

ERC ADVANCED INVESTIGATOR GRANTS

- **Pioneering Frontier Research at any field of Science**
- **Principal Investigator: Leader in the Field with Excellent 10-year Track Record**
- **Host Organization: Legal Organization in the Public or Private Research Sector**
- **2.5 ME Maximum Funding (3.5 ME with CoPI)**
- **Up to 5 Years maximum duration of the grant**

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“Scientific excellence, being the sole criterion to assess and select proposals, will be applied to the evaluation of both the Principal Investigator and the research project.”

“In assembling pools of experts, the ERC seeks to ensure the highest level of scientific and technical expertise.”

“Principal Investigators of Advanced Grant proposals will be expected to demonstrate a record of achievements appropriate to their field(s) of research.”

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GOALS: The principal objective of the peer reviewing system is to select the best science, independent of its discipline and independent of the particularities of the review panel structure.

METHOD: A single submission of the full proposal is followed by a 2-step evaluation process. The applicant selects the reviewing panel during submission.

PANELS: Life Sciences 9 Panels (LS1-LS9)
Social Sciences and Humanities (SH1-SH6)
Physical Science and Engineering (PE1-PE10)

Interdisciplinary Domain evaluated by panel chairs

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DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET

The cumulative grant request forms the basis for panel budget allocation

PE 39%

LS 34%

SH 14%

INT 13%

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Each Proposal contains 2 elements:

1) Part B1: Scientific leadership profile (2 pages)

Curriculum Vitae (2 pages)

10-year Track Record (2 pages)

Extended Synopsis of the project (5 pages)

2) Part B2: Full Scientific Proposal (15 pages)

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The tasks of the panel meetings

STEP 1

- 1.Recommend the lists of proposals to go to the second step. The number of proposals should correspond to three times the indicative budget.**
- 2.The list of proposals above quality threshold but below budgetary threshold**
- 3.The list of proposals below quality threshold**

STEP 2

- 1.The list of proposals within the Panel's indicative budget**
- 2. The reserve list: proposals above threshold but outside the indicative budget**
- 3.Rejected proposals**
- 4. Identify interdisciplinary proposals and forward the best to the Panel Chairs meeting**

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Evaluation in Step 1

Individual remote evaluations followed by a panel meeting. Each of the proposals is read by 4 panel members and 3 remote referees who:

- Award a mark for each of the evaluation criteria
- Provide a succinct but substantially explanatory comment for each subcriterion
- These comments are forwarded to the applicants
- Individual scores are averaged and normalized
- Proposals with scores below the threshold are rejected
- Proposals above the threshold are ranked and those above the budgetary cut-off are retained. The cut-off is usually set at 3 times the budget of the panel

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Evaluation criteria for Step 1

Excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation

1. Principal Investigator:

- How well qualified is the PI to conduct the project (reviewers examine the track record of the applicant).
- To what extent are the publications and achievements of the PI groundbreaking and demonstrative of independent creative thinking and capacity to go beyond the state of the art?
- To what extent does the quality and quantity of funding the PI has attracted during the past 10 years demonstrate his/her reputation as an excellent researcher?
- Intellectual capacity and creativity (record of research, collaborations, project conception, supervision of graduate students and postdocs, new productive lines of thinking)

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Evaluation criteria for Step 1

Excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation

2. Research project

Ground-breaking nature of the research and methodology:

- Does the proposed research address important challenges at the frontiers of the field?
- Does it have suitable ambitious objectives including inter- and trans-disciplinary developments?
- How well conceived and organized is the proposal?
- Is the outlined scientific approach feasible?

High-gain/high-risk balance and potential impact

- Does the proposed research involve highly novel methodologies?
- Does the research open new and important horizons (scientific, technological)?
- Will the project advance the ERA and the host institution?

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Evaluation criteria for Step 2

Excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation

Similar to Step 1 plus one more criterion: Research Environment

Contribution of the research environment to the project:

- **Does the host environment provide most of the infrastructure necessary for the research to be carried out?**
- **Does it provide an appropriate intellectual environment and infrastructural support to the PI?**
- **If other legal entities are involved, is their participation fully justified?**

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Evaluation criteria for Steps 1 and 2

Excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation

Scoring of the Criteria and quality threshold

4: Outstanding

3: Excellent

2: Very Good

1: Non-competitive

Threshold=2

Proposals marked below threshold in any of the 2 criteria are rejected

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Evaluation criteria for Steps 1 and 2

Excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation

Scoring of the Criteria and quality threshold

PI:

- 4.0 Absolutely outstanding records
- 3.5 Internationally competitive and excellent records
- 3.0 Excellent records in the field, qualified for the proposal
- 2.5 Very good records but not exceptional
- 2.0 Average records but commonplace
- 1.5 Uncompetitive records with weaknesses
- 1.0 Totally insufficient records

Proposal:

- 4.0 Absolutely outstanding and original, internationally competitive
- 3.5 Groundbreaking, innovative within the field
- 3.0 Excellent, but no exceptional
- 2.5 Very good and feasible
- 2.0 Average or good, commonplace not very original
- 1.5 Feasible but pursued by many
- 1.0 Fundamentally flawed in rationale, uncompetitive or not feasible