



European Research Council
Scientific Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

57th PLENARY MEETING, DUBLIN

11-12 October 2016

MINUTES

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Prof. Klaus BOCK, Prof. Margaret BUCKINGHAM, Prof. Athene DONALD, Prof. Tomas JUNGWIRTH, Prof. Mattias KLEINER, Prof. Michael KRAMER, Prof. Kurt MEHLHORN, Prof. Barbara ROMANOWICZ, Prof. Mart SAARMA, Prof. Nuria SEBASTIAN GALLES, Prof. Nils Christian STENSETH, Prof. Martin STOKHOF, Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Prof. Janet THORNTON, Prof. Isabelle VERNOS, Prof. Reinhilde VEUGELERS, Prof. Michel WIEVIORKA, Prof. Fabio ZWIRNER

Scientific Council members excused (in alphabetical order): Prof. Barbara ENSOLI, Prof. Eva KONDOROSI

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Pablo AMOR, Theodore PAPAZOGLU, Massimo GAUDINA, Jose LABASTIDA, Mechtild MAY, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Anna LONNROTH, Martin PENNY, Angela LIBERATORE, Laurence MOREAU, Ben TURNER, Francesca SGRITTA, Sabine SIMMROSS, Severina SHOPOVA, Marie ROBERTI

Chair of the meeting: Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, ERC President

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency

TUESDAY 11 October 2016

Session 1

1. Welcome of ScC Members, Plans and Goals of Meeting

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON welcomed everyone and in particular the new ScC members. He also outlined the goals of the meeting and excused Prof. Barbara ENSOLI and Prof. Eva KONDOROSI who could not attend.

Prof. Barbara ROMANOWICZ, Prof. Kurt MEHLHORN and Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, new members of the Scientific Council, introduced themselves as they attended a plenary meeting for the first time.

2. Adoption of agenda

The draft agenda of the 57th plenary meeting was adopted.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 56th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council in Brussels on 28-29-30 June 2016

The Minutes of the 56th plenary meeting of the ERC Scientific Council (ScC) were adopted without any changes.

4. Action Points Summary of the 56th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON checked the state of play of the action points from the last ScC meeting.

5. Update on recent Meetings and Activities

5.1 ERC Board meeting on 15 September 2016

A short report was given from recent meetings, including the last Board meeting.

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON reported from his various recent trips and meetings.

Prof. Nuria SEBASTIAN GALLES reported from a workshop in Geneva, Switzerland where she represented the ERC. The workshop was on Research assessment and research quality in the social sciences and humanities.

Prof. Mart SAARMA reported from his recent visit to South Africa where he represented the ERC and took part in several meetings/events.

5.2 ERC ScC-ERCEA joint brainstorming seminar on the future of ERC

The ScC and the ERCEA discussed and decided to organise an internal brainstorming Seminar/Workshop on the future of ERC in 2017 with the participation of the ScC and ERCEA staff. The context for such a Workshop was linked to the starting of the discussions on the next multi-annual Framework Programme and the development of the ERC from a young pan-European research funding agency to an established actor in the research funding landscape.

6. ScC Standing Committees Reporting and Update

Committee on Panels (CoP)

The Chair of the CoP, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON noted that the ScC will be discussing the observations of the ScC members to evaluation panel meetings and therefore CoP issues will be covered under that agenda point.

Committee on Conflicts of Interest, Scientific Misconduct and Ethical Issues (CoIME)

The Chair of the CoIME, Prof. Nuria SEBASTIAN GALLES, noted that the CoIME has been recently looking into various cases of Conflict of Interest.

6.1 Observations of the ScC members from visits to evaluation panel meetings

The ScC discussed the observations of the ScC members who have visited evaluation panel meetings. The importance of the role of the panel chairs was underlined by the ScC members. Also shared were observations from interviews, cross-panel evaluations and the format of the final panel chairs meetings, among others.

6.2 Discussion about the functioning of the ERC evaluation

The agenda point was covered under the previous point.

7. Working Groups Reporting and Update

The Chairs of the various Working groups reported on their activities.

Working Group on Gender Balance

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Isabelle VERNOS reported from the last meeting of the WG on 10 October in Dublin. She showed a video, which demonstrated recruitment bias in research institutes and asked for the agreement of the ScC members in order for the ERCEA to show the video to the panel chairs and panel members. The ScC agreed with the proposal. Furthermore, Prof. Isabelle VERNOS noted that the WG considered organising a gender workshop in the near future and provided updates from various recent gender events with ERC participation.

Working Group on Open Access

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Martin STOKHOF, reported from the last WG meeting on 10 October in Dublin, including ongoing work on open data. There were three different meetings related to open access on 10 October. One was a meeting of the WG, the second one an Open session with F1000 (Faculty of 1000) and the third one a follow up of the open session with F1000.

