



European Research Council
Scientific Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL 68th PLENARY MEETING, Brussels 12-13 December 2018

MINUTES

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, Prof. Klaus BOCK, Prof. Margaret BUCKINGHAM, Prof. Eveline CRONE, Dame Athene DONALD, Prof. Andrzej JAJSZCZYK, Prof. Tomas JUNGWIRTH, Prof. Eva KONDOROSI, Prof. Michael KRAMER, Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Prof. Janet THORNTON, Prof. Reinhilde VEUGELERS, Prof. Michel WIEVIORKA and Prof. Fabio ZWIRNER.

Scientific Council members excused (in alphabetical order): Prof. Paola BOVOLENTA, Prof. Christopher CLARK, Prof. Giulio SUPERTI-FURGA, Prof. Kurt MEHLHORN, Prof. Barbara ROMANOWICZ, Prof. Martin STOKHOF and Prof. Isabelle VERNOS.

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Pablo AMOR, Mechtild MAY, Jose LABASTIDA, Theodore PAPAZOGLU, George-Eric TE KOLSTE, Angela LIBERATORE, Laurence MOREAU, Niki ATZOULATOU, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Martin PENNY, Michel VANBIERVLIE, Anthony LOCKETT, Thierry PROST, Laura PONTIGGIA, Elena TOMA, Carmen GARCIA FERNANDEZ, Matteo RAZZANELLI, Ben TURNER, Mike MUGABUSHAKA, Madeleine DRIELSMA, Severina SHOPOVA, Christine SCHIEL, Diane BASTIANELLI.

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

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency.

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

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON welcomed everyone and outlined the goals of the meeting. He also excused Prof. Paolo BOVOLENTA, Prof. Christopher CLARK, Prof. Kurt MELHORN, Prof. Barbara ROMANOWICZ, Prof. Martin STOKHOF, Prof. Giulio SUPERTI-FURGA, and Prof. Isabelle VERNOS who could not attend the plenary meeting. Prof. Eva KONDOROSI noted that a book of condolences is available for ScC members to write a few words for the family of the ERCEA/A1 staff member, Boris KRAGELJ who recently passed away.

2. Adoption of Agenda of the 68th 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 67th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council in Heraklion in October 2018

The Scientific Council approved the Draft Minutes from the ScC Heraklion plenary meeting, which took place in October 2018.

4. Action Points Summary of the 67th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

The ERCEA informed the Scientific Council of the state of play of the action points from the previous Scientific Council plenary meeting.

5. Update on Recent Meetings and Activities

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON reported to the ScC members of the Summer Davos in China in September, which he attended with 12 ERC grantees and support staff from the ERCEA. Later in the month, he also visited Singapore on the invitation of the President of Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, Prof. Subra SURESH. There he accompanied Commissioner Moedas and took part in high level visits to Ministers. He also travelled to Australia where he met officials from the National Medical and Health Research Council and of the Australian Research Council. He also made presentations on the ERC at the Australian Academy of Sciences and at several Australian universities and also discussed a possible implementing arrangement between ERC and Australia. In addition, he gave a keynote lecture on competitive funding in Austria during his visit as part of the conference organised in the framework of the Austrian EU Presidency. Finally, he made three visits to Italy in Rome, Milan, Genova, and Trieste. All these were opportunities to visit officials of the Italian government and also from Universities. ERC events were organised at the Italian Institute of Technology in Genoa and in Milan. He also visited the Joint Research Centre in Ispra and attended a meeting in Venice organised by the Coimbra group of universities, which was focussed on the measure of impact and open access.

Prof. Klaus BOCK noted the very successful conference organised by the ERCEA/Dept B on Artificial Intelligence in October and congratulated the Agency for the good work.

Prof. Eva KONDOROSI reported that she travelled to Rome on the occasion of the award of the Balzan Prize by the Italian President. Furthermore, she attended the General Assembly of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Finally, she noted the importance of the opportunities given by the Young Academy to ERC PIs to interact among them.

6. Update on the Negotiations of the Horizon Europe Proposal

The ERC President reminded the Scientific Council of the key people working on the Horizon Europe Reports in the European Parliament. He also noted that about two weeks ago the EP adopted its position on the proposed legislation. In addition, three Competitiveness Council meetings have taken place since the summer. The last one was held at the end of November and adopted a version of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme via a partial general agreement (PGA).

Finally, the ERCEA gave a more detailed overview of the negotiations, including a reminder of the overall process.

7. Operational issues reporting: Grant Management

The ERCEA gave an update on the grant management activities, including information on the commitment and payment appropriations at the end of the year.

8. Work Programme 2020

The ScC was reminded by the ERCEA/A1 of the Work Programme 2020 adoption timeline.

Moreover, the ScC discussed issues like the budget distribution, resubmission rules for the granting schemes and the Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) to be included in the Work Programme 2020.

9. Update on ERCEA Department D (Resources and Support) Activities

The ERCEA Resources and Support Activities Department gave an update on its activities. It was noted that most of the Department's work is done in partnership with the other departments to make sure that everything runs smoothly. Moreover, the Department has a wide variety of specialised profiles covering a wide range of tasks in its various teams/units and acts as a strategic partner by developing, implementing and providing services to support the day-to-day operations of the Agency. The mission of Department D was described as formulating procedures and providing strategic guidance, direction and support.

10. Communication Activities Update

The ERCEA reported on recent communication activities, including recent videos, which have been produced explaining the SyG features. Also the Unit has been working on promoting ERC calls results and working closely with PIs and HIs. In addition, ERC has taken part in various events over the past months, such as ESOE, Davos and the STOA-ERC event. Moreover, the Unit is providing support to the ERC President as regards outreach to policy makers.

In addition, the Communication Strategy for 2019 was presented and adopted.

11. Role of the Standing Committees, Working Groups and Task Forces

The ERCEA gave an overview of past discussions and relevant statistics on the topic. A few key points were noted, namely that the role of the various WGs and Committees should not be addressed separately from the general functioning of the ScC and the role of the plenary meetings.

The ScC also decided to convert the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) WG into a Standing Committee.

12. Report from the ScC Task Force on Budget Allocation

Prof. Janet THORNTON, Chair of the ScC Task Force on Budget Allocation and the ERCEA Task Force Secretariat shared with the ScC some findings and recommendations of the Task Force.

13. Perspective on ERC activities-Horizon Europe

The ScC discussed possible scenarios for the ERC in the next Framework Programme.

14. Panels Restructuring

The ERCEA shared some ideas with the ScC as regards possible rearrangements of the evaluation model. The Scientific Council will organise a Retreat within the next few months, where the evolution of the evaluation model will be further discussed.

15. Reporting from Standing Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups

The Standing Committees on Conflicts of Interest (CoIME) and Panels (CoP) reported on their recent activities.

Due to the departure of the two vice-Presidents, some changes in the composition of the various committees and working groups were discussed and agreed.

In the absence of Prof. Isabelle VERNOS, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON reported on the activities of the Gender Balance Working Group.

16. Operational Issues Reporting: Evaluation Analysis

The ERCEA gave an update on ongoing evaluations, as well as reported on Scientific Project Monitoring and the state of Ethics Reviews.

17. Any Other Business

Reimbursement of expenses of ScC members

The ERCEA reminded the ScC members that it is imperative to sign their contracts in early January 2019 before claiming any reimbursement of expenses for ERC-related business.

Thanking departing ScC members

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON acknowledged the contributions of the departing ScC members to the ERC's work and thanked them for their dedication and service.