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EURAXESS India Newsletter is a quarterly electronic newsletter, edited by EURAXESS India, which provides information of specific interest to European and non-European researchers in India who are interested in the European research landscape and conducting research in Europe or with European partners.

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Editor: Ainhitze Bizkarralegorra Bravo, EURAXESS India, Country Representative.

EURAXESS INDIA

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Estonia is a small North European country and it has been a member of the European Union since 2004.



Promotional page about Estonia: www.estonia.ee.



[University of Tartu](http://www.ut.ee)



[Research in Estonia](http://www.research-estonia.ee) initiative carries out International marketing activities with the aim to **introduce Estonian research on an international level and for international audience**. The portal offers information and news for professionals, scholars, and students interested in research opportunities in Estonia.

Umbrella organisation uniting researchers, scholars and intellectuals: [Estonian Academy of Sciences](http://www.eas.ee)

1 Briefing | EURAXESS country: Estonia - A place for independent minds

Did you know that Skype was programmed in Estonia in 2003? Or that Estonia has used legally binding digital signatures since the year 2000? These facts illustrate the innovative attitude of the small North European country called Estonia perfectly. Estonia has an attractive environment for research, top-level infrastructure, a collaborative research community and excellent research achievements.

Research and Development in Estonia

Estonian researchers are good partners in international collaboration projects and the number of international co-publications is rising. Research in Estonia is becoming more international as the number of foreign researchers from 2005 to 2014 has increased **sevenfold** [1]. The impact of papers authored by Estonian researchers is growing rapidly; average citations per paper exceed the Thomson Reuters' Essential Science Indicators (ESI) mean citation rate by 5% [2].

There are 20 R&D institutions in Estonia, including [6 public universities](#) where most research is performed. The leading scientific institution in Estonia is the [University of Tartu](#).

The ratio of total R&D expenditure to GDP in 2015 was 1.5%, with nearly half of R&D expenditure in 2015 coming from the state budget [3].

Research Excellence in Estonia

Biological sciences are at the forefront of Estonian research – 2/3 of the top researchers (among 1% most cited in their field worldwide) who are affiliated with an Estonian research institution are **biologists** and **ecologists** [2]. Each Estonian paper published in environment/ecology and plant and animal science receives about 40% more citations than papers in these fields in general. Additionally, clinical medicine, molecular biology and genetics, physics, pharmacology and toxicology, and psychiatry/psychology are also above global average [2].

There are 9 [Research Centres of Excellence](#) in Estonia, composed of **internationally highly regarded research groups**. Featured topics are: terrestrial ecosystems in the context of global change from molecular to biome-level responses, genomics and translational medicine, information and communication technologies (ICT), molecular cell engineering, space studies.

[1] <http://www.stat.ee/science-technology-innovation> [2] <http://blog.ut.ee/how-successful-is-estonian-science/> [3] <http://www.stat.ee/news-release-2016-132>



EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion is an initiative of the European Research Area (ERA) that addresses barriers to the mobility of researchers and seeks to enhance their career development. This pan-European effort is currently supported by 40 countries, of which we will profile one in our quarterly e-newsletter. In this edition, we zoom in on Estonia



How Skype started in Estonia, read [The Story of Skype](#)

[e-Estonia – The Digital Society](#)

[Enterprise Estonia](#) supporting and advising entrepreneurs



The main funding body is the [Estonian Research Council](#).



Information and support for incoming researchers on [EURAXESS Estonia](#)

Author: Hanna Raig,
EURAXESS Estonia

Estonian R&D Strategy

The Estonian R&D strategy document **Knowledge-based Estonia 2014–2020** outlines four objectives: 1) Research in Estonia is of high level and diverse 2) R&D functions in the interest of Estonian society and economy 3) R&D makes the structure of economy more knowledge-intensive 4) Estonia is active and visible in international RDI cooperation. The strategy foresees that by 2020 investments in R&D **will reach 3% of GDP** [4].

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Innovation and the start-up ecosystem in Estonia are growing rapidly. Notable recent success stories backed by R&D in the IT field include [Skype](#), [TransferWise](#), [Lingvist](#), [Starship Technologies](#) and [Guardtime](#).

Estonia is standing out as a **digital society**. We have developed highly innovative and practical solutions for digital **public services** including online tax-declarations (in use since 2000), digital signatures (2000), online voting (2005), digital recipes (2010), and most recently the e-residency (2016) for anyone in the world (you can become an [e-resident](#) of Estonia in order to register your business in Estonia).

