



Charles
University

ERC Grants: Quick Guide

ERC Starting Grant

Supporting the independent careers of outstanding young scientists (PIs) in the phase of creating their own research teams or programmes.

Career stage: 0–10 years following PhD defence.

*Eligibility can be extended for maternity, paternity, or parental leave, illness, national service, clinical training, natural disasters, asylum, or for victims of gender-based violence or any other form of violence.

The **scientific excellence** of both the project and the scientist himself is demonstrated by:

- a breakthrough idea
- independent scientific results demonstrably independent of the PhD supervisor; the submitted project must not be a simple continuation of previous studies or post-doctoral stays

Grant amount up to **€1.5 million for 5 years.**

+ Possible **additional funding** up to €1 million to cover further eligible costs (e.g. start-up costs, major equipment, access to large facilities, major experimental and field work costs). For PIs currently based in non-associated third countries relocating to the EU/associated country, the additional funding may be up to €2 million.

An ERC grant can cover up to 100% of the total eligible direct costs of the research, plus a contribution of 25% of the total eligible costs towards indirect costs.

Formal conditions

ERC grants are open to PIs of any nationality currently living anywhere in the world. The new Host Institution must be based in the EU or an associated country and must employ the PI for at least the duration of the project.

Time commitment:

- Minimum **50%** of working time to be spent on the ERC project
- Minimum **50%** of working time to be spent in an EU/associated country

How does the evaluation work?

The evaluation has **two steps**. You will know the result within about 10 months of submitting the application.

At **Step 1, Part I of the Scientific Proposal** (setting out the background, objectives, and overall research strategy), the **CV**, and the **Track Record** are assessed by the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A invited

*up to 44 proposals per panel are retained for Step 2

A not invited

PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call

B PI cannot apply to the following two calls

C PI cannot apply to the following three calls

At **Step 2**, the complete Research Proposal is assessed: **Part I**, the **CV**, the **Track Record** and **Part II of the Scientific Proposal** (focusing primarily on the implementation), and **Resources**. The Principal Investigator presents their proposal at an **interview** with the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A the project is recommended for funding

*whether it will be funded or not depend on the availability of sufficient funds

B the project is **not recommended for funding**; PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call

Why Apply for ERC StG?

- financial independence
- prestige
- international visibility

If you want to start an independent scientific career with international recognition of the highest quality and want to apply your frontier research at a world level, the ERC Starting Grant is exactly for you.

ERC Consolidator Grant

Support for independent careers of outstanding young scientists in the phase of consolidation of their own research teams or programs.

Career stage: 5–15 years following PhD defence.

*Eligibility can be extended for maternity, paternity, or parental leave, illness, national service, clinical training, natural disasters, asylum, or for victims of gender-based violence or any other form of violence.

The **scientific excellence** of both the project and the scientist himself is demonstrated by:

- a breakthrough idea
- the excellent track record and the expansion of an existing research team or programme; submitted project must not be a simple continuation of previous studies or post-doctoral stays

Grant amount up to **€2 million for 5 years.**

+ Possible **additional funding** up to €1 million to cover further eligible costs (e.g. start-up costs, major equipment, access to large facilities, major experimental and field work costs). For PIs currently based in non-associated third countries relocating to the EU/associated country, the additional funding may be up to €2 million.

An ERC grant can cover up to 100% of the total eligible direct costs of the research, plus a contribution of 25% of the total eligible costs towards indirect costs.

Formal conditions

ERC grants are open to PIs of any nationality currently living anywhere in the world. The new Host Institution must be based in the EU or an associated country and must employ the PI for at least the duration of the project.

Time commitment:

- Minimum **40%** of working time to be spent on the ERC project
- Minimum **50%** of working time to be spent in an EU/associated country

How does the evaluation work?

The evaluation has **two steps**. You will know the result within about 10 months of submitting the application.

At **Step 1, Part I of the Scientific Proposal** (setting out the background, objectives, and overall research strategy), the **CV**, and the **Track Record** are assessed by the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A invited

*up to 44 proposals per panel are retained for Step 2

A not invited

PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call

B PI cannot apply to the following two calls

C PI cannot apply to the following three calls

At **Step 2**, the complete Research Proposal is assessed: **Part I**, the **CV**, the **Track Record** and **Part II of the Scientific Proposal** (focusing primarily on the implementation), and **Resources**. The Principal Investigator presents their proposal at an **interview** with the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A the project is recommended for funding

*whether it will be funded or not depend on the availability of sufficient funds

B the project is **not recommended for funding**; PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call

Why Apply for ERC CoG?

- financial independence
- prestige
- international visibility

If you can prove that your track record influences your field of science and want to apply your frontier research at a world-class level, the ERC Consolidator Grant is for you.

ERC Advanced Grant

Support for internationally recognized, independent experts who have already established themselves in the field and have demonstrably influenced it.

Designed for **PIs with a track record of significant research achievements.**

The **scientific excellence** of both the project and the scientist himself is demonstrated by:

- a breakthrough idea
- achieving leadership in terms of originality and significance of their research contributions

Grant amount up to **€2.5 million for 5 years.**

+ Possible **additional funding** up to €1 million to cover further eligible costs (e.g. start-up costs, major equipment, access to large facilities, major experimental and field work costs). For PIs currently based in non-associated third countries relocating to the EU/associated country, the additional funding may be up to €2 million.

An ERC grant can cover up to 100% of the total estimated eligible direct costs of the research, plus a contribution of 25% of the total eligible costs towards indirect costs.

Formal conditions

ERC grants are open to PIs of any nationality currently living anywhere in the world. The new Host Institution must be based in the EU or an associated country and must employ the PI for at least the duration of the project.

