



European Research Council
Scientific Council

Established by the European Commission

EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL 87th PLENARY MEETING 27-28 October 2022, Brussels, BE MINUTES

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Maria LEPTIN (ERC President), Genevieve ALMOUZNI, Paola BOVOLENTA, Eveline CRONE, Ben FERINGA, Mercedes GARCIAL ARENAL, Gerd GIGERENZER, Liselotte HØJGAARD (online), Dirk INZE, Andrzej JAJSZCZYK, Eystein JANSEN, Chryssa KOUVELIOTOU (online), Sylvie LORENTE, Laszlo LOVÁSZ (online), Kurt MEHLHORN (online), Giovanni SARTOR, Nicola SPALDIN, Jesper SVEJSTRUP, Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Alice VALKÁROVÁ and Milena ŽIC FUCHS.

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Laurence MOREAU, Jose LABASTIDA, Anthony LOCKETT, Mila BAS-SANCHEZ, Pascale CID, Angela LIBERATORE, Josefina ENFEDAQUE, Philippe CUPERS, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Lino PAULA, Niki ATZOULATOU, Ben TURNER, Elena TOMA, Madeleine DRIELSMA, Sabine SIMMROSS, Severina SHOPOVA, Andrea POLYAK and Brigitte ETIENNE.

ERC Executive Agency staff participating online: Gwennael JOLIFF-BOTREL, Anita KUCHARSKA, Victor LOSADA, Anisoara ULCELUSE-PIRVAN, Philippe VIJGHEN, Alice RAJEWSKI, Eleni ZIKA, Dace RAMBAKA, Dagmar MEYER, Elena TOMA, Laura PONTIGGIA, Anna PELAGOTTI, Eleni CHATZICHRISTOU, Elena VOLPI, David KRASA, Carmen GARCIA FERNANDEZ, Simona ROMAGNOLI, Samantha CHRISTEY, Marcin MONKO, Telma CARVALHO, Frank KUHN, Monique SMAIHI, Jhansi KOTA, Isabelle ORTMANS, Uli KAINZ, David KURZ, Fiona KERNAN, Agnes KULCSAR, Pascal DISSARD, Wieland STAESSENS, David KURZ, Miguel PESQUERA, Marco BARITAUD, Katja MEINKE and Soudaina WALA.

Chairs of the meeting: Maria LEPTIN (ERC President)

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency.

Thursday 27 October 2022

1. Welcome of Scientific Council Members, Plans and Goals of Meeting

Maria LEPTIN welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the main points to be discussed during the plenary. She excused Eveline CRONE who could not attend the meeting and welcomed Sylvie LORENTE who recently joined the Scientific Council. Maria LEPTIN also welcomed Pascale CID, new Head of the ERCEA Resources Department.

2. Adoption of the Agenda of the 87th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

The Draft Agenda of the meeting was approved by the Scientific Council.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 86th Plenary Meeting

The Scientific Council approved the Draft Minutes of the previous plenary meeting.

4. Action Points Summary of the 86th Plenary Meeting

The ERCEA informed the Scientific Council on the various action points from the previous Scientific Council plenary meeting in June.

5. Update on Recent Meetings and Activities

Andrzej JAJSZCZYK reported from his recent activities as follows:

- ERC Workshop on Research Assessment in June in Brussels;
- Research workshop in June in Poland;
- ERC Information Day on 27 June in Cyprus;
- Talk on ERC and widening participation on 24 October in Wrocław, Poland.

Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS reported from his recent activities as follows:

- Global Biodata Coalition Board meeting on 27 September online;
- EU R&I Days on 29 September in Brussels where he chaired a session from Lab to Market together with the Chair of the EIC Advisory Board, Mark FERGUSON;
- Meeting with Commission Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis SCHINAS on 30 September in Heraklion, Greece;
- EMBL Inaugural Kafatos Lecture organised by the EMBL alumni association on 7 October in Heraklion with talks given by ERC grantees;
- INNOVEIT EIT summit on 11 October in Brussels.

