

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

CAROLINA POLA Director of International Affairs



In 2018, we succeeded at consolidating our key alliances, thus adding to the goal of the Centre to reinforce CNIO's scientific leadership. We started off the year by implementing a strategy to focus on the promotion, participation in, and coordination of international scientific consortia; the execution of this strategy has created a considerable momentum that we will continue to push forward in light of the upcoming European framework programme. The active engagement of the Department of International Affairs (IAs) with the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (MICIU), the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI), the Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT), the European Commission and other funding actors is crucial to better understand where the opportunities lie and how to leverage our strengths and opportunities.

As 'Severo Ochoa' Centre of Excellence and member of the *Severo Ochoa* and *Maria de Maetzu* Alliance (SOMMa), IAs keeps leading the Work package of Outreach and provides a bridge between the activities of SOMMa and the CNIO. In particular, in November, the CNIO co-organised with SOMMa the first '100xCiencia' conference taking place within the alliance's framework. CNIO hosted the meeting, bringing together more than 140 people, both from SOMMa as well as from centres interested in sharing projects and views on Science Education and Public Engagement initiatives. The programme, which grasped the attention of various media outlets, hosted a roundtable with science representatives from various political parties and provided a forum for discussion with different societal actors. The impact and dissemination of the event was aligned with the objectives of SOMMa and CNIO to reach out to society and spread the knowledge obtained by the Spanish scientific community.

We have not ceased efforts to expand our reach, and this year—with the invaluable and instrumental collaboration of the *Ramón Areces* Foundation—the partnership with the prestigious Weizmann Institute of Science (WIS) is taking shape and growing into a fruitful alliance. The first call for CNIO-WIS joint projects was launched in June and the awarded projects will kick off in 2019. The Alliance has agreed that a second CNIO-WIS joint symposium on Cancer Discovery will take place in Israel for further strengthening the partnership and sowing the seeds for future collaborations. There is full commitment from all the partners in this tripartite alliance to achieve a model of international collaboration that will soon show a strong impact on science.

**“Establishing and consolidating international partnerships remains an overarching goal to promote CNIO institutional leadership. We strive to foster collaborations and participation in H2020 and focus on preparing the Centre to excel in the upcoming Horizon Europe.”**

The CNIO has paid special attention to establishing a cancer research consortium in drug discovery for the Spanish Association Against Cancer (AECC) Accelerator Awards call, which we believe can exert a great impact on the field of cancer and contribute to speed up progress in oncology. The rippling effect of such consortia, that comprise top scientists from Spain, UK and Italy, will serve the international cancer community at large. In 2018, the CNIO also actively participated in the first symposium organised by the Milner Therapeutics Institute in Cambridge, an international drug discovery-focused alliance in which the CNIO is an affiliate academic member. This alliance is key to place the CNIO at the heart of drug discovery in Europe and to boost collaborations with the big industry players in the field of biomedicine.