

*ERC – Supporting excellent researchers all over Europe:
Eastern Partnership*

How I got my ERC grant

Dmitri Rusakov

Tbilisi 2017



Institute of Neurology

University College London



How do you learn about the ERC funding

If you an active academic researcher you know where to look for the funding opportunities

The easiest way is to Google “ERC funding”

Googling from the UK produces this



The image shows a screenshot of a Google search page. At the top left is the Google logo. The search bar contains the text "ERC funding" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar are navigation tabs: "All", "News", "Images", "Videos", "Shopping", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The "All" tab is selected. Below the tabs, it says "About 589,000 results (1.09 seconds)". The search results are listed below, each starting with a green checkmark icon. The first result is "Starting Grants | ERC: European Research Council" with a URL "https://erc.europa.eu > Funding" and a description: "How I got my ERC grant - Dr Ágnes Melinda Kovács. Are you a talented early-career scientist who has already produced excellent supervised work, is ready to ...". An orange arrow points to this result. The second result is "ERC: European Research Council |" with a URL "https://erc.europa.eu/" and a description: "Funding body set up to stimulate scientific excellence by supporting and encouraging scientists, engineers and scholars to be adventurous and take risks in their ...". The third result is "ERC Funded Projects | ERC: European Research Council" with a URL "https://erc.europa.eu/projects-figures/erc-funded-projects" and a description: "Since 2007, more than 7,000 projects have been selected to receive ERC funding throughout the EU Member States and the associated countries. The ERC has ...". The fourth result is "For Non-European Researchers | ERC: European Research Council" with a URL "https://erc.europa.eu > Funding" and a description: "The European Research Council (ERC) is a funding organisation for frontier research. It aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe by funding the very best ...". The fifth result is "European Research Council (ERC) week: UCL celebrates funding ..." with a URL "https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/0317/130317-erc-funding" and a description: "13 Mar 2017 - Among the most prestigious grants in Europe, ERC funding is only awarded to academics at the frontier of research, with several Nobel ...".

Google

ERC funding

All News Images Videos Shopping More Settings Tools

About 589,000 results (1.09 seconds)

✓ Starting Grants | ERC: European Research Council
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STARTING GRANTS



How I got my ERC grant - Dr Ágnes Melinda Kovács.

Are you a **talented early-career scientist** who has already produced excellent supervised work, is ready to work independently and shows potential to be a research leader? The ERC Starting Grant could be for you.



Who can apply?

OPEN CALL

There are currently no open calls for Starting Grants

ON-GOING EVALUATIONS

[ERC Starting Grant 2017 - Evaluation](#)

UPCOMING CALL

Expected opening Summer 2017

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

[ERC Work Programme 2017](#)
[ERC Starting Grants 2017 – Information for applicants](#)

All Horizon 2020 reference documents are available on the [Participants Portal](#)

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SUPPORTING TOP RESEARCHERS FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

Search ...



OPEN CALLS

Proof of Concept | [ERC-2017-PoC](#)

[Information for applicants](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Timeframe ongoing evaluations](#)

Deadlines: 25-04-2017 | 05-09-2017

The official deadlines are only those indicated on the [Participant Portal](#)

NEWS

07-04-2017

ERC Advanced Grants: €540 million from EU to 231 senior researchers

07-04-2017

ERC Advanced Grants 2016 highlighted projects

07-04-2017

ERC President's Keynote: Looking beyond 60 Years of Rome Treaty - a Scientist View

07-04-2017

Speech ERC President "ERC 10 Years, a Success Story for Europe with a view on Italy"

> MORE

EVENTS

20-04-2017

[ERC – Supporting excellent researchers all over Europe | Eastern Partnership countries regional event: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine](#)

23-04-2017

[European Geosciences Union \(EGU\) General Assembly 2017](#)

ALL ABOUT ERC FUNDING

ERC STARTING GRANTS

ERC CONSOLIDATOR GRANTS

ERC ADVANCED GRANTS

How did you prepare your application including a brief description of your project? What are its novel aspects?

IMPORTANCE What is the burning scientific question you want to answer?

NOVELTY Has anyone tried to answer it already?

TIMELINESS Why now? Is it really urgent?

TECHNOLOGICAL COUP Taking advantage of a revolutionary technique (Hubble telescope, super-resolution imaging, etc.)?

