



– Masterclass –

Demystifying the ERC: From Foundations to Winning Strategy

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TAU EU Office offers:

Consultancy on Strategy & Fit

We analyze eligibility timelines, assess "frontier research" benchmarks, and help select the ideal evaluation panel

Proposal Deep Dives – perfecting the narrative

We provide multiple rounds of rigorous, confidential review focusing on the proposal's structural logic, and clarity

Interview Bootcamps

Interview preparation workshops focusing on the presentation, Q&A strategy etc. + Multiple Mock interviews

#3 in the world in absolute number of ERC Starting Grants in Europe

Host Institutions	Number of ERC Starting Grants
National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS)	122
Max Planck Society	66
Tel Aviv University	37
University of Copenhagen	35
Ghent University	35
Hebrew University of Jerusalem	33
Technical University of Munich	33
Utrecht University	32
Leiden University	28
National Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM)	23

200+
ERC
Grants





The ERC Mindset: Funding groundbreaking ideas and visionary researchers

ERC vs. The Rest – The Mindset Shift

"Standard" Grants	The ERC Ecosystem
Incremental: Building the next logical brick	Disruptive: Changing the entire architecture of the field
Feasibility First: "Can you prove this will work?"	Ambition First: "If this works, will it revolutionize the field?"
Funding a project: Funds a specific, focused research project within your existing lab/group	Funding an empire: Funding you to establish a dominant, world-class footprint in your field.



ERC 2027 Calls

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant	Plus Grant	Synergy Grant
Eligibility	0-10	5-15	n/a	n/a	n/a
Deadline	14/10/26	12/01/27	26/08/27	01/09/27	11/05/27
Max Budget	1.5M Euros	2M Euros	2.5M Euros	7M Euros	10M Euros
Est. Grants	373	296	311	30	48

* Extensions on eligibility

** Additional funding

Extending the Eligibility Window



Maternity

Flat rate of 18 months per child (or actual leave if longer).



Paternity/Parental Leave

Documented time of actual leave taken.



Clinical Training

Documented training time, up to max 4 years.



Long-term Illness

>90 days for PI or close family member.



Disasters

Reduced capacity due to natural/human-caused disasters.



Asylum & Violence

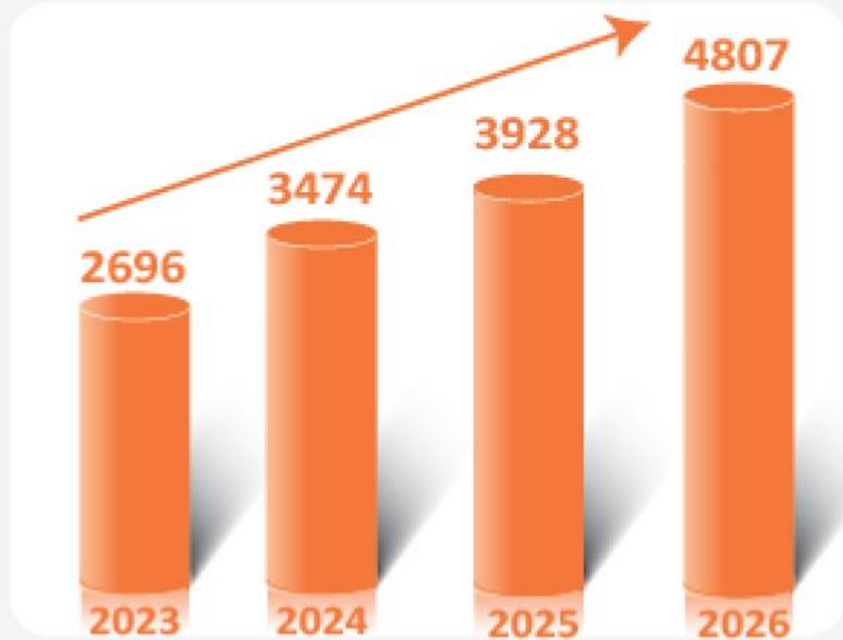
Seeking asylum or victim of gender-based violence (documented inability to work)