[Competence Centres \(8\)](#) are designed to improve the competitiveness of enterprises through strategic cooperation between Estonian science, industry and the public sectors. Main topics are health and food technologies and ICT services.

[Enterprise Estonia](#) promotes business and provides financial assistance, counselling, cooperation opportunities and training for entrepreneurs, research institutions and the public and non-profit sectors.

Funding and Recruitment Opportunities

Research in Estonia is primarily financed on the basis of **quality competition**. Financing comes from the state budget, foreign funds (mostly EU H2020 and other means) and companies. The [Estonian Research Council](#) is the principal funding body of R&D in Estonia, consolidating different grants and types of funding and giving research more visibility within society. There are also several **mobility grants**. [Click here](#) for the funding calls.

As most research is performed in the public universities, most research jobs are also available in public universities. PhD students are regarded as students and receive a monthly scholarship.

Important Information for Incoming Researchers

[EURAXESS Estonia](#) provides information and support to international researchers for free. We provide information about **entry conditions**, visas and **residence permits**, Estonia in general, the Estonian research landscape, **job & funding offers**, events for researchers and much more!

See [Estonian Embassy in New Delhi](#) and all [Estonian embassies and representations](#) around the world.

[4] Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2014-2020 “Knowledge-based Estonia”



Research collaboration with India

Research collaboration between Estonia and India is mostly based on **relations between universities and research groups** but also through bilateral agreements and through participation in European Union-Asia multilateral cooperation agreements. For example, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Estonia and the Government of the Republic of India on Co-operation in the **Fields of Science and Technology** was signed in 1999 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Estonia for **Cooperation in the field of Biotechnology** was signed in 2013.

Research cooperation between Estonia and India has been carried out through the **ERA-NET INNO INDIGO** project which is a consortium of European and Indian R&D organisations. Since 2014 the Estonian Research Council has participated in three INNO INDIGO calls – 1. Clean water and health 2. Diagnostics and interventions in chronic non-communicable 3. Bio based energy.

Results of a survey by the Estonian Development Fund indicate several attractive R&D fields for the Estonian economy and these are biotechnology, agriculture and plant genomics, ICT, folklore, nanotechnology and medicine (orthopaedics). Best prerequisites for research cooperation with India are in life sciences, ICT (cyber security), health and environmental sustainability.

All researchers from India can apply to Estonian Research Council mobility grants.

In the Estonian strategy for internationalization of higher education 2016-2020, India is one for the target countries from where Estonia welcomes international students.

Most Asian studies programmes in Estonia are based in [Tallinn University](#). [The Asian Research Centre in Estonia](#) focuses on promoting collaboration with Asian countries and organizes various events and seminars.

Interview with Indian researchers Katyayani Sukhavasi, Satish Srirama and Margaret Lyngdoh in Estonia

1. How did you hear about Estonia and why did you decide to work in Estonia?

Katyayani Sukhavasi (KS): My encounter with Estonia is a bit on the unusual side. I had moved to this country in 2013 as my husband got approved for his PhD. Eight months later I heard about a job opening at the University of Tartu which quite matched with my previous job profile back in India. I attended the interview and got selected. Three years later, in 2016 I became PhD student at Tartu University after facing an interview and giving a detailed presentation on



[ERA-NET Inno Indigo](#)



[See Estonian Research Council portal for funding opportunities in Estonia](#)



[Asian Research Centre in Estonia](#) brings together all parties interested in Estonia-Asia relations and collaboration.



Katyayani Sukhavasi

PhD student, laboratory specialist, Department of Pathophysiology

University of Tartu



Satish Srirama

Associate Professor, Head of Mobile & Cloud Lab, Institute of Computer Sciences

University of Tartu

my PhD project. So, definitely it wasn't cake walk all through but I am glad that I am part of a very competitive research group.

Satish Srirama (SS): I did my PhD in computer science from RWTH Aachen, Germany in 2008. One of my colleagues at RWTH, who is a German national, had actually moved to Estonia and suggested University of Tartu (UT) and its excellence in science and research. This motivated me to move to Estonia. I relocated to Tartu with my Estonian Science Foundation (now Estonian Research Council) funded **MOBILITAS Postdoctoral research grant**.

