

European Science Foundation

Science Connect in a nutshell

Who we are

The European Science Foundation–Science Connect (ESF–SC) is a non–governmental, non–profit association that has been implementing high–quality, independent science operations for the European Research Area since 1974.

ESF–SC is committed to promoting the highest quality science in Europe to drive progress in research and innovation.

The [ESF–SC](#) aims to initiate, support, develop, and implement actions striving, at European and international levels, to:

- Serve and strengthen all disciplines of science,
- Foster cooperation between the various research stakeholders.
- Support and assist the conduct of scientific research.

ESF–SC's actions are politically neutral and are guided by the following values: pan–European as well as worldwide scope, scientific excellence, openness, responsiveness, ethical awareness and human values.

[ESF member organisations](#) affirm their adherence to these values at the time of their admission.

ESF-SCIENCE CONNECT'S CORE ACTIVITIES

Research Quality Assessment and Grant Evaluation

We support research funders, programmes and universities in their effort to identify and select the best research projects and applications

The ESF-SC Community of Experts plays a vital role in sustaining scientific collaboration and supporting excellence in grant and programmatic evaluation.

Today it comprises nearly 10,000 international experts across all scientific disciplines.

ESF-SC ensures that best practices and ethical guidelines are respected, especially in managing conflicts of interest, following the recommendations of the [European Peer Review Guide](#), published by ESF in 2011.

Our grant evaluation support is tailored to each partner's needs and can involve:

- Providing two or more expert evaluation reports for each research project or application to be assessed to support the Partner's selection process.
- Setting up disciplinary international review panels who collectively assess projects and applications and deliver a ranked list.
- Full-scale support involving support with the call text and selection criteria definition, proposal collection, and full selection process tailored to the funding programme's objectives.

ESF-SC has been implementing independent [Grant Evaluation processes](#) for its own programmes for decades. Since 2009, ESF-SC has provided independent grant evaluation support to **European National research funding organisations** (e.g. Research Foundation Flanders (FWO), Austrian Science Fund (FWF), the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG), **Universities** (e.g. Bordeaux, Aix-Marseille, Luxembourg, Ghent, Torino, Naples), **Philanthropies** (e.g. the AXA Research Fund), **European agencies and programmes** (e.g. HERA Joint Research Programmes, ESA, Graphene Flagship Ramp Up, Europlanet 2024 RI, MSCA Co-funds).

Grant Evaluation in figures

Since 2019:

90+

Grant evaluation campaigns

30+

Partners

11,000

Proposals evaluated

(Fundamental research proposals, Post-doctoral fellowships, chair positions, interdisciplinary research projects and networks, collaborative research proposals)

ESF-SCIENCE CONNECT'S CORE ACTIVITIES

Hosting Scientific Structures

We provide tailored secretariat services to scientific structures and networks, allowing them to focus exclusively on their activities and impact

Each scientific platform hosted by ESF has its own Terms of Reference, governance and decision-making process, workplan, funding structure and membership. They operate independently from ESF corporate activity and governance.

Setting up and managing independent scientific entities (Expert Committees, learned societies and virtual institutes) involves significant administrative work and coordination on a daily basis.


Our [hosting support](#) is tailored to each platform's needs and can include:


- Financial management: collection of annual contributions, reporting.
- HR and legal support: staff recruitment, payroll administration, drafting of contracts, MoU, agreements
- Science policy management: organisation of events, plenary meetings, foresight studies.
- Communication support: website and social media management, event management, scientific writing.


Currently, ESF hosts six scientific platforms:


 [European Space Sciences Committee](#)
(ESSC – established in 1974)

CRAF [Committee on Radio Astronomy Frequencies](#)
(CRAF – established in 1988)

 [Nuclear Physics European Collaboration Committee](#)
(NuPECC - established in 1991)

 [Europlanet Society](#)
(established in 2018)

 [European Astrobiology institute](#)
(EAI – established in 2019)

 [cOAlition S](#)
(office established at ESF in 2020)

ESF's hosting support allows these platforms to run independently and effectively, maximising their visibility and impact in the European Research Area.

European Project Coordination and Management

We coordinate, communicate, and participate in multiple EU-funded projects

In 2021, ESF-SC was involved as a [Partner or Coordinator in 15 EU H2020 projects](#). ESF staff are experts in the technical, administrative, and financial specificities of EU projects.

ESF-SC considers European Framework projects as fundamental opportunities to address complex societal challenges. We lead interdisciplinary consortia in all project stages. We have long-established experience in:

- Coordination and administrative management of the grant,
- Project management,
- Communication and dissemination,
- Stakeholders mapping and management,
- Landscape (programmatic) mapping,
- Scientific foresight and road-mapping,
- Community consultation,

Active in EC projects since FP6, ESF has in recent years developed considerable experience in Horizon 2020 programmes and already engaged in two Horizon Europe projects. The organisation has developed good knowledge of several domains, with a particular focus on Responsible Research & Innovation (RRI) governance, ethics, and gender studies.

Programme Management

We implement and manage research funding programmes



The [Fight Kids Cancer \(FKC\) programme](#) is an exciting venture founded by three European NGO's that have joined forces to launch an opportunity to support academic research for paediatric cancers.

In 2019 these three organisations ([Fondatioun Kriibskrank Kanner](#)-Luxembourg, [Imagine for Margo](#)-France, [KickCancer](#)-Belgium) approached ESF-SC to investigate the possibility of establishing a collaborative research programme supported by a common pot of philanthropic funding.

This led to the setting up of the Fight Kids Cancer research programme in 2020. So far, the programme initiated three joint open calls for projects (10 M€ total budget over three years) that resulted in the selection of 11 research projects in 2020 and 2021 (results of the 2022 call are pending).

Acting on behalf of, and in close collaboration with, the funders, ESF-SC coordinates and implements the FKC programme from open call for proposals to project funding and monitoring.

Contact us



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