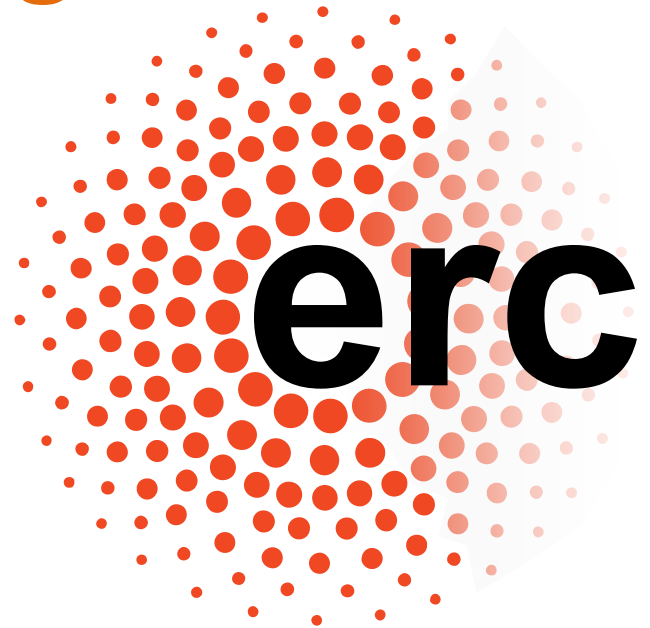


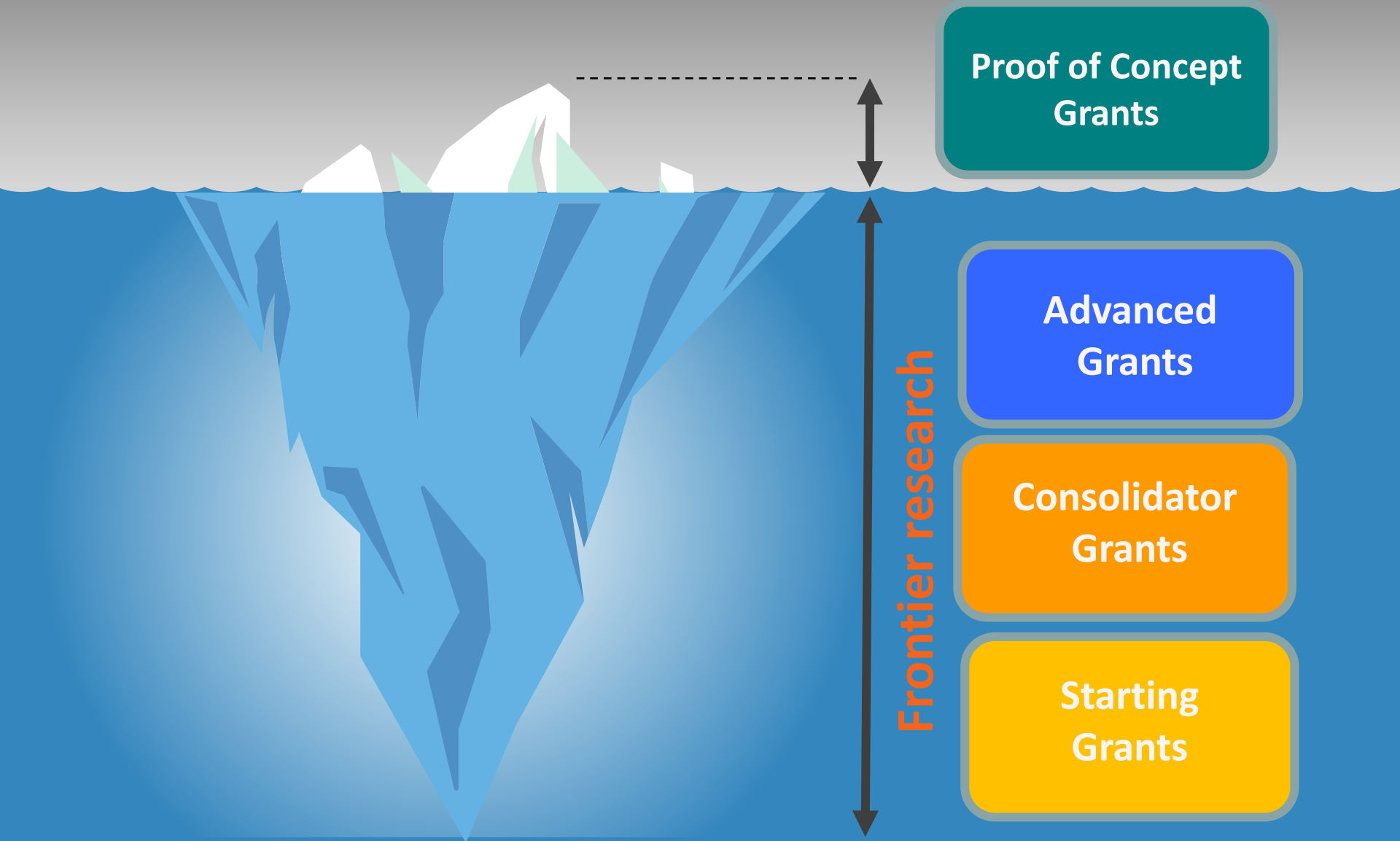
ERC Proof of Concept grant

Verónica Benéitez Piñero

PoC Call coordinator



The PoC in the ERC funding landscape

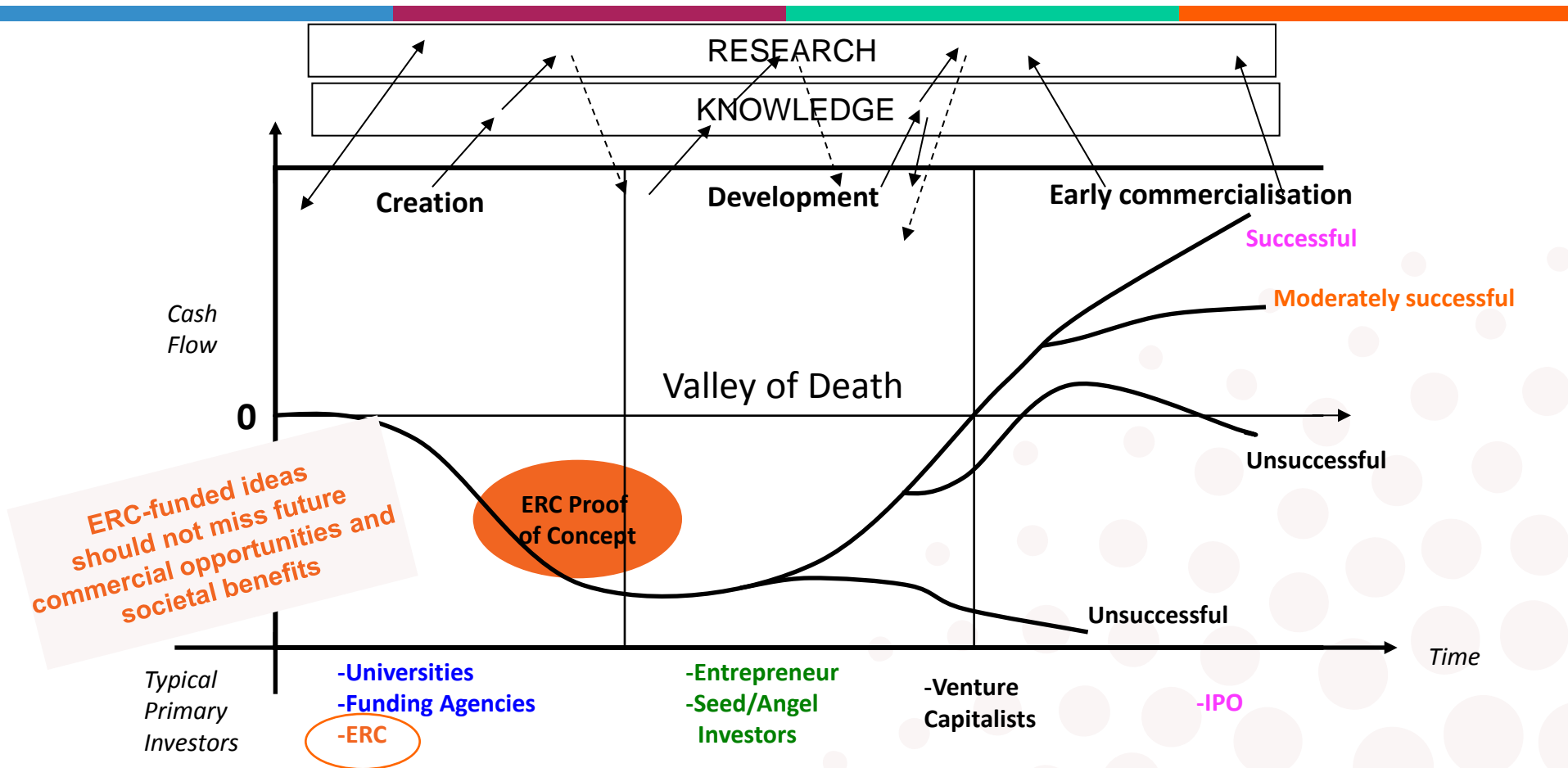




ERC PoC funding: support to crossing the Valley of Death



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Source: Adapted from "An Assessment of the SBIR Program, Charles W. Wessner, Editor, Committee on Capitalizing on Science, Technology, and Innovation: An assessment of the Small Business Innovation Research Program - National Research Council of the National Academies (2008)" and "Stephen Kline, Nathan Rosenberg (1986) An overview of innovation, in R. Landau & N. Rosenberg (eds.), The Positive Sum Strategy: Harnessing Technology for Economic Growth. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, pp. 275–305".

The objective of the PoC

➤ **Maximise the value** of the excellent research that the ERC funds

Provide funds to bring ERC-funded ideas to a *pre-demonstration* stage for:

- *potential* commercialisation opportunities or
- *potential* societal benefits



PoC – what is it?



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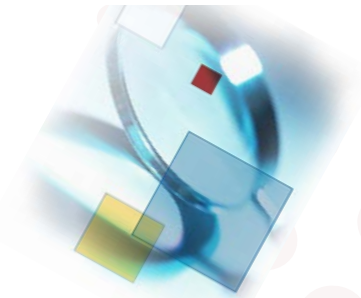
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Who can apply: Holders of an ERC grant with an idea substantially drawn from an ERC-funded project

What for: establish the innovation potential of the idea: technical validation, market research, clarifying IPR strategy, investigating business opportunities

Amount: up to €150,000 per grant (18 months)
Total budget for 2017 € 20 million

Evaluation: Experts in technology transfer check the innovation potential and that the plan is reasonable



