Dr Lluis Montoliu

Lluis Montoliu (Barcelona, 1963) is a biologist, CSIC Research Scientist and Deputy Director at the National Centre for Biotechnology and member of the Steering Committee of the Spanish Research Initiative on Rare Diseases, in Madrid, Spain after working in Heidelberg and Barcelona. He is the Director of the Spanish node of the European Mouse Mutant Archive (EMMA/INFRAFRONTIER). He has been Honorary Professor at UAM and is currently Honorary Professor at the UCM. His research team is interested in basic science (genome organization), and in applied biomedical science, using animal models for the study of human rare diseases, such as albinism. He has pioneered the in vivo use of genome-editing CRISPR approaches in Spain. He has founded and served at the board of several scientific societies. He has been a member and Chair of the CSIC Ethics Committee and currently serves at the Ethics Panel of ERC in Brussels.

Prof Dr Thomas Hildebrandt

Prof Dr Thomas Hildebrandt is professor and chair of wildlife reproduction medicine at the Freie Universitaet Berlin. Prof Hildebrandt and his team are world leaders in using artificial reproduction to breed rare and endangered animals such as elephants, rhinos and giant pandas. He was a founding member of the subspecialty Zoo Health Management as part of the European College of Zoological Medicine (ECZM).

He holds the honorary appointment of Professiorial Fellow of Biosciences at the University of Melbourne (2012 to 2027) and is also the Head of the Department of Reproduction Management at the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research in Berlin. Prof Hildebrandt is well-known internationally for his research on assisted reproduction in wildlife and especially the rescue project of the northern white rhinoceros (BioRescue) raised global interest. He is recipient of numerous awards.

Dr Mike McGrew

Dr. Mike McGrew is a professor at the Roslin Institute, at the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies at the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom. Dr McGrew first earned a BS from the University of Minnesota followed by a PhD in Biochemistry from Boston University Medical School. He carried out postdoctoral training at the IBDM, Marseille France and at the Roslin Institute, Scotland and was awarded a Chair in Avian Reproductive Technologies in 2021.

The McGrew laboratory at the Roslin Institute studies a special stem cell, the germ cell, which produces the sperm and eggs. These cells can be used to generate genome edited chickens, chickens which contain precise genetic changes in their genome. They use this system to investigate susceptibility to avian influenza infection, sex skewing of chicken, and novel ways to preserve both chicken breeds and avian wildlife.

His research has been cited widely in several popular science books: Tamed (Alice Roberts), How to Clone a Mammoth (Beth Shapiro), and Bring back the King (Helen Pritcher).

Prof. Francisco Marco Jimenez

Francisco Marco Jimenez is an Agronomist Engineer and Full Professor specializing in Animal Science. He graduated from the Universitat Politécnica de Valencia in 2003 and earned his PhD from the same university in 2007. His doctoral research was conducted at the Valencian Institute of Agricultural Research (CITA-IVIA). Since 2007, he has served as a Professor in the Animal Science Department at the Universitat Politécnica de Valencia, focusing on reproductive biotechnologies in mammalian and fish species. A significant part of his work involves the rabbit model, particularly in the cryopreservation of sperm, oocytes, and embryos, and in developing technologies for livestock species. Professor Marco-Jiménez holds a patent for a gamete and embryo vitrification device. He has authored over 140 research papers, participated in more than 30 research projects, and supervised 7 PhD theses. His research has been nationally and internationally recognized, receiving several awards, including the René Küss Prize in 2015 at the 30th European Congress of Urology, marking the first time a Spanish group has received this honor.

Dr. Teresa Mogas

Dr. Teresa Mogas is a professor in the Department of Animal Medicine and Surgery at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, where she has been on the faculty since 1994. She received her veterinary degree in 1990 and her PhD in 1994, both at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. She completed her post-doctoral studies at the University of Georgia (USA) and the University of Guelph (Canada). She has more than 30 years of documented research experience in different reproductive biotechnologies in mammals (encompassing cows, pigs, ewes, goats, horses, donkeys, and dogs): in vitro embryo production, sperm metabolism and cryopreservation of oocytes, sperm and in vitro produced embryos. Dr. Mogas' research group has worked for the last 20 years on the improvement of vitrification/warming protocols for oocytes and in vitro produced embryos. Her current research involves the study of different approaches to increase the cryotolerance of bovine oocytes and embryos by modifying the cells themselves to make them cryopreservable.