ERC Starting Grant Call 2019:
Notes and Tips for Applicants
(Version Sep 27, 2018)

Quick overview: Starting Grant Call 2019
Deadline: October 17, 2018 17:00 CET

- **Reference date** for the "Starter" and "Consolidator" eligibility window: **January 1st, 2019**
- **Waiting time** for **resubmission** of ERC proposals that failed **in step 1** of the evaluation: 1 year for proposals evaluated as category B, 2 years for category C proposals (most likely)
- Proposals that proceed to **step 2** but are not funded can be resubmitted "immediately" (to ERC calls of Work programme 2020)
- **Literature references** do **not count towards page limits** (B1+B2)
- **Track Record:** Presentation of **up to 5** publications from the last 10 years; **preprints** may be included, if freely available from a preprint server
- **Model CV-Template** provided by ERC
- **MD/PhD-equivalency**: M.D. + clinical training alone does not render a M.D. degree a PhD-equivalent; a proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency is necessary in addition
- **Clinical training** can lead to a prolongation of the "eligibility time window" of **up to 4 years maximum** –see ERC Work Programme 2019, p 17
- **Mandatory Funding ID annex** to indicate ongoing, submitted and previous grants
- Dedicated **textbox to explain cross-panel/cross-domain nature** of proposal, if a second panel is selected (on cover page of B1)
- Request for **exclusion of up to three reviewers** possible without justification
- **Open Access** is mandatory, related costs can be charged to the project
- ERC beneficiaries will automatically be covered by the H2020 provisions on **research data sharing** unless they specifically decide to opt-out; related costs can be charged to the project
- **Ethical issues table** needs to be completed online; **ethics self-assessment** annex to be provided if any issue in the ethical issues table applies (no template)
- **Minimum 50% of the PIs total working time** needs to be committed to the ERC project, and the PI needs to spend minimum 50% of his/her total working time in Europe or a Horizon 2020-Associated Country, even if the salary of the PI is not charged to the project

Important documents and useful links

Please read the following two documents:

- **ERC Work Programme 2019 (legally binding)**
  http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/erc/h2020-wp19-erc_en.pdf

- **Information for Applicants to the Staring and Consolidator Grant Call 2019,** including the detailed **panel expertise keywords:**
  http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/guides_for_applicants/h2020-guide19-erc-stg-cog_en.pdf

- Participant Portal: Link to proposal submission for **StG 2019**:
  http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/erc-2019-stg.html

- ERC **Standard Proposal template** (pdf) for the Starting/Consolidator Grant, including administrative forms and Letter of Commitment of the Host Institute:
  http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/call_ptef/pt/2018-2020/h2020-call-pt-erc-stg-2019_en.pdf →**rtf.-**versions available via the online-submission system (PPSS) after registration

- ERC Homepage: erc.europa.eu

- ERC Starting Grant 2019 Applicant Mailbox for queries related to the call:
  ERC-2019-STG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu

- Link to previous **ERC panel members (frequently generalists)**:
  o https://erc.europa.eu/document-category/evaluation-panels
    We recommend to use the lists of previous panel members to understand the different backgrounds and perspectives from which panel members may view your proposal. ERC panel members alternate between even and odd years, while several of the panel members will usually be replaced by new ones. It is therefore advisable to check in particular the panel member lists for the Call 2017 in order to arrive at an idea about the possible composition of panel members for 2019.

    The Panel Chairs for the ERC Starting Grant Call 2019 are listed at
    https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_2019_stg_panel_chairs.pdf

- Link to previous **ERC external referees (specialists)**:
  http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html#h2020-expertslists-excellent-erc

- Link to ERC **database of ERC-funded projects**:
  https://erc.europa.eu/projects-figures/erc-funded-projects
  Here you can search for ERC project summaries and Principle Investigators of ERC grants. Search results can be filtered e.g. by panel and keywords. Project abstracts and the CVs of Principal Investigators funded by the panel you consider applying for may prove helpful for deciding on the most suitable evaluation panel, and for comparing CVs/track records of PIs.

