**MNI9040/MNI9060 Managing Research Projects 2025**

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**This course has the following aims**

* to provide an overview of different national and EU funding sources that starting independent researchers should aim for
* to discuss how to "read" the calls and expectations from funders
* to introduce best practices regarding drafting applications, running and reporting projects
* meetings with and stories from people who have either managed to get Estonian Research Council’s (ETAg) starting grants, ERC starting and Marie Curie individual grants
* to discuss your own potential Project ideas.

For whom is this course:

* I would suggest this course (the 6 ECTS version) to students who are at least in their 2nd year or even 3rd year and who are starting to think about post-PhD academic career.
* The 3 ECTS version is more suitable for all, but mostly still for people who (should) start thinking about their post-PhD career.

**Schedule of meetings:**

* 12.02; 19.02; 26.02; 16.04; 23.04; 30.04 @17:15-20:30 **room SOC-309** and Zoom (the Zoom link is for exceptional and pre-agreed reasons; I assume that majority of full-time students attend classes).
* **Zoom:**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86294711785?pwd=vCY5l0ojPif9qmDgmtmVdwIdbRvKFg.1> (Meeting ID: 862 9471 1785; Passcode: 044075)

**Detailed Schedule**

**12.02 Intro**

* Why do we have so many projects in academia - the good and the bad?
* Discussion of your PhD “projects” and futures
* Some background readings
  + [Raudla, R., Karo, E., Valdmaa, K., & Kattel, R. (2015). Implications of project-based funding of research on budgeting and financial management in public universities. *Higher Education*, *70*(6), 957-971.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z1p-rb1Zl-4JO9ITCj5s7J7WhgJp-158/view?usp=sharing)
  + [Wichmann-Hansen, G., & Herrmann, K. J. (2017). Does external funding push doctoral supervisors to be more directive? A large-scale Danish study. *Higher education*, *74*(2), 357-376.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iqHsgVuGb8mfQwqY1VF-4FL3X14PD1qK/view?usp=share_link)
  + [Hallonsten, O. (2021). Stop evaluating science: A historical-sociological argument. *Social Science Information*, 0539018421992204.](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0539018421992204)
  + [ScienceBusiness (2022) France helps Brussels move ahead with ‘disruptive’ plan for research assessment](https://sciencebusiness.net/news/france-helps-brussels-move-ahead-disruptive-plan-research-assessment)
* Recording: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/AlbZvl5p-eLajFhohV_PBDFAEegglMUIarm9tFpmTTIN4QAmDZyo-DFlfC4s2PFy.seA5NxFovF8SuCFE> (Passcode: #d2z.S1R)
* [Slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iu7ys4f_sWxOznghbOrhv8xirasmk_tL/view?usp=share_link)

**19.02 Funding and landscapes**

* A short history of the evolution of instruments in the EU and Estonia (so you know the context)
* Overview of project sources for PhD students and post-docs in the EU and Estonia
  + Visit and get acquainted: <https://www.etag.ee/en/funding/research-funding/>
  + Visit and get acquainted: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe_en#proposal>
  + Visit and get acquainted: [https://erc.europa.eu](https://erc.europa.eu/)
* Watch the 2024 MCSA post-doc grant info-session by ETAg: [MSCA information session-20240229\_153131-Meeting Recording.mp4](https://livettu-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/marika_lunden_taltech_ee/EWzDlY271ElBqb3bdUxRnj0BKC2B0f_S9FtQYj7LuiCUPA?referrer=Teams.TEAMS-ELECTRON&referrerScenario=MeetingChicletGetLink.view.view) and see the [slides of the talk](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BVCYgooqIlX-HAkPc3EU4ITFWwEzl6v6/view?usp=share_link)
* Watch the 2024 webinar on ETAg starting and team grants [**here**](https://etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/The-information-webinar-for-applying-PSG-and-PRG_2024.mp4) and the slideshow [**here**](https://etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Webinar2024_PSG_PRG_ENG_6-3-24.pdf).
* Recording: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/MMJIFh5rkscT-RMKmdBHZS-Vx7COMB2fevX7MfWxGJ36M_s03hfmWnIrMYMg65AK.bTvcG7BuOgnq7WJv> (Passcode: ?mH9pAuG)
* [Slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bOdcref6Hk5Yj9vD81TWJ1iIdQW7A_wi/view?usp=share_link)

