IDIBAPS STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2028

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1. IDIBAPS Strategic Plan 2025–2028 Executive Summary

Vision and Approach

The new IDIBAPS Strategic Plan for 2025–2028 sets out a bold, collaborative vision to position the institute at the forefront of translational research for human health. Developed with input from the IDIBAPS community and key stakeholders, the plan aims to bridge fundamental discoveries about disease mechanisms with clinical research conducted both ***with and for patients***. This integrative approach leverages multidisciplinary expertise and cutting-edge technologies to address pressing health challenges and deliver meaningful societal impact.

Main Strategic Pillars

The plan is structured around **eight strategic pillars**, designed to maximise knowledge generation, quality and broad impact in science and society.

1. ***Carry out excellent translational research for human health***
   - Understand molecular and cellular mechanisms of human diseases.
   - Develop new and innovative diagnostics and therapies, including advanced therapies, through efficient academic and sponsored clinical trials.
   - Promote research on prevention and primary care.
   - Incentivize research on rare diseases, from diagnostic to treatment.
   - Advance computing and AI capabilities, leveraging available research and clinical data.
   - Integrate intersectional analysis and patient-centred research.
   - Foster internal and multidisciplinary collaborations, while promoting new research leaders and supporting the growth of research groups.
2. ***Foster a positive research culture***
   - Raise awareness about the institute´s culture and values.
   - Advance gender balance, equality, diversity, and inclusion, promoting staff´s wellbeing.
   - Foster open science, ethical leadership, good scientific practice and integrity.
   - Revise research assessment systems according to IDIBAPS values and CoARA principles.
   - Integrate sustainability and good practices to minimize environmental impact.
   - Organise retreats and social activities to nurture a sense of belonging, promoting the active participation of junior leaders and researchers.
3. ***Empower talent***
   - Attract junior talent from diverse disciplines.
   - Expand the institutional PhD and postdoctoral programmes and support clinician-scientists´ careers.
   - Strengthen IDIBAPS tenure-track programme, while developing effective mentoring.
   - Further develop advanced training initiatives addressed to the diverse professional profiles.
   - Manage generational turnover strategically.
4. ***Drive innovation***
   - Align innovation strategies across Campus Clínic institutions.
   - Enhance scouting, training, and incentives for researchers engaging in innovation.
   - Improve valorisation processes.
   - Expand collaborations with industry and reinforce support for spin-off companies.
   - Strengthen the Knowledge and Technology Transfer (KTT) team.
5. ***Upgrade and advance technology***
   - Desing and regularly revise the IDIBAPS technology / expertise roadmap.
   - Upgrade and integrate technologies and expertise in Core Facilities and laboratories.
   - Strengthen biosecurity.
   - Incentivize technology development.
   - Tackle research health data and AI challenges.

- Foster collaborations with academic and industry partners.
- Improve quality of operations and provide ongoing training for staff and users.

6. ***Promote cooperation***
   - Strengthen partnerships within the Campus Clínic and the CERCA ecosystem.
   - Establish national and international collaborations, promote mobility, and participate in alliances focused on translational and clinical research.
   - Launch sabbatical programmes to foster knowledge exchange and new collaborations.
7. ***Engage and involve society***
   - Expand internal communication at the institute and at the Campus Clínic.
   - Develop a new branding strategy.
   - Reinforce outreach and communication activities towards multiple audiences, and foster open dialogue, co-creation, and innovative formats for collaborations with diverse societal actors.
8. ***Streamline management***
   - Implement integrated, researcher-centric management systems and digital transformation.
   - Diversify funding sources, including philanthropic initiatives and other activities.
   - Expand research and management spaces and integrate cultures across institutions.
   - Ensure proper sizing and critical mass in the management structure.
   - Promote evidence-based science management and continuous improvement.

Distinctive Features

Compared to the previous plan, the new IDIBAPS Strategic Plan stands out for its collaborative development process and its renewed commitment to scientific and societal impact. Specific distinctive features ensure that the plan is not only ambitious in its goals but also inclusive, adaptive, and responsive to the needs of both the research community and society at large.

- **Fostering a collaborative approach**: The plan emphasizes the need to bridge fundamental and clinical research, integrating diverse disciplines, expertise and technologies, with a specific emphasis on Artificial Intelligence and data science. This would not be possible without strengthening synergies within and beyond the Campus Clínic.
- **Promoting an inclusive and open research culture**: IDIBAPS renews its commitment to open science, integrity, sustainability, patient engagement, and outreach to diverse societal actors, developing new initiatives, policies and training.
- **Empowering junior talent**: Attracting, developing and supporting junior researchers, clinician-scientists and group leaders will be a strong priority, with specific actions and programmes, promoting equality, diversity and inclusivity.
- **Driving innovation across the whole institute**: We will promote innovation in the broadest sense, defining it as continuous process of creativity, developing new ideas, technologies, process, and approaches. The plan emphasises innovation not only as the creation of new products and methods, but also as a mindset that permeates the entire organization.

2. IDIBAPS Mission, Vision and Core Values

IDIBAPS Vision

To enhance the health and quality of life of people through groundbreaking and high-impact research.

IDIBAPS Mission

To conduct world-class biomedical research that seamlessly integrates basic, translational, and clinical sciences, addressing the most pressing health challenges of our society and driving innovations that improve patient care.

IDIBAPS Values

- Ethics, ethic leadership and integrity
- Accountability and transparency
- Care and collegiality
- Collaboration
- Sustainability
- Equality, diversity and inclusion

3. Review of the Strategic Plan 2018-2024

The Strategic Plan 2018–2024 set a clear roadmap for IDIBAPS to advance biomedical research, foster innovation, and maximize societal impact. Over the past years, despite the challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the institute has implemented this plan through collaborative, multidisciplinary efforts, resulting in significant progress across all strategic pillars. Below is a synthesis of the main achievements, structured according to the plan's core objectives.

