The European Research Council

Finding the Right Support: ERC Mentoring and Visiting Fellowships

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Call and Project Follow-up Coordination

Building ERC Capacity in Widening Countries
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European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC Mobility Schemes and Mentoring Initiatives:

- **Mentoring Initiative (MI)**
- **Visiting Fellowship Programmes (VFP)**

ERC Mentoring Initiative (MI)

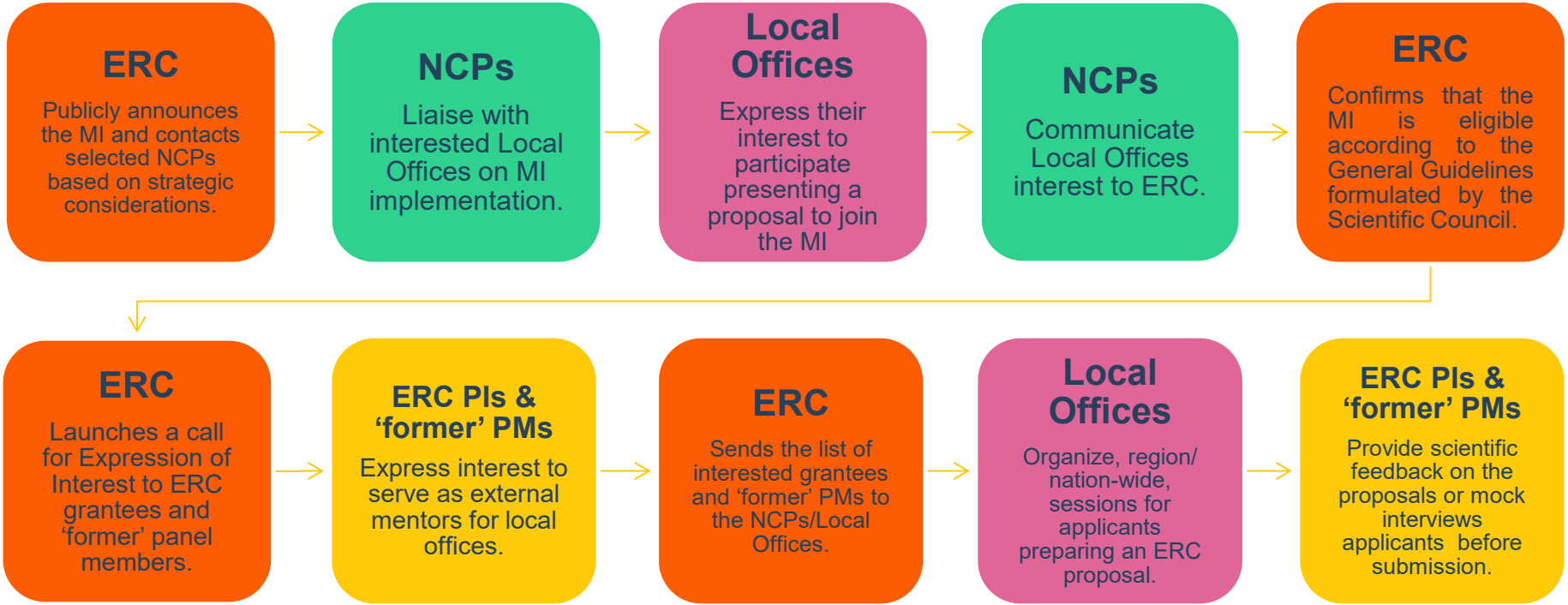
ERC identifies international experts to provide coaching and advice for potential ERC applicants, in countries where the level of participation and success rates in ERC calls have been so far modest.

- The Initiative is fully supported by European national or regional offices.

ERC MI key points:

- The ERC MI aims to find **ERC grantees and former panel members** who can mentor applicants.
- Mentoring **activities will likely start a few months** after the call is launched.
- The ERC MI will be fully **in line with the ERC's rules of conflict of interest**.
- National/regional **offices may cover mentoring-related costs** (fees, travel, subsistence) if their budget permits. Mentors will negotiate mentorship terms directly with the office.

