

European Research Council



The Ideas Programme Objectives and Organization

Christian KRASSNIG

Logistical support for the ERC

7 December 2006





- **Objectives**
- Organisation and Management
- Scientific Strategy





FP7 Ideas Programme

- **Creates ERC**
- **Provides funding**
 - **Budget (2007-2013) : ~7.5 bn Euro**
(around 15% of FP7 budget)
 - **Average annual budget: ~1 bn Euro**
- **Sets overall objectives for research and operating principles**





ERC: The FP7 *Ideas* Specific Programme

- **A new “institution” with a specific vocation**
 - **Independent Scientific governance (Scientific Council)**
 - **Dedicated implementation structure (Executive Agency)**
- **Which is also part of the “family” of FP7**
- **Complementary to other FP7 support to research (bottom-up vs targeted research)**





Strategic Objectives

Boost European excellence in frontier research:

- **By investing in the best researchers and ideas**
- **On the basis of excellence as the sole criterion**
- **Through competition at European level**
- **Providing benchmarks and leverage towards broader (structural) improvements in European research**





Activities and principles

- **Support for individual teams**
- **All fields of science and scholarship are eligible**
 - investigator-driven, bottom-up
 - can take account of specific topics and target groups (eg next-generation researchers)
- **Excellence is the only criterion**
- **Investment in research talent**
 - Flexible grants, under the control of the Principal Investigator





- Objectives
- **Organisation and Management**
- Scientific Strategy



European Research Council



ERC Structure and Organisation

The Scientific Council

Independent scientific governance

The Executive Agency

*Practical implementation and management
of operations*

The European Union

Providing the financial means and legal base





The Scientific Council **Members & Role**

Europe's most respected researchers – 22 persons, reflecting the full scope of European research, appointed by the Commission after an independent identification procedure

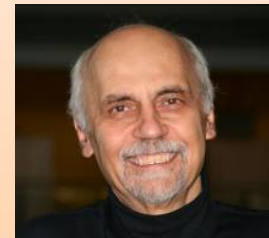
- **Establishes overall strategy**
- **Establishes work programme** (incl. calls for proposals, evaluation criteria);
- **Defines peer review methodology, control quality of scientific operations**
- **Ensures communication with the scientific community**





The Scientific Council Organisation

- 22 Members of SC elected the **Chair** and **Vice-Chairs**
- Chair: **Prof. Fotis Kafatos**
- Vice-Chairs: **Prof. Helga Nowotny** and **Dr Daniel Estève**
- Secretariat of the SC
- Regular Plenary Meetings (every 1-2 months)





SC Secretary-General

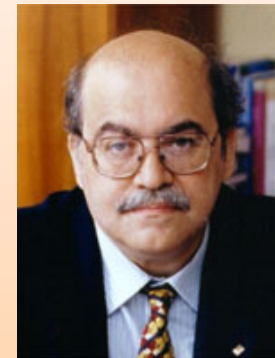
➤ **Prof. Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker**
(Jan 2007 – June 2009)

➤ **Prof. Andreu Mas-Colell**
(July 2009 – Dec 2011)

➤ **Role:**

→ Ensure integrated operation of ERC

→ Member of ERC board





The Executive Agency Role

- **Executes annual work programme**
(established by the Scientific Council)
- **Implements calls for proposals** and provide information and support to applicants
- **Organises peer review evaluation**
- **Establishes and manages grant agreements**
- **Administers scientific and financial aspects** and follow-up of grant agreements





European Commission (Representing the EU)

- **Provides financing** through the EU framework programmes
- **Guarantees autonomy** of the ERC
- **Assures the integrity and accountability** of the ERC
- **Adopts annual work programmes** as established by the Scientific Council





Dedicated Implementation Structure (DIS)

- ERC Executive Agency (ERC EA) creation will be initiated shortly after FP7 adoption and is expected to be fully operational by mid-2008
- Commission (Directorate S) will provide the “interim” DIS, building up capacities and operational methods
- Transition of DIS to ERC EA as early as possible





The first home for the ERC



Madou Plaza – Tour Madou Brussels

- 2 dedicated floors (5th/6th)
- 140 work places
- 5 meeting rooms
- 1 auditorium (192 seats)





- Objectives
- Organisation and Management
- **Scientific Strategy**





Scientific Strategy

- **2 funding streams operating on bottom-up basis**
- **Application procedures simplified**
- **ERC will be flexible to adjust mechanisms and scientific strategies**
- **ERC will complement (but not duplicate) existing European research initiatives**





Funding Streams

Two streams of activity are foreseen:

