



SDU ERC-mentoring session

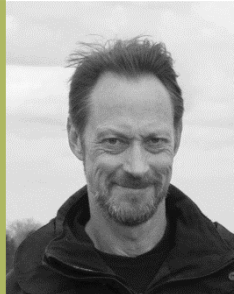
2 hours dedicated the ERC StG and CoG 2021 calls



13:10  **Jan-Wilhelm Kornfeld**, ERC StG receiver
Professor at the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, SDU
Jan will give a talk about his ERC StG experience





13:30  **Don Canfield**, ERC AdG receiver, ERC AdG Panel member
Professor & Villum Investigator & D-IAS Chair, Nordcee, Department of Biology, SDU.
Don will give a talk about his experience with the ERC calls

13:50 intermission

14:00  **Bo Thamdrup**, ERC AdG receiver, member ERC PE10 StG panel 2020
Professor, Nordcee, Department of Biology, SDU.
Bo will give a talk about the ERC evaluation process

14:20 Q&A

mute & mark  

mark & speak & show    

13:10



Jan-Wilhelm Kornfeld, ERC StG receiver
Professor at the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, SDU
Jan will give a talk about his ERC StG experience



Jan-Wilhelm Kornfeld

Dept for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Functional Genomics and Metabolism Research Unit

ERC Starting Grant holder 2016 ('TransGenRNA')

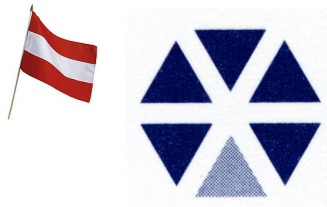


My ERC Starting Grant - A Story of Failure and Success

- Brief introduction to myself and my research
- My ERC StG idea
- The ERC interview
- My 2 cents on what makes a successful pitch
- Your thoughts and questions

- **Brief introduction to myself and my research**
- My ERC StG idea
- The ERC interview
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PhD thesis (Wien, AT)



Cytokine signaling and liver metabolism

Kornfeld et al. J Clin Endocrinol Metab (2011)
Müller*/Kornfeld* et al. Hepatology (2011), *=equal contribution
Kornfeld et al. Br J Cancer (2011)
Blaas*/Kornfeld et al. Hepatology (2010), *=equal contribution
Engblom/Kornfeld* et al. Genes Dev (2007), *=equal contribution

Postdoc (Köln, DE)



MicroRNAs and hepatic glucose metabolism

Kornfeld et al. Nature (2013)
EMBO Longterm Fellowship 2010-12
DFG: Emmy-Noether Junior Group leader grant

Principal Investigator (Köln)



Noncoding RNAs and brown adipose tissue

13 invited talks since 01/2014
2 international conferences organized since 01/2014
1st corresponding author paper submitted

- Brief introduction to myself and my research
- **My ERC StG idea**
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SDU | My 'big question': Transgenerational obesity

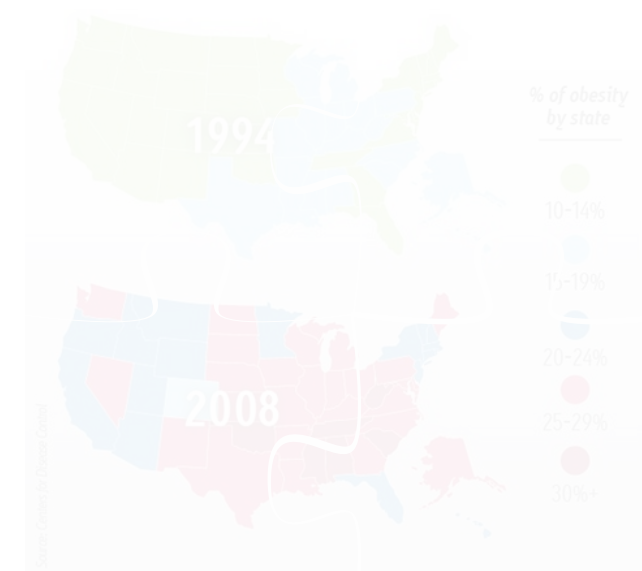
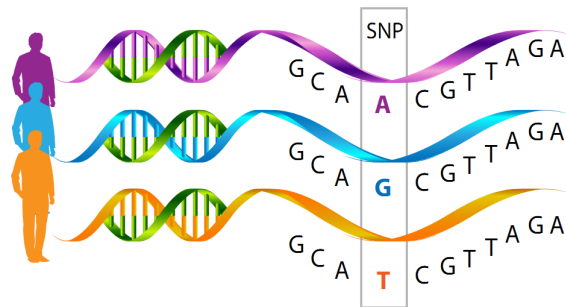
Lifestyle



