



ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

30th PLENARY MEETING, BRUSSELS

12-13 April 2011

Minutes of the meeting

TUESDAY 12 April 2011

Session 1

1. Welcome, introduction of new members, plans and goals of meeting

The ScC President welcomed the three new members of the ScC who were attending a plenary meeting for the first time.

Prof. Nowotny noted that in connection to the first ScC plenary meeting in 2012, planned at the end of February, 1st March may be a possible date for an ERC event celebrating 5 years since its creation.

1.1 Confirmation of the election of the second ScC Vice-Chair

The ScC confirmed unanimously the election of Prof. Pavel Exner as a ScC Vice-Chair.

1.2 Closed session

The ScC held a closed session.

2. Adoption of agenda of the 30th plenary meeting in Brussels and point summary of the 29th plenary meeting of the ERC ScC in Brussels on 8 and 9 February 2011

- The draft agenda of the 30th plenary meeting was adopted.
- The Minutes of the 29th plenary session of the ERC Scientific Council (ScC) were adopted without any changes.

3. Update on recent meetings and activities

3.1 ERC Board meetings on 24 February and 4 April 2011

An update was given on recent meetings, such as the last Board meetings on 24 February and 4 April 2011.

4. ERC Review follow-up

A short discussion on access to data took place. Following the adoption of the revised ERC Decision, the ERCEA has established and validated a procedure in line with the provisions of the Decision as regards the ScC members' access to data held by the Agency.

Moreover, Prof. Nowotny reported that the last meeting of the ERC Task Force was cancelled. The next and possibly last meeting will be on the 3rd of May.

Prof. Mathias Dewatripont has expressed his wish to step down as a member of the ERCEA Steering Committee. Following the proposal of Prof. Nowotny, the ScC agreed unanimously that Prof. Sierd Cloething represents them to the Steering Committee. ERCEA and the Commission will take the necessary formal steps for the new appointment.

5. ScC position paper in response to the Green paper issued by the Commission on research and innovation funding

The ERCEA gave a presentation on the scope of the Green paper. Following a short discussion it was decided that Prof. Nowotny will work on a draft document, together with Prof. Dewatripont.

Session 2

6. Work programme 2012 next steps

A decision was taken on the name of the new ERC granting scheme to be "ERC Synergy Grant". Moreover, a discussion took place on the evaluation procedure for the scheme, including the constitution of the evaluation panels and the re-application and eligibility rules for the applicants.

7. ScC Standing Committees update

A report was given on the work of the Committee on Panels (CoP), including issues related to CoP membership, update of procedures for appointing panel members and the roles of ERC peer reviewers and ERC Scientific Officers.

7.1 Composition of ScC Standing Committees and Working groups

Prof. Nowotny reminded the members of the ScC of the number of the working groups and their chairs.

8. ERCEA Key performance indicators

The ERCEA gave an overview of the operational Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) reflecting the efficiency of its operations. Following an audit of the ERCEA in the summer of 2010, it was requested that a set of KPIs is developed in agreement with the ScC. The majority of those have already been developed, related to the performance of the operational departments during evaluation, granting etc. The ScC agreed with the proposal. Moreover, it was noted that the ScC should come forth with proposals for indicators reflecting the effectiveness of the ERC and its operations.

9. Update on communication activities

The ERCEA gave an update on Communication activities, press releases and recent events. Moreover, the foreseen participation of ERC in a number of events was reported, including forthcoming outreach activities in India and China in June 2011 and conferences in the USA. In addition, it was decided that Prof. Tomasz Dietl will replace Prof. Nowotny at AAAS 2012 in Vancouver, Canada. Prof. Nowotny also noted that three ScC members will be part of the Editorial Board of the recently established ERC Newsletter, namely Prof. Exner, Prof. Dolev and Prof. Vernos.

WEDNESDAY 13 April 2011

Session 3

10. Operational issues

A short discussion took place on the relative weight that the assessment of the PI versus the project during the evaluation process. It was stressed that the PI's track record is important but the evaluators do not only focus on the publication list. They are also looking into the overall CV of the applicant, including his/her ability to realise the proposed research project. This point may need to be reiterated during the Panel Chairs meeting.

10.1 ERC Executive Agency update

The ERCEA informed the ScC on the state of play with respect to the ERC Executive agency's recruitment and information on the operating budget spending.

10.2 State of play: Granting

The ERCEA gave an update on the granting processes, including time to grant and time to pay, amendments and audits and planned outreach activities offering training and advice to host institutions. A discussion also took place on a customer-satisfaction survey on grant management conducted among ERC PIs and HIs. The conclusions to be drawn from the survey confirmed the efforts of the ERCEA to be in line with the excellence of its projects.

ERCEA also presented some data on the presence of a second affiliation to the PIs supported by the ERC. The results show that the presence of a second affiliation is limited (16.4%) and no significant difference is noted for the StG and AdG. The ScC highlighted that the findings of the survey are still important and if the resources available allow for it, the data collection can be continued.

10.3 State of play: ERC-2011-AdG call/ERC-2011-StG call

Update on the ERC-2011-AdG call

An update was given by the ERCEA on the state of play of the ERC AdG call-2011, including an overview of the panel recruitment for the three domains.

Update on the ERC-2011-StG call

An update was given by the ERCEA on the state of play of the ERC StG 2011. A discussion on the StG 2012 call and practical implications also took place.

The initial analysis of the results of a survey of panel chairs was also presented. The panel members were presented with a number of options to choose from in terms of managing the increased number of interviews expected. The results of the survey suggested that splitting the Starting Grant call into one Starters call and one Intermediate call, as well as increasing the number of panels could be considered.

11. Any other business

No items were discussed under this point.