

General Points

An ESRF proposal consists of

- an [Electronic Application form](#), and
- an [Experiment Methods form](#)

➤ [Electronic Application form](#)

- filled in on ESRF User Portal by Main Proposer

➤ [Experiment Methods Form](#)

- main document describing your proposal; upload as pdf file
- always use the latest template (download from User Guide web pages)
- respect template, format and length limit
 - 2 A4 pages, font size 12
 - reviewers see b/w, recto-verso, 2 pages per sheet
 - proposal rejection if not respected
- figure is always useful, can replace many words (general process; previous data to pinpoint problem...)

General Points

There is high competition for beam time at ESRF :

~45% acceptance rate (~900 out of 2000 proposals)

➤ **Proposal must be scientifically compelling and competitive!**

- <1% rejected, most for technical reasons
- almost all are proposals which could be done, giving useful results
- could be done; should be done; must be done; highlights
- geared towards research specifically benefitting from SR measurements
- strong scientific case where SR could give a result which would allow a field to significantly advance
- highly targeted proposal; avoid vague or too broad aims
 - preliminary measurements or characterisation recommended when appropriate
 - have full portfolio requiring now SR to provide answers/information on specific point(s)

General Points

➤ Lots of proposals !

- reviewers have many proposals to review and discuss
- proposal must be **self-contained**
- all important information should be given in the proposal
- reviewers don't necessarily have time to get extra information from references
- technically poorly written proposals (typos, errors, non-respect of template and format) have high chance of automatic poor grade
- structure is important; clear and easy to read
- prepare...

➤ Consult Beamline Staff

- target measurements based on beamline; clearly identify how your experiment can be done and whether it can give you the answers you need
- advice on number of shifts required for each experiment

➤ Reports & Publications

- very important !

Reports & Publications

Use of PUBLIC ESRF beamtime
= OBLIGATION to PUBLISH and REPORT on beamtime used

Reporting

- Users allocated beamtime are requested to provide a 2-page [Experimental Report](#) after each experiment
 - forwarded to Review Committees who monitor effective use of beamtime.
 - required as support for new requests for beam time
 - relevant reports and reports on recent beam time (status of project , productivity)
 - especially important in absence of publication
 - put correct report number in proposal form so it is automatically attached
 - ensure it is submitted !
 - confidential reports may be sent to the User Office

Publications in the Proposal Form

- Illustrates **productivity** and **activity** of **whole group** of proposers at ESRF
- Only ESRF data (fully or partially)
- Publications of the main and co-proposers, even if not closely linked to topic in question
- ESRF Personnel – special case
 - avoid flooding list with publications from other user groups
 - only publications relevant to the topic or to the team
- Beam Time Allocation Panel pay special attention to publication record....groups not publishing are unlikely to be given further beamtime
 - **Experiment Report**

Electronic Application Form (1)

- **Beamline, Scientific Area, Societal Theme and Type of Science**
 - careful and informed choice
 - correct beamline (target the proposal) and correct beam time in shifts
 - scientific area, societal themes and science type are all fed back to funding partners to monitor ESRF activity

- **New, Resubmitted or Continuation Proposal**
 - “New” = new proposal never previously submitted to ESRF
 - “Resubmitted” = proposal submitted in a previous round but not allocated beamtime; **improvements obligatory**; describe changes in dedicated section of form
 - “Continuation” = proposal is direct follow-on of previous beam time; **EXP REPORT !**

- **Proposers**
 - give scientific drivers; single proposer unlikely to perform experiment single-handedly
 - only include ESRF staff if they are one of scientific drivers; ask permission

Electronic Application Form (2)

➤ Technical & Safety Information

- Sample Environment, Sample Description, Safety tabs
- for beamline and Safety personnel; technical feasibility & safety assessment
- give as complete data as possible

➤ Technical Reasons for ESRF & Experience

- consulted by reviewers as complementary information

➤ Resubmission

- only required when proposal indicated as resubmission
- refer to Panel comment from previous proposal (not necessarily same members)
- clearly indicate where improvements have been made
- always improve, even if “not enough beamtime available”, otherwise same result is likely

Experiment Methods Form (1)

➤ Proposal Summary

- probably most important part !
- equivalent to abstract of scientific paper, one paragraph
- clear statement on essence of proposal – **what** are you trying to do, **how** you intend to do it, and **why** you are doing it (impact, importance of study)
- reviewers should understand exactly what the proposal is about from this summary; details are given in the following sections

➤ Scientific Background

- set the scene for the interest of your research
- reviewers from many different backgrounds
- indicate fundamental and societal importance of your work
- lead to the open question stated in the summary
- refer to any previous measurements or preliminary characterisation

Experiment Methods Form (2)

➤ Experiment Details

- exactly how are you going to carry out the experiment; strategy
- details and quantity of samples
- technique and setup; special requirements
- show reviewers you are ready and prepared
- allow beamline scientists to make technical feasibility assessment
- prior discussion with beamline scientist is strongly advised

➤ Beamline & Beamtime Requirements

- same beamline as on front page of proposal!
- support the choice of beamline; preferred and alternatives
- reason for beamtime requested and how this is calculated (cf Exp Details)
- can be relatively short

Experiment Methods Form (3)

➤ Results Expected & Significance

- what **results** you are expecting
- how these results **will allow you to answer the specific question(s)** stated in summary
- what will be the **impact** of answering this question on your field of research

➤ References

- illustrate importance of topic by citing one or two **milestone papers in your field**
- **recent exciting developments** in or around specific topic of proposal
- indicate level of your research by citing **own recent, relevant publications** (with or without ESRF data)
- should not expect that reviewers will have time to read references so **all essential information in the proposal!**