



Highlight

Beyond the first decade: ERC turns ten in 2017

16 December

Next year the European Research Council, a success story of the EU's Horizon 2020 programme, will mark its tenth anniversary; an important milestone in making Europe a global centre of excellence in research. It is time for celebrations all across Europe and for reflection on the past decade and on the future.

In 2007, the European Commission established the ERC with the mission to encourage excellent basic research in Europe through competitive funding, supporting top researchers across all fields and of any nationality. Since then, the ERC has had a considerable impact on the European research landscape. In almost ten years, it has funded nearly 7,000 researchers and thereby also supporting over 40,000 team members. Its support has been acknowledged in close to 100,000 international scientific journal articles.

To commemorate these first ten years, the ERC announces an "ERC week" that will take place from 13 to 19 March 2017, during which national authorities and research institutions in Europe and beyond will organise various activities: talks, conferences, open days and other events, thereby engaging with the public and research community, and supporting the work of the ERC.

On 21 March, a special event, by invitation only, will take place in Brussels to showcase ground-breaking ERC projects and to present the ERC's achievements and future challenges. Other tenth anniversary events will occur throughout the year in many countries and regions.

For more information

["Beyond the First Ten Years"](#)

[ERC website](#)

#ERC10yrs

Background

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 the very best, creative researchers of any nationality and age, to run projects based in



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

Europe. The ERC has three core grant schemes: Starting Grants, Consolidator Grants and Advanced Grants. Another funding scheme Synergy Grants should be re-launched in 2018.

Operating according to an "investigator-driven" (or "bottom-up") approach, the ERC allows its grant holders to identify new opportunities in any field of research, without thematic priorities. Also, the ERC has changed the scientific landscape in Europe; for instance several countries are reforming their funding agencies or policies on the basis of the ERC approach.

To date, the ERC has funded almost 7,000 top researchers at various stages of their careers and supported more than 40,000 team members. The applications are evaluated and selected after a peer-review process, every year involving hundreds of renowned scientists coming from all over the world. Scientific excellence is the only selection criterion.

The ERC is praised by the international scientific community for the quality of its evaluation system, for the scientific discoveries it funds, for the positive impact on global brain circulation, and for the prestige and autonomy it gives to researchers. This label of excellence is also demonstrated by the agreements signed with the main national research agencies in the world (in the United States, China, Japan, Brazil and others) that allow their young researchers to visit ERC projects and contribute to their work.

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

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