European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC Frontier Research Grants

Guide for Applicants for the

Starting Grant 2013 Call

Version August 2012*

The Guide is published by the ERC Scientific Council on http://erc.europa.eu
It can also be downloaded from the Research and Innovation Participant Portal on
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

FP7 Specific Programme
IDEAS

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Following the experience with previous calls, some adjustments and improvements have been introduced to this guide. Notably, changes have been introduced with regard to: I) the application forms on the Electronic Proposal Submission Service EPSS; II) restrictions on applications; III) evaluation criteria and outcome of evaluation; and IV) the information to be provided for proposals involving security-sensitive issues (see Annex 5).

As these adjustments have an impact on the proposal preparation and submission with EPSS, applicants are requested to consult the EPSS website and the Research and Innovation Participant Portal call page (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/) for further information.

Other changes have been introduced to increase the comprehensibility and readability of the guide.

*The revision of this Guide (August 2012) only affects the layout and not the content in any manner.

Purpose of the Guide

This guide provides practical information to potential applicants in preparing and submitting an application for an ERC Starting 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 present guide is based on the legal documents setting the rules and conditions for the ERC frontier research grants, 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 discrepancies between the aforementioned legal documents and this guide, 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.

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

1: Applying for an ERC Starting Grant

2: Managing ERC grants

3: Annexes

The Guide for Applicants may be further modified based on the experiences gained from preceding calls for proposals, on changes applied to the frontier research grants and the submission processes. Updated versions of the Guide for Applicants may be published with the publication of the future calls for proposals.

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

- Guide for ERC Peer Reviewers: 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 Principal Investigator's host institution. A template for the 'Supplementary Agreement' between the Principal Investigator and the host institution is available on the ERC website as well.
- Guide for ERC Grant Holders: This guide provides practical information to ERC grant holders, whether individual researchers or host institutions, on the administration and management of ERC grants, including monitoring and claiming of project costs, the scientific and financial reporting procedure, and the process for making changes to the project. It includes information to applicants that have been offered an ERC grant on the process to prepare the grant agreement and the associated terms and conditions. It is divided into two parts: part 1 is relevant for both the Principal Investigator and his/her host institution, whereas part 2 is relevant mainly for the host institution's administration.

Note: As with other parts of the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme, National Contact Points (ERC NCPs) have been set up across Europe[1] 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/national-contact-points.

[1] This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some third countries also provide this service.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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 now 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.

The Scientific Council establishes and 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 Starting Grant

1.1 About the ERC Starting Grants

ERC Starting Grants are designed to support researchers (Principal Investigators) at the stage at which they are starting their own independent research team or programme. The grants will support independent and excellent new individual research teams.

The objective is to provide appropriate and adequate support to excellent researchers, whatever their nationality, located in or moving to the EU Member States[2] and Associated Countries[3].

The aim is to fund projects carried out by individual teams which are headed by a single **Principal Investigator** (PI) and, as necessary, include additional **team-members**. The constitution of the research team is flexible. Commonly, it involves researchers from the Principal Investigator's research group or from the same organisation as team members. However, depending on the nature of a project the research team may also involve team members from other research organisations situated in the same or a different country (see point 1.1.5). In certain fields (e.g. in the humanities and mathematics), where research is often performed individually, the 'team' may consist solely of the Principal Investigator.

Starting Grants can be up to a maximum of EUR 1 500 000 for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). However, in exceptional cases described in point 1.1.4 of this guide, an additional amount of up to EUR 500 000 funding can be made available.

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

Box 1: Guiding principles of the ERC Starting Grant

- Scientific excellence is the sole evaluation criterion.
- Projects in all fields of research are eligible for funding.
- Individual research teams led by a single PI are supported.
- Significant funding is provided to attract exceptional research leaders.
- Grants are awarded to the host institution that engages and hosts the PI. The Principal Investigator will be employed by the host institution.
- The host institution guarantees the PI's independence and provides the research environment to carry out the project and manage its funding.

1.1.1 Who can apply for an ERC Starting Grant?

The ERC actions are open to researchers of any nationality who intend to establish and conduct their research activity in any EU Member State or Associated Country.

The PI may be of any age and nationality and may reside in any country in the world at the time of the application. Please see Box 2 for further details on the eligible PI.

[2] 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.

[3] The Associated Countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Faroe Islands, FYR Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey. Other countries may become associated during the course of FP7.

Box 2: ERC Starting Grant - Eligible Principal Investigator (PI)

The PI must have been awarded his/her first PhD (or equivalent doctoral degree, see Annex 4 of this guide) **at least 2 and up to 7 years prior to the publication date of the call for proposals of the ERC Starting Grant.**

Extensions to this period may be allowed in case of eligible career breaks which must be properly documented. Eligible career breaks are: For maternity, the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD will be considered reduced by 18 months for each child born **before or after** the PhD award. For paternity, the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD will be considered reduced by the actual amount of paternity leave taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD award. For long-term illness (over ninety days), clinical training or national service the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD will be considered reduced by the actual amount of leave taken for each incident which occurred **after** the PhD award.

Eligible incidents that take place within the extension of the eligibility window may lead to further extensions. The elapsed time since the award of the first PhD should not in any case surpass 11 years and six months for applicants to the Starting Grant.

Note 1: The reference date towards the calculation of the eligibility period should be the date of the actual award according to the national rules in the country that the degree was awarded. Official documents can be submitted in any of the EU official languages. Documents in any other language must be provided together with a certified translation into English.

Note 2: See also the statement of the ERC Scientific Council on **ERC Policy on PhD and equivalent doctoral degrees (Annex 4 of this guide)**.

Restrictions on submissions of proposals

As established in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 there are restrictions on the submission of proposals. The relevant restrictions applicable to the Starting Grants 2013 are:

- A Principal Investigator may submit only one proposal to the ERC for ERC frontier research grant calls made under the same Work Programme[4];
- 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). 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);
- A Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator[5] 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;

[4] Ineligible or withdrawn proposals do not count against this limit.
[5] Co-Investigator projects were supported under the Advanced Grant in Ideas Work Programmes from 2008 – 2011.

- 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-StG).

For more information on the subject, please see section 3.3.4 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013 for the current restrictions on submission of proposals and section 8.5 on the outcome of evaluation,

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Potential applicants must strictly observe these rules. Proposals that do not comply with these rules during the submission of a proposal will be brought to the attention of the ERC eligibility review committee, which will assess the eligibility of the proposal.

1.1.2 Who could be a competitive candidate for the ERC Starting Grant?

ERC grants support projects which are carried out by individual **research teams**[6] **headed by a single Principal Investigator (PI)** of any nationality and, if necessary, include additional team members. These teams may be of national or trans-national character. With the focus on the PI, the concept of individual team is fundamentally different from that of a traditional 'network' or 'research consortium'; **proposals of the latter type should not be submitted to the ERC**.

The PI does not necessarily need to be employed by the Host Institution at the time when the proposal is submitted. If not already employed by the Host Institution, the PI must be engaged by the latter at least for the duration of the grant.

ERC-funded PIs must be strongly committed to the project and devote a significant amount of time to it. Principal Investigators funded through the ERC Starting Grants will be expected to spend a minimum 50% of their total working time on the ERC project and a minimum of 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country [7].

With the support of the host institution, successful PIs will be expected to lead their individual teams and be fully engaged in the running of the ERC grant. Peer reviewers will therefore assess during evaluation whether PIs who have already been entrusted to lead important research teams/activities during the next few years and have already committed for this period significant time and effort will be able to simultaneously manage the significant ERC funding.

A competitive Starting Grant Principal Investigator must have already shown the potential for research independence and evidence of maturity. For example, it is expected that applicants will have produced **at least one important publication without the participation of their PhD supervisor**. Applicants should also be able to demonstrate a promising **track-record of early achievements** appropriate to their research field and career stage, including significant

[6] In certain fields (e.g. in the humanities and mathematics), 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.

[7] A specification about the PI's commitment should be provided in Parts B1 and B2 of the research proposal.

publications (as main author) in major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals, or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals of their respective field. They may also demonstrate a record of invited presentations in well-established international conferences, granted patents, awards, prizes etc.

