

Funding opportunities at the European Research Council



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

IFORS Vienna, 15 July 2026

ERC mission



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Established in 2007 by the European Commission

".... to support investigator-driven frontier research across all fields, based on scientific excellence."

bottom-up
no pre-determined priorities



INDIVIDUAL RESEARCHERS
FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

**LONG TERM
GRANTS**

TO PIONEERING PROJECTS
IN ANY FIELD OF FRONTIER RESEARCH

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Life Sciences



Physical Sciences and Engineering



Social Sciences and Humanities

Why apply for an ERC grant?



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ERC offers independence, recognition & visibility to:

- Work on a research topic of own choice
- Gain financial autonomy for five years
- Negotiate the best conditions of work with the host institution
- Attract excellent team members and collaborators from anywhere in the world
- Move with the grant to any place in Europe if desired (“portability of grants”)
- Opportunity to set a five year research agenda

Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion



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Excellence of the Research Project

- ✓ Ground-breaking nature
- ✓ Ambition

Excellence of the PI

- ✓ Intellectual capacity
- ✓ Creativity

As from WP2024, the Scientific Council has decided to explicitly give more emphasis to the project proposal than the past achievements of the applicant :

*“The panels will **primarily evaluate** the ground-breaking nature and ambition of **the research project**. At the same time, the panels will evaluate the intellectual capacity and creativity of the Principal Investigator, with a focus on the extent to which the Principal Investigator has the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project.*

**The Host Institution is not an evaluation criterion –
quality of PI's past, current or future institution is not evaluated.**

ERC grant schemes



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Starting Grants

Researchers (0-10 years after PhD);
up to €1.5 million for 5 years



Consolidator Grants

Researchers (5-15 years after PhD);
up to €2 million for 5 years



Advanced Grants

Researchers with track-record of significant
research achievements; up to €2.5 million for 5 years



Proof of Concept

bridging gap between research
- earliest stage of marketable innovation;
lump sum €150 000 for ERC grantees



Synergy Grants

2-4 Principal investigators;
up to €10 million for 6 years
1 PI can be based outside
EU/Associated Countries



Plus Grants

Principal investigators at all career stages
with a vision for transformative
research;
up to €7 million over 4-7 years

ERC Panel structure – 3 Domains; 28 panels

Life Sciences (LS)

- LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions
- LS2 Integrative Biology: from Genes and Genomes to Systems
- LS3 Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Aging
- 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 (SH)

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

Physical Sciences & Engineering (PE)

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

SH1 descriptors



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SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations

Economics, finance and management

- SH1_1 Macroeconomics; monetary economics; economic growth, labour economics
- SH1_2 International trade; international business; spatial economics
- SH1_3 Development economics; political economics
- SH1_4 Finance; financial markets
- SH1_5 Corporate finance; international finance
- SH1_6 Banking, insurance
- SH1_7 Accounting, asset prices, auditing
- SH1_8 Econometrics, game theory, decision theory
- SH1_9 Behavioural economics; experimental economics; neuro-economics
- SH1_10 Microeconomics, industrial organisation, applied microeconomics
- SH1_11 Innovation, research & development, entrepreneurship
- SH1_12 Management; operations management, international management
- SH1_13 Human resource management; organisational behaviour
- SH1_14 Strategy, operations research
- SH1_15 Marketing, consumer behaviour
- SH1_16 Quantitative economic history, economic systems, institutional economics

