

ERCEA VACANCY NOTICE

INTRODUCTION

The European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA), located in Brussels, Belgium, supports the work of the European Research Council (ERC). The ERC, set up by the European Union in 2007, is the premier European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. It funds creative researchers of any nationality and age, to run projects based across Europe. The ERC offers six grant schemes: [Starting Grants](#), [Consolidator Grants](#), [Advanced Grants](#), [Synergy Grants](#), [ERC Plus Grants](#), and the [Proof of Concept Grants](#), that help ERC-funded researchers to bridge the gap between their pioneering research and early phases of its commercialisation.

The ERC is led by an independent governing body, the [Scientific Council](#). Maria Leptin has been the President of the ERC since November 2021. The overall ERC budget from 2021 to 2027 is more than €16 billion, as part of the [Horizon Europe](#) programme, which is under the responsibility of Ekaterina Zaharieva, European Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation. Since the creation of the Agency, some 15 000 researchers at various stages of their careers have been supported.

The ERCEA is looking for a:

Head of Sector – ERCEA.C.3.004 Horizontal Support, Processes and Monitoring

Reference	ERCEA-IAM-03-2026
Selection type	Temporary Agent Inter-Agency Mobility
Contract type	Temporary Agent 2(f)
Grade bracket	AD 5 - AD 12
Deadline	7 September 2026 at 12:00 pm (Brussels time)

POSITION

The Head of Sector would join Unit ERCEA.C.3, which is in charge of the preparation of Grant Agreements following the selection of proposals from ERC Calls and of their financial management and implementation during their lifetime. The Unit provides administrative and financial support in pursuing the Department's goals and in the interest of its beneficiaries in relation to ERC Grants. The main activities relate to the preparation of post-award grant agreements, and their financial (i.e., reports assessment, audits implementation, and payments of eligible costs) and legal (i.e. amendments) follow-up.

The Unit is responsible for the execution of the relevant budget planned for these Grants and contributes to an optimal use of resources in accordance with legality/regularity and sound financial management.

The position of Head of Sector “Horizontal Support, Processes and Monitoring” offers a challenging role of responsibility involving horizontal financial functions and overview, across the whole spectrum of the Unit’s tasks and portfolio.

In cooperation with the management of the Unit, the jobholder will coordinate and supervise the post-award budget lifecycle of ERC grants, grant management operations across the Unit and across all business processes, contributing to the planning and monitoring of execution of the key performance indicators and the budget.

At the operational level, the jobholder will act as Head of Sector, verifier and authorising officer in line with the Financial Circuits for the operational budget and will contribute to and/or complement the management supervision and horizontal Unit efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation.

The jobholder will supervise and provide guidance to the Contract Agents in relation to the proper application of the administrative procedures and compliance with the legal framework and financial rules applicable to the ERC grants.

At the level of the department and across the Agency, the jobholder will contribute to the definition and review of procedures and guidelines, preparation of periodic reports (e.g. AAR, cooperation with Audit services) and will supervise the Unit's internal site.

The Head of Sector reports directly to the Head of Unit.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Human resources management

- Support the Head of Unit in achieving the objectives of the Unit in compliance with the Internal Control Standards.
- Manage the "Horizontal Support, Processes and Monitoring" Sector, supervise team members' work, distribute workload and report on the Sector activities.
- Provide effective leadership, ensuring that Sector members are motivated and constantly developing their skills and experience.
- Identify group and individual training needs.

Budget and finance

- Act as verifier and authorising officer in line with the Financial Circuits.
- Prepare the budgetary implementation and the financing decision/annual work-programme for grants.
- Plan, prepare, follow up on and report on the annual and multi-annual budget.
- Carry out financial risk assessment.
- Define budgetary and financial procedures in accordance with applicable regulations and internal control standards.
- Provide advice, support and training (including drafting manuals).

Procurement and contract management

- Prepare and negotiate financial aspects of grants, contracts and tenders on the basis of model.
- Ensure the ex-ante/ex-post verification of the conformity of financial operations with respect to legality, regularity, internal procedures and sound financial management.
- Ensure and follow up on the sound financial management of operational expenditure.
- Contracts and grants: examine and approve cost statements, establish financial documents (commitments, payments, recoveries).

Monitoring and reporting

- Monitor and report on commitments, expenditures and recoveries, in particular for annual activity reports and requests from the Court of Auditors and/or the European Parliament.
- Carry out on-the-spot financial controls.
- Prepare and manage reporting on budgetary and general accounts and/or third party and contractor files.

Internal control

- Act as the Unit's Internal Control Coordinator (ICCs), a member of the ICCs network, by promoting, monitoring and improving the effectiveness of the Unit's internal control systems and reporting thereon, in line with the Internal Control Standards.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

On the closing date for applications, candidates must fulfil the following criteria (including those referred to in Article 12(2) of the CEOS):

- a. Be a Temporary Agent 2(f), in a Union Agency in the meaning of Article 1(a)(2) of the Staff Regulations, who on the closing date for applications is employed within their Agency in a grade corresponding to the published grade bracket (AD 5 – AD 12).
- b. Temporary staff 2(f) referred to in criterion (a) should have:
 - At least two years' service within their Agency before moving.
 - Successfully completed the probationary period provided in Article 14 of CEOS.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Candidates need to make clear explicitly in their application how and to what extent they meet the selection criteria. The applications of candidates that do not meet one or more of the essential selection criteria will not be evaluated further.

