



## 2007 Starting Grant competition: State of Evaluation

22 June 2007

The first call for ERC Starting Grant proposals (closing date 25 April 2007) resulted in a massive response from the scientific community, as 9167 proposals were submitted. Such an impressive demand exceeded all expectations and was gratifying. To ensure an evaluation and selection process resulting in an efficient, fair and equal treatment of every proposal, the Scientific Council implemented an emergency plan that had been kept in reserve, and invited an additional 600 Panel Evaluators to support the 244 members of the 20 ERC Panels in the peer review evaluation process. Furthermore, upon request by the Scientific Council, several national research funding organisations confirmed their support by seconding 30 experts who will assist the ERC during the Panel meetings, by recording the outcome of the evaluations.

The individual remote evaluations by Panel Members and Evaluators started on May 15 and – depending on the Panel – will last until June 29. The Panel meetings will be held in June/July, beginning on June 12-14. The last Panel meeting will be on July 3-5.

The stage 1 evaluation and selection process by the ERC Panels will be formally concluded in July. The decisions and feedback to the Applicants will be provided in two waves. First, the applicants retained for stage 2 will be informed as soon as possible by inviting them to submit a stage 2 full proposal by 17 September 2007; second, the non-retained applicants will be informed by August that their application was not accepted; they will also receive a written feedback (including the remarks and marks from the remote evaluators and the ERC Panels).

Below you find an indicative schedule for the 2007 Starting Grant Competition for both stages.

Call closure for stage 1 outline proposals	25 April 2007
Stage 1 individual remote evaluation of proposals	May – June 2007
Stage 1 Panel meetings	June – July 2007
Feedback to applicants retained for stage 1: invitation for stage 2	July 2007
Feedback to applicants not retained for stage 1: letters of rejection	August 2007
Submission deadline for stage 2 proposals by retained applicants only	17 September 2007
Remote evaluation, Panel meetings & interviews	October-Nov 2007
Feedback and decisions communicated to applicants	Dec 2007 / Jan 2008



Evidently, the ERC regrets that the available funding, although substantial, is not adequate to fund all the meritorious applications. The ERC evaluation system will ensure that the best applications will be retained for the second step, and that the top ones are ultimately funded. We thank all the applicants who participated in this competition, whatever the outcome. We also hope that those who will not succeed will understand that disappointments are inevitable in this competition, and will have found the process not unreasonably demanding for them.

### **Background information**

[ERC Statement on the 2007 Starting Grant](#), 04 June 2007

[Impressive demand for first European Research Council grants](#), 26 April 2007

[Berlin Statement of Scientific Council on ERC Starting Grants](#), 27 February 2007