Actors involved in the PoC process



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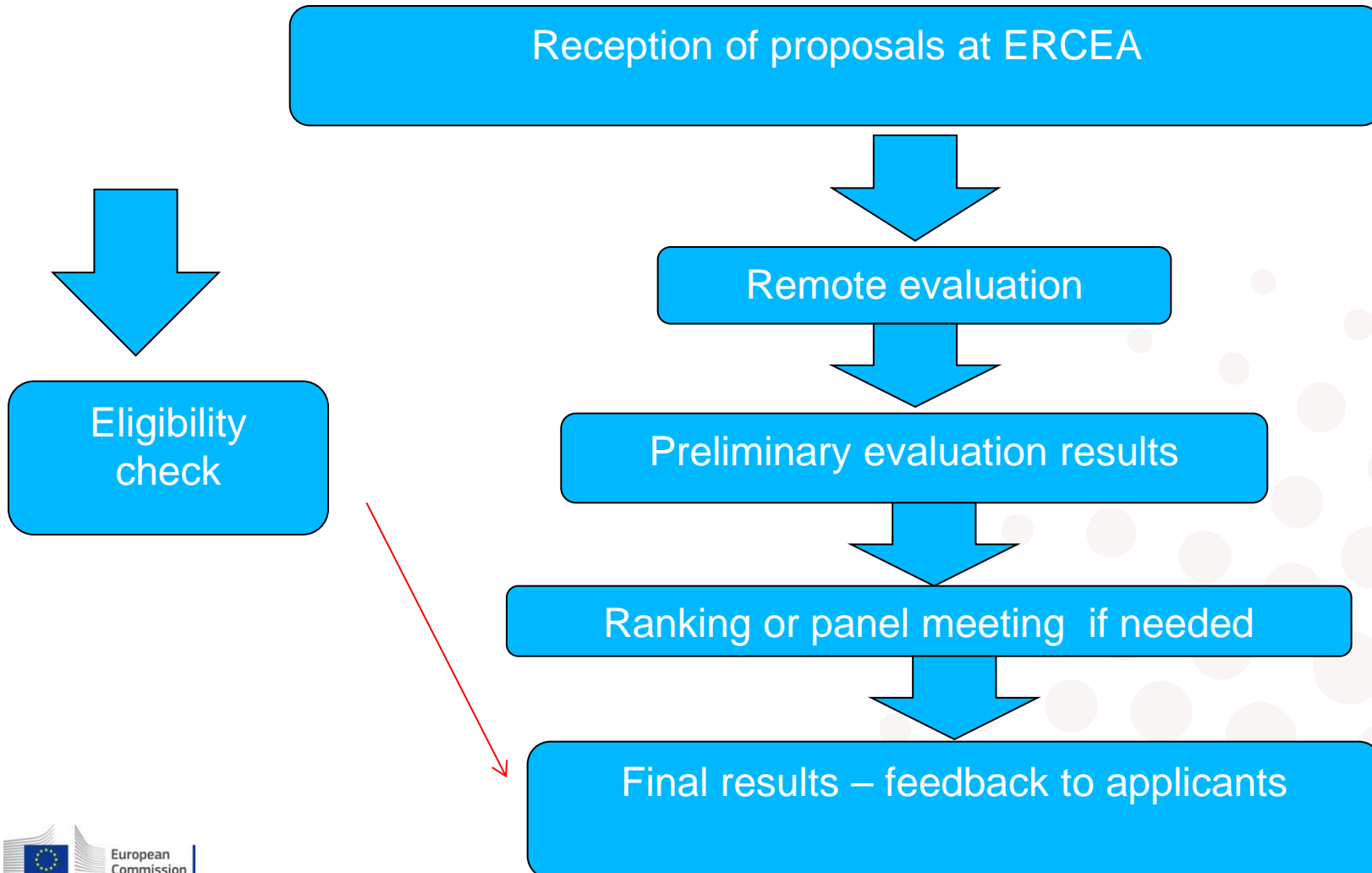
ERC Scientific Council
Draft the Work Programme

Holders of ERC frontier grants
Submit applications
for a PoC grant

ERC Executive Agency
Manages the evaluation

Independent experts
Assess the proposals and
select proposals for funding

PoC : Evaluation Flow



Reception of proposals at ERCEA



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- ERCEA publishes the call on the Participant Portal

1 call with 3 cut-off dates a year

- ❖Work Programme
- ❖Information for Applicants
- ❖Templates – Part B and HI letter
- ❖Frequently Asked Questions

- ERC grant holders are allowed to submit only one eligible application per Work Programme (year).

- By cut-off date, ERCEA collects all submitted proposals
- The proposals are allocated by the call coordination to the experts:
 - 5 reviews/proposal compulsory
 - no discussions between reviewers/ **remote evaluation**
- A complete proposals must have:
 - ✓Administrative data
 - ✓**Part B** (7 pages + budget table)
 - ✓Host Institution Support Letter
 - ✓Additional documents: Annexes if necessary.

Preliminary evaluation results

Proposals which fail 1 criterion will not be ranked
(if 3 experts fail 1 criterion, the proposals will not be considered)

Proposal X	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3
Expert 1	Fail	Pass	Pass
Expert 2	Fail	Pass	Pass
Expert 3	Fail	Pass	Pass
Expert 4	Pass	Pass	Pass
Expert 5	Pass	Pass	Pass

Ranking



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If there is not enough budget to fund all the proposals which **pass all three evaluation criteria**, those proposals which pass all three evaluation criteria will be sorted by:

1. the number of pass marks awarded by peer reviewers to criterion 1 (Excellence- Innovation potential);
2. then by the number of pass marks awarded to criterion 2 (Impact);
3. then by the number of pass marks awarded to criterion 3 (Quality and efficiency of the implementation).

