The European Research Council

ERC Grants
Overview and Novelties in WP 2024

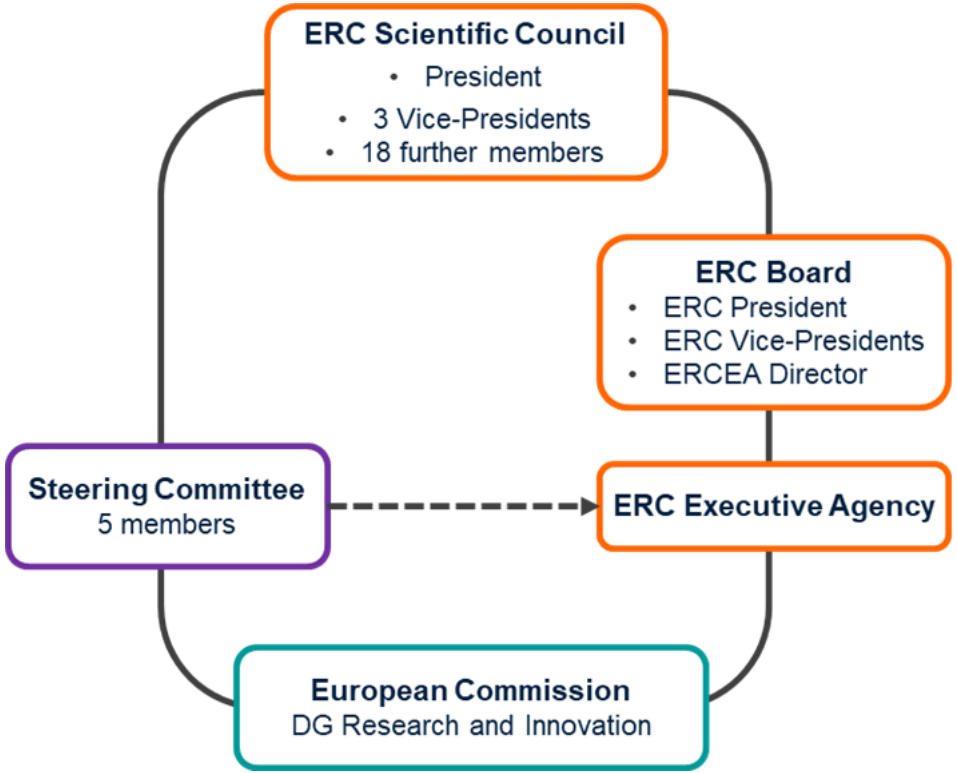
Christine Courillon

“Synthetic Chemistry & Materials”
Research program agent

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC and national support measures for researchers in Poland
September 28th 2023