Development
in utero



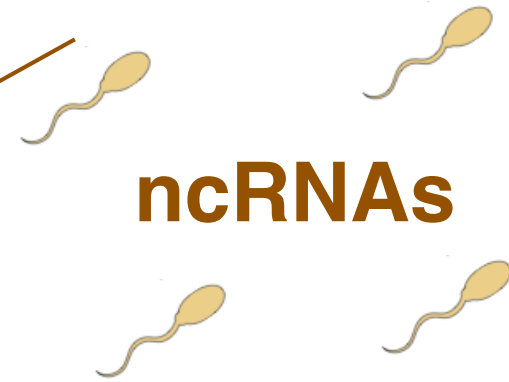
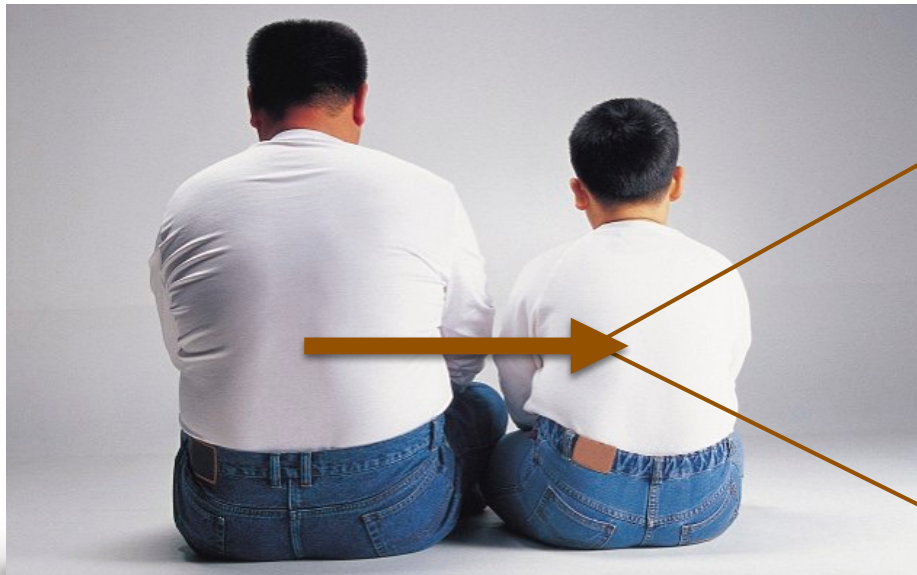
Genetics