Proposals will be funded in order of the ranking resulting from this 3-level sorting exercise until depletion of the available budget per evaluation round.

PoC : Example of ranking



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1	Position	Prop. num	Acronym	Excellence	Impact	Implementer	Threshold	Proposal c	Proposal k	Re
2	1	704340	DrugSense	5	5	5	ABOVE	12	150000	
3	2	713251	MAGTOOL	5	5	5	ABOVE	12	150000	
4	3	713474	THOR	5	5	5	ABOVE	12	14835	
5	4	713677	OLE-DIOX	5	5	5	ABOVE	12	149	
6	5	713627	ELR1K	5	5	5	ABOVE	12	15	
7	6	713659	GRAPHEAL	5	5	4	ABOVE	12	15	
8	7	713742	FabricMet	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	149545	
9	8	713524	CONQUES	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	150000	
10	9	712708	CONMIC	5	5	4	ABOVE	12	149213	
11	10	713608	MICROCLE	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	150000	
12	11	713689	HD-Biopri	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	149850	
13	12	713664	CryoProte	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	149926	
14	13	713728	HEAL-BY-M	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	149750	
15	14	713368	B-Brighter	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	149662	
16	15	713758	PFKFBLOC	5	5	4	ABOVE	18	150000	
17	16	713547	Microbes4	5	5	3	ABOVE	18	149375	
18	17	713483	SynBioGA	5	5	3	ABOVE	15	150000	
19	18	713612	MUSCLEGU	5	5	3	ABOVE	18	150000	
20	19	713734	miRCaP	5	5	3	ABOVE	18	150000	
21	20	713651	PROCEEDS	5	4	5	ABOVE	18	150000	

Proposals will be funded up to depletion of budget
6.6 M€ per cut-off = ~44

Status of the evaluation criteria

1. Excellence (Innovation potential) Does the proposed proof of concept activity greatly help move the output of research towards the initial steps of an innovation process as defined under "evaluation criteria" in the ERC Worked Programme related to the above mentioned call?	PASS
2. Impact Does the proposal meet the PoC objectives in terms of economic and/or societal impact as defined under "evaluation criteria" in the ERC Worked Programme related to the above mentioned call?	PASS
3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation (Quality of the proof of concept plan) Does the proposal meet the objectives related to feasibility, resources and project cost as defined under "evaluation criteria" in the ERC Worked Programme related to the above mentioned call?	PASS
Has the proposal been awarded a pass mark by a majority of peer reviewers on each of the three evaluation criteria?	YES
The reviewers recommend that the proposal should be retained for funding with a grant not exceeding 149,990.00 €	

Reviewer 5

1. Excellence (Innovation potential)

The prototype that is proposed to be constructed and validated as part of this proposal can be expected to help underpin the commercial viability of the technology platform that was developed by the applicant.

2. Impact

The applicant states a reasoned case for the economic and societal potential of his technology platform. The competitive analysis section, however, appears to confuse the cost (to the manufacturer) of employing a particular technology platform vs the cost (to the user) of using existing technological solutions. For example: the cost of running an ELISA is compared to the cost of an aptamer sensor. It is very unlikely that commercial offerings of the latter technology will be set at a price point that is anywhere near the advertised cost of the main component. This creates an artificially-enlarged cost advantage over the incumbent technology.

The IPR and industry contacts sections of the proposal are satisfactory.

3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation (Quality of the proof of concept plan)

The proposal contains a clear section describing the various aspects of the plan of activities, including risk analysis and -mitigation and a helpful chart. The team is not only comprised of people with a suitable technological background but helpfully also includes people with significant industry experience. The budget is acceptable and sufficiently justified.



Eligibility check



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- Performed by ERCEA staff in parallel to the evaluation.
 - ✓ **Eligible Project**
 - ✓ **Eligible Principal Investigator**
 - ✓ **Eligible Host Institution**
- ✓ Applicants will be informed as soon as the decision is taken
- ✓ Ineligible proposals will disappear from the list of proposals assigned to evaluators
- ✓ Applicants can redress on the eligibility decision.

