



European Research Council  
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## **ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL 38<sup>th</sup> PLENARY MEETING, BRUSSELS**

**4-5 December 2012**

### **MINUTES**

**Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order):** Prof. Nicholas CANNY, Prof. Sierd CLOETINGH, Prof. Tomasz DIETL, Prof. Daniel DOLEV, Prof. Carlos DUARTE, Dr. Daniel ESTEVE, Prof. Pavel EXNER, Prof. Hans-Joachim FREUND, Prof. Carl-Henrik HELDIN, Prof. Norbert KROÓ, Prof. Maria Teresa LAGO, Prof. Henrietta MOORE, Prof. Helga NOWOTNY, Prof. Christiane NÜSSLEIN-VOLHARD, Prof. Alain PEYRAUBE, Dr. Jens ROSTRUP-NIELSEN, Prof. Mart SAARMA, Prof. Anna TRAMONTANO, Prof. Isabelle VERNOS

**Scientific Council members excused (in alphabetical order):** Dr. Claudio BORDIGNON, Prof. Mathias DEWATRIPONT, Dr. Tim HUNT

**ERC Secretary General:** Prof. Donald DINGWELL

**ERC Executive Agency staff present:** Pablo AMOR, Theodore PAPAZOGLU, José LABASTIDA, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Massimo GAUDINA, Maria OLIVAN AVILES, Ben TURNER, Alexis-Michel MUGABUSHAKA, Severina SHOPOVA, Marie ROBERTI, Laura PONTIGGIA, Sabine SIMMROSS, Monique SMAIHI, Agnes KULCSAR, Ulrike KAINZ-FERNANDEZ DE LA REGUERA

**Chair of the meeting:** Prof. Helga NOWOTNY, ERC Scientific Council

**Advisor of the Chair:** Dr. Thomas KÖENIG

**Rapporteur:** Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency

### **TUESDAY 4 December 2012**

#### **Session 1**

##### **1. Welcome, plans and goals of meeting**

Prof. Nowotny welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the main discussion points. She also congratulated Prof. Kroo on his recent appointment as science and technology consultant of the government of the Qingdao Economic and Technological Development Area China.

Prof. Nowotny reported that a member of the Scientific Council (ScC) informed her, as required by the ScC Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct, that a family member might be applying for ERC funding. Therefore, the ScC member has refrained from the identification of panel members in the respective field but had offered to resign, if needed. After careful consideration and with the information to the ScC, Prof. Nowotny had decided that the measures taken by the ScC member were adequate and had not accepted the offer of resignation.

## **2. Adoption of agenda and point summary of the 37<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the ERC Scientific Council in Limassol on 4 and 5 October 2012<sup>1</sup>**

- The draft agenda of the 38<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting were adopted.
- The Minutes of the 37<sup>th</sup> 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 23 October and 22 November 2012**

An update was given on recent meetings, such as the Board meetings on 23 October and 22 November 2012 and the discussions that took place.

### **3.2 Other issues**

The ScC discussed other recent activities.

## **4. Summary of the ScC Retreat**

A short recap from the ScC Retreat at the end of October 2012 took place, including reference to the reconfiguration of the Working Groups (WG) remit and the renewal of their membership in view of the partial renewal of the ScC in early 2013. The issue will be re-discussed at the next ScC plenary meeting in January 2013.

## **5. Working groups update**

### **5.1 Working group on Innovation and relations with industry**

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Rostrup-Nielsen, gave a short report on recent events at which he represented the ERC as well as on on-going work and the discussions of the WG. He noted an interesting meeting with Mr. Brian Ager from the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT) who had also been invited to a recent Board meeting. The WG was to meet again at the end of the second day of the plenary meeting.

### **5.2 Working group on Gender balance**

The Chair of the WG, Prof. Lago, gave a report from the meeting of the WG on 3 December 2012 in Brussels. She mentioned the presentation which was given to the WG members by the CSA2012 selected project, ERCAREER. Prof. Lago also reported on her participation at a recent conference on ERA in Cyprus, the European Gender Summit 2012 and a meeting with NSF representatives discussing possible collaboration and exchange of best practices with the ERC.

The WG will meet again in January 2013 on the occasion of the ScC plenary meeting to discuss a Workshop to be organised in spring 2013.

## **6. ScC Standing Committees update**

An update was given on on-going activities of the CoIME by the Chair, Prof. Exner.

