

Factsheet: European Research Council (ERC) – Starting Grant (StG)

1. Objective of the Funding

The **ERC Starting Grant** supports excellent researchers in establishing or consolidating an independent research group or program. It funds ambitious, high-risk, and frontier research projects across all disciplines. The funding amounts to up to **€1.5 million** for a maximum of **5 years**.

2. Application Process

2.1 Eligibility Requirements

- Researchers of all nationalities and disciplines who have completed their PhD.
- Application possible within **10 years of PhD completion** (extensions possible, e.g., for parental leave, long-term illness, clinical training, military service, or experiences of displacement/violence).
- Expected to demonstrate scientific independence, e.g., through:
 - **Key publications** without the involvement of the PhD supervisor,
 - Evidence of **independent research ideas**.

2.2 Application Format and Deadline

- Joint application with the host institution via the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#).
 - Application language: **English**.
 - Call typically published in **July**, deadline usually in **October** of the same year.
 - Current application documents and further information are available on the [ERC website](#) or via the [National Contact Point ERC \(BMFTR\)](#).
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3. Special Features

- All scientific disciplines are eligible ("**bottom-up**" principle).
 - **Scientific excellence** is the sole evaluation criterion.
 - Two-stage evaluation process with **international peer review**.
 - The **Principal Investigator (PI)**:
 - Leads the project independently,
 - Establishes their own research group,
 - Must dedicate at least **50% of their working time** to the ERC project,
 - Must spend at least **50% of their working time** in an EU Member State or associated country.
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4. Application Tips

- **Host Institution Support Letter** is mandatory.
- Highly competitive; only excellent projects are funded.

The university recommends contacting the Research Support Office at least **3 months** before the deadline.