

Writing a Successful ERC Grant Proposal

In this webinar programme for ERC Synergy 2022/2023 call applicants we will discuss the ERC objectives and structure and how panels assess to what extent the proposed research is the best written proposal in your life time and containing high quality research.

The ERC selection criteria applied by the panels use terms which have become familiar jargon, such as important challenge, groundbreaking, scientific approach and feasibility. Most of these terms are also used by other funding agencies but they are interpreted and applied differently. This webinar will explain in detail not only what these terms mean and imply under the ERC umbrella but also how the ERC panel members use these terms to assess, discuss and select project proposals. These terms will be examined in the context of Synergy call, adding the dimension of transdisciplinary research and complementary competence and expertise of the Principal Investigators to the assessment. How to determine whether the proposed research is truly requiring “synergy”? How to balance scope, feasibility and potential gain with competence and expertise of the Principal Investigators? What are key elements for success in Synergy calls? This webinar will supply you with the necessary knowledge to write a successful Synergy proposal and will be an invaluable aid in meeting the ERC standards and getting one step closer to an ERC grant award.

Using the ERC guide “*Instructions for Applicants*” we will explain how you can address the ERC selection criteria and the Synergy specifics and draft a competitive project proposal. For example, we will examine keywords used in the ERC documentation and discuss what defines high quality research in the context of Synergy and how can the ERC evaluation criteria be used to translate your project idea(s) into high quality research. How can the term ‘*groundbreaking*’ be used to mark the innovativeness or originality of the proposed research and the term ‘*high gain*’ to demonstrate the potential breakthrough in science? How can your ambition be balanced by evidence for feasibility and back-up plans?

We will explain in detail how you to address the evaluation criteria and in particular innovativeness, feasibility and synergy.

1. Training objectives

- To provide researchers with a good understanding of:
- the evaluation criteria and how to analyse them;
 - how to write a competitive scientific proposal considering type of project; and
 - how to add the dimension of Synergy to the proposed research.

2. Who should attend?

The webinars will be of value for applicants who want to submit an ERC Synergy proposal. Depending on the scientific backgrounds of the participants we will highlight domain specific issues.

3. Methodology

The webinars will be in English, with no translation. The trainer(s) will provide practical information and discuss the requested information, the evaluation criteria and the best strategy for drafting the proposal with the participants.

The webinars are interactive and includes moments for discussions to promote an exchange of views between participants and trainer(s). Each participant receives an extensive guide with the information on the topics listed in the programme.

4. Trainer

Dr. Mette Skraastad, founder and partner of Yellow Research has extensive experience in running ERC workshops and in pre-submission review of ERC Starting, Consolidator, Advanced and Synergy grants. At Yellow Research we have successfully trained candidates for writing ERC proposals since the 2008 call. Her knowledge and experience in pre-submission review of ERC proposals is an important aspect of our success in this training.

5. Programme webinars

DAY 1 WEBINAR 1 from 9.00 to 11.00 AM, 31-05-2021

- Part I** **Challenge and potential breakthrough - Ground-breaking nature and potential impact**
We will discuss how to present the challenge(s) or research question (s), project idea and relevance to the critical reviewers. We will discuss ERC terms as challenges and innovativeness and how panels select proposals using the sole selection criterion excellence taking into account potential impact.
- Part II** **Feasibility of Scientific Approach - Maturity of proposed research**
The ERC panels are assessing the appropriateness of the methodologies for achieving the goals. Hereto they assess the feasibility of the scientific approach of the proposed research by the ERC panel to assess whether the proposed research and methodologies are feasible. This implies that the proposed research needs to have well-structured work plan with clear intermediate goals and expected results/outcomes, and evidence for feasibility and appropriate back-up plans. We will discuss how to present the scientific approach.
- Part III** **Short session questions and answers**

DAY 2 WEBINAR 2 from 9.00 to 11.30 PM, 14-06-2021

- Part IV** **ERC in a nutshell: who is your audience**
ERC structure, panels and evaluation procedure
- Part V** **Synergy**
In this part we will discuss how to interpret the evaluation criteria Synergy and complementary expertise and capacity of the applicants and how to translate these criteria into convincing information and arguments, tipping the high risk/high gain balance towards potential a very significant gain.
- Part VI** **How to write the different sections**
We will discuss the different sections of the proposal and what information could or should be presented in each section, why and how. We will walk through all proposal sections being: Summary, Extended Synopsis, PI descriptions, Scientific Proposal and the A3 form for justifying the costs. Going from promises made to the potential added value in view of ongoing research.
- Part VII** **Questions and answers and closing**

6. Date, Location, Contact

- Date** See above for dates and time
- Location** Zoom webinars – Internet connection required. Link will be sent after registration
- Registration** <https://fserc2021.sciencesconf.org>