European Commission and ERC



ERC is part of Horizon Europe

EUR 16 billion
ERC budget in Horizon Europe

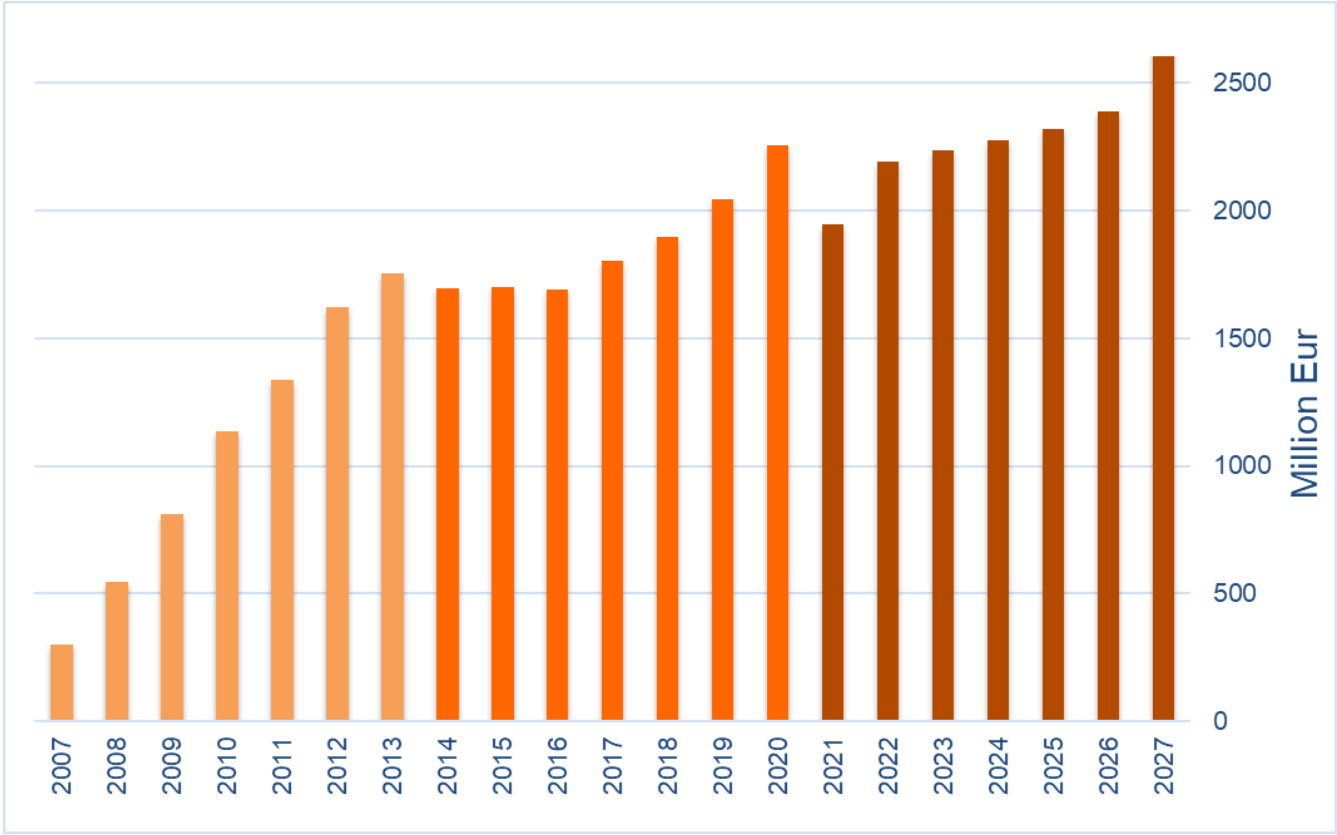
17%
of the entire
Horizon Europe budget

ERC budget 2007 – 2027: EUR 36.5 billion

FP7: €7.5 billion

H2020: €13 billion

HE: €16 billion



ERC Scientific Council

Maria LEPTIN
(Biology)
ERC President

Eveline CRONE
(Psychology)
Vice-President

Eystein JANSEN
(Earth Science)
Vice-President

Jesper SVEJSTRUP
(Biology)
Vice-President

Geneviève ALMOUZNI
(Biology)

Harriet BULKELEY
(Geography)

Ben FERINGA
(Organic Chemistry)

Mercedes GARCÍA-ARENAL
(History)

Gerd GIGERENZER
(Psychology)

Tom HENZINGER
(Computer Science)

Liselotte HØJGAARD
(Medicine)

Dirk INZÉ
(Plant Biology)

László LOVÁSZ
(Mathematics)

Chryssa KOUVELIOTOU
(High-Energy Astrophysics)

Sylvie LORENTE
(Mechanical Engineering)

Luke O'NEILL
(Biochemistry & Immunology)

Björn OTTERSTEN
(Electric Engineering)

Giovanni SARTOR
(Law)

Nicola SPALDIN
(Materials Theory)

Alice VALKÁROVÁ
(Physics)

Milena ŽIC FUCHS
(Linguistics)

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

European Commission

ERC in figures

Over **13,000**
top researchers funded since the ERC creation in 2007

Over **90,000**
researchers and other professionals employed in ERC research teams

Over **2,400**
patents and other IPR applications generated by ERC funding

Over **400**
start-ups identified as founded or co-founded by ERC grantees

Over **220,000**
articles from ERC projects published in scientific journals

Over **900** research institutions hosting ERC grantees – universities, public or private research centres in the EU or Associated Countries

89
nationalities of grant holders

12 Nobel Prizes, **6** Fields Medals, **11** Wolf Prizes and other prizes awarded to ERC grantees

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

European Commission

Why to apply for ERC grant?

