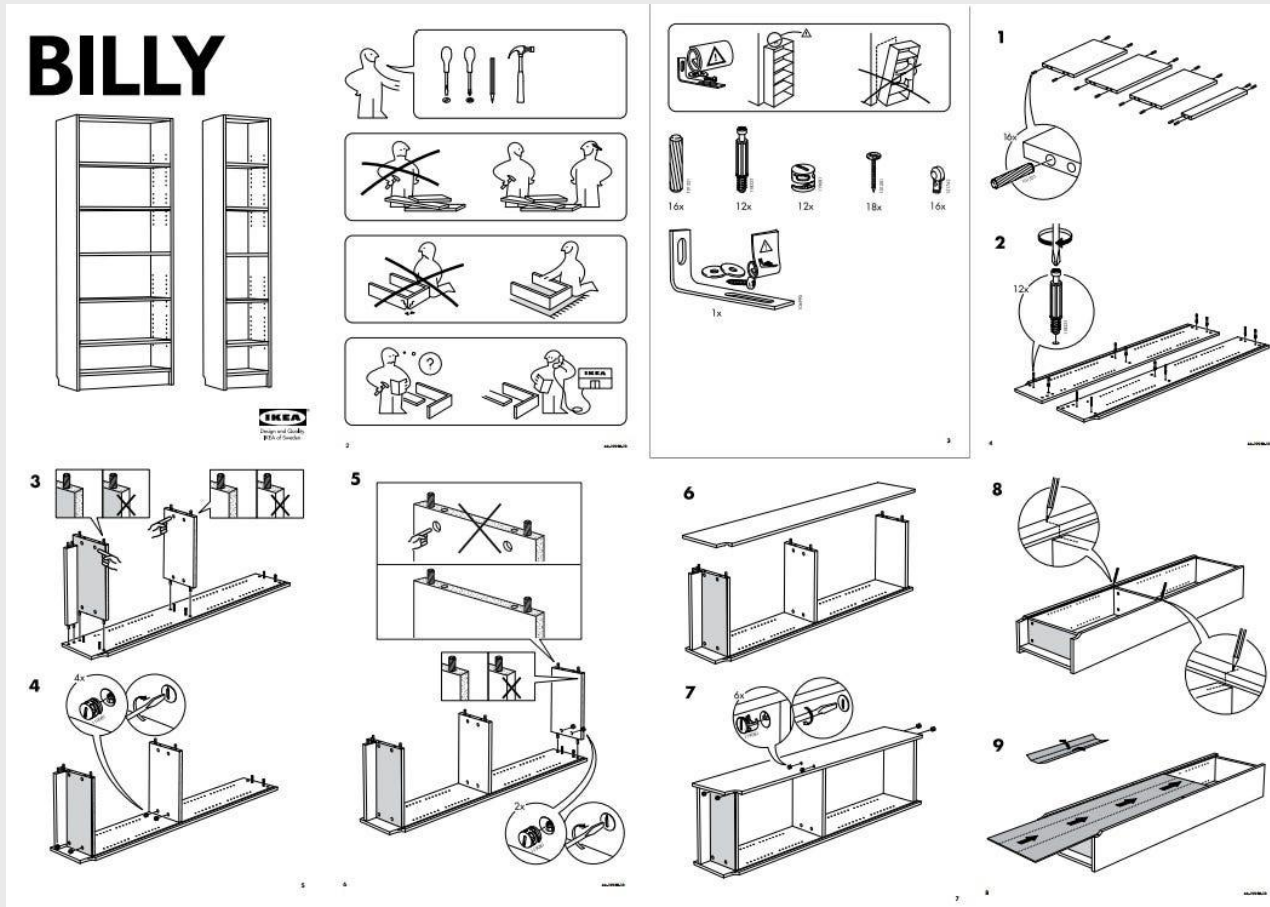


ERC Starting en Consolidator Grants 2025 – Testimony CoG 2022 call SH7

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WHAT SHOULD WE DO ...



WHAT WE (usually) DO ...

Why we do not read guidelines...

