

The European Research Council



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Funding Opportunities in Europe for Creative Minds from Anywhere in the World

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ERC supports excellent frontier research

- **Bottom-up approach, curiosity driven**
- **All fields of science and scholarship are eligible**
- **Scientific Excellence is the only evaluation criterion**
 - Individual team + research project
 - Irrespective of nationality, gender or age of researchers
- **Attractive grants for independent teams in Europe**
 - Significant, flexible grants
 - Host organisation located in EU or Associated Country

What does the ERC offer researchers?



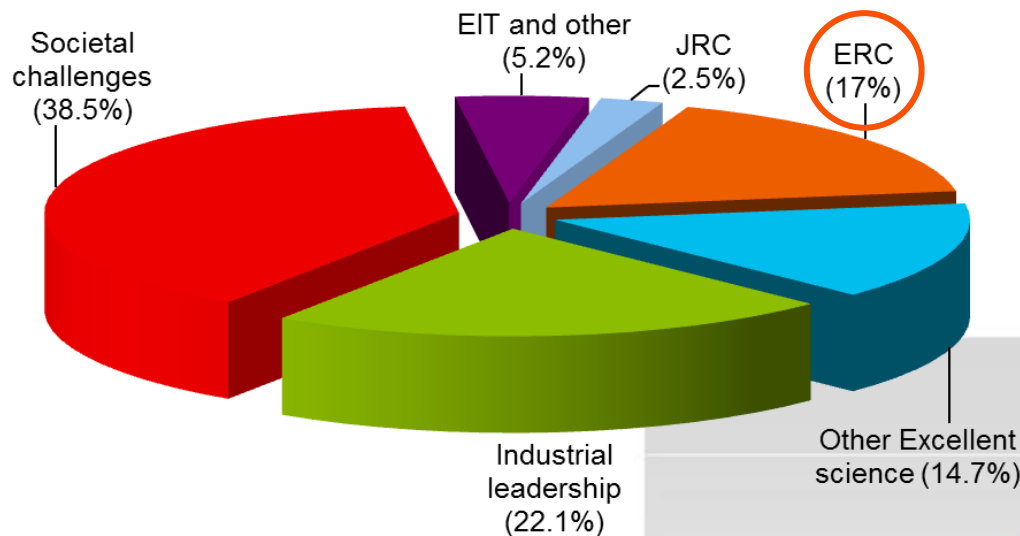
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Independence, recognition & visibility

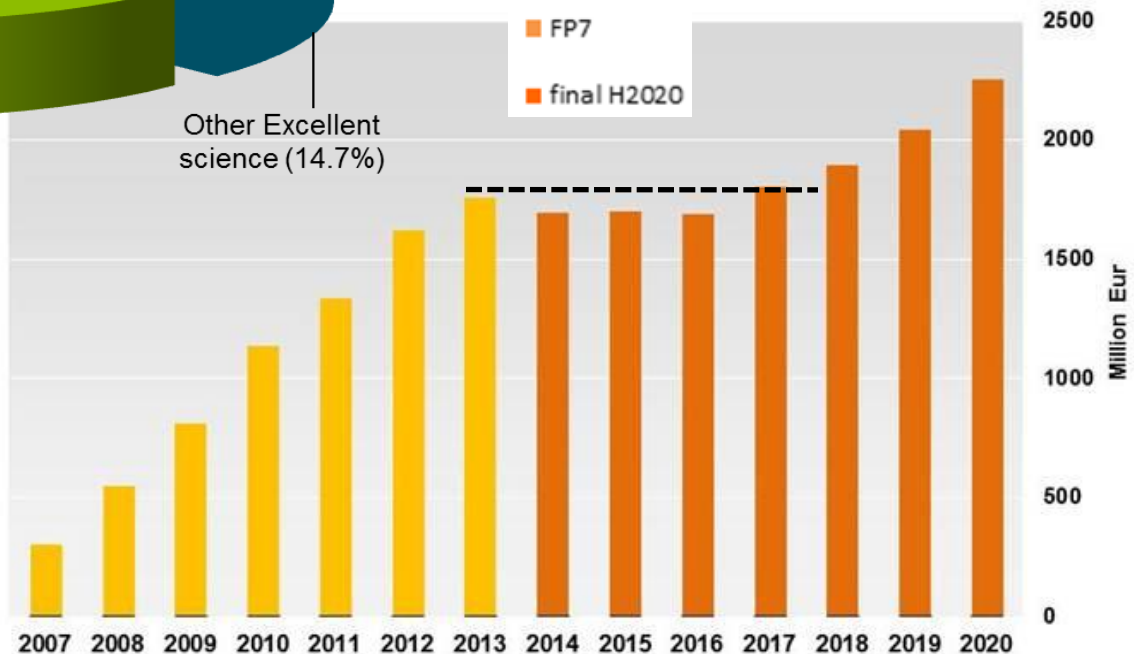
- to work on a research topic of **own choice** with a team of **own choice**
- to attract **top team members** (EU and non-EU) **and collaborators**
- to gain true **financial autonomy** for 5 years
- to negotiate with the host institution the **best conditions** of work
- to move with the grant to any place in Europe if necessary
(**portability of grants**)
- **to attract additional funding and gain recognition**
ERC funding is seen as a label of quality

