Horizon Europe

European Research Council (ERC) Frontier Research Grants

Information for Applicants to the Synergy Grant call

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IMPORTANT TO NOTE

The present document is based on the legal documents setting the rules and conditions for the ERC frontier research grants, in particular:

- ➢ the ERC Work Programme 2022[1],
- ➢ the European Research Council Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe, and the related methods and procedures for peer review and proposal evaluation relevant to the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe,
- ➢ the Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions.

This document complements and does not supersede the afore-mentioned documents, which are legally binding and prevail in case of discrepancies. 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 this document.

The Guide for ERC Peer Reviewers – applicable to the Synergy Grant call, provides practical information on the evaluation process.

National Contact Points (ERC NCPs) have been set up across Europe[2] 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 or the Funding & Tenders Portal.

Abbreviations

AC Associated Country[3]
ADG Advanced Grant
cHI corresponding Host Institution
COG Consolidator Grant
cPI corresponding Principal Investigator
ERCEA European Research Council Executive Agency
ERC panel ERC peer review evaluation panels
ERC WP - ERC Work Programme 2022
EU MS EU Member States
F&T Portal – Funding & Tenders Portal

HE Horizon Europe Framework Programme
HI – Host Institution
NCP – National Contact Points
PI – Principal Investigator
PM – Panel Member
PEV Panel Evaluator
PIC Participant Identification Code
POC Proof of Concept Grant
SEP Submission and Evaluation of Proposals
STG Starting Grant
SYG Synergy Grant

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[1] European Commission C(2021) 4860 of 14 July 2021
[2] This applies to EU Member States and Associated Countries. Some other countries also provide this service
[3] Please check the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal for up-to-date information on the current position for Associated Countries.

Content

1. ERC SYNERGY GRANT 2022

1.1   ERC FUNDING PRINCIPLES

The ERC Synergy Grant is part of the main ERC frontier research grants 2022 funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The ERC's frontier research grants aim to empower individual researchers and provide the best settings to foster their creativity. **Scientific excellence** is the sole criterion of evaluation in all ERC frontier research grants. Please see below an overview of all ERC 2022 calls.

STG **Starting Grants** (2-7 years after PhD) up to €1.5 Million for 5 years + up to €1 Million	COG **Consolidator Grants** (7-12 years after PhD) up to €2 Million for 5 years + up to €1 Million	ADG **Advanced Grants** 10 years track-record up to €2.5 Million for 5 years + up to €1 Million	SYG **Synergy Grants** 2-4 PIs at any career stage up to €10 Million for 6 years +up to €4 Million

Objectives

ERC Synergy Grants are intended to enable minimum two to maximum four Principal Investigators (PIs) (and their teams)[4] to jointly address ambitious research problems that could not be addressed by the individual Principal Investigators and their teams working alone. Synergy projects should enable substantial advances at the frontiers of knowledge, stemming, for example, from the cross-fertilisation of scientific fields, from new productive lines of enquiry, or new methods and techniques, including unconventional approaches and investigations at the interface between established disciplines. The transformative research funded by Synergy Grants should have the potential of becoming a benchmark on a global scale.

Principal Investigators must demonstrate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their research proposal. Principal Investigators must also demonstrate that their group can successfully bring together the scientific elements necessary to address the scope and complexity of the proposed research question.

Principal Investigators and the Synergy group

One of the Principal Investigators must be designated as the corresponding Principal Investigator (cPI). At any one time, one Principal Investigator per Synergy Grant Group, except the corresponding PI, can be hosted and engaged by an institution outside of a Member State or Associated Countries.

Researchers of any age and career stage can apply for up to six years funding. No specific eligibility criteria regarding the academic training are foreseen for PIs applying for ERC Synergy Grants. The Principal Investigators must present an early achievement track-record or a ten-year track-record, whichever is most appropriate for their career stage (see Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant profiles sections in the ERC Work Programme 2022). There is little prospect of an application succeeding in the absence of such a track-record. Applicants are encouraged to evaluate their track-records against the benchmarks described in the various profiles to decide for themselves their likelihood for success, thus avoiding investing effort in proposals that are very unlikely to succeed. The applicant PIs do not need to be based in the same Host Institution; any group that can demonstrate the need for a synergetic proposal to promote key research advances will be considered.

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[4]Where research is often performed individually in certain fields (e.g. in the humanities and mathematics), the 'team' may consist solely of the Principal Investigator.

It is of utmost importance not to confuse the term 'synergy' and its requirements with the concepts and the terminology of other parts of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme. Proposals perceived as mere loose cooperation or networking are not in the scope of the call. Support for consortia is provided by other calls under Horizon Europe. Synergy projects should generally involve PIs and their teams that are capable of tackling bold new research themes that require novel approaches. Such research teams are typically characterised by exceptional combinations of knowledge and skills, in which the Principal Investigators hold a central role. True to its bottom-up approach the Scientific Council remains open to what applicants choose as the best ways of working together. Nevertheless, the applicants are expected to explain the feasibility and appropriateness of the working arrangements by coming up with ideas on how to spend time together in ways that best suit the aims and goals of their research in order to convince the reviewing panels (or reviewers) about the outstanding and exceptional work together.

The ERC expects the composition of a Synergy Grant Group to remain unchanged throughout the lifetime of the grant. If a Principal Investigator leaves a Synergy Grant Group, the grant may be continued only exceptionally, subject to a scientific evaluation and provided that all eligibility criteria will continue to be met.

Examples of Synergy projects funded in the previous calls can be found on the ERC website: Synergy grants.

Research fields – no predetermined priorities

The ERC's frontier research grants operate on a 'bottom-up' basis and applications can be made in any field of research with an emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering[5]. In particular, the ERC encourages proposals of a multi- or trans-disciplinary nature which cross the boundaries between different fields of research, or proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions. The focus is on the group of PIs and on their teams. 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, however useful such resources might be to subsequent original research. Such projects are therefore unlikely to be recommended for funding by the ERC panels.

Each Synergy proposal must demonstrate that its objectives can only be achieved through the specific combination of knowledge and skills brought together by the participating PIs. In other words, a major scientific question of pressing significance, that could become benchmarks on a global scale, an integrated project and the transformative scientific potential are crucial elements in conceiving a Synergy proposal.

Careful consideration should be given so to propose truly novel ideas not just continuations of ongoing work or existing collaboration. As with any other frontier research funded by the ERC, research proposals are expected to be risky. It remains important, however, that the risk and how it will be managed is well thought through and explained in the proposal.

Evaluation and Peer Review

The ERC's evaluation process is conducted by peer review panels composed of renowned scientists and scholars. The panels may be assisted by independent external experts working remotely. The panel chairs and members have been selected by the ERC Scientific Council on the basis of their scientific merits.

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[5] Research proposals within the scope of Annex I to the Euratom Treaty, namely those directed towards nuclear energy applications shall be submitted to relevant calls under the Euratom Framework Programme

The peer reviewers are asked to look at the **quality of the science proposed, the synergy through the combination of the scientific elements and the know-how of the group, collaborative working arrangements and risk** when assessing the excellence of the proposal.

Open Science

Open science is a core principle of the ERC. The ERC is committed to the principle of open access to any published output of research, including in particular peer-reviewed articles and monographs. It also supports the basic principle of open access to research data and data related products such as computer code. The ERC considers that providing free online access to all these research products can be the most effective way to ensure that the products of the research it funds can be accessed, read and used as the basis for further research. Under Horizon Europe, beneficiaries of ERC grants must ensure open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications[6] of their results as set out in the [Model Grant Agreement](#) used for ERC actions. Beneficiaries must ensure that they or the authors retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with their open access requirements. In addition, beneficiaries of ERC grants funded under the ERC Work Programme 2022 will be covered by the provisions on research data management as set out in the [Model Grant Agreement](#) used for ERC actions. In particular, whenever a project generates research data, beneficiaries are required to manage it in line with the principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability as described by the FAIR principles initiative[7], and establish a data management plan within the first six months of the project implementation. Open access to research data should be ensured under the principle 'as open as possible, as closed as necessary'. These provisions are designed to facilitate access, re-use and preservation of the research data generated during the ERC funded research work.

Funding

Synergy Grant can be up to a maximum of EUR 10 000 000 for a period of 6 years. For projects of shorter duration the maximum size of the grant is reduced *pro rata*.

However, up to an additional EUR 4 000 000 can be requested to cover[8]:

(a) 'start-up' costs for PIs moving to 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 facilities and/or
(d) other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs.

As any additional funding is to cover major one-off costs it is not subject to pro-rata reduction for projects of shorter duration.

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

Project costs will be reimbursed at a funding rate of 100% for direct costs plus a flat-rate of 25% for indirect costs[9].

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[6] This includes peer-reviewed book chapters and long-text publications such as monographs, edited collections, critical editions, scholarly exhibition catalogues, or PhD theses.

[7] https://www.nature.com/articles/sdata201618

[8] Additional funding costs of the main grants are a separate cost category in the [Model Grant Agreement](#) used for ERC actions.

[9] Excluding the direct eligible costs for subcontracting, and any unit costs, which include indirect costs.

Research integrity

Cases of scientific misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or misrepresentation of data[10] may result in the rejection of proposals in accordance with section 3.11 of the [ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe](#). Please also note that plagiarism detection software is used to analyse all submitted proposals to detect similar proposals submitted by different PIs. A procedure is in place to assess alleged or suspected cases of scientific misconduct. Scientific misconduct may result in the rejection of the proposal from the current call and in a possible restriction on submission of proposals to future calls, as explained in the relevant ERC Work Programme.

Synergy Grant profile and track record[11]

Each Principal Investigator must provide a list of achievements reflecting their track record. The type of achievements expected for Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant applicant Principal Investigators are set out in the relevant profiles below. Principal Investigators applying to the Synergy Grant call can be at **any of these career stages**. A short narrative describing the scientific importance of the research outputs and the role played by the Principal Investigator in their production may be included.

Applicants are encouraged to evaluate their track-record and research independence against the below-mentioned benchmarks, in order to judge their likelihood for success and to avoid investing effort in proposals that are very unlikely to succeed.

In the context of the Covid-19 outbreak, applicants may mention in their research proposal (Curriculum Vitae) any specific situation caused by the pandemic that had a negative impact on their CV or track record.

Profile of an ERC Advanced grant Principal Investigator

ERC Advanced Grant PIs are expected to be active researchers and to have a track record of significant research achievements in their field during the last 10 years. A competitive Advanced Grant Principal Investigator must have already shown a record which identifies them as an exceptional leader in terms of originality and significance of their research contributions.

In most fields, PIs will be expected to have a proven track record of achievements in the past 10 years appropriate to their research field and at least matching one or more of the following benchmarks, for instance: up to 10 significant publications as main author in leading international peer-reviewed journals of their respective field, or major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals; 3 major research monographs (for research fields where monographs is the norm). Publications may be listed with their field relevant bibliometric indicators, however without mentioning the Journal Impact Factor. They may also demonstrate a record of invited presentations in well-established international conferences, organization of international conferences, granted patents, leading research expeditions, awards, prizes, academy memberships etc.

Any documented career break <u>during the last ten years</u> should be clearly explained in the dedicated section of the CV.

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[10] For example if (i) in the list of publications, the order of authors does not appear as indicated in the original publications; (ii) the written consent of the research collaborators mentioned in the proposal is not obtained by the call submission deadline

[11] See the [ERC Work Programme 2022](#) for the full description of the ERC AdG, CoG and StG profile, possible extensions of the period under consideration for the assessment of research achievements and career breaks.

Applicants in earlier career stages	
Profile of an ERC Starting grant Principal Investigator	**Profile of an ERC Consolidator grant Principal Investigator**
A competitive STG PI must have already shown the <u>potential</u> for research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced <u>at least one</u> important publication as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.	A competitive COG PI must have already shown research independence and evidence of maturity, for example by having produced <u>several</u> important publications as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.

All PIs 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 leading international peer-reviewed journals of their respective field. Publications may be listed with their field relevant bibliometric indicators, however without mentioning the Journal Impact Factor. They may also demonstrate a record of invited presentations in well-established international conferences, granted patents, awards, prizes etc.

1.2   ADMISSIBILITY AND ELIGIBILITY

Admissible and eligible proposals

All applications and the related supporting information are reviewed to ensure that all admissibility and eligibility criteria are met. All proposals must be complete, readable, and accessible. They must be submitted by eligible Principal Investigators before the relevant call deadlines. Please see section 2.1 for an overview of a complete ERC proposal. Proposals which do not meet these criteria may be declared inadmissible. All scientific fields are eligible for ERC funding[12].