User's fault

- we are lazy
- we assume most of it can be figured out by use of common sense
- we assume we know it anyhow
- we do not have time to read complicated guidelines
- we learn best when given spoken directions
- we learn best by watching and imitating

Not the user's fault

- guidelines are tedious to read because they are often poorly written and too long
- guidelines are written in jargon, too technical
- guidelines are written not by people who are going to use them (lawyers, administrators, ...)

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ERC Consolidator Grant

For excellent researchers with 7 to 12 years experience after PhD

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So... RT(f)M
before you
start

As a panel member...

Three stage process

-**step 0** : remote evaluation by each panel member (write IER + SER)

*panel members are expected to assess proposals as **generalists**

*only B1 + CV (max 10 pages)

*task “write IER” (Individual Evaluation Report)

1. Research Project

-Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

-Scientific Approach

2. Principal Investigator

*grade research project (0-5), grade PI (0-5), total grade (=sum)

*task “SER – Suggest External Reviewers” (<https://www.prophy.science/>)

*on average each panel member read 20-25 proposals >> put yourself in the position of a panel member

As a panel member...

Three stage process

- step 1** : panel meeting > evaluation based on part B1 + CV (10 pages) → A, B, C
 - A = interview
 - B = resubmittable next year (largely to a different panel)
 - C = resubmittable after 2 years (in part to a similar panel)
- *panel is about 15 people (gender balanced, different disciplines, different countries)
- *each proposal is evaluated by **at least 4 panel members** (in some/most cases more) leading to a grade between 0 and 5 (proposal), 0 and 5 (PI) and a total score (=sum). Proposals can also be read by members from other panels.
- *lead panel member introduces the project (what is it about, and what were the scores) and opens the discussion; open and fair discussion among those that have read the proposal, other panel members follow the discussion and can also intervene (no intervention from external panel members). Average discussion time for each proposal: 15 min
- *conclusion of each discussion >> A, B, C but also A-, A/B, B+ (re-evaluated)
- *all B and C get a short report why they were not selected
- *all A get a notice that they go to the next step (without any comments)

As a panel member...

Expert	Review	1. Research Project	2. Principal Investigator	Total score
[Redacted]	panel	4.5	4.5	9.0
[Redacted]	panel	1.5	3.0	4.5
[Redacted]	panel	3.5	4.0	7.5
Frank WITLOX	panel	3.5	4.0	7.5
[Redacted]	external	Highly Recommended		
[Redacted]	external	Not Recommended		
[Redacted]	external	Highly Recommended		
[Redacted]	external	Recommended		

As a panel member...

Three stage process

-**step 2** : panel meeting > entire proposal B2 + CV + budget (15 pages) (only A proposals) > interview.

- *write IER (but now based on B2), meaning: “what Q do you have for the interview?”
 - *each panel sets its own rules re: interview (ppt, video?, duration).
 - *30 min; 5-7 min introduction (then online, now in person) + Q&A led by lead panel member, open discussion.
 - *deliberation >> ‘yes’ or ‘no’ independent from requested budget.
 - *allocated money to each panel depends on total amount of proposals in that panel.
- COG 2022 SH7 – 72 stage 1 >> 25 stage 2 >> 11 granted (15,3%)


Tips

Stage 1:

- panel members read up to 25-30 proposals; most of them within their field, but also some outside their field >> generalist
- choose an acronym that is not an existing word ('ACCESS') or is difficult to pronounce ('EUTstaLISmT')
- be concise, clear, honest, explain why this research/why you
- 3,5 is the bar to cross
- high risk/high gain → groundbreaking, novel
- project > PI → project ~ PI-portfolio
- h-index, etc not a big issue

Stage 2:

- panel members read up to 5-8 proposals; all of them within their field + external evaluations (up to 10)
- prepare for the usual questions: why this, why that, why you, why not...
- be on top of your subject

A black and white photograph of a man riding a bicycle. He is wearing a dark, short-sleeved shirt and shorts. Attached to the back of the bicycle is a large, complex mechanical structure. It consists of a large, tilted rectangular prism or a large, tilted rectangular prism. The structure is made of metal frames and has a large, dark, rectangular panel on its side. The man is looking back over his shoulder at the camera. The background is a light-colored, textured surface, possibly a wall or a large piece of paper.

Good luck with
your 'dream
project' !

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