Candidates must fulfil the following selection criteria by the application deadline.

Essential selection criteria

- At least 5 years of professional experience in the implementation of EU programmes, including direct budget and grant implementation experience as a financial actor, in research framework programmes' tools and processes.
- Proven team leadership experience.
- Knowledge of English at level C1, according to the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#).

Advantageous selection criteria

- Experience in grant management in the research framework programmes (e.g. Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe).
- Good understanding of the legal framework applicable to research grants, such as provisions of the Financial Regulation relevant to grants and of the model grant agreements for research programmes.
- Knowledge of rules, procedures and tools linked to the grant management processes.
- Experience in contractual matters: administrative, legal and financial tasks.

Job-related competencies

- Be self-driven, polyvalent and resilient, which are required traits for the multi-tasking horizontal responsibilities and/or coordination functions of the post.
- Strong teamwork and collaboration skills, service-oriented attitude.
- Capacity to supervise, coordinate and/or monitor activities of an organisational entity and individuals.
- Strong communication skills.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in applying, please submit your application in English by 7 September 2026 at 12:00 (midday) Brussels time to ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu. The application must include:

- A 2-page CV in English (all pages beyond the first two will be disregarded). The CV must be saved in PDF format with the title FAMILY NAME – ERCEA-IAM-03-2026 – CV.
- A motivation letter.
- A SYSPER certificate and/or a screenshot or copy of your current contract confirming your eligibility in line with the eligibility criteria outlined above.

If the application has been submitted successfully, candidates will receive a confirmation e-mail shortly after the submission. 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. Candidates are responsible for the information they provide and for ensuring that all the information is complete and correct before submitting the application.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Candidates will be disqualified at any stage of the selection process if they do not:

- Comply with the conditions of application indicated in the vacancy notice.
- Submit their application by the deadline.
- Send a complete application including all requested elements.
- Complete the application in English.
- Inform the ERCEA HR Unit of a possible conflict of interest with a Selection Committee member.

In case of invitation to the interview, the following applies:

- The interview must take place in a well-lit private area with as little clutter as possible, with no unauthorised materials present.
- Candidates must be alone in the room during the interview. If conducted in a shared living space, candidates must ensure household members do not disturb them during the interview.
- Upon request by the Selection Committee or its Secretariat, candidates may be asked to show their surroundings (e.g., desk, screen, etc.).
- Candidates must refrain from reading any documents (including their CV or motivation letter) or using AI during the interview.
- Candidates must refrain from taking written notes during the interview. Candidates may request that questions be repeated without penalty.
- Candidates must maintain the confidentiality of the interview process, including refraining from disclosing the content of the questions to anyone.

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

STEPS OF THE SELECTION PROCESS

All correspondence regarding this selection process will be in English and will be sent to the e-mail address from which candidates submitted their application. Should candidates' email address change, they are asked to inform ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

The selection process is expected to be completed by the end of September 2026. Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the different stages in due time.

Admission to the selection process and assessment of the applications

Upon the closure of the publication window, the candidates' eligibility will be checked by the HR Team based on the information included in the application in line with the criteria elaborated above.

The recruiting service will then conduct the shortlisting of the eligible applications in line with the criteria elaborated above.

Interview and possible written exercise

The testing phase at the ERCEA consists of an interview and a possible written exercise to check specific skills required for the job (e.g., drafting skills). The exact testing modalities will be outlined in the interview and written test invitation. As a general rule, the dates set by the ERCEA cannot be changed at the candidate's request.

Committee

A Committee consisting of at least two members from the recruiting service, an HR Representative and possibly a member from another service, will interview the shortlisted candidates. Any contact made by the candidates or third parties with the Committee in relation to this selection process constitutes grounds for disqualification from the selection process.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

In case of an offer of engagement, candidates may be offered a contract ensuring continuation of the person's employment and career in the category of temporary staff 2(f).

The contract signed with the ERCEA shall be concluded without interruption of the contract concluded with the Agency of origin ('the preceding contract') and shall fulfil the following requirements:

- The same grade and the same seniority in the grade as the preceding contract.
- The same step and the same seniority in the step as the preceding contract.

If the contract with the Agency of origin was for an indefinite period, the member of temporary staff 2(f) shall also be engaged by the ERCEA for an indefinite period.

In the event that the preceding contract comes to its natural end on the day of the move, the duration of the contract shall be the same as that which the ERCEA would have set in case of a renewal of contract of one of its agents.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The ERCEA values diversity 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.

DATA PROTECTION

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 [Data Protection Notice](#), which provides useful information about the processing of their personal data and relevant rights.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

In assessing candidates' merits, Selection Committees observe the principle of equal treatment. If candidates nevertheless believe that this principle has not been applied in their case, they have the right, within 10 calendar days of the date on which they receive notification of the decision that was sent to them, to request a review at ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

If, at any stage of the selection process, candidates consider that their interests have been prejudiced by a particular decision, or lack thereof, they can, within three months of the date on which they are notified of the act adversely affecting them, lodge an administrative complaint pursuant to Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations at ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu. More information on appeal procedures may be found [here](#).