cnrs INFORMATICS

Guide

How to set up an ERC Project?

FEBRUARY 2026

Contents

ERC STARTING, CONSOLIDATOR, ADVANCED OR SYNERGY GRANT PROJECT

1. Why submit an ERC project?

Submitting a project to the European Research Council (ERC) offers a host of scientific, institutional and financial advantages. By promoting research at the frontiers of knowledge, the ERC encourages the freedom to explore innovative ideas and take scientific risks. This support creates an environment conducive to innovation and discovery.

Winning an ERC grant is widely regarded as a sign of **scientific excellence**. This gives international visibility to the person leading the project. It opens the door to **new collaborations and opportunities**, while expanding your professional network. What's more, ERC-funded projects enhance the prestige of your host institution and **make a significant contribution to society**, by generating innovative discoveries with a tangible impact, in both basic and applied science.

ERC projects are generally divided into several categories, either individual or collective. In the case of collective projects, collaboration and group dynamics are a natural part of the process. Individual projects, on the other hand, do not necessarily rely solely on the person leading them: they can be designed and carried out in a collaborative manner, bringing together a wider range of scientific expertise around the project leader. By drawing on the diversity of approaches and perspectives thus brought together, these projects offer valuable training opportunities for early-career researchers, while promoting the professional development of more experienced ones. An ERC project thus helps to structure and raise the profile of a research topic as a whole, contributing to the influence of its disciplinary field.

ERC projects are of long duration, requiring **in-depth reflection** and a **long-term vision** of a major scientific issue. The process of writing such a project, as well as the **feedback** received by candidates after submission, can easily be **assessed in other contexts**, such as the preparation of an "habilitation à diriger des recherches" (HDR) thesis or the application for other complementary or alternative funding.

Finally, ERC **grants** enable researchers to bring their most ambitious projects to fruition, with a high rate of reward compared to the modest size of the initial application document. Thanks to this **substantial funding**, and minimal administration, it is possible to devote oneself entirely to research, free from the usual budgetary constraints.

2. The ERC in brief, from the idea to the submission

ERC calls for proposals are open to all scientific disciplines, and are not thematically limited. They aim at a double scientific excellence: that of the research project and that of the applicant.

A project submitted to the ERC must be **ambitious** and **innovative**, capable of generate significant advances in a scientific or technological field, while seeking **to push back the current frontiers of knowledge**. However, this level of ambition inevitably entails **risks**. These risks must be judiciously taken into account, with clear strategies for managing, controlling and circumventing them.

The project must not simply extend or improve an existing study; it must aim to overcome **a major scientific obstacle**, introduce **a radically new idea or approach**, or aim for **a genuine scientific or methodological breakthrough**. Despite its lofty ambitions, the project must remain **feasible**.

A successful ERC project focuses on a **central question**, around which closely related and complementary components (tasks, tools) are built, rather than on a collection of juxtaposed independent questions. Before embarking on writing an ERC project, it's crucial to **familiarize yourself** with the specifics of these projects, including the evaluation criteria, the role of the principal investigator (PI) and the host institution (HI). Drafting a solid, convincing project requires **a significant investment of time** over several months/years, and the support of your team or laboratory is an undeniable asset. You need to plan ahead and make time available, especially for teacher-researchers. Adequate preparation and information before writing and submitting your project are crucial to increasing your chances of success in obtaining a grant.

1. What is an ERC project?

An ERC project consists of 2 parts:

- **An administrative section (A),** in which detailed information on the budget and resources will be requested, limited to 8,000 characters
- **A scientific section (B). This is itself divided into 2 parts:**

  Part B1 includes:

  • A cover page with title, acronym and 2,000-character abstract,

  • The first part of the scientific project, strictly 5 pages long,

  • CV with track record, max. 4 pages.

  Part B2 includes:

  • The second part of the scientific project is strictly limited to 7 pages for individual projects (10 pages for ERC SyG), excluding references.

- **The appendices**, where necessary documents such as the letter of commitment from the host institution (HIL) or documents proving the candidate's eligibility for the call (PhD certificate; document declaring a justified extension of eligibility) must be submitted.

Constraints on font size and margins must be respected in accordance with ERC guidelines.