The proposal's content should be related to the objectives of the ERC Synergy call and must meet all its admissibility and eligibility requirements, as defined in the ERC Work Programme 2022. Where there is a doubt on the admissibility and eligibility of a proposal, the peer review evaluation may proceed pending a decision following an admissibility and eligibility review committee[13]. The fact that a proposal is evaluated in such circumstances does not constitute proof of its admissibility or eligibility. If it becomes clear before, during or after the peer review evaluation phase, that one or more of the admissibility and eligibility criteria has not been met (for example, due to incorrect or misleading information), the proposal will be declared inadmissible or ineligible and it will be rejected.

Host institution

ERC grants are open to researchers of any nationality who intend to conduct their research activity in any EU Member State or AC. Up to four Host institutions could engage a Principal Investigator. One of these Host Institutions, with the exception of the corresponding Host institution (cHI), at any one time, may be a legal entity established outside the European Union or Associated Countries or an international organisation.

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[12] Proposals on nuclear energy applications within the scope of Annex I to the Euratom Treaty shall be submitted to relevant calls under the Euratom Framework Programme

[13] For further information see applicable ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe which can be found on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal.

The cPI will be the administrative contact point for the cHI, other PIs as well as other HIs. The constitution of the research teams is flexible. Together, all the Principal Investigators have scientific responsibility for the group's project on behalf of the host institution or host institutions which are the applicant legal entities. Depending on the nature of a project, the research team may involve team members from other research organisations situated in the same or a different country.

In case of Synergy Grants, Principal Investigators may be hosted by more than one Host Institution, and each of the Host Institutions shall offer their support to the Principal Investigator(s) hosted by them for the duration of the grant. At submission stage, **each** Host Institution must provide the host support letter for their Principal Investigator(s). The Host Institutions must engage the Principal Investigators for at least the duration of the grant[14]. PIs do not need to be employed by the cHI or HI at the time when the proposal is submitted.

The cHI and the other HIs 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 research organisation (such as CERN, EMBL, etc.), the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) or any other entity created under EU law. International organisations with headquarters in an EU Member State or associated country will be deemed to be established in that Member State or Associated Country. Any type of legal entity, public or private, including universities, research organisations and undertakings can host Principal Investigators and their teams. The ERC welcomes applications from Principal Investigators hosted by private for-profit research centres, including industrial laboratories.

Normally the PI will be employed by the HI, but cases where, for duly justified reasons, the PI's employer cannot become the HI, or where the PI is self-employed, can be accommodated. The specific conditions of engagement will be subject to clarification and approval during the granting procedure or during the amendment procedure for a change of HI.

Expected time commitment

PIs will be expected to spend as a minimum 30% of their working time on the ERC project and a minimum of 50% of their working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country, with the exception of the PI hosted or engaged by an institution outside of the EU or AC, if any.

PIs 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, appropriate measures may be taken, up to and including reduction of the grant and suspension or termination of the grant in accordance with the grant agreement.

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

Submission restrictions

The ERC calls are highly competitive. Thousands of high quality proposals are received each year and only outstanding proposals are likely to be funded. To maintain the quality and integrity of the ERC's evaluation process, restrictions on applications have been put in place.

The following general restrictions apply:

➢ A researcher may participate as PI in only one ERC grant at a time[15]. An ERC grant can only start after the duration of the project fixed in a previous grant agreement has ended.

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[14] Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions
[15] Including all PIs supported under the Synergy Grant.

➢ A researcher participating as PI in an ERC grant may not submit a proposal for another ERC grant, unless the existing project ends no more than two years after the call deadline[16] (i.e. before 10 November 2023 for Synergy applications).

➢ Principal Investigators who are not serving as Synergy Grant 2022 panel members can apply to the 2022 Synergy Grant call even if they served as Panel Members for the 2019 or 2020 Synergy Grant calls.

➢ A PI may submit proposals to different main frontier research grant calls published under the same Work Programme, but only the first eligible proposal will be evaluated, the second proposal will be declared ineligible.

The year of an ERC call for proposals refers to the Work Programme under which the call was published and can be established by its call identifier (ERC-2022-SYG), it does not refer to a calendar year.

Additional restrictions are related to the outcome of the evaluation in previous calls (see table below). They are designed to allow unsuccessful PIs the time necessary to develop a stronger proposal. Inadmissible and ineligible or withdrawn proposals do not count against any of the restrictions listed below.

Call to which the Principal Investigator applied under previous ERC Work Programmes and proposal evaluation outcome		2022 ERC calls to which a Principal Investigator is _not_ eligible
2020 and 2021 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant or 2020 Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity	Starting, Consolidator, Advanced and Synergy Grant
2020 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant
2020 Synergy Grant	A, or B at Step 3	No restrictions
	B at Step 1 or 2	No restrictions
	C at Step 1	Advanced and Synergy Grant
2021 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	A, or B at Step 2	No restrictions
	B, or C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant

1.3   EVALUATION PROCESS

A single submission of the full proposal will be followed by a **three-step evaluation, including interviews**. The evaluation will be conducted by means of a structure of dedicated panels. The panels will be assisted by independent external experts working remotely. These ERC panels assess, score

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[16] According to the duration of the project fixed in the previous grant agreement of the main frontier research grant.

and flag the proposals on the basis of the individual evaluations and on the panel discussion which follows them. The panels are not predefined at the beginning of the evaluation. The panel members and the proposals belong to a single panel. The composition of the panels at step 2 and step 3 is by nature multi-disciplinary to accommodate a proper evaluation of multidisciplinary and complex proposals.

As there are no predefined panels, and to facilitate the allocation of proposals to the right experts, the applicant corresponding PI has to indicate between four and six fixed keywords. These keywords are the same as the ones used in the ERC Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grants and given in Annex 4.1 of this guide. There is **no hierarchical order of the selected keywords**. The fixed keywords and free keywords and the abstract of the proposal are analysed together to ensure the best expertise for each proposal. It is the corresponding PI's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant keywords for the evaluation of the proposed research. The allocation of the proposals to the various panels in step 2 and step 3 will be done by grouping proposals based on their research areas and the expertise of the panel members.

The names of the five panel chairs are published on the ERC website before the deadline of the call, while the names of panel members are published only after the evaluation process is concluded.

No Contact allowed with Peer Reviewers

Please, note that in accordance with section 3.2 of the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe, any direct or indirect contact about the ERC peer review evaluation between an applicant legal entity or a PI submitting a proposal on behalf of an applicant legal entity, and any independent expert involved in the peer review evaluation under the same call, in view of attempting to influence the evaluation process, is strictly forbidden. Such contact can constitute an exclusion situation and, may result in the decision to reject the proposal concerned from the call in question (Article 141 of the Financial Regulation).

ERC Peer Reviewers are bound to confidentiality during as well as after the evaluation.

The corresponding PI on behalf of the group can request during the electronic proposal submission that up to four specific persons should not act as an evaluator in the evaluation of their proposal. The persons identified may be excluded from the evaluation of the proposal concerned, as long as it remains possible to have the proposal evaluated.

Step 1: The extended synopsis and the Principal Investigators' track records and CVs will be assessed (Part B1 only, and not the full scientific proposal) by the whole pool of panel members in one panel from a generalist perspective. After a remote evaluation phase in which each proposal is reviewed by minimum three reviewers, the panel chairs and vice chairs meet to discuss all proposals submitted to the Synergy Grant call and to select those passing to step 2. Proposals will be retained for step 2 based on the outcome of the evaluation at step 1 and a budgetary cut-off level of up to seven times the panel's indicative budget. In this first step the panel's indicative budget corresponds to the call's budget of EUR 297 Million for the Synergy 2022 call.

Step 2: The complete version of the retained proposals will be assessed (Parts B1 and B2). Five panels will be formed right after the step 1 filtering to ensure the best expertise using the whole pool of the step 1 panel members. External specialized reviews will complement the generalist reviews of the panel members. The five panels will have around 15-18 experts in each panel (the orientation of the panels is roughly towards 2 Physical Sciences, 2 Life sciences, 1 Social sciences and humanities domains, these are all highly cross-disciplinary panels). At the end of the remote individual assessment the five panels meet to discuss jointly all proposals. Proposals will be retained for step 3 based on the outcome of the evaluation at step 2 and on a budgetary cut-off level of up to three times the panel's indicative budget. An indicative budget in step 2 is allocated to each panel in proportion to the budgetary demand of its assigned proposals.

Step 3: Following the step 2 evaluation the applicants will receive an invitation letter detailing the format and the length of the interview. All Principal Investigators of the proposals selected for interviews will be invited to present their proposal to the interview panel. It is possible that the interviews are organised via teleconferencing tools. A minimum of three and a maximum of five panels would interview the applicants in parallel. The composition of the panels might be different from the panels at step 2. The interview panels may be reconfigured to ensure the best expertise for the proposals. The interview details will depend on the decision of the panels: interviews can last around 45 minutes in total. The panel may ask the applicants to give a 10-15 minute presentation on the proposed research project. The remaining time may be devoted to questions and answers on the scientific content and implementation of the project, modalities of collaboration among the Principal Investigators and the project's budget and resources. The presentation is an opportunity to elaborate on the synergies that the project aims to create. The interviews are planned between 5 and 9 September 2022. Please check the ERC website for any changes.

The resources requested by the applicants will be scrutinized and can be adjusted if not sufficiently justified. Projects recommended for funding will be funded by the ERC if sufficient funds are available. Proposals will be funded in priority order based on their rank.

As a general rule, all Principal Investigators should take part in the interview. The requirement for a physical or virtual presence will be decided depending on the Covid-19 pandemic situation and other factors in 2022. In case of interviews taking place in Brussels, in very exceptional cases, if a Principal Investigator from the group is unable to attend the interview (e.g. pregnancy, immobility due to illness, out in research field work), two alternatives for a remote interview are offered: video-conference or telephone-conference.

Note that it is difficult to accommodate a preference for a particular day within the panel meeting week. The schedules of the interviews in all the panels are interconnected, which limits the possibility of any change.

If experts are unable to attend the interview in person, subject to technical feasibility, they may participate in the panel meeting by electronic means (video-conferencing or telephone-conferencing).

In view of the confidentiality of the evaluation process, applicants invited to a step 3 interview should not share the identity of panel members within their scientific communities until their names have been published on the ERC website at the end of the evaluation.
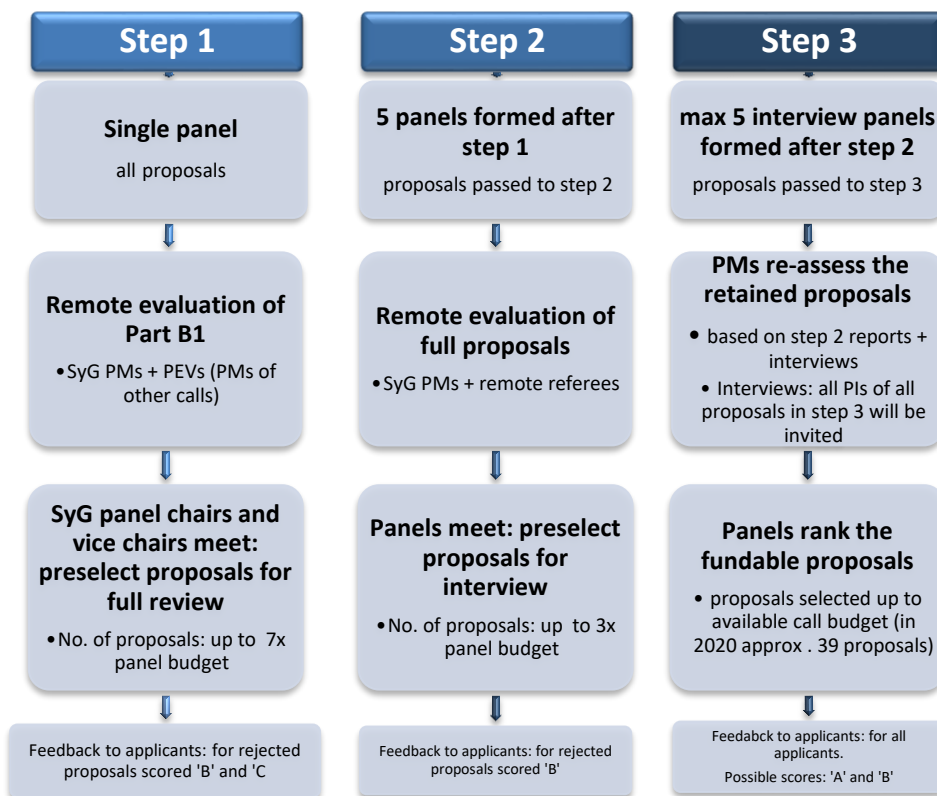
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Single panel all proposals	**5 panels formed after step 1** proposals passed to step 2	**max 5 interview panels formed after step 2** proposals passed to step 3
Remote evaluation of Part B1 • SyG PMs + PEVs (PMs of other calls)	**Remote evaluation of full proposals** • SyG PMs + remote referees	**PMs re-assess the retained proposals** • based on step 2 reports + interviews • Interviews: all PIs of all proposals in step 3 will be invited
SyG panel chairs and vice chairs meet: preselect proposals for full review • No. of proposals: up to 7x panel budget	**Panels meet: preselect proposals for interview** • No. of proposals: up to 3x panel budget	**Panels rank the fundable proposals** • proposals selected up to available call budget (in 2020 approx . 39 proposals)
Feedback to applicants: for rejected proposals scored 'B' and 'C'	Feedback to applicants: for rejected proposals scored 'B'	Feedabck to applicants: for all applicants. Possible scores: 'A' and 'B'

