ERC Starting Grant 2018: ALIFE (2019–2024)
Cornelia Meinert CR CNRS, Institut de Chimie de Nice, UCA
ERC Starting Grant – Why should you apply?

• 1.5 Mio€ !!

• Financial & scientifique independence for the duration of 5 years

• Build up your research group

• Get known by your research community

• Mobility across Europe

What gets funded?

• Innovative ideas / multidisciplinary research (High risk / High gain)

• One criteria: EXCELLENCE !

• NOTE: An excellent CV with a good idea will not pass but a good CV with an excellent idea could...
ERC Starting Grant – How to apply?

Step-by-step

1. Find out which ERC grant and which call is suitable for you.

2. Identify the host institution and team members you would like to work with.

3. Contact your national &/or regional contact points to gather all the details you need for your application and to obtain professional support.

4. Read the guidelines and call documents VERY carefully!

5. Choose the right PANEL! (me: PE 4 – Physical Science & Engineering)

6. Start writing your proposal! Allow sufficient time for colleagues to review your draft as well as your host institution to support you with the administrative & financial details.

7. Keep the deadlines! Submit as early as possible as submitted proposals can be updated at any time before the deadline.
Get informed: Info Day, HORIZON2020 web site, CNRS, internet... contact successful ERC applicants

Who can apply?

Researchers of any nationality with **2-7 years of experience since completion of PhD** (Extensions are possible under certain circumstances — see the latest ERC Work Programme), a scientific track record showing great promise and an excellent research proposal.

What proposals are eligible?

**Criteria**
Applications can be made in **any field of research**
The ERC's grants operate on a 'bottom-up' basis without predetermined priorities.

**Location**
Research must be conducted in **a public or private research organisation** (known as a Host Institution/HI). It could be the HI where the applicant already works, or any other HI located in one of the **EU Member States** (see also eligibility of UK legal entities) or **Associated Countries**.

**Host Institution**
Applications for an ERC grant must be submitted by a single Principal Investigator (PI) in conjunction with and on behalf of their Host institution, called the applicant legal entity.
ERC STARTING GRANT

Submission
- Part A (administrative)
- **Part B1** (5 pages)
- **Part B2** (15 pages)
- Justification, diploma, ethics, etc.

1st step evaluation
- Evaluation of **B1** (5 pages) by panelists
- Meeting of the panel
- Proposal selection for 2nd step
- Invitation to attend the interview

Mid October 2017

2nd step evaluation
- Evaluation of:
  - **Part B1** (5 pages)
  - **Part B2** (15 pages)
  - By external reviewer & panelists
  - Interviews
  - Selection of proposals

March 2018

June 2018
1. Start writing when you know what is the **key hypothesis** of your project. **Start EARLY!**

2. Be **clear** and structured. Do not lose yourself in technical details.

3. Panelists & external referees not necessarily specialists in your field.

4. **B1 has to contain all information**! **One central idea only! B1 necessary to pass step 1**

5. Demonstrate ‘ground-breaking’ nature, feasibility, high impact & independence / expertise (PI).

**Part B1:**

1. Title + abstract (1 p)  
   - Find a good acronym and title

2. Extended synopsis (5 p)  
   - use work packages, use figures to convey the central ideas, keep page limitations
   - panel members have to read many proposals. Quick impressions are important (strong abstract, clear goals, clear structure)
   - HDR, prix..... *explain*

3. CV (2 p)  
4. Funding ID  
5. Early achievement track record  
   - highlight most significant publications, articles as */senior author, w/o PhD supervisor, NC
**Part B2:**

1. Scientific proposal (15 pages)
   - state-of-the art and objectives
   - Methodology (work packages) to answer your hypothesis, new methods?
   - Project summary & impact
   - Schedule & Milestones, use Gantt chart
   - Risk vs. Gains Assessment
   - Management structure
   - Resources incl Human R, & project costs*
   - Detail description of financial ressources
   - Costing Table

