ERC Grant Writing Workshop

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La OFICINA EUROPEA

EIT JRC

CDTI
Liderazgo Industrial

Ciencia Excelente

oficina europea

H2020

Reto 6
Ciencia con y para la Sociedad

Retos Sociales (salvo R6)

CDTI

MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA Y COMPETITIVIDAD

Infraestructuras

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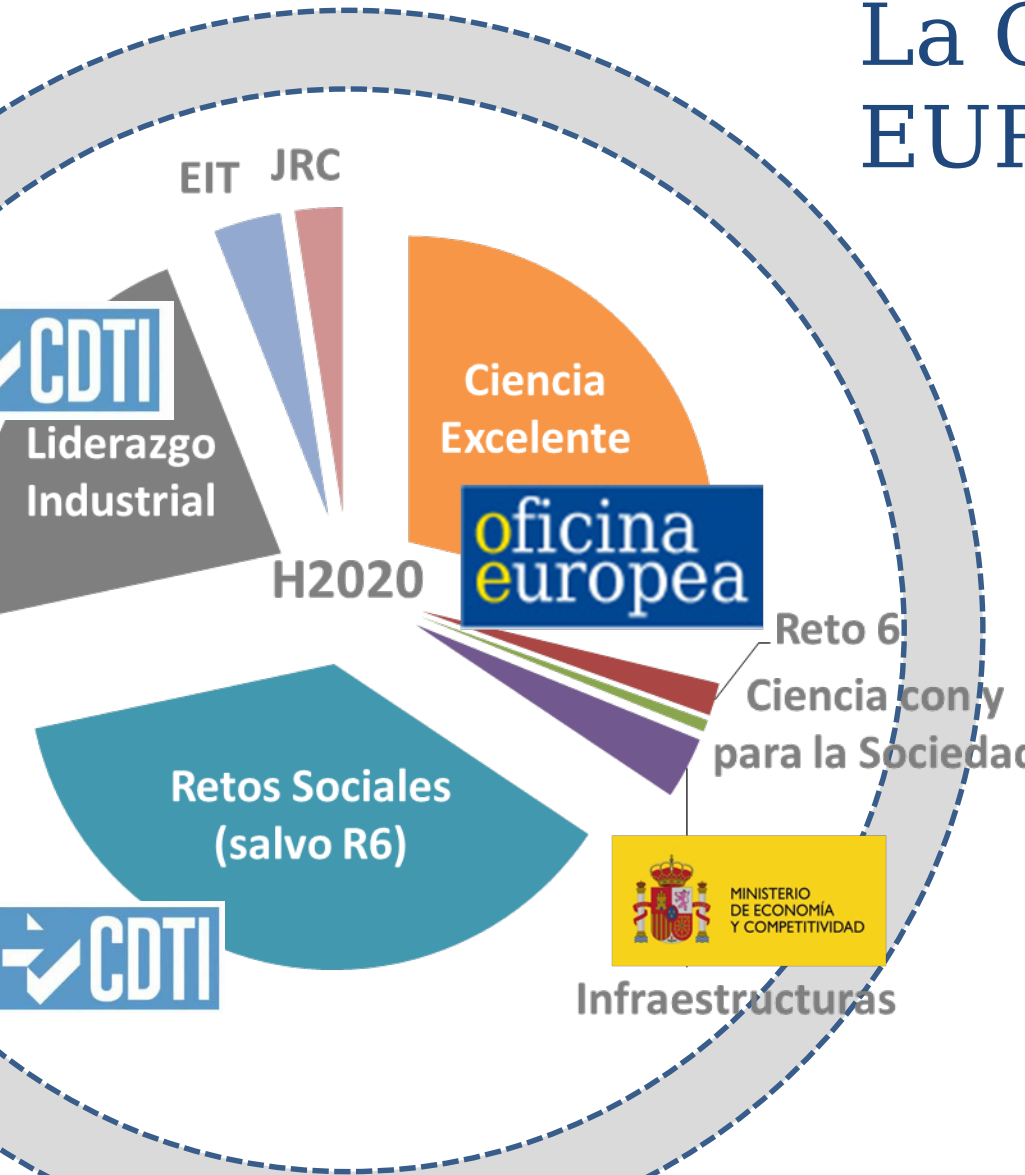
Objetive
- Promote the participation and leadership of the Spanish R&I system in H2020.

Areas
- EXCELLENT SCIENCE: ERC & MSCA
- SWAFS
- Challenge 6
- COST

Target group
- OPIs, Universities, public R&I centres

Pre-screening of proposals: What is it?

No es una revisión científica en estricto sentido, sino una valoración de la propuesta que busca mejorar su **estructura, claridad y atractivo**

- Proposal pre-screening: announced at www.eshorizonte2020.es
  - Who? Any elegible PI applying to StG or CoG
  - Evaluators are expert scientists, but not in the same field. Confidentiality agreement signed.
- Proposal sent through the HI project office at revisiones.erc@oficinaeuropea.es before a specific deadline (set by us)

Mock interviews

Supone un esfuerzo de dedicación por parte de los evaluadores y grantees que nos ayudan y que hacen una gran labor

- Expression of interest from the candidates needed (we don't know!)

- Common session + Q&A

- Individual mock interview (same conditions than the real one + 5 min of discussion)

- Panel=panel member +grantee

Rationale for this workshop

public consciousness. A proposal's overt function is to persuade a committee of scholars that the project shines with the three kinds of merit all disciplines value, namely, conceptual innovation, methodological rigor, and rich, substantive content. But to make these points stick, a proposal writer needs a feel for the unspoken customs, norms, and needs that govern the selection process itself. These are not really as arcane or ritualistic as one might suspect. For the most part, these customs arise from the committee's efforts to deal in good faith with its own problems: incomprehension among disciplines, work overload, and the problem of equitably judging proposals that reflect unlike social and academic circumstances.

Content

Two levels

I. On ERC specific issues

    I. Panel structure

    II. 2 step evaluation

    III. Evaluation questions

II. On grant writing

    I. Your audience

    II. Text structure

    III. Tips & tricks

Three stages

I. Before any writing

II. The first draft

III. Proof reading

What makes your proposal unique?