ERC Budget in H2020



**ERC Budget 2014-2020:
€13 billion**

**ERC Budget 2007-2013:
€7.5 billion**



ERC Grant Schemes

Starting Grants

starters
(2-7 years after PhD)
up to € 2.0 Mio
for 5 years

Consolidator Grants

consolidators
(7-12 years after PhD)
up to € 2.75 Mio
for 5 years

Advanced Grants

track-record of
significant research
achievements in the
last 10 years
up to € 3.5 Mio
for 5 years

Proof-of-Concept

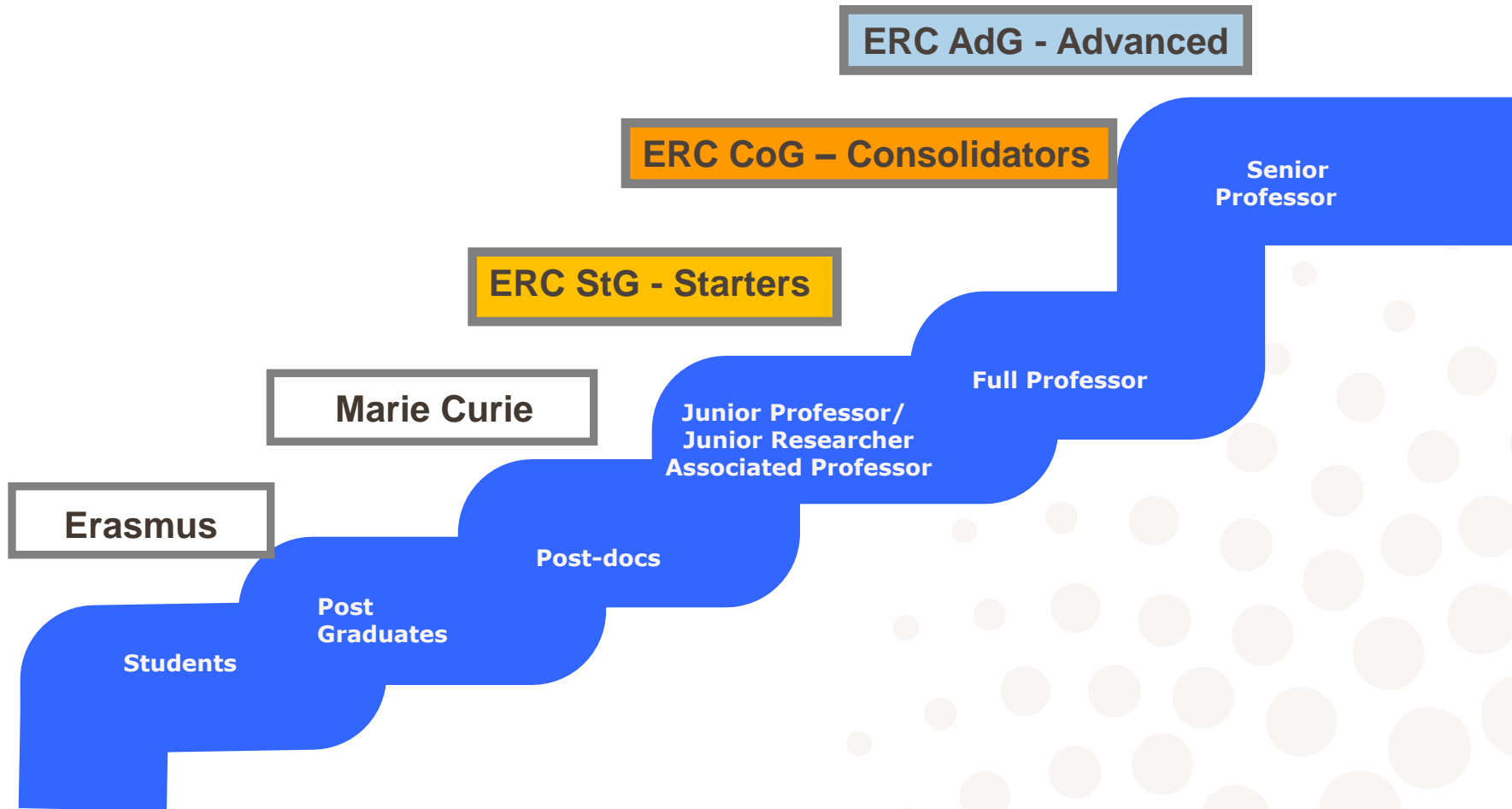
bridging gap between research - earliest
stage of marketable innovation
up to €150,000 for ERC grant holders

Researchers career development and complementary funding schemes



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After 8 Years of Existence... ERC = A Success Story



