



# ERC Grant Schemes

## Guide for Applicants for the

### Synergy Grant 2013 Call

10 October 2012

The Guide is published by the ERC Scientific Council on <http://erc.europa.eu>

It can also be downloaded from the Participant Portal on  
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/>



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
FP7 Specific Programme  
IDEAS



## **Purpose of the Guide**

This guide provides practical information to potential applicants in preparing and submitting an application for an ERC Synergy Grant. In addition, it provides a general overview on the ERC peer review evaluation process and presents the main features of the ERC grant agreement and the management of ERC grants.

The ERC Guide for Applicants for the Synergy Grant call is divided into three parts:

- 1: Applying for an ERC Synergy Grant
- 2: Managing ERC grants
- 3: Annexes

For detailed information on the ERC peer review evaluation process, the ERC grant agreement and the management of ERC grants, the following document is available on the ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu/document-library>:

- Guide for ERC Peer Reviewers – applicable to Synergy Grants: This guide provides practical information to peer reviewers as well as detailed information on the peer review evaluation and project selection process.
- ERC Model Grant Agreement: The grant agreement, which will be concluded between the ERC and the host institution of the Corresponding Principal Investigator<sup>1</sup> (the Corresponding HI<sup>2</sup>)<sup>3</sup>. For general information on the Model Grant Agreement, please see the Guide to Financial Issues relating to FP7 Indirect Actions<sup>4</sup>.

The present guide is based on the legal documents setting the rules and conditions for the ERC grant schemes, in particular the Ideas Work Programme, the ERC rules for the submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the 'Ideas' Specific Programme, and the ERC Model Grant Agreement. This guide does not supersede the afore-mentioned documents, which are legally binding. Should there be any discrepancy between the aforementioned legal documents and this guide, then the former will prevail. The European Commission, the ERC Executive Agency or any person or body acting on their behalf cannot be held responsible for the use made of the guide.

For further information, please go to the website at <http://erc.europa.eu/contact-us>

**Note:** As with other parts of the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme, National Contact Points (ERC NCPs) have been set up across Europe<sup>5</sup> by the national governments to provide information and personalised support to ERC applicants in their native language. The mission of the ERC NCPs is to raise awareness, inform and advise on ERC funding opportunities as well as to support potential applicants in the preparation, submission and follow-up of ERC grant applications. For details on the ERC NCP in your country please consult the ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu/ncp>

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<sup>1</sup> In the case where the PIs are not engaged by the same host institution of the Corresponding PI, the other host institutions of the other PIs shall be beneficiaries to the grant agreement.

<sup>2</sup> Any referral in this Guide to 'Corresponding Host Institution' or 'Corresponding HI' means the host institution of the Corresponding PI and any referral to 'host institutions' means the host institutions of the group of PIs where more than one host institution is associated with the proposal or project.

<sup>3</sup> In case of more than one host institution, the other host institution(s) will be requested to undertake the same obligations through a supplementary agreement signed with their respective PI(s).

<sup>4</sup> <http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/guide%20to%20financial%20issues.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some third countries also provide this service.

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## **The European Research Council**

The European Research Council (ERC) is a European funding initiative, designed to support the best scientists, engineers and scholars in Europe.

The ERC's mandate is to encourage the highest quality research in Europe through competitive funding and to support investigator-initiated frontier research across all fields of research, on the basis of scientific excellence.

Four types of ERC grants are currently available to support researchers in carrying out frontier research projects: ERC Starting Grant, ERC Consolidator Grant, ERC Advanced Grant and ERC Synergy Grant. In addition, ERC grant holders can apply for additional funding through a Coordination and Support Action ("Proof of Concept") to establish the innovation potential of ideas arising from their ERC-funded frontier research projects.

Grants are awarded and managed according to simple procedures that maintain the focus on excellence, encourage creativity and combine flexibility with accountability.

The ERC, which is established by the European Commission and funded through the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme with a budget of EUR 7.51 bn for 7 years (FP7, 2007-2013), complements other funding schemes in Europe, such as those of research funding agencies operating at the national level and those within the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme.

The ERC consists of a Scientific Council and an Executive Agency. It operates under conditions of autonomy and integrity, guaranteed by the European Commission, to which it is accountable.

### **The role of the ERC Scientific Council**

The Scientific Council establishes the overall scientific strategy of the ERC, including the annual Work Programme where the calls for proposals and the corresponding funding rules and selection criteria are defined. It also oversees the ERC's scientific management and the implementation of the Work Programme, including the peer review and project selection processes and the selection of peer reviewers.

### **The ERC Executive Agency**

The ERC Executive Agency implements the FP7 Specific Programme 'Ideas' and manages ERC operations. It executes the annual Work Programme as established by the Scientific Council, implements calls for proposals and organises peer review evaluation in accordance with methodologies designed by the Scientific Council, and establishes and manages grant agreements. Additionally, it provides information and support to applicants and grant holders.

# **1 : Applying for an ERC Synergy Grant**

## 1.1 About the ERC Synergy Grant funding scheme

Building on the success of its support for individual Principal Investigators (PIs), the ERC has extended its portfolio of instruments to cover small group-scale research efforts in EU Member States<sup>6</sup> and Associated Countries<sup>7</sup>. ERC Synergy Grants are intended to enable a small group of PIs and their teams to bring together complementary skills, knowledge, and resources in new ways, in order to jointly address a research problem.

The aim is to promote substantial advances in the frontiers of knowledge, and to encourage new productive lines of enquiry and new methods and techniques, including unconventional approaches and investigations at the interface between established disciplines.

The peer review evaluation will therefore look for proposals that demonstrate the synergies, complementarities and added value that could lead to **breakthroughs that would not be possible by the individual PIs working alone**.

The grant can be up to a maximum of EUR 15 000 000 for a period up to six years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration).

The guiding principles of the ERC Synergy Grant are highlighted in Box 1

### Box 1: Guiding principles of the ERC Synergy Grant

- Scientific excellence is the sole selection criterion.
- Projects in all fields of research are eligible for funding<sup>8</sup>.
- A small group of PIs (2-4) with a designated Corresponding PI is supported.
- Grants are awarded to the host institution that engages the Corresponding PI<sup>2</sup>.
- The host institution(s) guarantee(s) the PIs' independence and provide(s) the research environment to carry out the project and manage the funding.

### 1.1.1 What are the distinctive features of an ERC Synergy Grant?

**Applications can be made in any field of research** with an emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering<sup>8</sup>. In particular, proposals of an interdisciplinary nature which cross the boundaries between different fields of research, pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions are encouraged.

New types of joint effort may be needed perhaps built around specialized infrastructure, or that allow for new combinations of skills and disciplines, or the bringing together of researchers from

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<sup>6</sup> The EU Member States are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom.

<sup>7</sup> The Associated Countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Faroe Islands, FYR Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.

<sup>8</sup> Research proposals within the scope of Annex I of the EURATOM Treaty directed toward nuclear energy applications should be submitted to relevant calls under the Seventh EURATOM Research Framework Programme (this annex is available at: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12006A/12006A\\_AN1.htm](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12006A/12006A_AN1.htm)).

different institutions, sectors or countries. It is therefore expected that the organization of such activities will vary widely, depending on the particular needs of the research.

Some frontier research activities and methodologies may have ethical implications or may raise questions which will require sound ethical assessment in order to ensure that research supported by an ERC grant respects the fundamental ethical principles (see Annex 2). Additionally, as established in the ERC rules for the submission of proposals<sup>9</sup>, ERC actions addressing security-sensitive subjects need to be identified and scrutinised according to the applicable legislation (see Annex 5).

Cases of scientific misconduct such as plagiarism and fabrication or misrepresentation of data will be considered as breaches of fundamental ethical principles and the proposals concerned may be excluded in accordance with Article 15.2 of the FP7 Rules for participation.

As in every ERC frontier research call, the funding decision is based on the sole criterion of scientific excellence. However, in the ERC Synergy Grant scientific excellence takes on an additional meaning: its intrinsic synergetic effect. It might come with novel multi- or trans-disciplinary approaches or with the boldness of combining knowledge and skills in a single discipline or research field. True to its bottom-up approach the Scientific Council remains open to what applicants choose as the best ways of working together. Ultimately, each proposal must demonstrate that its objectives can only be achieved through the specific combination of knowledge and skills brought together by the participating PIs. In other words, each proposal must make clear its synergetic effect.

The ERC has a unique mission to fund frontier research and individual PIs on the basis of excellence only. It is therefore of utmost importance not to confuse the term “synergy” and its requirements with the concepts and the terminology of other parts of the Framework Programme. “Synergy” must not be perceived as similar to mere cooperation or networking. Instead, it aims for a unique combination of knowledge and skills in tackling those research problems that require precisely this novel and unique combination.

As is the case with any other frontier research funded by the ERC, research proposals are expected to be risky. It remains important, however, that the risk and how it will be managed is well thought through and explained in the proposal.

Another distinct feature of the ERC Synergy Grant is that an application is expected to explain its feasibility and the appropriateness of the “core time” in relation to the research agenda set out in the individual proposal. When defining the principles underlying the ERC Synergy Grant scheme, the Scientific Council deliberately abstained of defining this requirement. It refers to the expectation that applicants will come up with their own ideas on how to spend time together in ways that best suit the aims and goals of their research. This may comprise innovative working arrangements or other ways which will enhance the ability to do outstanding and exceptional work together.

The peer reviewers are asked to look at these distinct features – synergy, core time, risk – when assessing the excellence of the proposal.

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<sup>9</sup> See Annex D: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:327:0051:0070:EN:PDF>

## 1.1.2 Who can apply for an ERC Synergy Grant?

### Box 2: ERC Synergy Grant - Eligible Principal Investigators (PIs)

- PIs applying for an ERC Synergy Grant should be active and innovative researchers who combine their skills and disciplines in new ways for the proposed frontier research. No specific eligibility criteria with respect to their academic requirements are foreseen.
- The ERC Synergy Grant is open to researchers of any age or nationality residing in any country in the world at the time of their application.
- PIs have to establish and conduct their research activity in a Member State or Associated Country<sup>6,7</sup>.

### Restrictions on Applications

As established in the Ideas Work Programme 2013, the following application rules<sup>10</sup> apply for the ERC Synergy Grant:

- A Principal Investigator may submit only one proposal to the ERC for ERC frontier research grant calls made under the same Work Programme<sup>11</sup>;
- A Principal Investigator who has submitted an eligible proposal to a 2012 ERC call may not apply to a 2013 ERC call for any ERC frontier research grant if the proposal was evaluated as of insufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation (category C – see section 8.5 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013). As an exception to this rule, a Principal Investigator who has submitted an eligible proposal to the 2012 Synergy Grant call may apply to the 2013 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant calls (but not Synergy Grant) even if the proposal was evaluated as of insufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation (category C– see section 8.5 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013);
- A Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator<sup>12</sup> may hold only one frontier research grant from the ERC at any one time;
- A Principal Investigator who holds an ERC frontier research grant cannot submit a proposal for another ERC Grant unless the existing grant expires no more than two years after the call deadline;
- A Principal Investigator who is a serving Panel Member for a 2013 ERC call or who served as a Panel Member for a 2011 ERC call may not apply to a 2013 ERC call for the same type of grant.

The year of an ERC call refers to the Ideas Work Programme under which the call was made and can be established by its call identifier. A 2012 ERC call is therefore one that was made under the Ideas Work Programme 2012 and will have 2012 in the call identifier (for example ERC-2012-SyG).

For more information on the current restrictions on applications, please see the Ideas Work Programme 2013 - section 3.3.4.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Potential applicants must strictly observe these rules. Proposals which do not comply with these rules during the submission of a proposal may be ruled ineligible for the evaluation and will not be further reviewed.

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<sup>10</sup> Ineligible applications submitted to previous calls for proposals are not subject to the resubmission restrictions.

<sup>11</sup> Ineligible or withdrawn proposals do not count against this limit.

<sup>12</sup> Co-Investigator projects were supported under the Advanced Grant in Ideas Work Programmes from 2008 – 2011.



### 1.1.3 Who could be a competitive candidate for an ERC Synergy Grant?

Groups applying for the ERC Synergy Grant must be made up of a minimum of two and a maximum of four Principal Investigators (PIs) and, as necessary, their teams<sup>13</sup>. One of the PIs must be designated as the Corresponding Principal Investigator (Corresponding PI) as 'primus inter pares'.

Each of the PIs applying for the ERC Synergy Grant are expected to be active researchers and must present an early achievement track-record or 10-year track-record whichever is most appropriate for their career stage (see section 1.2.2.3). There is little prospect of an application succeeding in the absence of such a record.

It is expected that in most cases ERC Synergy groups will be interdisciplinary, often using multidisciplinary approaches; the description of the innovative ways of working together will be evaluated by peer reviewers. The applicants need not be based in the same Host Institution; however, it is expected that members of ERC Synergy groups will be physically located in the same place to ensure face to face contact for significant periods of 'core time' over the course of the project. The concept of 'core time' is left open, as is the concept of physical location in the same place, which could mean location in the same university or in the same city or area. As stated in the Ideas Work Programme, any group which can demonstrate the synergies, complementarities and added value that will make the whole greater than the sum of the parts in order to promote substantial advances in the frontiers of knowledge will be considered. This means that ERC Synergy groups may be of either national or trans-national character.

Neither the Corresponding PI nor the other PIs necessarily need to be employed by the Corresponding Host Institution or by the additional participating host institution(s) at the time of submission of the proposal. If not already employed by the Corresponding Host Institution or the additional participating host institution(s) in the case of a multi-beneficiary grant agreement, the PIs must be engaged by their host institution(s) at least for the duration of the grant.

The composition of the individual research teams is flexible and may involve, for instance, senior researchers, postdocs, graduate students, PhD researchers and administrative assistants. Depending on the nature of a project these researchers can be from the PI's research group and/or from the same institution, or may be from other research institutions situated in the same country or may be hosted by other institutions that can be located in any country, including countries other than EU Member States and Associated Countries. Team members can be of any age, nationality and country of residence. Team members operate under the leadership of the PIs. The legal entities hosting/engaging these additional team members shall also become beneficiaries (i.e. additional participating beneficiaries of a multi-beneficiary grant agreement) in case funding is requested for their participation.

Each of the PIs must be strongly committed to the project and **should devote at least 30% of their total working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of their total working time in Europe at the host institution(s)** (in an EU Member State or Associated Country)<sup>14</sup>. With the support of the host institution(s), successful PIs will be expected to lead their teams and be fully engaged in the running of the ERC grant.

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<sup>13</sup> In certain fields, research is often performed individually, aside from guiding research students. The term 'team' is therefore used in the broadest sense. It includes cases where an individual works independently.

<sup>14</sup> A specification about each PI's commitment should be provided in part B1 and part B2.

### 1.1.4 What is the level of funding of an ERC Synergy Grant?

As indicated in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 – section 7.3, the grant can be up to a maximum of EUR 15 000 000 for a period of up to six years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration).

The total requested grant should reflect a **realistic estimation of the project needs and should not be unnecessarily inflated to reach the maximum grant level**. The evaluation panels will review the requested grant and recommend the total amount to be granted on the basis of the needs of the project, using rounded figures. The panels may also suggest a modification to the indicative budgetary breakdown in the application but the PIs have the freedom to re-budget during the course of the project.

The European Union financial contribution will take the form of the reimbursement of up to 100% of the total eligible and approved direct costs and of flat-rate financing of indirect costs on the basis of 20% of the total eligible direct costs<sup>15</sup>. The costs which can be covered by an ERC grant are described in Box 3. Please note that the above-mentioned limits include indirect costs. The level of the awarded grant represents a maximum overall figure – the final amount to be paid must be justified on the basis of the costs actually incurred for the project<sup>16</sup>.

**Project costs covered by third parties** are allowed but **need to be declared**, and will be deducted from the total of eligible costs covered by the ERC grant. Nevertheless, ERC grants are expected to be significant and cover a major part of the project and its costs. Thus, ERC funding **aims neither at topping up the funding of running projects, nor providing a means for co-funding**. Applicants should specify any current research grants and their subject in the 'funding ID' included in part B2 section b.

The actual project costs claimed should be presented in line with the usual management practices and accounting rules of the Corresponding Host Institution and the other additional host institution(s).

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<sup>15</sup> Excluding the direct costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the host institution.

<sup>16</sup> Commission Decision C(2009)1942 of 23 March 2009 on the use of flat rates to cover subsistence costs incurred by beneficiaries during travel carried out within grants for indirect actions shall apply to grants awarded under this work programme.

### Box 3: Eligible and non-eligible direct and indirect costs

**Direct eligible costs** are those which support all the research, management, training and dissemination activities necessary for the project, such as:

- Personnel Costs;
- Equipment Costs;
- Consumables;
- Travel and Subsistence Costs;
- Publication Costs (page charges and related fees for publication of results).

**Indirect eligible costs** are those which cannot be identified as directly attributable to the project, but which are incurred in direct relationship with the project's direct eligible costs, such as:

- Costs related to general administration and management;
- Costs of office or laboratory space, including rent or depreciation of buildings and equipment, and related expenditure such as water, heating, electricity;
- Maintenance, insurance and safety costs;
- Communication expenses, network connection charges, postal charges and office supplies;
- Common office equipment such as PCs, laptops, office software;
- Miscellaneous recurring consumables.

**Non-eligible costs** cannot be reimbursed through the ERC grant, in particular:

- Any identifiable indirect taxes, including VAT or duties;
- Interest owed;
- Provisions for possible future losses or charges;
- Exchange losses;
- Costs declared, incurred or reimbursed in respect of another Community project;
- Costs related to return on capital;
- Debt and debt service charges;
- Excessive or reckless expenditure.

More detailed information and documentation is provided in the Guide to Financial Issues relating to FP7 Indirect Actions:

<http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/quide%20to%20financial%20issues.pdf>

## 1.1.5 Where can the Principal Investigators run an ERC-funded research activity?

It is expected that the research project will be implemented within the territory of a Member State or an Associated Country. This does not exclude field-work or other research activities in cases where these must necessarily be conducted outside EU Member States or Associated Countries in order to achieve the scientific objectives of the project or activity.

The ERC Synergy grant is awarded to the Corresponding Host Institution (Corresponding HI) that engages and hosts the Corresponding PI for at least the duration of the grant. The Corresponding HI must provide a commitment letter offering appropriate conditions for the Corresponding PI and the other PI(s) supported by it to independently direct the proposed research and manage the project's funding for its duration (see Annex 4). These conditions, including the '*portability*' of the project, are the subject of an agreement between the Corresponding PI and the Corresponding HI (Supplementary Agreement) and are described in the ERC Model Grant Agreement<sup>17</sup>. The ERC Grant Agreement itself will be concluded between the ERCEA and the Corresponding HI, the latter becoming hereby the principal beneficiary of the ERC grant.

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<sup>17</sup> Available on the ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu/document-library>.