Projects are submitted in one of three main thematic areas:

- Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE)
- Life Sciences (LS)
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SH)

These areas are divided into 28 panels referenced PE1 to PE11, LS1 to LS9 and SH1 to SH8, described in Annex 1 of the 2026 Work Programme (pp. 58—60).

It contains the keywords for panels PE6 and PE7, which are at the **heart of the scope of CNRS Informatics**.

There are 5 categories of ERC projects:

Individual projects, are 5-year projects, with 3 categories depending on the experience of the principal investigator (PI) in relation to his/her (first) thesis degree:

Starting, for a PI with 2 to 7 years post-thesis experience,

Consolidator, for a PI with 7 to 12 years post-thesis experience,

Advanced, for a PI with more than 12 years post-thesis experience.

The **Synergy** program targets collaborative projects lasting 6 years, involving 2 to 4 researchers and their teams.

Proof of Concepts (PoC) projects last 18 months and are reserved for those who are already PIs on an ERC project. They must be submitted during their ERC project or up to one year after the end of the project. The aim is to fund the first steps in the valorization of the ERC results, leading to a prototype.

An ERC project is evaluated in two steps:

- **Step 1:** Part B1 of the project is evaluated by a generalist panel committee, so it is essential that the tone and style of B1 are accessible to non-expert evaluators. The innovative aspects of the project must be clearly highlighted in this part of the document. Approximately one third of projects are selected to proceed to stage 2. The 2026 work programme introduces a fundamental change: feasibility is no longer assessed in stage 1. In part B1, applicants must clearly set out the state of the art, explain the scientific question to be answered and the objectives of the study, and outline the strategy and general approach to be used to achieve these objectives.
- **Step 2:** Part B2 of the project is intended to be reviewed by specialists with the appropriate expertise. In this stage, parts B1 and B2 are considered together by 6 to 8 experts (1 or 2 experts from the panel, and remote experts) to evaluate the project. The content of part B2 must now complement that of part B1. Experts must find all details of the project implementation, methodology, work plan, risk assessment, mitigation measures, and elements justifying the resources and budget requested. Feasibility is now assessed solely in stage 2, by reading part B2. Of the projects examined in stage 2, only about one-third will be funded. This gives a success rate of around 15%.

Find out more:

Full information on ERC projects can be found on various dedicated websites, including:

> On the official ERC website

You can consult: the official ERC 2026 work program

Examples of how to present the different parts of the submission:

- For Starting
- For Consolidator

  The ERC Starting or Consolidator Grant Applicant's Guide provides detailed information to help you prepare your application.
- For Advanced
- For Synergy
- For Proof of Concept

> On the official website of the French Ministry of Research and Space

You'll find, in french, all the information you need to prepare your project, as well as announcements of ERC information and support meetings.

> The ERC National Contact Point (PCN)

People affiliated with MESRE who provide information, assistance and advice to all project leaders, as well as support units based in French institutions.

> On the CNRS website

You'll find advice and pointers to help you with the scientific and administrative aspects of your project.

> On the CNRS Informatics website

You will find the calendar, contact details and applicant's guide for the various calls for proposals, intended for people who may be able to help you by reviewing your project.

2. Inform and contact

As soon as your project begins to take shape, you need to :

- **Exchange ideas with other scientists** (team leaders, DU, ERC unit from CNRS Informatics) before any concrete action is taken,
- **Inform your unit director** and your team leader,
- **Contact the "Service Partenariat et Valorisation" (SPV) of your "Délégation Régionale" (DR)**, for CNRS researchers, or **the equivalent department at your university,** for people recruited by universities,
- **Contact the CNRS Informatics' ERC unit** to assess the relevance of your application.

The SPV at your DR or university will be your key contact for administrative and financial aspects of your project (Part A). This department will help you to fill in the administrative part of the project and the financial form, and will provide you with the **letter of commitment from the host institution**, which must be downloaded from the submission site.

Local structures are available to help **with the preparation of the scientific part of the project**, covering all ERC scientific fields. It is essential to **plan several reviews** of the project, in particular by people with **varied profiles**, preferably those who are familiar with the ERC, and who reflect the **diversity of the panels** of experts responsible for evaluating the project. The CNRS Informatics ERC unit will provide you with more precise assistance, with **reviews by laureates or former panel members**, within the scientific perimeter of CNRS Informatics, i.e. panels PE6 and PE7.

