ERC Consolidator Grant 2017

Research proposal [Part B1][[1]](#footnote-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

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

Advice from the European Team

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.

Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. There is a limit of 2000 characters (spaces and line breaks included).

Some successful proposal 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…..



**Section a: *Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal (max. 5 pages)***

[**From ERC Template**] 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. **References do not count towards the page limits**. **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.**

**Advice from the European Team**

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 righ/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**

**Advice from the European Team**

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)

Family name, First name:

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

Date of birth:

Nationality:

URL for web site:

* **EDUCATION**

199? PhD

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

199? Master

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

* **CURRENT POSITION(S)**

201? – 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 AND AWARDS**

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

200? Award received from Name of Institution/ Country

198? – 199? Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS**

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? Organiser 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? – Funding 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.

**Advice from the European Team**

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 on-going and submitted grants and funding of the PI (Funding ID)***

*Mandatory information (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]](#footnote-2)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Grant applications**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Project Title* | *Funding source* | *Amount*  *(Euros)* | *Period* | *Role of the PI* | *Relation to current*  *ERC proposal2* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Advice from the European Team**

* Mention a distinct funding ID, which shows how much you are able to raise and manage funding. Use Euro. The funding ID will not count towards page limits. It must follow the table format indicated in the Part B1 template.

Specify any current research grants and their subject, as well as any on-going applications for work related to the ERC proposal. You must follow the table format indicated in the Part B1 template. This section is intended as proof that you are fundable but also that you are not going to be double funded for exactly the same work and that your time commitment is realistic, based on ongoing projects.

**Don’t ignore the last column**. State whether there is any overlap with any of your other projects. You can say something along these lines “there is no funding overlap with the ERC grant requested and any other source of funding for the same activities and costs that are foreseen in this project.” If any of your ongoing grants have any similarities with your ERC you can specify i.e.: use the title of the WP and the tasks that are similar.

You need to declare all your grants, it’s very likely that the panel may know of you and your work. They may even be an evaluator for other funders and might have seen some of your previous / current applications. Do not try to buy yourself out of teaching or at least do not mention this. It is not recommended to apply for ERC CoG if the exact same project has been submitted elsewhere.

ERC is different from other funders, therefore it would be unlikely that the same proposal would fit into this scheme.

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

(see ‘Information for Applicants to the Starting and Consolidator Grant 2015 Calls’– instructions for completing 'Part B' of the proposal)

**Advice from the European Team**

**How to score highly on the PI criterion**- Refer explicitly to the criteria described in the call document:

* Start with a short introduction about your area of research and its international recognition (maybe a paragraph or so).

Pack the track record with evidence about your achievements. Panels are more likely to give the go ahead if they trust the PI and are convinced of your credibility as an excellent researcher. Demonstrating independence is very important.

Avoid understatements and sell yourself as an excellent researcher.

Quote positive reviews of your work, highlight esteem for your research from others in your field.

Provide specific details of prizes, citation data for publications, project management experience, papers at conferences, mentoring students, organising / chairing conferences, etc.

If possible provide evidence of international influence and activities.

Try to explain how exactly you are the right person to undertake this particular project at this specific moment in time.

A brilliant PI has a good publication record in high impact/international journals with a high number of citations. Has good international contacts and collaborative publications. Participation in research projects early on their career/internationally and as a PI (preferably). Also any awards or international scholarships also should be stressed.

* Indicate up to Ten publications / conference proceedings / monographs in peer-reviewed journals, impact factor, citations (without self-citations), H index, Google Scholar or equivalent index, explain which system you have used so it is clear to the reader. If you are from a domain where peer reviewing is not widely used, you can briefly explain this. This can be helpful for cross-disciplinary researchers who will be assessed by evaluators from two completely different scientific domains. Evaluators are particularly interested in the publication record!

Highlight those of particular importance or major discoveries and briefly summarise the context:

Quote positive reviews of your work from others.

Provide evidence of international influence.

Include ‘tiny’ urls and if applicable, add number of hits/downloads.

If you have country-specific accolades, include them here and explain what they are.

Important mentoring activities can also be included here

Need to show independence (leading author) highlight publications without PhD supervisor

* Research monographs and any translations thereof (if applicable);
* Granted patent(s) (if applicable);
* Invited presentations to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools (if applicable);

Prizes/ Awards/ Academy memberships(if applicable).

Don’t repeat information that was in the CV.

Make sure you choose achievements that are regarded highly in your field/Domain.

1. Instructions for completing Part B1 can be found in the ‘*Information for Applicants to the Starting and Consolidator Grant 2017 Calls’*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Describe clearly any scientific overlap between your ERC application and the current research grant or on-going grant application. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)