



European Research Council  
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission



## European Research Council

- Created by the EU in 2007, the ERC invests in top researchers in Europe giving them the freedom to follow their **scientific curiosity**. This unique “bottom-up” approach, with no thematic or political priorities, empowers scientists, and has been recognised internationally. The ERC has also been described as a European success story.
- The ERC supports ‘**blue sky**’, **frontier research** across all fields. In its grant competitions, the best candidates are selected on the basis of one criterion: **scientific excellence**. Project proposals are evaluated by distinguished researchers from around the world. The ERC’s international high-quality peer review is its backbone.
- ERC grants are open to top talent worldwide. It **helps Europe keep and attract the brightest minds**, and to establish itself as a scientific powerhouse.
- With its motto "**for scientists, by scientists**", the ERC is governed by an **independent Scientific Council**, with 22 renowned scientists and scholars, who represent the scientific community in Europe. The ERC Executive Agency is the implementing arm.
- The ERC’s investment in ground-breaking, **high-risk/high-gain** research has paid off. It has led to countless **breakthroughs** - from the first image of a [black hole](#) to new insights into [infectious diseases](#) and novel understanding of [social phenomena](#).
- The ERC helps nurture science-based **industry** and create a greater impetus for spin-offs.
- As a flagship component of the EU’s programme for Research & Innovation **Horizon Europe** (2021-2027), the ERC has a budget of more than €16 billion.

### Key figures & impact

- **10 000 top researchers** funded so far. Two thirds of ERC grantees are less than 40 years old.
- Over **75 000 team members**, mostly PhD students and post-docs, supported through the ERC projects – the ERC thereby helps train the next generation of researchers.
- **7 Nobel Prizes, 4 Fields Medals, 9 Wolf Prizes** and other prizes awarded to ERC grantees.
- Around **80%** of completed ERC projects led to scientific **breakthroughs** or major advances, according to several [studies](#).
- ERC grants supported over **200 000 scientific publications**, including more than 6 100 articles that are among the 1% most cited publications.
- Innovation: ERC funding generated over **2 200 patents and other intellectual property right applications** and some **300 new companies**.

#### ERC contacts

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#### Further information

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