



EU Insight - Spreading Excellence and Widening participationⁱ

*Under Horizon 2020, the EU's research funding programme, a strong packet of measures with up to EUR 800 million in funding will be available for widening participation of low-research performing Member States. Such actions include special awards like the **ERA Chairs instrument**, **Teaming** or **Twinning**. These three instruments will be introduced in this EU Insight.*

"To make European research the best in the world, we need to unlock the potential in all parts of Europe. With the new ERA chairs we are helping promising regions attract the best research talent and strengthen their standing as research excellence centres."

European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas

Thirteen universities, technical institutes and private organisations in those parts of Europe that have not done as well as they could in research and innovation are to receive up to EUR 2.5 million each in EU funding to boost their research capacity through the appointment of "**ERA Chairs**", the European Commission announced on 13 February 2015.

Following the pilot call under FP7, this first Horizon 2020 call on ERA Chairs was launched on 11 December 2013 with a budget of EUR 33.6 million. The selected institutions have to award ERA Chairs to outstanding academics who have the capacity to raise standards and attract more high level staff as well as money from other sources, such as EU research funding or regional funds. The positions must be published and respect ERA guidelines (gender balance, fairness, transparency, etc.). **ERA Chair holders can come from anywhere in the world.**

List of projects to be funded under the first Horizon 2020 ERA Chairs Call

Countries	ERA Chair Institution	Acronyms	FIELDS
Croatia	RUDER BOSKOVIC INSTITUTE	PaRaDeSEC	Chemistry & Physics
Cyprus	THE CYPRUS INSTITUTE LIMITED	CySTEM	Environment
Cyprus	THE CYPRUS FOUNDATION FOR MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY RESEARCH	BIORISE	Mathematics & Engineering
Estonia	Tallinna Ülikool	CEITER	Economy & Social sciences
Estonia	TARTU ULIKOOL	TransGeno	Life sciences & medicine
Estonia	TARTU ULIKOOL	SynBioTEC	Life sciences & medicine
Poland	INSTYTUT CHEMII FIZYCZNEJ POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK	CREATE	Chemistry & Physics
Poland	INSTYTUT UPRAWY NAWOZENIA I GLEBOZNAWSTWA, PANSTWOWY INSTYTUT BADAWCZY	BioEcon	Economy & Social sciences
Portugal	ICETA - Instituto de Ciências e Tecnologias	EnvMetaGen	Environment
Portugal	UNIVERSIDADE DO MINHO	FoReCaST	Life sciences & medicine
Portugal	UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA	ERAatUC	Life sciences & medicine
Portugal	INSTITUTO DE MEDICINA MOLECULAR	EXCELLtoINNOV	Life sciences & medicine
Romania	INSTITUTUL DE CHIMIE MACROMOLECULARA PETRU PONI	SupraChem Lab	Chemistry & Physics



"Put simply, we want Horizon 2020 funds to benefit as wide a range of European universities and research institutes as possible. We are determined to see that no part of Europe is left behind in research and innovation. Teaming now helps to achieve this by creating partnerships between those at the top and those with the most potential. Horizon 2020 rewards excellence and, most importantly, the pursuit of excellence."

European Commissioner for
Research, Science and
Innovation Carlos Moedas

On 30 January 2015, the EU announced new grants that will help bridge the research excellence gap between Member States and strengthen competitiveness and growth across Europe. The new **Teaming** instrument, under which these grants are awarded, will help improve research performance and increase investment in countries with lower research excellence rankings. With funding from Horizon 2020, 31 projects from such countries have now been selected to prepare operational plans for new Centres of Excellence by teaming up with high-calibre institutions from all over Europe.

Eligible Member states under Teaming include all those which joined the EU after 2004 plus Portugal and Luxembourg, as well as eight of the non-EU countries associated with Horizon 2020. Teaming will help them to start new collaborations, build new scientific networks and seize new market opportunities.

The first Teaming projects selected for funding will be led by research institutions or agencies as well as national or regional authorities. In phase 1 of this action, the projects will receive up to EUR 500,000 each (EUR 14.5 million in total) to prepare operational plans for new Centres of Excellence or for upgrading existing ones.

Twinning aims to significantly strengthen a defined field of research in a particular knowledge institution (a research-active university or a public research organisation or a private non-profit research organisation) by creating a link between this institution and at least two internationally-leading research institutions in other Member States. Twinning strategies can include short term staff exchanges; expert visits and short-term on-site or virtual training; workshops; conference attendance; organisation of joint summer school type activities; dissemination and outreach activities. Twinning activities will provide no support to infrastructure and equipment and no support for hiring new permanent research staff. The call for applications is still open until 7 May 2015.

ⁱ This EU Insight is a compilation of the following two press releases from the European Commission:

[Press Release ERA Chairs from February 13, 2015](#)

[Press Release Teaming from January 30, 2015](#)

The information on the Twinning instrument was taken from the call text:

[Twinning Call from the European Commission](#)