



Statement of the ERC Scientific Council on Starting Grants

27 February 2007

The ERC Starting Grant scheme aims to foster early independence of outstanding young scientists and scholars, European and non-European, who are working in or moving to Europe. This is a challenge as well as an opportunity, both to them and to their respective host institutions. Both parties face international, global competition for scientific excellence; at the same time, they benefit from this strong incentive to improve the quality of their research.

Prospective grantees will need to make proposals of exceptional quality and, if awarded these prestigious grants, are expected to commit their best efforts to the proposed research programme, adhere to diligent handling of financial and other resources, and fulfil their reporting duties vis-à-vis their host institutions and the ERC.

The ERC Scientific Council encourages host institutions to make very special efforts to attract and retain scientists and scholars of the calibre to win Starting Grants. Host institutions will wish to ensure supportive academic surroundings, including for example access to talented graduate students, provision of appropriate office and (where pertinent) laboratory accommodation, access to scientific equipment, a proper balance of research and teaching, and appropriate intellectual support.

Host institutions will also wish to utilize the available administrative and legal options in a flexible way and make provision for a competitive salary which is equally attractive for nationals and non-nationals.

ERC grants require the scientific independence of grantees to be guaranteed by host institutions. Grantees must be able to choose their co-workers, decide on the evolving directions of their work, re-allocate resources as necessary and publish their scientific results without restrictions and independently, with, as co-authors, only those who contribute to the work significantly. At the same time grantees will commit themselves to scientific integrity and will honour the rules of the host institution.