the [Ethics Self-assessment step by step](#) document for guidance.

If the proposal is retained for funding, further to the outcome of the ethics review process, the Host Institution and the Principal Investigator receive a copy of the ethics report (the document is unsigned so as to preserve the anonymity of the experts).

Please include any supporting documentation, such as any authorisation you may already have. This will allow a more effective ethics clearance and an accelerated granting process¹⁴. Please upload any related documents or annexes in PPSS Step 5 'Edit Proposal'.

Applicants should be aware that no grant agreement can be signed by ERCEA prior to a satisfactory conclusion of the ethics review procedure.

If a proposal is rejected because of ethics considerations, the applicant is informed of the grounds for such a decision and the means to address enquiries and complaints.

The European Commission has set up a [dedicated website](#) that aims to provide helpful information on ethics issues.

¹⁴ A full description of the Ethics Review is provided in the [ERC Rules for the submission](#) of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the H2020 Specific Programme.

1.5 MEANS OF COMPLAINT

Please see the section 3.9 of the [ERC Rules for Submission](#) for a detailed description of the enquiries and complaints and evaluation review procedures.

Upon reception of the information letter with the evaluation report or with the results of the eligibility review, the PI and/or the HI (applicant legal entity) may introduce a **complaint against the rejection on the grounds of ineligibility** or a **request for an evaluation review**, if there is an indication that the results of the eligibility checks were incorrect or that there has been a procedural shortcoming or a manifest error of assessment.

A complaint can be made if the PIs and/or the HI consider that the assessment of the eligibility and/or evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Rules for Participation, the relevant ERC Work Programme, call for proposals or the ERC Rules for Submission. The evaluation review procedure is not meant to call into question the scientific judgement made by the peer review panel. It will look into procedural shortcomings and – in rare cases – into factual errors.

The information letter will provide a link to be used by the PIs and/or the HI to introduce a complaint. The letter will specify a deadline for the receipt of any such complaints, which will be 30 days from the date of receiving the information letter.

Complaints must be:

- related to the evaluation process, or eligibility checks, for the call and grants in question;
- set out using the online form, including a clear description of the grounds for complaint;
- received within the time limit specified in the information letter;
- sent by the PI and/or the HI.

An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent to complainants no later than two weeks after the deadline for submitting the complaint. This acknowledgement of receipt will indicate the estimated date of a definitive reply.

A redress committee may be convened to examine the eligibility or evaluation process for the complaint. The redress committee will bring together staff of the ERC Executive Agency with the requisite scientific, technical and legal expertise. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of requests, and fair and equal treatment of applicants. During the evaluation review procedure, the committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the committee may review the evaluation report, the individual comments and examine the CVs of the experts. The committee will not call into question the scientific judgement of appropriately qualified panels of experts. In the light of its review, the committee will recommend a course of action. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- a re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on the other criteria;
- the evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score;
- only one request for evaluation review per proposal will be considered by the committee;
- all requests for evaluation review will be treated in confidence.

The above procedure does not prevent the applicants from resorting to any other means of seeking redress such as lodging an appeal to the Commission in accordance with Article 22¹⁵⁴² of Council Regulation 58/2003, or filing an action for annulment under Article 263¹⁶⁴³ of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) before the Court of Justice of the European Union for a decision affecting a person or legal entity. Pls and applicant legal entities will have to choose either one or several of these means of redress, and they are not obliged to pursue one before another. These channels are also available to applicants who wish to register a complaint after the deadline mentioned above.

Please do not take more than one formal action at a time. Wait for the reply to your complaint, and then take further action against that decision. Deadlines for further action will start to run as from when you receive the reply to your complaint (final decision)¹⁷⁴⁴.

1.6 QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE CALL

An extended set of Frequently Asked Questions for the ERC calls is available at the [ERC website](#). They can be filtered by calls or categories, and answers the most common questions on how to prepare and submit an ERC application.

For additional questions related to the call, please contact the relevant Call coordination team:

ERC-2019-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu OR ERC-2019-COG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu

For questions related to the compilation of the Ethics issues of the proposal, please contact the Ethics Support team: ERC-ETHICS-REVIEW@ec.europa.eu

For questions on Open Access please see Article 29.2 of the [ERC Model Grant Agreement](#) or contact ERC-OPEN-ACCESS@ec.europa.eu.

¹⁵ Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes (OJ L 11, 16.01.2003, p. 1)

¹⁶ Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 47–390).

¹⁷ Please be aware that, as per Article 22 of Regulation 58/2003, reaching a final decision on an Article 22 request may generally take more than 30 days. Therefore if you first file an Article 22 request you may not be able to submit afterwards an evaluation review request within the 30 days deadline.

2. COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

2.1 OVERVIEW OF AN ERC APPLICATION

An ERC application is composed of:

- the administrative form (Part A);
- the research proposal (Parts B1 and B2);
- supporting documentation (PhD certificate, HI support letter, and any documentation needed on eligibility and ethics issues).

2.2 THE ADMINISTRATIVE FORM

The administrative form is accessed via the call submission link in the [Participant Portal](#). The electronic form has 5 sections (approximately 15 pages in total), which need to be completed before a submission can take place. Many fields are mandatory and specific to the ERC calls and we therefore advise you to create your draft proposal well in advance of the submission deadline. **All mandatory fields are marked with an *. Failure to fill in any mandatory field will block submission.**

1 – General Information contains information about the research proposal, including the project duration, title, acronym and abstract. Furthermore, in this section you will select the ERC evaluation panel which you believe is best fit to evaluate the research proposal. If the proposal covers several scientific disciplines you may indicate a 'secondary review panel'. You may indicate up to four ERC keywords as listed in Annex 4.1 that cover your proposal subject. The abstract should provide a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as a short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process. Please note that in case your proposal is funded this abstract will be published. It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information. This section also contains general declarations related to the proposal and participation in H2020¹⁸.

2 – Participants & contacts contains information about the PI and the HI. One section will appear for each beneficiary. The name and e-mail of contact persons including the PI and HI contact are **read-only**. Further details such as ORCID number, researcher ID, other ID, last name at birth, gender, nationality etc., should be filled for the PI as well as the address and telephone number of each contact person. The PI mobile number is an essential information for the step 2 interview logistics.

3 – Budget contains a summary of the total estimated project costs and the requested EU contribution for the project. The costs are given in whole Euros (not kilo Euros). The figures should match the corresponding figures in the detailed Part B2 budget table. As this is the official budget request, any change to the Part B2 overall budget should be updated in this summary table before the final submission. Please refer to [section 2.3](#) for further instruction on how to draw up the budget.

4 – Ethics issues serves to identify any ethical aspects of the proposed work. This table has to be completed even if there are no issues (simply confirm that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal). Please note that, in case you answer YES to any of the questions, you are requested to

¹⁸ Please note that we may request the applicants to provide the written consent mentioned in the declarations of all participants at any time during the evaluation process. These consents should however not be submitted with the application.

provide an Ethics Self-Assessment and additional ethics documentation, if applicable, as detailed in the [Ethics Self-assessment step by step](#). Please refer to [section 1.4](#) for further details.

5 – Call-specific questions contains information on the academic training of the PI, as well as declarations related to eligibility, expected working time in EU or an AC, as well as permission statements on data-related questions. The data-related consents are entirely voluntary. As established in section 3.3 of the [ERC Rules for Submission](#), you may identify up to three reviewers who you wish to exclude from the evaluation of your proposal.

2.3 THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The research proposal (Part B) consists of Part B1 and Part B2. The templates are provided in the submission system and their use is **mandatory**. Each proposal page **shall** carry a **header** presenting the **PI's last name**, the **acronym of the proposal**, and the reference to the respective proposal section (**Part B1** or **Part B2**).

The following parameters **must** be respected for the layout:

Page Format	Font Type	Font Size	Line Spacing	Margins
A4	Times New Roman Arial or similar	At least 11	Single	2 cm side 1.5 bottom

In fairness to all applicants, the **page limits will be strictly applied**. Only the material that is presented within these limits will be evaluated. Peer reviewers will only be asked to read the material presented within the page limits, and will be under no obligation to read beyond them¹⁹.