Working Group on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Chair of the KPIs WG, Prof. Reinhilde VEUGELERS reported on recent activities of the WG, including work on the scientific reporting templates and the continuous reporting forms, as well as bibliometric analysis and aiming at identify some KPIs for programme evaluation. As a result of that it has been established that 7% of ERC projects' publications are among the top 1% highly cited publications. Also, a lot of the publications of ERC PIs appear after the end of their project but are still acknowledging it.

Working Group on Innovation and relations with industry

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Klaus BOCK, reported that the evaluation of the PoC scheme, with the participation of external experts, has been launched.

Working Group on Science behind the projects

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Nils C. STENSETH noted that the last meeting, which took place on 10 October in Dublin was very constructive and all present ScC members attended it.

Working Group on Widening European Participation

In the absence of the Chair of the WG, Prof. Eva KONDOROSI, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON reported from the last WG meeting on 10 October in Dublin. He mentioned that the ERCEA reported on the state of play of the visiting fellowships to the ERC teams. In terms of events, the ERC will be represented at an event organised by Academia Europaea in mid-November in Wroclaw, Poland. Moreover, an ERC widening event is currently being prepared and it will take place on 2 December 2016 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Representatives from neighbouring countries will also be invited.

Working Group on Increasing International Participation

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, gave an update on the implementing arrangements that the ERC has signed so far and those in the pipeline. He also recently met with the Korean counterparts to discuss the arrangement. Furthermore, the arrangements with organisations in Brazil and Canada are expected to be signed in October 2016.

Session 2

8. H2020 interim evaluation state of play

The ERCEA reported to the ScC that a High Level Group on interim evaluation has been given the task to draw strategic conclusions on maximising the impact of EU Research and Innovation programmes as part of the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 and also to formulate a vision for future EU Research and Innovation support. The group is chaired by Mr Pascal LAMY and will consist of 12 members. A call for expression of interest has been published in August with a deadline 9 September 2016. Once fully operational, the group is expected to have up to 5 meetings with a first meeting scheduled for 7 December 2016. Also envisaged are a series of meetings with key stakeholders and a report in June 2017. Some of the main building elements of the contribution of various parts of the H2020 were mentioned as well.

9. Operational issues reporting: Evaluation processes

The ERCEA gave an update on the state of play of the StG2016, AdG2016 and PoC2016 deadline 2 evaluations. Also, an update was given on the StG2017 call preparations.

10. Perspectives of new possible calls

-Synergy Grant: next steps

The Scientific Council had previously shown itself to be overall in favour of reintroducing SyG in Horizon 2020. It was now necessary to take a final decision on when to introduce the SyG for operational reasons, as preparations would need to be made immediately for a SyG 2018 call. Following a discussion, the ScC decided to reintroduce SyG already in 2018.

-Exploratory Awards: Follow-up

Following up on previous discussions of the ScC at its April and June plenary meetings, the ScC considered again the possible creation of Exploratory awards with an overall idea of supporting through those an exploratory development phase for new interdisciplinary groups. The ScC then decided that further brainstorming in a relevant task-force is needed before any decision is taken on creating such a scheme.

WEDNESDAY 12 October 2016

Session 3

11. Communication Activities Update

The ERCEA gave an update on recent communication activities and events, as well as media coverage. The ScC was informed about the coverage on ERC in the Irish press on the occasion of the ScC Dublin plenary meeting and the announcement of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry for 2016, which was awarded to the ERC grantee Bernard L. Feringa. Among the major past events stressed was the ERC participation at ESOF in July 2016 in Manchester. ERC had various sessions there, which went very well. Moreover, an update was given on the campaigns highlighting ERC results. In terms of media monitoring, 129 media items were noted two weeks after the StG2016 results were announced.

Finally, the following upcoming events were highlighted: signing of the implementing arrangement with Brazil on 13 October, EU-Canada Summit and signing of implementing arrangement on 27 October, ERC Science Diplomacy Conference on 27-28 October, ITRE

Committee hearing with the ERC President on 8 November, ERC at Falling Walls on 8-9 November, and the Cell Biology Annual meeting in San Francisco on 3-7 December, to name a few.

ERC 10th Anniversary

The ScC was also informed that a number of events are being planned for the ERC 10th Anniversary in 2017. 21 March 2017 has been identified as the date for the big celebratory event in Brussels. On 21 March a scientific conference is being planned, followed by celebrations in the evening. The Brussels event will be preceded by an "ERC week" of decentralised events across Europe and the world between 13 and 19 March 2017. 10 EU countries have already confirmed that they will organise ERC events locally.

12. Operational Issues Reporting: Granting processes

The ERCEA gave an update on the granting processes, including the state of play of the current portfolio of FP7 grants and commitment credits under H2020.

13. Any Other Business

-ScC plenary meeting in July 2017

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON informed the ScC that he has received an invitation from CERN in Switzerland, to host the July 2017 plenary meeting. He therefore asked for the agreement of the ScC. The ScC approved the proposal.