

institute has yet to prove its scientific worth. Teresa Madurell, a Spanish social-democrat MEP on the ITRE committee, suggests that the EIT should get no more than 3.1% of Horizon 2020's funds. Paul Rübiger, an Austrian Christian Democrat MEP who also sits on the committee, wants to trim that even further, suggesting that the EIT's remit be reduced to knowledge-transfer activities only.

The EIT's critics say that the money would be better spent on initiatives with a proven track record. The most popular programmes include the European Research Council (ERC), which dispenses excellence-based grants for frontier science, and the Marie Curie Actions programme, which provides career-development grants to young researchers. The commission proposed that the ERC's budget should rise by 77% to €13.3 billion, but Luke Georghiou, who studies European research policy at the University of Manchester, UK, expects opposition from member states in eastern Europe, which could hold up the budget negotiations. Scientists in those countries often lose out to those from research powerhouses such as the United Kingdom and Germany when ERC grants are allocated. Some say that the ERC should also fund those scientists with the 'potential for excellence'. Vicky Ford, a British Conservative member of the ITRE committee, counters that ERC funding should go only to excellent research.

The ERC tends to fund individual researchers, so during FP7 larger collaborations have relied on separate funding streams. But some scientists are concerned that funding for applied research has squeezed out support for basic science in these programmes. Over the past four years, calls for collaborative proposals in areas of basic science such as epigenetics and protein regulation have become less frequent, says Karin Metzloff, executive director of the European Plant Science Organisation in Brussels. She hopes that the ITRE committee meeting can help to make basic-science projects a bigger priority in Horizon 2020's collaborative-research programme, dubbed Societal Challenges.

Overall, research is likely to be spared the EU budget's most severe cuts, because politicians recognize that investing in science is central to boosting economic growth. Indeed, countries such as Spain, which has slashed domestic science spending owing to the financial crisis, will become more reliant on Horizon 2020 funds. That may even prompt them to give ground in negotiations on contentious issues such as human embryonic stem-cell research, says Georghiou. "They need to replace their national funding shortage," he says. ■



Marc Hauser left Harvard University in 2011 after the institution found him guilty of misconduct.

#### RESEARCH ETHICS

# Misconduct ruling is silent on intent

*Psychologist Marc Hauser admits errors but not fraud.*

BY EUGENIE SAMUEL REICH

**M**avens of research ethics often insist that there is a clear difference between sloppy science and scientific fraud. But if ever there was a case that blurs that line, it is that of Marc Hauser, a high-flying evolutionary psychologist who resigned from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 2011, after the university found him guilty of misconduct.

In a finding published on 6 September in the *Federal Register*, the US Office of Research Integrity (ORI) in Rockville, Maryland, which oversees science funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has also concluded that Hauser "engaged in research misconduct". The office found that he: "published fabricated data" in the journal *Cognition* in 2002<sup>1</sup>; "falsified" results in an unpublished study; and made false statements in four other instances. But the ORI did not state whether Hauser acted intentionally — its definition of misconduct also covers cases in which misrepresentations are "reckless".

That has provided enough wiggle room for both supporters and critics to claim the finding as a vindication. "It isn't a strong case for intentional misconduct. It seems it's peccadilloes," says Pierre Pica, a linguist at the French National

Center for Scientific Research in Paris, who has criticized the investigation. But Gerry Altmann, a psychologist at the University of York, UK, and editor-in-chief of *Cognition*, disagrees. "The number of instances [in the investigated body of work] suggests it is extremely unlikely it was not intentional," he says.

Harvard had found Hauser guilty of eight counts of misconduct in 2010, after a three-year internal investigation of some of his studies of cognition in non-human primates. To the annoyance of many scientists, the university did not release its findings, so exactly what Hauser had done remained unclear. The ORI provides details on six counts of misconduct, three of which were published<sup>1-3</sup>.

In a statement sent to *Nature*, Hauser acknowledges mistakes and errors, but not scientific fraud or research misconduct, which the ORI says he neither admits nor denies. "Although I have fundamental differences with some of the findings in the ORI report," Hauser says, "I acknowledge that I made mistakes. I let important details get away from my control, and as head of the lab, I take responsibility for all errors made within the lab, whether or not I was directly involved." No one else who worked in Hauser's lab has been charged with misconduct.

