European Research Council (ERC)

WELCOME

UR

Universität Regensburg

Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

The European Research Council (ERC) in Horizon Europe

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www.erc-germany.de

Agenda

- ERC Basics

- Application Procedure and Evaluation Process

- General Hints

National Contact Point ERC – Services

- General information on the ERC

- Advice on grant application and grant management

- Proposal check (contact us 3 weeks before deadline)

- Events

- Newsletter & website

Close collaboration with EU liaison officers of host institutions

ERC Basics

Horizon Europe Programme Structure (2021-2027)
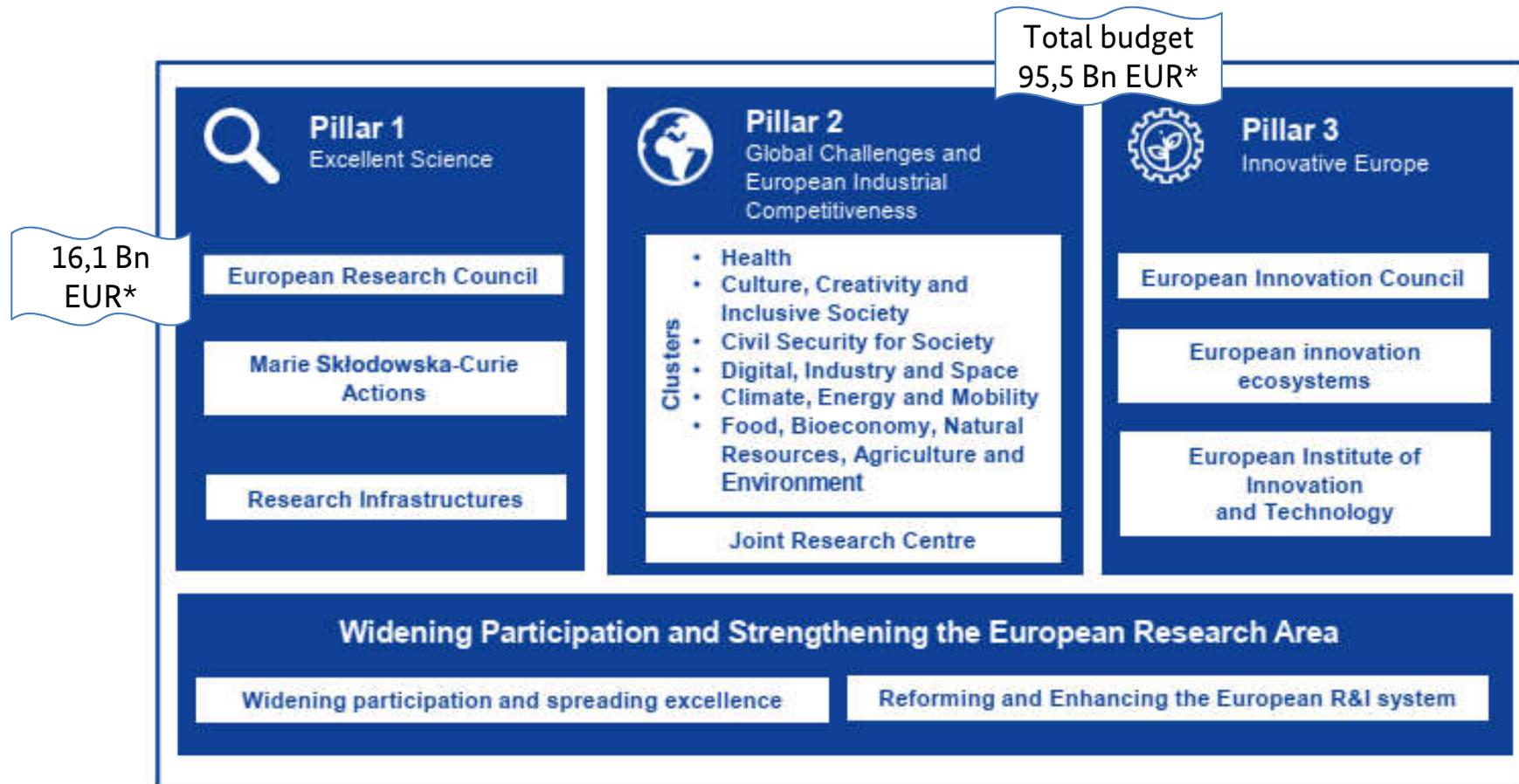
*Status: Trilogue, 10.12.2020

