

# The European Research Council



**European Research Council**

Established by the European Commission



**Katia Fach Gómez**  
**Scientific Management Department-ERC**

June 17, 2015

# Outline



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

- **What is the ERC?**
- **What does ERC offer?**
- **How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?**
- **How ERC research proposals are evaluated?**
- **ERC achievements and participation of non-ERA nationals**
- **New Implementing Arrangement with Argentina**



**European Research Council**

Established by the European Commission

# What is the ERC?



# What is the ERC?

## ERC in the H2020 Structure



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

### ➤ The HORIZON 2020 main components:

- Excellent Science
  - ➔ *World class science is foundation of technologies, jobs, well-being*
  - ➔ *Europe needs to develop, attract, retain research talent*
  - ➔ *Researchers need access to the best infrastructures*
- Industrial leadership
- Societal challenges

### ➤ Excellent Science:

- European Research Council
- Future and Emerging Technologies
- Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions
- Research Infrastructures

# What is the ERC?

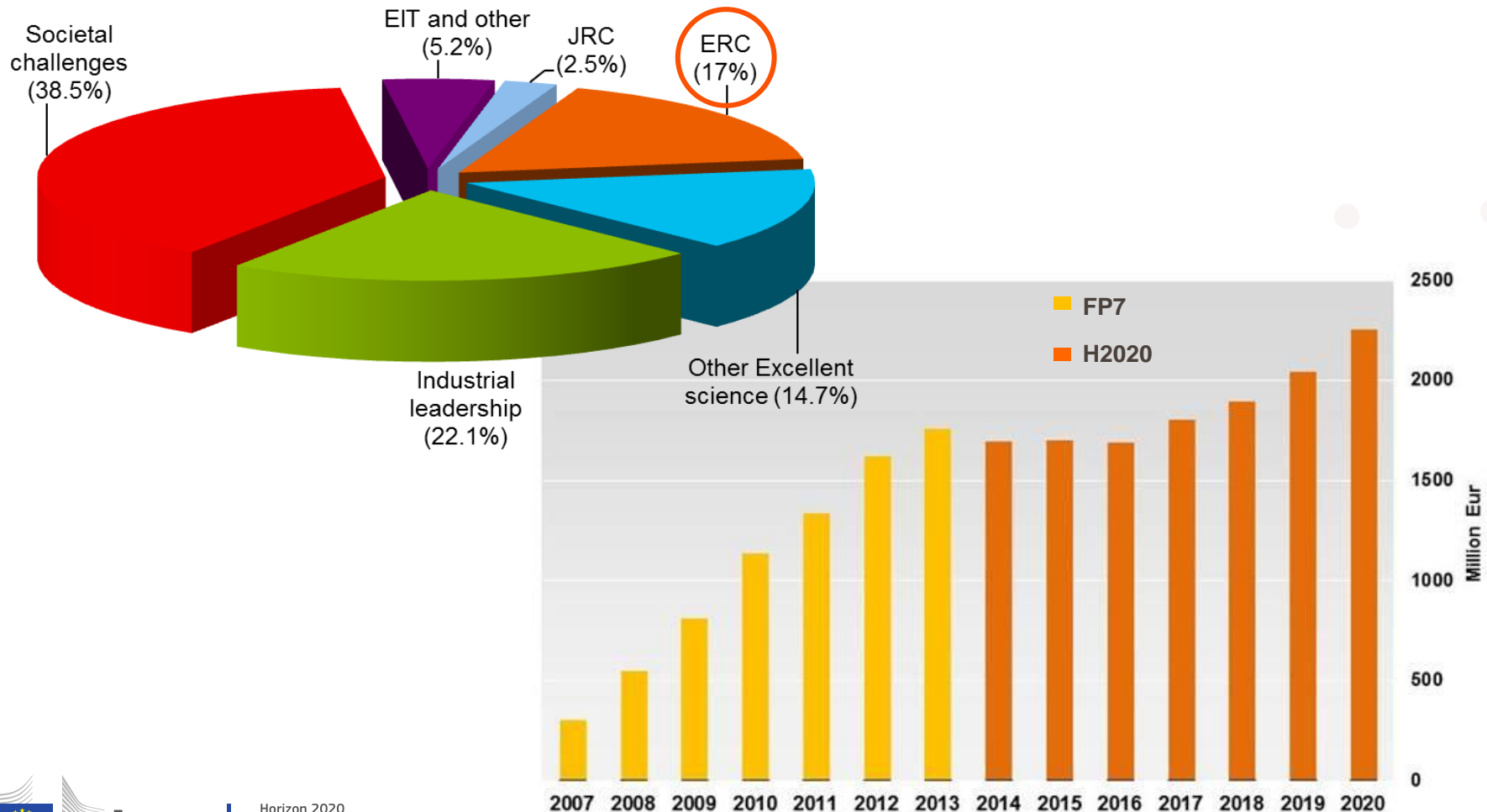
Horizon 2020 Budget € 77 billion

ERC Budget € 13 billion



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission



# What is the ERC?

## ERC structure



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

### The European Commission

- **Provides 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



### The ERC Scientific Council

- **22 prominent researchers** proposed by an independent identification committee
- **Appointed by the Commission** (4 years, renewable once)
- **Establishes overall scientific strategy**; annual work programmes (incl. calls for proposals, evaluation criteria); peer review methodology; selection and accreditation of experts
- **Controls quality of operations and management**
- **Ensures communication with the scientific community**



### The ERC Executive Agency

- **Executes annual work programme** as established by the Scientific Council
- **Implements calls for proposals** and provides information and support to applicants
- **Organises peer review evaluation**
- **Establishes and manages grant agreements**
- **Administers scientific and financial aspects** and follow-up of grant agreements
- **Carries out communications activities** and ensures information dissemination to ERC stakeholders





**European Research Council**

Established by the European Commission

# What does ERC offer?

# What does ERC offer?

## Creative Freedom of the Individual Grantee



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### ERC offers independence, recognition & visibility

- to work on a research topic of **own choice**, with a team of **own choice**
- to gain true **financial autonomy** for 5 years
- to negotiate with the host institution the **best conditions** of work
- to attract **top team members** (EU and non-EU) **and collaborators**
- to move with the grant to any place in Europe if necessary (**portability of grants**)