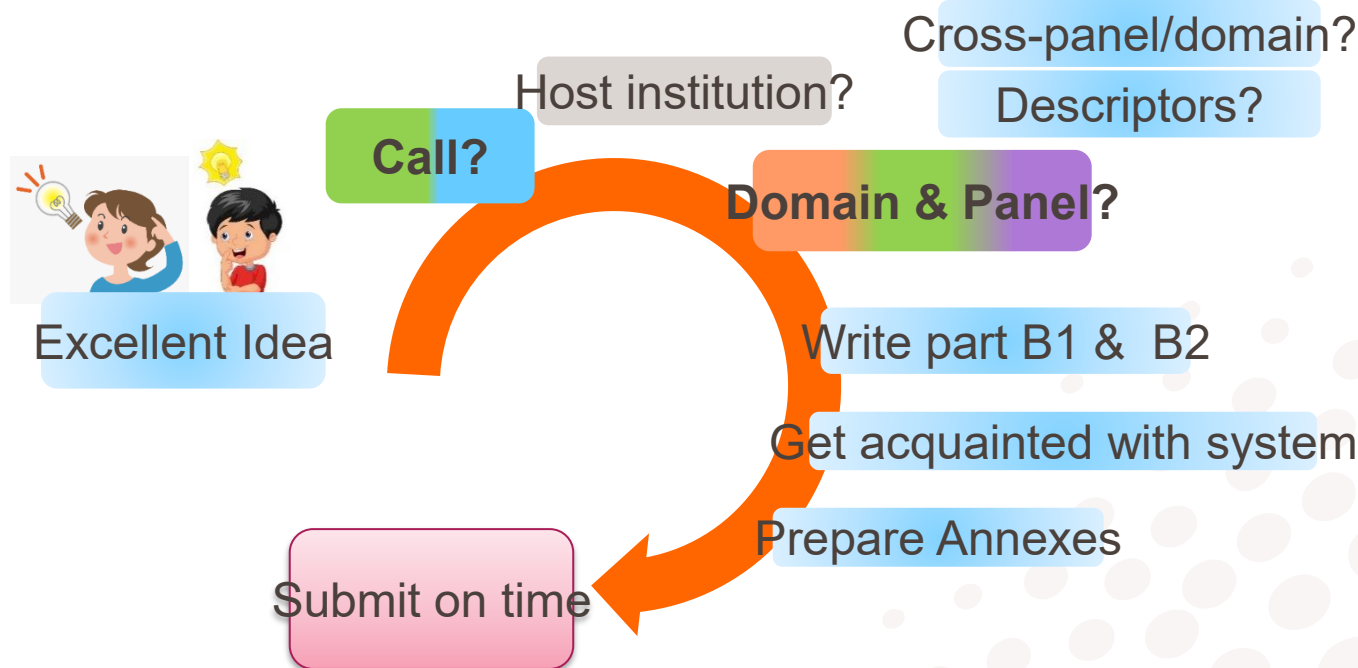
These are **not** research priorities (just guidance of panel profile);

Apply even if your specific research field is not explicitly mentioned

Submitting an ERC proposal



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Panel members



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It is totally forbidden to make contact with panel members → rejection of your proposal, exclusion of the panel member

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[Homepage](#) > [Apply for a grant](#) > [Panel Members](#)

Panel members

Panel members play a vital role in the ERC's evaluation of grant proposals. They are top scientists and scholars coming from all over the world to help ERC select the best project proposals. The ERC's peer review ensures a comprehensive and robust assessment of research proposals. It is organised in three research domains and, currently, in 28 panels.

This webpage provides information about the panel members who took part in the completed ERC grant competitions, and about panel chairs, both past and currently serving.

Note to applicants:
This information is given for reasons of transparency. **Applicants, potential applicants, or potential host institutions must not contact reviewers.** If they do so, the applications may be rejected on the grounds of a breach of research integrity