Case study: Signal formation in synaptic circuits with astroglia (NETSIGNAL)

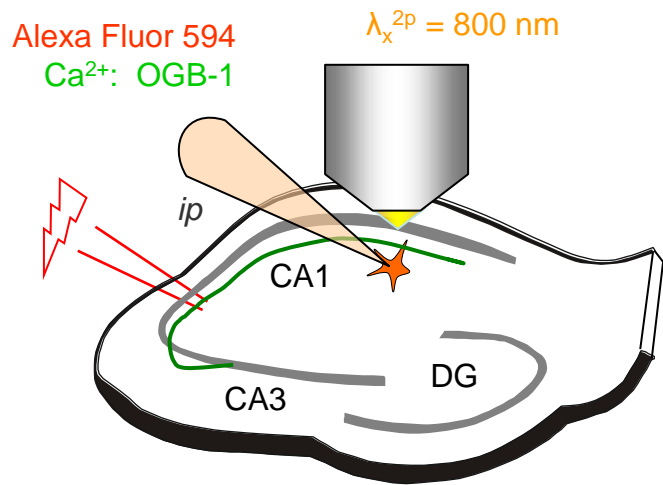
IMPORTANCE Non-excitable brain cells (astroglia) emerge everywhere, in health and disease, but their roles remain an enigma

NOVELTY No one has tried to conceptualise the role of astroglia in neural signal coding

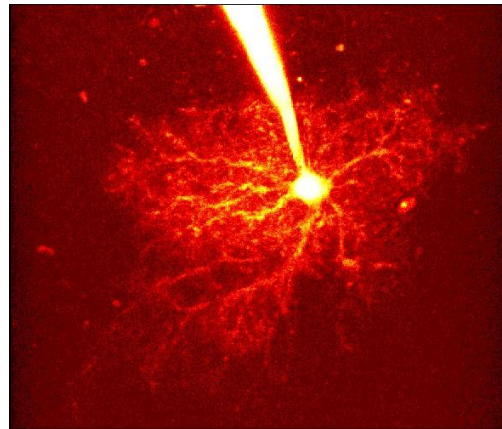
TIMELINESS Rapidly multiplying astroglial studies are facing an interpretational dead-end

TECHNOLOGICAL COUP Recent emergence of two-photon excitation microscopy, optogenetics, and super-resolution microscopy promise breakthroughs

