



**CAROLINA POLA**  
Director of Innovation

**“Bringing discoveries into society as new medicines and technologies is a goal that we nurture with an overarching strategy and team effort.”**

Identifying how to leverage our innovation capacities and providing the means and framework to make it happen is the objective of the Direction of Innovation. To turn a scientific discovery into a product requires the identification of those specific scientific results that have the potential to change how a disease, such as cancer, is diagnosed, treated or managed.

The excellent science that emanates from the research carried out by CNIO's investigators is the ideal ground for innovation to thrive. As such, the CNIO has taken part in the Milner Therapeutics Institute since its inception as an affiliate academic institution. In this role, the Centre has had the opportunity to interact with numerous industry partners during the first symposium held in Cambridge in October 2018. This year, the reach out activities of the Direction of Innovation, in close collaboration with the Office of Technology Transfer and Valorisation, also included the marketing of our technologies and capabilities in bio-business meetings, such as BioSpain that was held in Seville, Spain, as well as in other forums. Such efforts have resulted, among others, in meetings with four important venture capitals looking for new opportunities in the biomedical field, and a myriad of interactions with other industry partners, including their open innovation and academic scouting departments.

Our academic drug discovery programme continues to contribute to closing the valley of death and to developing a pipeline that feeds from the invaluable discoveries made by CNIO investigators as novel targets and innovative phenotypic screenings. This year, we have made great strides to increase the openness of the programme in order to become the drug discovery unit of reference for other centres of excellence in Spain, which currently lack our drug discovery capabilities.

In 2018, *CaixaImpulse* awarded two innovation projects led by CNIO researchers: an innovative project to further advance one of our lead drug discovery programmes, led by Maria Blasco; and another innovative advanced therapeutic approach, headed by Sandra Rodríguez-Perales. Moreover, collaborations with industry, along with the licensing activities of our antibodies and sales, underscore co-development opportunities and also represent about 15% of the total income of the CNIO. In 2018, up to 7 discoveries and technologies were identified and protected to be further developed into novel technologies, and conversations continue with a recently created start-up, Senolytic Therapeutics, in order to identify synergies for advancing their products. We expect 2019 to be a year in which we will continue to reap an increasing amount of benefits from our efforts.