

# Cómo preparar una propuesta ERC exitosa a la altura de la idea

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# Novelties WP 2026 (IV) – New Proposal Structure

- New Proposal Structure:

Scientific Proposal Part I ( $\leq$  five pages)

Scientific Proposal Part II ( $\leq$  seven pages/ten for Synergy Grant)

- CV and Track Record ( $\leq$  four pages)
- Resources and Time Commitment: up to two pages ( $>$ two pages for Synergy Grant)
- Annex of Running Grants/Grant Applications in Progress (does not count toward page limit)



# Scientific Proposal (StG, CoG and AdG – 2026)

Part II should not be a repetition of Part I

	Part I (5 pages)	Part II (7 pages)
Objective	To convince the evaluation panel that the proposal presents an <b>original and creative idea</b> addressing an <b>important scientific question</b> , with the potential to <b>advance the frontiers of knowledge</b>	Explain <b>how</b> the project will be implemented in detail.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State of the knowledge</li> <li>- Scientific question and objectives</li> <li>- Overall approach or research strategy</li> <li>- <i>Expected contribution to the field</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detailed methodology</li> <li>- Work plan and timeline</li> <li>- Risk assessment and mitigation</li> <li>- Additional background (if needed)</li> </ul>
Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visionary, conceptual, persuasive: focused on scientific ambition, without technical detail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Precise, technical, and implementation-focused — aimed at experts in the field.</li> </ul>



\* Assumed by the Spanish NCPs

# Research strategy (Part I) vs. Methodology (Part II)

## B1

**Purpose:** : Convince the panel that your idea is original, ambitious, and scientifically sound.

- Style: **Concise, clear, accessible to non-specialists**
- What to include:
  - Overview of the scientific approach.
  - Preliminary evidence (own data, pilots, key publications).
  - Added value compared to the SoA and the competitors.
  - General risk evaluation and how you plan to address them.
  - Key collaborations that contribute capacity (without detailing contracts).
- **What to avoid:** Technical or methodological detail (this belongs in Part II)

## B2

**Purpose:** Show that you have thought **thoroughly** about how to execute each part of the project.

- Style: **Technical, rigorous, detailed**, for experts in your field.
- What to include:
  - Refer back to the objectives in Part I and focus on how your methods will achieve them — no need to restate them.
  - Detailed design of the work plan (packages, tasks, schedule).
  - Specific methods you will use at each stage.
  - Methodological justification (why those methods?).
  - Technical and human resources required.
  - More specific risk evaluation and contingency plans.
  - Collaboration details: roles, contributions, planned agreements.
- **What to avoid:** Selling the idea as if it were a pitch. This section should demonstrate technical expertise

