The Gender Equality Plan at the European Research Council (ERC)

Professor Isabelle Vernos
ERC Scientific Council,
Chair of the ERC ScC Gender Balance Working Group

Gender Summit
Washington, November 2013
What is ERC?

The ERC supports excellence in frontier research through a bottom-up, individual-based, pan-European competition.

Budget: € 7.5 billion (2007-2013) - 1.1 billion €/year

Legislation
- Scientific governance: independent Scientific Council with 22 members; full authority over funding strategy
- Support by the ERC Executive Agency (autonomous)
- Excellence as the only criterion

Strategy
- Support for the individual scientist – no networks!
- Global peer-review
- No predetermined subjects (bottom-up)
- Support of frontier research in all fields of science and humanities
Researchers career development and complementary funding schemes

- ERC SyG – Synergy
- ERC Advanced
- ERC StG – Consolidators
- ERC StG - Starters
- Marie Curie
- Erasmus
- Students
- Post Graduates
- Post-docs
- Junior Professor / Junior Researcher
- Associated Professor
- Full Professor
- Senior Professor

By end of FP7 more than 4,000 Grants funded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Call</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AdG</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>StG</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoG</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SyG</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>PoC</td>
<td>1%</td>
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</table>
ERP budget FP7 and Horizon 2020

FP7 budget € 50.5 billion
ERC budget € 7.5 billion

H2020 budget € 77 billion
ERC budget € 13 billion
ERC Scientific Council Members

- Prof. Klaus BOCK (Chemistry)
- Prof. Nicholas CANNY (History)
- Prof. Sierd A.P.L. CLOETINGH (Earth Sciences)
- Prof. Tomasz DIETL (Physics)
- Prof. Daniel DOLEV (Computer Sciences)
- Prof. Athene DONALD (Biological Physics)
- Prof. Carlos M. DUARTE (Biology)
- Dr. Barbara ENSOLI (Medicine)
- Prof. Daniel ESTEVE (Physics)
- Prof. Pavel EXNER (Applied Mathematics & Mathematical Physics), ERC Vice President
- Prof. Reinhard GENZEL (Astrophysics)
- Prof. Carl-Henrik HELDIN (Molecular Cell Biology), ERC Vice President
- Prof. Timothy HUNT (Biology)
- Prof. Matthias KLEINER (Engineering)
- Prof. Eva KONDOROSI (Biology)
- Prof. Helga NOWOTNY (Science and Technology Studies), ERC President
- Prof. Alain PEYRAUBE (Linguistics)
- Prof. Mart SAARMA (Biology)
- Prof. Nuria SEBASTIAN GALLES (Psychology)
- Prof. Anna TRAMONTANO (Biochemistry)
- Prof. Isabelle VERNOS (Molecular and Cell Biology)
- Prof. Reinhilde VEUGELERS (Economics)

Prof. Don Dingwell
ERC Secretary General
Established by the European Commission

European Research Council

Gender Balance Working Group

The ERC Scientific Council is concerned with gender balance in all phases of the ERC calls and hence set up a Gender Balance Working Group, which in 2010 formulated a Gender Equality Plan

Members of the Gender Balance Working Group:

- **ERC Scientific Council**: Isabelle Vernos (Chair), Carlos Duarte, Carl-Henrik Heldin, Helga Nowotny, Anna Tramontano, Athene Donald, Reinhard Genzel
- **ERCEA**: Severina Shopova
ERC’s mission is to support excellent frontier researchers across Europe, irrespective of nationality, gender or age. ERC Scientific Council Gender equality plan was adopted in December 2010.

Three main objectives:

- to raise awareness of ERC gender policy among potential applicants in all research fields
- to identify and challenge any potential gender bias in the ERC evaluation procedure
- to improve the gender balance within the ERC’s peer review system
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ERC Scientific Council
Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013
– example of steps taken or following

Gender mainstreaming with focus kept on excellence

ERC Scientific Council gender equality plan

Take an active role in the gender debate, gender equality networks and workshops

Make targeted visits to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics, to inform about open ERC calls

Highlight ERC women grantees as role models for potential ERC applicants

Analyse relation between ERC grants and gender structures in research careers

Highlight good practice host institutions regarding coverage of family related costs (e.g. child care, moving with a family etc)

Make targeted visits to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics, to inform about open ERC calls

Achieve a better gender balance in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel's relevant scientific communities

Monitor submission rates of women and men

Look at success rates of and granted amounts to women and men

Ensure ERC evaluation criteria encompass the situation of both women and men in research
Established by the European Commission