*Contact grant management entity (CNRS or university) for budget, personal costs, etc...
**Part B2:**

Table 1. Costing Table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Category</th>
<th>Total in euro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI (C. Meinert: 50%, 5 yrs @ 32556 €/yr)</td>
<td>162 780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdocs (2 x 2 yrs = 4 yrs @ 56225 €/yr)</td>
<td>224 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (2 x 3 yrs = 6 yrs @ 33386.7 €/yr)</td>
<td>200 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Direct Costs**

1. Total Direct costs for Personnel (in euro) 588 000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total in euro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>48 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>390 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumables</td>
<td>154 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications (including Open Access fees), dissemination activities, etc.</td>
<td>20 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Total Other Direct Costs (in euro) 612 000

A – Total Direct Costs (i + ii) (in euro) 1 200 000

B – Indirect Costs (overheads) 25% of Direct Costs (in euro) 300 000

C1 – Subcontracting Costs (no overheads) (in euro)               

C2 – Other Direct Costs with no overheads (in euro)               

Total Estimated Eligible Costs (A + B + C) (in euro) 1 500 000

Total Requested Grant (in euro) 1 500 000
ERC Starting Grant – Proposal Preparation

Part B2:

1. Scientific proposal (15 pages)
   - state-of-the art and objectives
   - Methodology (work packages) to answer your hypothesis, new methods?
   - Project summary & impact
   - Schedule & Milestones, use Gantt chart
   - Risk vs. Gains Assessment
   - Management structure
   - Resources incl Human R, & project costs*
   - Detail description of financial resources
   - Costing Table

*Contact grant management entity (CNRS or university) for budget, personal costs, etc...

- Proofread before submission (I had a native speaker proofreading my application)
- Ask colleagues for feedback
- Carefully check for weak points
- B1 & B2 have to be submitted at the same time.
ERC Starting Grant

**Submission**
- Part A (administrative)
- **Part B1** (5 pages)
- **Part B2** (15 pages)
- Justification, diploma, ethics, etc.

*Mid October 2017*

**1st step evaluation**
- Evaluation of **B1** (5 pages) by panelists
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*March 2018*

**2nd step evaluation**
- Evaluation of:
  - Part B1 (5 pages)
  - **Part B2** (15 pages)

  By external reviewer & panelists
- Interviews
- Selection of proposals

*June 2018*

Evaluation: A B C
Dear Applicant,

Subject: Initial information on the outcome of the evaluation of proposals submitted to the Call for Proposals ERC-2018-STG - Proposal n° 804144 A-LIFE

I am pleased to inform you that the ERC evaluation panels, composed of independent experts, have favourably reviewed your proposal in Step 1 of the evaluation process. We cordially invite you to attend an interview with the evaluation panel.

Date: The interviews for your panel will take place from 04/06/2018 to 08/06/2018. Please make sure to keep these days free.

Place: Brussels, Belgium

Interview content: Interviews will last between 20 and 30 minutes. They will include a short presentation by the applicant and time for questions and answers.

If, in very exceptional cases, you are unable to attend the interview (e.g. pregnancy, immobility due to illness, expedition), two alternatives for a remote interview are offered:

a. Video-conference: A video-conference room has been booked for the duration of the interviews and can be used by panels provided the interviewee also has access to a matching facility. A specific schedule will be established depending on the needs.

b. Telephone-conference: A telephone (with loudspeaker) will be available in each meeting room to ensure the possibility of telephone interview.
Best advice: Participate @Oreaux blancs ERC Starting Grant INC, find similar support from your host institute!

Do not hesitate to contact the ‘Point de Contact National ERC’/ your university/…directly to obtain information on support for your oral presentation !!!!

- 2 days workshop in Paris, 16-17 April 2018: “Réussir les auditions ERC”
- Exchange with other ERC applicants of the same but also former year
  => feedback, insider information, motivation, ideas, positive support !! Tailored workshop for ERC applicants!!!

