



European Research Council
Executive Agency

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CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Temporary Agents (AD 6) for the European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA)

ERCEA/TA/172/2019

The European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA) is organising a Call for Expression of Interest in view of establishing a Reserve List of approximately 15 candidates for:

Research Programme Agent in the field of Ethics Review and Monitoring

The registration period will start on 26/03/2019 and end on
26/04/2019, at 12:00 (midday) Brussels time.



European
Commission

ERC Executive Agency, Unit D.2, Human Resources
Place Rogier 16, COV2, BE-1049 Brussels, Belgium | erc-selection@ec.europa.eu | <http://erc.europa.eu> |



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A. Who we are and what we offer

The ERCEA is dedicated to selecting and funding the excellent ideas that have not happened yet, and the scientists that are dreaming them up.

In practice, the ERCEA supports the work of the ERC, the first pan-European funding body sustaining excellent frontier research in Europe, set up by the European Union in February 2007. The ERCEA was created in order to manage the Ideas Programme, part of the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7). Its mandate was renewed until 2024, for the implementation of part of the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020).

In order to achieve the ERC's objectives, the ERCEA manages several frontier research grants: 'Starting Grants' targeted at early-career, emerging research leaders, 'Consolidator Grants', aimed at excellent researchers who are already independent, 'Advanced Grants' that support established top researchers, as well as 'Synergy Grants' for groups of two to four Principal Investigators to jointly address ambitious research projects. The grants fund projects in any field of research, with excellence as the sole selection criterion. Since the creation of the Agency, some 9,000 top researchers at various stages of their careers have been supported. Under Horizon 2020, the ERCEA has a total budget of some €13 billion.

The ERCEA is dedicated to excellence in research and in all aspects of its work, and seeks to attract professional, highly-motivated staff with the right qualifications and expertise. The ERCEA's working environment is modern, dynamic, inspiring and engaging.

Within the ERCEA, the Scientific Management Department carries out tasks that require an understanding of the scientific subject matter. It implements the peer review and the ethics review processes for the selection of ERC grants and the processes for scientific and ethics monitoring of grants. The Department supports the Scientific Council in its work as it relates to scientific matters.

The Agency is situated in the heart of Brussels and expected to count a total staff of 529 by the end of 2020. For more details on the ERC and ERCEA, please visit our website: <http://erc.europa.eu/>.

In organising this Call for Expression of Interest, the ERCEA seeks to fill current and future vacancies of Research Programme Agent in the field of Ethics Review and Monitoring.



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Temporary Agent (AD 6) – Research Programme Agent in the field of Ethics Review and Monitoring (ERCEA/TA/172/2019)

We are

Within Department B, Unit B.1 deals with Ethics Review and Expert Management. The Unit defines and manages the processes for ethics review and monitoring. The Unit also implements the contracting and payments of experts.

We offer

The Research Programme Agent will work as an adviser and coordinator for the ethics review and ethics monitoring of the proposals and projects funded by the ERC, and will have the following duties:

Provide advice on ethics issues

- Use their competence and knowledge to advise colleagues on ethics issues such as clinical research, animal welfare, human rights, data protection, research with cells and tissues, research in low income countries.
- Review and validate the ethics clearances of proposals and projects, drafted by the ethics officers.
- Participate as panel coordinator to the ethics review panels.
- Define ethics content guidelines and templates for beneficiaries to help them in performing their research according to the ethics principles.

Organise the work

- Coordinate the work of the ethics officers together with the Head of Sector and other TAs in the Sector. Agree on priorities and deadlines.
- Act as ethics call-coordinator within the Sector for one or more calls. Supervise the ethics process and make sure deadlines are met.
- Contribute to the planning of the ethics review panels. Define the pools of experts for each panel based on their expertise.
- Ensure the follow-up of the implementation of the projects by monitoring contractual obligations via ethics monitoring, ethics checks and technical reviews.
- Support the Head of Sector in achieving the objectives of the Sector.

Maintain procedures and guidelines

- Contribute to the internal quality assurance of the work of the Ethics Sector by drafting guidelines and procedures for the proper implementation of the ethics process. Ensure that a full set of procedures and guidelines is maintained for all operations in the Sector.
- Analyse and assess the ethics process and provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.



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- Follow the evolution of the IT systems that are relevant to the Sector (such as SEP, Sygma, Compass) by actively participating in user groups. Actively propose and negotiate new functionalities. Contribute to the testing of new releases of IT systems.

