



European Research Council
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission

Essential guidance for ERC panel members

ERC Panel members are expected to contribute to the evaluation process by delivering concise and substantial reviews on the basis of their specialist expertise as well as their generalist competence, which should reflect openness to inter- and multi-disciplinary research perspectives, and by actively participating in the panel meetings. Panel members are also expected to be available for reviews requested for proposals submitted to other panels, if their expertise is required.

Given the broad scientific coverage of each panel and the limited number of panel members per panel, each panel member represents an important area of research. Funding decisions are taken by the panel as a whole and it is therefore crucial for the quality of the evaluation process that panel members are fully available for both panel meetings.

In order to ensure the confidentiality of the evaluation process and to protect panel members from being contacted by potential applicants or host institutions in a way that could compromise their independence, the identity of panel members is confidential until after the end of the evaluation, when their names will be published on the ERC website. Only the names of panel chairs are published at the beginning of the evaluation. Should you need to inform your employer about your appointment as ERC panel member, please ensure that this information is not spread further.

For the same reason of protecting the independence of ERC reviewers, panel members are discouraged from participating as speakers in ERC-focused public events until their names have been published on the ERC website. Please also avoid mentioning your function on your website and in your CV until your term has come to an end. If not possible, please do not specify the call/panel. If in doubt, please contact the ERC Executive Agency.

In the context of safeguarding the reputation of the ERC for the benefit of all researchers associated with it, we expect that panel members who are under official investigation for reasons relating to scientific integrity will inform the ERC Executive Agency.

In order to avoid potentially serious conflict of interest situations that could impact on the capacity of a panel member to participate in the evaluation, panel members should not coach applicants in preparation for submitting proposals to a call on which they serve as reviewer.

It might happen that an applicant contacts you for advice on a concrete proposal, not being aware that you will serve as panel member for the same call. If you have served for the ERC previously, you could respond that as a former panel member, you had access to sensitive and confidential information in the context of the evaluation process and you would therefore prefer to refrain from giving targeted advice on a specific proposal to avoid divulging this confidential information. If you are a new panel member, you could refer to future ERC evaluations in which you might be involved (without specifying the call and panel).

A conflict of interest situation may also arise if a panel member is named in a proposal as team member, collaborator, or member of the advisory board. If you are aware that this is the case, please inform the ERC Executive Agency at your earliest convenience.

For more information, including the *Code of Conduct for ERC reviewers*, which specifies further potential conflict of interest situations, please see the dedicated website: <https://erc.europa.eu/erc-experts-Horizon-Europe>