



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

**Highlight:**

**New ERC President at AAAS 2014: Creating a close relationship of mutual trust with the scientific community**

15 February 2014

The European Research Council (ERC) participates in the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Annual Meeting 2014 in Chicago, USA, 13-17 February 2014. The ERC is the only European Union organisation to fund blue sky research solely on the basis of scientific excellence. At AAAS, the ERC is represented by its new President, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, two ERC Scientific Council members, Prof. Klaus BOCK and Prof. Nils Chr. STENSETH, as well as two ERC grantees. The President will explain how the ERC has been able to accomplish solid achievements by building on its close relationship of mutual trust with the scientific community and the European Commission. At AAAS, the ERC expects to whet the appetite of top scientists, and encourage them to carry out innovative and high-risk research in Europe.

Speaking for the first time in the USA as ERC President, Jean-Pierre Bourguignon said: *“I’m delighted to take part in the AAAS 2014 meeting; today’s respected audience and programme is a promising indicator of the high expectations society has of scientific research”*. He added: *“Many of the best scientists travel around the world to work on ground-breaking projects and enhance their career. I am here today to spread the word about the possibilities Europe offers, which give top researchers the freedom to choose their own research priorities and encourage them to take part in the daring high-risk research that the ERC supports”*.

Topics at ERC events will also include everything from ERC grant schemes to the evolution of spotty fish and the use of nanowires for solar energy – subjects researched by ERC grantees Prof. Walter SALZBURGER (Starting Grant 2007 and Consolidator Grant 2013) (ERC [story](#) “If Darwin could have scuba dived”) and Prof. Anna FONTCUBERTA i MORRAL (Starting Grant 2009) (ERC [story](#) “Throwing light on to nanowires”).

2014 is the seventh year the ERC has attended AAAS. The ERC will take part in one public policy symposium, one exhibitor-sponsored workshop, two press briefings and several side-events.

This year, the conference may draw as many as 8,500 attendees from 60 countries to debate the theme *“Meeting Global Challenges: Discovery and Innovation”*. AAAS 2015 and 2016 will be held in San José, California and Washington DC respectively.



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**\*\*\* ERC press programme at AAAS 2014 \*\*\***

**ERC Press Briefing & Interview opportunities  
with ERC President Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON and ERC grantees**

**WHEN?** **Sat 15 Feb 2014 2:00 - 2:45 pm**  
Plus opportunity for *ad hoc* interviews Sat 15 (3 – 5 pm) and Sun 16 Feb

**WHERE?** **Montreux Room 3** – Swissôtel, Chicago

**WHO?** **Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, [ERC President](#)**  
**ERC grantees:**  
**[Prof. Walter SALZBURGER](#) and [Prof. Anna FONTCUBERTA i MORRAL](#)**

Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON is also a speaker at the **European Commission Press Breakfast on Friday 14 February 2014, from 7:45 - 9:00 am** (Swissôtel, Montreux room 3) together with DG Research and Innovation Deputy-Director General Rudolf STROHMEIER.

[Full ERC programme](#) at AAAS 2014.

**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.

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 funded around 4 000 researchers and their frontier research projects.

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, who define the scientific funding strategy and methodologies. They 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.



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### **Links**

[ERC website](#) and [ERC stories](#)

[ERC President biography](#)

[Full AAAS 2014 program](#)

### **ERC Press contacts**

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