



Welcome to the CNB

Fernando Rojo

DIRECTOR

In 2017, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of our centre. Celebrations were inaugurated by the Secretary of State for Research, Development and Innovation in the presence of the CSIC Vice-president and the Chancellor of the Autónoma University; they included two symposia, a social event and the installation of a time line in the entrance hall with milestones in the history of the CNB. The jubilee year also brought a facelift to the CNB, such as complete refurbishing of its north facade, renovation of seats in the auditorium and painting of the entrance hall and adjacent corridors.

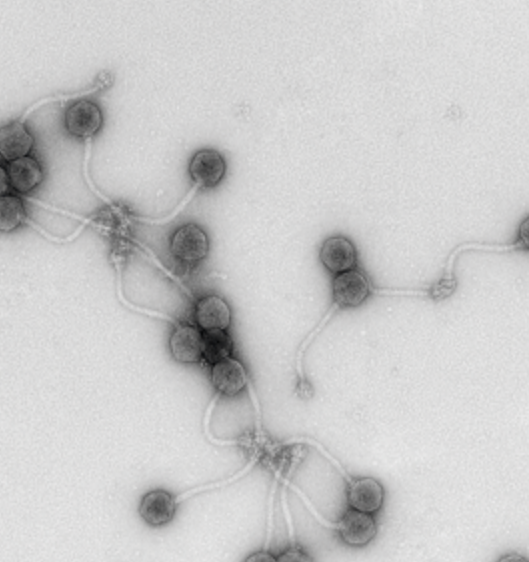
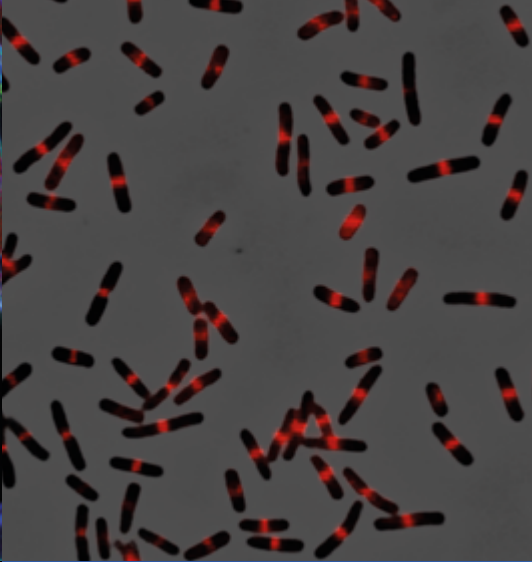
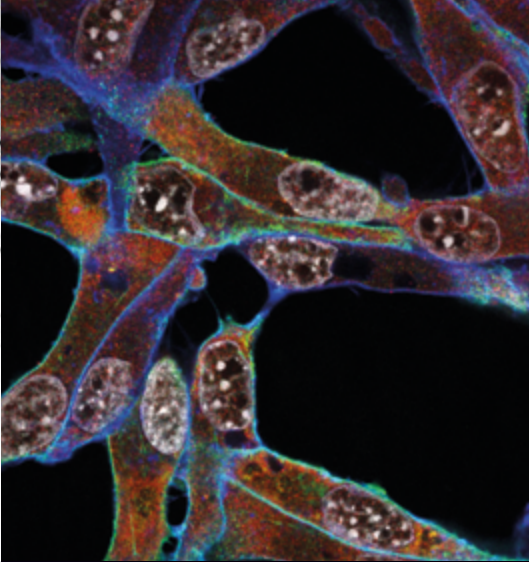
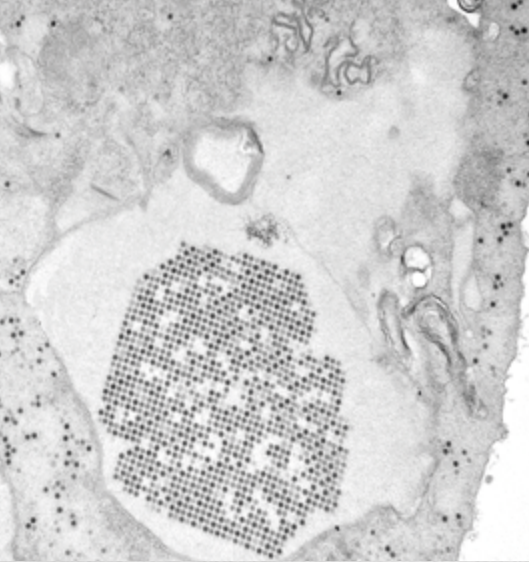
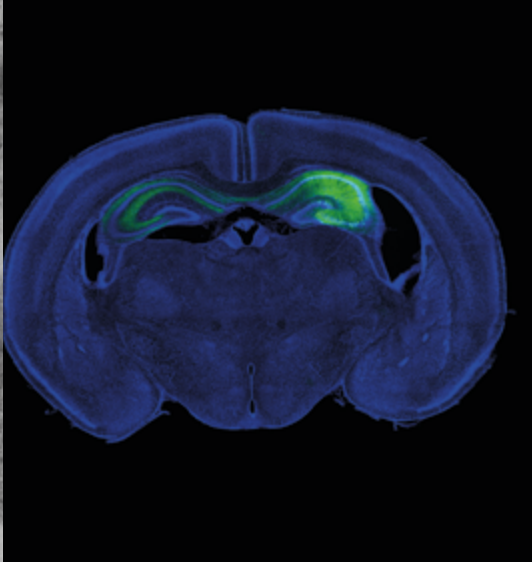
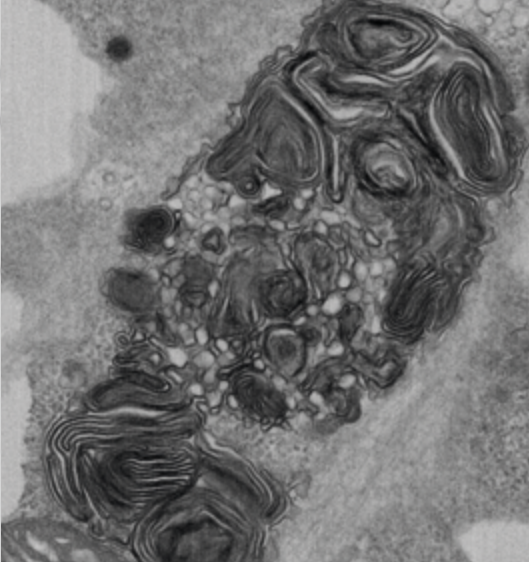
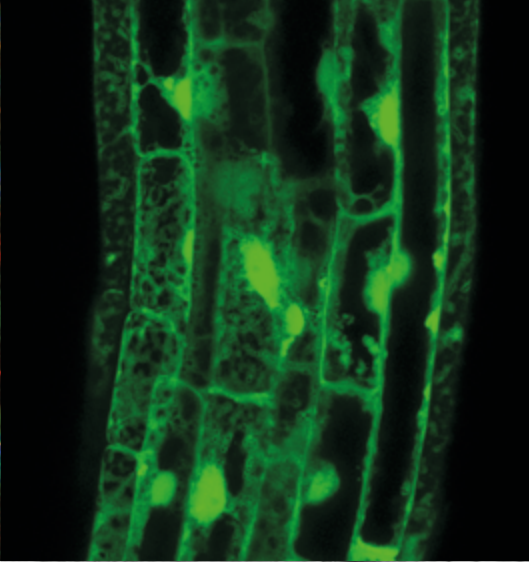
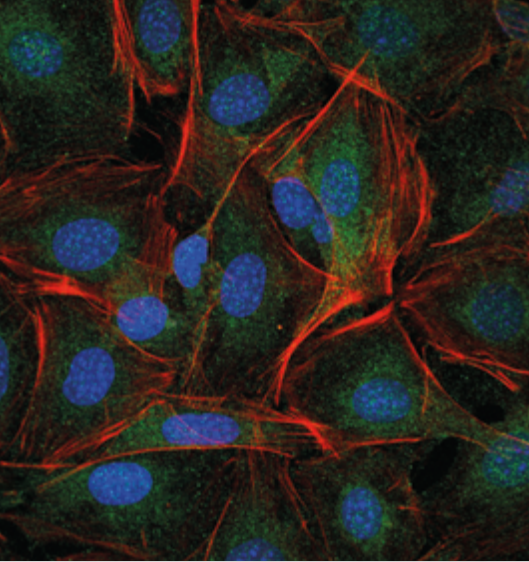
In 2017, we also faced the challenge to renew the accreditation of the CNB as Severo Ochoa Centre of Excellence, which we obtained for the first time in 2014. We successfully passed the 2016 mid-term review by an international panel of experts who concluded that *"the CNB did well and has made good use of the Severo Ochoa funding, which has been essential to help overcome some of the recent shortages."* By the end of 2017, we presented a new 4-year strategic plan focussed on three main areas, namely building a state-of-the-art bio-imaging platform, strengthening capabilities for imaging data analysis and mathematical modelling of biological systems, and becoming a leader in synthetic biology and engineering of biotechnologically interesting bacteria. Our efforts were successful and, in late 2018, we were notified the renewal of our Severo Ochoa distinction. Reviewers indicated that *"CNB has received the SO award in the past and has proven to make good use of this support... The number of researchers has stayed relatively steady during years 2013-2017. The management has been efficient. Overall the CNB has performed very well and maintained its excellent level in a difficult context for Spanish science"*.