Margaret Lyngdoh (ML): I met Professor Ülo Valk in North Eastern India in 2009 at a workshop on indigenous Assamese practices of magic. Yes, a workshop on researching magic, indeed! That was the first time I heard about Estonia. I got back home and looked at my atlas, but I could not find it because it was an old atlas. Then the internet clarified some things about Estonia for me. Prof. Valk told me that there was a scholarship available to be a visiting PhD student and I successfully applied for it. So I first came to Estonia in February 16 2010 and had my first glimpse of snow. For me, folkloristics is the scholarly excuse I get to study magic and the supernatural (from an academic perspective, of course!) But on a more serious level, in the ethnic community to which I belong to in North Eastern India (Khasi), folklore is more than just belief in the supernatural, or practices linked to magic. I have understood over the past seven years of researching for my doctoral thesis and from visiting various Folklore Departments in the USA and Ireland and India, that the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu, has the most conducive research environment. This is because it is here in Tartu that new theories on folklore methodology are developed and clarified. The feel of the folklore library is very encouraging because it has the best collection of books on folklore that I have come across. The research fields in the Department are also very balanced with focus on Estonian and international folklore. Today, as a Junior Researcher in the Department, I must say that I am fortunate because I get to grow and make my academic opinion more mature in the company of some of the best folklorists in the field. We also have a brand new [MA programme](#) in Folklore!

2. Name three characteristic things about research work in Estonia or about Estonia in general.

KS: Performance excels in stress free environment and Estonia is one among those countries which provides freedom and safety for people residing here and is willing to encourage more foreign nationals to be part of its growth. Estonia has safely preserved its natural reserves like lakes, forests, bogs and boasts on it. The four seasons are distinct and a true pleasure to be cherished in here. People are warm and friendly, though reserved until and unless approached. With such beautiful surroundings and healthy competitiveness among fellow researchers it is always a treat to be part of this new yet developed country.



Margaret Lyngdoh

Junior Research Fellow,
Department of Estonian and
Comparative Folklore

University of Tartu

SS: Freedom, support and opportunities are three characteristics, which I really liked in Estonia. You are free to choose the research domain and direction at UT, as long as you produce good results. The initial support we got from the university and the research funding institutes such as Estonian Research Council was excellent. The opportunities we get for funding and individual growth make the research ecosystem in Estonia very interesting. Moreover, the country being small, you get to know several people from different research groups and institutes, thus encouraging cross-domain research.

ML: For me, sincerity is a cultural value in Estonia and it is best reflected in the research environment in my Department. Whether it is in the context of research ethics, innovative theories or internationalisation, I have discovered that the department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore is one of the best in the world. This is because of the focus of research is varied, wide, and international. If I were to isolate three key features of research in my Department in particular and in Estonia, in general, it would be (a) international, (b) cutting edge in innovation, and (c) friendly. Yes, I think that research in Estonia is friendly, because in my experience, researchers have an empathetic, compassionate connection with their research topics. And as Estonians have kindness as a basic characteristic, this also is expressed in the way that research is conducted.

3. A message to anyone who is considering research work with Estonian partners or moving to Estonia for work.

KS: Go for it! Research work in Estonia has been strongly laid on work freedom, implementation of new ideas, freedom of expression, encouraging and supportive colleagues/supervisors. Moving to Estonia could initially be quite a shock as things are quite different compared to India but definitely you will have beautiful memories written in for the future. The Estonian government has been proactively taking necessary steps to make life of foreigners worth their stay. Take the leap and explore the possibilities.

SS: As I already mentioned, “freedom at work” is the best thing you get in Estonia. To give the example of my own case, three years after moving to Estonia, I could form my own research group (Mobile & Cloud Lab, <http://mc.cs.ut.ee/>) in 2012, which I am leading since. Estonia is a land of opportunities, especially for research in IT. We also have a small yet close Indian community, which should be able to help you with initial relocation issues. Do not worry about cold and Estonian winter. If we managed in the past 7-8 years, you too can ☺ .

ML: To anyone who wants to come to Estonia for research or to work, I would like to recommend it. Here it is possible to develop independent academic and scientific opinions. If you want to be the best that you can be, come to study, research or work in Estonia! I mean every word that I have written. Estonia continues to be the best experience of my life.



EURAXESS Science Slam India 2017

Don't miss your next research trip to Europe to visit a research institute of your choice and more!

The 5th edition of the annual competition open to researchers and entrepreneurs of any nationality, age and research field who are based in India is under preparation.

