

ERC Work Programme 2017



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

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Consolidator Grant profile

Objectives

ERC Consolidator Grants are designed to support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they may still be consolidating their own independent research team or programme. Applicant Principal Investigators must demonstrate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their scientific proposal.

Size of ERC Consolidator Grants

Consolidator Grants may be awarded up to a maximum of **EUR 2 000 000** for a period of **5 years**²³.

However, up to an **additional EUR 750 000** can be requested in the proposal to cover (a) eligible "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or (c) access to large facilities²⁴.

²³ The maximum award is reduced pro rata temporis for projects of a shorter duration. This does not apply to ongoing projects.

²⁴ As any additional funding is to cover major one-off costs it is not subject to pro-rata temporis reduction for projects of shorter duration. All funding requested is assessed during evaluation.

Profile of the ERC Consolidator Grant Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator shall have been awarded their first PhD **over 7 and up to 12 years prior to 1 January 2017**. The effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD can be reduced in certain properly documented circumstances (see "*Eligible Principal Investigator*" above).

A competitive Consolidator Grant Principal Investigator must have already shown research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced **several important publications as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor**. Applicant Principal Investigators should also be able to demonstrate a promising track record of early achievements appropriate to their research field and career stage, including significant 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.

Early achievements track record

In the Track Record (see “Proposal description” below) the applicant Principal Investigator should list (if applicable):

- 1. Up to ten publications in major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals, peer-reviewed conferences proceedings and/or monographs of their respective research fields, highlighting those as main author or without the presence as co-author of their PhD supervisor (properly referenced, field relevant bibliometric indicators may also be included);**
- 2. Research monographs and any translations thereof;**
- 3. Granted patent(s);**
- 4. Invited presentations to internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools;**
- 5. Prizes/ Awards/ Academy memberships.**

Expected time commitment of the Consolidator Grant Principal Investigator

The question of whether the Principal Investigator is strongly committed to the project and demonstrates the willingness to devote a significant amount of time to the project forms a key part of the evaluation.

Principal Investigators funded through the ERC Consolidator Grants shall spend a minimum of 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country and a minimum of 40% of their total working time on the ERC project²⁵.

Principal Investigators shall ensure a sufficient time commitment and presence throughout the course of the project to

guarantee its proper execution. The time commitment will be monitored, and in cases where the actual commitment is below the minimum levels set out above, or the levels indicated in the proposal (see proposal description below), appropriate measures may be taken, up to and including reduction of the grant and suspension or termination of grants in accordance with the grant agreement.

It is also expected that Principal Investigators will be able to start their project within six months of receiving an invitation letter from the ERC.

²⁵ See Eligible Host Institution above regarding field work.

Evaluation criteria

For all ERC frontier research grants, **scientific excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation**. It will be applied in conjunction to the evaluation of both: the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project; and the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the Principal Investigator.

During the evaluation, the phase of the Principal Investigator's transition to independence, possible breaks in the research career of the applicant and/or unconventional research career paths should be taken into account. Benchmarks set in the relevant profiles above including the expected minimum working times to be spent on the ERC project, will also be taken into consideration.

In general, projects wholly or largely consisting in the collation and compilation of existing material in new databases, editions or collections are unlikely to constitute ground-breaking or "frontier" research in themselves, however useful such resources might be to subsequent original research. Such projects are therefore unlikely to be recommended for funding by the ERC's panels.

Plagiarism detection software may be used to analyse proposals submitted to the ERC.

The detailed evaluation elements applying to the excellence of the research project and the Principal Investigator are set out below.

1. Research Project

Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Starting, Consolidator and Advanced

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?

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 is the proposed research methodology 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 and resources necessary and properly justified (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

2. Principal Investigator

Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment

Starting and Consolidator

Intellectual capacity and creativity

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to propose and conduct ground-breaking research?

To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?

To what extent have the achievements of the PI typically gone beyond the state of the art?

Commitment

To what extent does the PI demonstrate the level of commitment to the project necessary for its execution and the willingness to devote a significant amount of time to the project (minimum 50% for Starting and 40% for Consolidator of the total working time on it) (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

Advanced

Intellectual capacity and creativity

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to propose and conduct ground-breaking research?

To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?

To what extent have the achievements of the PI typically gone beyond the state of the art?

To what extent has the PI demonstrated sound leadership in the training and advancement of young scientists?

Commitment

To what extent does the PI demonstrate the level of commitment to the project necessary for its execution and the willingness to devote a significant amount of time to the project (minimum 30% of the total working time on it) (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?