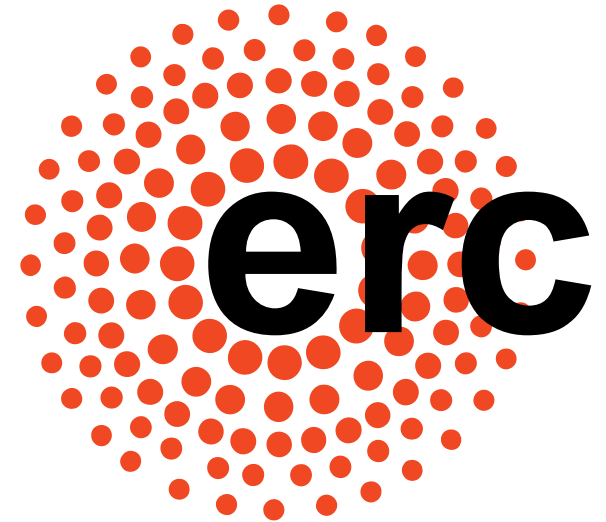


# The European Research Council

Funding opportunities for investigator-driven frontier research



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission



Διαδικτυακή Ημερίδα: Ευκαιρίες  
Χρηματοδότησης και Σταδιοδρομίας  
για νέους ερευνητές

Πουλυμενοπούλου Μικαέλα  
29 Σεπτέμβρη 2020



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

# ERC's mission

“The ERC's mission is to encourage the **highest quality research in Europe** through **competitive funding** and to support investigator-driven frontier research **across all fields**, on the basis of **scientific excellence**. “

## The ERC Scientific Council

- **21 prominent researchers** proposed by an independent identification committee
- **President** appointed by the Commission following recommendation of an independent committee
- **Establishes overall scientific strategy**
- **Controls quality of operations and management**
- **Ensures communication with the scientific community**

## The ERC Executive Agency

- Executes annual work programme
- Implements calls for proposals
- Organises peer review evaluation
- Establishes and manages grant agreements
- Administers scientific and financial aspects
- Carries out communications activities



# Scientific Governance by the Scientific Council



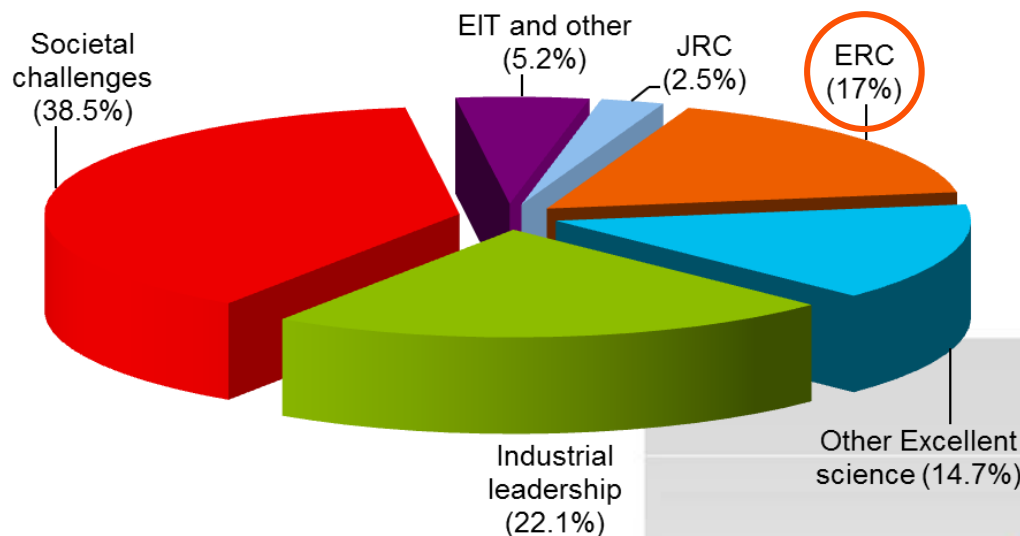
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Established by the European Commission