ERC Mentoring Initiative (MI) procedures



Action taken by ERC NCPs Local Offices ERC PIs and 'former' PMs

ERC MI – State-of-play

- **16 countries** participate in the MI as of today
- Since 2021, **170+** mentors were selected by **170+ mentees** targeting ERC calls**.**
- **130+ mentees applied** to ERC calls, and **26 were funded** so far.
- **800+** ERC grantees and former panel members expressed interest to participate as mentors in 2026.

List of offices participating to the 2026 call

- **Cyprus** - Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF)
- **Czech Republic** - Czech National Expert Group (NEG) for the ERC
- **Greece** - PRAXI Network, Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH)
- **Estonia** - Estonian Research Council (ETAg)
- **Hungary** - Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA)
- **Italy** - National Research Council (CNR)
- **Latvia** - Latvian Council of Science (LCS)
- **Lithuania** - Research Council of Lithuania (RCL)
- **Luxembourg** – Luxinnovation
- **Malta** - Xjenza Malta
- **Moldova** - National Agency for Research and Development (NARD)
- **Poland** - National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR), Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA), National Science Centre (NCN) and the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP)
- **Romania** - Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)
- **Slovak Republic** - Horizon National Office - Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (CVTI SR)
- **Turkey** - Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK)
- **Ukraine** - Ukraine National Research Foundation – Horizon Europe Office in Kyiv

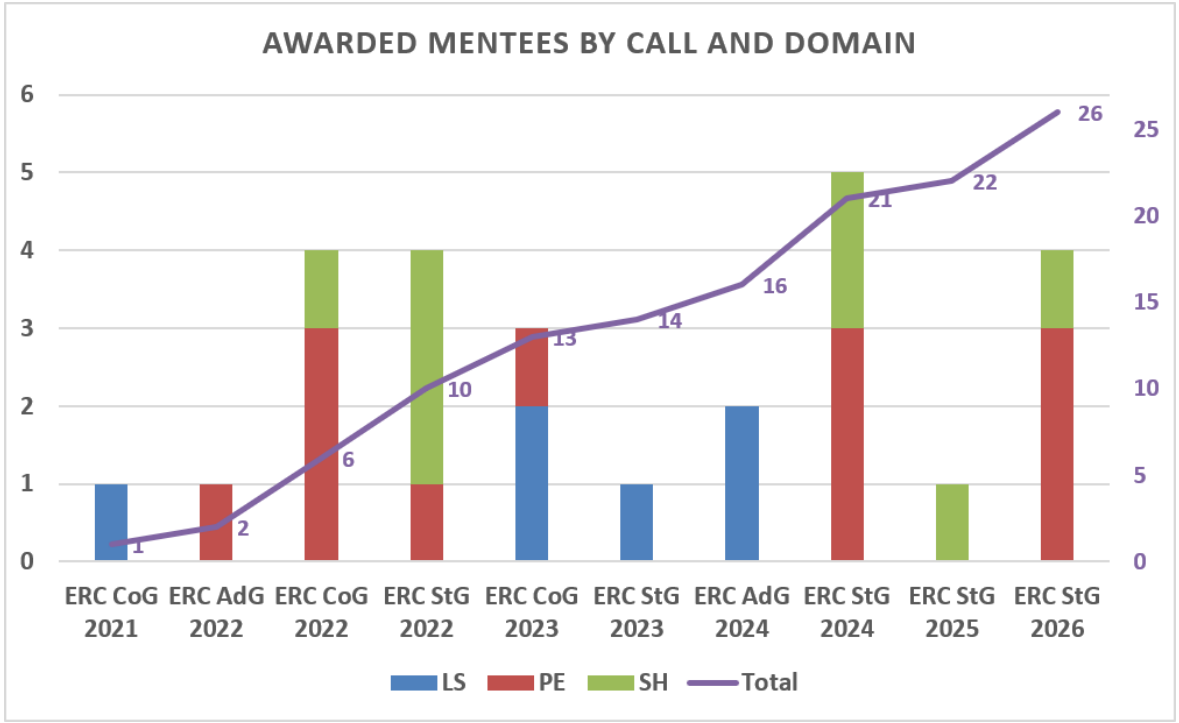
New national offices joining ERC MI in 2026