ERC in Horizon Europe/Work Programme 2021

- **Core message:** Stability and continuity

- Slightly revised panels for 2021/22 calls (published here)

- Advanced Grant: interview as part of the evaluation

- **Changes** to call calendar:

  Please check for updates!
  https://erc.europa.eu/

  – Opening of first calls delayed

  – Eligibility periods for StG and CoG **not affected**

  – No Synergy Grant & possibly no Proof of Concept call in 2021

  – return to "usual" calendar by WP 2023

Principles of ERC Funding

- **Scientific excellence as sole criterion**

- Ground-breaking frontier research

- High risk – high gain

- Investigator-driven

- All research fields – "bottom-up"

- Portability of grants

- Funding regardless of nationality, age & gender

- Host Institution based in the EU/Associated Country

- No co-financing needed

- Scientific autonomy

ERC Grant Schemes (I/II)

	Starting Grants StG	**Consolidator Grants CoG**	**Advanced Grants AdG**	**Synergy Grants SyG**	**Proof of Concept**
Target group	Scientists 2-7 years after PhD	Scientists 7-12 years after PhD	Established scientists, 10 years track record	2-4 scientists	Successful ERC Grantees
Max. duration	5 years	5 years	5 years	6 years	18 months
Max. budget	1.5 Mio. € (2.5 Mio.€)*	2 Mio. € (3 Mio.€)*	2.5 Mio. € (3.5 Mio.€)*	10 Mio. € (14 Mio. €)*	150 000 €

* exception possible in case of high equipment costs or PI from Third Country, other major experimental and field work costs, excluding personnel costs

ERC Grant Schemes (II/II)

	Starting Grants StG	Consolidator Grants CoG	Advanced Grants AdG	Synergy Grants SyG	Proof of Concept
PI Time commit-ment project	50%	40%	30%	30%	–
PI Time commit-ment in EU / AC*	50%	50%	50%	50%	–

* Associated Country

Eligibility Period Work Programme 2021

Different Rules for Medical Doctors

	Starting Grants StG	Consolidator Grants CoG	Advanced Grants AdG
Eligibility Period: Date of the first PhD	> 2 and ≤ 7 years prior to 1 January 2021 Cut-off dates: PhD awarded from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2018 (inclusive)	> 7 and ≤ 12 years prior to 1 January 2021 Cut-off dates: PhD awarded from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2013 (inclusive)	No specific criteria

The date of the first PhD considered for the calculation of the eligibility period is the date of the actual award according to the national rules of the country where the degree was awarded.

Eligibility of Medical Doctors (MD)

- German "Dr med" is not considered as reference date, 3. Staatsexamen is
- Eligibility period:
  - 4-9 years past MD/"3. Staatsexamen" for Starting Grants
  - 9-14 years past MD/"3. Staatsexamen" for Consolidator Grants

- Principal Investigators who are MDs need to have:
  - Appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (postdoc fellowship, professorship, …)

  OR
  - Additional PhD

Extensions of the eligibility period

- Maternity before/after PhD: 18 months per child

- Extension by the documented time:

  - Maternity before/after PhD leave > 18 months

  - Paternity before/after PhD

  - Military/civil service after PhD

  - Long-term illness of the PI or a close family member (>90 days) after PhD

  - Clinical training after the award of the first eligible degree (up to 4 years)

Call Calendar 2021, tentative dates*

	Starting Grants (ERC-2021-StG)	Consolidator Grants (ERC-2021-CoG)	Advanced Grants (ERC-2021-AdG)
Open	25-02-2021	11-03-2021	20-05-2021
Closing	24-03-2021	20-04-2021	31-08-2021

*Dates are subject to the adoption of Horizon Europe and the ERC Work Programme 2021.