# ERC funding: it is part of Horizon 2020

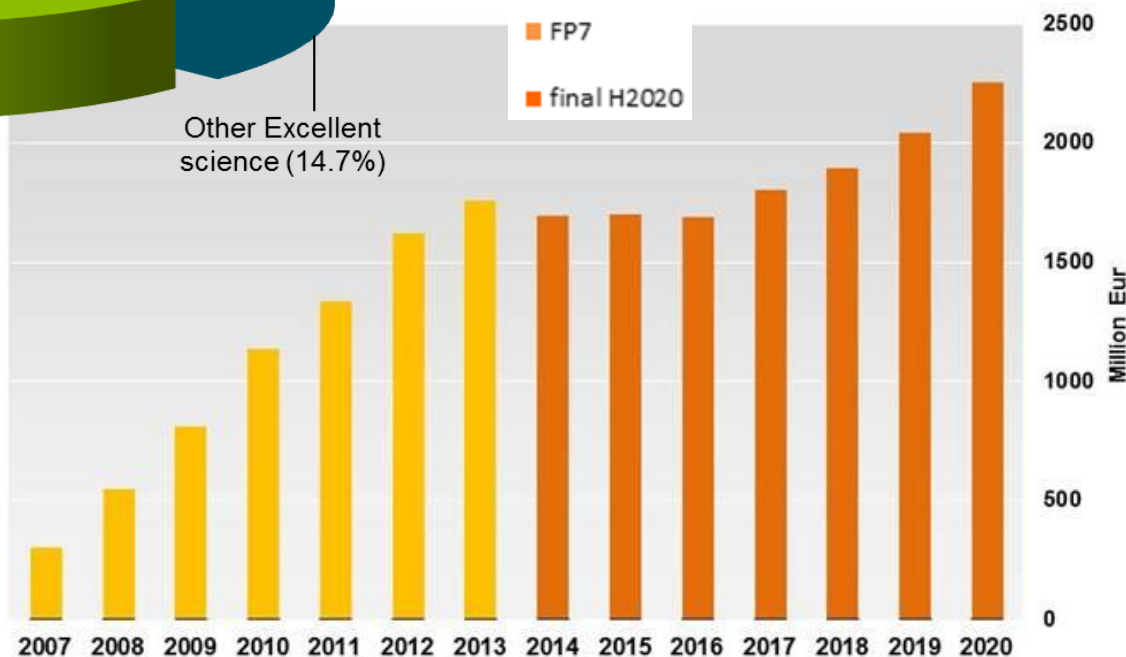


European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission



ERC Budget €  
13 billion

For **2020**, the budget is more than 2.25 billion euros, the highest ever since the beginning of the ERC.

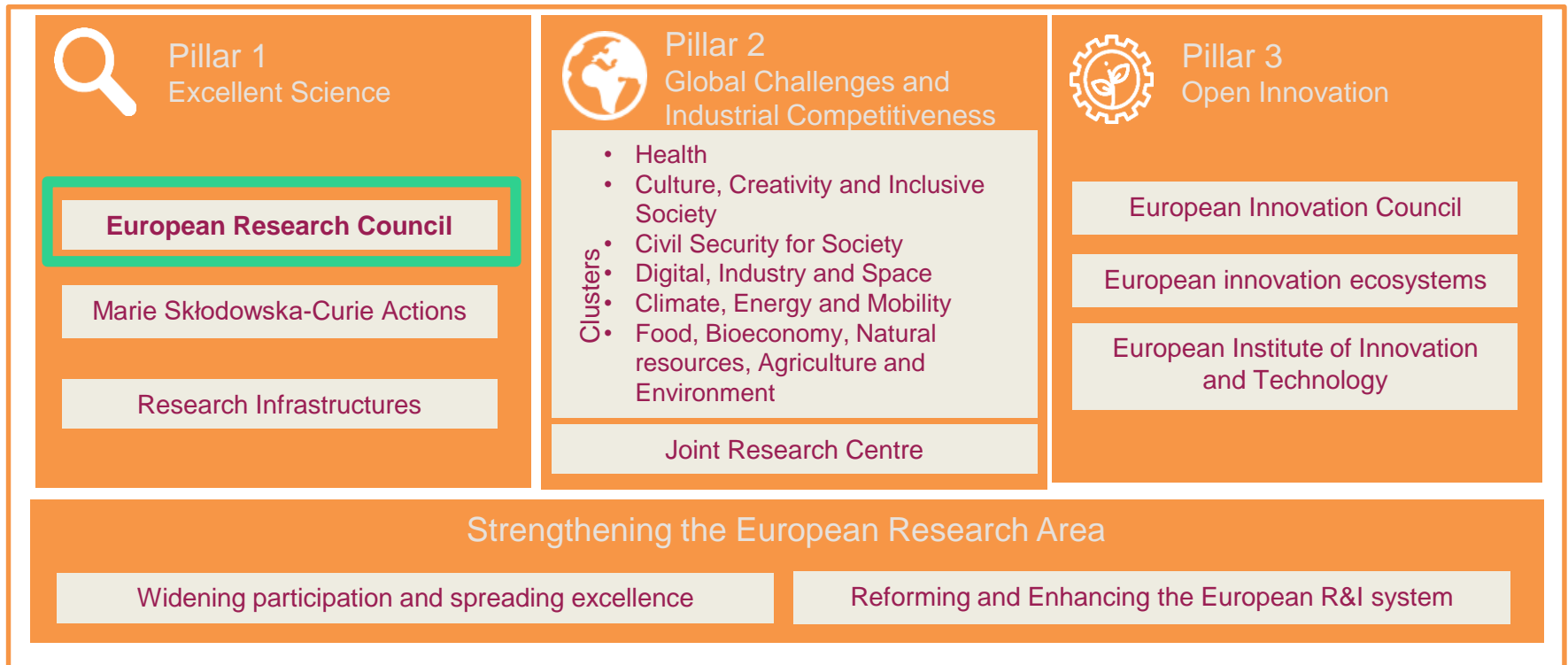


# ERC in Horizon Europe



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## Preliminary Structure



Envisaged start of Horizon Europe

1 January 2021

# ERC Basics



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Excellence

Bottom-up

Any field of  
Research

Long-term grants

Individual Researchers from all  
over the world

High-risk/High-gain  
projects



# Who can apply?



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## Independent Researchers of

- ✓ any nationality,
  - ✓ any age,
  - ✓ any current working place in the world can apply
- 
- ✓ Requirement: Host institution letter from an institute in EU or associated country