- **to attract additional funding and gain recognition**; ERC is a quality label



# What does ERC offer?

## ERC Grant Schemes



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

### Starting Grants

starters  
2-7 years after PhD  
(≥ 50% commitment)  
up to € 2.0 Mio  
for 5 years

### Consolidator Grants

consolidators  
7-12 years after PhD  
(≥ 40% commitment)  
up to € 2.75 Mio  
for 5 years

### Advanced Grants

track-record of  
significant research  
achievements in the  
last 10 years  
(≥ 30% commitment)  
up to € 3.5 Mio  
for 5 years

### Proof-of-Concept

bridging gap between research - earliest  
stage of marketable innovation  
up to €150,000 for ERC grant holders

# What does ERC offer?

## ERC funding schemes



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### **Starting Grant (StG): nurturing the next generation research leaders.**

To support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they are starting their own independent research team or programme.

### **Consolidator Grant (CoG): consolidating the next generation research leaders.**

To support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they may still be consolidating their own independent research team or programme.

### **Advanced Grant (AdG): attracting and rewarding established independent research leaders.**

To support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they are already established research leaders with a recognised track record of research achievements.

**Applicant Principal Investigators must demonstrate the ground breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their scientific proposal.**

# What does ERC offer?

## Principal investigator profile and commitment



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

### PI Profile:

- Any current place of work but working or moving to work in Europe (EU member state or H2020 Associated Country)
- **Any nationality** or age
- StG: 2 and up to 7; CoG: 7 and up to 12 years of experience after PhD; AdG: no constraints
- Potential (StG) or evidence (CoG) for independence and maturity; strong leadership (AdG)
- Good track-record appropriate to their research field and career stage

### PI Commitment:

- Minimum 50% (StG), 40% (CoG), 30% (AdG) of PI working time on ERC project
- Minimum 50% of PI working time in a EU Member State or Associated Country

# What does ERC offer?

## Funding



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### Starting Grant (StG):

Up to **1.5** million € for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). Up to **0.5** million € additional

### Consolidator Grant (CoG):

Up to **2.0** million € for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). Up to **0.75** million € additional

### Advanced Grant (AdG):

Up to **2.5** million € for a period of 5 years (pro rata for projects of shorter duration). Up to **1.0** million € additional

additional



to cover (a) eligible "start-up" costs for Principal Investigators moving from a another country to the EU or an Associated Country as a consequence of receiving the ERC grant and/or (b) the purchase of major equipment and/or (c) access to large facilities.