Preliminary promising result

Complete new line of research (*in Europe*)

New methodology, technology or device

New approach to an open question

Access to a unique set of data (SH)

Integration of various concepts/ techniques /views

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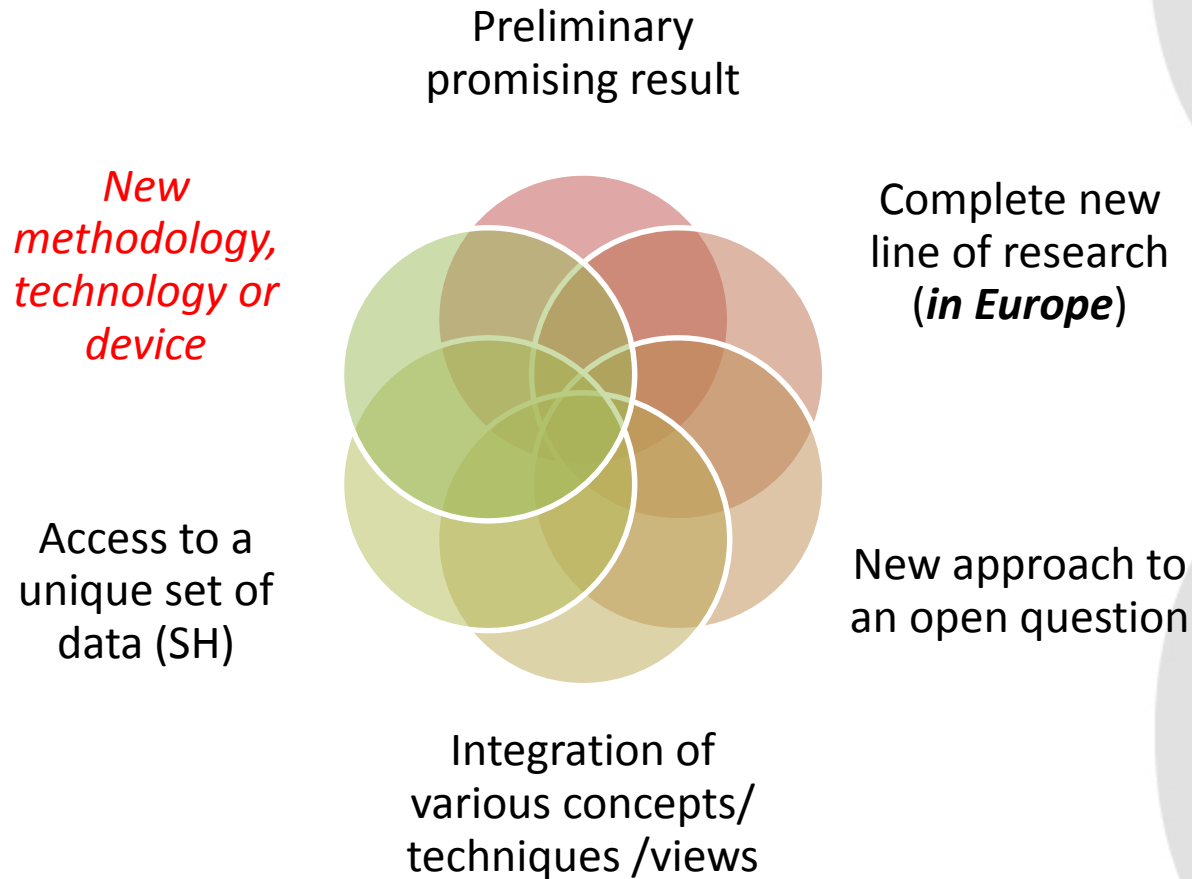
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BEFORE ANY WRITING...

Basic recommendations

EN

ERC Work Programme 2015

erc
European Research Council
Established by the European Commission
(European Commission C(2014)5008 of 22 July 2014)

1 | P a g e

Minimum profile

Evaluation questions!

Evaluation process

Panel description

erc
LOGO-ERC
European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC Frontier Research Grants

Information for applicants to the

Starting and Consolidator Grant 2015 Calls

7. October 2014

This document is published by the ERC Scientific Council on http://erc.europa.eu
It can also be downloaded from the Research and Innovation Participant Portal on
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Horizon 2020 Specific Programme
Part 1
Excellent Science

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▶ Funding Schemes
▼ Apply for Funding
- Step by Step
- Call for Proposals
- Evaluation Panels
- Host Institutions
- For Non-European Researchers

National Contact Points

FAQ

Evaluation Panels

Tweet

The selection of scientific and scholarly proposals for ERC funding is based on international peer review with excellence as the sole criterion. The ERC uses a typical panel-based system, in which panels of high-level scientists and/or scholars make recommendations for funding.

Domain and panel structure

The ERC panel structure consists of 25 panels.

The panels of each grant are grouped into three disciplinary domains that cover the entire spectrum of science, engineering and scholarship:

1. Social sciences and Humanities (SH)
2. Life sciences (LS)
3. Physical and Engineering Sciences (PE)

Research proposals of a multi and inter disciplinary nature are strongly encouraged throughout the ERC's schemes. Proposals of this type are evaluated by the ERC's regular panels with the appropriate external expertise.
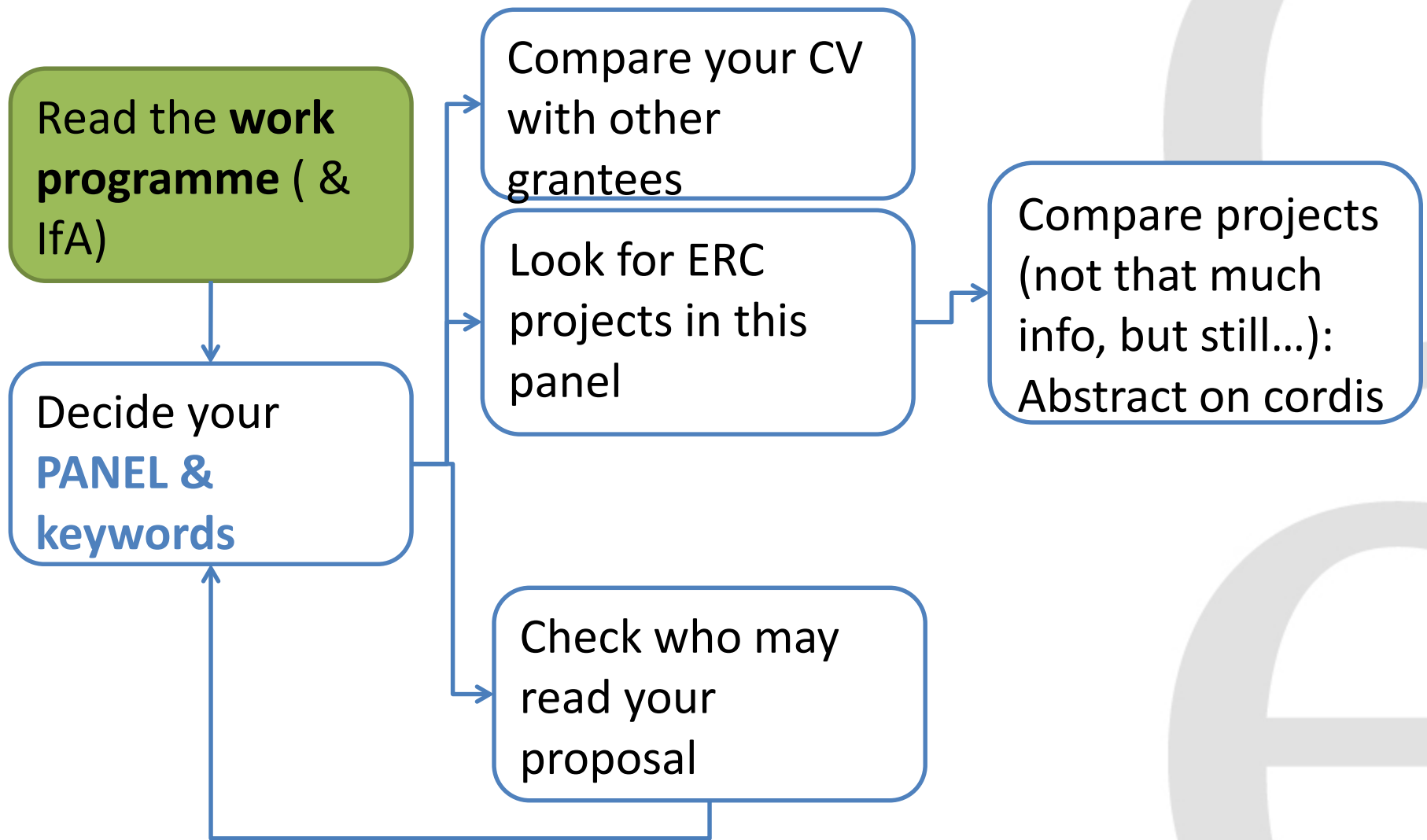
Composition of the panels