# What does ERC offer?

## Grant Schemes



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### 5 year grants

**Starting grant**  
€ 1.5 M (+1M)

**Consolidator grant**  
€ 2 M (+1M)

**Advanced grant**  
€ 2.5 M (+1M)

Career

2-7 years  
after PhD

7-12 years  
after PhD

Significant achievements  
the last 10 years

**Proof-of-Concept**  
*for ERC grant holders*  
€150,000 for 18 months

**Synergy Grant**

- 2-4 PIs at any career stage
- €10 M (+4M)
- for 6 years

*NEW from 2019 – 1 PI can be based outside EU/AC*

## What do ERC grants offer?

independence, recognition & visibility

# Reasons for Additional Budget



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Additional funding could be for:

- (a) "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving to the EU or an Associated Country from elsewhere as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or
- (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or
- (c) access to large facilities and/or
- (d) other **major experimental and field work costs**, excluding personnel costs." (WP2020, page 22)

# Are you thinking to apply?

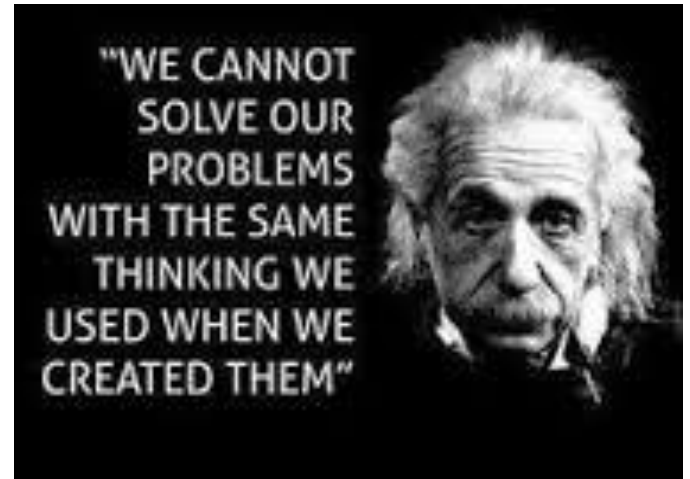


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A bright, original and  
exciting idea

Your project may be RISKY

.....but FEASIBLE



## THINK OUT OF THE BOX

# 2021 - 2022 Panel Structure



Each panel:  
Panel Chair and 12-16 Panel Members

## Life Sciences

- **LS1** Molecules of Life: Biological Mechanisms, Structures and Functions
- **LS2** Integrative Biology: from Genes and Genomes to Systems
- **LS3** Cellular, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- **LS4** Physiology in Health, Disease and Ageing
- **LS5** Neuroscience and Disorders of the Nervous System
- **LS6** Immunity, Infection and Immunotherapy
- **LS7** Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Diseases
- **LS8** Environmental Biology, Ecology and Evolution
- **LS9** Biotechnology and Biosystems Engineering

## Social Sciences and Humanities

- **SH1** Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- **SH2** Institutions, Governance and Legal Systems
- **SH3** The Social World and its Diversity
- **SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- **SH5** Cultures and Cultural Production
- **SH6** The Study of the Human Past
- **SH7** Human Mobility, Environment, and Space

## Physical Sciences & Engineering

- **PE1** Mathematics
- **PE2** Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- **PE3** Condensed Matter Physics
- **PE4** Physical & Analytical Chemical Sciences
- **PE5** Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- **PE6** Computer Science and Informatics
- **PE7** Systems and Communication Engineering
- **PE8** Products and Processes Engineering
- **PE9** Universe Sciences
- **PE10** Earth System Science
- **PE11** Materials Engineering



# What do you need to submit an ERC research proposal



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- Design a **research project** to implement the idea
- Get a letter of support from a **Host Institution**
- Choose the **right panel**
- Select appropriate **descriptors** and **keywords**
- Select **secondary panel** if your proposal is **interdisciplinary** -> explain the inter-disciplinary nature
- Write the **research proposal** and submit **electronically** before the deadline!



