European Research Council (ERC) Grants

2024 Calls for proposals

European Research Council (ERC) grants

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Starting Grant

2-7 years after PhD

Up to 1.5 M€
For 5 years

Consolidator Grant

7-12 years after PhD

Up to 2 M €
For 5 years

Advanced Grant

Track record of the last 10 years

Up to 2.5 M €
For 5 years

Proof-of-Concept
*Exploration of
the commercial and social innovation
potential of ERC funded research*
150 000 €

Synergy Grant
2 – 4 Principal Investigators
Up to 10 M € for 6 years

ERC grants – aims and principles

- **Starting** and **Consolidator grants** aim to support researchers who are looking to set up or consolidate their own independent research team or programme.

- **Advanced grants** target established research leaders.

- **Synergy grants** support a small group of two to four Principal Investigators to jointly address ambitious research problems that could not be addressed by the individual Principal Investigators and their teams working alone.

- The ERC **Proof of Concept Grants** aim to facilitate exploration of the commercial and social innovation potential of ERC funded research

- Research proposals must be **groundbreaking**, ambitious, but feasible

- **Scientific excellence is the sole criterion** on the basis of which ERC frontier research grants are awarded

- Applications can be made in any field of research

- Excellent investigators can apply for funding to carry out their frontier research projects (togeter with their teams) in an EU Member state or Associated country

- Applicants can be of any nationality.

ERC Calls 2024

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant	Synergy Grant
Call opens	11.07.2023	12.09.2023	29.05.2024	12.07.2023
Deadline	24.10.2023	12.12.2023	29.08.2024	08.11.2023

ERC 2024 Work Programme

StG 2024 Call

	Starting Grant 2024		Starting Grant 2024
Call identifier	ERC-2024-StG	Planned date to inform applicants after 1st step	10.05.2024
Call opens	11.07.2023	... 2nd step	23.08.2024
Call deadline	24.10.2023	Indicative date for signature of grant agreements	21.12.2024
Budget million EUR (estimated number of grants)	601 (387)		

StG conditions

- By **01.01.2024** the applicant must have **at least 2** years and not more than **7*** years after PhD *defence*

- Funding: up to **1,5 M €** / 5 years
  - Additional funding of up to 1 M €

- A Starting Grant Principal Investigator should have already shown evidence of the potential for research independence, for example by having produced at least one important publication as main author or without the participation of their PhD supervisor.

*Extensions

- Extensions:
  - For maternity, the eligibility period can be extended beyond 7 years by **18 months**, or if longer by the amount of leave actually taken until the call deadline, for **each child** born <u>before or after</u> PhD.
  - For paternity leave, the eligibility period can be extended by the amount of **paternity leave actually taken** until the call deadline for each child born <u>before or after</u> PhD.

  - For long-term illness, clinical qualification, national service, natural disaster, or seeking asylum the the eligibility period can be extended by the amount of leave actually taken for each incident which occurred <u>after</u> PhD;

StG funding

- Funding: up to **1,5 M €** / 5 years
  - Additional funding of up to 1 M €:
    - "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant
    - purchase of major equipment
    - access to large facilities
    - other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs.
- Funding amount includes the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct costs, excluding subcontracting.
- The PI must commit at least 50% of their working time to the ERC project. The PI must spend at least 50% of their working time in a MS/AC.

CoG 2024 Call

	Consolidator Grant 2024		Consolidator Grant 2024
Call identifier	ERC-2024-CoG	Planned date to inform applicants after 1st step	21.06.2024
Call opens	12.09.2023	… 2nd step	13.12.2024
Call deadline	12.12.2023	Indicative date for signature of grant agreements	12.04.2024
Budget million EUR (estimated number of grants)	548 (291)		

CoG conditions

- By **01.01.2024** the applicant must have **at least 7** years and not more than **12*** years after PhD *defence*

- Funding: up to **2 M €** / 5 years
  - Additional funding of up to 1 M €

- A Consolidator Grant Principal Investigator should have already shown evidence of research independence.

