



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Community Research

The 7th Framework Programme “Ideas”

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European Commission

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Introduction

➤ The ERC is:

- A logical development of the European Research Area
- Securely anchored in European legislation

but at the same time.....

- A revolutionary development



Basic/frontier research in the European Research Area

- **EU activities (FP7):**
 - Ideas/ERC, Marie Curie fellowships, research infrastructures, thematic priority areas
- **Intergovernmental:**
 - CERN, ESA, EMBL etc.
- **National**
 - Research councils, academies, etc.



Ideas/ERC in FP7

- A new institution
- Which is also part of the “family” of FP7:
 - Co-operation
 - Ideas
 - People
 - Capacities



Ideas/ ERC – overall objectives and operating principles

- **Support investigator-driven frontier research over all areas of research**
- **By individual teams**
- **Excellence as sole criterion**
- **Autonomous scientific governance**
- **Simple, user-friendly delivery**



Why “Frontier Research” ?

- Research at the frontiers is:
 - intrinsically risky
 - characterised by an absence of disciplinary boundaries
 - Frequently useful
- We want to avoid outmoded distinctions:
 - Between “basic” and “applied” research
 - Between “science” and “technology”
 - Between “traditional” disciplines



FP7 Ideas Programme

- **Creates ERC**
- **Provides funding (~ €1bn p.a.)**
- **Establishes overall objectives for research and operating principles**



ERC - Structure and Organisation

The Scientific Council

Independent scientific governance

The Agency

Practical implementation and management of operations

The European Union

Providing the financial means



The Scientific Council - Members & Role -

- 22 high level scientists reflecting the full scope of European research, nominated by Commission
- Role:
 - Establish overall scientific strategy: annual work programmes (incl. calls for proposals, evaluation criteria); define peer review methodology; ensure selection and accreditation of experts
 - Control quality of operations and management
 - Ensure communication with the scientific community



The Scientific Council - Structure and Organisation -

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



The Agency

- Execute annual work programme (established by the Scientific Council)
- Implement calls for proposals and provide information and support to applicants
- Organise peer review evaluation
- Establish and manage grant agreements
- Administer scientific and financial aspects and follow-up of grant agreements



The European Union (represented by the European Commission)

