



**Max Weber Programme
Academic Careers Observatory**

**National and European Funding Opportunities
Conference**

San Domenico di Fiesole

Badia Fiesolana

26 November 2014

Executive Summary

On the 26 November 2014, the Academic Careers Observatory (ACO) of the Max Weber Postdoctoral Programme (MWP) hosted representatives from various national and European research agencies to provide a platform to show-case available research and funding schemes. The Conference highlighted, in particular, opportunities aimed at early-career scholars. Delegates from the funding agencies explained their schemes and offered advice and insight on the application process. This meeting included representatives from the European Research Council and the European Commission and from national research agencies in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Ireland.

The conference was divided into four separate sessions. The first session of the day focused on European agencies and was chaired by a Max Weber Fellow (MWF) in the Social and Political Sciences, Julija Sardelic. Pilar Lacruz from the European Research Council and Frank Marx from the Research Executive Agency of the European Commission spoke about funding for research proposals at the European level. Lacruz opened the conference with a presentation of the different types of European Research Council grants, while Marx's presentation focused on the Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions.

The second session of the morning, chaired by MWF Ylenia Brilli, turned the focus of the conference to funding opportunities for early-stage researchers at the national level. This would be the theme of the rest of the conference, with eight different countries in Europe represented by delegates from the various agencies. For this session Adam Walker from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council, Ross McKiernan from the Irish Research Council, and Eléonore Dispersyn from France's Agence Nationale de la Recherche all delivered presentations highlighting research funding opportunities available within their respective States.

The focus on research funding opportunities at the national level continued into the first afternoon session with Gritta Klöhn from the German Academic Exchange Network and Maja Ardüser from the Swiss National Science Foundation. Eileen Keller, MWF, chaired this session.

Finally, a plenary session concluded the conference day. The discussion was focused on research funding in the context of financial restraint; it was followed by a lively discussion with the agency representatives and the audience.

Introduction, Richard Bellamy, Director of the Max Weber Programme

Richard Bellamy, the Director of the Max Weber Programme opened the conference by thanking all the participants and introducing the Academic Careers Observatory, a MWP initiative that focuses on providing young academics with information on the main trends in the academic job market and academia in general by facilitating the diffusion of knowledge about national academic careers and research opportunities in the social sciences and humanities throughout Europe and beyond. Bellamy highlighted that this is the ninth conference put on by ACO and the fourth that focuses on funding opportunities. He emphasized the resources provided on ACO's website, accessible not only to MWFs but to everyone around the world. At the end of his brief introduction, Bellamy passed the floor to Julia Sardelic, MWF, who was to chair the first conference panel.

Panel 1: Applying for Funding Opportunities for Young Researchers: The European Agencies

Pilar Lacruz, European Research Council

Lacruz, a European Research Council (ERC) Scientific Officer, started the panel by mentioning that the ERC falls within the general Horizon 2020 strategy, which is the European framework research programme. The ERC falls within the Excellence in Science pillar, together with Marie Curie and Future and Emerging Technologies (FET).

One of the key points here is that Europe needs to develop, attract and retain talented researchers. The mission of the ERC, Lacruz stated, is to encourage the highest quality research in Europe through competitive funding and to support investigator-driven frontier research across all fields, on the basis of scientific excellence. Lacruz defines frontier research as fundamental basic research that tries to go beyond the frontiers of knowledge. The ERC is led by scientists. The Scientific Council, which is led by 22 members representing Europe's scientific community, has full authority over funding strategy and methodologies. The ERC Executive Agency supports the Scientific Council, implementing and managing ERC operations. Lacruz stressed that the ERC supports individual scientists (plus their teams), not networks.

There are three types of researchers who can apply for the ERC grants available. Excellent Researchers (PIs), which includes people of any nationality, age, or current place of work as long as they have a PhD which is at least two years old. The proposed research project must be done in conjunction with a Host Institution (HI), which has to be based in Europe or an associated country. Researchers can decide on the size of their individual research team and who will be on it. The Starting Grant is available for researchers, i.e. Principal Investigators (PI), who have between two to five years of research experience after their PhD. Researchers awarded a starting grant can be funded up to two million Euros for up to five years. Consolidator Grants are for researchers who have a minimum of seven years research experience and a maximum of twelve years experience. Advanced Grants are for leaders in their field. Finally, ERC grant holders can apply for the Proof of Concept grant, which is meant to bridge the gap between research and the earliest stage of marketable innovation.

