

## More than 11,000 students discover the most relevant women in cancer research through an interactive map

To celebrate the International Women and Girls in Science Day, the Spanish Association for Cancer Research (ASEICA) has organized 'CONÓCELAS'. This activity has connected in person or virtually more than 230 women scientists ('Cancer Detectives') with students from all corners of Spain, so they that discover how and who are the new generations of female researchers in the field of molecular oncology.

The objective of 'CONÓCELAS' is to enhance the visibility of women scientists in cancer research, in a dynamic and interactive way. "We are very excited about the interest that 'CONÓCELAS' has raised. Last year the activity was already a success, but in the 2022 edition we had a greater impact. We have received requests to connect more than 11,000 students with women scientists from all over Spain as well as from research centers abroad", indicates **Marisol Soengas**, vice president of ASEICA and general coordinator of this event.

"An important objective of 'CONÓCELAS' is to present leading women researchers that are dynamic and committed to science, who will explain their work and will show to children what cancer is and how is the work in a laboratory", adds **Luis Paz-Ares**, president of ASEICA.

### The 'Detectives' on the map: a list of cancer researchers

ASEICA has developed an [interactive map](#) that locates women scientists in cancer in Spain and abroad. "This map is the first of its kind," says **Ana Cuenda**, from the ASEICA Board of Directors and also coordinator of this event.



Sorted by Autonomous Communities, each 'Detective' has a file that includes both scientific references and more personal aspects of their lives, beyond the laboratory.



## Awards

Other novelty to highlight this year is that Merck Health Foundation and ASEICA have launched a call for the "1st **Fundación Merck Salud-ASEICA** Awards for the promotion of scientific vocations".

There are two categories of prizes. Two prizes will be awarded to the educational centers that were most involved in this initiative. In addition, to enhance visibility to our scientists, 40 Awards with 'Women's name' will be awarded to the women researchers who more actively participated in 'CONÓCELAS'. "We decided that it was important to establish this type of recognition, because the vast majority of science awards have men's name," says **Soengas**.

## Connecting with more than 11,000 students

Through this initiative, ASEICA aims to encourage all students and, in particular girls of different educational levels to become interested in Science, thanks to the opportunity to speak and ask directly to women scientists who are leaders in their research fields.



"Our intention is that 'CONÓCELAS' offers a fresh and different vision of the importance of working in a laboratory that, in the case of ASEICA members, aims to improve the health of cancer patients", comment researchers **María Caffarel** and **Verónica Torrano**, also coordinators of the event.

In the words of Marisol Soengas, 'CONÓCELAS' does not end here. We will continue working to generate new scientific vocations and to bring science closer to students and the society in general". In addition to the Merck Salud Foundation, CONÓCELAS has the collaboration of the Network of Associations of Spanish Researchers and Scientists Abroad (RAICEX).

---