

AGENDA

HORIZON EUROPE ERC WORKSHOP

DAY 1 Building the Foundations of a Competitive ERC Proposal

09 : 00 START OF THE TRAINING

09 : 00 – 09 : 15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

- Welcome and workshop overview
- Introduction of participants and trainers
- Objectives, structures and expected outcomes of the workshop

09 : 15 – 09 : 45 INTRODUCTION TO THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ERC)

- The ERC mission and philosophy: funding frontier research
- ERC as a career-defining funding opportunity
- Understanding where participants are in their ERC journey

09 : 45 – 10 : 30 ERC FUNDING SCHEMES AND EVALUATION PROCESS

- Overview of ERC grant schemes: Starting, Consolidator, Advanced, Synergy, PLUS and Proof of Concept
- Eligibility requirements for Principal Investigators and Host Institutions
- ERC evaluation process and panel structure

10 : 30 – 11 : 00 COFFEE BREAK

11 : 00 – 11 : 45 STRUCTURING A COMPETITIVE ERC PROPOSAL

- Defining the fundamental scientific problem
- Moving beyond incremental research
- Formulating high-risk/high-gain research questions
- Identifying knowledge gaps and scientific opportunities
- Aligning ambition with feasibility

12 : 30 – 13 : 30 Lunch Break

13 : 30 – 13 : 50 DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP, INDEPENDENCE AND SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE

- Preparing a competitive CV and Track Record
- Demonstrating scientific independence and intellectual ownership
- Presenting major achievements, key publications and scientific contributions
- Building a convincing profile of international leadership and visibility
- Effectively communicating career trajectory and future research vision

13 : 50 – 14 : 30 THE EXCELLENCE CRITERION IN PRACTICE

- How ERC evaluators assess scientific excellence
- Evaluating novelty, ambition, feasibility and impact potential
- Distinguishing outstanding proposals from merely good proposals
- Lessons learned from successful ERC applications
- Common evaluation concerns and how to address them



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14 : 30 – 15 : 00	INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION AND Q&A • Open discussion with participants • Addressing specific questions and proposal challenges

END OF TRAINING DAY 1



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DAY 2 ERC Workshop & Hands-on Exercise

09 : 00 START OF THE TRAINING

09 : 00 – 09 : 30 RECAP OF DAY 1 AND INTRODUCTION TO DAY 2

- Key lessons from Day 1
- Common challenges in moving from a good idea to an ERC-competitive concept

09 : 30 – 10 : 30 INTERACTIVE CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE

- Participants present their research concepts (brief pitches)
- Group discussion and peer feedback
- Evaluator-style assessment of novelty, ambition and feasibility

09 : 30 – 10 : 30

- Identification of strengths, weaknesses and improvement opportunities

10 : 30 – 11 : 00 COFFEE BREAK

11 : 00 – 12 : 00 COMMON WEAKNESSES IN ERC PROPOSALS: LESSONS FROM EVALUATION PRACTICE

- Why strong researchers are often unsuccessful in ERC competitions
- Analysis of common weaknesses identified by ERC evaluators
- Comparing competitive and non-competitive proposal examples
- Common pitfalls in project positioning ambition, methodology and presentation
- Practical strategies for avoiding evaluation risk and strengthening proposal quality

12 : 00 – 12 : 30 FINAL DISCUSSION AND CLOSING REMARKS

- Key takeaways
- Individual action points
- Questions and answers

END OF TRAINING DAY 2