Outline

• ERC in Horizon 2020
  Mission, Structure, Funding schemes, Key principles

• What we fund in 2014
  Calls, Deadlines, Continuity and changes

• Submission and Evaluation Procedure
  How to prepare and submit a grant

• Statistics on Italy
ERC in Horizon 2020

- ERC in Horizon 2020
  Mission, Structure, Funding schemes, Key principles
HORIZON 2020: funding opportunities

1) Excellent Science

European Research Council -
Support of the most talented and creative individual researchers

(ERC budget proposal: € 13 billion*)

Collaborative research for Future and Emerging Technologies

Training and career development through Marie Curie Actions

Research Infrastructures

2) Industrial leadership

3) Tackling Societal Challenges

* funding figure is subject to the pending Multiannual Financial Framework Regulation by the EP and the Council
Budget Horizon 2020
after negotiations between Parliament-Council-Commission

FP7 budget: € 50.5 billion
ERC budget: € 7.5 billion

H2020 budget: € 77 billion
ERC budget: € 13 billion

Co-operation (65 %)
JRC non-nuclear (3 %)
Capacities (8 %)
People (9 %)
Ideas (15 %)
Societal challenges (38.5 %)
EIT and other (5.2 %)
JRC (2.5 %)
ERC (17 %)
Industrial leadership (22.1 %)
Other Excellent science (14.7 %)
What is ERC?

The ERC supports excellence in frontier research through a bottom-up, individual-based, pan-European competition

Budget: € 13 billion (2014-2020)

- Scientific governance: independent Scientific Council (22 members); full authority over funding strategy
- Support by the ERC Executive Agency (autonomous)
- Excellence as the only criterion (irrespective of nationality, gender or age of researchers)

Strategy
- Support for the individual scientist – no networks/consortia!
- Peer-review evaluation
- Investigator-driven (bottom-up), no top-down priorities
- Support of frontier research in all fields of science

Legislation
- Scientific governance: independent Scientific Council (22 members); full authority over funding strategy
- Support by the ERC Executive Agency (autonomous)
- Excellence as the only criterion (irrespective of nationality, gender or age of researchers)
What we fund in 2014

What we fund in 2014
Calls, Deadlines, Continuity and changes
ERC Grant schemes

**Starting Grants**

- **Starters**
  - (2-7 years after PhD)
  - up to € 2.0 Mio for 5 years
  - (1.5 Mio + 500,000)

**Consolidator Grants**

- **Consolidators**
  - (7-12 years after PhD)
  - up to € 2.75 Mio for 5 years
  - (2 Mio + 750,000)

**Advanced Grants**

- track-record of significant research achievements in the last 10 years
- up to € 3.5 Mio for 5 years
  - (2.5 Mio + 1 Mio)

**Proof-of-Concept**

- bridging gap between research - earliest stage of marketable innovation
- up to €150,000 for ERC grant holders
- (Up to 18 months!)
## Deadlines in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Starting Grant</th>
<th>Consolidator Grant</th>
<th>Advanced Grant</th>
<th>Proof of Concept Grant</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Call identifier</strong></td>
<td>ERC-2014-StG</td>
<td>ERC-2014-CoG</td>
<td>ERC-2014-AdG</td>
<td>ERC-2014-PoC</td>
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<td><strong>Publication date</strong></td>
<td>11 December 2013</td>
<td>11 December 2013</td>
<td>17 June 2014</td>
<td>11 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deadline(s)</strong></td>
<td>25 March 2014</td>
<td>20 May 2014</td>
<td>21 October 2014</td>
<td>1 April 2014 1 October 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget Mio €</strong></td>
<td>485 (370)</td>
<td>713 (400)</td>
<td>450 (200)</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Pending the adoption of the WP 2014
Established by the European Commission

Call budget distribution for 2014 calls

Breakdown per domain

• PE: Physical Sciences & Engineering
• LS: Life Sciences
• SH: Social Sciences & Humanities

⇒ Within each domain, budget is broken down according to total funding requested per panel (equal chance in each panel)

Funding rates:
100% of eligible direct costs + 25% indirect costs
General requirements:

Researcher

- Any nationality, age or current place of work

In conjunction with a Host Institution

- Based in EU or associated countries

Individual research team

- Researcher has freedom to choose national or trans-national team, if scientific added value proven
Essential features maintained

• Independent Scientific Council
• Executive Agency with autonomous operation
• Scientific excellence - the sole criterion
• Funding: 100% of direct costs (+ 25% overheads)
• Portability
Summary of main changes for H2020

• More stringent resubmission rules:
  If B (Step 1 or Step 2) → cannot apply in 2015
  If C (Step 1) → cannot apply in 2015 and 2016

• Eligibility rules for MDs
• Ethics table → online submission forms
• Model CVs provided
• No reason for exclusion of reviewers
• Changes in panel descriptors
ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants
The applicant’s profile

“Am I competitive enough?”