# What does ERC offer?

## Role of the host institution



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

- Is located in an EU Member State or an Associated Country
- Hosts the PI for the duration of the project
- Is a legal entity: university, research center, business research unit, etc.
- Is committed to ensure that the PI may:
  - Apply for funding independently
  - Manage research and funding project
  - Publish independently as senior author
  - Have access to reasonable space and facilities
- Signs Grant Agreement
- Overhead: 25%

# What does ERC offer?

## Features of ERC grants



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

- No constraints on eligible costs as long as they are for the execution of the project
- Rules of the HI apply
- High flexibility: aims of the project can be modified through amendments to the grant agreement
- Grants have a light reporting along the project life-time: financial report every 18 months, scientific report at mid-term and end of the project
- Grants have 25-40% pre-financing
- PI is empowered to manage the research activity and the funds of the project
- Grants are portable

# What does ERC offer?

## ERC 2015 Work Program



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC calls	Budget	Call Opening	Submission Deadline(s)
<b>Starting Grants</b> ERC-2015-StG	430 M€	7 October 2014	3 February 2015
<b>Consolidator Grants</b> ERC-2015-CoG	585 M€	13 November 2014	12 March 2015
<b>Advanced Grants</b> ERC-2015-AdG	630 M€	10 February 2015	2 June 2015
<b>Proof of Concept</b> ERC-2015-PoC	20 M€	7 November 2014	DL1: 5 February 2015 DL2: 28 May 2015 DL3: 1 October 2015

# How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?



# How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?

## Main considerations



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

- Have a ground-breaking idea
- Design a research project to implement the idea
- Convince yourself on the feasibility of the project
- Ask yourself if you have the capabilities to build and supervise a research team to carry out the project
- Contact a HI where the project will be developed (the HI must be located in EU or any of the H2020 associated countries)
- Get the support from the HI
- Write your research proposal
- Submit your research proposal within the deadline

# How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?

## ERC panel structure



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### Life Sciences

- **LS1** Molecular and Structural Biology and Biochemistry
- **LS2** Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics and Systems Biology
- **LS3** Cellular and Developmental Biology
- **LS4** Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology
- **LS5** Neurosciences and Neural Disorders
- **LS6** Immunity and Infection
- **LS7** Diagnostic Tools, Therapies & Public Health
- **LS8** Evolutionary, Population and Environmental Biology
- **LS9** Applied Life Sciences and Biotechnology

### Social Sciences and Humanities

- **SH1** Markets, Individuals and Institutions
- **SH2** The Social World, Diversity and Common Ground
- **SH3** Environment, Space and Population
- **SH4** The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- **SH5** Cultures and Cultural Production
- **SH6** The Study of the Human Past

### Physical Sciences & Engineering

- **PE1** Mathematics
- **PE2** Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- **PE3** Condensed Matter Physics
- **PE4** Physical & Analytical Chemical Sciences
- **PE5** Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- **PE6** Computer Science & Informatics
- **PE7** Systems & Communication Engineering
- **PE8** Products & Process Engineering
- **PE9** Universe Sciences
- **PE10** Earth System Science

# How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?

## ERC panel structure



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### EXAMPLE

#### SH2 The social world, diversity, institutions and common ground: sociology, political science, law, communication

- SH2\_1 Social structure, inequalities, social mobility
- SH2\_2 Diversity and identities, gender, interethnic relations
- SH2\_3 Social policies, welfare and educational systems
- SH2\_4 Democratisation, social movements, social integration
- SH2\_5 Political systems and institutions, governance
- SH2\_6 Conflict and conflict resolution, violence
- SH2\_7 Legal studies, constitutions, human rights, comparative law
- SH2\_8 International relations, global and transnational governance
- SH2\_9 Communication and information, networks, media

# How to prepare and submit an ERC research proposal?

## Proposal structure



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

### PART A – online forms

- A1** Proposal and PI info
- A2** Host Institution info
- A3** Budget

### PART B1 – submitted as .pdf

- Extended Synopsis 5 p.
- CV 2 p.
- Early Achievements (StG and CoG) or 10-year Track Record (AdG) 2 p.

### Annexes – submitted as .pdf

- Statement of support of HI
- If applicable: explanatory information on ethical issues; copy of PhD (StG, CoG); document for extension of eligibility window (StG, CoG)

### PART B2 – submitted as .pdf

- Scientific Proposal 15 p.





# How ERC research proposals are evaluated?

# How ERC research proposals are evaluated?

## Main features of the evaluation process



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

- Goal of the evaluation: select the best frontier research proposals
- Only evaluation criteria: excellence
- Method: peer review
- Structure: 25 panels distributed in 3 scientific domains (10 Physical Sciences, 9 Life sciences and 6 Social Sciences and Humanities)
- Each panel consists of 1 panel chair and 12-16 panel members

What makes  
ERC evaluation  
exceptional?