1. Excellence in Research

Guided by the plan's commitment to scientific leadership, translational and multidisciplinary research, IDIBAPS has expanded its output and impact:

- **Publications:** IDIBAPS researchers published over 2,000 articles annually, including >1,500 original peer-review articles, with >70% open access publications in the last few years. Leadership is demonstrated by 30 to 40% highly cited original articles and nearly half led by IDIBAPS researchers. Publications include relevant clinical guidelines to facilitate the translation of new knowledge to clinical practice (e.g., 60 guidelines in 2024, 72% international and 28% led by IDIBAPS researchers).
- **Competitive projects**: Competitive funding more than doubled from 2020 to 2024, reaching nearly €34 million in 2024. Overall, IDIBAPS has demonstrated exceptional capacity to attract and lead competitive projects at both national and international levels, with a marked increase in project coordination, and strategic impact. This success is underpinned by professional project management, strong international alliances, and a robust track record in both fundamental, translational and clinical research.
- **Strategic multidisciplinary focus:** The creation of Multidisciplinary Research Programmes on Cancer, Neuroscience and Metabolism as well as the Technology Clusters (e.g., 3D-Biomodels) has fostered internal synergies and positioned the institute at the forefront of translational research with impact for the patients.

2. Talent and Training

The plan emphasized attracting, developing, and retaining talent:

- **HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R):** The institute successfully implemented and renewed its HRS4R accreditation, reaffirming its commitment to transparent, fair, and competitive recruitment, career development for researchers, ethics, integrity, and overall continuous improvement.
- **Career Development:** IDIBAPS launched a new international PhD program featuring dedicated initiatives such as the PhD Welcome Days and the annual PhD Day, and expanded career activities for postdoctoral researchers. Targeted programs (Emerald, BITRECS, 50/50 and 80/20 programs) were strengthened to support the career of clinician-scientists at every stage of their professional journey.
- **Gender Equality:** IDIBAPS has made significant strides in gender equality, with a new action plan, awareness campaigns and innovative policies and initiatives. The roving researcher is a new professional profile, launched in 2024, to support researchers, especially women, during long-term leaves, helping to mitigate career interruptions at critical career stages.

3. Core Facilities and Scientific Infrastructure

IDIBAPS prioritized investment to expand research space, renew and incorporate state-of-the-art infrastructure and increase expertise to support translational and clinical researchers:

- **Expansion:** Research space grew by integrating wet and dry laboratory space at nearby facilities and the Science Park of Barcelona.

- **Core Facilities:** The five technology platforms (Biobank, Genomics, Cytometry, MRI, Clinical Research Support) incorporated new personnel and equipment to offer advanced services and training, and they increased their participation in national and European networks. The recent creation of the Research Computing Core Facility now supports bioinformatics, data science, and FAIR data management, addressing emerging needs in computational research. Finally, the Clinical Trial Unit was also integrated to provide support to clinical trials, including academic ones supported by competitive funding.

4. Translation and innovation

The Strategic Plan called for a stronger culture of translation, innovation and technology transfer:

- **Clinical translation:** IDIBAPS has increased participation and leadership in clinical trials, with over 1,300 active studies annually – including academic and industry-sponsored trials – across diverse fields, predominantly oncology, but also liver diseases, neurosciences and other diseases. Strategic partnerships with major pharmaceutical companies (e.g., Novartis, Roche, AstraZeneca) and collaborations with academic and clinical networks have driven innovation, advanced new therapies, and generated significant non-competitive funding for the institute.
- **Innovation processes:** IDIBAPS expanded scouting, evaluation, and valorisation of research results, leading to new license agreements and the creation of few spin-offs, such as Gyala (advanced therapies), Athena (diagnostic in dermatology) and Reveal Genomics (diagnostic in breast cancer, recognized by the Time magazine as one of the best inventions of 2022).
- **Funding:** The institute increased returns in royalties from patent, know-how and software licenses (nearly to €1M in the last 5 years). Efforts were also intensified to secure competitive funding for innovation, highlighted by the successful award of Caixa Impulse and European Research Council Proof-of-Concept projects.

5. International Profile and Collaborations

IDIBAPS aimed to boost its international visibility and partnerships at institutional level:

- **International alliances:** IDIBAPS researchers, Core Facility experts and managers increased their active participation in major European and international scientific global initiatives (e.g., Human Cell Atlas, Cancer Mission, EBRAINS, EATRIS) as well as European alliances on science policy and management (CoARA, EARMA).
- **International talent attraction**: Significant emphasis was placed on recruiting internationally through targeted recruitment campaigns for PhDs and postdocs and enhancing English-language communications.
- **Benchmarking:** Benchmarking for the CERCA 2024 evaluation outlined that IDIBAPS compares favourably with leading European institutes in research outputs, competitive funding, and collaborative leadership (e.g., Pasteur Institute, San Raffaele and German Cancer Research Centre).

6. Communication and Engagement with Society

The plan emphasized outreach and societal engagement:

- **Media Presence:** IDIBAPS actively and rigorously disseminate its results to the media to raise awareness about the institute's research and its impact on society, making scientific advancements more accessible to citizens and contributing to building trust with society.
- **Outreach Activities:** IDIBAPS organized multiple outreach activities reaching thousands of people annually to foster a strong connection between science and society. Highlights include bringing hands-on science workshops to schools, hosting open days and summer camps for children, and engaging patients and the public through lab visits and creative events like scientific photography contests.