- ERC webpage on **open access**: https://erc.europa.eu/funding-and-grants/managing-project/open-access

- Guidelines on Implementation of Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data (ERC):
  https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/oa-pilot/h2020-hi-erc-oa-guide_en.pdf

Online submission of ERC proposals: Submit early, submit often

We strongly recommend to **submit a first version of the proposal around 1 week before the deadline**, in order to check for any browser problem or other technical issues that may block proposal submission, or lead to layout changes in the uploaded versions. Up to the call deadline, **you can continuously modify your proposal by submitting (not just uploading) a new version, which will overwrite the previous one**.

- In case of problems with the online submission system (PPSS), please **contact your host institution** (grant management/researchers´ service), **FFG** (ylva.huber@ffg.at) or directly the **PPSS Service Desk**: **DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu** or **+32 (2) 29 92222.**

- Information on how to use the online submission system is also available via the submission service user manual: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/support/sep_usermanual.pdf

- Please ensure that all the **required supporting documents are obtained and submitted** via PPSS in time (Commitment letter of the Host Institution, ethical issues annex [ethical self-assessment and any additional documents related to ethics], other supporting documents as applicable)

Ethical issues: Online table and ethical self-assessment annex

- The **ethical issues table** needs to be completed online in the Participant Portal (PPSS). The page numbers to be indicated in the ethics table refer to part B2. It is possible to indicate several page numbers divided by '/' (e.g. 12/14).

- For each ethical issue that applies to your proposal, please 1) tick the appropriate box in the list and 2) provide information on your approach to these issues in the **ethics self-assessment** document**.** As there is **no template** for the ethics self-assessment, we suggest to use a plain word-document indicating the relevant topic(s) from the online-ethics section and to describe your strategy to deal diligently with these issues (e.g. which ethic approvals you will obtain, compliance with relevant national and European law/directives, anonymization of data, insurance, etc). Convert the document into **pdf** format and upload it as **ethical self-assessment annex** in the PPSS. Furthermore, you can upload additional annexes with ethics-related documents (e.g. examples of informed consent forms)

- A **guideline** on how to complete the ethical self-assessment is available at https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/EthicsSelfAssessmentStepByStep.pdf

- **Please note**: The ethical self-assessment guide also refers to documents that may not be available at the stage of proposal submission but need to be provided at the stage of preparing the grant agreement, e.g. ethics approvals.

- The **ethical issues section will not be evaluated** during proposal evaluation, as communicated to FFG by the ERCEA: "*Any document related to ethics (including the ethics issues table) will <u>not</u> be made available to the ERC reviewers during the evaluation. Hence, they will not be instructed to look at them. The evaluators are not supposed to take ethic issues into account during evaluations. The ethics clearance is done by the ethics review after evaluation is final*."

- For proposals with immediate ethics issues, it is nonetheless "*advisable to include a short paragraph summarising how they will be dealt with and refer to ethics self-assessment/annexes*."

Evaluating scientific excellence: Questions that StG reviewers need to answer

(ERC Work Programme 2019, p36)

1. **Research Project**
   Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Starting, Consolidator, Advanced and Synergy
Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?

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

To what extent is the proposed research high risk/high gain (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)?

Scientific Approach
To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high risk/high gain (based on the Extended Synopsis)?

