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## **Highlight:**

### **Open to the world: Mexican young talent to join ERC teams in Europe**

12 November 2015

A new agreement has been concluded today to encourage Mexico's most promising young researchers to come to Europe and temporarily join research teams led by European Research Council (ERC) grant holders.

The deal was signed in Mexico City by European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas and Director General of the Mexican National Council of Science and Technology (Conacyt) Dr Cabero Mendoza.

On the occasion of the signing, Commissioner Moedas stated: *"Today's agreement showcases the European Research Council's international relevance. Mexico has a great deal of talent to share and this initiative will connect a new generation of top researchers from Mexico with research teams in Europe. You have to be 'Open to the World' to promote innovation and scientific exchange in the 21st century and this closer collaboration between the EU and Mexico will help European research to push the frontiers of knowledge to the benefit of our global society".*

The ERC President, Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, also welcomed the deal with Conacyt: *" « ERC-funded projects create a first-class scientific environment that can be further enriched by contributions brought by researchers from anywhere in the world. Thanks to the agreement now signed, Mexican scientists will be able to benefit from it and bring their knowledge and ideas to ERC teams. I am sure that such collaborations give rise to lasting ties and to win-win situations. Contributing to brain circulation is a clear ambition of the ERC. »"*

The new agreement provides the opportunity for research or postdoctoral fellows of Conacyt to undertake six to twelve months research visits, becoming part of teams led by ERC grant holders in Europe. It comes after similar initiatives between the ERC and other prestigious non-European counterparts were launched. After the first agreement was signed with the US (National Science Foundation, NSF) in 2012, South Korea, Argentina, Japan, China and South Africa followed.

## **Background**

The joint initiative launched today is in the form of an 'Implementing Arrangement' under the umbrella of the Science & Technology Agreement between the EU and Mexico. The Conacyt Research Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows participating will continue to receive remuneration from Conacyt. The initiative is expected to be implemented in autumn 2016, with the first visits of Mexican researchers to ERC-funded research teams in early 2017.

[Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología](#) (in English the National Council of Science and Technology, Conacyt) is Mexico's entity in charge of the promotion of scientific and technological activities, setting government policies for these matters, and granting scholarships for postgraduate studies. It is officially designated as a decentralised public agency of Mexico's federal government.



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The [European Research Council](#), set up by the European Union in 2007, is the first 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 five-year-projects based in Europe. The ERC also strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come to Europe. To date, the ERC has funded more than 5,000 top researchers at various stages of their careers. On average, ERC grantees employ around six team members. An estimate shows that already around 18% of these team members are nationals from countries outside Europe.

The ERC is led by an independent governing body, the Scientific Council, and, since January 2014, the ERC President is Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon. The ERC has a budget of over €13 billion and is part of the EU research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, for which European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Carlos Moedas is responsible.

In order to increase its visibility overseas the ERC launched in 2012 an international awareness-raising campaign, "ERC goes Global", led by the former ERC Secretary General Prof. Dingwell. In this context, he visited Mexico, for the first time, in February 2013 where he met Conacyt's Director General, Dr Enrique Cabrero Mendoza, with whom preliminary discussions took place about the possibility of having an implementing arrangement.

Under today's agreement, researchers from Mexico funded by Conacyt will have an opportunity to join the ERC-funded teams but will continue receiving remuneration from Conacyt.

#### **For more information**

[Interview with Dr Maria-Elena Torres-Padilla, ERC grantee from Mexico](#)

[ERC website](#)

[ERC agreement with third countries](#)

[Striking ERC-funded projects](#)

[Horizon 2020](#)

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