Applicants are encouraged to evaluate their track-record and leadership potential against the above-mentioned benchmarks that have been adopted by the Scientific Council, in order to decide for themselves their likelihood for success, thus avoiding to invest effort in proposals that are very unlikely to succeed.

1.1.3 What kind of research can be funded?

Applications can be made in any field of research with particular emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering[8]. 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.

The peer review evaluation of proposals will therefore give emphasis to these aspects, in full understanding that such research has a high-gain/high-risk profile, 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.

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 Box 3 and Annex 2 of this guide).

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.

[8] 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 7th EURATOM Research Framework Programme (this annex is available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12006A/12006A_AN1.htm).

Box 3: Dealing with ethical issues

Fundamental ethical principles must be respected, including the rights and principles enshrined 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. The opinions of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE)** and the Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union which recognises animals as sentient beings will also be taken into account. ***

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 "Ideas" Specific Programme, 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.

* see http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm

** see http://ec.europa.eu/european_group_ethics/activities/docs/opinion_22_final_follow_up_en.pdf

*** see http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/references_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

Additionally, as established in the ERC Rules for submission - Annex D[9], ERC actions addressing security-sensitive subjects need to be identified and scrutinised according to the applicable legislation (see Annex 5 and Box 8).

[9] See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2001D0844:20060805:EN:PDF

1.1.4 What is the level of funding of the ERC Starting Grants?

As indicated in section 4.3 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013, Starting Grants can be up a maximum of EUR 1 500 000 for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). However, up to an additional EUR 500 000 can be made available to cover (a) eligible 'start-up' costs for Principal Investigators moving from another country to the EU or an Associated Country[10] as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or (c) access to large facilities[11]. Any such request needs to be fully justified in the proposal (Part B2 section c).

The total requested grant should reflect a realistic estimation of the project needs and be fully justified (Part B2 section c). The overall level of the grant offered will be determined on the basis of the needs of the project and judged by the peer review evaluation panel against the requested grant to the budget. **In all cases, the evaluation panels will review the requested grant and recommend the total amount to be granted, using rounded figures**. The panels may also suggest a modification to the indicative budgetary breakdown in the application but the PI has the freedom to modify the budgetary breakdown during the course of the project.

The 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[12]. 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[13].

The costs which can be covered by an ERC grant are described in Box 4.

Normally, an ERC grant covers all eligible costs of a project. However, it is possible, that specific cost items are covered partially or in full by the host institution or by third party funding.

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 is **neither aiming 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 B1 section b.

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

[10] However, the additional funding can only be granted if the reason to move from another country to the EU or an Associated Country is exclusively linked with the ERC Starting Grant. No preceding appointment by, or move to, the potential HI before the awarding of the grant can therefore give rise to such an additional financial assistance. Moreover, the requested additional budget should be clearly motivated and integrated into direct and/or indirect costs mentioned in the budget table.

[11] As any additional funding is to cover major one-off costs it is not subject to pro-rata reduction for projects of shorter duration. All funding requested is assessed during evaluation.

[12] 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.

[13] 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 4: 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 conduct of 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, can not 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 are provided in the Guide to Financial Issues relating to FP7 Indirect Actions:
ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/financialguide_en.pdf

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

It is expected that the research project will be implemented within the territory of an EU 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 the EU or the Associated Countries in order to achieve the scientific objectives of the project/activity.

An ERC grant is awarded to the applicant legal entity - the host institution - that engages and hosts[14] the PI for at least the duration of the grant. **The host institution must provide a commitment letter offering appropriate conditions for the PI to direct independently the research and manage its funding for the duration of the project** (see Annex 3). These conditions, including the *'portability'* of the project[15], are the subject of a supplementary agreement between the PI and the host institution[16]. **The ERC Grant Agreement itself will be concluded between the ERCEA and the host institution, the latter becoming hereby the beneficiary of the ERC grant**.

The host institution must either be established in an EU Member State or an Associated Country as a legal entity created under national law or it may be an International European Interest Organisation[17]. [18]), the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) or an entity created under EU law. Any type of legal entity, public or private, including universities, research organisations and undertakings can host Principal Investigators and their teams.

It is also expected that the host institution will be the only participating legal entity. However, where they bring scientific added value to the project, additional team members may be hosted by additional legal entities which will be eligible for funding, and which may be legal entities established anywhere including outside the European Union or Associated Countries, or international organisations[19].

Any type of legal entity, public or private, including universities, research organisations and undertakings can host the Principal Investigator and his/her team as long as the principles indicated below are respected and the Principal Investigator 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 host institution commits to the following **conditions of independence**[20], ensuring that the PI is able to:

---

[14] This does not exclude cases where the PI's employer is not the host institution. In these cases, the specific conditions of engagement will also be subject to clarification and approval during the granting procedure.

[15] A special clause may be included in new ERC grant agreements with regard to equipment which is critical for the implementation of the project, which are used exclusively for the project, and which are fully charged to the project's budget. In case of portability of the ERC grant, and upon request of the Principal Investigator to the host institution and approval of the ERCEA, such equipment shall be transferred at their residual value to the new host institution (residual value is the difference between purchase price and depreciation costs already accepted by ERCEA).

[16] This is supplementary to the ERC Grant Agreement and is described in the ERC Model Grant Agreement C(2007)1625, 16.04.2007. It is available on the ERC website at http://erc.europa.eu/document-library

[17] As defined by Article 2.11 of the FP7 Rules for participation Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006.

[18] Such as: CERN, EMBL, ESA, ESO, ESRF, ILL.

[19] In accordance with Article 29.2(a) of the FP7 Rules for participation Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006.

[20] 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.

- **apply for funding independently**
- **manage the research and the funding for the project and make appropriate 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.**

1.1.5.1 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 EWS enables the Commission services to take the necessary precautionary measures to ensure a sound financial management[21].

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 you that the details of your organisation (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[22].

More information on the EWS and CED can be found here:
http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm

[21] 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.

[22] 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 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12).

1.2 Preparing and submitting an ERC Starting Grant application[23]

An ERC grant application should be submitted by a single Principal Investigator, who has the scientific responsibility for the project in conjunction with and on behalf of the host institution which is the applicant legal entity.

1.2.1 When can I apply?

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[24], the Research and Innovation Participant Portal[25], and in the Official Journal of the European Union[26].

The ERC publishes an annual call for proposals for the ERC Starting Grants. The provisional timing of this call for proposals is indicated in the table below. It is expected that the call budgets will be gradually increased each year.

ERC Starting Grant Calls Provisional Schedule – 2013

	Call open	Call Deadlines	Evaluation
ERC-2013-StG	**Summer 2012**	**Autumn 2012**	**Winter 2012 - Spring 2013**

The foreseen date of publication of the next call for Starting Grant proposals, ERC-2013-StG call, is **10 July 2012**.

Unlike in previous calls, there will be a single submission deadline (single submission of full proposals) for all three scientific domains (Physical Sciences & Engineering, Life Sciences, Social Sciences & Humanities). The foreseen deadline is **17 October 2012, 17.00.00 (Brussels local time).**

Please note that these foreseen submission deadlines could be modified after the publication of the call. You are therefore invited to periodically consult the Research and Innovation Participant Portal where any modifications of the submission deadlines are indicated.

Box 5: Key features of the ERC grant application procedure

- Applications should be submitted by a single PI in conjunction with and on behalf of her/his host institution (the applicant legal entity).
- A proposal consists of **administrative forms (Part A), a research proposal (Parts B1 and B2) and supporting documentation.**
- Proposal formats and page numbers are strictly limited.
- Submission is accepted only via the web-based Electronic Proposal Submission Service EPSS. The application procedure consists of a **single submission stage using EPSS.**
- Strict rules apply for restrictions on submission of proposals that must be checked before applying for a grant.

[23] 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.
[24] http://erc.europa.eu/
[25] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal
[26] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOIndex.do?ihmlang=en

1.2.2 How can I submit an ERC grant application?

The key features of the ERC Grant application procedure are highlighted in Box 5.

1.2.2.1 EPSS registration

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the web-based Electronic Proposals Submission Service (EPSS)[27] integrated in the Research and Innovation Participant Portal.
PIs need first to register their intention to submit a proposal via the web-based EPSS in order to receive a login name and password and thus to get access to EPSS for preparing, uploading and submitting a proposal. This should be done as early as possible before the call deadline for the submission of proposals.

