

European Research Council (ERC) - criteria on scientific quality

<i>Evaluation Criterion</i>	Scientific excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation. (1) The panels will primarily evaluate the ground-breaking nature and ambition of the research project. (2) At the same time, the panels will evaluate the intellectual capacity and creativity of the Principal Investigator(s) (PI(s)), with a focus on the extent to which the PI(s) has/ have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project.
<i>(1) Evaluation Element - Research Project</i>	<u>Evaluation Step 1</u>: The ground-breaking nature and ambition of the research project is assessed as follows: ▪ To what extent does the research address important scientific questions? ▪ To what extent are the project's objectives ambitious, will the project advance the frontier of knowledge and is the proposed approach scientifically convincing? ▪ Synergy Grants only: To what extent does the proposal go beyond what the individual PIs could achieve alone? <u>Evaluation Step 2</u>: The ground-breaking nature and ambition of the research project is assessed as follows (<u>in addition</u> to step 1 questions): ▪ To what extent are the research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project? ▪ To what extent are the timescales and resources adequate and properly justified? ▪ Synergy Grants only: To what extent do the PIs succeed in proposing a combination of scientific approaches that are crucial to address the scope and complexity of the research questions to be tackled?
<i>(2) Evaluation Element - Principal Investigator(s) (PI(s))</i>	<u>Evaluation Step 1 and Step 2</u>: The intellectual capacity and creativity of the Principal Investigator(s) (PI(s)) is assessed as follows: ▪ To what extent has/have the PI(s) demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research? ▪ To what extent does/do the PI(s) provide evidence of creative and original thinking? ▪ To what extent does/do the PI(s) have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project? ▪ Synergy Grants only: To what extent does the Synergy Grant Group demonstrate that it brings together the know-how necessary to address the proposed research question(s)?

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	ERC Starting Grant	ERC Consolidator Grant	ERC Advanced Grant	ERC Synergy Grant
<i>Profiles of Principal Investigator(s) (PI(s))</i>	The PI should have already shown evidence of the potential for research independence , for example, by having produced at least one important publication as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.	The PI should have already shown evidence of research independence .	The PI is expected to be an active and established research leader with a track record of significant research achievements . No specific eligibility criteria with respect to the academic requirements are foreseen.	PIs of any career stage are welcome and must demonstrate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their research proposal. PIs must also demonstrate that their group can successfully bring together the scientific elements necessary to address the scope and complexity of the proposed research question . The evaluation experts will be instructed to evaluate each PI considering their profiles, as relevant to their career stage. The group is evaluated as a whole.
<i>Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Track Record</i>	The PI is expected to include, among others, a list of up to ten research outputs that demonstrate how the applicant has advanced knowledge in their field, with an emphasis on more recent achievements, and a list of selected examples of significant peer recognition (for example, prizes). The applicant may include a short, factual explanation of the significance of the selected outputs , the applicant's role in producing each of them, and how they demonstrate the applicant's capacity to successfully carry out the proposed project, as well as a short explanation of the importance of the listed examples of significant peer recognition.			
	The applicant may also include relevant additional information on career breaks, diverse career paths, and life events, as well as any particularly noteworthy contributions to the research community they have made other than research achievements and peer recognition and a short explanation of these contributions. The purpose of this section is to allow the panels to take a more rounded view of the applicant's career and achievements and to ensure that any additional responsibilities, commitments, and leadership roles that the applicants have taken on beyond their individual research activities are recognised and taken into account.			

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<i>Principles of the ERC</i>	Research integrity: Any breach of research integrity by PIs, team members or beneficiaries may be sanctioned by measures e.g. the rejection of proposals, requests for measures to be taken by the host institution, reduction of the grant and suspension or termination of grants. PIs who submit proposals which are rejected on the grounds of breach of research integrity may face restrictions on resubmission.
	Ethics and Security: Every project funded or placed on a reserve list by the ERC under Horizon Europe is subject to an ethics review process. The ethics review process is independent from the scientific evaluation. The process is aimed at ensuring that all the research and innovation activities under Horizon Europe comply with ethics principles and relevant national, European Union and international legislation. ERC actions must comply with applicable security rules and in particular rules on protection of classified information against unauthorised disclosure, including compliance with any relevant national and European Union law. Where appropriate, the EU Commission will carry out a security scrutiny for proposals raising security issues.
	Open science: Open science is a general principle of the Horizon Europe programme, and a core principle of the ERC. The ERC is committed to the principle of open access to the published output of research, including, in particular, peer-reviewed articles and monographs. It also supports the basic principle of open access to research data and data-related products such as computer code, algorithms, software, workflows, protocols or any other forms of research output. The ERC considers that providing free online access to all these materials can be the most effective way of ensuring that the fruits of the research it funds can be accessed, read, and used as the basis for further research.
	Gender and Diversity: Under Horizon Europe, beneficiaries of ERC grants must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action and aim for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level, as set out in the Model Grant Agreement for ERC actions. ERC PIs should also determine the relevance of integrating sex and gender analysis into their research.
	Communicate your research: As an ERC grant holder, your goal is to carry out ambitious research. But to get relevant exposure and make the fruit of your work broadly available, outreach activities are a must. Trigger new collaborations and opportunities for you and your team, sharing your project and results with the research community, the media, policy-makers, potential investors, funding agencies and the wider public.