



European Research Council
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission

ERCEA JOB OPENING

The European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA), located in Brussels, Belgium, supports the work of the European Research Council, the first pan-European funder of excellent frontier research in Europe. The ERCEA is dedicated to selecting and funding the excellent ideas that have not happened yet, and the scientists that are dreaming them up. The ERCEA is establishing a Reserve List of qualified candidates ('talent pool') from which to hire for the position of:

Project Adviser in Ethics

CONTRACT TYPE	Contract Agent, Function Group IV (full-time)
REFERENCE	ERCEA/CA/234/2024
DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS	Monday, 27 May 2024 by 12:00 (midday) Brussels time

ERCEA Project Advisers in Ethics are part of the Ethics Review and Expert Management Unit of the Scientific Management Department of the ERCEA, which defines and manages the processes for ethics review and monitoring, redress and expert management. The Ethics Review and Expert Management Unit counts around 45 highly committed and qualified staff members in three sectors.

POSITION

ERCEA Project Advisers in Ethics implement the first step of the ethics review and support the work of external ethics experts ("Ethics Reviewers") in reviewing the complex proposals for ERC grants. In addition, they monitor the implementation of the ethics deliverables of ERC-funded projects, under the supervision of Ethics Call Coordinators. Key strengths needed to establish trust-based relationships with different stakeholders (mainly ERC applicants and Principal Investigators) and to manage demanding situations include effective organisational, analytical and communication skills, as well as outstanding drafting and presentation skills. ERCEA Project Advisers in Ethics need to demonstrate the capability to drive independent work forward in the context of a broader team effort. While not being directly involved in scientific research, the position requires an excellent knowledge of the state of the art in the scientific field and related ethics domains, and the ability to leverage this knowledge for project monitoring and portfolio analysis.

JOB DESCRIPTION

ERCEA Project Advisers in Ethics would be entrusted with the following tasks and duties:

Project management

- Perform the ethics pre-screening of proposals; participate in the ethics screening and ethics assessment activities;
- Send out requests for additional information to ERC applicants after panel meetings and follow-up on replies from the applicants; draft reports;
- Responsible for the full organisation of ethics panels together with colleagues;
- Assign proposals to ethics experts based on their expertise; prepare the documents for the ethics experts;
- Draft guidelines for the applicants and the panel members;

- Monitor the ethics deliverables in the implementation of the research projects; validate the state of the ethics requirements at each payment; produce ethics monitoring notes accordingly; communicate with ERC Principal Investigators;
- Contribute to the design and implementation of new measures aiming to improve the efficiency of the ethics appraisal process in the ERCEA;
- Participate in horizontal activities undertaken by the ERCEA (e.g., feedback to policy).

External communication

- Present the ethics sector and ethics process at workshops, seminars, publications, conferences and other public events;
- Contribute to publications intended for external stakeholders;
- Help collect information and draft replies to ethics questions from external stakeholders such as European Institutions, Member States and / or the general public;
- Extract and disseminate best practices and facilitate exchange of experiences;
- Provide input to the European Commission concerning the ERC programme and the European Research Area concerning research ethics in the ERCEA.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

On the closing date for applications, candidates must fulfil the following criteria:

- Be a national of a member state of the European Union and enjoy full rights as a citizen.
- Have fulfilled any obligations imposed by the applicable laws regarding military service.
- Meet the character requirements for the duties involved.
- Be physically fit to perform their duties.
- Have a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies of at least three years attested by a diploma.
- Produce evidence of a thorough knowledge of one of the languages of the European Union and a satisfactory knowledge of another language of the Union to the extent necessary for the performance of duties.
- Have successfully passed an EPSO CAST in Function Group IV (that is still valid)¹ OR be registered in a CAST Permanent Call for Expression of Interest in Function Group IV².

SELECTION CRITERIA

Candidates need to make explicitly clear in their application how and to what extent they meet the selection criteria. The applications of candidates that do not meet one or more of the essential selection criteria, will not be evaluated further.

Essential selection criteria

- Strong academic background including at least a completed Master's level degree.
- Three years of professional experience in dealing with research ethics issues, or a completed PhD related to research ethics.
- Knowledge of English at level C1, according to [the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#).