3. Choose your category

Check the category in which you can apply, which depends on your seniority in relation to the date of doctoral graduation on the first of January of the call (January 1, 2026 for the 2026 call).

You are **Starting** if you have successfully defended your doctoral thesis at least 2 years and up to 7 years before January 1, 2026, i.e. successfully defended your doctorate from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023, inclusive.

You are a **Consolidator** if you have successfully defended your doctorate thesis at least 7 years and up to 12 years before January 1, 2026, i.e. successfully defended your doctorate from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2018, inclusive.

Beyond that, you're in the **Advanced** category.

The dates used to calculate the age of your degree may be modified in certain duly documented circumstances, such as maternity and paternity leave, long-term illness, national service, asylum applications, etc. The full list of eligibility period extensions can be found on pp. 18-19 of the 2026 Work Programme. Applicants are advised to consult the specific guidelines of the ERC and their host institution for detailed information on these regulations.

4. Choose your panel

The **choice of the thematic panel** in which the project is submitted is an important step. An ERC project is submitted to a **main panel**, which may be supplemented by a secondary panel. It is strongly recommended, wherever possible, to choose only one panel, and to do so carefully. The dossier must highlight the **project's added value in the scientific field covered by that panel**, and projects that straddle several panels, while convincing each of them, prove very complex (these projects generally have lower success rates). To help you make your choice of panel, you can first consult the keywords associated with each panel in the ERC Work Programme 2026. To refine your choice, a simple method is to check whether you know any experts or prize-winners in the panel you have chosen. To do this, please consult:

- **The composition of the evaluation panels** for previous calls (members and chairs): everything can be found at this link. Thirty-three per cent of panel members are replaced every two years. To get an idea of the profile of the panel members most relevant to your application, simply consult the list of members from two years ago.
- **The database of ERC projects funded to date:** you can target your selection by category, year and/or country, to find the winners, their subjects and panels.

The **experts** on the panel:

- **Have a wide range of expertise** in relation to your project: there are about fifteen of them, and they must cover all the panel's keywords (for PE6 and PE7, see Appendix A.2 of this document),
- **Are of different nationalities:** you should be aware that you will probably not be appraised by a person of your own nationality. French (acronyms, schools, abbreviations, etc.) must be explained so that they can be understood by jury members of all nationalities.

Extract from the participants' guide :

It is the applicant's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant ERC panel ('primary evaluation panel') for the evaluation of the proposed research and to indicate one or more ERC keywords representing the research fields involved. The Principal Investigator may indicate a secondary evaluation panel. The initial allocation of the proposal to a panel will be based on the preference expressed by the applicant. However, when necessary due to the expertise required for the evaluation, a proposal may be reallocated to a different panel with the agreement of both panel chairs concerned. In such cases, applicants are informed of the reallocation of the proposal at the latest through the notification for the invitation to the interview (if applicable) or in the Evaluation Report attached to the information letter with the final outcome of the evaluation of their respective proposal.

5. Writing

Writing the dossier requires a great deal of care and time. It is also necessary to allow time for numerous proofreads and corrections in order to produce a high-quality project.

We strongly recommend that you begin writing the project **six months before the submission date**. We suggest starting with document B1, which presents a particular challenge in terms of finding the **right tone and style for non-expert evaluators**. To ensure a smooth submission process, aim to have a high-quality first draft of **the entire project at least two months** before the submission date, and in particular a first draft of **section B1 at least three months** before the submission date. This will give you time to have your project proofread, corrected and refined.

The project must be ambitious, i.e. groundbreaking in relation to what you have done so far (and in relation to the state of the art). Therefore, if your project builds on previous work, it must also show that there is a significant leap between that work and the objectives of the ERC project, in order to convince the panel of its originality and feasibility.

The extract from the ERC Work Programme 2026 document indicates the questions that the rapporteurs will need to answer. Specific recommendations for writing the CV, track record and parts B1 and B2 of the project are detailed in Section 5 of this guide.

6. Submit

Submissions are made online via the Participant Portal Submission Service (PPSS). The first step, as soon as the idea of writing a project takes shape, is to obtain **a login account** (EU login account). This login account allows you and your employer (host institution) to fill in various administrative or financial documents online, in addition to the scientific project. To guide you, several documents are available on the European Commission's website:

1. The User Guide of the Submission Service is available.

2. The Horizon Europe Online Manual describes the project submission procedure.

3. The European Commission's HOW TO website is an online manual with screenshots that requires you to log in with your username

When the submission deadline approaches, remember to validate your project several days in advance, to check that no parts are missing and that the pdf is legible. You can then update your project right up to the submission deadline, with each new upload replacing the previous version.