Opening in August 2017.
Stay tuned!

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/worldwide/india/science-slam>



2 Hot topic | 5th EURAXESS Science Slam India is coming - A EURAXESS brand event for researchers & innovators in India

The EURAXESS Science Slam India is a competition open to all career levels researchers starting with MA/M.Sc. candidates (research-based or mixed) - from universities, research institutes or private sector, in all fields of research including Social Sciences and Humanities, Life Sciences and Engineering, of any nationality and age (18+) who are based in India. This competition is part of the 5th EURAXESS Science Slam taking place in Brazil, China and India.

The competition has two stages: (i) the 'Virtual' Pre-selection (online) where candidates will submit a short video in a creative, entertaining and accessible way; and (ii) the Live Finals where the finalists will perform in front of the review panel and a mixed audience who will choose the winner.

Stay tuned to register for EURAXESS Science Slam India 2017!

Now is time for you to consider becoming the next EURAXESS Science Slammer in India!

To find all about the EURAXESS Science Slam visit [EURAXESS India](http://euraxess.ec.europa.eu) website and follow us on [Facebook/EuraxessLinksIndia](https://www.facebook.com/EuraxessLinksIndia).

The first prize will be the EURAXESS Science Slammer title and a round trip to Europe to visit Brussels (Belgium) and a research institute of the winner's choice in the European Union in 2018.



EURAXESS Science Slam India finalists: 2014 (left), 2015 (left below) & 2016 (right below)





EURAXESS Science Slam India 2016



The audience chose Damanbha Lyngdoh, PhD candidate at North Eastern Hill University – NEHU, Shillong as the 4th EURAXESS Science Slammer India with his slam "Do not judge a book by its cover - A tale from India's North-East".

With the support of EURAXESS and Finnair, he is now visiting a research institute of his choice in the European Union.

According to Damanbha Lyngdoh:

"Explaining science and making sense out of it to a general audience is a challenging task. The EURAXESS Science Slam India 2016 has provided that platform for students/ researchers/ teachers to effectively communicate (without scientific jargons) their complex and complicated scientific research to the general public. Personally, it was a great learning experience as it challenged me to think "outside the box" on how to share and disseminate the scientific knowledge to every one. On the whole, the event was a great success and I am sure that everybody (finalists and audience) must have benefitted from it in some way or the other."

We bring to you under this section an **article by Dr. Anand Kant Das**, the **EURAXESS Science Slam India 2014 first prize**.



Dr Anand Kant Das - EURAXESS Science Slammer India 2014.

A postdoctoral researcher at Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria.

Anand uses ultra-sensitive microscopy to understand the inner workings of the brain. He completed his PhD from Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai, in the area of Neuroscience and Biophysics.

He finds ecstasy in reading philosophy, climbing mountains and traveling. He is also deeply interested in the traditional and alternative system of medicine and comparative religion.

Anand talks about what EURAXESS Science Slam India, the Science Slam tour and his current post-doc in Austria meant for him.

I was enthralled looking at cells for the first time under a microscope at a local science fair in India. I was eight years old and was so thrilled that I shared this experience with everyone I knew back then. Next, I caught a cockroach and decapitated it with a sterile blade. To my utter surprise, the cockroach was alive for several days. I realized that the cockroach had died due to starvation and not because of decapitation. This was perhaps my first curiosity-driven experiment as a young school going kid. A deep quest to understand life began to take shape in me. I began wondering about how nature has manufactured the machinery of life. The sheer complexity of life highly intrigued me. I now believe that this complexity arises from simple fundamental principles. We need to understand these principles to get a

grip on the logic of life. A career in research came as a natural choice to me and hence I enrolled for a Ph.D. program at one of India's premiere research Institutes- Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai, investigating the mechanisms which lead to brain damage in Alzheimer's disease.

It was during this period, I realized that there exists a wide gap between the research and innovations which take place in laboratories and what reaches out to the interested public. The only way to bridge the gap is science communication. It is an effective way to disseminate scientific knowledge and explain the wider relevance of scientific findings to societies. I started to hone my science communication skills and came across the EURAXESS Science Slam competition- a perfect platform to showcase your science communication skills at the national and international platform.



I started to hone my science communication skills and came across the EURAXESS Science Slam competition- a perfect platform to showcase your science communication skills at the national and international platform.

