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ERC Starting Grant 2019 "Motivated Reading of Evidence"

When and how do economic agents lie to themselves even in the presence of hard evidence?

The overall process

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- **Think long in advance**, get inspired, go to conferences, try out your ideas by talking to other researchers, try to describe the structure of your project to colleagues etc.

- When ready with **a project that seems a rich coherent whole**, apply !

- See this process as a **great opportunity** to think big, challenge yourself, ask a new ambitious question !

- Then, two steps:
  - Writing of the project and submission: it can take time (I've seen successful grantees write the project in about a month; it took me much more time)
  - Oral interview in Brussels (or on Zoom)
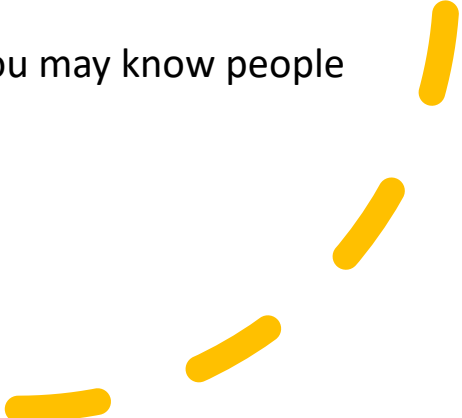
Writing the project down

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- **Two parts, B1 and B2, submitted at the same time**
  - B1 is a 5-pages version of the project + a short CV / B2 a longer version
  - B1 is evaluated by the ERC committee and, only if your project passes this first round, B2 is sent to referees

- **B1 should be understandable by people out of your specific subfield !**
  - Set the stage, explain where your project fits in the whole field
  - Give concrete easily-understandable examples
  - Be very clear about what is new (don't expect people to guess it !) + if possible, explain honestly what parts seem harder, riskier, safer…

- When being more specific (in B2), find a balance between
  - **a concrete description of some parts of the project**
  - **parts that require more thinking, longer-term ideas**

- Overall, make it clear that you are the right person to lead the project: link the work to what you can do or did in the past

- Read examples and ask for feedbacks on both parts !

The interview: presentation + questions

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- The presentation is VERY short (7 minutes in my case and strict)
  - Again, convince people who are not experts on your topic (the two closest committee members are in charge of your project anyway).
  - **Give emphasis to some parts, don't do something linear !** The committee needs to remember something particularly new or relevant in *your* project while *they listen to many*
  - **You cannot afford searching for your words**

- Prepare for questions by **re-reading your project carefully** (there is a really long time between the moment you write the project and the interview) + search a bit who is in the committee (you can't know exactly but…)
  - *How do you connect your project to research in this other field ?*
  - *How will you recruit such a post-doc profile ?*

- Practical things : quite small room, waiting can be long, you may know people

- Smile, be enthusiastic !

Good luck !