# Practical Tips

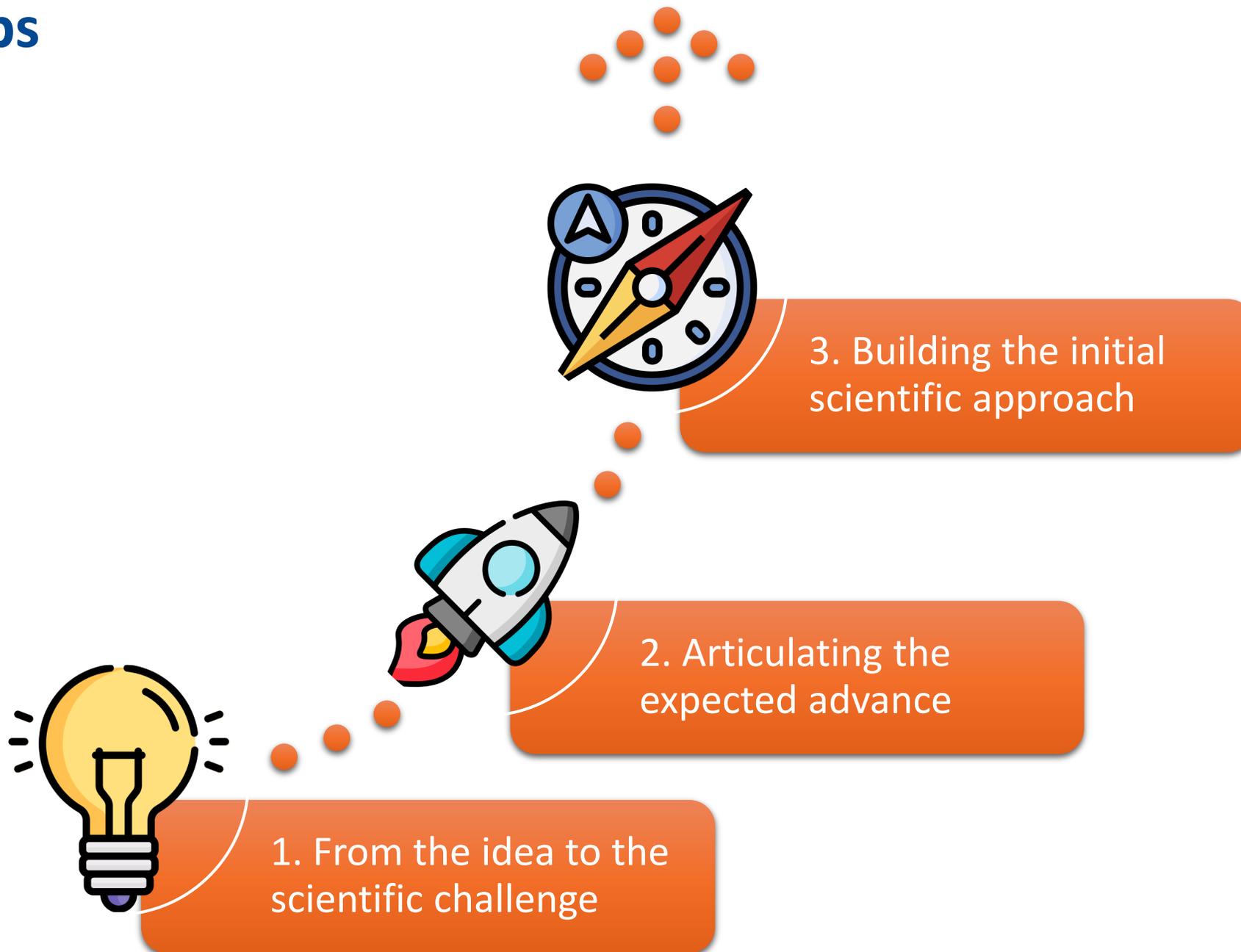
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# Understanding the ERC Evaluation Process

Write your proposal so that a few experts can defend it and the full panel can support it

- Each ERC panel includes 12–18 members, collectively covering all disciplines represented by the panel’s keywords.
- In Step 1, your proposal is read in detail by 2–3 panel members—those most familiar with your field.
- If you reach Step 2, it means you’ve convinced those experts (during the interview and final discussion)
- There are no quotas by discipline: all proposals compete equally, regardless of topic.

