



## Welcome to the CNB

CNB DIRECTOR:

**Carmen Castresana**

In November 2012, we celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of the CNB, an important age for an institute and an important time to acknowledge the contribution of all CNB personnel who have devoted their efforts to the creation of an excellent research institute, of which we have many reasons to feel proud.

The pathway has not been and it is not easy. We have faced many difficulties, in particular those derived from the constraints imposed by a system that lacks the flexibility needed to solve our daily problems and maintain the centre at the forefront of scientific development. The unconditional dedication of our personnel and their devotion to science have nonetheless allowed us to raise the funds needed to cope with these problems and to achieve scientific results of exceptional quality.

In the last two years, CNB researchers have contributed to the publication of 424 papers in ISI-listed journals, 35 of which were published in journals with an impact factor above 10. As proof of its dynamism, the CNB obtained 125 grants (11 from the European Union VII Framework Programme), submitted 54 PhD theses, taught more than 400 hours in Master's degree programmes and workshops in Spain and abroad, hosted 322 seminars and organised 18 international workshops and meetings. The numbers speak for themselves of the international nature of the CNB; near 40% of the papers published by our scientists are the result of collaborations with international scientific groups. As a result of this, the CNB is attractive to young scientists from abroad, who currently make up 38% of the pre- and post-doctoral personnel

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of the centre. At this point, I want to acknowledge the initiative by the Fundación La Caixa in offering fellowships for international PhD students to carry out their thesis projects at the CNB. As a result of the 2011 and 2012 calls, the CNB selected 20 excellent students from all over the world to initiate their PhD studies at the centre.

All these scientific indicators were appreciated by the CNB Scientific Advisory Board, who participated in a special act in November 2012 to commemorate the CNB's 20th anniversary. For this occasion, Her Majesty Sofia, Queen of Spain visited the CNB in February 2013, accompanied by relevant authorities from the government, the CSIC and the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. All had the opportunity to listen to a few words from previous CNB Directors and to visit some of our most attractive installations.

In recent times, we are encountering a new and worrying situation derived from the economic crisis in Spain, which translates into a 36% reduction in our funding in the last two years. These cuts have already caused the loss of nearly 20% of the people working at the CNB, and if it is not stopped we will soon suffer other negative effects that might severely affect the progress of our research.

At this point, I would like to acknowledge the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), on whose campus the CNB is located, for establishing the UAM+CSIC International Campus of Excellence. As part of this initiative, the UAM has contributed to the creation of a number of technological platforms in which the CSIC institutes collaborate in close interaction with the university. This initiative promotes the acquisition of new equipment and infrastructure that will partially alleviate the shortage of funds we presently face.

Despite the difficult situation, we are making the efforts necessary to maintain our position and develop our scientific potential. One of our principal challenges is to strengthen the biotechnological value of the CNB. As an initial effort in this direction, in the present report we include a specific section devoted to innovation, which highlights results patented at the CNB and licensed to companies for translation into benefits for society. This section also includes a technological offer that describes patented CNB discoveries for which we are searching for an industrial partner. Our compromise with the innovation facet of our research will be strongly pursued through the organisation of meetings, seminars and projects in which the CNB will open its doors, facilities, knowledge and discoveries to biotechnology companies. Equally important, and as part of our compromise with society, we want to transmit and help the public understand our need as a country to maintain the scientific position we have achieved in recent years. In these difficult times, we seek and hope to find the help of foundations and organisations that are conscious of the situation and could play a critical role in helping us to preserve the present and future value of our scientists and technological developments.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the agencies and institutions that have funded CNB research in the last two years and to express again my admiration of all CNB personnel who, by performing excellent work, help to keep the centre running and moving towards the accomplishment of our objectives.