

# The European Research Council



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## Grant Agreement Preparation and External support

ERC Executive Agency

NCP 17/05/2019



# Overview



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- **Grant Agreement preparation**
- **Documents**
- **External support**
- **Examples delivered to beneficiaries**



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# Grant Agreement preparation

# Grant Agreement preparation



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Call  
deadline



Evaluation

Info to  
beneficiaries:  
ESR + Invitation



Grant preparation: Interaction with PI and HI

- Annex 1
- Annex 2
- Draft/Signed Supplementary Agreement
- Statement of Changes
- PI's passport

Grant  
signature



Pre-  
financing

# Grant Agreement preparation

## How does it start ?



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- **Invitation Letter**
- **Online : Funding & Tender opportunities**
- **Electronic signatures:**
  - ✓ Sign the 'Declaration of Honour'
  - ✓ Exception: Supplementary Agreement
- **Proposal**

# Grant Agreement preparation Goals



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- Annex 1 – Part B = submitted proposal
- Annex 2 = one column
- Fast and efficient
- Key points
  - ➔ Start date
  - ➔ PI situation
  - ➔ External support (Third parties, Subcontracting...)
- Description of the Action and the Estimated budget for the action match the proposal

# Grant Agreement preparation

## Key point : Start date



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- **First day of the month following the signature of the GA**

OR

- **Fixed start date:** within 6 months from invitation letter
  - ✓ **Exceptions:** Maternity/Paternity leave, Relocation to EU/AC
- Two ERC grants **cannot run in parallel**
- The granting process : **ethics issues** are cleared

# Grant Agreement preparation

## Key point : PI situation



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- What to clarify?
  - ✓ PI **hosted and engaged**
    - Where ?
    - Who employs the PI?
  - ✓ PI's **time dedication** to the action
    - As in the proposal?
    - > 10 percentage points?
    - Time dedication in Annex 2
  - ✓ Reminder: at least 50% in EU or AC





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# Documents

# Documents SyGMA



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The screenshot shows the SyGMA interface for ERC-ADG. The navigation bar includes sections: Project Summary (info icon), Beneficiari... (error icon), General Information (checkmark), Reporting Periods (checkmark), Scientific Periods (checkmark), GA Information (warning icon), GA Options (checkmark), and Financial Information (checkmark). A 'DOCUMENTS' button with a warning icon is highlighted with a red box. Below the navigation bar, a list of documents is shown under the 'Grant Agreement' section. Two items are highlighted with red boxes: 'Annex 1 - Description Of Action (part B)' and 'Statement on Changes'.

Title	Status
Grant Agreement	
Annex 1 - Description Of Action (part A)	
Annex 1 - Description Of Action (part B)	
Annex 2 - Estimated budget of the action	
Annex 2a - Additional information on the estimated budget	
Annex 3 - Accession Forms	
Annex 4 - Model for the financial statements	
Annex 5 - Model for the certificate on the financial statements	
Annex 6 - Model for the certificate on the methodology	
Grant Agreement Summary	
Grant Agreement Data Sheet	
Statement on Changes	

1. Annex 1 (Part A) created by SyGMA
2. Annex 1 (Part B) – Upload in SyGMA
3. Annex 2 (budget table) – Encode in SyGMA
4. Statement on Changes – Upload in SyGMA
5. Supplementary Agreement via email
6. Copy of PI's passport via email

# Documents

## Annex 1 (Description of Action)



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- **Annex 1 - Part A**
  - ➔ structured information
  - ➔ generated from SyGMa
- **Annex 1 - Part B**
  - ➔ merge Parts B1 and B2 including narrative of the proposal into one single document
  - ➔ keep scientific description intact and check the resources section
  - ➔ delete the budget table from Part B2 of the proposal
  - ➔ upload Part B in **SyGMa**

# Documents

## Annex 2 (Estimated budget of the action)



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- Budget of the action from SyGMA : based on the data encoded
- **The Description of the Action** and the **Estimated Budget of the action** should be consistent

# Documents

## Statement of Changes



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- One page statement describing any changes made in the Annex 1 **compared to** the original proposal
- Mandatory
- Uploaded in **SyGMA**

# Documents

## Supplementary Agreement & PI's passport



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- Supplementary Agreement (SA)
  - ✓ Template available on the ERC website
  - ✓ Tripartite SA when the PI is employed by a third party
- PI's passport
  - ✓ Only if not provided yet



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# External support

# External support



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- In principle, beneficiaries are expected to have all the necessary resources to carry out the work.
- But....