B. General qualifications and experience required

1. Eligibility criteria

Candidates will be considered eligible for selection on the basis of the following formal criteria to be fulfilled by the deadline for applications:

1.1 General conditions:

- Be a national of a member state of the European Union;
- Enjoy full rights as citizen;
- Have fulfilled any obligations imposed by the applicable laws on military service;
- Meet the character requirements for the duties involved¹;
- Be physically fit to perform their duties.

1.2 Specific conditions:

1.2.1 Qualifications

Have a level of education corresponding to completed university studies of at least three years attested by a diploma. Only qualifications issued by EU Member State authorities and qualifications recognised as equivalent by the relevant EU Member State authorities will be accepted. In instances where diplomas are obtained from a non-EU Member State, the candidate may be required to provide the relevant document of comparability by a recognised authority.

1.2.2 Knowledge of languages

Have a thorough knowledge of English and a satisfactory knowledge of another official EU language to the extent necessary for the performance of the duties pertaining to the post. English is the predominant working language at ERCEA and generally considered to be the *lingua franca* of the scientific community.

1.2.3 Professional experience

Candidates must have, at the closing date for applications, professional experience of at least three years, acquired after graduation referred to in 1.2.1. A doctoral programme, even unpaid, will be counted as professional experience for a maximum of three years.

¹ Prior to appointment, the successful candidate will be asked to provide a certificate from their police file indicating that they do not have a criminal record.



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2. Selection criteria

2.1 Essential

2.1.1 Professional experience

- The professional experience of at least three years (as requested in point 1.2.3.) should be in the field of dealing with ethics issues related to two or more of the following domains: clinical research, animal welfare, human rights, data protection, research with cells and tissues, research in low income countries, environmental protection and safety, misuse and dual use, artificial intelligence.

2.1.2 General skills and competences (assessed during the written test and interview)

- Strong managerial, organisational and communication skills;
- Excellent knowledge of ethics issues;
- Excellent analytical skills;
- Outstanding drafting skills, with an eye for detail;
- Enthusiasm for and confidence in coordinating evaluation panels involving senior external experts;
- Ability to work well under pressure and in a multicultural environment;
- Good knowledge of European research policies and programmes.

2.1.3 Knowledge of Languages

Candidates must have a thorough knowledge of one of the European Union languages and a satisfactory knowledge of another European Union language to the extent necessary for the performance of the duties. In particular, candidates must demonstrate an excellent command of written and spoken English (C1 level).²

2.2 Advantageous

- A sound knowledge of the EU legislation that are relevant for research ethics;
- Academic qualification in one of following areas: Ethics; Philosophy; Biomedical Sciences; Biology; Law; Human Rights; Human Geography; Veterinary; Psychology; Anthropology; Economy; Environmental Sciences; Political Sciences; Artificial Intelligence.

² Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.



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C. Selection Process

1. Selection Committee

A Selection Committee will be appointed for this profile and will comprise five members including a member designated by the Staff Committee. Alternate members may be appointed to replace members who have declared a conflict of interest.

Under no circumstances should candidates approach the Selection Committee themselves, either directly or indirectly concerning this selection. The Appointing Authority of the ERCEA (hereafter AHCC) reserves the right to disqualify any candidate who disregards these instructions. In assessing candidates' merits, the Selection Committee shall observe the principle of equal treatment.

2. Indicative schedule

The selection process shall take several months to be completed. Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the different stages in due time.

3. Admission to the selection process

Once the deadline for submitting the application form has elapsed, the Selection Committee will check the applications submitted for their profiles against the **eligibility criteria** as detailed above under Chapter B, Section 1.

4. Initial assessment of the applications

The Selection Committee will assess the applications of eligible candidates with reference to the **selection criteria** as detailed above under Chapter B, Section 2.

5. Invitation to written tests

Upon completion of the assessment, the Selection Committee will establish a shortlist of approximately **45** candidates best matching the needs of the profile. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to sit a written test³.

Only candidates who score above threshold in the written tests (see 6.1 below) will be invited to the interview.

Candidates will be invited to interviews by e-mail from ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu. Should candidates' e-mail address change prior to the completion of the selection process, they are asked to inform ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

³ No more than three times the number of successful candidates sought for the Reserve List will be invited to take the written test



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Please note that, as a general rule, for organisational purposes, the appointments set by ERCEA cannot be changed at the candidate's request.

6. Tests

6.1 Written test

The test will be in English on ERCEA premises in Brussels and will be marked anonymously, out of a total of 100 points (pass mark: 70). The written test will include:

- (1) A case study exercise on a subject related to the field of the vacant position, designed to test the technical knowledge of the candidates, as well as their ability to understand, analyse, summarise and draft in English.
- (2) General questions to assess the candidate's knowledge of EU Institutions, European research policies and programmes, the ERC and its work, including the general skills and competences detailed under point 2.1.2 "General skills and competences".