Additional Principal Investigators participating in an ERC Synergy group may also be hosted by additional legal entities which will be eligible for funding, but these must also be established in a Member State or an Associated Country or be an International European Interest Organisation<sup>18</sup> or the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.

In case of more than one host institution, the Corresponding HI will be the principal beneficiary and the other host institution(s) of the other PI(s) will be beneficiary(ies) upon the definitions of the ERC Model Grant Agreement. In such a case, the principal beneficiary and the other beneficiary(ies) shall make appropriate internal arrangements consistent with the provisions of the grant agreement to ensure the efficient implementation of the project.

Any type of legal entity, public or private, including universities, research organisations and undertakings can host a Principal Investigator and his/her team as long as the principles indicated below are respected and the Principal Investigator and his/her activity are not constrained by the research strategy of the entity. The ERC welcomes applications from Principal Investigators hosted by private commercial research centres, including industrial laboratories.

It is a condition for all ERC funding that the Corresponding HI commits to the following **conditions of independence**<sup>19</sup>, ensuring that the Corresponding PI and each of the PIs it engages may:

- **apply for funding independently;**
- **manage his/her part of the research and the funding for the project and make appropriate related resource allocation decisions;**
- **publish independently as senior author and include as co-authors only those who have contributed substantially to the reported work;**
- **supervise team members, including research students, doctoral students or others;**
- **have access to reasonable space and facilities for conducting the research.**

The confirmation of the Corresponding HI of the association with and its support to the group's project, indicating each PI belonging to the group, does not commit the Corresponding HI to engage and guarantee contractual conditions to those PIs who are engaged by other host institutions<sup>20</sup>.

#### *Registration of legal entities in the Commission's Early Warning System (EWS) and Central Exclusion Database (CED)*

To protect the EU's financial interests, the Commission uses an internal information tool, the Early Warning System (EWS) to flag identified risks related to beneficiaries of centrally managed contracts and grants. Through systematic registration of financial and other risks the

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<sup>18</sup> Such as: CERN, EMBL, ESA, ESO, ESRF, ILL.

<sup>19</sup> Note that the conditions of independence provided to the PI and his/her team are consistent with 'The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers', C(2005)576, 11.03.2005.

<sup>20</sup> In case of more than one host institution, the other host institution(s) will be requested to undertake the same obligations through a supplementary agreement signed with their respective PI(s).

EWS enables the Commission services to take the necessary precautionary measures to ensure a sound financial management<sup>21</sup>.

EWS registrations are not publicly disclosed. However, registrations will be transferred to the Central Exclusion Database (CED) if they relate to entities that have been excluded from EU funding because they are insolvent or have been convicted of a serious professional misconduct or criminal offence detrimental to EU financial interests. The data in CED are available to **all public authorities implementing EU funds**, i.e. European institutions, national agencies or authorities in Member States, and, subject to conditions for personal data protection, to third countries and international organisations.

The Work Programme informs the applicant that the details of their organisation(s) (or those of a person who has powers of representation, decision-making or control over it) may be registered in the EWS and the CED and be shared with public authorities as described in the relevant legal texts<sup>22</sup>. More information on the EWS and CED can be found here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

## 1.2 Preparing and submitting an ERC Synergy Grant application<sup>23</sup>

An ERC Synergy Grant application should be submitted by the Corresponding PI as 'primus inter pares' on behalf of the group. Together all the PIs have scientific responsibility for the group's project on behalf of the Corresponding Host Institution which is the applicant legal entity.

Grant applications are assessed by peer review evaluation panels (ERC panels), which may be supported by additional independent experts. These ERC panels assess, score and rank the proposals. The key features of the ERC Grant application procedure are highlighted in Box 4.

### Box 4: Key features of the ERC grant application procedure

- Applications should be submitted by the Corresponding PI in conjunction with and on behalf of the group and her/his host institution (the applicant legal entity).
- A proposal consists of **administrative forms (part A), a research proposal (part B) and supporting documentation**.
- Proposal formats and page numbers are strictly limited.
- Submission of all the documents is accepted only via the web-based **Participant Portal Submission System (PPSS)**. The application procedure consists of a **single submission stage**.
- Strict rules apply for re-applications and multiple applications that must be checked before applying for a grant.

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<sup>21</sup> The EWS covers situations such as significantly overdue recovery orders, judicial proceedings pending for serious administrative errors/fraud, findings of serious administrative errors/fraud, legal situations which exclude the beneficiary from funding.

<sup>22</sup> The basis for registrations in EWS and CED is laid out in:

- the Commission Decision of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 125), and  
- the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1302/2008 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12).

<sup>23</sup> The working language of the ERC evaluation panels is English. Please note that accordingly the panel reports will be available in English only. If the proposal is not in English, a translation of the full proposal would be of assistance to the experts. An English translation of the abstract must be included in the proposal.

## 1.2.1 When are the grant applications submitted?

ERC grant applications can be submitted only in response to a '**call for proposals**'. Calls announced in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 are published on the ERC website<sup>24</sup>, the Participant Portal<sup>25</sup> and in the Official Journal of the European Union<sup>26</sup>.

The provisional timing of these calls for proposals is indicated in the table below.

### ERC Synergy Grant Call Provisional Schedule – 2013

	Call open	Call Deadline	Evaluation
ERC-2013-SyG	10 October 2012	10 January 2013	Spring 2013 - Autumn 2013

The foreseen electronic proposal submission deadline (single submission of full proposals) is:

**10 January 2013 17.00.00 (Brussels local time)**

Please note that this foreseen submission deadline may be modified after the publication of the call. You are therefore invited to periodically consult the ERC website where any modifications of the submission deadline are indicated.

## 1.2.2 How are the grant applications completed?

### 1.2.2.1 Overview of the grant application

A complete ERC Synergy Grant application involves the following three separate components:

- **The administrative forms (part A)** : on-line forms A1, A2, A3,
- **The research proposal (part B)**
  - **Part B1:**
    - Sections a, b, c: The scientific proposal.
    - Section d: Ethical and security issues. The ethical issues table (and, when necessary, the explanatory annexes on ethical and security-sensitive issues and how they will be treated).
  - **Part B2:**
    - Section a: The Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal.
    - Sections b, c: The Principal Investigators. The 'funding ID' should be specified (separately for each PI).
- **The supporting documentation**
  - Supporting statement from the Corresponding Host Institution (Annex 4).
  - If applicable, ethical and/or security-sensitive issue documentation. (Annex 2 and Annex 5).

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<sup>24</sup> <http://erc.europa.eu/>

<sup>25</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/appmanager/participants/portal>

<sup>26</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOIndex.do?ihmlang=en>

### 1.2.2.2 Instructions for completing 'Part A' of the proposal

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the web-based Participant Portal Submission System (PPSS) (see section 1.2.4 of this guide).

#### **A Forms:**

In the A forms, the PIs will be asked for administrative data that will be used in the evaluation and further processing of the proposal. The A forms are an integral part of the proposal.

- Form A1 concerns information about the research proposal and the PIs, including a non confidential abstract of the proposal and the chosen ERC keywords for evaluation. The Corresponding PI must indicate a minimum of four ERC keywords to describe the research field(s) of the proposal (see Annex 1). **There is no hierarchical ordering of the selected keywords and they are not linked to predefined panels i.e. keyword 1 is equally weighted with keywords 2, 3 and 4. The keywords are used to best allocate proposals to experts.**
- It is the Corresponding PI's responsibility to choose the most relevant free keywords for the evaluation of the proposed research.
- Form A2 concerns information about the host institution(s) and other participants, when applicable<sup>27</sup>.
- Subcontractors are not required to fill in form A2 and should not be listed separately in form A3.
- Form A3 concerns information about the estimated project costs and grant required.

**Please ensure that all costs are given in whole Euros (integer), not thousands of Euros, and must exclude value added tax (VAT).**

Please ensure that the amount given in the financial form A3 corresponds precisely to the information provided in the research proposal text (part B1, section c: resources). In case of discrepancy, the A3 data will prevail.

#### **Participant Identification Code (PIC):**

Those who are familiar with the proposal submission and grant preparation forms know that, in the past, participants had to provide their legal and financial information to the European Commission every time they submitted a proposal or negotiated a contract. To eliminate these redundant requests for information, applicants are invited to register their organisational data once in the **Unique Registration Facility (URF)**, which is hosted in the [Participant Portal](#)<sup>28</sup>. This self-registration will lead to a request by the European Commission for the organisation to provide supporting documents and to nominate a Legal Entity Authorised Representative (LEAR).

The LEAR is a person nominated in each legal entity participating in FP7. This person is the ERC Executive Agency's contact for all questions on legal status. The LEAR has access to the online database of legal entities with a possibility to view the data stored on their entity and to initiate updates and corrections to these data. After the validation of the entity has been finalised, the contact person/authorised representative named in the URF receives the PIC number. Once the LEAR is validated, he/she manages the modifications of the entity-related information in the URF and distributes the PIC number within the organisation, which can be used in all proposal submissions and negotiations.

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<sup>27</sup> The filling of additional A2 forms, corresponding to other institutions of other PIs and/or team members ('additional participants'), may be necessary.

<sup>28</sup> For participants not yet having a Participant Identification Code (PIC), i.e. not yet being registered and validated in the Commission's Unique Registration Facility (URF) their existence as legal entities and their legal status will have to be validated before a grant agreement can be signed.

Applicants who think their organisation already has registered in URF and wish to retrieve the PIC, should query the PIC database online by using the PIC search functionality<sup>29</sup>. Please visit the '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)' of the URF page for any additional general information. Applicant legal entities possessing a Participant Identification Code (PIC) can use this number to identify themselves in the Participant Portal Submission System (PPSS).

On entering the PIC, some parts of the A forms will be filled in automatically. Please note that in the cases where a PIC is not available it will always be possible to submit a proposal by entering the organisation details manually. However, the use of PICs will lead to a more efficient handling of the proposal.

### **Reviewer Exclusion:**

As established in the ERC Rules for the submission of proposals<sup>30</sup>, applicants submitting proposals may request that up to three specific persons are excluded as peer reviewers in the evaluation of their proposal. Such a request is done at the time proposal submission in the Part A (the administrative forms). Applicants will have to specify one of the following reasons:

1. Direct Scientific Rivalry;
2. Professional Hostility;
3. Similar situation which would impair or put in doubt the objectivity of the potential evaluator.

If the person(s) identified is an independent expert participating in the Synergy Grant 2013 evaluation, he/she may be excluded from the evaluation of the proposal as long as ERCEA remains in the position to have the proposal evaluated.

Applicants need to provide the following data about the persons which they intend to exclude from the evaluation:

- Name of the expert(s);
- Institution/employer, city and country;
- Web page, if possible.

Such a request will be treated confidentially by the authorised staff of ERCEA and the concerned Panel Chair. If the excluded expert is a member of a panel he/she will be informed about the request concerning him/her<sup>31</sup>.

### **Preparing the Proposal:**

**The following notes are for information only. They should assist applicants in completing the A forms of their proposal. Online guidance will also be available. The precise questions and options presented on PPSS may differ slightly from these below.**

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<sup>29</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations>

<sup>30</sup> Commission Decision 2010/767/EU of 9 December 2010 amending Decision C(2007) 2286 on the adoption of ERC rules for the submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures for indirect actions under the Ideas Specific Programme of the Seventh Framework Programme (2007 to 2013), OJ L 327, 11.12.2010, p. 51-70.

<sup>31</sup> Please note that the request for exclusion is accepted by ERCEA as long as the proposal could still be evaluated by other reviewers having the necessary expertise. Additionally, in application of the existing regulation (Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 articles 13 and 14, OJ L8 of 12.1.2011, p. 10.) an excluded expert may be granted access to all data linked to his/her exclusion in order to provide information which could rectify an inaccurate statement made by the applicant (Please refer to the Specific Privacy Statement provided on the ERCEA website:

<http://erc.europa.eu/documents/erc-specific-privacy-statement-exclusion-independent-experts-applicants>).



Please consult the Participant Portal call page regularly for updated information or contact the PPSS helpdesk by email ([DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu)) or by phone (+32 (2) 29 92222).

### **Form A1: Proposal and PI information**

<b>Proposal Number</b>	[pre-filled by the system]
<b>Proposal Acronym</b>	<p>The short title or acronym will be used to identify your proposal efficiently in this call. It should be of <u>no more than 20 characters</u> (use standard alphabet and numbers only; no spaces, symbols or special characters please).</p> <p>The same acronym should appear on each page of the research proposal.</p>

### **General Information on the Proposal**

<b>Type of project</b>	[pre-filled] Support for Frontier Research – ERC Synergy Grant
<b>Call identifier</b>	[pre-filled] The call identifier is the reference number given in the call or part of the call you are applying for, as indicated in the publication of the call in the Participant Portal call page. A call identifier looks like this: <i>ERC-2013-SyG</i> .
<b>Topic Code</b>	[pre-filled] ERC Synergy Grant
<b>Proposal Title (max 180 char. - Non Confidential Information)</b>	<p>The title should be <u>no longer than 180 characters</u> and should be understandable to the non-specialist in your field.</p> <p><b>In order to best review your application, your agreement is needed below so that this non-confidential title can be used when contacting potential external experts.</b></p>
<b>Duration in months</b>	The estimated duration of the project in full months.
<b>ERC Keyword 1 , 2, 3 and 4</b>	<p>[drop-down menu] Please choose a minimum of 4 keywords that best characterise the research area of your proposal.</p> <p><b>Note that the keywords are neither hierarchical nor linked to predefined panels. They are used to allocate proposals to experts.</b></p> <p>The full list of ERC keywords is in Annex 1 of this ERC Guide for Applicants for the Synergy Grant 2013 Call.</p>
<b>ERC Keywords 5-6</b>	<p>[drop-down menu] You can select additional ERC keywords. Keywords 5-6 are <u>optional</u>.</p> <p><b>Note that the keywords are neither hierarchical nor linked to predefined panels. They are used to allocate proposals to experts.</b></p>
<b>Free Keywords</b>	In addition, please enter free text keywords that you consider best characterise the scope of your research proposal. There is <u>a limit of 200 characters</u> .

<p><b>Abstract (min.100/ max. 2000 char.) (non confidential information)</b></p>	<p>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. <b>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 referees and/or inform the European Commission and/or the programme management committees and/or relevant national funding agencies<sup>32</sup> (provided you give permission to do so where requested below). It must therefore be short and precise and shall not contain confidential information.</b></p> <p>Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. <b>The abstract must be written in English<sup>23</sup></b>. There is <u>a limit of 2000 characters</u> (spaces and line breaks included).</p>
<p><b>In order to best review your application, do you agree that the above non confidential proposal title and abstract can be used, without disclosing your identity, when contacting potential reviewers?</b></p>	<p>[Yes/No] In the course of the evaluation procedure, the non-confidential title and abstract of your proposal may be communicated to potential external experts. Please specify your agreement or disagreement.</p>

**Reviewers requested to be excluded (up to three can be listed)**

You may indicate the names of up to three reviewers to be excluded from reviewing the proposal. If the person identified is an independent expert participating in the Synergy Grant 2013 evaluation, he/she may be excluded from the evaluation of this proposal. The names of the excluded experts may be provided to the Panel Chair and/or members of the relevant Panel(s). Please note that all fields have to be properly completed for the request to be considered.

Please indicate one of the following as the reason for exclusion - 1: Direct scientific rivalry; 2: Professional hostility; 3: Similar situation which would impair or put in doubt the objectivity of the potential evaluator.

Family Name	First Name(s)	Institution	City	Country	Webpage	Reason for exclusion

<p><b>How many principal investigators (including the corresponding principal investigator) intend to participate in this proposal?</b></p>	<p>[2/3/4] – Please indicate how many Principal Investigators (including the Corresponding PI) intend to participate in this proposal.</p>
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<sup>32</sup> The consent for disclosing to relevant national funding agencies the evaluation results of your proposal, in case it is recommended for funding, is requested.

### The Corresponding Principal Investigator

<b>Family Name</b>	Last name as given in Passport or Identity Card.
<b>Family Name at Birth</b>	Your last name at birth.
<b>First Name(s)</b>	Your first name(s) as given in Passport or Identity Card.
<b>Title</b>	Please choose one of the following: Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.
<b>Gender Female(F)/Male(M)</b>	This information is required for statistical and mailing purposes. Indicate F or M as appropriate.
<b>Nationality</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.
<b>Country of residence</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select the country in which you legally reside.
<b>Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY)</b>	Please specify your date of birth using the format (DD/MM/YYYY).
<b>Country of Birth</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select the country in which you were born.
<b>Town of Birth</b>	The town in which you were born. Insert the name of the town in English (please avoid any district codes).

<b>Contact Address</b>	
<b>Current Organisation name (if applicable)</b>	Name under which your organisation is registered.
<b>Current Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory name (if applicable)</b>	Name under which your Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered.
<b>Street name</b>	The street name.
<b>Number</b>	The street number.
<b>Town</b>	The town, in English (please avoid any district codes).
<b>Postal Code/Cedex</b>	The postal code.
<b>Country</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.
<b>Phone 1, 2</b>	Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> phone number is optional.
<b>Fax</b>	Please insert the full fax number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
<b>E-mail 1, 2</b>	Please insert your e-mail address. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> e-mail address is optional. Please note that e-mail 1 is the main channel of communication between the ERCEA and the PI, therefore please verify

	that the e-mail 1 provided is correct. Additionally, e-mail 1 will be used to generate the PI's ERC web account where official communication from ERCEA to the PI may be posted.
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<b>Academic Training</b>	
<b>Date of first PhD (or equivalent) award (DD/MM/YYYY)</b>	Please specify the date of award of your doctoral degree (or equivalent degree) using the format (DD/MM/YYYY).

**The Corresponding Host Institution**  
***(Please fill in the information for the Corresponding Host Institution)***

**(This is different from A2)**

<b>The Authorised Legal Representative of the Corresponding Host Institution</b>	
The person who can commit the Host Institution according to the requirements of the applicable ERC Model Grant Agreement (C(2007)1625, 16/04/2007).	
<b>Family Name</b>	Last name as given in the Passport or ID card.
<b>First Name(s)</b>	First name(s) as given in the Passport or ID card.
<b>Title</b>	Please choose one of the following: Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.
<b>Gender Female(F)/Male(M)</b>	This information is required for statistical and mailing purposes. Indicate F or M as appropriate.
<b>Position in the Host Institution</b>	e.g. senior administrative officer
<b>Contact address of the Corresponding Host Institution and administrative contact person for the ERCEA</b>	
<b>Institution legal name</b>	Name under which your institution is registered.
<b>Office/ Section/ Department/ Faculty</b>	The name under which the host Office/Section/Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered.
<b>Family Name (contact person)</b>	Last name as given in the Passport or ID card.
<b>First name(s) (contact person)</b>	First name.
<b>Street name</b>	The street name.
<b>Number</b>	The street number.
<b>Town</b>	The town, in English (please avoid any district codes).
<b>Postal Code/Cedex</b>	The postal code.
<b>Country</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.