3. Profile of the project leader

Eligibility criteria and a description of the profile of an ERC Advanced Grant recipient are given in the ERC Work Program 2026. These criteria, which are listed in part below, are only indicative. A more pragmatic way of evaluating your profile is to compare it with recent winners in your category and panel.

For Starting

The Starting Grant supports excellent Principal Investigators starting or having recently started their own independent research team or programme. A Starting Grant Principal Investigator should have already shown evidence of the potential for research independence, for example, by having produced at least one important publication as its main author or a publication without the participation of their PhD supervisor.

For Consolidator

The Consolidator Grant supports excellent Principal Investigators who are consolidating their own independent research team or programme. A Consolidator Grant Principal Investigator should have already shown evidence of research independence.

For Advanced

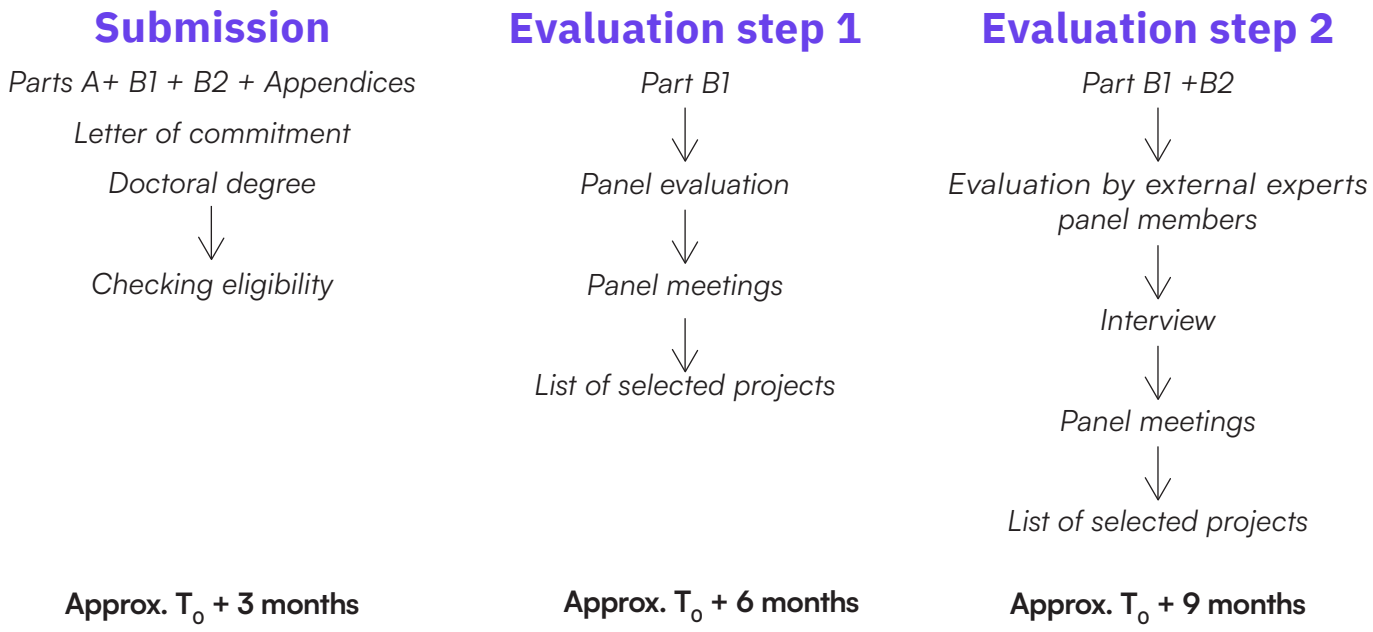
The objective of the Advanced Grant is to support excellent Principal Investigators that are established research leaders. An ERC Advanced Grant Principal Investigator is expected to be an active researcher with a track record of significant research achievements.

4. Project evaluation (individual grants)

To write a project with every chance of success, it is essential to be familiar with the evaluation procedure, and in particular with the profile of the evaluators and the evaluation criteria. This is the aim of this section.