# External support



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- They can involve **external support** :
  - ✓ purchase goods, works and services
  - ✓ in-kind contributions provided by third parties against payment or free of charge
  - ✓ subcontractors
  - ✓ linked third parties

# External support

## Purchase of goods and services (Art. 10)



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- Not action tasks
- In Annex 1 and Annex 2 (other direct costs – other goods and services)
- Best value for money & avoid any conflict of interest
- Evidence: contract invoice, procurement procedure

# External support Subcontracts (Art. 13)



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- Action tasks
- In Annex 1 and Annex 2 (no indirect costs)
- Best value for money & no conflict of interest
- Costs charged with a profit margin (price)
- Evidence: procurement procedures, subcontract agreement, invoices, proof of the work carried out

# External support Linked third parties (Art. 14)



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- Action tasks
- Responsible towards the beneficiary
- Linked third parties named in Art. 14 of the GA and listed in Annex 1 and costs budgeted in Annex 2
- Declare their own costs
- Evidence : affiliated entity or legal link not limited to the EU project

# External support

## Third Party in-kind contributions



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- Resources to a beneficiary, not on action tasks
- Beneficiary reimburses the Third Party (Art. 11 **Payment**) or with no payment to the Third Party (Art. 12 **Free of charge**)
- The Third Party and their costs in Annex 1
- No indirect costs calculated for resources provided by the Third Party outside the beneficiary's premises.



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# Examples delivered to beneficiaries

# Example 1: Start date



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- Taking into account that:
  - ✓ The invitation letter for ERC Advanced Grant was sent on **01/04/2019**
  - ✓ The PI is involved in a Starting Grant ending on **30/07/2019**
  - ✓ The ethical clearance was issued on **10/06/2019**

## Questions:

- **Could the PI start the action on 01/07/2019?**
- **Could the PI start the action on 01/08/2019?**

# Example 1: Start date



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## Reply:

- Could the PI start the action on 01/07/2019?
- **No, conflict with ongoing ERC grant**
  
- Could the PI start the action on 01/08/2019?
- **Yes, ERC grant finished and ethical clearance issued**



## Example 2 : External Support



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- The PI would like to disseminate the action results on a website. In the Description of Action this task was not foreseen.
- "e-solutions" a company for the creation of a web-site may perform it. The estimated cost of the web-site is € 20.000.

### Question:

- **Under which cost category this could be charged to the ERC grant ?**
  - ✓ **Subcontracting?**
  - ✓ **Purchase of goods and services?**

# Example 2 : External Support



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## Reply: purchase of goods and services

- Not the implementation of action tasks : it is a contract
- During grant agreement preparation : Tasks and estimated costs should be in Annex 1 and Annex 2
- During implementation: if unforeseen, transfers between categories are allowed
- Justify contracts in the financial reports (if above 15% of personnel costs)

## Example 3 : External Support



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- Your Principal Investigator Mr. Stephen, knows a lot of scholars in other universities with whom he collaborates.
- For his ERC project, he is convinced that he absolutely needs one of them to work with him. This person would work in his lab and your PI has even already reached an agreement with the expert's university to reimburse his salary costs to this entity.

### Question:

- **The PI asks you to arrange all the legal/financial matters. What do you do?**
  - ✓ **Subcontracting?**
  - ✓ **Third Party providing in-kind contribution?**

# Example 3 : External Support



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## Reply: in-kind contribution against payment

- If necessary to implement the action: in-kind contributions provided by third parties against payment (Art.11) or free of charge (Art.12)
- In this case, the beneficiary makes a payment and therefore incurs a cost (Art.11)
- During the grant agreement preparation: mandatory to name the third parties & state costs in Annexes 1 and 2
- During implementation: amendment to include the third parties
- Exceptionally 'simplified approval procedure'

# Example 4 : External Support



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- During the ERC project implementation, the PI Prof. Stephen realizes that the project would require to detect clouds through horizontal lidar measurements, an essential action. This activity has to be performed by an external company, there is budget available but this was not foreseen at all in the Description of Action (DoA).

## Question:

- **What is your advice?**
  - ✓ **There is no need for an amendment as budget reallocation is allowed?**
  - ✓ **An amendment is needed to include subcontracting in the DoA?**

# Example 4 : External Support



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## Reply: Amendment is needed

- Implementation of action tasks
- During the grant preparation, tasks and estimated costs should be set in Annex 1 and Annex 2 for each subcontract
- During implementation, amendment to include subcontracts
- Exceptionally 'simplified approval procedure'