Recognizing that Starting Grants were of the most interest to her audience, Lacruz gave details. The objective of this type of grant is to support excellent PIs at the career stage of starting their own independent research programme. Those interested in applying must have been awarded their first PhD at least two years and up to seven years prior to 1 January 2015. Mothers can extend the eligibility period by 18 months per child. Thus far, PIs must have shown potential for research independence as well as evidence of maturity, which is proven by submitting several requested documents with the application. Lacruz emphasised that applicants must have at least one important publication without the participation of their PhD supervisor. In order to convince panel members of excellence, applicants must have an early achievement track record that includes:

- Up to five publications in leading peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings and/or monographs
- Research monographs and any translations thereof (if applicable)

- Granted patent(s) (if applicable)
- Invited presentations to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools (if applicable)
- Prizes/Awards/Academy memberships (if applicable)

Additionally, Lacruz stressed that it is expected that researchers spend a minimum of 50% of their working time in the European Union or associated countries, and that 50% of their working time must be spent on the ERC project. In terms of the grant itself, researchers have a maximum of 1.5 million Euros for a period of five years, with the possibility of gaining an additional 0.50 million Euros in justified cases. The call opened in February 2015 and the deadline is 2 June 2015.

The ERC allows researchers to work on a research topic of their own choice with a team of their own choice. Researchers have financial autonomy for up to five years, the ability to negotiate for the best conditions of work with the host institution, and grants are 'portable' if there is a relocation to another university. Grants are awarded to the Host Institution (HI) that engages the PI, and the HI provides appropriate conditions for the PI to independently direct the research and manage its funding. This includes having the freedom to decide on the allocation of resources, publishing independently as a senior author and having access to appropriate space and facilities to conduct research.

After seven years in existence, there are more than 4,000 funded top researchers, with 64 nationalities represented of which 65% are at an early-career stage. There is a benchmarking effect where some national programmes and agencies are funding PIs to make them more competitive.

Excellence is the sole evaluation criterion. The panel members will look at the ground-breaking nature of the project and its potential impact. They will also look at the PI's intellectual capacity, commitment, and creativity. Referees and panels evaluate and score each criterion, which results in a ranking of the proposals. The ERC panel structure is made up of 3 domains and 25 panels. Among the panels is the SH2 The Social World, Diversity, Institutions and Values: sociology, political science, law, communication, education panel. Notably, interdisciplinary proposals are welcome. Each panel is made up of a panel chair and 12-16 panel members. After the submission of a full proposal there is an eligibility and plagiarism check. Following the check, there is a remote evaluation of the proposal by panel members on the basis of Part B1 (which includes track record and CV). The first panel meeting is then held where the proposals are discussed in depth, after which there is an evaluation by panel members and external experts. There follows an individual assessment of the full proposal by panel members and remote referees. After this evaluation, there is a second panel meeting in Brussels, where candidates present themselves for interview at the ERCEA's premises in Brussels. This includes a 10-minute presentation of the proposal and a round of questions from panel members.

Links for ERC: <http://erc.eu/>

<http://erc.europa.eu/>

Link for support to applicants: <http://erc.europa.eu/national-contact-points>

Link for panels: <http://erc.europa.eu/evaluation-panels>

Check the National Contact Point (NCP) to find an HI, and contact the EU Grants office at the target institution if encountering problems. Applicants must submit their application to a specific panel, but can indicate a secondary panel if necessary. Some final tips include:

- Allow sufficient time to prepare your application.
- Submit well in advance of the deadline – you can overwrite any version submitted with a new one.
- Double and triple check that all documents are correct and have been submitted.
- Respect the page limits and proof-read your proposal well.