Each ERC panel consists of a chairman and 10-16 members. The Panel Chair and the Panel Members are selected on the basis of their scientific reputation.

In addition to the Panel Members (who act as "generalists"), the ERC evaluations rely on input from remote experts external to the panel, called referees. They are scientists and scholars who bring in the necessary specialised expertise.

Before the deadline of a call, the names of the panel chairs are published on the ERC website. Similarly, the names of panel members are published, however, after the evaluation process is concluded.

Panel Chairs and Panel Members from the ERC Starting Grant calls

ERC-2014-StG	Panel Chairs
ERC-2013-StG	Panel Chairs Panel Members
ERC-2012-StG	Panel Chairs Panel Members

You are here: **Homepage** > **Projects and Results** > **ERC Funded Projects**

Browse ERC projects by

Funding scheme ⊞

Call year ⊞

Country of Host Institution ⊞

Keywords:

[   ]

Start/Show   Clear all

ERC Funded Projects

Important notice: Due to upgrade and maintenance of the ERC funded projects section, projects signed in 2014 may not appear in the search. We apologize for the inconvenience, but this page will be fully accessible soon.

The ERC operates according to an "investigator-driven", or "bottom-up", approach, allowing researchers to identify new opportunities in any field of research. Accordingly the portfolio of ERC funded projects spans a wide range of topics and research questions.

Since 2007, more than **4,500 projects** have been selected to receive ERC funding throughout the EU Member States and the associated countries. The ERC has received over **43,000 project proposals** for its calls.

You can use the menu on the left to search quickly and easy ERC funded projects.

- Projects can be filtered according to: funding schemes, call year, and/or country of host institution.

- The "keywords" free text filter can be used to search by project acronym, panel abbreviations (e.g. LS1, PE3 etc...), scientific disciplines, or others. *For the panel abbreviations, see* here *the overview of panel descriptors.*

Information displayed is automatically updated through the information available on the **CORDIS** platform.
Please note that only funded projects, whose grant agreements have been signed, appear in this database. For this reason, the total number of projects in this database may differ from the figures provided in the statistics section 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'.

Read the **work programme** (& IfA)

Decide your **PANEL & keywords**

Compare your CV with other grantees

Look for ERC projects in this panel

Compare projects (not that much info, but still…): Abstract on cordis

Check who may read your proposal

PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

PART A – online forms

A1 Proposal and PI info
A2 Host Institution info
A3 Budget

Annexes – submitted as .pdf

- Statement of support of HI
- If applicable: explanatory information on ethical issues; copy of PhD (StG, CoG); document for extension of eligibility window (StG, CoG)

PART B1

- Extended Synopsis   5 p.
- CV   2 p.
- Track Record   2 p.

PART B2

- Scientific Proposal   15 p.

Administrative information

- A1, A2 on-line forms.

- A3 budget : Total budget must be equal than the one stated in B2. **In case of discrepancy, A3 prevails.**

- HI support letter: template given*, duly signed and stamped with date.

- PhD Diploma

- Extension of elegibility: official docs.

- Ethics self-assessment on-line form→ If needed, extra annex with relevant certificates/procedures…

Exclusion of reviewers

- Up to three names, not reason needed
- Usually respected, but the panel chair has the last word.

Panel Structure

Life Sciences

LS1 Molecular & Structural Biology & Biochemistry

LS2 Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics & Systems Biology

LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology

LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology & Endocrinology

LS5 Neurosciences & Neural Disorders

LS6 Immunity & Infection

LS7 Diagnostic tools, Therapies & Public Health

LS8 Evolutionary, Population & Environmental Biology

LS9 Applied Life Sciences & Biotechnology

Social Sciences & Humanities

SH1	**Individuals, Markets and Organisations**
SH2	**Institutions, Values, Environment and Space**
SH3	**The Social World, Diversity, Population**
SH4	**The Human Mind and Its Complexity**.
SH5	**Cultures and Cultural Production (antropology)**
SH6	**The Study of the Human Past**

Physical Sciences & Engineering

PE1 Mathematics

PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter

PE3 Condensed Matter Physics

PE4 Physical & Analytical Chemical Sciences

PE5 Materials & Synthesis

PE6 Computer Science & Informatics

PE7 Systems & Communication Engineering

PE8 Products & Process Engineering

PE9 Universe Sciences

PE10 Earth System Science

Keywords

> ➢ Keywords define **who**- PM/external referee- will evaluate your proposal. Check them carefully!!!

PE9

1. Georges Meylan (Panel Chair)
2. João Manuel Alves
3. Luciana Bianchi
4. Robert H. Brandenberger
5. Marc Chaussidon
6. Carsten Dominik
7. Eva Grebel
8. Luigi Guzzo
9. Richard Harrison
10. Carole Mundell
11. Hagai Netzer
12. Guy Perrin
13. Peter Schneider
14. José-María Torrelles

PE9

- PE9_1 Solar and interplanetary physics
- PE9_2 Planetary systems sciences
- PE9_3 Interstellar medium
- PE9_4 Formation of stars and planets
- PE9_5 Astrobiology
- PE9_6 Stars and stellar systems
- PE9_7 The Galaxy
- PE9_8 Formation and evolution of galaxies
- PE9_9 Clusters of galaxies and large scale structures
- PE9_10 High energy and particles astronomy – X-rays, cosmic rays, gamma rays, neutrinos
- PE9_11 Relativistic astrophysics
- PE9_12 Dark matter, dark energy
- PE9_13 Gravitational astronomy
- PE9_14 Cosmology
- PE9_15 Space Sciences

Keywords

- Each panel has its own descriptors/keywords

- Free text keywords also

- Keywords determine who will read your proposal as evaluator and/or external referee. Check them carefully

- Keywords ~ panel members

- Some keywords updates in SH, LS9, PE7

Acronym, full title, abstract, B1, and B2

THE FIRST DRAFT

General considerations

- [Success rate]+[resubmission restriction] = take it seriously!