To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

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

To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?
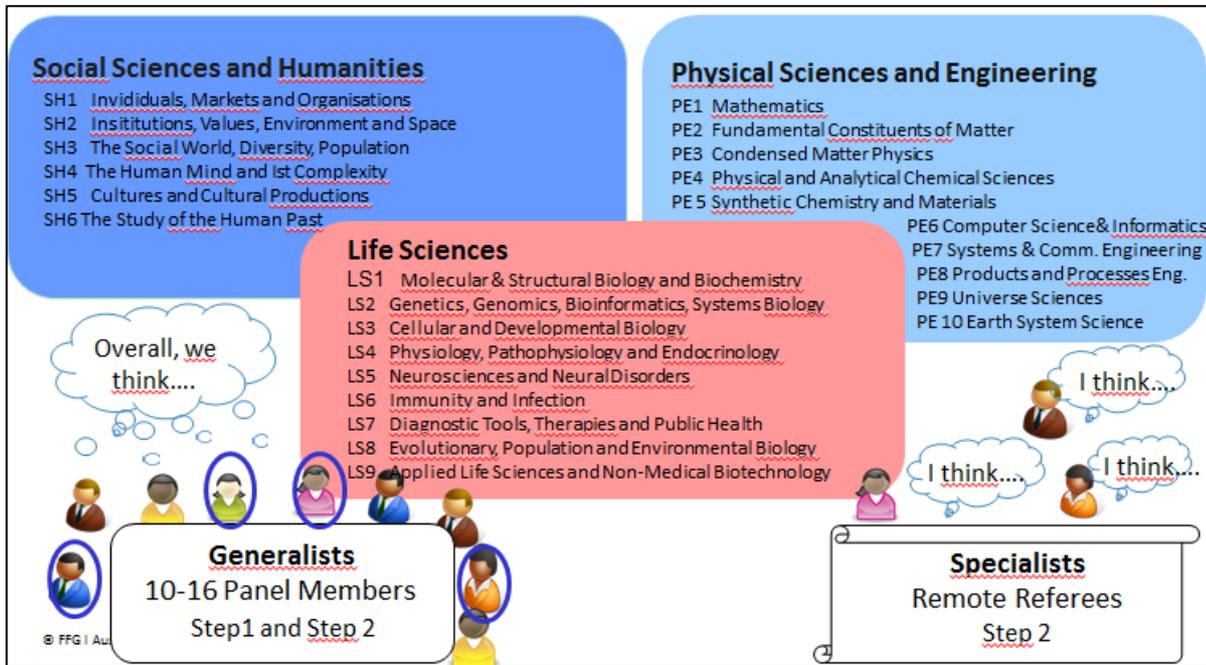
2. **Principal Investigator (Starting and Consolidator)**
   Intellectual capacity and creativity

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?
To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

Social Sciences and Humanities
SH1 Invididuals, Markets and Organisations
SH2 Insititutions, Values, Environment and Space
SH3 The Social World, Diversity, Population
SH4 The Human Mind and Ist Complexity
SH5 Cultures and Cultural Productions
SH6 The Study of the Human Past

Physical Sciences and Engineering
PE1 Mathematics
PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter
PE3 Condensed Matter Physics
PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences
PE 5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
PE6 Computer Science& Informatics
PE7 Systems & Comm. Engineering
PE8 Products and Processes Eng.
PE9 Universe Sciences
PE 10 Earth System Science

Life Sciences
LS1   Molecular & Structural Biology and Biochemistry
LS2 Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics, Systems Biology
LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology
LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology
LS5 Neurosciences and Neural Disorders
LS6 Immunity and Infection
LS7 Diagnostic Tools, Therapies and Public Health
LS8 Evolutionary, Population and Environmental Biology
LS9 Applied Life Sciences and Non-Medical Biotechnology

Overall, we think....

I think....

I think....

I think....

Generalists
10-16 Panel Members
Step1 and Step 2

Specialists
Remote Referees
Step 2

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Evaluation step one: Usually **four Panel Members,** the majority of whom may often be **generalists** rather than specialists in the area(s) of your project, **read part B1 only**. The other panel members will frequently only see the abstract of the proposal and possibly skim through the proposal during the panel meeting.

Evaluation step two: The **full proposal (B1 and B2) becomes accessible** to **panel** members and **specialist external referees**. The final decision on the recommendation of a project for funding lies with the panel members.

Considerations and Tips for a convincing ERC Starting Grant proposal

Structure

- Think of a **narrative** and provide a **clear structure**, so that your proposal reads as a compelling, authentic story.