Frank Marx, Research Executive Agency

Marx's presentation on Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions (MSCA) began with a statement of the MSCA's main objective for H2020: to ensure the optimum development and dynamic use of Europe's intellectual capital in order to generate new skills and innovation. The current budget for the MSCA for 2014-2020 is €6.126 billion. Amongst the other objectives are:

- Attract and retain research talent in Europe
- Develop state-of-the-art, innovative training schemes, consistent with the requirements of R&I
- Promote sustainable career development in R&I
- Focus on delivering new knowledge and skills
- Back up strong partnership with MS via a co-funding mechanism

Marx pointed out that mobility is a key requirement. MSCA is open to all domains of research and innovation (R&I) from basic to market. Participation in the non-academic sector is strongly encouraged. The EU contribution based on unit costs is calculated on the basis of the number of researcher-months.

One of the categories of researchers is the Individual Fellowship (IF), a postdoctoral fellowship for outstanding research. This fellowship is only for experienced researchers in possession of a doctoral degree, or who have four years of full-time research experience at the time of the call deadline. There are two types of fellowships depending on the mobility of the researcher: 1) within Europe: European Fellowships; and 2) outside Europe: Global Fellowships, with most of the global fellows going to the United States. The duration of projects is usually two years (if Global, three years). The MSCA provides support to experienced researchers of any nationality. Marx stressed the importance of international mobility within Member States (MS) and Associated Countries (AC). The mobility rule states that applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity in the country of the host organization for more than twelve months in the three years immediately prior to the call deadline. There is an additional three or six month secondment option, within Europe and another sector.

The objective of a Cofund is to stimulate regional, national or international programmes to foster excellence in researchers' training, mobility and career development. The scope includes:

- International, intersectoral and interdisciplinary research training, as well as transnational and cross-sector mobility of researchers at all stages of their careers
- Possibilities of synergies with structural funds
- Researchers to comply with the mobility rules of the MSCA

The duration of projects is a maximum of five years, and the duration of fellowships is set for a minimum of three months. Marx then noted that the Cofund would be unlikely to apply to the interests of the MWFs.

Next, Marx discussed Innovative Training Networks (ITN), an EU programme structured for doctoral training. It is dedicated to early-stage researchers and involves a broad partnership of institutions from both academic and non-academic sectors. There are three types:

1) European Training Networks (ETN)

- at least three beneficiaries from three different EU MS or AC. Above this minimum any country can participate

2) European Industrial Doctorates (EID)

- At least two beneficiaries established in two different MS or AC.
- At least one beneficiary must be entitled to award doctoral degrees and at least one beneficiary must come from the non-academic sector, primarily enterprise.
- Each researcher is enrolled in a doctoral programme and spends at least 50% in the non-academic sector.
- The joint supervision of fellows by supervisors from each sector is mandatory.

3) European Joint Doctorates (EJD).

- At least three beneficiaries from different EU MS or AC which are entitled to award doctoral degrees.
- Creation of joint doctoral programmes, leading to the delivery of joint, double or multiple doctoral degrees.
- A joint degree refers to a single diploma issued by at least two higher education institutions offering an integrated programme and recognised officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located.
- A double or multiple degree refers to two or more separate national diplomas issued by two or more higher education institutions and recognised officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located.

ITN aims to develop entrepreneurship and skills to match labour market needs and enhance the employability of researchers. It is characterized by a strong involvement of commercial entities in

training. Duration of projects is four years, with fellowships lasting from three months to three years.

Marx then discussed the Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE), which requires at least three independent participants in three different countries, with at least two participants from two different Member States or Associated Countries; however, if all are in the same Member State or Associated Country, then one must be academic and one must be non-academic. The countries not eligible for EU funding are: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States. There are some exceptional cases, however, where partners from those countries might be funded. Projects have a maximum duration of four years, and support to secondments of staff members lasts from one to twelve months. Award criteria is made up of Excellence: (50%), Impact (30%) and Implementation (20%).

MSCA Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/mariecurieactions>

Horizon 2020 Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020>

Participant Portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home>

Questions:

Ylenia Brilli, MWF, asked Marx about the timing of the evaluation process and responses on Marie Curie applications currently under review. Marx responded that three experts remotely work on a given proposal and write individual assessment reports. The three experts then hold a consensus meeting in Brussels, and work to agree upon the comments and the corresponding scores. He noted that they try to make the process as quick as possible, as there is a large amount of proposals and assessments to get through. The goal is usually to have everything finished by January or February.

The second question came from MWF Michal Onderco, who asked whether the Individual Fellowships offer financial support for academic activities other than research. Marx responded by saying that the money is accessible for traveling, networking, etc.

