



European Research Council
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA)

is organising a Call for Expression of Interest in view of establishing a Reserve List
for the position of

Research Programme Agent in Condensed Matter Physics

Job title	Research Programme Agent
Field	Condensed Matter Physics
Reference	ERCEA/TA/209/2022
ERCEA Unit	Unit B.4 – "Physical Sciences and Engineering"
Type of contract	Temporary Agent
Function group and grade	AD 6
Duration of contract	2 years (with the possibility of extension)
Minimum basic salary	5.669,29 EUR plus benefits
Approximate number of candidates to be included on Reserve List	10 candidates
Deadline for application	12 May 2022 by 12:00 (midday) Brussels time

1. Who we are

The European Research Council Executive Agency (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 European Research Council (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 to manage the Ideas Programme, part of the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7). The ERC was part of the first Pillar – "Excellent Science" – of Horizon 2020, the EU Programme for Research and Innovation (H2020, 2014-2020). Its mandate was renewed until 2028, for the implementation of part of Horizon Europe, Pillar I "Excellent Science" (Horizon Europe 2021-2027).

In order to achieve the ERC's objectives, the ERCEA manages several main 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 ERC also funds "Proof of Concept" grants to promote innovation arising from the research projects. ERC projects can be in any field of research, with excellence as the sole selection criterion.

Since the creation of the Agency, some 11.000 researchers at various stages of their careers have been supported. Under Horizon Europe, the ERCEA has a total budget of over 16 billion EUR.

The ERCEA is dedicated to *excellence* in research and in all aspects of its work, and seeks to attract dedicated, professional, highly motivated staff with the right qualifications and expertise. The working environment at the ERCEA is modern, dynamic, inspiring and engaging. The ERCEA is situated in the heart of Brussels and expected to count a total staff of 526 by the end of 2022.

Within the ERCEA, the Scientific Management Department (Department B) carries out the tasks of the ERC that require an understanding of the scientific subject matter. It implements the peer review process for the selection of ERC grants and the processes for scientific monitoring of grants. The Department advises the ERC Scientific Council in areas related to scientific matters.

Unit B.4, the "Physical Sciences and Engineering" Unit of Department B, manages the peer-review process for the scientific evaluation of submitted proposals and the scientific monitoring of ERC-funded projects in the domain of Physical Sciences and Engineering. This Unit consists of over 50 very committed staff members, working in 12 small teams, each responsible for a specific sub-domain or "Panel" led by a Research Programme Agent who coordinates the ERC Panel's work.

For more details about the ERC and ERCEA, please visit our website: <https://erc.europa.eu/>.

2. What we offer

In organising this Call for Expression of Interest, the ERCEA seeks to establish a Reserve List with approximately 10 candidates who may be considered to fill current and future vacant posts of Research Programme Agents in the field of Condensed Matter Physics (including Nanoscience, Molecular Electronics, Fluid Dynamics, Statistical Physics, Biological Physics and related topics) in Unit B.4 "Physical Sciences and Engineering".

As a Research Programme Agent, the jobholder will work as the team coordinator of **ERC Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics** and will be entrusted with the following tasks and duties:

Coordination of the Evaluation and Selection of Research Proposals

- Coordinate the peer-review process for the selection of research proposals for the relevant evaluation panels, including the preparation, organisation and operation of the meetings, and the documentation of results;
- Contribute to the development of guidelines, orientations and new approaches relating to the proper implementation of the programme;
- Coordinate the team of ERC Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics – currently three Project Advisers and an Administrative Assistant, under the guidance of the Head of Sector.

Project Management

- Assess the scientific implementation of projects primarily in Condensed Matter Physics through periodic reviews, reporting, etc.;
- Contribute to the analysis of the portfolio of ERC funded projects;
- As appropriate, analyse and assess the results and impact of the programme, provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

External Communication

- Present the programme and project results to external stakeholders at workshops, seminars, conferences and other public events;
- Contribute to publications produced by the programme intended for external stakeholders;
- Extract and disseminate best practices and facilitate exchanges of experience;
- Collate information and draft replies to questions from external stakeholders;
- Produce reports and minutes on high-level meetings as required.

For details about the Conditions of Employment, see Section 7.

3. Requirements

3.1. Eligibility criteria

3.1.1. General conditions

- Be a national of a member state of the European Union;
- Enjoy full rights as a citizen;
- Have fulfilled any obligations imposed by the applicable laws regarding military service;
- Meet the character requirements for the duties involved¹;
- Be physically fit to perform their duties.²

3.1.2. Specific conditions

Qualifications

Have a level of education corresponding to completed university studies of at least three years, attested by a diploma, in a relevant area for the profile, as specified above in Section 2.