<b>Phone 1, 2</b>	Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> phone number is optional.
<b>Fax</b>	Please insert the full fax number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
<b>E-mail 1, 2</b>	Please insert the e-mail address. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> e-mail address is optional. Please note that E-mail 1 is the main channel of communication between the ERCEA and the Corresponding Host Institution; therefore please verify the E-mail 1 provided is correct. Additionally, E-mail 1 will be used to generate the Host Institution's ERC web account where official communication from ERCEA to the Host Institution may be posted.

**Principal Investigator 2 (3 & 4 if applicable)**

***(Please fill in the information below for the PIs and their future host institutions)***

<b>Family Name</b>	Last name as given in Passport or Identity Card.
<b>Family Name at Birth</b>	Your last name at birth.
<b>First Name(s)</b>	Your first name(s) as given in Passport or Identity Card.
<b>Title</b>	Please choose one of the following: Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.
<b>Gender Female(F)/Male(M)</b>	This information is required for statistical and mailing purposes. Indicate F or M as appropriate.
<b>Nationality</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.
<b>Country of residence</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select the country in which you legally reside.
<b>Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY)</b>	Please specify your date of birth using the format (DD/MM/YYYY).
<b>Country of Birth</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select the country in which you were born.
<b>Town of Birth</b>	The town in which you were born. Insert the name of the town in English (please avoid any district codes).

<b>Contact Address</b>	
<b>Current Organisation name (if applicable)</b>	Name under which your organisation is registered.
<b>Current Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory name (if applicable)</b>	Name under which your Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered.
<b>Street name</b>	The street name.
<b>Number</b>	The street number.
<b>Town</b>	The town, in English (please avoid any district codes).

<b>Postal Code/Cedex</b>	The postal code.
<b>Country</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.
<b>Phone 1, 2</b>	Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> phone number is optional.
<b>Fax</b>	Please insert the full fax number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
<b>E-mail 1, 2</b>	Please insert your e-mail address. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> e-mail address is optional. Please note that e-mail 1 is the main channel of communication between the ERCEA and the PI, therefore please verify that the e-mail 1 provided is correct. Additionally, e-mail 1 will be used to generate the PI's ERC web account where official communication from ERCEA to the PI may be posted.

<b>Academic Training</b>	
<b>Date of first PhD (or equivalent) award (DD/MM/YYYY)</b>	Please specify the date of award of your doctoral degree (or equivalent degree) using the format (DD/MM/YYYY).

<b>Contact address of the future Host Institution and contact person for the ERC</b>	
<b>Future Organisation name (if applicable)</b>	Name under which the future organisation is registered
<b>Future Department/Faculty/Institute/ Laboratory name (if applicable)</b>	Name under which the future Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered.
<b>Family Name (contact person)</b>	Family name of the contact person
<b>First Name (contact person)</b>	First name of the contact person
<b>Town</b>	The town, in English (please avoid any district codes)
<b>Postal Code/Cedex</b>	The postal code
<b>Country</b>	[drop-down menu] Please select one Country
<b>Phone 1, 2</b>	Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The mobile phone number is optional.
<b>Fax</b>	Please insert the full fax number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
<b>E-mail 1, 2</b>	Please insert the e-mail address. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> e-mail address is optional. Please note that E-mail 1 is the main channel of communication between the ERCEA and the Host Institution; therefore please verify the E-mail 1 provided is correct. Additionally, E-mail 1 will be used to generate the Host Institution's ERC web account where official communication from ERCEA to the Host Institution may be posted.

<p><i>I acknowledge that I am aware of the eligibility requirements for applying for the ERC Synergy Grant as specified in the Ideas Work Programme 2013, and certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my application is in compliance with all these requirements. I understand that my proposal may be declared ineligible at any point during the evaluation or granting process if it is found not to be compliant with these eligibility criteria.</i></p>	<p>[Yes/No] As established in the Ideas Work Programme 2013, rules apply to reapplications for ERC Synergy Grants by researchers who apply as PIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Principal Investigator may submit only one proposal to the ERC for ERC frontier research grant calls made under the same Work Programme ;</li> <li>• A Principal Investigator who has submitted an eligible proposal to a 2012 ERC call may not apply to a 2013 ERC call for any ERC frontier research grant if the proposal was evaluated as of insufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation (category C – see section 8.5 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013).</li> <li>• A Principal Investigator who holds an ERC frontier research grant cannot submit a proposal for another ERC Grant unless the existing grant expires no more than two years after the call deadline;</li> <li>• A Principal Investigator who is a serving Panel Member for a 2013 ERC call or who served as a Panel Member for a 2011 ERC call may not apply to a 2013 ERC call for the same type of grant.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Some national and regional public research funding authorities run schemes to fund ERC applicants that score highly in the ERC's evaluation but which cannot be funded by the ERC due to its limited budget. In case your proposal could not be selected for funding by the ERC do you consent to allow the ERC to disclose the results of your evaluation (score and ranking range) together with your name, non-confidential proposal title and abstract, proposal acronym, host institution and your contact details to such authorities? This consent is entirely voluntary and refusal to give it will in no way affect the evaluation of your proposal.</i></p>	<p>[Yes/No] For communication purposes only, the ERCEA asks for your permission to publish your name, the proposal title and acronym, the Host Institution name and country should your proposal be above quality threshold at step 2 of the evaluation process. <u>The decision about this permission will not affect in any manner the outcome of the evaluation and will not be communicated to the reviewers.</u></p>
<p><i>The ERC is sometimes contacted for lists of ERC funded researchers by institutions that are awarding prizes to excellent researchers. Do you consent to allow the ERC to disclose your name, non-confidential proposal title and abstract, proposal acronym, host institution and your contact details to such institutions? This consent is entirely voluntary and refusal to give it will in no way affect the evaluation of your proposal.</i></p>	<p>[Yes/No] <u>The decision about this permission will not affect in any manner the outcome of the evaluation and will not be communicated to the reviewers.</u></p>
<p><i>The Scientific Council of the ERC has developed a monitoring and evaluation strategy in order to help it fulfil its obligations to establish the ERC's overall strategy and to monitor and quality control the programme's implementation from the scientific perspective. The Scientific Council has initiated a range of projects and studies to support this strategy as set out in the annual work programmes of the ERC, which can be found at <a href="http://erc.europa.eu/document-library">http://erc.europa.eu/document-library</a> (under the part 'Coordination and Support Actions'</i></p>	<p>[Yes/No] <u>The decision about this permission will not affect in any manner the outcome of the evaluation and will not be communicated to the reviewers.</u></p>

<p>from WPs 2007 - 2010 and 'Other Activities' from 2011 - 2013). Do you consent to allow the third parties commissioned to carry out these projects and studies to process the content of your proposal including your personal data? The privacy statement on grants (<a href="http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_sps_grants_02_2012_2.pdf">http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_sps_grants_02_2012_2.pdf</a>) explains further how your personal data is secured. This consent is entirely voluntary and refusal to give it will in no way affect the evaluation of your proposal.</p>	
<p><b>Does the proposal raise any ethical issues, as specified in the Ethical Issues Table at the end of Part B1</b></p>	<p>[Yes/No] The Ethical Issues Table has to be completed even if there are no issues (by confirming in the table that none of the ethical issues apply).</p> <p>If any of the issues in the Ethical Issues Table (in part B1) apply to your proposal, you <b>must</b> provide a brief explanation of the ethical issue involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately. An Ethical Issues Annex template is provided in PPSS together with the part B1 template.</p> <p>See Annex 2 of this guide.</p>

## Form A2: Organisation Information

One form for each participant (beneficiary). If there is more than one beneficiary – in the case of one or more PIs engaged by a host institution different to the Corresponding Host Institution and/or one or more team members engaged by organisation(s) other than the host institution(s), please generate and fill in another A2 form by adding another participant.

<p><b>Proposal Number</b></p>	<p>[pre-filled by the system]</p>
<p><b>Proposal Acronym</b></p>	<p>[filled in from A1]</p>
<p><b>Organisation Number [pre-filled]</b></p>	<p>The number allocated by PPSS to each organisation participating in the proposal. The <b>Corresponding PI's Host Institution (or the 'principal beneficiary')</b> is always <b>number one</b>.</p>
<p><b>The Organisation</b></p>	
<p><b>If your organisation has already registered for FP7, enter your Participant Identity Code</b></p>	<p>Applicants possessing a Participant Identification Code (PIC) can use this number to identify themselves in the Participant Portal Submission System. On entering the PIC, parts of the A forms will be filled in automatically. Please note that in the cases where a PIC is not available it will always be possible to submit a proposal by entering the organisation details manually. However, the use of PICs will lead to more efficient handling of the proposal. The process for assigning a PIC is triggered by a self-registration of an organisation at the following website: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations">http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations</a>. On this website you will also find a search tool for checking if your organisation is already registered (and has thus a PIC).</p>
<p><b>Organisation legal name</b></p>	<p><b>For a Public Law Body</b>, it is the name under which the organisation is registered in the Resolution text, Law, Decree/Decision establishing the Public Entity, or in any other document established at the constitution of the Public Law Body; <b>For a Private Law Body</b>, it is the name under which the organisation is registered in the national Official Journal (or equivalent) or in the national company register.</p>
<p><b>Organisation short name</b></p>	<p>Choose an abbreviation of the organisation legal name, only for use in this proposal and in all relating documents. This short name should not be more than 20 characters exclusive of special characters (./;...), e.g. CNRS and not C.N.R.S. It should be preferably the one commonly used, e.g. IBM and not Int.Bus.Mac.</p>



<b>Organisation Town</b>	Town where the organisation is located, in English (please avoid any district codes).
<b>Organisation Country</b>	The country where the organisation is located, in English (please avoid any additional regional or district code or information).
<b>Department/Faculty/Institute/Lab Name</b>	The name under which the Office/Section/Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered.
<b>Department/Faculty/Institute/Lab Town</b>	The town where the Office/Section/Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is located, in English (please avoid any district codes).
<b>Department/Faculty/Institute/Lab Country</b>	The country where the Office/Section/Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is located, in English (please avoid any additional regional or district code or information).
<b>Internet Homepage</b>	Insert the address of the organisation internet homepage.

## **Form A3: Budget**

### **Financial information (in Euros) – whole duration of the project**

This financial data summarises the total costs and the requested ERC grant, also presented in the research proposal text (part B1: section 1c: resources).

**Please note that there is a difference in how the financial information is presented in A3 (online form) and in the proposal text.**

**In the A3 form, the budget details should be provided by beneficiary.**

**In the proposal text, the budget breakdown (Annex 3) should be provided by PI, together with a summary table for the full budget.**

The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. There is no minimum contribution per year; the requested contribution should be in proportion to the actual needs to fulfil the objectives of the project.

The host institution(s)<sup>33</sup> should enter the different types of costs (personnel, other direct, indirect and subcontracting). Please ensure the table contains the correct amount of the different types of costs and the correct total eligible costs and requested grant.

#### **Eligible and non-eligible direct and indirect costs**

An ERC grant can cover up to 100% of the total eligible direct costs of the research plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs on the basis of 20% of the total eligible direct costs (excluding the direct eligible costs for subcontracting and the costs of reimbursement of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary). Costs claimed should be in line with the host institution's own accounting rules.

Direct eligible costs are those which support all the research, management, training and dissemination activities necessary for the project, such as: Personnel Costs; Equipment Costs; Consumables; Travel and Subsistence Costs; Publication Costs (page charges and related fees for publication of results).

**Indirect eligible costs** are those which cannot be identified as directly attributable to the project, but which are incurred in direct relationship with the project's direct eligible costs, such as: Costs related to general administration and management; Costs of office or laboratory space, including rent or depreciation of buildings and equipment, and related expenditure such as water, heating, electricity; Maintenance, insurance and safety costs; Communication expenses, network connection charges, postal charges and office; Supplies; Common office equipment such as PCs, laptops, office software; Miscellaneous recurring consumables.

Non-eligible costs cannot be reimbursed through the ERC grant, such as: Any identifiable indirect taxes, including VAT or duties; Interest owed; Provisions for possible future losses or charges; Exchange losses; Costs declared, incurred or reimbursed in respect of another Community project; Costs related to return on capital; Debt and debt service charges; Excessive or reckless expenditure.

- Please ensure that the amounts given in this form correspond precisely to the information provided in the research proposal text (part B1: section 1c: resources). In case of discrepancy, the data contained in this A3 form will prevail.
- Please make sure that all costs are given in whole Euros (integer), not thousands of Euros. All costs must be given excluding the value added tax (VAT).
- For further questions about the budget please consult the FAQs on the ERC website.

<b>Participant Number in this proposal</b>	The Corresponding <u>Host Institution</u> for the proposal is always <u>number one</u> .
<b>Organisation short name</b>	The same name that has been used in form A2.
<b>Personnel Costs (in €)</b>	Personnel costs are only the costs of the actual hours worked by the persons directly carrying out work under the project and must correspond to the percentage of dedicated working time to run the ERC project. Such persons must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– be directly hired by the beneficiary in accordance with its national legislation,</li> <li>– work under the sole technical supervision and responsibility of the latter, and</li> <li>– be remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the participant.</li> </ul> Participants may opt to declare average personnel costs if certified in accordance with a

<sup>33</sup> Additional lines should correspond to any legal entities that have filled form A2.

	methodology approved by the Commission and consistent with the management principles and usual accounting practices of the participant. Average personnel costs charged by a participant having provided a certification on the methodology are deemed not to significantly differ from actual personnel costs.
<b>Other direct costs (excluding subcontracting) (in €)</b>	Means direct costs not covered by the above-mentioned categories of costs.
<b>Indirect costs (max. 20 % of direct costs) (in €)</b>	Indirect costs are all those eligible costs which cannot be identified by the participant as being directly attributed to the project but which can be identified and justified by its accounting system as being incurred in direct relationship with the eligible direct costs attributed to the project. They may not include any eligible direct costs.
<b>Subcontracting (in €)</b>	A subcontractor is a third party which has entered into an agreement on business conditions with one or more participants, in order to carry out part of the work of the project without the direct supervision of the participant and without a relationship of subordination. Where it is necessary for the participants to subcontract certain elements of the work to be carried out, the following conditions must be fulfilled: - subcontracts may only cover the execution of a limited part of the project; - recourse to the award of subcontracts must be duly justified in part B of the proposal having regard to the nature of the project and what is necessary for its implementation; - recourse to the award of subcontract by a participant may not affect the rights and obligations of the participants regarding background and foreground; - Part B of the proposal must indicate the task to be subcontracted and an estimation of the costs; Any subcontract, the costs of which are to be claimed as an eligible cost, must be awarded according to the principles of best value for money (best price-quality ratio), transparency and equal treatment. Framework contracts between a participant and a subcontractor, entered into prior to the beginning of the project that are according to the participant's usual management principles may also be accepted. Participants may use external support services for assistance with minor tasks that do not represent per se project tasks as identified in part B of the proposal.
<b>Total Eligible Costs (in €)</b>	The sum of direct costs (personnel and others), indirect costs and subcontracting.
<b>Requested Grant (in €)</b>	The total budget that you are requesting as the ERC grant (in Euros).

### 1.2.2.3 Instructions for completing 'Part B' of the proposal

The research proposal (part B) consists of two parts: part B1 (including cover page, sections a, b, c and d) and part B2 (including sections a, b and c). **The templates for these two parts are provided in PPSS and their use is mandatory.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Both part B1 and part B2 are evaluated at step 1. However, in case of oversubscription (defined as the requested budget of the submitted proposals being more than 10 times the indicative call budget), only part B2 is evaluated.

**When drafting part B2 you should pay particular attention to the extended synopsis (Part B2 section a) and should not consider it as simply complementing part B1. It is important that the extended synopsis contains minimum information relevant to the evaluation criteria (core time, high risk/high gain profile, synergy, as well as resources, methodology), since the panel may only evaluate part B2 at step 1.**

The information to be included in each of the parts is described below. The maximum length of each part or its sections, which needs to be respected strictly, is described below. The research proposal needs to be uploaded and submitted via PPSS (see section 1.2.4 of this guide)

**Only the material contained within the page limits mentioned below while respecting the layout parameters will be evaluated. It should provide sufficient information to the peer reviewers to assess the proposal according to the evaluation criteria.**

Each proposal page **must** carry a **header** presenting the **acronym**, and the reference to the respective proposal part (**part B1** or **part B2**).

The following parameters **must** be respected for the layout:

Page Format	Font Type	Font Size	Line Spacing	Margins
A4	Times New Roman	At least 11	Single	2 cm right and left side, 1.5 cm bottom

### **Part B1 – Cover page**

Proposal full title  
 Proposal acronym  
 Name of the Corresponding Principal Investigator (PI) and Corresponding Host Institution  
 List the other PI(s), indicating which PI belongs to which Host Institution  
 Proposal duration in months  
 Proposal summary (half page, possibly copy/paste of abstract from the administrative form A1)

### **Part B1, sections a, b, c and d:**

**The scientific proposal** [max 15 pages, excluding the Budget Tables (obligatory), Ethical Issues Table (obligatory) and Annex (only if applicable), and the Security Aspects Letter (only if applicable)]

Describe the scientific, technical, and/or scholarly aspects of the project demonstrating the ground-breaking nature of the research, its potential impact and research methodology. Describe the **significant synergies, complementarity and added value of the group** beyond the current work of the Principal Investigators to enable it to jointly achieve the project's scientific objectives. Indicate the fraction of each PI's working time that will be devoted to this project, a full estimation of the real project cost and any ethical considerations raised by the project. Indicate innovative ways of working together and how the core time spent together will be utilised.

**a. State of the art and objectives:** Specify clearly the objectives of the proposal, in the context of the state of the art in the field. When describing the envisaged research it should be indicated how and why the proposed work is important for the field, and what impact it will have if successful, such as how it may open up new horizons or opportunities for science, technology or scholarship. Specify any particularly challenging or unconventional concepts and approaches of the proposal, including multi - or interdisciplinary aspects.

#### **b. Methodology**

Describe the proposed methodology and feasibility in detail including, as appropriate, key intermediate goals. Explain and justify the methodology in relation to the state of the art, including any particularly novel or unconventional aspects addressing 'high-gain/high-risk' balance, i.e. if successful the payoffs will be very significant, but there is a higher-than-normal risk that the research project does not entirely fulfil its aims.

Highlight any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to the project planning. In case it is proposed that team members engaged by another host institution participate in the project, their participation has to be fully justified. This should be done emphasising the scientific added value they bring to the project.

#### **c. Resources (incl. project costs)**

It is strongly recommended to use the budget table template to facilitate the assessment of resources by the panels (see Annex 3). The summary and the breakdown of the budget following the template is subdivided in personnel costs, equipment and infrastructure, consumables, travel, publication costs, and any envisaged subcontracts. This table has to be provided by each PI and a final table will summarise the overall budget breakdown for the

project. These figures should be summarised in the financial information **form A3** as well (although according to host institutions and not according to PIs).