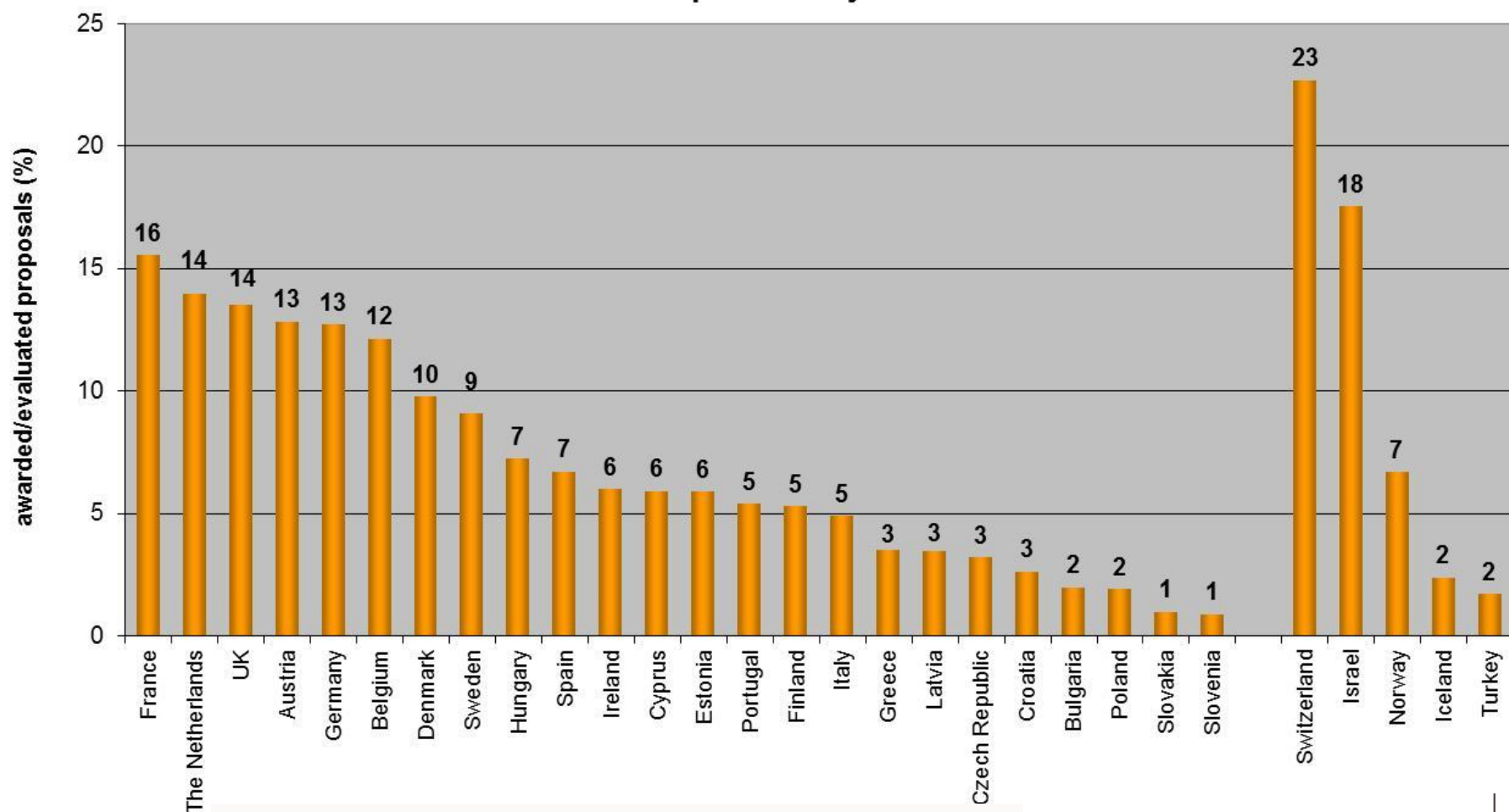
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- **59,000** proposals have been evaluated
- Over **4 300** top researchers funded during FP7 (2007-2013)
- **5000th** ERC grant agreement signed this June
- 64% are at an early-career stage
- **68** nationalities represented
- **Highly competitive** (overall success rate for main schemes - 10%)
- Working in over 600 different institutions in **35** countries
- **Benchmarking** effect: impact on national programmes and agencies

Success Rates/Country of Host Institution in FP7 (2007-2013)