- Provide the **big picture:** Introduction/state of the art are important sections to put your research into a **broader context** (appealing also to panel members who are not specialists in your field) and to motivate your research goals.

- The introduction/motivation should, however, not dominate the proposal: The **major part** of the proposal (also in B1) should explain your **novel approach.**

- Present the concrete **aims/objectives** of your project rather early and in a highly visible manner (e.g. bullet points, bold fonts, text box). Panel Members like to see them at the first glance.

- The **perfect match between aims/objectives**, the **methodology** and the **workplan** of the project should be easy to grasp. E.g, you can refer to aim(s) 1,2 when describing method x or research line/workpackage y). This will support the impression of a well integrated, coherent proposal.

Part B1
is your "ticket to the interview": a crucial element of the proposal that needs to capture the novelty, ambition and the feasibility of the project. The success rate for step1 of the evaluation process, where only Part B1 is assessed, was lately around 30% for the Starting Grant.

- The extended synopsis in B1 should contain **all important information** to evaluate both the breakthrough character and the feasibility of the project. This includes:

  -key **preliminary data**/results/"proof of principle" already obtained
  -**risks and contingency strategies** (what are significant risks and your "plan B)
  -how will you **validate** the results of your project? E.g. how will you determine causality, as opposed to "only" correlation?
  - other factors that may be important to show the **explanatory power** of your approach, e.g. generalizability of results

- Based on ERC evaluation comments, we strongly recommend to also include a paragraph/sentence on the **team composition** in B1 (message: the necessary expertise will be assembled in your team), as well as a **brief timeplan** (1-2 sentences, or putting timing information in brackets, e.g. "aim 1… [Year 1-3]" / "key intermediate goal x [Year 3]").

- One or a few high quality **figure(s)** can also be very helpful for B1

- **References** to literature should be included. They do not count towards the 5 page-limit. The references in B1 may also support Panel Members in selecting the external referees to evaluate the proposal in step 2 of the evaluation.

Part B2
should present the required details for the evaluation by specialist reviewers in step 2. This concerns in particular the methodology, preliminary data, risks and contingency plans, but also details on resources, including the team composition and –organisation and the infrastructure/scientific environment at the host institution. Part B2 also contains the budget table (see template), which is included in the 15 pages-limit.

- Present your **key intermediate goals** and expected **results** and how you will **validate/ interpret** results

- Highlight any **novel/unconventional methodology**

- Deal **appropriately with significant risks** (contingency plans, alternative strategies; promising preliminary data)

- At least in most cases, reviewers will likely expect a reasonable **time plan** for an ERC project. It has meanwhile become standard in part B2 of ERC proposals to present e.g. a Gantt chart or overview table on key intermediate goals/milestones (see also example below). The time plan should however not be too detailed to be credible for a groundbreaking research agenda.

- Present the composition and expertise requirements for your **team** (PhDs, Post Docs), as well as **working arrangements** (e.g. supervision of PhD students supported by Post-Docs; overall supervision and guidance by PI). Please consider: What is the ideal combination of PhD students and PostDocs for your project, how should e.g. PhD students "overlap" timewise to ensure optimal continuity of the project, etc? Reviewers may e.g. question whether certain tasks could be "too demanding for a PhD student" and should rather be allocated to a Post Doc; or conversely whether the selected tasks constitute a convincing PhD project.

- Explain your **commitment** to the project as PI, including the percentage of total working time. If you think there could be reasonable doubts on whether you will be able to fulfil the time commitment due to other duties, describe your strategy up front.