*Extensions

- Extensions:
  - For maternity, the eligibility period can be extended beyond 12 years by **18 months**, or if longer by the amount of leave actually taken until the call deadline, for **each child** born <u>before or after </u>PhD.
  - For paternity leave, the eligibility period can be extended by the amount of **paternity leave actually taken** until the call deadline for each child born <u>before or after </u>PhD.

  - For long-term illness, clinical qualification, national service, natural disaster, or seeking asylum the the eligibility period can be extended by the amount of leave actually taken for each incident which occurred <u>after</u> PhD;

CoG funding

- Funding: up to **2 M €** / 5 years
  - Additional funding of up to 1 M €:
    - "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant
    - purchase of major equipment
    - access to large facilities
    - other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs.
- Funding amount includes the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct costs, excluding subcontracting.
- The PI must commit at least 40% of their working time to the ERC project. The PI must spend at least 50% of their working time in a MS/AC.

AdG 2024 Call

	Advanced Grant 2024		Advanced Grant 2024
Call identifier	ERC-2024-AdG	Planned date to inform applicants after 1st step	31.01.2025
Call opens	29.05.2024	... 2nd step	13.06.2025
Call deadline	19.08.2024	Indicative date for signature of grant agreements	18.11.2025
Budget million EUR (estimated number of grants)	578 (237)		

AdG conditions

- No specific criteria about the date of PhD defense

- Funding: up to **2,5 M €** / 5 years
  - Additional funding of up to 1 M €

- An ERC Advanced Grant Principal Investigator is expected to be an active researcher and to have a track record of significant research achievements.

AdG funding

- Funding: up to **2,5 M €** / 5 years
  - Additional funding of up to 1 M €:
    - "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant
    - purchase of major equipment
    - access to large facilities
    - other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs.
- Funding amount includes the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct costs, excluding subcontracting.
- The PI must commit at least 30% of their working time to the ERC project. The PI must spend at least 50% of their working time in a MS/AC.

SyG 2024 Call

	Synergy Grant 2024		Synergy Grant 2024
Call identifier	ERC-2024-SyG	Planned date to inform applicants after 1st step	04.05.2024
Call opens	12.07.2023	... 2nd step	30.08.2024
Call deadline	08.11.2023	... 3rd step	04.11.2024
Budget million EUR (estimated number of grants)	400 (39)	Indicative date for signature of grant agreements	24.03.2025

SyG conditions

- Joint application by 2-4 Principal Investigators
- Funding: up to **10 M €** / 6 years
  - Additional funding of up to 4 M €
- Principal investigators can be at any career stage. 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.

SyG funding

- Funding: up to **10 M €** / 6 years
  - Additional funding of up to 4 M €:
    - "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant
    - purchase of major equipment
    - access to large facilities
    - other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs.
- Funding amount includes the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as 25% of the total eligible direct costs, excluding subcontracting.
- Each PI must commit at least 30% of their working time to the ERC project. Pis based in MS/AC must spend at least 50% of their working time in a MS/AC. One PI in the group can be based outside MS/AC

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Application forms (slight differences for SyG)

- Part A of the proposal (administrative forms):
  - General information, incl abstract and panel
  - Administrative data on the participating organisations
  - Data on the PI
  - Budget and explanation on the use of resources
  - Ethics and security issues table and explanations
  - Additional questions

- Part B of the proposal:
  - B1:
    a) 5 p Extended Synopsis
    b) 4 p CV and track record of the PI
  - B2: 14 p Scientific proposal
    a) State of the art and objectives
    b) Methodology

- Additional documents:
  - Host Institution confirmation letter
  - PhD certificate
  - Other documents (if needed)

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ERC panels (StG, CoG, AdG)