- Writing an excellent proposal takes **time** and effort

- All retained proposals are excellent, but an excellent proposal can fail.

- Within the good ones, decisions are made in the margins

- Writing is a difficult task: when writing, actively try to be as clear and attractive as you can. And do **critically review your proposal**

Submission of proposals

PART A – online forms

A1 Proposal and PI info
A2 Host Institution info
A3 Budget

PART B1 – submitted as .pdf

- Extended Synopsis   5 p.
- CV   2 p.
- Track Record   2 p.

Annexes – submitted as .pdf

- Statement of support of HI
- If applicable: explanatory information on ethical issues; copy of PhD (StG, CoG); document for extension of eligibility window (StG, CoG)

PART B2 – submitted as .pdf

- Scientific Proposal   15 p.

On acronyms and titles

ACRONYM

- Pronounceable
- Catchy
- Evoquator of the science behind
- May be a short title!

FULL TITLE

- Meaningful
- … but not too specific

On acronyms and titles

ACRONYM

- EXPAND

- ChinaCreative

- PANDA

- NANOHEDONISM

FULL TITLE

- Defining the cellular dynamics leading to tissue expansion

- From Made in China to Created in China - A Comparative Study of Creative Practice and Production in Contemporary China

- Phylogenetic ANalysis of Diversification Across the tree of life

- A Photo-triggered On-demand Drug Delivery System for Chronic Pain

ABSTRACT: the door

Possible structure

- Relevance
- Main objective
- Novelty
- Some hints of methodology
- Impact

Most common errors

- No novelty (highlighted)
- No impact
- Too wordy
- Too many info on the state of the art and not the idea itself
- Info on the PI, or not relevant info

What makes your proposal unique?

Preliminary
promising result

*New
methodology,
technology or
device*

Complete new
line of research
(*in Europe*)

Access to a
unique set of
data (SH)

New approach to
an open question

Integration of
various concepts/
techniques /views
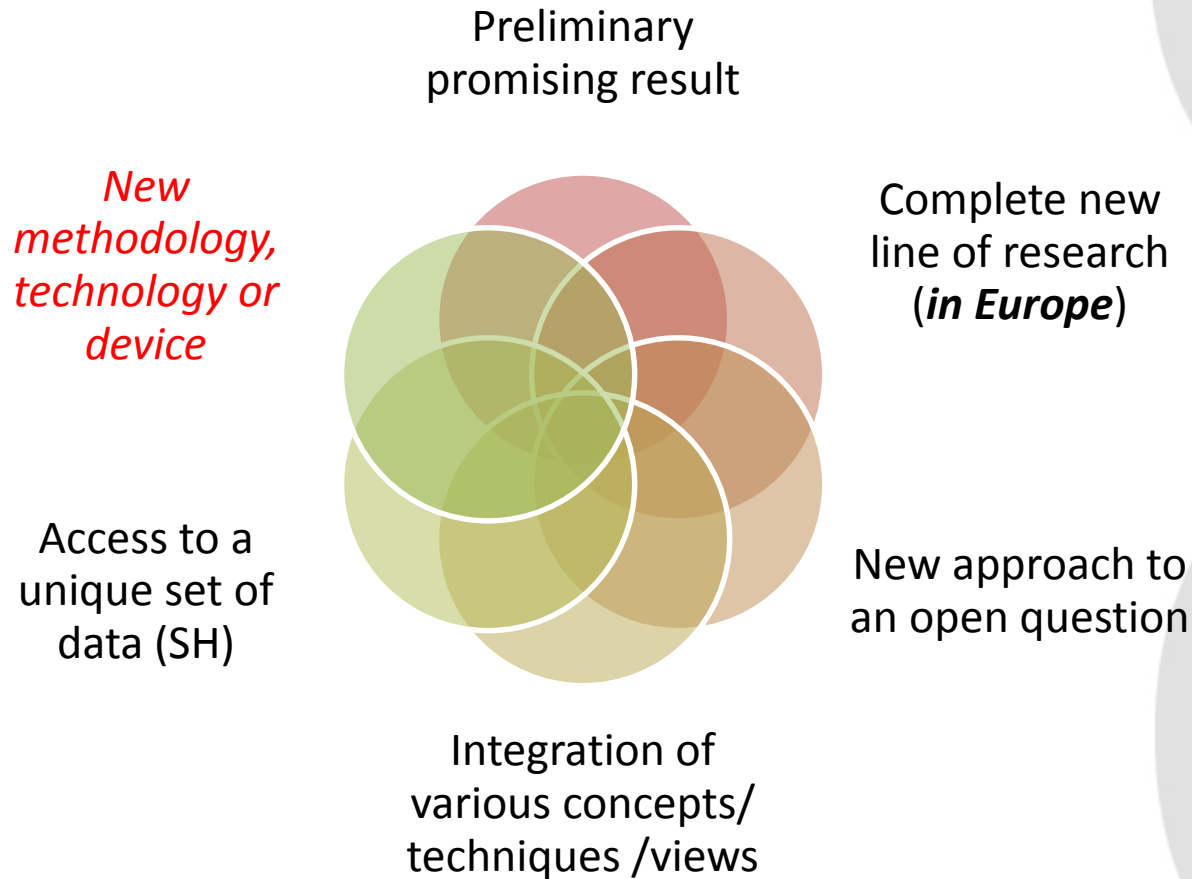
The Cover Page: abstract + title + basic info

Proposal Full Title

PROPOSAL ACRONYM

Cover Page:
- Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Name of the PI's host institution for the project
- Proposal duration in months

Proposal summary (identical to the abstract from the online proposal submission forms, section 1).

The abstract (summary) should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as the short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to contact in particular the potential remote referees and/or inform the Commission and/or the programme management committees and/or relevant national funding agencies (provided you give permission to do so where requested in the online proposal submission forms, section 1). It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information.

Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. The abstract must be written in English. There is a limit of 2000 characters (spaces and line breaks included).

> SHORT and PRECISE with NO CONFIDENTIAL information

Explanation/justification of cross-panel or cross domain nature, if a secondary panel is indicated in the online proposal submission forms. There is a limit of 1000 characters, spaces and line breaks included.