ERC launched ERC MI 2026 call for expressions of interest and 3 new national offices joined the initiative:

- **Greece** - PRAXI Network, Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH)
- **Moldova** - National Agency for Research and Development (NARD)
- **Romania** - Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)

www. https://erc.europa.eu/apply-grant/additional-opportunities#ERC-Mentoring-Initiative

ERC MI – State-of-play

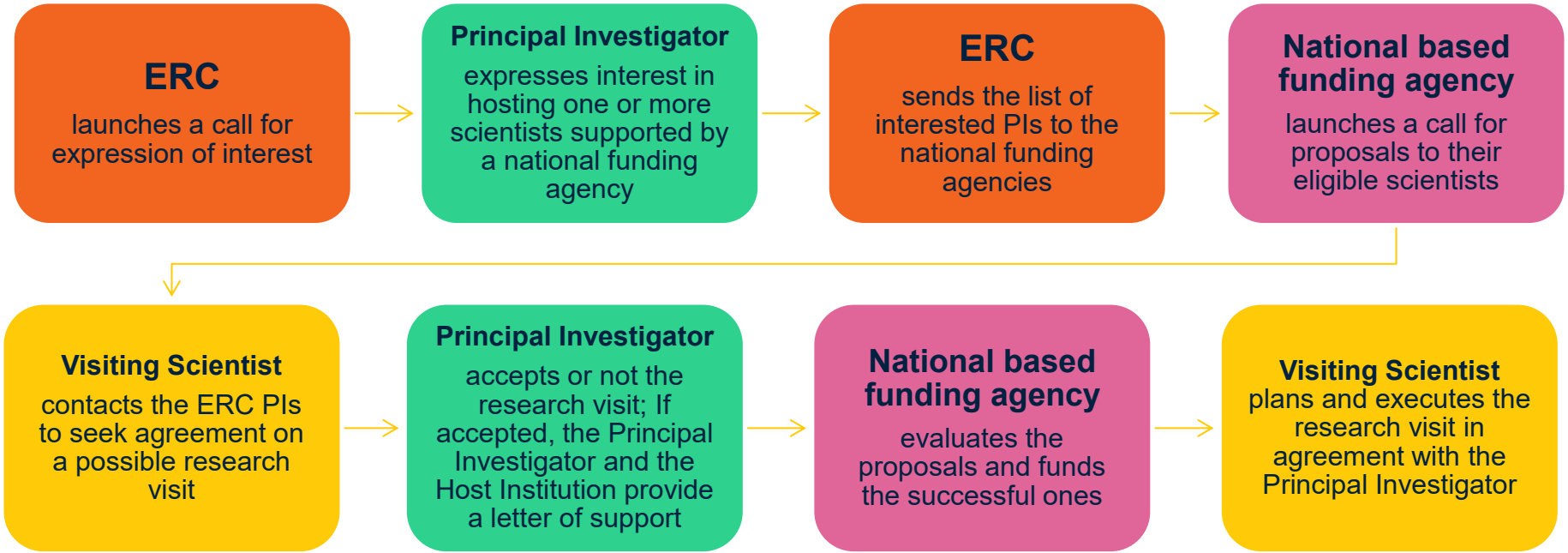


Visiting Fellowship Programme (VFP)

ERC promotes the efforts of national and regional authorities that set up and fund mobility programmes to allow potential ERC candidates to visit and gain experience with ERC-funded teams.

- The Programme is fully supported by some European national or regional authorities.

ERC VFP procedures



Action taken by

ERC | ERC Principal Investigator | Funding agency | Visiting scientist

VFP participation processes and conditions

Common to all agreements



ERC does not intervene in the communication between the ERC PIs and potential visitors.

Selection of the visiting scientists is **done by each local office** without any intervention of the ERC.

The visit should take place **within the lifetime of the ERC project.**

It is expected that **collaborations will occur in similar areas** of scientific pursuit or on topics of mutual interest.

Visiting **researchers may be incorporated into the research teams** of the ERC-funded PIs for the duration of the visit.

