

**News Release**

28 March 2008

Financial support from the national level to ERC Starting Grant finalists

France, Italy and Switzerland have launched national initiatives offering the possibility for financial support to finalists of the first ERC Starting Grant competition whose proposals cannot be funded by the ERC due to budgetary limits. Prof Kafatos, ERC president, said:

"The ERC is pleased with this clear sign of support of the ERC's funding strategy for the next generation of researcher leaders. It is an early acknowledgement of the intrinsic quality of the ERC's peer review evaluation mechanisms, which we aim to further develop and refine on the basis of experience. It also demonstrates the commitment of European funding bodies, including the ERC and national actors, to work together towards the common objective of making European research the best in the world."

The ERC estimates that the available budget for its first call for proposals will allow about 300 proposals to be funded. Some 550 applicants reached the second stage of the Starting Grant competition, of whom 430 passed the ERC quality threshold.

The ERC is progressively contacting the Starting Grant winners to establish grant agreements, the first of which will be signed in the coming weeks. The next ERC Starting Grant call for proposals will be announced this summer.

National funding initiatives to support ERC Starting Grant finalists:

- **France:**
On request of the Minister for Higher Education and Research Valérie Pécresse, the ANR (Agence National de Recherche) has launched an initiative to support the researchers from French host institutions who passed the ERC quality threshold but who will not get ERC funding. <http://www.recherche.gouv.fr/cid20921/felicitations-aux-laureats-francais-de-l-european-research-council.html>
- **Italy:**
A call for proposals has been launched by the Italian Ministry of University and Research. It is open to all Starting Grant finalists who passed the ERC quality threshold but who will not get ERC funding, the condition being that their research will be performed in Italy. Deadline 21 April 2008.
http://www.miur.it/0006Menu_C/0012Docume/0015Atti_M/6932Bando_cf3.htm
English translation: <http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/MIUR.pdf>
- **Switzerland**
SNSF (Swiss National Science Foundation) has launched an initiative to back researchers from Swiss host institutions who passed the ERC quality threshold but who will not get ERC funding. However, certain SNSF specific conditions have to be fulfilled. The researchers concerned will be contacted directly.

For more information:

<http://erc.europa.eu>

List of ERC Starting Grants results: <http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/Listfinal.pdf>

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