Additional Funding

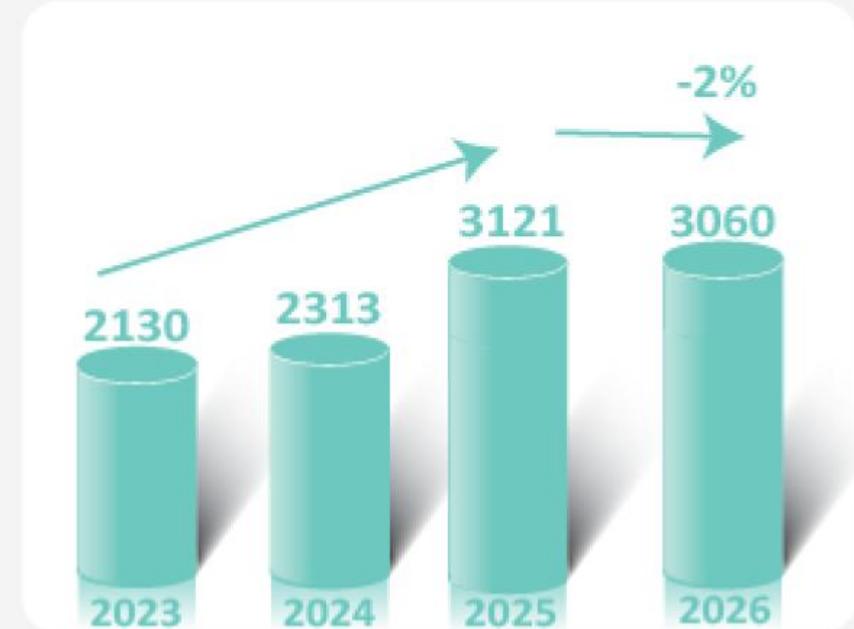
Additional EUR 1 000 000 to cover large costs e.g. start-up costs, major equipment, access to large facilities, major experimental and field work costs

Researchers currently based outside the EU or Associated Countries will be able to request up to EUR 2 000 000 in additional funding to cover further eligible costs necessary for the project implementation