Peers  
Review procedure

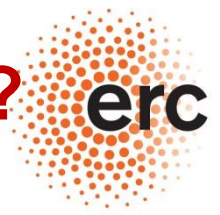


European  
Commission

Horizon 2020  
European Union funding  
for Research & Innovation

# How ERC research proposals are evaluated?

## Peers



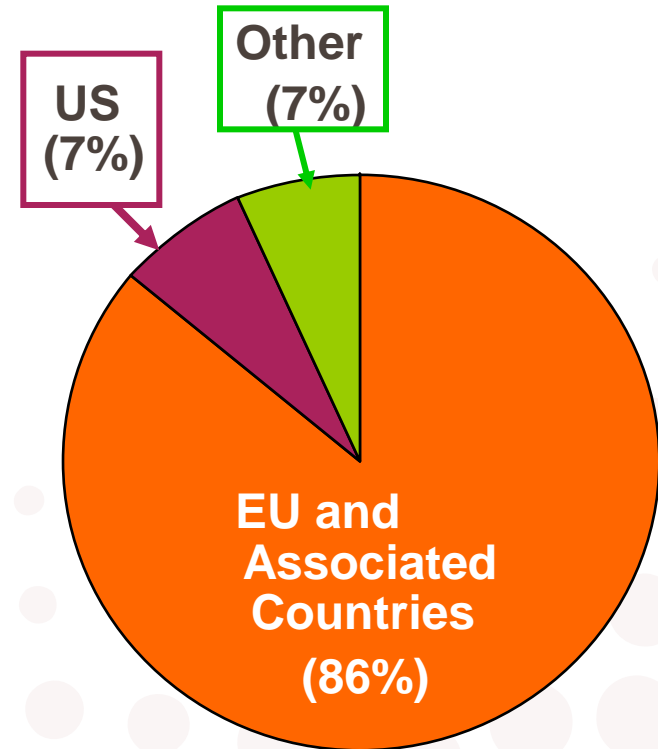
European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### ➤ Panel members: typically 375 / call

- High-level scientists
- Recruited by ScC from all over the world: ~14% from outside Europe
- About 12-16 members plus a chair person

### ➤ Referees: typically 2000 / call

- Evaluate only a small number of proposals
- Similar to normal practise in peer-reviewed journals



European  
Commission

Horizon 2020  
European Union funding  
for Research & Innovation

# How ERC research proposals are evaluated?

## Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

Evaluation of *excellence* at two levels:

- **Excellence of the Research Project**
  - ✓ Ground breaking nature
  - ✓ Potential impact
  - ✓ Scientific Approach
- **Excellence of the Principal Investigator**
  - ✓ Intellectual capacity
  - ✓ Creativity
  - ✓ Commitment



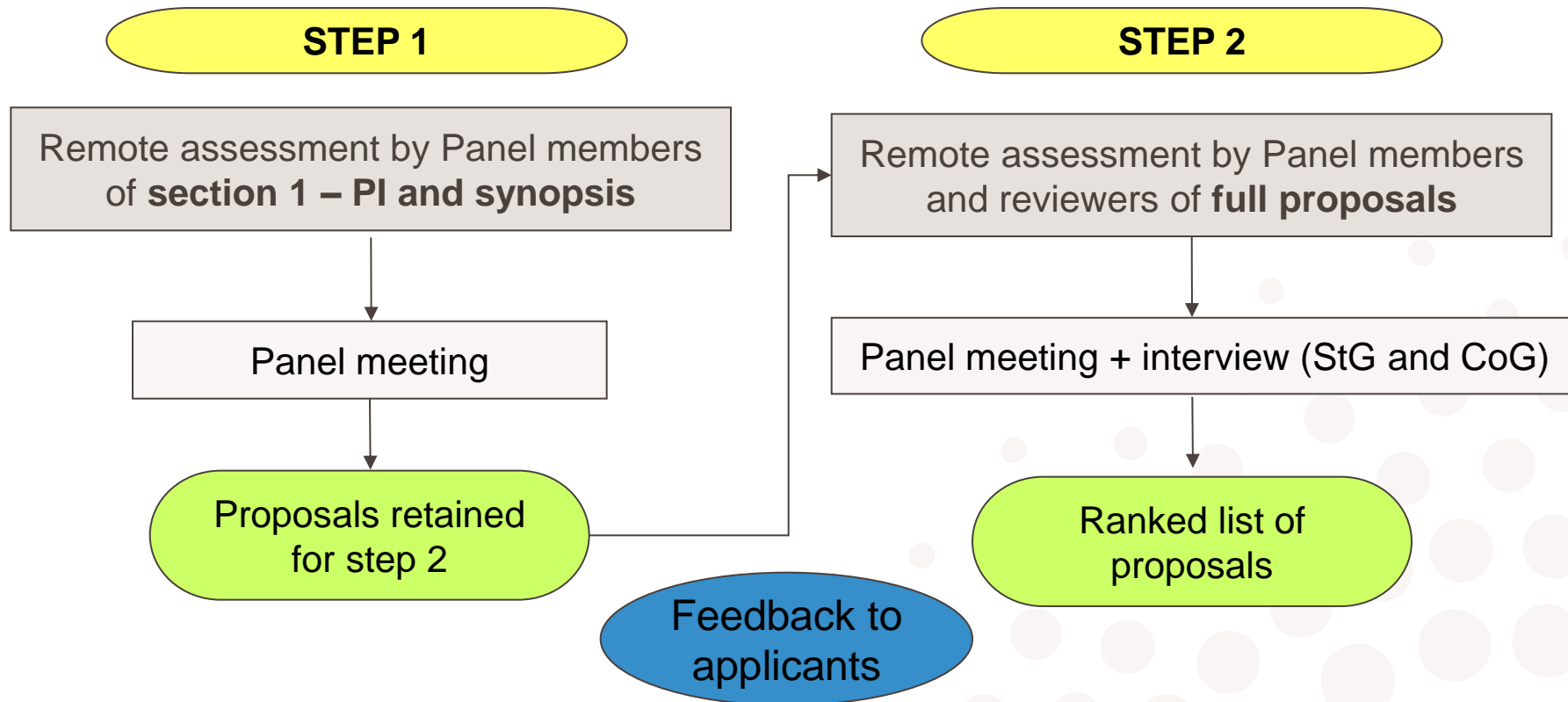
# How ERC research proposals are evaluated?