Our distinction as Severo Ochoa Centre of Excellence would not have been possible without a distinguishing high activity over the past years. In 2017 and 2018, scientific productivity and fund raising continued at levels similar to previous years. Our scientists published more than 500 articles in JCR-indexed journals. Ranking these journals by their impact factor, we find that 79% and 36% of the centre's scientific output have been published, respectively, in the top 25% and top 10% of journals in their corresponding field of knowledge; the mean impact factor was close to 6.

The filing of 11 new patents, 7 PCT/NPE applications and 10 license agreements reflect our efforts to push the development of research results into marketable products. Apart from numerous activities that established contacts between companies and researchers, the Knowledge Transfer Office organised seminars, round-tables and workshops to raise awareness about diverse aspects of innovation and increase the visibility of the centre's technology offer.

The incorporation of 7 young researchers and 2 senior scientists, who obtained a CSIC position or moved in from other institutes during the past 2 years, will certainly help to keep up with or even improve these benchmarks. We are also confident that ongoing efforts to consolidate a considerable number of temporal positions will provide the stability we need to resist the ups and downs of research funding.

We have continued our efforts to communicate our work to the society. Our Communication and Outreach Office kept up to date our web site, launched a blog, and actively managed our Facebook and Twitter accounts, respectively, that count already on 2,500 and 12,800 followers. The Office organised numerous guided visits to our centre and coordinated our participation in outreach events, such as the European Researcher's Night, the National Science and Technology Week and the 100XCiencia 2 and 3 meetings of SOMMA, the alliance of Spanish Centres of Excellence.



The Communication and Outreach Office was also instrumental in coordinating the centre's training programmes, such as the CNB Course on Introduction to Research for university students or our PhD training programme, which includes a yearly welcome event, a scientific symposium and soft skill training courses. Furthermore, the Office helped with the coordination of more than 300 seminars and courses, which included talks by 43 distinguished speakers in the CNB and CNB Junior seminar series. We are confident that our constant efforts to offer excellent training opportunities and a rich academic life will keep attracting students to the CNB, who follow the example of the 47 brilliant students who, in 2017 and 2018, obtained their PhD degree under the supervision of CNB researchers.

By end of 2018, we finished the renewal of our Scientific Advisory Board with our eyes already on the forthcoming 5-year review of the centre's strategy and performance during the 2016-2020 period.

This look back on the past two years cannot finish without expressing my deepest gratitude to Mario Mellado and Peter Klatt, Vice-directors of the CNB, for their outstanding contribution to solve many and frequently complicated scientific, organisation and administrative issues.

Fernando Rojo

Director

If you want to know more about the CNB, please check the following links:

- CNB website: <http://www.cnb.csic.es>
- Blog CNB divulga: <http://divulga.cnb.csic.es>
- CNB publications: <http://www.cnb.csic.es/index.php/en/science-society/publications>
- CNB YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/CNBcsic>
- CNB Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CNB.csic>
- CNB Twitter: http://twitter.com/CNB_CSIC