Be aware that at **step 1 only Part B1** is evaluated by the panel members (they have no access to Part B2). At **step 2 both Parts B1 and B2** are evaluated by panel members and remote reviewers.

When drafting Part B1, pay particular attention to the Extended Synopsis (section a) and do not think of it as simply complementing Part B2. It is important that Part B1 contains all essential information.

During the step 1 evaluation the panel members' expertise covers a wide range of proposals within a research field. The panel members are asked to act as generalists when evaluating the proposals. Further expertise on each proposal retained to step 2 is brought to the evaluation by remote reviewers. They are scientists and scholars who work remotely and deliver their individual reviews in preparation of the step 2 panel meeting.

Part B1

The Part B1 cover page should list the name of the PI and HI, the title, acronym and abstract of the proposal as well as the project duration (in months). The abstract should be half a page and must be a copy/paste of abstract from the administrative form section 1. For inter-disciplinary/cross-panel proposals please indicate the additional ERC review panel(s) and explain why the proposal needs to be considered by more than one panel.

¹⁹ The working language of the ERC evaluation panels is English. Please note that accordingly, the evaluation reports will be available in English only. If the proposal is not in English, the ERCEA will provide a version of the proposal translated using computer-aided technology. An English translation of the abstract must be included in the proposal.

Section a: Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal (max. 5 pages) should contain all essential information including the feasibility of the scientific proposal since the panel will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1. References should be included (they do not count towards the page limits).

Section b: Curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages) should follow the suggested template. Include any career breaks or unconventional career paths, so that your career stage is fairly assessed by the evaluation panels. You should as well list your previous and ongoing grants and grant applications in the funding ID table (this table will not count towards the page limits).

Section c: Early achievements track-record (max. 2 pages) should list your important achievements, including your most important publications²⁰ (up to five for Starting Grant and up to ten for Consolidator Grant) highlighting those as main author and/or without the co-authorship of your PhD supervisor. The publications should be properly referenced, including all authors in the published order. Field relevant bibliometric indicators as well as research monographs and any translations thereof may also be included. If applicable include: granted patent(s); invited presentations to internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools; Prizes/Awards/Academy memberships etc.

Part B2 (max. 15 pages. References should be included – they do not count towards the page limit)

Section a: State-of-the-art and objectives in which you specify the proposal objectives in the context of the state of the art in the research field. It should be clear how and why the proposed work is important for the field, and what impact it will have if successful, such as how it may open up new horizons or opportunities for science, technology or scholarship. Specify any particularly challenging or unconventional aspects of the proposal, including multi- or inter-disciplinary aspects.

Section b: Methodology. Describe the proposed methodology in detail including any key intermediate goals. Explain and justify the methodology in relation to the state of the art, and particularly novel or unconventional aspects addressing the 'high-risk/high-gain' balance. Highlight any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to the project planning. In case you ask that team members are engaged by another host institution their participation has to be fully justified by the scientific added value they bring to the project.

Section c: Resources (including project costs) - It is strongly recommended to use the **Part B2 budget table template** to facilitate the assessment of resources by the panels. State the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the research objectives. The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. The requested budget should be fully justified and in proportion to the actual needs. The evaluation panels assess the estimated costs carefully; **unjustified budgets will be consequently reduced**. Specify your commitment to the project and how much time you are willing to devote to the proposed project²¹. Describe the size and nature of the team, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles. The participation of team members engaged by other host institutions should be justified and in relation to the additional financial cost this may impose. When estimating your personnel costs take into account the dedicated working time to run the project. Specify any existing resources that will contribute to the project. Describe other necessary resources, such as infrastructure and equipment. Include a short technical description of any requested equipment, why you need it and how much you plan to use it for the project. Please

²⁰ Preprints should be freely available from a preprint server; they should be properly referenced and either a link to the preprint or a DOI should be provided.

²¹ You are expected to spend as a minimum 50% for STG and 40% for COG of your working time on the ERC project.

include a realistic estimation of the costs for Open Access to project outputs. Costs for providing immediate Open Access to publications (article processing charges/book processing charges) are eligible if they are incurred during the lifetime of the project.

Part B2 budget table

The ERC funds up to 100% of the total eligible costs. **The costs are given for the full project duration²²**. Include the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct costs (excluding subcontracting). Furthermore, include a breakdown of the budget subdivided in personnel costs, travel, equipment, consumables, publication costs (including any costs related to Open Access), other direct costs, and any envisaged subcontracting costs. Please use whole Euro integers only when preparing the budget table.

If additional funding above the ceiling of 1.500.000 € for STG and 2.000.000 € for COG is requested for (a) covering eligible 'start-up' costs for a PI moving from another country to the EU or an AC as a consequence of receiving an ERC grant and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or (c) access to large facilities, then this needs to be fully justified in the table provided for this purpose. **Please note that any additional funding request under (a) and (b) is subject to 25% overhead.** The request of additional funding under (c) to access large research facilities owned by a third party²³ and not used on the premises of the beneficiaries should be listed in cost category 'C2. Other Direct Costs with no overheads'. Include the additional costs in the overall budget table as well.

In case the total costs differ from the requested grant, it should be specified in the proposal what exactly is funded from other sources. The '**Total estimated eligible costs**' as well as the '**Total requested grant**' figures MUST equal those inserted in the online proposal submission forms (section 3 – Budget). Please **carefully check** all values of the budget table to avoid arithmetical mistakes.

For more information on eligible- and non-eligible direct and indirect costs as well as the different cost categories, applicants should consult the [H2020 ERC Model Grant Agreement](#) and the [H2020 ERC Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#)²⁴

²² The maximum award is reduced pro rata temporis for projects of a shorter duration (e.g. for a Consolidator Grant project of 48 months duration the maximum requested EU contribution allowed is 1.600.000 €). Additional funding to cover major one-off costs is not subject to pro-rata temporis reduction for projects of shorter duration (e.g. with additional funding it is possible to request a maximum EU contribution of 2.350.000 € for a project of 48 months duration).

²³ [H2020 ERC Model Grant Agreement](#) - Articles 11 and 12

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html#h2020-mga-erc

²⁴ Applicants should pay special attention to the cost category 'Direct costing for Large Research Infrastructures'. The cost category will only be applicable for PIs who are hosted by institutions with Large Research Infrastructures of a value of at least EUR 20 million and **only** after having received a positive ex-ante assessment from the Commission's services. This cost category should only be used for costs to access large research infrastructures inside the premises of and owned by the participating organisations. Please refer to the [ERC Model Grant Agreement](#), pp. 92 to 102.

2.4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

A scanned copy of the following supporting documentation needs to be submitted with the proposal by uploading them electronically in PDF format:

- **PhD certificate.** You must submit scanned copies of documents proving your eligibility for the grant, i.e. the PhD certificate (or equivalent doctoral degree, see Annex 4.3 to this document) clearly indicating the **date of award**.
If you request an **extension of the eligibility window** (beyond 7 years for STG applicants and 12 years for COG applicants), the relevant documentary evidence should be uploaded together with the PhD certificate or as separate annexes. Please see [Annex 4.4](#) for details.
- **Host Institution support letter.** As the applicant's legal entity, the HI must confirm its support to the project and of the PI. As part of the application the institution must provide a binding statement that the conditions of independence are already fulfilled or will be provided to the PI if the application is successful. The template letter is part of the zip-file available in the submission system (see [Annex 4.2](#)). The complete wording should be printed on paper with the official letterhead of the HI, originally signed, stamped and dated by the institution's legal representative. **Proposals that do not include this institutional statement may be declared ineligible.**
- Documents related to the ethics review (i.e. **ethical self-assessment** and supporting documentation). Where necessary, the beneficiary(ies) shall provide a written confirmation that it has received (a) favourable opinion(s) of the relevant ethics committee(s) and, if applicable, the regulatory approval(s) of the competent national or local authority(ies) in the country in which the research is to be carried out. Such documentation must be provided to the ERCEA at the latest during the ethics review. If such documentation is available and provided with the application at submission stage, it may help speed up the ethics review process following evaluation.