The third question from the audience asked whether there is any grant that can be applied for if all of the requirements for the PhD cannot be submitted by the deadline of the call. Marx responded that, in theory, a PhD is not an absolute requirement for certain posts. But he noted that if you do not have a PhD it may reflect disinterest in research. Lacruz then responded that if you do not have a PhD, you cannot apply directly, but you can try to get yourself included in a team.

Fran Meissner, MWF, asked whether it is possible to work for the institution if it wants to employ you for a few months before the contract starts. Marx responded that as long as it was for no more than twelve months, it would be fine. The call deadline is a fixed point, and what is valid is the applicant's situation at the time of the application. Fran Meissner then asked if it was counterproductive to apply for an ERC grant if you are eligible for a Marie Curie, to which Marx replied that the panel needs to be informed of the dual applications. Marx did hint that it may end up being counterproductive, however.

MWF Damien Gerard asked about whether getting a starting grant would have any impact on future applications for a consolidator grant, to which Lacruz responded that the application process is independent each time.

Panel 2: Applying for Funding Opportunities for Young Researchers: National Agencies I

Adam Walker, Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK

Walker, Head of Languages, Literature and International Engagement at the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), started his presentation by giving his audience a bit of background on the AHRC, which was formed in 1998 and is one of seven Research Councils in the UK. The remit of the AHRC includes 14,000 academics and 50 disciplines and sub-disciplines. Walker went on to discuss the AHRC subject remit, which includes three teams: 1) Histories, Cultures and Heritage; 2) Creative Arts and Digital Humanities; and 3) Languages, Literature and International Engagement. The AHRC receives around £100 million per annum from the government, of which postgraduate funding receives £43 million. The AHRC invests around £51 million per annum in research funding. Over 70% of that goes into Responsive Mode, which Walker said is made up of four schemes:

- Research Grants (including early career route)
- Leadership Fellows (including early career route)
- Research Networking
- Follow-on funding for impact and engagement

Responsive mode schemes operate to open deadlines. The rest of the funding goes into thematic/strategic programmes.

Research Grants support well-defined research projects that enable individual researchers to collaborate with and bring benefits to other individuals and organisations. They must be collaborative, with a Principle Investigator (PI) and at least one collaborator. The grants can last up to 60 months and involve a full Economic Cost (fEC) of £50,000-£1 million. Walker highlighted the fact that there is an Early Career Route in the schemes. The Early Career Route was introduced to support researchers at an early stage in their careers in gaining experience of managing and leading research projects. The fEC of the grant ranges from £50,000-£250,000 and can last up to 60 months. Only the PI needs to meet the early career eligibility; co-investigators may be at any stage in their careers.

Next, Walker moved on to talk about the Leadership Fellows Scheme, which provides time for research leaders/potential future research leaders to undertake focused individual research alongside collaborative activities that have the potential to generate a transformative impact on their subject area and beyond. This award lasts from six to eighteen months, with recipients receiving £50-£250k (standard route).

In terms of the Early Career Route (ECR), which is available through the LFS, the ECR aims to achieve the development of experience and capabilities of ECR's on a project by developing their experience and capabilities of ECRs at crucial phases of their career.

Duration of this award lasts from six months to two years. Funding ranges from £50k-250 fEC.

Eligibility:

Early Career Researcher:

- At the point of application, applicants must be:
 - Within eight years of the award of a PhD, **or**
 - Within six years of a first academic appointment

For the Leadership Fellows scheme:

- must have been employed at the university they wish to apply through for **one** year
- must have at least two years of postdoctoral experience in an academic/research environment or equivalent

Generally speaking, applicants must have a contractual arrangement with an eligible UK HEI or IRO. In terms of international opportunities, Walker mentioned that international researchers are eligible as co-investigators on AHRC grants – up to 30% of the fEC. AHRC also has agency agreements with the Sao Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) and the National Science Foundation. Proposals involving international collaborations may apply for additional funding, and researchers would be able to make use of the Research Networking scheme. Additionally, the AHRC is actively involved in European platforms such as Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) and Horizon 2020. Finally, the International Placement Scheme allocates two to six month fellowships to PhD students and ECRs to spend time at some of the world's leading research institutions.

