

ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

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Prof. Julio E. Celis
Secretary General
Federation of European Biochemical Societies (FEBS)
Danish Cancer Society
Strandboulevarden 49
DK-2100 Copenhagen

Brussels, 27/02/2006

Dear Prof. Celis,

You will be aware that the ERC Scientific Council has now started an intensive programme of work to develop the scientific strategy and operational mechanisms for the European Research Council. At its second meeting on 24/25 January 2006, the Council confirmed that ERC funding should follow the key principles of supporting investigator-initiated frontier research across all fields of research on the basis of excellence. I attach the Press Statement issued after that meeting.

In the start up phase of the ERC, the Scientific Council decided to give priority to a call for early stage independent investigators (ESII) with a deadline early in 2007. The objective of this call will be to provide support to the development of independent careers of excellent researchers who are at the stage of establishing their first research team, as new or newly established investigators. This research funding stream will be continued during the ERC's later operations, and supplemented by a funding scheme for individual teams, headed by established investigators at all subsequent career stages. This second scheme will come on stream later in 2007.

We will be working in the coming months to develop this strategy, and to prepare a work programme and call for proposals. In this context, on behalf of the Scientific Council, I am writing to the main representative organisations of the scientific community in Europe to invite their views on the adopted strategy, and in particular the ESII funding stream for the establishment and support of early stage independent investigators.

We would also greatly appreciate comments from ISE member organisations on these matters, if possible by 31 March 2006. Please send your response by e-mail to rtd-erc@cec.eu.int. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat (see address below).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Fotis C. Kafatos, FoMeRS
Chairman of the ERC Scientific Council

Annex: press statement issued by the Scientific Council on 30 January 2006