Panel member name

Funding schemes

Years

Select

Select

Review panels

(LS) Life Sciences

(PE) Physical Sciences & Engineering

(SH) Social Sciences & Humanities

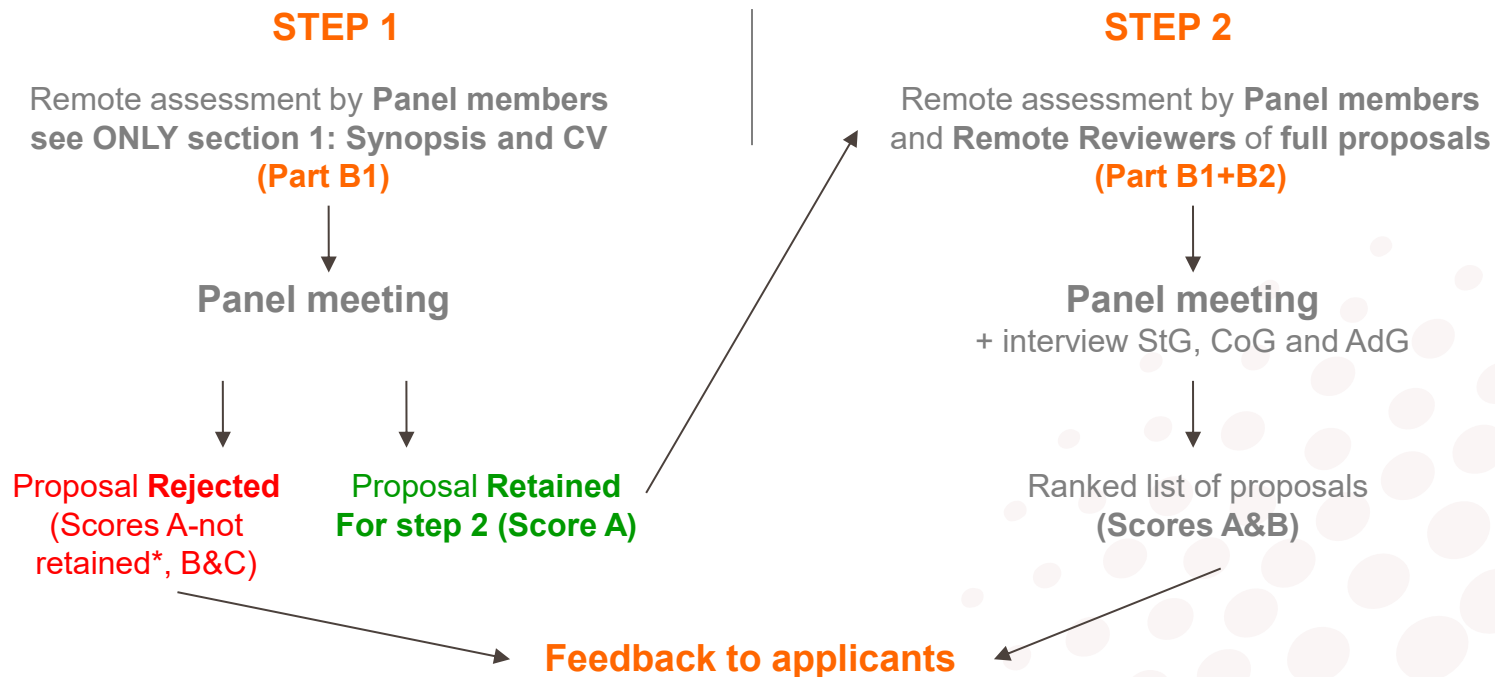
(SyG) Synergy Grants

Apply

Reset

How are the ERC proposal evaluated

For individuals calls: a single submission but a two step evaluation



Eligibility periods: What changes in ERC Work Programme 2027?



