One of the principal goals of the CNIO is to increase its training capacity in order to give students and professionals the opportunity to advance their careers in the healthcare sector. During 2020, the CNIO signed several new agreements with Spanish Universities and other institutions, namely with the Universidad de Salamanca, Universidad de Valencia, Universidad de Alicante, Universidad de Alcalá, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia y Universidad del País Vasco, IES Siglo XXI, IES Lope de Vega, IES Antonio Machado, IES San Juan de la Cruz y el Instituto Técnico de Estudios Profesionales, Centro Educativo CEU-Instituto Superior de Estudios Profesionales, and Sociedad Cooperativa Madrileña de Enseñanza Alhucema.

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**TRANING OF BSC/MSC STUDENTS**

The CNIO is committed to training junior scientists at the onset of their careers. To this end, the Centre has established a Programme that offers BSc and MSc students the opportunity to obtain hands-on practical laboratory experience by working on ongoing research projects in one of the CNIO groups. The CNIO offers 2 types of short-term laboratory training:

→ An annual Summer Training Programme for undergraduate students, from any country, who are in their last years of study in the biomedical field. The Programme encompasses 8 weeks of full-time laboratory training (292.5 hours). During this time, the students actively participate in research projects in one of the CNIO groups. During 2020, 1 student from Spain participated in this programme.

→ Additionally, students can apply for laboratory training throughout the academic year by directly contacting the Heads of CNIO’s individual Research Groups or Units. This year, 85 students participated in these programmes, of whom 4 ended up joining the CNIO as pre-doctoral students.
The training of PhD students in cutting-edge cancer research is of key importance to the CNIO. The Centre offers many opportunities for bright and dynamic university graduates, of all nationalities, to pursue an ambitious PhD project. Attesting to this, 14 students obtained their PhD degrees in 2020 and 21 others joined the CNIO in the same year. Over 15% of the 109 students working at the CNIO in 2020 were graduates from foreign universities, thus contributing to the internationalisation of the Centre.

Since 2008, the “la Caixa” Foundation offers international fellowships to PhD students to enable them to carry out their thesis projects in biomedical research in Spanish centres of excellence, such as the CNIO. During 2020, 2 pre-doctoral students received a doctoral fellowship from the INPhINIT excellence, such as the CNIO. During 2020, 52 postdoctoral fellows worked at the CNIO. Notably, about one third of these fellows were from outside of Spain, many coming from very prestigious international institutions.

In 2020, the Fundación Banco Santander funded a highly competitive fellowship programme aimed at supporting outstanding young scientists who have been trained in the UK or in the USA, and who wish to start or continue their postdoctoral training at the CNIO. This last call resulted in contracting 1 postdoctoral scientist.

Thanks to the donations received through the “CNIO Friends” platform, the fifth call of the “CNIO Friends” Postdoctoral Contract Programme, launched in 2020, resulted in the recruitment of 6 scientists for a 2-year period each.

One of the CNIO’s prime objectives is to attract young researchers who have recently obtained their PhD or MD degrees, and to offer them highly attractive research projects at the forefront of cancer research.

In 2020, 2 postdoctoral fellows worked at the CNIO. Notably, about one third of these fellows were from outside of Spain, many coming from very prestigious international institutions.

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The distribution of students across the CNIO’s Research Programmes in 2020 was as follows: 68% of students worked in the Biotechnology Programme, and 6% in the Clinical Programme, 0% in the Experimental Therapeutics Programme, 13% in the Structural Programmes in 2020 was as follows: 68% of students worked in the Biotechnology Programme, and 6% in the Clinical Programme, 0% in the Experimental Therapeutics Programme, 13% in the Structural Programmes...
POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

In addition, the CNIO — in collaboration with academic institutions across Spain — provides access to a variety of postgraduate programmes that cover the areas of Cellular & Molecular Biology, Molecular Biomedicine, Biotechnology, Biocomputing, Clinical & Applied Cancer Research, and Therapeutic Targets.

Official Postgraduate Programmes in Molecular Biosciences

The majority of the international postgraduate trainings offered at the CNIO are developed in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Sciences at the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM). These trainings fall under 4 official Postgraduate Programmes, namely, the Doctorate in Molecular Biosciences, Master's in Biomolecules & Cell Dynamics, Master's in Molecular Biomedicine, and Master's in Biotechnology. CNIO also collaborates with the UAM as a partner institution of UAM’s Doctoral School (EDUAM) and is a member of the Management Committee.

Master's Degree in Biocomputing Applied to Personalised Medicine and Health

The Master's in Bioinformática Aplicada a la Medicina Personalizada y la Salud is organised together with the National School of Health of the National Institute of Health Carlos III (Escuela Nacional de Sanidad del Instituto de Salud Carlos III, ENS-ISCIII).

Official Master's Degree in Clinical and Applied Cancer Research

The CNIO and the CEU-San Pablo University in Madrid (USP-CEU) co-organise a Postgraduate Training Programme in Clinical and Applied Cancer Research: the Máster Universitario en Investigación Clínica y Aplicada en Oncología.

Official Master's Degree in Therapeutic Targets of Cell Signalling: Research and Development

The CNIO collaborates with the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Department at the University of Alcalá de Henares (UAH) for the Máster Oficial en Dianas Terapéuticas en Señalización Celular: Investigación y Desarrollo.

LABORATORY TRAINING FOR TECHNICIANS

This training programme has been developed for students in Anatomical Pathology, Clinical Diagnostic Laboratory, and Archiving/Recording. It is organised through agreements with 19 institutions that provide secondary education for laboratory technicians in Spain. It provides students with hands-on knowledge in cellular and molecular biology techniques. The programme consists of 14 weeks (370-400 hours) of laboratory training. Of the 5 students who participated in this programme in 2020, 1 was hired by the CNIO.

TRAINING FOR MDs

In line with CNIO’s commitment to bridge the “bench to bedside” gap, the Centre offers 3 training opportunity programmes to MDs and other health care professionals. Training usually consists of a 3-month period during residency. In 2020, 7 medical residents from 5 different hospitals enjoyed the benefits of rotations within the different Groups and Units at the CNIO.

ADVANCED TRAINING OF SCIENTISTS THROUGH EXTRAMURAL PROGRAMMES

During 2020, the Ramón y Cajal Programme supported 6 scientists. This special initiative, established in 2001 by the former Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology (currently the State Research Agency of the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation) aims to encourage Spanish or foreign scientists working abroad to return to or relocate to Spain. Successful candidates are selected on the basis of their potential capacity to lead independent projects and groups, or to contribute successfully to the ongoing research in the existing groups. Fourteen other scientists are funded by similar programmes, including the Juan de la Cierva programme (Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, 6 contracts); the Miguel Servet programme (2 contracts) of the Institute of Health Carlos III; and the Spanish Association Against Cancer (AECC, 6 contracts).

VISITING RESEARCHERS PROGRAMME

The Jesús Serra Foundation, part of the Catalana Occidente Group, aims to help eminent international specialists work together with CNIO researchers for a few months in order for them to expand their knowledge in areas of common interest. During 2020, Scott Lowe, from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York (USA), and Sonia Lain, from the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm (Sweden), were beneficiaries of the Jesús Serra Foundation’s Visiting Researchers Programme.

“SCIENCE BY WOMEN” PROGRAMME

Thanks to the “Science by Women” Programme, launched by the Spanish Fundación Mujeres por África, the CNIO selected Mai Tolba, from Ain Shams University (Egypt), to carry out a 6-month stay at the CNIO during 2020.