



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC Highlight:

ERC at the Innovation Convention: Unleashing Europe's innovation potential

10 March 2014

The European Research Council (ERC) is taking part in the second edition of the Innovation Convention, starting today in Brussels, which brings together a wide array of prominent figures from politics, industry and academia to debate innovation. ERC President Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon will share his insights in a session on 'Global challenges, global collaboration', alongside two research ministers amongst others. The ERC will also be represented by Scientific Council members Dame Athene Donald and Prof. Reinhilde Veugelers, as well as several grantees, including Nobel laureate Prof. Serge Haroche.

In the context of this forum, ERC President Jean-Pierre Bourguignon highlighted the ERC's role in research and innovation: *"The drive to unleash Europe's innovation potential resonates with the European Research Council's raison-d'être. The ERC supports 'blue sky' research that often triggers scientific breakthroughs which are essential for innovation. Investing in top researchers with innovative ideas, with an emphasis on the younger generation, is pivotal if Europe is to become more competitive."*

ERC participation at the Innovation Convention (at the Square - Brussels Meeting Centre)

Monday 10 March

Press points (on level 2):

- 13:00 to 13:30 with Prof. Dame Athene Donald;
- 16:45 to 17:15 with Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon.

To arrange one-to-one interviews, please see ERC press contact below.

Innovation Café: 'Global challenges, global collaboration' 14.00-15.15 (Copper Hall)
ERC President [Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon](#) is one of the speakers. Also participating: Derek Hanekom, South African Minister of Science and Technology; Jennie Yeung, President, UN Education Science Cultural Health Advancement Foundation; Dr. Lino Baranao, Argentinean Research Minister; and Eddie Bernice Johnson, US Congresswoman.

Innovation Café: 'Shaping the 21st Century, imagining the 22nd' 14.00-15.15 (Gold Hall)
ERC Scientific Council member [Dame Athene Donald](#), Professor of Experimental Physics at Cambridge University, will speak along with Dr. Ralf Speth, CEO Jaguar Land Rover; Dr. Pedro Baranda, CEO Otis; Dame Ellen MacArthur, Founder of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

Nobel inspiration: a conversation with young researchers 15.15-16.30 (Silver Hall)
ERC Advanced grantee Nobel laureate Prof. [Serge Haroche](#) will share his views on science careers with younger researchers. Dr [Erik Lindahl](#), who holds an ERC Starting Grant and a Proof of Concept grant (KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden), will also take part.

How research partnerships are turning on the Innovation Growth Machine in Europe 15.15–16.30 (Studio 214/216)

ERC Scientific Council member [Prof Dr. Reinhilde Veugelers](#) will share her views together with Dr. Jens Neugebauer, Director Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft; Prof. Enrico Macii, Vice-Rector Politecnico di Torino; Dr. Edoardo Rabino, Fiat-Chrysler.



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[Hearing your genes evolve](#) 18.15-19.00 (Silver Hall)

ERC Starting Grantee [Sarah Teichmann](#) (EMBL; Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute) takes part.

Background

The **Innovation Convention** is an essential part of the *Innovation Union* flagship initiative, the European Union strategy aiming to create an innovation-friendly environment that makes it easier for great ideas to be turned into products and services stimulating economic growth and creating jobs. The Convention provides a platform to debate policies that will contribute towards the building of a research and innovation eco-system in Europe.

The second edition of the Innovation Convention takes place on 10 and 11 March 2014 in Brussels. The audience ranges from high-level policy-makers to top researchers, business leaders and the general public. Around 3,000 people are expected to participate in this two-day event, organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General Research and Innovation.

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 also strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to Europe.

From 2007 to 2013 under the seventh EU Research Framework Programme (FP7), the ERC's budget was €7.5 billion. Under the new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), Horizon 2020, the ERC has a substantially increased budget of over €13 billion. Since its launch, the ERC has selected over 4,500 researchers for funding.

The ERC consists of an independent Scientific Council and an Executive Agency. The Scientific Council, the ERC's governing body, is composed of 22 distinguished scientists and scholars, including the ERC President. They define the scientific funding strategy and methodologies, and act on behalf of the scientific community in Europe to promote creativity and innovative research. Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon has been the ERC President since 1 January 2014. The ERC Executive Agency implements the ERC component of the EU Programme Horizon 2020 and is led by Director Pablo Amor.

More information

[ERC website](#)

[ERC announcement on the first Innovation Convention 2011](#)

ERC Press contacts

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