ERC VFP Key points

- Duration of visits **1-6 months** *(up to 2019 the minimum duration was 3 month)*
- Visiting fellows commit to **apply for an ERC grant** in specified timeframe
- Visiting fellows need to have a **letter of support** of the proposed host researcher and institution when applying
- National/regional **funding agencies cover the travel and salary costs** of the fellows for the duration of the visit
- To be eligible, ERC grantees must have more than 18 months remaining before their project's end date.

ERC VFP – State-of-play

- **9 countries** participated in the VFP in 2026
- Since 2016, **60+ fellows applied** to ERC calls, and **8 were funded** so far.
- **900+** ERC grantees expressed interest to participate as host in 2025.

ERC VFP participation

Funding agencies and institutions of **9 countries** participate in the scheme as of today:

- **Slovenia –** Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)
- **Estonia** - Estonian Research Council (ETAg)
- **Romania** - Politehnica University of Bucharest (since 2019)
- **Slovak Republic** - SAS & Pavol Jozef Safarik University in Kosice – UPJS (since 2020)
- **Hungary** - Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) (rejoined in 2022)
- **Cyprus** – Research and Innovation Foundation of Cyprus (RIF) (since 2023)
- **Latvia** – Latvian Council of Science (LCS) (since 2024)
- **Italy** - CNR (since 2021) & POLIMI (since 2025)
- **Moldava** - National Agency for Research and Development (NARD) (since 2026)

Funding agencies and institutions no longer participating:

- Poland - NCN (not participating since 2020)
- Czech Republic (not participating since 2021)
- Georgia (not participating since 2022)
- Belgium (Flanders region - not participating since 2023)
- Republic of Serbia - (not participating since 2024)
- Italy - University of Venice (not participating since 2025)
- Croatia - Croatian Science Foundation (HRZZ) (not participating since 2026)

www. https://erc.europa.eu/funding/additional-opportunities

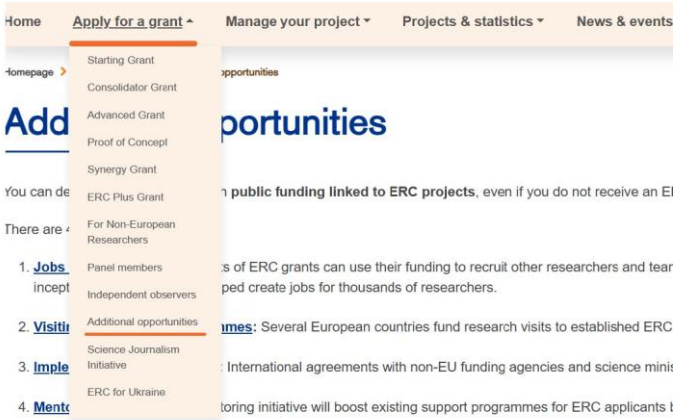
In Summary

Mentoring Initiative (MI) – for researchers that need support and feedback on their proposal (or mock interviews) to strengthen the quality of their application.

Visiting Fellowship Programme (VFP) – for researchers that would like to strengthen their research profile before applying for an ERC grant.

More info and support

ERC website



2. **Visiting Fellowships Programmes**: Several

3. **Implementing Arrangements**: International

4. **Mentoring Initiative** : the mentoring initiative

Additional Opportunities: https://erc.europa.eu/apply-grant/additional-opportunities

More info and support

Contacts

ERC MI
Support@: ERC-MENTORING-INITIATIVE@ec.europa.eu

ERC VFP
Support@: ERC-VISITING-FELLOWSHIP-PROGRAMMES@ec.europa.eu

Next calls for EoI

- ERC MI: Spring 2027
- ERC VFP: Summer 2027

THANK YOU!

Back-up slides

ERC MI – Mentoring activities

- The preferred modality of mentoring activities is the **1:1 remote mentoring, used by all the institutions**. Cyprus, Italy and Slovakia are using **remote mock interviews**. Cyprus and Turkey used **pre-screening of proposal** and/or review of CVs.

- Cyprus foresees to cover **travel costs for mentors and mentees** and Poland, Hungary and Malta adopted **daily fees**. The other institutions do not foresee financial support to mentors.