**Early registration and submission is strongly recommended**

# How ERC research proposals are evaluated

*Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion*

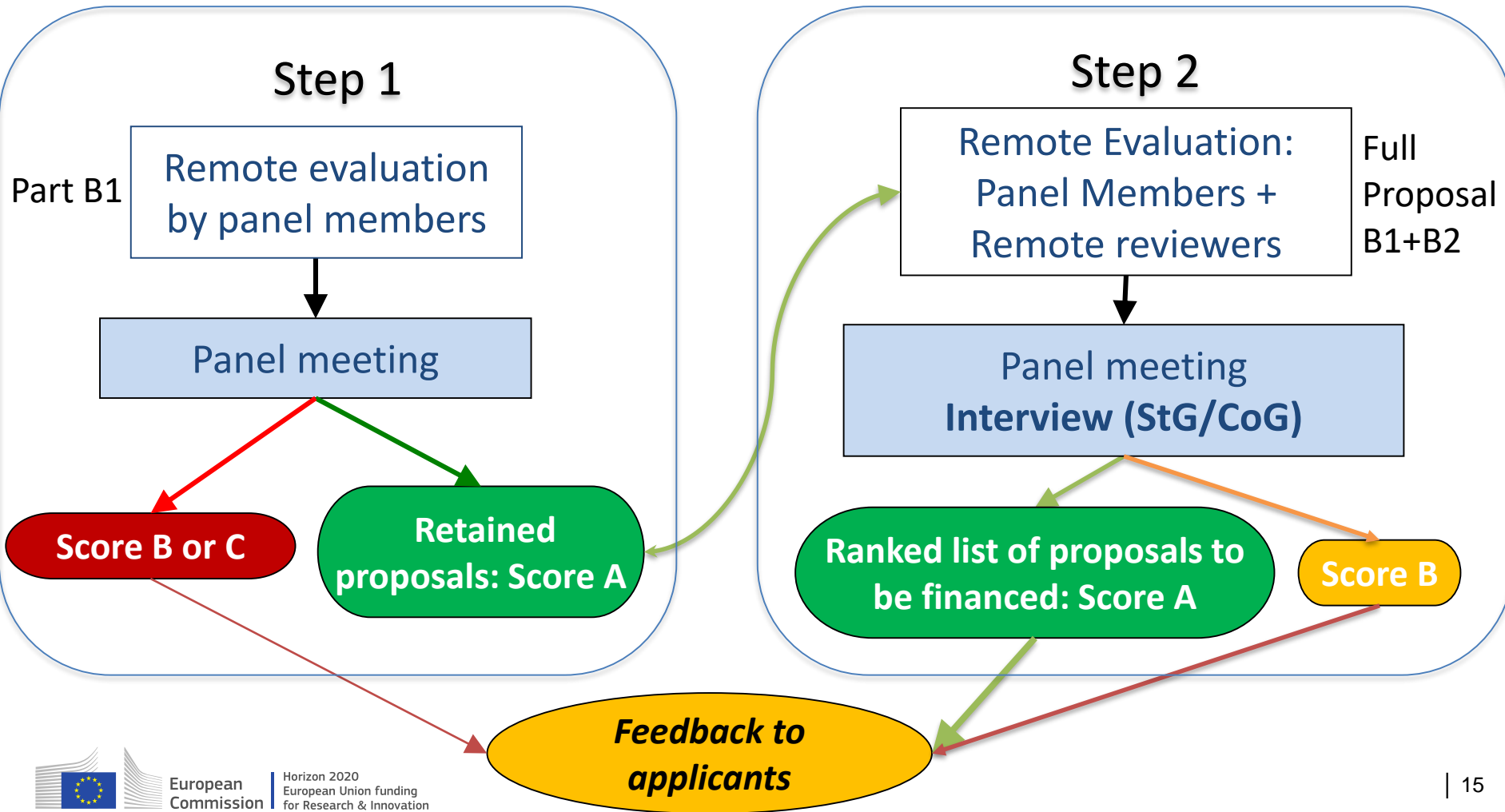
- **Excellence of the Research Project**
  - Ground breaking nature
  - Potential impact
  - Scientific Approach
  
- **Excellence of the Principal Investigator**
  - Intellectual capacity
  - Creativity
  - Commitment

# Evaluation of proposals:

## Review procedure for StG, CoG and AdG



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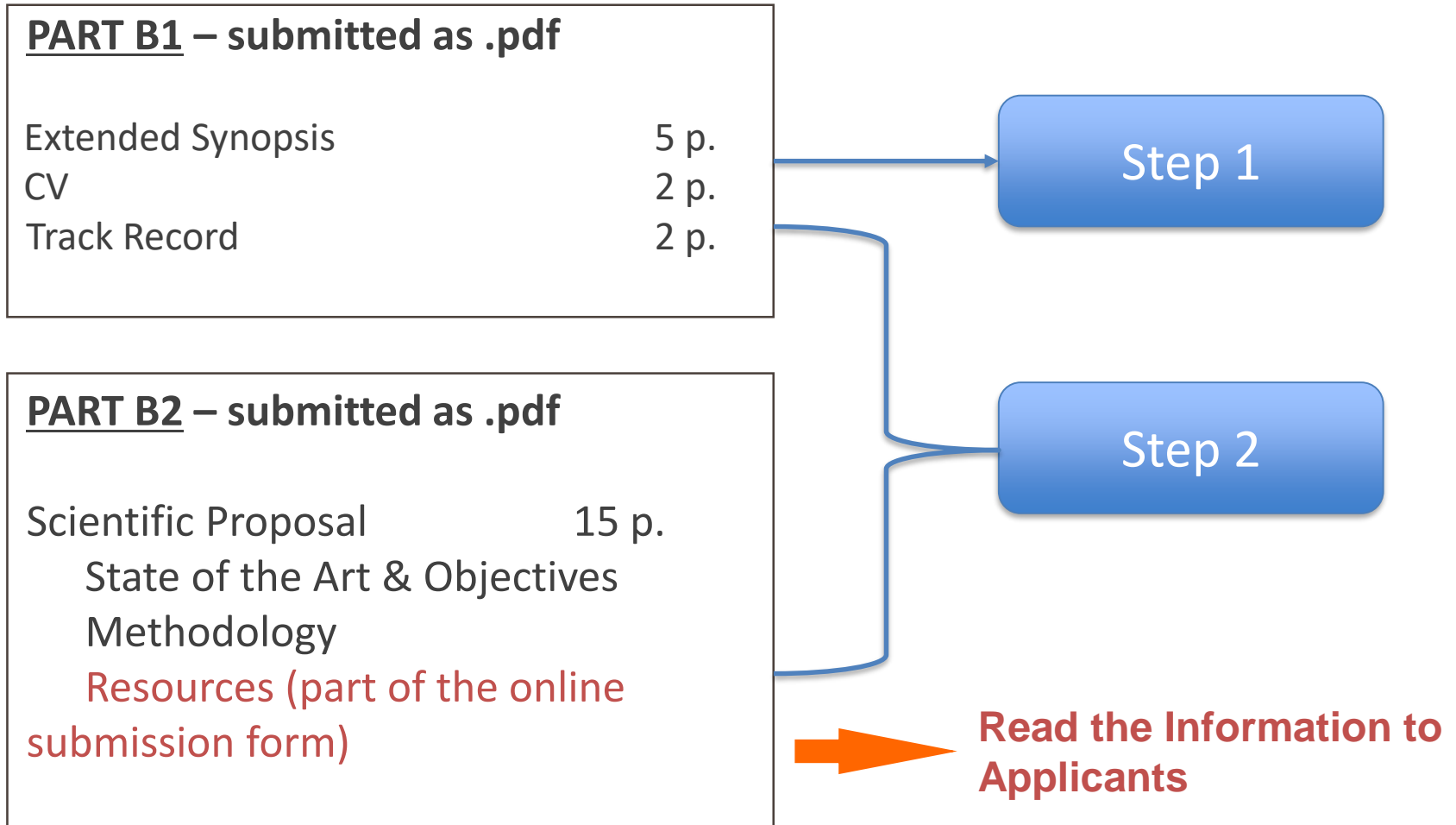