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

## Evaluation of proposals: review procedure



- Right balance between generalist + specialized review
- Appropriate treatment of interdisciplinary proposals

# ERC achievements and non-ERA participation

# ERC achievements and participation of non-ERA nationals

## After 8 Years of Existence...



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

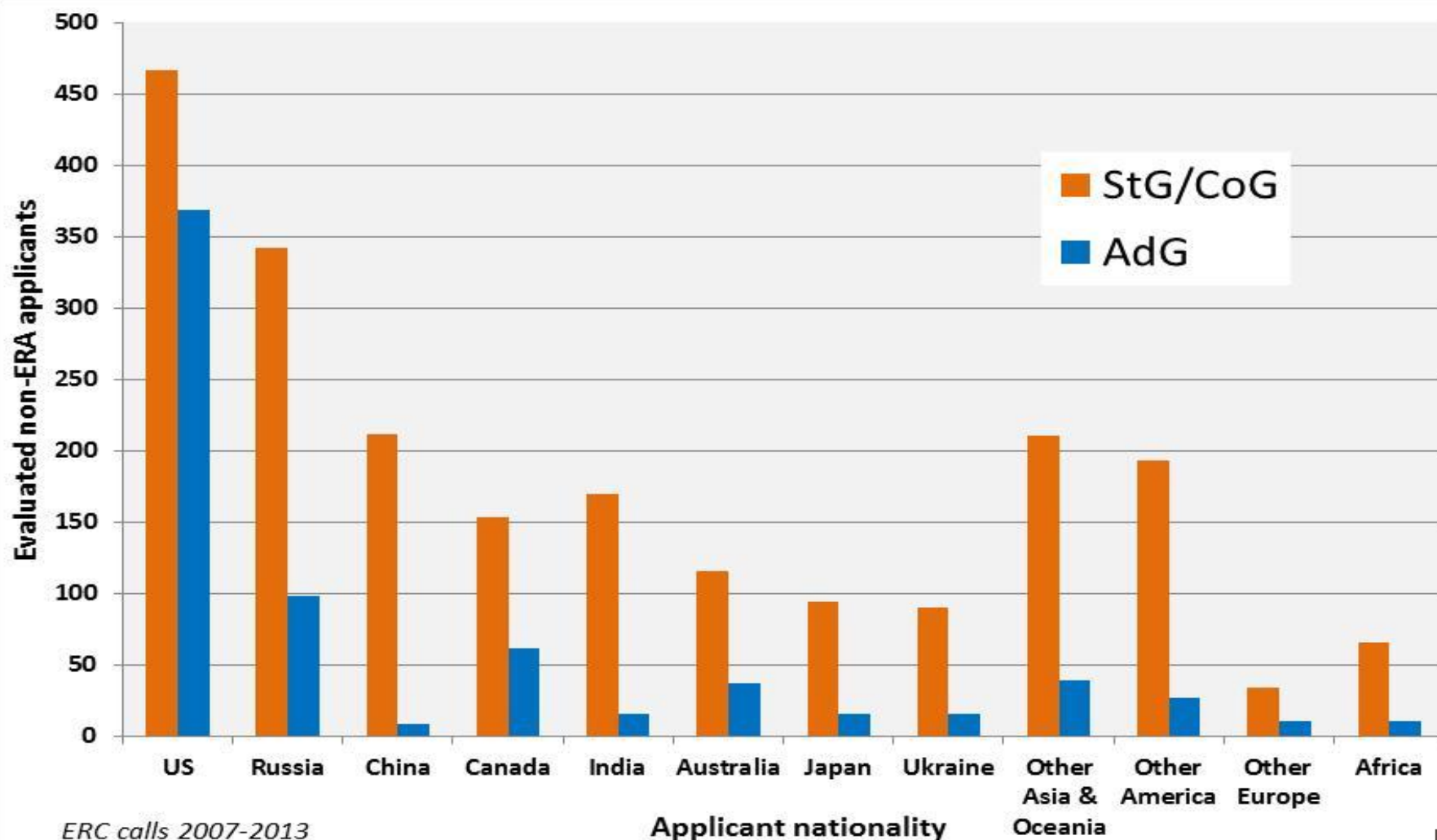
- Highly recognised by the research community
- Over 4 600 top researchers funded (65% are at an early-career stage); 65 nationalities represented
- Highly competitive (average success rate 12%)
- Working in almost 600 different institutions in 32 countries
- 310 grantees with non-ERA nationality
- Efficient and fast grant management
- Over 30 000 publications acknowledging ERC funding
- 7% of these publications were in the top 1% most cited in their scientific field and year of publication
- 20% of completed LS and PE projects reported at least one patent (on average 2 patents reported per project)

