

Applying for ERC consolidator

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Algebraic geometry/number theory

Should I apply?

- Takes time and effort (maybe 100-200 hours for proposal, hopefully + interview)
- Compare to recent successful applicants (avoid name-recognition bias)

Timeline

- Started thinking in Spring
- Wrote seriously from early Summer
- Deadline for me: December

Choosing the panel

- PE1.

Writing process

- Started with B2
- Imagined I was writing for specific experts I know
- Referees *will* look at B1 (apparently)

Target audience

- Audience: the best mathematicians you know
- Different from NWO
- Your grant office may or may not get this

Feedback on proposal

- I had feedback from about 6 people
- One read everything carefully, others just read the abstract of B1 or ...
- Can ask LLMs, but avoid copying their style

Doubts

- Lots!

Interview preparation

- Ask others for lists of questions
- Check panel history for likely distribution of fields
- Practiced with colleagues, collaborators, student...

Interview practicalities

- Baby due soon after, ERC was flexible
- Have pencil & paper ready

What makes a mathematics project What project? interesting?

- A simple new idea that solves problems people care about
- Applications to real world/other fields
- Solve (cases of) (longstanding) conjecture
- Unexpected connection between fields
- ...

Good luck!