6.2 The interview

The interview will finalise the assessment of candidates according to the selection criteria. The interview will be conducted in English on the ERCEA's premises in Brussels. The candidate's knowledge of a second official language will be assessed in compliance with point 1.2.2 "Knowledge of languages". The interview will be marked out of 100 points (pass mark: 70).

7. Verification of documents and eligibility

The candidate's application will be checked against the original documents and certificates in order to confirm the accuracy of the statements made in the application and the eligibility of the candidate.

If, at any point in time, it is established that the information in an application has been falsified, the candidate will be disqualified from the selection process.

The inclusion on a Reserve List remains subject to the confirmation of eligibility of the candidate following the verification of original documents.

8. Reserve List

The Selection Committee will include on the Reserve List approximately 15 candidates with the highest marks. The draft unranked Reserve List, in alphabetical order, will be submitted to the AHCC of the ERCEA for approval.

Candidates should note that inclusion on a Reserve List does not imply any entitlement to employment.



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The Reserve List will be valid for a period of 12 months from the date of its establishment. The validity of the Reserve List may be extended at the discretion of the AHCC.

9. Notification to candidates

All candidates will be notified about the outcome of their application from ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu. In order to facilitate the selection process, all correspondence with candidates concerning this vacancy will be carried out in English.

10. Application Procedure

Candidates should submit their Application Form in English, and send it to ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

The subject line of the e-mail should mention family name followed by the Call reference, as follows: "FAMILY NAME – ERCEA/TA/172/2019 – Ethics Review and Monitoring".

The ERCEA will only take into account applications received by the deadline, which is **26/04/2019 at 12:00 (midday) Brussels time**.

Professional references (see page 6 of Application Form) may be consulted should candidates be included on a Reserve List of the ERCEA (and thus have been successful in this selection), and should a recruiting service have shortlisted them in view of offering a contract of employment and wish to confirm the statements made in the selection process. Please note that in order to comply with rules on personal data protection, the names and contact data should be provided with consent of the persons whose name is listed.

Applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their applications, since heavy internet traffic or a fault with the internet connection could lead to difficulties in submission. The ERCEA cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such difficulties. Candidates are also responsible for the information they provide, which is the basis for the Selection Committee's assessment. They are responsible for ensuring that all the information is complete and correct before submitting the application.

Candidates will be disqualified if they do **not**:

- comply with the conditions of application for the Call published;
- send their application by the deadline;
- send a complete application including all requested elements;
- meet all the eligibility criteria;
- provide all the required supporting documents.



11. Providing original documents on the day of the interview

If invited to the interview, candidates will be required to show, on the day of the interview, original or certified copies of the documents detailing citizenship, studies and any professional experience. Candidates are required to bring, on the day of interview:

- a document proving citizenship (e.g., passport, identity card or any other official document specifying citizenship, which must have been obtained no later than the closing date for online registration);
- if relevant, a document proving that obligations concerning military service have been fulfilled;
- the diploma(s) attesting successful completion of studies;
- proof of professional experience clearly indicating starting and finishing dates and the nature of the duties carried out (e.g., employment contracts, employers' certificates).

Paper copies of web pages and/or references to websites do not constitute supporting documents for these purposes.

Candidates must also bring a photocopy of each document. Upon verification, the original documents will be returned on the day of interview. The photocopies will be retained, for the periods specified in the Specific Privacy Statement published on the ERC website – see section F.

D. Conditions of Employment

Candidates on the Reserve List resulting from this selection process may be invited to a second interview by the recruiting services in the ERCEA. The successful candidates of second interviews may be offered a temporary contract pursuant to Title I, Article 2(f) of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS).⁴ The place of employment will be Brussels, Belgium.

The grade of recruitment will be AD 6. Successful candidates who are offered a contract of employment will be graded on entry into service in Step 1 or Step 2 according to the length of their professional experience. The basic monthly salaries for grade AD 6 are:

- Step 1 : 5.416,58 EUR
- Step 2 : 5.644,20 EUR

In order to be taken into account, professional experience must be connected with one of the Institution's areas of activity. Professional experience will be counted from the date on which the applicant acquired the minimum qualification for access to the position. Professional experience before this date will not be counted. It is therefore essential to provide information on the qualification giving access to the post, in particular the date of award. In calculating professional experience, duly

⁴ See [Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union](#).