# FP7 Evaluated Proposals from non-ERA Nationals



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

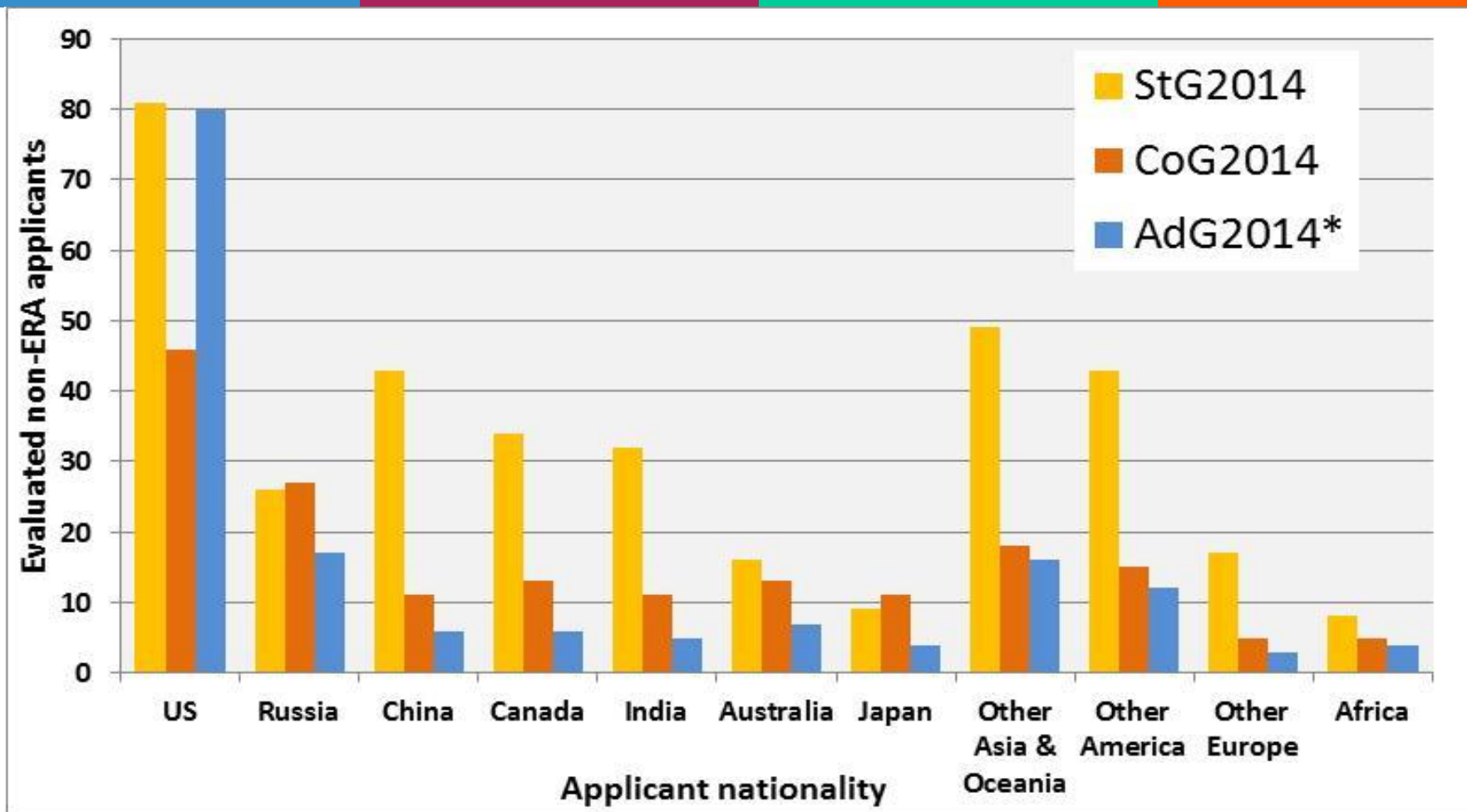


# H2020 Evaluated Proposals from non-ERA Nationals



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission



European  
Commission

Horizon 2020  
European Union funding  
for Research & Innovation

\*) all submitted

# FP7- H2020

## Funded projects with Argentinean PIs



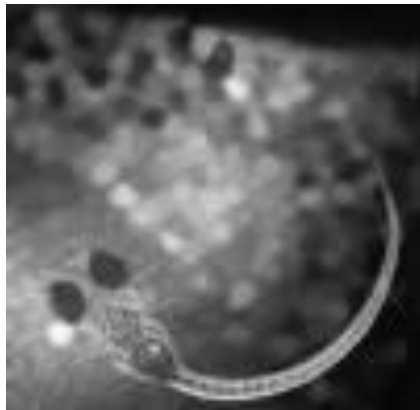
European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### ERC grantees with Argentinean nationality (04.03.2015)

Country*	HI Country	ERC call	Domain	Grantees	Host Institution
Argentina	DE	StG-2007	Life Sciences	9	German Research Center for Environmental Health
	UK		Phys Sci & Eng		Imperial College
	FR	StG-2009	Life Sciences		INSERM
	FR	StG-2010	Soc Sci & Hum		CNRS
	ES	StG-2012	Phys Sci & Eng		Catalan Institute for Nanotechnology
	UK		Phys Sci & Eng		University of Oxford
	DK		Phys Sci & Eng		University of Copenhagen
	AT	StG-2013	Life Sciences		Research Institute of Molecular Pathology
	ES	StG-2014	Life Sciences		National Centre for Cardiovascular Research - Spain
Total:				9	

\*) nationality as last declared by the principal investigator

Basis: ERC calls StG/CoG/AdG 2007-2013 and H2020 CoG/StG 2014

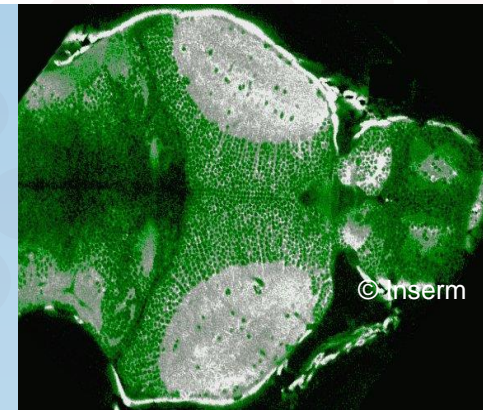


**Dr German SUMBRE - ERC Starting Grant 2009**

Host Institution: FR - National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm)