1. The procedure in brief

The two-step evaluation procedure (Step 1 and Step 2) is shown in the diagram below. In Step 1, only the short part B1 of the project is evaluated by 3 to 4 members of the panel to which the project has been submitted. In Step 2, the parts B1 and B2 are evaluated by 4 to 6 external experts and 2 to 3 panel members.



PLEASE NOTE : Interdisciplinary projects are evaluated by the main panel, which, if necessary, involves members of the secondary panel(s).

2. Evaluation: criteria

At each of the two evaluation steps, the experts write comments and assign scores to various criteria relating to the applicant (PI) and the scientific project. Details of the evaluation procedure and criteria can be found in the documents provided by the ERC. We have copied some of the key points from the StG and CoG 2026 applicant guide.

Evaluators assess the PI by answering questions about his or her **scientific abilities, creativity and the innovative nature of his or her contributions.**

Steps 1 and 2:

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct groundbreaking research?

To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative and original thinking?

To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project ?

Each criterion is rated: **outstanding (5), excellent (4), very good (3), good (2) or non-competitive (1).**

The evaluators assess the scientific project in terms of groundbreaking nature, ambition, feasibility, and potential impact of the research project.

Steps 1 and 2:

To what extent does the research address important scientific questions ?

To what extent are the project's objectives ambitious and will it advance the frontier of knowledge?

Only step 2:

To what extent are the research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?

To what extent are the timescales and resources adequate and properly justified?

These two scoring elements (IP and scientific project) enable panel members to grade the proposal as a whole (A, B or C), which will determine its ranking in relation to the other proposals. By way of example (but each panel decides its own ranking), a proposal ranked in the top third in step 2 is likely to be funded.

3. Evaluation: step 1

In this first stage, only part B1 of the project is evaluated by three members of the panel (or more if the project is interdisciplinary), who are not necessarily experts in the field.

As a reminder, **part B1 includes:**

1. A cover page with the title, acronym and a 2,000-character summary.

2. Part I of the Scientific Proposal (previously called the synopsis) of strictly 5 pages,

3. A CV with a track record of no more than 4 pages.

This set of documents must therefore provide a very clear and convincing overview of the project, its challenges and its potential impact, and make the expert want to read on (part B2), as well as highlighting the scientific qualities of the project leader.

IMPORTANT NOTICE :

Please be aware that at Step 1 only Part I of the Scientific Proposal and the Curriculum Vitae and Track Record, are evaluated by the panel members (they have no access to other parts and sections). At Step 2, the complete proposal which also includes Part II of the Scientific Proposal, Resources and Time Commitment are evaluated by panel members and remote reviewers.

Part I of the Scientific Proposal is the part that will be seen by the evaluation panel in the first step of the evaluation and that forms the basis for the panel's decision whether they want to assess your project and interview you in the second step of the evaluation. Therefore, when drafting pay particular attention to Part I of the Scientific Proposal and do not think of it as simply complementing

Part II of the Scientific Proposal. It is important that Part I of the Scientific Proposal contains all essential information. During the Step 1 evaluation, the panel members' expertise covers a wide range of proposals within a research field. The panel members are asked to act as generalists when evaluating the proposals. Further expertise on each proposal retained to Step 2 is brought to the evaluation by Remote Reviewers. Remote Reviewers are scientists and scholars who do not participate in the panel meetings and who deliver their individual reviews before the Step 2 panel meeting.

The 2026 work programme introduces a fundamental change: **feasibility is no longer assessed in stage 1.** In part B1, candidates must clearly set out the state of the art, explain the scientific question to be answered and the objectives of the study, and outline the strategy and general approach put in place to achieve these objectives.

At the end of stage 1 of the evaluation (part B1), there are three possible outcomes for the applicant:

You are rated A **invited**: your application is of excellent quality and you move on to stage 2 of the evaluation, specifically the interview. Regardless of the outcome of stage two, you may reapply in the next call for proposals if your application is not funded.

You are rated A **not invited**: your application is of excellent quality but is not ranked high enough to proceed to stage 2.

You are rated B: your application is of high quality but does not proceed to stage 2. You are not allowed to reapply in the next call.

You are rated C: application of average quality. You do not proceed to the second stage. You are not authorised to re-submit for the next two calls.