Copies of official documents can be submitted in any of the EU official languages. **Document(s) in any other language must be provided together with a certified translation into English.**

Please provide only the documents requested above. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, support letters, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) will be disregarded. **Experts will not have access to any supporting documentation during the evaluation.**

All annexes, including the PhD documentation, the host institution support letter (and where relevant in case of ethical issues or requests for eligibility extensions) should be provided and uploaded as separate pdf documents. They do not count towards the maximum page limits for the proposal.

3. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

3.1 IMPORTANT INFORMATION BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Regularly consult the [Participant Portal](#) call page for updated information on the calls.
- Make sure that the personal information added in the Administrative Form is accurate as this information is used to personalise the communications to applicants and the Evaluation Reports.
- In case of technical problems with PPSS please contact **DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu** or get in touch with the **SEP helpdesk** directly on **+32 (2) 29 92222** to receive immediate assistance.
- Early registration and submission in PPSS is strongly recommended and should be done as early as possible in advance of the call deadline. Applicants, who wait until shortly before the close of the call to start uploading their proposal, take a serious risk that the uploading will not be concluded in time and thus the 'SUBMIT' button will not be active anymore in order to conclude the submission process.
- Only the person starting the proposal will have the right to manage the access rights of other people to the proposal. The person who creates the proposal will be able to modify any parts of the proposal and to submit it. Further contacts will only be able to edit the parts related to their personal data.
- Be aware that only one person should work on the forms at any given time. If two persons work on the forms at the same time, in case of a save conflict, the last save wins, which means that you risk overwriting changes made by another person if you are working in parallel. We therefore recommend that you give 'read-only' access to your partners/additional contact persons (other contacts) unless it is absolutely necessary to grant full access. Please remember that the Main administrative contact person has full access – it is not possible to grant them 'read-only access'.
- Up to the call deadline it is possible to re-edit, download or withdraw a proposal. The last version of your proposal submitted before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated; no later version can be accepted and no earlier version can be recovered from the submission system. Once the deadline has passed, no further additions, corrections or resubmissions are accepted. However, a read-only access to the submitted proposal is available for 90 days after the call deadline.
- **Do submit your proposal as early as possible** (at least 48 hours prior to the deadline of the call) to avoid being confronted with last issues shortly before the call deadline. There is no reason in delaying the submission for confidentiality concerns as the system does not allow any access to the proposals before call deadline (other than to selected data that is part of the Submission and Evaluation of Proposals Assent Disclaimer).
- In some rare occasions the proposal may be altered while converted into a PDF file. Before uploading the file, please check that everything is correct. Additionally, please download and verify all uploaded files in due time before the submission deadline.

Submission is deemed to occur only if the submission sequence described in [Section 3](#) of this document has been followed and not when the applicant starts uploading the proposal.

3.2 HOW TO APPLY

ERC grant applications can only be submitted in response to a 'call for proposals' and only via the Electronic Submission Service. Calls announced in the ERC Work Programme 2019 are published on the [ERC website](#), the Research and Innovation [Participant Portal](#) (PP), and in the [Official Journal](#) of the European Union.

USER GUIDANCE

- proposals must be submitted electronically using the electronic submission system of the web-based [Participant Portal](#) (PPSS)²⁵;
- the [user guide](#) of the Submission Service is available online;
- the ['IT HOW TO'](#) wiki site provides an online IT manual with screenshots;
- the Participant Portal H2020 [Online Manual](#) describes the standard process of proposal submission.

The submission of an ERC proposal includes 6 steps. For each submission step please find below links to a short guide including a quick demo²⁶.

[Step 1 and 2](#) – Logging in and Selecting a Topic

To be able to submit a proposal and, in general to login to the Participant Portal, you must first register an EU Login account (step 1). Each time you access the proposal for editing, this user ID is requested. The same user ID is used for all later interactions with the ERCEA, including notification of the results of the evaluation²⁷. Under 'Search Topics' you may search for 'ERC' to select an open ERC call (step 2). Soon after the opening of the call you may access the Electronic Submission Service via the PP call page. The 'Start Submission' button is available in the 'Submission Service' section of the call. When you click 'Start Submission' and confirm the call selection, you will arrive to step 3 – Create a Draft proposal.

[Step 3](#) – Create a draft proposal

At this step, you fill in pre-registration data for the proposal. These details will be used by the ERCEA in order to plan the evaluation. You will not have access to this page again once it is completed and you have progressed to Step 4, but certain data, such as Acronym and Short Summary (abstract) can be modified at a later stage (at step 5, when editing the administrative form). **Be careful to choose the correct Participant Identification Code (PIC) number for your Host Institution.** An [online tool](#) is available to search for existing PICs and the related organisations. Organisations not yet having a PIC must self-register (via the same page) before submitting the proposal.

[Step 4](#) – Manage your related parties and/or Edit contact details

At this step you MUST enter the name and e-mail of the PI and the Main Host Institution Contact person²⁸. You may also add the LEAR as a contact person (e.g. as a team member with read-only

²⁵ In duly justified exceptional circumstances the ERCEA may authorise submission on paper.

²⁶ The Electronic Submission Service is used across all the funding schemes of the European Commission, thus the guidelines provided may contain a nomenclature which is not for the ERC funding schemes (e.g. there is no such a thing as 'Consortium' in any of the ERC grants funding schemes). Thus for the correct nomenclature, please refer to this document.

²⁷ Further details are available here: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/eim/external/help.cgi>

²⁸ Be careful to type the correct e-mail address of the PI and all contact persons at this step. Please note that if the Principal Investigator and the administrative contact person is the same person (because the PI is self-

rights). These data are propagated into the administrative form where they cannot be edited. You may at any point return to Step 4 of the submission to add or delete any contact person or to change the access rights. Remember to save your data before leaving Step 4. Once the coordinator saves the changes, an automatic invitation is sent to all contacts' e-mail addresses. The invited persons can access the proposal after logging in to the Participant Portal – with the EU login account linked to the given e-mail address – under the 'My Proposals' tab.

If they have not yet registered an EU login account, the PI or the applicant legal entity's contact person will receive an activation e-mail inviting them to activate their EU login account. Following to this first activation the EU login account will be maintained for following communications or feedback.

In order to be able to submit your proposal after saving changes made in Step 4 (Parties), you have to re-open the administrative form ('Edit forms' button), revise the changes, validate and save the form. Failure to do so will prevent you from submitting your proposal. Further details are available in the Submission Service user manual.

Step 5 – Edit and complete the proposal

This step is the core of the submission process, as from this step, you **can edit the online administrative proposal submission forms**, view the history, print the draft proposal, **download templates, upload files** and **submit** the proposal by clicking on the relevant buttons. Guidance on how to fill in the administrative forms is provided directly in the form as ghost text for the single entries or as additional help text hidden behind question-marks . Some parts of the form will be prefilled based on the data entered at pre-registration or in the Beneficiary Register. Please use the functionality '**Validate form**' button to check the validity and completeness of your data. Any warning or error will be listed at the end of the validated form.

Further information on the preparation of the application (the online administrative forms and Proposal Parts B1 and B2) is given in [section 2](#) of this document.

- **All files must be uploaded in the submission system as PDF ('portable document format'). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system.** Irrespective of any page limits specified in this document, there is an **overall limit of 10 Mbytes to the size of each uploaded document (Part B1, B2, and supporting documentation)**. However, it is advised to limit the size of Parts B1 and B2 to 2 Mbytes each.
- Unless specified in the call, embedded material and any other documents (company brochures, scientific papers, reports, audio, video, multimedia, etc.) sent either electronically or by post to the ERCEA or uploaded directly in the Participant Portal will be disregarded.

There are also restrictions to the name given to the Part B files: use alphanumeric characters; special characters and spaces must be avoided. You are advised to clean your document before converting it to PDF (e.g. accept all tracked changes, delete notes). Check that your conversion software has successfully converted all the pages of your original document (e.g. there is no problem with page limits or page view), and that captions and labels have not been lost from your diagrams.