Maria LEPTIN reported from her recent activities as follows:

- Visit to Rotterdam at the invitation of ERC Vice-President Eveline CRONE on 16 June. Visit of Erasmus University Rotterdam and Science Ministry in The Hague. Dinner with Leiden University;
- Addressed EP's STOA interparliamentary group on use of animals for scientific research at invitation of Christian EHLER, MEP, on 28 June;
- ESOF conference on 13-14 July. Participation in Opening ceremony, ERC Public Engagement with Research Award, ERC press conference, etc;
- Kavli Prize Award Ceremony in Oslo, Norway on 6 September. Meeting with Norwegian Science Minister, Rector of Oslo University and others;
- Participation at STS Forum, Kyoto. Chaired session on Basic science, innovation and policy from 1 to 4 October. Numerous bilateral meetings with Japanese partner agencies JSPS, JST, AMED and European counterparts, including the Slovenian Science Minister, Swiss university rectors and others;
- Participation at panel discussion on *"Responsible evaluation of research and scholarship: Overcoming the implementation gap"* co-hosted by the Einstein Foundation and the German Rectors' Conference on 11-12 October;
- Participation in panel on the economic impact of fundamental science at the 100th anniversary of the Solvay Chemistry Conference with Ben FERINGA on 20 October;
- Attendance of luncheon hosted by Japanese Ambassador to the EU in honour of Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON on 21 October;
- Speech on the role of frontier research at the European Academy of Science hosted by Rodrigo MARTINS on 24 October. Meetings with Graca CARVAHLO, MEP and ERC grantees;
- Dirk INZE reported that on 9 October he gave a presentation on the ERC and Proof of Concept grants to the liaison officers' network, representing 133 Universities across Europe and Japan.

6. Appointment of the new LS and PE Vice-Presidents and one of the members of the ERCEA Steering Committee

Maria LEPTIN informed the Scientific Council of the two candidates to replace the departing Vice-Presidents for the PE and LS domains, Eystein JANSEN for PE and Jesper SVEJSTRUP for LS. The Scientific Council voted unanimously in favour of Eystein JENSEN and Jesper SVEJSTRUP taking the positions of Vice-Presidents as of 1 January 2023.

Maria LEPTIN introduced the candidate to replace a departing Steering Committee member. Gerd GIGERENZER had agreed to take on the responsibilities. The Scientific Council voted unanimously in favour of Gerd GIGERENZER representing the Scientific Council at the Steering Committee as of 1 January 2023.

7. State of play of Horizon Europe implementation

– Update on the association of third countries

The ERCEA reminded the Scientific Council members of the associations of third countries to the EU Framework Programme. Negotiations with Switzerland and the UK remained blocked. Technical negotiations between EU and UK, which had been suspended since February, had restarted recently.

Canada and New Zealand had been finalising negotiations with the EU and were expected to start their participation in 2024. They would associate to Pillar II and would be the first non-neighbouring countries to ever associate to the Framework Programme. Japan and South Korea were taking part in early-stage negotiations. South Korea was very interested in associating to the ERC as well.

– Update on reporting templates

The ERCEA reported on recent discussions regarding the reporting templates.

8. Communication Activities update

The ERCEA reported on recent communication activities and plans ahead especially for 2023.

The Scientific Council was asked for input for the 2023 communication strategy including communication objectives, priorities and target audiences.

9. Update on lump sums implementation

The ERCEA gave an update on the work of the internal Task Force on Lump Sums.

10. Scientific Council Plenary meetings per year

Maria LEPTIN reminded the Scientific Council of the decision taken at the Helsinki plenary meeting to streamline and optimise the activities of the Scientific Council and to have four plenary meetings a year. The Scientific Council members reiterated their wish for more strategic discussions and a retreat from time to time, as well as meetings outside of Brussels to engage with the different scientific communities. The Scientific Council decided to keep four plenary meetings for 2023, with two meetings outside of Brussels.