N.B. a proposal can be declared ineligible at any stage

Selection of PoC evaluators



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- ✓ The selection of experts is done by the Scientific Council
- ✓ There is only one pool of experts responsible for the evaluation of the proposals, regardless of their originating Scientific Domain
- ✓ Experts DO NOT evaluate Science
- ✓ At the end of the call, the list of experts is made public via the ERC website

Profile of the PoC evaluator



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Experts in **knowledge transfer** with experience in:

- management of tech transfer from research through practical use;
- working with academics to deliver research collaborations, exchange know-how, license new technologies and create new business ventures;
- developing innovative technologies from public (and private) sources, turning ideas into patented, scientifically validated and licensable technologies;
- building/commercialising IPRs;
- developing technologies through proof-of-concept and prototype stage and in licensing onwards to a wide variety of industry sectors;
- identifying, protecting and evaluating the commercial potential of (basic) research;
- providing investment to support the early stages of business formation out of research in the public sector science base.

PoC – some figures



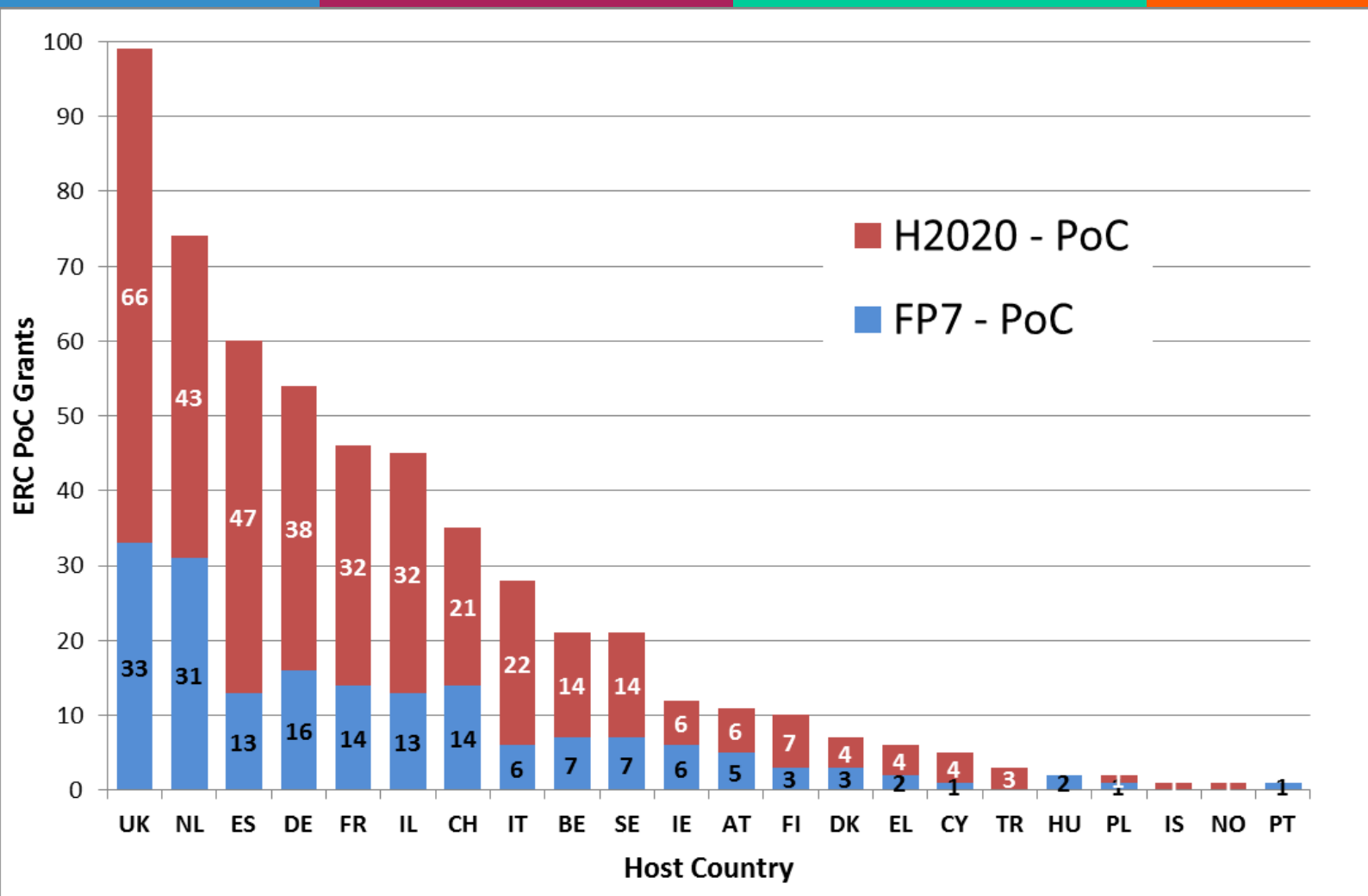
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	Budget 10ml 2011	Budget 10ml 2012	Budget 10ml 2013	Budget 15ml 2014	Budget 20ml 2015	Budget 20ml 2016	TOTAL
Proposals*	139	120	279	426	323	408	1 695
Funded	51	60	67	121	160	159	618
Success	37%	50%	24%	28%	49%	39%	36%

