



**European Research Council**  
Established by the European Commission

Press release

## **ERC advocates cutting-edge research in Davos**

20 January 2016

**The European Research Council (ERC) takes part in the World Economic Forum that starts today in Davos to discuss how blue sky research brings about innovation.**

Amongst other leaders, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Carlos Moedas and ERC President Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon participate to underline Europe's efforts to attract top scientists.

On the kick-off day of the summit, Commissioner Moedas commented: *"It will be important to discuss the European Union's role in the 4th Industrial Revolution at Davos this week. One thing is for sure, there will be no revolution without supporting the kind of interdisciplinary, frontier research that will lead to innovation in European industry and manufacturing. That is why the work of European Research Council grantees is so important. We need our best minds to push the boundaries of research, while policymakers work harder with the scientific community to create flexible innovation ecosystems that are capable of dealing with sudden and unprecedented changes in the world around us."*

President Bourguignon said: *"The whole idea of the European Research Council is based on the power of curiosity-driven science and serendipity to bring about major scientific breakthroughs. That's why the ERC funds top researchers, no matter where they come from, to let them develop their ambitious projects in any field - from sociology to nanotechnology, genetics or logics. Providing substantial support, the ERC helps Europe attract more top talent and to make it a natural home for first-class science."*

At the summit, the ERC will also be represented by 13 of its [funded researchers](#) who will speak in [sixteen sessions](#) showcasing their research. Amongst them, there are two renowned economists: Prof. H el ene Rey, who will share her expertise in global financial cycles, and Nobel Prize winner Prof. Sir Christopher Pissarides, who will give his insights into unemployment. The ERC also holds an IdeasLab session with four grantees who will speak about the future of computing.



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

**ERC Press Conference in Davos - follow live [LINK](#)**

**Europe – Magnet for talent**  
**Friday 22 January at 12.30 - 13.00**  
(Press Conference Room, Media Village)

- **Prof. H el ene Rey**, named "the economist to watch in 2016" by the *Economist*; returned to Europe from the University of Princeton mainly thanks to her ERC grant
- **Carlos Moedas**, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation
- **Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon**, ERC President

Europe faces a serious challenge: how can it attract the brightest researchers from outside Europe and reverse brain drain? By backing the best with €13 billion, the European Research Council allows first-class researchers to pursue their cutting-edge ideas in fields such as cancer therapy, climate change or nanotechnology. This approach generates innovation, boosts the economy, and helps create jobs. ERC grant holder Prof. H el ene Rey, named "the economist to watch in 2016" and an expert in global financial cycles, is a shining example of top talent returning to Europe from the USA and will speak about her experience and work. The speakers will reflect on how Europe can be more competitive and innovative through blue sky research.

**Some highlights of the ERC programme:**

Suggested highlights:

**> European Markets 2016**

20 January 12.40 – 14.00, Morosani Schweizerhof Arvenstube with ERC grantee H el ene Rey

**> A world without work** - televised and [webcast live](#)

20 January 14.15 – 15.15, Aspen 2, Congress Centre with ERC grantee Christopher Pissarides

**> Women in science**

20 January 20.00 – 22.00, Hotel Sunstar Alpine, Parsenn 1-2-3 with ERC grantee Suchitra Sebastian

**> The future of computing: European Research Council IdeasLab session**

21 January 14.45 - 16.00, Fl uela Ideas Lab Congress Centre. Introduced by Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon and featuring ERC grantees: Jeremy O'Brien, Julie Grollier, Ehud Shapiro, Michael H ausser

**> The Privatization of Science: Problem or Progress?**

22 January 15.00 – 16.00, with ERC President Jean-Pierre Bourguignon

**Background**

The World Economic Forum (WEF), which has taken place annually since 1971, is one of the most recognised platforms for discussion of pressing global issues. With the overarching goal to "improve the state of the world", the forum gathers over 2,500 participants, bringing together political, business, scientific and civic society leaders from around the world.

Set up in 2007 by the EU, the European Research Council (ERC) is the first European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. Every year, it selects and funds the very best, creative researchers of any nationality and age to run five-year projects based in Europe. The ERC strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to Europe. To date, it has funded more than 5,500 top researchers at a variety of stages in their careers.



## European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

Under the new EU research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, of which European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas is responsible, the ERC has a budget of over €13 billion. 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 led by ERC President Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon.

### Links

[ERC programme at WEF 2016](#)

[ERC delegation's biographies](#)

[Full WEF 2016 programme](#)

[ERC website](#)

### ERC press contacts

Madeleine Drielsma

Press and Communication adviser

Phone: +32 (0)2 298 76 31

[erc-press@ec.europa.eu](mailto:erc-press@ec.europa.eu)

Marcin Mońko

Press and Communication adviser

Phone: +32 (0) 2 296 66 44

[erc-press@ec.europa.eu](mailto:erc-press@ec.europa.eu)