

Guidelines ERC Grants

Version 16.10.2025

The University of Bayreuth is always delighted when our researchers apply for grants of the European Research Council (ERC). We have a good track record in securing what is arguably the most prestigious individual funding in Europe and are therefore committed to provide interested researchers with the best possible support to successfully place their projects in the European research landscape.

The University of Bayreuth would also like to support its faculties in attracting successful ERC grantees to Bayreuth.

These guidelines will cover both aspects and explain what you need to keep in mind surrounding the ERC grant and what kind of support we can offer you.

1. ERC application

The European Research Council (ERC) calls for proposals are aimed at these target groups:

- **ERC Starting Grants (StG):** young scholars 2-7 years after their doctorate (from 2027 call: 0-10 years after doctorate)
- **ERC Consolidator Grants (CoG):** advanced scholars 7-12 years after their doctorate (from 2027 call: 5-15 years after doctorate)
- **ERC Advanced Grants (AdG):** established scholars
- **ERC Synergy Grant (SyG):** a small team of established scholars, 2-4 PIs (1 PI can be located outside EU)

ERC grants have a duration of 5 years, only ERC SyG has 6 years. They are endowed with up to € 1.5 Mio (StG), € 2 Mio (CoG), € 2.5 Mio (AdG), or € 10 Mio (SyG).

The call dates are published on the [ERC webpages](#), the calls themselves can be viewed on the [Funding & Tender Portal](#) of the EU.

The Office of Research Support publishes the calls in the [newsletter](#). Most calls are published around 3 months before submission deadline. We therefore recommend that you start thinking about the ERC and a concept for an ERC project well in advance of the call.

If you are interested in an ERC application, we will support you from the very beginning, from the first considerations to the final submission of your ERC proposal.

1.1 Should I apply?

To apply for an ERC grant, you should have an **innovative project idea** that can last for 5 (or 6) years and that will significantly advance your field. At the same time, you should be able to convincingly demonstrate that you are exactly the right person, or that your ERC Synergy group has exactly the right people, to implement the project idea.

It helps to look at previous ERC grantees from your field. The ERC webpage [Projects & Statistics](#) provides an overview.

You are welcome to contact us at this stage already and send us your CV with a list of publications. We will advise you on the most suitable time for an ERC application, especially with regard to your personal scientific career phase.

Scientific excellence is the only criterion for the ERC. You need an excellent project idea and an excellent academic track record. For a ERC SyG you need to present convincingly that the project will only succeed in the proposed group.

1.2 I would like to apply. What comes next?

We will provide you with the necessary documents. First, we go through the "**Information for Applicants**" with you, which is updated and published for each call. Here, the ERC procedure is explained in detail from start to submission, and the review process and evaluation criteria are explained. The submission process is examined and explained for every step of the way.

For your **financial planning**, we will give you an Excel spreadsheet to plan your staff and material expenses over the 5 years of the ERC grant (6 years in case of SyG). The 25% overhead that the EC contributes to the project is already calculated in this tool. Depending on which staff you want to hire in which years, we will calculate the corresponding costs for you. The Excel tool also allows you to calculate the depreciation costs of large equipment purchases. When submitting your proposal via the portal, you only enter the 5 (6)-year totals of the relevant budget items, i.e. our Excel spreadsheet is an internal tool to help you plan your budget better.

We also provide you with the **proposal templates B1 and B2**, the crucial documents in terms of content. B1 is the shorter part, it introduces the project and needs to be written rather broadly so that every panel member can follow your proposal and can be convinced of the project idea. This is all about good 'storytelling'. The panel members come from a range of subject areas, so write B1 as broadly as possible.

B2 is the longer, more in-depth part that goes to the external peer reviewers (experts in your field), in case you make it to the second round. This should be more demanding in terms of language and content.

We will also help you with the **online part of your application**. You should enlist as a user in the [Funding & Tender Portal](#) and, ideally, register your project application at an early stage. You can do

this as soon as the 'Submit' button of the relevant call is activated in the portal. You can save and edit your online project application at any time.

- PIC (EU code) of the University of Bayreuth: 999849908
- Abbreviation of the University of Bayreuth: UBT
- Administrative Contact (in Step 4 of the project registration): see contact person below

We recommend that you contact the staff of the [Bavarian Research Alliance \(BAYFOR\)](#) for support regarding subject-specific aspects of your proposal (if your topics matches with their areas of expertise). BayFOR also offers to read your proposal.

If you have general questions regarding proposal submission, a range of information is available on the web, including many commercial providers. However, we do advise caution here and strongly recommend that you first contact us and possibly also obtain information from the European Commission's [National Contact Point \(NCP\)](#), which is funded by the federal government. Particularly useful are their [FAQs](#).

We also like to recommend for **proofreading** of your proposal the ERC experts at the NCP. They can also be reached directly at their [KoWi](#) office in Bonn.

1.3 What internal processes at the University of Bayreuth do I need to keep in mind?

A **Host Institution Support Letter** is required for the submission of an ERC application. This is signed by the President after a **written agreement** has been reached with the Provost (Kanzlerin) on the use of resources. This written agreement specifies, among other things, questions regarding office and lab space for newly hired staff (after consultation with the faculty), the acquisition of expensive equipment, reduction in teaching load, as well as the distribution of the overhead (65% go to the university, 35% go back to project as compensation funding).

The Office of Research Support coordinates the preparation and signature of these two documents.

1.4 Submission and the time thereafter

Once you have your application ready in all three parts (A = Online, B1, B2), you can submit. It is advisable to submit the application at least 48 hours before the deadline.

When submitting, it is important that you select a reviewer panel that fits your subject area. The above-mentioned "Information for Applicants" provides details on this.

After submitting, you will receive a confirmation from the EC system and will hear after about 3 months whether you have made it to the second round. If so, you will be scheduled for an **interview** in Brussels with your expert panel. The interview consists of your PowerPoint presentation (usually about 3-8 minutes) and a Q&A session. By then, the external peer reviewers will have read your B2 part, and the panel will refer to their questions in the interview.

After the interview, it usually takes less than 1 month until you receive the final decision. In the case of a positive decision, we will guide you through the next steps, review the **grant agreement** with you and connect you with other units at our university administration, e.g. our Third-Party Funding unit.

2. Attracting ERC Grantees to the University of Bayreuth

If you are approached by ERC grantees who are interested in moving their grant to the University of Bayreuth in order to work here for the duration of the grant or permanently, you should contact your faculty.

In a first step, it needs to be clarified whether the ERC project is **a good fit for the faculty in terms of content**. The strategic orientation of the relevant subject area at UBT should be considered here.

Next, **employment options** need to be discussed. If the grantee is interested in a permanent position at the University of Bayreuth, a concept should be developed together with the faculty that outlines how the position of the ERC grantee can be permanently incorporated into the University's budget after the end of the ERC funding. This concept should also consider the integration of the grantee in teaching activities.

In addition, **the necessary basic resources, office and laboratory space, laboratory facilities and the use of equipment** must be discussed with the faculty. ERC research groups are often staff-intensive, i.e. the matter of office and laboratory space should not be underestimated.

If the faculty does not see any obstacles in this regard either, the next step will be to enter into a **discussion with the University Governing Board** and, if a tenured position at the University of Bayreuth is sought, to submit the above-mentioned concept to the governing board.

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding your ERC proposal:

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