11. Panel re-organization

The ERCEA reported on the work done by the internal Task Force on Panel Re-organisation.

12. Research assessment

Maria LEPTIN and the ERCEA reported several points related to research assessment, including reference to the agreement on reforming research assessment and the outcome of the ERC workshop on research assessment.

The Scientific Council discussed several points related to research assessment, including applicants' CVs and the evaluation process in general terms.

13. Closed session

The Scientific Council held a closed session.

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12. Research assessment

The Scientific Council continued its discussions on research assessment.

14. Update from the Scientific Council Standing Committees and Working Groups

The various standing committees and WGs that met recently reported on their activities.

– **Standing Committee on Panels**

Maria LEPTIN reported that CoP would meet on 18 November to discuss re-invitations of panel members and panel chairs for StG2024 and SyG2024.

– **Standing Committee COIME**

Jose LABASTIDA (in the absence of the Chair) reported that there were no new developments to share with the Scientific Council.

– **Standing Committee PRIME**

Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS reported the PRIME would meet in December to discuss the ERC monitoring and evaluation actions for 2023-2024.

– **WG on Open Science**

Paola BOVOLENTA noted that Nicola SPALDIN had agreed to take over as Chair of the Open Science WG as of 1 January 2023. The Scientific Council endorsed the decision. Giovanni SARTOR had joined the WG as well. The WG had discussed open access compliance.

– **WG on Gender and Diversity**

Geneviève ALMOUZNI noted that Sylvie LORENTE had agreed to join the Gender and Diversity Issues Working Group (GDIWG). She reported on recent discussions and activities of the WG. Those included updating gender statistics on the ERC website (without including information on non-binary applications given the small numbers and data protection restrictions), parental leave discussions and trainings for scientific officers on bystanders' approach to go beyond unconscious bias. Geneviève ALMOUZNI reported on forthcoming events where she would participate and the gender dimension in research would be discussed.

– **WG Science Behind the Projects (SBP)**

Dirk INZE reported from recent activities of the SBP WG. He reminded the Scientific Council of the mapping of ERC frontier research publication and the accompanying information package and policy sheets that had been produced with it. The SBP WG had been brainstorming to come forth with a new name of the WG and would propose a new name at its meeting on 6 December.

– **WG on Innovation**

Kurt MEHLHORN reported on recent activities of the Innovation WG. He highlighted the forthcoming ERC-EIC Energy storage workshop next month. Regarding membership of the WG, he noted that several members would be leaving at the end of the year and the membership would need to be renewed. The WG would also need to choose a new Chair.

– **WG on Widening European Participation**

Andrzej JAJSZCZYK reported from recent activities of the Widening European Participation WG. He informed the Scientific Council that Alice VÁLKAROVÁ had agreed to become the Chair of the WG as of 1 January 2023. The Scientific Council endorsed the decision. Andrzej JAJSZCZYK reported on his participation at the Central European Technology Forum in Wrocław, Poland, where he gave a speech and had intensive discussions about widening participation. He said he would be participating in an event on 10 November in the Czech Republic on brain drain and capacity building. Other forthcoming widening events included one on 15 November and an ERC Information day on 23 November in Scotland. The WG intended to meet again before the December plenary meeting.

15. Methodology for the H2020 Qualitative Evaluation of Completed Projects

The ERCEA reported on the H2020 qualitative evaluation of ERC completed projects (SAP).

16. Operational Issues Reporting

– **StG2022 outcome**

The ERCEA reported on the outcome of the completed StG2022 call.

– **SyG2022 outcome**

The ERCEA reported on the outcome of the completed SyG2022 call.

17. Any Other Business

-Scientific Council Strategy discussions

Maria LEPTIN noted that future strategic discussions at the Scientific Council Plenary meetings will be scheduled, aligned with the different strategic areas covered by the Working Groups and the Standing Committees.