Only qualifications issued by EU Member State authorities and qualifications recognised as equivalent by the relevant EU Member State authorities will be accepted.³ In case 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.

Professional experience

Have professional experience of at least five years. This should include professional experience directly relevant to the tasks described in Section 2, and should be acquired after graduation referred to under "Qualifications" above. A doctoral programme, even unpaid, will be counted as professional experience for a maximum of three years.

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 outlined in Section 2. English is the working language of the ERCEA and is generally considered to be the *lingua franca* of the scientific community.

¹ In case of inclusion on a Reserve List and in case the ERCEA decides to offer a contract of employment, 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 in line with Article 12.2(c) of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS).

² In case of an offer of employment by the ERCEA, prior to appointment, the selected candidate will be asked to undergo a compulsory medical examination by one of the Institutions' medical officers to demonstrate the fulfilment of the requirement of Article 12.2(d) of the CEOS.

³ UK diplomas awarded until 31 December 2020 are accepted without an equivalence. UK diplomas awarded as from 1 January 2021 must be accompanied by an equivalence issued by a competent authority of an EU Member State.

3.2. Selection criteria

The selection criteria will be assessed at the various stages of the selection process. The applications of candidates who at any stage of the selection process are found not to meet one or more of the essential selection criteria, will not be considered further.

Candidates need to make clear explicitly in their Application Form how and to what extent they meet the selection criteria, and in particular to highlight the relevance of their educational and professional background and motivation for the position as well as their strengths and past achievements relevant for the position.

3.2.1. Essential

Professional research experience

Research qualification at PhD level PLUS two further years of professional experience in research, in any of the areas covered by ERC Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics.

OR

Five years of professional experience in research, in any of the areas covered by ERC Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics.

OR

Research qualification at PhD level PLUS two further years of professional experience in research in Physical Sciences and Engineering PLUS three years of professional experience in research or research project management relevant to the areas covered by ERC Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics.

OR

Five years of professional experience in research in Physical Sciences and Engineering PLUS three years of professional experience in research or research project management relevant to the areas covered by ERC Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics.

Knowledge of languages

Excellent knowledge of English: spoken and written skills equivalent to level C1⁴ or higher level for working purposes.⁵

Skills and competences

- Outstanding drafting and presentation skills, with an eye for detail;
- Ability to work well under pressure in demanding situations and ability to handle several tasks simultaneously;
- Ability to deliver quality and results individually and in a team while working in a multicultural environment;
- Strong organisational and communication skills;
- Ability to coordinate and inspire a small team as well as evaluation panels involving senior external experts;
- Knowledge of European research policies and programmes.

⁴ [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.](#)

⁵ The language for this selection process has been defined in line with the interests of the service, which require newly recruited Temporary Agents to be immediately operational and capable of communicating effectively in their daily work. Accordingly, given that new recruits need to be able to assume their duties immediately without receiving additional language training, the new Temporary Agents must be able to communicate with the scientific community and the already operating staff in ERCEA and services in the Commission in the most commonly working language used in the ERCEA.

3.2.2. Advantageous

- Good knowledge of the state of the art in the field, and ability to make use of it in portfolio analysis and feedback to policy;
- Further research experience in a relevant area for the profile as a team member or team leader;
- Experience in working as a researcher in international research projects and/or the management of research projects, particularly at European level;
- Professional experience acquired in an EU Institution, an international organisation or a national research funding organisation. Experience managing processes for the scientific evaluation of proposals and the scientific monitoring of funded projects.

4. How to apply

1. Download the Application Form which can be found on the ERC website here: <https://europa.eu/!MvtD6k>
2. Complete this Application Form in English.
3. Save the completed Application Form as follows:
FAMILY NAME_ERCEA-TA-209-2022
Your application can only be taken into consideration if the form is SAVED – it should not be printed in pdf format nor scanned!
Candidates are responsible for the correct submission of the application form.
The ERCEA will not be held liable should these instructions not be followed.
4. Send the completed Application Form to:
ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu
by **12 May 2022 by 12:00 (midday) Brussels time**
5. In the subject of your email, please mention:
"FAMILY NAME – ERCEA/TA/209/2022 – Panel PE3: Condensed Matter Physics".