7. Management

Operational excellence, quality, efficiency and sustainability were key strategic goals:

- **Governance:** IDIBAPS has streamlined management following the merger with Fundació Clínic of Barcelona, supported by the Board of Trustees and Scientific Advisory Board.
- **Financial Strength:** The institute raised €350M (2020–2023), with only 8% originated from core trustee funding, demonstrating exceptional ability to attract and diversify external resources and robust financial sustainability.
- **Quality Assurance:** The institute ensures continuous improvement and accountability by carrying out regular audits, convening internal committees, and organising participatory retreats.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** IDIBAPS has advanced sustainability by establishing a dedicated committee, developing a manual of sustainable good practices, and leading the SuRe network to promote environmentally responsible research in Catalonia. Specific new initiatives included reducing energy and water consumption, promoting recycling, and raising awareness.

Conclusion

By delivering on the Strategic Plan 2018–2024, IDIBAPS has reinforced its position as a leading biomedical research institute, driving scientific excellence, fostering innovation, nurturing talent, and engaging society. These efforts have been recognized by the renewal of its accreditation as an ISCIII, CERCA and AECC centre. Building on these accomplishments, and informed by the strengths, challenges, and opportunities identified in the forthcoming SWOT analysis (see section 4), IDIBAPS is well-positioned to embark on its next strategic cycle and to continue making a significant impact in health and biomedical science.

4. Methodology

To effectively chart the course for IDIBAPS over the next four years, we began with a comprehensive analysis of our current situation and landscape.

We began by reviewing the achievements and areas for improvement from our previous strategic plan (2018-2022). This analysis was crucial not only for guiding our future direction but also for obtaining reaccreditation as a health institute by the National Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII) and for succeeding in the evaluation by external experts for the CERCA institution. To gather further insights, we commissioned an external consultant to perform an international benchmarking based on publications, mapping our positioning compared to other national and international centres of excellence in biomedicine.

The insights gained from these evaluations and studies, along with the feedback from ISCIII and CERCA, informed a detailed SWOT analysis to identify our internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats, highlighted in the following figure.

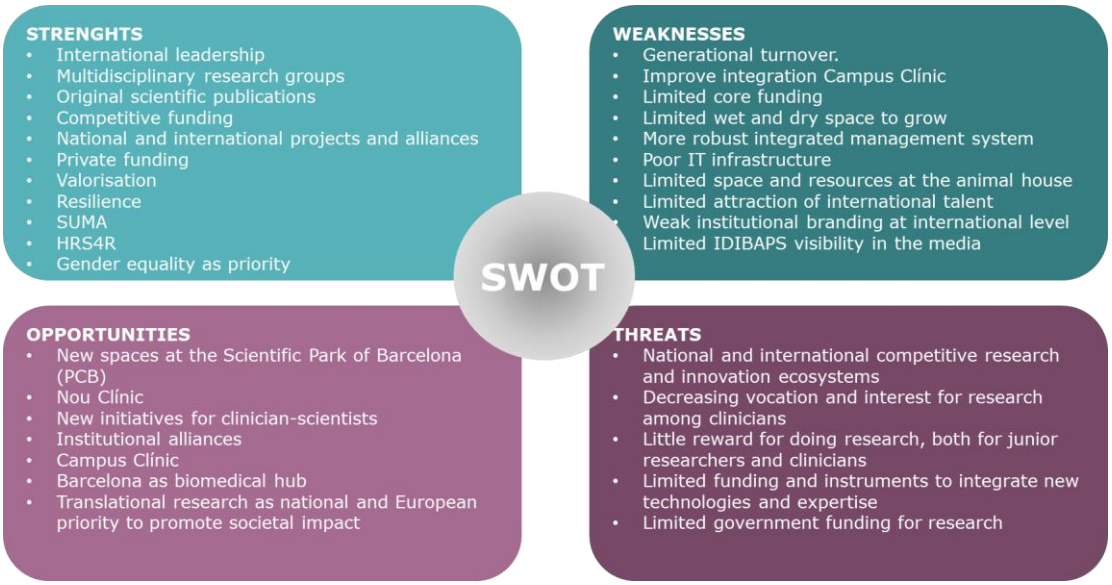

Figure 1. SWOT analysis.

To ensure our strategy is well-informed and aligned with broader priorities, we analysed relevant literature and the current landscape, including national and European priorities in health research and innovation.

Three recent papers reflecting on the key elements and attributes of modern research institutes[1,2,3] inspired and guided further reflections and paved the way to structured brainstorming with diverse communities and stakeholders, including multiple researchers, PhD students, management teams, core facilities, faculty members and representative of our Board of Trustees.

Specifically, we organized the following sessions, engaging >200 people:

- A 1-day retreat with the Steering Committee to identify key priorities for the new Strategic Plan (10 participants, February 2024).
- A survey during the PhD Day to gather inputs on challenges and expectations by the PhD community (49 respondents, May 2024). The survey was further analysed with a focus group including PhD representatives and diverse group leaders.

[1] EU-LIFE charter of independent life science research institutes, https://doi.org/10.1002/1873-3468.14855
[2] Key attributes of successful research institutes, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3002267
[3] The strategy behind one of the most successful institutes, DOI: 10.1038/d41586-024-02085-2.

- A brainstorming session with the Sustainability Committee to identify further actions to ensure environmental sustainability of IDIBAPS operations (12 participants, July 2024).
- A 1-day retreat with management staff to reflect on aspects to improve in IDIBAPS management and synergies with the research community (57 participants, September 2024).
- A brainstorming session with the researchers enrolled in the IDIBAPS tenure-track system to collectively design a comprehensive career development plan and mentoring (13 participants, September 2024).
- A 2-day retreat with all group leaders, heads of core facilities and management departments, and some representatives by the Hospital Clínic of Barcelona at the Cap Roig Castle, in Calella de Palafrugell (>80 participants, October 2024). Around one hundred people attended and engaged in brainstorming sessions on topics such as excellence in science, IDIBAPS' institutional culture, talent, innovation, the implementation of new technologies, IDIBAPS' collaboration with the ecosystem of Campus Clínic and other research centres, management and communication and dissemination.
- A half-a-day session to reflect on the main priorities proposed for the next Strategic Plan together with representatives from the IDIBAPS Board of Trustees (10 participants, October 2025).
- A session with the members of the Patients´ and User´s committee of the Hospital Clínic of Barcelona to gather further inputs from patients and external stakeholders (6 participants, December 2025).