EPSS can be accessed via the ERC website[28] and the call page on Research and Innovation Participant Portal[29], or directly at https://www.epss-fp7.org/epss/welcome.jsp. Full instructions will be found in the 'EPSS 'preparation and submission guide' available on the EPSS welcome page at https://www.epss-fp7.org/epss.

Please note that some web-browsers and/or Operating Systems (OS) may not be supported by the EPSS, for further information please consult the 'EPSS 'preparation and submission guide' mentioned above.

Please consult regularly the Research and Innovation Participant Portal call page for updated information or contact the EPSS HELPDESK by e-mail support@epss-fp7.org, or by phone +32 2233 3760.

1.2.2.2 EPSS proposal submission

Following registration and agreement to the conditions of use of EPSS (see above), the application can be prepared, uploaded and submitted via EPSS. Further information on the preparation of the application (Parts A and B) is given in paragraph 1.2.3 of this guide.

- **Completing the Part A forms in the EPSS and uploading a Part B does not yet mean that your proposal is submitted.** Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal, you must press the button 'SUBMIT NOW' (If you don't see the button 'SUBMIT NOW', first select the 'SUBMIT' tag at the top of the screen). **Please note that 'SUBMIT NOW' starts the final steps for submission; it does not in itself cause the proposal to be submitted.**
- After reading the information page that then appears, it is possible to submit the proposal using the button marked '*Press this button to submit the proposal*'.
- The EPSS then performs an automatic validation of the proposal by carrying out a number of basic verification checks. A list of any problems ('validation error message') such as missing data, viruses, wrong file format or excessive file size will then appear on the screen. **Submission is blocked until these problems are corrected.** Once corrected, the applicant must then repeat the above steps to achieve submission. Only upon completion of these basic verification checks the

[27] In exceptional cases, if an applicant has absolutely no means of accessing the EPSS and if it is impossible to arrange to do so, it 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. 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 3, COV2 21/132, 1049 Brussels, Belgium.
[28] ERC: European Research Council - Submit an ERC Grant Proposal: http://erc.europa.eu/step-step
[29] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal

EPSS allows the applicant to submit. However, these checks do not replace the formal eligibility checks described in paragraph 1.3.1 of this guide and cannot assure that the contents of these files respond to the requirements of the call.

- Once the proposal is submitted, the applicant receives a message that indicates that the proposal has been received. This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt (see paragraph 1.2.4.2 of this guide ('*Has my proposal been received by the ERCEA?*').
- **The applicant may continue to modify the proposal and submit revised versions overwriting the previous one right up until the deadline**. The sequence above must be repeated each time (see also below paragraph 1.2.4.3 of this guide ('*How do I modify or withdraw my proposal?*')).
- **If the submission sequence described above is not followed at least once, the ERCEA considers that no proposal has been submitted.**
- The research proposal and attached supporting documentation must exclusively use PDF ('Portable Document Format', compatible with Adobe version 3 or higher, with embedded fonts)[30]. Only such PDF files will be accepted for evaluation. Unless specified in the call, embedded material and any other documents (company brochures, scientific papers, reports, audio, video, multimedia, etc.) sent electronically or by post, will be disregarded. However, panel members and/or referees may (but are not obliged to) access relevant web pages (that the PI may refer to in Part B1) in order to further assess the applicants' previous work (including openly accessible published manuscripts of the applicant).
- Proposals must be **submitted before the deadline** specified in the call for proposals[31].
- EPSS will be closed for a relevant call at its call deadline. After this moment, it will be impossible to access EPSS for the relevant call.

Early registration and submission in EPSS is strongly recommended and should be done as early as possible in advance of the call deadline. Applicants, who wait until too near to the close of the call to start uploading their proposal, take a serious risk that the uploading will not be concluded in time and thus the 'SUBMIT NOW' button will not be active anymore in order to conclude the submission process.

[30] Irrespective of the page limits specified above, there is an overall limit of 10 MB to the size of the PDF proposal file. There are also restrictions to the file name you give to the PDF proposal - use alphanumeric characters only. Special characters and spaces must be avoided.

[31] In the unlikely event of a failure of the EPSS service due to a breakdown of the ERC server during the last 24 hours of a call, the deadline will be extended by a further 24 hours. This will be notified by e-mail to all applicants who had registered in EPSS for this call, and also by a notice on the call page on the ERC website (http://erc.europa.eu/) and the Participant Portal:http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal as well as on the website of EPSS. Such a failure is a rare and exceptional event. Therefore, it should not be assumed that there will be such an extension of a call. If an applicant encounters difficulties in submitting a proposal, it should not be assumed that it is because of a problem with the ERC server. In most cases, other bottlenecks on the 'data highways' may occur and slow down or block the uploading of your proposal on the ERC server. For technical inquiries on the use of EPSS, please contact the EPSS helpdesk (see paragraph 1.2.2 of this guide). Please note that the ERC 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.

1.2.3 How do I complete the grant application?

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

- **The administrative forms (Part A)**
- **The research proposal (Part B)**
- **The supporting documentation**

1.2.3.1 Instructions for completing 'Part A' of the proposal

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the web-based Electronic Proposal Submission Service EPSS (paragraph 1.2.2 of this guide).
In the A forms, the PI 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[32].

Part A: form A1 gives a snapshot of the proposal and of the PI, form A2 concerns the PI's host institution, while form A3 deals with financial matters.

Please note:

- Form A1 concerns information about the research proposal and the PI, including an abstract of the project proposal and the chosen ERC panel for evaluation. The PI must indicate the most relevant ERC panel for evaluation of their proposal and choose one or more descriptors (i.e. ERC keywords) of the research fields involved from a drop-down menu (see Annex 1 to this guide).

  It is the PI's responsibility to choose the most relevant ERC panel ('primary evaluation panel') for the evaluation of the proposed research. The initial allocation of the proposals to the various panels will be based on the expressed preference of the PI. In the case of interdisciplinary proposals the PI may indicate a 'secondary evaluation panel'. The primary panel will then decide whether the proposal is indeed cross-panel or even cross-domain and if its evaluation requires expertise from other panels.

  Despite the initial allocation being based on the preference of the PIs, when necessary due to the expertise required for the evaluation, proposals may be reallocated to different panels during the course of the peer review evaluation.
- Form A2 concerns information about the PI's host institution[33].
- 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 B2 section c, Resources). In case of discrepancy, the A3 data will prevail.

[32] Details of the scientific project itself which the applicant PI intends to carry out will be described in the research proposal, Part B1 and Part B2.
[33] The filling of additional A2 forms, corresponding to other institutions of team members ('additional participants'), may be necessary.

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 to the Commission their legal and financial information every time they submit a proposal or negotiate a contract. To eliminate these redundant requests for information, we invite you to register your organisational data (once in the **Unique Registration Facility (URF)** which is hosted) in the Research and Innovation Participant Portal[34]. This self-registration will lead to a request by the Commission to 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 contact for the ERC Executive Agency related to all questions on legal status. He/she has access to the online database of legal entities with a possibility to view the data stored on his/her entity and to initiate updates and corrections to these data. After the validation of the entity has been finalised, the contact person/authorized representative named in the Research and Innovation Participant Portal receives the PIC number. Once the LEAR is validated, he/she manages the modifications of the entity-related information in the Research and Innovation Participant Portal and distributes the PIC number within his/her organisation, which can be used in all proposals submission and negotiations

If you think your organisation already has registered in Research and Innovation Participant Portal and you wish to retrieve the PIC, please query online the PIC database by using the PIC search functionality[35]. Please do not forget to visit the 'Frequently Asked Questions' of the Research and Innovation Participant Portal page should you want any additional general information.

Applicant legal entities possessing a Participant Identification Code (PIC) can use this number to identify themselves in the EPSS system.

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 a PIC will lead to more efficient handling of the proposal.

Exclusion of independent experts at the request of an applicant.

As established in section 3.1.2.1 of the ERC Rules for submission[36] applicants submitting proposals may request that up to three specific persons would not act as peer reviewers in the evaluation of their proposal. Such a request is done at the time of 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.