Advantageous selection criteria

- Further research experience in ethics.
- Experience in working as a researcher in international research projects and/or the management of research projects.

¹ Candidates must be included in the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) database for Contract Agents in Function Group IV and have successfully passed the EPSO tests for that Function Group. Please consult [here](#) the valid EPSO CASTs.

² The pre-selected candidates will be requested by the ERCEA to undergo the EPSO computer-based reasoning tests unless they have already valid results. Only candidates that have successfully passed the EPSO CAST FG IV tests will be invited to the next step in the selection process (see below).

- Professional experience acquired in an EU Institution, an international organisation or a national research funding organisation.
- Experience in managing processes for the ethics review of proposals and the ethics monitoring of funded projects.
- Excellent knowledge of the legislation and guidelines that are relevant for research ethics.
- Knowledge of European research policies and programmes.
- Good understanding of ethics issues related to humans, animals, the environment, and artificial intelligence.

Job-related competencies

- Outstanding drafting and presentation skills in English, with an eye for detail.
- Ability to work well under pressure in demanding situations and ability to handle several tasks simultaneously.
- Ability to deliver quality results individually and in a team while working in a multicultural environment.
- Strong organisational and communication skills.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in joining the ERCEA, please follow these steps:

- 1** If you do not have yet a valid and successful EPSO CAST in Function Group IV, create, or update, an application for the Permanent CAST profile (EPSO CAST) at FG IV level.

→ Register for the Permanent CAST profile [here](#). You can register in any profile at FG IV level.
- 2** Submit a 2-page CV and ERCEA Application Form by Monday, 27 May 2024 by 12:00 (midday) Brussels time to ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu

→ Download the application form [here](#) and follow the instructions and rules listed in the Application Form.

If the application has been submitted successfully, candidates will receive a confirmation e-mail within three working days. Candidates are strongly advised not to leave the submission process to the last minute. The ERCEA cannot be held responsible for any delay due to, for example, heavy internet traffic or connection difficulties. In the case of multiple submissions, only the latest valid and complete application will be considered.

Candidates are responsible for the information they provide and for ensuring that all the information is complete and correct before submitting the application.

Candidates will be disqualified if they do not:

- Comply with the conditions of application for the Job Opening;
- Have an updated EPSO CAST application in the relevant profile by the deadline for applications;
- Send their application by the deadline;
- Send a complete application including all requested elements;
- Complete the application in English.

Furthermore, if it is established at any point in time that the information in an application has been falsified, candidates will be disqualified from the selection process.

At any stage of the selection, the ERCEA can request candidates to present, for example, certified copies of degrees, diplomas, references, proof of experience. These documents should not be sent during the selection process, except upon request of the ERCEA.

STEPS OF THE SELECTION PROCESS

All correspondence regarding this Job Opening will be in English and will be sent to the e-mail from which candidates submitted their application. Should candidates' e-mail address change, they are asked to inform ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu.

The selection process will take several months to complete. Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the different stages in due time.

Upon the closure of the publication window, the candidates' eligibility will be checked by the HR Team based on the information included in the application in line with the criteria elaborated above. The recruiting service will conduct the shortlisting of the eligible applications in line with the criteria elaborated above. The shortlist will include:

- Pre-selected candidates who already have a valid and successful FG IV EPSO CAST. These candidates might be invited to the testing phase at the ERCEA without sitting the EPSO CAST test again.
- Pre-selected candidates who do not already have a valid and successful FG IV EPSO CAST. These candidates will be invited by EPSO to sit a series of computer-based multiple-choice question (MCQ) tests during the time window corresponding to the present Job Opening. Only candidates who have successfully passed these tests might be invited to the testing phase of the ERCEA. Sample EPSO tests can be found [here](#).

The testing phase at the ERCEA consists of an interview and a possible written exercise to check specific skills required for the job (e.g., drafting skills). The exact testing modalities will be outlined in the interview and written test invitation.

As a general rule, the dates set by the ERCEA cannot be changed at the candidate's request.

