

## DEAN'S OFFICE

**MARÍA S. SOENGAS**  
Dean for Academic Affairs

### Participants

Mónica Álvarez, Ana F. Batalha, Hugo Bernard, Jasminka Boskovic, Bruna Calsina, Daniela Cerezo, Almudena Chaves, Guillermo de Cárcer, Lucía

T. Díez, Silvia Janeiro, Eleonora Lapi, Ana Losada, Jorge Martínez, Raúl Martínez, David Olmeda, Laura Remacha, María Rigau, Federica Schiavioni



The CNIO is recognised for the relevance and international projection of our Scientific Programmes. Key to this success is a solid core of undergraduate students, predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows, medical residents and a broad spectrum of visiting scientists. In fact, personnel in training constitute over 60% of the workforce in our institute. As such, the CNIO dedicates particular emphasis to career development, supported in part by highly competitive PhD and Postdoctoral Programmes. Agreements are also in place with multiple universities and medical centres, to ultimately bridge the gap between academic and clinical environments. Also very successful are our undergraduate summer internships, as well as diverse exchange and visitor programmes. Ultimately, our mission is to nurture and foster the development of our scientists-in-training, in order to maximise their chances of success.

The CNIO Student Association (CNIOSA) and Postdoc Association (CNIOPDA) are the driving forces behind an

inspiring series of seminars and workshops that we hold throughout the year. In this context, scientific reasoning, grant writing, manuscript organisation and CV preparation are just some of the many topics covered in our curriculum. Likewise, we acknowledge that career options extend beyond the bench and we therefore pay special attention to the areas of public communication, management of intellectual property, and the creation of *start-ups* or *spin offs*. These activities are performed in concert with CNIO's Training Programmes and the Innovation and Communication Offices that are both deeply committed to providing the best environment for our personnel. We are most grateful to the *Fundación Jesús Serra*, for their continuous support to strengthen career development programmes at the CNIO.

We believe that an informed society is better prepared to understand (and if needed, face) the diseases that constitute human cancer. Therefore, we are actively involved in

knowledge dissemination. Members of CNIOSA and CNIOPDA have participated in various school visits and Open Doors activities such as the *Semana de la Ciencia* or the *European Researchers'Night*; all these events were highly attended, attracting over 250 participants of all ages.

A particularly inspirational event this year was our Annual CNIO Lab Day. We were fortunate to host **Simon Gifford**, co-founder of *Mashauri Limited*, Director of *Genesis Management Consulting* and Professor at the prestigious *Instituto de Empresa*. Gifford gave an inspiring talk on how MBAs and entrepreneurs think and behave differently. He also spoke about his personal experience in setting up various consulting companies, emphasising the value of risk-taking and independent thinking. We also had seven outstanding talks given by CNIO trainees that covered exciting discoveries in the fields of epidemiology, epigenetics, proteomics, metastasis and drug development. Progress made in other basic and translational aspects of cancer were discussed in over sixty posters, which together emphasised the breadth of research covered by our different Scientific Programmes.

Another main highlight of the Lab Day was the announcement of the recipients of our '*Director's List Awards*'. These are recognitions of outstanding contributions made by our personnel in 3 categories: (1) predoctoral fellows with publications of the highest scientific impact; (2) excellence in research by postdoctoral and staff investigators; and (3) altruistic volunteering to further the mission of the Centre related to training, scientific divulgation and outreach.

### 1. Awards for Excellence in Research by Predoctoral Fellows

Early in the year, the family Agüera-Nieto contacted the CNIO about giving a donation to support research conducted by young scientists. This led to the inauguration of the '*Antonia Nieto Award*', in honour of their mother, to recognise the PhD student authoring the article with the highest impact. In 2016, the award went to Lluç Mosteiro for her impressive work published in *Science* on the mechanisms of cellular reprogramming *in vivo*. We are still moved by the kindness and commitment of the Agüera-Nieto family, who came to the CNIO to hand over this award and to share their multiple ideas and suggestions for the *Amigos del CNIO* initiative. Their energy is yet an additional inspiration for us to further strive to make significant contributions towards the advancement of cancer research.

**“At the CNIO we aim high: to carry out the most innovative and competitive basic and translational research, and to best prepare our trainees for the future, so that they can fulfil their potential as influential leaders.”**

Additional awards in the PhD category were for Ana Teijeiro (*Cancer Cell*), Cristina Mayor-Ruiz (*Mol Cell*), Juan J. Montero (*Nat Commun*) and Eva Pérez-Guijarro (*Nat Commun*).

### 2. Award for Excellence in Research by Postdoctoral/ Staff Investigators

The awardee was Matilde Murga, for her outstanding contributions to the fields of DNA replication and genomic instability (*Mol Cell* and additional coauthored papers in *Nat Struct and Mol Biol*, *Oncotarget* and *Sci Signaling*).

### 3. Outstanding Contribution to Outreach and Awareness

This year's recipient was Guillermo de Cárcer, for his tireless efforts in the organisation of the European Researcher's Night. This is an event for which he coordinated over 50 volunteers, resulting in a flawless and exciting open-doors activity. The award was presented by Marcos Argumosa, who is himself an utterly impressive example of altruism, having run 10 consecutive marathons in 2015 to support the *Amigos del CNIO* initiative.

In summary, we are as proud as ever of the achievements accomplished by our vibrant community of young investigators at the CNIO. We thank all those public and private contributors that have helped to support and fuel their efforts, and will make sure that the next years will be even more successful in moving the cancer field forward in a meaningful manner for the patients.