# How to prepare & submit an ERC research proposal



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## Scientific Proposal structure





# Contrary to what you may think.....



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- ✓ ERC funds "frontier research", **including applied research.**
- ✓ The budget is distributed among the scientific panels **as a function of demand.**
- ✓ The panel descriptors **do not represent ERC scientific priorities.**
- ✓ The **success rate is virtually flat** across the eligibility window (StG, CoG).
- ✓ The Host Institution is **not an evaluation criterion.**

# #Tips for applicants: Questions to ask



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- Does it promise to go substantially **beyond the state of the art (innovative)**?
- Is it **timely**? (Why wasn't it done in the past? Is it feasible now?)
- What's the **risk**? Is it justified by a substantial potential gain? Do I have a plan for managing the risk?
- Why is my proposed project **important**?

Highlight and justify the high-risk & high-gain character

Be aware of the competitors

# #Tips and advice if invited for an interview



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- Get Panel Members interested in you and your project
- Panel wants to see that these are your ideas, not of your supervisor
- Don't try to guess who is in the panel – Waste of time

➤ **Practice thoroughly**

**It is normal to be nervous**

# Transition of ERC to Horizon Europe



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- The calendar of the calls in 2021 will differ from the calendar of 2020 calls for proposals - Normal schedule expected by mid-2022
- Panel Structure
  - New: SH panel (**SH7**) “**Human Mobility, Environment and Space**” to cover the fields of human geography, demography, health, sustainability science, territorial planning and spatial analysis
  - New: PE panel (**PE11**) “**Materials Engineering**” to cover “Advanced materials development: performance enhancement, modelling, large-scale preparation, etc.”
  - Small redefinitions of LS panels
- ERC Advanced Grant – PI interviews at Step 2
- Most likely no SyG in 2021, expected to be back in 2022