# First Steps

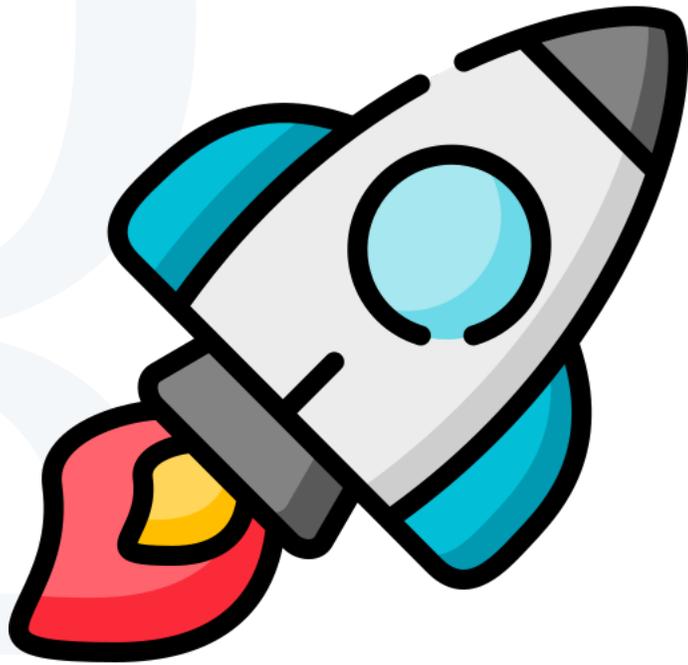


# 1. From the idea to the scientific challenge



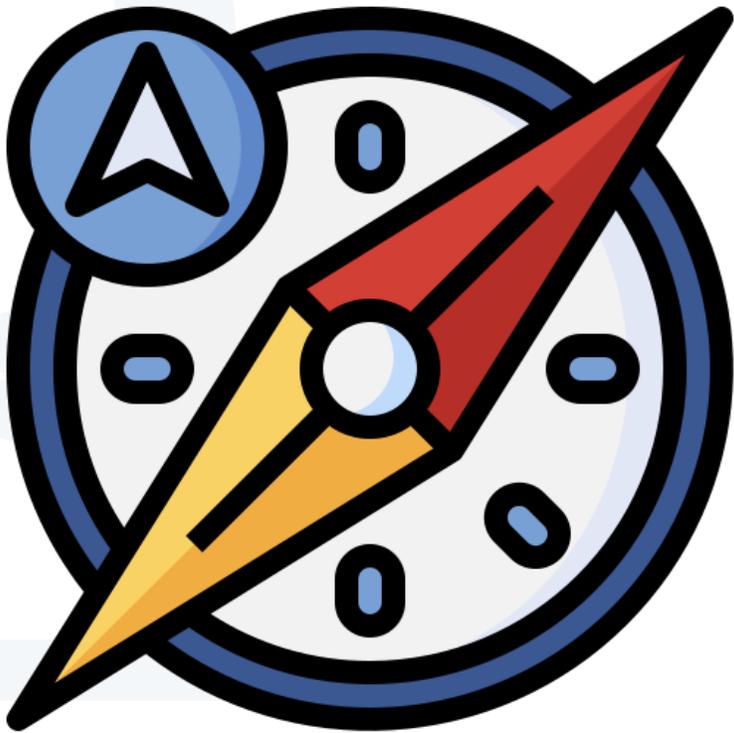
- A good scientific question is ambitious and clear—**not necessarily complex.**
- **Curiosity** and **relevance** must go together.
- Start from a **conceptual gap**, not a technical issue.
- ERC ideas do not confirm something; they **change understanding.**
- If it can be answered with a **national/project call**, it's probably not “ERC level”.

## 2. Articulating the expected advance



- “Advancing knowledge” means **opening new perspectives, not doing more of the same.**
- **Ambition  $\neq$  technical complexity;** it is a conceptual leap.
- ERC ideas are **transformative.**
- Avoid **generic claims** (“it will be innovative”) — show the novelty.
- Panels look for projects that **change the rules of the game.**

### 3. Building the initial scientific approach



- **Excellence is also in the how:** a strong idea requires a coherent and well-thought-out strategy.
- The **approach** is not a list of methods, but a **conceptual translation** of the idea into action.
- A good ‘how’ inspires **confidence**: it shows that the IP has thought about the path forward, without losing sight of the ambition.
- **At SyG**, the added value lies in how the **different approaches** need each other in order to move forward..

# Resumen



Everything starts with a big question

A question that challenges the status quo and seeks to expand the frontiers of knowledge



Ambition = conceptual advance, not complexity

ERC rewards ideas that change how we understand a phenomenon



Excellence lies also in the "how"

A coherent, rigorous strategy shows leadership and feasibility



Your voice and vision matter

The panel wants to see the creative mind behind the project



In SyG, synergy drives discovery

Synergy arises from combining perspectives to achieve what no single team could.

# Final recommendations



**Think in two complementary parts:** Part I (Vision) & Part II (implementation)



**Be clear, concrete and persuasive:** avoid jargon, justify claims, show your voice



**Ambition ≠ Technical complexity:** focus on advancing knowledge



**Transformative impact:** open new research avenues, inspire others, etc.



**Build trust with the panel:** show leadership, coherence and execution capacity.

# Gracias



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