Ross McKiernan, Irish Research Council, Ireland

McKiernan first addressed the question of why Ireland is an appealing place in which to carry out research. He humorously stated that Ireland is a place where people can have the most fun while changing the world. Research carried out by the Irish Industrial Development Agency has concluded that Dublin is ranked as the best city in the world for human capital, first for people's flexibility and the adaptability of its workforce, and the first in Europe for completion of third level education. There are seven universities in Ireland and fourteen Institutes of Technology, with Trinity College being ranked the highest of the institutions. McKiernan then listed a number of research funding agencies:

Irish Research Council www.research.ie

Higher Education Authority www.hea.ie

Science Foundation Ireland www.sfi.ie

Health Research Board www.hrb.ie

Enterprise Ireland <http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/>

The Irish Research Council gives out their awards to individual researchers and seeks to fund all disciplines. Amongst the funding schemes that the IRC covers are postgraduate scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships, research project grants, knowledge exchange grants and travel grants.

McKiernan then mentioned the Enterprise Funding Schemes, which consist of a researcher (MA, PhD, or postdoctoral fellow) pairing up with an industry partner and a higher education institute to submit a research proposal. The assessment process is peer-reviewed. Under the enterprise partnership scheme, applications are made to an Irish higher-education institute, and successful candidates are based at that institution for two years. However, for a third of that time to a year can be spent in the researcher's country of residence at a charity organization, museum, etc. In terms of scholarships, postgraduate scholars receive €24,000 pa, broken down into a stipend of €16,000 pa, with fees to maximum of €5,750 pa and research expenses to maximum of €2,250 pa. The Irish Research Council funds 66% of the total, while the enterprise partner commits to providing €8,000 per annum. The postdoctoral fellowship scholarship is valued at €45,895 per

annum. The salary amounts to €31,275 pa, with PRSI €3,365, pension at €6,255 pa, and research expenses to a maximum of €5,000 pa. The IRC funds 2/3 of the scholarship, with the enterprise partner funding the other third.

The Government of Ireland (GOI) Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme is the longest running and most popular scheme of the IRC. It is intended to support early career researchers. One- or two-year full-time fellowships are available. The success rate is at 15%-20%. The value of the award is: salary €31,275; PRSI €3,365; and 20% pension of €6,255, if applicable. In terms of eligibility for GOI and EPS Fellowships, applicants must have either graduated or had a viva/thesis defence within the five-year period of 28 February 2010 to 28 February 2015. Additionally, applicants must have authored or co-authored at least one published peer-reviewed research publication or equivalent IP output. Applicants must not hold, or have held before, a GOI or Enterprise Funding Scheme (EPS) Fellowship. Applicants cannot be a permanent member of staff at a Higher Education Institute, nor can they apply if they have been a postdoc for more than five years.

To best prepare an application, McKiernan stated that it is important to first focus on the Evaluation Criteria. He also suggested that applicants talk to Irish Academic Mentors and Enterprise Partners in preparation. In listing general assessor comments, McKiernan highlighted that assessors often mention that applications have a lack of awareness of ethical considerations in their researchers. Other assessor comments include:

- Feasibility
- Need for clear methodological approaches
- Demonstrate relevant skills – e.g. languages; lab training, archiving
- Choice of Mentors and HEI
- Proof-read your completed application

McKiernan then pulled up the Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI) website, which is an initiative that works with businesses, investors, universities, state research organisations, research funders and government agencies to maximise state-funded technology and ideas. The website is a useful resource to find research partners and academic mentors

(<http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/>).

Next came the EURAXESS IRELAND website, which has information on visa applications and other practical information about moving to Ireland (<http://www.euraxess.ie/>).

Eléonore Dispersyn, French National Research Agency

Dispersyn is a Project Manager at the French National Research Agency (ANR), which was created by the French government in 2005 to organize the competitive funding of projects. The main challenges that the ANR focuses on are part of the European Strategic Agenda. Amongst its objectives are:

- targeting research efforts on economic and societal priorities determined at the highest level of State and through consultation with the other research players
- encouraging inter-disciplinary actions
- intensifying links between the public and private sectors
- developing international and European collaborations

Dispersyn said that the ANR funds basic as well as technological and industrial research in all disciplines and scientific fields. In terms of organisation, the ANR has five scientific departments (including a Social Sciences and Humanities department), each with a Head of Department and a number of Programme Directors and Project Managers. The agency has a funding budget of €432.5 million. Grant amounts range from €320k and €880k. The average success rate is about 30%.