Increasing Competition



StG : + 78.3%



CoG : + 43.6%

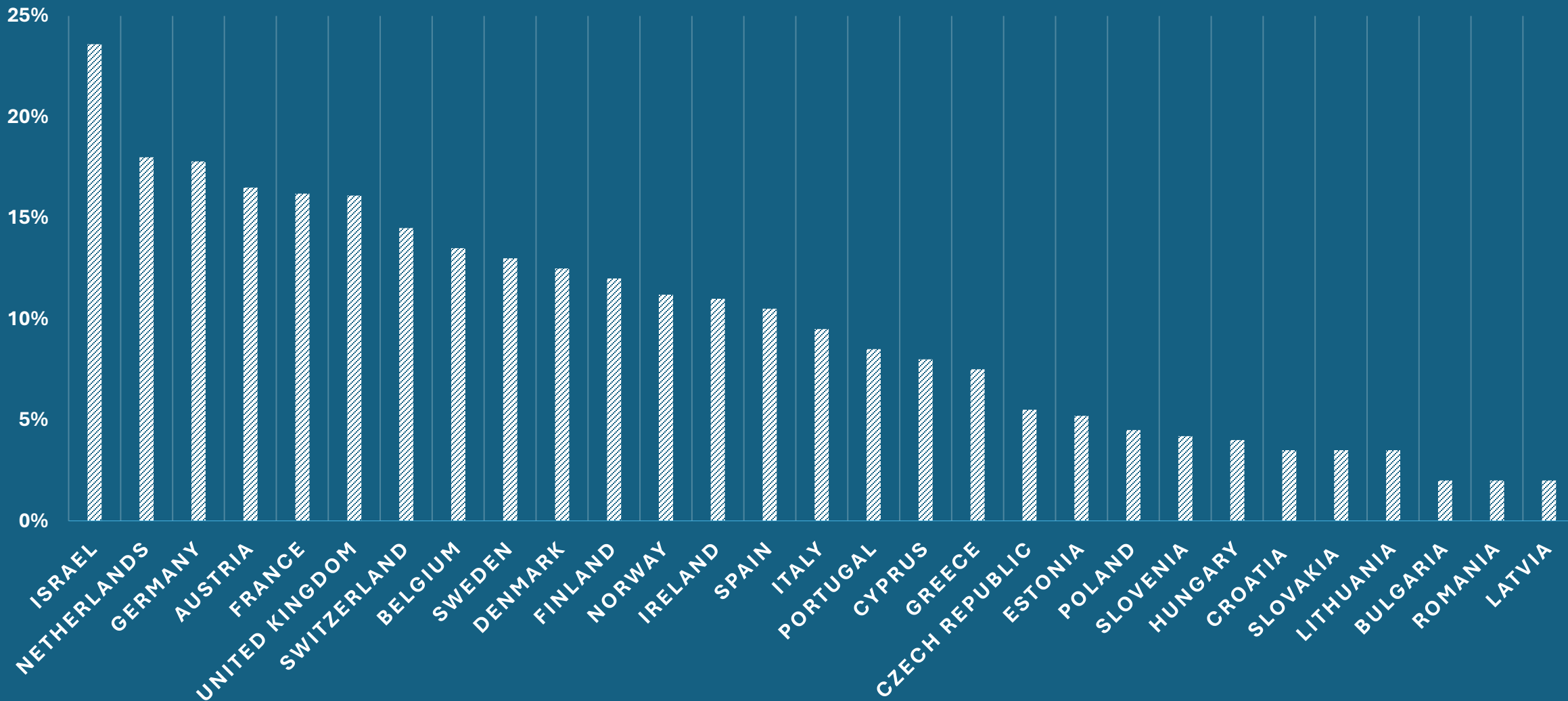
*** Only one StG or CoG**

**** There could be restrictions on resubmission**

***** Change in number of expert reviewers**

ERC Success rate by country

AVERAGE SUCCESS RATE



When should I submit?

Typically 3 main questions:

- Will there be a new paper, in Q1, out this year?
- Do you have enough preliminary results?
- Is this your last time to be a starter or a consolidator?

Additional points to consider:

There will not be a call in October 2027

New restrictions on resubmission are expected in 2028

The Application Package

Part A (Administrative)

- General Info, Participants, Budget Table, Ethics & Security Tables.

Part B1 (The Hook)

- Cover Page
- Part I (5 pages)
- CV & Track Record (4 pages)

Part B2 (The Details)

- Part II (7 pages)
- Funding ID

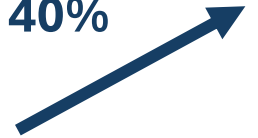
Mandatory Annexes

- ✓ PhD Certificate
- ✓ Host Institution Support Letter (Binding)
- ✓ Eligibility Extension Proofs

ERC Review Process

 **Funded**

40%



STEP 2 (The Deep Dive)

- **Inputs:** Part I + Part II + Budget + Interview
- **Evaluators:** Panel Members + Remote Referees (Specialists)
- **Criteria:** Scientific Ambition + Implementation + Feasibility
- **Outcome:** A (**Funded/Reserve**), B (**Rejected**)

30%
(max 44
proposals)



STEP 1 (The Filter)

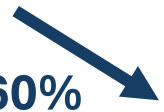
- **Inputs:** Part I + CV + Track Record
- **Evaluators:** Panel Members (Generalists)
- **Criteria:** Ground-breaking nature + Ambition
- **Outcome:** A (**Invited**), B (**Rejected**), C (**Rejected**)

ERC deadline
(Submitting
b1+b2)



New - Up to 2/3 of reviewers
may be a 'remote step 1
expert' or a PEV

60%



Rejected

The Three Pillars of a Winning Proposal

**"So What?"
Factor**



Strong B1



**Balancing Risk
with Mitigation**



What is the most important first step of writing an ERC proposal?