Participating in the slam in the year 2014, eventually became a life-changing experience for me. The event was extremely well planned and executed. The finals took place at Café Zoe in Mumbai, a converted mill space, a charming combination of European and industrial décor. The ambiance of the café, the aroma of the food and of course the slam sessions made my evening. While the entire event was organized and coordinated by Ainhitze, country representative of EURAXESS, 3xUS solutions took care of the stage and moderation. I feel that I could reach out the audience and also entertain them during the slam. I made use of real life examples, interesting anecdotes, presentation, props and models to convey the basic ideas. In brief, my slam was simple and humorous. I was lucky to win the slam and avail a free trip to Europe.

The trip helped me immensely on the professional front. During this entire trip, I could meet a lot of people, learn new things and network with them. One of the most useful aspects of the trip was the visit to a research institute of my choice. I was nearing my Ph.D. thesis submission and looking for opportunities for post-doctoral positions. I could visit labs, meet experts in person and got interviewed by them. This helped me immensely as I could eventually bag few post-doctoral positions as a direct outcome of my EURAXESS trip. I ultimately joined Prof. Gerhard Schuetz's biophysics group at Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien), Austria, as a post-doctoral researcher. Currently, I am ultra-sensitive microscopy tools to understand the inner workings of the brain during addiction.

Science communication is not an easy exercise, particularly when the complexity and the relevance of one's own research need to be explained to a layperson. Nevertheless, it is a very useful exercise because as you prepare to explain your work it gives you a sense of ownership and increases your confidence as you reach out to the public. Chalk out the key aims of your project and reduce to a maximum of three key ideas and then spend time thinking of ways to communicate these ideas in a simple and entertaining way without going wrong on the scientific side or over claiming the findings.

In conclusion, I am reminded of Ernest Hemingway who once said "Every man's life ends the same way. It is only the details of how he lived and how he died that distinguish one man from another." EURAXESS Science Slam is one such event which can enrich your life in ways you cannot fathom. Don't feel shy or intimidated. Get up! Make a quick video and slam your way to success.

Chalk out the key aims of your project and reduce to a maximum of three key ideas and then spend time thinking of ways to communicate these ideas in a simple and entertaining way without going wrong on the scientific side or over claiming the findings.



Xavier Serra

Associate Professor of the Department of Information and Communication Technologies and Director of the Music Technology Group at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona.

email: xavier.serra@upf.edu

CompMusic: <http://compmusic.upf.edu/>

CAMUT: <http://mtg.upf.edu/projects/camut>

Riyaz: <https://riyazapp.com/>

3 In Focus | Xavier Serra researcher and an ERC Grantee on Music Technology – Discover his contribution to Indian music!

In this edition of the EURAXESS India Newsletter, we have the opportunity to present to you Xavier Serra two times ERC awardee, first as ERC Advanced grantee, followed by an ERC Proof of Concept grant.

Born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1959, Xavier, after finishing his undergraduate education, in 1981 moved to the US to continue his studies. In 1989, he finished his PhD at Stanford University and then he worked for two years at a research center of Yamaha, also in the US. In 1991 he returned to Barcelona, and for the past 23 years he has been at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, where he is currently Associate Professor of the Department of Information and Communication Technologies and Director of the Music Technology Group.

What is your research background and interest?

My academic career and research work has been moving and evolving within the field of music technology, always interested in the analysis, description and synthesis of sound and music signals, trying to find a balance between basic and applied research, and exploring approaches from both scientific/technological and humanistic/artistic disciplines. The specific research topics in which I am active are Audio Signal Processing, Sound and Music Computing, Music Information Retrieval, and Computational Musicology.

What made you apply for an ERC Advanced Grant?

I wanted to be able to lead a research project with which I could have a significant academic and social impact. The trigger of the specific idea came during a trip to India in 2010, where I was invited to talk about my research. Talking with the Indian students and their faculty, I realized that most of the research I had been doing within the field of music technology had a very western centric approach and could not scale to quite a number of other musical cultures. I became motivated to try to solve that by focusing on music-related research that could be of relevance to India and other non-western cultures.

When did you receive your ERC Advanced Grant, in which field? Which organization did host the ERC funded project lead by you?

I received the ERC Advanced Grant in 2011 within the field of engineering field of information technologies but with a secondary focus in the humanities. The goal was to develop information technologies of relevance to music. The hosting institution was the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, where I was, and still am, a faculty member.

Did you do any part of your research in India as an ERC Advanced Grantee?