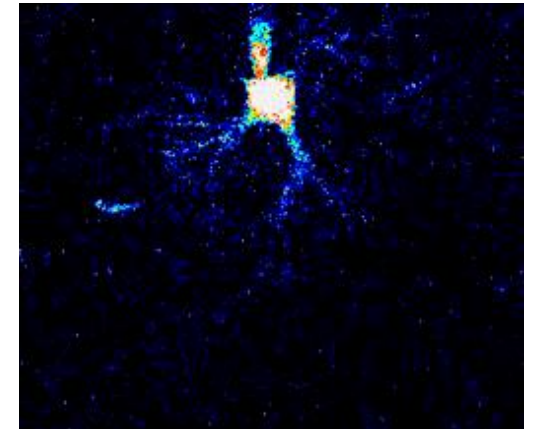
Probing astroglial function *in situ*



Alexa channel



OGB-1 channel



~2 frames / second, 5 min total

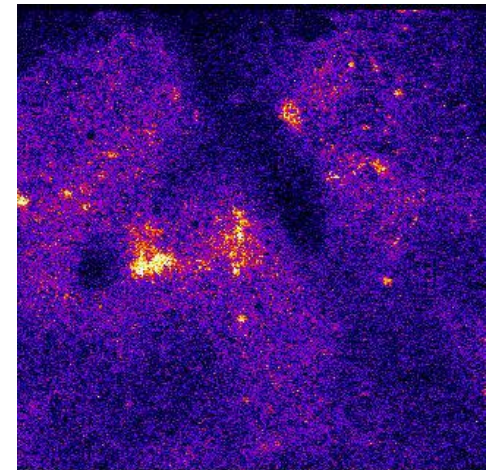
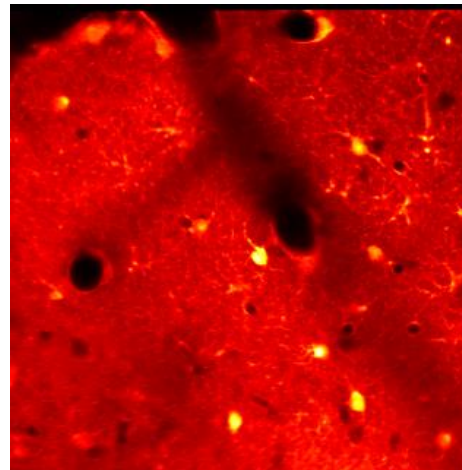
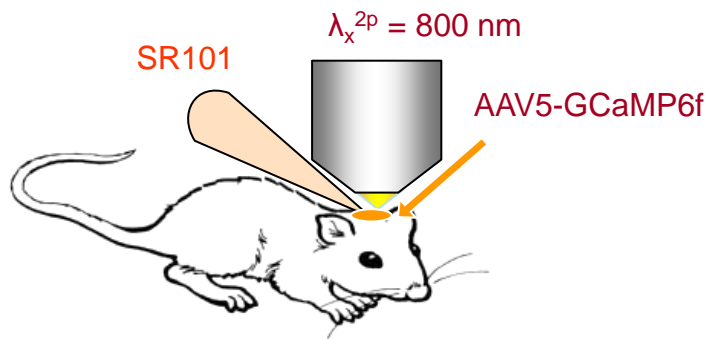
Basic experimental design

Probing astroglial function *in vivo*

Somatosensory cortex, ~150 μm deep

SR101 channel

Astroglia-targeted
AAV5 *GfaABC1D-LckG CaMP6f*



x20 acceleration

James Reynolds

Basic experimental design

**Your experience with the evaluation process, your reaction
when you received the results**

**Good experience: the reviewers were clearly top-level
scientists**

Positive reaction (Champaign)

Team and their roles

ERC funded

Dr Lucie Bard (France) Patch-clamp electrophysiology and 2PE
Ca²⁺ imaging and ligand uncaging *in situ*

Dr Kaiyu Zheng (UK) Optics development, time-resolved 2PE
imaging, high-end models, biophysics

Dr Janosch Heller (Germany) Super-resolution (dSTORM)
imaging, gene-targeting labels, biochemistry

Dr James Reynolds (Ireland) Viral transfection methods, gene-
targeting labelling, 2PE imaging *in vivo*

Formerly ERC funded

Dr Annika Rings (Germany)

Mr Alistair Jennings (UK)

Dr Yaroslav Ermolyuk (Russia)

Ms Deborah Abraham (UK)

Ms Maham Haq (Pakistan)

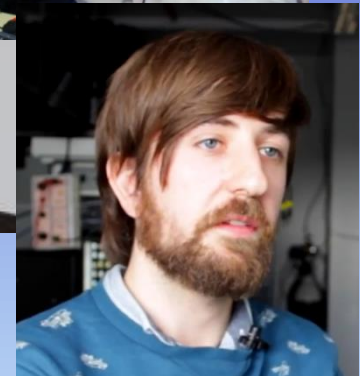
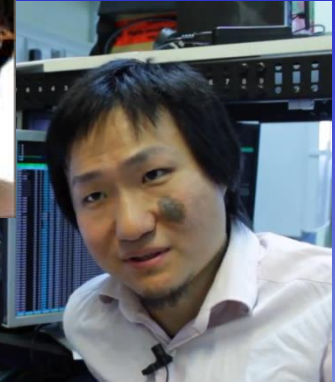
Funded by other sources

Piotr Michaluk (Poland)

Dr Thomas Jensen (UK)

Dr Leonid Savtchenko (UK-Ukraine)

Dr Olga Kopach (Ukraine)



TIPS (Grant preparation)

Leave two or more months to prepare an application, talk to the ERC if unclear of anything

Start early with your funding plan giving the admin plenty of time to check and approve it

Make sure you have pilot data that show your main techniques and demonstrate the rationale

Keep the proposal highly structured (Background, Importance, Timeliness, Objectives, Techniques, Plan, etc.)

The more data and method illustrations the better

Find top collaborators who can help with unique methods

Thank you!

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UCL Institute of Neurology



European Research Council
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Established by the European Commission



University College London



Fin