- **References** to literature should be included (they do not count towards the 15 page-limit)

Avoid unnecessary repetition between B1 and B2

- Last year, the guidance document "Information for Applicants" stated that *"you should avoid a repetition of the extended synopsis in part B2. At step 2 of the evaluation process part B1 is evaluated together with B2"* (p.25). While this sentence was removed from the slimmed-down Starting Grant guidance document this year (version 1.0), the general recommendation to avoid unnecessary repetition between B1 and B2 has been confirmed to FFG in personal communication with the ERCEA.
As part B1 should capture the essence of the entire proposal, B1 and B2 need to be mutually consistent. **However, panel members may increasingly disapprove of longer sections with identical wording in B1 and B2.** As both B1 and B2 are evaluated at step 2, you can also **save space in B2** by e.g. referring to a figure or section in B1, instead of repeating it in B2.

Proposal Abstract
The abstract is an important part of the proposal, also during panel discussions. The majority of panel members may only read the abstract and possibly leaf through the proposals when they are discussed in the panel meetings. The abstract should therefore present the essence of your project, capcturing the scientific challenge, novel approach, objectives, potential impact and unique features of the project.

Further considerations for B1 and B2:

Novelty and Vision

- Address explicitly the **groundbreaking nature** of the project (what is the core novelty?) and its potential **impact** - both the "immediate" impact on your field/other fields as well as your more **long-term vision** (5-10 years or beyond); showing how the ERC Grant will **enable you to build a new research field.**

- It should be evident for reviewers that your approach is really **novel**, **original, and timely.** Thus it should not come across as an incremental "extension" of (your) previous research. Explain the **unique features** and the advantages of your approach compared to **competing approaches.**

Hypothesis-driven project/clearly defined research questions

- While there can be differences between research fields/disciplines, ERC reviewers frequently comment positively on the fact that a project is hypothesis-driven. In any case, however, the overarching research questions should be clearly presented. Proposals that apparently lack such question(s) and are perceived as largely technology- or methodology-driven will likely be at a disadvantage.

Scope of the project: Justified approach

- As with any research proposal, also the scope of an ERC project can be questioned by reviewers – either as being too broad/unfocused or too narrowly focused/incremental. It is therefore important to explain why the approach you have chosen is the best strategy to achieve a breakthrough

Clarity

- Your proposal needs to be **well understandable** also for **reviewers that are not specialists** in your own research field/topic.

- Important: **Precise wording**/descriptions, **clear** (working) **definitions**, concrete **examples**, high quality **figures**

- Ensure a reader-friendly layout, with sufficient spaces, highlighting key messages, e.g. by short summary of a section in a text box, bullet points; selective use of bold fonts

Collaborations

- Strive for a good balance when describing collaborations for the project: explain their importance for the project, but without giving the impression of being "too dependent" on them. Messages: due to excellent connections of the PI, s/he will have access to all required complementary expertise and infrastructure. The collaborations are well-defined/targeted. This should avoid a potential impression of a project based on a consortium, as the ERC explicitly does not fund consortia (ERC Work

Programme 2019, p9). If you think your project would actually require several PIs, the ERC Synergy Grant call (for a group of 2-4 PIs; next deadline: November 8th, 2018) could be an option.

Demonstrating a competitive "Starter" profile

- **CV, Track Record, State of the art:**
  Make sure that your own contributions (e.g. in important co-authored papers) are clearly visible. "Research independence" of the PI should be evident throughout the proposal, i.e. not only shown in the CV and Track Record, but also in B1 and B2, e.g. when presenting preliminary work data ("As we could show in [ref.x]…")

- Your **experience in team leadership** should be reflected in the CV/Track record (e.g. [co-]supervision of PhD students)

- **Up to 5 representative publications** should be listed in the track record for Starters (see Work Programme 2019 and comment below).

Explain why the ERC grant is important for you now

- We suggest to explain the importance of the ERC grant for you concisely, e.g.to build an internationally competitive team/hire additional Post Docs/PhD students, establish a new line of research;…

  There should be no impression that the ERC grant could rather be a "top-up" of existing funds/resources. However, where applicable it is useful to demonstrate the complementarity of the ERC project with other grants/funds, to generate a critical mass of efforts. This can include contributions by the host institution that are not charged to the ERC, demonstrating the commitment of the host institution to the project.