Describe the size and nature of the Synergy group, including each PI and where appropriate, their key team members and their roles. The participation of team members engaged by another institution besides that of the participating PIs should be justified in relation to the additional financial cost this may impose to the project (see section 1.1.3 of this guide). Describe other necessary resources, such as infrastructure and equipment. Specify any existing resources that will contribute to the project. It is advisable to include a short technical description of the equipment requested, a justification of its need as well as the intensity of its planned use. Please ensure that a short narrative description is provided for all budget lines for which funding is requested.

State the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the objectives for the duration of the project. This should be a reasoned estimate of the projects costs. Each PI should take into account the percentage of their dedicated time (each PI is expected to devote at least 30% of their total working time to the ERC-funded project while spending at least 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country) to run the ERC-funded activity when calculating their personnel costs. Include the direct costs of the project plus a flat rate financing of indirect costs on the basis of 20% of the total eligible direct costs (excluding subcontracting and the costs of reimbursement of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary) towards overheads.

The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. The evaluation panels assess the estimated costs carefully; unjustified budgets will be consequently reduced.

There is no minimum contribution per year; the requested contribution should be in proportion to the actual needs to fulfil the objectives of the project.

#### **d. Ethical and Security-Sensitive Issues**

The **Ethical Issues Table** serves to identify any ethical aspects of the proposed work. This table has to be completed even if there are no issues (by confirming in the table that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal).

If any of the issues in the Ethical Issues Table (in part B1) apply to the proposal, the Corresponding PI **must** provide a brief explanation of the ethical issue involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately. Annex 2 of this guide describes the ethics review process and gives guidance on the completion of the Ethical Issues Table. An Ethical Issues Annex template is provided in PPSS, which has to be uploaded in case there are any ethical implications in the proposal.

The PIs are encouraged to include any supporting documentation, such as any authorisation they may already have. This will allow a more effective ethical clearance and an accelerated granting process if the proposal is retained for possible funding<sup>34</sup>.

Please upload this Ethical Issues Annex and any related documents in the PPSS step 5, section 'part B & annexes' (for further information, see section 1.2.4. of this guide).

Please be aware that no grant agreement can be signed by ERCEA prior to a satisfactory conclusion of the ethical review.

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<sup>34</sup> A full description of the Ethics Review is provided in the in ERC rules for the submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the Ideas Specific Programme:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:327:0051:0070:EN:PDF>

A dedicated website that aims to provide helpful information on ethical issues is now available at: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html)

### **Security-Sensitive Issues**

ERC actions may be classified if they are considered as security-sensitive. The proposal can be considered security-sensitive for a variety of reasons, most notably:

- if the proposed action may need to handle classified information as background;
- if some foreground is planned to be classified.

In addition, a proposal may also be considered as sensitive, independently of any security classification, if it plans to exchange material subject to transfer or export licensing. If export licences (or intra EU licences) are required for carrying out the planned work, applicants must clarify the requirement to have such export or transfer licences and must provide a copy of export or transfer licences (or of the requests). For further information on security-sensitive issues relevant to this Call, see Annex 5 of this guide.

If your proposal is security-sensitive, describe (in your description of work) why, which are the participants concerned by the sensitivity and what are the measures foreseen to cope with it. Please annex to your proposal a first version of the Security Aspects Letter (SAL) and its annex, Security Classification Guide (SCG) as part of the proposal using the templates provided in Annex 5.

Describe also your experience in managing security-sensitive projects, if relevant.

Please note that these security related parts of the proposal are not considered as part of the scientific evaluation. These will only be considered in the scrutiny of security-sensitive actions.

**The pages of the Budget Tables, the Ethical Issues Table included in part B1 and additional Annexes (separate documents) where relevant in the case of ethical issues and/or security-sensitive subjects do not count towards the maximum page limit for part B1.**

### **Part B2 – Cover page**

Proposal full title

Proposal acronym

Name of the Corresponding Principal Investigator (PI) and Corresponding Host Institution

List the other PI(s), indicating which PI belongs to which Host Institution

Proposal duration in months

Proposal summary (half page, possibly copy/paste of abstract from the administrative form A1)

### **Part B2, sections a, b and c:**

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

The extended synopsis should be a stand-alone description of the scientific proposal, including the scientific feasibility of the project, with particular attention to its ground-breaking nature and how it may open up new horizons or opportunities for research. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. References to literature should also be included. **It is important that the extended synopsis contains minimum information relevant to the evaluation criteria (working arrangements, core time and resources, methodology), since the panel may only evaluate part B2 at step 1 in case of oversubscription<sup>49</sup> (see section 1.3.2 on the evaluation process).**

**Specify briefly the commitment of each PI to the project.** (According to the evaluation criteria specified in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 the Principal Investigators have to be strongly committed to the project and expected to devote at least 30% of their total working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.)

### **The Principal Investigators**

**Each of the Principal Investigators must provide a list reflecting their track record.** This can be **either** an '**early achievement track-record**' (for PIs within 12 years after their PhD) or a '**10-year track-record**' (for advanced researchers) chosen by the applicants based on which is **most appropriate for their career stage**.

The evaluation experts will be instructed to judge each PI against the benchmarks relevant to his/her career stage. The experts will also pay particular attention to the joint effort of the group that may be built around specialised infrastructure, or that allow for new combinations of skills and disciplines, or the bringing together of researchers from different institutions, sectors or countries.

#### **b. Curriculum Vitae (max 2 pages for each PI):**

In addition to the standard academic and research record, the CV **should include a succinct 'funding ID' which must specify any current research grants and their subject, as well as any ongoing application for work related to the proposal**. This facilitates the proper assessment of the proposal and the granting process in case the proposal is retained for funding.

Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained. Peer reviewers will take this into consideration when assessing the PI's quality and career progression.

#### **c. Track-Record**

##### **Early achievement track-record (max 2 pages for each PI):**

The PI should list: his/her activity as regards:

1. **Publications** in **major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals** and/or in the **leading international peer-reviewed journals, peer-reviewed conferences proceedings and/or monographs of their respective research fields**, highlighting five representative publications, those without the presence as co-author of their PhD supervisor, and the number of citations (excluding self-citations) they have attracted (if applicable).
2. **Granted patent(s)** (if applicable).
3. **Invited presentations to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools** (if applicable).
4. **Prizes and Awards** (if applicable).

or

##### **10-Year track-record (max 2 pages for each PI):**

The PI should list his/her activity over the **past 10 years** (dated from the deadline of the call) as regards:

1. Highlight **10 representative publications, as senior author** (or in those fields where alphabetic order of authorship is the norm, joint author), in major international peer-reviewed

- multidisciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals and/or peer-reviewed conferences proceedings of their respective research fields, also indicating the number of citations (excluding self-citations) they have attracted (if applicable).
2. **Research monographs and any translations** thereof (if applicable).
  3. **Granted patents** (if applicable).
  4. **Invited presentations** to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools (if applicable).
  5. **Research expeditions** that the applicant has led (if applicable).
  6. **Organisation of International conferences** in the field of the applicant (membership in the steering and/or programme committee) (if applicable).
  7. **International Prizes/Awards/Academy memberships** (if applicable).
  8. **Memberships to Editorials Boards of International Journals** (if applicable).
  9. **Examples of leadership in industrial innovation or design** (if applicable)

The above mentioned page limits for part B2 sections b and c apply individually, i.e. maximum 4 pages per PI.

#### 1.2.2.4 Supporting Documentation

A scanned copy of the following supporting documentation needs to be submitted with the proposal by uploading electronically in PPSS in PDF format using the corresponding template available on PPSS (see Annex 4: 'Commitment of the Corresponding Host Institution' of this guide).

The Corresponding Host Institution (applicant legal entity) must provide a binding statement that the conditions of independence set out in the supplementary agreement to the ERC Grant agreement are already fulfilled or will be provided to the Corresponding PI and the other PIs' Synergy project if the application is successful. This document needs to be originally signed, stamped and dated by the institution's legal representative. Proposals that do not include this institutional statement will not be considered for evaluation.

Please provide only the documents requested above. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, supporting documentation, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) will be disregarded.

### **1.2.3 Is the proposal ready for evaluation?**

Incomplete proposals (where parts or sections of the proposal and/or the Corresponding Host Institution's commitment statement are missing) are considered ineligible and will not be evaluated<sup>35</sup>. The proposal must be submitted **before the call deadline**.

Where there is a doubt on the eligibility of a proposal, the peer review evaluation may proceed pending a decision by an eligibility review committee. If it becomes clear before, during or after the peer review evaluation phase, that one or more of the eligibility criteria has not been met, the proposal is declared ineligible and is withdrawn from any further examination.

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<sup>35</sup> See also 'Eligibility Check' in the ERC rules for the submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the Ideas Specific Programme:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:327:0051:0070:EN:PDF>



## Checklist – Is your group's proposal complete?

For the submission of a complete Synergy Grant proposal, the following components have to be prepared:

### The Administrative Forms (part A): to be completed in PPSS

- on-line forms A1, A2, A3

**The Research Proposal (part B): part B and the supporting documentation should be uploaded and submitted via PPSS as PDF files. Make sure all file names<sup>36</sup> contain the 'Proposal Short Name', such as PartB1\_[Proposal-Short-Name].pdf**

#### Part B1:

- Section a, b, c – The scientific proposal.
- Section d – The ethical and security issues table (and, when necessary, the explanatory information on ethical and security-sensitive issues and how they will be treated).

#### Part B2:

- Section a – The Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal.
- Section b, c – The Principal Investigators. The 'funding ID' should be specified for each PI.

### The Supplementary Documents:

- The supporting statement from the Corresponding Host Institution: originally signed, stamped and dated by the host institution's legal representative (see Annex 4).
- If applicable, the explanatory information on ethical issues and how they will be treated (Ethical Issues Annex, see Annex 2 of this guide).
- If applicable, the explanatory information on security-sensitive issues and how they will be treated (Security Issues Annex, see Annex 5 of this guide).

**Please ensure that all forms and supplementary documents are uploaded correctly in the PPSS system before the final submission. It is strongly recommended to double-check by downloading them and verifying their completeness.**

## 1.2.4 How are the grant applications submitted?

Proposals must be submitted electronically, using the Participant Portal Submission Service (PPSS) which is to be found on the Participant Portal. Proposals arriving at the ERCEA by any other means are regarded as 'not submitted', and will not be evaluated<sup>37</sup>. All the data that the Corresponding Principal Investigator uploads is securely stored on a server to which only the Corresponding PI and the other contact persons in the proposal have access until after the call deadline.

The Corresponding PI can access PPSS from the call page on the Participant Portal. Other participants must be invited by the Corresponding PI in order to access the service. Please note that the terminology "Proposal Coordinator" used in PPSS corresponds to the concept of "Corresponding Host Institution" in the case of the Synergy Grant call. The Corresponding PI should be mentioned as the first contact person for the Corresponding Host Institution.

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<sup>36</sup> Please note that filenames cannot exceed 75 characters long including the file extension.

<sup>37</sup> In exceptional cases, when the Corresponding PI has absolutely no means of accessing the Participant Portal Submission Service, an applicant may request permission from the ERCEA to submit on paper. Such a request, which must clearly explain the circumstances of the case, must be received by the ERCEA no later than one month before the call deadline. The ERCEA will reply to such a request within five working days of receipt. Only if a derogation is granted, the ERCEA will send proposal forms for paper submission to the applicant concerned. Such a request should be sent to the following address: European Commission, European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA)/ Unit B 2, COV2 21/138, 1049 Brussels, Belgium.

As this is a web application, an Internet connection is required. An Internet browser and version 9 (or above) of the Adobe reader are needed. To check the requirements, click on <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/submission/manage/diagnostics>.

Full instructions are found in the “10 Minute guide to the Electronic Submission”, available from the PPSS website (click on "Starter Manual" to download the user guide).

#### Obtaining a mandatory Participant Identification Code or PIC:

Before starting the process of submitting the proposal, **each Host Institution in your proposal must be identified with a Participant Identification Code. Failure to do so will block the submission of your proposal!** The Participant Identification Code is a unique 9 digit number that helps the ERCEA identify a participant organisation. It is used in all grant-related interactions between the organisation and the ERCEA.

If your organisation has already participated in a 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme proposal, it is likely that you already have a PIC number. You can check this on the Participant Portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations>

*If your organisation already has a PIC, it is likely that it has also appointed a Legal Entity Authorised Representative (LEAR) (see section 3.1.). The names of LEARs are however not available online; you have to enquire within the administration of your own organisation.*

If a PIC is not yet available for an organisation, it can be obtained by registering the organisation in the Unique Registration Facility. A PIC will then be given, which can then be used in PPSS. The use of PICs will lead to more efficient processing of your proposal. Registration in the Unique Registration Facility for receiving a PIC is quick and simple: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations>, but you are advised to proceed well before the call deadline to avoid potential last minute troubles.

All Host Institutions already possessing a PIC should use it to identify themselves in the proposal submission system. After entering the PIC, sections of their A forms are filled in automatically.

If, after entering your PIC, the data which appears for your organisation is incorrect, you should contact the LEAR of your organisation to correct it through the Unique Registration Facility (URF). It is possible for you yourself to change the data prefilled from the PIC in your forms, but these changes would remain local to PPSS for this proposal only. The original incorrect data would always re-appear the next time the PIC was used, until corrected by the LEAR of your organisation in the URF.

#### Actions to be undertaken by the Corresponding PI:

##### **Step 1: getting a user ID with the Commission**

Getting a personal user ID with the **European Commission Authentication Service (ECAS)** is mandatory in order to login to the Participant Portal and to be able to use the different functions of the Portal, including the proposal submission. This will allow editing the proposal data in the participant portal submission system, completing the information requested or – for the Corresponding Host Institution's contacts – submitting the proposal. The system will request a login for every Host Institution. The same user ID will be used for all later interactions with the ERCEA. Further details on the ID are available under:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/eim/external/help.cgi>

### **Step 2: choosing a funding scheme**

For each call, a list of available funding schemes will be presented by PPSS. The Corresponding PI must choose the appropriate one for the proposal. In the case of the 2013 Synergy Grant call, only one funding scheme is available.

### **Step 3: creating a draft proposal**

Once the Corresponding PI and the Corresponding Host Institution are known and identified, the Corresponding PI fills in the preregistration data for the proposal. These details will be used by the ERCEA in order to plan the evaluation. The following details are requested:

- *The proposal acronym.* This is the name of the proposal and it will be used throughout the lifetime of the project, if funded. No more than 20 characters are allowed (standard alphabet and numbers only; no symbols or special characters, except underscore, space, hyphen or dot).
- *The proposal short summary,* which describes briefly the purpose of the proposal with a maximum of 2,000 characters.
- *The ERC Keywords applying to the proposal.* Please carefully choose keywords that best characterise your proposal. They will be used to allocate proposals to experts. If needed, these keywords can still be changed later on (A1 form).
- *Activity topic:* ERC Synergy Grant [ERC-2013-SyG].

### **Step 4: adding other Host Institutions to the proposal**

The Corresponding PI can:

- *Add other Host Institutions to the proposal.* A search function is offered, in order to insert the participant code in the administrative forms and copy the most up to date information for you. This information will be completed with contact details – multiple contacts can be added. These contacts can be another Principal Investigator hosted by the organisation and the contact person for the ERC. **Only host institutions<sup>38</sup> should be added at this step.** The host institutions listed in this step will be invited to access the proposal (the contact person(s) will receive an email with a link to access the system and update the participating organisation information). Once the corresponding PI saves this page, an automatic invitation is sent to all contacts' e-mail address. The invited persons can access the proposal after logging in to the Participant Portal under the 'My Proposals' tab. **Please note that other beneficiaries (for example team members belonging to a different organisation) are to be added further down in the administrative forms (Step 5, form A1 and A2).**
- *Delete a Host Institution.*
- *Reorder the Host Institutions.* The order of the participants in the administrative forms will be adjusted.

The Corresponding PI and the Corresponding Host Institution however cannot be deleted, and is always the first participant.

### **Step 5: forms, files and submission**

This step is the core of the process, as, from this step, the Corresponding PI, or the contact(s) of the Corresponding Host Institution can:

- Fill in the administrative forms, part A of the proposal
- Forms are completed using a PDF reader (e.g. Adobe Reader, see above "What is needed" for minimum requirements). The Corresponding PI and any other contacts of the Corresponding Host Institution can complete all the forms, including the budget table and the administrative details of the Corresponding Host Institution. The other Host Institutions' contacts can only complete their own administrative details.

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<sup>38</sup> A Host Institution is defined as an organisation hosting one or more of the PIs.

- Download the templates of the part B of the proposal (Part B1, Part B2, Host Institution Support Letter, and – if applicable – Ethical Issues and Security Issues annexes)
- Upload the files that will be the part B of the proposal.
- Submit the proposal package.

*Only the Corresponding PI and any other contacts of the Corresponding Host Institution can upload the part B of the proposal and submit the proposal. Therefore, only they should be logged into PPSS when the submission attempt is made.*

For the proposal Part B you must use exclusively PDF (“portable document format”, compatible with Adobe version 3 or higher, with embedded fonts). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system. Irrespective of any page limits specified in this Guide, there is an overall limit of 10 Mbytes to the size of proposal file Part B. It is advised to limit the size of the proposal to 2 Mbytes.

There are also restrictions to the name given to the Part B files: use alphanumeric characters; special characters and spaces must be avoided.

*You are advised to clean your document before converting it to PDF (e.g. accept all tracked changes, delete notes).*

*Check that your conversion software has successfully converted all the pages of your original document (e.g. there is no problem with page limits).*

*Check that your conversion software has not cut down landscape format pages to fit them into portrait format. Check that captions and labels have not been lost from your diagrams*

*Please note that the ERCEA prints out proposals in black and white on plain A4 paper. The printable zone on the print engine is bounded by 1.5 cm right, left, top bottom. No scaling is applied to make the page "fit" the window. Printing is done at 300 dots per inch.*

Completing the Part A forms in PPSS and uploading Part B files does not yet mean that the proposal is submitted. Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal, the "SUBMIT" button must be pressed.

At this point the service performs a limited automatic validation of the proposal. A list of discovered problems, such as missing data, is given on the last page of the proposal submission forms. In some cases users are allowed to submit incomplete administrative information **but for significant omissions, proposal submission will be blocked until the problems are corrected**. Therefore you are strongly advised, when preparing your proposal, to regularly click on 'validate' at the bottom of any page of the Part A to obtain updated validation messages and to review them on the last page of the proposal submission forms.

When errors or omissions are corrected, the Corresponding PI or the contact(s) of the Corresponding Host Institution must then repeat the above step to finally achieve the proposal submission.

If the submission sequence described above is not followed, the ERCEA considers that no proposal has been submitted.