Figure 1 shows the schematic representation of the 2022 evaluation process. PM: panel member; PEV: panel evaluator. PEV is an ERC term used for panel members of the other ERC main frontier research calls reviewing ERC SyG proposals.
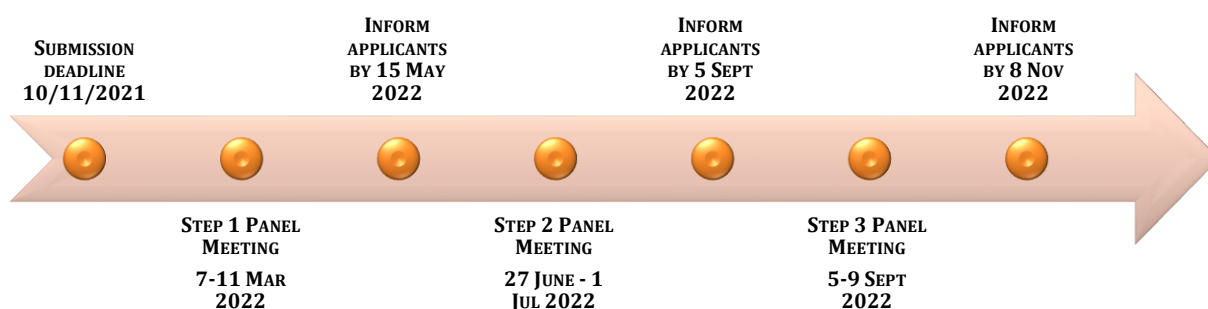
SUBMISSION DEADLINE 10/11/2021 — STEP 1 PANEL MEETING 7-11 MAR 2022 — INFORM APPLICANTS BY 15 MAY 2022 — STEP 2 PANEL MEETING 27 JUNE - 1 JUL 2022 — INFORM APPLICANTS BY 5 SEPT 2022 — STEP 3 PANEL MEETING 5-9 SEPT 2022 — INFORM APPLICANTS BY 8 NOV 2022

Figure 2: Timeline of the Synergy 2022 evaluation. The time to inform the applicants corresponds to indicative dates when the applicants receive the evaluation report. Successful applicants invited for step 3 interviews will receive their interview modalities at the end of July 2022.

Outcome of evaluation and feedback to applicants

At each evaluation step, the reviewers will evaluate the quality of the research project and the Synergy group. The panels will look into the ground-breaking nature, the synergetic aspects, ambition and feasibility of the research project; and the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the Principal Investigators (see the evaluation criteria below). The peer reviewers will need to see that the collaborative working arrangements between the Principal Investigators described as part of the research methodology can ensure scientific excellence. Following the

timeline described above, the ERCEA provides feedback on the final decision of the evaluation through an 'Information letter' to the PIs and the Host Institutions (applicant legal entities) via the EU Login secured web-mail account accessible on the F & T Portal. Besides the information letter, an evaluation report will be provided to all PIs and all HIs' contact person(s).This indicates whether the proposal meets the quality threshold and is retained, and provides the score, ranking range and corresponding comment 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 of opinions about the merits of a scientific proposal are part of scientific debate 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 comment** reflects the consensus decision taken by the panel as a whole based on prior remote individual assessments from independent reviewers, which can be external remote referees as well as panel members, and on a thorough discussion as well as on the ranking against other proposals during the panel meeting.

At the end of each step the proposal will receive one of the following scores:

Step 1
A score - is of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation
B score - is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 2 of the evaluation[17]
C score - is not of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation[18]

Only the applicants not retained for step 2 receive the evaluation results including an evaluation report.

Step 2
A score - is of sufficient quality to pass to step 3 of the evaluation,
B score - is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 3 of the evaluation

Applicants who receive an A score are invited for an interview to present their project at the step 3 panel meeting[19]. The rejected applicants will receive the evaluation results, including an evaluation report. The passed applicants will receive two notifications: the first one that they have passed to step 3 and a second one specifying the interview requirements.

Step 3
A score - fully meets the ERC's excellence criterion and is recommended for funding if sufficient funds are available;
B score - meets some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded.

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[17] The applicants may be subject to restrictions on submitting proposals to future ERC calls based on the outcome of the evaluation. Applicants will need to check the restrictions in place for each call in the following ERC Work Programme.
[18] The applicants may be subject to restrictions on submitting proposals to future ERC calls based on the outcome of the evaluation. Applicants will need to check the restrictions in place for each call in the following ERC Work Programme.
[19] The interview may be in physical presence in Brussels or virtual, through video- or teleconferencing systems. Please note that the ERC will reimburse the PI's travel expenditures for the interview in Brussels (see Commission Decision C(2007) 5858). 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 in person in Brussels (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.
Should a planned interview not be possible for reasons beyond the control of the ERCEA, the panel will have to take its decision based on the information made available to it.

The step 3 evaluation outcome is provided to all applicants through an information letter together with an evaluation report. It includes the final score, the panel ranking range of their proposal, the panel comment explaining the panel decision as well as the individual comments prepared by each reviewer in the remote phase of step 2.

Evaluation criteria

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

1. Research Project

Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

➢ *To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?*
➢ *To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development 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 high 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 does the proposal go beyond what the individual Principal Investigators could achieve alone? (based on the Extended Synopsis)*
➢ *To what extent do the Principal Investigators succeed in proposing a combination of scientific approaches that are crucial to address the scope and complexity of the research questions to be tackled? (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 research proposal, evaluated only in step 2 and 3)?*
➢ *To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology (based on the research proposal, evaluated only in step 2 and 3)?*
➢ *To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified (based on the research proposal, evaluated only in step 2 and 3)?*

2. Principal Investigators

Intellectual capacity and creativity

➢ *To what extent have the PIs demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?*
➢ *To what extent do the Ps have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?*

1.4   ETHICS AND SECURITY

Every project funded by the ERC under Horizon Europe is subject to an ethics review process. The ethics review process is independent from the evaluation procedure and the evaluation panels do not have access to the ethics documents.

Please see Annex A to the [ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe](#) for a detailed description of the ERC Ethics Review procedure.

The process is aimed at ensuring that all the research and innovation activities under Horizon Europe comply with ethics principles and relevant national, Union and international legislation, including the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#) and the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) and its Supplementary Protocols.

The main areas that are addressed during the ethics review process include:
1. Human embryonic stem cells and human embryos
2. Human participants
3. Human cells/tissues
4. Personal data
5. Animals
6. Non-EU countries
7. Environment, health and safety
8. Artificial Intelligence

When submitting their proposal, applicants must complete the Ethics Issues Table as part of the submission form and provide an ethics self-assessment and supporting documentation where needed as separate annex(es). Please see the [How to Complete your Ethics Self-Assessment](#) document for guidance. It is important to provide a complete overview of all ethics issues during the submission phase in order to speed up the ethics review process. Applicants should be aware that no grant agreement can be signed by ERCEA prior to a satisfactory conclusion of the ethics review procedure.

Security

Under Horizon Europe applicants are requested to identify if the proposed activity will use and/or generate information which might raise security concerns. When submitting their proposal, applicants must complete the security issues table (section 4 of the online proposal submission form) and provide, if applicable, available supporting documentation (as separate annexes). For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage.

1.5   MEANS OF REDRESS, ENQUIRES AND COMPLAINTS

Please see the section 3.9 of the [ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe](#) for a detailed description of the admissibility, eligibility procedures, enquiries and complaints, and evaluation review procedures.

Means of redress:
Upon receiving the information letter with the evaluation report or with the results of the admissibility and eligibility review, the corresponding PI and/or the corresponding HI (applicant legal entity) may request an admissibility, eligibility or evaluation review, if there is an indication that the results of the admissibility or eligibility checks were incorrect or that there has been a procedural shortcoming or a manifest error of assessment.
A request can be made if the PIs and/or the HIs consider that the applicable procedure has not been correctly applied to the proposal.

The evaluation review procedure is not meant to call into question the scientific judgement made by the peer review panel. It will look into procedural shortcomings and – in rare cases – into factual errors.

The information letter provides a link for the cPI and/or the cHI to introduce the request. The letter will specify a deadline for the receipt of any such requests, which will be 30 days from the date of receiving the information letter. A formal notification is considered to have been accessed by the applicant 10 calendar days after sending, if not accessed before in the system[20].

Requests must be:
  − related to the evaluation process, or admissibility/eligibility checks, for the call and grant in question;
  − set out using the online form, including a clear description of the grounds for complaint;
  − received within the time limit specified in the information letter;
  − sent by the cPI and/or the cHI.

Requests that do not meet the above-mentioned conditions, or do not deal with the admissibility, eligibility or evaluation of a specific proposal, will not be admitted.

An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent no later than two weeks after the deadline for submitting the request indicating the estimated date of a final reply.

A redress committee may be convened to examine the request for the admissibility, eligibility or evaluation. The redress committee will bring together staff of the ERC Executive Agency with the requisite scientific, technical and legal expertise. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of the requests, based on all available information related to the proposal and its evaluation, and fair and equal treatment of all applicants.

In case of the evaluation review procedure, the 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 profile and expertise of the experts. The committee may also contact the panel chair/panel member(s) concerned. **The committee will not call into question the scientific judgement of appropriately qualified panels of experts.** In light of its

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[20] Evaluation result letters are formal notifications. This means that deadlines triggered by these letters (evaluation review request, etc.) must be counted accordingly (i.e. access date + 1 day (event) + 30 days (deadline) OR sending date + 1 day (event) + 10 days (embargo period) + 30 days (deadline), if the letter was not accessed in the system.

review, the committee will recommend a course of action to the Responsible Authorizing Officer (RAO) for the call. 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.

Please note:
- a partial or total re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality of the assessment of a proposal.
- the committee may uphold the initial outcome if it concludes that the errors identified would not substantially affect the outcome of the evaluation nor the ranking of the project.
- the evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score;
- only one request at the time for evaluation review per proposal will be considered by the committee;
- all requests for evaluation review will be treated in confidence.

Other means of redress:

The above procedure does not prevent the applicants from resorting to any other means of redress such as:

- requesting a legal review of the Agency decision under Article 22 of Council Regulation 58/2003[21] ('Article 22 request'), within 1 month of receiving the ERCEA's letter; or

- bringing an action for annulment under Article 263 of the TFEU[22] ('Article 263 action') against the Agency, within 2 months of receiving the ERCEA's letter.

Applicants may choose which means of redress they wish to pursue. Applicants are asked not to take more than one formal action at a time. Once the Agency/Commission communicates the final decision on an action, applicants can take a further action against that decision. Deadlines for a further action will start to run from when applicants receive the final decision[23].

Other types of complaints on decisions affecting the involvement of applicants in the programme:

Any other complaint against a decision affecting the involvement of applicants in Horizon Europe shall be addressed to the Agency Director within 30 calendar days from the receipt of the communication of the Agency decision[24].

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[21] Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes, O J L 11, 16.01.2003, p.1.

[22] Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 47–390).

[23] Please be aware that, as per Article 22 of Regulation 58/2003, reaching a final decision on an Article 22 request may generally take more than 30 days. Therefore, if you first file an Article 22 request you may not be able afterwards to submit an evaluation review request within the 30 days deadline.

[24] A formal notification that has not been accessed within 10 calendar days after sending is considered to have been accessed by the applicant.