stress

famine

obesity



ncRNAs

~~**DNA**~~



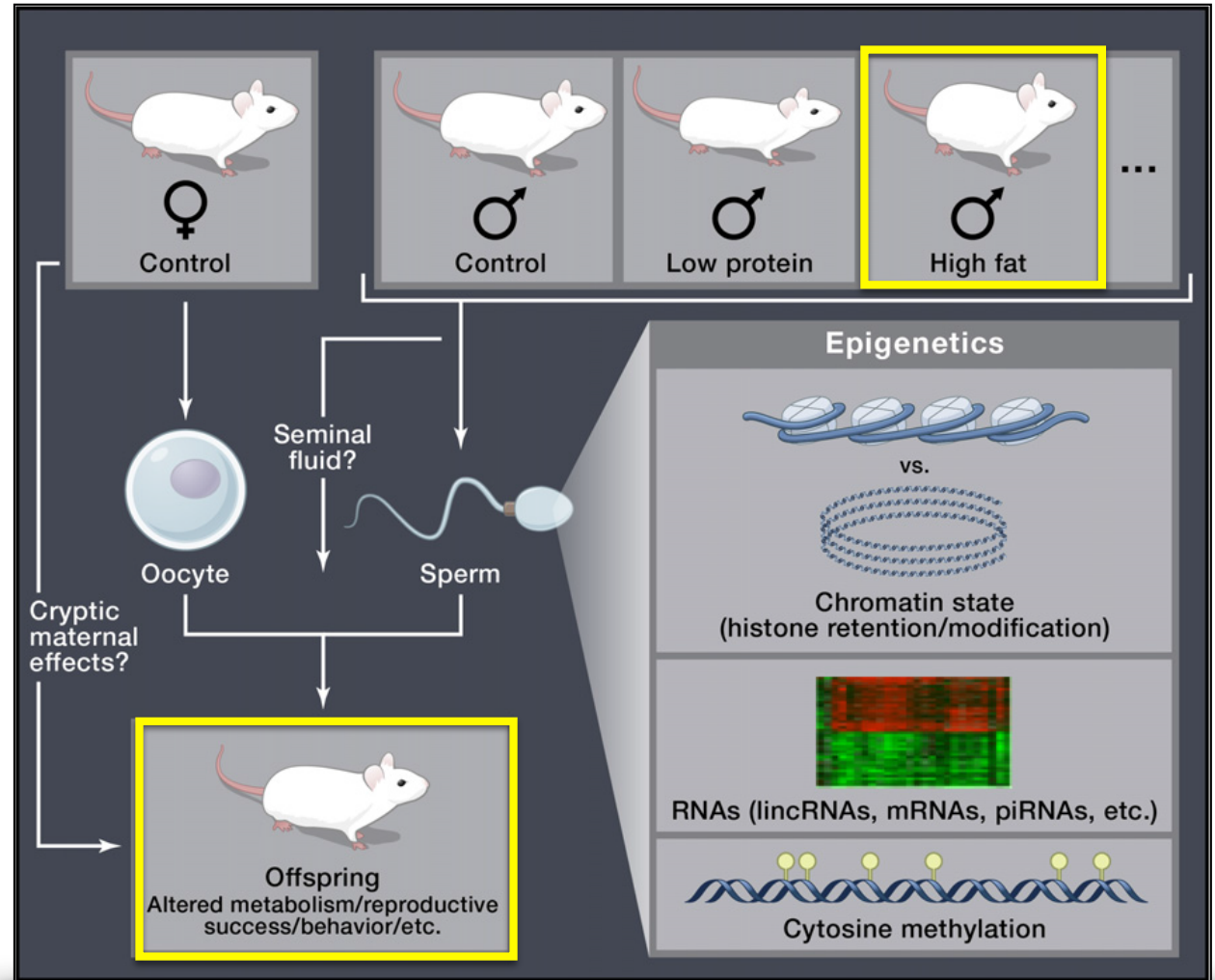
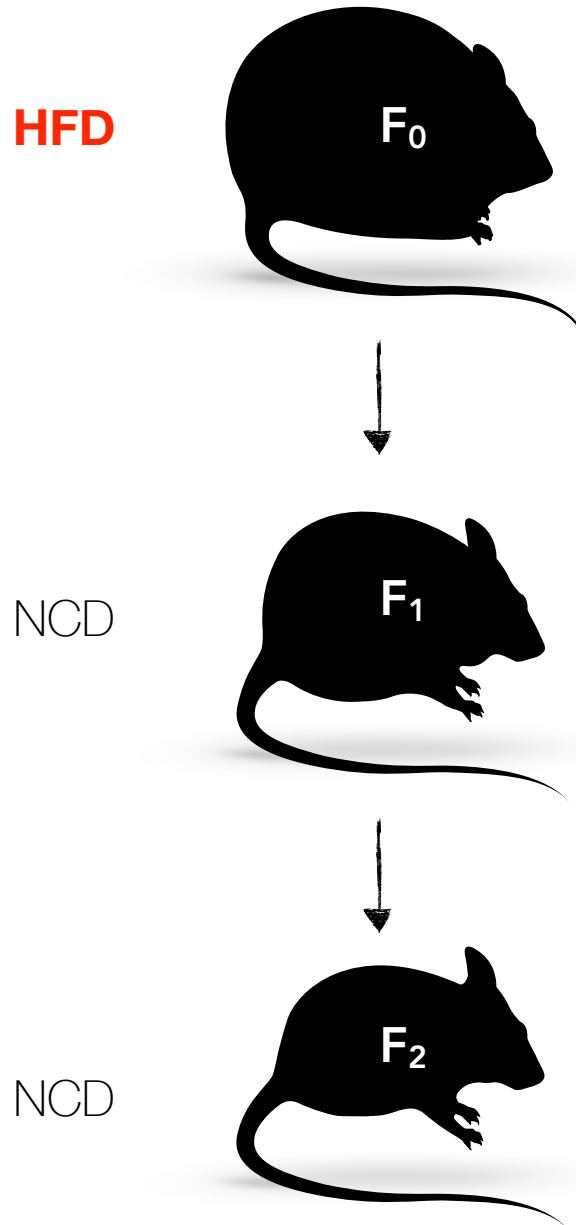
D. melanogaster



