The specific role of the PI in ERC grants

Città della Scienza – 29 October 2013
AGENDA

I. Rights & Obligations of the Principal Investigator

II. Novelties and Clarifications on management aspects
   1. Change of Host Institution
   2. Extension of duration
   3. Commitment of the Principal Investigator

III. Dissemination of results and Open Access

IV. Draft time table for the next calls
1. ERC specificities – PI central role

- Science-led funding
- Highest level of excellence
- Peer review
- World class competitiveness
- Attractiveness of Europe
- Flexible, science-friendly practices
The PI has the autonomy and authority to lead the research and the team. Use of budget in line with the usual management and accounting practices of the HI.
2. ERC Contractual specificities

- Principal Investigator
  - is named in the Grant Agreement Art 2, but not signatory

- Annex II – General conditions Art.II.3.

- Supplementary Agreement

- National legislation
  (e.g. Maternity leave, etc)

- Rules of the beneficiary (Host Institution)
  (e.g. Sabbatical, etc)
3. Rights of the Principal Investigator

- Full administrative support of the HI
- Rights & obligations enshrined in General conditions
- Timely and clear information on project management
- Access to facilities and general logistics
- Administrative support in dealing with ERCEA (reports, amendment requests, etc)
3. Rights of the Principal Investigator

- Scientific autonomy
- Selection of team members
- Decision on the use of the budget **but** in line with the usual management and accounting practices of the HI
- Authority to publish
  - In full respect of national and institutional legal framework
3. Rights of the Principal Investigator

- Guarantee for adequate contractual conditions
- Conditions consistent with the European Charter of Researchers
- Maternity leave / Parental leave
  - No systematic suspension of the project
4. **Obligations of the Principal Investigator**

- Effective supervision of the project
- Effective use of budget
- Ensure that the objective described in Annex I are achieved.
- Make appropriate modifications to the research line when needed.
- Decide on a meaningful distribution of resources (within national & institutional legal frame)
4. **Obligations of the Principal Investigator**

- **Time commitment**
  - to the ERC project
  - and in an EU Member State or associated country

- **Starting and Consolidator grants**
  - at least 50% of their total working time to the ERC-funded project
  - at least 50% of their total working time in EU/AC

- **Advanced grants**
  - at least 30% of their total working time to the ERC-funded project
  - at least 50% of their total working time in EU/AC

  ⇒ Commitment applies for the whole duration of the project

- **Synergy** – PIs core time together
4. **Obligations of the Principal Investigator**

- Reporting obligations
- Financial reporting
  - Contribution to project management and achievements descriptive part
- Scientific reporting
  - Major achievements
  - Publishable summary
  - Problems/difficulties
  - Websites where additional information may be found
4. Obligations of the Principal Investigator

- Other obligations of the PI

- Inform ERCEA of any modification in implementation
  - some modifications might require an amendment: *Modification of Annex I, Change of Host Institution, Termination*

- Respect confidentiality and the IPR rules
  - e.g. respecting eligibility of costs and special attention to transfer of foreground

- Dissemination
  - Acknowledgement of ERC support
II. Novelties and Clarifications

1. Portability

- 'Portability' is a specific feature of ERC grants and means 'Change of Host Institution'

- at the request of the Principal Investigator, who has the right to require the transfer of the project to a new beneficiary (Host Institution) for as long the research objectives of the project are preserved,

- the Host Institution has the right to object to the conditions of the transfer but the final decision remains with the ERCEA

- is applicable to all types of ERC Grants
II. Novelties and Clarifications

1. Portability – By type of grant & move

By type of Grant

1. Before signature: 74% StG / 26% AdG
2. After signature: 80% StG / 20% AdG

By type of move

1. Before signature: 39% cross border / 61% national move
2. After signature: 41% cross border / 59% national move

Patterns for both type of grants and moves are very similar:
Portability is mostly requested by StG and tends to be a national move
II. Novelties and Clarifications

1. Portability – PIs moves by country

- Leading countries in “national move of the PIs”: DE, UK
- Leading countries in “departure of PI”: IT
- Leading countries in “arrival of PIs”: CH, DE
II. Novelties and Clarifications

1. Portability – When and Why?

When the HI changes within the lifetime of the project:

- ≥ Month 25: 31%
- Month [1 - 12]: 40%
- Month [1 - 24]: 69%

Reasons raised:

- Improved Professional conditions for the PI: 74%
- Better research conditions: 14%
- Problems with initial HI: 3%
- Not defined: 9%

- 40% - incurred within the 1st year of the project
- 69% - incurred within the first 2 years of the project (i.e. before mid-term)
II. Novelties and Clarifications
1. Portability – Request for change of HI

- The request to transfer the project should always be submitted PRIOR to the effective change;
- the ERCEA will provide the necessary templates and list of supporting documents needed for the submission of the amendment request;
- Upon receipt of a complete amendment request ERCEA will reply within 45 days
II. Novelties and Clarifications
1. Portability – Request for change of HI

- Preparation phase

Principal Investigator

INICIAL
Host Institution

Informs and negotiates the terms & conditions of the transfer
II. Novelties and Clarifications
1. Portability – Request for change of HI

- Preparation phase

Principal Investigator

Agreement on transfer modalities:
- research team;
- equipment;
- estimation of remaining funds;
- intellectual property rights (background & foreground)
- third parties & subcontractors