The Chair of the CoP, Prof. Heldin, gave a report from the last meeting of the CoP on 3 December 2012 in Brussels where panel composition, panel procedures and identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) were discussed.

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<sup>1</sup> If any necessary changes in the point summary are proposed, a written proposal in advance will be appreciated.

## **Session 2**

### **Closed session**

The ScC held a short closed session before the meeting with the Director General of DG RTD.

#### **7. Meeting with Mr. Robert-Jan Smits, Director General of DG RTD**

Mr. Robert-Jan Smits gave an overview of the on-going discussions on the future EU budget and Horizon 2020, including the recent exchanges in the European Parliament (EP) and the Council of Ministers. He underlined the importance of the Nobel Laureates letter of support for EU research funding initiated by two of the ScC members, Sir Tim Hunt and Prof. Christiane Nusslein-Volhard.

Mr. Robert-Jan Smits outlined the procedure and timetable for selecting the ERC President under Horizon 2020. The need to prepare for the transition to the new Scientific Council and to ensure continuity was also discussed.

## **Session 3**

#### **8. Meeting with Mr. Giovanni Kessler, Director General of OLAF**

A presentation was given by Mr. Giovanni Kessler on the mission and functioning of the European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF).

Following a discussion with the ScC members it was noted that the exchanges between ERC (ColME) and OLAF will continue and they are much appreciated.

## **Session 4**

#### **9. Communication activities update**

The ERCEA/A2 gave an update on recent communication activities, including a new website tool for ERC funded projects and recent press announcements and media (including social media) coverage of the Nobel Laureates letter in support of EU funding for research. Moreover, striking projects and new publications were presented. In terms of events the "ERC Goes Global" 2013 planned visits of the ERC Secretary General were outlined. Also mentioned were recent and forthcoming events with ERC participation (sessions/stands), such as, among other, the Falling Walls conference (9 November 2012 in Berlin), American Association of Anthropology event (14 November 2012, San Francisco), Destination Europe event (6-7 December 2012, San Francisco), World Economic Forum Annual meeting (23-27 January 2013 Davos) and AAAS (14-18 February 2013, Boston).

The External Communication strategy for 2013 was discussed and agreed by the ScC, setting out some objectives and areas of activities.

#### **10. Preliminary overview of projects completed in 2012**

The ERCEA reported on examples of bibliometric analysis on the basis of publications from ERC funded projects. It was underlined that this is work in progress and more will be reported in future.

## **WEDNESDAY 5 December 2012**

### **Session 5**

#### **11. Operational issues**

##### **11.1 State of play: ERC-2012-SyG call**

The ERCEA gave an overview of the SyG2012 call, which was recently finalised, including some suggestions for future improvements of the evaluation processes. The ScC members were also requested to put forth names of panel members in order to enlarge the evaluation panels.

##### **11.2 State of play: ERC-2012-AdG call/ERC-2013-AdG**

An update was given by the ERCEA on the state of play of the AdG2012 call evaluation. Moreover, an overview of the AdG2013 call pre-registrations was noted, including comparison with submissions in previous years.

##### **11.3 State of play: ERC-2012-PoC call**

The number of proposals retained at the second deadline of PoC2012 call was reported. A comparative overview of the PoC calls in 2011 and 2012 was given. Furthermore, the PoC2013 call will be published on 10 January 2013 with 2 deadlines, namely 24 April 2013 and 3 October 2013.

##### **11.4 State of play: ERC-2013-StG call**

The ERCEA gave an overview of the main parameters of the StG2013 call, including comparisons of submissions of the StG calls between 2011 and 2013. An update from the initial panel chairs meeting on 6 November 2012 was also given.

##### **11.5 State of play: Granting**

The ERCEA gave an update on the state of play of the grant management activities, including an overview of the execution of commitment credits and the granting activities.

The ScC was also informed that the new Financial Regulations will enter into force as of 1 January 2013 and a new model grant agreement will be introduced with positive developments for the beneficiaries, such as for example the waiving of the obligation to report interests on pre-financing, the shortening of the payment time limits and the electronic signatures of the reports. The electronic-only submission of grant agreements will reduce the administrative burden and potential errors. It will be directly available for grants signed in 2013 and it will be made available for the rest of the ERC portfolio in the course of 2013.

#### **12. Any other business**

No items were discussed under this point.