Completing the Proposal submission forms in the submission system and uploading all the necessary files does not yet mean that your proposal is submitted (mandatory files: Part B1, Part B2, PhD certificate, Host Institution support letter and – if applicable: Ethical Self-assessment and supporting documentation for eligibility extension and/or ethics issues). Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal, **the 'SUBMIT' button must be pressed**. The system performs a limited

employed), you must use two different e-mail addresses as the system does not allow two identical e-mail addresses to be entered.

automatic validation of the proposal. Any problems such as missing data, wrong file format or excessive file size will appear as a list of warnings and/or on the screen. You may submit your proposal with warnings (marked in yellow), but it is not possible to submit a proposal until all errors (marked in red) are corrected. Please note that the electronic checks by the submission system do not replace the formal eligibility review and do not confirm that the contents of these files respond to the requirements of the call.

Step 6 – The Proposal Submitted page

Reaching this step means that the proposal is submitted (i.e. sent to the ERCEA for evaluation). It does not mean that the proposal is valid, complete and eligible in all respects. Within a few minutes of submission your proposal will be available for download with an e-receipt in the system. You will receive a confirmation e-mail with the summary data of the submitted proposal. The mail can end up in the spam folder or be blocked by the anti-spam system of your organisation. This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt. In Step 6 you can re-edit the proposal, going back to Step 5. **You may continue to modify the proposal and submit revised versions overwriting the previous one right up until the call deadline.** The sequence above must be repeated each time. The last version of your proposal submitted before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated. No earlier version can be recovered from the submission system.

Check if the proposal is complete. Once submitted, it is recommended to verify the proposal and its content by downloading all the submitted files. We strongly advise that you submit a first version of your proposal at least 48 hours in advance of the call deadline. Incomplete proposals (where parts or sections of the proposal and/or the host institution's commitment statement are missing) may be declared ineligible and will not be evaluated²⁹. The proposal must be submitted **before the relevant deadline of the call** to the appropriate primary ERC panel (i.e. the panel which covers the main scientific areas of the research proposed).

Warning: Please note that in the last hours prior to call closure, the download option of checking your submitted proposal may be disabled due to a high pressure on the system. In this case the ERCEA will inform the applicants via the call page on the [Participant Portal](#) (under 'call summary') that the function has been disabled. **If the e-receipt and download option have been disabled, you may review your submitted proposal by going back to Step 5 to check the data in the administrative forms and click on 'View History' to verify which attachments have been uploaded.**

3.3 HOW TO WITHDRAW A PROPOSAL

To withdraw a proposal **before the call deadline** use the "withdraw proposal" button from the 'My proposals' tab when logged in at the PP. After the call deadline proposals may be withdrawn at any moment **until the day preceding the panel meetings** where a final decision on the outcome of the evaluation of the proposal is established. A withdrawn proposal will not be considered for evaluation nor count against possible re-application restrictions as set out in the ERC Work Programme 2019.

To withdraw a proposal **after the call deadline**, please send an e-mail to the call-specific mailbox ERC-2019-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu or ERC-2019-COG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu and include a signed scanned letter requesting the formal withdrawal. In the case of two or more proposals submitted by the same PI, the ERCEA services may ask the PI to withdraw one or more of those proposals. In the case of absence of reaction by the PI to this request, only the first eligible proposal will be considered.

²⁹ See also section 2.4 'eligibility check' in the [ERC Rules for Submission](#) and in the section "Proposal submission and description" of the [ERC Work Programme 2019](#).

4. ANNEXES

4.1 ERC EVALUATION PANELS AND KEYWORDS

Physical Sciences and Engineering

PE1 Mathematics

All areas of mathematics, pure and applied, plus mathematical foundations of computer science, mathematical physics and statistics

- PE1_1 Logic and foundations
- PE1_2 Algebra
- PE1_3 Number theory
- PE1_4 Algebraic and complex geometry
- PE1_5 Lie groups, Lie algebras
- PE1_6 Geometry and Global Analysis
- PE1_7 Topology
- PE1_8 Analysis
- PE1_9 Operator algebras and functional analysis
- PE1_10 ODE and dynamical systems
- PE1_11 Theoretical aspects of partial differential equations
- PE1_12 Mathematical physics
- PE1_13 Probability
- PE1_14 Statistics
- PE1_15 Discrete mathematics and combinatorics
- PE1_16 Mathematical aspects of computer science
- PE1_17 Numerical analysis
- PE1_18 Scientific computing and data processing
- PE1_19 Control theory and optimisation
- PE1_20 Application of mathematics in sciences
- PE1_21 Application of mathematics in industry and society

PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter

Particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics

- PE2_1 Fundamental interactions and fields
- PE2_2 Particle physics
- PE2_3 Nuclear physics
- PE2_4 Nuclear astrophysics
- PE2_5 Gas and plasma physics
- PE2_6 Electromagnetism
- PE2_7 Atomic, molecular physics
- PE2_8 Ultra-cold atoms and molecules
- PE2_9 Optics, non-linear optics and nano-optics
- PE2_10 Quantum optics and quantum information
- PE2_11 Lasers, ultra-short lasers and laser physics
- PE2_12 Relativity
- PE2_13 Thermodynamics
- PE2_14 Non-linear physics
- PE2_15 Metrology and measurement
- PE2_16 Statistical physics (gases)

PE3 Condensed Matter Physics

Structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences, biological physics

- PE3_1 Structure of solids, material growth and characterisation
- PE3_2 Mechanical and acoustical properties of condensed matter, Lattice dynamics
- PE3_3 Transport properties of condensed matter
- PE3_4 Electronic properties of materials, surfaces, interfaces, nanostructures, etc.
- PE3_5 Physical properties of semiconductors and insulators
- PE3_6 Macroscopic quantum phenomena: superconductivity, superfluidity, etc.
- PE3_7 Spintronics
- PE3_8 Magnetism and strongly correlated systems
- PE3_9 Condensed matter – beam interactions (photons, electrons, etc.)
- PE3_10 Nanophysics: nanoelectronics, nanophotonics, nanomagnetism, nanoelectromechanics, etc.
- PE3_11 Mesoscopic physics
- PE3_12 Molecular electronics
- PE3_13 Structure and dynamics of disordered systems: soft matter (gels, colloids, liquid crystals, etc.), liquids, glasses, defects, etc.
- PE3_14 Fluid dynamics (physics)
- PE3_15 Statistical physics: phase transitions, noise and fluctuations, models of complex systems, etc.
- PE3_16 Physics of biological systems

PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences

Analytical chemistry, chemical theory, physical chemistry/chemical physics

- PE4_1 Physical chemistry
- PE4_2 Spectroscopic and spectrometric techniques
- PE4_3 Molecular architecture and Structure
- PE4_4 Surface science and nanostructures
- PE4_5 Analytical chemistry
- PE4_6 Chemical physics
- PE4_7 Chemical instrumentation
- PE4_8 Electrochemistry, electrodialysis, microfluidics, sensors
- PE4_9 Method development in chemistry
- PE4_10 Heterogeneous catalysis
- PE4_11 Physical chemistry of biological systems
- PE4_12 Chemical reactions: mechanisms, dynamics, kinetics and catalytic reactions
- PE4_13 Theoretical and computational chemistry
- PE4_14 Radiation and Nuclear chemistry
- PE4_15 Photochemistry
- PE4_16 Corrosion
- PE4_17 Characterisation methods of materials
- PE4_18 Environment chemistry

PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials

Materials synthesis, structure-properties relations, functional and advanced materials, molecular architecture, organic chemistry

- PE5_1 Structural properties of materials
- PE5_2 Solid state materials
- PE5_3 Surface modification
- PE5_4 Thin films
- PE5_5 Ionic liquids
- PE5_6 New materials: oxides, alloys, composite, organic-inorganic hybrid, nanoparticles
- PE5_7 Biomaterials, biomaterials synthesis
- PE5_8 Intelligent materials – self assembled materials
- PE5_9 Coordination chemistry
- PE5_10 Colloid chemistry
- PE5_11 Biological chemistry

