

Building ERC-Competitive Research: Lessons from Croatia

Unlocking ERC Success - Smart Preparation & Winning Strategies

MEDILS | Split | 7 – 8 September 2026

PROGRAMME 7 September 2026	
9:00 – 9:30	Registration
9:30 – 9:50	Opening ceremony Welcome speeches <i>Representative of the University of Split</i> <i>Representative of the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth</i>
9:50 – 10:20	Introduction to the ERC <i>Martin Penny, PhD, European Research Council Executive Agency Head of the Communication Unit</i>
10:20 – 11:00	Importance of frontier research Panel discussion Moderator: <i>Prof. Jadranka Šepić, PhD, University of Split, Croatia Ambassador for the ERC</i> Panellists: <i>Prof. Srđan Čapkun, PhD, ETH Zürich, Switzerland</i> <i>Prof. Phoebe Koundouri, PhD, Athens University of Economics and Business, University of Cambridge Ambassador for the ERC</i> <i>Prof. Iva Tolić, PhD, Ruđer Bošković Institute, Croatia</i>
11:00 – 11:20	Coffee break
11:20 – 12:00	Widening countries and the ERC Overview of participation and support measures <i>Emanuel Maloč, Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes (AMEUP), Croatia National Contact Point for ERC</i> Success story from a Widening country <i>Petra Fedorová, Technology Centre Prague, Czech Republic National Contact Point for ERC</i>
12:00 – 12:40	Frontier research strategy in the Widening countries Panel discussion Moderator: <i>Danica Ramljak, DVM, PhD, University of Split, Croatia</i> Panellists: <i>Prof. Andras Stipsicz, HUN-REN Alfréd Rényi Institute of Mathematics, Hungary Member of ERC Scientific Council</i> <i>Petra Fedorová, Technology Centre Prague, Czech Republic National Contact Point for ERC</i>

	<i>Prof. Ülo Niinemets, PhD, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonia Ambassador for the ERC</i> <i>Prof. Nenad Pavin, PhD, Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia</i>
12:40 – 13:40	Lunch break
13:40 – 14:10	On ERC Grants <i>Martin Penny, PhD, European Research Council Executive Agency Head of the Communication Unit</i>
14:10 – 14:40	Features of competitive ERC proposals Panel discussion Moderator: <i>Ana Butković, PhD, Pre-Award Research Support Centre, University of Rijeka, Croatia</i> Panellists: <i>Jelena Bujan, PhD, Ruđer Bošković Institute, Croatia</i> <i>Prof. Eleonora Macchia, PhD, University of Bari, Italy Ambassador for the ERC</i> <i>Prof. Mojca Plesničar, PhD, Institute of Criminology, Slovenia; University of Ljubljana, Slovenia Ambassador for the ERC</i>
14:40 - 14:50	Short break
14:50 – 15:20	Evaluation process and criteria <i>Prof. Iva Tolić, PhD, Ruđer Bošković Institute, Croatia</i>
15:20 – 16:00	Summary of the day & interactive discussion <i>Prof. Jadranka Šepić, PhD, University of Split, Croatia Ambassador for the ERC</i>

PROGRAMME | 8 September 2026

9:00 – 9:30	ERC proposal: Details & vision <i>Prof. Themis Alissafi, PhD, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece; Biomedical Research Academy of Athens, Greece Ambassador for the ERC</i>
9:30 – 10:50	Case study analysis: successful vs. unsuccessful proposals Panel presentations <i>Prof. Jadranka Šepić, PhD, University of Split Ambassador for the ERC</i>
10:50 – 11:10	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:10 - 11:20	<i>Registration to parallel workshops – Preparing a proposal for ERC Starting or Consolidator Grant</i> Workshop 1 Life Sciences (LS) <i>Prof. Ülo Niinemets, PhD, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonia Ambassador for the ERC</i> <i>Jelena Bujan, PhD, Ruđer Bošković Institute, Croatia</i> Workshop 2 Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE) <i>Prof. Jadranka Šepić, PhD, University of Split Ambassador for the ERC</i> <i>David Courtney, PhD, Queen's University Belfast Ambassador for the ERC</i> Workshop 3 Social Sciences and Humanities (SH) <i>Prof. Mojca Plesničar, PhD, Institute of Criminology, Slovenia; University of Ljubljana, Slovenia Ambassador for the ERC</i> <i>Prof. Ida Raffaelli, PhD, University of Zagreb, Croatia National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technological Development</i>
11:20 – 12:50	Developing your proposal – Writing exercise Group work
12:50 – 13:50	<i>Lunch break</i>
13:50 – 15:00	Review of project proposals & simulation of evaluation Group work
15:00 – 16:00	ERC interview preparation Group work
16:00 - 16:30	Closing remarks <i>Danica Ramljak, DVM, PhD, University of Split, Croatia</i> <i>Prof. Jadranka Šepić, PhD, University of Split Ambassador for the ERC</i>