

The Center for Cooperative Research in Biomaterials CIC biomaGUNE celebrates its 15th anniversary

15 years devoted to cutting-edge research in the field of biomaterials and knowledge transfer to industry and society

CIC biomaGUNE is celebrating its 15th anniversary at the Miramar Palace in Donostia, where a symposium will be held with the participation of research professionals trained at the center

Donostia-San Sebastian. 14 December, 2021. The Center for Cooperative Research in Biomaterials –[CIC biomaGUNE](#), member of the Basque Research and Technology Alliance ([BRTA](#)), has been conducting cutting-edge research at the interface between Chemistry, Biology and Physics since 2006. Its main lines of research address the design, preparation and characterization of biofunctional nanostructures and their biological evaluation *in vitro* and *in vivo* for use in the study of biological processes and in the development of biomedical tools, such as theranostic platforms (which combine therapeutic and diagnostic capabilities), multi therapeutic platforms, regenerative medicine or multimodal imaging tools.

Throughout today they will be celebrating their 15th anniversary at the Miramar Palace in Donostia in a scientific event in which lectures will be delivered by researchers who have been trained at CIC biomaGUNE and who have continued their careers in the world of science and technology. In addition, Professor Joao Mano from the University of Aveiro (Portugal) will be welcomed as a special guest and will be receiving the Madinaveitia-Lourenço Award from the Royal Spanish Society of Chemistry (RSEQ).

Center of reference across the world

Since embarking on its research activity, CIC biomaGUNE has achieved international recognition thanks to the excellent scientific results obtained, which can be summed up in more than 1,400 research articles in high-impact journals that have received more than 45,000 citations, 74 completed PhD theses and 33 theses in progress, as well as 19 applications for patents, 7 of which have been granted and 6 licensed. It has also signed more than 200 research agreements with companies and external partners. CIC biomaGUNE has participated in setting up 2 spin-off enterprises (MD-Renal and [Asparia Glycomics](#)) and has been awarded more than 325 research projects including 8 prestigious ERC (European Research Council) grants, the GRAPHENE FLAGSHIP project (one of the largest research initiatives funded by the European Commission) and a Research Chair funded by the AXA Research Fund.

International recognition of the academic excellence of CIC biomaGUNE research staff is also reflected in prestigious awards (including the National Research Award, the Lilly Biomedical Research Award, the Horizon Award of the Division of Materials Chemistry of the Royal Society

of Chemistry, honorary doctorates, academy memberships and the recognition of three group leaders as Highly Cited Researchers, among others), as well as in a large number of invited contributions to give (plenary) lectures at international conferences.

"The success rate achieved in competitive projects (particularly European projects) is probably one of the highest in Spain. An undeniable maturity has been achieved with each of the Center's 11 research groups being recognized as leaders in their fields of specialization. Thanks to this very high scientific level, we have more and more contact with companies in different fields so that joint projects can be developed," said the Ikerbasque professor Luis Liz-Marzán, who has headed the center's Scientific Directorate for the last nine years.

CIC biomaGUNE has a unique research infrastructure equipped with the most advanced facilities in Nanoscience, Biomaterials and Molecular Imaging; besides fully equipped research laboratories, this includes Technology Platforms and the Molecular and Functional Imaging Facility –one of the largest preclinical imaging research infrastructures in Europe–.

The center was recognized in 2018 as a "María de Maeztu" Unit of Excellence by the Spanish Research Agency for meeting requirements of excellence, which are characterized by a high impact and degree of competitiveness in its field of activity on the global scientific stage. CIC biomaGUNE also has the seal of Excellence in Human Resources for Research awarded by the European Commission, the AAALAC certification for animal care, and the certification of its R+D+i management system in line with the UNE 166002:2014 standard.

Over the last 4 years, both the Center's staff and its R&D&i revenues have increased by 45%: there are now 167 people (51% women and 30% international staff) and its R&D&i revenues are expected to amount to nearly €14 M in 2021.

International success for the people who have been trained at this center

In the course of these fifteen years, CIC biomaGUNE "has gained national and international recognition thanks to the excellent scientific results achieved in the field of biomaterials. Among other achievements, our activity has led to the generation of knowledge, the internationalization of research through collaboration with international organizations and institutions, as well as the opening up of our facilities to the scientific community and the industrial sector", highlighted Liz-Marzán.

They are "especially proud of the fact that many of the people who have pursued their scientific training at CIC biomaGUNE have gone on to successful careers in the world of science and technology, working in companies or else at research centers and universities, even leading their own research groups. One of the great successes of CIC biomaGUNE has been the enormous commitment of its entire research staff, both in terms of contributing to its essential objectives as well as specifying joint projects. Team spirit is probably the most important value of CIC biomaGUNE", said Ikerbasque professor Aitziber L. Cortajarena, who will be taking up the position of Scientific Director of the Center in January 2022.