Which panel?

- Consider which panel is likely in the best position to understand the groundbreaking nature of your project, and to appreciate your previous achievements.

- While the ERC welcomes **interdisciplinary** projects, they constitute a challenge for the evaluation process, as these proposals need to be rated as excellent in every discipline they cover. If you consider your proposal to be interdisciplinary (cross-panel/cross-domain), you can indicate a secondary panel in the online-submission system. In this case, please describe the cross-panel/cross-domain nature in the dedicated text box on the B1 cover page.
  However, we recommend to give some extra thought to this question, as so far the success rates of explicitly cross-panel proposals apparently has been lower. Alternatively, you can choose only one panel, but add keywords from other relevant panels (as well as free keywords). Exceptionally, the panel may also allocate a proposal to a different panel than the one indicated by the PI.

Feedback by colleagues

− Questions and critical comments of colleagues (both within and beyond your research field, ideally with a background similar to that of potential panel members) on the proposal will be highly valuable

− We suggest to picture and prepare for the situation of the interview in step two already when drafting the proposal (you will only have a few minutes to "pitch" your project and around 20-25 minutes to answer questions), e.g. by collecting critical questions from specialists and non-specialists

− Where applicable, also a polishing of the proposal by an English native speaker is highly recommended.

Specific remarks on B1-CV, Track Record and B2- resources

B1, Section b: Curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages)

− Overall, it is recommended to maintain the structure of the **CV template** (see Information for Applicants, p18: "Curriculum vitae …should follow the suggested template")

− In addition to the s provided by the CV template, please present also key activities as reviewer for **journals**

− Ensure an impeccable and reader-friendly **layout** also of the CV and Track Record section

• ***Appendix to CV: All ongoing and submitted grants and funding of the PI (Funding ID)*** Mandatory information not counting towards page limits

−   According to information by the ERCEA, the information in this table is also used to support the selection of reviewers for the proposal (avoiding potential conflicts of interest with reviewers that might be involved in running/submitted projects with the applicant).

   However, if several ongoing grants are listed which will temporally overlap with the ERC project, it is advisable to also demonstrate that **the PI will be able to fulfil his/her time commitment to the ERC project**, e.g. by indicating the percentage of time commitment of the PI for the other grants in the table.

− For submitted grant proposals which **strongly overlap with the content of the ERC project (**e.g. in the case of an FWF START application)**, we recommend to add an explanatory sentence**, e.g.: *In case both the X grant application and the ERC grant application are successful, I shall accept the ERC Grant and decline the X grant*

−   Based on a new sentence in the Information for Applicants guide[1], we recommend to also include

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[1] Page 18: „You should as well list your previous and ongoing grants and grant applications in the funding ID table (this table will not count towards the page limits)".

previous, concluded grants in this section, although the Funding ID section in the B1 template currently only refers to "all ongoing and submitted grants and funding of the PI".

B1, Section c: Early achievements track-record (max. 2 pages)

–   In the early achievements track record, your most important publications (**up to five publications** in the case of Starters) should be presented, highlighting those as main author and/or without the co-authorship of your PhD supervisor. You can also add field relevant bibliometric indicators, e.g. citations without self-citations (see ERC Work Programme 2019; Information for Applicants 2019). **Preprints** may be included, if freely available from a preprint server (preprints should be properly referenced and either a link to the preprint or a DOI should be provided).

–   We recommend to provide **summary/overview information** for the reviewers (e.g. total number of publications, contributions to conferences, citations, h-index etc as applicable; weblink to full list of publications), as well as specific "**highlight information**". For the list of five top publications in the track record, it is very advisable to **describe their significance and your contribution in 1-2 sentences**, e.g. in a textbox ("Here, we could show for the first time…")

–   There is hardly any information available to date on how much attention ERC reviewers pay to the provision of listing only "**up to five publications**" in the Track Record. According to the ERC Executive Agency, *„the 'up to 5 publications' is not an eligibility issue but how strictly each panel will look at this in the evaluation is their own decision and cannot be predicted."*

–   In any case, we recommend to mention any **further important papers of particular relevance for your ERC projec**t (i.e. in addition to the top 5) in the proposal as well, e.g. by integrating this information in a brief additional running text section in the Track record ("research profile", "research interests" or similar),   and/or   in   the   extended   synopsis   and   B2.

