

**M U N I**  
**S C I**

# **Turning an ERC STG in PE proposal into successful Junior Star**

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# Career and track record

- PhD in Physical geography (6/2017)
  - Active layer thermal variability on James Ross Island, Antarctica
- Assistant professor (since 1/2019)
- Track record to 4/2021
  - 23 WoS Papers, 318 citations, h-index 9 → **should not be so important**
  - No postdoc or long-term working experience abroad
    - ...but...
  - International experiences justified mostly by numerous of papers and wide network of collaborations → **this is important**
  - Research independence on my PhD supervisor → **important for ERC**



# Grant applications experiences

- CSF standard grant
  - 2018, 2019 (both as PI)
- CSF bilateral (with Germany)
  - 2017, 2018
- CSF Juniorstar
  - 2020, **2021 (sucesfull)**
- MSCA
  - 2018, 2019, 2020
  - score around 80 % in all applications
- ERC
  - 2021 – evaluation B (50-60 %) → **key for JuniorStar application**
  - 2023 – advanced to interview; evaluation B

*CSF decides not to fund the proposed project due to lack of funds*

## **„Catch-22 issue“**

reviewers suggest somebody more experienced from project team should be PI. But, how to get experiences?

# ERC experiences in brief

## — Why I tried ERC in 2021

- Why not try?
- Lot of time during lockdowns in 2020/2021...
- Motivation to summarize ideas of big research question

## — Benefits from application

- New skills in proposal writing → structure, risk assessment, innovativeness...
- You have much bigger attention by others (colleagues, people with ERC experiences, project department etc.)
- Project preparation takes several months → the ideas are evolving
- Benefit from reviews for upcoming work/proposals

# How I turned ERC to JuniorStar

- Even though I had 2 weeks for the JuniorStar writing only, my proposal in 2021 was funded (2nd attempt for JuniorStar).
- I followed advices I got when preparing ERC (skills in proposal writing)
- I kept similar proposal structure as I did in ERC
  - Clearly define gaps in state-of-the art
  - **Risk management** → justification of **high risk/high gain**
- I selected 1 of 3 Objectives from ERC to JuniorStar
  - I had to cut budget from 1.8mil EUR to ca. 0.8mil EUR

***Mistake! - Always go to maximum (ca 1 mil EUR for JuniorStar)***

After 3.5 months working on ERC I simply cannot bring anything better

# Wrap-up

- Don't be discouraged your first ERC takes a lot of time. You will save this time later!
  - JuniorStar (2 weeks for preparation)
  - ERC in 2023 (ca. 2 months for preparation B1 and B2)
- Even if you do not get the ERC, you can still leverage your experience in other project schemes
  - Reviews (4 for B1; 10 for B2)
- Validation and improvement of your research ideas