When the proposal has been successfully submitted, the service will proceed to Step 6 where the Corresponding PI or the contact(s) of the Corresponding Host Institution sees a message that indicates that the proposal has been received.  
(This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt – see Section 5).

### **Step 6: proposal status page**

Reaching this step means that the proposal is submitted (i.e. sent to the ERCEA for evaluation). It does not mean that the proposal is valid, complete and eligible in all respects or that it will be funded.

In Step 6 you can:

- *Download the proposal.* It is advised to download the proposal once submitted to check that it has been correctly sent. The downloaded proposal will be digitally signed and time stamped.
- *Re-edit the proposal,* going back to step 5. The Corresponding PI or the contact(s) of the Corresponding Host Institution may continue to modify the proposal and submit revised versions overwriting the previous one right up until the deadline.
- *Withdraw the proposal.* If the proposal is withdrawn, it will not be considered for evaluation. A reason for the withdrawal will be requested by the service.  
(Note: Your proposal draft is not deleted from the server and this withdrawal action can be reversed, but only before the deadline, by simply submitting it again).

### **About the deadline**

Proposals must be submitted on or before the deadline specified in the call fiche. It is your responsibility to ensure the timely submission of your proposal.

PPSS will be closed for this call at the call deadline. After this moment, the proposal can no longer be modified. It is however visible in a read-only version.

***Do not wait until the last moment before submitting your proposal!  
Call deadlines are absolutely firm and are strictly enforced.***

Please note that successive drafts of the proposal can be submitted with PPSS. Each successive submission overwrites the previous version. It is a good idea to **submit a draft well before the deadline**.

*Do not wait until the last moment to attempt the submission of the proposal. Internet access issues and proposal verification issues must be detected well before the submission deadline if help is to be requested from the service desk. Such issues are never accepted as extenuating circumstances for failure to submit in time.*

*Submission is deemed to occur at the moment when the corresponding PI completes the submission sequence described above. It is not the point at which the upload of the part B is started. If you wait until too near to the close of the call to start uploading your proposal, there is a serious risk that you will not be able to submit in time.*

*If you have submitted your proposal in error to another call which closes after this call, the ERCEA will not be aware of it until it is discovered among the downloaded proposals for the later call. It will therefore be classified as ineligible because of late arrival.*

***The submission of a proposal requires some knowledge of PPSS, a detailed knowledge of the contents of the proposal and the authority to make last-minute decisions on behalf of the group of PIs if problems arise. You are advised not to delegate the job of submitting your proposal!***

In the unlikely event of a failure of PPSS due to breakdown of the Commission server during the last 24 hours of this call, the deadline will be extended by a further 24 hours. This will be notified by e-mail to all Corresponding PIs who had registered for this call by the time of the original deadline, and also by a notice on the Call pages on the Participant Portal. Such a failure is a rare and exceptional event; therefore do not assume that there will be an extension to this call. If you have difficulty in submitting your proposal, you should not assume that it is because of a problem with the Commission servers, as this is rarely the case. Contact the PPSS helpdesk if in doubt.

Please note that the ERCEA will not extend deadlines for system failures that are not its own responsibility. In all circumstances, you should aim to submit your proposal well before the deadline to have time to solve any problems.

### **Correcting or revising your proposal**

Errors discovered in proposals submitted can be rectified by simply submitting a corrected version before the submission deadline; the new proposal package (part A and B) will overwrite the old one.

Once the deadline has passed, however, the ERCEA can accept no further additions, corrections or re-submissions.

**The last version of your proposal submitted before the deadline is the one which will be taken into consideration; no later version can be substituted and no earlier version can be recovered.**

### **Ancillary material**

Only a single PDF file can be uploaded for each mandatory (part B1, part B2, Host Institution Support Letter) or optional (Ethical and Security Issues) part of the annexes. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, supporting documentation, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) sent electronically or by post will be disregarded.

### **Withdrawing a proposal**

You may withdraw a proposal before the call deadline by simply submitting a revised version with an empty Part B section, and with the following text in the abstract field of form A1: *"The applicants wish to withdraw this proposal. It should not be evaluated by the ERC"*.

You may also withdraw a proposal, either before or after the call deadline, by accessing the 'My Proposals' tab when you log in to the participant portal. With the action 'view submitted' the Corresponding PI or the contact of the Corresponding Host Institution will move to Step 6, where the proposal can be withdrawn.

## 1.3 Evaluation and selection of grant proposals

### 1.3.1 Eligibility Check

Proposals are first checked to ensure that all of the eligibility criteria are met.

A proposal must fulfil all of the following eligibility criteria:

- It must be submitted before the call deadline.
- It must be complete (i.e. all of the requested forms, parts or sections of the proposal, and supporting documents must be completed or present).
- Its content must relate to the ERC Synergy Grant scheme which is subject of the call for proposals.
- It must meet the eligibility requirements of the ERC Synergy Grant scheme as well as other criteria mentioned in the relevant call for proposals.
- It must be in compliance with the restrictions on applications rules (see section 1.1.2 of this guide).

Where there is a doubt on the eligibility of a proposal, the peer review evaluation may proceed with the evaluation pending a decision by an eligibility review committee.

The eligibility is checked on the basis of the information given by the Corresponding PI in the proposal. If at a later stage, an eligibility criterion is found not to be fulfilled (for example, due to incorrect or misleading information), the proposal will be immediately declared ineligible.

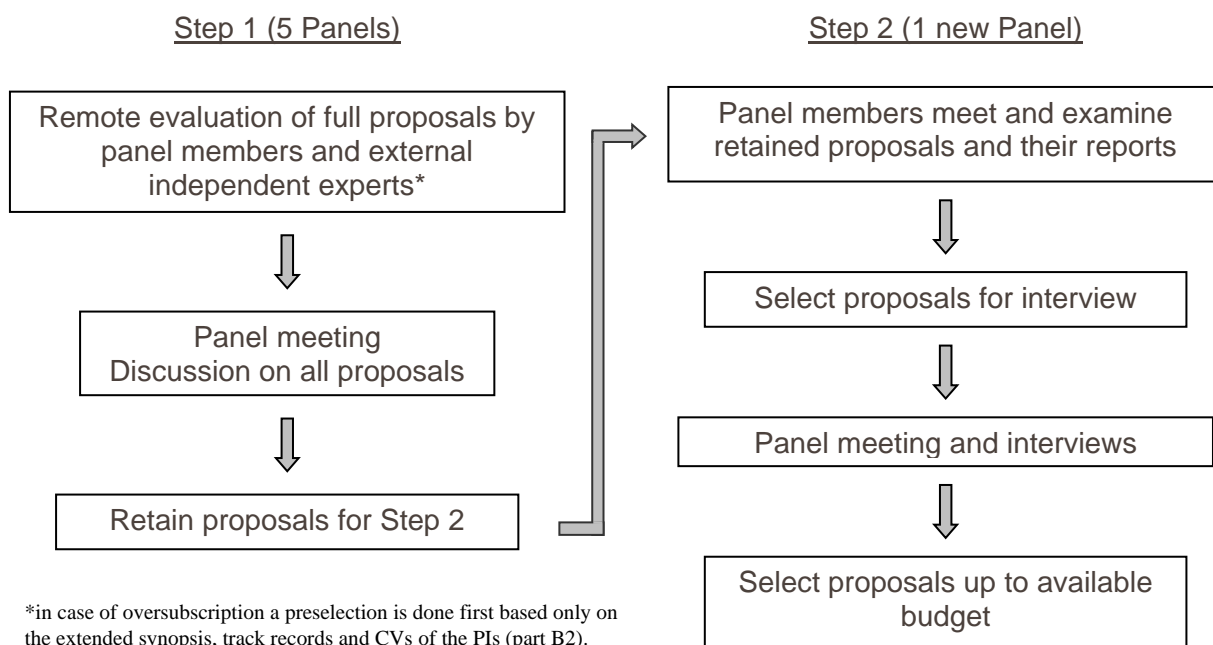
### 1.3.2 Peer review evaluation of proposals

Understanding the evaluation process and the evaluation criteria is important for the completion of the administrative forms and preparation of the research proposal.

The peer review evaluation process for the ERC Synergy Grant scheme differs from the ERC Advanced, Consolidator and Starting Grant schemes. A single submission of an ERC Synergy Grant proposal will be followed by a two-step peer review evaluation, including interviews. Grant applications are assessed by peer review evaluation panels (ERC panels), which may be supported by additional independent experts. These ERC panels assess, score and rank the proposals on the basis of the individual evaluations and on the panel discussion which follows them.

Depending on the budget available for the call, a budgetary cut-off applies to the ranking list and only the highest ranked proposals are offered an ERC grant until the call budget is consumed.

## **Schematic Representation of the Evaluation Process**



### **1.3.2.1 What are the ERC Synergy Grant evaluation panels?**

The peer review evaluation of ERC Synergy Grant proposals is in the hands of five high level peer review evaluation panels (ERC SyG panels) in step 1 and an additional panel in step 2.

Approximately 70 panel members have been proposed by the ERC Scientific Council on the basis of their scientific reputation in frontier science, scholarship and engineering. Before the deadline of a call, the names of the panel chairs are published on the ERC website. However, the names of panel members are published after the evaluation process is concluded.

The composition of the panels in step 1 is not predefined. The five panels will be formed in a dynamic way after all proposals were received to ensure the best expertise for a group of proposals. Step 1 panels will be formed from approximately 60 panel members and chairs. The step 2 panel will be composed of 15 experts: 10 new panel members together with the five step 1 panel chairs.

### **1.3.2.2 Two-step peer review evaluation**

A single submission of an ERC Synergy Grant proposal will be followed by a two-step peer review evaluation.

#### **Proposal allocation to an ERC panel:**

As there are no predefined panels and to facilitate the allocation of proposals to the right experts the applicant has to indicate between four and six fixed keywords. These keywords are the same as the ones used in the ERC Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grants and given in Annex 1 of this guide. There is **no** hierarchical ordering of the selected keywords. The fixed keywords and free keywords are analysed together to ensure the best expertise for each proposal. It is the Corresponding PI's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant keywords for the evaluation of the proposed research (administrative form A1, see section 1.2.2.2 of this guide). The allocation of the proposals to the various panels will be done by grouping proposals based on the given keywords and panel members.



## Step 1 evaluation:

Proposals which fulfil the eligibility criteria are evaluated by the ERC SyG panels, which in step 1 assess, score and comment on the quality of the full proposal (part B1 and part B2). Each proposal will be assigned to at least four panel members and several external independent experts.

Both the panel members and the external experts complete individual reviews. At this point, all experts are acting individually; they do not discuss the proposals with each other, nor with any other person. They record their opinions in individual reports, giving scores and comments against the evaluation criteria (see below, section 1.3.4).

After the completion of their individual reviews, the five panels meet to discuss and assess the proposals based on the evaluation criteria, arbitrate controversial opinions in individual reviews (including those received from external experts), calibrate final marks and establish a common ranking list of those proposals meeting the quality threshold. An indicative budget will be allocated to each panel, in proportion to the budgetary demand of its assigned proposals. This indicative budget is calculated as the cumulative grant request of all proposals to the panel<sup>39</sup> divided by the cumulative grant request of all proposals to the call, multiplied by the total indicative budget of the call.

At the end of step 1, the proposals will be ranked by the panels on the basis of the marks they have received and the panels' overall appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses. Proposals will be retained for step 2 based on a ranked list constructed in order of their 'normalised accumulated budget'<sup>40</sup> and a budgetary cut-off level of 2.5 times the indicative call budget.

Depending on the outcome of evaluation, some applicants may be subject to restrictions on applying to subsequent calls. Applicants will therefore be informed that their proposal:

- A. is of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation;
- B. is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 2 of the evaluation;
- C. is not of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation. The applicants may also be subject to resubmission limitations in the next ERC Synergy call.

In addition, applicants will be told the ranking range of their proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panels.

Please note that **if necessary**, and in order to ensure the quality of the evaluation in the case of heavy oversubscription to the call<sup>41</sup> at step 1, panels may identify the less competitive applications by assessing the proposals **solely on the basis of the extended synopsis and the Principal Investigators' track-records and CVs (part B2)**. These proposals will not be further evaluated and will be rejected, allowing the panel to focus on a thorough evaluation of the retained proposals. Therefore particular attention should be paid to the full completion of both part B1 and B2 of the grant proposal.

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<sup>39</sup> Proposals containing grant requests above the maximum limit will be treated as at the limit for the purpose of calculating these indicative budgets.

<sup>40</sup> The recommended normalised accumulated budget (NAB) for every panel is calculated by summing the normalised budget (recommended budget divided by panel's indicative budget) of each proposal from the top position down to the actual position of the given proposal. Thus, the normalised accumulated budget takes into account the position of the proposal in its panel ranking, the recommended budget of the proposal and of all proposals ranked higher in the same panel and the indicative budget of the panel.

<sup>41</sup> Defined as the requested budget of the submitted proposals being more than 10 times the indicative call budget.

## Step 2 evaluation:

The complete version of the retained proposals (part B1 and B2) will be reassessed by a single panel at step 2 using the reports completed in step 1. Based on this assessment a subset of proposals will be selected for interviews based on a budgetary cut-off level set anywhere up to 2 times the indicative call budget.

The PIs of this subset of proposals may be invited for an interview to present their project to a panel meeting in Brussels. They will be accordingly reimbursed for their travel and subsistence expenses. As part of the preparation for interviews site visits may be conducted in cases where features of the site form a significant part of the proposal.

The final decision of the panel is based upon the panel discussion and interviews. After a panel discussion, when the controversial opinions are arbitrated and a decision is reached, final marks are assigned to all proposals and a ranking list is established on the basis of the marks they have received and an overall appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses. Applicants will be informed that their proposal:

- A. fully meets the ERC's excellence criterion and is recommended for funding if sufficient funds are available;
- B. meets some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded.

In addition, applicants will be told the ranking range of their proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panel.

Projects recommended for funding will be funded by the ERC if sufficient funds are available. Proposals will be funded in priority order based on their final rank.

Please note that any direct or indirect contact about the peer review evaluation of a call between a PI and/or the Corresponding HI submitting a proposal under the same call on the one side and any independent expert involved in that peer review evaluation on the other side may result in the decision of the ERCEA to exclude the proposal concerned from the call in question.

### 1.3.3 Ethics review

The objective of the ethics review is to ensure that the ERC does not support research which would be contrary to fundamental ethical principles (see Box 6 and Annex 2 of this guide) and to examine whether the research complies with the rules relating to research ethics set out in the Seventh Framework Programme and the related statement of the Commission, the Rules for Participation and the Specific Programme 'Ideas'. After the peer review evaluation and before any funding decision is taken, all proposals retained for funding will undergo an ethics clearance procedure. The proposals involving sensitive ethical issues will undergo an ethics review as a step of the ethics clearance procedure.

### 1.3.4 Evaluation criteria

**Excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation.** It will be applied to the evaluation of both the Principal Investigators and the group's research project in conjunction.

The detailed elements applying to the 2 parts of the proposal are specified in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 – section 8.4. Applicants should carefully read this section of the Work Programme. The criteria are reproduced below:

#### 1. Research Project

*Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility*

## Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

*To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?*

*To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development across disciplines)?*

*How much is the proposed research high risk/high gain?*

## Scientific Approach

*To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible (based on Extended Synopsis)?*

*To what extent is the proposed research methodology appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (based on Scientific Proposal)?*

*To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology (based on Scientific Proposal)?*

*To what extent are the proposed timescales and resources necessary and properly justified (based on Scientific Proposal)?*

## Added value of the Group

*To what extent does the proposal require and demonstrate novel working arrangements, significant synergies and scientific added-value to enable it to achieve its objectives?*

*Do they go beyond what the individual Principal Investigators could achieve alone?*

## 2. Principal Investigators

### *Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment*

	Fully agree	Agree partially	Disagree partially	Strongly disagree
<i>The track records of each of the PIs are characterized by ground-breaking research and their achievements have typically gone beyond the state-of-the-art.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>The track records of each of the PIs contain abundant evidence of creative independent thinking.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Each of the PIs demonstrate the level of commitment to the project necessary for its execution and have demonstrated the willingness to devote a significant amount of the time to the project (min 30% of the total working time on it and min 50% in a EU Member State or Associated Country) as well as to spend significant periods of "core time" being physically located in the same place (based on Scientific Proposal).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Application of criteria

Panels and referees will evaluate the proposals under the criteria of Heading 1: *Group Research Project* and Heading 2: *Principal Investigators*. The evaluation panels will review the level of the requested grant and, as appropriate, suggest adjustments.

At the end of each evaluation step, the proposals will be ranked by the panel or panels on the basis of the marks they have received and the panels' overall appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses.

Projects recommended for funding will be funded by the ERC if sufficient funds are available. Proposals will be funded in priority order based on their rank.

### **1.3.5 Feedback to applicants**

Official communications and feedbacks from the ERCEA to the Corresponding PI and the Corresponding HI (as the applicant legal entity) may be done via an ERCEA secured web-mail account. At the time of the first communication or feedback, the Corresponding PI and the administrative contact person of the Corresponding HI will receive an activation email (at the address *Email 1* provided in *form A1*) inviting them to activate their ERC web-mail account. Following this first activation the ERC web-mail account will be maintained for any further communications or feedback.

The Corresponding PI and Corresponding HI are provided with feedback on the outcome of the peer review evaluation in the form of an evaluation report. This indicates whether the proposal meets the quality threshold and is retained, and provides the score and corresponding comments given by the panel as well as the comments given by the individual reviewers.

**Please note that the comments by the individual reviewers may not necessarily be convergent – controversy and differences in opinion about the merits of a proposal are part of the 'scientific method' and are legitimate.**

Furthermore, the ERC panel may take a position that is different from what could be inferred from the comments of the individual reviewers. This is the case for example, if the panel discussion reveals an important weakness in a proposal that had not been identified by the individual reviewers. The panel comments reflect the consensus decision taken by the panel as a whole based on prior remote individual assessments from independent reviewers, which can be remote referees as well as panel members, and on a thorough discussion and on the ranking against other proposals during the panel meeting.

### **1.3.6 Redress**

Upon reception of the feedback on the outcome of the peer review evaluation with the evaluation report or with the results of the eligibility check, the Corresponding PI and/or the Corresponding HI may wish to introduce a request for redress, if there is an indication that there has been a shortcoming in the way a proposal has been evaluated, or that the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect. The redress procedure is not meant to call into question the scientific judgement made by the peer review panel; it will look into procedural shortcomings and – in rare cases – factual errors.

Such requests for redress should be raised within one month of the date of the feedback on the outcome of the peer review evaluation sent by the ERC Executive Agency, and should be introduced via the web-based mailing system at

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/research/participants/redress>

Requests must be:

- related to the peer review evaluation process, or eligibility checks, for the call and funding scheme in question;
- set out using the online form via the above-mentioned web-based mailing system, including a clear description of the grounds for complaint;
- received within the time limit specified on the information letter;
- submitted by the Corresponding PI and/or the Corresponding HI (as the applicant legal entity).

