Estonian Research Council

Applying for Starting Grants in 2025

4th March 2025 | Unit of National Research Grants

Europa Liit Euroopa struktuuri- ja investeerimisfondid

Eesti tuleviku heaks

Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium

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Agenda

- The most important info and how to find it
- What is new? i.e. changes compared to Call 2024
- Requirements for the applicant
- Budget and grant amounts
- Requirements for the research staff
- About the application form
- After the submition of the application
- Some additional suggestions
- Q&A

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The most important info and how to find it

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Call 2025

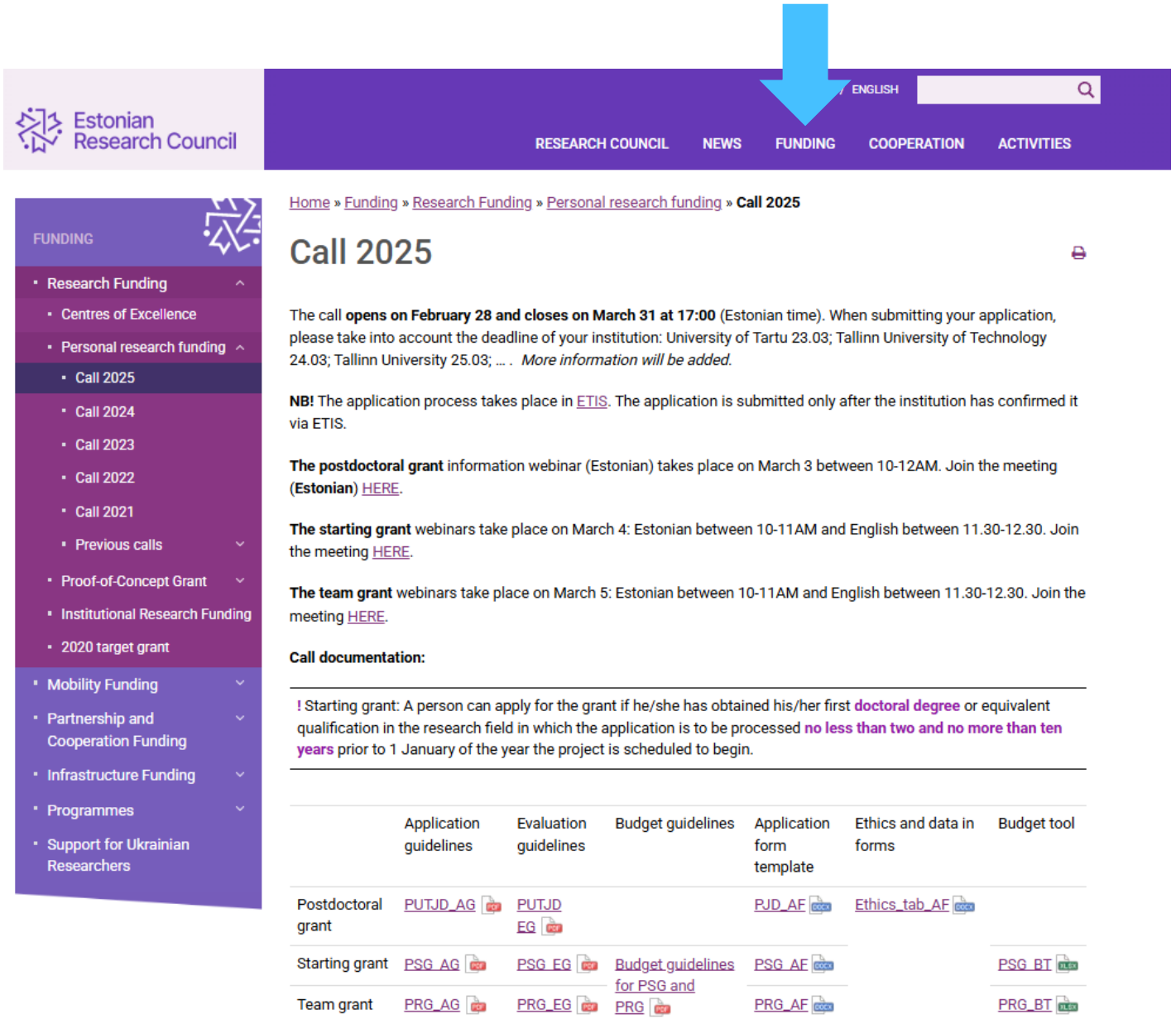
Starting grants (PSG, up to 5 years)

Submission of applications via ETIS from 28th February to 31st March at 5 pm (Estonian time).