StG: 0-10 years after PhD
CoG: 5-15 years after PhD

The eligibility period for both Starting and Consolidator Grant schemes will be widened:

- From 2027 on, researchers will be eligible to apply for a **Starting Grant immediately after successfully defending their PhD, and at any time within the following 10-year period**
- **Consolidator Grant** applicants will be eligible to apply **between 5 and 15 years after defending their PhD**
- Researchers will be awarded no more than one Starting Grant and one Consolidator Grant during their career
- The rules for the extension of the eligibility periods will remain in place

Administrative part A



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- Call – Starting, Consolidator, Advanced (0-10 STG; 5-15 COG; 12+ ADG)
(since PhD thesis defence date)
- Eligibility extension possible (career breaks, long-term illness, military service, maternal/paternal leave – 18 months per child)
- Documents: PhD diploma, extension documents
- Host institution support letter – institutional support for the implementation of the project

- **Abstract** (2000 characters)
 - First impression of the project
 - Important for project classification
 - Assigning the panel and panel evaluators
 - Assigning external evaluators
 - Publicly available (if funded)
 - To include: ***The topic and main goal – contribution to existing knowledge – scientific approach and expected results***

- **Part B1** (max. 5 pages)
 - Extended synopsis – describes **the overall idea** of the project and importance of the topic
 - Overview the current state of knowledge, objectives of the project, overall approach/research strategy to reach the goals of the project
 - Scientific approach – broadly
 - Clear language (for a generalist expert)
 - Risk mitigation strategy

Main goal: make the panel want to read part B2 and pass the application to Step 2

Part B2 – max. 7 pages



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Detailed description of the project

- describe **in detail** the implementation: research methodology, work plan, risk assessment etc.
- Do not repeat part B1 – further elaboration
- Detailed description of the methodology and a work plan (time scale)
- Risk mitigation strategies (plan B if things do not work out as planned)
- Composition of the team and task division (collaborators, PhD students, postdocs; profiles and number of people involved)

Important: before submitting the proposal, make sure you have the written consent of the researchers named in your proposal

- Budget and resources section: provided as a separate document for assessment at step 2

Step 2 – The Interview



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- Online - minimum 30 minutes (can be longer) – usually 5 minute presentation; 20 minutes Q&A
- Answers – short and to the point – to make best use of time
- No need to repeat what was written in the application – clarification of specific points
- OK not to have all the answers, need to show the way of thinking and adapting to risks
- Atmosphere is collegial – interview is an exchange of opinions and a discussion
- Take care of technical details – sound, lighting, background
- Have backup slides to illustrate your answers (if possible)

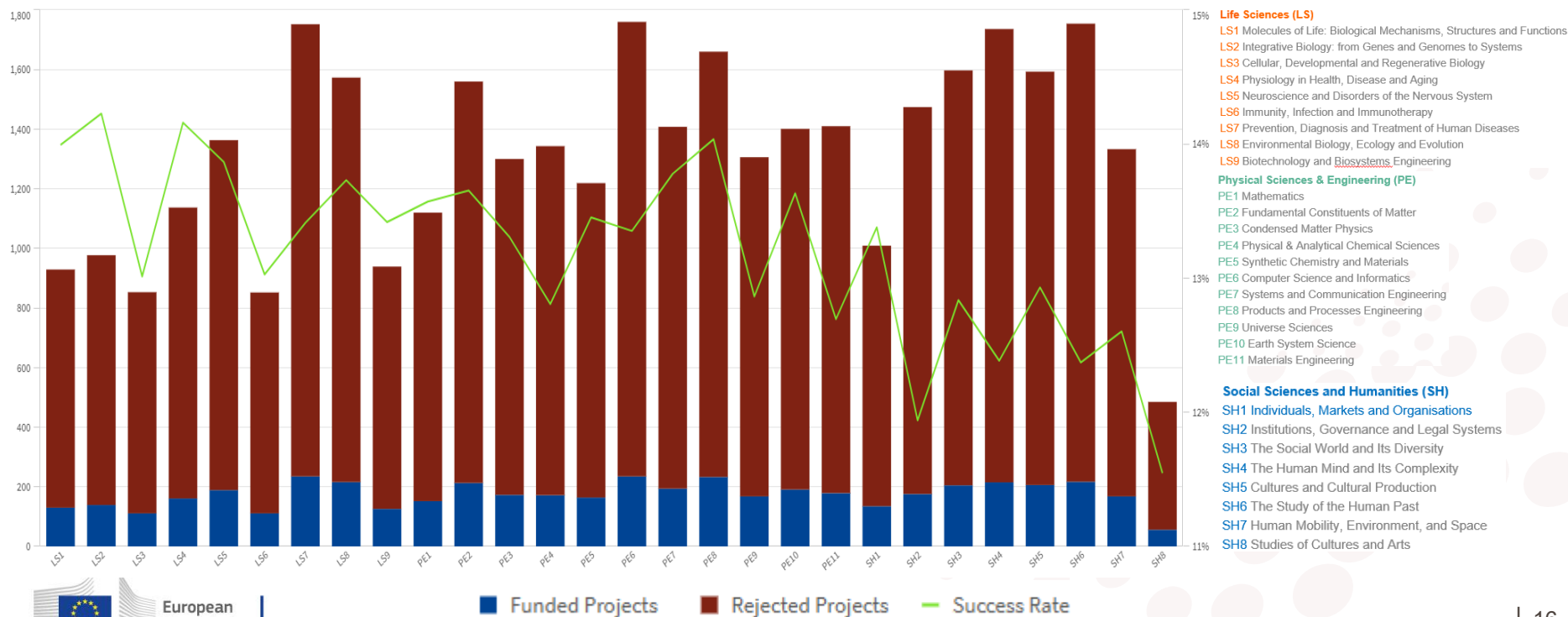
Projects by panel and success rate in Horizon Europe