Candidates who succeed in the ERCEA interview and possible exercise are included in a Reserve List initially valid for two years. The Reserve List is approved by the ERCEA Director and will include the candidates who meet the evaluation criteria, listed alphabetically. Candidates included in the Reserve List could be offered a job when there is a vacancy for which their profile is suitable and subject to reference checks.

The inclusion on the Reserve List does not imply any entitlement to employment.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

The selection process aims to establish a Reserve List of eligible and qualified candidates. These candidates may be offered a contract with the ERCEA under the following terms:

- One-year contract, with the possibility of renewal. A permanent contract/contract of indefinite duration can be offered after two fixed-term contracts of one year each.
- A basic salary (before EU Institutions' tax³) between 3.943,39 EUR and 5.711,77 EUR depending on the length of the professional experience. On top of the basic salary, the remuneration package may include further monthly allowances (an expatriation allowance amounting to 16% in addition to the basic salary; a household allowance; etc.). *For example, a Project Adviser who has six years of professional experience after the qualifying degree, who is single, and who is entitled to an expatriation allowance, earns an estimated monthly net salary of 4.311,66 EUR.*
- Generous leave entitlements; recuperation of overtime worked; flexible working hours; full international health insurance.
- Coverage under the European Union Institutions' Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme; access to the European Union's pension plan after ten years of service.
- An inspiring and multicultural working environment in the heart of Brussels, Belgium. The ERCEA cares about well-being and offers ample opportunities for personal and professional learning and development.
- Free access to a European School and access to childcare facilities of the European Commission.

³ Note that the salary is not subject to national taxation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The ERCEA values difference, promotes equality. We apply a policy of equal opportunities and accept applications without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, as per Article 1(d)(1) of the Staff Regulations.

PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

The ERCEA ensures that applicants' personal data are processed as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (Official Journal of the European Communities, L 295 of 21 November 2018). This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data. Candidates are invited to carefully read the [Data Protection Notice](#), which provides useful information about the processing of their personal data and relevant rights.

REQUEST FOR REVIEW, APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Review

The ERCEA and the Selection Committees operate within the context of the general principles of European Union law as interpreted by the Courts. In assessing candidates' merits, Selection Committees observe the principle of equal treatment. If candidates nevertheless believe that one of these principles has not been applied in their case, they have the right, within 10 calendar days from the date when they receive notification of the decision that was sent to them, to request a review by sending an e-mail stating their reasons to: ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu. Candidates must quote in the subject line: reference number of the selection process; 'Request for review'. The ERCEA will forward it to the Selection Committee if it comes within the Committee's remit.

Appeal procedure

If, at any stage of the selection, candidates consider that their interests have been prejudiced by a particular decision, or lack thereof, they can take the following action:

- Lodge an administrative complaint pursuant to Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations, at: ERC-SELECTION@ec.europa.eu. The complaint must be lodged within three months from the date on which candidates are notified of the act adversely affecting them, or lack thereof, only if the rules governing the selection process have clearly been infringed. The Appointing Authority of the ERCEA cannot overturn a value judgement (i.e., the quality of a candidate's performance in a written or oral test or the relevance of qualifications and professional experience) made by the Selection Committee. The Appointing Authority of the ERCEA shall notify the person concerned of its reasoned decision within four months of the date on which the complaint was lodged.
- Should the aforementioned complaint be rejected, candidates may request a [judicial review](#) of the act adversely affecting them, pursuant to Article 270 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 91 of the Staff Regulations. The request for judicial review must be lodged within three months from the date on which candidates are notified of the decision taken in response to the above-mentioned administrative complaint.

Complaints to the European Ombudsman

Any citizen of the European Union or any natural or legal person residing in a Member State may direct a complaint concerning instances of maladministration to the [European Ombudsman](#) pursuant to Article 228(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Complaints to the European Ombudsman do not suspend the periods mentioned in Articles 90(2) and 91 of the Staff Regulations for lodging complaints or submitting an appeal before the Court of Justice according to Article 270 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It should also be noted that, under Article 2(4) of the Regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the European Ombudsman's duties, any complaint to the European Ombudsman must be preceded by appropriate administrative approaches to the institutions and bodies concerned.