If the application has been submitted successfully, candidates will receive a confirmation e-mail within two working days. Candidates are strongly advised not to leave the submission process to the last minute. The ERCEA cannot be held responsible for any delay due to, for example, heavy internet traffic or connection difficulties. In the case of multiple submissions, only the latest valid and complete application will be considered.

Candidates are responsible for the information they provide and 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;
- Complete the form in English.

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

Supporting documents

At any stage of the selection, the ERCEA can request candidates to present, for example, certified copies of degrees, diplomas, references, proof of experience. These documents should not be sent during the selection process, except upon request of the ERCEA.

5. Correspondence

All correspondence regarding this Call for Expression of Interest will be in English and will be made to the e-mail from which candidates submitted their application. Should candidates' e-mail address change, they are asked to inform ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

6. Selection process

Timing

The selection process shall take several months to complete. Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the different stages in due time. Please note that, as a general rule, for organisational purposes, appointments set by the ERCEA cannot be changed at the candidate's request.

Appointment of a Selection Committee

The Appointing Authority of the ERCEA will appoint a Selection Committee. The names of the Selection Committee members will be communicated to the candidates invited to interviews.⁶

Eligibility check

After the deadline for applications, the Selection Committee will check the applications submitted for their profiles against the eligibility criteria. To be considered eligible, candidates must fulfil each of the eligibility criteria listed under point 3.1 by the deadline for application mentioned on page 1.

Shortlisting

The Selection Committee will assess the applications of eligible candidates with reference to the selection criteria detailed above under point 3.2. The Selection Committee will establish a shortlist of approximately 30 candidates best matching the needs of the profile. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to sit a written test.

Written test

Candidates will be asked to complete a written test, which will include:

- A case study exercise on a subject related to the field, designed to test the technical knowledge of the candidates, as well as their ability to understand, analyse, summarise and draft in English.
- General questions to assess the knowledge of EU Institutions, European research policies and programmes, the ERC and its work, and the requirements detailed under point 3.2.

The Selection Committee will anonymously assess the written test. The candidates who best meet the evaluation criteria as demonstrated through their written test will be invited to an interview.

⁶ Under no circumstances should candidates approach the Selection Committee themselves, either directly or indirectly concerning this selection process. The Appointing Authority of the ERCEA 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.

Interview

The interview will finalise the assessment of candidates according to the selection criteria. The knowledge of a second official language may be assessed in line with Section 3.

Language

The written test will need to be completed in English and the interview will be conducted in English, in view of the nature of the duties and the particular field of this selection process.

Reserve List

At the end of the selection process, the Selection Committee will propose to the Appointing Authority of the ERCEA a Reserve List with the names of approximately 10 candidates, listed alphabetically, who best meet the evaluation criteria. The Reserve List will be valid for an initial period of two years starting from the date of approval of the Reserve List by the Appointing Authority, with possible extensions.

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

7. Conditions of employment

The successful candidate of second interview rounds may be offered a contract offer pursuant to Title I, Article 2(f) of the CEOS, for an initial duration of two years, with the possibility of renewal of one year. A second renewal of the contract would be a contract of indefinite duration.

On their entry into service, selected candidates will be classified in Step 1 or Step 2 of Function Group AD, Grade 6, according to the assessment of their qualification and professional experience.⁷ The selected candidates will have to provide evidence of these with supporting documents.

The basic monthly salaries for Function Group AD, Grade 6 are currently 5.669,29 EUR (in Step 1) or 5.907,53 (in Step 2). 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," and staff members are exempt from national taxation. The European Institutions have their own social security and pension scheme. The ERCEA offers flexible and family-friendly working arrangements (flexitime, teleworking) in consideration of operational needs.

The place of employment will be Brussels, Belgium, where the ERCEA has its premises.

8. 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.

⁷ The classification in step 1 or 2 will be done in accordance with the ERCEA's general implementing provisions concerning the criteria applicable to classification in step on appointment or engagement and will depend on the assessment of the qualification and professional experience of the selected candidate.

9. 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 Communities, L 295 of 21 November 2018). This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data.

Candidates are invited to carefully read the Specific Privacy Statement, which provides useful information about the processing of their personal data and relevant rights:

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

10. Request for review, appeals and complaints

10.1. 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.

10.2. 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/209/2022

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 Appointing Authority of the ERCEA 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 Appointing Authority of the ERCEA shall notify the person concerned of its reasoned decision within four months of the date on which the complaint was lodged.

- 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.

10.3. 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.