Facts & Figures

Starting Grant 2020	Consolidator Grant 2020	Advanced Grant 2020
– 3272 Proposals – 436 Grants – Success rate: 13,3 % – Median age grantee: 35* – By far most proposals are submitted 6 years after PhD	– 2506 Proposals – 327 Grants – Success rate: 13 % – Median age grantee: 40* – By far most proposals are submitted 11 years after PhD	– 2678 Proposals (42% increase, 20% increase from UK) – Expect to fund: ~210 proposals – Expected success rate: ~7.8% – Median age grantee: 52*

Statistics show that success rate is equal throughout most of the eligibility window! →
Do not wait until the last moment

* 2019

Application Procedure and Evaluation Process

Familiarize yourself early

- with the Funding & Tenders Portal and the submission system

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

- with the relevant documents such as the Information for Applicants of your call

- with the evaluation sub-criteria

2021 documents
(pre-publication beginning of
February https://erc.europa.eu/)
Until then check out documents
from 2020

The proposal

2 audiences:
B1 – generalists &
B2 – experts of your field

Administrative Forms (Part A)	**Research Proposal (Part B)**	
1 General information including abstract **2** Participants & contacts **3** Budget table **4** Ethics **5** Call specific questions including excluded reviewers	**B1** **A** Extended Synopsis of the project (5 pages) **B** Curriculum vitae (2 pages) **Appendix**: ongoing grants/grant applications **C** Track-record (2 pages)	**B2 Scientific Proposal** **A** State-of-the-art and objectives ⎤ **B** Methodology ⎦ 14 p. **C** Ressources and Time Commitment (2 pages) **Annexes** Host Institution Binding Statement of Support PhD record (StG & CoG) Ethics documents (if applicable) Extension of eligibility (if ap.)

Peer Review Evaluation Procedure – Panels

Handled by 27 panels divided into 3 scientific domains

- 11 Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE) panels
- 9 Life Sciences (LS) panels
- 7 Social Sciences and Humanities (SH) panels

Panels consist of a panel chair & 10-15 members

- Names of panel chairs published on [ERC website](#) before call deadline, names of panel members after evaluation
- Panels alternate – most 2019 panel members are re-invited for 2021

- Check [Panel structure](#) for ERC calls 2021 and 2022 including descriptors
- Choose the panel that fits best, choose descriptors, keywords & target your proposal to that audience

Success rate is independent from the panel!
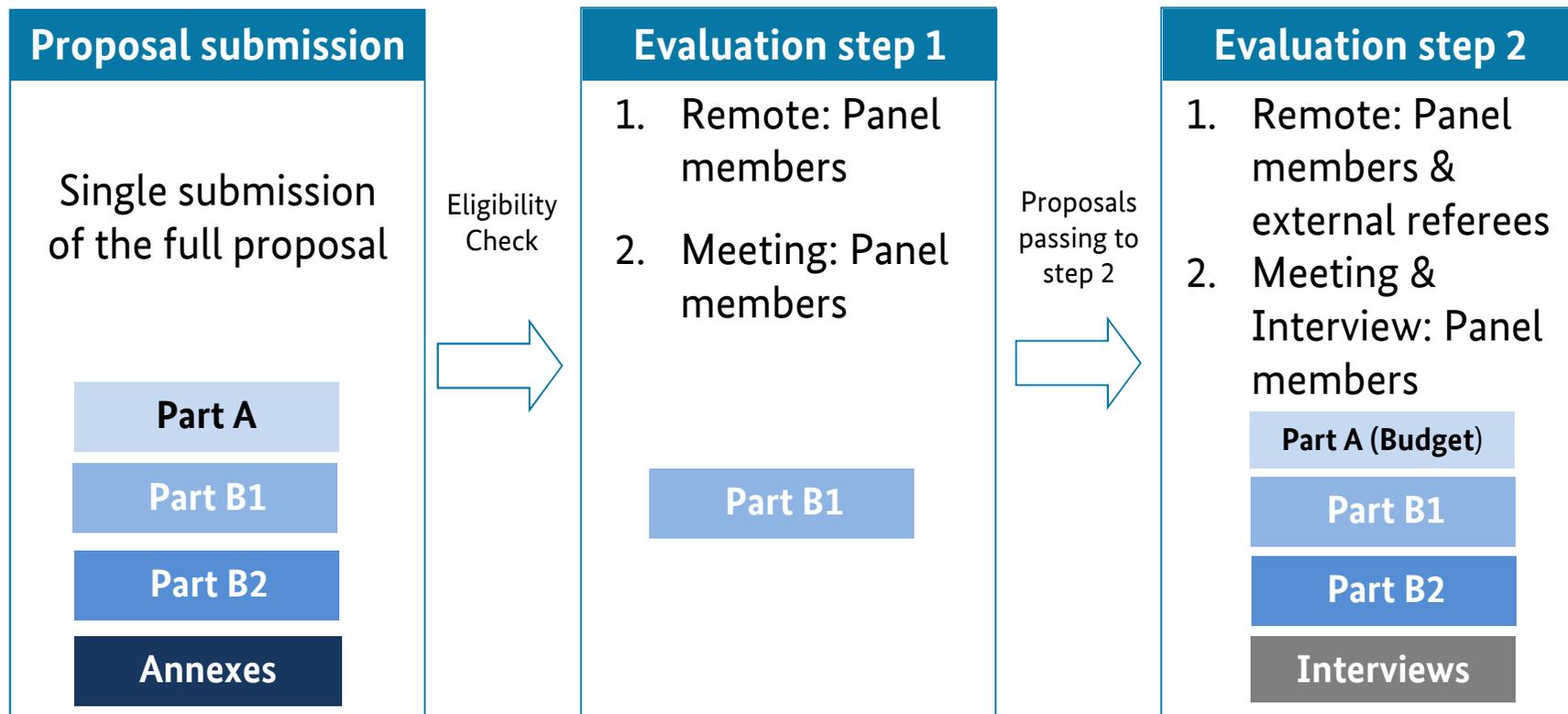
Scores & Re-application rules