STG, COG, ADG calls



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Operations research: some statistics

Horizon2020 and Horizon Europe



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Projects

25

Number of signed grant agreements.

ERC Contribution

€48M

Funding received for the projects.

Countries

11

Host Institution countries.

Associated PoCs

2

PoCs associated to selected projects.

Nationalities

14

Principal Investigator nationalities.

Women PI

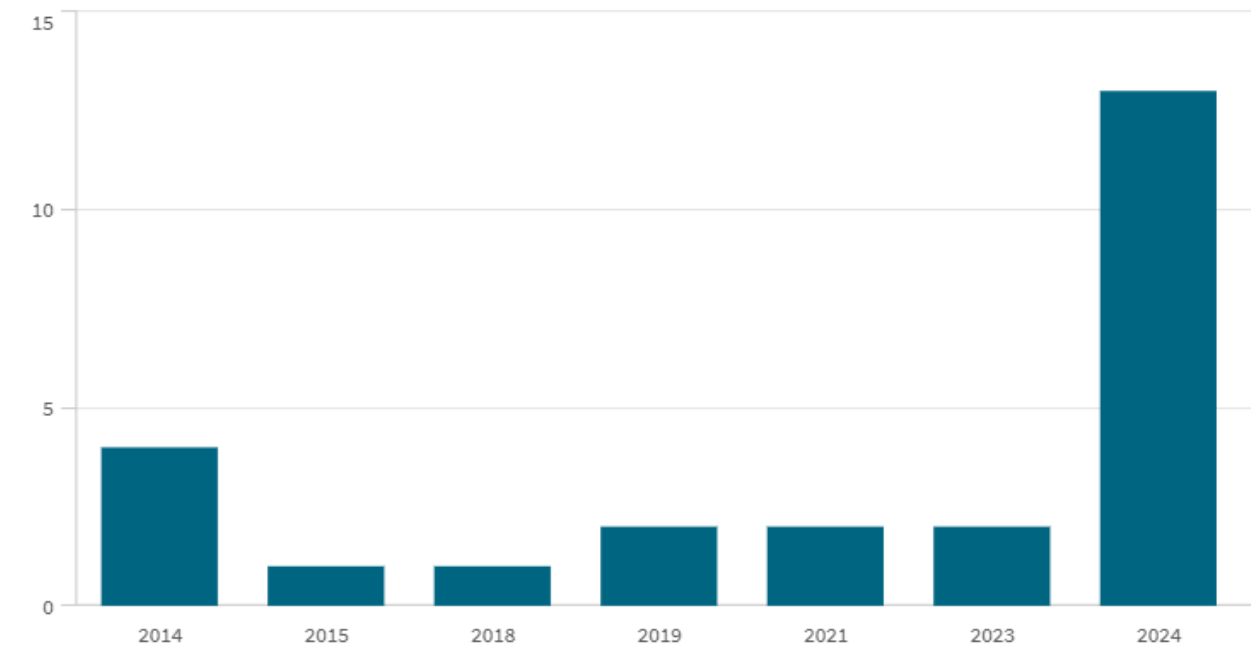
32.0%