1.6   QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE CALL

Useful information can be found on the ERC website and more specifically on the pages dedicated to the Synergy Grant Call.

An extended set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the ERC calls is available at the ERC website. They can be filtered by calls or categories, and answers the most common questions for how to prepare and submit an ERC application.

A series of instructional videos giving information about the whole ERC application process, 'ERC classes' (drafting the proposal, its evaluation steps and PI's interview) is available on the funding page of the ERC website.

For additional questions related to the call, please contact the relevant Call coordination team:

ERC-SYG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu

For questions related to the compilation of the Ethics issues of the proposal, please contact the Ethics Support team: ERC-ETHICS-REVIEW@ec.europa.eu

For questions on open access to scientific publications and research data management, please see the section on Open Science in the Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions or contact ERC-OPEN-ACCESS@ec.europa.eu.

2. COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

> **A single submission deadline for ERC-2022-SYG is planned for:**
>
> **10 November 2021, 17:00.00 (Brussels local time)**

Please note that the planned submission deadline could be modified after the publication of the call. You are therefore invited to periodically consult the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#) where any modifications of the submission deadline is indicated.

2.1 OVERVIEW OF AN ERC APPLICATION

An ERC application is composed of

- ➢ The administrative form (Part A),
- ➢ The research proposal (Parts B1 and B2),
- ➢ Supporting documentation (HI support letter(s) and ethics issues)

2.2 THE SUBMISSION FORM

> The submission form is accessed via the call submission link in the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#). The electronic form has 5 sections (approximately 20 pages in total), which need to be completed before a submission can take place. Many fields are mandatory and specific to the ERC calls and we therefore advise to create a draft proposal well in advance of the submission deadline. **All mandatory fields are marked in red if left empty. Failure to fill in any mandatory field will block submission.**

1 – General Information contains information about the research proposal, including the project duration, title, acronym and abstract. Furthermore, in this section you will select four to six ERC keywords as listed in [Annex 4.1](#) that you believe best fit your scientific proposal. **There is no hierarchical order of the selected keywords and they are not linked to predefined panels, i.e. keyword 1 is equally weighted with keywords 2 to 6. The keywords are used to best allocate proposals to experts**. The abstract should provide a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as a short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process. Please note that in case your proposal is funded this abstract will be published. It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information. This section also contains general declarations related to the proposal and participation in Horizon Europe[25]. The declarations have to be filled in by the Principal Investigator on behalf of the Host Institution and 'We' has to be understood as both 'the Principal Investigator' and 'the Host Institution'.

2 – Participants section contains information about the PIs and the HIs. Separate sections will appear for each Principal Investigator and beneficiary. The name and e-mail of contact persons including the PIs and HIs contacts are **read-only in the forms.** To give access rights to the proposal and change contact persons, the form needs to be closed and the guidance of the online submission system to be followed. Further details such as ORCID number, researcher ID, other ID, last name at birth, gender, nationality etc., should be provided for the PIs as well as the address and telephone number of each contact person. <u>The PI's mobile number is an essential information for the Step 3 interview logistics</u>.

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[25] Please note that the ERCEA may at any time during the evaluation process request the applicants to provide the written consent mentioned in the declarations. These consents should not be submitted with the application, but the applicant must ensure the written consent from all participants prior to the call submission deadline.

This section contains new fields compared to previous calls under the below headings:

- **Gender Equality Plan (GEP)**: 'yes/no' tick box question to be filled in by the corresponding HI contact person. Only Public bodies, Higher education institutions and Research organisations must answer this question. This answer will not affect the evaluation of the project.
The requirement of having a Gender Equality Plan (with minimum prerequisites[26]) will not prevent a proposal from being evaluated in the ERC-2022-SYG call and it will not prevent the signature of the grant agreement, thus a GEP will not be obligatory for the duration of the grant either. For the other ERC 2022 Calls with submission deadlines in 2022, please consult the ERC Work Programme 2022, as a GEP (or an equivalent strategic document) needs to be put in place by grant signature.

- Person in charge of the proposal (Principal Investigators): on this page there is a new field on the 'career stage' of the PIs. This information will not be provided to the evaluators and it will not be evaluated. The field on the career stages refers to the ones defined in Frascati 2015 manual (see below). Please choose the appropriate option:

> Category A – Top grade researcher: the single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted. Example: 'Full professor' or 'Director of research'.
> Category B – Senior researcher: Researchers working in positions not as senior as top position but more senior than newly qualified doctoral graduates (IsCED level 8). Examples: 'associate professor' or 'senior researcher' or 'principal investigator'.
> Category C – Recognised researcher: the first grade/post into which a newly qualified doctoral graduate would normally be recruited. Examples: 'assistant professor', 'investigator' or 'post-doctoral fellow'.
> Category D – First stage researcher: Either doctoral students at the IsCED level 8 who are engaged as researchers, or researchers working in posts that do not normally require a doctorate degree. Examples: 'PhD students' or 'junior researchers' (without a PhD).

3 – Budget contains a summary of the total estimated project costs and the requested EU contribution for the project. The costs are given in whole Euros (not kilo Euros). The figures should match the corresponding figures in the detailed Part B2 budget table. Note that in the administrative form the budget lines appear by beneficiary organisation. Only in part B2 it is possible to detail the budget for each PI. As the project costs and the ERC contribution request is specified both in the Administrative form and in Part B2, please make sure that the figures in both places are aligned. Please refer to section 2.3 below for further instruction on how to draw up the budget. **Please ensure that all costs are given in whole Euros (integer), not thousands of Euros**.

4 – Ethics and security section consists of the ethics issues table, and the security issues table. **The ethics 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 applies to the proposal). Please note that, in case you answer YES to any of the questions, you are requested to

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[26] Public GEP: formal document published on the institution's website and signed by the top management, addressing the following issues:
 - Dedicated resources: commitment of human resources and gender expertise to implement it.
- Data collection and monitoring: sex/gender disaggregated data on personnel and students and annual reporting based on indicators.
- Training: Awareness raising/trainings on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.
- Minimum areas to be covered and addressed via concrete measures and targets:
    - work-life balance and organisational culture;
    - gender balance in leadership and decision-making;
    - gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
    - integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content;
    - measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment.

provide an Ethics Self-Assessment and additional ethics documentation, if applicable, as detailed in the Ethics Self-assessment step by step. Please refer to section 1.4 for further details.

The security issues table serves to identify if the proposed activity will use and/or generate information which might raise security concerns. The table provided has to be completed by answering YES or NO to all questions. Where necessary and applicable, you are requested to provide available documentation as annexes. For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage.

5 – 'Other questions' section contains information on the academic training (collected for statistical purposes only) as well as declarations related to eligibility and expected working time in EU or an AC. Each SyG PI is expected to commit as a minimum 50% of their working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country, with the exception of the PI hosted by an HI outside of these countries. This information will be provided to the experts at Step 2 and 3.

The 'Other questions' section also contains permission statements on sharing evaluation data. These data-related consents are entirely voluntary.

The applicant corresponding PI will have to declare that they have the written consent of all participants on their involvement and the content of their proposal, as well as of any researcher mentioned in the proposal on their participation in the project (either as team member, collaborator, other PIs or member of the advisory board). Please note that the ERCEA may request the applicant corresponding PI at any time during the evaluation, to provide proof of the written consent obtained prior to the call submission deadline. As established in section 3.3 of the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe, and specified in the ERC Work Programme 2022 applicant PIs may identify up to four specific persons to be excluded from the evaluation of their proposal.

2.3 THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The research proposal (Part B) consists of Part B1 and Part B2. The templates are provided in the submission system and their use is **strongly recommended**. Each proposal page **shall** carry a **header** presenting the **corresponding PI's last name**, the **acronym of the proposal**, 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 Arial or similar	At least 11	Single	2 cm side 1.5 bottom

In fairness to all applicants, the **page limits will be strictly applied**. Only the material that is presented within these limits will be evaluated. Peer reviewers will only be asked to read the material presented within the page limits, and will be under no obligation to read beyond them.

The working language of the ERC evaluation panels is English. Please note that accordingly, the evaluation reports will be available in English only. If the proposal is not in English, the ERCEA will provide a version of the proposal translated using computer-aided technology. An English translation of the abstract must be included in the proposal.

Please be aware that at step 1 of the evaluation only Part B1 is evaluated by the panel members, while at step 2 and 3 both Parts B1 and B2 are evaluated. The Resources and Time Commitment section, as an integral section of Part B2 is evaluated only if the proposal passes to step 2 and 3.

When drafting Part B1, PIs should pay particular attention to the extended synopsis 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 and synergetic aspects**, since the panel will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1, without access to Part B2. Be familiar with the evaluation criteria and be aware that reviewers answer a set of questions in all steps, thus the relevant information should already be present in part B1. Additional criteria complement the step 1 questions and will be addressed only if the proposal passes to step 2, thus consider carefully in which part you include the relevant information.

The panel members are asked to act as generalists when evaluating the proposals. Thus, their expertise will have to cover a wide range of proposals within a research field. For this reason and the fact that panel members evaluate only Part B1 at step 1, PIs should ensure that Part B1 is as complete and detailed as possible. In addition to the panel members, the ERC evaluations rely on input from remote referees if the proposal passes to the next step. They are scientists and scholars who bring in the necessary specialised expertise. Remote referees work remotely and deliver their individual assessments by electronic means. They do not participate in panel meetings and their involvement is limited to step 2 of the evaluation process.

Part B1

Cover page:
Proposal full title
Proposal short name (acronym)
Name of the corresponding PI (cPI)
Name of the corresponding Host institution (cHI)
List of the other participating PIs, indicating their respective Host Institutions
Proposal duration in months

Proposal abstract (half page, must be a copy/paste of the abstract from the administrative form section 1)

The Research Proposal: Part B1 – section a, b and c:

a. *Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal* **(max. 5 pages) - References to literature should be included; they do not count towards the page limits.**

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. **It is important that this extended synopsis contains all relevant information including some details about combination of the scientific approaches to be able to assess the feasibility of the scientific proposal and the know-how of the group since the panel will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1.**

The Principal Investigators

Each of the Principal Investigators must provide a list reflecting their track record. This can be either an **'early achievement track-record'** (for PIs within 2-7 and 7- 12 years after their PhD) or a **'10-year track-record'** (for advanced researchers) chosen by the applicants based on which is most appropriate for their career stage.

The evaluation experts will be instructed to judge each PI against the benchmarks relevant to their career stage. The group is evaluated as a whole.

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

The CV **should include the standard academic and research record**. A suggested outline is available in the Part B1 downloadable template. **The structure of the CV may be modified**, but the ERC recommends the use of the provided template. Hyperlinks should be avoided, as experts are under no obligation to review external documents. If applicable, please make sure that any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths which might have influenced your track record are clearly explained in the career break section of your CV so that this can be fairly assessed by the evaluation panels. If applicable, the Covid-19 impact on the scientific productivity may be listed.

The succinct **'funding ID', to be completed by each PI,** which must specify any current research grants and their subject, and any on-going and submitted applications for work related to the proposal **must follow the table format indicated in the Part B1 template.** Please note that grants where your participation was *pro bono*, i.e. no funds were received, should be listed as well. The funding ID will not count towards the page limits**.**

c. Track record (max. 2 pages for each PI)[27]:

Each Principal Investigator is required to include, depending on their career stage, a **list of achievements** reflecting either an '**Early achievements track-record**' or a '**10-year track record'** (see the profiles of the various Principal Investigators in the ERC Work Programme 2022). **Each PI may include a short narrative description of the scientific importance of their research outputs describing the role that the Principal Investigator played in their production.**

'**Early achievements track-record**'. Each applicant PI should list (if applicable):
1. **Publications (up to five for Starting Grant and up to ten for Consolidator Grant profile) 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

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[27] As described in the ERC Work Programme 2022 sections on the profiles of the ERC Starting/Consolidator/Advanced Grant PI.

presence as co-author of their PhD supervisor (properly referenced and including all authors; field relevant bibliometric indicators, **except the Journal Impact Factor**, may also be included); 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). The publications should be properly referenced, including all authors in the published order (see section 1.1 on Research integrity).

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**.