Choosing the right panel

3 domains - 28 panels

(9-22 “sub panels” under each panel)

PE

**Physical Sciences and
Engineering**

PE1 Mathematics
PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter
PE3 Condensed Matter Physics
PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences
PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
PE6 Computer Science and Informatics
PE7 Systems and Communication
Engineering
PE8 Products and Processes Engineering
PE9 Universe Sciences
PE10 Earth System Science
PE11 Materials Engineering

LS

Life Sciences

LS1 Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms,
Structures and Functions
LS2 Integrative Biology: from Genes and
Genomes to Systems
LS3 Cell Biology, Development, Stem Cells
and Regeneration
LS4 Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing
LS5 Neuroscience and Disorders of the
Nervous System
LS6 Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy
LS7 Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of
Human Diseases
LS8 Environmental Biology, Ecology and
Evolution
LS9 Biotechnology and Biosystems
Engineering

SH

**Social Science and
Humanities**

SH1 Individuals, Markets and
Organisations
SH2 Institutions, Governance and Legal
Systems
SH3 The Social World and Its Interactions
SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
SH5 Texts and Concepts
SH6 The Study of the Human Past
SH7 Human Mobility, Environment, and
Space
SH8 Studies of Cultures and Arts

PE6 Computer Science and Informatics

Theoretical and experimental computer science, information processing, intelligent systems

PE6_1 Computer architecture, high-performance computing, real-time and embedded systems

PE6_2 Operating and distributed systems, computer networks and performance evaluation, mobile computing

PE6_3 Software engineering, programming languages

PE6_4 Theory of computation, semantics of computation, formal methods

PE6_5 Algorithms, complexity theory, algorithmic game theory and computational economics

PE6_6 Security, privacy, cryptology

PE6_7 Databases, web and information systems, information retrieval

PE6_8 Artificial intelligence, autonomous agents, knowledge representation

PE6_9 Machine learning, statistical data processing, computing with artificial neural networks

PE6_10 Natural language processing, large language and other foundation models

PE6_11 Computer vision, computer graphics, visualization

PE6_12 Human computer interaction, multimedia and virtual reality, computer games

PE6_13 Numerical and scientific computing, computational modelling and simulation methods, bioinformatics

PE6_14 New computational paradigms, quantum computing, bio-inspired computing

Engineering the Perfect Application: B1 Vs. B2 Strategy

B1

Conceptual/Visionary

~~Marketing pitch~~



ELEVATOR PITCH

Do not confuse visionary with shallow

Your B1 cannot just be a beautiful elevator pitch. It is a strategic document that should Intrigue, Convince and Inspire.

You must convince generalists of your methodology's logic in B1, so that the specialists are given permission to audit your technical blueprints in B2

- **State of Knowledge:** Clearly describe what you and others have been doing for the past decade and define the GAP/lacuna/problem
- **Scientific Question:** Formulate an elegant, crystal-clear hypothesis.
- **Research Strategy:** Layout a robust path to prove/disprove the core hypothesis.

Part I should convince the evaluation panel that it presents an original and creative idea addressing an important question.

It should substantiate what may be changed, opened, challenged or how the results of the work will alter the current understanding of the field.

B2

Technical and Operational Blueprint

Your reviewers are not reading to be inspired, they are reading to audit your capability

Your B2 should explain clearly the “How”