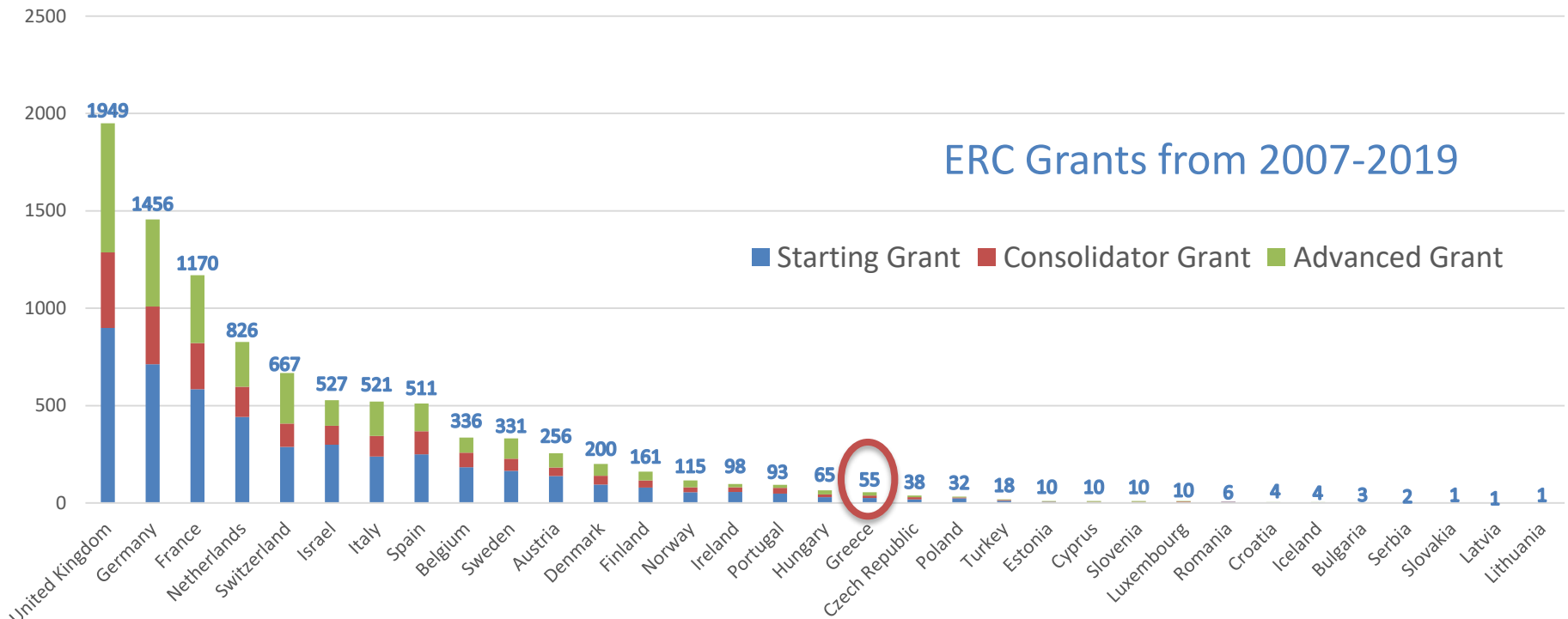


# ERC granted proposals

## 2007-2019



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# ERC granted proposals

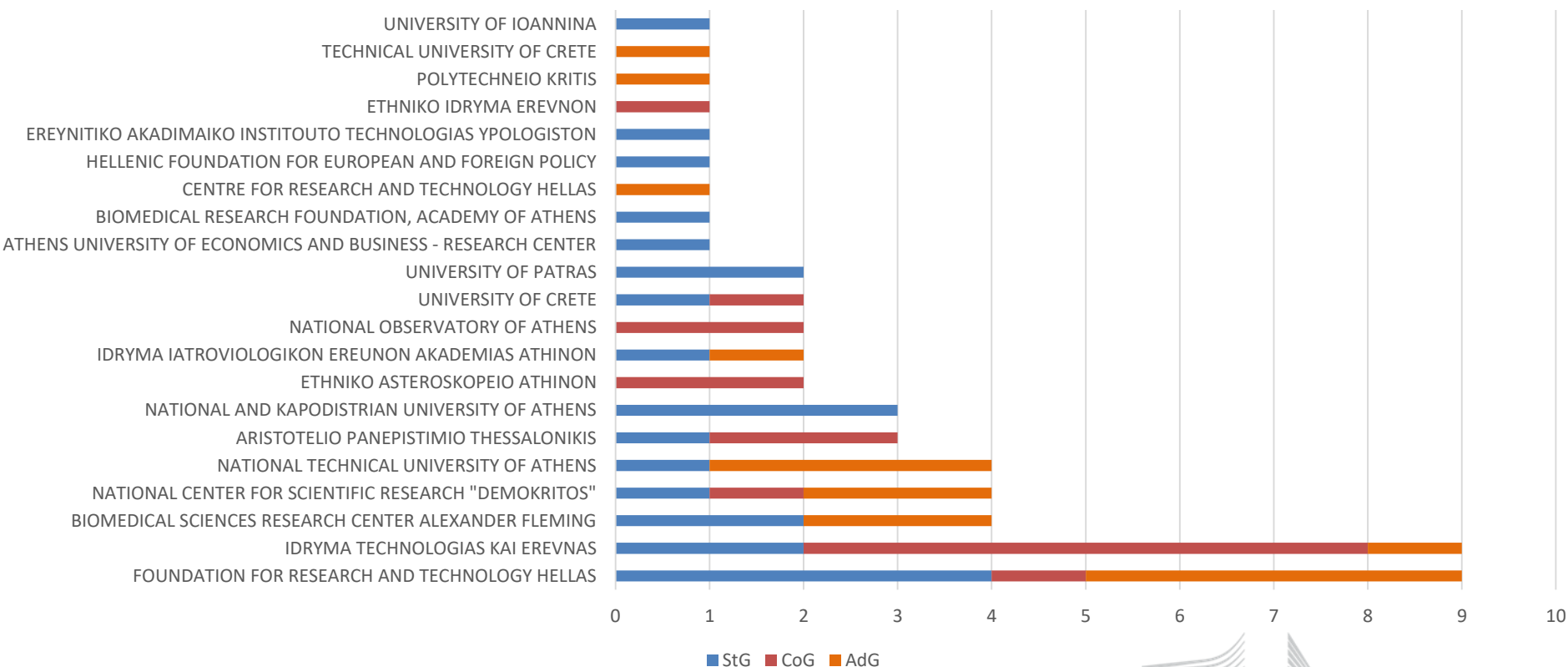
## 2007-2019



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### ERC grants in Greek HI



# Some useful tools and links



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- Read **Information for Applicants and Work Programme**
- Contact your **NCP**
- Consult **ERC website**  
<https://erc.europa.eu/>
  - latest funding opportunities,
  - ERC funded projects



## NEWS > MORE NEWS

22-09-2020

Jean-Pierre Bourguignon's address to the European Parliament - why EU must invest in R&I long-term now

21-09-2020

Coronavirus - business continuity measures at the ERC (UPDATED 21-09-2020)

07-09-2020

Jean-Pierre Bourguignon's address to the European Parliament - the future of EU R&I budget

03-09-2020

Starting Grants 2020: €677 million for early-career researchers

01-09-2020

Applications for ERC Advanced Grants 2020: Facts and figures

28-07-2020

From lab to market: €8.25 million to exploit research results

## CALL CALENDAR 2021

### TENTATIVE DATES

#### Starting Grants | ERC-2021-STG

Open: 12-01-2021  
Deadline: 09-03-2021

#### Consolidator Grants | ERC-2021-CoG

Open: 21-01-2021  
Deadline: 20-04-2021

#### Advanced Grants | ERC-2021-AdG

Open: 20-05-2021  
Deadline: 31-08-2021

#### Proof of Concept | ERC-2021-PoC

Open: 14-01-2021  
Deadlines: 16-03-2021, 17-06-2021, 20-10-2021

#### Synergy Grants

No Synergy Grant call in 2021 (foreseen again in 2022)

Please note that the dates are subject to the adoption of Horizon Europe and the ERC Work Programme 2021.