Signature of a new supplementary agreement

NEW Host Institution
II. Novelties and Clarifications
1. Portability – Request for change of HI

- Submission of official documents
II. Novelties and Clarifications
1. Portability – Request for change of HI

- Inform the ERCEA
  - request to transfer the project should always be submitted PRIOR to the effective change.
  - The ERCEA will provide the necessary templates and list of supporting documents needed for the submission of the request.
  - documents should be submitted as early as possible and at least 45 days before the transfer date
II. Novelties and Clarifications

1. Portability – Request for change of HI

- Financial follow-up to the signed amendment
  - Submission of the Financial Report by the INITIAL HI
    (covering the costs up to the transfer date)
  - Assessment of costs' eligibility by the ERCEA
  ⇒ Transfer of funds from the Initial HI to the New HI
II. Novelties and Clarifications

2. Extension of duration

- **Solid scientific justification** - to allow the PI to finalise his research or to investigate new strands of research unforeseen originally; subject to ERCEA appraisal

- **Personal grounds** related to the PI only (e.g. maternity leave, long term illness, portability etc.); follows in certain cases the social legislation of the HI;

- **Maximum length of extension is 12 months**: subject to ERCEA appraisal
II. Novelties and Clarifications

3. Commitment of the PI

Time commitment of the PI for the ERC project and in Europe

- **StG and CoG**
  - at least 50% of total working time must be spent for the ERC-funded project
  - at least 50% of total working time must be spent in EU/AC

- **AdG and Synergy**
  - at least 30% of total working time must be spent for the ERC-funded project
  - at least 50% of total working time must be spent in EU/AC

- **History of this rule:**
  - WP 2010: minimum requirement for PI time spent in Europe is introduced, only for Advanced Grantees. Minimum requirements for PIs commitment to the project is introduced for Stg and AdG
  - WP 2012: minimum requirement for PI time spent in Europe is introduced also for Starting Grantees. In addition, the rules for Advanced Grantees were extended to the principal investigators of the Synergy Grants.
  - WP 2013: the rules for Starting Grants were also applied to the newly created Consolidator Grants.
II. Novelties and Clarifications

3. Commitment of the PI

- Time involvement of PIs varies during the implementation of the project, in particular when PI request a sabbatical leave (maximum duration so far limited to 1 year).

- The original time commitment as per proposal might vary during the project implementation (e.g., when PI is involved in other projects running at the same time). This is accepted in duly justified cases and under condition that the minimum time to be spent on the project (in line with the Work Programme) is respected.

- PIs leaving the EU, but keeping an affiliation with their original HI and proposing project long-distance supervision might be exceptionally accepted strictly on a case by case basis, subject to supervision methods and ERCEA appraisal.
III. Dissemination & Open Access

→ Obligation of dissemination of scientific results

Why?

- Wide access and therefore efficient dissemination of research results are key to further scientific progress.
- Highlight ERC success stories & striking projects
- Showcase ERC achievements, including the wider benefits and impacts of the ERC such as on the European Research Area (ERA) or Europe's competitiveness, growth and jobs policies.
- Public education and engagement
- Attracting new resources (national and international complementary funding)
- Attract the very best established researchers
III. Dissemination & Open Access

→ Obligation of dissemination of scientific results

Legal basis

- Articles II.1.5 and II.30 of the General conditions:
  
  Results of the research (foreground) shall be disseminated as swiftly as possible by the beneficiary, in line with the rule for IPR protection.

- ERC financial support shall always be acknowledged

- Since WP2012, new Special Clause 39 on "open access" (in addition to general conditions): An electronic copy of the scientific publication linked to foreground shall be deposited in an institutional/subject-based repository

  1. immediately – open access publication
  2. within 6 months of publication in all other cases
III. Dissemination & Open Access

→ Guidelines vs. Special Clause 39 ERC

- ERC Open Access Guidelines:
  - *aspirational* (not legally binding)
  - should be followed by all ERC funded researchers on a voluntary basis

- Special Clause 39 ERC:
  - *legally binding*
  - addressing *beneficiary*
  - no reference to *research data*
  - systematically included in Grants resulting from 2012 calls onwards (*i.e. ERC grants from calls in 2007 – 2011 not affected by the Special Clause*)
‘Best effort’ formulation strongly encourages researchers and publishers to comply while guaranteeing scientific and academic freedom.

Detailed instructions on how to fulfil the ‘best effort’ requirement provided in the **Guide to Intellectual Property Rules for FP7 projects**.

Authors should seek information on publishing models and copyright/licensing policies of the journal(s) to which they plan to submit, and check compatibility with the maximum embargo of six months (see the SHERPA/RoMEO website [http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo)).
III. Dissemination & Open Access

→ Open access and Horizon 2020

- OA pilot in FP7
  - 'Best effort' to provide OA, during and after the project
  - 7 areas
  - Scientific publications relating to foreground (ERC: including monographs)
  - Allowed embargos: 6/12 months (ERC: 6 months for all areas)

- OA publishing costs
  - Eligible while project runs

- OA mandate in Horizon 2020
  - Obligation to provide OA *(during the project)*
  - All areas of Horizon 2020
  - Peer-reviewed publications
  - Allowed embargos: 6/12 months
  - *In addition: pilot for research data (taking into account commercial interests, privacy, security)*

- OA publishing costs
  - Eligible while project runs
  - *Other options currently under discussion*
IV. Draft time table for the next calls

