



European Research Council

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Highlight

ERC at Summer Davos: the role of research in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

24 June 2016

The ERC will participate in the tenth edition of the Annual Meeting of the New Champions (AMNC), held in Tianjin, China, from 26 to 28 June. The ERC takes part for the fifth year running - this time with President Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, Vice President Prof. Mart Saarma and twelve ERC grantees, who will share their latest scientific findings. Six of them are part of the World Economic Forum's Young Scientists Programme.

The AMNC, also known as Summer Davos, is the main global event on science, technology and innovation, gathering young leaders from academia, fast growing enterprises, government and civil society, as well as the media, of over 90 countries. The 2016 edition will address the topic of "the Fourth Industrial Revolution and its transformational Impact".

President Bourguignon, a speaker at the event, said: *"The ERC is committed to backing bright minds from anywhere in the world, letting them push the boundaries of science across Europe. In order for the European Union to be at the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is essential that frontier research receive adequate support and be viewed with a broad enough mind to allow full interdisciplinarity. The AMNC will be a good opportunity for the scientific community, entrepreneurs and policy makers to meet and to work towards a flexible ecosystem in which innovation is not viewed as a prerequisite. Innovation often results from a creative act which is properly channelled and enhanced."*

He added that, since last year, the ERC and the Chinese National Science Foundation have launched an initiative to make it easier for young Chinese researchers to contribute to and benefit from ERC-funded projects: *"Breakthrough discoveries often stem from scientific exchange and collaboration across borders and continents. That is why the ERC's vision necessarily includes encouraging brain circulation."*

The twelve ERC grant winners will shed light on topics ranging from antimicrobial resistance, bacterium-sized robots for drug delivery and quantum physics, to stem cell biology and fertility. The ERC Ideas Lab will focus on emerging strategies to fight drug-resistant infections and on the future of antibiotics.



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ERC at the AMNC 2016:

Sunday 26 June

10:00 - 10:30 **Science in Depth: Fighting Superbugs by Rendering Bacteria Defenceless**
(Congress Centre, Science Hub)

Speaker: **ERC grantee Prof. Stephan Sieber**

10:45 - 11:15 **Ask about Parkinson's disease** (Congress Centre, Brain Hub)

Speaker: **ERC Vice President Prof. Mart Saarma, neuroscientist**

11:30 - 12:00 **Science in Depth: Turbocharging the Immune System** (Congress Centre, Science Hub)

Speaker: **ERC grantee Prof. Nicole Joller**

12:00 - 13:00 **Forum debate: Betting on Moon Shots** (Congress Centre, Arena)

Speakers include: **ERC President Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon**

15:30 - 16:30 **What if: We become Superhuman?** (Congress Centre, Arena)

Speakers include: **ERC Vice President Mart Saarma**

Monday 27 June

15:30 - 16:15 **Science in Depth: Engineering Biology** (Congress Centre, Transformation Hub)

Speakers: **ERC grantees Profs. Martin Fussenegger, Bradley Nelson, Viola Vogel**

17:30 - 18:45 **Fighting Superbugs: ERC Ideas Lab session** (Congress Centre, Ideas Lab 1)

Speakers: **ERC grantees Profs. Kevin Foster, Nicole Joller, Stephan Sieber**

Introduction by **ERC Vice President Mart Saarma**

Tuesday 28 June

09:15 - 10:30 **Engineering Biology: The ETH Zurich Ideas Lab** (Congress Centre, Science Hub)

Speakers: **ERC grantees Profs. Martin Fussenegger, Bradley Nelson and Viola Vogel**

10:30 - 11:00 **Science in Depth: New approaches to antibiotic discovery**
(Congress Centre, Ideas Lab1)

Speaker: **ERC grantee Prof. Kevin Foster**

Links

[ERC full programme at AMNC](#)

[ERC speakers biographies](#)

[ERC website](#)

[AMNC webpage](#)



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Background

Set up in 2007 by the EU, the European Research Council (ERC) is the first pan-European funding organisation for frontier research. It aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe by encouraging competition for funding between the very best, creative researchers of any nationality and age. The ERC strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to Europe. Since its launch, the ERC has supported over 6,000 top researchers and has radically changed Europe's research landscape.

The ERC is led by an independent governing body, the Scientific Council. Since 2014, the ERC President is Prof. [Jean-Pierre Bourguignon](#). Prof. [Mart Saarma](#) is one of three ERC Vice Presidents. The ERC has a budget of over €13 billion from 2014 to 2020 and is part of the EU research and innovation programme, *Horizon 2020*, for which European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, Carlos Moedas is responsible.

ERC representatives took part in the Annual Meeting of the New Champions for the first time in September 2012. The ERC then participated in the Davos Summit in Switzerland, in January 2013, and since then it has been present at both events every year. The **World Economic Forum** is an independent international organisation committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape the global, regional and industry agenda.

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