'10-year track record'. Each PI must provide a list of achievements in the last 10 years (as applicable below):

1. **Up to ten representative publications, from the last ten years, as main author** (or in those fields where alphabetic order of authorship is the norm, joint author) in **major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals** and/or in the **leading international peer-reviewed journals and peer-reviewed conferences proceedings** of their respective research fields, (properly referenced; field relevant bibliometric indicators, **except the Journal Impact Factor**, may also be included); 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);
2. *Research monographs and any translations thereof;*
3. *Granted patents;*
4. *Invited presentations to internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools;*
5. *Research expeditions that the applicant Principal Investigator has led;*
6. *Organisation of **international conferences** in the field of the applicant (membership in the steering and/or organising committee);*
7. **Prizes, awards, academy memberships**;
8. **Major contributions to the early careers of excellent researchers**;
9. **Examples of leadership in industrial innovation or design**.

The track-record can be extended beyond ten years, in case of certain career breaks, as foreseen in the ERC WP, provided they are duly reported in Section b: Curriculum vitae.

Part B2 sections a, b and c (Scientific proposal: max. 15 pages. References should be included – they do not count towards the page limit). Section c 'Resources and time commitment' are not limited to 2 pages and do not count towards the page limit.

This part of the proposal is evaluated only in step 2 and step 3 of the peer review evaluation.

Please use the Word-template provided online in the F & T Portal Submission Page for the call.

Describe in more detail the scientific, technical, and/or scholarly aspects of the project demonstrating the ground-breaking nature of the research, its potential impact and research methodology. Describe the significant synergies, complementarity and added value of the group beyond the current work of the PIs to enable it to jointly achieve the project's objectives. At step 2 and 3 of the evaluation process Part B2 is evaluated together with Part B1.

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 and working arrangements in detail including, as appropriate, key intermediate goals. Include elements specifying why the combination of the skills, knowledge, expertise etc. brought together by the PIs is crucial to the execution of the work. Explain and justify the methodology in relation to the state of the art, including any particularly novel or unconventional aspects addressing 'high-risk/high-gain' balance. Highlight any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to the project planning. In case it is proposed that team members engaged by other organisations than the Host Institution(s) 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 and time commitment (incl. project costs) – this section does not count towards the page limit.

It is strongly recommended to describe adequately the resources needed for each PI and to use the budget table template included in Part B2 to facilitate the assessment of resources by the panels. For detailed information on eligible- and non-eligible direct and indirect costs as well as the different cost categories applicants should consult the [Model Grant Agreement](#) used for ERC actions. Please **use whole euro integers** only when preparing the budget table.

State the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the objectives for the duration of the project. **The resources requested should be reasonable and fully justified in the proposa**l. The requested grant should be in proportion to the actual needs to fulfil the objectives of the project.

Specify briefly the commitment of each PI to the project and how much time each PI is willing to devote to the proposed project. Please note that each PI is expected to devote at least 30% of their working time to the ERC-funded project.

Describe the size and nature of the Synergy group, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles. The participation of team members engaged by another institution should be justified in relation to the additional financial cost this may impose to the project. Take into account the percentage of each PI's dedicated time to run the ERC funded activity when calculating the personnel costs.

Specify any existing resources that will contribute to the project. Describe other necessary resources, such as infrastructure and equipment. 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. When estimating the costs for travel, please also consider participation of the PIs and team members in conferences and dissemination events.

Include a realistic estimation of the costs for Open Access for project outputs. Costs for providing immediate Open Access to publications (article processing charges/book processing charges) are eligible if they are incurred during the lifetime of the project.

Describe any additional funding requested for the project. It needs to be indicated in the budget table and well justified for the successful implementation of the project. Describe any existing resources not requiring EU funding that will be used for the project, such as infrastructure and equipment.

When drafting the budget, it is highly advisable to consider the need to include such expenditure, and if that is the case, to make a realistic estimation of the amount needed. In addition, the ERC recommends that all funded researchers follow best practice by retaining files of research data

produced and used, and are prepared to share these data with other researchers when not bound by copyright restrictions, confidentiality requirements, or contractual clauses.

Costs related to data management can also be eligible.

Budget table. Please use the budget table template provided in part B2 form. The ERC funds up to 100% of the total eligible costs. **The costs are given for the full project duration[28].** Each PI is required to fill in their budget breakdown. Include the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct cost. Furthermore, include a breakdown of the budget subdivided in personnel costs, travel, equipment, consumables, publication costs (including any costs related to Open Access), other direct costs, and any envisaged subcontracting costs. Costs for Host Institution invoices and invoices for other entities should be included (e.g. access to large facilities, access to other services that are charged as unit costs)[29].

If additional funding[30], above the normal (EUR 10 000 000), is requested for (a) covering eligible 'start-up' costs for a PI moving from another country to an EU Member State or an Associated Country as a consequence of receiving an ERC grant and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or (c) access to large facilities and/or (d) other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs, then this also needs to be fully justified. Please note that any additional funding request under (a), (b) or (d) may be subject to 25% overhead. Normally, if they are costs for subcontracting or internal invoices, they do not include overheads. Include the additional costs in the budget tables as well.

The costs are given for the full duration. A breakdown by reporting period is not requested for the evaluation process. The 'Total Eligible Costs' as well as the 'Requested EU contribution'' figures in the table should be equal to those inserted in the online proposal submission forms (section 3 – Budget). In case the total costs differ from the requested grant, it should be specified in the proposal what exactly is funded from other sources.

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

With the exception of clear mistakes (detected cases of obvious clerical error[31]), in case of inconsistencies between the amounts in the budget table in part B2 and the amounts in the administrative form A, the figures entered in form A will prevail.

For more information on eligible- and non-eligible direct and indirect costs as well as the different cost categories, applicants should consult the Model Grant Agreement and the Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement.

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[28] The maximum award is reduced pro rata *temporis* for projects of a shorter duration than 72 months (e.g. for a project of 60 months duration the maximum requested EU contribution allowed is EUR 8 333 333). Additional funding to cover major one-off costs is not subject to pro-rata *temporis* reduction for projects of shorter duration (e.g. with additional funding it is possible to request a maximum EU contribution of EUR 12 333 333 million for a project of 60 months duration).

[29] The internal invoices of (1) in-kind contribution against payment may be charged as purchase costs for other goods, works and services. Where there is an exchange of goods and services for a payment, the case is treated as a purchase of goods and services to which a flat rate of 25% indirect costs are calculated. (2) The internal invoices of an affiliated entity and those provided as in-kind contribution free of charge, may be charged under 'internal invoices'. Where there is no payment, the case is treated as goods and services internally produced/invoiced. In this case actual indirect costs are considered.

[30] Additional funding costs of ERC frontier research grants are a separate cost category in the Model Grant Agreement used for ERC actions. These costs will be eligible if they fulfil the eligibility conditions set out in the Model Grant Agreement for this cost category, if they are incurred for the activities and objectives for which the additional funding may be awarded, and if they are in line with the specific eligibility conditions for the other relevant cost categories as set out in the Model Grant Agreement (e.g. costs related to a purchase of major equipment must also fulfil the specific eligibility conditions for the cost category for "Equipment").

[31] See Articles 151 and 200.3 of the Financial Regulation and section 2.3 of ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe.

2. 4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

A scanned copy of the following supporting documentation needs to be submitted with the proposal by uploading electronically in PDF format (they do not count towards the page limits):

➢ **Host Institution support letter(s)**: Each Host Institution (applicant legal entity) must confirm its association with and its support to the project and the Principal Investigator(s) it intends to host. As part of the application each Host Institution must provide a binding statement that the conditions of independence are already fulfilled or will be provided to their PIs, if the application is successful. The Host Institution support letter (template available in the submission system or please see Annex 4.2 to this document) needs to be completed with the official letterhead of the HI. If it is printed, it must be blue-ink signed, stamped and dated by the institution's legal representative. In case it is digitally signed there is no need to stamp it. A PDF version must be uploaded in the submission system. Proposals that do not include this institutional statement may be declared inadmissible.

➢ Documents related to the **ethics** issues (i.e. supporting documentation). Where necessary, applicant PIs shall provide any available documentation, such as: (a) favourable opinion(s) of the relevant ethics committee(s); (b) the regulatory approval(s) or authorization(s) of the competent national or local authority(ies) in the country in which the research is to be carried out; (c) templates of information sheets and informed consent forms, etc. The supporting documentation must be provided to the ERCEA at the latest during the ethics review. If such documentation is available and provided with the application at submission stage, it may help speed up the ethics review process following evaluation. **Please note that the ethics self-assessment is now included in section 4 of the online proposal submission form.**

➢ Documents related to the **security** issues (i.e. supporting documentation). Where necessary, the applicant PIs shall provide available documentation at submission stage. For proposals selected for funding, additional information regarding security issues may be requested at a later stage.

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

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, support letters, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) will be disregarded. **Experts will not have access to any supporting documentation during the evaluation. They will have access only to parts B1 and B2.**

All annexes, i.e. the host institution support letter and, where relevant, documentation already available related to ethics and security issues should be provided and uploaded as separate pdf documents. They do not count towards the maximum page limits of the proposal.

3. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

3.1   IMPORTANT INFORMATION BEFORE YOU BEGIN

➢ Regularly consult the Funding & Tenders Portal call page for updated information on the call.

➢ Make sure that the personal information added in the Submission Form is accurate as this information is used to personalise the communications to applicants and the Evaluation Reports.

➢ In case of technical problems with the submission system please contact EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu or get in touch with the **IT Helpdesk** directly on **+32 (2) 29 92222** to receive immediate assistance.

➢ Registration and submission via the F&T Portal submission system should be done as early as possible and well in advance of the call deadline. Applicants, who wait until shortly before the closing of the call to start uploading their proposal, take a serious risk that the uploading will not be concluded in time.

➢ Only the person creating the draft proposal will have the right to manage the access rights of other people to the proposal and will be able to modify any parts of the proposal and to submit it, whereas the other contacts will only be able to edit the parts related to their personal data.

➢ Be aware that only one person should work on the forms at any given time. If two persons work on the forms at the same time, in case of a save conflict, the last save wins, which means that you risk overwriting changes made by another person if you are working in parallel. We therefore recommend that you give 'read-only' access to your fellow PIs/partners/additional contact persons (other contacts) unless it is absolutely necessary to grant full access. Remember that the Main Host Institution contact person has full access – it is not possible to grant them 'read-only access'.

➢ Up to the call deadline it is possible to re-edit, download or withdraw a proposal. **ONLY the last updated version of your proposal submitted before the deadline will be evaluated**; no later version can be accepted and no earlier version can be recovered from the submission system. Once the deadline has passed, no further additions, corrections or resubmissions are accepted. However, a read-only access to the submitted proposal is available for 90 days after the call deadline.

➢ **Submit your proposal as early as possible** (at least 48 hours prior to the deadline of the call) to avoid being confronted with last minute issues shortly before the call deadline. There is no reason in delaying the submission for confidentiality concerns as the system does not allow any access to the proposals before call deadline (other than to selected data that is part of the Submission and Evaluation of Proposals Assent Disclaimer).

➢ In some rare occasions the proposal may be altered while being converted into a PDF file. Before uploading the file, please check that everything is correct. Additionally, please download and verify all uploaded files in due time before the submission deadline.

Submission is deemed to occur only if the submission sequence described in point 3.2 below has been followed and not when the applicant starts uploading the proposal.

3.2   HOW TO APPLY

ERC grant applications can only be submitted in response to a 'call for proposals' and only via the Electronic Submission Service. Calls announced in the ERC Work Programme 2022 are published on the ERC website, the Funding & Tenders Portal.
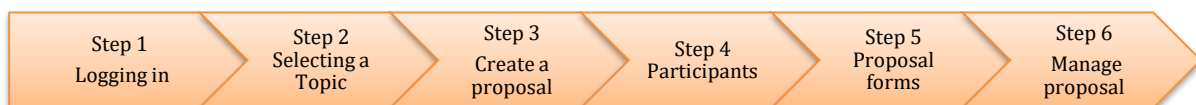
Data Protection notice

All legal notices are accessible on the F&T Portal.
The Privacy Statement on 'Grant management and registration/validation of participants' relevant to this document is available here.

USER GUIDANCE

- proposals must be submitted electronically using the electronic submission system of the web-based Funding & Tenders Portal (F&T Portal)[32];

- the user guide of the Submission Service is available online;

- the IT HOW TO wiki site provides an online IT manual with screenshots;

- the F&T Portal Online Manual describes the standard process of proposal submission.

