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Press Release

16 November 2026

Josep Dalmau receives the 23rd Burdinola Research Award for his pioneering contributions to the study of autoimmune encephalitis

An internationally renowned expert in neuroimmunology, Dalmau was the first researcher to describe autoimmune encephalitis and has characterised more than half of the types currently known. His discoveries have helped transform the diagnosis and treatment of these diseases.

Burdinola has presented the 23rd Burdinola Research Award to Dr Josep Dalmau, an internationally renowned expert in autoimmune encephalitis, in recognition of his outstanding scientific career and groundbreaking contributions to the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of these diseases.

The award was presented on 9 November at the CaixaResearch Institute in Barcelona, during a ceremony attended by professionals and representatives from the scientific and research community.

An international leader in neuroimmunology

Dr Dalmau was the first researcher to describe autoimmune encephalitis and, throughout his career, has characterised more than half of the approximately twenty types currently known. His discoveries have led to significant advances in identifying and treating diseases that were previously sometimes mistaken for viral infections or psychiatric disorders.

After beginning his professional career in Barcelona, Dalmau continued his research at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York and at the Universities of Arkansas and Pennsylvania.

He is currently an ICREA researcher and leads the Pathogenesis of Autoimmune Neuronal Disorders research group at IDIBAPS-Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, alongside his affiliation with the CaixaResearch Institute. He also coordinates the Neuroimmunology Programme at Hospital Sant Joan de Déu Barcelona and Hospital Clínic and is a member of the US National Academy of Medicine.

His scientific career has earned him numerous distinctions, including the 2025 Gregorio Marañón National Research Award in Medicine and Health Sciences, the 2026 Jiménez Díaz Memorial Lecture, the American Brain Foundation's 2023 Scientific Breakthrough Award and the 2017 Rei Jaume I Prize for Biomedical Research.

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An edition focused on personalised and precision medicine

The 23rd Burdinola Research Award focused on personalised and precision medicine in psychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases, a field of research aimed at advancing our understanding, diagnosis and treatment of highly complex conditions.

The ceremony opened with a welcome address by Mireia Castanys, Director of the Research Centres Department at the "la Caixa" Foundation and Deputy Director of the CaixaResearch Institute, followed by remarks from Jorge Carballo, Managing Director of Burdinola.

Joseba Pineda, Chair of the Jury for the 23rd Burdinola Research Award, presented the jury's decision, while Luis Bataller, Head of Clinical Neurology at the Valencian Institute of Oncology, delivered a tribute to the award recipient.

Jorge Carballo then presented the 23rd Burdinola Research Award to Dr Dalmau, who subsequently gave a lecture on his research related to the theme of this year's edition.

More than three decades recognising scientific excellence

Established in 1993, the Burdinola Research Award recognises scientific excellence, outstanding research careers and the social impact of research conducted in Spain.

With its 23rd edition, Burdinola reaffirms its commitment to research, knowledge and scientific talent, recognising those whose work expands the frontiers of knowledge and contributes to creating a positive impact on society.