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# Ευχαριστώ πολύ

**Mikaela Poulymenopoulou**  
mikaela.poulymenopoulou@ec.europa.eu





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# ANNEX

# What has the ERC ever given us?



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Over **9,400**  
top researchers funded since  
the ERC's creation in 2007



Over **150,000**  
articles from ERC projects published  
in prestigious scientific journals



Over **60,000**  
researchers and other professionals  
employed in ERC research teams



**> 780** research institutions  
hosting ERC grantees – universities,  
public or private research centres in  
the EU or associated countries



**€ 13 billion**

ERC budget for 2014-2020 under  
Horizon 2020



**82**

nationalities of  
grant holders

# 2020 calls



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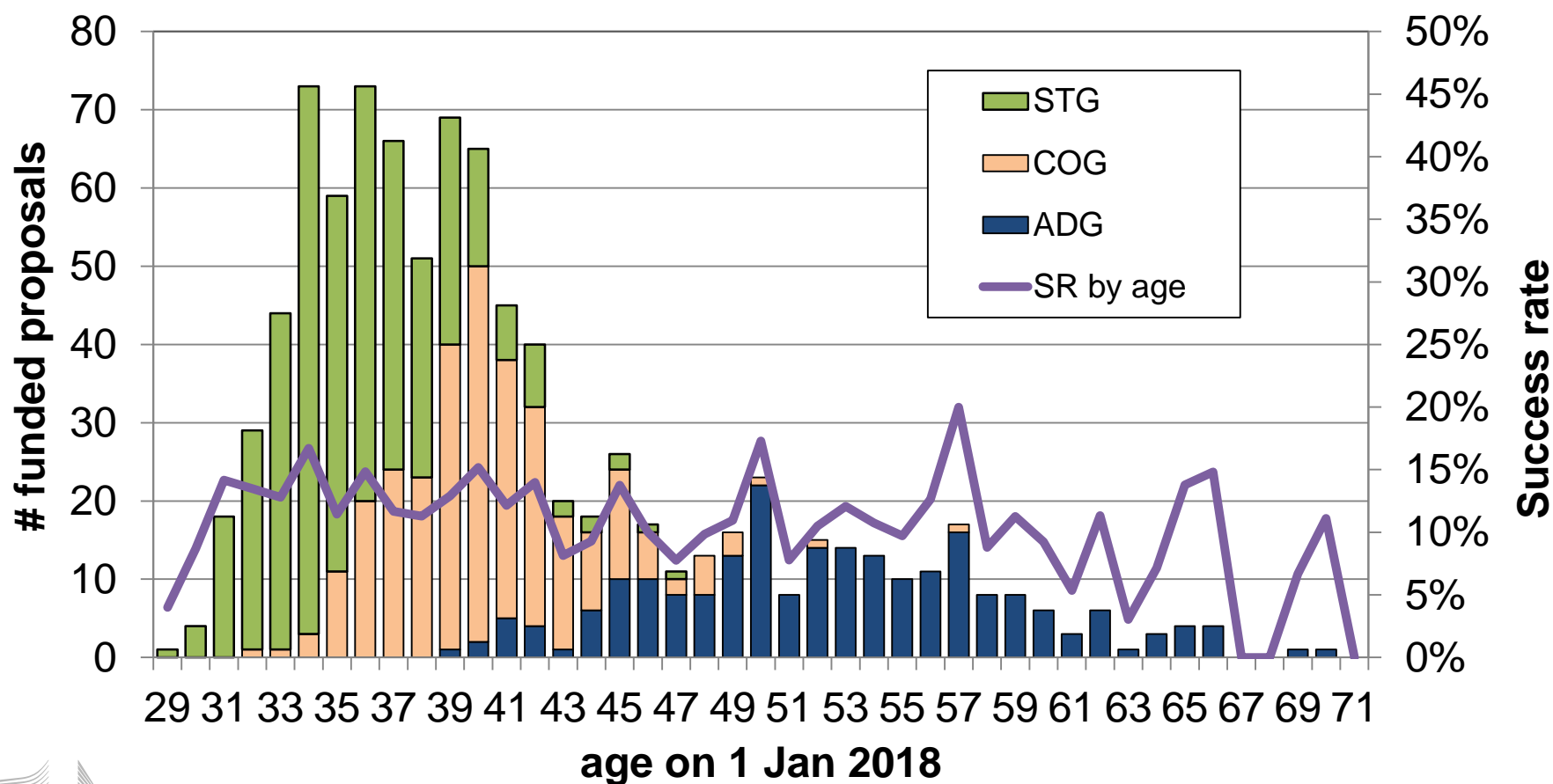
ERC calls	Call Opening	Submission deadline(s)
Starting Grants ERC-2020-StG	17 July 2019	16 October 2019
Consolidator Grants ERC-2020-CoG	24 October 2019	4 February 2020
Advanced Grants ERC-2020-AdG	14 May 2020	26 August 2020
Synergy Grants ERC-2020-SyG	18 July 2019	5 November 2019
Proof of Concept ERC-2020-PoC	15 October 2019	21 January 2020 23 April 2020 17 September 2020

# Shall I apply now or wait another year? 2018 STG-COG-ADG Calls Age of Grantees



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## 2018 Grantees by age and success rate