Steering committee

PhD community

Sustainability committee

Delegada members

Research management

Tenure-track community

Group Leaders, Core Facilities, Research Management

Hospital Clínic Patient Committee

Overall, this thorough analysis, including the multiple consultations and brainstorming sessions, provided a solid foundation for our strategic plan for 2025-2028, leading to an innovative and sustainable future for our research institute.

5. The way forward

This plan articulates our vision for the coming years, a vision that has been developed collaboratively with our community and key stakeholders. Our main strategic priority is to be at the forefront of **excellent translational research for human health**, bridging fundamental discoveries about disease mechanisms with clinical research conducted both **with and for patients**. This approach integrates diverse disciplines, perspectives, and cutting-edge technologies. In addition to this central focus, seven additional strategic priorities will guide our actions to maximize **societal impact**. Distinct features include promoting a positive research culture, increasing alignment and synergies with the Campus Clínic institutions, empowering junior talent, nurturing new leadership and driving innovation across the whole institution.

i. Carry out excellent translational research for human health

Since its inception[4], IDIBAPS has been dedicated to integrating high-quality clinical research with cutting-edge fundamental research, promoting original translational research to address the most pressing health challenges of our society.

Located within the Campus Clínic and closely linked with the Hospital Clínic of Barcelona (HCB) and the University of Barcelona (UB), IDIBAPS leverages the interdisciplinarity of its approximately 100 research groups to pioneer biomedical research that addresses patients´ needs. The spectrum of tackled diseases is broad, reflecting those treated at the Hospital Clínic of Barcelona: from cancer, neurological diseases, infections, to immunological, respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, including rare disease. Its unique strengths include access to extensive clinical and molecular datasets and rich patient cohorts and samples, combined with the capability to conduct mechanistic studies with state-of-the-art technologies, including omics and advanced imaging.

Our main research priorities within the next Strategic Plan are:

- Understand **molecular and cellular mechanisms of human diseases** by detailed studies, including omics and imaging, in primary human samples and *in vitro*, *in vivo* and *in silico* models, unravelling biological pathways, risk factors, and vulnerabilities. This will provide solid biological basis for personalized medicine with improvement in diagnosis, treatment and patient risk stratification and management.
- Develop new and innovative **diagnostics and treatments**, including **advanced therapies**, more efficiently promoting academic and sponsored clinical trials, and boosting collaborations with pharmaceutical and biotech companies.
- Promote research on **disease prevention** and early detection, as well as on **primary care**.
- Incentivize research in **rare diseases**, from diagnosis to treatment. Translational research in rare diseases is vital because it bridges basic scientific discoveries with clinical applications, enabling faster development of diagnostics and therapies. This is especially important in rare conditions, where timely translation can significantly improve patients' quality of life and reduce the long diagnostic and treatment gap.
- Enhance research and development in **computing and Artificial Intelligence** to support big data (including omics, imaging and other molecular and clinical data) integration and analysis, by partnering with expert institutions in the fields, such as the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre, while also developing in-house expertise. IDIBAPS and the Hospital Clínic of Barcelona are in fact in a privileged position to **leverage the available research and clinical data** as well as rich patients´ cohorts to accelerate the translation of discoveries into clinical applications.
- Integrate **intersectional analysis**, considering the sex and gender as well as other variables (race, age, class and other socio-political dimensions), in our research projects, as they can influence molecular and cellular processes, clinical characteristics, and health and disease outcomes.
- Promote **patient-centred research** by engaging patients and their representatives.

To incentivize excellence in biomedical translational research and promote internal collaborations, IDIBAPS will continue promoting innovative initiatives. In the previous strategic plan, the institute supported multidisciplinary programmes focused on specific research lines and technology clusters, bringing together researchers using similar technologies and expertise.

For the next four years, our main line of actions are:

- Foster **internal and multidisciplinary collaborations**, supporting, catalysing and continuously evaluating ongoing and new research programmes and areas, and technology clusters.

[4] The experience of the Hospital Clinic of Barcelona. Integration Medical School-IDIBAPS- University Hospital (Educación Médica, 2027): La experiencia del Hospital Clínic de Barcelona: integración Facultad de Medicina - IDIBAPS - Hospital Universitario

- Support the career development of **new junior group leaders** and ensure the continuation and strengthening of research groups focused on pressing diseases, led by group leaders close to retirement, in coordination with HCB and UB.
- Increase **incentives** and **support measures for research groups**, considering their heterogenous needs.

ii. Foster a positive research culture

According to the UK Royal Society[5], "*Research culture encompasses the behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes and norms of our research communities*". Building on the values promoted in our previous strategic plan – integrity, accountability, and care – we, as a community, also commit to fostering collegiality, collaboration, ethical leadership, transparency, sustainability, equality, diversity, and inclusion. We aim to create a sense of belonging in our institution, where every member feels valued, respected, and integral to our collective endeavours.