- Potential for research independence
- Evidence of scientific maturity
- At least one (StG) /several (CoG) publications without participation of PhD supervisor

Promising track-record of early achievements

- Significant publications
- Presentations in conferences
- Funding, patents, awards, prizes

At least 50% of working time on the project and 50% in EU or Associated Country
ERC Advanced Grants

The applicant’s profile

- Exceptional leaders in terms of the originality and significance of their research
- Internationally-recognised
- Significant research achievements in the last 10 years
- No specific eligibility criteria with respect to their academic requirements

At least 30% of working time on the project and 50% in EU or Associated Country
Submission and Evaluation Procedure

- **Submission and Evaluation Procedure**
  How to prepare and submit a grant
Submission, evaluation and selection

Submission of full proposals (strict deadline!)

Eligibility check (PI, HI, submission restrictions)

Step 1 (remote) evaluation on the basis of PI and synopsis (part B1)

1st Panel meeting

Proposals passing to step 2

Individual assessment of full proposals by panel members & remote referees

AdG: 2nd Panel meeting

StG, CoG: 2nd Panel meeting incl. interviews of applicants

Consolidation of 3 main domains rank lists

Proposals selected for funding based on call budget

Feedback to applicants

Ethics Review

Redress
Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion

Evaluation of *excellence* at two levels:

**Excellence of the Research Project**

- **Ground breaking nature and potential impact** (important challenges, developments across disciplines, high risk-high gain)
- **Scientific Approach** (novel concepts/methodology)

**Excellence of the Principal Investigator**

- **Intellectual capacity** (achievements beyond the state of the art)
- **Creativity** (evidence of creative independent thinking)
- **Commitment** (demonstrated leadership and commitment to the project)
Proposal preparation: Part B1

✓ Pay particular attention to the **ground-breaking nature** of the research project – no incremental research!

✓ Know your competitors – what is the **state of play** and why is your idea and scientific approach outstanding?

✓ Only the **extended synopsis** is read at Step 1 – it gives the **first impression** – concise and clear presentation is crucial

✓ Outline of the **methodological approach** (feasibility!)
Proposal preparation: Part B2

✓ Do not "waste" Part B2 – provide **sufficient detail** on methodology, work plan, selection of case studies etc. (15 pages)
  (in particular important for the AdG as the full proposal is the only basis for the selection!)

✓ Check coherency of figures, **justify requested resources** and involvement of team members
Submission of proposals

Single submission

• One deadline per Call
• To a targeted panel (careful selection of keywords!)
• Electronically only – via Participant Portal
• Proposals have two parts:
  - Part A: administrative forms
  - Part B: scientific proposal (Part B1 and B2)

Complete information: Guides for Applicants

Get familiar with the NEW PARTICIPANT PORTAL
Submission of proposals: Preparation process

✓ Register early
✓ Make use of the **help tools and call documents** (FAQ, GfA, WP)
✓ Get in touch with your **National Contact Point**
✓ Submit your proposal and relevant annexes **well in advance** → can be **revised until the call deadline**

... Only what is in the system at the time of the deadline is evaluated
# Submission of proposals

## Proposal structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PART A</strong> – online forms</th>
<th><strong>PART B1</strong> – submitted as .pdf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal, PI and HI info</td>
<td>Extended Synopsis 5 p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Institutions (if any)</td>
<td>CV 2 p.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Track Record 2 p.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics table (2014)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Annexes</strong> – submitted as .pdf</th>
<th><strong>PART B2</strong> – submitted as .pdf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement of support of HI</td>
<td>Scientific Proposal 15 p.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy of PhD or equiv.</td>
<td>(incl. budget breakdown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(only StG &amp; CoG)</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*If applicable:*

- Document for extension of eligibility window (StG & CoG)
- Ethics self-assessment
- Other documents (maternity leave..)
25 panels for all areas of science

Each panel:
Panel Chair and 12-14 Panel Members

Selection of the panel:
PI responsibility

PE - Physical Sciences & Engineering
10 panels

SH - Social Sciences & Humanities
6 panels

LS - Life Sciences
9 panels
Submission, evaluation and selection

Submission of full proposals (strict deadline!)