B2, Section c : Resources

–   Apart from explaining the project costs in the adequate detail (usually around half/one page of explanatory text page for the main cost items, plus the budget table), this section is also suitable to present **detailed information on the team composition and expertise**, including the expertise requirements for Post Docs and PhD students that will be hired for the project.

–   We also recommend to present relevant information on the **host institution/research environment** here, to support the message of "the right project and team in the right place".

–   The time plan/overview on timing of key intermediate goals is typically either presented at the end of section b) methodology or in section c) resources

Indicative example table for key intermediate goals

	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3
Years 1-2	Analysis of... Publication 1...	Purify...	Visualize... Conference...
Years 3-4	Maps...	Integration of...	...
Year 5	Model...	Correlation of findings...	...Publications,...

Budget table:

➔ Please contact the grant management office at your ERC host institution for support with the budget calculation

- **Other direct costs** (with overhead flat rate): This category includes contracts to purchase goods, works or services, e.g. contract for a computer; contract for an audit certificate on the financial statements; contract for the publication of brochures; contract for the creation of a project website, contract for organization of the rooms and catering for a meeting, contract for hiring IPR consultants/agents. These costs do not arise from directly implementing the action tasks of the ERC project, but they are necessary to implement these tasks. In Horzion 2020, overheads apply to these costs, as opposed to the case for subcontracts (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf, 122)

- **Audit costs** should be included in the **other direct costs** category. In Horizon 2020, only one audit (certificate of the financial statement) is required at the end of the project, if the funding (direct costs) amounts to more than 325.000 EUR

- **Subcontracting costs** (without overheads): Costs for subcontracts arise from the implementation of specific tasks which are part of the action (ERC project) by a third party. No overheads can be charged for these costs.

- **Equipment:** Please note that only **depreciation rates** (according to national rules) can be charged to the ERC for equipment. If the depreciation period of the equipment in question exceeds the duration of the ERC project, the remaining costs have to be carried by other means. Please contact your host institution in case of questions in this context.

- Do not forget the possibility to include costs for publications, including **open access fees** (Article 29.2 of the ERC Model Grant Agreement). In Horizon 2020, each beneficiary must ensure open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to its results. Also costs related to **open access to research data** (Article 29.3. of the ERC Model Grant Agreement) can be charged.

- **Other direct costs with no overheads :** This category includes costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary (= host institution), e.g. access to large research facilities owned by a third party and not used on the premises of the beneficiaries.

- **PI salary:** As a PI, you may request funding for your salary corresponding to the percentage of total working time dedicated to the ERC project (or a smaller fraction of that amount), even if you already receive a salary by your host institution. Funding of (part of) the PI's salary can e.g. support the host institution in hiring a teaching replacement in case there is an agreement to reduce teaching obligations of a PI during the ERC project. Please consider, however, whether funding of the PI salary could result in a less-than-optimal number/experience level of team members due to budget constraints, as this needs of course to be avoided.

Indicative evaluation schedule for the Starting Grant Call 2019 (may be changed)

Timeframe for sending information to applicants (ERC-2019-StG)	Physical Sciences & Engineering (PE)	Life Sciences (LS)	Social Sciences & Humanities (SH)
1. Results of eligibility check (applies only to proposals declared ineligible)	January		
2. Results of Step 1	mid May	mid May	mid May
3. Step 2 Interviews	early/mid June	mid/end June	end May/early June
4. Results of Step 2	mid/end August	mid/end August	mid/end August

Updates at: https://erc.europa.eu/timeframe-starting-grant-2019-evaluation-erc-2019-stg