



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

## Press release

**30 June 2015**

### **ERC Advanced Grants: € 445 million from the EU to 190 senior research leaders**

**The European Research Council (ERC) has announced today the award of its prestigious Advanced Grants to 190 senior researchers. The funding, worth in total €445 million, will enable them and their teams to pursue ground-breaking ideas. These are the first ERC Advanced Grants awarded under the 'excellent science' pillar of Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation programme launched in 2014.**

On this occasion, Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *"Scientists benefitting from these ERC Advanced Grants work at the frontiers of human knowledge. They have ground-breaking ideas that may be risky to pursue, but that also reap exceptional gains. They also often spark new discoveries and tackle the biggest challenges for society. Thanks to funding for excellent science from Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation programme, they will be able to continue exploring these ideas."*

The President of the ERC, Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, commented: *"This year the competition has been particularly fierce and many more than the 190 laureates would have deserved support. The scientists responsible for the selection in the 25 peer review panels, covering all fields, were faced with a very difficult task of choosing proposals bold enough to provide radical new knowledge while having a good chance of being successful"*.

The grantees will work on a wide range of topics and will follow many different approaches as the ERC supports frontier research in all areas of knowledge in a very open format. The following examples illustrate this diversity: a researcher in Italy will set up a team pioneering gene therapy for heart arrhythmias; a scientist in Sweden will address the outstanding questions for understanding the most important liquid on Earth – water; a Czech biologist will investigate bio-diversity in tropical and temperate forests. ([Read more](#))

ERC grants are awarded to researchers of any nationality based in, or willing to move to, Europe. In this competition, researchers of 23 different nationalities received the funding, with British (38), German (33), Dutch (18), French (17) and Italian (16) researchers awarded the highest number of grants.

The new ERC projects will be hosted in 17 countries across Europe, with the United Kingdom (45 grants), Germany (29) and France (23) as top locations. ([See statistics](#))



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[List of all selected researchers in alphabetical order](#)

Lists of selected researchers by domain (in alphabetical order):

- [Physical Sciences and Engineering](#)
- [Life Sciences](#)
- [Social Sciences and Humanities](#)

[Statistics - Advanced Grants](#)

[Discover more projects in this Advanced Grant competition](#)

## **Background**

Set up in 2007 by the European Commission, the European Research Council (ERC) is the first European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. Every year it selects and funds the very best individual scientists to run five-year projects in Europe. Competitions are open to researchers of any nationality, age or scientific area, including humanities and social sciences, hosted in a university or research centre based in the EU or in one of the countries associated to Horizon 2020. The applications are evaluated and selected after a peer-review process involving every year hundreds of renowned scientists coming from all over the world. The scientific quality of the proposal, aiming for excellence, is the only selection criterion.

The ERC operates according to an "investigator-driven" (or "bottom-up") approach, allowing researchers to identify new opportunities in any field of research, without thematic priorities. From 2007 to 2013, under the seventh EU's Research Framework Programme (FP7), the ERC's budget was €7.5 billion. Under the first pillar ("Excellent science") of the new EU Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), Horizon 2020, the ERC has a budget of €1.6 billion for each of the years 2014, 2015 and 2016.

To date, the ERC has funded more than 5,000 top researchers at a variety of stages in their careers, giving high priority to young researchers (the [5000<sup>th</sup> ERC grant](#) was celebrated on 16 June). The ERC has also supported over 40,000 team members, who benefit from cutting-edge research training opportunities. By offering them funding, autonomy and prestige, the ERC contributes to the development of a new generation of top researchers in Europe, who are competitive at a global level.

More than 40,000 articles featuring ERC projects have been published to date in international scientific journals. Also, the ERC is changing the scientific landscape in Europe as several countries are reforming their funding agencies or policies on the basis of the ERC approach.

The ERC consists of an independent governing body, the Scientific Council, and an implementing body, the Executive Agency. Since January 2014, the ERC President is Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon.



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### **The ERC Advanced Grant in brief**

- For well-established top researchers of any nationality/age, scientifically independent and with a recent high-level research track-record and profile which identifies them as leaders in their respective field(s).
- Based on a simple approach: 1 researcher with his/her team, 1 host institution, 1 project, 1 selection criterion: scientific quality aiming for excellence.
- Host institution should be based in the European Research Area. This can be the institution where the researcher is already working or a new one. The Host institution can be changed in the course of the project if the researcher so wishes (“portability of the grant”).
- No consortia or co-funding are requested.
- Funding: up to €2.5 million per grant (that can exceptionally be increased to €3.5 million, in case of purchase of major equipment, mobility from another continent, etc.).

### **For more information**

[ERC website](#)

[Striking ERC-funded projects](#)

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

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