Life Sciences

- **LS1** Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions
- **LS2** Integrative Biology: From Genes and Genomes to Systems
- **LS3** Cell Biology, Development, Stem Cells and Regeneration
- **LS4** Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing
- **LS5** Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System
- **LS6** Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy
- **LS7** Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases
- **LS8** Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution
- **LS9** Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering

Social Sciences and Humanities

- **SH1** Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- **SH2** Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
- **SH3** The Social World and Its Interactions
- **SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- **SH5** Texts and Concepts
- **SH6** The Study of the Human Past
- **SH7** Human Mobility, Environment, and Space
- **SH8** Studies of Cultures and Arts

Physical Sciences & Engineering

- **PE1** Mathematics
- **PE2** Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- **PE3** Condensed Matter Physics
- **PE4** Physical & Analytical Chemical Sciences
- **PE5** Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- **PE6** Computer Science & Informatics
- **PE7** Systems & Communication Engineering
- **PE8** Products & Process Engineering
- **PE9** Universe Sciences
- **PE10** Earth System Science
- **PE11** Materials Engineering

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

- **Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project** (StG, CoG, AdG, SyG)
  - 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)?

- **Scientific Approach**
  - To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the groundbreaking nature and ambition of the proposed research *(based on the Extended Synopsis)*?
  - To what extent does the proposal go beyond what the individual Principal Investigators could achieve alone *(for **Synergy Grants**, 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 *(for **Synergy Grants**, 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)*?
  - To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources, and PI commitment adequate and properly justified *(based on the research proposal)*?

ERC evaluation criteria 3/3

2. Principal Investigator(s)

- **Intellectual capacity and creativity**
  - To what extent has/have the PI(s) demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
  - To what extent does/do the PI(s) provide evidence of creative and original thinking?
  - To what extent does/do the PI(s) have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

- **Synergy**
  - To what extent does the **Synergy Grant** Group successfully demonstrate in the proposal that it brings together the know-how – such as skills, experience, expertise, disciplines, teams – necessary to address the proposed research question *(based on the Extended Synopsis)*?

StG, CoG, AdG evaluation process

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Step 1

- Remote assessment by panel members – only B1
- Proposals will receive a score **A invited, A not invited**, B or C
- Up to 44 proposals per panel will be retained for step 2 of the evaluation

Step 2

- Both B1 and B2 will be assessed
- In addition to panel members, remote independent experts will be asked to assess the proposals
- **Interviews**

Final ranking

- The panel will decide final scores and ranking
- Proposals can get a score A or B
- Not all proposals with score A will be funded

Resubmission restrictions

Call to which the Principal Investigator applied under previous ERC Work Programmes and proposal evaluation outcome		2024 ERC calls to which a Principal Investigator is _not_ eligible
2022 and 2023 Starting, Consolidator, Advanced Grant or Synergy Grant	Rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity	Starting, Consolidator, Advanced and Synergy Grant
2022 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant
2023 Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant	A, or B at Step 2	No restriction
	B, or C at Step 1	Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant
2022 and 2023 Synergy Grant	A, or B at Step 3	No restriction
	B at Step 1 or 2	No restriction
	C at Step 1	Synergy Grant

Sources of information

- Funding & Tenders portal:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-search;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=ERC;matchWholeText=true

- All documents necessary for application
- Link to the electronic submission system

- ERC website:

https://erc.europa.eu/homepage

- All about ERC grants
- Funded projects, former panel members, etc.
- Guidelines, videos

Résumé Resources Library established by the Joint Funders Group that is recommended by DORA community of practice is a good resource for narrative CVs

Thank you!
Kristin Kraav
ETAG

Support from ETAG for applying ERC grant

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What do we support? Supporting the ERC application

- ETAG supports researchers who have reached the second round of the ERC Starting (StG), Consolidator (CoG), Advanced (AdG), or Synergy (SyG) Grant competitions but have not received funding.

- We offer an opportunity to continue their research in Estonia and enhance their proposal for resubmission in the ERC grant application round. The new application must be submitted within two years (or three if applying for a different grant).