NB! **The application is submitted only after the applicant's institution has confirmed it via ETIS.**
Please follow the deadlines of your institution

(University of Tartu 23rd March,
TalTech 24th March,
University of Tallinn 25th March)!

All the materials are available on the website of the Council.



https://etag.ee/en/funding/research-funding/personal-research-funding/call-2025-2/

	Application guidelines	Evaluation guidelines	Budget guidelines	Application form template	Ethics and data in forms	Budget tool
Postdoctoral grant	PUTJD_AG	PUTJD EG		PJD_AF	Ethics_tab_AF	
Starting grant	PSG_AG	PSG_EG	Budget guidelines for PSG and PRG	PSG_AF		PSG_BT
Team grant	PRG_AG	PRG_EG		PRG_AF		PRG_BT

PSG and PRG applications are evaluated by **international Expert Panels**. Postdoctoral grant applications are evaluated by a separate expert panel consisting of Estonian experts. Click here to find more information about the Expert Panels.

Frequently asked questions about grant applications of call 2025

+ **Applying for the starting and team grant**

+ **Applying for the postdoctoral grant**

Guidelines for Completing Your Ethics Self-Assessment for Grant Application

Guidelines regarding bibliometric background information

The recommended form for the data management plan.

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What is new?

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What is new? (1)

- During the project period the PI of the starting or team project is obliged to work at the institution with a workload of **at least 0.8**
- All members of the project must be employed or study at a **positively evaluated Estonian R&D institution** for the period they participate in the respective project
- Starting project staff can include members who are employed or study **at another** positively evaluated Estonian R&D institutions
- A doctoral student **can simultaneously** be the member of the other research staff of a team project and the member of the senior research staff of a starting project if his/her supervisor is the PI or the member of the senior research staff of either of those projects

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What is new? (2)

- The applicant of a starting grant must have obtained one's doctoral degree 2-**10** years before the beginning of the project (01.01.2026), i.e. the doctoral degree must be obtained within the period 01.01.2016-01.01.2024 (the period is extended by the period the applicant has been away from research).
- Research mobility is no longer a mandatory condition to be able to apply for the starting grant.
- The applications in the field of Humanities and the Arts are evaluated in 3 expert panels (formerly there were 4 expert panels).

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Requirements for the applicant

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The applicant...(1)

- can submit one application in the Call 2025 (PUTJD, PSG, PRG)
- cannot be listed as a member of the senior research staff in another PSG or PRG application
- applicant's previous application (PUTJD, PSG, PRG) has not fallen below the qualification threshold „Good" in at least 1 criterion in 2 previous calls (2023, 2024) or in at least 2 criteria in the previous call (2024).
- has obtained the PhD degree within the period from 1st January 2016 to 1st January 2024

  (in case the applicant has been away from research for substantial reasons, this period is extended)
- be ready to present the confirmation of **Estonian ENIC/NARIC** to prove that your PhD degree is in correspondence with educational qualifications of Estonian education system.

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The applicant (2)

- must be the PI of the project
- is ready to start the project on 1st January 2026*

NB! In case of later starting date the end date of the project does not change

- will enter into an employment contract with a positively evaluated Estonian R&D institution with at least a workload of 0.8 for the duration of the project
- PI's place of work must be Estonia

*it is possible to apply for a later starting date for the project

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Budget and grant amounts

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Grant amounts 2025

- Small grant amount
  76 000€ per year

- Large grant amount
  117 000€ per year

It is possible to apply for **small** or **large** grant amount.

NB! Do not forget that the large team grant comes with additional conditions on the team requirements

(see paragraph 9.6.1 in Conditions and Procedure for Starting Grants)

https://etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2026-Budget-Guidelines.pdf

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Budget

- The budget consists of:
  - **direct costs**
    - **staff costs** incl. salaries with taxes, scholarships;

    NB! The salaries of all members of senior research staff must be at least partially covered from the grant.
    - **research costs**, incl. subcontracting costs, costs related to the (open access) publication and popularisation of the R&D results, costs related to the protection of intellectual property, travel costs, and other costs that stem from the characteristics of the project;
  - **overhead**.

- A PhD student who is a member of the senior research staff in a PSG project does not have to be paid from the grant if the PhD student is hired as a junior research fellow at the University (i.e. the PhD student is already funded from the state budget)
- To plan the budget we recommend using Budget Tool. It is mandatory to use Budget Tool if you apply for a large grant amount.