An initial reply will be sent to complainants no later than two weeks after the deadline for redress requests. This initial reply will indicate when a definitive reply will be provided.

A redress committee of the ERC Executive Agency may be convened to examine the peer review evaluation process for the case in question. The redress committee will bring together staff of the ERCEA with the requisite scientific/technical and legal expertise. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of requests, and equal treatment of applicants. The redress committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the committee may review the evaluation report, the individual comments and examine the CVs of the experts. In the light of its review, the committee will recommend a course of action to the ERC Executive Agency. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated. Unless there is clear evidence of a shortcoming there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation.

Please note:

- This procedure is concerned with the peer review evaluation and/or eligibility checking process.
- The **committee will not call into question the scientific judgment** of the individual peer reviewers, who are appropriately qualified experts.
- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on the other criteria.
- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.
- Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee.
- All requests for redress will be treated in confidence.

## **2 : Managing ERC Synergy Grants**

## 2.1 Preparation of a grant agreement<sup>42</sup>

The ERC Executive Agency prepares grant agreements for projects on the basis of the proposal and the recommendations of the ERC panel. The grant preparation involves no negotiation of scientific/technical substance. Applicant legal entities and Corresponding PIs are expected to provide, if requested, further information on the project and its envisaged management in view of the rules applicable to ERC grants and if needed on the legal and financial capacity of the legal applicant entity or other additional legal entities.

If the conditions are accepted, the ERC Executive Agency prepares the draft grant agreement: the template of the grant agreement and its annexes can be found at the following link:

<http://erc.europa.eu/document-library>

Additionally to the standard text of the grant agreement, each HI (Corresponding HI and the other HIs) shall conclude a 'Supplementary Agreement' with their respective PIs to ensure the minimum requirements for the project implementation, such as the host institution's commitment to grant the PIs' Synergy project the requisite basic support and the independence to manage the research funding for the duration of the project, amongst others. Any provisions of the supplementary agreement<sup>43</sup> which are not in accordance with the ERC grant agreement shall be deemed to be void for the purposes of the ERC grant agreement.

The start of the project normally takes place the first calendar day of the month following conclusion of the grant agreement. Due to the ground-breaking nature of frontier research projects, it is expected that all projects start within 6 months from the invitation to initiate the preparation of the granting process. The ERC reserves the right to cancel a grant if the proposed start date goes beyond this limit.

## 2.2 Flexibility within an ERC grant agreement

### 2.2.1 Change of scientific strategy and/or objectives

The PIs are expected to carry out the project as described in the grant agreement, however, it is possible to adjust the scientific strategy and reallocate expenditure (e.g. regarding staff, equipment, consumables) accordingly, provided the research performed is still in line with the original scientific or scholarly objectives. **Please note that if one of the PIs withdraws from the project, the project will be subject to a re-evaluation.**

### 2.2.2 Grant portability<sup>44</sup>

It is expected that the group of PIs establishes and concludes the funded research project in association with the original Corresponding HI (or with the group of HIs in the case of a multi-beneficiary project). However, the ERC grant scheme allows PIs having received a frontier research grant to transfer their project or part of the project from one host institution to another in the course of the project. The PI(s) concerned should then directly inform the

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<sup>42</sup> Detailed information and documentation, including the template structures and forms for financial and scientific reporting are provided in the ERC Guidance Notes for preparing the Grant Agreement available at <http://erc.europa.eu/document-library>

<sup>43</sup> See template with minimum requirements available at <http://erc.europa.eu/document-library>

<sup>44</sup> The portability refers to the project or part of the project.

principal beneficiary and his/her own beneficiary, presenting the reasons<sup>45</sup> for wishing to move to another institution. In many cases, in order to facilitate mobility of researchers, when there is a common agreement among the PI(s) and the original and the new host institutions, such a request will be dealt with by the ERC Executive Agency<sup>46,47</sup>.

The original host institution is expected to transfer funds other than those that have not already been covered by an accepted cost claim or funds permanently committed to resources required for the project (on personnel, consumables, etc). It is expected to take all reasonable steps to transfer equipment and other purchases made for the benefit of the project, such that the aims of the project can be secured<sup>48</sup>.

If more than one beneficiary is involved in the project, only that part of the grant that is assigned to the host institution of the concerned PI is transferable (unless otherwise agreed with the other beneficiaries).

In case of transfer of the entire project or a part of it, the beneficiary and the new beneficiary(ies) shall define before the transfer the background and foreground needed for the purposes of the project in a written agreement and, where appropriate, may agree to exclude specific background.

## **2.3 Project progress reporting**

Project reporting is carried out in two streams: scientific reporting (for which the Corresponding PI is responsible on behalf of the PIs' Synergy project) and financial reporting on the use of resources (for which the Corresponding Host Institution is responsible with the endorsement by the Corresponding PI).

### **2.3.1 Scientific reporting**

The Corresponding PI is required to send scientific reports to the ERC Executive Agency (normally two intermediate reports for a 6 year project and one at the end of the project). These reports inform the ERCEA on progress and achievements of the project. Specific outputs from the project should be included (e.g. publications).

The scientific reports may be subject to review by a pertinent scientific review panel convened by the ERCEA, which may also involve site visits. The review panel will make recommendations as to the future course of the project.

### **2.3.2 Financial reporting**

The Corresponding Host Institution is required to send financial reports (normally every 18 months) justifying the use of any expenditure<sup>49</sup>. A certificate on the financial statements shall be submitted for claims of interim payments and final payments when the amount of the financial contribution of the Union claimed by a beneficiary<sup>50</sup> under the form of reimbursement of costs is equal to or superior to EUR 375 000, when cumulated with all previous payments for which a certificate on the financial statements has not been

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<sup>45</sup> This may, for example, be necessary if the provisions for the PI's leadership of the research have not been respected.

<sup>46</sup> However, in some cases, only after a careful analysis of the request by the ERC Executive Agency, which may involve a review of the project, will the PI be entitled to request transfer of the remainder of the grant to the new host institution.

<sup>47</sup> This would not normally be done within the first two years of the start of the project.

<sup>48</sup> In some countries, equipment is formally owned by the State and the consent of the host institution alone may not be sufficient.

<sup>49</sup> The Corresponding PI should consult the other participating PIs in the project when endorsing the financial reports prepared by the Corresponding Host Institution.

<sup>50</sup> In this case, the beneficiary includes the Corresponding Host Institution, other host institution(s) and any other beneficiary under Special Clause ERC 30.



submitted.) Where the project involves more than one legal entity, the Corresponding Host Institution must provide a consolidated cost claim.

Applicants are reminded that the Commission's Research DGs have adopted a new and reinforced audit strategy aimed at detecting and correcting errors in cost claims submitted in projects on the basis of professional auditing standards. As a result, the number of audits and participants audited will increase significantly and the Commission's services will ensure the appropriate mutual exchange of information within its relevant internal departments in order to fully coordinate any corrective actions to be taken in a consistent way. More information can be found here: [http://cordis.europa.eu/audit-certification/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/audit-certification/home_en.html)

## **2.4 Payment of ERC grants**

Grants are paid in several instalments: an advance payment (as pre-financing) is made within a maximum of 45 days of the date of entry into force of the ERC grant agreement. Interim payments are made on the basis of actual expenditures accepted for each financial reporting period.

The total amount of the pre-financing and the interim payments paid out to the beneficiary shall not exceed 90% of the maximum amount of the financial contribution attributed to the project.

A final payment is made corresponding to the last financial reporting period plus any adjustment needed.

## **2.5 Publication and exploitation of results**

### 2.5.1 Acknowledging ERC support

Whenever achievements resulting from ERC-funded research are published (such as in journals, patents, presentations, etc.) each PI should highlight the ERC's financial support under the Seventh Framework Programme. This may imply a written acknowledgment and/or the application of the ERC logo and the European emblem:

*“The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) / ERC Grant agreement n° [xxxxxx]”*

For downloading the image files of the ERC logo and the European emblem, please consult <http://erc.europa.eu/logos-and-banners>

### 2.5.2 Dissemination, exploitation and IPR

A strategy to disseminate and exploit project results should be developed, with due regard to applicable local and national regulations and the rules regarding Intellectual Property Rights described in detail in the ERC grant agreement.

The ERC Executive Agency may publish information on projects which it supports financially. This could include the name of the PIs and host institution(s), the project's objectives, the amount of funding awarded, and the location of the project and the project reports. However, in clearly justified cases, the host institution(s) may request that the ERC Executive Agency does not make this information public.

## 2.6 Further information and support

General information and key documents are available on the **ERC website** at <http://erc.europa.eu> and on the Participant Portal at <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/>. The ERC website also includes 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

As with other parts of the Seventh Framework Programme, **National Contact Points (ERC NCPs)** have been set up across Europe<sup>51</sup> by the national governments to provide information and personalised support to ERC applicants in their native language. The mission of the ERC NCPs is to raise awareness, inform and advise on ERC funding opportunities as well as to support potential applicants in the preparation, submission and follow-up of ERC grant applications<sup>52</sup>. For details on the ERC NCP in your country please consult the ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu/ncp>.

Technical questions related to the Participant Portal Submission System (PPSS) should be directed to the **PPSS Helpdesk** ([DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu), tel. +32 (2) 29 92222) or via its [webportal](#)<sup>53</sup> on the Participant Portal. A general **ERC Helpdesk** is also available and accessible via the Europe Direct Contact Centre at <http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=enquiries>

**Information events** (seminars, conferences, exhibitions) on the ERC or with participation of ERC speakers are published on the ERC website.

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<sup>51</sup> This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some third countries also provide this service.

<sup>52</sup> Note: The ERC will provide the coordinating NCP organisations with information and statistics on the outcome of calls and the evaluation of each proposal. This information is given under strict conditions of confidentiality and allows NCP organisations to customise their service.

<sup>53</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7\\_calls](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls)

## **3 : Annexes**

## **ANNEX 1: ERC KEYWORDS**

For the planning and operation of the evaluation of ERC Synergy Grant proposals the following keywords will be used

### **Social Sciences and Humanities**

#### **SH1 Individuals, Institutions and Markets:** Economics, finance and management

- SH1\_1 Macroeconomics
- SH1\_2 Development, economic growth
- SH1\_3 Microeconomics, behavioural economics
- SH1\_4 Marketing
- SH1\_5 Political economy, institutional economics, law and economics
- SH1\_6 Econometrics, statistical methods
- SH1\_7 Financial markets, asset prices, international finance
- SH1\_8 Banking, corporate finance, accounting
- SH1\_9 Competitiveness, innovation, research and development
- SH1\_10 Organization studies: theory & strategy, industrial organization
- SH1\_11 Labour economics, income distribution and poverty
- SH1\_12 Public economics
- SH1\_13 International trade
- SH1\_14 History of economic thought and quantitative economic history

#### **SH2 Institutions, Values, Beliefs and Behaviour:** Sociology, social anthropology, political science, law, communication, social studies of science and technology

- SH2\_1 Social structure, inequalities, social mobility, interethnic relations
- SH2\_2 Social policies, work and welfare
- SH2\_3 Kinship, cultural dimensions of classification and cognition, identity, gender
- SH2\_4 Myth, ritual, symbolic representations, religious studies
- SH2\_5 Democratization, social movements
- SH2\_6 Violence, conflict and conflict resolution
- SH2\_7 Political systems and institutions, governance
- SH2\_8 Legal studies, constitutions, comparative law, human rights
- SH2\_9 Global and transnational governance, international studies
- SH2\_10 Communication networks, media, information society
- SH2\_11 Social studies of science and technology

#### **SH3 Environment, Space and Population:** Environmental studies, geography, demography, migration, regional and urban studies

- SH3\_1 Environment, resources and sustainability
- SH3\_2 Environmental change and society
- SH3\_3 Environmental regulations and climate negotiations
- SH3\_4 Social and industrial ecology
- SH3\_5 Population dynamics, aging, health and society
- SH3\_6 Households, family and fertility
- SH3\_7 Migration
- SH3\_8 Mobility, tourism, transportation and logistics
- SH3\_9 Spatial development and architecture, land use, regional planning
- SH3\_10 Urban studies, regional studies
- SH3\_11 Social geography, infrastructure,
- SH3\_12 Geo-information and spatial data analysis

**SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity:** Cognitive science, psychology, linguistics, education

- SH4\_1 Evolution of mind and cognitive functions, animal communication
- SH4\_2 Human life-span development
- SH4\_3 Neuropsychology
- SH4\_4 Cognitive and experimental psychology: perception, action, and higher cognitive processes
- SH4\_5 Social and clinical psychology
- SH4\_6 Linguistics: formal, cognitive, functional and computational linguistics
- SH4\_7 Linguistics: typological, historical and comparative linguistics
- SH4\_8 Psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics: acquisition and knowledge of language, language pathologies
- SH4\_9 Use of language: pragmatics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, second language teaching and learning, lexicography, terminology
- SH4\_10 Philosophy of mind, epistemology and logic
- SH4\_11 Education: systems and institutions, teaching and learning

**SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production:** Literature and philosophy, visual and performing arts, music, cultural and comparative studies

- SH5\_1 Classics, ancient Greek and Latin literature and art
- SH5\_2 History of literature
- SH5\_3 Literary theory and comparative literature, literary styles
- SH5\_4 Textual philology, palaeography and epigraphy
- SH5\_5 Visual arts, performing arts, design
- SH5\_6 Philosophy, history of philosophy
- SH5\_7 Museums and exhibitions
- SH5\_8 Music and musicology, history of music
- SH5\_9 History of art and architecture
- SH5\_10 Cultural studies, cultural diversity
- SH5\_11 Cultural heritage, cultural memory

**SH6 The Study of the Human Past:** Archaeology, history and memory

- SH6\_1 Archaeology, archaeometry, landscape archaeology
- SH6\_2 Prehistory and protohistory
- SH6\_3 Ancient history
- SH6\_4 Medieval history
- SH6\_5 Early modern history
- SH6\_6 Modern and contemporary history
- SH6\_7 Colonial and post-colonial history, global and transnational history, entangled histories
- SH6\_8 Social and economic history
- SH6\_9 gender history
- SH6\_10 History of ideas, intellectual history, history of sciences and techniques
- SH6\_11 Cultural history, history of collective identities and memories
- SH6\_12 Historiography, theory and methods of history

## Physical Sciences and Engineering

**PE1 Mathematics:** All areas of mathematics, pure and applied, plus mathematical foundations of computer science, mathematical physics and statistics

- PE1\_1 Logic and foundations
- PE1\_2 Algebra
- PE1\_3 Number theory
- PE1\_4 Algebraic and complex geometry
- PE1\_5 Geometry
- PE1\_6 Topology
- PE1\_7 Lie groups, Lie algebras
- PE1\_8 Analysis
- PE1\_9 Operator algebras and functional analysis
- PE1\_10 ODE and dynamical systems
- PE1\_11 Theoretical aspects of partial differential equations
- PE1\_12 Mathematical physics
- PE1\_13 Probability
- PE1\_14 Statistics
- PE1\_15 Discrete mathematics and combinatorics
- PE1\_16 Mathematical aspects of computer science
- PE1\_17 Numerical analysis
- PE1\_18 Scientific computing and data processing
- PE1\_19 Control theory and optimization
- PE1\_20 Application of mathematics in sciences
- PE1\_21 Application of mathematics in industry and society

**PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter:** Particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics

- PE2\_1 Fundamental interactions and fields
- PE2\_2 Particle physics
- PE2\_3 Nuclear physics
- PE2\_4 Nuclear astrophysics
- PE2\_5 Gas and plasma physics
- PE2\_6 Electromagnetism
- PE2\_7 Atomic, molecular physics
- PE2\_8 Ultra-cold atoms and molecules
- PE2\_9 Optics, non-linear optics and nano-optics
- PE2\_10 Quantum optics and quantum information
- PE2\_11 Lasers, ultra-short lasers and laser physics
- PE2\_12 Acoustics
- PE2\_13 Relativity
- PE2\_14 Thermodynamics
- PE2\_15 Non-linear physics
- PE2\_16 General physics
- PE2\_17 Metrology and measurement
- PE2\_18 Statistical physics (gases)

**PE3 Condensed Matter Physics:** Structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences, biophysics

- PE3\_1 Structure of solids and liquids

- PE3\_2 Mechanical and acoustical properties of condensed matter, Lattice dynamics
- PE3\_3 Transport properties of condensed matter
- PE3\_4 Electronic properties of materials, surfaces, interfaces, nanostructures...
- PE3\_5 Semiconductors and insulators: material growth, physical properties
- PE3\_6 Macroscopic quantum phenomena: superconductivity, superfluidity...
- PE3\_7 Spintronics
- PE3\_8 Magnetism and strongly correlated systems
- PE3\_9 Condensed matter – beam interactions (photons, electrons...)
- PE3\_10 Nanophysics: nanoelectronics, nanophotonics, nanomagnetism, nanoelectromechanics...
- PE3\_11 Mesoscopic physics
- PE3\_12 Molecular electronics
- PE3\_13 Structure and dynamics of disordered systems: soft matter (gels, colloids, liquid crystals...), glasses, defects...
- PE3\_14 Fluid dynamics (physics)
- PE3\_15 Statistical physics: phase transitions, noise and fluctuations, models of complex systems...
- PE3\_16 Physics of biological systems

**PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences:** Analytical chemistry, chemical theory, physical chemistry/chemical physics

- PE4\_1 Physical chemistry
- PE4\_2 Spectroscopic and spectrometric techniques
- PE4\_3 Molecular architecture and Structure
- PE4\_4 Surface science and nanostructures
- PE4\_5 Analytical chemistry
- PE4\_6 Chemical physics
- PE4\_7 Chemical instrumentation
- PE4\_8 Electrochemistry, electrodialysis, microfluidics, sensors
- PE4\_9 Method development in chemistry
- PE4\_10 Heterogeneous catalysis
- PE4\_11 Physical chemistry of biological systems
- PE4\_12 Chemical reactions: mechanisms, dynamics, kinetics and catalytic reactions
- PE4\_13 Theoretical and computational chemistry
- PE4\_14 Radiation and Nuclear chemistry
- PE4\_15 Photochemistry
- PE4\_16 Corrosion
- PE4\_17 Characterization methods of materials
- PE4\_18 Environment chemistry

**PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials:** Materials synthesis, structure-properties relations, functional and advanced materials, molecular architecture, organic chemistry

- PE5\_1 Structural properties of materials
- PE5\_2 Solid state materials
- PE5\_3 Surface modification
- PE5\_4 Thin films
- PE5\_5 Ionic liquids
- PE5\_6 New materials: oxides, alloys, composite, organic-inorganic hybrid, nanoparticles
- PE5\_7 Biomaterials synthesis
- PE5\_8 Intelligent materials – self assembled materials