- Continuation activity of Mobilitas Pluss. Differences include:
  - Alignment with smart specialization fields;
  - Grade 'A' in the second round.
  - A PI can apllay for a maximum of 2 times within the period.

Smart Specialisation areas

- „Estonian Research and Development, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship (RDIE) Strategy 2021–2035" Focus Areas:
  - digital solutions across all areas of life;
  - health Technologies and Services;
  - valorization of Local Resources;
  - smart and Sustainable Energy Solutions;
  - viable Estonian society, language and cultural space.
- In the application, it is necessary to clearly indicate the area to which the project contributes and how.
- RDIE Focus Areas and Roadmaps.

Application process

- Signed letter of intent from the RD institution to the ETAG.

- ETAG opens the application round in the ETIS environment (personal form).

- The application must include project personnel, a brief summary, objectives, outcomes, impact, connection to Smart Specialisation areas, and other relevant information.

- ETAG does not conduct scientific evaluations of the applications, but perform a technical review. During this process, the application, institution, the PI, and other staff members are assessed for compliance with established requirements, as well as the project's contribution to Smart Specialisation areas.

Estonian Research Council

RESEARCH COUNCIL   NEWS   **FUNDING**   COOPERATION   ACTIVITIES

FUNDING

- Research Funding
- Mobility Funding
  - Postdoctoral research grant
  - Supporting the ERC applications
  - Returning researcher grant
  - Mobilitas Pluss mobility funding
  - Incoming postdoctoral grant
  - Mobility funding from Horizon Europe
  - International cooperation programmes
- Partnership and Cooperation Funding
- Infrastructure Funding
- Programmes
- Support for Ukrainian researchers

Supporting the ERC applications

ERC Grant Application and Processing Procedure

What We Do and What is the Goal of the Activity?

The Estonian Research Council (ETAG) supports researchers who have advanced to the second round of the ERC Starting, Consolidator, Advanced, or Synergy Grant competitions but have not received funding from the European Research Council (ERC). We offer them the opportunity to continue their research in Estonia and enhance their application for resubmission in the ERC Grant application round.

The goal of this activity is to increase the number of ERC Grant holders in Estonia, as ERC grants are highly regarded in the research community, and the success of Estonian researchers in obtaining them has been low so far. The more holders of internationally competitive grants there are in Estonia, the more attractive Estonia becomes as a research nation, and the more successful its participation in the European Horizon initiatives.

Who Qualifies to Receive Support?

Researchers who are employed by an institution and participate in the ERC Grant competition, receive an evaluation grade of A, but have not received funding from the European Research Council qualify for support. Subsequently, the researcher must submit an application to the Estonian Research Council through the Estonian Research Information System (ETIS) using the specified form. The application must include information about the purpose, results, budget, and schedule of the project. Additionally, the application must demonstrate how the project contributes to the smart specialization fields. Only projects that contribute to the smart specialization fields will be funded.

Budget

- The support is provided based on a unit cost, which depends on the volume of the concurrent PUT Starting Grant Level III being awarded. In 2023, this is 110,000 euros per year.

- The support is granted for a maximum of 1.5 years per project.

- The unit price includes salary costs, research expenses, and overhead costs.

- The unit price is not calculated for periods shorter than 1 month.

- The institution must ensure co-financing, which is 14% of the unit price.

What else?

- **Mentorship Program:**
  - Support provided both before submitting an initial ERC application and when preparing for interviews in the second round. €500 per mentorship.
  - A total of 20 mentorship funding allocations in the preceding year.
  - Application:
    - An official application signed by the institution to ETAG before involving the mentor. After mentorship, a reimbursement claim must be submitted to ETAG, along with evidence of mentor payment.
    - For mentorship during the interview stage, no preliminary application is needed; a reimbursement claim suffices, accompanied by evidence of the researcher's advancement to the second round and mentor payment.

- **ERC Short Visits**
  - Applications accepted twice a year.

Thank you!
Allan Padar
ETAG