* withdrawn and ineligible not taken into account

ERC Proof of Concept 2011-2016*



* DL3 2016 excluded

How to write a good PoC proposal

- Read carefully the reference documents:
 - Work programme
 - Information for applicants
 - (everything can be found on the participant portal)
- Talk to existing PoC grantees in your institution:
 - Did they get external help?
 - Why did they failed?
- Look at the list of PoC Grantees published on ERC website. Talk to them!

Guy Kawasaki - The ten topics that a venture capitalist cares about



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TOPIC	CONTENT
Problem	Describe the pain that you're alleviating. The goal is to get everyone nodding and buying in.
Solution	Explain how you alleviate this pain and the meaning that you make. Ensure that the audience clearly understands what you sell and your value proposition.
Underlying Magic	Describe the technology, secret sauce or magic behind your product or service.
Business Model	Explain how you make money—who pays you, your channels of distribution and your gross margins.
Marketing and Sales	Explain how you will reach your customer and your marketing leverage points.
Competition	Provide a complete view of the competitive landscape. Too much is better than too little.
Management Team	Describe the key players on your management team, board of directors and board of advisors, as well as your major investors.
Financial Projections and Key Metrics	Provide a three- to five-year forecast containing not only dollars but also key metrics, such as number of customers and conversion rate.
Current Status, Accomplishments to Date, Timeline and Use of Funds	Explain the current status of your product or service, what the near future looks like and how you'll use the money you're trying to raise.

PoC : How to write Part B

Criterion 1 Excellence-Tips



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Try to answer the following questions:

- State the expected output of your project. Why is your proposal innovative?
- If you are going to improve a product, method, process.... how will you do it?
- Shortly mention how it is done today and how your project will do it better.
- Do you know the state of the art in the industry sector?! Find out!

PoC : How to write Part B

Criterion 2 Impact -Tips



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Answer the first three questions (Compulsory):

Impact: who will benefit from your idea? Why? Name your final users

Generation of financial or social profit: We don't expect you to know how much profit you will make, but at least a process should be indicated....prove that you have been thinking about it!

Market research: PoC will provide funding for further market research, but an idea on how this will be carried on, is important. **Know your competitors!**

PoC : How to write Part B

Criterion 3 PoC plan -Tips



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- Present the plan having in mind the technical and the commercial needs. (Do not mess it up)
- Write a management plan! Do not forget to mention the risk and contingency!
- Don't waste too much space in people's CVs. Make it short.
- Justify the budget items. Subcontracting in PoC is allowed. Give names of subcontractors (they will be deleted later but are important for the evaluation).

PoC : How to write Part B

General Tips



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Invest some time on your **idea**. If you have a good idea with good innovation potential, the plan can be modified!

Take a look at the market, try to identify beforehand the competitors and who will benefit from it.

Experts also expect external help, you are researchers not business people!

Submit your proposal, you will get feedback from experts

Restriction One proposal a year.

Thank you for your attention

