European Research Council (ERC)

Starting Grants and Advanced Grants
Information and Proposal Writing Events

In its capacity as UK National Contact Point (NCP) for the European Research Council (ERC), the UK Research Office, in partnership with institutions from across the UK, is holding a series of information events for researchers who are interested in applying for the ERC Starting Grants or Advanced Grants:

- **King’s College London (KCL)**, Tuesday 21st August 2012;
- **University of Leicester**, Wednesday 22nd August 2012;
- **University College London (UCL)**, Wednesday 5th September 2012*;
- **University of Glasgow**, Wednesday 12th September 2012; and
- **Natural History Museum (NHM), London**, Tuesday 16th October 2012 (Advanced Grants only)

(*travel may take longer than usual due to the Paralympics. See [http://www.getaheadofthegames.com](http://www.getaheadofthegames.com)

**Aim of each session**

Each session will provide participants with an overview of the ERC Starting Grants or Advanced Grants schemes. Participants should gain a deeper understanding of the proposal format and the key issues they are required to address in planning, writing and costing an ERC Grant proposal. There will also be an opportunity to ask some questions. Attendance will be free of charge, thanks to the support from the organisations hosting the events.

**Who should attend?**

The sessions are aimed at researchers based in, or moving to, the UK who are planning to submit a proposal to the ERC Starting or Advanced Grants calls. Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

To be eligible for the 2013 Starting Grant call, the Principal Investigator must have been awarded his/her first PhD at least 2 and up to 7 years prior to the publication date of the call for proposals (10 July 2012). This is extendable up to 11.5 years in certain strict cases. Please note that UKRO intends to hold some additional events on the ERC Consolidator Grants in autumn 2012, which will be advertised in due course. However, those interested in the Consolidator Grants are welcome to attend the Starting Grant events if they wish, since both schemes are similar.

**Programme outline**

For the events at KCL, Leicester, UCL and Glasgow:

- **The morning session will cover Starting Grants**
  It will start at 09:30 promptly (with registration from 9.10) and close at 13.15.
- **The afternoon session will cover Advanced Grants**
  It will start at 14:00 promptly (with registration from 13.40) and close at 17.45.

For the event at the NHM:

- **There will be a single session on Advanced Grants**
  It will start at 09:30 promptly (with registration from 9.10) and close at 13.15.

*Please note that it is only necessary to attend one session and lunch will not be provided.*

**Registration**

If you would like to attend please complete the online registration form at: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/events/Pages/stg_adg_events.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/events/Pages/stg_adg_events.aspx)
European Research Council Funding Opportunities

What is the ERC?
The European Research Council (ERC) is part of the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7). The ERC, which is also known as the FP7 Ideas Programme, is the first pan-European funding agency for investigator-driven frontier research and has funding of EUR 7.51 billion (2007-2013).

What research areas does the ERC fund?
The ERC's funding schemes operate on a 'bottom-up' basis without predetermined priorities. Applications can be made in any field of research (apart from nuclear energy research) with particular emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering. In particular, proposals of an interdisciplinary nature which cross the boundaries between different fields of research, pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or proposals introducing unconventional, innovative approaches and scientific inventions are encouraged.

What types of grants does the ERC fund?
The ERC currently has five funding schemes. The three main funding schemes are Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grants. These fund projects led by a Principal Investigator (PI) and (if they wish) their team. Excellence is the sole criterion for funding, and the peer review criteria are the excellence of the PI and the excellence of the research project. The other two ERC funding schemes are Synergy Grants (which enable small groups of two to four PIs to jointly address frontier research problems which the individual PIs could not achieve working alone) and Proof of Concept funding (for existing ERC grant holders only).

ERC Starting Grants
ERC Starting Grants are designed to support PIs at the stage at which they are starting their own independent research team or programme. The scheme will support independent and excellent new individual research teams. To be eligible, the PI must have been awarded his/her first PhD at least 2 and up to 7 years prior to the publication date of the call for proposals. This is extendable up to 11.5 years in certain strict cases.

- ERC Starting Grants offer funding for up to EUR 1.5 or 2 million over a period of up to 5 years.
- Further details: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg/Pages/index.aspx)

ERC Consolidator Grants
ERC Consolidator Grants are designed to support PIs at the stage at which they are consolidating their own independent research team or programme. The scheme will strengthen independent and excellent new individual research teams that have been recently created. To be eligible, the PI must have been awarded his/her first PhD over 7 and up to 12 years prior to the publication date of the call for proposals. This is extendable up to 16.5 years in certain strict cases.

- The ERC-2013-CoG Consolidator Grants call is expected to open on 7 November 2012 and close on 21 February 2013.
- ERC Consolidator Grants offer funding for up to EUR 2 or 2.75 million over a period of up to 5 years.
- Further details: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/cog/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/cog/Pages/index.aspx)

ERC Advanced Grants
Advanced Grants are intended to promote substantial advances in the frontiers of knowledge, and to encourage new productive lines of enquiry and new methods and techniques, including unconventional approaches and investigations at the interface between established disciplines. Applicants must have a recognised track record of research achievements, particularly over the last ten years.

- ERC Advanced Grants offer funding for up to EUR 2.5 or 3.5 million over a period of up to 5 years.
- Further details: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/adg/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/adg/Pages/index.aspx)

ERC Synergy Grants
The ERC Synergy Grant scheme enables small groups of 2 to 4 PIs and their teams to bring together complementary skills, knowledge, and resources in order to jointly address research problems at the frontier of knowledge going beyond what the individual PIs could achieve alone. Please note that this Synergy Grant call is a pilot call and the ERC expects to only be able to fund around 10 to 15 proposals with the call budget. It is therefore likely to be extremely competitive with only the most exceptional proposals being funded.

- The ERC-2013-SyG Synergy Grants call is expected to open on 10 October 2012 and close on 10 January 2013.
- ERC Synergy Grants offer funding for up to EUR 15 million over a period of up to 6 years.
- Further details: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/syg/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/syg/Pages/index.aspx)

ERC Proof of Concept Funding
The ERC Proof of Concept grants provide additional funding to existing ERC grant holders (or those whose ERC grants have recently finished) to establish a proof of concept strategy for ideas arising from an ERC-funded project.

- ERC Proof of Concept funding is for up to EUR 150 thousand over a period of 12 months.
- Further details: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/poc/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/poc/Pages/index.aspx)

Where can I find out more information?
Further information, including the ERC Work Programme and Guide for Applicants, are available on the UK ERC National Contact Point (NCP) website at: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/index.aspx).
If you have any questions, please e-mail the UK ERC NCP helpdesk at: erc-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk or telephone 0032 2 2896121.

How do I stay up to date on news and UK events on the ERC?
If you would like to receive e-mail notifications on future UK ERC events as well as updates on the ERC, please fill in the form at: [http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc_newsletter_registration.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/Pages/erc_newsletter_registration.aspx)