- Oreaux blancs in Paris, 3-4 Mai 2018 with INC representatives & invited experts who read your proposal and prepared questions

- Polish (if necessary) your talk after oreaux blancs

- Rehearse your talk (10 min !), prepare for questions and weak points of your proposal

J-1 : Arrived one day before audition in Brussels and visited the place
J: arrive at least 1h before audition, you will wait with other candidates
ORIGIN OF LIFE
HOW LIFE BECAME HANDED?
Selection of handeness at the dawn of molecular evolution


Angew. Chem. 2010
Angew. Chem. 2012
*Angew. Chem. 2014
EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS
CNRS Bronze Medal (2018)
Habilitation (2018)
*corresp. author in Science, PNAS & Angew. Chem.
880 citations, h-index 18
4 invited talks @international conferences
7 invited talks @international advanced schools
>200 public & media outreach

Member of COST Action TD1308: ORIGINS

CHIRALITY as a trigger of selection, interaction & feedback in the evolution of the first pre-biopolymers
Infrastructure Host Lab:
- 150 m² Lab space
- NMR facility (200, 400 & 500 MHz)
- LC-Orbitrap
- Microscopy platform (TEM, AFM)

External Resources:
- CP synchrotron radiation @SOLEIL, FR
- Synchrotron radiation CD @ASTRID2, DK
- Ice simulation reactor @University Hawaii & Marseille equipped with in situ FTIR & PI-ReTOFMS
Dear Applicant,

Following the Step 2 panel meetings of the ERC-2018-STG call, the review panels have made their final decision about proposals to be funded for this call.

We are pleased to inform you that your proposal has been retained for funding in this call.

In about four weeks the official communication will be placed in the Participant Portal containing all information related to the evaluation process together with an evaluation report (providing reviews and an overall panel comment summarising the panel decision). The full evaluation results will consist of an Evaluation result letter, a letter from the ERC President and an Evaluation Report.

You will receive a notification from the Participant Portal as soon as the communication has been placed there. However, we advise you to check your Participant Portal account regularly. Please go to: My AREA> My Proposal(s) and click on the ‘FO’ button to access the ‘Process specific documents’.

We kindly ask you and the host institution to not publicise your award until you have received your official notification with the Evaluation Report.

At this stage this message should in no way be considered as a commitment of financial support by the European Research Council.

We thank you very much for your interest in the Starting Grant 2018 Call of the European Research Council and wish you every success in your research endeavours.

Best regards,
Acheter les équipements: Un parcours du combattant

Amortissement
Délais de livraison
• Equipment (dissemination rules, CNRS marché, etc....),
• Postponed starting date as much as possible to acquire equipment and avoid overhead costs (April 1\textsuperscript{st} 2019) and allows for careful recruitment as well
• Recruitment (CNRS Emploi, Euraxess, etc......)

• Build up team and Lab !
• Respect CNRS rules: TEMPO, AGATE, travel refund, etc.....
• Exclusivity of equipment
• The more details you have put in the financial part of B2, the better you can justify your consumables

• Be prepared to hear for future grant submissions (in France): You will NOT be funded because you have already an ERC grant !
The Asymmetry Team

Adrien GARCIA (PhD student)
Raphaël PEPINO (PhD student)
Jana BOCKOVA (PostDoc)
Prof. U.J. MEIERHENRICH
Institut de Chimie de Nice
Université Côte d’Azur
Nice, France

Dr. N. C. JONES
Dr. Søren. V. HOFFMANN
Department of Physics & Astronomy,
ISA - Institute for Storage Ring Facilities, Aarhus University
Aarhus, Denmark

Dr. L. d’HENDECOURT
Institut d’Astrophysique Spatiale,
Université Paris Sud
Orsay, France

Dr. L. NAHON
Beamline DESIRS Synchrotron SOLEIL Gif-sur-Yvette, Fr

Prof. R.I. KAISER
W.M. Keck Research Lab
University of Hawaii @Mānoa