ERC offers independence, recognition & visibility to:

- work on a research topic of own choice
- gain financial autonomy for five years
- negotiate the best conditions of work with the host institution
- attract excellent team members and collaborators from anywhere in the world
- move with the grant to any place in Europe if desired (“portability of grants”)
- win additional funding

ERC grant schemes

Starting Grants

starters (2-7 years after PhD) up to € 1.5 Mio
for 5 years

Consolidator Grants

Consolidators (7-12 years after PhD) up to € 2 Mio
for 5 years

Advanced Grants

track-record of significant research achievements in the last 10 years up to € 2.5 Mio
for 5 years

Synergy Grants

2 – 4 Principal Investigators up to € 10.0 Mio for 6 years
1 PI can be based outside EU/Associated Countries

Proof-of-Concept

bridging gap between research - earliest stage of marketable innovation
lump sum €150,000 for ERC grant holders

Eligibility window

The first PhD shall have been successfully defended

> 2 and ≤ 7 years prior to 1 January 2024 **StG 2024**

> 7 and ≤ 12 years prior to 1 January 2024 **CoG 2024**

Cut-off dates: Successful defense of first PhD

from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2021 (inclusive) **StG 2024**

from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2016 (inclusive) **CoG 2024**

Extensions of eligibility window for StG / CoG
Extension of the ten-year track record for AdG

- Maternity – 18 months per child (before or after PhD)
- Paternity – actual time taken off
- Military service / Sickness (> 3 months)
- Medical speciality training
- Caring for seriously ill family members

No limit to the total extension

Who can apply to ERC?

- **Any nationality**, **any age** and any current place of work
- In conjunction with an EU / Associated Country Host Institution
- At least 50% of the time in EU or Associated Countries

Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine and UK

Attractive features for researchers

- Grantees can **keep affiliation** with home institute outside Europe / as well as Team Members

- **Additional funding : 1M€**

  moving to Europe / equipment / access to Infrastructures / other major experimental & field work costs

- **Grantees can move within EU with their grant**

ERC Starting Grants (2-7 y past PhD)

- **Objective:** support excellent PIs at the stage at which they are **starting** their own independent research team or program

- **Grant size:** €1.5M (possibility of additional up to €1M)

- **PI Profile:**
  - → Potential for research independence
  - → At least one publication as main author or without PhD supervisor
  - → 50% of PI's time in the project + 50% in the EU or AC

ERC Consolidator Grants (7-12 y past PhD)

- **Objective:** support excellent PIs at the stage at which they **may still be consolidating** their own independent research team or program

- **Grant size:** €2.0M (possibility of additional up to €1M)

- **PI Profile**
  - → Has achieved a certain degree of research independence
  - → Several publications as main author or without PhD supervisor
  - → 40% of PI's time in the project + 50% in the EU or AC

ERC Advanced Grants

- **Objective:** established & active research leaders with a **recognised track-record of research** achievements in the last 10 years

- **Grant size:** €2.5M (possibility of up to additional €1M)

- **PI Profile**
  - → Significant track record in the last 10 years
  - → Supervision of early-career stage researchers
  - → 30% of PI's time in the project + 50% in the EU or AC

