

February 11, International Day of Women and Girls in Science

BIST launches a program to boost female leadership in scientific research

- ◆ The 'Mothers of Science' grant launched this weekend, a call for fellowships to support researchers that are working towards transitioning to Group Leader positions
- ◆ The program also includes leadership training workshops and a mentorship network

Barcelona, February 12, 2018. *"At BIST, 41% of senior research positions are held by women, but only 15% of group leader positions are. It is therefore absolutely essential to put in place measures that allow this group of excellent, well-prepared and highly competitive researchers to achieve leadership positions, especially in our seven centers, and also to reinforce the assessment of their talent in the labour market",* explains Gabby Silberman, General Director of the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST).

To achieve this, BIST is launching the "BIST Empowering Women in Science" program, which includes the "Mothers of Science" grant whose call opened on February 11, the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. The grant is intended to support researchers with children who are in the process of competing for a leadership position in science. In total, 10 fellowships will be awarded to BIST researchers for up to one year and in the selection process, their scientific excellence and potential for becoming research leaders will be especially valued.

In addition to receiving these fellowships, the researchers selected for the "Mothers of Science" grants, as well as two of the finalists, will participate in several coaching sessions to support them in the development of their leadership skills. *"In short, it is about paving the way for the leadership of researchers who have already demonstrated their scientific excellence,"* stresses the BIST Director, who plans to expand the fellowship program in future calls with the support of private companies.

Another action within the BIST Empowering Women in Science program will be the implementation of a **mentorship network** that will connect junior researchers with scientific leaders, so that they can work together in their professional development. This initiative is based on one of the conclusions drawn at the BIST Round Table on Empowering Women in Science within the BIST Community, organized on November 28, 2017, with the aim of identifying the concerns and recommendations for female researchers in the BIST Community.

The organization of **round tables and debates** such the one from last November, is another action planned as part of the BIST initiative to work towards diversity in scientific leadership. This also includes carrying out **training programs** to promote researchers' leadership skills. Among BIST's immediate objectives for example, is reaching a minimum of 40% female participation in the **Leadership in Action** courses scheduled for April and October for post-doctoral researchers (female participation was 25% in 2017). Furthermore, specific content will be included to address the issue of gender equity in the "**Leading Science**" course for senior researchers, which will be held in May/June of this year.

Likewise, to promote gender equity and diversity, BIST has established a series of guidelines in the selection process of its **PROBIST post-doctoral fellowship program** (bist.eu/probist) in order to guarantee the presence of women both in the selection panels and among the candidates. In the first call of the program, 25 fellowships were awarded, 10 of which (40%) went to women.

The seven BIST centres have organized various activities that will take place throughout the month of February in celebration of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Taking advantage of this framework, Gabby Silberman presents the Mothers of Science grant today, Monday, February 12, at ICFO as part of the activities program of ICFO's Women in Science Month.

About BIST

The Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) is an initiative of seven research centers of excellence in Catalonia whose objective is to increase their collaboration in order to build a common scientific project. Its strength is based in the research capacity of its centers and in its potential to promote leading multidisciplinary research projects. The centers of the BIST are the [Center for Genomic Regulation](#) (CRG), the [Institute for Bioengineering of Catalonia](#) (IBEC), [The Institute of Photonic Sciences](#) (ICFO), the [Institute of Chemical Research of Catalonia](#) (ICIQ), the [Catalan Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology](#) (ICN2), the [Institute for High Energy Physics](#) (IFAE), and the [Institute for Research in Biomedicine](#) (IRB Barcelona).





For more information:

Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST)

Adela Farré

afarre@biobiz-communications.com

T. +34 626 992 057

Jenny Kliever

jkliever@bist.eu

T. +34 938 239 603

NOTES:

- Document: [*Summary Report of BIST Round Table on Empowering Women in Science within the BIST Community*](#) (November 28, 2017)
 - Data about the presence of women in science: 2015 scientific figures, Secretary of State for R + D + i (January 2017)
http://www.crue.org/Boletin_SG/2017/02.%20Febrero/Cientificas_en_cifras_2015.pdf
-