Success rates per country of HI



*) First legal signatories of the first grant agreement taken into account

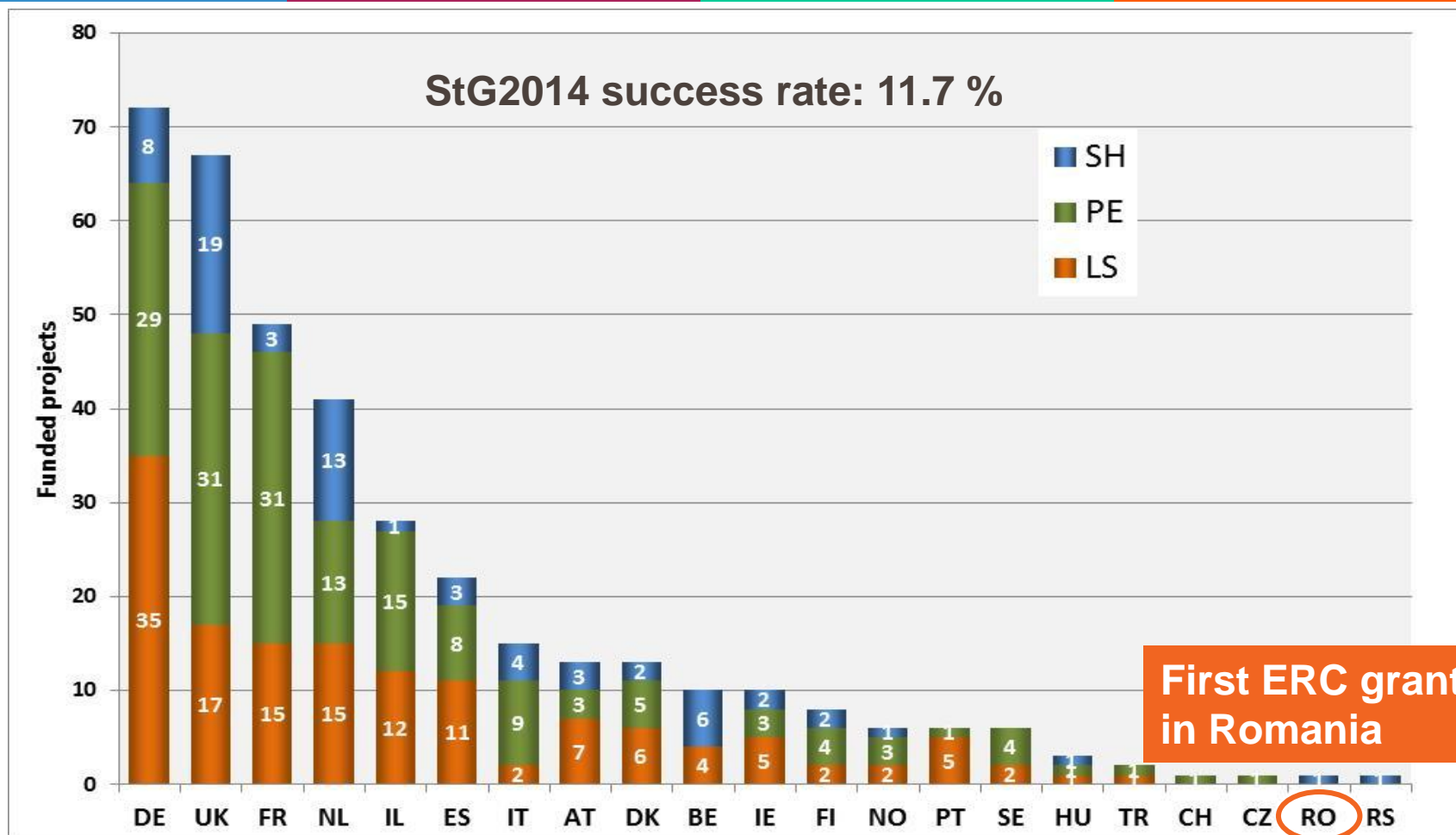
H2020 StG 2014

Funded Projects by Country of HI



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First ERC grant
in Romania



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Horizon 2020
European Union funding
for Research & Innovation