M. musculus (C57BL/6)



C. elegans



- Brief introduction to myself and my research
- My ERC StG idea
- **The ERC interview**
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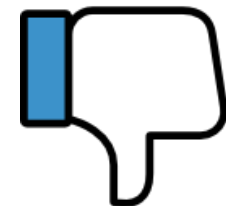
SDU | The interview - It is never the right time



SDU | My ERC interview 1.0 - I could have done better

- Successful in my postdoc (Kornfeld et al *Nature* 2013)
- Renowned hosting institution (Max Planck)
- Emerging field of metabolism research
- Already received tokens of early scientific excellence in DE

- Project less matured (submission deadline close)
- No preliminary findings
- Overambitious proposal
- Very tense atmosphere at interview site / panel



- Successful in my postdoc (Kornfeld et al *Nature* 2013)
 - Renowned hosting institution (Max Planck)
 - Emerging field of metabolism research
 - Already received tokens of early scientific excellence in DE
-
- Project scope more realistic / 2 key questions (synergistic but independent)
 - Preliminary findings showing feasibility
 - Prepared for the situation / procedure
 - Affable ERC panel and interview
 - Close mentorship and recurrent rehearsals



- Introduction to myself and my research
- My ERC StG idea
- The ERC interview
- **My 2 cents on what makes a successful pitch**
- Your thoughts and questions

SDU | My 2 cents: What makes a successful ERC pitch?

- Talk to successful grantees - Q: Why did *they* get the grant?
- Ask yourself: Q: Why should *you* get the grant (CV, idea, host inst., techniques)?
- Try to understand the 'unwritten' ERC rules. Whom do they really support?
- Develop a scientifically bold idea, *not a research grant proposal*.
- Pitch your idea to junior / senior PIs: You want enthusiasm and hard criticism.
- Are you excited about your idea or is it geared to 'hot topics' in your field?
- Is the question behind your project relevant even if your hypothesis proves wrong?
- Tricky part: Is it still feasible to achieve in 5y time with 2-3 people?
- Ideally: Find somebody that chaperones you during your application (*and has time!*).
- Ideally: Prepare well but expect to apply twice.

