ERC Consolidator Grant 2018
Research proposal [Part B1][1]
(Part B1 is evaluated both in Step 1 and Step 2,
Part B2 is evaluated in Step 2 only)

Proposal Full Title

PROPOSAL ACRONYM

Cover Page:

- Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Name of the PI's host institution for the project
- Proposal duration in months

Text highlighted in grey should be deleted.

Proposal summary (identical to the abstract from the online proposal submission forms, section 1).

The abstract (summary) should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as the short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to contact in particular the potential remote referees and/or inform the Commission and/or the programme management committees and/or relevant national funding agencies (provided you give permission to do so where requested in the online proposal submission forms, section 1). It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information.

Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. The abstract must be written in English. There is a limit of 2000 characters (spaces and line breaks included).

European Team Advice:

How Evaluators Read the Proposals

- They first read title and abstract.
- The abstract already decides if they are interested in reading more.
- The second thing they read is the publication list.
- They often flip through the pages. This means: Your proposal needs to be well structured. Important parts of your proposal should be eye catching.

[1] Instructions for completing Part B1 can be found in the '*Information for Applicants to the Starting and Consolidator Grant 2018 Calls'*.

- They have many proposals to read. They have little time. Make their work easier in presenting them a nice proposal.
- The following criteria are not used: nationality, gender, age, amount of requested grant.
- Remember that most likely only one of the panel members reviewing your proposal may be close to your immediate field.

The abstract (summary) and the title are EXTREMELY important. They can potentially decide if the evaluators are interested or not in your proposal. The summary should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. Put the goal of you proposals in the first sentence and highlight it (Bold/Italics?). The abstract will be used as the short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to contact in particular the potential remote referees and/or inform the Commission and/or the programme management committees and/or relevant national funding agencies (provided you give permission to do so where requested in the online proposal submission forms, section 1). It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information.

Some successful proposals follow this format:
Aim/Novelty: In <Acronym> we propose to develop a novel X in order to address <give the fundamental/key questions you are addressing>. If you have preliminary results or building on previous work briefly mention here.
Challenges and the novel approach you are suggesting: Novel approaches need to be developed and they are better than because…. Our approach is based on X and we will be able to do Y. Also give the present state of the art and where the proposed work will lead.
Goal: our ultimate goal is to…
Roadmap: The project will utilise cutting edge…. with …..Together these experiments will be used to test….. which is a critical unmet need…. OR if successful the project will….. OR answering these questions requires an ambitious research programme covering… I now seek to…..

Explain and justify the cross-panel or cross domain nature of your proposal, if a secondary panel is indicated in the online proposal submission forms. There is a limit of 1000 characters, spaces and line breaks included.

Section a: Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal (max. 5 pages, references do not count towards the page limits)

[The Extended Synopsis should give a concise presentation of the scientific proposal, with particular attention to the ground-breaking nature of the research project, which will allow evaluation panels to assess, in Step 1 of the evaluation, the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. References to literature should also be included. Please use a reference style that is commonly used in your discipline such as American Chemical Society (ACS) style, American Medical Association (AMA) style, Modern Language Association (MLA) style, etc. and that allows the evaluators to easily retrieve each reference.]

Please respect the following formatting constraints: Times New Roman, Arial or similar, at least font size 11, margins (2.0cm side and 1.5cm top and bottom), single line spacing.

European Team Advice:

- The extended synopsis should provide a concise presentation for the scientific proposal, including the feasibility of the project and paying particular attention to the ground breaking nature of the proposal and how it may open new horizon or opportunities for research. Give some background to the project and make sure you explain the proposed work in the context of the state of the art.
- It should be written in such a way that it "speaks" to at least 4 panel members, 3 of which will be at some distance from your specific area. Make sure you communicate the significance of what you're proposing in terms of advancing your field to scientists/professors/group leaders not from your immediate area. The general scientist should be able to understand what you propose to do but it should also contain elements that would impress the expert evaluator.
- What research questions you will address? Clearly define them. Describe the proposed work in terms of the state of the art in the field.
- **A well-structured proposal** should: be clear where the state of the art ends and your contribution begins; research questions are clear and can be linked to the methods; team members' tasks are well designed and it is clear how the PI will be leading the team.
- **You need to answer 5 key questions**: Why bother? , Is this a European priority? , is the solution already available? Why now-what would happen if you did not do this now?, Why you?. You should aim to have these addressed in the first paragraph of your proposal! The "WHY NOW" is one of the most important ones for ERC.
- What is the heart of the problem? Present your solutions and -if applicable- the involvement of others (multidisciplinary approach), but remember that you are the primary focus of this grant.
- Give an outline of the project and the methodology, ideally broken down into Work packages.
- Address the novelty and ground-breaking aspects of your research.
- How feasible is your project? Include the risks and gains. Feasibility is extremely important and very frequently raised by evaluators! Include a plan B.
- Demonstrate high risk/high gain of what you are proposing.
- Conclude with what your overarching goal is?
- You can use a two tier figure to depict the research outputs. The outer layer representing the high risk task and the inner layer the low risk tasks.
- Treat this as your dream project- think what excites you about this research and make sure you convey that in the text.
- Convince them that the work is feasible and innovative/ ground breaking

- Explain how your project will open new horizons and opportunities.
- Don't forget to use ERC terminology (Novel, ground breaking, beyond the state of the art)
- You can use a Pert chart for the WPs and also a Gantt chart.
- Use figures and photos specifically prepared for your ERC grant application, remove unnecessary items from them.
- After reading your extended synopsis the evaluator should be reassured that you are excellent and the right/Only person to successfully deliver this project.
- A nice layout is very important. The evaluators have a lot if proposal to read, so it is important that they are able to get all the information they need at once. Perhaps use bullet points, numbered subtitles, breaks etc.
- A lot of academics suggest that they write B2 first but this is subjective.