Yes. I established collaborations with research teams in IIT Mumbai and IIT Madras and quite a number of Indian people collaborated in one way or another. Given that the goal of the project was to break a prevalent western centric approach in engineering research, it was important to involve people from the countries whose music I was studying and also carry the research within the cultural context that I wanted to contribute to.

What part of your work has been funded by the [ERC Advanced Grant](#) and what part by the [ERC Proof of Concept Grant](#)?

Within the Advanced Grant, we have been doing basic and applied research for our [CompMusic project](#), on quite a number of topics related to Audio Signal Processing, Music Information Retrieval, and Computational Musicology. We have been developing ways to analyze musical signal from a number of music traditions with to goal to automatically extract musically meaningful information. Then with the Proof of Concept Grant, within the [CAMUT project](#), we have developed two practical software systems using some of the technologies developed in CompMusic and we have developed an exploitation strategy for those systems. The focus of CAMUT has been the Indian music traditions and the Indian market.

Tell EURAXESS India readers about CompMusic and CAMUT.

CompMusic is focused on the advancement in the field of Music Information Research by approaching a number of current research challenges from a culture specific perspective. We developed information modelling techniques of relevance to several non-Western music cultures and in the process we aimed at contributing to the overall field of MIR. We studied five music cultures: Hindustani (North India), Carnatic (South India), Turkish-makam (Turkey), Arab-Andalusian (Maghreb), and Beijing Opera (China). We focused on the extraction of features from audio music recordings related to melody and rhythm, and on the semantic analysis of the contextual information of those recordings. The goal was to characterize culture specific musical facets of each repertoire and to develop musically meaningful similarity measures with them.



CAMUT focused on how to take advantage of the technologies developed in CompMusic in the Indian market. The starting idea was that there is an emerging market for digital music in India that will need music intelligence technologies adapted to local needs and music tastes. We developed two specific prototypes tailored to suit India's economic and sociocultural context, and formulated a business plan based on their potential for commercialization. One prototype, Saraga, addresses the need to provide innovative means to organize/archive, retrieve, discover and explore music collections. The other prototype, Riyaz, focuses on providing tools for music education, in particular to learn how to sing. After evaluating their market potential, we decided to focus on [Riyaz](#).

Do you have a background in music?

Yes, I studied western classical music at the conservatory in Barcelona, and I have a Master degree in music performance. Currently I am still active in playing the cello, but only at an amateur level.

CAMUT has been tailored for Indian market. Are there any reasons for choosing India as a market?



The main reason is that during the CompMusic project I was able to collaborate with amazing researchers, musicians, and students from India, and through them I became captivated by India. Then, two of my Indian PhD students really wanted to get involved in trying to exploit the technologies that they had developed during their PhD, so I was very happy to be able to help them in that with the CAMUT project.

How did you finalise your team Members?

With the CompMusic project I had the great opportunity to put together a large research team in a very flexible way. I was able to hire PhD students and post-docs, support small research teams in India and Turkey, pay for music consultants, ... and basically I could support a very heterogeneous group of people from different places of the world, all of them fascinated by music and technology. This has been the most rewarding experience of the project.



Xavier Serra with his team of researchers and collaborators from India

What challenges did you face in bringing out the app Riyaz?

There have been, and there still are, many challenges being faced in the development and exploitation of Riyaz. We are researchers, and despite having been involved in quite a number of technology transfer projects, the development of a commercially viable product in India brings huge challenges. We had to immerse ourselves into issues of product development, marketing, business development... and everything in just one year and a half. Plus, we had to do all of that in India.

Has a survey been conducted on how successful Riyaz has been?

Yes, [Riyaz](#) is a mobile app distributed online, and it is quite easy to track its usage. The prototype version became available two months ago as a free app for Android mobiles, and so far, the app has been downloaded more than 100000 times just in India. From that point of view, it has been very successful, but this is not enough for succeeding in having a commercially viable product. We are still working towards that.



I cannot think of any type of funding, other than the ERC grants, that would have allowed me to do such a project. The possibility of thinking big and of being able to carry out that big idea has been amazing. I definitely recommend all researchers to try it.

We understand that CompMusic also focusses on Turkish-makam (Turkey), Arab-Andalusian (Maghreb), and Beijing Opera (China). Have you developed any products in these markets? If yes, did you find a difference between India and these markets?