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Requirements for the research staff

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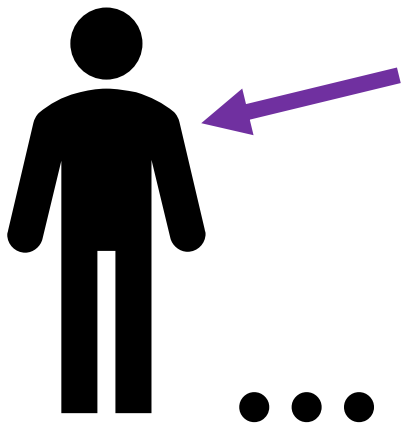
Requirements for the members in the project (1)

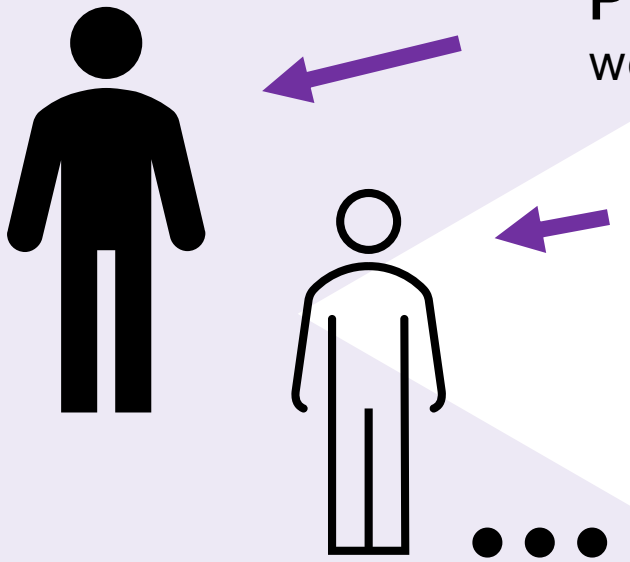
PSG **small** grant amount
(76 000€)



PI
workload >= 0.8

...

PSG **large** grant amount
(117 000€)



PI
workload >= 0.8

PhD holder or PhD student
workload >= 0.2

...

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Requirements for the members in the project (2)

- the team must meet the requirements for **the entire period of the project**
- **the names** of the people of the required team must be shown in the application
- members of the senior research staff cannot simultaneously be listed as members of the (senior) research staff in another PSG or PRG application
- the members of the senior research staff cannot participate in an ongoing PSG or PRG project in such a way that the participation periods coincide
- **PhD students** must be included as members of the **senior research staff**
- PSG amount **large** can only be applied for when the research team includes at least one member of the senior research staff in addition to the applicant/PI (**workload of at least 0.2** during the entire period of the project)

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External partners

- External partners are not members of the research team
- The competences of external partners are considered during the evaluation
- External partners do not need to fulfil the requirements of team members (e.g. do not have to work in positively evaluated Estonian R&D institution)
- If the collaboration is **new and/or crucial** to the project, it is advised to present some proof of the future collaboration (e.g. confirmation letter)
- It is recommended to add these proofs, since **the experts** might take their presence and content into account

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About the application form

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The application (1)

- The application is in English – **use ENG view**
- The summary has to be written **in both English and Estonian**
- Only members of staff who have **accounts in ETIS** can be added

(see https://www.etis.ee/create_account to apply for an account)

- **ETIS CV-s** must be informative and members of the senior research staff **must confirm their CV-s** before the submission!
- While writing the application in ETIS, press SAVE often!

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The application (2)

- Make sure your e-mail is correct in ETIS
- Make sure to choose the notifications from ETIS to your e-mail

- You can add up to 7 most relevant publications in the application form.

- Make sure the data regarding your publications is up-to date
  - Web of Science (and ETIS) for **Exact Sciences**, **Biological and Environmental Sciences**, **Medical and Health Sciences**, and **Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences**
  - Google Scholar (and ETIS) for **Engineering and Technology** and **Social Sciences**
  - only ETIS for **Humanities and the Arts**

(see the Guidelines regarding bibliometric background information)

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The application (3)

- Justification can be up to 24,000 characters (incl. spaces)
- The files that can be attached to the Justification part of the application as PDFs:
  - the list of references;
  - timetable (e.g., Gantt chart, incl. deliverables and milestones);
  - risk assessment incl. risk mitigation and back-up plan;
  - figures relevant to the Justification (max 1 file, max 5 pages)
- Files cannot contain long descriptive text that should be in the Justification
- Links cannot be added to the application
- The application contains **automatic checks of technical details**. If the application contains an error, the application cannot be confirmed. List of errors can be found under the "Submit" tab

PSG1001 application 2025 Status: In progress (submission deadline: 02.04.2024 17:00) Application

Application | Justification | Ethics and data | Staff | R&D results | Impact | Budget | Bibliometrics | Additional information | Submit | Expertise

Please print out the .pdf file of your application and check if all the relevant information has been provided.
If you would like to receive automatic messages regarding your application to your e-mail, please update your message settings in ETIS under "My Account".