**Project: ZEBRAFISH PERCEPTION:**

**Sensory perception: neural representation and modulation**



European Union funding  
Research & Innovation



# FP7- H2020

## Funded projects with focus on Argentina



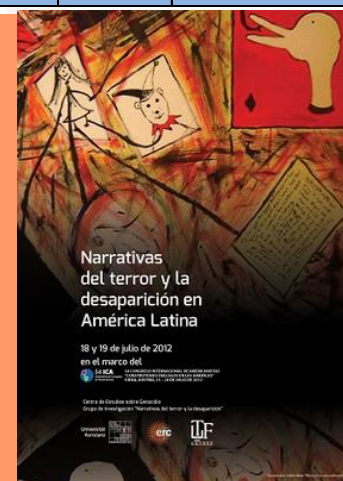
European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

Project Acronym	Title	Institution	Country	Call
EDSGEL	Likelihood-based estimation of non-linear and non-normal DSGE models	FUNDACION CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS MONETARIOS Y FINANCIEROS	ES	StG2009
NoT	Narratives of Terror and Disappearance. Fantastic Dimensions of Argentina's Collective Memory since the Military Dictatorship	UNIVERSITAT KONSTANZ	DE	StG2009
GloGender	Global Governance and Gender Disparities. Explaining Developments in Key Labor related Human Rights Indicators	LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE	UK	StG2009
Genocide	Corpses of Genocide and Mass Violence: Interdisciplinary and Comparative Approaches of Dead Bodies Treatment in the 20th Century (Destruction, Identification, Reconciliation)	ECOLE DES HAUTES ETUDES EN SCIENCES SOCIALES	FR	StG2011
StateBgLatAmerica	The State Building process in Latin American history: a comparative study, 1820-1870	UNIVERSITAT POMPEU FABRA	ES	AdG2008
POLPART	How citizens try to influence politics and why. International comparisons of movement and party politics	STICHTING VU-VUMC	NL	AdG2013