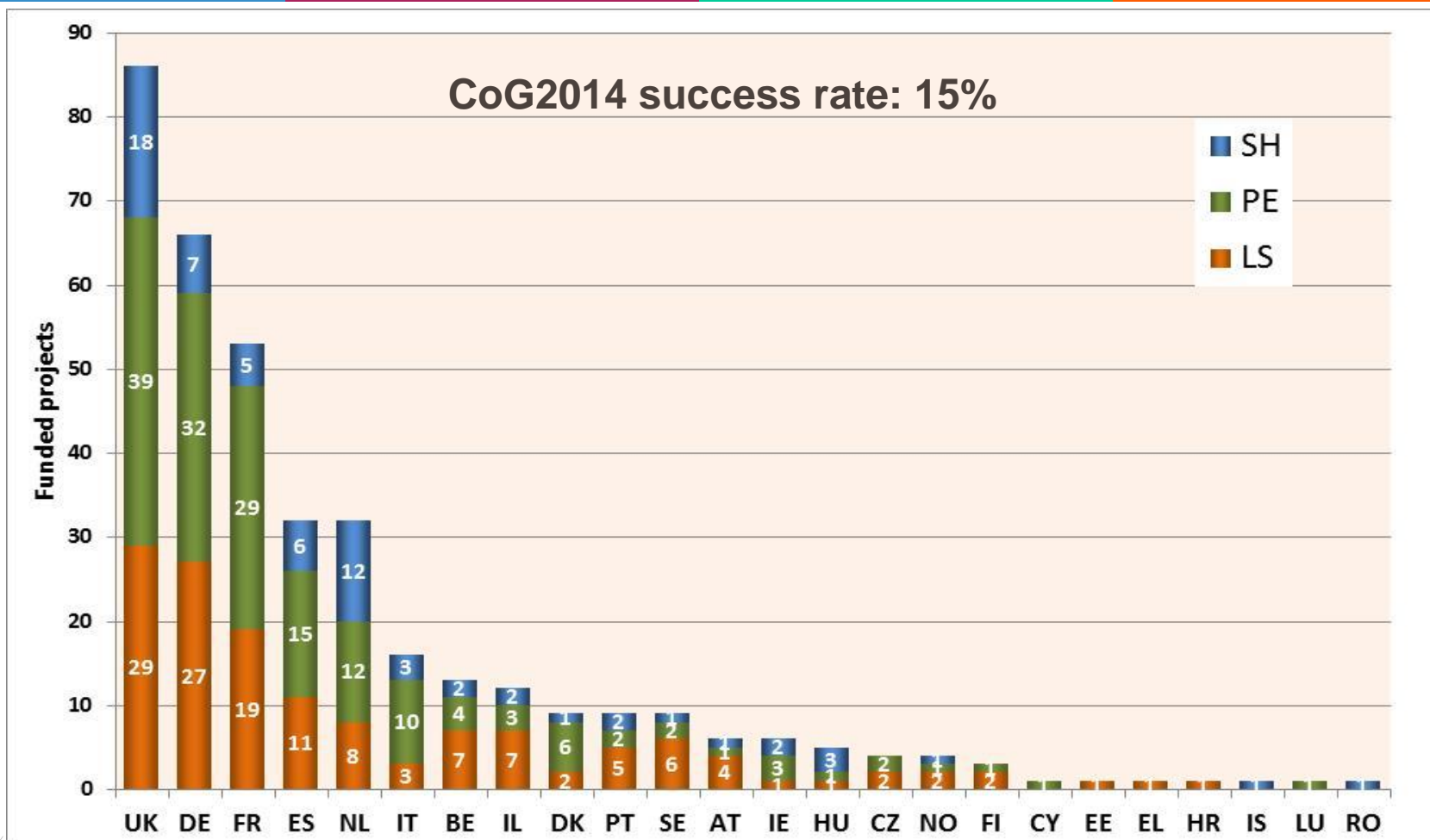
H2020 CoG 2014

Funded Projects by Country of HI



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Horizon 2020
European Union funding
for Research & Innovation

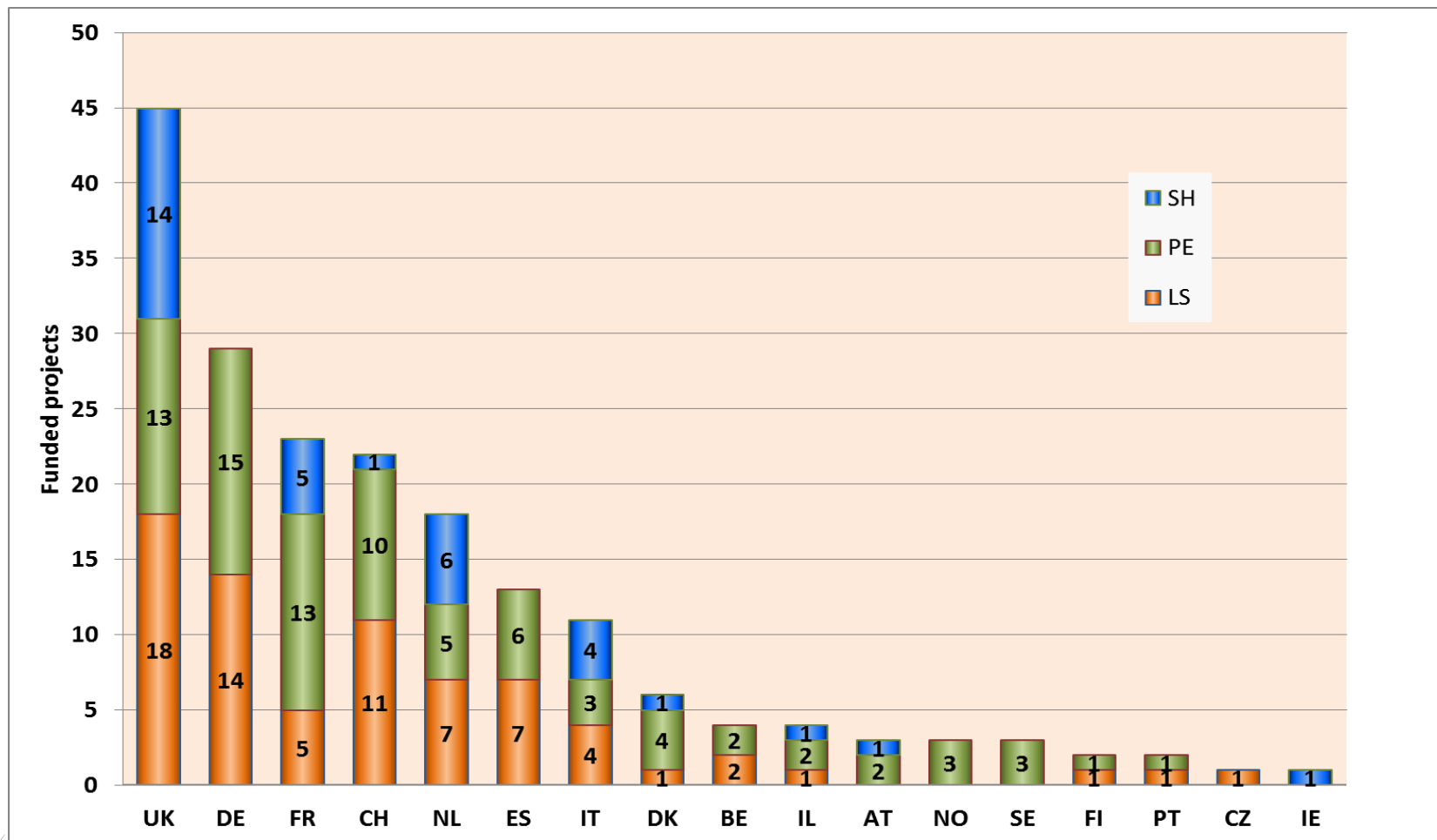
H2020 AdG 2014

Funded Projects by Country of HI



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Horizon 2020
European Union funding
for Research & Innovation