The ANR Work Programme 2015, which is consistent with the France Europe 2020 national strategic agenda, has had its submission and funding process simplified. It involves two entry points for postdocs. First, there is a single generic call for proposals that includes a two-step evaluation. Additionally, there is a one-step evaluation process for specific national and international calls for proposals. Furthermore, there are two types of positions for postdocs: a coordinator of the proposal or a postdoc hired within a proposal submitted by a more senior researcher. There are various types of instruments available such as:

- Collaborative research projects on the national or international level (PRC and PRCI respectively)
- Collaborative research projects involving enterprises (PRCE)
- Individual research projects carried out by young researchers (JCJC)

Dispersyn pointed out that the JCJC instrument was the most applicable to her audience. The JCJC's ANR funding level for researchers ranges from 100 to 800 k€. The scientific coordinator must have been awarded his or her doctorate less than ten years from the publication date of the Work Programme. It belongs in the basic research category but can sometimes spill over into industrial research. Its duration ranges from two to four years.

With regard to specific calls, there is a component called 'Building the ERA and France's international attractiveness'. There are several types of European and international calls for proposals. There is also a specific call: 'Hosting High-Level Researchers', which involves a funding instrument offering a first-class welcome to foreign researchers (junior and senior).

Finally, Dispersyn ended her presentation by discussing the Hosting High-Level Researchers (@RAAction), which is a new, specific call that is open to French and foreign researchers living outside of France. There is no age limit and it covers all disciplines with a focus on domains that are uncommon or non-existent in France. This call focuses on basic, technological or industrial research. Its stated objective is to enable French and foreign high-level researchers living outside France to relocate to France and carry out their research in a French laboratory for three to four years in excellent conditions. Its requirements include:

- Candidate: highly-talented researcher in the early stages of a career (junior), or world-leading researcher (senior)
- No condition of nationality
- Doctorate must have been obtained at least two years prior to the date of closing of the call
- Applicants must have spent a significant part of their careers abroad: a minimum of two years for young researchers, and the majority of their careers for senior researchers
- Applicant must not hold a permanent contract in a French organization
- Applicant must not have been residing in France for more than six months at the date of the closing of the call (strongly recommended)

@RAAction includes a total grant of 150,000€ to 900,000€, which covers the Principal Investigator's salary, operating expenses and equipment costs.

[ANR website](#)

Questions:

The first question was for all three representatives, as a member of the audience asked whether nationality is a condition for applying for any of their agencies' schemes. Walker replied saying that nationality is not a condition for the AHRC. Ross McKiernan confirmed the same for the IRC, adding that time can be spent abroad during the IRC fellowship, and also in enterprises, with a third of the time that can be spent in an enterprise within the Enterprise Funding Scheme. Dispersyn also confirmed that for the ANR, nationality is not the problem, and that all that is required is to have a contract i.e. an affiliation with the host institution in France.

Another question was for the IRC representative, Ross McKiernan; one member of the audience asked whether the IRC contacts the academic mentors and, in general, what is the relationship between the IRC and the host institution within the GOI scheme. He replied that they do not contact the institution during the application procedure, but that the research office of the host institution has to endorse the application, which basically means that if the application is accepted by the IRC, the institution would host it.

Another question was for the ANR representative, asking whether the applications have to be submitted in French. Dispersyn responded saying that application can be in English, and that this is perfectly fine.

Julija Sardelic, MWF, asked Adam Walker whether the AHRC funding is in line with the UK's Research Evaluation Framework REF, which is an evaluation system for UK universities. She also asked what is expected in terms of an applicant's publication experience. Walker replied saying that REF is an extremely complicated exercise so they did not adapt to the REF. Early career researchers do submit their research to that exercise, and institutions are graded. The AHRC is not directly involved, but the grading of the REF has an impact on the funds that universities receive. In terms of publication experience, he said that a publication record varies from one scheme to another. McKiernan added that for the IRC schemes, 30% of the evaluation goes to the 'developing track-record' criteria, which is advantageous for early-career researchers.

