

Scientific Council of the European Research Council announced

Today the European Commission is announcing the names of the 22 eminent men and women who will be the founding members of the Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC), a funding organisation for frontier research proposed by the European Commission under the Seventh Research Framework Programme (2007-2013). The Scientific Council will be an independent body whose role is to determine the ERC's scientific strategy and ensure that its operations are conducted according to the requirements of scientific excellence. The 22 scientists were chosen by an independent panel of high-level scientists, chaired by Lord Patten of Barnes, Chancellor of Oxford and Newcastle-upon-Tyne Universities.

The 22 founding members of the Scientific Council are:

Dr. Claudio BORDIGNON (IT)
Professor Manuel CASTELLS (ES)
Prof. Dr. Paul J. CRUTZEN (NL),
Prof. Mathias DEWATRIPONT (BE)
Dr. Daniel ESTEVE (FR)
Prof. Pavel EXNER (CZ)
Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim FREUND (DE)
Prof. Wendy HALL (UK)
Prof. Dr. Carl-Henrik HELDIN (SE)
Prof. Dr. Fotis C. KAFATOS (GR)
Prof. Dr. Michal KLEIBER (PL)
Prof. Norbert KROO (HU)
Prof. Maria Teresa V.T. LAGO (PT)
Dr. Oscar MARIN PARRA (ES)
Prof Robert MAY (UK)
Prof. Helga NOWOTNY (AT),
Prof. Christiane NÜSSLEIN-VOLHARD (DE)
Dr. Leena PELTONEN-PALOTIE (FI)
Prof. Alain PEYRAUBE (FR)
Dr. Jens R. ROSTRUP-NIELSEN (DK)
Prof. Salvatore SETTIS (IT)
Prof. Dr.med. Rolf M. ZINKERNAGEL (CH)

In its proposal for the Seventh Framework Programme for Research (2007-2013), published in April 2005, the Commission proposed the creation of an autonomous European Research Council to support “frontier research” carried out by research teams competing at European level, across all scientific and technological fields, as well as social science and the humanities. The objective of this proposal, which has been extremely well received both within the scientific community and by Member States’ governments, is to strengthen the excellence of European science. The ERC will fund the best of European science and scholarship, as assessed by peer review.

Over the past two years the Commission has worked to develop the idea of the ERC – widely regarded by the European research community as a necessary component of the European Research Area – into a serious political project. The announcement of the Scientific Council is a significant practical step in turning the ERC into reality. The ERC is expected to start operations in early 2007, assuming a positive decision of the Council of Ministers and European Parliament on the Commission’s proposals. By setting up the Scientific Council in advance, it will be possible to start discussions on the scientific strategy and implementation methods of the ERC.

The Scientific Council will be an independent body representing the interests of science and research at the very highest level. Its members, who have themselves been selected independently of the Commission, will act in their personal capacity, independently of political or other interests. In this way, the Scientific Council will ensure the quality and autonomy of scientific judgement that are the keys to the ERC’s success.

For biographical information on the appointees, see [MEMO/05/265](#)

For information on the Identification Committee, see [IP/05/90](#)