Call Planning 2016



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- **StG 2016 (2-7 years PhD)**
 - Opened 29 July 2015
 - Deadline 17 November 2015
- **CoG 2016 (7-12 years PhD)**
 - Opened 15 October 2015
 - Deadline 2 Feb 2016
- **AdG 2016**
 - Opens 24 May 2016
 - Deadline 1 September 2016

ERC Grant Schemes

- Starting Grants (2-7 years after PhD)
 - €1.5M, with possibility of an additional €0.5M
- Consolidator Grants (7-12 years after PhD)
 - €2.0M, with possibility of an additional €0.75M
- Advanced Grants
 - €2.5M (**AdG**) possibility of additional €1.0M

Reasons for additional funds:

- start-up costs when moving to Europe
- access to large facilities
- major equipment

StG/CoG: Eligibility extensions



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- Eligibility window can be **extended** for following cases:
- **Maternity leave:** 1.5 years per child before or after PhD
- **Paternity leave:** for documented paternity leave taken before or after the PhD
- **National service:** documented time after PhD
- **Long-term illness:** documented time after PhD
- **Clinical training:** MD date plus 2 years (+ proof of doctoral equivalency)

StG/CoG: applicant's profile

- Demonstrated potential for research independence
- Ability to develop a ground-breaking idea, think out of the box
- Evidence of scientific maturity and creativity
- At least one (StG) /several (CoG) significant publications without participation of PhD supervisor
- Invited presentations in conferences
- Funding, patents, awards, prizes

AdG: applicant's profile

- Track-record of significant research achievements **in the last 10 years**
- Exceptional **leaders** and **mentors**
- 10 publications as senior author in major scientific journals
- 5 granted patents
- 10 invited presentations at international conferences
- 3 international conferences where Principal Investigator was an organiser
- International prizes/awards

Preparing an application



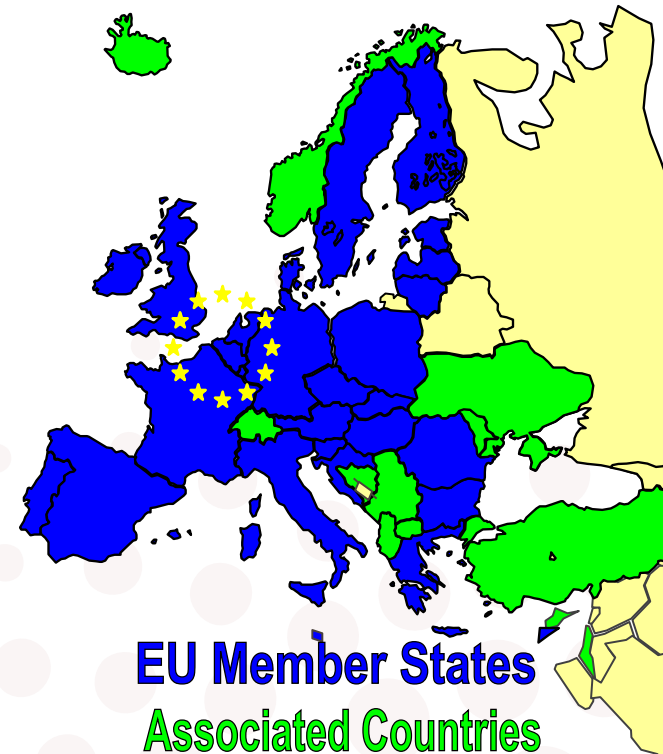
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- **Register early**, get familiar with the system and templates and start filling in the forms
- A submitted proposal can be **revised until the call deadline** by submitting a new version and overwriting the previous one
- Follow the formatting rules and **page limits**.
- **Download and proof-read** the proposal before submitting.
- Show to colleagues and friends to check for clarity

Who can apply?

- Any nationality, any age or any current place of work
- In conjunction with a Host Institution
 - based in EU or associated countries
 - At least 50% of the time spent in EU or AC



Role of the host institution



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- Hosts the PI and is located in an **EU Member State** or an **Associated Country**
- Signs the Grant Agreement
- Is a legal entity: university, research center, business research unit, etc.
- Is committed to ensure that the PI may:
 - Apply for funding independently
 - Manage research and funding project
 - Publish independently as senior author
 - Have access to reasonable space and facilities
- Overhead: 25%

Questions to ask yourself as an applicant



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- Am I internationally competitive?
- Does my proposal promise to go substantially beyond the state of the art? (Are your competitors doing the same thing?)
- Is it high risk/high gain? Think Big! Do I have a plan B?
- Why am I the best/only person to carry it out?
- Do I have preliminary results? Is it feasible?
- Is it timely? (Why wasn't it done already?)

Typical reasons for rejection

Proposed project

- Scope: Too narrow \leftrightarrow too broad/unfocussed
- Incremental research/continuation of previous work
- Work plan/team composition not detailed enough/unclear
- Insufficient risk management

Principal Investigator

- Insufficient track-record
- Insufficient leadership profile

Projects funded by the ERC

<http://erc.europa.eu/erc-funded-projects>



The screenshot shows the top section of the ERC website. On the left is the ERC logo with the text "European Research Council" and "Established by the European Commission". To the right, the text "European Research Council" is followed by the tagline "Supporting top researchers from anywhere in the world". A search bar is located on the right side of the header. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: Home, Funding and Grants, Projects and Results (highlighted in green), Media and Events, About ERC, and Contact us. Below the navigation bar, a breadcrumb trail reads: "You are here: Homepage > Projects and Results > ERC Funded Projects".

