

FP7 European Research Council (ERC): Feedback on Some Frequently Asked Questions - 14 November 2008 (on ERC-2009-StG Call)

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

Q: The Work Programme states that "no Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator may be associated with more than one application to the ERC during the same year". Please could you clarify - what does "year" refer to?

A: UKRO has checked this with the European Commission, who state that "application ... same year" refers to submission date (so the call deadline).

Q: How do the indirect costs work for the ERC?

A: The ERC grant agreement foresees a flat-rate financing for indirect costs. The indirect costs are equal to 20% of the direct eligible costs (minus subcontracting costs and costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used in the premises of the beneficiary). This applies to any beneficiary, whatever costing method this beneficiary is subject to for other FP7 projects. This means also that no beneficiary will be asked to prove that it spent this 20%, this is a flat-rate that will simply be applied to the direct costs claimed.

Q: A potential applicant has the support of two hosting institutions for elements of their interdisciplinary research project. The infrastructural resources provided in these two institutions are essential for key developments of their project. How should this be dealt with in the application form?

A: This may be a classical case where the participation of a second legal entity is justified, if not necessary.

Application:

In the application the applicant should still choose the main host based on his/her own assumptions but taking into account his/her employment contract, budget proportions, etc.

For the main host the administrative details in A1 must be provided. For the other second legal entity a second A2 form should be filled out.

The host support letter is formally only required from the main host but it would not do any harm to include a second support letter from the other institution and put it into the same annex.

It is important to justify in part B under research environment the inclusion of another legal entity (apart from the main host). This should not be a problem in this case.

Grant agreement:

If the proposal is selected, the grant agreement will be technically concluded with the main host and then the other legal entity accedes to this grant agreement. Legally, however, this is a grant agreement with both legal entities.

There are two Annex II templates for the Grant Agreement: one for single beneficiary, and one for multi-beneficiary grants which would be used in this case.

STARTING GRANT QUESTIONS:

Q: What are the rules for extensions to the eligibility period for Starting Grants for maternity, in the case of twins?

A: The extension allowable is "1 year per child born after the PhD award", so gives a two year of extension for twins.

Q: What language do I need to submit my proposal in?

A: As per page 30 of the Guide for Applicants, the working language of the ERC evaluation panels is English. If your proposal is not in English, a translation of the full proposal would be of assistance to the experts. An English translation of the abstract must be included in your proposal.

Q: What language does the PhD certificate need to be in?

A: The ERC will accept PhD certificates in any EU27 language (i.e. the languages of the Member States of the EU). For non-EU27 languages (such as Russian, Chinese, Turkish, Latin) you need to provide either:

-a letter (in any EU27 language) from the issuing institution certifying the award of the PhD, the award date, the place and the field;

-or a certified translation of the certificate (preferably in English, or in another EU27 language).

In the later case, it is not necessary to upload both the certificate and the translation, the certified translation is enough.

Q: The margins in the proposal template given on EPSS don't match the guidance in the Guide for Applicants. What should I do?

A: In the Guide for Applicants (page 31), it states that the margin in the application documents should be at least 1.5 cm. The proposal header can be included in the top margin. However, the template provided in EPSS has one margin which is at 1 cm (the margin pre-sets are: 2, 1, 2.5 and 2 cm). We have checked with the Commission, and applicants who will use this template will not be penalised because of this smaller margin.

Q: What parts for the proposal will the evaluators have access to during the first and second step of the evaluation process?

A: During the first step of the evaluation the evaluators will not have access to Part B2, only Part B1 and A1T. During the second step of evaluation, evaluators will have access to the full proposal, including Part B1 (cover page, Section 1) and Part B2 (Sections 2 & 3).

ADVANCED GRANTS QUESTIONS:

Q: I have just been told that I have am going to be funded for an Advanced Grant. Roughly how long is the granting process expected to take?

A: The Commission hope that this grant agreement process should take 2-3 months depending on the speed of both sides - the Host Institution and the Commission. A flow sheet of the process is available on our website and at the end of this article.

Q: I have not had my results yet for the Advanced Grants call. When might I find out?

A: The ERC has already notified most people. All applicants should get a 'quick info letter' by the end of October at the latest. The remaining AdG results (for the Intedisciplinary Domain and the reserve lists) will be published on the ERC website shortly and UKRO will circulate these once they are available.

Further information

Further information about the ERC is available on our website: www.ukro.ac.uk/erc

The flowsheet for the Advanced Grant granting process is at:

www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/post_application_info/080828_adg_granting_flowchart.pdf