The conditions for re-submission highlight the importance of part B1 of the project.

4. Evaluation: step 2

If, at the end of step 1, your project is selected for step 2 of the evaluation process, you go on to the **interview**.

The panel members responsible for your application will identify a list of international experts with skills closely related to your project, who will be asked to evaluate your project (B1 and B2). The project will then be evaluated by 6 to 8 experts, including 1 or 2 from the panel, and the others from outside but chosen for their expertise in the field of your project.

To prepare your interview, the CNRS Informatics' ERC unit ERC offers you rehearsal sessions in the format required by the ERC. Please contact the ERC unit immediately after receiving notification of admission to this step.

Contact

CNRS Informatics ERC unit
ins2i.erc@cnrs.fr

As a reminder, **part B2** corresponds to the presentation of the scientific project in addition to part B1: The content of part B2 must now complement that of part B1. Experts must find all details of the project implementation, methodology, work plan, risk assessment, mitigation measures, and elements justifying the resources and budget requested. Feasibility is now assessed solely in stage 2, by reading part B2. No redundancy is tolerated in part B2 compared to part B1. This is why its length has now been reduced to **7 pages**.

Part B2 covers everything that is not covered in part B1, as the two documents are considered independent. Care must be taken to ensure that the entire application is consistent; it must be easy to assess.

For the online administrative section 'resources' (section A), please do not hesitate to contact the SPV service at your delegation or university. At the end of stage 2 of the evaluation (sections B1 and B2), there are two possible outcomes for the applicant:

- If you receive an **A** rating, you may be selected for funding, subject to available funds.
- You receive a **B**: you are not selected for funding. However, you are allowed to resubmit a project the following year. If you submit a project the following year, please note that the members of the evaluation committee will be different and it is possible that the external examiners will also be different. **There is also no memory effect**, at least officially. Thus, this is not a review procedure, but is considered a completely new submission. In general, we find that resubmissions that take into account the experts' opinions have a better chance of success. Furthermore, statistics show that the success rate for resubmitted projects is higher than for first-time applicants.

The CNRS Informatics ERC unit can help you with your resubmission, in particular by analysing the experts' scientific report (ESR) with you.

5. Writing tips

All the framed parts in English are taken from Horizon Europe du candidat StG et CoG.

If you know an ERC winner, ask them to send you their project. In the writing phase, it's usually very informative to have a few examples of successful projects. Several examples are available on the official ERC website:

- For Starting
- For Consolidator
- For Advanced
- For Synergy

1. Part B1

Part 1 of the scientific proposal (5 pages max.)

The **project has to be attractive, punchy** and announce the **breakthrough and the challenges** you're tackling. If possible, this should appear in the title (choose carefully), in the **summary** and **clearly in the part 1 of the Scientific proposal** (previously called synopsis), in 5 pages.

Part I must convince all members of the panel of the project's merits and take into account the fact that some of them may not necessarily be experts in the field. It is essential to provide convincing arguments demonstrating that the project is ambitious and innovative, and that you are the only person qualified to carry it out.

Feel free to detail the preliminary results, if any, while providing context in Part B2 (project initiation, proven methodology, etc.).

Part I of the Scientific Proposal (max. 5 pages) should make a compelling case why your proposal is an original, creative idea about an important question in your research field(s) and how the project will advance the frontier of knowledge. It should, in any order and format you choose, (1) lay out the current state of knowledge, (2) explain the scientific question and the objectives of the project and (3) present the overall approach or research strategy you propose to use to reach the project goals. It should present the contribution of your proposal to the research field(s) and indicate what you expect may be changed, opened, challenged or how the current understanding will be different after your work has been undertaken.

CV and track record

In stage 1, your score as principal investigator (PI) is based on your CV and track record (4 pages max.). The CV and track record are now two separate parts, but they are linked and explained in a narrative format. It is essential to select, organise and highlight the key points of your profile, providing the experts with information that will enable them to assess your qualities according to the following criteria: **ground-breaking, creativity, independence**. French candidates sometimes have a tendency to be overly modest and self-censoring.

Curriculum Vitae and Track Record are presented in one single template of up to four pages. The applicant is expected to include their personal details, education, key qualifications, current position(s) and relevant previous positions. It should also include the names of their PhD supervisor(s) and postdoctoral mentor(s).