Monitor submission rates of women and men

Gender mainstreaming with focus kept on excellence

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ERC Scientific Council gender equality plan

Awareness Submission Evaluation Granting

Monitor submission rates of women and men
Monitor submission rates of women & men by country and research domain
Share women StG applicants vs. women academic staff in Grade B, by country of host institution

Grade B: "Researchers working in positions not as senior as top positions (A) but more senior than newly qualified PhD holders". (She Figures 2009)
Monitor submission rates of women & men by country and research domain
Share women AdG applicants vs. women academic staff in Grade A, by country of host institution

Grade A: "The single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted."
(She Figures 2009)
Shares of submitted proposals
Starting and Advanced Grants

34% of all StG2013 proposals were submitted by women

16% of all AdG2013 proposals were submitted by women
ERC Scientific Council
Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013
– example of steps taken or following

Gender mainstreaming with focus kept on excellence

 ERC Scientific Council gender equality plan

- **Awareness**
  - Monitor submission rates of women and men

- **Submission**
  - Look at success rates of and granted amounts to women and men

- **Evaluation**
  - Ensure ERC evaluation criteria encompass the situation of both women and men in research

- **Granting**
  - Achieve a better gender balance in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel's relevant scientific communities

Take an active role in the gender debate, gender equality networks and workshops

Make targeted visits to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics, to inform about open ERC calls

Highlight ERC women grantees as role models for potential ERC applicants
All ERC calls 2007-2013 (without SyG and CoG2013)
25 % of the applications from women
20 % of the grants to women

Withdrawn and ineligible proposals not taken into account
Shares of grants to women
Starting and Advanced Grants

All ERC Advanced Grants:
15 % of the applications from women
13 % of the grants to women

All ERC Starting Grants:
30 % of the applications from women
25 % of the grants to women

Withdrawn and ineligible proposals not taken into account
Comparing success rates of men and women by type of grant – cumulative data
ERC Scientific Council
Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013
– example of steps taken or following

Gender mainstreaming with focus kept on excellence

- Take an active role in the gender debate, gender equality networks and workshops
- Make targeted visits to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics, to inform about open ERC calls
- Highlight ERC women grantees as role models for potential ERC applicants
- Monitor submission rates of women and men
- Look at success rates of and granted amounts to women and men
- Ensure ERC evaluation criteria encompass the situation of both women and men in research
- Achieve a better gender balance in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel's relevant scientific communities
Gender balance in the ERC peer review system

“The medium term goal is to achieve gender balance in each ERC evaluation panel as well as among the panel chairs. This may take time, and will also depend on the overall gender balance in particular research fields.

In a first step, the ERC will aim at a better gender proportionality in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel's relevant scientific communities.”

(ERC gender equality plan 2007 – 2013)
Established by the European Commission

Analyse relation between ERC grants and gender structures in research careers

Look at success rates of and granted amounts to women and men

Achieve a better gender balance in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel’s relevant scientific communities

Highlight good practice host institutions regarding coverage of family related costs (e.g. child care, moving with a family etc)

Monitor submission rates of women and men

Ensure ERC evaluation criteria encompass the situation of both women and men in research

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– example of steps taken or following

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Analyse relation between ERC grants and gender structures in research careers
Selected project: ERCAREER - "Capturing career paths of ERC grantees and applicants"

Participants: VUA (NL) – in collaboration with IAB (DE) and UEA (UK)

Purpose: Support to ERC monitoring and evaluation strategy

Objectives:
• The project maps the road to and from excellence by shedding light on paths and patterns, differences and similarities in the career paths of women and men ERC grantees.
• It looks into who are those scientists who apply to the ERC, how do they differ from the scientific population as a whole, and what distinguishes the successful from the unsuccessful applicants?

Budget: 149 826 EUR
Call Title: "ERC proposal submission, peer review and gender mainstreaming"

Objective:

• The focus of the studies should be on the ERC practices and processes in the context of gender mainstreaming and in particular during the proposals' submission and peer review.

Indicative budget: EUR 200 000

Evaluation: on-going
 ERC Workshop:  "On the way to the top: providing equal opportunities for men and women in science and technology"

When:  2 December 2013

Where:  ERC premises, Brussels

Objectives:
• Gather representatives from national research organisations and gender experts to discuss the diversity of practices and approaches to gender mainstreaming in various European countries;

• Exchange best practices on policies and approaches aiming at the promotion of wider participation of women researchers.

More information on the ERC

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