Key lines of action include:

- Raise awareness about the institute´s **culture and values**, by dedicated activities, brainstorming sessions, debates and dedicated campaigns.
- Continue striving to achieve **gender balance** in research and broaden the scope of **equality**, **diversity** and **inclusion**, promoting staff´s **wellbeing**, to create a richer and multifaceted community that values and respects differences in race, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.
- Foster **open science**, **ethical leadership**, **good scientific practice**, and **integrity**, creating more opportunities for an open dialogue among the scientific community about perceived challenges, defining clear policies, and providing training and mentoring.
- Revise and implement a **research assessment system** that values and reward IDIBAPS culture. We aim to recognize diversity of scientific outputs as well as mentoring and institutional commitment, aligned with the European CoARA principles.
- Integrate **sustainability** and **good environmental practice** into all our operations, minimizing IDIBAPS's impact on the environment.
- Promote the active **participation of junior leaders and researchers** in the IDIBAPS operations, listening to their ideas, needs and vision.
- Regularly organize retreats and joint events as well as social activities with the IDIBAPS community, including junior leaders and researchers, to nurture the **sense of belonging**, spark new ideas, provide opportunities to get to know each other and exchange ideas.

iii. Empower talent

At the heart of any successful research institute lies its talent to drive our mission forward, enabling groundbreaking discoveries and advancements in scientific disciplines, such as biomedicine.

Since 2014, IDIBAPS has developed and regularly revised a well-defined Research Career Policy, and since 2015, the institute holds the HR Excellence for Research recognition by the European Commission, demonstrating a clear commitment to develop a research environment where people can thrive.

Given our unique focus on promoting biomedical patient-oriented research and our close collaboration with HCB, IDIBAPS and the hospital have pioneered and developed diverse programmes to support specifically the career of clinician-scientists[6]. These include the PhD4MD programme at PhD level, the BITRECS programme at the postdoctoral level, as well as the 50/50 and 80/20 programmes for junior / mid-term, and senior researchers, respectively.

[5] Research culture by the Royal Society: https://royalsociety.org/news-resources/projects/research-culture/

[6] Structured programs to train the next generation of clinician scientists (*Nature Medicine*, 2025): 10.1038/s41591-024-03339-2

Importantly, the institute has recently launched an International PhD programme overseen by the IDIBAPS PhD Committee to promote new activities supporting our rich community of doctoral candidates.

Training is an important ingredient for talent development, and IDIBAPS is organizing multiple initiatives, including the Stepping Stones programme for researchers, mentoring and multiple courses organized by the HR department for all employees.

For our next strategic plan, our ambition is to boost national and international talent recruitment and retention, jointly with HCB and UB, grow the interdisciplinarity of our research groups and increase IDIBAPS attractiveness. Incorporating diverse research profiles – from biology to medicine, mathematics and engineering – will be essential to drive IDIBAPS cutting-edge biomedical research.

Specific lines of action to support PhD and postdoctoral fellows include:

- Attract **junior talent from diverse disciplines** through attractive and highly visible international calls, comprehensive onboarding processes, incentives, and other initiatives promoting professional and personal life balance.
- Increase support for the **PhD community** and further develop the **IDIBAPS PhD programme** in collaboration with the UB, raising also additional funds to offer competitive fellowships for both researchers and clinician-scientists.
- Create an **IDIBAPS Postdoctoral programme**, boost a Postdoctoral community and develop new support actions, such as welcome sessions, peer-to-peer mentoring, and others.
- Support the **career of clinician-scientists** from their early stages (during and after the residency) in coordination with HCB, ensuring sustainability of programmes such as EMERALD, BITRECS, also in collaboration with other research organizations. Boost the **50/50 and 80/20 programmes** offering more positions, ensuring the protected time for research is respected and developing attractive career opportunities in research as well as in healthcare.
- Encourage and support the **academic careers** of tenure-track researchers and clinician-scientists within the professional promotion systems of all institutions on the Clinic Campus (i.e. IDIBAPS, HCB, and UB).
- Develop a comprehensive **mentoring** programme for tenure-track researchers and clinician-scientists.
- Further develop **advanced training** for researchers, equipping them with transdisciplinary skills (from basic to translational and clinical research, including other relevant disciplines such as mathematics, physics and engineering), aligned with IDIBAPS mission, including international summer schools and sharing resources with other institutes.

To attract new group leaders opening new research lines and ensuring the continuation of strategic research groups, whose leader is close to retirement, IDIBAPS, jointly with HCB and UB, envisions specific lines of actions targeting diverse profiles:

- Actively **search for new talent**, creating joint search committees, increasing IDIBAPS attractiveness and leveraging opportunities offered by ICREA and other institutions.
- Manage efficiently and transparently the **generational turnover**, planning strategic actions 4 to 5 years ahead. Groups that do not have a qualified R4 candidate for replacement should be considered for discontinuation, and staff scientist relocated to other groups. In case of leadership replacement for an IDIBAPS group, the R4 appointment should be a qualified internal or external candidate, via open international calls. If such candidate has not been identified, alternatives can be considered: a) provide a provisional position of leadership for a candidate that will be re-evaluated in a 3-year window, or b) consider co-leadership positions.

Overall, IDIBAPS aims to develop career development programmes for all professional profiles at the institute, from management and administration to new profiles within research groups – such as data managers, engineers, data scientists, specialized technicians, etc. – all actively contributing to advancing research and innovation.

iv. Drive innovation

*"Innovation is the process of developing new ideas, products, services, or methods that **add value** by improving existing systems or creating entirely new solutions"* (ChatGPT).

As outlined in the IDIBAPS bylaws, the institute's mission encompasses both research and innovation, with a focus on **creating value for our society**. Since its foundation, IDIBAPS has been a catalyst for scientific and technological advancements, creating 15 spin-offs since its foundation (5 in the last five years) and supporting the commercialization of numerous projects at the Campus Clínic. These efforts highlight our commitment to translating research into real-world applications, fostering a dynamic environment where groundbreaking ideas can flourish and make a tangible impact on healthcare and society. Innovation efforts are coordinated with the other institutions present at the campus, including HCB, MonClínic, ISGlobal and UB.

