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The best will establish a new Chair: The launch of the prestigious ERA Chair grant competition

World-class experts in the field of research on the borders of biology, chemistry and physics are being given the opportunity to create their own Chair in one of the best Polish research institutions. In the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw the competition for the prestigious European ERA Chair grant has just been launched.

The Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IPC PAS) in Warsaw, Poland, has just launched a competition for outstanding scientists of international renown. The winner of the competition, organized under the European ERA Chair grant of 2.5 million euros, will be able to establish a new Chair at the IPC PAS: the Department of Physical Chemistry of Biological Systems. The offer includes the possibility of, among others, the implementation of their own research programme, their own selection of research staff as well as their choice of new measuring apparatus. The proposed salary, which is significantly higher than that offered by leading academic institutions in Europe and the US, makes the competition even more attractive.

“Our intention is to find a scholar of world renown, who will be able to make use of the hitherto successes of the Institute in areas such as microfluidic technology, analytical chemistry, modern biological chemistry and nonlinear optics and lead the Chair to new research areas, located on the borders of biology with chemistry and physics,” says Prof. Robert Hołyst (IPC PAS).

The candidate's qualifications should allow for effective competition for the most prestigious European grants: ERC Advanced Grants and ERC Starting Grants.

Researchers interested in the ERA Chair competition should lodge their application at the IPC PAS by 15th November, 2015 (detailed information is available at: http://ichf.edu.pl/EraChair_IPC.pdf). The preliminary selection of candidates will last until 31st December, 2015 when a shortlist of 3-5 finalists will be drawn up. In January 2016 the shortlisted candidates will be invited to Warsaw, where they will give a seminar at the IPC PAS in front of the Recruitment Committee, made up of scientists from Poland, Great Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands, which includes winners of ERC grants. The Committee will announce the winner of the competition following their substantive evaluation of the candidates' performance.

ERA (European Research Area) Chair grants are awarded under Horizon 2020, the largest European funding programme for scientific research and innovation. The programme's budget for 2014-20 amounts to almost 80 billion euros. The main aim of ERA Chair grants is to attract the most eminent academics to scientific institutions operating in the recently adopted EU Member States. The long-term effect of the implementation of grants is to be the raising of the standard of science in new Member States and an increase in its competitiveness to a level enabling effective competition with leading research centres, both in Europe and in the world.

Poland, often underappreciated, in fact has outstanding achievements in the field of pioneering research in natural sciences and engineering. Many people are familiar with Nicolaus Copernicus, the founder of the heliocentric theory, or Maria Skłodowska-Curie, who laid the foundations for nuclear physics. But there are a great many more Poles who can take credit for the development of world science and technology. Just a few worth mentioning include Ignacy Łukasiewicz, a pioneer of the oil industry, Kazimierz Funk, the discoverer of the first vitamins, Ludwik Hirsfeld, the discoverer of blood groups, Stanisław Ulam, the creator of the Monte Carlo method, and Jan Czochralski, the inventor of monocrystal growth method – the foundation of modern electronics.

“Our predecessors have set us extremely high intellectual and scientific standards. Not only do we want to meet these standards, but we intend to raise them further and develop them. This is our goal, this is where our commitment lies – and this is the purpose of the ERA Chair grant,” emphasises Prof. Holyst.

The Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences (<http://www.ichf.edu.pl/>) was established in 1955 as one of the first chemical institutes of the PAS. The Institute's scientific profile is strongly related to the newest global trends in the development of physical chemistry and chemical physics. Scientific research is conducted in nine scientific departments. CHEMIPAN R&D Laboratories, operating as part of the Institute, implement, produce and commercialise specialist chemicals to be used, in particular, in agriculture and pharmaceutical industry. The Institute publishes approximately 200 original research papers annually.

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LINKS:

<http://www.ichf.edu.pl/>
The website of the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

<http://www.ichf.edu.pl/press/>
Press releases of the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

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The competition of the prestigious 2.5 million euro ERA Chair grant has been launched at the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. (Source: IPC PAS, Grzegorz Krzyzewski)

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Logo of the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland. (Source: IPC PAS)