



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Deputy Director-General 1 - SCIENCE & POLICY TRANSITIONS
DDG1.03 - "Chief Scientific Advisers – SAM, EGE"

Statement on the search process for the new President of the Scientific Council of the European Research Council

Updated 9 November 2020

1. Introduction

A new President of the European Research Council (ERC) is due to be appointed at the end of the first quarter of 2021.

The ERC President will chair the ERC Scientific Council, ensure its leadership and its liaison with the ERC Executive Agency and represent the ERC in the world of science.

The President shall be appointed by the Commission following a transparent recruitment process involving a dedicated Search Committee. The Search Committee carries out its work independently and transparently. The recruitment process and the candidate selected shall have the approval of the ERC Scientific Council.

2. Search process

The Commission invites the organisations and bodies representative of the various segments of the research community to nominate outstanding candidates for the presidency of the ERC. In addition, individual applications will be sought through an open call, promoted via a Commission News Alert, on the ERC website and through relevant media.

The Search Committee will assess the nominations and applications received based on the factors and conditions set out in this document and identify a shortlist of three candidates to be proposed to the European Commission to select the next ERC President.

The members of the Search Committee will also take a proactive role to encourage suitable nominations and applications.

3. Requirements and conditions

The ERC President should be:

- A senior and internationally renowned and respected scientist or scholar;

- An innovative research leader, combining wisdom and experience with vision and imagination and acknowledged openness towards all fields of science and scholarship;
- A person who has the trust and confidence of the scientific community and is renowned for her/his independence and commitment to research;
- A prominent figure of European Science, able to defend the case of frontier research and to communicate effectively.

The ERC President will reside in Brussels for the duration of the appointment and devote most of her/his time (in principle at least 80%) to ERC activities. S/he will be appointed and remunerated as a Special Adviser to the Commission, with a salary commensurate with senior management in the Commission. The term of office is limited to four years, renewable once. No age limit applies. Nominees and applicants must be nationals of an EU Member State. The Commission services will verify the situation of potential conflict of interest for all the shortlisted candidates before the final decision is taken.

4. How to nominate and apply

The Commission invites nominations of and applications from candidates fulfilling the above requirements.¹ All nominations and applications will be treated as confidential.

Nominations and applications should include the following elements:

- A letter of motivation from the nominee/applicant, including a statement on absence of conflict of interest (max. 1 page).
- A curriculum vitae, including;
 - Contact information and nationality;
 - Relevant professional experience (e.g. universities, scientific institutions, business, government, etc., indicating also any administrative or science policy experience);
 - Research interests and experience (indicating the major research activities in which the candidate has been involved).
- A link to a site where a publications and/or other significant information, e.g. prizes, can be found.

For nominations, only candidacies accompanied by a short statement by the nominating organisation regarding the qualifications and broader profile of each candidate will be considered. It is expected that the nominating bodies would establish the willingness of candidates to be nominated before their names are forwarded.

The Search Committee will only consider candidatures that provide these elements. The submitted documents will be used to assess nominations and applications according to

¹ The European Union institutions apply a policy of equal opportunities and accept applications without discrimination.

the requirements set out above, and for the Search Committee to make an informed judgement.

The highest ranked candidates will be invited to an interview with the Search Committee to inform its decision on the final shortlist of three candidates to be submitted to the Commission.

The deadline for nominations and applications is set at **Monday 30 November 2020 at 17:00 (CET)**. Nominations and applications should be sent to the following electronic address: RTD-ERC-PRES-SC@ec.europa.eu.

5. Main representative organisations to be consulted

- **Academia Europaea**
- **ALLEA (European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities)**
- **BUSINESSEUROPE**
- **CESAER (Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research)**
- **EARTO (European Association of Research and Technology Organisations)**
- **EASAC (European Academies Science Advisory Council)**
- **EIRMA (European Industrial Research Management Association)**
- **ESF (European Science Foundation)**
- **EUA (European University Association)**
- **Euro-CASE (European Council of Academies of Applied Sciences, Technologies and Engineering)**
- **LERU (League of European Research Universities)**
- **The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities**
- **Science Europe (Association of European Research Funding Organisation and Research Performing Organisations)**

6. Provisional timetable for the search process

- *October*: Invitation letters for nominations sent to representative organisations and launch of open call for applications.
- *30 November*: Deadline for nominations and applications.
- *December 2020 - January 2021*: Search Committee meetings to assess nominations and applications and select candidates for interviews and organise the interviews.
- *Beginning of February 2021*: Final meetings of the Search Committee to conduct interviews and agree on a short-list of three candidates.
- *End of 1st quarter, 2021*: The appointment of the final candidate is made by the Commission, which will ensure the prior agreement of the ERC Scientific Council.

Background

Members of the Search Committee

- Prof. **Helga NOWOTNY** (Chair), Former President of the ERC Scientific Council
- Prof. **Pearl DYKSTRA**, Erasmus University Rotterdam
- Prof. **Tamás FREUND**, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Prof. **Jiří FRIML**, Institute of Science and Technology, Austria
- Prof. **Serge HAROCHE**, Collège de France
- Prof. **Viola VOGEL**, ETH Zürich
- Prof. **Fabio ZWIRNER**, University of Padua, Member of the ERC Scientific Council

Useful links:

- [European Research Council](#)
- [Commission proposal on Horizon Europe](#)
- [Horizon 2020](#)
- [Special Advisers \(Articles 123 and 124 of the Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Union\)](#) -  1.7 MB