



Stockholm
University
President

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May 5, 2020

Friends of the ERC

Letter of Support to the European Research Council

I hereby express the full support from Stockholm University for the importance of undiminished or raised funding to the European Research Council, in order to keep up excellent quality-driven research in Europe. The ERC has been a success story in the European Framework Programmes of Research and Innovation. Unfortunately, however, far from all excellent ERC proposals have been possible to support, and an increased rather than decreased budget is therefore warranted.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that we cannot predict which crises that will hit our society next, and independent bottom-up research, that is not commanded by political governance, is therefore of utmost importance. Likewise, breakthroughs in non-applied science can often be applied to solving societal challenges in the future, and the Nobel prize is often awarded to such basic science breakthroughs. At Stockholm University we value the European Research Council as one of the most important funding instruments for promoting such breakthroughs.

The ERC grants have given the opportunity for numerous outstanding researchers, including some of our researchers at Stockholm University, to realise their ideas on ground-breaking research. I therefore sincerely hope that ERC will be able to continue to support future researchers that want to pursue high risk-high gain projects.

With a generous support to the ERC, Europe will continue to be a leading research and innovation union and maintain and attract excellent researchers. The future products of today's research will boost economic growth and employment in Europe. By promoting research and innovation, EU will show willingness and action to take a lead in solving the large societal challenges. Stockholm University therefore urge the EU to continue to support European research and in particular ERC with undiminished or increased efforts in the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Astrid Söderbergh Widding'.

Astrid Söderbergh Widding
President of Stockholm University