Proposal Full Title

ERC Proof of Concept Lump Sum Grant 2024

(ERC-2024-PoC)

Part B

***Please respect the following formatting constraints: Times New Roman, Arial or similar, at least font size 11, margins (2.0 cm side and 1.5 cm top and bottom), single line spacing. Please respect the overall page limit (10 pages excluding the headers, references, and the risk mitigation table).***

**Abstract**

The abstract should enable a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as a short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to contact in particular the ERC experts and potential reviewers and in communications to the programme management committees and other interested parties. Please note that in case your proposal is funded this abstract will be published. It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information. Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters.

The abstract must be written in English and should be identical to the text introduced in your administrative form.

**Maximum number of characters including spaces is 2000.**

**Section 1a: The idea – Breakthrough Innovation potential (max. 3 pages excluding the abstract, the proposal title, reference to the PoC call and name of the Part B present on the first page, above this section)**

**1a.i. Brief description of the idea to be taken to proof of concept:**

**The problem:** *Describe the problem or the need that the idea is aiming to solve or alleviate*

**The solution:** *Explain how the idea will solve or alleviate the problem or the need and the meaning that this will make. A clear value proposition should be included, explaining*

* *how the idea solves users' problems or improves their situation*

**The origin:** *Briefly describe the ERC-funded project from which the idea is substantially drawn and briefly demonstrate the relation between the idea and the ERC-funded project in question.*

**1a.ii. Demonstration of Breakthrough Innovation Potential:**

*Describe how the idea has the potential to drive innovation and business inventiveness and/or tackle societal challenges.*

*Describe in detail how the project outcomes will be innovative or distinctive. This section should include a clear explanation of why the solution proposed is new compared to what already exists. A clear value proposition should be included*, *explaining why potential users or sponsors should choose this solution and not other existing solutions. Describe any competing products or solutions.*

**1a.iii.** **Demonstration of the high-risk/high-gain idea:**

*Explain how the idea, if successful, will result in breakthrough innovation.*

*Describe which are the aspects that may be**difficult to overcome or what are the features that might require development of new approaches.*

**Section 1b: Approach and Methodology (max. 6 pages)**

**1b.i. Outline the approach and methodology to explore the innovation potential of your ERC-funded research**

Describe the chosen pathway from research to innovation (e.g., patenting, creation of spinouts, licensing agreements, research contracts, research collaborations, consultancy agreements, informal advice, public engagement, policy reports/contributions to policy, and more) and explain your choice of pathway.

**1b.ii Describe the activities** exploring the pathway from ground-breaking research towards innovation:

This may include (where applicable[[1]](#footnote-1)) proposed plans to:

* **Test, experiment, demonstrate and validate the effectiveness of the project’s outcomes (or of the idea)** *(e.g.**testing, experimenting, technical reports or any other form of validation to confirm that the solution is effective, efficient and sustainable, or appropriate.)*
* **Undertake research** required to carry out the above activities and to address the weaknesses uncovered by them.
* **Clarify the IPR position and strategy[[2]](#footnote-2) or knowledge transfer strategy** *(e.g. patenting, creation of spin-outs, licensing agreements, research contracts, research collaborations, consultancy agreements, informal advice, public engagement, policy reports/contributions to policy, and more.)*
* **Involving industrial partners, societal or cultural organisations, policy makers or any other potential stakeholders supporting the translation of research results into innovation.** Describe the level of relationship with entities mentioned in your proposal. If you have an established working relationship with any of them, describe its nature.
*If such contacts already exist, include supporting documentation like letters of support or intent from the relevant stakeholders. These letters of support or intent ca be uploaded in .pdf as annexes to the proposal, which will be provided to the evaluation panel reviewers and will be part of their assessment of the feasibility and effectiveness of the project*
* **Assess the potential “end users” of the expected innovation.** Who would be using the output? What would be the expected size of the group or market?

**1b.iii. Plan of the proof of concept - Description of the Action**:

Grants to be awarded under this action (Proof of Concept), shall exclusively take the form of a standard lump sum pre-fixed **at EUR 150 000** by a European Commission decision **[[3]](#footnote-3)**.

The Action description shall present a detailed project plan including clearly identified objectives, and a description of work. The description of work must demonstrate that the timescale and resources are appropriate for the implementation and feasibility of the project. It should include a description of the resources and a description of the team**.**

**Description of the Action and timescale**:

Demonstrate the feasibility of the planned activities within the timescale planned for the implementation of the proposed project:

* Justify the project plan (where applicable, broken down into activities e.g. validating results, testing in real world contexts, clarifying IPR or knowledge transfer position and strategy, competitive/market analysis, plans for contacts with commercial and/or societal partners etc.) with clear objectives, task description and milestones representing the completion of each task.
* Present a GANTT chart and/or milestones table, allowing effective monitoring over the project period.

**Description of the resources**

* Give a narrative description of the resources allocated for each activity. *Examples of resources: e.g. the type of project staff working on a task and the estimated effort (person-months), type of equipment and consumables required for the project implementation, staff travel requirements, etc.*
* Justify that the resources are appropriate for the planned work.

The resources should NOT be described financially. This means that no cost figures should appear. Applicants should be able to justify the good use of the lump sum for the resources described[[4]](#footnote-4).

**Description of the team (including the PI)**:

* Describe the team and their achievements and experience in relation to the approach you will be taking.
* Describe the roles of all team members within your project. What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the team?

**Section 1c: Principal Investigator- strategic lead and project management [[5]](#footnote-5) (max 1 page excluding the risk mitigation table)**

**The Strategic Lead**:

* Describe how you will take the strategic lead of the project.

**The Project Management**:

* Describe the organisational structure and the decision-making process.
* Explain why these are appropriate to the complexity and scale of the project.
* Describe what can go wrong in the project and present a plan for the identification and acceptance or offsetting of possible risks linked to the project (e.g. scientific events such as if a test or an experiment fails).
* Present a plan for unforeseen events of non-scientific/technical nature, including back-up procedures, emergency response and ex-post recovery (e.g. if a key person of the team leaves or you cannot access a facility). –

Use this risk mitigation table to summarise the information in this section:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description of the risk** | **Proposed risk-mitigation measures** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

1. "where applicable" does not mean you should skip these points if not applicable. In this case, explain why it does not apply to the project (is it out of scope or has it already been achieved?) in order for the evaluators to understand why this issue is not addressed in the frame of the Proof of Concept project. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Any application for funding of IPR activities under the ERC Proof of Concept will not discharge beneficiaries from their prior obligations under their pre-existing ERC Grant Agreement in respect of protecting IPR capable of industrial or commercial application. If any foreground was potentially protectable in the pre-existing ERC project, beneficiaries had the legal obligation to seek for adequate and effective protection according to the [Horizon Europe Regulation](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/reference-documents;programCode=HORIZON) and the [Multi & Mono Model Grant Agreement for Lump Sum Grants](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/ls-mga_en.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In accordance with the [Decision authorising the use of lump sums for the European Research Council Proof of Concept actions](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he-erc-poc_en.pdf) under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The overall value of the PoC action may be higher than the lump sum if covered by additional contributions. If so, please specify these so that the Reviewers understand that part of the project activities will be financed through additional funding. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Synergy Grant Principal Investigators are eligible to apply only with the written consent of all Principal Investigators in the same Synergy Grant project. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)