[34] 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.
[35] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal
[36] 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.

If the person(s) identified is an independent expert participating in the Starting Grant 2013 evaluation, he/she may be excluded from the evaluation of your proposal as long as ERCEA remains in the position to have your 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. If the excluded expert is a member of a panel he/she will be informed about the request concerning him/her.

Please note that the request for exclusion is accepted by ERCEA as long as the proposal can still be evaluated by other reviewers having the necessary expertise.

Additionally, in application of the existing regulation[37] on data protection, an excluded expert may be granted access to all data linked to his/her exclusion. (Please, refer to the Specific Privacy Statement provided on the ERCEA website at the following address: http://erc.europa.eu/documents/erc-specific-privacy-statement-exclusion-independent-experts-applicants).

[37] Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 articles 13 and 14, OJ L8 of 12.1.2001, p. 1.

The following notes are for information only. They should assist you in completing the A forms of your proposal. On-line guidance will also be available. The precise questions and options presented on EPSS may differ slightly from these below.
Please consult regularly the Research and Innovation Participant Portal call page for updated information or contact the EPSS HELPDESK by e-mail, or by phone +32 2 233 3760.

Form A1: Proposal and PI information

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

General Information on the Proposal

Type of project	[pre-filled] Support for Frontier Research – ERC Starting Grant
Call identifier	[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 Research and Innovation Participant Portal - FP7 Calls. A call identifier looks like this: *ERC-2013 StG*-followed by a number.
Activity code	[pre-filled] ERC Starting Grant
Proposal Title (max 180 char.) (Non Confidential Information)	The title should be no longer than 180 characters and should be understandable to the non-specialist in your field. **In order to best review your application, your agreement is needed below so that this non-confidential title can be used when contacting potential reviewers, should your proposal be retained for step 2 of the evaluation process.**
Duration in months	The estimated duration of the project in full months.
Primary ERC Review Panel	[drop-down menu] – *mandatory* Please choose the primary ERC review panel ('Targeted Review Panel') by which you would like your proposal to be evaluated. This information is mandatory. The full list of ERC review panels is in Annex 1 of this ERC Guide for Applicants for the Starting Grant 2013 Call.
Secondary ERC Review Panel (if applicable)	[drop-down menu] You can choose a secondary ERC review panel that you consider most relevant to your proposal. This information is optional for a 'Secondary ERC Review Panel'. The full list of ERC review panels is in Annex 1 of this ERC Guide for Applicants for the Starting Grant 2013 Call.
ERC Keyword 1 (please	[drop-down menu] - mandatory

choose this keyword from those linked to the Primary ERC Review Panel)	Please select ERC keywords (i.e. panel descriptors as indicated in the ERC review panel list - Annex 1 of this document) that best characterise the subject of your proposal. As first keyword please choose one which is linked to the Primary Review Panel. ERC Keyword 1 is mandatory.
ERC Keywords 2, 3, 4	[drop-down menu] You can select additional ERC keywords (i.e. panel descriptors as indicated in the ERC review panel list - Annex 1 of this document) that best characterise the subject of your proposal. You don't need to limit your choice of ERC keywords to your choice of specific review panel(s). Keywords 2, 3 and 4 are optional.
Free Keywords [mandatory field to be filled]	In addition, please enter free text keywords that you consider best characterise the scope of your research proposal. The choice of keywords should take into account any multi-disciplinary aspects of the proposal. You can also use keywords from other specific classification systems, provided that the actual describing text is included. For example, applicants to the 'PE1 -- Mathematics' panel may want to use the Mathematics Subject Classification system, and can then enter a text like 'MSC2010: 51Hxx Topological geometry'. There is a limit of 200 characters.
Abstract (min.100/ max. 2000 char.) (non confidential information)	The abstract (summary) should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. **The abstract will be used as the short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to contact in particular the potential referees and/or inform the Commission and/or the programme management committees and/or relevant national funding agencies[38] (provided you give permission to do so where requested below). It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information.** Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. **The abstract must be written in English**. There is a limit of 2000 characters (spaces and line breaks included).
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?	[Yes/No] – In the course of the evaluation procedure, the non-confidential title and abstract of your proposal may be communicated to potential external referees, should your proposal be retained for step 2 of the evaluation process. Please specify your agreement or disagreement.

Reviewers Requested to be Excluded

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 Starting 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

[38] The consent for disclosing to relevant national funding agencies the evaluation results of your proposal in case it is recommended for funding is requested below.

Information on the Principal Investigator

The following information of the Principal Investigator is used to personalise the communications to applicants and the Evaluation reports. Please make sure that your personal information is accurate and please inform the ERCEA in case your e-mail address changes (by using the call specific email address ERC-2013-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu).

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

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

Country	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.
Phone 1	Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
Mobile	Please insert the full mobile number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The mobile phone number is optional, but can be useful for contact regarding possible interview scheduling or last minute changes.
Fax	Please insert the full fax number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
E-mail 1, 2	Please insert your e-mail address. The 2nd 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-mail account where official communication from ERCEA to the PI may be posted.

Academic Training	
Date of first PhD (or equivalent) award For the Starting Grant the Principal Investigator shall have been awarded his/her first PhD at least 2 and up to 7 years prior to the publication date of the call for proposals of the ERC Starting Grant.	Please specify the date of award of your doctoral degree (or equivalent degree) using the format (DD/MM/YYYY). This should correspond to the date on the actual original PhD certificate. For more information on equivalent degrees please see Annex 4 of this guide. Wrong or missing information may cause your proposal to be ineligible.
Do you hold the degree 'Doctor of Medicine' (MD)? To be considered an eligible Principal Investigator medical doctors (MDs) need to provide the certificates of both basic studies (MD) and a PhD or completion of clinical specialty training or proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (i.e. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment). Additionally, candidates must also provide information on their research experience (including peer reviewed publications) in order to further substantiate the equivalence of their overall training to a PhD.	[Yes/No] - **If this applies to you, please attach additional documentation required as an annex to your application, and enter the date of the PhD equivalent (certified MD date + 2 years).** For medical doctors who have been awarded both an MD and a PhD, **the date of the first degree that makes the applicant eligible** takes precedence in the calculation of the eligibility time-window (2-7 years after PhD or 4-9 years past MD for Starting Grant applicant.
With respect to the award of the first PhD (or equivalent) I request an extension of the eligibility window,	In case you wish to request an extension to your eligibility window – as indicated in paragraph 1.1.1 Box 2: ERC Starting Grant - Eligible Principal Investigator (PI) – please indicate the number of days necessary to fall within the eligibility window.

(indicate number of days) [see the Ideas 2013 Work Programme and the Guide for Applicants for the Starting Grant 2013 Call]	
If yes, please enter the reasons for the extension of the eligibility window request (max. 100 characters):	Please indicate (max. 100 characters) the main reasons - as established in section 3.3.2 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013 -justifying your request for the extension of the eligibility window. Please attach all necessary supporting documents.
I acknowledge that I am aware of the eligibility requirements for applying to the ERC Starting 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	Yes Please confirm that you are eligible according to all requirements established in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 – please pay particular attention to section 3.3 including 3.3.4 – 'Further restrictions on submission of proposals'.
Some national and regional public research funding authorities run schemes to fund ERC applicants that score highly in the ERC's evaluation but which can not 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	[**Yes/No**]

consent is entirely voluntary and refusal to give it will in no way affect the evaluation of your proposal.	
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.	**[Yes/No]**
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[39] (under the part 'Coordination and Support Actions' from WPs 2007 - 2010 and 'Other Activities' from 2011 - 2013). Do you consent to allow the third parties commissioned to carry	**[Yes/No]**

[39] http://erc.europa.eu/document-library

out these projects and studies to process the content of your proposal including your personal data? The privacy statement on grants[40] 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.	
Ethical Issues	
Does the proposal raise any ethical issues, as specified in the Ethical Issues Table at the end of Part B 2?	[Yes/No] The Ethical Issues Table has to be completed even if there are no issues (simply confirm that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal). If any of the ethical issues indicated in the Ethical Issues Table in Part B2 apply to your proposal, you **must** 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 EPSS with the Part B2 templates. See paragraph 1.1.3, Box 3 of this guide.