Key future objectives include:

- Align **innovation strategies** and create strong synergies among the Campus Clínic institutions to foster an innovation culture and spirit of the community.
- Improve **proactive scouting** of new innovative ideas and projects, engaging more groups in innovation and supporting them step-by-step throughout the innovation process with positivity, vision and hands-on guidance.
- Provide **training** on innovation and entrepreneurship for researchers, exploring also partnerships with other institutes and business schools.
- Increase **incentives** for researchers who succeed in bringing innovative ideas to the market.
- Improve **valorisation processes**, revising current policies, support processes and advisory systems to define early on the right pathways for exploitation.
- Expand **collaborations with the innovation ecosystem**, create opportunities for networking with technology and pharmaceutical companies and explore innovative programmes such as entrepreneurship in residence.
- Enhance and reinforce support and monitoring of **established spin-off companies**, with a clear and transparent policy for investment and divestment.
- Strengthen and expand the **Knowledge and Technology Transfer** (KTT) team in synergy with the other institutions of the Campus Clínic Barcelona, including HCB and MonClínic.

v. Upgrade and advance technology

Seven Core Facilities support translational and clinical research at IDIBAPS: functional genomics, cytometry, magnetic resonance imaging, the biobank, the Clinical Trial Unit, medical statistics and the recently created Research Computing unit. In addition, a team of Lab Managers supports the research groups by overseeing common equipment and research spaces.

Our future aim is to strengthen the technological support to research and innovation development, incorporating cutting-edge technologies and expertise, answering to new needs, and strengthening the partnership between Core Facilities and IDIBAPS research groups, as well as other relevant external stakeholders, including academic institutions, such as the CERCA centres, and private companies.

Key objectives include:

- Design and regularly revise and update a **technology / expertise roadmap** to support IDIBAPS translational and clinical research.
- **Upgrade technologies and expertise** at IDIBAPS Core Facilities and Laboratories, enhancing collaborations among Core Facilities, with IDIBAPS researchers as well as with providers and industry.
- Strengthen **biosecurity** at IDIBAPS facilities to safeguard research integrity and protect staff and to ensure compliance with international standards for safe biomedical research and innovation.

- Incentivize **technology development** and the integration of new expertise (e.g., bioengineering) within IDIBAPS and in collaboration with other institutes and companies.
- Tackle the challenge of **big data, AI and research health data** management (data storage, processing, integration…), in collaboration with the Campus Clínic institutions and other relevant centres, such as the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre.
- Strengthen **collaborations and agreements** with HCB, MonClínic and UB faculties (Medicine, Nursing as well as Biology, Physics and/or Mathematics) to share expertise and knowledge and provide efficient access to relevant and multiple technologies; nationally with CERCA institutes with complementary expertise, such as the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre (BSC), and Institute of Biotechnology of Catalonia (IBEC), the Institute of Nanotechnology (ICN2), among others; internationally, participating in international alliances, research and technology projects.
- Improve **quality of operations**, personalized support to users, time to service, establishing a feedback system by users, regular evaluations as well as advisory committees.
- Provide ongoing **training** for staff (long-life career development) and develop training for users on technology and specific expertise.

vi. Promote cooperation

Cooperation is a cornerstone of the new IDIBAPS strategic plan. We aim to strengthen partnerships within the Campus Clínic, and foster new collaborations at regional, national, and international levels, to enhance our research capabilities and impact. Through collaborative efforts, we can leverage diverse expertise and disciplines, share resources, and drive innovation. This pillar underscores our commitment to building a network of excellence that transcends boundaries and accelerates scientific progress.

Key aims include:

- Improve collaborations within the **Campus Clínic**, aligning culture and strategies on critical areas, such as talent recruitment and retention, innovation, digital transformation, technological facilities and communication. This will include enhancing institutional collaboration between IDIBAPS and HCB by implementing initiatives such as cross-representation in their respective governing bodies, thus promoting a more harmonious and fruitful alignment.
- IDIBAPS is part of the **CERCA ecosystem**, and as such, it is naturally positioned to collaborate with other synergistic research institutes within this network. These collaborations will be fostered both top-down and bottom-up, through strategic initiatives and grassroots efforts that encourage cross-disciplinary engagement and mutual understanding among scientists from diverse fields.
- Establish institutional **partnerships nationally** (e.g., other ISCIII accredited centres and national research centres) and **internationally** (e.g., international research hospitals, well-renown institutes) to foster mobility of researchers and management staff.
- Promote IDIBAPS active participation in **national and international alliances** and explore the creation of a **new alliance focused on translational and clinical research** with other European hospital-associated research institutes.
- Launch a **sabbatical programme** to attract and host international experts, foster knowledge exchange, and strengthen collaborations across disciplines and institutions.

vii. Engage and involve society

IDIBAPS is committed to an open and ongoing dialogue with society. Over the past strategic plan, we have significantly expanded our communication and outreach efforts – bringing science into schools, opening our laboratories to the public, and fostering trust through transparent communication of our

research outcomes. These initiatives have enabled us to reach thousands of citizens annually, strengthen relationships with multiple stakeholders, including patient associations. Building on these achievements, we envision a more profound and sustained engagement with society, deepening our collaborations with diverse societal actors – patients, educators, journalists, artists and the broader public – by developing innovative formats for dialogue and participation. Our goal is to ensure that IDIBAPS communicates science openly and responsibly, as well as actively listens, learns, and co-creates knowledge with society.

