



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission



Press release

## EU awards grants worth €621 million to early-career researchers from over 50 countries

408 scientists win the European Research Council's Starting Grants

**3 September 2019, 12.00 CEST, EMBARGO**

Four hundred and eight early-career researchers have been awarded European Research Council grants in this year's first completed ERC competition. The highly-coveted funding will help individual scientists and scholars to build their own teams and conduct pioneering research across all disciplines. The grants, worth in total €621 million, are part of the EU' Research and Innovation programme, Horizon 2020.

Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *"Researchers need freedom and support to follow their scientific curiosity if we are to find answers to the most difficult challenges of our age and our future. This is the strength of the grants that the EU provides through the European Research Council: an opportunity for outstanding scientists to pursue their most daring ideas."*

President of the European Research Council (ERC), Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, commented: *"In this year's ERC Starting Grant competition, early-career researchers of 51 nationalities are among the winners - a record! It reminds us that science knows no borders and that talent is to be found everywhere. It is essential that, for its future successful development, the European Union keeps attracting and supporting outstanding researchers from around the world. At the ERC we are proud to contribute to this goal by supporting some of the most daring creative scientific talent."*

The successful candidates' research covers a diverse range of topics, including studying how forest foods could provide a solution to world hunger; assessing the intensity, frequency, and distribution of extreme sea levels in Europe; investigating how tech companies sell their products and seek consumers' trust, or unraveling the survival skills of single cell organisms. See all nine [examples](#) of research selected for funding in Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and the UK.

The results of this grant competition show a greater diversity of nationalities than ever before: researchers are from 51 different countries across the world, from as

far afield as Taiwan and Cuba. Some 20 researchers will move to Europe from outside the EU and associated countries to conduct new research.

The ERC-funded research will be carried out in 24 countries, with institutions from Germany (73), the UK (64) and the Netherlands (53) to host the highest number of projects. Some 13% of applications were selected for funding this time.

These Starting Grants will help the selected scientists build their own research teams, creating an estimated 2,500 jobs for postdoctoral fellows, PhD students and other staff at the host institutions.

See more [statistics](#).

[List of all selected researchers](#) (alphabetical order)

Lists of selected researchers by domain (alphabetical order):

- [Physical Sciences and Engineering](#)
- [Life Sciences](#)
- [Social Sciences and Humanities](#)

Discover [more projects](#) in this Starting Grant competition

### About Starting Grants

ERC Starting Grants are awarded to early-career researchers of any nationality with two to seven years of experience since completion of the PhD (or equivalent degree) and a scientific track record showing great promise. The research must be conducted in a public or private research organisation located in one of the EU Member States or Associated Countries. The funding (maximum €2.5 million per grant, including up to €1 million to cover extraordinary costs) is provided for up to five years. Calls for proposals are published once a year for each scheme.

### For potential applicants

Researchers who would like to compete for an ERC Starting Grant must apply for the 2020 round of funding before 16 October 2019. Application dates and details can be found at: [erc.europa.eu/funding/starting-grants](http://erc.europa.eu/funding/starting-grants).

### About the ERC

The European Research Council, set up by the European Union in 2007, is the premiere 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 in Europe. The ERC also strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to work in Europe. To date, the ERC has funded around 9,000 top researchers at various stages of their careers. It offers four core grant schemes: Starting, Consolidator, Advanced and Synergy Grants. The ERC is led by an independent governing body, the Scientific Council. The ERC President is Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon. The ERC has a budget of over €13 billion for the years 2014 to 2020, part of Horizon 2020, for which European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, Carlos Moedas, is responsible.

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