Comments and recommendations for the CV:

- **Personal information:** provide a link to your personal website for quick verification by the experts (don't forget the update your site!)
- **Education:** specify the specific features of the French system (grandes écoles with information on selection, level, etc.);
- **Current and previous position(s):** specify level of competition;
- **Fellowships and awards:** specify selection rate, nature and quality of institution ;
- **Supervision of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows:** specify the rate of co-supervision and the number of co-supervisors; if possible, give a brief description of what happened to the students;
- **Teaching activities:** specify the nature (course, TD, TP), if it is a new course, the number of hours, etc.;
- **Organization of scientific meetings:** specify your role, the name of the event and its importance in the field;
- **Institutional responsibilities:** specify what this responsibility entails, in terms of work, visibility, notoriety, etc. ;
- **Commissions of trust:** as far as possible, situate your role and the level of conferences, journals, institutions, etc. in which you are involved ;
- **Memberships of scientific societies:** to be mentioned only if significant;
- **Major collaborations:** assess the reputation and quality of the lab and its partners.

Research Achievements & Peer Recognition

Principal Investigator must provide a list of achievements reflecting their track record. A short narrative describing the scientific importance of the research outputs, and the role played by the Principal Investigator in their production may also be included. A list of up to ten research outputs is expected, that demonstrates how the applicant has advanced knowledge in their field with an emphasis on more recent achievements and a list of selected examples of significant peer recognition. The applicant may include a short, factual explanation of the significance of the selected outputs, the applicant's role in producing each of them, and how they demonstrate the applicant's capacity to successfully carry out their proposed project may be included, as well as a short explanation of the importance of the listed examples of significant peer recognition.

Additional Information

The applicant may also include relevant additional information on career breaks, diverse career paths, and life events, as well as any particularly noteworthy contributions to the research community they have made other than research achievements and peer recognition and a short explanation of these contributions. The purpose of this section is to allow the panels to take a more rounded view of the applicant's career and achievements and to ensure that any additional responsibilities, commitments, and leadership roles that the applicants have taken on beyond their individual research activities are recognised and taken into account.

The ERC is now looking at 'scientifically atypical' profiles, such as candidates who have experienced a career break, giving them the opportunity to explicitly contextualise periods of interruption in their application.

Comments and recommendations for the Track record:

- **Publications:** limit yourself to what is 'international'; indicate the leading journals and conferences in your field; specify the order of authors that is customary in your field; provide a summary of publications with figures, including the h-index (specify ISI Web of Science or Google Scholar, and the date), and the number of citations of your most significant articles. For Starting positions, focus on (and clearly identify) publications without your thesis supervisor, as this demonstrates your independence. Summarise the contribution of each significant publication in a short sentence. Focus on the best, most international or most significant publications.
- **Patents or software:** for patents, specify whether they are French patents only or whether they have given rise to extensions (PCT, national phases, etc.), indicate the inventors and their share of inventivity in the patents; briefly indicate the importance of the patents; for software, specify whether they have been filed with the Agency for the Protection of Programs (APP); in both cases, indicate whether they have given rise to operating licenses.
- **Invited presentations:** Specify whether these are invited plenary lectures, invited lectures in a special session, or seminars in a laboratory; provide detailed information on the reputation of the event to which you have been invited; separate events into different categories, and possibly only include the most prestigious invitations; add links to the event websites.
- **Prizes and awards:** give details of the importance of the prize, the institution awarding it, the selection rate, etc.
- **Add a paragraph about your participation in projects**, indicating your role (partner, local coordinator, or PI of the project), the number of participants, the amount raised, your responsability, etc.

Only this part B1 is considered in step 1 of the evaluation, and allows us to move on to step 2.

2. Part B2

Parts B1 and B2 are examined together in this step 2: B1 can be used as the basis for a long description of the project (less repetition), while maintaining a complete presentation that is pleasing to the expert. In particular, reading should be "linear" and not involve going back and forth between B2 and B1.

Part B2 is the long description of the project (now 7 pages maximum, not including references) which follows the following outline: project implementation, detailed methodology, work plan, risk assessment and mitigation plan, justification of the budget and resources requested (in addition to what is included in Part A - Budget). For this last part, do not hesitate to ask your delegation's SPV or your university for assistance.