Key objectives include:

- Expand **internal communication** by developing a new intranet, welcome information, focused seminars for the internal community, and other activities, to ensure the IDIBAPS community is well informed and aligned with the institutional goals.
- Improve communication mechanisms and initiatives within the **Campus Clínic**, actively participating, as example, in the Clínic Obert, opening the doors of the whole campus to citizens.
- Formulate a **new branding strategy** to distinctly highlight the integration of IDIBAPS within the Campus Clínic and ensure the national and international visibility of the institute.
- Reinforce **outreach and communication towards multiple audiences**, including attractive activities and formats, such as videos, podcasts, ambassadors, festivals, and training sessions for researchers.
- Strengthen and explore new **collaborations with societal actors**: patient associations, schools, journalists, artists, among others, ensuring an open dialogue and fostering co-creation.

viii. Streamline management

"…within a research institute, administration is not only conceived as a service to the research endeavours of the institute, but becomes part of the research "instrumentarium", contributing to research innovation in a decisive way"[7].

IDIBAPS management has strengthened over the last years, specializing and professionalizing diverse roles and departments, collaborating with and supporting researchers, to facilitate excellent research at the highest quality standards. We aim to further strengthen a purpose-focused management and administration to increase our efficiency and accountability, advancing better governance, while promoting proactivity, flexibility and user-friendliness. Our aim is that research management becomes part of the "*instrumentarium*", contributing to the mission and vision of the institute.

Key objectives include:

- Design and implement an **integrated management system** with the following characteristics:
    - Researcher-centric focus
    - Digital transformation (paperless office), integrating AI and data-oriented model
    - Process reengineering
    - Efficient Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), launching a new intranet portal
- Strengthen **diversification of funding sources** to consolidate financial autonomy. It will be fundamental to increase return from **philanthropic initiatives** in coordination with HCB and Mon Clínic, as well as other activities, such as clinical trials and innovation, while influencing the Board of Trustees to increase the institute´s core funding.
- Create opportunities in the short and mid-long term to expand research and management **spaces**, including the active participation in the collaborative design and planning of the new campus, **Nou Campus Clínic-UB**.

[7] EU-LIFE charter of independent life science research institutes, https://doi.org/10.1002/1873-3468.14855

- Improve **integration of different cultures** (HCB, UB, CIBER, CSIC, ICREA), through clear policies, reducing administrative workload, and providing equal access to facilities, information, support mechanisms, etc.
- Ensuring the **proper sizing of the management structure**, consolidating the workforce, stabilizing positions and competitive conditions for the attraction and retention of the management talent.
- Promote **evidence-based science management**, exploring collaborations on “research on research” or metascience.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

This strategic plan will be a living and breathing document, which will be regularly evaluated and revised, to include relevant updates, as needed.

Monitoring and evaluation of the plan will be carried out externally and internally, with the final goal to generate a broad and integrated understanding of IDIBAPS´s performance and impact.

External evaluation will be carried out by institutions such as CERCA, the national Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII) and the Spanish Association against cancer (AECC). They will perform 1) annual monitoring of IDIBAPS activities, according to specific indicators, and 2) in-depth institutional evaluations every 4 to 5 years, with the support of external experts to ensure the institute is up to their required quality standards.

Internal evaluation by IDIBAPS will be carried following a **monitoring and evaluation framework**, including **quantitative and qualitative indicators**, to capture short-, mid- and long-term **outcomes and impact**, and therefore assess whether the plan is effectively guiding the institution toward its goals. This will help us determine if any adjustments are needed or if there are new opportunities to leverage as we implement the plan. Key principles of monitoring and evaluation include:

- **Evidence-based evaluation**, founded on robust quantitative and quality indicators, to ensure objectivity and credibility.
- **High-quality and relevance**, focusing on what truly matters for the institute´s goals.
- **Transparency, openness and accountability**, making processes and results verifiable and open to the community.
- **Priority and efficiency**, concentrating efforts on the most strategic areas and allocate resources efficiently to maximize value without overburdening staff and avoiding useless bureaucratic exercises.

The following framework indicates the diverse monitoring and evaluation dimensions for each strategic priority, including the most relevant “core” indicators which will be regularly reported and assessed. This does not exclude that additional indicators and measures might be integrated as the plan develops across the years.

STRATEGIC PILLARS	MONITORING AND EVALUATION DIMENSIONS AND INDICATORS		
Carry out excellent translational research for human health	*New knowledge*	*New diagnostic and treatments*	*Health and clinical impact*
	- Number and other relevant bibliometric indicators of publications, across areas and groups, including collaborative publications (among IDIBAPS groups and international centres) and publications featuring intersectional analysis	- Number and other relevant bibliometric indicators of clinical guidelines (internationality, leadership, etc.)	- Evidence of clinical implementation of IDIBAPS studies and discoveries
	- Featured publications, highlighted by the IDIBAPS research community	- Number of clinical trials across diseases, including academic and sponsored trials	- Impact narratives, highlighting the societal and health impact of IDIBAPS research
	- Number of new and ongoing projects, highlighting IDIBAPS PI-led initiatives, across areas and groups		