Step 1 Logging in	Step 2 Selecting a Topic	Step 3 Create a proposal	Step 4 Participants	Step 5 Proposal forms	Step 6 Manage proposal

Step 1 and 2 – Logging in and Selecting a Topic

To be able to create and submit a proposal and, in general to login to the Funding & Tenders Portal, first register an EU Login account (Step 1). Each time you access the proposal for editing, this user ID (EU Login) is requested. The same user ID is used for all later interactions with the ERCEA, including notification of the results of the evaluation[33]. Under the 'Search' function, you may search for ERC-2022-SYG (Step 2). Soon after the opening of the call, you will be able to access the Electronic Submission page. The 'Start Submission' button is available under the 'Start submission' section of the call. You will need to select HORIZON ERC Grants to open the submission page. When you click 'Start Submission' and confirm your choice, you will move to the next step: Step 3 – Create a Draft proposal.

Step 3 – Create a draft proposal

At this step, you fill in pre-registration data for the proposal. These details will be used by the ERCEA in order to plan the evaluation. You will not have access to this page again once it is completed and you have progressed to Step 4, but certain data, such as Acronym and Short Summary (abstract) can be modified at a later stage (at step 5, when editing the administrative form). **Be careful to choose**

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[32] In duly justified exceptional circumstances the ERCEA may authorise submission by other means than the electronic submission system.

[33] Further details are available here: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/eim/external/help.cgi

the correct Participant Identification Code (PIC) number for your corresponding Host Institution. An online tool is available to search for existing PICs and the related organisations. Organisations not yet having a PIC must self-register (via the same page) before starting the application process.

When registering, please select carefully the type of contact person you are:
Corresponding Principal Investigator, Main Administrative Contact person, Principal Investigator or Contact person (e.g. additional contact person or team-member) can be chosen.

> **We advise that either the corresponding Principal Investigator or the Main Administrative contact person (the administrative person on behalf of the corresponding Host Institution) start creating a proposal.**

> **The person who starts drafting the proposal will have an influence on the subsequent steps. Only that person will have the right to manage the access rights of other people to the proposal at the following step. The person who creates the proposal will have the 'coordinating' role, and alongside other people at the corresponding Host Institution with a designated coordinating role, will be able to modify any parts of the proposal and to submit it. Further contacts or PIs at other Host Institution will only be able to edit the parts related to their personal data or their Host Institution (have 'full access' rights to their parts).**

Step 4 – Participants - Manage your related partners and/or edit contact details

Here you define the Host Institutions and, if applicable, you may add additional partner organisations. After defining a Host Institution by clicking on the 'Add contact +' button you identify the Principal Investigators linked to it and the administrative contact person(s). You can see the name and details of the corresponding Host Institution (always participant number '1') and the name of the person who created the draft proposal. At this step, you can:

- ➢ **add the Main administrative contact person name (**for the corresponding Host Institution) **or the corresponding Principal Investigator** (if not done yet) **and e-mail;**
- ➢ **add further Principal Investigators hosted at the corresponding HI** (full access or read-only access);
- ➢ **add further Principal Investigators hosted at other Host Institutions;**
- ➢ **give access to one or more 'Contact person(s)'** (full access or read-only access);
- ➢ **add additional organisations** ('Add Partner Organisations (no PI) '): to add team members hosted in other organisations than the Host Institutions.

> **Note that only one PI can apply with a Host Institution outside of the EU or Associated Countries. No such restrictions apply to partner organisations hosting additional team members.** A partner organisation hosts only additional team members not belonging to a HI, a PI should not be added as a contact.

Be careful to type the correct e-mail address of the PIs and all contact persons at this step. Please note that if the Principal Investigator and the administrative contact person **is the same person** (e.g. because the PI is self-employed), you must use two different e-mail addresses as the system does not allow two identical e-mail addresses to be entered.

Organisations must be identified by their nine-digit PIC numbers. A search function is provided in the system to facilitate the search for partners (if any). If you realise that you have made a mistake in selecting the organisation, you can use the 'Change Organisation' button.

For each contact person the **role within the project** must be defined. When giving access rights to **contact persons**, the e-mail address of the person serves as the main identifier. You must define the level of access rights for each contact person:

- ➤ **Coordinator contact (full access):** corresponding Principal Investigator level of rights is named 'Coordinator contact' in submission system. The Coordinator contact/cPI, the Main administrative contact of the corresponding HI or another PI with full access at the corresponding HI has the right to edit all parts of the proposal, upload documents, submit, and withdraw the proposal.
- ➤ **Participant contact (full access):** PIs at other HIs and their administrative contacts have full access to their parts, but have only read-only rights to other institutions parts, and cannot submit the proposal.
- ➤ **Team member (read-only rights):** The persons identified with read-only rights cannot edit or submit the proposal.

Please also be aware that only one person should work on the forms at any given time. If two persons work on the forms at the same time, in case of a save conflict, the last save wins, which means that you risk overwriting changes made by another contact person if you are working in parallel. We therefore recommend that you give 'read-only' access to your partner organisations/additional contact persons (other contacts) unless it is absolutely necessary to grant full access. Please remember that the Main administrative contact person has full access – it is not possible to grant them 'read-only access'.

For the Principal Investigators and the Host Institution contact persons' full details will be required later in the administrative forms (section 2). **Please be aware that you MUST enter the details of the PIs and the Host Institution contact persons at the 'Participants' step before going further, since these fields are not-editable in the following step in the forms.** You may at any point return to the 'Participants' step of the submission to add or delete any contact person or to change the access rights. If you have made an error in adding a person/contact to an organisation, first delete the person from the unwanted entry, save it and only afterwards enter the name in the contact details of the wanted organisation. **Remember to save your data before leaving this step otherwise you will be prevented from submitting the proposal**.

You may also add the LEAR as a contact person (e.g. as a team member with read-only rights) to the proposal at the 'Participant' step of the application.

Once the coordinator (cPI or cHI main administrative contact) saves the changes, an **automatic invitation** is sent to all contacts' e-mail addresses. The invited persons can **access the proposal** after logging in to the F & T Portal - with the EU Login account linked to the given e-mail address – under the '**My Proposals**' tab. **In case you encounter difficulties, please contact the submission system's Service Desk at** DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu **or +32 (2) 29 92222.**

Step 5 – **Proposal forms - Edit and complete the proposal**

This step is the core of the submission process, as from this step, you **can edit the online administrative** proposal submission **forms**, view the history, print the draft proposal, **download templates**, **upload files** and **submit** the proposal by clicking on the relevant buttons.

Guidance on how to fill in the administrative forms is provided directly in the form as ghost text for the single entries or as additional help text hidden behind question-mark . Some parts of the form will be prefilled based on the data entered at pre-registration or in the Beneficiary Register.

Please use the functionality **'Validate form**' button to check the validity and completeness of your data. Any warning or error will be listed at the end of the validated form.

Further information on the preparation of the application (the online administrative forms and Proposal Parts B1 and B2) is given in sections 2.2 and 2.3 of this document.

> ➢ **All files must be uploaded in the submission system as PDF (Portable document format). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system.** Irrespective of any page limits specified in this document, there is an **overall limit of 10 Mbytes to the size of each uploaded document (Part B1, B2, and supporting documentation)**. However, it is advised to limit the size of Parts B1 and B2 to 2 Mbytes each.
> ➢ Unless specified in the call, embedded material and any other documents (company brochures, scientific papers, reports, audio, video, multimedia, etc.) sent electronically outside of the submission system or within it or by post will be disregarded.
> ➢ There are also restrictions to the name given to the Part B files: use alphanumeric characters; special characters and spaces must be avoided.

Completing the Proposal submission forms in the submission system and uploading all the necessary files does <u>not</u> yet mean that your proposal is submitted (mandatory files: Part B1, Part B2, Host Institution support letter and – if applicable: supporting documentation for ethics and security issues). Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal, **the 'SUBMIT' button must be pressed**. The system performs a limited automatic validation of the proposal. A list of any problems such as missing data, wrong file format or excessive file size will then appear on the screen. You will see a list of warnings and/or errors. You may submit your proposal with warnings (marked in yellow) but **submission is blocked until all errors marked in red are corrected.** However, the electronic checks by the submission system do not replace the formal admissibility and eligibility review described in section 1.2 of this document and cannot guarantee that the contents of these files respond to the requirements of the call.

Step 6 – **Manage Proposal page**

Reaching this step means that the proposal is submitted (i.e. sent to the ERCEA for evaluation). It does not mean that the proposal is valid, admissible and eligible in all respects. Within a few minutes of submission your proposal will be available for download with an e-receipt in the system. You will receive a confirmation e-mail with the summary data of the submitted proposal. The mail can end up in the spam folder or be blocked by the anti-spam system of your organisation. This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt.

In Step 6 you can re-edit the proposal, going back to the previous step. **You 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. The most recent version of your proposal submitted before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated; no later version can be substituted and no earlier version can be recovered.

Check if the proposal is complete. Once submitted, it is recommended to verify the proposal and its content by downloading all the submitted files. We strongly advise that you submit a first version of your proposal at least 24 hours in advance of the call deadline. Incomplete proposals (where parts or

sections of the proposal and/or the host institution's commitment statement are missing) may be declared inadmissible and will not be evaluated[34]. The proposal must be submitted **before the relevant deadline of the call**.

Warning: Please note that in the last hours prior to call closure, the download option of checking your submitted proposal may be disabled due to a high pressure on the system. In this case the ERCEA will inform the applicants via the call page on the F & T Portal (under 'call summary') that the function has been disabled.

If the e-receipt and download option have been disabled, you may review your submitted proposal by going back to Step 5 to check the data in the administrative forms and click on 'View History' to verify which attachments have been uploaded.

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[34] See also section 2.4 'Admissibility and eligibility checks' in the ERC Rules of submission and evaluation under Horizon Europe and in the section 'Proposal submission and description' of the ERC Work Programme 2022

3.3   HOW TO WITHDRAW A PROPOSAL

To withdraw a proposal **before the call deadline** use the 'withdraw proposal' button from the 'My proposals' tab when logged in at the F & T Portal. After the call deadline proposals may be withdrawn at any moment **until the day preceding the panel meetings** where a final decision on the outcome of the evaluation of the proposal is established. A withdrawn proposal will not be considered for evaluation nor count against possible re-application restrictions as set out in the ERC Work Programme 2022.

To withdraw a proposal **after the call deadline,** please send an e-mail to the call-specific mailbox ERC-SYG-APPLICANTS@ec.europa.eu and include a signed scanned letter requesting the formal withdrawal. The letter should mention the name and the acronym of the proposal as well as the call identifier (for example ERC-2022-SyG).

A PI can be part of only one proposal submitted for the same call and even for any call published under the ERC Work Programme 2022. In the case of two or more proposals submitted by the same PI, even if they are part of a different group of PIs, the ERCEA services may ask the corresponding PI to withdraw one or more of those proposals. In the case of absence of reaction by the corresponding PI to this request, only the first eligible proposal will be considered.

4. ANNEXES

4.1   ERC KEYWORDS

For proposal submission and for evaluation of Synergy grant proposals, the following keywords will be used. Applicants should choose between 4 and 6 keywords from the list below. There is no hierarchical ordering of the keywords.

