

Implementing Arrangement between the European Commission and the National Science Foundation for providing research opportunities in Europe for U.S. scientists and engineers

In accordance with the terms of the ‘Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the European Community and the Government of the United States of America’, signed on 5 December 1997, which entered into force on 14 October 1998¹, as amended² and renewed, hereinafter referred to as the “Agreement”, an Implementing Arrangement to provide research opportunities in Europe for U.S. scientists and engineers is hereby established between the European Commission and the National Science Foundation (NSF) (hereinafter referred to as the “Sides”).

The purpose of this Implementing Arrangement is to facilitate such opportunities between the two Sides, connecting researchers with complementary strengths and shared interests, particularly early on during their careers.

From the European Commission side, this Arrangement is intended to be administratively managed by the European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA), which is the dedicated implementation structure of the European Research Council (ERC). The ERC’s mission 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.

From the United States of America side, NSF intends to be responsible for administering the Arrangement. NSF’s mission is to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure the national defense.

The Sides understand that the collaboration under this Arrangement is intended to operate only within the limits of their respective authorities, policies and legal frameworks.

Research opportunities are intended to be provided in accordance with the terms set out in the Agreement.

This Arrangement is not intended to create rights and obligations under international or domestic law and it has no financial implications.

1. AREAS OF ACTIVITIES

The Sides intend to provide opportunities for U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award to pursue research collaboration with European researchers already supported through EU-funded European Research Council (ERC) grants.

This opportunity is intended to be open to all NSF-funded scientists and engineers, but an emphasis would be placed on encouraging participation from those who are early on in their careers.

¹ OJ L 284, 22.10.1998, p.37

² OJ L 90, 02.04.2009, p. 20

The Sides intend to facilitate use of ERC-funded projects to host scientists and engineers with an active NSF award. It is expected that collaborations would occur in similar areas of scientific pursuit or on topics of mutual interest.

2. COLLABORATIVE OBJECTIVES

- The collaboration is intended to enable U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award, particularly those who are early on in their careers, to undertake research visits with ERC-supported European teams.
- Research visits may be single short or long-term (e.g., 2-12 months) or multiple short-term visits (e.g., for joint experiments). Research visits are expected to be completed prior to the termination date of the NSF award. Multiple short-term visits should aggregate to an agreed upon minimum (e.g., 2 months).

3. PROCEDURE OF COOPERATION

The following set of operational steps is intended to be used:

- The ERC would solicit expressions of interest from Principal Investigators (PIs) holding ERC grants in hosting U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award to contribute to their teams for short or longer periods with the travel expenses between U.S. and Europe covered by NSF.
- The ERC would send to NSF a listing of the interested PIs/teams, together with the publishable description of their respective ERC-funded projects and other information as mutually decided between NSF and ERC to facilitate the collaborations between the researchers.
- NSF would inform U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award of the collaborative opportunity through issuance of a Dear Colleague Letter that describes the goals of the ERC programme and the collaborative opportunities as defined by the European researchers and provides application procedures, eligibility considerations, and relevant policies and requirements, as appropriate.

4. FUNDING

Activities under this Implementing Arrangement are intended to be subject to the availability of appropriated funds, to the applicable laws and regulations, policies and programmes of each Side.

NSF

U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award would continue to receive NSF funding during the period of the European visit, and their salaries would be covered according to the award terms and conditions. Through this collaboration, NSF would also provide support for travel expenses. In case of a long-term visit (6 months or longer), travel expenses of accompanying family members would also be covered by NSF.

ERC

Visiting U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award may be incorporated into the research teams of the ERC-funded Principal Investigators (at the Host Institution of the ERC projects) for the duration of the visit, so that any relevant expenses can be claimed under the ERC grant, supporting the team and the activity as noted below. Sufficient flexibility exists for the ERC grant to support the visiting researcher with no separate direct funding arrangement between the visiting researcher and the ERC required. The ERC grant agreement provides that only the costs eligible within its terms can be reimbursed and the maximum amount of the ERC grant may not be increased for this purpose. The involved U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award should be solely in charge of seeking and obtaining any payments or reimbursements under this section without any involvement of the NSF. Eligible cost categories may include:

- (1) subsistence costs on a per diem basis, or any other pertinent modality of the Host Institution, in accordance with the applicable national law and any other rules or regulations applicable on the Host Institution, which may take into account the level of experience of the individual visiting NSF awardee.
- (2) any other eligible costs incurred during the visit of the U.S. scientists and engineers with an active NSF award that are directly related to the ERC-funded project.

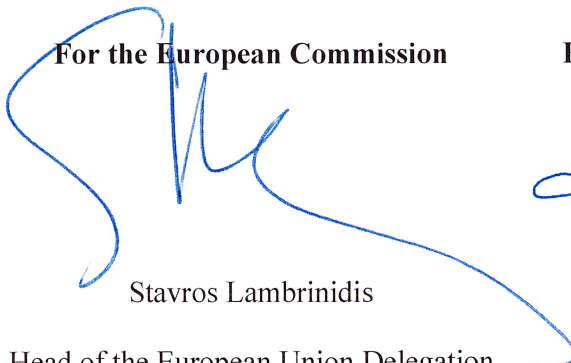
5. DURATION

Cooperation under this Arrangement is intended to commence from signature by both Sides. It may be discontinued by either Side at any time.

This Arrangement replaces the 'Implementing Arrangement between the European Commission and the National Science Foundation for providing research opportunities for U.S. early career scientists and engineers' signed on 13 July 2012.

Signed on 29 October 2019, at Washington and on 29 October 2019 at Alexandria, Virginia, in duplicate in the English language.

For the European Commission



Stavros Lambrinidis
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For the National Science Foundation



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