

Fundación Jesús Serra and CNB-CSIC present the winners of the new research grants programme

Fundación Jesús Serra, of Grupo Catalana Occidente, continues to support research by financing several scientific projects at the National Biotechnology Centre (CNB-CSIC) through grants.

Five young researchers receive four grants and a contract to conduct their doctoral thesis at the CNB.

Fundación Jesús Serra, of Grupo Catalana Occidente, continues its support for research under a new collaboration with the National Biotechnology Centre (CNB-CSIC). The winners of the [first call](#) for research grants for young researchers were announced following the meeting of the evaluation committee at the CNB-CSIC headquarters in Madrid. The success of the call can be seen in the quantity and quality of the proposals received: six applications for research grants worth 15,000 euros each for four emerging CNB-CSIC groups; 20 applications for completing a doctoral thesis in a project directed by CNB-CSIC researchers through a four-year contract; and an additional 6,000 euros for training expenses during this time.

The financial assistance awarded to complete a doctoral thesis in CNB-CSIC groups went to Yolanda Rodríguez Carrasco, a researcher in the Department of Immunology and Oncology, whose research group is working on the study of cellular signalling networks that govern the behaviour and activation of B lymphocytes.

In addition, the four grants allocated for emerging groups at the centre were awarded to young researchers Juana Antonia Ávila-Flores, James Pelletier, Luis F. Seoane and Adrián Valli. The trajectory and innovative projects of these four scientists reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the research conducted at the CNB-CSIC, which addresses issues with a high impact on society, such as agriculture, health and the environment.

Winners

The project by **Antonia Ávila-Flores**, a researcher in the Department of Immunology and Oncology, focuses on the potential of diacylglycerol kinase enzymes as a reinforcement in antitumour therapy and in the search for the mechanisms to regulate these enzymes in different types of cells involved in the immune response.

Thanks to the help of Fundación Jesús Serra, **James Pelletier**, a researcher in the Systems Biology Department, financed by the International Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSP) will investigate essential physiological processes in cells with a minimum genome and develop technologies for their application as therapies.

About Fundación Jesús Serra

Fundación Jesús Serra is a non-profit organisation created in memory of Jesús Serra Santamans, a well-known businessman and sponsor and founder of Grupo Catalana Occidente. The foundation develops and supports projects in the areas of research, education, business, social action, sports, and promotion of the arts, with a common goal: a responsible commitment to society.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mar Torrents
m.torrents@romanrm.com
Tel. 934 142 340

Luis F. Seoane, a researcher in the Systems Biology Department, focuses his research on mathematical modelling of brain plasticity and the development of new systems for analysing complex networks in areas such as network theory, linguistics or economic and social systems. Thanks to the help of Fundación Jesús Serra, Seoane will be able to conduct scientific research and establish collaborations in various leading international laboratories in the field.

The project by Adrián Valli, researcher for the Ramón y Cajal programme in the Department of Plant Molecular Genetics, focuses on developing tools to control viral infections that affect plant species used in the agricultural and food sectors by means of innovative biotechnological approaches.

The doctoral thesis project led by Dr **Yolanda Rodríguez Carrasco** will focus on the role of the diacylglycerol kinase protein in the B-lymphocyte-mediated immune response, a project that will allow for personalised approaches to immunotherapy.

First call for grants from the Fundación Jesús Serra and CNB-CSIC

The collaboration between Fundación Jesús Serra, of Grupo Catalana Occidente, and the Spanish National Biotechnology Centre (CNB-CSIC) began in 2019 with its direct support for research projects on COVID-19 related topics. This latest call by the Foundation goes one step further in its support for research and the values it represents, funding several scientific projects at the CNB under an agreement signed between the two entities in December 2021.

This initiative is a demonstration of the foundation's interest in continuing to contribute to the development of research conducted at the CNB-CSIC with two types of grants aimed at young researchers.

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