Evaluation step 1
A = sufficient quality
B = high quality but not sufficient
C = unsufficient

Evaluation step 2
A = sufficient quality → **funded** / unfunded
B = high quality but not sufficient

A: moves on to evaluation step 2
B: suspended for one call year
C: suspended for two call years

A unfunded &
B: no re-application restrictions
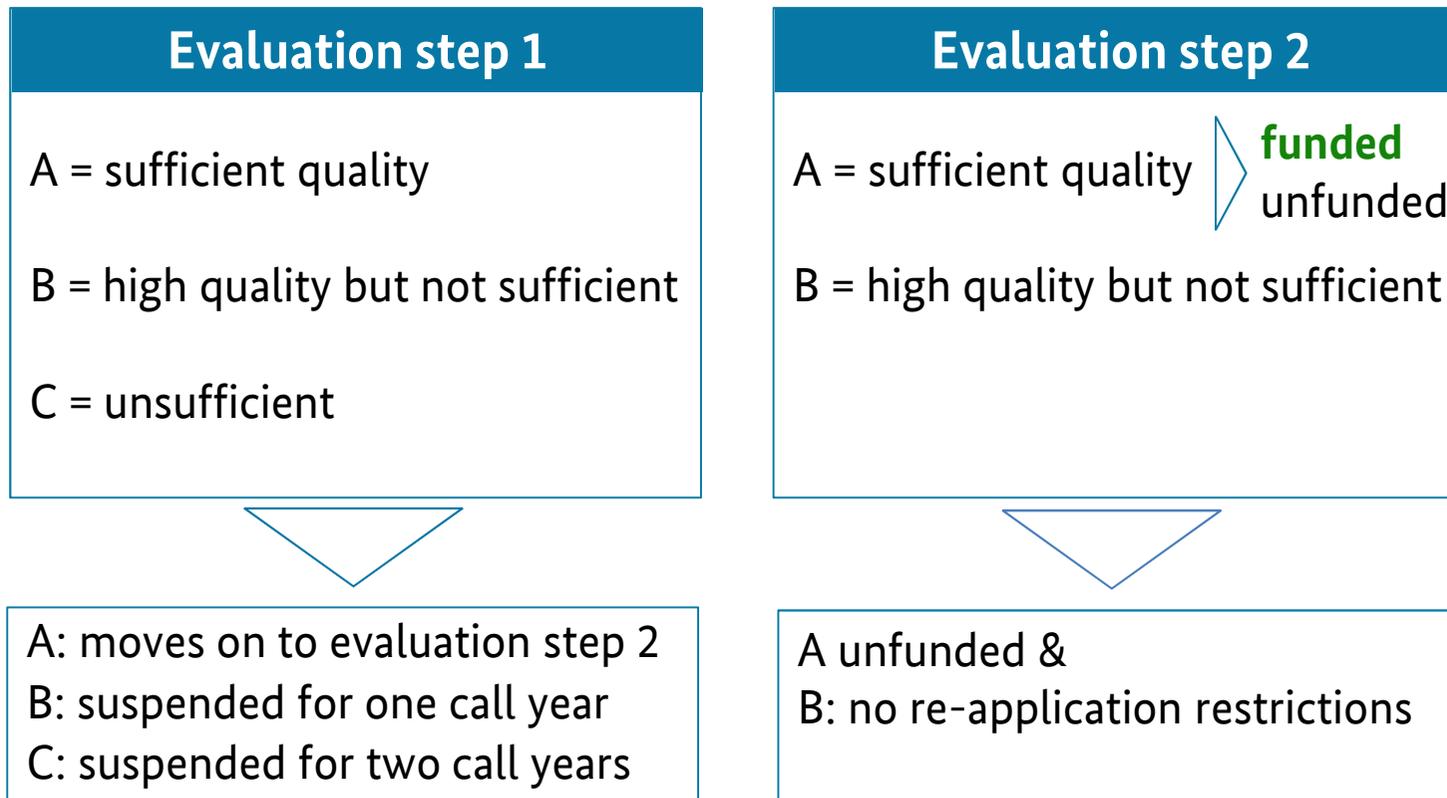
General Hints