ERC Funded Projects

Browse ERC projects by

Funding Scheme

Call year

Country of Host Institution

Keywords

Search

Clear all



The system is currently being updated.

Search by:

- *Call*
- *Year*
- *HI country*

which include also projects selected for funding whose grant agreements have not been signed yet.

For queries on the content, please use this [contact form](#) and select the category 'Web'.

Proposal structure



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Administrative documentation

Part A - online forms

General information on research proposal
Host Institution (HI) and applicant
Budget
Ethics
Call-specific questions

Annexes - submitted as .pdf

Host Institution support letter
Copy of PhD (or equivalent degree) certificate
(StG & CoG)
If applicable, document for extension of
eligibility window (StG & CoG)
If applicable explanatory information on ethical
issues

Documents sent to panel members in Step1:

Part B1 – submitted as .pdf

Extended Synopsis 5p
CV 2p
Early achievements
(StG & CoG) or 10-year track-record
(AdG) 2p

Documents sent to panel/reviewers in Step2:

Part B2 – submitted as .pdf

Full Scientific Proposal 15p
State-of-the-art and objectives
Methodology
Resources (incl project cost)



Submission of Proposals



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Differences in Part B1 and Part B2

In Step 1: **Panel members** see only **Part B1** of your proposal and are expected to act as generalists:

- Pay particular attention to the **ground-breaking nature** of the research project – no incremental research. State-of-the-art is not enough. Think big!
- Know your competitors – what is the **state of play** and why is your idea and scientific approach outstanding?
- Only the extended Synopsis is read at Step 1: **concise and clear presentation** is crucial (evaluators are not necessarily all experts in the field)
- Outline of the **methodological approach** (feasibility)
- Show your **scientific leadership** in your CV (model CV provided in the part B1 template)

Submission of Proposals

Differences in Part B1 and Part B2



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- In Step 2: Both **Part B1 and B2** are assessed by internal panel members and sent to specialists around the world (**specialised external referees**)
 - Do not just repeat the synopsis
 - Provide **details** on methodology, work plan, selection of case studies etc. (15 pages)
 - Check coherency of figures, **justify requested resources**
 - Explain **involvement/profile of team members**
 - Provide alternative strategies to **mitigate risk**

Submission to Panels



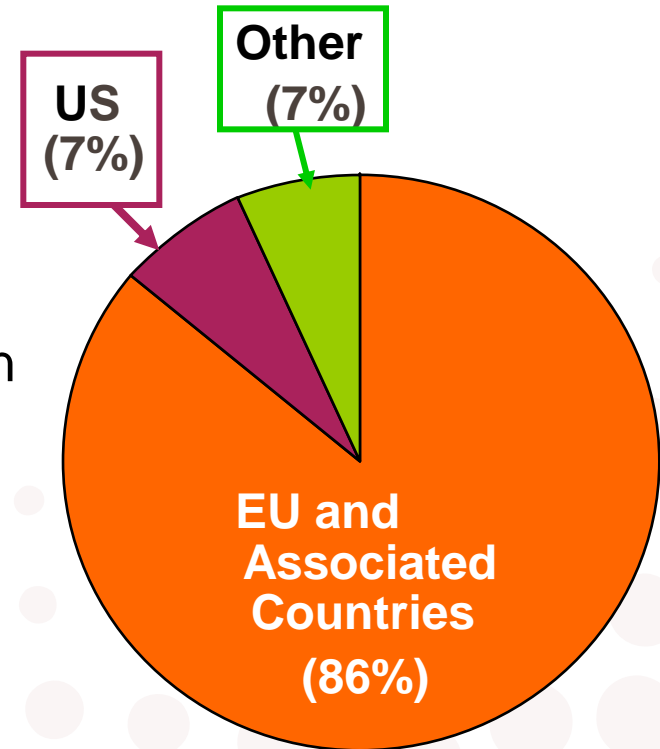
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- 25 panels covering all areas of science and scholarship:
 - Life Sciences (LS) - 9 panels
 - Physical Sciences & Engineering (PE) - 10 panels
 - Social Sciences and Humanities (SH) - 6 panels
- Proposals are submitted to a Panel of PI's choice
 - PI can flag one “Secondary Review Panel”
 - Can explain the interdisciplinary nature of the proposal
- Transfer of proposals between panels may occur if
 - clear mistake on part of applicant
 - necessary expertise is available in a different panel
- **But:** In case of proposals spanning more than one panel or domain, evaluation by members of other panels possible

Evaluation of proposals: peer review

- **Panel members:**
 - High-level scientists
 - Recruited by ScC from all over the world:
~14% from outside Europe
 - About 12-16 members plus a chair person
 - Evaluate in Step1 and Step2
- **External Reviewers:** typically 2000 / call
 - Nominated in Step1 by panel
 - Evaluate only a small number of proposals only in Step2