The Host Institution

The Authorised Legal Representative of the Host Institution	
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).	
Family Name	Last name as given in the Passport or ID card.
First Name(s)	First name.
Title	Please choose one of the following: Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.
Gender Female(F)/Male(M)	This information is required for statistical and mailing purposes. Indicate F or M as appropriate.
Position in the host organisation	e.g. senior administrative officer
Contact address of the host organisation and contact person for the ERC and person in charge of administration, legal and financial aspects in the host organisation.	
Organisation legal name	**For Public Law Body,** it is the name under which the host institution 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; **For Private Law Body,** it is the name under which the host institution is registered in the national Official Journal (or equivalent) or in the national company register.

[40] http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_sps_grants_02_2012_2.pdf

Office/Section/Department/Faculty/name	The name under which the host Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered
First name(s) (contact person)	First name.
Street name	The street name.
Number	The street number.
Town	The town, in English (please avoid any district codes).
Postal Code/ Cedex	The Postal code.
Country	[drop-down menu] Please select one country.
Phone 1, 2	Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The 2nd phone number is optional.
Fax	Please insert the full fax number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.
E-mail 1, 2	Please insert the e-mail address. The 2nd 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-mail account where official communication from ERCEA to the Host Institution may be posted.

Form A2: Host Organisation

One form for the host institution. If other organisations are involved, please generate and fill in another A2 form by adding another participant.

Proposal Number	[pre-filled by the system]
Proposal Acronym	[filled in from A1]
Organisation Number [pre-filled]	The number allocated by the consortium (if it is the case) to each organisation. The **PI's Host Institution (or the 'principal beneficiary')** is always **number one**.
The Organisation	
If your organisation has already registered for FP7, enter your Participant Identity Code	Applicants possessing a Participant Identification Code (PIC) can use this number to identify themselves in the Electronic Proposal 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: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations. On this website you will also find a search tool for checking if your organisation is already registered (and has thus a PIC).
Organisation legal name	Pre-filled from A1 (can be edited). **For a Public Law Body,** 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; **For a Private Law Body,** it is the name under which the organisation is registered in the national Official Journal (or equivalent) or in the national company register.

Organisation short name	Choose an abbreviation of the host institution 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 as commonly used, e.g. IBM and not Int.Bus.Mac.
Organisation Town	Town where the Organisation is located, in English (please avoid any district codes).
Organisation Country	The country where the Organisation is located, in English (please avoid any additional regional or district code or information).
Department/Faculty/ Institute/Lab Name	The name under which the Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is registered.
Department/Faculty/ Institute/Lab Town	The town where the Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is located, in English (please avoid any district codes).
Department/Faculty/ Institute/Lab Country	The country where the Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory is located, in English (please avoid any additional regional or district code or information).
Internet Homepage	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, as they are also presented in the Research proposal text (Part B2, Section c, Resources).

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[41] 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 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 conduct of 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 amount given in this form correspond precisely to the information provided in the research proposal text (Part B2, Section c, 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, and must exclude value added tax (VAT).

Participant Number in this proposal	The PI's Host Institution of the proposal is always number one.
Organisation short name	The same name that as been used in form A2.
Personnel costs	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: – be directly hired by the beneficiary in accordance with its national legislation, – work under the sole technical supervision and responsibility of the latter, and – be remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the participant. Participants may opt to declare average personnel costs if certified in accordance with a 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.
Other direct costs (excluding subcontracting)	Means direct costs not covered by the above-mentioned categories of costs.
Indirect costs	Indirect costs are all those eligible costs which cannot be identified by the participant as being

[41] Additional lines should correspond to any legal entities that have filled form A2.

(max. 20 % of direct costs)	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.
Subcontracting	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 B2 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 B2 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.
Total Eligible Costs	The sum of direct costs (personnel and others), indirect costs and subcontracting.
Requested Grant	The total budget that you are requesting as the ERC grant (in Euros).

1.2.3.2 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 and c) and Part B2 (including Sections a, b, c and d). **The templates for these two sections are provided in EPSS and their use is mandatory.** More specifically, you can download the Part B2 template under the tab 'Part B & Annexes' by clicking on the link 'Download Part B2 Template(s) (zip-file).

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Please be aware that at step 1 of the evaluation only Part B1 is evaluated by the panel members, while at step 2 both Part B1 and B2 are evaluated.

When drafting Part B1, PIs should pay particular attention to the extended synopsis (Section a) and should not consider it as simply complementing Part B2. It is important that the extended synopsis contains all relevant information including the feasibility of the scientific proposal since the panel will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1. Please note that at step 1 the panel has no access to Part B2.

The information to be included in each of the sections is described below. The maximum length of each section or its sub-sections, which needs to be respected strictly, is described below. The research proposal needs to be uploaded and submitted via EPSS (see paragraph 1.2.2 of this guide).

In fairness to all applicants, the page limits below will be applied strictly. Only the material that is presented within these limits will be evaluated (peer reviewers will only be asked, and will be under no obligation to read beyond, the material presented within the page limits). Each proposal page **must** carry a **header** presenting the **PI's last name**, the **acronym**, and the reference to the respective proposal section (**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 side 1,5 bottom

Part B1 – Cover page:

Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
Name of the PI's host institution for the project
Proposal full title
Proposal short name
Proposal duration in months
Proposal summary (half page, possibly copy/paste of abstract from administrative part A1)

Part B1 section a, b and c:

The Principal Investigator

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

The Extended Synopsis should give a concise presentation of the scientific proposal, with particular attention to the ground-breaking nature of the research project and the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. References to literature should also be included. **It is important that this extended synopsis contains all relevant information including the feasibility of the scientific proposal since the panel will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1.**

b. Curriculum Vitae (max 2 pages):

The CV **should include the standard academic and research record as well as a succinct 'funding ID' which must specify any current research grants and their subject, and any ongoing application for work related to the proposal.** Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained so that can be fairly assessed by the evaluation panels.

c. Early achievements track-Record[42] (max 2 pages):

The Principal Investigators must provide a list of achievements reflecting their track record.

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

[42] As described in the Ideas Work Programme 2013 section 4.4 Profile of the ERC Starting Grant principal Investigator.

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).

Part B2 Section a, b, c and d:

The scientific proposal **(max 15 pages, excluding Ethical Issues Table and Annex)**

This part is evaluated *only* in step 2 of the peer review evaluation.

The scientific, technical, and/or scholarly aspects of the project should be described more in detail demonstrating the ground-breaking nature of the research, its potential impact and research methodology. The fraction of the applicant's research effort that will be devoted to this project, a full estimation of the real project cost and any ethical considerations raised by the project also need to be indicated.

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 aspects of the proposal, including multi - or inter-disciplinary aspects.

b. Methodology
Describe the proposed methodology 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. 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 emphasizing the scientific added value they bring to the project.

c. Resources (incl. project costs)
It is strongly recommended to use the costing table template to facilitate the assessment of resources by the panels. The budget table template is included in the template for Part B2.

Describe the size and nature of the team, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles. The participation of team members engaged by another host institution should be justified in relation to the additional financial cost this may impose to the project (please see paragraph 1.1.5 of this guide). Describe other necessary resources, such as infrastructure and equipment. The resources requested should be reasonable and fully justified in the proposal. If additional funding, above the normal (EUR 1 500 000), is requested for purchase of major equipment or for covering the eligible 'start-up' costs for PI's moving from another country to the EU or an Associated Country (as a consequence of receiving an ERC grant) then this also needs to be fully justified. Please note that any additional funding request should include the 20% overhead. 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.

Specify briefly your commitment to the project and how much time you are willing to devote to the proposed project. Please note that you are expected to devote at least 50% of your total working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of your total working

time in an EU Member State or Associated Country (see Ideas Work Programme 2013).

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. Take into account the percentage of your dedicated time to run the ERC funded activity when calculating your 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) towards overheads. Furthermore, include a breakdown of the budget subdivided in personnel costs, equipment and infrastructure, consumables, travel, publication costs, and any envisaged subcontracts. State how the costs will be distributed over the duration of the project. These figures should be summarised in the financial information form A3 as well as in the costing table provided as a template.
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 sensitivity Issues

- **Ethical 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 (simply confirm that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal).