Some questions on your proposal

- Can you explain your project idea **briefly and concisely**?

- Are the **goals** and the **novelty** clear from the beginning?

- Which **important challenges** will you tackle?

- Which are the **ground-breaking** or **novel** aspects?

- What makes the project **high risk but feasible**?

- What is the expected **impact** on your **research field**?

- Why are you the **right person** to carry out the project?

➤ *Propose a project that comes from your heart & be excited about it*

➤ *Use the expertise of your EU office and the NCP ERC*

Readability

Panel members receive 20-40 proposals – make their live easier

- Easy to read and attractive

  - Understandable for non experts of your field

  - Leave no question & no evaluation criteria unanswered

  - Concise title, headings, sub-headings

  - Clear, comprehensible language, short sentences

  - Paragraphs, Bullet points, tables, graphics…

  - Time chart, roles of team members etc

Typical Reviewer Comments you do not want to read about your proposal*

*"solid **track record** … however, was not considered as internationally competitive"*

*"The **novelty** of insights is not always clear "*

*"serious doubts about the **independence** of the PI"*

*"**Confusingly** written proposal"*

*"I consider this proposal to be high risk, but I am not convinced that the **potential gains** are truly very high"*

"neither the lead question nor the approaches are clearly defined"

*"There is hardly any form of **work plan**"*

*"the principal investigator does not seem to have the **capacity** and is not prepared to execute the outlined project"*

*"**Feasibility** is hard to judge based on the information provided"*

*"rather **incremental** than groundbreaking"*

Examples taken from StG 2019

Typical Reviewer Comments you may want to read about your proposal*

*"**Ground-breaking** project that if successful could have a huge **impact** in the field"*

*"The PI has an **excellent track** record of publishing in high impact journals and is first author on a significant number of these papers"*

*"**originality** and **importance** of the proposal"*

*"incredibly **ambitious** proposal"*

*"highly **sophisticated** and **inventive** technology underlying this proposal"*

*"methods are on the **cutting edge** of work in this area"*

*"scientific approach is **feasible** but clearly **high risk/high gain**"*

*"The PI is an **eclectic, original thinker**"*

Examples taken from StG 2019

Browse funded ERC Projects

<https://erc.europa.eu/projects-figures/erc-funded-projects>

Love to stream?