- PE5_12 Chemistry of condensed matter
- PE5_13 Homogeneous catalysis
- PE5_14 Macromolecular chemistry
- PE5_15 Polymer chemistry
- PE5_16 Supramolecular chemistry
- PE5_17 Organic chemistry
- PE5_18 Medicinal chemistry

PE6 Computer Science and Informatics

Informatics and information systems, computer science, scientific computing, intelligent systems

- PE6_1 Computer architecture, pervasive computing, ubiquitous computing
- PE6_2 Computer systems, parallel/distributed systems, sensor networks, embedded systems, cyber-physical systems
- PE6_3 Software engineering, operating systems, computer languages
- PE6_4 Theoretical computer science, formal methods, and quantum computing
- PE6_5 Cryptology, security, privacy, quantum cryptography
- PE6_6 Algorithms, distributed, parallel and network algorithms, algorithmic game theory
- PE6_7 Artificial intelligence, intelligent systems, multi agent systems
- PE6_8 Computer graphics, computer vision, multi media, computer games
- PE6_9 Human computer interaction and interface, visualisation and natural language processing
- PE6_10 Web and information systems, database systems, information retrieval and digital libraries, data fusion
- PE6_11 Machine learning, statistical data processing and applications using signal processing (e.g. speech, image, video)
- PE6_12 Scientific computing, simulation and modelling tools
- PE6_13 Bioinformatics, biocomputing, and DNA and molecular computation

PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering

Electrical, electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering

- PE7_1 Control engineering
- PE7_2 Electrical engineering: power components and/or systems
- PE7_3 Simulation engineering and modelling
- PE7_4 (Micro- and nano-) systems engineering
- PE7_5 (Micro- and nano-) electronic, optoelectronic and photonic components
- PE7_6 Communication technology, high-frequency technology
- PE7_7 Signal processing
- PE7_8 Networks (communication networks, sensor networks, networks of robots, etc.)
- PE7_9 Man-machine interfaces
- PE7_10 Robotics
- PE7_11 Components and systems for applications (in e.g. medicine, biology, environment)
- PE7_12 Electrical energy production, distribution, application

PE8 Products and Processes Engineering

Product design, process design and control, construction methods, civil engineering, energy processes, material engineering

- PE8_1 Aerospace engineering
- PE8_2 Chemical engineering, technical chemistry
- PE8_3 Civil engineering, architecture, maritime/hydraulic engineering, geotechnics, waste treatment
- PE8_4 Computational engineering
- PE8_5 Fluid mechanics, hydraulic-, turbo-, and piston- engines

- PE8_6 Energy processes engineering
- PE8_7 Mechanical and manufacturing engineering (shaping, mounting, joining, separation)
- PE8_8 Materials engineering (biomaterials, metals, ceramics, polymers, composites, etc.)
- PE8_9 Production technology, process engineering
- PE8_10 Industrial design (product design, ergonomics, man-machine interfaces, etc.)
- PE8_11 Sustainable design (for recycling, for environment, eco-design)
- PE8_12 Lightweight construction, textile technology
- PE8_13 Industrial bioengineering

PE9 Universe Sciences

Astro-physics/chemistry/biology; solar system; stellar, galactic and extragalactic astronomy, planetary systems, cosmology, space science, instrumentation

- PE9_1 Solar and interplanetary physics
- PE9_2 Planetary systems sciences
- PE9_3 Interstellar medium
- PE9_4 Formation of stars and planets
- PE9_5 Astrobiology
- PE9_6 Stars and stellar systems
- PE9_7 The Galaxy
- PE9_8 Formation and evolution of galaxies
- PE9_9 Clusters of galaxies and large scale structures
- PE9_10 High energy and particles astronomy – X-rays, cosmic rays, gamma rays, neutrinos
- PE9_11 Relativistic astrophysics
- PE9_12 Dark matter, dark energy
- PE9_13 Gravitational astronomy
- PE9_14 Cosmology
- PE9_15 Space Sciences
- PE9_16 Very large data bases: archiving, handling and analysis
- PE9_17 Instrumentation - telescopes, detectors and techniques

PE10 Earth System Science

Physical geography, geology, geophysics, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, cryology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management

- PE10_1 Atmospheric chemistry, atmospheric composition, air pollution
- PE10_2 Meteorology, atmospheric physics and dynamics
- PE10_3 Climatology and climate change
- PE10_4 Terrestrial ecology, land cover change
- PE10_5 Geology, tectonics, volcanology
- PE10_6 Palaeoclimatology, palaeoecology
- PE10_7 Physics of earth's interior, seismology, volcanology
- PE10_8 Oceanography (physical, chemical, biological, geological)
- PE10_9 Biogeochemistry, biogeochemical cycles, environmental chemistry
- PE10_10 Mineralogy, petrology, igneous petrology, metamorphic petrology
- PE10_11 Geochemistry, crystal chemistry, isotope geochemistry, thermodynamics
- PE10_12 Sedimentology, soil science, palaeontology, earth evolution
- PE10_13 Physical geography
- PE10_14 Earth observations from space/remote sensing
- PE10_15 Geomagnetism, palaeomagnetism
- PE10_16 Ozone, upper atmosphere, ionosphere
- PE10_17 Hydrology, water and soil pollution
- PE10_18 Cryosphere, dynamics of snow and ice cover, sea ice, permafrosts and ice sheets

Life Sciences

LS1 Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Structural Biology and Molecular Biophysics

Molecular synthesis, modification, mechanisms and interactions, biochemistry, structural biology, molecular biophysics signalling pathways

- LS1_1 Macromolecular complexes including interactions involving nucleic acids, proteins, lipids and carbohydrates
- LS1_2 Biochemistry
- LS1_3 DNA synthesis, modification, repair, recombination, degradation
- LS1_4 RNA synthesis, processing, modification, degradation
- LS1_5 Protein synthesis, modification, turnover
- LS1_6 Lipid biology
- LS1_7 Glycobiology
- LS1_8 Molecular biophysics (e.g. single-molecule approaches, bioenergetics, fluorescence)
- LS1_9 Structural biology and its methodologies (e.g. crystallography, cryo-EM, NMR and new technologies)
- LS1_10 Molecular mechanisms of signalling pathways
- LS1_11 Fundamental aspects of synthetic biology and chemical biology

LS2 Genetics, 'Omics', Bioinformatics and Systems Biology

Molecular genetics, quantitative genetics, genetic epidemiology, epigenetics, genomics, metagenomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, glycomics, bioinformatics, computational biology, biostatistics, systems biology

- LS2_1 Molecular genetics, reverse genetics, forward genetics, genome editing
- LS2_2 Non-coding RNAs
- LS2_3 Quantitative genetics
- LS2_4 Genetic epidemiology
- LS2_5 Epigenetics and gene regulation
- LS2_6 Genomics (e.g. comparative genomics, functional genomics)
- LS2_7 Metagenomics
- LS2_8 Transcriptomics
- LS2_9 Proteomics
- LS2_10 Metabolomics
- LS2_11 Glycomics/Lipidomics
- LS2_12 Bioinformatics
- LS2_13 Computational biology
- LS2_14 Biostatistics
- LS2_15 Systems biology

LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology

Cell biology, cell physiology, signal transduction, organogenesis, developmental genetics, pattern formation and stem cell biology, in plants and animals, or, where appropriate, in microorganisms

- LS3_1 Morphology and functional imaging of cells and tissues
- LS3_2 Cytoskeleton and cell behaviour (e.g. control of cell shape, cell migration and cellular mechanosensing)
- LS3_3 Organelle biology and trafficking
- LS3_4 Cell junctions, cell adhesion, cell communication and the extracellular matrix
- LS3_5 Cell signalling and signal transduction
- LS3_6 Cell cycle, division and growth
- LS3_7 Cell death (including senescence) and autophagy
- LS3_8 Cell differentiation, physiology and dynamics
- LS3_9 Developmental genetics in animals and plants