> justification on ID nature!! (key for the panel)

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B1: The evaluation process
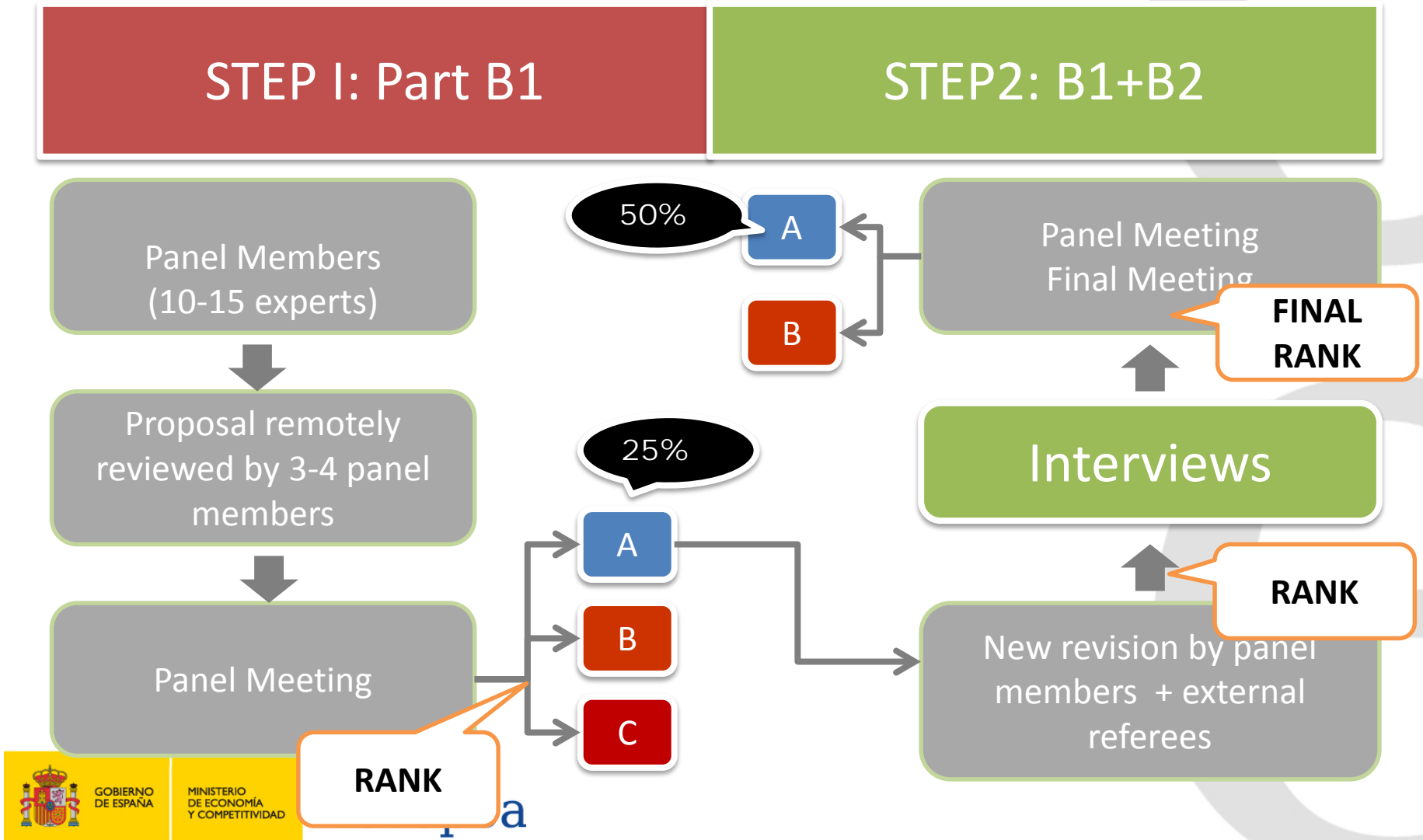
B1: Evaluation: step 1 & step 2

STEP I (ONLY B1):
- a) Extended synopsis
- b) CV IP
- c) Early achievements track record/ 10 year track record

> - Proposal reviewed by 3-4 PM
> - 35-45 proposals per PM
> - Individual remote Assessment
> - Panel meeting Decision of proposals retained to step 2
> - Feedback to applicants (A,B, C)

STEP II (B1 + B2):
- Scientific Proposal
- Interview (StG/CoG)

> - Retained proposals are assigned to external referees
> - Remote individual assessment by PM + Referees
> - Panel meeting + individual interview (StG + CoG)
> - Feedback to applicants (A, B)

Evaluation panel: Ranking meeting
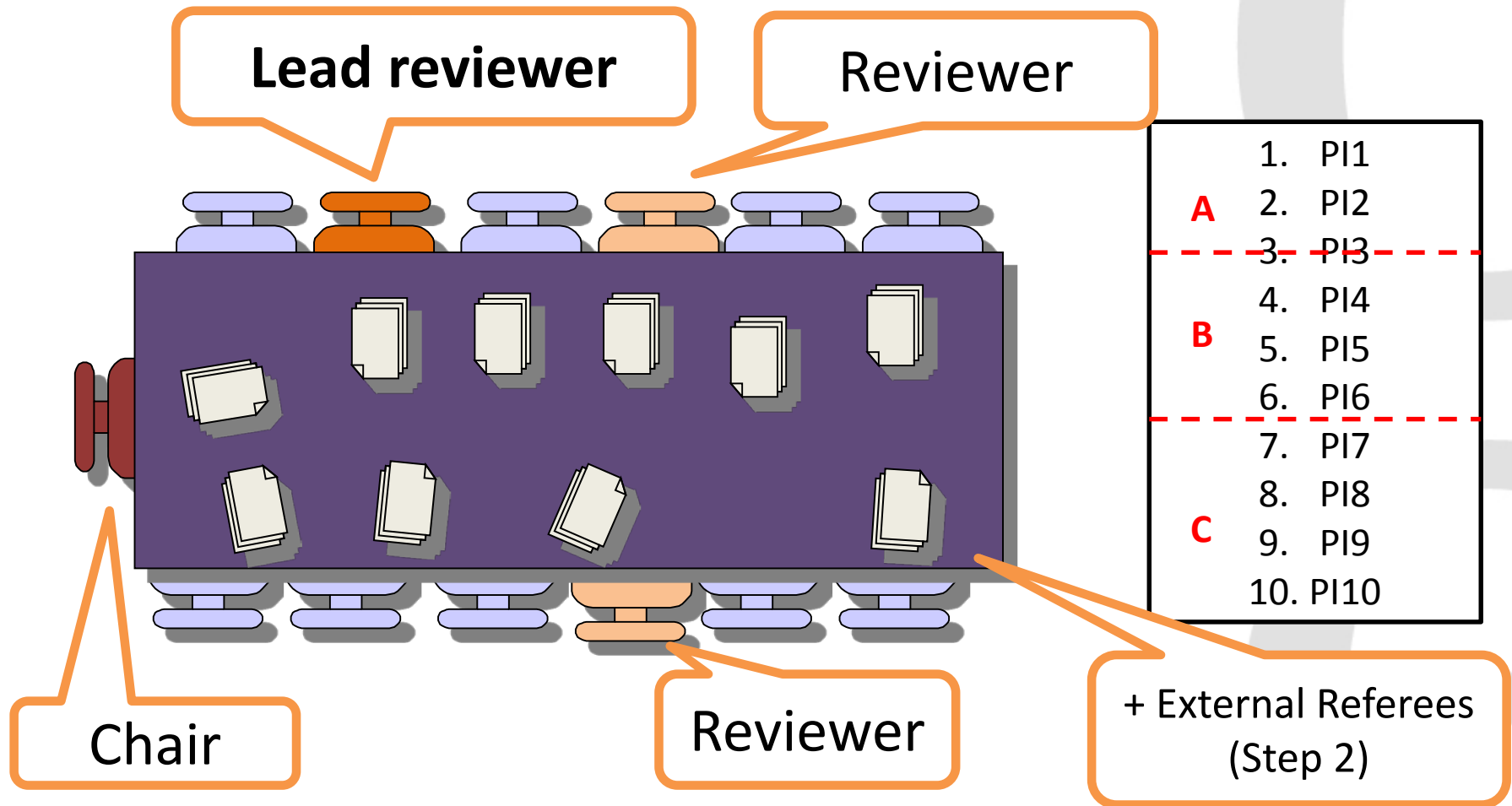
Number of applications decreasing