- Introduction to myself and my research
- Brief thoughts on what to prepare before starting
- My ERC StG idea
- The ERC interview
- **Your thoughts and questions**

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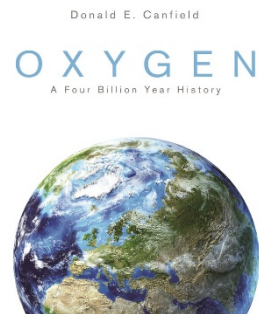
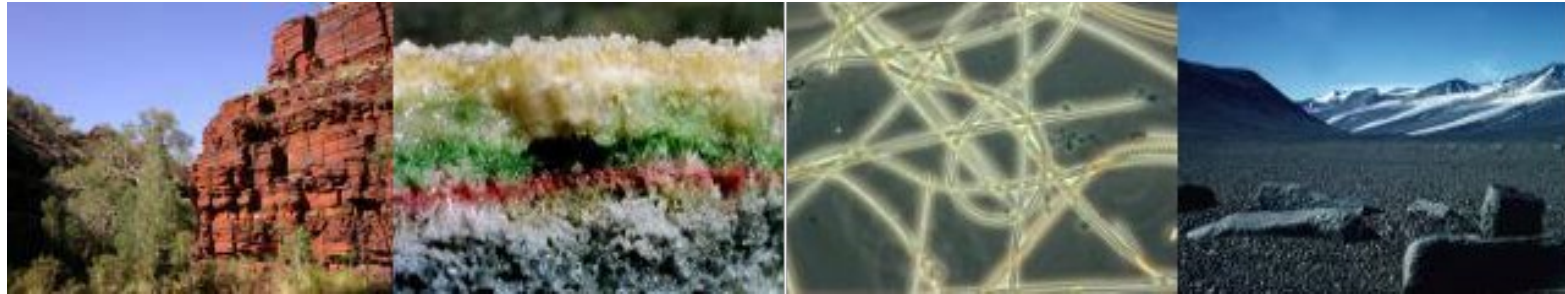
www.kornfeldlab.com



13:30



Don Canfield, ERC AdG receiver, ERC AdG Panel member
Professor & Villum Investigator & D-IAS Chair, Nordcee, Department of
Biology, SDU.
Don will give a talk about his experience with the ERC calls



Nordcee Group
Department of Biology



Nordic Center for Earth Evolution

ERC Advanced grants

Don Canfield

Institute of Biology and NordCEE

University of Southern Denmark



First considerations



Nordic Center for Earth Evolution

- the reason
- the idea
- the team (should follow organically from the idea)
- which grant?
 - regular grant (2,500,000 Euro max)
 - synergy grant (15,000,000 Euro max)



Should I apply?



Nordic Center for Earth Evolution

- great idea (novel and risky encouraged)
- no age discrimination (last 5-10 years productivity)
- gender balance
- h*-index, >15, to be successful, >25
- the chances?



Proposal Preparation



Nordic Center for Earth Evolution

- well organized
- clear statement of goals
- good graphics
- sufficient statements of methods
- justify budget
- use only the space you need

ERC Advanced Grant 2010
Research proposal (Part B1)

How Oxygen Regulates the Structure and Function of Microbial Ecosystems
OXYGEN

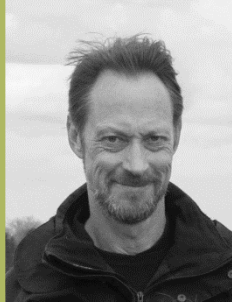
- Name: Donald Eugene Canfield
- Host institution: University of Southern Denmark
- Full title: How Oxygen Regulates the Structure and Function of Microbial Ecosystems
- Proposal short name: Oxygen
- Proposal duration in months: 60

Proposal summary: Our project is called OXYGEN. We are a multidisciplinary team of biogeochemists, microbial ecologists, molecular biologists, and chemists engaged in producing and applying cutting-edge oxygen sensor technology to fundamental issues of how oxygen regulates the growth and metabolism of aerobic and anaerobic organisms in laboratory settings and in nature. Our ultimate goal is to understand how oxygen controls the structure of microbial ecosystems and the biogeochemical cycling of elements in low-oxygen natural environments, which abound on Earth. Within this framework, we identify the following 3 major research objectives:

- 1) The development and application of cutting-edge oxygen sensor technology**
- 2) Exploration of the oxygen regulation of aerobic and anaerobic organisms**
- 3) Exploration of oxic-anoxic interface environments as they relate to the activities of micro and macroorganisms.**

Our aim is also geobiological, as we will apply our understanding to the coupled evolution of ecosystem structure and Earth-surface chemistry through time.