- LS3_10 Embryology and pattern formation in animals and plants
- LS3_11 Tissue organisation and morphogenesis in animals and plants (including biophysical approaches)
- LS3_12 Stem cell biology in development, tissue regeneration and ageing, and fundamental aspects of stem cell-based therapies

LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology

Organ physiology, pathophysiology, endocrinology, metabolism, ageing, tumorigenesis, cardiovascular diseases, metabolic syndromes

- LS4_1 Organ physiology and pathophysiology
- LS4_2 Comparative physiology and pathophysiology
- LS4_3 Molecular aspects of endocrinology
- LS4_4 Fundamental mechanisms underlying ageing
- LS4_5 Metabolism, biological basis of metabolism-related disorders
- LS4_6 Fundamental mechanisms underlying cancer
- LS4_7 Fundamental mechanisms underlying cardiovascular diseases
- LS4_8 Non-communicable diseases (except for neural/psychiatric and immunity-related diseases)

LS5 Neuroscience and Neural Disorders

Neural cell function and signalling, systems neuroscience, neural bases of cognitive and behavioural processes, neurological and psychiatric disorders

- LS5_1 Neural cell function, communication and signalling, neurotransmission in neuronal and/or glial cells
- LS5_2 Systems neuroscience and computational neuroscience (e.g. neural networks, neural modelling)
- LS5_3 Neuronal development, plasticity and regeneration
- LS5_4 Sensation and perception (e.g. sensory systems, sensory processing, pain)
- LS5_5 Neural bases of cognitive processes (e.g. memory, learning, attention)
- LS5_6 Neural bases of behaviour (e.g. sleep, consciousness, addiction)
- LS5_7 Neurological disorders (e.g. neurodegenerative diseases, seizures)
- LS5_8 Psychiatric disorders (e.g. affective and anxiety disorders, autism, psychotic disorders)
- LS5_9 Neurotrauma and neurovascular conditions (including injury, blood-brain barrier, stroke, neurorehabilitation)

LS6 Immunity and Infection

The immune system and related disorders, biology of infectious agents and infection, biological basis of prevention and treatment of infectious diseases

- LS6_1 Innate immunity in animals and plants
- LS6_2 Adaptive immunity
- LS6_3 Regulation and effector functions of the immune response (e.g. cytokines, interferons and chemokines, inflammation, immune signalling, helper T cells, immunological memory, immunological tolerance, cell-mediated cytotoxicity, complement)
- LS6_4 Immunological mechanisms in disease (e.g. autoimmunity, allergy, transplantation immunology, tumour immunology)
- LS6_5 Biology of pathogens (e.g. bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi)
- LS6_6 Mechanisms of infection (e.g. transmission, virulence factors, host defences, immunity to pathogens, molecular pathogenesis)
- LS6_7 Biological basis of prevention and treatment of infection (e.g. infection natural cycle, reservoirs, vectors, vaccines, antimicrobials)
- LS6_8 Infectious diseases in animals and plants

LS7 Applied Medical Technologies, Diagnostics, Therapies and Public Health

Development of tools for diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of diseases, pharmacology, clinical medicine, regenerative medicine, epidemiology and public health

- LS7_1 Imaging for medical diagnosis
- LS7_2 Genetic tools for medical diagnosis
- LS7_3 Other medical technologies for diagnosis and monitoring of diseases
- LS7_4 Pharmacology and pharmacogenomics (including drug discovery and design, drug delivery and therapy, toxicology)
- LS7_5 Applied gene and cell therapies, regenerative medicine
- LS7_6 Radiation therapy
- LS7_7 Analgesia and surgery
- LS7_8 Epidemiology and public health
- LS7_9 Environmental health, occupational medicine
- LS7_10 Health services, health care research, medical ethics

LS8 Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology

Population, community and ecosystem ecology, evolutionary biology, behavioural ecology, microbial ecology

- LS8_1 Ecosystem and community ecology, macroecology
- LS8_2 Biodiversity, conservation biology, conservation genetics
- LS8_3 Population biology, population dynamics, population genetics
- LS8_4 Evolutionary ecology
- LS8_5 Evolutionary genetics
- LS8_6 Phylogenetics, systematics, comparative biology
- LS8_7 Macroevolution, paleobiology
- LS8_8 Coevolution, biological mechanisms and ecology of species interactions (e.g. symbiosis, parasitism, mutualism, food-webs)
- LS8_9 Behavioural ecology and evolution
- LS8_10 Microbial ecology and evolution
- LS8_11 Marine biology and ecology

LS9 Applied Life Sciences, Biotechnology, and Molecular and Biosystems Engineering

Applied plant and animal sciences, forestry, food sciences, applied biotechnology, environmental, and marine biotechnology, applied bioengineering, biomass and biofuels, biohazards

- LS9_1 Applied biotechnology (including transgenic organisms, applied genetics and genomics, biosensors, bioreactors, microbiology, bioactive compounds)
- LS9_2 Applied bioengineering, synthetic biology, chemical biology, nanobiotechnology, metabolic engineering, protein and glyco-engineering, tissue engineering, biocatalysis, biomimetics
- LS9_3 Applied animal sciences (including animal breeding, veterinary sciences, animal husbandry, animal welfare, aquaculture, fisheries, insect gene drive)
- LS9_4 Applied plant sciences (including crop production, plant breeding, agroecology, forestry, soil biology)
- LS9_5 Food sciences (including food technology, food safety, nutrition)
- LS9_6 Biomass production and utilisation, biofuels
- LS9_7 Environmental biotechnology (including bioindicators, bioremediation, biodegradation)
- LS9_8 Biohazards (including biological containment, biosafety, biosecurity)
- LS9_9 Marine biotechnology (including marine bioproducts, feed resources, genome mining)

Social Sciences and Humanities

SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations

Economics, finance and management

- SH1_1 Macroeconomics; monetary economics; economic growth
- SH1_2 International management; international trade; international business; spatial economics
- SH1_3 Development economics, health economics, education economics
- SH1_4 Financial economics; banking; corporate finance; international finance; accounting; auditing; insurance
- SH1_5 Labour and demographic economics; human resource management
- SH1_6 Econometrics; operations research
- SH1_7 Behavioural economics; experimental economics; neuro-economics
- SH1_8 Microeconomics; game theory
- SH1_9 Industrial organisation; strategy; entrepreneurship
- SH1_10 Management; marketing; organisational behaviour; operations management
- SH1_11 Technological change, innovation, research & development
- SH1_12 Agricultural economics; energy economics; environmental economics
- SH1_13 Public economics; political economics; law and economics
- SH1_14 Competition law, contract law, trade law, Intellectual Property Rights
- SH1_15 Quantitative economic history and history of economics; institutional economics; economic systems

SH2 Institutions, Values, Environment and Space

Political science, law, sustainability science, geography, regional studies and planning

- SH2_1 Political systems, governance
- SH2_2 Democratisation and social movements
- SH2_3 Conflict resolution, war, peace building
- SH2_4 Constitutions, human rights, comparative law, humanitarian law, anti-discrimination law
- SH2_5 International relations, global and transnational governance
- SH2_6 Sustainability sciences, environment and resources
- SH2_7 Environmental and climate change, societal impact and policy
- SH2_8 Energy, transportation and mobility
- SH2_9 Urban, regional and rural studies
- SH2_10 Land use and regional planning
- SH2_11 Human, economic and social geography
- SH2_12 GIS, spatial analysis; big data in political, geographical and legal studies

SH3 The Social World, Diversity, Population

Sociology, social psychology, social anthropology, demography, education, communication

- SH3_1 Social structure, social mobility
- SH3_2 Inequalities, discrimination, prejudice, aggression and violence, antisocial behaviour
- SH3_3 Social integration, exclusion, prosocial behaviour
- SH3_4 Attitudes and beliefs
- SH3_5 Social influence; power and group behaviour
- SH3_6 Kinship; diversity and identities, gender, interethnic relations
- SH3_7 Social policies, welfare
- SH3_8 Population dynamics; households, family and fertility
- SH3_9 Health, ageing and society
- SH3_10 Religious studies, ritual; symbolic representation
- SH3_11 Social aspects of learning, curriculum studies, educational policies
- SH3_12 Communication and information, networks, media
- SH3_13 Digital social research
- SH3_14 Science and technology studies

SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity

Cognitive science, psychology, linguistics, philosophy of mind

- SH4_1 Cognitive basis of human development and education, developmental disorders; comparative cognition
- SH4_2 Personality and social cognition; emotion
- SH4_3 Clinical and health psychology
- SH4_4 Neuropsychology
- SH4_5 Attention, perception, action, consciousness
- SH4_6 Learning, memory; cognition in ageing
- SH4_7 Reasoning, decision-making; intelligence
- SH4_8 Language learning and processing (first and second languages)
- SH4_9 Theoretical linguistics; computational linguistics
- SH4_10 Language typology; historical linguistics
- SH4_11 Pragmatics, sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, discourse analysis
- SH4_12 Philosophy of mind, philosophy of language
- SH4_13 Philosophy of science, epistemology, logic

SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production

Literature, philology, cultural studies, study of the arts, philosophy

- SH5_1 Classics, ancient literature and art
- SH5_2 Theory and history of literature, comparative literature
- SH5_3 Philology and palaeography
- SH5_4 Visual and performing arts, film, design
- SH5_5 Music and musicology; history of music
- SH5_6 History of art and architecture, arts-based research
- SH5_7 Museums, exhibitions, conservation and restoration
- SH5_8 Cultural studies, cultural identities and memories, cultural heritage
- SH5_9 Metaphysics, philosophical anthropology; aesthetics
- SH5_10 Ethics; social and political philosophy
- SH5_11 History of philosophy
- SH5_12 Computational modelling and digitisation in the cultural sphere

SH6 The Study of the Human Past

Archaeology and history

- SH6_1 Historiography, theory and methods in history, including the analysis of digital data
- SH6_2 Classical archaeology, history of archaeology
- SH6_3 General archaeology, archaeometry, landscape archaeology
- SH6_4 Prehistory, palaeoanthropology, palaeodemography, protohistory
- SH6_5 Ancient history
- SH6_6 Medieval history
- SH6_7 Early modern history
- SH6_8 Modern and contemporary history
- SH6_9 Colonial and post-colonial history
- SH6_10 Global history, transnational history, comparative history, entangled histories
- SH6_11 Social and economic history
- SH6_12 Gender history; cultural history; history of collective identities and memories
- SH6_13 History of ideas, intellectual history, history of economic thought
- SH6_14 History of science, medicine and technologies

4.2 HOST INSTITUTION SUPPORT LETTER TEMPLATE 2019

(Print on paper bearing the official letterhead of the host institution)

Commitment of the host institution for ERC Calls 2019^{30, 31, 32}

The <<please 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 successful>>, which is the applicant legal entity,

confirms its intention to sign a supplementary agreement with
<<please fill in here the name of the principal investigator>>

in which the obligations listed below will be addressed should the proposal entitled
<<acronym>> : <<title of the proposal>>

be retained.

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

The *applicant legal entity* commits itself to hosting [and engaging] the *principal investigator* for the duration of the grant to:

- a) ensure that the work will be performed under the scientific guidance of the *principal investigator* who is expected to devote:
 - *in the case of a Starting Grant at least 50% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country;*
 - *in the case of a Consolidator Grant at least 40% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country;*
 - *in the case of an Advanced Grant at least 30% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of her/his working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.*

³⁰ A scanned copy of the signed statement should be uploaded electronically via the Participant Portal Submission Service in PDF format.

³¹ The statement of commitment of the host institution refers to most obligations of the host institution, which are stated in the H2020 ERC Model Grant Agreement (MGA). The H2020 ERC MGA is available on the ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu> & http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html. The reference to the time commitment of the Principal Investigator is stated in the ERC Work Programme 2018.

³² This statement (on letterhead paper) shall be signed by the institution's legal representative and stating his/her name, function, email address and stamp of the institution.

- 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;
 - v) possibility to apply independently for funding;
 - vi) access to appropriate space and facilities for conducting the research;
- f) provide — during the implementation of the project (action) — research support to the *principal investigator* and the team members (regarding infrastructure, equipment, access rights, products and other services necessary for conducting the research);
- g) support the *principal investigator* and provide administrative assistance, in particular for the:
 - i) general management of the work and his/her team
 - ii) scientific reporting, especially ensuring that the team members send their scientific results to the *principal investigator*;
 - iii) financial reporting, especially providing timely and clear financial information;
 - iv) application of the *applicant legal entity's* usual management practices;
 - v) general logistics of the project (action);
 - vi) access to the electronic exchange system (see Article 52 of the Agreement);
- h) inform the *principal investigator* immediately (in writing) of any events or circumstances likely to affect the Agreement (see Article 17 of the Agreement);
- i) ensure that the *principal investigator* enjoys adequate:
 - i) conditions for annual, sickness and parental leave;
 - ii) occupational health and safety standards;
 - iii) insurance under the general social security scheme, such as pension rights;

- j) allow the transfer of the Agreement to a new beneficiary ('portability'; see Article 56a of the Agreement).
- 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 Researchers³³ - 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.

For the host institution (applicant legal entity):

Date



Name and Function



Email and Signature of legal representative



Stamp of the host institution (applicant legal entity)

IMPORTANT NOTE: In order to be complete all the above mentioned items are mandatory and shall be included in the commitment of the corresponding host institution.

³³ Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OJ L 75, 22.3.2005, p. 67).

4.3 PHD AND EQUIVALENT DOCTORAL DEGREES

The ERC Policy on PhD and equivalent doctoral degrees is detailed in Annex 2 of the [ERC Work Programme 2019](#) 'ERC Policy on PhD and equivalent doctoral degrees':

1. *The necessity of ascertaining PhD equivalence*

In order to be eligible to apply to the ERC Starting or Consolidator Grant a Principal Investigator must have been awarded a PhD or equivalent doctoral degree. First-professional degrees will not be considered in themselves as PhD-equivalent, even if recipients carry the title "Doctor". See below for further guidelines on PhD degree equivalency.

2. *PhD Degrees*

The research doctorate is the highest earned academic degree. It is always awarded for **independent research** at a professional level in either academic disciplines or professional fields. Regardless of the entry point, doctoral studies involve several stages of academic work. These may include the completion of preliminary course, seminar, and laboratory studies and/or the passing of a battery of written examinations. The PhD candidate selects an academic adviser and a subject for the dissertation, is assigned a dissertation committee, and designs his or her research (some educators call the doctoral thesis a dissertation to distinguish it from lesser theses). The dissertation committee consists usually of 3-5 faculty members in the candidate's research field, including the adviser.

3. *Independent research*

Conducting the research and writing the dissertation usually requires one to several years depending upon the topic selected and the research work necessary to prepare the dissertation. In defending his or her thesis, **the PhD candidate must establish mastery of the subject matter, explain and justify his or her research findings, and answer all questions put by the committee**. A successful defence results in the award of the PhD degree.

4. *Degrees equivalent to the PhD:*

It is recognised that there are some other doctoral titles that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the PhD in certain fields. All of them have **similar content requirements**. Potential applicants are invited to consult the following for useful references on degrees that will be considered equivalent to the PhD:

- EURYDICE: "Examinations, qualifications and titles - Second edition, Volume 1, European glossary on education" published in 2004³⁴. Please note that some titles that belong to the same category with doctoral degrees (ISCED 6 classification or ISCED 8 – 2011 classification³⁵) may correspond to the intermediate steps towards the completion of doctoral education and they should not be therefore considered as PhD-equivalent.
- List of research doctorate titles awarded in the United States that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the PhD within certain fields. These doctorate titles are also recognised as PhD-equivalent by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)³⁶.

³⁴ <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/european-glossary-on-education-pbEC3212292/>

³⁵ <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/isced-2011-en.pdf>

³⁶ <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-structure-us.html>

5. First Professional Degrees (for medical doctors please see below):

It is important to recognise that the initial professional degrees in various fields are **first degrees, not graduate research degrees**. Several degree titles in such fields include the term "Doctor", **but they are neither research doctorates nor equivalent to the PhD**.