- PE5\_9 Coordination chemistry
- PE5\_10 Colloid chemistry
- PE5\_11 Biological chemistry
- PE5\_12 Chemistry of condensed matter
- PE5\_13 Homogeneous catalysis
- PE5\_14 Macromolecular chemistry
- PE5\_15 Polymer chemistry
- PE5\_16 Supramolecular chemistry
- PE5\_17 Organic chemistry
- PE5\_18 Molecular chemistry
- PE5\_19 Combinatorial chemistry

**PE6 Computer Science and Informatics:** Informatics and information systems, computer science, scientific computing, intelligent systems

- PE6\_1 Computer architecture, pervasive computing, ubiquitous computing
- PE6\_2 Computer systems, parallel/distributed systems, sensor networks, embedded systems, cyber-physical systems
- PE6\_3 Software engineering, operating systems, computer languages
- PE6\_4 Theoretical computer science, formal methods, and quantum computing
- PE6\_5 Cryptology, security, privacy, quantum crypto
- PE6\_6 Algorithms, distributed, parallel and network algorithms, algorithmic game theory
- PE6\_7 Artificial intelligence, intelligent systems, multi agent systems
- PE6\_8 Computer graphics, computer vision, multi media, computer games
- PE6\_9 Human computer interaction and interface, visualization and natural language processing
- PE6\_10 Web and information systems, database systems, information retrieval and digital libraries, data fusion
- PE6\_11 Machine learning, statistical data processing and applications using signal processing (e.g. speech, image, video)
- PE6\_12 Scientific computing, simulation and modelling tools
- PE6\_13 Bioinformatics, biocomputing, and DNA and molecular computation

**PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering:** Electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering

- PE7\_1 Control engineering
- PE7\_2 Electrical and electronic engineering: semiconductors, components, systems
- PE7\_3 Simulation engineering and modelling
- PE7\_4 Systems engineering, sensorics, actorics, automation
- PE7\_5 Micro- and nanoelectronics, optoelectronics
- PE7\_6 Communication technology, high-frequency technology
- PE7\_7 Signal processing
- PE7\_8 Networks (communication networks, sensor networks, networks of robots...)
- PE7\_9 Man-machine-interfaces
- PE7\_10 Robotics

**PE8 Products and Processes Engineering:** Product design, process design and control, construction methods, civil engineering, energy systems, material engineering

- PE8\_1 Aerospace engineering
- PE8\_2 Chemical engineering, technical chemistry



- PE8\_3 Civil engineering, maritime/hydraulic engineering, geotechnics, waste treatment
- PE8\_4 Computational engineering
- PE8\_5 Fluid mechanics, hydraulic-, turbo-, and piston engines
- PE8\_6 Energy systems (production, distribution, application)
- PE8\_7 Micro (system) engineering
- PE8\_8 Mechanical and manufacturing engineering (shaping, mounting, joining, separation)
- PE8\_9 Materials engineering (biomaterials, metals, ceramics, polymers, composites...)
- PE8\_10 Production technology, process engineering
- PE8\_11 Industrial design (product design, ergonomics, man-machine interfaces...)
- PE8\_12 Sustainable design (for recycling, for environment, eco-design)
- PE8\_13 Lightweight construction, textile technology
- PE8\_14 Industrial bioengineering
- PE8\_15 Industrial biofuel production
- PE8\_16 Architectural engineering

**PE9 Universe Sciences:** Astro-physics/chemistry/biology; solar system; stellar, galactic and extragalactic astronomy, planetary systems, cosmology, space science, instrumentation

- PE9\_1 Solar and interplanetary physics
- PE9\_2 Planetary systems sciences
- PE9\_3 Interstellar medium
- PE9\_4 Formation of stars and planets
- PE9\_5 Astrobiology
- PE9\_6 Stars and stellar systems
- PE9\_7 The Galaxy
- PE9\_8 Formation and evolution of galaxies
- PE9\_9 Clusters of galaxies and large scale structures
- PE9\_10 High energy and particles astronomy – X-rays, cosmic rays, gamma rays, neutrinos
- PE9\_11 Relativistic astrophysics
- PE9\_12 Dark matter, dark energy
- PE9\_13 Gravitational astronomy
- PE9\_14 Cosmology
- PE9\_15 Space Sciences
- PE9\_16 Very large data bases: archiving, handling and analysis
- PE9\_17 Instrumentation - telescopes, detectors and techniques

**PE10 Earth System Science:** Physical geography, geology, geophysics, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management

- PE10\_1 Atmospheric chemistry, atmospheric composition, air pollution
- PE10\_2 Meteorology, atmospheric physics and dynamics
- PE10\_3 Climatology and climate change
- PE10\_4 Terrestrial ecology, land cover change
- PE10\_5 Geology, tectonics, volcanology
- PE10\_6 Paleoclimatology, paleoecology
- PE10\_7 Physics of earth's interior, seismology, volcanology
- PE10\_8 Oceanography (physical, chemical, biological, geological)
- PE10\_9 Biogeochemistry, biogeochemical cycles, environmental chemistry
- PE10\_10 Mineralogy, petrology, igneous petrology, metamorphic petrology
- PE10\_11 Geochemistry, crystal chemistry, isotope geochemistry, thermodynamics

PE10\_12 Sedimentology, soil science, palaeontology, earth evolution  
PE10\_13 Physical geography  
PE10\_14 Earth observations from space/remote sensing  
PE10\_15 Geomagnetism, paleomagnetism  
PE10\_16 Ozone, upper atmosphere, ionosphere  
PE10\_17 Hydrology, water and soil pollution  
PE10\_18 Cryosphere, dynamics of snow and ice cover, sea ice, permafrosts and ice sheets

## Life Sciences

**LS1 Molecular and Structural Biology and Biochemistry:** Molecular synthesis, modification and interaction, biochemistry, biophysics, structural biology, metabolism, signal transduction

- LS1\_1 Molecular interactions
- LS1\_2 General biochemistry and metabolism
- LS1\_3 DNA synthesis, modification, repair, recombination and degradation
- LS1\_4 RNA synthesis, processing, modification and degradation
- LS1\_5 Protein synthesis, modification and turnover
- LS1\_6 Lipid synthesis, modification and turnover
- LS1\_7 Carbohydrate synthesis, modification and turnover
- LS1\_8 Biophysics (e.g. transport mechanisms, bioenergetics, fluorescence)
- LS1\_9 Structural biology (crystallography and EM)
- LS1\_10 Structural biology (NMR)
- LS1\_11 Biochemistry and molecular mechanisms of signal transduction

**LS2 Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics and Systems Biology:** Molecular and population genetics, genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, bioinformatics, computational biology, biostatistics, biological modelling and simulation, systems biology, genetic epidemiology

- LS2\_1 Genomics, comparative genomics, functional genomics
- LS2\_2 Transcriptomics
- LS2\_3 Proteomics
- LS2\_4 Metabolomics
- LS2\_5 Glycomics
- LS2\_6 Molecular genetics, reverse genetics and RNAi
- LS2\_7 Quantitative genetics
- LS2\_8 Epigenetics and gene regulation
- LS2\_9 Genetic epidemiology
- LS2\_10 Bioinformatics
- LS2\_11 Computational biology
- LS2\_12 Biostatistics
- LS2\_13 Systems biology
- LS2\_14 Biological systems analysis, modelling and simulation

**LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology:** Cell biology, cell physiology, signal transduction, organogenesis, developmental genetics, pattern formation in plants and animals, stem cell biology

- LS3\_1 Morphology and functional imaging of cells

- LS3\_2 Cell biology and molecular transport mechanisms
- LS3\_3 Cell cycle and division
- LS3\_4 Apoptosis
- LS3\_5 Cell differentiation, physiology and dynamics
- LS3\_6 Organelle biology
- LS3\_7 Cell signalling and cellular interactions
- LS3\_8 Signal transduction
- LS3\_9 Development, developmental genetics, pattern formation and embryology in animals
- LS3\_10 Development, developmental genetics, pattern formation and embryology in plants
- LS3\_11 Cell genetics
- LS3\_12 Stem cell biology

**LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology:** Organ physiology, pathophysiology, endocrinology, metabolism, ageing, tumorigenesis, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome

- LS4\_1 Organ physiology and pathophysiology
- LS4\_2 Comparative physiology and pathophysiology
- LS4\_3 Endocrinology
- LS4\_4 Ageing
- LS4\_5 Metabolism, biological basis of metabolism related disorders
- LS4\_6 Cancer and its biological basis
- LS4\_7 Cardiovascular diseases
- LS4\_8 Non-communicable diseases (except for neural/psychiatric, immunity-related, metabolism-related disorders, cancer and cardiovascular diseases)

**LS5 Neurosciences and Neural Disorders:** Neurobiology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neurochemistry, neuropharmacology, neuroimaging, systems neuroscience, neurological and psychiatric disorders

- LS5\_1 Neuroanatomy and neurophysiology
- LS5\_2 Molecular and cellular neuroscience
- LS5\_3 Neurochemistry and neuropharmacology
- LS5\_4 Sensory systems (e.g. visual system, auditory system)
- LS5\_5 Mechanisms of pain
- LS5\_6 Developmental neurobiology
- LS5\_7 Cognition (e.g. learning, memory, emotions, speech)
- LS5\_8 Behavioural neuroscience (e.g. sleep, consciousness, handedness)
- LS5\_9 Systems neuroscience
- LS5\_10 Neuroimaging and computational neuroscience
- LS5\_11 Neurological disorders (e.g. Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, Parkinson's disease)
- LS5\_12 Psychiatric disorders (e.g. schizophrenia, autism, Tourette's syndrome, obsessive compulsive disorder, depression, bipolar disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)

**LS6 Immunity and Infection:** The immune system and related disorders, infectious agents and diseases, prevention and treatment of infection

- LS6\_1 Innate immunity and inflammation
- LS6\_2 Adaptive immunity
- LS6\_3 Phagocytosis and cellular immunity

- LS6\_4 Immunosignalling
- LS6\_5 Immunological memory and tolerance
- LS6\_6 Immunogenetics
- LS6\_7 Microbiology
- LS6\_8 Virology
- LS6\_9 Bacteriology
- LS6\_10 Parasitology
- LS6\_11 Prevention and treatment of infection by pathogens (e.g. vaccination, antibiotics, fungicide)
- LS6\_12 Biological basis of immunity related disorders (e.g. autoimmunity)
- LS6\_13 Veterinary medicine and infectious diseases in animals

**LS7 Diagnostic Tools, Therapies and Public Health:** Aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of disease, public health, epidemiology, pharmacology, clinical medicine, regenerative medicine, medical ethics

- LS7\_1 Medical engineering and technology
- LS7\_2 Diagnostic tools (e.g. genetic, imaging)
- LS7\_3 Pharmacology, pharmacogenomics, drug discovery and design, drug therapy
- LS7\_4 Analgesia and Surgery
- LS7\_5 Toxicology
- LS7\_6 Gene therapy, cell therapy, regenerative medicine
- LS7\_7 Radiation therapy
- LS7\_8 Health services, health care research
- LS7\_9 Public health and epidemiology
- LS7\_10 Environment and health risks, occupational medicine
- LS7\_11 Medical ethics

**LS8 Evolutionary, Population and Environmental Biology:** Evolution, ecology, animal behaviour, population biology, biodiversity, biogeography, marine biology, ecotoxicology, microbial ecology

- LS8\_1 Ecology (theoretical and experimental; population, species and community level)
- LS8\_2 Population biology, population dynamics, population genetics
- LS8\_3 Systems evolution, biological adaptation, phylogenetics, systematics, comparative biology
- LS8\_4 Biodiversity, conservation biology, conservation genetics, invasion biology
- LS8\_5 Evolutionary biology: evolutionary ecology and genetics, co-evolution
- LS8\_6 Biogeography, macro-ecology
- LS8\_7 Animal behaviour
- LS8\_8 Environmental and marine biology
- LS8\_9 Environmental toxicology at the population and ecosystems level
- LS8\_10 Microbial ecology and evolution
- LS8\_11 Species interactions (e.g. food-webs, symbiosis, parasitism, mutualism)

**LS9 Applied life Sciences and Non-Medical Biotechnology:** Agricultural, animal, fishery, forestry and food sciences; biotechnology, genetic engineering, synthetic and chemical biology, industrial biosciences; environmental biotechnology and remediation

- LS9\_1 Applied genetic engineering, transgenic organisms, recombinant proteins, biosensors
- LS9\_2 Synthetic biology, chemical biology and new bio-engineering concepts
- LS9\_3 Agriculture related to animal husbandry, dairying, livestock raising
- LS9\_4 Aquaculture, fisheries

LS9_5	Agriculture related to crop production, soil biology and cultivation, applied plant biology
LS9_6	Food sciences
LS9_7	Forestry, biomass production (e.g. for biofuels)
LS9_8	Environmental biotechnology, bioremediation, biodegradation
LS9_9	Applied biotechnology (non-medical), bioreactors, applied microbiology
LS9_10	Biomimetics
LS9_11	Biohazards, biological containment, biosafety, biosecurity

## **ANNEX 2: ETHICAL ISSUES**

### **Annex 2a: Specific Information on Ethical Issues**

The objective of the ethics review is to ensure that the European Union does not support research which would be contrary to fundamental ethical principles (see Box 6) and to examine whether the research complies with the rules relating to research ethics set out in the Decisions on FP7 and the Ideas Specific Programme. All proposals retained for funding, regardless of the applicant having identified any ethical issues, will be reviewed concomitantly the peer review evaluation. The proposals identified as having ethical issues by the Corresponding PI or during the ethics process (see Annex 2b) will undergo an ethics review that can take up to several weeks to be completed, according to the complexity and sensitivity of the issues involved. Applicants need to be aware that no grant agreement can be signed by the ERCEA prior to a satisfactory conclusion of the ethics review.

Proposals raising specific ethical issues such as research intervention on human beings<sup>54</sup>; research on human embryos and human embryonic stem cells and non-human primates are automatically submitted to a more in-depth ethics review.

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<sup>54</sup> Such as research and clinical trials, and research involving invasive techniques on persons (e.g. taking of tissue samples, examinations of the brain).

## Box 6: Dealing with ethical issues

Fundamental ethical principles must be respected, including those reflected in the Charter\* of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. These principles include the need to ensure the freedom of research and the need to protect the physical and moral integrity of individuals and the welfare of animals.

**Applicants should indicate whether the proposed research raises sensitive ethical questions such as research involving human beings, human biological samples, personal data, genetic information or animals\*\*.**

According to Article 6 of the FP7 Decision and Article 3 of the Specific Programme 'Ideas', the following activities cannot be funded:

- research activities aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- research activities intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable;
- research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

As regards human embryonic stem cell research, the ERC is bound by the European Commission's commitment to follow the practice of the EU's Sixth Research Framework Programme (see OJ L 412 of 30.12.2006, p. 42) and exclude from financial support any research activities destroying human embryos, including for the procurement of stem cells. The exclusion of funding of this step of research will not prevent ERC funding of subsequent steps involving human embryonic stem cells.

Applicants must ensure that the research proposed respects all national rules and procedures of the relevant country where the proposed research is conducted. Where necessary, approval must be sought from the relevant national or local ethics committee prior to the start of the project.

The opinions of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE)\*\*\* are and will be taken into account. Furthermore, due account should be taken of the Protocol\*\*\*\* on the Protection and Welfare of Animals, to reduce the use of animals in research and testing (with a view to ultimately replacing animal use), to involve animals with the lowest degree of neuropsychological sensitivity, and to cause the least pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm.

\*see [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm)

\*\*a dedicated website that aims to provide helpful information on ethical issues is available at: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html)

\*\*\*see [http://ec.europa.eu/bepa/european-group-ethics/docs/publications/opinion\\_22\\_final\\_follow\\_up\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/bepa/european-group-ethics/docs/publications/opinion_22_final_follow_up_en.pdf)

\*\*\*\*see [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/references\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/references_en.htm)

## Ethical Issues Table and description of ethical issues in the research proposal, part B1

The Ethical Issues Table (see Annex 2b) has to be completed **even if there are no ethical issues** in part B1 (simply confirming that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal).

If the answer to any of the questions of the Ethical Issues Table is "YES", the Corresponding PI must provide a brief description of the ethical issues involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately on the **Ethical Issues Annex** provided in PPSS (together with the part B1 template). In particular, it should outline the **benefit** and **burden** of such research, the effects it may have and how the ethical issues will be managed.

The Corresponding PI may wish to include copies of any existing authorisation for the proposed work (these copies do not count towards the page limit).

The following special issues, among others, should be taken into account:

**Informed consent:** When describing issues relating to informed consent, it will be necessary to demonstrate an appropriate level of ethical sensitivity and to consider issues of insurance, incidental findings and the consequences of withdrawing from the study.

**Data protection issues:** Avoid the unnecessary collection and use of personal data. Identify the source of the data, describing whether it is collected as part of the research or if previously collected data is being used. Consider issues of informed consent for any data being used. Describe how personal identification data is protected.

**Use of animals:** Where animals are used in research the application of the 3Rs (Replace, Reduce, Refine) must be convincingly addressed. The number of animals used should be specified. Describe what happens to the animals after the research experiments.

**Human embryonic stem cells:** Research proposals that will involve human embryonic stem cells (hESCs) will have to address all the following specific points:

- the Corresponding PI as well as, where appropriate, the Corresponding Host Institution (the applicant legal entity) should demonstrate that the project fulfils important research aims to advance scientific knowledge in basic research or to increase medical knowledge for the development of diagnostic, preventive or therapeutic methods to be applied to humans.
- the necessity to use hESCs in order to achieve the scientific objectives set forth in the proposal. In particular, applicants must document that appropriate validated alternatives (in particular, stem cells from other sources or origins) are not suitable and/or available to achieve the expected goals of the proposal. This latter provision does not apply to research comparing hESCs with other human stem cells.
- the Corresponding PI as well as the Corresponding Host Institution (the applicant legal entity) should take into account the legislation, regulations, ethical rules and/or codes of conduct in place in the country(ies) where the research using hESC is to take place, including the procedures for obtaining informed consent;
- the Corresponding PI as well as the Corresponding Host Institution (the applicant legal entity) should ensure that for all hESC lines to be used in the project were derived from embryos
  - of which the donor(s) express, written and informed consent was provided freely, in accordance with national legislation prior to the procurement of the cells.
  - that result from medically-assisted *in vitro* fertilisation designed to induce pregnancy, and were no longer to be used for that purpose.
  - of which the measures to protect personal data and privacy of donor(s), including genetic data, are in place during the procurement and for any use thereafter. Researchers must accordingly present all data in such a way as to ensure donor anonymity;
  - of which the conditions of donation are adequate, and namely that no pressure was put on the donor(s) at any stage, that no financial inducement was offered to donation for research at any stage and that the infertility treatment and research activities were kept appropriately separate.



