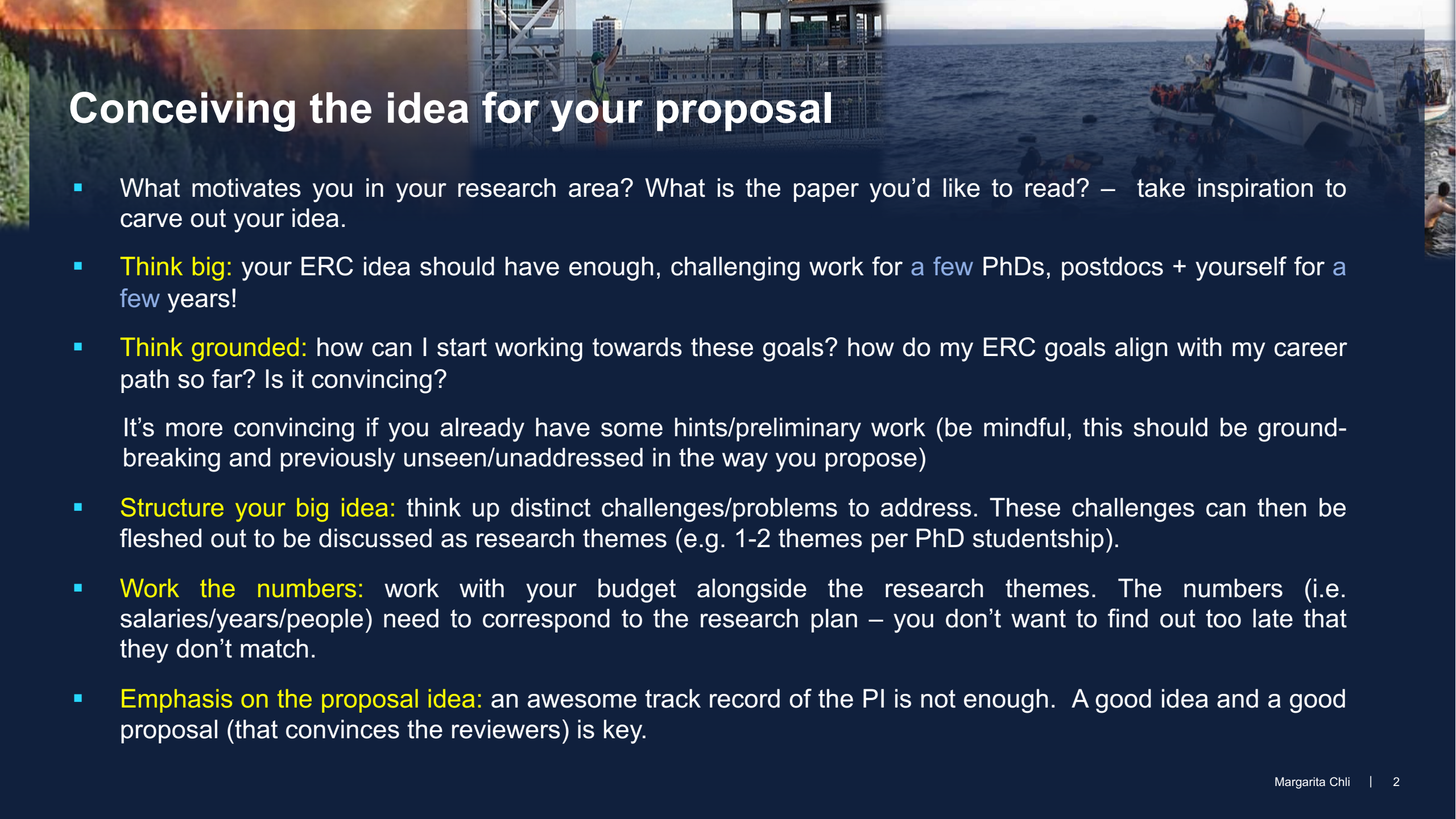




*ERC Consolidator Grant: SkEyes*

**My testimonial in the form of tips + advice**

Margarita Chli



# Conceiving the idea for your proposal

- What motivates you in your research area? What is the paper you'd like to read? – take inspiration to carve out your idea.
- **Think big:** your ERC idea should have enough, challenging work for a few PhDs, postdocs + yourself for a few years!
- **Think grounded:** how can I start working towards these goals? how do my ERC goals align with my career path so far? Is it convincing?

It's more convincing if you already have some hints/preliminary work (be mindful, this should be groundbreaking and previously unseen/unaddressed in the way you propose)

- **Structure your big idea:** think up distinct challenges/problems to address. These challenges can then be fleshed out to be discussed as research themes (e.g. 1-2 themes per PhD studentship).
- **Work the numbers:** work with your budget alongside the research themes. The numbers (i.e. salaries/years/people) need to correspond to the research plan – you don't want to find out too late that they don't match.
- **Emphasis on the proposal idea:** an awesome track record of the PI is not enough. A good idea and a good proposal (that convinces the reviewers) is key.

# Writing the proposal

- **Reach out to the host institution early on** – they can take quite some time before they give you their approval (unfortunately – sometimes this needs to go through a committee meeting or two! Consider that people might also be taking holidays!)
- **Sell it well:** dedicate time for a well-written, well-structured proposal. A polished presentation gives a positive first impression of your quality + your work's quality.

Add neat visuals as appropriate.

Make sure the overall idea is expressed clearly and concisely in the proposal. Don't assume all reviewers are 100% concentrated when reading – as in paper reviews

- **Don't oversell:** can be a red flag for reviewers and a magnet of negative comments. Better be honest: not overly humble, not overly confident. Support with numbers / facts as appropriate: citations, career path, awards, projects won – they speak for themselves.
- **Show independence:** key goals in your proposal/idea should not be dependent on someone else's help (both above and below you). What would happen if this help suddenly disappears?
- **Example proposal:** helpful to have one, even if it's not in your area. Don't ask just anyone, but ppl you know, and trust and they can trust you. This is a very personal and confidential thing to share.



# Interview tips

- Follow the instructions given to you **to the letter**.
- **Prepare:** list of potential questions with answers (who are your competitors, what's novel in your proposal, ... )
- **Practice:** your words, the time, your rhythm – take up any opportunities for mock interviews.
- Be upbeat + pleasant, motivated for your research.





## *SkEyes*

High-fidelity Collaborative Perception for Small Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

**Margarita Chli**

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# Final tips

- Reach out to the **national contact point** – CY office's help + advice is stellar
- **Human error:** even if you + your proposal idea are awesome, you might still get rejected – don't take it personally 🙄
- **Go for it** – overcome your doubts and laziness. Worst case: you get rejected and you have material for many proposals to come