



ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

23rd PLENARY MEETING, REHOVOT, ISRAEL

15– 16 DECEMBER 2009

Minutes of the meeting

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Dr. Claudio BORDIGNON, Prof. Sierd CLOETINGH, Prof. Mathias DEWATRIPONT, Prof. Carlos DUARTE, Dr. Daniel ESTEVE, Prof. Pavel EXNER, Prof. Carl-Henrik HELDIN, Prof. Fotis C. KAFATOS, Prof. Michal KLEIBER, Prof. Norbert KROÓ, Prof. Maria Teresa LAGO, Dr. Oscar MARÍN PARRA, Prof. Andreu MAS-COLELL, Prof. Helga NOWOTNY, Prof. Christiane NÜSSLEIN-VOLHARD, Prof. Alain PEYRAUBE

Scientific Council members excused (in alphabetical order): Prof. Hans-Joachim FREUND, Prof. Wendy HALL, Prof. Henrietta MOORE, Dr. Leena PELTONEN-PALOTIE, Dr. Jens ROSTRUP-NIELSEN, Prof. Salvatore SETTIS, Prof. Rolf ZINKERNAGEL

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Jack METTHEY, Pablo AMOR, Bernardus TUBBING, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDA, Nathalie LEGROS, Theodore PAPAZOGLU, Benjamin TURNER, Eleni ZIKA, Sabine SIMMROSS, Marie ROBERTI

Support to the ERC ScC Chair: Manolis ANTONOYIANNAKIS, Isabel PETTERA

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

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency

TUESDAY 15 December 2009

Session 1

- 1. Welcome, plans and goals of meeting**
- 2. Adoption of agenda and point summary of the 22nd plenary meeting of the ERC ScC of 13-14 October 2009**

The agenda and minutes of the 22nd plenary session of the ERC Scientific Council (ScC) were adopted without any changes.

- 3. Update on recent meetings**

The ERC Scientific Council reaffirmed its position that an AdG Panel Member can resign but has to wait for one year in order to submit an application to an AdG call. It was underlined that the ScC Standing Committee on Panels would have to address this issue as well. It was

also suggested that a clarifying sentence is included in the letter of invitation to the panel members.

4. Operational issues

4.1 ERC Executive Agency: update on recruitment and logistics

The ERCEA Director (*ad interim*) informed the ScC on the state of play with respect to the ERC Executive agency evolution and in particular the recruitment for the management positions and the training opportunities for the staff.

4.2 State of play: ERC-2009-AdG call/ ERC-2010-StG

Update on the ERC-2009-AdG call

The ERC Executive agency gave an update on the ERC-2009-AdG call, including an update on the panel chairs meeting. The ScC members who were delegates to the panel meetings also reported their observations from the evaluations.

The ScC took note of the issues raised which will have to be taken into account when drafting WP2011. Moreover, the ScC discussed the current conflict of interest rules, which sometimes made it difficult for some proposals to be evaluated in the final stages. It was suggested that the ScC Standing Committee on Conflict of Interest looks into the issue and comes up with proposals how to tackle it.

Finally the ERCEA informed the ScC that the ERC-2010-AdG call was published with deadlines in February, March and April.

Update on the ERC-2010-StG call

An update was made by the ERC Executive agency on the ERC-2010-StG call, including the "streaming approach" ("starters" vs. "consolidators") and its application.

The ScC decided on the renewal of StG panels and confirmed its decision to have two sets of StG panels from 2011 on.

4.3 State of play: Granting

An update was given by the ERCEA on the granting process.

4.4 Communication activities

The ERCEA gave an update on communication activities, such as the organisation of an award ceremony for the StG 2010 awardees, information on third countries outreach and the involvement of the ERC in international conferences/events in 2010, such as AAAS 2010 in the USA, the Careers Fair in Boston, USA, the Shanghai World Expo 2010 in China and the Indian Science Congress.

5. ERC Review follow-up

The ERCEA reported on the Communication of the Commission produced as a response to the Report of the Review Committee. The ERCEA Director's post has also been published both internally and externally with a deadline in the beginning of March.

Session 2

CLOSED SESSION

The ScC held a closed session.

Session 3

6. Ethical review matters

A discussion on ethical review matters took place and in particular with respect to the appointment of the Ethical Review Committee members in order to ensure that the members of the panel have the correct expertise. The ScC expressed its wish to provide names of competent experts on the issue. Moreover, it was noted that the ScC Standing Committee on Conflict of Interest should also be involved.

7. Scientific follow up of projects

The ScC reiterated its view that the Scientific Officers should establish an appropriate relationship with the Principal Investigators of the funded projects. There was general consensus by the ScC on the necessity of the full involvement of the evaluation panels in the scientific follow-up of the funded projects. The ScC explored the possibility of *ex post* assessment of a project, during the evaluation of a future proposal to the ERC by the same Principal Investigator. Further thinking on the different elements of the scientific reporting in the StG and AdG schemes is also necessary.

8. Report on Working Groups: Relations with Industry and Gender Balance

The chair of the Working group (WG) on Gender Balance reported on the recent meeting (25 November 2009 in Brussels) and its conclusions, such as the importance for the Work programme of being gender neutral. Some additional adjustments at the level of the Work Programme are necessary.

In the absence of the chair of the WG on Relations with Industry the discussion on this item was postponed for the next plenary meeting.

9. Scientific Council Committees

It was agreed by the ScC to include Prof. Zinkernagel in the ScC Standing Committee on Conflict of Interest. The Secretariat of the Standing Committees will be ensured by 2 staff members of Unit A1. The constitution of an internal ERCEA Operational Committee on Panels was also discussed in order to facilitate the work of the ScC Standing Committee on Panels. It was agreed that the functioning/rules of the ScC Panels Committee as well as its relation with the internal operational committee will be established on the occasion of the ScC plenary meeting in Bucharest.

10. Preparation of the Work Programme 2011

The ERCEA presented a document summarising issues arising from the most recent evaluations and calls made under the Work Programme 2010, requesting orientations towards the establishment of the Work Programme 2011. The main parameters of the possible adjustments were then discussed by the Scientific Council

10.1 Calls/budget profile to 2013

The ScC decided to keep the current 50:50 budget distribution between the two granting schemes StG and AdG but to keep monitoring developments.

Session 4

11. ERC Strategy

In order to facilitate the Scientific Council's strategy discussion, the ERCEA presented an analysis, drawing lessons from the first three years of the ERC's existence, on a number of topics, such as gender balance, industry participation, third countries outreach, and sustaining and enhancing excellence. The Secretary General presented some ideas exploring where the ERC could add further value by developing a broader repertoire of instruments.

12. Any other business

Prof. Nowotny thanked the ScC in concluding her term as Chair of the ScC plenary meetings.