



European Research Council  
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Press release

## **New ERC Scientific Council members appointed**

10 July 2015

**Today, three new members of the Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) have been appointed by the European Commission: Professors Margaret Buckingham, Michael Kramer and Silvio Micali.**

Margaret Buckingham, who holds dual French-British nationality, is a professor at the Pasteur Institute and Research Director at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Department of Developmental and Stem Cell Biology, Paris. Michael Kramer, a German national, is a professor and a director of the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy in Bonn. Italian-born Silvio Micali is a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, USA.

The appointments come after the terms of office of three Scientific Council members – Professors Daniel Dolev, Reinhard Grenzel and Anna Tramontano - ended. The mandate of the newly appointed members is for four years.

In addition, the mandate of Professor Isabelle Vernos, member of the ERC Scientific Council since 2011, was renewed. She will serve for another four years. Prof. Vernos is a research professor at Catalan Institution for Research and Advanced Studies (ICREA), Centre for Genomic Regulation, Barcelona.

The ERC Scientific Council, composed of 22 distinguished scientists and scholars representing the European scientific community, sets the ERC strategy and selects the peer review evaluators. Its members are proposed by an independent [Identification Committee](#) and appointed by the European Commission.

### Note to the editors

Set up by the European Commission in 2007, the **European Research Council** is the first European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. Every year, it selects and funds the very best, creative researchers, regardless of nationality, gender and age, to run five-year projects based in Europe. The ERC also strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to Europe. Since its launch, the ERC has funded over 5,000 researchers in any field of research.

The ERC consists of an independent Scientific Council and an Executive Agency. The Scientific Council, the ERC's independent governing body, is composed of 22 eminent 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 is the ERC President since January 2014. The ERC Executive Agency implements the ERC strategy and is led by Director Pablo Amor. The ERC has a budget of over €13 billion and is part of the EU research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, for which European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas is responsible.



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## Biographies of the new ERC Scientific Council members

### Margaret Buckingham

Prof. Margaret Buckingham is a prominent figure in developmental biology research in the field of muscle and heart formation. She is a member of the French Académie des Sciences and the United States National Academy of Sciences. She has been a member of the UK Royal Society since 2013 and the Academia Europaea since 1998. She was awarded the Prix Jaffé of the Académie des Sciences in 1990 and the Lifetime Achievement Award of the American Society for Developmental Biology in 2010. Honoured as Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 2002, Buckingham was promoted to the grade of Officier de l'Ordre National du Mérite in 2008. In 2013 she was awarded the CNRS Gold Medal, France's most prestigious scientific distinction. She is currently a member of the Scientific Council of the European Research Council.

Margaret Buckingham holds a Master's degree from Oxford University (UK) before obtaining her PhD in biology in 1971. From 1971 to 1974, she did a postdoc in France at the Pasteur Institute. After joining the CNRS in 1975, she established her research team. She became senior researcher at CNRS in 1981 and professor at the Institut Pasteur in 1992, while continuing her research work at CNRS. From 1987 to 2010, she was head of the "Génétique Moléculaire du Développement" laboratory at the Institut Pasteur.

### Michael Kramer

Prof. Dr Michael Kramer has been Director and Scientific member at the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy (Max-Planck-Institut für Radioastronomie) in Bonn since 2009 and Professor for Astrophysics at the University of Manchester since 2006.

Born in Cologne, he graduated Physics in Cologne and Bonn, and obtained a PhD at the University of Bonn in 1995. He was a staff astronomer at MPIfR (1996-1998), a Max-Planck Otto-Hahn fellow at the University of California at Berkeley (1998-1999), Lecturer (1999-2003), Senior Lecturer (2003-2005) and Reader (2005-2006) at the University of Manchester, Head of the Pulsar Group of the Jodrell Bank Observatory/Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics (2005-2009), Associate Director of the Jodrell Bank Observatory (2007-2009). He is currently a member of the Scientific Council of the European Research Council.

His expertise lies in radio astronomy with a focus on the observations of pulsars for experimental tests of gravitational physics. He was a member of the team which received the Descartes Prize of the European Union in 2005, he won the Marcel-Grossmann Award in 2009 and the Academy Award of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Science in 2010. In 2013 he was also awarded the Herschel Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society in the UK.

### Silvio Micali

Prof. Silvio Micali is an Associate Department Head, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, MIT, as of January 15, 2015.

Professor Silvio Micali received his Laurea in Mathematics from the University of Rome, "La Sapienza", and his PhD in Computer Science from the University of California at Berkeley. Since 1983 he has been on the MIT faculty. His research interests are the theory of computation, cryptography, zero knowledge, pseudo-random generation, secure protocols, and mechanism design.



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Professor Micali has received the Turing Award (in computer science), the Gödel Prize (in theoretical computer science), and the RSA prize (in cryptography). He is a member of the US National Academy of Sciences, the US National Academy of Engineering, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

### **Isabelle Vernos**

Prof Vernos is a research professor at ICREA (Institutió Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats), Centre de Regulació Genòmica, Barcelona, and an EMBO member since 2005. In the past, she worked at the Wellcome CRC Institute, Cambridge, the UK. She then worked as a staff scientist in the Cell Biology and Biophysics Programme at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, Germany, becoming a team leader in 2001.

Research in her laboratory is directed at understanding the role of the microtubule network in cell organization and function. To address this question her group study various microtubule-associated proteins (molecular motors and MAPs) and their regulators (kinases, phosphatases and the small GTPase Ran during M-phase). One major goal is to unravel how the self-organisation of cellular components results in the morphogenesis of dynamic molecular machines.

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