If any of the ethical issues listed in the Ethical Issues Table in Part B2 apply to your proposal, you **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 EPSS, with Part B2 templates.

Optionally you may wish to include any supporting documentation, such as any authorization you may already have. This will allow a more effective ethical clearance and an accelerated granting process if the proposal is retained for possible funding[43].

Please upload this Ethical Issues Annex and any related documents in the 'Extra Annexes Upload' section included in the EPSS tab 'Part B & Annexes'.

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

A dedicated website that aims to provide helpful information on ethical issues is available at: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html

- **Security sensitivity 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 a 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

[43] 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

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 to this guide.

If your proposal is security sensitive, describe (in your description of work Part B2 section d) 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, the Security Classification Guide, as part of the proposal using the template provided in Annex 5 to this guide.

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 Part B2 section d, Ethical and security-sensitive issues, included in Part B2 and additional Annexes (separate document) where relevant in case of ethical issues and/or security-sensitive subjects do not count towards the maximum page limit for Part B2.

1.2.3.3 Supporting Documentation

A scanned copy of the following supporting documentation needs to be submitted with the proposal by uploading electronically on EPSS in PDF format:

- The 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 PI if the application is successful. This document (template available on EPSS, or please see Annex 3 of this guide) needs to be originally signed, stamped and dated by the institution's legal representative.
- The PI should submit scanned copies of documents proving his/her eligibility for the grant, i.e. the PhD certificate (or equivalent degree, see Annex 4 of this guide) clearly indicating the date of award/defence and, in case of an extension of the eligibility period beyond 7 years has been requested, the relevant documentary evidence.
- Any additional supporting documents which may be required following the indications provided in this guide (i.e. ethical and/or security sensitivity issues)

Copies of official documents can be submitted in any of the EU official languages. Document in any other language must be provided together with a certified translation into English.

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.

1.2.4 Is my proposal ready for evaluation?

Incomplete proposals (where parts or sections of the proposal and/or the host institution's commitment statement are missing) are considered ineligible and will not be evaluated[44]. The proposal must be submitted **before the respective deadline of the call** to the appropriate primary ERC panel (i.e. the panel which covers the main scientific areas of the research proposed).

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.

Checklist – Is your proposal complete?

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

The Administrative Forms (Part A): to be completed in EPSS

- on-line forms A1, A2, A3

The Research Proposal (Part B):

Part B1 (to be evaluated at step 1 and step 2):

- Section a - The Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal.
- Section b and c – The Principal Investigator. The 'funding ID' should be specified.

Part B2 (to be evaluated at step 2 only):

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

The Supplementary Documents:

- The supporting statement from the host institution: originally signed, stamped and dated by the host institution's legal representative (see Annex 3).
- PhD certificate (or equivalent doctoral degree) and, in case of requested extension of eligibility period has been requested, the documentary evidence (e.g. maternity, paternity leave, national service, long-term illness, unavoidable leave for statutory reasons, etc.).
- 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 sensitivity issues and how they will be treated (Security Sensitivity Issues Annex, see Annex 5 of this guide).**

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

[44] See also 'eligibility check' in ERC Rules for the submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the Ideas Specific Programme: http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_rules%20for%20submission.pdf and in the "Ideas" Work program 2013 (section 3.3).

1.2.4.1 How do I submit the proposal via EPSS?

The research proposal, Part B1 and B2 and the supporting documentation should be uploaded and submitted via EPSS as PDF files. For more information on EPSS and the uploading/submission of the grant application, please consult paragraph 1.2.2 of this guide.

Please ensure that all file names[45] contain the 'Proposal Short Name', such as:

- *PartB1_[Proposal-Short-Name].pdf*
- *Host-Letter_[Proposal-Short-Name].pdf*
- *PhD_[Proposal-Short-Name].pdf*

Box 6: Proposal submission - important to know:

- Proposals cannot be submitted without prior registration, which is required to obtain an EPSS login name and password.
- Proposals sent by means other than EPSS will not be accepted (see however footnote 27 above).
- Up to the call deadline, it is possible to modify a proposal simply by submitting a new version. So long as the call has not yet closed, the new submission will overwrite the old one.
- **After the call deadline no update of the proposal will be accepted. Only the material that the proposal contains within the given page limits while respecting the indicated layout parameters will be evaluated.**
- Submission is deemed to occur only if the submission sequence described in paragraph 1.2.2 of this guide has been followed and not when the applicant starts uploading the proposal.
- Proposals are kept under secure conditions at all times. When no longer needed, all copies are destroyed except those required for archiving and/or auditing purposes.
- In some rare occasions the proposal may be altered while in transit on the Internet. To check that the uploaded proposal has been received unaltered, please download and verify all

1.2.4.2 Has my proposal been received by the ERCEA?

If the submission is technically successful, the applicant receives an automatic computer-generated acknowledgement from EPSS. Acknowledgement of receipt is subsequently provided by e-mail after the call deadline.

Once submitted, it is recommended to verify the proposal and its content by downloading all the submitted files.

Subsequent to submission, and only in exceptional cases, the ERC may contact the PI if this is necessary to clarify questions of eligibility or to verify administrative or legal data contained in the proposal.

1.2.4.3 How do I modify or withdraw a proposal?

Up to the call deadline, it is possible to modify a proposal simply by submitting a new version. As long as the call has not yet closed, the new submission will overwrite the old one.

[45] Please note that filenames cannot exceed 75 characters including the file extension.

The last version of your proposal submitted before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated, and no later material can be submitted.

Once the deadline has passed, the ERCEA cannot accept any further additions, corrections or re-submissions. However a read-only access to the submitted proposal is granted in case the PI wishes to verify what has been submitted. This possibility is available for 30 days after the call deadline.

Proposals may be withdrawn before the call deadline by submitting a revised version with an empty Part B1, with the following words entered into the abstract field of the administrative form A:

'The applicant wishes to withdraw this proposal. It should not be evaluated by the ERC'.

A proposal may be **withdrawn after the call deadline** until the ERCEA has notified to the PI the final outcome of the peer review evaluation. The withdrawal of a proposal must be done by sending a signed letter to: European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA)/ Unit B3, COV2 21/132, BE-1049 Brussels, Belgium.

Please consult regularly the Research and Innovation Participant Portal for updated information or contact the EPSS HELPDESK by e-mail, or by phone +32 2233 3760.

1.3 Evaluation and selection of grant proposals[46,47]

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 single submission deadline.
- It must be submitted to an appropriate ERC panel (i.e. a panel, which is covering the main scientific areas of the research proposal, see paragraph 1.3.2 and Annex 1 to this guide).
- 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 grants which is subject of the call for proposals.
- It must meet the eligibility requirements of the respective ERC grant as well as other criteria mentioned in the relevant call for proposals).
- It must be in compliance with the restrictions on submission of proposals rules (see paragraph 1.1.1.1 of this guide).

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.

[46] The Guide for ERC Peer Reviewers provides detailed information on ERC peer review evaluation and project selection processes. See ERC website at http://erc.europa.eu/document-library
[47] See also Annex 10 to the Ideas Work Programme 2013.

The eligibility is checked on the basis of the information given by the 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 immediately be declared ineligible.

1.3.2 Peer review evaluation of proposals

For more details on the evaluation procedure, PIs are invited to consult Annex 2 and Annex 10 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013. For information on the evaluation criterion, PIs are invited to consult Section 8.4 of the same document.

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

Grant applications are assessed by peer review evaluation panels (ERC panels), which may be supported by additional remote reviewers. These ERC panels assess and score 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.

Please note that any direct or indirect contact about the peer review evaluation of a call between the PI and/or applicant legal entity 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.

It is of crucial importance that the ERC evaluation procedure is gender fair. It has therefore been carefully designed to identify scientific excellence irrespective of gender, and to take career breaks as well as unconventional research career paths into account. The outcome of each ERC evaluation is analysed with respect to submission and success rates of women and men. Please see the ERC Gender equality plan for more information (**http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_scc_gender_equality_plan_2007_2013.pdf**).

