



↘ The Gran Via in l'Hospitalet



↘ An Idibell researcher

# THE BIOMEDICAL MICROCLUSTER



↘ Pediatric emergencies



↘ Sant Joan de Déu Hospital

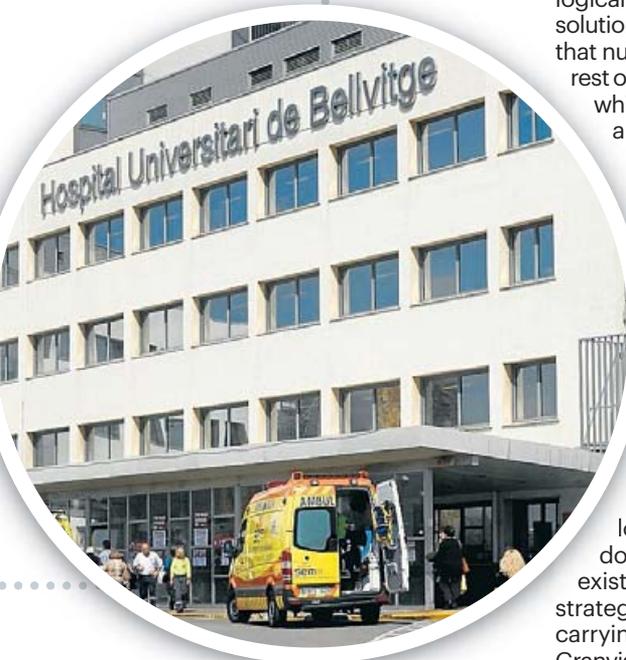
→ The microcluster came into being as a result of the urban renewal plan for the Granvia – Llobregat to l'Hospitalet de Llobregat area, which involved the tunnelling of the Gran Via (Highway C-32). This process meant the creation of an area of over 500,000m<sup>2</sup> for economic activities connected to the fields of research, the pharmaceutical industry and the health sciences in general, with the aim of reinforcing the country's healthcare ecosystem. The area will also be the site of the European Centre for Traditional Chinese Medicine. The idea behind the creation of a biomedical cluster came about due to a pre-existing reality: the area is already home to the Idibell Biomedical Research Institute, the

Catalan Institute of Oncology (ICO) and the University Hospital of Bellvitge (HUB). With the intention of creating a healthcare corridor on the southern edge of Barcelona, the Sant Joan de Déu Hospital (HSJD), which is located in Esplugues de Llobregat, will also join the cluster, which will mean integrating paediatric and gynaecological services into the cluster's value chain, in terms of both research and healthcare. In this way, the cluster will be able to cover the entire spectrum of the human chain. Other research and healthcare centres in the surrounding area could also join the cluster. For Raquel Egea, the director of innovation and business development at Idibell, this is an

opportunity to improve the interactions between the centres that make up the campus, creating a platform for promoting talent, knowledge and generating economic activity based on biomedicine. The proposal, which is a joint project involving the town councils of l'Hospitalet and Esplugues de Llobregat and Idibell, is the result of a strategy for revitalizing the area through internationalization and by offering companies, research institutes and centres connected with the biomedical sector the opportunity to set up there and generate synergies that will have a positive impact on the rest of Catalonia's innovation system.



↘ The Catalan Oncological Institute



↘ The façade of the Hospital of Bellvitge

#### IDIBELL

Idibell ([www.idibell.cat](http://www.idibell.cat)) is a biomedical research centre that was created in 2004 and that covers the research and innovation needs of the ICO in l’Hospitalet, HUB and the Centre for Regenerative Medicine. It has at its disposal 10,000 healthcare professionals and 1,200 researchers who are engaged in over 350 active research projects per year and more than 500 active clinical trials. All of that has made it a reference in research in the fields of oncology and neuroscience and won it renown in the field of regenerative medicine and translational research, which is characterised by multidisciplinary clinical research. That’s why the researchers at Idibell are determined to continue to pursue

excellence in both research and healthcare while working closely together with companies which, understanding their healthcare vocation, help to provide solutions for citizens’ medical needs. As well as providing healthcare, both ICO and HUB are research centres that are able to attract qualified talent and work with companies to generate earnings – with a turnover of over €6 million per year in clinical trials. “We perform translational research, working in a patient-focused way, identifying their needs and developing solutions, even though production and marketing are in the hands of other companies,” explains Ms. Egea. She is very positive about the creation of the microcluster because it will drive a highly dynamic value chain between research and patients, underpinned by their geographical proximity. At the same time, space is being created for other biomedical institutes and research centres and technological centres to move in and create joint solutions: “We are generating an ecosystem that nurtures and favours an impact on the rest of the biomedical system in Catalonia, which is now Spain’s biomedical hotspot and one of the strongest areas for biomedical research in southern Europe,” she says.

#### PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

For Francesc Belver, deputy mayor of l’Hospitalet de Llobregat, the main objective is to maximize the visibility and potential of an already existing reality by completing the development of the territory to make it a reference microcluster while creating a centre of biomedical activity and a healthcare hub for the local area. Currently, the work being done is taking various directions: the existing actors are creating a territorial strategy for obtaining resources and carrying out projects together, and the Granvia – Llobregat urban plan is generating spaces for new business initiatives in the research field to set up in, since there will be more plots available for building; plans are also being drawn up for the tunneling of the Gran Via and the urbanization of one of the sectors in the master plan. While that is happening, an attempt is being made to consolidate the microcluster with the aim of creating a legal entity in order to make it easier to carry out joint actions.

It is hoped that the microcluster will be a reality in five years time and that the organizations that comprise it will be able to create synergies and engage in the maximum possible interaction. Another expected result is increased investment and the arrival of new actors in the fields of research and development and the pharmaceutical industry and a transfer of knowledge from the research cluster to the business fabric of the city of L’Hospitalet de Llobregat.



## JUANOLA

**IN 1906, THE PHARMACIST MANUEL JUANOLA REIXACH created the first Juanola drops in the neighbourhood of Gràcia in Barcelona. They were hand made using natural ingredients: licorice extract, menthol, eucalyptus, corn starch and other essential oils, and were easily recognizable because of their rhomboid shape and black colour. “They cure your cough, clear your voice and refresh your mouth” says the advertising slogan that has accompanied them since the 1930s. They are still being made using natural ingredients in the Juanola factory in Sant Quirze del Vallès.**