



*Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca
Dipartimento per la Formazione Superiore e per la Ricerca*

Capo Dipartimento

To the Rectors of state and non-state Universities

To the Presidents of PROs under MIUR supervision

SUBJECT: National Research Programme 2015-2020 – FARE Implementation actions in Italy:
“Attracting ERC holders” - 2017 and 2018 calls.

Dear Colleagues,

As is known, the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research is implementing key activities to deliver the current National Research Programme (NRP), approved on 1 May 2016.

Among these activities, great attention is being paid to fundamental research and, more specifically, to successful Italian and foreign researchers who obtain *European Research Council* grants (please refer to my letter reference no. 15390, dated 2 August 2016). As reported in the PNR section on “human capital” measures, recent data confirm we need to take action in order to ensure that an increasing number of ERC awardees remain in Italy (or choose our country) to conduct research in Italian Universities or Public Research Organisations (PROs). Currently, the percentage of ERC grant holders who choose an Italian host institution is still low.

Against this background, the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR) has decided to promote the following action “Attracting ERC grant holders”, through a specific call – to be published today - addressed to researchers who are currently conducting ERC funded research activities at Italian host institutions (Universities or PROs under MIUR supervision).

With this 10 million euro call, the best projects presented by candidates, in agreement with their respective host institutions, will be selected according to the criteria set out by the National Committee of Research Guarantors.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you about the initiatives that the Ministry intends to launch, as of next year, addressed to researchers competing in future ERC calls, who identify an Italian University or PRO under MIUR supervision, when submitting their application. This is a very innovative measure aimed at gradually increasing the percentage of ERC grant holders hosted in Italy.

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For this purpose, in 2017 and 2018 the Ministry intends to allocate 20 million euro a year from the FSC and FIRST funds.

These funds will finance new calls, to be published respectively by the end of 2017 and 2018, open to projects connected and complementary to ERC funded projects. The applicants will be awardees of *ERC Starting Grant*, *Consolidator Grant* and *Advanced Grant* for the 2017 and 2018 calls, respectively.

Through this competitive procedure, analogous to the call published today for 2016, *Principal Investigators* submitting their application will have potential access to a contribution amounting to maximum 20% of their total five year ERC grant (between 300.000 and 600.000 euro, based on the value of the ERC grant). The beneficiaries of the above funds will be, once again, PROs or Universities acting as host Institutions.

Therefore, I kindly invite you to pay close attention to the above actions promoted by the Ministry, and I am confident I will be able to rely on your usual cooperation in supporting measures to encourage the presence of excellent researchers in Italian PROs and Universities.

Kind Regards,

Marco Mancini

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