1.3.2.1 What are the ERC evaluation panels?

The peer review evaluation of ERC Starting Grant proposals is in the hands of 25 peer review evaluation panels (ERC panels), covering all fields of science, engineering and scholarship, which for operational reasons are subdivided into three main research domains:

- **Physical Sciences and Engineering** **10 Panels**
- **Life Sciences** **9 Panels**
- **Social Sciences and Humanities** **6 Panels**

Details on the structure of the ERC panels are provided in Annex 1. The panel chair and members have been proposed by the ERC Scientific Council on the basis of their scientific reputation. Before the deadline of a call, the names of the panel chairs are published on the ERC website. Similarly, the names of panel members are published, however, after the evaluation process is concluded.

Furthermore, section 3.1.4 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013, provides the following indicative percentages for each of the three main research domains:

- **Physical Sciences & Engineering: 44%**
- **Life Sciences: 39%**
- **Social Sciences & Humanities: 17%**

Research proposals of a multi- and inter-disciplinary nature are strongly encouraged by the ERC. Proposals of this type are evaluated by the ERC's regular panels with the appropriate external expertise (see section 8.2 of the Ideas Work Programme 2013).

Proposal allocation to an ERC panel:

It is the PI's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant ERC panel ('primary evaluation panel') for the evaluation of the proposed research (administrative form A1, see paragraph 1.2.3 of this guide), and indicate one or more panel descriptors (i.e. ERC keywords representing the research fields involved, see Annex 1 to this guide). The initial allocation of the proposals to the various panels will be based on the expressed preference of the PI. On its own initiative or in case that the PI has indicated a secondary evaluation panel, the primary panel will determine whether the proposal is indeed cross-panel or cross-domain and, if this is confirmed, the panel may request additional reviews by appropriate members of other panel(s) or additional referees. The composition of the ERC evaluation panels are by nature multi-disciplinary and therefore some multidisciplinary proposals may be properly evaluated within the main panel. **Although the initial allocation is based on the preference of the PI, when necessary due to the expertise required for the evaluation, a proposal may be reallocated to a different panel with the agreement of both Panel Chairs concerned.**

Box 7: Interviews with Principal Investigators

The review methodology for the ERC Starting Grant includes interviews with PIs of proposals at Step 2 conducted by the relevant ERC evaluation panel.

Depending on the panel, interviews will last approximately 30 minutes in total. The first part will be devoted to a presentation on the outline of the research project by the PI. The remaining time will be devoted to a question and answer session.

Panels will take into account the results of the interviews alongside the individual reviews.

The ERC will reimburse the PI's travel expenditures for the interview in Brussels (see Annex C of the ERC rules for the submission of proposals*). Travel costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of the appropriate supporting documents. For travel >100 km, a flat rate will be paid to cover living expenses (including costs for overnight stay).

Alternatives to interviews: For those candidates who are, **in very exceptional cases**, unable to attend the interviews (pregnancy, immobility due to illness, out in research fieldwork), two alternatives may be offered: i) video-conferencing, ii) telephone-conferencing. Once invited for an interview, such candidates are requested to indicate in due time to ERCEA in case they need to have recourse to one of these options.

*http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:327:0051:0070:EN:PDF

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 3 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 procedure. Those proposals involving sensitive ethical issues will undergo an ethics review.

1.3.4 Security scrutiny procedure

The objective of the security scrutiny procedure is to ensure that the ERC does not support research which would be contrary to the existing legislation[48] (see Box 8 and Annex 5 of this guide). After the peer review evaluation and before any funding decision is taken, all proposals retained for funding will be reviewed for security issues. The proposals involving security-sensitive issues will undergo a security scrutiny procedure.

1.3.5 Outcome of evaluation

At each evaluation step, each proposal will be evaluated and marked for each of the two main sections of the proposal (research project and Principal Investigator).

At the end of each evaluation step, 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.

At the end of **step 1** of the evaluation, on the basis of the assessment of Part B1 of the proposal, applicants will be informed that their proposal was scored:

- **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 applicant may also be subject to restrictions on submitting proposals to future ERC calls[49].

At the end of **step 2** of the evaluation, on the basis of the assessment of the full proposal, applicants will be informed that their proposal was scored:

- **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.

The evaluation panels may review the level of the requested budget and, as appropriate, suggest adjustments (see section 3.1.2 of the Ideas Work Programme).

In addition, at the end of both steps applicants receiving the communication about the final outcome of the evaluation will be told the ranking range of their proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panel.

[48] Commission decision No 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal rules of procedure (OJ, L 317, 3.12.2001)

[49] Applicants will need to check the restrictions in place for each call.

Projects recommended for funding (scored 'A') will be funded by the ERC if sufficient funds are available. Proposals will be funded in priority order based on their rank. This means that it is very likely that not all proposals scored 'A', and therefore recommended for funding, will be eventually funded by the ERC.

1.3.6 Feedback to applicants

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

PIs and applicant legal entities are provided with feedbacks 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.

1.3.6.1 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 PI and/or the PI's host institution (applicant legal entity) 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 procedural shortcomings and – in rare cases – into 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 grants 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;
- sent by the PI and/or the PI's host institution (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 grants

2.1 Preparation of a grant agreement[50]

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 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.

Additionally to the standard text of the grant agreement the host institution and the PI shall conclude a 'Supplementary Agreement' to ensure the minimum requirements for the project implementation, such as the host institution's commitment to grant the PI 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[51] 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. ERCEA 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 PI is 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.

2.2.2. Grant portability

It is expected that the PI establishes and concludes the funded research project in association with the original host institution (applicant legal entity). However, the ERC grants allow PIs having received a frontier research grant to transfer their projects from one host to another in the course of the project. The PI should then present the reasons[52] for wishing to move to another institution. In many cases, in order to facilitate mobility of researchers, when there is a common agreement between the PI and the original and the new host institutions, such a request will be dealt with by the ERC Executive Agency in a straightforward manner[53,54].

[50] 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 (Document Library/Information for Applicants/Guides and Rules).
[51] See template with minimum requirements available at http://erc.europa.eu/document-library.
[52] This may, for example be necessary if the provisions for the PI's leadership of the research have not been respected.
[53] 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.

The original host institution is expected to transfer funds other than those that have already been consumed or irretrievably 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[55].

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 PI is transferable (unless otherwise agreed with the other beneficiaries).

2.3 Project progress reporting

Project reporting is carried out in two streams: scientific reporting (for which the PI is responsible) and financial management reporting including use of resources (for which the host institution is responsible).

2.3.1 Scientific reporting

PIs are required to send scientific reports to the ERC Executive Agency (mid-term and at the end of the project). These reports inform the ERC 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 management reporting

The host institution is required to send periodic financial management reports (normally every 18 months) justifying the use of any expenditure. Declarations of costs exceeding a cumulative total of EUR 375 000 must be accompanied by a certificate on financial statements. Where the project involves more than one legal entity, the 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 assure 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

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 management reporting period.

The total amount of the pre-financing and the interim payments paid out to the beneficiary shall not exceed 85% of the maximum amount of the financial contribution attributed to the project.

---

[54] This would not normally be done within the first two years of the start of the project.

[55] In some countries, equipment is formally owned by the State and the consent of the host institution alone may not be sufficient.

A final payment is made corresponding to the last financial management 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.) the 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 PI and host institution, 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 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, the Research and Innovation 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[56] 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[57].For details on the ERC NCP in your country please consult the ERC website at http://erc.europa.eu/national-contact-points.

Technical questions related to the Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS) should be directed to the **EPSS Helpdesk** by e-mail support@epss-fp7.org, by phone +32-2-233 3760 or via its webportal[58] on the Research and Innovation Participant Portal. A general **ERC**

[56] This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some third countries also provide this service.
[57] 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 customize their service.
[58] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal

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.

3 : Annexes

ANNEX 1: ERC PEER REVIEW EVALUATION PANELS (ERC PANELS)

For the planning and operation of the evaluation of ERC grant proposals by panels, the following panel structure applies. There are 25 ERC panels to cover all fields of science, engineering and scholarship assigned to three research domains: Social Sciences and Humanities (6 Panels, SH1–SH6), Physical Sciences and Engineering (10 Panels, PE1–PE10), Life Sciences (9 Panels, LS1–LS9).

