



Press release

New top researchers selected in the European Research Council's second Starting Grant competition: Results

8 September 2009

The European Research Council (ERC) expects to fund some 240 top researchers in its second prestigious ERC Starting Grant competition with an estimated total budget of €325 million. This new wave of grantees follows the 299 researchers who received grants in the first Starting Grant competition in 2007.

In total, 2503 proposals were submitted to the second Starting Grant call. Set against the more than 9000 proposals received in the first call, this has led to a substantial improvement in success rates, 10% as opposed to 3% in the first call.

ERC President Prof. Fotis Kafatos said: *"The Scientific Council and I are delighted to announce the outcome of this second round of Starting Grants. Building on our experience from the first call we fine-tuned the scheme, resulting in a more manageable number of submissions with higher overall quality. The already widely acknowledged ERC peer review system again coped well with this highly competitive call. On behalf of the Scientific Council I take the opportunity to thank the evaluation panels and the external peer reviewers for their invaluable work."*

The average age of grantees is 36 years and around 23% are women (with large variations between the different research domains and panels). The grantees are of 33 nationalities and will be working in host institutions in 19 different countries. Nine grantees currently based outside Europe are moving to an EU member state or associated country to take up their Starting Grant.

The total call budget is estimated at €325 million. This figure is higher than the €296 million originally announced. The additional funds are expected to be confirmed shortly and will enable the total number of confirmed grants to reach around 240. The lists of confirmed grantees will gradually be updated on the ERC webpage (see links below).



Looking to the future, the ERC President stated that *"the ERC Starting Grant is about enabling the very best up-and-coming researchers to launch their independent careers early on. Over the coming years we will put increasing budgetary emphasis to the Starting Grant, and will work to ensure that grants reach the most promising researchers even at very early career stages, as well as scientists who are consolidating their independence. The Scientific Council has therefore introduced a new feature in the scheme. In the next call (with deadlines this autumn), the Starting Grant budget will be segmented into two parts, one designated for researchers with 2-6 years post-PhD experience, the other for those who have 6-10 years of experience. It is our hope that this will attract more candidates who are in the very early stages of their research careers."*

Lists of results

The three lists per domain show, in alphabetical order, the confirmed proposals selected for funding to date (219). These can be funded under the call budget originally announced. More funds are expected to become available, allowing for additional grants to be offered. The lists will subsequently be updated. Proposals placed on the reserve lists will only be published once their actual funding has been confirmed.

- Life Sciences: http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/StG-2_List_LS.pdf
- Physical Sciences and Engineering: http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/StG-2_List_PE.pdf
- Social Sciences and Humanities: http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/StG-2_List_SH.pdf

Statistics - Starting Grant call 2009

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/statistics_STG-2_outcome.pdf

Note to the editors

The European Research Council (ERC) is a pioneering part of the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme and has a total budget of € 7.5 billion (2007-2013). Set up in 2007, the ERC aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe by supporting and encouraging the best creative scientists, scholars and engineers of any nationality in any field of research, to work in European host institutions.

ERC Starting Grant in brief

- Supports early-career top research leaders who are about to establish or consolidate a proper research team and to start conducting independent research in Europe.
- Funds pioneering frontier research in any field. Interdisciplinarity is encouraged.
- Candidates must have a certain number of years of experience after their PhD. (Current call: 3-8 years required. Upcoming call: 2-10 years required.)
- Funding: up to € 2.0 million per grant for up to 5 years
- Calls for proposals: published annually in summer with deadlines in autumn



Links

ERC Press Release on outcome first Starting grant call
http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/press_release-14122007_en.pdf

Statistics first Starting Grant call
<http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/memo.pdf>

ERC website
<http://erc.europa.eu>

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