

# 10

# AGENCIA ESTATAL DE INVESTIGACIÓN

2015-2025



**10 years promoting science**



MINISTERIO  
DE CIENCIA, INNOVACIÓN  
Y UNIVERSIDADES



AGENCIA  
ESTATAL DE  
INVESTIGACIÓN

10

# ÍNDICE

**1**



**Institutional Presentation**

**2**



**Who We Are and What We Do**

**3**



**A Decade of Funded Science**

**4**



**Impact on the Scientific Community**

**5**



**International Collaboration: A Strategic Priority**

**6**



**Key Programmes**

**7**



**A Transformation Agenda**

**8**



**Commitment to Equality, Sustainability, and Open Science**

# INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION

## A Message from AEI Director

*The Research State Agency of Spain (Agencia Estatal de Investigación, AEI) celebrates its tenth anniversary, consolidated as an essential driving force for promoting science in Spain. Over the past decade, it has effectively managed the public research funds entrusted to it, supporting thousands of researchers and financing projects of scientific excellence. Its work has been instrumental in advancing the frontiers of knowledge and opening new pathways to innovation, contributing decisively to economic development and social well-being.*

*This anniversary not only invites us to look back, but also marks the beginning of a new stage with an ambitious and transformative goal: to position AEI among the most recognised research funding agencies internationally. To achieve this, the Agency will guide its action around six strategic pillars: securing a solid management contract; strengthening quality, transparency, and simplification; promoting national and international cooperation; consolidating a culture of continuous improvement; aligning its instruments with new European priorities; and decisively advancing in sustainability, equality, and diversity.*



*With this new stage, AEI reaffirms its role as a key element of the Spanish R&D&I ecosystem, driving excellent research capable of generating knowledge, innovation, and solutions to the great societal challenges of the next decade.*

*José Manuel Fernández  
de Labastida*

# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Research State Agency of Spain (Agencia Estatal de Investigación, AEI) is the largest research funding body in Spain, promotes scientific and technical research through the efficient allocation of national and European public funds to universities, research centres, foundations and companies, ensuring transparent, rigorous and independent evaluation processes.

## MISSION

To foster research and promote excellence and collaboration among stakeholders in order to generate high-impact knowledge that helps solve societal challenges. To oversee funded activities and provide advice on improving their design and planning through public R&I policies.

## VISION

To help individuals and institutions engaged in research in Spain reach their full potential and make research a key driver of societal development.

## TEAM

**200**

staff

**+35,000**

evaluators

**1,090**

collaborating staff who devote part of their time to scientific and technical management

# A DECADE OF SCIENCE FUNDING

Over the last decade, AEI has established itself as a key pillar of scientific and technological progress in Spain, supporting projects that strengthen our R&I system.

AEI was born out of a demand shared by the scientific community and enshrined in the 2011 Science, Technology and Innovation Act. This Act provided for the creation of a public entity to streamline and modernise the management of research funds and bring the Spanish model closer to international standards.

Since its creation, it has increased its budget to €1.286 billion in 2024 and has developed its structure, consolidating its focus on scientific excellence and organising itself into 19 areas of knowledge and 55 sub-areas.

It is a key player in Spain's economic and social progress. Its standards are comparable to those of European and international organisations. Although it is still young, it is establishing itself as a benchmark in its second decade.

## AEI in figures



**€8,305 million**

Managed



**57,800**

Projects and grants  
funded (R&D&I)



**+23,000**

Grants for research staff  
contracts

## Ten years promoting science in Spain

2011

### Science, Technology and Innovation Act

Law 14/2011 provides for the creation of a state agency to streamline the management of research funds

2015

### Creation of the AEI and approval of its Statute

RD 1067/2015 sets out the creation of AEI and approval of its Statute.

2016

### Institutional preparation period

Marina Villegas, first director. The legal framework and structure are defined.

2017

### First independent budgets

AEI began operating with its own budget and the launch of its fund management activities

2018

### Consolidation of its operational autonomy

Enrique Playán is appointed director. AEI is integrated into the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.