Percentage of women leading projects.

OR Projects by Call year



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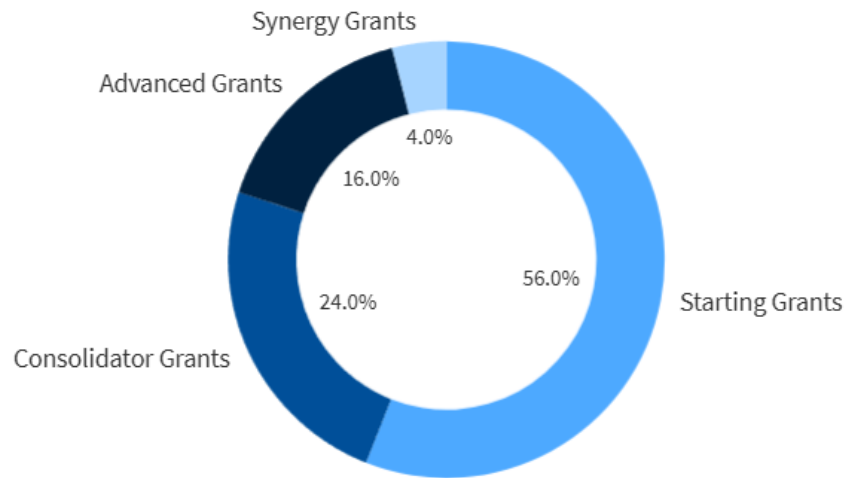


Bar chart illustrating the distribution of grants by call year.

OR Funded projects by Call and by Domain

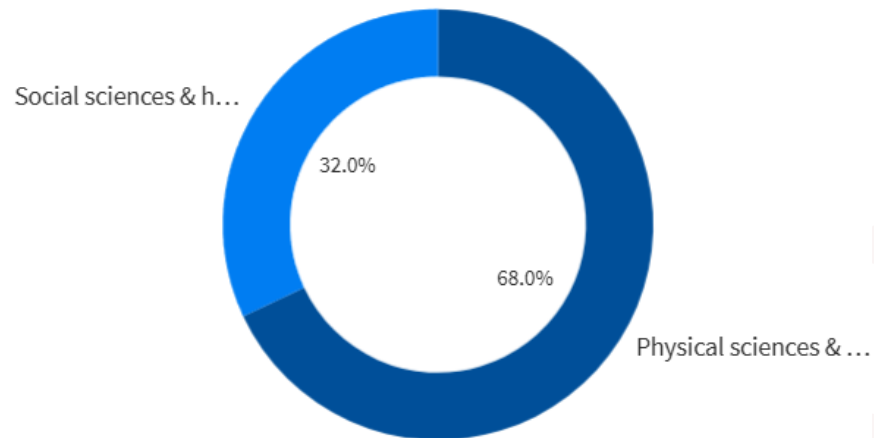


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Donut chart illustrating the share of funded projects among the grant types.

Projects by domain



Donut chart illustrating the share of funded projects among the scientific domains.