- 7 ERC Classes – „Step by step to the ERC Application process"
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbFbzkVWgCU&list=PLtv6FnsXqn XAYRk6HCErwMxwML0ZKoMcy
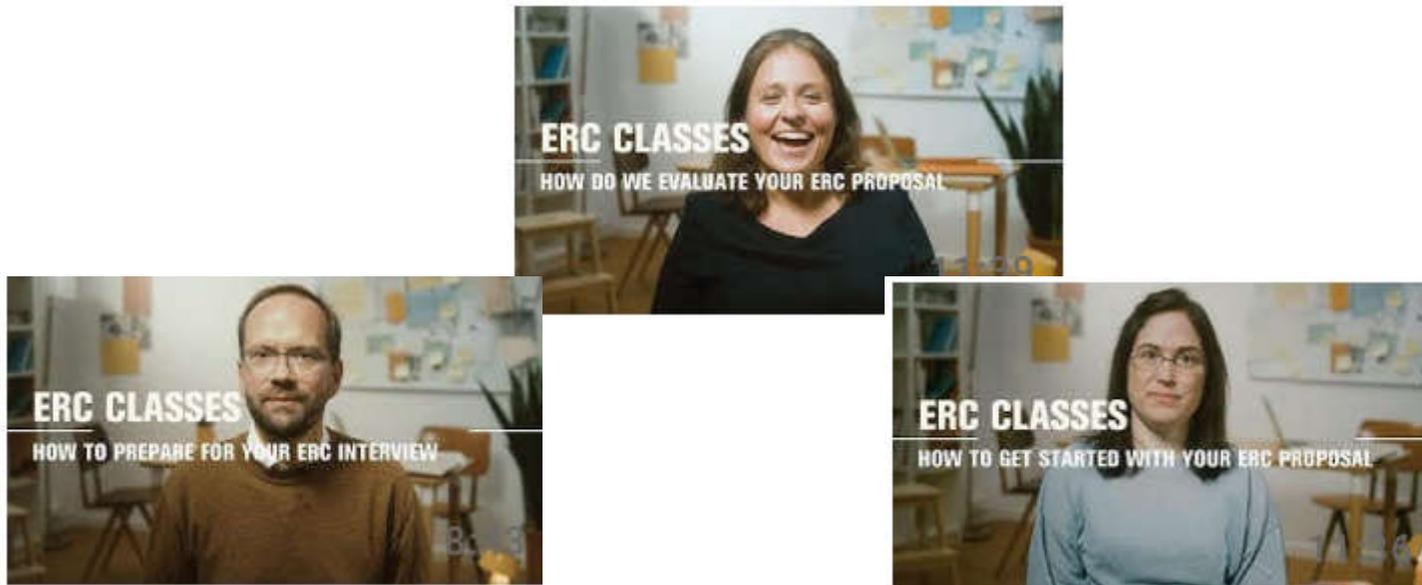
Resources

- NCP ERC (extensive information) www.eubuero.de/erc.htm (DEU) & www.erc-germany.de (EN)

- ERC (extensive information) https://erc.europa.eu/

- Funding & Tenders Portal (calls, documents, proposal registration and submission) https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

- Your institution https://www.uni-regensburg.de/forschung/forschungsfoerderung/eu-service/index.html

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- ✓ **External funding incentive system**:
  rewards application for external funding projects with up to 30.000 € in five different lines:
  https://www.uni-regensburg.de/forschung/drittmittelanreizsystem/index.html

- ✓ Information and calls: **Newsletter research funding:**
  Mail to webadmin.forschungsfoerderung@ur.de

- ✓ **Next events**:
  - February 23 16:00: Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions
  - March 2   10:00: The Future of Joint Research

✓ **Ref. IV/5 Research Support and External Funding**:
for applications to the EU, please contact:

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Faculties: **Faculties:**
- Medicine   - Catholic Theology
- Mathematics   - Law
- Physics   - Business, Economics and
- Biology and Pre-Clinical Medicine   Management Information Systems
- Chemistry and Pharmacy   - Philosophy, Art History, History and
                                                        Humanities
                                                      - Human Sciences
                                                      - Languages, Literature and Cultures