Eligibility check (PI, HI, submission restrictions)

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Who evaluates the proposals?

- **Panel members**: typically 600 / call
  - High-level scientists
  - Recruited by ScC from all over the world
  - About 12-14 members plus the Chair

- **Referees**: typically 2000 / call
  - Evaluate only a small number of proposals
Panel meeting – Step 1 Scoring

End of **Step 1**:  
A Proposal is of sufficient quality to pass to Step 2  
B Proposal is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to Step 2  
C Proposal is not of sufficient quality to pass to Step 2  

⇒ *In case of B and C  → submission restrictions*
End of Step 2:

A fully meets the ERC's excellence criterion and is recommended for funding, if sufficient funds are available.

B meets some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded.

⇒ In case of B → submission restrictions

At the end of both steps applicants will be told the ranking range of their proposal out of the proposals evaluated by the panel.

StG and CoG: Importance of the interview
Statistics on Italy

- Statistics on Italy
Proposals submitted by Italian HI
ERC Starting Grant calls 2007-2013
ERC Advanced Grant calls 2008-2013

5375 evaluated proposals from host institutions in Italy,
by ERC call and domain

Ineligible and withdrawn proposals not taken into account  *all submitted
# Funded proposals with Italian HI

**ERC Starting Grant calls 2007-2013**
**ERC Advanced Grant calls 2008-2013**

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## 234 projects with a host institution in Italy, by ERC call and domain

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<th></th>
<th>LS</th>
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* current host institutions; data as of 09/09/13
Success rates per country of Host Institution

ERC Starting Grant calls 2007-2013
ERC Advanced Grant calls 2008-2013

*) First legal signatories of the first grant agreement taken into account
Established by the European Commission

Mobility of researchers
ERC Starting grant 2007-2013 & Advanced grant 2008-2013

22 foreign researchers in Italy

133 Italian researchers abroad: UK (39), FR (23), CH (22)
Main Italian HI with ERC grants
ERC Starting & Advanced grant calls 2007 – 2013

- National Research Council (CNR) - Italy: 14 Starting Grants, 2 Advanced Grants
- University of Trento: 8 Starting Grants, 5 Advanced Grants
- University of Roma - La Sapienza: 9 Starting Grants, 5 Advanced Grants
- Bocconi University Milan: 8 Starting Grants, 5 Advanced Grants
- University of Rome - Tor Vergata: 4 Starting Grants, 6 Advanced Grants
- International School for Advanced Studies - Trieste: 3 Starting Grants, 7 Advanced Grants
- European University Institute: 3 Starting Grants, 7 Advanced Grants
- University of Padua: 8 Starting Grants, 1 Advanced Grant
- University of Milan: 6 Starting Grants, 1 Advanced Grant
- Normal Superior School of Pisa: 1 Starting Grant, 6 Advanced Grants
- University of Parma: 1 Starting Grant, 4 Advanced Grants
- University of Bologna: 3 Starting Grants, 3 Advanced Grants
- University of Turin: 2 Starting Grants, 2 Advanced Grants
- University of Pisa: 3 Starting Grants, 3 Advanced Grants
- Polytechnic University of Milan: 4 Starting Grants
- National Institute for Nuclear Physics - Italy: 2 Starting Grants, 3 Advanced Grants
- FIRC - Institute of Molecular Oncology: 4 Starting Grants, 4 Advanced Grants
- European Institute of Oncology: 3 Starting Grants, 1 Advanced Grant

* current host institutions; data as of 09/09/13
Some take-home messages

ERC awards are:

• **Very competitive:** ~12% success rates
• **Significant:** €1.5 Mio – €3.5 Mio
• **Bottom-up:** open to any topic
• **Ambitious:** achieve/boost independence; form a group
• **Looking for High-risk/High-gain research**
• **Flexible:** distribution of budget can be changed
• **Portable:** can be moved anywhere in Europe
• **Prestigious:** will boost a research career
Thank you for your attention!

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