14:00



Bo Thamdrup, ERC AdG receiver, member ERC PE10 StG panel 2020
Professor, Nordcee, Department of Biology, SDU.
Bo will give a talk about the ERC evaluation process



Nordcee Group
Department of Biology

The ERC evaluation process

Bo Thamdrup

professor, Department of Biology

PI for ERC AdG NOVAMOX

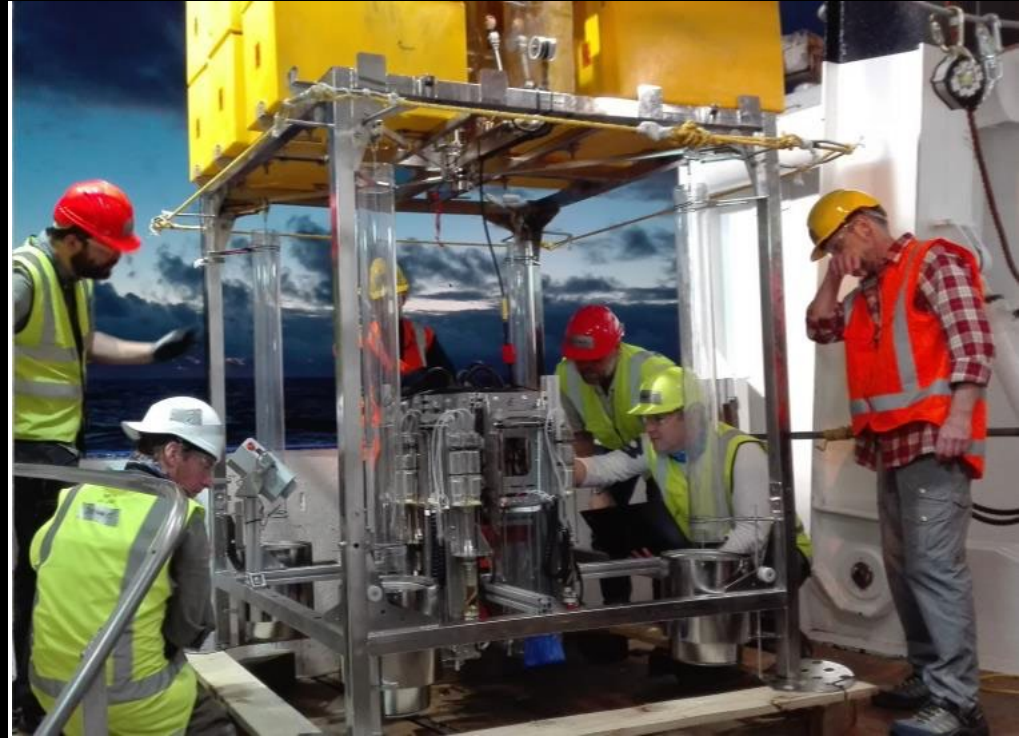
co-I for ERC AdGs OXYGEN and HADES

Panel member for ERC StG panel

PE10 2019-20

*PE10: Earth system sciences
(Geophysics, geo- and cosmochemistry,
biogeochemistry)*

16 panel members



Procedures for StG and CoG applications

Stage I

Remote evaluation of B1:

- Each proposal is assigned to specific panel based on request by applicant.
- Potential transfers may take place if both Panel Chairs agrees.
- Cross panel reviews by request by applicant, scientific officer, Panel Chair.
- Each proposal is reviewed is by 4 panel members (possibly cross-panel review) → **prepanel ranking**

First panel meeting:

- Ranking of proposals by the full panel lead by lead-reviewer
 - **A** Proposals that should go forward to the second step
 - **B** Proposals of high quality but not sufficient to pass to step 2
 - **C** Proposals of lower quality that are far from passing to step 2
- Panel selects proposals for stage II review (A and top B) ~2 x expected budget
- Panel writes compiled panel reviews to rejected proposals (B and C)

Procedures for StG and CoG applications

Stage II

Remote evaluation:

More focus on feasibility, methodology, risks and contingencies

- Same scoring system but more extensive review of full proposal (B1 and B2).
- Each proposal is reviewed by ~4 panel members (possibly cross-panel review) + **3-6 external reviewers**.

