

Writing a proposal for the European Research Council (ERC) Workshop for prospective applicants, 24th July 2017

- Date: 24th July 2017, 9:00 am–4:00 pm
- Location: TU Berlin, EU Office, Fraunhofer Str. 33-36, 10623 Berlin, room FH 604
- Trainer: Dr. Mette Skraastad, Yellow Research
- Registration: Please send an e-mail with the subject line 'ERC Proposal writing workshop' to events@eu-buero.tu-berlin.de. Please indicate in your e-mail the ERC call for which you are planning to submit your application (i.e. Starting Grant 2018, Consolidator Grant 2018, Advanced Grant 2017 or submission at a later stage) and the ERC panel for your proposal (e.g. LS4, PE8).

Workshop content

The ERC selection criteria applied by the panels use terms which have become familiar jargon, such as important challenges, novel concept, novel scientific approach and methodology but feasible. Most of these terms are also used by other funding agencies but they are interpreted and applied differently. This workshop 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 discuss, assess and select project proposals. This process differs from panel to panel, for example feasibility of the scientific approach is assessed differently in social sciences from life sciences and development of a new methodology has a different meaning in social sciences from physics. What does this imply? This workshop will supply you with the necessary knowledge to write a successful ERC proposal and will be an invaluable aid in meeting the ERC standards and getting one step closer to obtaining an ERC grant.

Using the ERC guide with "Instructions for Applicants" we will explain how you can address the ERC selection criteria and the panel specifics and draft a competitive project proposal. For example, we will examine keywords used in the ERC documentation such as novelty, groundbreaking, impact and feasibility of scientific approach and how these terms can be used to write a project proposal. However, we will also explain how to take into account the balances that are built into the ERC selection criteria such as being ambitious but still enforcing a breakthrough and proposing a novel scientific approach but still being feasible. We will explain in detail how you can address the feasibility of the scientific approach, taking into account the panel specifics and research fields.

We will also discuss the panel specifics concerning the quality of the CVs and track-record of ERC grantees. What is the norm per panel and what does this mean for the CVs of the participants planning to submit under H2020? What "actions" do participants have to highlight or undertake to bring their CV in line with the expectations of the selected panel?

The workshops aims to provide researchers with a good understanding of (i) how to interpret the evaluation criteria, (ii) how to design the proposal and to write the proposal and (iii) how to demonstrate the ground-breaking nature of one's CV and track-record.

Agenda

9:00 Opening

Part I Introduction to ERC Calls

Overview, ERC objectives, Selection criteria and Evaluation procedure

Part II Scientific Proposal

We will use the project template to explain per paragraph '*state-of the-art and objectives*', '*methodology*' and '*resources*':

- What needs to be addressed,
- How this can be addressed,
- Different steps in conceptualizing the specific paragraphs
- Different formats for designing the proposal

We will detail how to address 1) groundbreaking nature and ambition 2) high-gain/high-risk balance and the link to feasibility 3) the envisioned impact on future research and possibilities for utility 4) sound project plan and structure with intermediate goals and back-up plans.

Lunch

Part III Extended Synopsis

The extended synopsis is a 5 page summary of the Scientific Proposal with an emphasis on the groundbreaking nature and feasibility of the proposal and how the outcomes of the research will impact further research.

Part IV Principal Investigator

We will explain what reviewers are looking for in terms of potential scientific leadership and international recognition, and how to refine the suggested template for the Curriculum Vitae, including Funding ID, and Track Record.

16:00 End of course