European Research Council

Peter Brown
Director, Irish Research Council
What is ERC?

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

Budget H2020: € 13 billion
1.9 billion €/year

Budget FP7: € 7.5 billion
1.1 billion €/year
• Career changing
• Opportunity to do frontier research in any discipline
• Opportunity to build your team
• Highly competitive
• Requires dedication
Key PI career stages

- Starting Grant
- Consolidator Grant
- Advanced Grant

Collaborative awards

- Synergy grant

Research through to Innovation

- Proof of Concept (POC) grants

Ireland’s H2020 ERC Performance

- 108 awards
- 2020 Advanced Grant pending
- Across Sciences, Arts and Humanities
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} highest source** of funding for Ireland under H2020
- Ireland’s first Synergy Grant in 2020 - AHSS
ERC Applications Evaluated **SOLELY** Based On Excellence

- **Excellence of the Research Project**
  - ✓ Ground breaking nature
  - ✓ Potential impact
  - ✓ Scientific Approach

- **Excellence of the Principal Investigator**
  - ✓ Intellectual capacity
  - ✓ Creativity
  - ✓ Commitment

**Note:** Quality of the PI's institution (where they come from / where they go to) is **not** evaluated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting grant</td>
<td>For early-career researchers to develop their career and establish their own team</td>
<td>PhD + 2-7 years experience</td>
<td>Up to €1.5 million + €1m</td>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consolidator grant</td>
<td>For established researchers to consolidate their own research team or programme</td>
<td>PhD + 7-12 years experience</td>
<td>Up to €2 million + €1m</td>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced grant</td>
<td>For well-established researchers to develop a new and outstanding project</td>
<td>10-year excellent scientific track record</td>
<td>Up to €2.5 million + €1m</td>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synergy grant</td>
<td>For a group of 2-4 researchers to collaborate on a research problem with a novel approach</td>
<td>Excellent scientific track record</td>
<td>Up to €10 million + €1m</td>
<td>Up to 6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof of concept grant</td>
<td>For ERC grantees to bridge the gap between research and marketable innovation</td>
<td>Holders of previous ERC grant</td>
<td>Up to €150 thousand</td>
<td>Up to 18 months</td>
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ERC Career impact study 2017-2019
(all ERC frontier research grants funded under FP7)

of ERC Starting/Consolidator grantees*:

- 62% had their group become more visible internationally
- 61% gained academic independence
- 59% improved their status in the scientific community
- 27% were nominated for membership of scientific academies, learned societies or editorial boards

of ERC Advanced grantees*:

- 52% had their group pushed to world-leader status
- 52% could focus more on research activities
- 25% were nominated for membership of scientific academies, learned societies or editorial boards

(*) share of respondents reporting that the impact was achieved to a large extent
## 2021-2022 Calls Calendar (may be subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Starting Grant</th>
<th>Consolidator Grant</th>
<th>Advanced Grant</th>
<th>Synergy Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WP</strong></td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open</strong></td>
<td>25/02/2021</td>
<td>23/09/2021</td>
<td>11/03/2021</td>
<td>20/05/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>19/10/2021</td>
<td>20/01/2022</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closure</strong></td>
<td>08/04/2021</td>
<td>13/01/2022</td>
<td>20/04/2021</td>
<td>10/11/2022</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>17/03/2022</td>
<td>31/08/2021</td>
<td>15/07/2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
<td>EUR 619 M</td>
<td>EUR 757 M</td>
<td>EUR 633 M</td>
<td>EUR 626 M</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 784 M</td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 561 M</td>
<td>EUR 300 M</td>
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</table>

### Proof of Concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2022</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WP</strong></td>
<td>15/07/2021</td>
<td>16/11/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cut-off dates or Closure</strong></td>
<td>14/10/2021</td>
<td>15/02/2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19/05/2022</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29/09/2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
<td>EUR 25 M</td>
<td>EUR 25 M</td>
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Noteworthy changes effective 2021-2022

• Two new panels
  ✓ PE11 – Materials Engineering
  ✓ SH7 – Human Mobility, Environment and Space
• Interview now part of Advanced Grant assessment process
• Steps taken to better reflect DORA principles in the application form
• Opportunity for applicants to make case if COVID-19 has negatively affected their track record
Enterprise Ireland offers **financial support** to researchers preparing applications to ERC scheme

- www.horizoneurope.ie

An award of **up to €16,000** can be obtained for the following assistance:

- Professional consultancy services to assist in proposal preparation
- Graphical design services
- Teaching buy-out to free up time
- Hiring a research assistant to help collate information to interpret experimental results, or to carry out preliminary research
- Travel to collaborators or to obtain ERC-relevant experience
Supporting future ERC success across all disciplines

- **IRC Laureate awards**
  - Key action of Innovation 2020
  - Funding for frontier basic research across all disciplines
  - Solely based on excellence
  - Key among the objectives are to cultivate a long-term pipeline of ‘ERC-ready’ candidates

- **Laureate call opening in 2021**
  - Starting / Consolidator
  - More awards
  - Expected opening Q3 2021

48 Laureates currently in the system, with ERC success already in evidence
Supporting future ERC success across all disciplines

❖ Council offer mock interviews for applicants progressing to final ERC assessment stage
❖ Piloted training workshop for prospective ERC applicants
❖ Joint NCPs (IRC and SFI) work closely together to identify opportunities to enhance engagement
Your ERC NCPs:

STEM NCP:
Dr Maria Nash, SFI
www.sfi.ie

AHSS NCP (Interim):
Dr Deirdre Quinn, IRC
www.research.ie
THANK YOU

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