CAMUT was focused in the Indian market and now we just received another PoC Grant, for the TECSOME project, in order to exploit other CompMusic technologies in a more international context. We still do not know how it will work. The music market is a very difficult one, especially in those countries, so we are trying to approach our exploitation goal with a more global perspective. We have one and a half years to explore that. We will see how it works.

Are there any tips that you would like to give to prospective ERC grantees in India?

CompMusic has been the most relevant research project I have carried out in my academic career, and the most rewarding one. I cannot think of any type of funding, other than the ERC grants, that would have allowed me to do such a project. The possibility of thinking big and of being able to carry out that big idea has been amazing. I definitely recommend all researchers to try it.

Clearly the ERC grant allowed me to do a major advancement in my research career, and I should be able to build on top of it. I have quite a number of research ideas that can benefit from the outcomes of CompMusic. I now hope I can find a way to carry them out.

What do you plan to do once the CompMusic project finish?

This is a difficult question. The period of the CompMusic project has been the most rewarding period in my whole academic career. So when that time finishes, and CompMusic is finishing in 2 months, it is really a big change. Once you experience the research opportunities that such project brings, it is really difficult to go back to the "regular" academic life. Clearly the ERC grant allowed me to do a major advancement in my research career, and I should be able to build on top of it. I have quite a number of research ideas that can benefit from the outcomes of CompMusic. I now hope I can find a way to carry them out.

Thank you very much for your contribution Xavier!!



4 In case you missed it...

4.1 From our Flashnotes (April-June)

(click on the respective link for more details)

Still open calls and selected News:

[Funding Opportunities 2017 May & June Issue](#)

News: [Celebrating 10-year of ERC](#)

News: [STARS Grants - Supporting TAleNT in "ReSearch@University" of Padova](#)

[The European Commission Horizon 2020 invites proposals for H2020-MSCA-IF-2017](#)

News: [Dedicated section to Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions \(MSCA\) on EURAXESS India](#)

[MSCA-IF Host Institution Offer I University of Jaén, Spain](#)

[MSCA-IF Host Institution Offer I LUMSA University, Italy](#)

[More hosting offers in the specific "Hosting" Section on EURAXESS Portal](#)

News: [4th Multisectoral Indo-Spanish Call for Technological Cooperation Projects](#)

News: [Newton Bhabha Fund Researcher Links Workshop Call for 2017-18](#)

News: [The German Chancellor Fellowship for tomorrow's leaders](#)

[MSCA IF Call 2017 - Hosting Offers in Spain](#)

News: [End and Results of EqUIP Project](#)

[EqUIP Pre-announced call on 'Sustainability, Equity, Wellbeing and Cultural Connections](#)

News: [EHEVF India & South Asia 2016 and EHEF India 2016 \(Catalogues\)](#)

News: [2 PhD positions for MSCA project at IBEI on explaining 'Global India'](#)

[MSCA IF Call 2017 – Hosting Offers at Silesian University of Technology \(Poland\)](#)

News: [Results of INNO INDIGO and INDIGO POLICY - Enhancing EU-India Cooperation in STI \(2013-2017\)](#)

News: [INNO INDIGO POLICY - 5th Newsletter](#)

News: [ERC Newsletter, Spring Issue 2017](#)



4.2 Event Outlook

Event (click on event title for more details)	Location	Date (2017)
1 Europe		
Events announced under Horizon 2020 website The website includes information on the Information Days by the European Commission and Brokerage events	<i>Check link</i>	<i>Check link</i>
International Scientific Events 2017 in Bulgaria in September	Bulgaria	1-11 September
Conference on Advances in Biomedical Research	Croatia	3-7 July
RemTechExpo 2017 - India targeted in Italy in September	Ferrara, Italy	19-22 September
ESOF (EuroScience Open Forum) 2018	Toulouse, France	9-14 July (2018)
2 India		
5 th EURAXESS Science Slam India – Pre-selection (Stage 1) Stay tuned on EURAXESS India	Online	August-October
European Research Day 2017 - Advancing Your Research Career in Europe: Funding and Fellowship Opportunities for Indian Researchers Stay tuned on EURAXESS India	Ahmedabad	15 September
3 rd Communicating Science Out of the Lab – EURAXESS Event Stay tuned on EURAXESS India	Chennai	11 November
5th EURAXESS Science Slam India – Live Finals (Stage 2) Stay tuned on EURAXESS India	Kolkata	8 December