- Provide 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

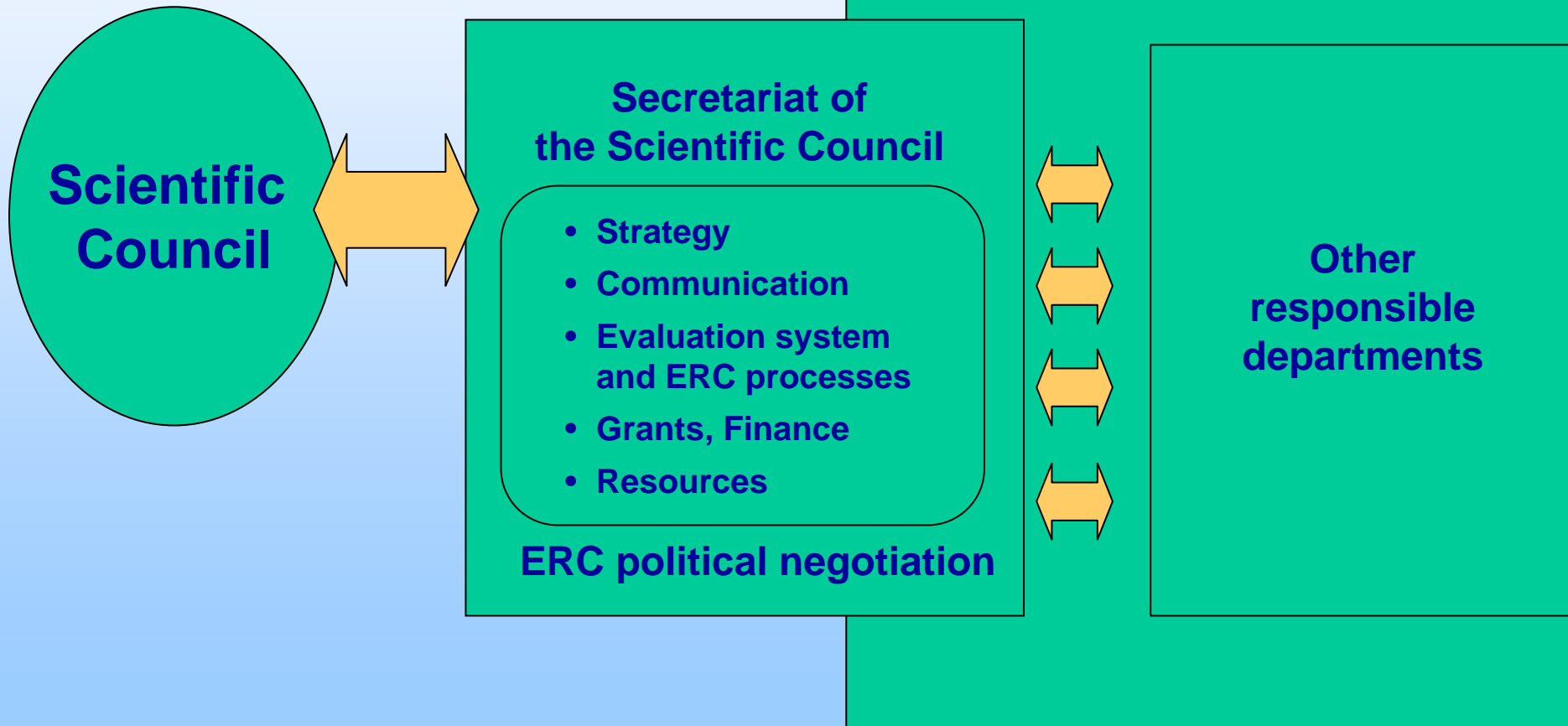


Preparations for ERC launch 2006/2007

- Finalise political negotiations
- Establish legal base; prepare for the creation of the agency
- Provide Scientific Council secretariat
- Prepare implementation methods, including:
 - frontier research grant
 - evaluation system
- Build up personnel and infrastructure
- Communicate strategy to scientific community



Initial structure for ERC development





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



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
- Short annual reports plus detailed final report



Evaluation Process

➤ Peer Review Evaluation

- Approx. 18 high level panels (~10 members)
- Multidisciplinary projects encouraged (appraised by all appropriate panels)
- ScC members involved to oversee the process

➤ Evaluation Criteria

- Potential of the people (research excellence, achievements, publications)
- Excellence of the project



ERC Budget 2007-2013

- Total budget (2007-2013) : €7460m
(revised Commission proposal)
- First Year: Approx. €300m



ERC launch strategy 2006/2007

- 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



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

- 25 EU Member States
- Associated Countries (e.g. NO, IS, CH, IL), incl. ACC (RO, BU, TR, HR)

→ Team Members

- 25 EU Member States
- Associated Countries (e.g. NO, IS, CH, IL), incl. ACC (RO, BU, TR, HR)
- International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC)
- Industrialised Countries, e.g. Australia, Canada, Japan, USA



Applications for Grants

- Two-step application Procedure (due to large number of expected applications)
- Eligibility (ERC Starting Grant)
 - First independent research team
 - Less than 10 years since completion of PhD
 - Only one ERC Grant per investigator may be active at any one time



European Events with ERC participation

- **Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF2006):**
Munich, 15-19 July 2006, Discussion forum on the European Research Council with the participation of Prof Kafatos
- **FP7 launch event for information multipliers**
Brussels, 7-9 February 2007, conference aimed at intermediaries and at stakeholders of European research policy
- **ERC launch conference**
Berlin, 26-28 February 2007, organised with the German EU presidency as high-level conference



Further Information

Website of the ERC Scientific
Council at <http://erc.europa.eu>