

Europe attracts American researchers

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One of the goals of the European Research Council, ERC, is to bring the world's leading researchers to work in Europe. American Juleen Zierath is one of those who have received funds from the ERC. She found the best environment for her research at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden.

It's more usual that scientists leave Europe to work in the US. But Juleen Zierath, Professor of Clinical Integrative Physiology at Karolinska Institutet, has travelled in the opposite direction. An American who was educated in the US, she travelled to Sweden to carry out research. She is one of very few women who have been awarded one of Europe's most competitive and prestigious grants, the ERC Advanced Grant.

Juleen Zierath will present her personal perspective on the significance of the ERC for the research community at the annual conference organised by The American Association for the Advancement of Science, AAAS. She will also describe what living in Sweden as an American is like. The presentation is part of a symposium on crossing boundaries in research.

"The ERC is remarkable. It focuses on scientific excellence, has very little bureaucracy and gives significant funds to individual scientists. Many [Europeans](#) travel to the US to carry out research, but this is an effective magnet for attracting them back to Europe", says Juleen Zierath.

But Zierath is governed by more than just money. She emphasises how important it is to work at a quality university with a long tradition of

attracting excellent researchers. The strong ties between basic research and clinical research that are prevalent in Scandinavia are also crucial for success in [medical research](#).

Juleen Zierath misses American pizza and football, but in terms of research, environment, she feels she can enjoy the best of both the American and European culture. She has no plans to leave Sweden in the immediate future.

"I have a fantastic research environment that I would find it difficult to leave. And I like living in Stockholm. It's a cosmopolitan city, but even so I have wild deer and foxes in my garden, a few kilometres outside the city centre."

Professor Zierath's research focuses on improving the health of people with diabetes, and her research is always carried out close to patients. She is studying the cellular mechanisms that lead to the development of insulin resistance in type 2 diabetes. One of her achievements has been to discover the roles that certain genes play in the physiology of the cell and the body.

Provided by Karolinska Institutet

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