



EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES VIA THE AUSTRALIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE AT ATHENS

The AAIA's Athens base (AAIA-A) is registered as a Host Institution for all European Research Council (ERC) funding opportunities. This establishes a unique opportunity for Australian Arts and Humanities scholars whose research incorporates a Hellenic component to be the lead researcher (Principal Investigator in ERC terminology) for Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grants, in particular, since Australian-based researchers are not eligible for these schemes otherwise. This document is aimed at researchers who are interested in applying for a Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant through this opportunity.

A condition of every ERC grant is that the grant holder must spend at least 50% of their time within Europe for the duration of the project, regardless of % of time the applicant commits to the project. For this reason, the AAIA-A requires all applicants to allocate a minimum of 50% of their time to their ERC project, even if the scheme has a lower minimum.

To meet these and additional ERC requirements, the grant holder must be employed directly by the AAIA-A for the % of time they plan to be in Europe to undertake their project.

Furthermore, the financial and administrative aspects of the project must be managed by the AAIA-A. This is also a requirement of the ERC.

To address these arrangements, therefore, Funding Agreements and Employment Contracts will be issued by the AAIA-A to the grant holder and their home institution.

In addition, the AAIA requires that research projects under its auspices meet the AAIA's research expectations and fall under at least one of our current [research themes](#).

You are encouraged to watch the [ERC's webinars](#) on these schemes to learn more about what they entail from the perspective of a project lead.

Below, we have compiled answers to questions you are likely to have about the role the AAIA-A plays in facilitating Australian access to the ERC's Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant schemes. If you have any further questions about this opportunity, please contact the AAIA Director at tamar.hodos@sydney.edu.au.

TIMINGS

How much of time can I devote to my ERC project?

When you apply for an ERC grant, you must commit to a % of your time leading the grant. Although the minimum requirement varies for each scheme, in practice most successful applicants commit 100% of their time.

The EU requires me to spend at least 50% of my project time in the EU. What does this mean in practice?

You can spend from 50% up to 100% of your grant time in the EU during your grant period.

50% is the minimum amount of time you must spend in the EU while holding an ERC grant.

The 50% threshold is calculated over the life of the grant. So, for example, you could choose to spend 2.5 years consecutively in the EU, or 6 months a year for each of the 5 years. How you allocate your time in the EU is entirely up to you and the needs of your project.

VISAS

Do I need a visa?

Yes. Once you have established when and for how long you will need to be in the EU for your project, the AAIA-A will be able to help you identify what type(s) of visa(s) you need and calculate the cost(s) for your budget. The AAIA-A will also support you with your visa application(s) when the time comes.

Will the grant cover the cost of my visa and relocation to the EU?

Yes. The Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced grants provide for an additional €1M above the grant limit itself to allow for oncosts. Oncosts include relocation costs, visas, equipment purchases, and fieldwork expenses.

EMPLOYMENT

Why do I need an employment agreement?

To apply for an ERC Starting, Consolidator or Advanced grant, you must have a registered ERC host institution, which becomes your employing institution for your time on your ERC grant. You can have any university or appropriately registered research organisation in the EU be your host institution.

Having said this, the Starting, Consolidator and Advanced grants are often used by institutions and researchers alike to negotiate an offer of a permanent position at that host institution. Therefore, it is unlikely your current employing institution will support you to apply for one of these ERC grants with another organisation in the EU, because it is tantamount to indicating that you would like to pursue a permanent position elsewhere.

The exception to this is to have the AAIA-A as your host institution. The AAIA will employ you only for the duration of your ERC grant. Our employment agreement confirms that you will be expected to return to your home institution at the end of your project period. In addition, your home institution will be able to claim all output and related metrics associated with your project.

What do I do about my superannuation payments during my grant period?

You will need to negotiate this with your home university to ensure that you do not lose the benefits your current employer makes to your superannuation for the duration of your grant.

What do I do about health insurance while in the EU for my project?

You may wish to take out private health insurance for wherever you are based in the EU during your project.

You cannot use personal travel insurance because you will be employed by the AAIA-A, and therefore Greece will be your country of employment during your time in Europe for the duration of your project.

Will I be liable for tax in the EU during my project?

Yes. Since you will be employed directly by the AAIA-A, you will be employed under Greek employment law. This means you will be subject to Greek taxes, social security and pension payments. You will need to apply for a Greek tax file number and open a bank account in Greece into which your income will be paid directly. The AAIA-A will support you in your application for a Greek tax file number and opening a bank account in Greece, if you do not already have an EU bank account.

What do I do about Australian taxes if I am based in the EU for my project?

You are advised to discuss your tax arrangements with a professional tax advisor, since what you do may be determined by how you structure your time in the EU over the duration of your project.

Who pays for my accommodation while I am working in the EU?

You will be responsible for your own accommodation costs for wherever in the EU you regard as your primary base during your project.

If you work away from your EU base at part of your project, then you can budget for travel and accommodation costs to work elsewhere, since this constitutes working away from your place of employment.

The information in this document is for advisory purposes only.

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