STG 2014-2015 # and share of evaluated proposals by domain

Legend:
- STG 2014 (3204)
- STG 2015 (2871)
- % in domain 2014
- % in domain 2015

Y-axis: # evaluated proposals (0, 200, 400, 600, 800, 1000, 1200, 1400, 1600)

PE: 45,4% 43,6%
LS: 31,5% 32,1%
SH: 23,0% 24,3%

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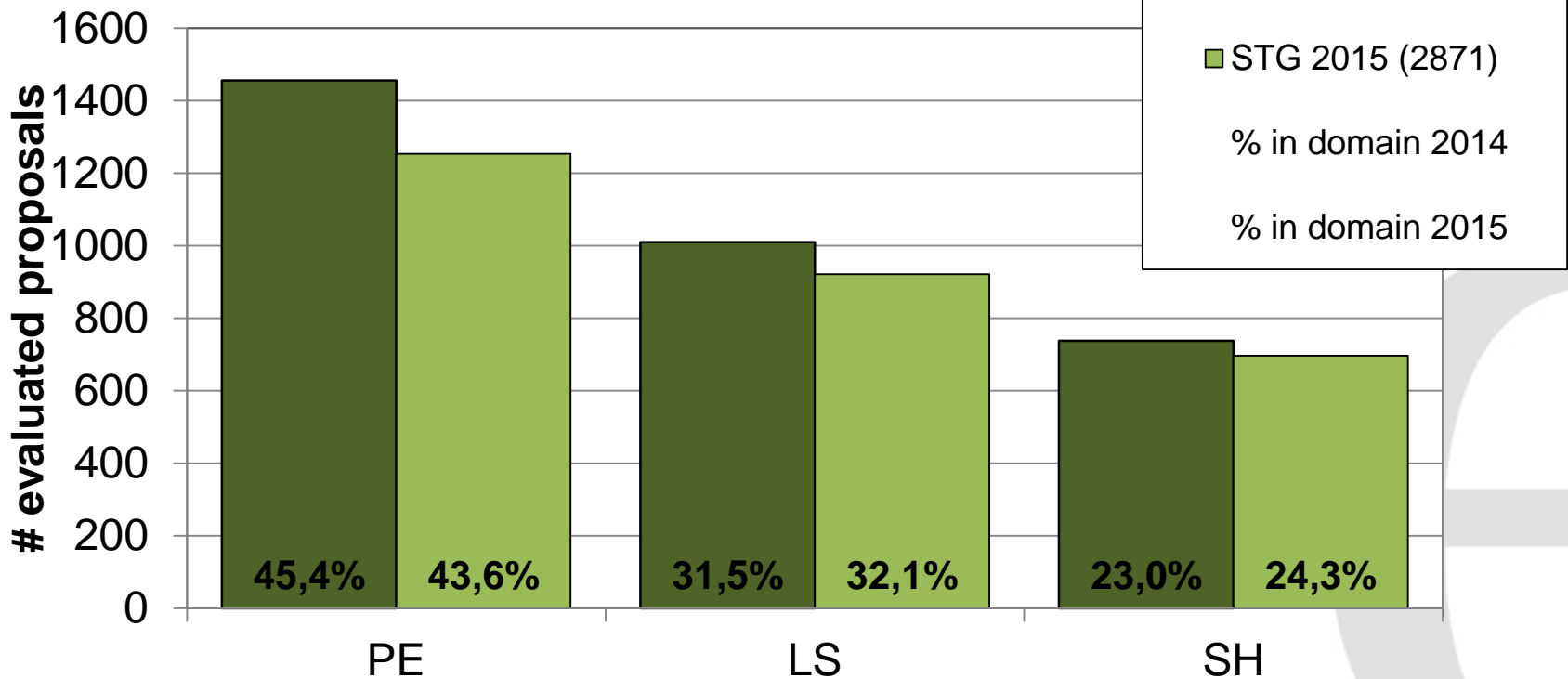
Numbers

- StG2014: 3272 applications ~827 interviews, 10%-11% success rate (370 projects) 11% success rate

- CoG2014: 2528 applications, 810 interviews, 400 projects expected, 15% success.

- CoG 2015: 330 projects expected

1. Research project: Ground breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

RELEVANCE

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)?

How much is the proposed research **high risk/high gain**?

NOVELTY

IMPACT

FEASIBILITY

Scientific Approach

To what extent is the outlined scientific approach **feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high gain/high risk** (based on Extended Synopsis)?