Time commitment:

- Minimum **30%** of working time to be spent on the ERC project
- Minimum **50%** of working time to be spent in an EU/associated country

How does the evaluation work?

The evaluation has **two steps**. You will know the result within about 10 months of submitting the application.

At **Step 1, Part I of the Scientific Proposal** (setting out the background, objectives, and overall research strategy), the **CV**, and the **Track Record** are assessed by the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A invited

*up to 44 proposals per panel are retained for Step 2

A not invited

PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call

B PI cannot apply to the following two calls

C PI cannot apply to the following three calls

At **Step 2**, the complete Research Proposal is assessed: **Part I**, the **CV**, the **Track Record** and **Part II of the Scientific Proposal** (focusing primarily on the implementation), and **Resources**.

The Principal Investigator presents their proposal at an **interview** with the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A the project is recommended for funding

*whether it will be funded or not depend on the availability of sufficient funds

B the project is **not recommended for funding**; PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call

Why Apply for ERC AdG?

- financial independence
- prestige

ERC grants enable PIs to create ideal conditions for concentrating work on a fundamental scientific problem with minimal bureaucratic burden.

ERC Plus Grant

The new ERC scheme, piloted under the **2026 and 2027 Work Program**.

This super grant supports outstanding PIs who address a major scientific challenge. Applications should be for projects that could not be carried out with a regular ERC scheme.

Designed for **PIs at all career stages who have an outstanding record of scientific achievement at the forefront of their field.**

Only some **30 ERC Plus Grants can be awarded** per year. This very high level of competitiveness should be taken into account when considering submission.

*Comparison: In the other ERC programs—Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced—approximately a 1000 applications are typically funded in total.

Grant amount up to **€7 million for 4-7 years.**

*no possibility to request additional funding

An ERC grant can cover up to 100% of the total estimated eligible direct costs of the research, plus a contribution of 25% of the total eligible costs towards indirect costs.

Formal conditions

ERC grants are open to PIs of any nationality currently living anywhere in the world. The new Host Institution must be based in the EU or an associated country and must employ the PI for at least the duration of the project.

Time commitment:

- Minimum **30%** of working time to be spent on the ERC project
- Minimum **50%** of working time to be spent in an EU/associated country

NEW SCHEME

2026 & 2027

How does the evaluation work?

The evaluation has **two steps**.

At **Step 1, Part I of the Scientific Proposal** (setting out the background, objectives, and overall research strategy), the **CV**, the **Track Record** and the **Statement of Vision** (explanation of how proposed research will achieve more than would be possible with a regular ERC grant) are assessed by the evaluation panel.

*Greater emphasis will be placed on CV and past achievements to ensure that truly outstanding researchers are supported.

Evaluation results:

Retained

Sufficient quality to pass to Step 2.

*no capacity limit for Step 2

Not retained

Not sufficient quality to pass to Step 2, and PI cannot apply to the following ERC Plus call 2027.

At **Step 2**, the complete Research Proposal is assessed: **Part I**, the **CV**, the **Track Record**, the **Statement of Vision** and **Part II of the Scientific Proposal** (focusing primarily on the implementation), and **Resources**.

The Principal Investigator presents their proposal at an **interview** with the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A the project is recommended for funding

*only some 30 proposals can be awarded per year

B the project is **not recommended for funding**

ERC Synergy Grant

Support for ambitious ideas that cannot be addressed by individual PIs alone and requires a unique combination of expertise, resources, equipment, and more.

Designed for a group of **2–4 PIs**.

The **scientific excellence** of both the project and the scientists themselves is demonstrated by:

- an idea capable of pushing the boundaries of contemporary knowledge
- each PI must be at the level of an individual ERC applicant

Grant amount up to **€10 million for 6 years.**

+ Possible **additional funding** up to €4 million to cover further eligible costs (e.g. start-up costs, major equipment, access to large facilities, major experimental and field work costs).

An ERC grant can cover up to 100% of the total eligible direct costs of the research, plus a contribution of 25% of the total eligible costs towards indirect costs.

Formal conditions

ERC grants are open to PIs of any nationality currently living anywhere in the world. A maximum of one Host Institution may be located outside the EU or an associated country (AC), but all other institutions must be located in the EU/AC. The Host Institution must employ the PI for at least the duration of the project.

Time commitment:

- Minimum **30%** of working time to be spent on the ERC project
- Minimum **50%** of working time to be spent in an EU/AC

How does the evaluation work?

The evaluation has **three steps**. You will know the result within about 10 months of submitting the application.

At **Step 1, Part I of the Scientific Proposal** (setting out the background, objectives, and overall research strategy), the **CV**, and the **Track Record** are assessed by the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A invited

*proposals are retained for Step 2 based on a budgetary cut-off level of up to seven times the panel's indicative budget

A not invited

PIs may resubmit the modified application in the following call

B PIs cannot apply to the following two Synergy calls

C PIs cannot apply to the following three Synergy calls

At **Step 2**, the complete Research Proposal is assessed: **Part I**, the **CV**, the **Track Record** and **Part II of the Scientific Proposal** (focusing primarily on the implementation), and **Resources**.

Evaluation results:

A sufficient quality to pass to Step 3

*proposals are retained for Step 3 based on a budgetary cut-off level of up to three times the panel's indicative budget

B not sufficient quality to pass to Step 3; PIs may resubmit the modified application in the following call

At **Step 3**, Principal Investigators presents their proposal at an **interview** with the evaluation panel.

Evaluation results:

A the project is recommended for funding

*whether it will be funded or not depend on the availability of sufficient funds

B the project is **not recommended for funding**; PI may resubmit the modified application in the following call