# European Research Council (ERC) Workshop

*ERC grants from the perspective of an ERC Evaluator*

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# STARTING GRANTS 2016 STATISTICS

## *Scientific Excellence*

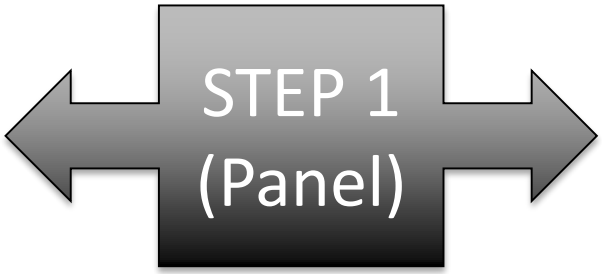
| | Submitted Proposals | Selected Proposals |
|---|---|---|
| Life Sciences | 869 | 99 |
| Physical Sciences and Engineering | 1288 | 146 |
| Social Sciences and Humanities | 778 | 80 |
| Total | 2935 | 325 |

**Success rate ~ 11 %**

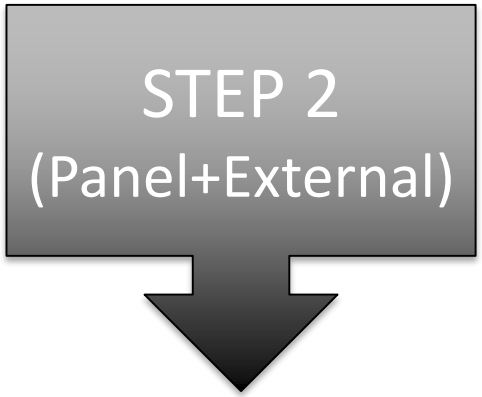
# TWO-STEP EVALUATION
# (6-7 months)
# Scientific excellence of both project and PI

**B.** high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 2
(STOP 1 call)

**C.** not of sufficient quality to pass to step 2
(STOP 2 calls)




**A.**
**sufficient quality to pass to step 2**




**FINAL RANKING**

# *STEP 1*
## *(Evaluation of both project and PI)*

**Mainly by panel members**
**Each panel member evaluates about 25-40 proposals Step1**
**(B1 part-extended synopsis+ CV+track record)**

**Each project is evaluated by (at least) 3 panel members**

**PANELISTS ALSO TAKE CARE OF CROSS PANEL EVALUATIONS**

***Expertise of Panel Members and topics of proposals***

# PANELS COVER A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS

## *The example of LS6*

13 sub-areas as defined by the ERC Scientific Council:

1 Innate immunity and inflammation
2 Adaptive immunity
3 Phagocytosis and cellular immunity
4 Immunosignalling
5 Immunological memory and tolerance
6 Immunogenetics
7 Microbiology
8 Virology
9 Bacteriology
10 Parasitology
11 Prevention and treatment of infection by pathogens (e.g. vaccination, antibiotics, fungicide)
12 Biological basis of immunity related disorders (e.g. autoimmunity)
13 Veterinary medicine and infectious diseases in animals

# STEP 1 EVALUATION MARKS (both project and PI)

**RESEARCH PROJECT (0-4):**

*Ground-breaking nature,*
*Novelty and potential impact*
*Scientific approach*

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) (0-4):**

*-propose and conduct ground-breaking research (before ERC application)*
*-independence:*
*-achievements beyond state-of-the-art*

**STEP 1- RESEARCH PROJECT:**

*Ground-breaking nature, novelty and potential impact*

*Scientific Approach*

**Extended Synopsis- 5 PAGES**

## ***Why this project?***

Key (biological) question

Unexplored or poorly explored topic

High risk-high gain

Clear description of aims and experimental steps
(list aims and sub-aims)

Feasibility

Preliminary results (include figures and/or tables)/expertise for each aim (possibly)

Expected milestones

Possible (national/international) collaborations

*NOT EVALUATED: METHODOLOGY, TIMESCALE, RESOURCES (STEP2)*

## PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):

*-propose and conduct ground-breaking research*
*-independence:*
*-achievements beyond state-of-the-art*

**CV and Early Achievements track record**

*…….at least one important publication as main author or without the participation of PhD supervisor.*

# ***Why this PI?***

***1) - propose and conduct ground-breaking research***

First authorship (patents/other) in journals without phD supervisor:
high quality journals vs specialized, commentaries, invited talks

Expertise needed for the project (and/or collaborations)
International mobility (quality of past research groups)

***2) independence:***

Last authorship in research papers
Grants as PI (also competitive grants for previous PI salary)
Independent position (ongoing/new/future also to be funded by ERC)
Supervision of students (undergrad/grad)

# ***Why this PI?***

**3) CV and Early Achievements track record**

*-achievements beyond state-of-the-art*
Novel ideas and novel concepts: candidate or supervisor?

-more senior vs junior applicants: we see mostly senior…..

**COMMON MAJOR PROBLEMS**

**International mobility**
**Independence (papers, positions, grants, group)**

## STEP 1 EVALUATION RESULTS

**Each panel member can see other evaluations only few days before panel meeting**

# PANEL MEETING DISCUSSION (COI excluded)

# Each panel member leads discussion on selected proposals

## RANKING OF PROJECTS

***Admitted Step 2***

Usually about 3x expected budget

***Not admitted Step 2***

B (cannot apply for next call)

C (cannot apply for next two calls)

# STEP 2 EVALUATION

***Before interview: Re-evaluation of the proposal***
*(more details are available)*
***PROJECTS ARE SCORED AGAIN***

**RESEARCH PROJECT (0-4):**
*Ground-breaking nature, novelty and potential impact*
*Scientific approach (also methodology)*

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) (0-4):**
*-propose and conduct ground-breaking research (before ERC application)*
*-independence:*
*-achievements beyond state-of-the-art*
*- Time allocated (min 50%)*

**Panel members+external experts (avg 5/7).**
**Panel members evaluate about 5-7 proposals Step2 (B2 part)**
**External experts usually review 1**

# STEP 2 EVALUATION

***Interview:***

***10’ presentation (candidate)***
***15’ discussion (lead reviewer+ others)***
***5’ without candidate***

*Focus clearly on the project (interest/original idea…)*
*What you want to do*
*How you plan to do it*
*Why you are the right person to do it*
*Independence (relationship with former supervisor)*

*Answer to panel questions/criticisms clearly and directly*
*Provide facts*

# STEP 2 EVALUATION RESULTS

## RANKING OF PROJECTS

***A Funded***

A not funded

B not funded

***ALL can apply next call***

**PANEL MEETING DISCUSSION (COI excluded)**
**Each panel member leads discussion on 1-3 Proposals**
**And acts as a panel reviewer for 4-8 proposals**

*PANEL COMMENTS: underline weak points of proposal/CV*

*Final general tips:*
*-think simple*
*-act as a scientist*
*-be yourself*

***GOOD LUCK!***