

## PRESS RELEASE

## The Barcelona City Council, BIST, and UPF sign the transfer of land usage rights to build the new scientific building at the Antic Mercat del Peix

- With today's signature, a plot of land measuring 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>, which until now has been assigned to Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) and occupied by a car park, is transferred to the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST).
- With a constructed area of 25,000 m<sup>2</sup>, the new BIST building is set to become a centre of reference in precision medicine. It will form part of the hub for research and innovation in health, biodiversity, and planetary wellbeing developed by the Government of Catalonia, the Barcelona City Council, and UPF, together with BIST and CSIC.

Barcelona, 21 July 2021. This morning, **Jaume Collboni**, First Deputy Mayor of the Barcelona City Council, **Oriol Amat**, Rector of Pompeu Fabra University (UPF), and **Gabby Silberman**, Director General of the [Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology](https://www.bist.eu) (BIST) signed a public deed formalising the transfer of a plot of almost 3,000 square metres of land where Barcelona's former Mercat del Peix used to be and currently occupied by a car park, to BIST. With this agreement, the construction of the new BIST building within the hub for research and innovation in health, biodiversity, and planetary wellbeing, being developed by the Generalitat, the Barcelona City Council, and UPF, together with BIST and CSIC, is launched.

The new building will be designed by the Barcelona-based architectural firm Barozzi Veiga, winner of the international competition organised by BIST. It will house some sixty research groups and more than 500 researchers from four BIST centres (CRG, IBEC, ICN2, and IRB Barcelona) working on the development of new insights for **precision medicine**. "Our challenge is to create a space that fosters multidisciplinary collaboration to find new and more efficient therapeutic approaches to challenges such as cancer and infectious diseases," said Gabby Silberman, BIST Director General. "With today's signature, we are symbolically laying the first stone of this great scientific project".

The Deputy Mayor, for his part, underlined the City Council's commitment to a project that aims not only to revitalise the Ciutadella Park area, but also to promote Barcelona's leadership as an international benchmark in research. "Today we are taking a big step towards making science a driving force for social and economic progress in Barcelona and we back the biotech sector, one of the strategic sectors of the Barcelona Green Deal. We have all the elements for our city to become the main hub for scientific spin-offs in Spain: we have the space, we have the universities, and we have the research centres. We will continue to work towards transferring technology to companies, to ensure that research also translates into improving people's lives and creating quality jobs," he said.

Oriol Amat, UPF Rector, noted that when in 2019 the Barcelona City Council, the Generalitat, and UPF signed the agreement to develop the "Ciutadella del Coneixement" project, "we knew we were launching a major urban transformation, but also a new model for collaboration among scientific institutions. Today's event is a reflection of this, with the contribution of the City Council".

## Institutional momentum

The construction of the building is scheduled to begin in 2022, with the support of the Generalitat de Catalunya. The Generalitat will likewise partially finance the Institute of Evolutionary Biology (IBE-CSIC) project, which will also form part of the research and innovation hub at the Mercat del Peix.

"For the Generalitat, this is a high-priority project," said Gemma Geis, Regional Minister for Research and Universities, "because it symbolises the willingness of all those involved to building a country that bases its progress and welfare on cutting-edge research and its transfer to society".

## About BIST

The Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) is a leading institution of multidisciplinary research encompassing seven Catalan research centres of excellence. By fostering collaboration among members of its diverse scientific community, BIST aims to play a leading role in pushing the frontiers of science while becoming a global reference for training outstanding research talent.

The centres of the BIST are the [Centre 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).



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