Common Problems- More details on:

- Your ideas are interesting but the proposal is not well anchored: Make sure you are up-to-date with the literature and link your ideas to existing research.
- Main concepts are poorly defined: Some ideas may seem obvious to you, but they may be less obvious to your evaluators.
- Proposal is claimed to be innovative, but: Little offered to support such a claim; answers (methodological and substantive) available from other disciplines.
- Feasibility: striking the right balance between ambitious and doable.
- Proposal is more complex than necessary: Try to balance the need to impress with the need to communicate your ideas

Format that some successful proposals follow in section B1

Objectives: 1st paragraph: in the first sentence the essence of the project is given. Then the hypothesis is given and also an account of what the current data supports. This is followed by what fundamental question(s) the project will address. Close the first paragraph on a note of how you are uniquely placed to answer this question(s).

A few successful proposal format this section in terms of questions there are set to answer and the objectives of each of these questions.

Then you can give an the background and importance in one section or provide the state of the art separately for each of the questions, address the bottlenecks and what are you proposing to do in order to address this.

Section on **Feasibility** is included. Explaining what you plan to use and why this will be successful.

Section in **Methodology**. Here you need to stress that the questions you want to address require a number of highly ambitious and challenging set of experimental work. Give an overall explanation on what

methods you will use to explore these questions. You can briefly mention here the team that will help you achieve these objectives (Postdocs/PhDs/RA/Technicians to be hired) etc. If you will collaborate with other colleagues on specific aspects of the project also mention here. This could also be a separate section, it usually follows methodology. Briefly justify why the collaboration with these people is essential.

Then a brief description/summary of the methods you will use to address each of the questions/objectives I provided. Risk mitigation/ contingency plans also included.

References: are at the end of this section.

Section b: Curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages)

[The template below is provided only for guidance. It may be modified as necessary and appropriate.]

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Family name, First name:

Researcher unique identifier(s) (such as ORCID, Research ID, etc. ...):

Date of birth:

Nationality:

URL for web site:

European Team Advice:

In the CV section you could also add the following:

- **Scientific leadership profile**: refer to your key contributions to the field, in what areas your work has had an impact and contributed to a better understanding of a particular problem.
- Has your work changed the way other scientists think of something in particular in your area?
- From where have you received funding?
- What committees have you served on, are you a regular invited speaker at international conferences?
- Mention if you have/are supervising any PhD/MSc students
- Might also be worth mentioning here if you are involved in local engagement with public bodies, and if you have won any medals or awards.
- The CV section is pretty straight forward. Add your details, Education, previous positions, Academic awards, Editorial positions. Use the heading they provide and if there is something that doesn't fall in any categories they have you can add it in! Add the exact date your PhD was awarded, as it appears on degree.
- Also make sure your own website is up to date. It is possible that some evaluators will google you so make sure you get rid of any unwanted material from your website or social media.
- You can also have a section on teaching activities
- You can also include URLs, but if you do make sure they are up to date as evaluators will look (although don't rely on them because evaluators are not obliged to look)

- **EDUCATION**

200? PhD

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution, Country

Name of PhD Supervisor

199? Master

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution, Country

- **CURRENT POSITION(S)**

201? – Current Position

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – Current Position

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **PREVIOUS POSITIONS**

200? – 200? Position held

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – 200? Position held

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **FELLOWSHIPS**

200? – 200? Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

199? – 199? Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS (if applicable)**

200? – 200? Number of Postdocs/ PhD/ Master Students

Name of Faculty/ Department/ Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **TEACHING ACTIVITIES (if applicable)**

200? – Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – 200? Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **ORGANISATION OF SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS (if applicable)**

201? Please specify your role and the name of event / Country

200? Please specify type of event / number of participants / Country

- **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (if applicable)**

201? – Faculty member, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – 201? Graduate Student Advisor, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – 200? Member of the Faculty Committee, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – 200? Organizer of the Internal Seminar, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – 200? Member of a Committee; role, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **COMMISSIONS OF TRUST (if applicable)**

201? – Scientific Advisory Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Review Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Review panel member, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Editorial Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – Scientific Advisory Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – Reviewer, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – Scientific Evaluation, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – Evaluator, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **MEMBERSHIPS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES (if applicable)**

201? – Member, Research Network "*Name of Research Network*"

200? – Associated Member, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

200? – Founding Member, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **MAJOR COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)**

Name of collaborators, Topic, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **CAREER BREAKS (if applicable)**

Exact dates Please indicate the reason and the duration in months.

European Team Advice:

Report on any significant career breaks. Peer reviewers will take it into consideration during the assessment of the quality of the PI and his/her career progression. You might want to move the career break description nearer the top- so that the evaluator can keep this in mind when reading your achievements.

Examples include: Maternity leave, Leave due to sickness, Caring for a relative/child, army service or specialisation in Medicine.

Appendix: All ongoing and submitted grants and funding of the PI (Funding ID)

<u>Mandatory information</u> (does not count towards page limits)

On-going Grants

Project Title	*Funding source*	*Amount (Euros)*	*Period*	*Role of the PI*	*Relation to current ERC proposal*[2]

Grant applications

Project Title	*Funding source*	*Amount (Euros)*	*Period*	*Role of the PI*	*Relation to current ERC proposal*[2]

[2] Describe clearly any scientific overlap between your ERC application and the current research grant or on-going grant application.

Section c: Early achievements track-record (max. 2 pages)

(see 'Information for Applicants to the Starting and Consolidator Grant 2018 Calls'– instructions for completing 'Part B' of the proposal)