**26.02 Project management in the EU and at TalTech**

* Independent reading of the EU and TalTech project management handbooks
  + Read also PM2 Project Management Methodology: [https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/97cc2f12-c648-11ee-95d9-01aa75ed71a](https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/97cc2f12-c648-11ee-95d9-01aa75ed71a1)
  + Visit and get acquainted the R&D project related regulations and our project handbook: <https://portal.taltech.ee/wiki/show/et:dokumendid:teadus-arendustoo:dokumendid:main#>
* Recording: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/EYzQS_FlMUDD9lR4nxbspvl-CflnPSuV2VO3QHNzC9Mqa7iGgA9sjNhju5vRED_p.E3GY6aFMtAVpYJYy> (Passcode: 90b9&TX0)
* [Slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/14bLdtX0vBoHzunJf-Yus35CjaUStlQXA/view?usp=share_link)

**Gap in class**:

* Watch at your own speed **life stories of university scientists in getting a post-doc, grants and careers** 
  + MartinThalfeld, EE grants and engineering specificities: [recording](https://drive.google.com/file/d/146XHs1Tvrvv-6R4c4CMhEMsJAuoRtaRp/view?usp=sharing) and [slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gk2u8MH6p8Ji1-aUbXxpvIPNG_jYoE6Z/view?usp=sharing)
  + Ott Scheler, EE grants and biosciences: [recording](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1og104Sz0ZXGrqz_VlHcVnwKdNlpVH3P9/view?usp=sharing) and [slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gHato0PdUxAJHrRu0h62pedU4rpgKv2S/view?usp=sharing)
  + Jana Holmar, EE grants and ICT: [recording](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1e5tox8vRcAryqeoLR2HA6Iv6SSc1g5CQ/view?usp=sharing)
* **Starting working on your assignments** and plan and carry out the interviews (see below for details)

**NB! There will be no class on 09.04 and we have moved all following classes forward by one week.**

**16.04 Live Zoom only (no in-class meeting)!**

* **17.15** Prof. Vasilis Kostakis TalTech getting and managing an ERC grant
* **18.30** Dr. Teele Tõnismann, ADOC Talent Management**:** Know your skills and talents, [slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jeWg0cuUhEK-Jn7zzDmiXsQZJf9vQhoj/view?usp=share_link)

**23.04 Funding, landscapes and management II**

* Overview of demand-side instruments and possibilities
  + Visit and get acquainted: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe_en>
  + Visit and get acquainted (Pillar II and Pillar III activities): <https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe_en#proposal>
* Recording: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/6jgj8D_UPg8Aejk3yJ1PToron1raQkSXQThrlB5rjNnTa_vg2RzHL0PMaj4xVCr9.HSupzImf91d3cd8p> (Passcode: v!pH57L?)
* [Slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HhkJDZh_DXgDIhcYtb3zAHSOl29zqzM3/view?usp=share_link)

**30.04 Group presentations and wrap-up discussions**

We have 6 groups, we can arrange it so that we have max 30 min for each group (15-20 min presentation and 10-15 min Q&A).

Please [upload your presentations here](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NtKS_asoXptewZzziVPRQg8lCxO8ImRI?usp=share_link) before the class.

**Grading**

* **Pass/fail**
* to pass the course, students need to form groups (4-5 people) based on their program and/or specialization and prepare a group presentation that

a) provides an overview of the **post-doc level research funding opportunities in your field** (who funds and what types of project are currently funded in terms of focus on direction) → ask for key sources of funding in your field and what types of research (supply vs demand; recent trends in topics, interdisciplinarity etc)

b) and **key principles and practices of good project management in your field** → ask what theories/models/principles and tools/apps/platforms are used in PM

* for the presentation, you should interview at least 4 PIs in your field (e.g. your supervisors) and some post-docs, or PhD holders with own grants
* the presentation should summarize key findings and principles from your meetings and interviews
* presentation is in 2 parts:

1. where to get funding and how
2. how to manage projects: what are the common approaches, tools and principles (dos and donts)

* the presentation should be about 20 min

**Register your groups (or lack of group) here:** <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1blGdlGnU7_nZfPnnW4Cwu6gmhjKoINb9hFk1XOj4i7A/edit?usp=sharing>

**MNI9040 students** (who want to get 6 ECTS), should prepare **in addition** the following individual project portfolio/plan - **due 07.05** (submit to [erkki.karo@taltech.ee](mailto:erkki.karo@taltech.ee))

* Take your ongoing or near-future project (your PhD ‘project’, ongoing or near-future research and innovation project, near-future post-doc project) and compile a project portfolio that includes:

a) abstract (in human language),

b) 1-2 page excellence overview, or state-of-the-art, and research questions/goals (incl references etc),

c) 1-2 page implementation plan (incl work packages, Gantt, milestones, deliverables, communication plan),

d) 1-page impact overview (KPIs + KIP narratives) - use here the Horizon Europe proposal template!

e) risk management and ethics plan (max 1-page)

f) key project management principles to follow (max 0,5 pages)

g) concrete outline of likely follow-up funding sources (max 0,5 pages)