ERC Synergy Grants

- **Objective:** Very highly ambitious projects: "*global leadership*“

Interdisciplinarity encouraged, **but not required**

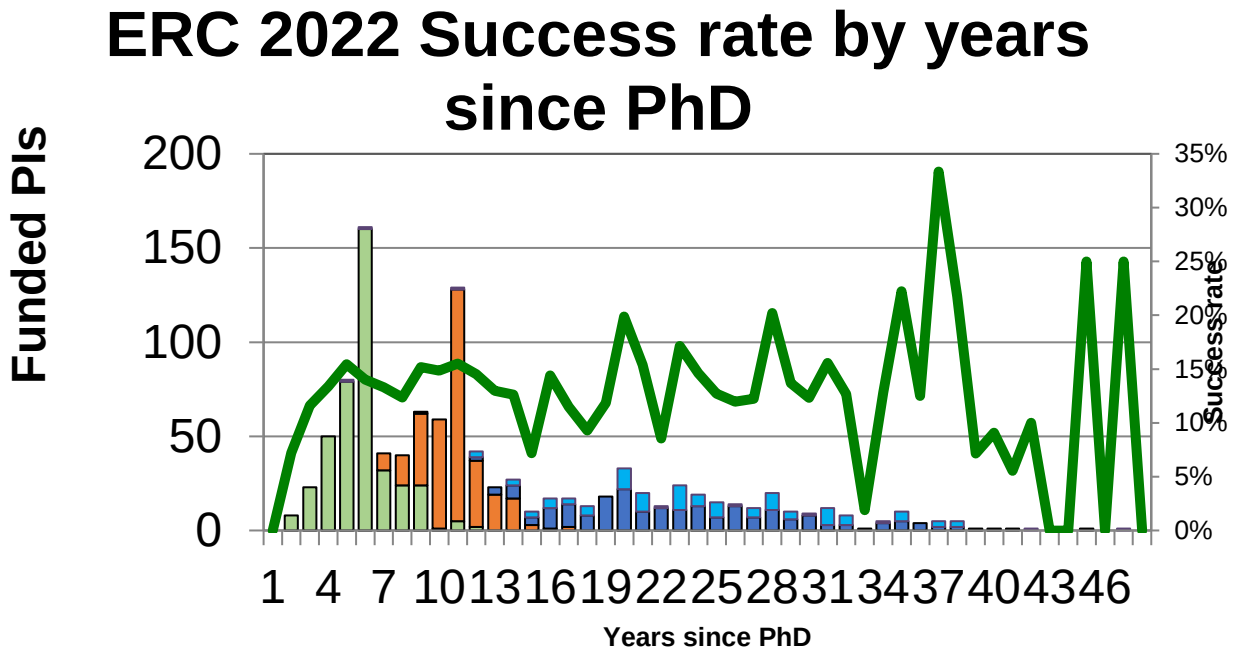
- **Grant size:** Normally up to €10M (+ €4M) – over 6 years

- **PI Profile:** 2 - 4 PIs – Any profile (StG, CoG or AdG)

Overview of 2022 calls

2022	StG	CoG	AdG	SYG	Total
# Evaluated 2022	2838	2168	1588	355	6949
Change from 2021	-29%	-17%	-8%		
# Grants	408	321	218	35	1072
Success rate	14%	15%	14%	10%	
Amount awarded EU (M€)	636	659	544	354	2193 M €
Female participation	41%	36%	23%	27%	
Avg. size grants (M€)	1.56	2.05	2.49	10.1	
% of total spending	29%	25%	30%	16%	
Median age Grantee	35	40	50	50	

Success rate : 2022 – Academic age (years since PhD)



How to prepare & submit an ERC research proposal?
ERC Panel structure: LS

Life Sciences

- **LS1** Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures & Functions
- **LS2** Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems
- **LS3** Cell Biology, Development, Stem Cells & Regeneration
- **LS4** Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing
- **LS5** Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System
- **LS6** Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy
- **LS7** Prevention, Diagnosis & Treatment of Human Diseases
- **LS8** Environmental Biology, Ecology & Evolution
- **LS9** Biotechnology & Biosystems Engineering

How to prepare & submit an ERC research proposal?
ERC Panel structure: PE

Physical Sciences & Engineering

- **PE1** Mathematics
- **PE2** Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- **PE3** Condensed Matter Physics
- **PE4** Physical & Analytical Chemical Sciences
- **PE5** Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- **PE6** Computer Science & Informatics
- **PE7** Systems & Communication Engineering
- **PE8** Products &Processes Engineering
- **PE9** Universe Sciences
- **PE10** Earth System Science
- **PE11** Materials Engineering