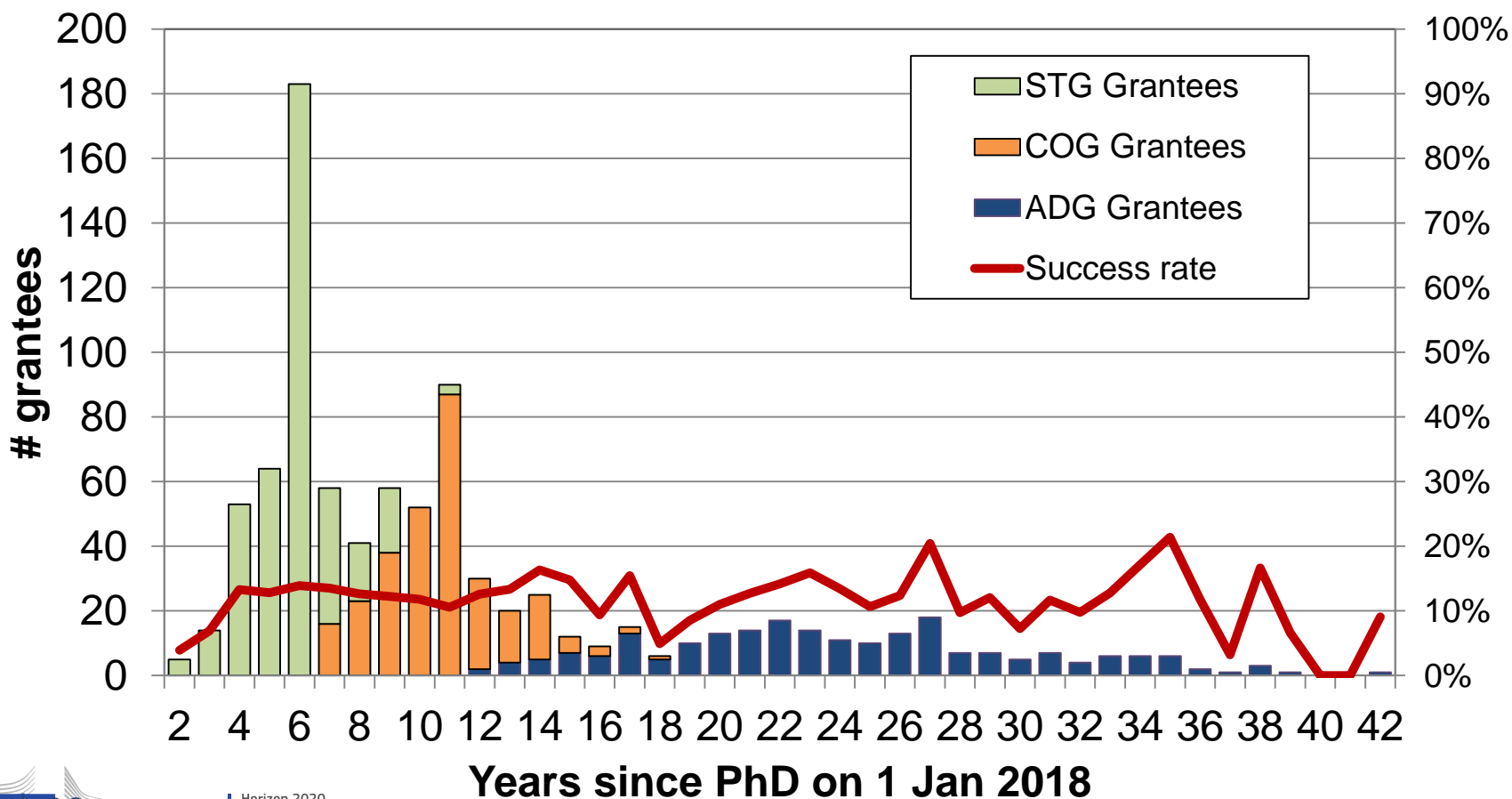


# 2018 Calls "Academic age" of grantees



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## All calls 2018 Grantees by years since PhD



# Additional opportunities

## International Arrangements\*

- Support researchers to temporarily join ERC teams in Europe.
- Following ERC calls for Principal Investigators (PIs) to express an interest in hosting scientists based in the participating non-European countries.
- Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Singapore, South Africa, the United States.

## Visiting Fellowship\*

- Visiting fellows commit to apply for an ERC grant in specified timeframe.
- Duration of visits: 1-6 months.
- Costs are covered by sending institutions.
- Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Flanders, Georgia, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia.

## Join an ERC team

- [Euraxess](#)

*\*Managed by the respective regional/national funding agencies*



# Eligibility window for 2020 calls

For the individual grants and possible extensions



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- StG: PhD at least 2 and up to 7 years before 1 January 2020
- CoG: PhD at least 7 and up to 12 years before 1 January 2020

Extensions of eligibility window possible for documented cases of:

## Before or after PhD

- Maternity – 18 months per child
- Paternity – actual time taken off

## After PhD

- Military service
- Clinical training (max. 4 years)
- Caring for seriously ill family members

No limit to the total extension

# ERC and Open Access



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- The ERC has reached a unanimous decision to follow a path towards Open Access implementation that is independent of cOAlition S activities
- This is in order to respect researchers' needs, especially the younger ones, to preserve equity among research communities and among European countries, with emphasis to countries with more limited national financial support for research.
- The ERC is working closely with the Commission to find solutions that allow the Open Access Rules under Horizon Europe to apply across all programs, including the ERC.