6. Medical Doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine):

For medical doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine), **a medical doctor degree will not be accepted by itself as equivalent to a PhD award**. To be considered an eligible Principal Investigator, medical doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine) need to provide the certificates of **both a medical doctor degree and a PhD or proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency** (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment). Additionally, candidates must also provide information on their research experience (including peer reviewed publications) in order to further substantiate the equivalence of their overall training to a PhD. In these cases, the certified date of the medical doctor degree completion plus two years is the time reference for calculation of the eligibility time-window (i.e. 4 - 9 years past the medical doctor degree for Starters, and over 9 - 14 years past the medical doctor degree for Consolidators).

For medical doctors who have been awarded both an MD and a PhD, **the date of the earliest degree that makes the applicant eligible** takes precedence in the calculation of the eligibility time-window (2 - 7 years after PhD or 4 - 9 years past the medical doctor degree for Starters, and over 7 - 12 years after PhD or 9 - 14 years past the medical doctor degree for Consolidators).

Further explanation on point 6 for applicants holding several degrees:

An MD degree³⁷ takes precedence over a PhD degree **only** when an applicant has held an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment) **before** a PhD award date.

Example 1

A PI who was awarded an MD in 2004, completed clinical specialty training in 2009 and then was awarded a PhD on 1 January 2014, is eligible to apply to the Starting Grant 2019 call based on the award date of the PhD. As the MD by itself is not accepted as equivalent to a PhD award, the earliest eligible degree is the PhD – awarded 5 years prior to 1 January 2019 and within the eligibility window (2 – 7 years after PhD).

Example 2

A PI who was awarded an MD on 1 January 2000, completed clinical training in 2003 and held one or several research positions (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship or professorship appointment) prior to being awarded a PhD in 2013, is ineligible for both the Starting and Consolidator Grant 2019 calls. The MD degree together with the research experience acquired during the research position(s) is considered equivalent to a PhD. Therefore, the earliest eligible degree is the MD – awarded 19 years prior to 1 January 2019 and not within the eligibility window (4 – 9 years past MD for Starting and 9 – 14 years past MD for Consolidator grant applicants). An extension for three years of clinical training is not enough to make the applicant eligible for the Consolidator grant call.

³⁷ The basic medical degree (first graduate degree in medicine) applicable to all countries.

Example 3

A PI who was awarded an MD degree on 1 January 2011, followed by a Dr. Med. degree awarded on 11 July 2012 and who then held one or several research positions requiring PhD equivalence (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship or professorship appointment) is eligible to apply to the Starting Grant 2019 call based on the award date of the MD degree. As the Dr. Med. degree by itself is not accepted as equivalent to a PhD degree, the earliest eligible degree is the MD degree – awarded 8 years prior to 1 January 2019 and within the eligibility window (4 – 9 years past MD for Starting grant applicants). The certified date of the MD degree completion plus two years is the time reference for calculation of the eligibility time-window and thus 1 January 2013 is the PhD equivalence date which should be entered in the application form for this applicant.

Example 4

A PI who was awarded an MD Univ. degree on 8 August 2005, followed by a Dr. Med. degree awarded on 25 October 2006 and then a PhD on 1 January 2010 is eligible to apply to the Consolidator Grant 2019 call based on the award date of the PhD degree. As the Dr. Med. degree by itself is not accepted as equivalent to a PhD award, and as the applicant has not held any research positions requiring PhD equivalence between the MD and the PhD, the earliest eligible degree is the PhD degree – awarded 9 years prior to 1 January 2019 and within the eligibility window (7 – 12 years past PhD) for Consolidator grant applicants.

4.4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR EXTENSION REQUESTS

The reference date towards the calculation of the eligibility period should be the date of the actual award according to the national rules in the country where the degree was awarded.

However, the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD³⁸ taken into consideration for eligibility (EETE) can be reduced **in the following properly documented circumstances** provided they started before the call deadline. For all circumstances which take into account documented amount of leave taken or training received, the time to be subtracted from the EETE may not exceed the amount of time between the start date of the documented circumstance and the call deadline.

For maternity, the EETE will be considered reduced by 18 months or if longer by the documented amount of leave actually taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD award. For paternity, the EETE will be considered reduced by the documented amount of paternity leave actually taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD award.

For long-term illness³⁹, or national service the EETE will be considered reduced by the documented amount of leave actually taken by the Principal Investigator for each incident which occurred **after** the PhD award.

For clinical training, the EETE will be considered reduced by the documented amount of clinical training actually received by the Principal Investigator **after** the award of the first eligible degree, and **by up to 4 years maximum**.

All applicants are entitled to an extension of their eligibility window (the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD taken into consideration for eligibility - EETE) if properly documented and related to the specific circumstances defined in the annual ERC work programme⁴⁰. Please note that any such circumstance must have started before the call deadline. The reference date for calculating the eligibility window is the actual award date of the first eligible degree according to the national rules of the awarding country. The extension time is calculated based on the supporting documentation submitted with the application. There is no limit to the total extension timeframe. Please note however, that a maximum of 4 years have been introduced for extensions due to clinical training. The individual extensions for different periods are additive and the total extension time can thus be based on several reasons.

Maternity leave

For maternity, a flat rate of 18 months extension is granted for each child born **before or after** the PhD award. If a maternity leave or the combined maternity- and parental leave was longer than 18 months, an extension will be granted for the documented leave actually taken. The same principle also applies for child adoption.

Supporting documents: birth certificate(s) or passport(s) of the child(ren), family book or any other official document that links the mother and the child(ren). For extension requests above 18 months

³⁸ For applicants whose first eligible degree is their MD such incidents can be considered from the date of the completion of their MD degree.

³⁹ Over ninety days for the Principal Investigator or a close family member (child, spouse, parent or sibling).

⁴⁰ E.g. no extension to the eligibility window can be accepted for periods of unemployment.

per child, an official signed document⁴¹ from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s) must be submitted. Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods.

Paternity leave

For paternity leaves, an extension will be granted corresponding to the documented time of paternity and/or parental leave actually taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD award (counting up until the call deadline). Both full time and part time leaves can be accepted if properly documented⁴². The same principle also applies for child adoption.

Supporting documents: an official signed document³⁷ from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s). Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods.

Long-term illness

For long-term illness (more than ninety days for the Principal Investigator or a close family member such as a child, spouse, parent or sibling), an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented time of leave actually taken after the PhD award (counting up until the call deadline). Full time and part time leaves as well as reduced working capacity can be accepted if properly documented.

Supporting documents: an official signed document from the employer certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s). Any document should mention the reason for the leave. If the leave was conducted as a part-time leave, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the time off work happened over several periods, as long as the leaves were related to the same illness or condition. Furthermore, the request should be supported by an official document explaining the long-term nature of the illness or condition of the applicant or the close family member (e.g. from a hospital, a doctor or an insurance company). The supporting documents should also prove the family relationship in case the extension request relates to caring for a seriously ill close family member.

National (military) service

For national military service, an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented amount of leave actually taken after the PhD award (counting up until the call deadline).

Supporting documents: document signed by official authority with start and end date of the service.

Clinical training

For clinical training, the EETE can be reduced by the documented time of clinical training received by the PI after the award of the first eligible degree up to a maximum of 4 years (counting up until the call deadline). For applicants whose first eligible degree is their MD, clinical training can be accepted from the date of the completion of their MD degree. No extension will be accepted for serving as a house doctor or hospital doctor unless it is part of a clinical training programme. In case of part-time clinical training, the exact total training time will be accepted on a pro-rata basis to extend the eligibility window of the applicant.

Supporting documents: an official document signed by the employer (usually a hospital) certifying start and end date(s) of the individual training period(s). Any document should mention the type of training. If the training was conducted part-time, this should be stated. It is acceptable if the training happened over several periods and for different clinical specialties.

⁴¹ The certificate should be issued by a person within the employing organisation empowered to certify the actual leave taken (i.e. an authorised officer from the HR Department).

⁴² An official document proving your right to social paternity benefits can also be accepted.