The panel names are accompanied by a list of panel descriptors (i.e. ERC keywords) indicating the fields of research covered by the respective ERC panels.

The panel descriptors must always be read in the overall context of the panel's titles and sub-titles.

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, eco-toxicology, 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 ERC does not support research which would be contrary to fundamental ethical principles (see Box 3) 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 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[59]; research on human embryos and human embryonic stem cells and non-human primates are automatically submitted to a more in-depth ethics review.

Ethical Issues Table and description of ethical issues in the research proposal, Part B2

The Ethical Issues Table (see Annex 2b) has to be completed **even if there are no ethical issues** (simply confirming that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal) (in Part B2).

If the answer to any of the questions of the Ethical Issues Table is 'YES', the 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 EPSS (together with the Part B2 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 PI is encouraged to include copies of any existing authorization 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:

[59] Such as research and clinical trials, and research involving invasive techniques on persons (e.g. taking of tissue samples, examinations of the brain).

- the PI as well as, where appropriate, the 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 PI as well as the Host Institution (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 PI as well as the Host Institution (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 PI as well as the Host Institution (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 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).

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

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.

	Research on Human Embryo/ Foetus	YES	Page[60]
	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		

	Research on Humans	YES	Page
	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		

[60] Please indicate here the page number of Part B2 of your proposal on which the ethical issue in question arises.

	Privacy	YES	Page
	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		

	Research on Animals[61]	YES	Page
	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		

	Research Involving non-EU Countries (ICPC Countries[62])	YES	Page
	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		

	Dual Use	YES	Page
	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

For real time updated information on Data Protection also see:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/index_en.htm

[61] For real time updated information on Animal welfare also see:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/home_en.htm

[62] 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).

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 'Extra Annexes Upload' section included in the EPSS tab 'Part B & Annexes'.

The pages of the Ethical Issues Table (included in Part B2 and Ethical Issues Annex (separate document) will not count towards the maximum page limit for Part B.

Annex 3: Commitment of the host institution

Commitment of the host institution[63, 64, 65]

The (please enter the name of the legal entity that is associated to the proposal and may host the 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 the name of the principal investigator in which the obligations listed below will be addressed), should the proposal entitled (Please enter the acronym) : (Please enter the title of the proposal) be retained.

Performance obligations of the applicant legal entity that will become the 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 for the duration of the grant to:

a) ensure that the work will be performed under the scientific guidance of the *principal investigator* who is expected to devote:

- *in the case of a Starting Grant* at least 50% of her/his working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of her/his total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country;

- *in the case of an Advanced Grant at least 30% of her/his working time* to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of her/his 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 *principal investigator*;

c) establish a *supplementary agreement* with the *principal investigator* which specifies that the *applicant legal entity* shall:

i) support the *principal investigator* in the management of the *team* and provide reasonable administrative assistance to the *principal investigator*, in particular as regards:

a. the timeliness and clarity of financial information,

b. the general management and reporting of finances,

[63] A scanned copy of the signed template should be uploaded electronically in EPSS in PDF format. More information can be found in the Guide for Applicants on ERC Grant Schemes.

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

[65] This statement (on letterhead paper) shall be signed by the institution's legal representative and stating his/her name, function, email address and stamp of the institution. The legal representative signing this template should be the same person as the one mentioned in the A1 form.

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 investigator* and his/her *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 investigator* and his/her *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 investigator*, 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 the *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;

c. the authority to deliver scientific reports to the *ERC Executive Agency*;

d. the authority to publish as senior author and invite as co-authors only those who have contributed substantially to the reported work.

vi) inform the *principal investigator* 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 the *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, Email +Signature of legal representative

Stamp of institution (applicant legal entity)

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

Annex 4: PhD and Equivalent Doctoral Degrees: The ERC Policy

1. The necessity of ascertaining PhD equivalence

In order to be eligible to apply to the ERC Starting or Consolidator Grant a Principal Investigator must have been awarded a PhD or equivalent doctoral degree. First-professional degrees will not be considered in themselves as PhD-equivalent, even if recipients carry the title 'Doctor'. See below for further guidelines on PhD degree equivalency.

2. PhD Degrees

The research doctorate is the highest earned academic degree. It is always awarded for **independent research** at a professional level in either academic disciplines or professional fields. Regardless of the entry point, doctoral studies involve several stages of academic work. These may include the completion of preliminary course, seminar, and laboratory studies and/or the passing of a battery of written examinations. The PhD student selects an academic adviser and a subject for the dissertation, is assigned a dissertation committee, and designs his/her research (some educators call the doctoral thesis a dissertation to distinguish it from lesser theses). The dissertation committee consists usually of 3-5 faculty members in the student's research field, including the adviser.

3. Independent research

Conducting the research and writing the dissertation usually requires one to several years depending upon the topic selected and the research work necessary to prepare the dissertation. In defending his/her thesis, **the PhD candidate must establish mastery of the subject matter, explain and justify his or her research findings, and answer all questions put by the committee**. A successful defence results in the award of the PhD degree.

4. Degrees equivalent to the PhD:

It is recognised that there are some other doctoral titles that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the PhD in certain fields. All of them **have similar content requirements**. Potential applicants are invited to consult the following for useful references on degrees that will be considered equivalent to the PhD:

a. EURYDICE: 'Examinations, qualifications and titles - Second edition, Volume 1, European glossary on education' published in 2004[66]. Please note that some titles that belong to the same category with doctoral degrees (ISCED 6) may correspond to the intermediate steps towards the completion of doctoral education and they should not be therefore considered as PhD-equivalent.

b. List of research doctorate titles awarded in the United States that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the PhD within certain fields. These doctorate titles are also recognised as PhD-equivalent by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)[67]

[66] http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/thematic_studies_archives_en.php
[67] http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-structure-us.html

5. First Professional Degrees:

It is important to recognize that the initial professional degrees in various fields are **first degrees, not graduate research degrees**. Several degree titles in such fields include the term 'Doctor', **but they are neither research doctorates nor equivalent to the PhD**.

6. Doctor of Medicine (MD):

For medical doctors, an MD will not be accepted by itself as equivalent to a PhD award. To be considered an eligible Principal Investigator medical doctors (MDs) need to provide the certificates of both basic studies (MD) and a PhD or completion of clinical specialty training or proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (i.e. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment). Additionally, candidates must also provide information on their research experience (including peer reviewed publications) in order to further substantiate the equivalence of their overall training to a PhD. In these cases, the certified date of the MD completion plus two years is the time reference for calculation of the eligibility time-window (i.e. 4-9 years past MD for Starting grant applicants).

For medical doctors who have been awarded both an MD and a PhD, **the date of the first degree that makes the applicant eligible** takes precedence in the calculation of the eligibility time-window (2-7 years after PhD or 4-9 years past MD for Starting grant applicants).

Annex 5: Security Issues

Security-sensitive proposals are required to follow special procedures. ERC actions may be classified[68] 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)[69] *and its annex* Security Classification Guide (SCG)[70] *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[71]. 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).

[68] As defined in the Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001amending its internal rules of procedure (OJ, L 317, 3.12.2001).
[69] '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', see Annex D to 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).
[70] As defined in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom.
[71] 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 8: Scrutiny of security sensitive ERC actions[72]

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 proposal may be considered security-sensitive for a variety of reasons, most notably if it handles or produces classified information, if some foreground is planned to be classified or 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

During the subsequent granting process, ERCEA will put in place the recommendations of the committee.

Annex 5a - Security Aspects Letter (SAL) 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[73].
- 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.

[72] See Annex 5
[73] Commission decision n°2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal rules of procedure (OJ, L317, 3.12.2001), Section 19.1

- 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 (SCG) TEMPLATE

Annex to the Security Aspects Letter (SAL)

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

Production of classified Background				
Subject	**Classification level**	**Beneficiaries involved in production or wanting to access**		**Comments including purpose of the access and planned use**
		Responsibility	**Date of production**	
number and name of the reports	proposed Classification level	entities name only		
		owner		
		entities name only		
		reader		
		…		
		…		

Production of classified Foreground				
Subject	**Classification level**	**Beneficiaries involved in production or wanting to access**		**Comments including purpose of the access and planned use**
		Responsibility	**Date of production**	
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