How to prepare & submit an ERC research proposal?
ERC Panel structure: SH

Social Sciences and Humanities

- **SH1** Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- **SH2** Institutions, Governance & Legal Systems
- **SH3** The Social World and its Interactions
- **SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- **SH5** Texts and Concepts
- **SH6** The Study of the Human Past
- **SH7** Human Mobility, Environment, and Space
- **SH8** Studies of Culture and Arts

PE5 Synthetic Chemistry & Materials

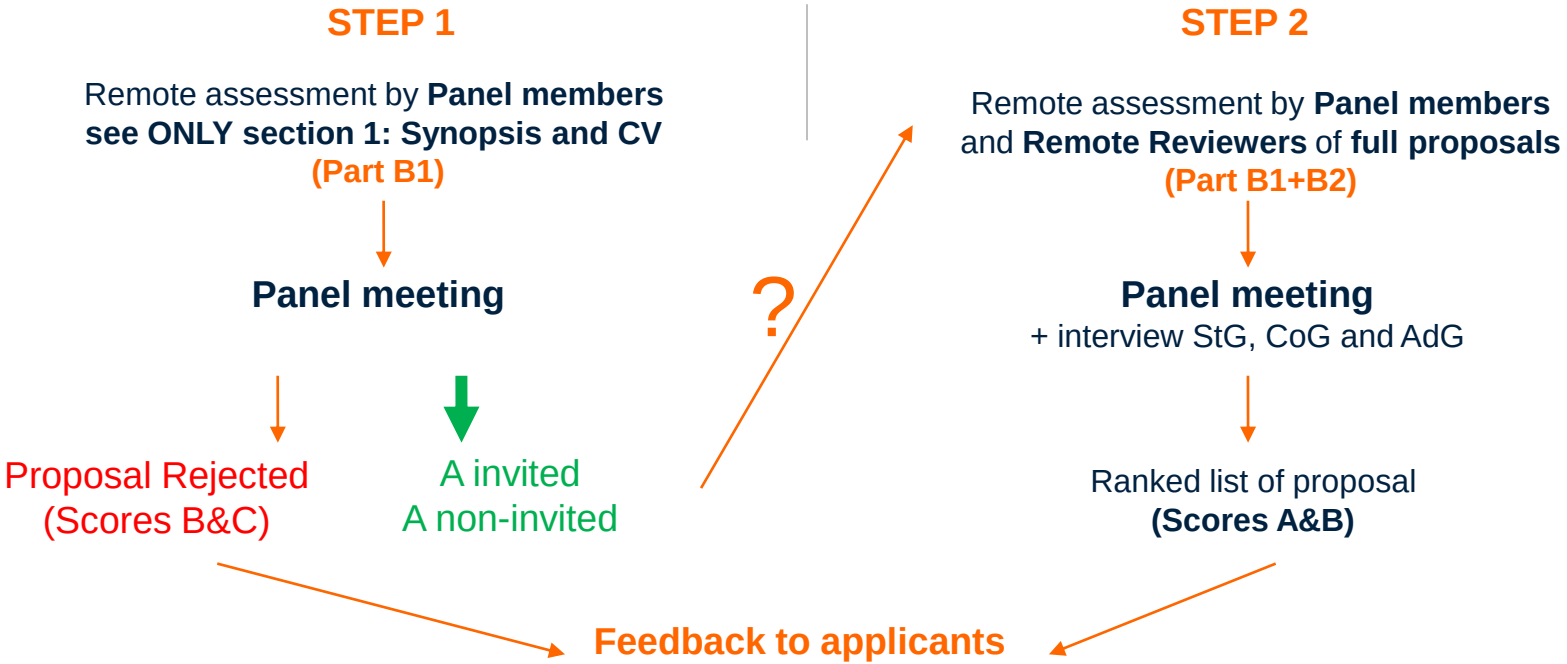
New materials and new synthetic approaches, structure-properties relations, solid state chemistry, molecular architecture, organic chemistry