Panel 3: Applying for Funding Opportunities for young researchers: National Agencies II

Gritta Klöhn, German Academic Exchange Service, Germany

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is a self-governing organization, made up of 239 German universities, that engages in three strategic areas of activity: structures for internationalization, scholarships for the best and expertise for academic collaboration. Gritta Klöhn explained that DAAD funding is made up of an annual budget of €420 million. DAAD's main office is located in Bonn, Germany.

Klöhn then went on to describe the postdoctoral programme specifically for German citizens, which is open to all disciplines and destinations. This programme is intended for research stays abroad that lead to further qualifications and the gaining of important career skills. At the time of the application, the PhD degree should not be more than four years old. Scholarships are allocated for a period of three months to two years. Research stays in several countries may be combined within one application. Financial support consists of a monthly stipend to cover research costs. There is also an expatriate allowance, travel allowance, and an allowance for partner and/or children and childcare. Furthermore, Klöhn highlighted the fact that there is support for re-integration after a research stay abroad. Applications for short-term fellowships (three to six months) can be submitted at any time, but applicants should expect to allow for at least three months for the selection process to be concluded. Long-term fellowships (seven months to two years) have two deadlines: 15 November and 15 June.

The Postdoctoral Researchers International Mobility Experience (PRIME) programme is for both German citizens and international candidates. Klöhn went on to describe this programme, which consists of an 18-month funding period. Twelve of these months must be spent outside of Germany, and the final six months can be spent in Germany as part of a (re)integration process. People of any nationality and discipline can apply for PRIME to pursue an independent research project at a research institution of the applicant's choice. Notably, as Klöhn pointed out, researchers receive funding through the form of a salary and not a scholarship. Along with the 18-month long salary, financial support also includes a travel allowance (for the candidate as well as immediate

family members) as well as health/accident/private liability insurance. The deadline for applications is 1 February. For more information, visit: www.daad.de/prime/en

The next programme that Klöhn discussed is the Re-integration of German Scientists from Abroad programme, which aims to help German academics abroad return to a professional career in Germany. This programme is open to PhD students, postdocs and senior scientists. There are two types of funding available:

- 1) Travel grants for job interviews and lectures
- 2) Return scholarships (up to six months) to re-enter the German research landscape

Financial support includes travel grants together with scholarships given in the form of a monthly grant. For more information, visit: www.daad.de/rueckgewinnung

Research Grants can be attained in the form of short-term (three to six months) or one-year (seven to ten months) grants. Postgraduates, PhD students and postdocs can apply to participate in a research project or course at a higher education institution in Germany or a non-university research institute. Klöhn stated that financial support, which is centred on a one-off research allowance, depends on the academic level, and includes health, accident and personal liability insurance as well as a travel allowance. For more information on research grants, visit:

www.daad.de/deutschland/stipendium/hinweise/en/

For more general information, visit: www.research-in-germany.de

Maja Ardüser, Swiss National Science Foundation

Maja Ardüser of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) explained how the SNSF seeks to make Switzerland more competitive for research. The Marie Heim-Vögtlin scheme seeks to re-integrate and avoid drop out of qualified female researchers with a delay or interruption in their scientific career due to their familial situation. This scheme has flexible conditions to reconcile research and family. There is only one submission deadline per year. Candidates who are successful in the first phase of the application are invited to present themselves and their project in the second phase of the interview. Among the requirements that Ardüser listed are:

- PhD candidate or postdoctoral researcher in Switzerland
- Delay in the scientific career
- Confirmation from a host institution

Approximately 35 grants are awarded per year, which have a success rate of 22%.

Next in the presentation were mobility fellowships, which are designed for young researchers who wish to enhance their scientific profile by working at a research institution outside of Switzerland. Ardüser explained that Early Postdoc Mobility (EPM) fellowships are directed at postdocs who are at the beginning stage of their career, while Advanced Postdoc Mobility (APM) fellowships are geared toward experienced postdocs and offer the option of a return grant to come back to Switzerland after the fellowship.

The EPM requirements include:

- Submission up to nine months before and up to two years after the doctoral exam
- Swiss nationality or a valid permit for Switzerland, or marriage resp. registered partnership with a Swiss national
- For persons with a foreign nationality: at least three years of activity at a Swiss research institution.