Part II of the Scientific Proposal (max 7 pages): This should be a detailed explanation of the project implementation, including research methodology, work plan, risk assessment, and mitigating measures, justification for the requested budget and resources, and any further necessary background not included in Part I.

Comments and recommendations for the scientific project:

- **Methodology** (organization): Once the state of the art has been established, the challenges and objectives must be clearly identified. This will enable the methodology to be structured in such a way as to respond clearly and in detail to these previously identified points. It is not necessary to organise the 'Work Packages' section with Gantt charts or other diagrams. However, it is essential to provide credible ideas for addressing the various challenges of your project and to convince the experts of its feasibility and your ability to carry it out successfully.
- **It is also important to:** situate the project in its international context (partners and competitors), present the team and team members that the PI will be coordinating, demonstrating the complementarity of skills and their suitability to the project's challenges, add a paragraph with arguments on the expected spin-offs, provide a risk analysis, **discuss a "plan B" in the event that objectives are only partially achieved.**
- **Resources** (presentation of financial arrangements and project costs): contact the partnership department of your Delegation or the Europe department of your university for the financial set-up of your project, to ensure that it is compatible with the agreement between your institution and the European Union, in particular the rules governing the eligibility of expenses. In particular, it is possible to pay salary supplements using the ERC grant. This must be done in accordance with the usual rules and practices of the institution hosting the PI, in line with the rules of the grant agreement. Further information can be found here.

It should be noted that a project that requires less money than the maximum possible amount is not more likely to be approved: it is the **scientific excellence** of the project and the applicant that counts. The financial aspect does not really come into play during the evaluation process, but rather during the negotiation phase once the project has been accepted. The project leader's involvement in the project must satisfy two rules: **50% of the research time must be spent in Europe or an associated country; the project leader must devote at least 50% (Starting), 40% (Consolidator) or 30% (Advanced) of their working time to the ERC project**. Greater involvement is appreciated, but it is important not to indicate an overly high level of involvement that would not be credible.

Appendices

A.1. Calendar of the 2026 call

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Advanced Grant	Synergy Grant	Proof of Concept
Identifier	ERC-2026-StG	ERC-2026-CoG	ERC-2026-AdG	ERC-2026-SyG	ERC-2026-PoC
Call Opens	09/07/2025	25/09/2025	28/05/2026	10/07/2025	20/01/2026
Deadline	14/10/2025	13/01/2026	27/08/2026	05/11/2025	17/03/2026 17/09/2026

A.2. PE6 and PE7 panel descriptions

For information, here are the keywords of the PE6 and PE7 panels, corresponding to the scientific activities at the heart of CNRS Informatics. In particular, these keywords show the diversity of members within a panel. Remember that part B1 of the project will be evaluated by the members of the panel chosen for the submission, so it must be convincing for experts with a varied profile.

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_56 Algorithms, and complexity theory, distributed, parallel and network algorithms, algorithmic game theory and computational economics

PE6_6 Security, privacy, cryptology

PE6_7 Databases, web and information systems, information retrieval

PE6_6 Algorithms and complexity, distributed, parallel and network algorithms, algorithmic game theory
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

PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering

Electrical, electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering.

PE7_1 Control engineering

PE7_2 Electrical engineering: power components and/or systems

PE7_3 Simulation engineering and modelling

PE7_4 (Micro- and nano-) systems engineering

PE7_5 (Micro- and nano-) electronic, optoelectronic and photonic components

PE7_6 Communication systems, wireless technology, high-frequency technology

PE7_7 Signal processing

PE7_8 Networks, e.g., communication networks and nodes, Internet of Things, sensor networks, networks of robots

PE7_9 Man-machine interfaces

PE7_10 Robotics

PE7_11 Components and systems for applications (in e.g., medicine, biology, environment)

PE7_12 Electrical energy production, distribution, applications

Earlier versions of this document were written by Christian Jutten, and by Marie-Christine Rousset.

Updated by Delia Kesner and Anna Lourantou-Paris

Contact
ERC unit of CNRS Informatics

Delia KESNER
01 57 27 92 38
kesner@irif.fr
ins2i.erc@cnrs.fr

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cnrs INFORMATICS

3, rue Michel-Ange
75794 Paris Cedex 16
+ 33 1 44 96 40 00
ins2i.cnrs.fr | X