Foster a positive research culture	*Implementation of IDIBAPS values*	*Research assessment aligned with IDIBAPS values and CoARA*	*Collaboration and sense of belonging*
	- IDIBAPS overall workforce breakdown, considering sex/gender, internationality, professional profiles, etc.	- Outcomes of research groups´ evaluation	- Evidence and narratives of internal collaborations and sense of belonging
	- Results of IDIBAPS staff´s wellbeing and satisfaction surveys		
	- Follow-up of environmental impact indicators		
Empower talent	*Talent attraction*	*Talent nurturing and promotions*	*Lifelong training and career development*
	- Number of new PhD and postdoctoral fellows, clinician-scientists, considering sex/gender, internationality, etc.	- Number of PhD students and defended thesis (including those with European mention); number of postdoctoral fellows and clinician-scientists	- Number and outcomes of IDIBAPS training programme, highlighting content and targeted profiles
	- New group leaders joining IDIBAPS	- PIs with positions of scientific prestige (ICREA professors, University professors, etc.)	- Reach of internal training activities, distinguishing professional profiles and other diversity variables
		- Promotions following the IDIBAPS tenure-track programme and generational turnover strategy	
Drive innovation	*Innovation culture and mindset*	*Campus Clínic alignment on innovation*	*Societal and economic impact*
	- Number of new innovation ideas and novel/running projects, across research areas and groups	- Innovation policies, processes and initiatives, harmonized and coordinated across the Campus Clínic institutions	- Number and quality of created spin-off companies, new and active ones, including hired staff and turnout/market share
	- Patent portfolio, including new granted patents and licensed ones		- Number of new and active licenses and their return
	- Number and extent of public-private collaborations		- Overall royalties
Upgrade and advance technology	*Technology upgrade*	*Research data and AI integration*	*Quality operations*
	- New integrated technology and expertise, actively supporting IDIBAPS research	- Developed Research Data Strategy, in collaboration with HCB	- New and running quality certifications, and specific performance indicators for each Core Facility to assess their operations and impact

	- New technology developments	- Initiatives demonstrating AI integration in IDIBAPS research	- Strengthened biosecurity measures and processes
Promote cooperation	*Campus Clínic cooperation*	*National collaborations*	*International collaborations*
	- Selected collaborative initiatives with Campus Clínic institutions and their impact	- Number of publications and projects with national collaborators and selected high-impact examples	- Number of publications and projects with international collaborators and selected high-impact examples
		- Selected collaborative initiatives with national institutes (CERCA centres, ISCIII institutes, national infrastructures...) and their added value	- Selected collaborative initiatives with international institutes and their added value
Engage and involve society	*Informed and engaged IDIBAPS community*	*National and international visibility*	*Society engagement*
	- Number and relevance of internal communication activities	- New institutional branding	- Number and relevance of communication and outreach activities
	- Reach of internal communication initiatives		- Reach of communication and outreach activities, highlighting diverse targeted audiences
			- Evidence of cocreation and engagement with diverse societal actors
Streamline management	*Researcher-focused, integrated and efficient instrumentarium*	*Sustainable growth*	
	- Implemented integrated and digital management system	- Diversification of funding sources	
	- Development of quality management plan and processes	- Expansion of research and management spaces	
	- Evidence of improved efficiency and quality of operations	- Proper sizing of management structure and career development opportunities	

7. Financial Plan 2025-2028

OPERATING	2025	2026	2027	2028	TOTAL
CORE FUNDING	**7.375.000**	**7.701.000**	**8.575.000**	**9.200.000**	**32.851.000**
Public Administrations/Trustees - Operating funding	7.375.000	7.701.000	8.575.000	9.200.000	32.851.000
R+D+I ACTIVITY	**66.989.000**	**66.412.000**	**77.505.000**	**82.978.000**	**293.884.000**
Competitive Calls	31.550.000	32.643.000	38.303.000	41.095.000	143.591.000
Contracts and Services	30.121.000	28.330.000	32.820.000	35.035.000	126.306.000
Collaboration agreements and philanthropy	5.318.000	5.439.000	6.382.000	6.848.000	23.987.000
OTHERS - NON-RDI ACTIVITY	**4.344.000**	**5.015.000**	**4.242.000**	**3.977.000**	**17.578.000**
Others	4.344.000	5.015.000	4.242.000	3.977.000	17.578.000
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	**78.708.000**	**79.128.000**	**90.322.000**	**96.155.000**	**344.313.000**
VARIABLE OPERATING EXPENSES	**57.898.000**	**56.668.000**	**65.570.000**	**69.986.000**	**250.122.000**
- Temporary Staff (Activity funded)	30.478.000	30.369.000	35.633.000	38.231.000	134.711.000
- R&D Activity Expenses (Consumables, Reagents,…)	25.481.000	24.544.000	28.799.000	30.899.000	109.723.000
- Other variable expenses (Travel and subsistence, others,	1.939.000	1.755.000	1.138.000	856.000	5.688.000
FIX OPERATING EXPENSES	**20.728.000**	**22.436.000**	**24.699.000**	**26.121.000**	**93.984.000**
- Permanent Staff (R&D and Support)	11.804.000	12.715.000	13.955.000	14.441.000	52.915.000
- General Administrative expenses (Rents, supplies,…)	7.472.000	7.909.000	9.159.000	10.019.000	34.559.000
- Others	1.452.000	1.812.000	1.585.000	1.661.000	6.510.000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	**78.626.000**	**79.104.000**	**90.269.000**	**96.107.000**	**344.106.000**

CAPITAL	2025	2026	2027	2028	TOTAL
FUNDING ASSURED	**5.128.000**	**2.000.000**	**1.000.000**	**1.000.000**	**9.128.000**
Public Administrations & Private funding	2.000.000	2.000.000	1.000.000	1.000.000	6.000.000
Reinvestment of remaining previous years	3.128.000				3.128.000
FUNDING NO ASSURED	**270.501**	**602.925**	**1.000.000**	**1.000.000**	**2.873.426**
IDIBAPS Funding	270.501	602.925	1.000.000	1.000.000	2.873.426
TOTAL CAPITAL INCOME	**5.398.501**	**2.602.925**	**2.000.000**	**2.000.000**	**12.001.426**
INVESTMENT	**5.398.501**	**2.602.925**	**2.000.000**	**2.000.000**	**12.001.426**
- Scientific equipment + Lab conditioning + Others	5.398.501	2.602.925	2.000.000	2.000.000	12.001.426
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	**5.398.501**	**2.602.925**	**2.000.000**	**2.000.000**	**12.001.426**