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

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

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

2. PI: Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment (for StG and CoG)

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% for Starting and 40% for Consolidator of the total working time on it and min 50% in an EU Member State or Associated Country) (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?*

2. PI: Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment (for Advanced)

Advanced
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
To what extent has the PI demonstrated sound leadership in the training and advancement of young scientists?
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 30% of the total working time on it and min 50% in an EU Member State or Associated Country) (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

The extended synopsis

- Extended synopsis (5 pages): should give a concise presentation of the scientific proposal, including the scientific feasibility of the project, with particular attention to its ground-breaking nature and how it may open up new horizons or opportunities for research

- **Free format**

The Extended Synopsis

Evaluators say:

- Know the field
- Not a continuation of your postdoc but built on your previous experience
- Original and groundbreaking
- Ambitious but realistic (not mad)
- Hypothesis driven

Extended synopsis

Possible structure

- Main objective/idea /core concept of the project focusing on its novel aspects
- State of the art, nowadays limitations
- Methodology, challenges &risks: preliminary results, contingency plans
- Potential Impact
- Resources & team (optional)

Most common errors

- Lack of clarity
- Ambiguity
- No risk analysis

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CV and Track record

Evaluators say:

- **Independence**
- **CLARITY:** Vague information won't help you.
- **QUALITY** vs QUANTITY
- The track record **must be in line** with the proposed research
- Numbers are ok but explain your contribution
- EXPLAIN: The panel members may not know if your merits are relevant or not (prizes, grants, journals…)
- Post-doctoral stays: CLARITY
- Contribution at each career step: explain gaps

CV & Track record

Content

- Follow the templates... but adapt them if necessary!
- Track record: rationale selection: quality vs quantity. EXPLAIN IT!
- Put every proof of independence you may have
- But avoid too local, not relevant merits

Most common errors

- Lack of coherence between your track record and your proposal.
- Core competences missing (and you don't give any solution)
- Not structured/selected info

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Applicant's last name   Part B1   ACRONYM

Section b: **Curriculum vitae** (max. 2 pages)

[The template below is provided only for guidance. It may be modified as necessary and appropriate.]

PERSONAL INFORMATION
Family name, First name:
Researcher unique identifier(s) (such as ORCID, Research ID, etc. ...):
Date of birth:
URL for web site:

- **EDUCATION**

199?	PhD
	Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution, Country
199?	Master
	Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution, Country

- **CURRENT POSITION(S)**

2017 – 2017	Current Position
	Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country
200? –	Current Position (please specify if supervision)
	Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **PREVIOUS POSITIONS**

200? – 200?	Position held (please specify if supervision)
	Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country
200? – 200?	Position held (please specify if supervision)
	Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

200? – 200?	Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country
200?	Award received from Name of Institution/ Country
198? – 199?	Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

- **SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS**

| 200? – 200? | Number of Postdocs/ PhD/ Master Students |
| | Name of Faculty/ Department/ Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country |

- **TEACHING ACTIVITIES (if applicable)**

| 200? – | Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/ Country |
| 200? – 200? | Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/ Country |

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- **Use it** but feel free to adapt it to your needs

- New: ORCID, Researcher ID

- URL website: introduce all references you think can help you: your group website, HI website, postdoc website, … (and not only here)

Curriculum Vitae TEMPLATE

Applicant's last name		Part B1		ACRONYM

Appendix: *All ongoing and submitted grants and funding of the PI (Funding ID)*
Mandatory information. Does not count towards page limits.

On-going Grants

Project Title	Funding source	Amount	Period	Relation to current ERC proposal

Applications

Project Title	Funding source	Amount	Period	Relation to current ERC proposal

- Extra 2 pages limit
- **Funding ID**: To avoid double funding, but also to check you leadership.

B2: Full proposal

Structure

- Objectives and state of the art
- Methodology
- Resources (including budget table)

Content

- B1 + more detailed info on methodology
- To be read by external referees

B2 (C) Resources

Cost Category			Total in Euro
Direct Costs[1]	**Personnel**	PI[2]	
		Senior Staff	
		Postdocs	
		Students	
		Other	
	i. Total Direct Costs for Personnel (in Euro)		
	Travel		
	Equipment		
	Other goods and services	Consumables	
		Publications (including Open Access fees), etc.	
		Other (please specify)	
	ii. Total Other Direct Costs (in Euro)		
A – Total Direct Costs (i + ii) (in Euro)			
B – Indirect Costs (overheads) 25% of Direct Costs[3] (in Euro)			
C1 – Subcontracting Costs (no overheads) (in Euro)			
C2 – Other Direct Costs with no overheads[4] (in Euro)			
Total Estimated Eligible Costs (A + B + C) (in Euro)[5]			
Total Requested EU Contribution (in Euro)[6]			

For the above cost table, please indicate the duration of the project in months:	
For the above cost table, please indicate the % of working time the PI dedicates to the project over the period of the grant:	**%**

> Besides the table, justification of profiles, equipment needed, and use of other EXISTING resources

StG2014: Average budget of funded projects

- ● Average cost of funded proposal per month
- ● Max cost per proposal per month
- ● Min cost per proposal per month

(25000 € = 1.5 m € over 60 months)
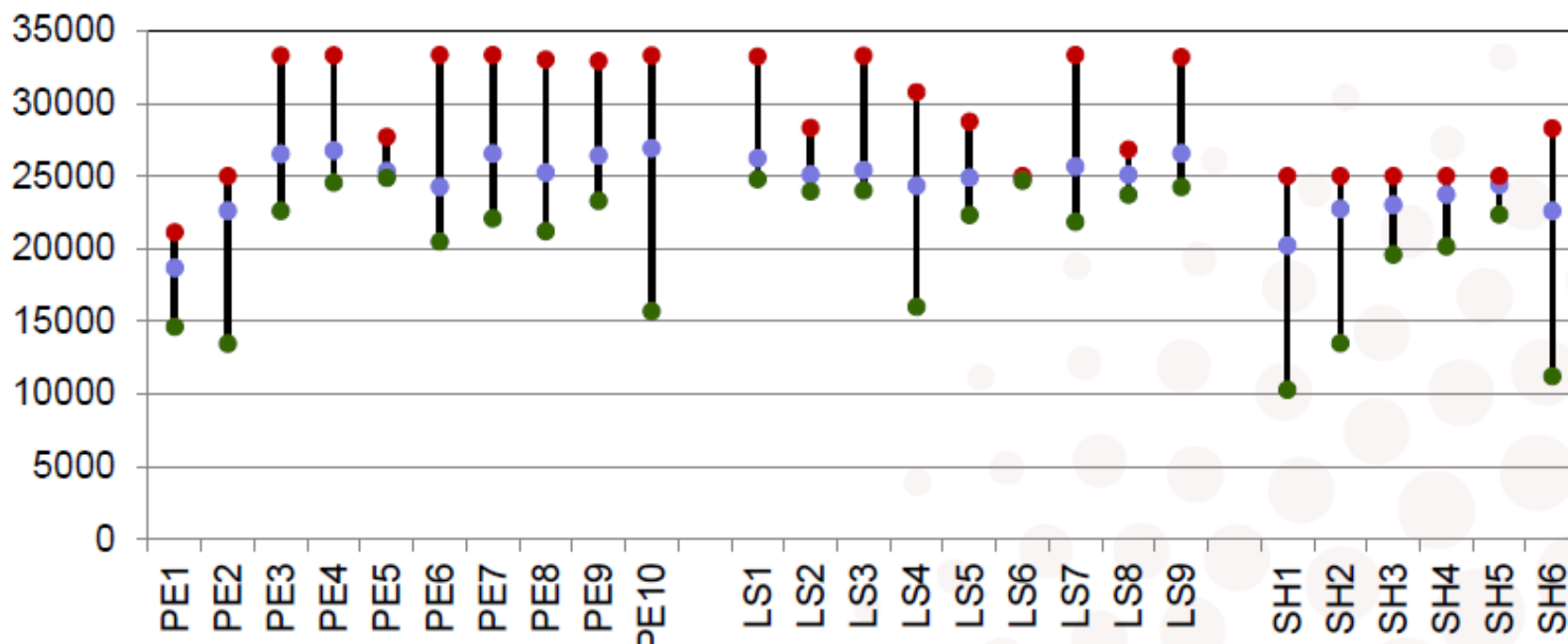
¡4 ojos ven más que 2!