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   Lie groups, Lie algebras
PE1_6   Geometry and Global Analysis
PE1_7   Topology
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   Mathematical statistics
PE1_15   Generic statistical methodology and modelling
PE1_16   Discrete mathematics and combinatorics
PE1_17   Mathematical aspects of computer science
PE1_18   Numerical analysis
PE1_19   Scientific computing and data processing
PE1_20   Control theory, optimisation and operational research
PE1_21   Application of mathematics in sciences
PE1_22   Application of mathematics in industry and society

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

PE2_1   Theory of fundamental interactions
PE2_2 Phenomenology of fundamental interactions
PE2_3 Experimental particle physics with accelerators
PE2_4 Experimental particle physics without accelerators
PE2_5 Classical and quantum physics of gravitational interactions
PE2_6 Nuclear, hadron and heavy ion physics
PE2_7 Nuclear and particle astrophysics
PE2_8 Gas and plasma physics
PE2_9 Electromagnetism
PE2_10 Atomic, molecular physics
PE2_11 Ultra-cold atoms and molecules
PE2_12 Optics, non-linear optics and nano-optics
PE2_13 Quantum optics and quantum information
PE2_14 Lasers, ultra-short lasers and laser physics
PE2_15 Thermodynamics
PE2_16 Non-linear physics

PE3   Condensed Matter Physics

Structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences, biological physics

PE3_1   Structure of solids, material growth and characterisation
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   Physical properties of semiconductors and insulators
PE3_6   Macroscopic quantum phenomena: e.g. superconductivity, superfluidity, quantum Hall effect
PE3_7   Spintronics
PE3_8   Magnetism and strongly correlated systems
PE3_9   Condensed matter – beam interactions (photons, electrons, etc.)
PE3_10 Nanophysics, e.g. nanoelectronics, nanophotonics, nanomagnetism, nanoelectromechanics
PE3_11 Mesoscopic quantum physics and solid-state quantum technologies
PE3_12 Molecular electronics
PE3_13 Structure and dynamics of disordered systems: soft matter (gels, colloids, liquid crystals), granular matter, liquids, glasses, defects
PE3_14 Fluid dynamics (physics)
PE3_15 Statistical physics: phase transitions, condensed matter systems, models of complex systems, interdisciplinary applications
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 Characterisation methods of materials
PE4_18 Environment chemistry

PE5   Synthetic Chemistry and Materials

New materials and new synthetic approaches, structure-properties relations, solid state chemistry, molecular architecture, organic chemistry

PE5_1   Structural properties of materials
PE5_2   Solid state materials chemistry
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 synthesis – self assembled materials
PE5_9   Coordination chemistry
PE5_10   Colloid chemistry
PE5_11   Biological chemistry and chemical biology
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   Medicinal chemistry

PE6   Computer Science and Informatics

Informatics and information systems, computer science, scientific computing, intelligent systems

PE6_1   Computer architecture, embedded systems, operating systems
PE6_2   Distributed systems, parallel computing, sensor networks, cyber-physical systems
PE6_3   Software engineering, programming languages and systems
PE6_4   Theoretical computer science, formal methods, automata
PE6_5   Security privacy, cryptology, quantum cryptography
PE6_6   Algorithms and complexity, distributed, parallel and network algorithms, algorithmic game theory
PE6_7   Artificial intelligence, intelligent systems, natural language processing
PE6_8   Computer graphics, computer vision, multi media, computer games
PE6_9   Human computer interaction and interface, visualisation
PE6_10   Web and information systems, data management 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, bio-inspired computing, and molecular computing
PE6_14   Quantum computing (formal methods, algorithms and other computer science aspects)

PE7   Systems and Communication Engineering

Electrical, electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering

PE7_1   Control engineering
PE7_2   Electrical engineering: power components and/or systems
PE7_3   Simulation engineering and modelling
PE7_4   (Micro- and nano-) systems engineering
PE7_5   (Micro- and nano-) electronic, optoelectronic and photonic components
PE7_6   Communication systems, wireless technology, high-frequency technology
PE7_7   Signal processing
PE7_8   Networks, e.g. communication networks and nodes, internet of Things, sensor networks, networks of robots
PE7_9   Man-machine interfaces
PE7_10   Robotics
PE7_11   Components and systems for applications (in e.g. medicine, biology, environment)
PE7_12   Electrical energy production, distribution, application

PE8   Products and Processes Engineering

Product and process design, chemical, civil, environmental, mechanical, vehicle engineering, energy processes and relevant computational methods

PE8_1   Aerospace engineering
PE8_2   Chemical engineering, technical chemistry
PE8_3   Civil engineering, architecture, offshore construction, lightweight construction, geotechnics
PE8_4   Computational engineering
PE8_5   Fluid mechanics
PE8_6   Energy processes engineering
PE8_7   Mechanical engineering
PE8_8   Propulsion engineering, e.g. hydraulic, turbo, piston, hybrid engines
PE8_9   Production technology, process engineering
PE8_10   Manufacturing engineering and industrial design
PE8_11   Environmental engineering, e.g. sustainable design, waste and water treatment, recycling, regeneration or recovery of compounds, carbon capture & storage
PE8_12   Naval/marine engineering
PE8_13   Industrial bioengineering
PE8_14   Automotive and rail engineering; multi-/inter-modal transport engineering

PE9   Universe Sciences

Astro-physics/chemistry/biology; solar system; planetary systems; stellar, galactic and extragalactic astronomy; cosmology; space sciences; astronomical instrumentation and data

PE9_1   Solar physics – the Sun and the heliosphere
PE9_2   Solar system sciences
PE9_3   Exoplanetary science, formation and characterization of extrasolar planets
PE9_4   Astrobiology
PE9_5   Interstellar medium and star formation
PE9_6   Stars – stellar physics, stellar systems
PE9_7   The Milky Way
PE9_8   Galaxies – formation, evolution, clusters
PE9_9   Cosmology and large-scale structure, dark matter, dark energy
PE9_10   Relativistic astrophysics and compact objects
PE9_11   Gravitational wave astronomy
PE9_12   High-energy and particle astronomy
PE9_13   Astronomical instrumentation and data, e.g. telescopes, detectors, techniques, archives, analyses

PE10   Earth System Science

Physical geography, geology, geophysics, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, cryology, 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   Palaeoclimatology, palaeoecology
PE10_7   Physics of earth's interior, seismology, geodynamics
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, cosmochemistry, crystal chemistry, isotope geochemistry, thermodynamics
PE10_12 Sedimentology, soil science, palaeontology, earth evolution
PE10_13 Physical geography, geomorphology
PE10_14 Earth observations from space/remote sensing
PE10_15 Geomagnetism, palaeomagnetism

PE10_16 Ozone, upper atmosphere, ionosphere
PE10_17 Hydrology, hydrogeology, engineering and environmental geology, water and soil pollution
PE10_18 Cryosphere, dynamics of snow and ice cover, sea ice, permafrosts and ice sheets
PE10_19 Planetary geology and geophysics
PE10_20 Geohazards
PE10_21 Earth system modelling and interactions

PE11   Materials Engineering
Advanced materials development: performance enhancement, modelling, large-scale preparation, modification, tailoring, optimisation, novel and combined use of materials, etc.

PE11_1   Engineering of biomaterials, biomimetic, bioinspired and bio-enabled materials
PE11_2   Engineering of metals and alloys
PE11_3   Engineering of ceramics and glasses
PE11_4   Engineering of polymers and plastics
PE11_5   Engineering of composites and hybrid materials
PE11_6   Engineering of carbon materials
PE11_7   Engineering of metal oxides
PE11_8   Engineering of alternative established or emergent materials
PE11_9   Nanomaterials engineering, e.g. nanoparticles, nanoporous materials, 1D & 2D nanomaterials
PE11_10 Soft materials engineering, e.g. gels, foams, colloids
PE11_11 Porous materials engineering, e.g. covalent-organic, metal-organic, porous aromatic frameworks
PE11_12 Semi-conducting and magnetic materials engineering
PE11_13 Metamaterials engineering
PE11_14 Computational methods for materials engineering

Life Sciences

LS1   Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions
For all organisms:
Molecular biology, biochemistry, structural biology, molecular biophysics, synthetic and chemical biology, drug design, innovative methods and modelling

LS1_1   Macromolecular complexes including interactions involving nucleic acids, proteins, lipids and carbohydrates
LS1_2   Biochemistry
LS1_3   DNA and RNA biology
LS1_4   Protein biology
LS1_5   Lipid biology
LS1_6   Glycobiology
LS1_7   Molecular biophysics, biomechanics, bioenergetics
LS1_8   Structural biology
LS1_9   Molecular mechanisms of signalling processes
LS1_10   Synthetic biology
LS1_11 Chemical biology
LS1_12 Protein design
LS1_13 Early translational research and drug design
LS1_14 Innovative methods and modelling in molecular, structural and synthetic biology

LS2   Integrative Biology: from Genes and Genomes to Systems
For all organisms:
Genetics, epigenetics, genomics and other 'omics studies, bioinformatics, systems biology, genetic diseases, gene editing, innovative methods and modelling, 'omics for personalised medicine

LS2_1   Genetics, forward genetics, genome editing
LS2_2   Gene editing
LS2_3   Epigenetics
LS2_4   Gene regulation
LS2_5   Genomics
LS2_6   Metagenomics
LS2_7   Transcriptomics
LS2_8   Proteomics
LS2_9   Metabolomics
LS2_10   Glycomics/Lipidomics
LS2_11   Bioinformatics and computational biology
LS2_12   Biostatistics
LS2_13   Systems biology
LS2_14   Genetic diseases
LS2_15   Integrative biology for personalised medicine
LS2_16   Innovative methods and modelling in integrative biology

LS3   **Cellular**, Developmental and Regenerative Biology

For all organisms:

Structure and function of the cell, cell-cell communication, embryogenesis, tissue differentiation, organogenesis, growth, development, evolution of development, organoids, stem cells, regeneration, therapeutic approaches

LS3_1   Cell cycle, cell division and growth
LS3_2   Cell senescence, cell death, autophagy, cell ageing
LS3_3   Cell behaviour, including control of cell shape, cell migration
LS3_4   Cell junctions, cell adhesion, the extracellular matrix, cell communication
LS3_5   Cell signalling and signal transduction, exosome biology
LS3_6   Organelle biology and trafficking
LS3_7   Mechanobiology of cells, tissues and organs
LS3_8   Embryogenesis, pattern formation, morphogenesis
LS3_9   Cell differentiation, formation of tissues and organs
LS3_10   Developmental genetics
LS3_11   Evolution of developmental strategies
LS3_12   Organoids
LS3_13   Stem cells
LS3_14   Regeneration
LS3_15   Development of cell-based therapeutic approaches for tissue regeneration
LS3_16   Functional imaging of cells and tissues
LS3_17   Theoretical modelling in cellular, developmental and regenerative biology

LS4   **Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing**

Organ and tissue physiology, comparative physiology, physiology of ageing, pathophysiology, interorgan and tissue communication, endocrinology, nutrition, metabolism, interaction with the microbiome, non-communicable diseases including cancer (and except disorders of the nervous system and immunity-related diseases)

LS4_1   Organ and tissue physiology
LS4_2   Comparative physiology
LS4_3   Physiology of ageing
LS4_4   Endocrinology
LS4_5   Non-hormonal mechanisms of inter-organ and tissue communication
LS4_6   Microbiome and host physiology

LS4_7 Nutrition and exercise physiology
LS4_8 Impact of stress (including environmental stress) on physiology
LS4_9 Metabolism and metabolic disorders, including diabetes and obesity
LS4_10 The cardiovascular system and cardiovascular diseases
LS4_11 Haematopoiesis and blood diseases
LS4_12 Cancer
LS4_13 Other non-communicable diseases (except disorders of the nervous system and immunity-related diseases)

LS5 Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System

Nervous system development, homeostasis and ageing, nervous system function and dysfunction, systems neuroscience and modelling, biological basis of cognitive processes and of behaviour, neurological and mental disorders

LS5_1 Neuronal cells
LS5_2 Glial cells and neuronal-glial communication
LS5_3 Neural development and related disorders
LS5_4 Neural stem cells
LS5_5 Neural networks and plasticity
LS5_6 Neurovascular biology and blood-brain barrier
LS5_7 Sensory systems, sensation and perception, including pain
LS5_8 Neural basis of behaviour
LS5_9 Neural basis of cognition
LS5_10 Ageing of the nervous system
LS5_11 Neurological and neurodegenerative disorders
LS5_12 Mental disorders
LS5_13 Nervous system injuries and trauma, stroke
LS5_14 Repair and regeneration of the nervous system
LS5_15 Neuroimmunology, neuroinflammation
LS5_16 Systems and computational neuroscience
LS5_17 Imaging in neuroscience
LS5_18 Innovative methods and tools for neuroscience

LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy

The immune system, related disorders and their mechanisms, biology of infectious agents and infection, biological basis of prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, innovative immunological tools and approaches, including therapies

LS6_1 Innate immunity
LS6_2 Adaptive immunity
LS6_3 Regulation of the immune response
LS6_4 Immune-related diseases
LS6_5 Biology of pathogens (e.g. bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi)
LS6_6 Infectious diseases
LS6_7 Mechanism of infection
LS6_8 Biological basis of prevention and treatment of infection
LS6_9 Antimicrobials, antimicrobial resistance
LS6_10 Vaccine development
LS6_11 Innovative immunological tools and approaches, including therapies

LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases

Medical technologies and tools for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human diseases, therapeutic approaches and interventions, pharmacology, preventative medicine, epidemiology and public health, digital medicine

LS7_1 Medical imaging for prevention, diagnosis and monitoring of diseases

LS7_2   Medical technologies and tools (including genetic tools and biomarkers) for prevention, diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of diseases
LS7_3   Nanomedicine
LS7_4   Regenerative medicine
LS7_5   Applied gene, cell and immune therapies
LS7_6   Other medical therapeutic interventions, including transplantation
LS7_7   Pharmacology and toxicology
LS7_8   Effectiveness of interventions, including resistance to therapies
LS7_9   Public health and epidemiology
LS7_10 Preventative and prognostic medicine
LS7_11 Environmental health, occupational medicine
LS7_12 Health care, including care for the ageing population
LS7_13 Palliative medicine
LS7_14 Digital medicine, e-medicine, medical applications of artificial intelligence
LS7_15 Medical ethics