## **Ethical considerations when research field work is performed in non-EU Countries**

The proposed research is expected to be responsive to the needs of the country where research is carried out (e.g. the study must be of added value for the health and welfare of the intended participants, their community, and/or their country).

### **Applicable legislation**

The Corresponding PI as well as the Corresponding Host Institution (the applicant legal entity) must abide by European standards of research ethics, as it is expressed in the applicable legislation/regulations of the host countries. They should also comply with internationally accepted guidance documents, such as the Declaration of Helsinki.

### **Benefit sharing**

Research projects where possible, must seek to provide direct benefits to research participants and their community, and also for local researchers. The Corresponding PI should address whether and how the research might impact on the local population.

### **Healthy volunteers**

As healthy volunteers can represent a particularly vulnerable population in emerging economy - and developing countries, specific attention should be paid to ensure that they are able to provide genuine informed consent, and to ensure their safety.

### **Data protection**

Data protection and privacy must be ensured, in compliance with EU/national legislation. If cross-country transmission is anticipated, a formal legal agreement, such as a Material Transfer Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding is recommended so as to safeguard the rights of developing countries, but also those of the stakeholders of the developed country.

### **Animal welfare**

Research projects must comply with the applicable EU/national legislation governing animal experimentation. The proposed research should also contribute to the capacity building of the host country (e.g. in terms of training on animal experiments and/or facilities).

Note: Only in exceptional cases additional information will be sought for clarification, which means that any ethics review will be performed **solely on the basis of the information available in the proposal.**

To ensure compliance with ethical principles, the Commission Services will undertake ethics audit(s) of selected projects at its discretion.

A dedicated website that aims to provide clear and helpful information on ethical issues is now available at: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html)

## Annex 2b: Ethical Issues Table (template)

### Areas Excluded From Funding Under FP7 (Art. 6)

- (i) Research activity aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- (ii) Research activity intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (Research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads can be financed);
- (iii) Research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer;

All FP7 funded research shall comply with the relevant national, EU and international ethics-related rules and professional codes of conduct. Where necessary, the beneficiary(ies) shall provide the responsible Commission services with a written confirmation that it has received (a) favourable opinion(s) of the relevant ethics committee(s) and, if applicable, the regulatory approval(s) of the competent national or local authority(ies) in the country in which the research is to be carried out, before beginning any Commission approved research requiring such opinions or approvals. The copy of the official approval from the relevant national or local ethics committees must also be provided to the responsible Commission services.

<b>Research on Human Embryo/ Foetus</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>Page<sup>55</sup></b>
	Does the proposed research involve human Embryos?		
	Does the proposed research involve human Foetal Tissues/ Cells?		
	Does the proposed research involve human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?		
	Does the proposed research on human Embryonic Stem Cells involve cells in culture?		
	Does the proposed research on Human Embryonic Stem Cells involve the derivation of cells from Embryos?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

<b>Research on Humans</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Does the proposed research involve children?		
	Does the proposed research involve patients?		
	Does the proposed research involve persons not able to give consent?		
	Does the proposed research involve adult healthy volunteers?		
	Does the proposed research involve Human genetic material?		
	Does the proposed research involve Human biological samples?		
	Does the proposed research involve Human data collection?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

<sup>55</sup> Please indicate here the page number of Part B2 of your proposal on which the ethical issue in question arises.

<b>Privacy</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Does the proposed research involve processing of genetic information or personal data (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction)?		
	Does the proposed research involve tracking the location or observation of people?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

<b>Research on Animals<sup>56</sup></b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Does the proposed research involve research on animals?		
	Are those animals transgenic small laboratory animals?		
	Are those animals transgenic farm animals?		
	Are those animals non-human primates?		
	Are those animals cloned farm animals?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

<b>Research Involving non-EU Countries (ICPC Countries<sup>57</sup>)</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Is the proposed research (or parts of it) going to take place in one or more of the ICPC Countries?		
	Is any material used in the research (e.g. personal data, animal and/or human tissue samples, genetic material, live animals, etc) :		
	a) Collected and processed in any of the ICPC countries?		
	b) Exported to any other country (including ICPC and EU Member States)?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

<b>Dual Use</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Research having direct military use		
	Research having the potential for terrorist abuse		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

**Guidance notes on informed consent, dual use, animal welfare, data protection and cooperation with non-EU countries are available at :**

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html#ethics\\_sd](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html#ethics_sd)

**For real time updated information on Data Protection also see:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/index_en.htm)

<sup>56</sup> For real time updated information on Animal welfare also see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab\\_animals/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/home_en.htm)

<sup>57</sup> In accordance with Article 12(1) of the Rules for Participation in FP7, 'International Cooperation Partner Country (ICPC) means a third country which the Commission classifies as a low-income (L), lower-middle-income (LM) or upper-middle-income (UM) country. Countries associated to the Seventh EC Framework Programme do not qualify as ICP Countries and therefore do not appear in this list.

**If any of the above issues apply to your proposal**, you are required to complete and upload the 'B2\_Ethical Issues Annex' (template provided in PPSS).

The **Ethical Issues Annex** (max 2 pages) must provide a brief explanation on the ethical issue involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately. Please specify as well any authorization or permission you already have for the proposed work and include copies (these copies do not count towards the 2-page-limit). The Ethical Issues Annex will allow a proper ethical screening if the proposal is chosen for possible funding. **Without it, your application cannot be reviewed properly.**

Please upload this Ethical Issues Annex and any related documents in the 'part B & annexes' section in PPSS.

**The pages of the Ethical Issues Table (included in part B1 and Ethical Issues Annex (separate document) will not count towards the maximum page limit for part B1.**

## **ANNEX 3: TEMPLATE OF BUDGET TABLE**

In part B1 the use of the following budget table is strongly recommended. The budget table (including the declaration of the level of involvement) should be filled in for the Corresponding Principal Investigator and each Principal Investigator. Please include a summary table (using the same template) for the entire budget.

Note that the budgets are broken down in 4 financial reporting periods of 18 months each.

Please indicate for every budget table the name of the PI and of his/her Host Institution.

	<b>Cost Category</b>	<b>Months 1- 18</b>	<b>Months 19-36</b>	<b>Months 37-54</b>	<b>Months 55-72</b>	<b>Total (72)</b>
<b>Direct Costs:</b>	<i>Personnel:</i>					
	PI <sup>58</sup>					
	Senior Staff					
	Post docs					
	Students					
	Other					
	Total Personnel:					
	<i>Other Direct Costs:</i>					
	Equipment					
	Consumables					
	Travel					
	Publications, etc					
	Other					
	Total Other Direct Costs:					
Total Direct Costs:						
<b>Indirect Costs (overheads):</b>	Max 20% of Direct Costs					
<b>Subcontracting Costs:</b>	(No overheads)					
<b>Total Costs of project:</b>	(by year and total)					
<b>Requested Grant<sup>59</sup>:</b>	(by year and total)					

<b>For the above budget table, please indicate the % of working time the PI dedicates to the project over the period of the grant:</b>	<b>%</b>
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Please note that each PI is expected to devote at least 30% of their working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country (see the Ideas Work Programme 2013, section 8.4.).

<sup>58</sup> Please take into account the percentage of your dedicated working time (minimum 30%) to run the ERC funded activity when calculating the salary.

<sup>59</sup> Please make sure that the sums by period and cost category match.

## **ANNEX 4: COMMITMENT OF THE CORRESPONDING HOST INSTITUTION**

*(to be printed on the official letterhead of the corresponding Host Institution)*

### **Commitment of the Corresponding Host Institution**<sup>60, 61, 62</sup>

The (Please enter name of the legal entity that is associated with the proposal and may host the corresponding principal investigator and the project in case the application is successful), which is the *applicant legal entity*, confirms its intention to sign a supplementary agreement with [Please enter name of the corresponding principal investigator and of the principal investigator(s) that will be engaged by the corresponding Host Institution<sup>63, 64</sup>] in which the obligations listed below will be addressed, should the proposal entitled

(Please enter acronym): (Please enter title of the proposal)

be retained.

The *applicant legal entity* confirms its association with and its support to the group's project which involves the following *principal investigators*: [Please enter the name of the corresponding principal investigator and of all participating principal investigators].

Corresponding PI:

PI 2:

PI 3 (if applicable):

PI 4 (if applicable):

The fact that the applicant legal entity confirms its association with and support to the group's project does not imply an obligation to contractually engage all of the PIs.

Performance obligations of the applicant legal entity that will become the principal beneficiary of the grant agreement, should the proposal be retained and the preparation of the grant agreement be successfully concluded:

The *applicant legal entity* commits itself to engage the *corresponding principal investigator* for the duration of the grant and to:

- a) ensure that the work will be performed under the scientific guidance of the *principal investigators* who will be expected to devote at least 30% of their total working time to

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<sup>60</sup> A scanned copy of the signed statement should be uploaded electronically in the online submission platform in PDF format. More information can be found in section 1.2.2.4 of the Guide for Applicants.

<sup>61</sup> The statement of commitment of the corresponding host institution refers to most obligations of the corresponding host institution, which are stated in the model ERC grant agreement (see article II.2 of the grant agreement). The model ERC grant agreement is available on the ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu>.

<sup>62</sup> This template (on letterhead paper) shall be signed by the institution's legal representative and stating his/her name, function and stamp of the institution.

<sup>63</sup> Please only insert the names of those PIs that will be engaged by the corresponding host institution.

<sup>64</sup> In case of more than one beneficiary, the other additional beneficiary(ies) will be requested to sign a supplementary agreement with their respective PI(s) and undertake the same obligations with their respective PI(s) at the moment of granting.

the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.

- b) carry out the work to be performed, as it will be identified in Annex I of the ERC Grant Agreement, taking into consideration the specific role of the *corresponding principal investigator* and the *principal investigator(s)*.
- c) establish a *supplementary agreement* with the *corresponding principal investigator* and with the *principal investigator(s)* that it will engage, which specifies that the *applicant legal entity* shall:
  - i) support *each principal investigator* in the management of *his/her team* and provide reasonable administrative assistance to the *principal investigators*, in particular as regards:
    - a. the timeliness and clarity of financial information,
    - b. the general management and reporting of finances,
    - c. the advice on internal *applicant legal entity* strategies and *ERC Executive Agency or Commission* policies,
    - d. the organisation of *project* meetings as well as the general logistics of the *project*.
  - ii) provide research support to the *principal investigators* and *their team members* throughout the duration of the *project* in accordance with Annex I ERC Grant Agreement, in particular as regards infrastructure, equipment, products and other services as necessary for the conduct of the research;
  - iii) ensure that the *principal investigators* and *their team members* enjoy, on a royalty-free basis, access rights to the *background* and the *foreground* needed for their activities under the *project* as specified in Annex I ERC Grant Agreement;
  - iv) guarantee adequate contractual conditions to the *principal investigators*, in particular as regards:
    - a. the provisions for annual, sickness and parental leave,
    - b. occupational health and safety standards,
    - c. the general social security scheme, such as pension rights.
  - v) ensure the necessary scientific autonomy of each *principal investigator*, in particular as regards:
    - a. the selection of other *team members*, hosted and engaged by the *applicant legal entity* or other legal entities, in line with profiles needed to conduct the research, including the appropriate advertisement;

- b. the control over the budget in terms of its use to achieve the scientific objectives<sup>65</sup>;
  - c. the authority to deliver scientific reports to the *ERC Executive Agency*<sup>66</sup>;
  - d. the authority to publish as senior authors and invite as co-authors only those who have contributed substantially to the reported work.
- vi) inform the *principal investigators* of any circumstances affecting the implementation of the *project* or leading potentially to a suspension or termination of the ERC Grant Agreement;
- vii) subject to the observance of applicable national law and to the agreement of the *ERC Executive Agency*, the transfer of the grant agreement as well as any pre-financing of the grant not covered by an accepted cost claim to a new legal entity, should a *principal investigator* request to transfer the entire *project* or part of it to this new legal entity. The *applicant legal entity* shall submit a substantiated request for amendment or notify the *ERC Executive Agency* in case of its objection to the transfer.

For the institution (applicant legal entity)

Name, Function, + Signature of legal representative

Stamp of institution (applicant legal entity)

Date

**IMPORTANT NOTE: All the above mentioned items are mandatory and shall be included in the commitment of the corresponding host institution.**

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<sup>65</sup> The reallocation of tasks and budget will be requested by the corresponding principal investigator in consultation with the group of PIs.

<sup>66</sup> The scientific reports will be delivered to the ERCEA through the corresponding principal investigator.



## **ANNEX 5: SECURITY ISSUES**

Security-sensitive proposals are required to follow special procedures. ERC actions may be classified<sup>67</sup> if they are considered as sensitive. These procedures are described in this guide. They will apply to all ERC actions if so specified in the relevant call, or when the subjects addressed are considered as sensitive.

A security-sensitive proposal is a proposal for an action that may need to handle classified information. Proposals submitted to ERC calls must not contain any classified information. However, it is possible that the output of an action ('Foreground') needs to be classified, or that classified inputs ('Background') are required. In such cases, applicants have to declare their proposal as 'sensitive' and provide a Security Aspects Letter (SAL)<sup>68</sup> and its annex Security Classification Guide (SCG)<sup>69</sup> as part of their proposals.

A 'security considerations' flag will be associated with a proposal:

- when the applicant declares a proposal as sensitive;
- if the expert evaluators or the ERCEA detect or suspect any of the following conditions:
  - Classified information is, or may be, used as background information;
  - Some foreground is planned to be classified.

The SCG will cover:

- The level of classification of background and foreground;
- Which participant will have access to what information.

In addition, the following documents are required as part of the proposal:

- A copy of the Facility Security Clearances (FSC) (or the FSC requests). The validity of the FSC will be checked by the European Commission's Security Directorate through the appropriate formal channel with the National Security Authorities (NSAs) involved;
- Formal written authorization by the relevant security authorities to use the classified background.

In addition, a proposal may also be considered as sensitive, independently of any security classification, if it is planned to exchange material subject to transfer or export licensing. In that context, applicants must comply with national laws and EU regulation<sup>70</sup>. If export licences (or intra EU licences) are required for carrying the planned work, applicants must clarify the requirement to have such export or transfer licences and must provide a copy of export or transfer licences (or of the requests).

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<sup>67</sup> As defined in the Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal rules of procedure (OJ, L 317, 3.12.2001).

<sup>68</sup> 'Security Aspects Letter (SAL)': "a set of special contractual conditions, issued by the contracting authority, which forms an integral part of a classified contract involving access to or generation of EU classified information, and that identifies the security requirements or those elements of the classified contract requiring security protection", as defined in section 27 of Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom.

<sup>69</sup> As defined in section 27 of Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom.

<sup>70</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 428/2009 of 5 May 2009 setting up a Community regime for the control of exports, transfer, brokering and transit of dual-use items (OJ L 134, 29.5.2009, p.1).

### **Box 7: Scrutiny of security sensitive ERC actions**

ERC grants addressing security-sensitive subjects must undergo a security scrutiny procedure. In order to ensure this, any successful ERC proposal will be scrutinised for security aspects prior to granting.

A security 'sensitive' proposal is a proposal for an action that may need to handle classified information. Proposals submitted to ERC calls must not contain any classified information. However, it is possible that the output of an action ('Foreground') needs to be classified, or that classified inputs ('Background') are required. In addition, a proposal may also be considered as sensitive if it is planned to exchange material which is subject to transfer or export licensing.

The first step of this scrutiny (security scrutiny clearance) will be carried out by ERCEA staff, who will identify all proposals that clearly have no associated security issues and which therefore should proceed with granting immediately.

The remaining proposals (i.e. those that clearly are or that may be security-sensitive) will be scrutinised, according to legislation, by a '**Security Scrutiny Committee**'. This committee consists of representatives of national security authorities, supported, if appropriate, by representatives of the relevant members of the Programme Committees. The scrutiny will be carried out by Committee members of the same country(ies) as that of the prospective grant beneficiaries (i.e. the host organisation and other organisations involved in the proposal).

The outcome of the scrutiny process results in a recommendation of the committee:

- That no EU classification is needed;
- That an EU classification at some level is needed (references);
- That the proposal is too sensitive to be financed.

## **Annex 5a: Security Aspects Letter (template)**

The following security requirements shall be complied with for handling and storage of the elements and parts of the grant agreement that are mentioned in the Security Classification Guide in Appendix to this SAL for the grant agreement.

- The performance of the grant agreement will involve information classified 'EU restricted', 'EU confidential' or 'EU secret'.
- A Facility Security Clearance is [or is not] required.
- Persons who need to access EU classified information (EUCI) must have an EU personal security clearance and be briefed as to their responsibility for security.
- The beneficiaries concerned shall take all measures prescribed by the National Security Authority/Designated Security Authority (NSA/DSA) for safeguarding EUCI.
- The beneficiaries concerned shall appoint a Facility Security Officer (FSO).
- The beneficiaries concerned, through the FSO, shall maintain a continuing relationship with their NSA/DSA.
- The beneficiaries concerned shall maintain a record of their employees taking part in the project and who have been cleared for access to EUCI.
- EU classified information for the purpose of these instructions is to be understood as information classified and marked 'EU restricted', 'EU confidential' or 'EU secret' or its equivalent national classification.
- Information generated by the beneficiaries concerned will require EU classification and marking.
- The beneficiaries concerned must obtain the approval of the Contracting Authority before beginning negotiations with a view to subcontract.
- The Commission Security Directorate may - in co-ordination with the responsible NSA/DSA - conduct inspections at concerned beneficiaries' facilities to verify the implementation of the security requirements for the handling of EUCI.
- The beneficiaries concerned shall report all cases of unauthorised disclosure or loss of EUCI to the responsible NSA/DSA, the Commission Security Directorate and the Contracting Authority.
- All EUCI provided or generated under this grant agreement shall continue to be protected in the event of termination of the grant agreement.
- The beneficiaries concerned shall undertake not to use, other than for the specific purpose of the grant agreement No ... [to be completed].
- Handling and storage instructions for information classified 'EU restricted', 'EU confidential' or 'EU secret'.

## Annex 5b: Security Classification Guide (template)

### Annex to the Security Aspects Letter

*This template should be filled in for all sensitive projects and will be part of the grant agreement.*

<b>Handling of classified Background</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Classification level</b>	<b>Beneficiaries involved in handling or wanting to access</b>		<b>Comments including purpose of the access and planned use</b>
		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Date of handling or request of access</b>	
number and name of the reports	Classification level	entities name only		
		owner		
		entities name only		
		reader		
		...		
		...		

<b>Production of classified Foreground</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Classification level</b>	<b>Beneficiaries involved in production or wanting to access</b>		<b>Comments including purpose of the access and planned use</b>
		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Date of production or request of access</b>	
number and name of the deliverable	proposed Classification level	entities name only		
		owner		
		entities name only		
		contributor		
		entities name only		
		reader		
		...		
		...		

Please see the Commission decision No 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal rules of procedure (OJ, L 317, 3.12.2001).

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2001D0844:20060805:EN:PDF>