2021

### Strengthens its role after the pandemic

Domènec Espriu is appointed director. Recovery Mechanism funds begins, along with the implementation of the first Equality Plan.

2024

### International expansion of Call for Proposals

The international category is being introduced for the first time in 'Proyectos Generación de Conocimiento' call.

2025

### Towards a new decade

José Manuel Fernández de Labastida, new director. The AEI sets itself the aim to become a global benchmark

# IMPACT ON THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

The creation of the AEI has represented a decisive change in the way science is financed and organised in Spain. Its management has brought greater transparency, stability and competitiveness. Over the years, the AEI has consolidated a support model based on excellence and alignment with international standards , becoming a benchmark for researchers and institutions.



PROGRAMA  
AGILIZA

The AEI seeks to modernise the management of its grants by reducing administrative burdens and deadlines through unified calls for proposals, inter-institutional coordination, simplified payments, and digital communication tools, including AI. The aim is to increase efficiency and bring the organisation closer to the scientific community.



## Success stories

Projects funded by AEI become success stories that transcend science and generate social impact.

### SOCIAL CHALLENGES

#### FIGHTING CANCER

Since 2018 , AEI has funded more than 1,300 cancer projects with €403.8 million. The AEI collaborates with organizations such as the Spanish Association Against Cancer (AECC) and the CRIS Cancer Foundation to ensure quality and transparency in research.

### PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

#### TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Technology Platforms , public-private structures that promote collaboration in science and innovation. More than 60 platforms funded by the AEI work in energy, biotechnology and the circular economy to promote sustainability and decarbonisation.

### COOPERATION

#### CAMPAÑA ANTÁRTICA

Active since 1987, the Spanish Antarctic Campaign carries out scientific projects on climate change, biodiversity and geology at bases and on specialised vessels, notable for its international cooperation under the Antarctic Treaty. In its latest campaign, 300 people participated in 28 research projects.



### SOCIAL IMPACT

#### FIGHT AGAINST MISINFORMATION IVERES PROJECT

The platform uses artificial intelligence to detect possible cases of disinformation in Spanish, thereby significantly reducing verification times. The platform coordinated by RTVE and several universities, it has received awards and is part of the state investment aimed at protecting the quality of information.

## Success stories

### INVESTIGACIÓN DE FRONTERA

#### COMPHORT PROJECT: COMMUNICATION SECURE QUANTUM

The project COMPHORT, led by the Autonomous University of Madrid, is developing a quantum system to emit individual photons at room temperature. This breakthrough enables real-time encryption of communications, ideal for emergency situations without traditional infrastructure.

### TRANSFER AND INNOVATION

#### MATHEMATICS AGAINST CATASTROPHES

Researchers from the University of Malaga and the University of Seville are designing a series of algorithms capable of predicting maritime disasters such as tsunamis and floods in real time. These advanced models will improve contingency plans and preparedness for natural disasters.

### INTERNATIONALISATION

#### ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS WITH A SPANISH STAMP

Since 2018, AEI has allocated 113 million euros to 688 grants in Astronomy and Astrophysics. This includes the first ESA mission led by a Spanish researcher, studies on asteroids, and participation in NASA missions, further reinforcing the international projection of Spanish science.



### INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

#### DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN ADOLESCENTS

DIGITAS is a digital platform developed by the University of Jaén and funded by AEI and European Next Generation funds. It is aimed at preventing emotional problems in adolescents, such as Social Anxiety Disorder. To this end, it uses educational digital resources and content.

# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION: A STRATEGIC PRIORITY

AEI promotes international collaboration, positioning the country among the EU leaders in Horizon Europe (2021-2027). It strengthens its participation in strategic sectors, global consortia and governance bodies to compete on equal terms, expand opportunities for collaboration and consolidate its role as a reliable partner in the construction of global knowledge.

## International calls for proposals and projects

### INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION PROJECTS (PCI)

Key instrument adapted to align with international programmes. In 2024, 193 projects were funded with a budget of €46.2 million in 20 transnational programmes in strategic areas.