Second panel meeting:

- Interviews 10+15+5 min
 - Panel Chair act as moderator
 - Lead reviewer opens the questioning
 - Other panel reviewers and panel members ask questions
 - Provisional ranking of applicant
- Final numbered ranking
 - **A** proposals which fully meet the ERC's excellence criterion and are therefore recommended for funding if sufficient funds are available
 - **B** those proposals which meet some but not all elements of the ERC's excellence criterion and therefore will not be funded
- Lead reviewers draft panel comments for rejected proposals

2020: No interviews for StG!

PROPOSAL REVIEW (Hide full criteria descriptions)

CRITERION 1: RESEARCH PROJECT

Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Score: 4.0 (Outstanding) 3.5 3.0 (Excellent) 2.5 2.0 (Very Good) 1.5 1.0 (Non-competitive)

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

To what extent does the proposed research address **important challenges?**

To what extent are the objectives ambitious and **beyond the state of the art** (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?

To what extent is the proposed research **high risk/high gain** (i.e. if successful the payoffs will be very significant, but there is a high risk that the research project does not entirely fulfil its aims)?

Comments:

(max. 3000 words)

Scientific Approach

To what extent is the outlined **scientific approach feasible** (bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is **high risk/high gain** based on the Extended Synopsis)?

Comments:

(max. 3000 words)

- Criterion 2 - PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Current score: 3.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 0

Please click here for more information

Your score:

Score: 4.0 (Outstanding) 3.5 3.0 (Excellent) 2.5 2.0 (Very Good) 1.5 1.0 (Non-competitive)

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the **ability to conduct ground-breaking research?**

Score: 4.0 (Outstanding) 3.5 3.0 (Excellent) 2.5 2.0 (Very Good) 1.5 1.0 (Non-competitive)

To what extent does the PI provide evidence of **creative independent thinking?**

Score: 4.0 (Outstanding) 3.5 3.0 (Excellent) 2.5 2.0 (Very Good) 1.5 1.0 (Non-competitive)

To what extent does the PI have the required **scientific expertise and capacity to** successfully execute the project?

Score: 4.0 (Outstanding) 3.5 3.0 (Excellent) 2.5 2.0 (Very Good) 1.5 1.0 (Non-competitive)

Comments:

For CoG:

The PI has demonstrated the ability to propose and conduct ground-breaking research and his/her achievements have typically gone beyond the state of the art.

The PI provides abundant evidence of creative independent thinking.

The ERC Grant would contribute significantly to the establishment and/or further consolidation of the PI's independence.

What makes a great proposal?

- The IDEA. The project should be exciting, ambitious, innovative (**maybe a little bit crazy!**) and address an important scientific question
 - aiming at a **step** rather than **incremental** change in its field
- The scientific approach should appear feasible for the applicant (highlight competitive advantage of applicant)
 - new methods can be supported by preliminary data
- Risks and challenges should be well outlined and appropriate contingency plans included
- The applicant's independence, creativity, dedication and ability to lead a project should be evident
 - collaborations are welcome, but the PI shouldn't depend on them
- Applications should be easy to read. Idea, importance, and innovation should be clear from the opening paragraph – the reader should have an overview of all important aspects from the 1st page
- Avoid overstatements, unnecessary technicalities, and too many abbreviations
- Imagine yourself being the reviewer – don't think too much about specific panel members

Important about interview:

- Explain overall idea
- Highlight novelty and importance of the insight gained
- Outline experimental strategy and highlight novel approaches
- Highlight competitive advantage of applicant but avoid spending a lot of time on CV

- B1 focuses on the idea, B2 more on background, execution, feasibility.
- Discuss with colleagues and get feedback!
- Contacting panel experts before or after evaluation can lead to exclusion!

GOOD LUCK!