



European Research Council
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission

Brussels, 2.06.2014
ERCEA/C2/MM/ARR
ercea.c(2014)1813543

NOTE TO THE ATTENTION OF ERC BENEFICIARIES AND PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

Subject: Principles governing the extension of the duration of ERC Grant Agreements under FP7

Following the launch of Horizon 2020 and the need to enhance the monitoring of the successful completion of the 7th Framework Programme for Research, the Directorate for Research and Innovation of the European Commission has requested the Board of the European Research Council to look into possibilities allowing to streamline the further implementation of the IDEAS (FP 7) programme. One of the measures agreed upon concerns the establishment of the following principles for extensions of ERC projects under IDEAS (FP7):

As a general principle it should be reminded that in accordance with the ERC Grant Agreement, the beneficiaries have the obligation to carry out the work within the duration of the project fixed in Article 3. The possibility to request an extension of the project's duration via an amendment should be handled as follows:

- An extension should be an exceptional option, which may be necessary in certain cases, but whose use shall be kept to a minimum;
- Extensions may be granted only once per project;
- Extensions may be granted on well-justified scientific grounds and provided that a high scientific value has been demonstrated in the project implementation, or if the request was caused by events that were not reasonably foreseeable at the point of signing the grant;
- The ERC grant agreements may be extended for up to **maximum 12 months**; except for POC for which the maximum is 6 months;
- Cases of **“force majeure”, health reasons and parental/maternity leave of the PI in line with the social legislation applicable to the host country and host institution of the PI** will be the only exceptions to the above.

Requests for extension of an ERC grant will be rejected in the following cases:

- If the beneficiaries wish to undertake actions for their own benefit (e.g. applying for external authorisation or registration, invitation of additional guests, covering employment periods of team members or depreciation of equipment, etc.), or to undertake additional work neither foreseen in nor directly deriving from the DOW, or to consume unspent EU funds;
- In cases of delays due to the fact that the management of the project was not up to the standard expected from an ERC grant (e.g. the project experienced recruitment delays that were foreseeable by the host institution's usual practice and/or by the PI; key equipment was purchased too late, etc.);
- Requests for extension submitted before the approval of the mid-term scientific report or in the last 6 months of the project should not be accepted;
- Retroactive demands for extension (i.e. submitted after the end date of the project) will not be accepted.

The ERC Agency will set up a monitoring system to detect delays appearing during the assessment of the financial and mid-term scientific reports, and will systematically draw the attention of the Principal Investigators and of the Host Institutions to the need to catch up with the delays.

The final decision to accept an amendment for extension remains in any case with the ERC Agency.

These guidelines shall apply to all requests for extension received after 30th June 2014.

Should you have any further questions please contact unit C2 of ERCEA, grant management Department, at the following email address: ERC-C2-AMENDMENTS@ec.europa.eu .

Mechtild MAY
Head of Department
(*signed*)