The ORI often resolves allegations ▶



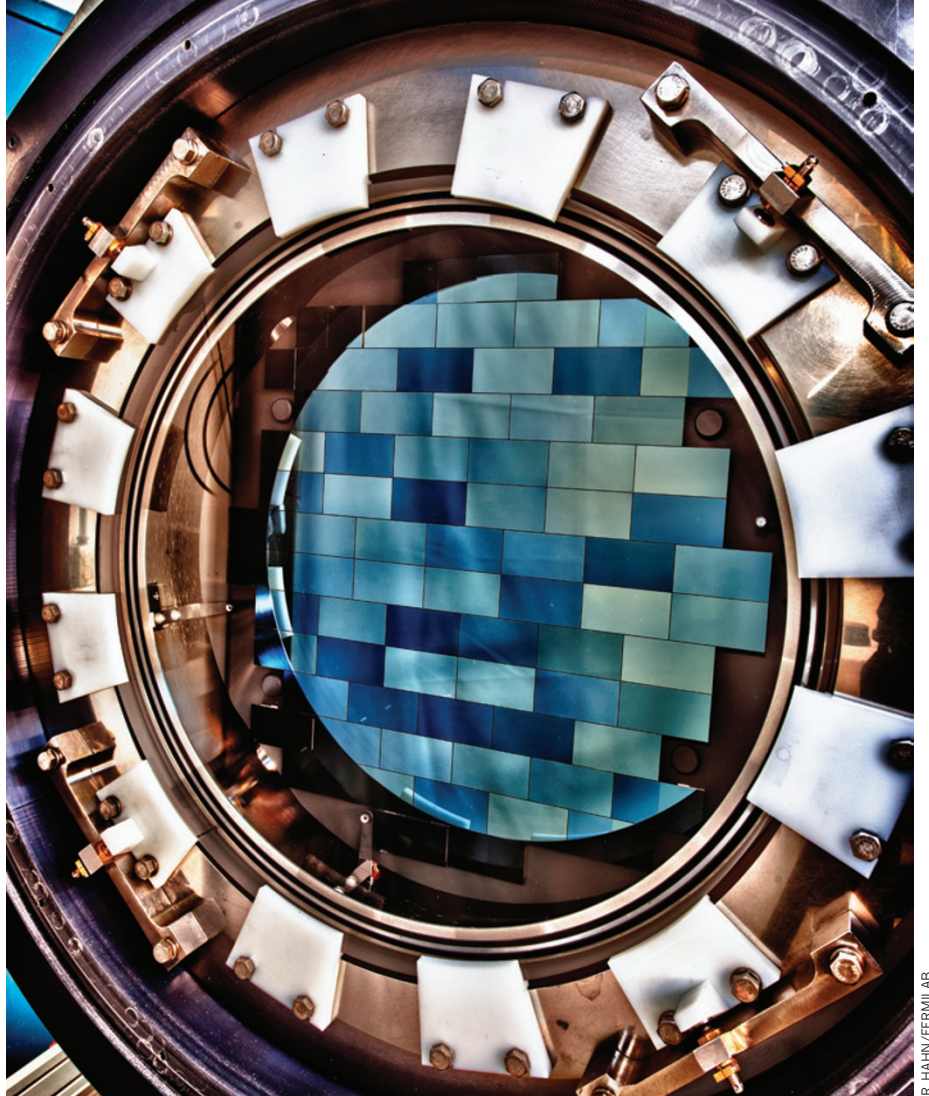
► against scientists through a settlement agreement, which helps the reputedly overstretched office to save on legal resources. Hauser's settlement means that he escapes the harshest possible punishment — a ban on future NIH funding — and must instead submit a supervisory plan that will ensure integrity if he applies to the agency for any future research grants. (The agency spent at least US\$790,000 on grants that funded work affected by the misconduct.)

Bennett Galef, an expert in animal behaviour at McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada, reviewed evidence used in the Harvard investigation at the request of Hauser's lawyer, and questions the ORI's use of the word "fabricated" to describe the errors in the *Cognition* paper<sup>1</sup>. "That is a conceivable read of what happened, but it's slanted," he says. According to Galef, lab records show that in the study, which examined habituation to sound patterns, two groups of tamarin monkeys were played the same stimuli instead of different ones, as the paper reported. Galef says that this was because of an error in the computer program that played the stimuli, which the authors plausibly didn't know about because the protocol called for them to be blinded to the stimuli at the time they coded the monkeys' responses. "It was a big mistake. It was definitely a disaster, but whether there was any fabrication, you don't know," says Galef.

ORI officials familiar with Hauser's case could not comment because of government privacy rules. The inspector-general of the National Science Foundation, which also funded Hauser, is still looking into one of the misconduct counts found by Harvard; the remaining instance was referred to the ORI but has been deemed outside its statute of limitations. Harvard says that the graduate students and post-docs who were working in Hauser's lab have been relocated to other labs within the university.

Hauser has now begun a different chapter in his life, working with at-risk youth. His website states that he has co-founded a company called Gamience, which develops computer games to teach self-control and other cognitive skills, and is working with a non-profit company that serves schools on Cape Cod, called the Cape Cod Collaborative, in Bourne, Massachusetts. "This work is deeply satisfying and I look forward to making new contributions to human welfare, education and the role of scientific knowledge in understanding human nature," Hauser says. ■

1. Hauser, M. D., Weiss, D. & Marcus, G. *Cognition* **86**, B15–B22 (2002).
2. Hauser, M. D., Glynn, D. & Wood, J. *Proc. R. Soc. B* **274**, 1913–1918 (2007).
3. Wood, J. N., Glynn, D. D., Phillips, B. C. & Hauser, M. D. *Science* **317**, 1402–1405 (2007).



R. HAHN/FERMLAB

The Dark Energy Survey camera will investigate millions of galaxies for the subtle effects of weak lensing.

## COSMOLOGY

# Cameras to focus on dark energy

*A pair of detectors that measure minute distortions in images of distant galaxies will probe the riddle of cosmic acceleration.*

BY ERIC HAND

Even the best pictures of a distant galaxy are a bit lopsided. But this is an attribute, not a bug. Because mass distorts space-time, light coming from distant galaxies is bent as it passes through intervening shoals of invisible matter, leaving the images of these distant objects minutely sheared and stretched.

Two astronomical surveys now scheduled to come online seek to take advantage of this effect, which is known as weak gravitational lensing. The surveys aim to use the technique to get a firmer handle on dark energy, the mysterious force that is apparently speeding up the

expansion of the Universe. By observing the patterns of distortions across large swathes of sky (see 'Falling into line'), astronomers hope to map the density and distribution of dark matter, the web-like invisible scaffolding around which visible matter is thought to have first coalesced. Then, by looking at changes in this hidden web across cosmic time, they hope to discern the imprint of dark energy.

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Read more about the search for dark energy at:  
[go.nature.com/cz3f64](http://go.nature.com/cz3f64)

Observers already study the effects of dark energy by tracking cosmic landmarks: the standard candles of distant supernovae and the