LS8   Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution

For all organisms:

Ecology, biodiversity, environmental change, evolutionary biology, behavioural ecology, microbial ecology, marine biology, ecophysiology, theoretical developments and modelling

LS8_1   Ecosystem and community ecology, macroecology
LS8_2   Biodiversity
LS8_3   Conservation biology
LS8_4   Population biology, population dynamics, population genetics
LS8_5   Biological aspects of environmental change, including climate change
LS8_6   Evolutionary ecology
LS8_7   Evolutionary genetics
LS8_8   Phylogenetics, systematics, comparative biology
LS8_9   Macroevolution and paleobiology
LS8_10 Ecology and evolution of species interactions
LS8_11 Behavioural ecology and evolution
LS8_12 Microbial ecology and evolution
LS8_13 Marine biology and ecology
LS8_14 Ecophysiology, from organisms to ecosystems
LS8_15 Theoretical developments and modelling in environmental biology, ecology, and evolution

LS9   Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering

Biotechnology using all organisms, biotechnology for environment and food applications, applied plant and animal sciences, bioengineering and synthetic biology, biomass and biofuels, biohazards

LS9_1   Bioengineering for synthetic and chemical biology
LS9_2   Applied genetics, gene editing and transgenic organisms
LS9_3   Bioengineering of cells, tissues, organs and organisms
LS9_4   Microbial biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_5   Food biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_6   Marine biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_7   Environmental biotechnology and bioengineering
LS9_8   Applied plant sciences, plant breeding, agroecology and soil biology
LS9_9   Plant pathology and pest resistance
LS9_10 Veterinary and applied animal sciences
LS9_11 Biomass production and utilisation, biofuels
LS9_12 Ecotoxicology, biohazards and biosafety

Social Sciences and Humanities

SH1   Individuals, Markets and Organisations
Economics, finance and management

SH1_1   Macroeconomics; monetary economics; economic growth
SH1_2   International trade; international management; international business; spatial economics
SH1_3   Development economics; structural change; political economy of development
SH1_4   Finance; asset pricing; international finance; market microstructure
SH1_5   Corporate finance; banking and financial intermediation; accounting; auditing; insurance
SH1_6   Econometrics; operations research
SH1_7   Behavioural economics; experimental economics; neuro-economics
SH1_8   Microeconomic theory; game theory; decision theory
SH1_9   Industrial organisation; entrepreneurship; R&D and innovation
SH1_10   Management; strategy; organisational behaviour
SH1_11   Human resource management; operations management, marketing
SH1_12   Environmental economics; resource and energy economics; agricultural economics
SH1_13   Labour and demographic economics
SH1_14   Health economics; economics of education
SH1_15   Public economics; political economics; law and economics
SH1_16   Historical economics; quantitative economic history; institutional economics; economic systems

SH2   Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
Political science, international relations, law

SH2_1   Political systems, governance
SH2_2   Democratisation and social movements
SH2_3   Conflict resolution, war, peace building, international law
SH2_4   Legal studies, constitutions, human rights, comparative law
SH2_5   International relations, global and transnational governance
SH2_6   Humanitarian assistance and development
SH2_7   Political and legal philosophy
SH2_8   Big data in political and legal studies

SH3   The Social World and its Diversity
Sociology, social psychology, social anthropology, education sciences, communication studies

SH3_1   Social structure, social mobility, social innovation
SH3_2   Inequalities, discrimination, prejudice,
SH3_3   Aggression and violence, antisocial behaviour, crime
SH3_4   Social integration, exclusion, prosocial behaviour
SH3_5   Attitudes and beliefs
SH3_6   Social influence; power and group behaviour
SH3_7   Kinship; diversity and identities, gender, interethnic relations
SH3_8   Social policies, welfare, work and employment
SH3_9   Poverty and poverty alleviation
SH3_10   Religious studies, ritual; symbolic representation
SH3_11   Social aspects of teaching and learning, curriculum studies, education and educational policies
SH3_12   Communication and information, networks, media
SH3_13   Digital social research
SH3_14   Social studies of science and technology

SH4   The Human Mind and Its Complexity
Cognitive science, psychology, linguistics, theoretical philosophy

SH4_1   Cognitive basis of human development and education, developmental disorders; comparative cognition

SH4_2   Personality and social cognition; emotion
SH4_3   Clinical and health psychology
SH4_4   Neuropsychology
SH4_5   Attention, perception, action, consciousness
SH4_6   Learning, memory; cognition in ageing
SH4_7   Reasoning, decision-making; intelligence
SH4_8   Language learning and processing (first and second languages)
SH4_9   Theoretical linguistics; computational linguistics
SH4_10 Language typology; historical linguistics
SH4_11 Pragmatics, sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, discourse analysis
SH4_12 Philosophy of mind, philosophy of language
SH4_13 Philosophy of science, epistemology, logic

SH5   Cultures and Cultural Production
Literary studies, cultural studies, study of the arts, philosophy

SH5_1   Classics, ancient literature and art
SH5_2   Theory and history of literature, comparative literature
SH5_3   Philology; text and image studies
SH5_4   Visual and performing arts, film, design and architecture
SH5_5   Music and musicology; history of music
SH5_6   History of art and architecture, arts-based research
SH5_7   Museums, exhibitions, conservation and restoration
SH5_8   Cultural studies, cultural identities and memories, cultural heritage
SH5_9   Metaphysics, philosophical anthropology; aesthetics
SH5_10 Ethics and its applications; social philosophy
SH5_11 History of philosophy
SH5_12 Computational modelling and digitisation in the cultural sphere

SH6   The Study of the Human Past
Archaeology and history

SH6_1   Historiography, theory and methods in history, including the analysis of digital data
SH6_2   Classical archaeology, history of archaeology, social archeology
SH6_3   General archaeology, archaeometry, landscape archaeology
SH6_4   Prehistory, palaeoanthropology, palaeodemography, protohistory, bioarchaeology
SH6_5   Palaeography and codicology
SH6_6   Ancient history
SH6_7   Medieval history
SH6_8   Early modern history
SH6_9   Modern and contemporary history
SH6_10 Colonial and post-colonial history
SH6_11 Global history, transnational history, comparative history, entangled histories
SH6_12 Social and economic history
SH6_13 Gender history, cultural history, history of collective identities and memories, history of religions
SH6_14 History of ideas, intellectual history, history of economic thought
SH6_15 History of science, medicine and technologies

SH7   Human Mobility, Environment, and Space
Human geography, demography, health, sustainability science, territorial planning, spatial analysis

SH7_1   Human, economic and social geography
SH7_2   Migration
SH7_3   Population dynamics: households, family and fertility
SH7_4   Social aspects of health, ageing and society
SH7_5   Sustainability sciences, environment and resources
SH7_6   Environmental and climate change, societal impact and policy

SH7_7   Cities; urban, regional and rural studies
SH7_8   Land use and planning
SH7_9   Energy, transportation and mobility
SH7_10 GIS, spatial analysis; big data in geographical studies

4.2   HOST INSTITUTION SUPPORT LETTER TEMPLATE 2022

<u>Print on paper bearing the official letterhead of the institution.</u> Each institution is required to provide a separate support letter listing the PI(s) who will be engaged by them.

Commitment of the Host Institution for the

ERC Synergy Call 2022[35, 36, 37]

The <<please fill in here the name of the legal entity that is associated to the proposal and may host the Principal Investigator(s) and the project (action) in case the application is successful>>, which is the applicant legal entity (Host Institution), confirms its intention to sign a supplementary agreement with

<< please fill in here the name of the Principal Investigator(s) who will be engaged by the Host Institution >>[38],

in which the obligations listed below will be addressed should the proposal submitted by the Principal Investigators listed below be retained.

The applicant legal entity (Host Institution) confirms that it is aware that the Synergy project will involve the following Principal Investigators (PIs):

<<Please enter below the names of all Principal Investigators participating in the project.>>

Corresponding PI: ....

PI 2:   ....

PI 3 (if applicable): ....

PI 4 (if applicable): ....

The fact that the applicant legal entity confirms its awareness of the group's Synergy project does not imply an obligation to contractually engage all of the Principal Investigators.

Performance obligations of the applicant legal entity (Host Institution) that will become the beneficiary of the HE ERC Grant Agreement (hereafter referred to as the Agreement),

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[35] A scanned copy of the signed statement should be uploaded electronically via the Funding & Tenders Portal Submission Service in PDF format.

[36] The statement of commitment of the Host Institution refers to most of the Host Institution obligations, stated in the Model Grant Agreement (MGA) used for ERC actions. The MGA is available on the Funding & Tenders Portal. The reference to the time commitment of the Principal Investigator(s) is stated in the ERC Work Programme 2022.

[37] This statement (on letterhead paper) shall be signed (blue ink or digital) by the institution's legal representative indicating their name, function, email address, address and, in case of blue ink signature, along with the stamp of the institution.

[38] Please insert the names only of those Principal Investigators that will be engaged by the Host Institution.

should the proposal be retained and the preparation of the Agreement be successfully concluded:

The following obligations apply <u>only</u> to the Principal Investigators, hereinafter referred as the PI(s), who will be engaged by the applicant legal entity (Host Institution) signing this letter.

The applicant legal entity (Host Institution) commits itself to ensure that the action tasks described in Annex 1 of the Agreement are performed under the guidance of the PI(s) who is/are expected to devote in the case of a Synergy Grant at least 30% of their working time to the ERC funded project (action) and spend at least 50% of their working time in an EU Member State or Associated Country.

The applicant legal entity (Host Institution) commits itself to respect the following conditions for the PI(s) and their team:

a) host and engage the PI(s) for the whole duration of the action;
b) take all measures to implement the principles set out in the Commission recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers[39] - in particular regarding working conditions, transparent recruitment processes based on merit and career development – and ensure that the PI(s), researchers and third parties involved in the project (action) are aware of them.
c) enter — before grant signature — into a *Supplementary Agreement* with the PI(s), that specifies the obligation of the *applicant legal entity* to meet its obligations under the Agreement;
d) provide *the* PI(s) with a copy of the signed Agreement;
e) guarantee the PI(s) scientific independence, in particular for the:
    i)   use of the budget to achieve the scientific objectives;
    ii)   authority to publish as senior author and invite as co-authors those who have contributed substantially to the work;
    iii) preparation of scientific reports for the project (action);
    iv)   selection and supervision of the other *team members*, in line with the profiles needed to conduct the research and in accordance with the *beneficiary's* usual management practices;
    v)   possibility to apply independently for funding;
    vi)   access to appropriate space and facilities for conducting the research;
f) provide — during the implementation of the project (action) — research support to the PI(s) and the team members (regarding infrastructure, equipment, access rights, products and other services necessary for conducting the research);
g) support the PI(s) and provide administrative assistance, in particular for the:
    i)   general management of the work and their team;
    ii)   scientific reporting, especially ensuring that the team members send their scientific results to the PI(s);

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[39] Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OJ L 75, 22.3.2005, p. 67).

iii) financial reporting, especially providing timely and clear financial information;

iv) application of the beneficiary's usual management practices;

v) general logistics of the project (action);

vi) access to the electronic exchange system;

h) inform the PI(s) immediately (in writing) of any events or circumstances likely to affect the Agreement;

i) ensure that the PI(s) enjoys adequate:

i) conditions for annual, sickness and parental leave;

ii) occupational health and safety standards;

iii) insurance under the general social security scheme, such as pension rights;

j) allow the transfer of the Agreement to a new beneficiary, if requested by the P(s) and provided that the objectives of the action remain achievable (portability; see Article 41 of the Agreement);

k) respect the fundamental principle of research integrity and ensure that persons carrying out research tasks under the action follow the good research practices and refrain from the research integrity violations described in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity[40]. If any such violations or allegations occur, verify and pursue them and bring them to the attention of the Agency.

For the applicant legal entity (Host institution)

Date

....

Name and Function

.... ; ....

Email and Signature (blue ink or digital) of legal representative

.... ; ....

Stamp of the applicant legal entity (Host Institution)[41]

IMPORTANT NOTE: In order to be complete all the above mentioned points are mandatory and shall be included in the commitment of the applicant legal entity (Host Institution). The highlighted fields should be filled in.

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[40] The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies) and ESF (European Science Foundation) of March 2011.

[41] No need to stamp this letter of support when it is digitally signed.