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documented professional activity (i.e., remunerated employment or self-employment) is taken into account. Compulsory military service or equivalent civil service shall be taken into consideration.

Statutory maternity leave is counted as professional activity, but unpaid leave is not counted. Part-time work will be taken into account in proportion to the percentage of full-time hours worked. Periods of education or training, unremunerated traineeships and study grants are not taken into account. Any given time period can be counted only once (e.g., if the applicant had a full-time job and did freelance consultancy work in the evenings and weekends, the days spent on the latter will not be added to the period of the former).

In case of an offer of employment and prior to contract signature, the successful candidate will be asked to undergo a compulsory medical examination by one of the Institutions' medical officers so as to demonstrate the fulfilment of the requirement of Article 28(e) of the Staff Regulations of the Officials of the European Communities ("Staff Regulations").

If a contract should be offered, its initial duration is two years and it may be renewed for a further period of one year. If renewed again, the contract is concluded for an indefinite period and will terminate should the ERCEA cease to exist.

The European Institutions have their own social security and pension scheme. In addition to the basic salary, staff members may be entitled to various allowances, in particular expatriation allowance, household allowance, dependent child allowance and education allowance. The salary is subject to a Community tax deducted at source; staff members are exempt from national taxation.

E. Equal opportunities

The ERCEA values difference and promotes equality. We apply a policy of equal opportunities and accept applications without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, as per Article 1(d)(1) of the Staff Regulations. We offer flexible family-friendly working arrangements (flexitime, teleworking) in consideration of operational needs.

F. Protection of personal data

The ERCEA ensures that applicants' personal data are processed as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (Official Journal of the European Union, L 295 of 21 November 2018). This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data.

A Specific Privacy Statement is published on the ERC's website at the following address:

https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_sps_selection.pdf.



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Candidates are invited to carefully read it, as it provides useful information about the processing of their personal data and relevant rights.

G. Request for review, appeals and complaints

Review

The ERCEA and the Selection Committees operate within the context of the general principles of European Union law as interpreted by the Courts. In assessing candidates' merits, Selection Committees observe the principle of equal treatment.

If candidates nevertheless believe that one of these principles has not been applied in their case, they have the right, **within 10 calendar days** from the date when they receive notification of the decision that was sent to them, to request a review by sending a letter stating their reasons to the e-mail address: ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

Candidates must quote in the subject line: The reference of the selection process concerned; their full name; 'Request for review'; the stage of the selection concerned in their complaint. The ERCEA will forward it to the Chairperson of the Selection Committee if it comes within the Committee's remit, and candidates shall receive a reply as soon as possible.

Appeal Procedure

If, at any stage of the selection, candidates consider that their interests have been prejudiced by a particular decision, or lack thereof, they can take the following action:

- Candidates can lodge an administrative complaint pursuant to Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations, at the following address:

European Research Council Executive Agency
To the Attention of the Director
REF: ERCEA/TA/172/2019
COV2, Place Rogier 16
B-1049 Brussels

The complaint must be lodged within three months from the date on which candidates are notified of the act adversely affecting them, or lack thereof, only if the rules governing the selection process have clearly been infringed. The AHCC cannot overturn a value judgement (i.e., the quality of a candidate's performance in a written or oral test or the relevance of qualifications and professional experience) made by the Selection Committee. The AHCC shall notify the person concerned of its reasoned decision within four months of the date on which the complaint was lodged.



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- Should the aforementioned complaint be rejected, candidates may request judicial review of the act adversely affecting them, pursuant to Article 270 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 91 of the Staff Regulations, before:

Court of Justice of the European Union

Registry of the General Court

Rue du Fort Niedergrünewald

L-2925 Luxembourg

http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_7030/en/

The request for judicial review must be lodged within three months from the date on which candidates are notified of the decision taken in response to the above-mentioned administrative complaint.

Candidates shall indicate the reference of this Call for Expression of Interest.

Complaints to the European Ombudsman

Any citizen of the European Union or any natural or legal person residing in a Member State may direct a complaint concerning instances of maladministration to the European Ombudsman pursuant to Article 228(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union:

The European Ombudsman

1, Avenue du President Robert Schuman - BP 403

F-67001 Strasbourg Cedex

<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/start.faces>

It should be noted that complaints to the European Ombudsman do not suspend the periods mentioned in Articles 90(2) and 91 of the Staff Regulations for lodging complaints or submitting an appeal before the Court of Justice according to Article 270 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It should also be noted that, under Article 2(4) of the Regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the European Ombudsman's duties, any complaint to the European Ombudsman must be preceded by appropriate administrative approaches to the institutions and bodies concerned.