

Press release

## Presenting CataloniaBio & HealthTech

**The members of the CataloniaBio association of companies and the HealthTech Cluster approved the merger at their meetings yesterday**

**It will promote the convergence of biopharma, MedTech and digital health companies to boost competitiveness and address unmet medical needs**

**In January, elections will be held to choose the new board for the next four years**

Barcelona, 13 December 2017 – A new era for the CataloniaBio association of companies and the HealthTech Cluster. Members of the two organisations unanimously passed the motion to merge under the brand **CataloniaBio & HealthTech** at their respective extraordinary general meetings held in Barcelona yesterday. Negotiations and the preliminary merger process have taken place throughout the year, with institutional support from ACCIÓ, the Catalan government agency that promotes clusters, and legal guidance from RCD.

CataloniaBio & HealthTech now **represents more than 170 companies**, as well as collaborating stakeholders such as hospitals, research centres and universities that are leaders in R&D in biomedicine. The headquarters will be located at the Barcelona Science Park. The profile of member companies ranges from microenterprises to SMEs and large corporations developing products (drugs, medical devices, diagnostic tests, etc.), scientific services, non-scientific services and knowledge generators.

In Catalonia, which has become a global benchmark in medicine and clinical research in recent years, **two main sectors of innovation are being consolidated: ICT and health**. Thanks to this integration, the new association will represent the sector in a more transversal way, **promoting the convergence of biopharma, medical technology (MedTech) and digital health**, which were previously seen as parallel paths, encouraging synergies and collaborations, and building a significant critical mass to tackle future challenges.

“We’re in a time of global change and we have to be aware of it and move towards it. Joining forces with the HealthTech Cluster fits perfectly with the strategy we established in 2014 with the

new board for what CataloniaBio should be. We were looking for growth, visibility and projection of the biomedical business fabric,” explained Ignasi Biosca, outgoing president of CataloniaBio and managing director of Reig Jofre. Seven **strategic lines** have been established: internal and external networking, innovation and technology transfer, international alliances, investment and funding, talent management, regulatory framework and communication.

“We’re becoming a benchmark in innovation,” explained Albert Gallart, outgoing president of the HealthTech Cluster and CEO of Grupo Pulso. “This isn’t the end of a project, it’s the beginning of a bigger one. It is a tool that will depend on how we use it as members. With this merger, we will get out ahead of other countries with healthcare ecosystems,” said Albert Giralt, outgoing vice-president and general manager of the HealthTech Cluster and general manager of Avinent.

Clara Campàs, outgoing vice-president of CataloniaBio and director of Strategy and Development at Kern Pharma, highlighted “the great motivation behind the launch of this process and the opportunities it will bring from here on out.”

The new corporate image will be presented over the coming weeks.

### **Elections for new board of directors**

At the event presenting the new organisation to the members, the governing body also announced elections will be held early next year. The deadline for candidates to register is 9 January and the electoral period will be from 25 January to 7 February 2018.

*Photo: the governing body that coordinated the merger, made up of the members of the two boards of directors. From left to right, Jaume Amat (CataloniaBio-Specipig), Albert Giralt (HealthTech Cluster-Avinent), Ignasi Biosca (CataloniaBio-Reig Jofre), Albert Gallart (HealthTech Cluster-Grupo Pulso), Clara Campàs (CataloniaBio-Kern Pharma), Melqui Calzado (CataloniaBio) and Manel Pretel (HealthTech Cluster). Also Àngel Alonso (HealthTech Cluster-Vecmedical) who is not in the picture.*

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