Printing

Select tabs to include in print view

- [x] All
- [x] Application
- [x] Justification
- [x] Ethics and data
- [x] R&D activity
- [x] R&D cooperation
- [x] Staff
- [x] R&D results
- [x] Impact
- [x] Budget
- [x] Bibliometrics
- [x] Additional information

Print PDF

List of errors

Submission

Please make following amendments:

- Tab "Application" > Field "Keywords" is mandatory!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Summary in Estonian" is mandatory!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Summary in English" is mandatory!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Please explain and justify your choice" is mandatory!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Research type" is mandatory!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Research experience abroad (e.g., postdoctoral studies, working as a researcher at an R&D institution or at a research-intensive enterprise, etc. in a foreign country) or outside the same country" is mandatory!
- Sum of percentages of fields of research must be 100%!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Field and speciality" is mandatory!
- Tab "Application" > Field "Have you used the help of generative artificial intelligence (MS Copilot, ChatGPT, Midjourney, DALL E or similar) for writing or preparing the application or its parts?" is manda
- Tab "Ethics and data" > Field "Confirmation of adherence to the principles of research integrity and research ethics" is mandatory!
- Tab "Ethics and data" > Field "Do any of the project's research activities need to be approved by an ethics committee?" is mandatory!
- Tab "Ethics and data" > Field "Research data management" is mandatory!

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After the submition of the application

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Evaluation of the applications

- PSG applications will be evaluated in 16 Expert Panels that are based on 7 research fields (see the list and keywords on the website of the Council).
- The preliminary final evaluation will be sent to the applicants in the beginning of July (at the latest).
- The applicant and the institution are entitled to make objections regarding the preliminary final evaluation (the so-called hearing – deadline 18th August, objections to be sent via ETIS).
- The Evaluation Committee will confirm the final ranking lists of each Expert Panel.
- Considering the position in the ranking list and funding amount, the Evaluation Committee will decide which applications will be forwarded to the Panel on Research Ethics and Data Management.
- After the evaluation in the Panel on Research Ethics and Data Management, the Evaluation Committee will make the proposals to approve the applications.

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Evaluation of the application

Criterion	Rating scale	Example
1. Scientific justification for the research project	From 1 to 5	4.5
2. Feasibility of the research project	From 1 to 5	4.5
3. Competence of the applicant	From 1 to 5	5
4. Importance and potential impact of the research project	From 1 to 5 (with coefficient 0.8)	4
	Total score:	=4.5+4.5+5+4*0.8=17.2
5. Research ethics, incl. the potential ethical risks accompanying the implementation of the project	Appropriate, conditionally appropriate	
6. Research data management	Appropriate, conditionally appropriate	

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Ethics tab

- Research ethics and data management form in Word

https://etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Ethics-and-data-section-in-the-application-forms-2026.docx

- To fill out the table please use the „Guidelines for Completing Your Ethics Self-Assessment for Grant Application“

https://etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Eetika_Tabel_ENG_v1_2025.pdf

- Questions concerning ethical issues: **Marten Juurik**

(Head of the Unit of Research Integrity, +372 731 7381, marten.juurik@etag.ee).

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Some additional suggestions

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What else to pay attention to?

- **Please read the Conditions and Procedure for Starting Grants very carefully**
- Compile the application correctly! Do not add files that are not allowed! The character limit is the same for all applicants.

NB! Neither these slides nor FAQ has all the information!

- All members of the project must update their CV-s in ETIS
- Please make sure the people you want to include in your application are available
- Please give yourself **enough time** to fill in the application!
- Be aware that the **confirmation of the application** may also take more time than you think! **Do not leave submition on the last minute!**
- **During April, be ready to make corrections demanded by ETAG.**

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Questions regarding the application

Research Funding Officers:

Medical and Health Sciences; Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences: Ade Kallas-Kivi (+372 731 7366, ade.kallas-kivi@etag.ee)

Biological and Environmental Sciences: Merle Mandel (+372 731 7387, merle.mandel@etag.ee)

Exact Sciences: Raili Torga (+372 731 7358, raili.torga@etag.ee)

Engineering and Technology: Katriin Pirk (+372 5395 7767, katriin.pirk@etag.ee)

Humanities and the Arts: Elli Marie Tragel (+372 5349 1291, ellimarie.tragel@etag.ee)

Social Sciences: Marin Järvpõld (+372 5370 0754, marin.jarvpold@etag.ee)

Head of the Field of National Research Grants: Eveli Laats (+372 5191 1737, eveli.laats@etag.ee)

Head of the Unit of Research Integrity: Marten Juurik (+372 731 7381, marten.juurik@etag.ee).

Q&A