- 1. ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grant scheme (ERC Starting Grant)**
→ Call for proposals to be published in early 2007
- 2. ERC Advanced Investigator Researcher Grant scheme (ERC Advanced Grant)**
→ Call for proposals at a later stage





ERC Starting Grant

(ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grant)

- Support researchers at the start of their first independent research team
- Provide a structure for transition from working under a supervisor to independent research
- Supply grants to support the creation of excellent new teams which bring energy and new ideas to their disciplines





ERC Starting Grant

(ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grant)

- Main aim is the 3Rs:

Retain, Repatriate, Recruit

- ~ €300M (approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of ERC annual budget)
- ~ 200 Starting Grants per year, each for up to 5 years
- 1400 Starting Grants over 7 years of FP7





ERC Advanced Grant

(ERC Advanced Investigator Researcher Grant)

- Designed to support excellent investigator-initiated research projects by established investigators
- Should complement the ERC Starting Grant scheme by targeting researchers who have already established their independence as team leaders





Applications for Grants

- Two-step application Procedure (due to large number of expected applications)
- Eligibility (ERC Starting Grant)
 - First independent research team
 - Less than 8 years (+3) since completion of PhD
 - Only one ERC Grant per investigator may be active at any one time





Who can apply? Individual Teams

- The Team Leader (“Principal Investigator”) has the
 - power to assemble his/her research group;
 - freedom to choose the research topic.
- Individual teams should consist of **a grouping of researchers which meets the needs of the project, without “artificial” administrative constraints**; thus members may be drawn from one or several legal entities, from either within or across national boundaries, including third countries





Who can apply? European and International Teams

- Ideas (ERC specific programme) encourages participation of researchers from European and non-European countries
- Level of participation varies with regard to **roles** and **funding**
- Roles:
 - **Principal Investigator**
 - 27 EU Member States
 - Associated Countries (e.g. NO, IS, CH, IL), incl. ACC (TR, HR)
 - **Team Members**
 - 27 EU Member States
 - Associated Countries (e.g. NO, IS, CH, IL), incl. ACC (TR, HR)
 - Third Countries (ICPC, Industrialised Countries)





ERC Grants

- Up to 5 years
- Two-step application procedure
(due to large number of expected applications)
- Peer review Panels determine proposals to be funded and applicable budgets
- Simple grant preparation for most projects
- Flexibility and portability





Peer review evaluation

- Approx. 20 high level panels (~10 members), based on:
 - Coherence across all broad research domains and fields
 - A forward-looking approach
 - Encouragement to interdisciplinarity
 - Funding allocations independent of the panel structure
 - Flexibility and inclusiveness
- Multidisciplinary projects appraised by all appropriate panels
- SC members involved to **oversee the process**





Evaluation criteria

- Excellence of project
- Potential of the Principal Investigator
 - Research excellence
 - Achievements
 - Publications
- Research Environment (only 2nd stage)





Communication Main Activities

- **ERC website at <http://erc.europa.eu>**
 - Operational website replacing the current website of the Scientific Council
- **ERC promotional material & dissemination**
 - Material: Flyers/Posters, Fact Sheets on ERC, Brochure on SC
 - Dissemination: Mailings, Events, News Alerts, Press Releases
- **Ideas/ERC NCPs**
 - Nomination through MS/AS by 31 October (still pending for many countries)
 - Dedicated information and training day on 13 December 2006 in Brussels
- **ERC launch event, 27/28 February 2007, Berlin**
 - High-level event at ERC launch (DE Presidency)





ERC documentation

- Ideas Specific programme
- Ideas Work Programme
- Calls for proposals
- ERC Guide for applicants (inc. guidance notes for evaluators)
- ERC Rules on proposal submission, evaluation, selection and award procedures
- ERC grant agreement
- “FP7 in brief





Indicative Timing

DATE	ACTION
20-21 November	SC Plenary meeting agreed on ERC Work programme 2007
Late November	Commission forwards ERC Work programme to Programme Committee
11 December	Council decisions on FP7 package
December	Commission "adoption" of work programmes
22 December	Preliminary "Publication" of first calls in OJ
1 January	FP7 operational
27-28 February	ERC launch event under DE Presidency in Berlin
May	1st Call deadline for ERC (Starting grants)
14-15 May	SC Plenary meeting to agree on ERC Work programme 2008
June	Commission adoption of ERC work programme
July	Publication of 2 nd calls (Advance Grants) in OJ
July - November	Evaluation and selection of projects (Starting grants)



European Research Council



Further Information

Website of the ERC Scientific Council:

<http://erc.europa.eu>

Basic research website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/basic_research

