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Press release  
22 January 2016

## From frontier research to innovation ERC funds 135 Proof of Concept grants

**Harnessing bionic silkworms for super-hard fibres, new treatment for chronic wounds based on medical inhalants, reverse-engineering of mediaeval building processes for restoration of Europe's architectural heritage. These are just some of the inventions made by ERC grantees who received additional funding to explore the innovation potential of their research.**

**The ERC has announced today the results of the third round of its 2015 Proof of Concept grant competition. Overall in three rounds of the competition, 135 ERC grantees benefited from this top-up funding scheme. The Proof of Concept grants, worth €150,000 each, can be used, for example, to establish intellectual property rights, investigate business opportunities or conduct technical validation.**

EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Carlos Moedas said: *"There can be no sustainable environment for European innovation without scientific excellence. Proof of Concept grants help researchers bridge the divide between academia and the market. They support the frontier science that leads to innovation with real-life applications, creating new opportunities for European jobs and products."*

ERC President Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon said: *"We know that ERC grants stir the entrepreneurial spirit in the teams they support. This is exemplified by the interest shown by our grantees in the Proof of Concept funding, which the ERC Scientific Council has introduced to help develop innovative ideas into viable solutions dealing with societal and market needs. This adds one dimension to the ERC philosophy based on trust in researchers driven by scientific curiosity."*

The awarded projects come from research covering wide range of topics in physical sciences and engineering, life sciences and social sciences and humanities. In 2015 the ERC received 339 applications for this additional funding and awarded grants worth €20 million.

The researchers selected in the competition are based in 17 countries across the Europe: United Kingdom (22), Spain (20), Netherlands (17), Germany (15), France (10), Sweden (9), Israel (8), Switzerland (8), Italy (7), Belgium (5), Austria (3), Denmark (3), Portugal (3), Greece (2), Cyprus (1), Finland (1), and Poland (1).



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List of selected researchers in [1<sup>st</sup> round](#), [2<sup>nd</sup> round](#), and [3<sup>rd</sup> round](#) of Proof of Concept competition

[List of all selected researchers in 2015 Proof of Concept grant competition](#)

[Discover more examples of Proof of Concept projects](#)

## **Background**

Since its launch in 2011, the ERC Proof of Concept funding scheme has helped more than 400 researchers find a way to get their ERC-funded research results to market and to tackle societal challenges. The competitions are reserved to researchers benefitting from an ongoing, or recently completed, ERC grant. The funded projects can take up to 18 months.

The European Research Council, set up by the European Union in 2007, is the first European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. Every year, it selects and funds creative researchers of any nationality and age, to run ambitious projects based in Europe. The ERC strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to Europe. To date, the ERC has funded more than 5,000 top researchers at various stages of their careers.

The ERC is led by an independent governing body, the Scientific Council. Since January 2014, the ERC President is Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon. The ERC has a budget of over €13 billion for the years 2014-2020. It is part of the EU research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, for which European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Carlos Moedas is responsible.

## **For more information**

[ERC website](#)

[Striking ERC-funded projects](#)

[The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020](#)

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