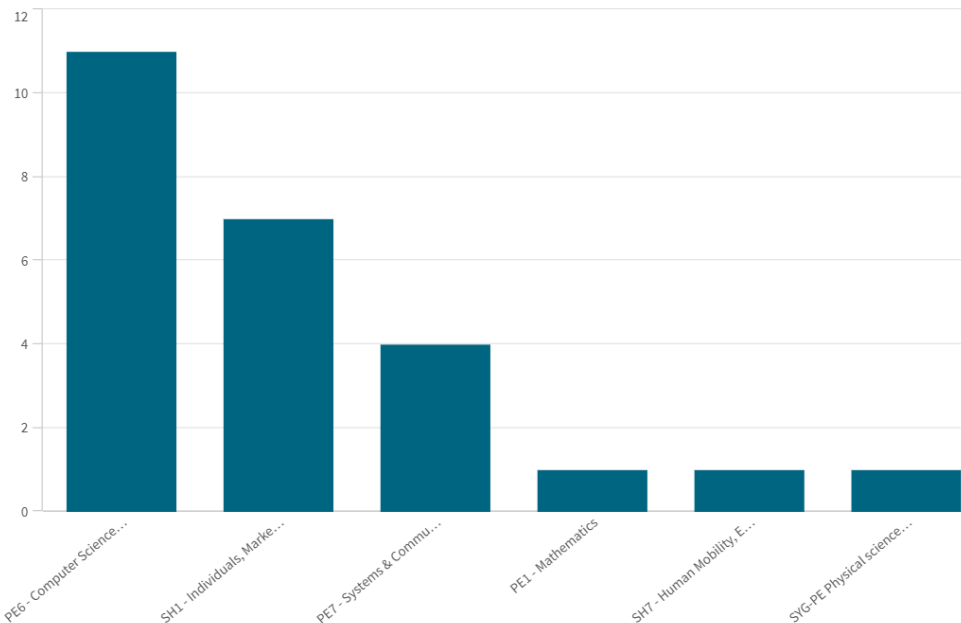
OR projects by panel



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PE6	Computer Science and Informatics
SH1	Individuals, Markets and Organisations
PE7	Systems and Communication Engineering
PE1	Mathematics
SH7	Human Mobility, Environment, and Space
SYG-PE	Physical sciences and engineering

Projects by panel



Bar chart illustrating the distribution of funded projects by evaluation panel in a given selection of projects.

OR topics of funded research



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MFR topics

Energy storage and use (inc. batteries) Inequality
Control systems technology and applications
Energy transmission and distribution Statistical inference
Macroeconomics
Data storage Game theory Financial regulation
Machine learning Markets Bioinformatics
Graph theory
Algorithms, algorithm development
Search and optimisation Computational complexity
Mobility Decision-making Microeconomics Complexity
Control engineering Behavioural economics, neuroeconomics
Information and coding theory

Word cloud illustrating the main topics appearing in a selection of projects (H2020 and Horizon Europe only).

Finally...



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- Don't exclude yourself from participating in ERC calls - if you have an idea that you think will make a significant change in your field of research: go for it!
- If you fail, try again! Panel feedback is useful and resubmissions have a higher success rate
- Take risks and provide evidence that you can do it
- Focus on the main points, avoid 'bonus' objectives (usually overly ambitious, vaguely articulated and poorly integrated)
- Don't oversell your own work/contributions and give credit to work of others where it's due
- Writing a competitive proposal is hard – devote plenty of time!
- Get critical feedback on your proposal from peers and colleagues!

Where can you find more information?



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Our website:

erc.europa.eu

Our social media channels:



Funding & Tender Opportunities:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

Additional Opportunities:

<https://erc.europa.eu/funding/additional-opportunities>

National Contact Points (NCP):

<https://erc.europa.eu/funding/national-contact-points>

Discover the ERC Classes videos for applicants



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- Getting started with your ERC proposal
- Writing your proposal
- Understanding the evaluation process
- Preparing for the interview
- Complying with ethics requirements
- Explaining Synergy Grants



Watch the full [playlist](#)

Thank you for your attention