PROOF READING

Extended synopsis: Tips & tricks

- Use the first and last paragraphs to convey the core ideas

- Key figures: before/after, b&w, self-explanatory (striking if possible). Not too many

- Use of I, we

- Active voice, choose the right verb

- Cut the clutter: many, very, it has been shown that…

Proof reading

- Final draft: 8-6 weeks before the deadline
- Give your draft to colleagues from other disciplines
- Format & tone reviews
- English!

EVALUATION REPORTS

Final score at each step

STEP 1

A	is of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation;
B	is of high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 2 of the evaluation
C	is not of sufficient quality to pass to step 2 of the evaluation

STEP 2

A	fully meets the ERC's excellence criterion and is recommended for funding if sufficient funds are available
B	meets some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and will not be funded

ESR structure

Cover sheet: basic info about the proposal (PI, Title, HI), including the abstract
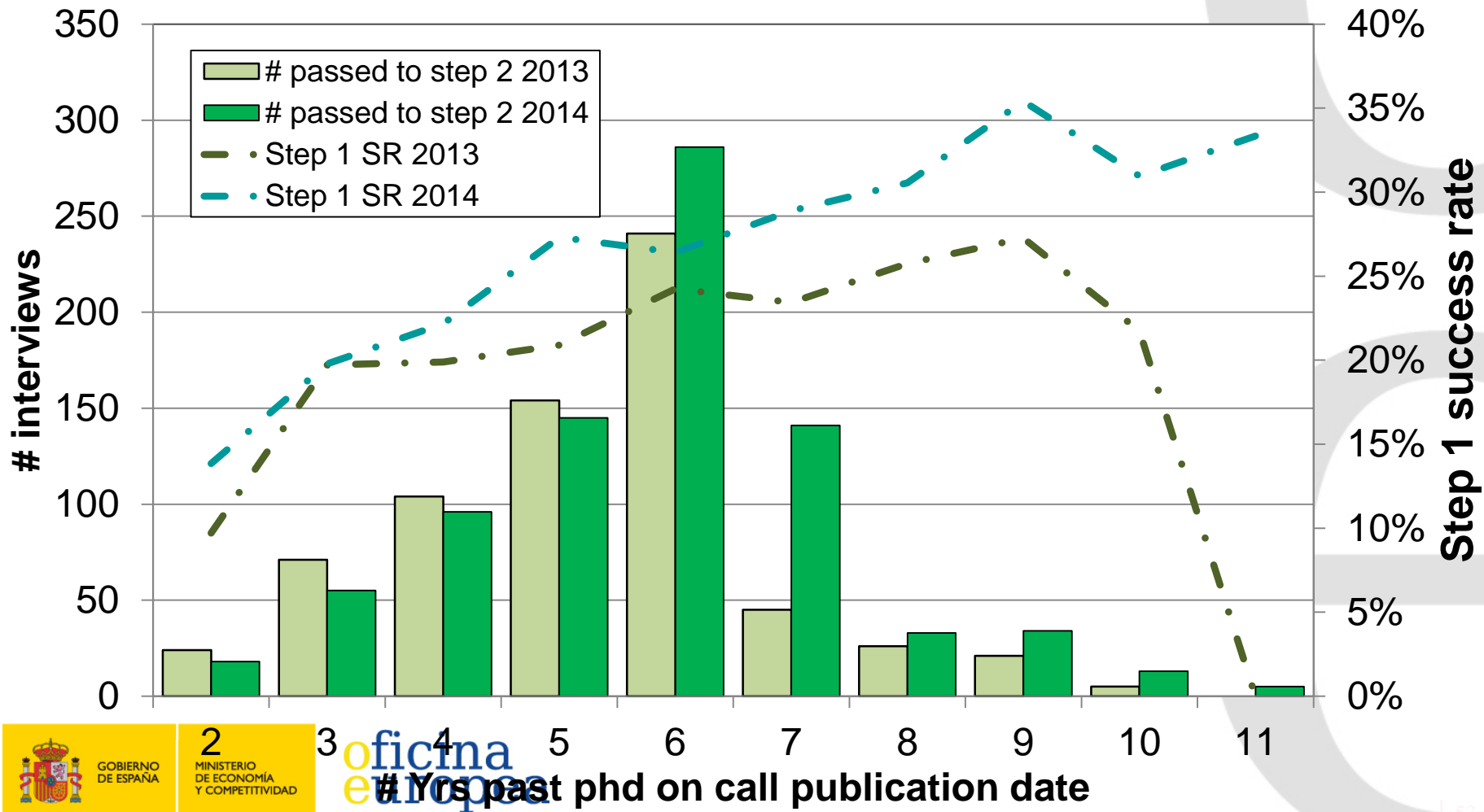
Final score + ranking range
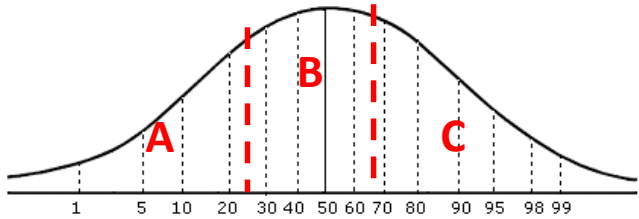
Panel Comment

Individual reviews: different roles

StG 2013 - 2014
Results of Step1 by years past PhD

Work hard on your written proposal, keeping in mind the evaluation questions but do use the freedom ERC enables to do your dream proposal. And **follow your own criteria. ¡Mucha suerte!**

esther.rodriguez@oficinaeuropea.es

NOTE

- This presentation shows the experiences shared by many panel members and succesful grantees

- It gathers also most common features seen in succesful (and not successful) proposals

- All the proposal information given in this presentation is public and available at different internet sites (ERC, CORDIS, eshorizonte2020.es)