ERC Grant Preparation

• Although lots of work, and stress is obviously on excellence (blah, blah, no-one thinks they’re crap, everyone has doubts).
• Useful process even if you don’t get it
• Use it as the basis for future grants
• Excellent feedback from the ERC. If you get reviewed you get responses from 7 reviewers (NOT the token VR paragraph)
ERC Grant Preparation

- Started with a VR grant application – September 2016.
- Discussed with grants office on how to modify it (October 2018).
- Worked solidly on it from December onwards.
- Different for everyone, but good to have a solid idea first, then don’t be afraid to modify heavily.
ERC Grant Preparation

• ERC stresses high risk-high reward. Modify accordingly!
• First page need outline a serious problem/flaw/fundamental gap in theory, etc
• Then about how you can fix this.
• B1 is 5 pages, so need to outline this problem, then how you can fix it, then why you are perfect for fixing it.
ERC Grant Preparation

• Regarding the high risk/ high reward. They want high risk, but also you to show awareness of exactly what that risk, how you can mitigate it, and how you can get something from the experiment even if it fails.

• Divided up into work packages/ tasks. Although each should build into the other, want independence if one fails, etc.
ERC Grant Preparation

• Concentrate heavily on the B1 – they only look at this and your CV at the first stage.

• Use the grants office! Mistake to think that only an expert in your field can give you good feedback. It needs to be persuasive for a non-expert (and mostly looked at by people not precisely in your field).

• Think about flow and ease of reading. Reviewers will spend about 1 hour reading it, easier to grasp the better.
ERC Grant Preparation

• Room to expand in the B2, however don’t just replicate the B1 – expand a lot on the methodology of course, but give new info. The second stage reviews the B1 and B2 in combination (so think of it as enhancing rather than replacing the B1).
ERC Interview/ Presentation

• Make it visual! Less text the better (the opposite of this presentation)
• Max 10-12 slides
• Have more than one ‘stop’ slide in case you are going over (massive clock, so you’ll know the time…)
• You can have slides after to help you answer questions you think might come up