-Structural properties of materials
-Solid state materials chemistry
-Surface modification
-Thin films
-Ionic liquids
-New materials: oxides, alloys, composite
organic-inorganic hybrid, nanoparticles
- Biomaterials synthesis
-Intelligent materials synthesis, self-assembled materials

- Coordination chemistry
- Colloid chemistry
- Biological chemistry & Chemical Biology
- Chemistry of condensed matter
- Homogeneous catalysis
- Macromolecular chemistry
- Polymer chemistry
- Supramolecular chemistry
- Organic chemistry
- Medicinal Chemistry

Evaluation: process

For individuals calls: a single submission but a two-step evaluation



At the end of step 1 Evaluation: **Novelties**

- **Evaluation:**
  - No budget multiplier in StG, CoG, AdG: **up to 44 proposals per panel in Step 2**
  - **New A-score at Step 1** (StG, CoG, AdG, SyG):
    - **'A invited'** – *high quality proposals to pass to Step 2*
    - **'A not invited'** – *high quality proposals exceeding the threshold for Step 2, but not subject to resubmission restrictions*
- New **resubmission restriction**: **applicants selected for funding and preparing a grant agreement in a 2023 ERC call, may not apply to StG, CoG, AdG in 2024 ERC calls**

Evaluation

Excellence

is the sole evaluation criterion

Excellence of the Research Project

- Ground breaking nature
- Scientific impact
- Scientific Approach

Excellence of the Principal Investigator

- Intellectual capacity
- Creativity
- Commitment

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

European Commission

2024 Calls - Research Assessment

- Evaluation is **primarily** focused on the **proposed research project**
    - Ground-breaking nature, ambition, and potential impact
    - Feasibility of the scientific approach
- Intellectual capacity, creativity, and commitment of the PI also evaluated, with a focus on the extent to which the PI has the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project

Evaluation criteria: Project at step 1

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)?

Evaluation criteria: Project at Step 1

Scientific Approach

To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is ground-breaking (*based on the Extended Synopsis*)?

Evaluation criteria: Project at Step 2

Scientific Approach

To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (*based on the research proposal*)

To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified (*based on the research proposal*)?

New CV and Track Record – 2024 Calls

- No prescriptive Principal Investigator profiles
- Personal details: education, employment
- Research achievements (<=10):
  - demonstrating advancement in the field
  - emphasis on more recent achievements
  - short narrative on significance of achievements
- Peer recognition: prizes, fellowships, academy membership, etc.
- Additional information:
  - career breaks, diverse career paths, life events
  - other contributions to research community

Evaluation criteria: PI at step 1 / 2

No prescriptive PI profile

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?

Exceptional / Excellent / Very Good / Good / Non-competitive

Preparing your interview: Some tips and advice

If invited to step 2 (StG, CoG & AdG) / step 3 (SyG)

- Get Panel Members interested in you and what you are doing
- Practice thoroughly, several (many?) times; a presentation followed by questions
- Panels want to see that these are *your* ideas
- Expect questions on evaluation criteria, budget…

Provisional Call Calendar – Work Programme 2024

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant	Synergy Grant	Proof of Concept Grant
Call opens	11/07/2023	12/09/2023	29/05/2024	12/07/2023	16/11/2023
Call deadline (cut-off date)	24/10/2023	12/12/2023	29/08/2024	08/11/2023	14/03/2024 17/09/2024
Budget (m EUR)	601	584	578	400	30

Where can you find more information?

Videos - ERC Classes

- What to consider before applying
- How to fill in the application
- The interview
- How the evaluation works.

Click here to watch!

Good luck and thank you for your attention!

christine.courillon@ec.europa.eu

More information:
erc.europa.eu

Follow us on social media

@ERC_Research

European-Research-Council

European Research Council

ERC_Research

European Research Council

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

European Commission