The EPM fellowship lasts from twelve to eighteen months. There are two calls per year.

The APM fellowships include the same requirements as the EPM, in addition to having to prove doctoral and research experience of at least one year at postdoctoral level. Duration of the

fellowship outside of Switzerland ranges from one to three years, with the return phase in Switzerland lasting from three months to a year. There are two calls per year.

The Ambizione scheme is targeted at researchers who have returned to Switzerland and aims to create the conditions for starting an independent project at a Swiss institution. Furthermore, it seeks to anchor foreign talent at Swiss institutions. Those with a doctorate are welcome to apply. Ardüser noted that candidates *must* have completed postdoctoral research activities of at least twelve months at a different university from that of the dissertation. The evaluation process is conducted in two phases, with the second phase involving a face-to-face interview.

The SNSF offers professorships that enable junior researchers to establish an independent research team. It is essential that applicants have spent at least one year abroad. Furthermore, applicants must have a degree from a Swiss university or have had two years of activity at a Swiss research institution. These professorships have a duration of four years, with a possible follow-up for a maximum of two years.

International short visits allow researchers working in Switzerland to go abroad or researchers from elsewhere to come to Switzerland. This scheme is aimed to further careers and exchange knowledge. Duration of the visit ranges from one week to three months. The grant contributes to travel and accommodation costs. Visiting fellows must hold a PhD and must be employed as a researcher in their country of origin before, during and after the visit.

For more information, visit; www.snsf.ch

Questions:

The first question that came from the audience was a question for Klöhn, asking about the office in charge of the PRIME programme and also about the strictness of the time distribution during the DAAD fellowships. She answered that for the PRIME programme, applications are direct to Bonn, and this is the case for all applicants from Germany and abroad. She also emphasized that the timeline of the DAAD programmes is quite strict. So, if a researcher is supposed to spend six months in Germany and twelve abroad, it has to be done that way.

Another question concerned the funding of the fellowships for Germans and foreigners. Klöhn responded saying that there are two bodies, two Ministries, that fund separately applicants from Germany and from abroad. German funds can be applied for if the researcher has a residence permit, citizenship is not a requirement. However, she stressed that the foreigners from abroad cannot apply for the national programmes. Yet another question was focused on the integration programme, asking for how long a researcher has to be abroad in order to apply for this scheme. According to Klöhn, the requirement is more than twelve months abroad for the fellowship programme, but for the travel costs there are no restrictions.

A member of the audience asked what the PRIME programme includes. The DAAD representative responded saying that it includes a salary, equal to being employed at a German university. It also includes a travel allowance for the researcher and family members, and insurance. Additional financing is available for the family, but this depends on the university. The integration scheme, instead, pays just a salary. Michael Kozakowski, MWF, asked about PRIME's eligibility requirement and whether there are any restrictions regarding subjects. Klöhn responded saying that it is important when applying that within the last three years the applicant has not lived in the respective country for more than twelve months. Also, in this case, the deadline is what counts; it is 1 February of the respective year. At the same time, there are no restrictions regarding the subject. She also said that at the last call they had 350 applications, and initially had only 18 stipends. They however convinced the EU to give them more funds and finished with 31 stipends. The natural sciences were a bit more dominant, compared to the humanities. So, it is competitive, but if the candidate is convincing, with a good timetable, s/he will have a good chance of success.

The final question was related to the importance of the host institution. A member of the audience asked how important the host institution is and whether an applicant can freely choose the host institution. Klöhn responded saying that the host institutions are important; there are two committee members who have to give the DAAD an evaluation of the candidate's work and they also evaluate whether the host institution is well chosen. She added that candidates are totally free in choosing the host institution.

Another set of questions was for SNSF's representative. One question for Ardüser asked about the exact eligibility conditions for the Marie Heim-Vögtlin scheme, and what counted as career interruption. She replied saying that it is mainly for time spent with a partner, i.e. following a partner's career, and for children, but also functions in the case when a relative requires care. Another question was focused on the breakdown of funding for Ambizione. Ardüser explained that there are three divisions, and that about 30% goes for projects in the humanities and social sciences.

Plenary Session

The final session was a plenary session chaired by MWF Emmanuel Comte. This session discussed some of the remaining questions and summarized some of the main characteristics of the funding schemes made available by the different agencies.