### MANAGEMENT OF EUROPEAN PROJECTS AND INTERNATIONAL TALENT ATTRACTION (GPE)

It funds offices in universities and research centres to attract international talent and ensure a high scientific and economic return for Spain.

## The role of the AEI in financing

### The work of the AEI



Defining call topics



Ensuring the consistency of national and international requirements



Facilitate the integration of Spanish groups into transnational projects

### Results obtained

**+50**

**Joint calls**  
(Horizonte 2020)

**+500**

**Funded projects**

**+5M€**

**Spanish R&D&I annual ROI**

## KEY PROGRAMMES

Throughout the year, AEI launches up to 21 open and competitive calls for proposals to fund public and private entities, which are grouped into three categories according to their main objective.



**Research  
projects**



**Human  
resources**



**Institutional  
Strengthening**

Some of these calls for proposals are flagship because they are unique in the country and because their successful track record is a guarantee of their continuity.

### PROYECTOS GENERACIÓN DE CONOCIMIENTO

More than €655 million in funding to support research groups in Spain. It was the largest call for proposals in Spain in 2024.

### HUMAN RESOURCES FUNDING

With programmes such as ATRAE, which offers €1 million to attract and retain talent, or the Ramón y Cajal grants, which have been incorporating highly qualified researchers into the Spanish science and technology system for 25 years.

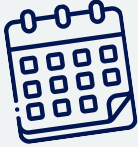
### PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION PROJECTS

In 2024, €320 million was allocated to promoting strategic alliances between research centres, universities and companies that generate innovations with economic and social impact.

### GRANTS FOR CENTROS DE EXCELENCIA SEVERO OCHOA Y UNIDADES DE EXCELENCIA MARÍA DE MAEZTU

Recognising international research excellence.

## Calendar of calls



AEI publishes a calendar with the key dates for all calls for proposals (opening, provisional resolution proposal and final resolution) to provide the scientific community with a regular forecast.

Instant access via QR code to all updated calls



## A TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

The AEI is entering a new phase to position itself among the world's leading funding agencies, guided by excellence, transparency, and administrative efficiency. It will foster international collaboration, adopt global best practices, and harness new technologies to advance knowledge and attract top talent. AEI will strengthen institutions, and enhance knowledge transfer within a Spanish scientific system that is already mature and globally competitive.

### Strategic challenges



Promote Spain's prominent participation in the generation of cutting-edge knowledge



Increase its international recognition



Establish itself as a benchmark for evaluation and funding



Strengthen its capacity to direct research towards the main social and technological challenges of today

# COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND OPEN SCIENCE

AEI maintains a firm commitment to **sustainability** in its operations and in the projects it funds. It seeks to promote environmentally friendly research that contributes to identifying solutions for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



AEI integrates gender **equality and diversity** as fundamental principles of its actions, as reflected in its Statutes. In 2018, it joined the H2020 SUPERA project, which led to the creation of the Strategic Gender Equality Group (GEI) and the approval of the First Gender Equality Plan 2021-2023. The Second Gender Equality Plan 2025-2027 is now in force, seeking to strengthen a more inclusive and diverse system.

## Second Gender Equality Plan

### Scope of application

**EXTERNAL**

Evaluation and financing

**INTERNAL**

AEI personnel

### Principles

- Transversality of the intersectional gender approach
- Inclusion and diversity
- Complementarity
- Sustainability of life and shared responsibility Zero tolerance for gender-based violence

The AEI promotes **Open Science** through its participation in the Spanish Open Science Strategy and National Open Science Strategy, and incorporates this philosophy into its calls for proposals. It collaborates in international forums, such as Science Europe's Research Culture group, to promote values of equality, integrity and scientific openness. Its endorsement to DORA (San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment) reinforces fairer and more transparent evaluation.



10

More information  
**[www.aei.gob.es](http://www.aei.gob.es)**



MINISTERIO  
DE CIENCIA, INNOVACIÓN  
Y UNIVERSIDADES



AGENCIA  
ESTATAL DE  
INVESTIGACIÓN