Methodology

Each aim should be explained in great details

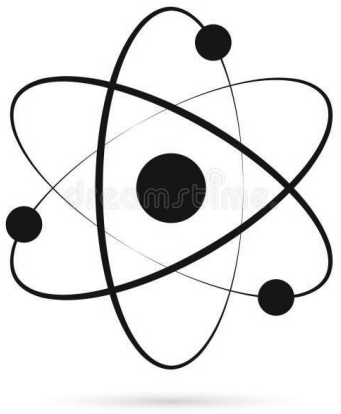
Risk

Risk assessment and contingency plans

Work plan

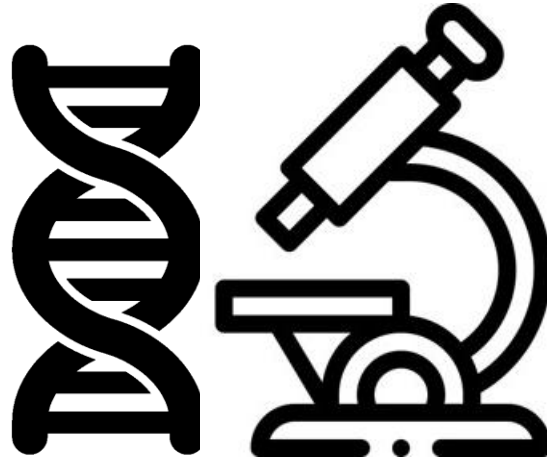
Gantt chart and working arrangements

Different Fields, Same Excellence



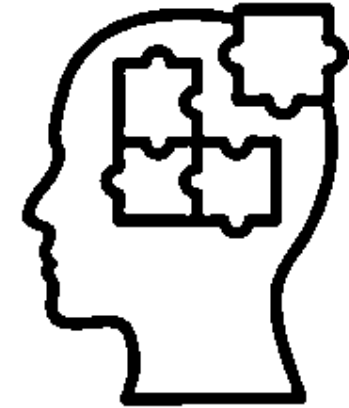
PE

The Trap: Getting lost in engineering, hardware assembly, or "tool building" without clarifying the fundamental science the tool unlocks.



LS

The Trap: Presenting a purely descriptive "fishing expedition". Reviewers look for hypothesis-driven, mechanistic insights.

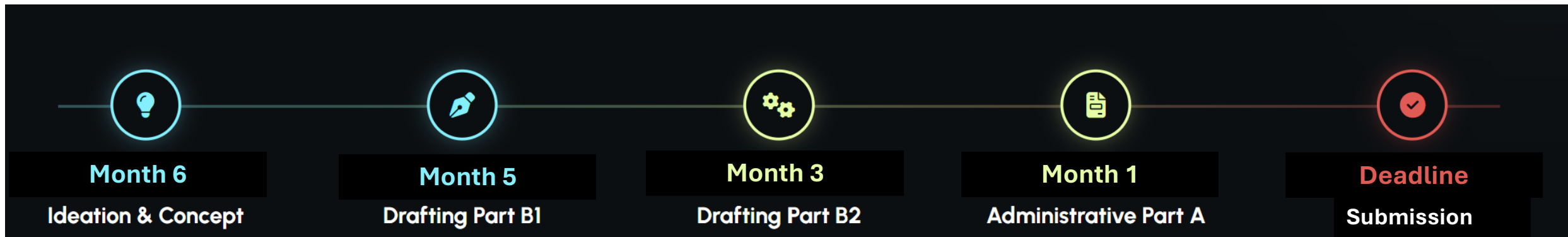


SH

The Trap: Sounding like a "glorified book project" or localized case-study. The theoretical framework must have global implications.

Tips for Experienced Applicants

- **Resubmission is Key:** Statistics show resubmissions have a higher success rate. Use panel feedback as a roadmap, not critique.
- **Critical Friends:** Find colleagues who will be "brutal" early on. Don't let the ERC panel be the first to tear your proposal apart (ideally former ERC grantees or reviewers).
- **Leverage Your EU Desk:** Israeli institutional EU desks are world-class. Engage them at least 6 months before the deadline for support. A winning ERC proposal requires iterative deep-thinking, not a two-week sprint.



Common pitfalls

Choosing the wrong panel

A CV that reads like a standard bio

Project presented as an incremental "next-logical-step" rather than a leap

Insufficient detail regarding risk mitigation or lack of explicit contingency plans

Not giving the abstract enough attention – this is the single most important part of your proposal and should be written last

Asking for a modest budget – “I am cheaper than most so more likely to be funded”

Submitting your ISF proposal, with minor modifications, to the ERC

Additional information sources

ERC Panel Members - <https://erc.europa.eu/apply-grant/panel-members>

ERC funded projects - <https://erc.europa.eu/projects-statistics/erc-dashboard>

ERC Instructional videos - <https://www.youtube.com/@EuropeanResearchCouncil>

Participant portal - <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/>

מוקדש בגעגוע ואהבה לאחיין שלי סמ"ר ינון תמיר ז"ל

23/06/2003 – 19/11/2023

