

## The Pasqual Maragall Foundation consolidates the growth of female research talent at the BBRC

- The Barcelonaβeta Brain Research Center, the Pasqual Maragall Foundation's research center, promotes the development of female talent at all stages of scientific careers: from training to the consolidation and leadership of scientific projects
- In 2025, women represent more than two thirds (68.4%) of the BBRC's workforce and play a prominent role in research and leadership
- The center has historically had a majority of women on its staff, a female presence that has grown progressively in recent years, both in new hires and in leadership roles and positions of scientific responsibility.



**Barcelona, 10 February 2026** – On the occasion of the **International Day of Women and Girls in Science (11F)**, promoting interest in science from an early age, making female role models visible, and creating real opportunities for girls are essential both for scientific progress and for building a more equitable society. In this context, the **Barcelonaβeta Brain Research Center (BBRC)**, the research center of the Pasqual Maragall Foundation, **reaffirms year after year its commitment to promoting female talent at all stages of scientific careers.**

In recent years, the BBRC has recorded **sustained growth in the number of women on its team**, an evolution that reflects the centre's commitment to creating an environment that **supports**

**equal opportunities and the development of research talent.** This trend can be observed both in the early stages of scientific training and in positions of responsibility and leadership.

*“Encouraging girls’ interest in science and ensuring they have the same opportunities to develop their research talent is not only a matter of equity, but also a key element in advancing towards higher-quality, more impactful science. Diversity in research teams fosters more innovative approaches and more comprehensive solutions, especially in fields such as health and biomedical research,”* says **Dr. Sandra Acosta, biologist specialising in neurodevelopment and Principal Investigator of the Brain Disorders Models research group at the BBRC.**

### **The BBRC increases female representation to 68.4% of its workforce in 2025**

Female representation at the BBRC is not incidental, but the result of a long-standing and sustained commitment. In recent years, the percentage of women has remained stable between 61% and 64%, **and in 2025 it increased to 68.4% of the total workforce.**

During 2025, women represented the majority of both trainee and consolidated research staff, accounting for 10 of the 14 predoctoral positions, 5 of the 7 postdoctoral positions, and 5 of the 10 principal investigator or group leader roles.

This trend is also reflected in recent hires. Throughout 2025, **of the 35 new staff members who joined the BBRC, 25 were women.** Likewise, most new collaborator incorporations and a significant proportion of university students in training at the center were women.

Research in Alzheimer’s prevention requires not only scientific excellence, but also rigorous and humane support for the volunteers who participate in studies such as the ALFA study, a pioneering research infrastructure that enables the longitudinal analysis of early changes associated with the disease before the onset of symptoms.

Making this type of research possible requires the coordinated work of **multidisciplinary teams** that support the entire process: from clinical research and participant support (including visit coordination, follow-up, and ensuring quality standards) to the **processing, preservation, and traceability of biological samples.** In parallel, research generates a very large volume of data, **making data management** and analysis equally essential to ensure quality, integrity, and scientific usability throughout the life cycle of research projects.

In this context, February 11 highlights the importance of recognising that science is built through a wide diversity of disciplines and professional trajectories, reinforcing the need to promote equal opportunities and the presence of women across all areas that make scientific progress possible.

*“Women play a fundamental role in research, as well as in clinical and operational fields, where many professional profiles make science happen. Giving visibility to this contribution is key to recognising our real weight and opening up new motivations”* says **Anna Soteras, Director of the Clinical Operations Facility.**

### **Promoting scientific vocations**

In addition to their research activities, throughout 2025 BBRC women researchers participated in outreach initiatives aimed at the educational community, from primary education to baccalaureate level, with the goal of bringing science closer to students and showcasing female role models in the STEAM field. Altogether, these initiatives reached more than 600 students.

### Alzheimer's in figures

It is currently estimated that Alzheimer's and neurodegenerative diseases affect 900,000 people, a figure that translates into one in ten over 65 years of age and a third of those over 85. These pathologies are one of the main causes of mortality, disability and dependence. If an effective cure is not found and with life expectancy on the rise, by 2050 the number of cases could triple in the world, exceeding one and a half million people in Spain alone, a fact that could collapse the health and care systems.

### About the Barcelonaβeta Brain Research Center and the Pasqual Maragall Foundation

The Barcelonaβeta Brain Research Center (BBRC) is the research centre of the Pasqual Maragall Foundation, promoted by the "la Caixa" Foundation since its creation, dedicated to the prevention of Alzheimer's disease and the study of the cognitive functions affected by healthy and pathological ageing. The BBRC's research focuses on the preclinical phase of Alzheimer's, a period before the onset of the first symptoms, when changes in the brain associated with the disease already occur. The BBRC has more than 100 professionals dedicated to contributing to the forefront of research into Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases.

The Pasqual Maragall Foundation is a non-profit organisation that was born in April 2008, in response to the commitment made by Pasqual Maragall, former mayor of Barcelona and former president of the Generalitat de Catalunya, when he publicly announced that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. The Foundation's mission is to promote research to prevent Alzheimer's and offer solutions that improve the quality of life of affected people and their families.

The Pasqual Maragall Foundation has the support of more than 100,000 members and with:



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