

Madrid, January 3, 2024

Dear ASEICA members,

Happy New Year! Hope that 2024 will come full of great moments to celebrate in and outside science!

Last January we announced what was going to be a year-long celebration, as ASEICA was getting into its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At the Board we wanted to sincerely thank you for helping us surpass our expectations. A week ago we summarized main milestones of ASEICA-2023 in a letter written in Spanish, but we wanted to share them again with those of you, members and colleagues, that may be not be Spanish speakers.

Let me begin by highlighting the metrics from the **ASEICA-Communication Group**: 14 campaigns, 15 press releases, 48 brandnews, 10 videos and more than 120 news in TV, press and radio, all resulting in a over 7 million impressions in social media. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedicated effort of **Ana Cuenda**, our head of ASEICA-Communication, along with the Grupo R Communication Agency and the always insightful suggestions from **Xosé Bustelo** from the ASEICA Senate. Although these activities were detailed in the Presidency Report presented at the General Assembly during the Extraordinary Congress of ASEICA in A Coruña, I want to emphasize here the most relevant actions:

Regarding **advocacy**, the defense of R&D is, as you know, an essential part of ASEICA's DNA. This year, we released a document outlining "11 Measures for Improvement", which we shared with political parties in the context of the general elections. Additionally, we presented claims and proposals to the Government, the Ministries of Science and Universities, and the "Agencia Estatal de Investigación", to address the many concerns of our members in ASEICA, from predoctoral fellows to stablished investigators. We also organized the 5<sup>th</sup> Innovation Day with SEOM, accompanied by a press conference and the presentation to the media of the "Decalogue of proposals to boost transfer from oncology research". Lastly, we actively participated in committees related to the development of scientific policies, particularly those concerning equitable patient access to new treatments. For example, you can find information in our website about our participation in "Historias de Vida" with the ECO Foundation and MSD, as well as other roundtable discussions with various collaborating entities.

**ASEICA-Woman**, currently led by **Gema Moreno-Bueno and Patricia Sancho**, has continued to establish itself as a reference in actions aimed at overcoming gender barriers and promoting the professional development of female researchers. This year, they took to social media with #CONÓCELAS, which, after three editions, achieved the unprecedented record of connecting over 26,000 students (from primary schools to universities) with 300 woman scientists. In collaboration with the Merck Health Foundation we granted four awards to educational institutions and 40 awards to "Women in Cancer Research", the latter involving training workshops. Ongoing initiatives such as an interactive platform to "Place Women in the Map" are still underway. Stay tuned for new actions from ASEICA-Woman at the national and international levels.

The **ASEICA-Young** area, led by **Toni Celià-Terrassa, Ana Janic**, and **Anna Monfort**, has once again excelled in many fronts. Since 2020, they have organized 13 online Predoc meetings (Café Predocs), 15 Postdoc meetings and 16 Early PIs meetings. Additionally, they have run three leadership courses and 23 Meet the Expert seminars, having also expanded the ASEICA4You mentoring program. The enthusiasm of ASEICA-Young and their interest for setting up collaborative networks was evident in their II Retreat, held at full capacity in A Coruña in November, after having closed registration in just few hours. I invite you to visit our website to meet the representatives of each of these groups (almost 20 members). Anna Monfort has left us to pursue her professional career in another field, but we know we can count on her in ASEICA. Good luck in your new journey, Anna! With this farewell, we welcome **Juan Carlos López**, who will replace Anna. Juan Carlos is already familiar with ASEICA through his participation in the predoc group, and we know how proactive he is. Lucky to have you on board, Juan!

The **ASEICA-MED** area, currently coordinated by **Miguel Sanmamed** and Ignacio Durán, in collaboration with **Luis Paz-Ares** and **Rafael López**, has mobilized a think tank with specialists in various areas of oncology to promote the professional development of medical scientists. In this context, ASEICA-MED prepared a Statement ("Posicionamiento") with concrete proposals for improvement, which was also publicly presented and has generated great interest both, from the research community (with more than 10 entity endorsements) and government entities such as ISCIII. With this momentum, ASEICA-MED organized its II Retreat, also with ambitious plans for the future. Keep an eye for the yet-to-come of this group!

Within the **ASEICA-Learn** area, coordinated by **Luis Paz-Ares**, **Ignacio Durán**, and **Gema Moreno-Bueno**, in collaboration with the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, we launched the I ASEICA Diploma for Specialization in Translational Oncology. This diploma consists of 3 sets of basic, clinical, and translational modules, 36 teachers, personalized tutoring sessions and practical work. The feedback from participants has been so positive that a second edition is already underway!

After months of preparations throughout the year, we organized an **Extraordinary 40<sup>th</sup>-anniversary Congress** in A Coruña. I hope those who were able to attend agree that it was a success, with almost 500 registered participants, 33 speakers, more than 260 posters, 11 flash talks, and, as a novelty, 12 "Meet the Expert" roundtables. The well-deserved nomination of Mariano Barbacid as Honorary Member was a fantastic culmination to this celebration. But for all this activity to be possible, months of effort were needed from the tireless team at **TACTICS**, the technical secretariat of ASEICA, the fundraising group (**Luis Paz-Ares**, **Ignacio Durán**, **Miguel SanMamed**, **Rafa López**, **Aleix Prat**, and myself), and the organizing committee. Since ASEICA keeps moving, we are already working on the International ASEICA Congress 2024, which will be coordinated this time by **Arkaitz Carracedo**, whom I take this opportunity to welcome as the new Advisor to the President.

To commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we have also prepared a **digital and interactive magazine** to review and highlight main milestones in the history of ASEICA, which we will send to you shortly. It is not possible to cover such a rich history in detail, but I hope you find this summary of interest and agree that ASEICA is a truly dynamic Association to be proud of.

Although this letter is becoming lengthy, I do not want to miss the opportunity to mention two of our great collaborating entities: **MasQueUnTrail** and the **FERO Foundation**. Thanks to them, we were able to continue providing grants to young researchers. We also have a very exciting project underway with the **La Caixa Foundation** on innovation that we will start next year, as well as agreements with other entities that we hope will be of interest to your professional development.

My final message is, once again, for everyone in the **ASEICA "family"**. We are almost 1500 members, but our ambition is to reach and be useful to many more. I encourage you to serve as "Ambassadors" of ASEICA within the scientific community, but also, and as much as possible, do not forget our social commitment to cancer patients. About 280,000 diagnoses in Spain and over 18 million worldwide are not just numbers; they are realities, sometimes very harsh, that require scientific and technological advances. In this context, I leave you with a link to the video we created based on the wonderful song "Me inventaré" gifted to us by Diego Cantero.

<https://youtu.be/-MMoLQG2KWE?si=ATtCyp0ZplJSz8K> (in Spanish, but straightforward to follow).

Wishing you a happy and productive 2024,

Best

Marisol Soengas  
President of ASEICA