**Researcher: Prof. Kirsten Mahlke - Host Institution: Universitat Konstanz (DE)**

**Project: NoT: Narratives of Terror and Disappearance. Fantastic Dimensions of Argentina's Collective Memory since the Military Dictatorship**

This project seeks to investigate the interdependency of fantastic narrative and the historical phenomenon of terror. The five-year, six-member project combines a literary theoretical reassessment of the fantastic as a mode of telling the unspeakable with a historical case study of the Argentinean 'war on terrorism' during the military dictatorship of 1976-83 and its aftermath.



# New Implementing Arrangement with Argentina

## ERC- MINCYT Arrangement: *Background and types of visits*

- Implementing Arrangement signed with the Argentinean Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (**Mincyt**) - March **2015**.
- It provides opportunities to Argentinean Investigators of CONICET with a PICT (MINCYT Scientific and Technological Research Project) or PIP (CONICET Multiannual Research Project) **running project and at least 10 years of posdoc experience**.
- Argentinean Investigators research visits could be **single and long-term** (e.g., 6-12 months) or **multiple short-term** (e.g., for joint experiments).

## ERC- MINCYT Arrangement: *Financial conditions*



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

- The **CONICET** will cover the **salary** during their staying abroad.
- The **MINCYT** will cover **travel expenses** of Argentinean Investigators and also health insurance (no reference to their families).
- The **ERC grant** will cover **subsistence costs** on a per diem basis, or any other applicable modality of the Host Institution, as well as **other eligible costs** incurred during the visit of the Argentinean Investigator that are directly related to the ERC-funded project.



European  
Commission

Horizon 2020  
European Union funding  
for Research & Innovation

# Some Positive Aspects of this kind of Collaboration



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

Joint measurement campaigns

The NSF grantee received **inspiration** for **new lines of research and training** in specific **new techniques**

The NSF grantee will train our research group in a **new method** during her research stay, which will allow us to test some of our current hypotheses in a **new way**

This extended **face-to-face meeting** was essential to develop the collaboration

# Some Positive Aspects of this kind of Collaboration



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

Two-day **seminar** originating an still ongoing discussion about how his methods may be applied to our research interests

**Joint paper** submitted to a highly ranked journal

The **presence** of the NSF scientist allowed to address specific questions a lot **faster** and **more in depth** than on an email discussion

**Exchange of samples**

We intend to **continue our collaboration**  
In the **future**, through Skype meetings, meetings at conferences, and possibly also a visit

**Future Reciprocal research stays** by team members



European  
Commission

Horizon 2020  
European Union funding  
for Research & Innovation



- **October:** Only 1 joint ERC call per year - ERC scientists are contacted by the ERC (eligibility conditions: at least 18 months left to ERC project completion, no PoC).
- **November:** ERC PIs answer (via SurveyMonkey) showing their **potential interest** in hosting US/Korean/Argentinean/Japan/xxxxx scientists in their ERC teams.
- **December:** Lists of ERC interested ERC scientists+projects is made available to the different foreign funding agencies.



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

# Implementing Arrangements: Argentinian *Management* **erc**

- **Spring:** National Selection procedures. The foreign agencies launch their **national calls for expression of interest** to their eligible grantees. These scientists look for the **most appropriate ERC team** and submit proposals to the respective agency. The proposal needs to produce evidence that the ERC PI+HI will accept the visit and will support the research in the context of the ERC grant (**letter of intent**).
- **Summer:** The foreign scientists are **selected** by the respective foreign funding agency to visit specific ERC projects and their **visits begin to take place**.



European Research Council

Established by the European Commission

More information on  
[erc.europa.eu](https://erc.europa.eu)

To subscribe to ERC newsletter and newsalerts  
[erc.europa.eu/keep-updated-erc](https://erc.europa.eu/keep-updated-erc)

Implementing Arrangement with Argentina  
[ERC-IMPLEMENTING-ARRANGEMENTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ERC-IMPLEMENTING-ARRANGEMENTS@ec.europa.eu)

Follow us on  
[www.facebook.com/EuropeanResearchCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanResearchCouncil)  
[twitter.com/ERC\\_Research](https://twitter.com/ERC_Research)