



European Research Council
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Highlight:

"ERC goes Global" campaign continues to China

2 September 2013

The European Research Council (ERC) is visiting China from 2 to 7 September to inform top researchers about its funding opportunities and to foster relations with its Chinese counterparts. As part of the awareness-raising campaign "ERC goes Global", the tour will take the ERC delegation to leading universities and research institutions in Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Wuhan, Xi'an and Harbin. They will also meet with the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) in Beijing. Following the visit, the ERC will participate in the Annual Meeting of the New Champions – organised by the World Economic Forum – from 11 to 13 September in Dalian, China.

ERC Secretary General Prof. Donald Dingwell, who leads the delegation, commented: *"The European Research Council is excited about visiting China; a powerhouse for research in Asia. We hope to forge closer ties, learn from each other and raise the levels of support for the best researchers. The ERC's substantial funding is open to top talent from anywhere in the world. We are confident that Chinese researchers will respond to this remarkable opportunity in Europe. This is not the first time the ERC goes to China, and it won't be the last."*

The ERC funds leading researchers from anywhere in the world, and their innovative ideas across all disciplines, with up to €3.5 million (around 28.6 million yuan) per grant. Since the ERC's launch in 2007, it has awarded €6.3 billion (approx. 51.5 billion yuan) to over 3,800 scientists performing frontier research in Europe - both early-career and senior.

Secretary General. Donald Dingwell will be accompanied by ERC Scientific Council member and member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Prof. Alain Peyraube, and Chinese ERC grantee Prof. Ming Cao. Based in the Netherlands, Prof. Cao was awarded an ERC Starting Grant in 2012, worth € 1.5 million (approx. 12.3 million yuan) for five years. He carries out research in the field of Physical Sciences and Engineering, and is an associate professor and chair in network analysis and control at the Institute of Technology, Engineering and Management, University of Groningen.

Since 2007, seven Chinese researchers have been awarded ERC grants; a number that the ERC hopes to see increase. ERC grants are both substantial and highly flexible, and allow grant holders to spend half of their research time outside the EU and its associated countries. This provides the possibility for grant holders to maintain an affiliation with their country of origin, if they so wish.

One of the Chinese ERC grantees is Dr Feng Hao, who performs his research in the UK (University of Newcastle). Read more [here](#)



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Annual Meeting of the New Champions, Dalian

From 11 to 13 September 2013, an ERC delegation headed by ERC President Prof. Helga Nowotny, will speak at the Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as the "Summer Davos", organised by the World Economic Forum in Dalian, China. The theme of this year's edition is "Meeting the Innovation Imperative". In addition to President Nowotny, ERC Scientific Council members Sir Tim Hunt and Alain Peyraube, as well as six outstanding ERC grantees, will represent the ERC. Prof. Hunt is a Nobel Prize laureate in Medicine (2001), and Prof. Peyraube is a Chinese linguist and expert in Chinese studies. The ERC grantees participating are working in areas of research ranging from nano-materials, photonics, optics to health, IT technology and energy storage.

On 12 September, the ERC will give a press conference – "The European Research Council - from frontier research to innovation". Ahead of the conference, President Helga Nowotny said: *"The ERC is looking forward to a fruitful interaction with its global partners in Dalian, China. We see this as an opportunity to reach out to other actors and raise our visibility beyond a more scientific audience."*

Background

Set up in 2007 by the European Union, the **European Research Council (ERC)** aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe¹ by encouraging competition for funding between the very best, creative researchers of any nationality and age.

The ERC, part of the **EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7)**, has a total budget of €7.5 billion (around 62 billion yuan) from 2007 to 2013. The European Commission last year proposed to almost double the ERC budget for 2014 to 2020 under the new research Programme 'Horizon 2020'.

The ERC has adopted an 'investigator-driven', 'bottom-up' approach, which allows researchers to identify new opportunities in any field of research. Since its launch, the ERC has funded over 3,800 research projects throughout Europe, and has become a "benchmark" of the competitiveness of national research systems as it complements existing funding schemes at national and European levels. The ERC has three core grant schemes: 'ERC Starting Grants', targeted at early-career emerging research leaders; 'ERC Consolidator Grants', aimed at already independent excellent researchers; and 'ERC Advanced Grants', supporting top senior researchers.

The ERC is composed of an Executive Agency and a Scientific Council. The latter sets the ERC scientific strategy and consists of 22 top scientists and scholars. The ERC is led by President Prof. Helga Nowotny and the Scientific Council is represented in Brussels by Secretary General Prof. Donald Dingwell.

¹ The EU's FP7 associated countries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.



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Prof. Donald Dingwell [biography](#)

Prof. Alain Peyraube [biography](#)

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