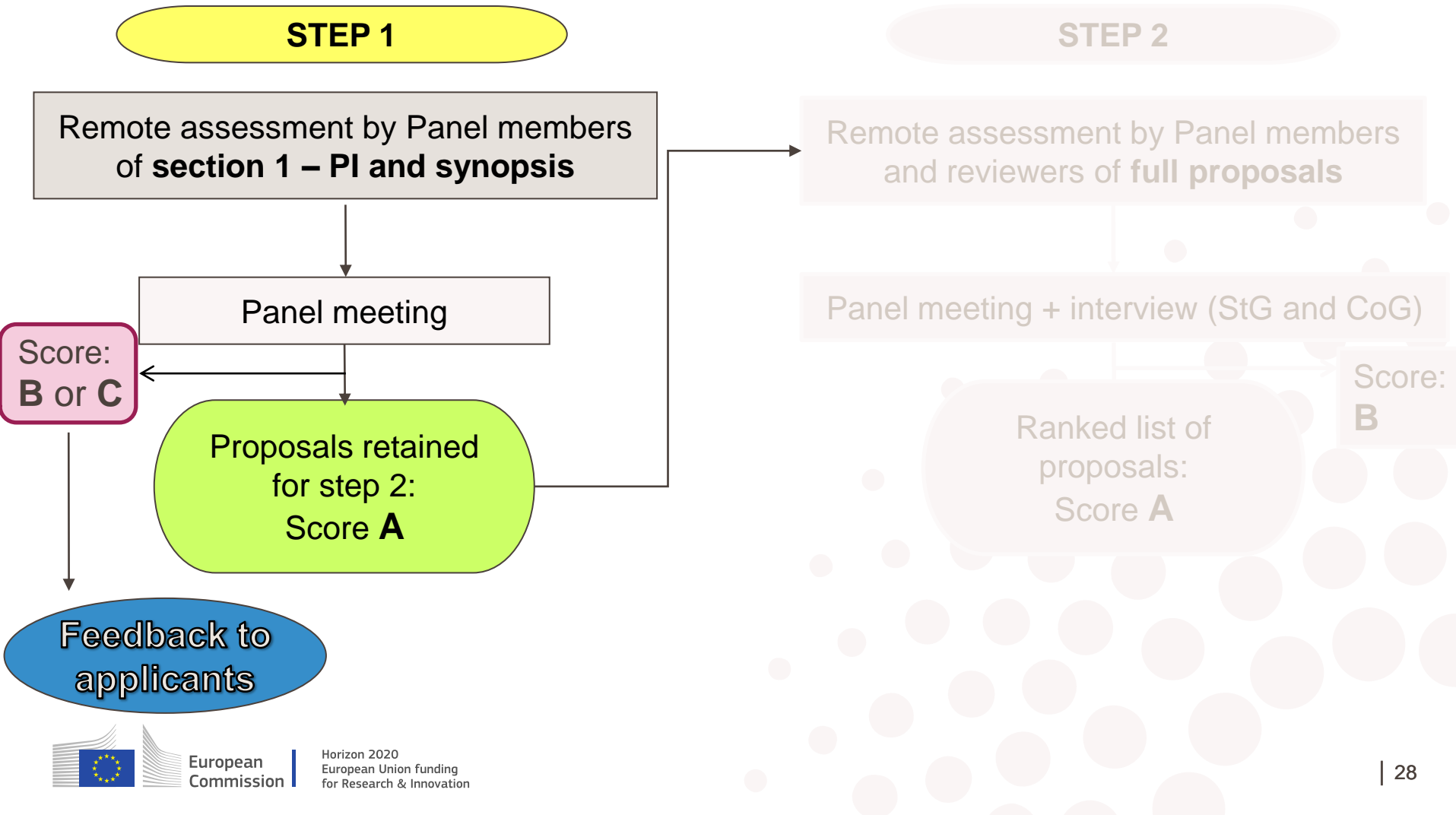


Evaluation of proposals: review procedure



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Evaluation of proposals: review procedure



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STEP 1

Remote assessment by Panel members
of **section 1 – PI and synopsis**

Panel meeting

Score:
B or C

Proposals retained
for step 2:
Score **A**

STEP 2

Remote assessment by Panel members
and reviewers of **full proposals**

Panel meeting + interview (StG and CoG)

Ranked list of
proposals:
Score **A**

Score:
B

Feedback to
applicants

Restrictions of reapplications



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- Increasing number of applications results in low success rates and high panel workload
 - those who receive a B at Step 1 have to wait out one year
 - those who receive a C have to wait out two years

More information:



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More information on

erc.europa.eu

National Contact Point (NCP)

erc.europa.eu/national-contact-points

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THANK YOU...

QUESTIONS?

ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants – Evaluation Questions - Project



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1. Research Project

Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Starting, Consolidator and Advanced

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?

To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development across disciplines)?

To what extent is the proposed research high risk/high gain?

Scientific Approach

To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible (based on the Extended Synopsis)?

To what extent is the proposed research methodology appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

To what extent are the proposed timescales and resources necessary and properly justified (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?



ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants – Evaluation Questions - PI



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2. Principal Investigator

Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment

Starting and Consolidator

Intellectual capacity and creativity

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to propose and conduct ground-breaking research?

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

To what extent have the achievements of the PI typically gone beyond the state-of-the-art?

Commitment

To what extent does the PI demonstrate the level of commitment to the project necessary for its execution and the willingness to devote a significant amount of time to the project (min 50% of the total working time on it and min 50% in an EU Member State or Associated Country) (based on the full Scientific Proposal).