

**Lluís Montoliu, Ph.D.**

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**Short Biography**

Lluís Montoliu (Barcelona, Spain, 1963) graduated (MSc) in Biological Sciences (University of Barcelona, 1986) and obtained his PhD in Biological Sciences “Molecular Genetics” (University of Barcelona, 1990) working at the Centre for Research and Development (CID-CSIC, Barcelona) on maize molecular genetics. He then moved to mouse molecular genetics and spent two postdoctoral periods, at the German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ, Heidelberg, Germany, 1991-95) and at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (1995-96). In 1997 he joined the CNB-CSIC, in Madrid, as a group leader. In 2006, he contributed to the foundation and became a member of ALBA, the Spanish association in support of people with albinism. In 2007, he joined the Spanish Rare Disease initiative (CIBERER). In 2016, he became coordinator of the CIBERER Neurosensory Disorders area and member of the CIBERER Steering committee. He is also Honorary Professor at UAM where he teaches to Master students since 1998, and Director of the European Mouse Mutant Archive (EMMA/INFRAFRONTIER) Spanish node since 2007. He is a member of the CSIC Ethics Committee since 2006 and of the ERC Ethics Panel in Brussels (EU) since 2013. In 2006, he founded the International Society for Transgenic Technologies (ISTT) and served as its President from inception to 2014. He currently also serves at the boards of the International Mammalian Genome Society (IMGS) and the International Federation of Pigment Cell Societies (IFPCS) and is the elected President of the European Society for Pigment Cell Research (ESPCR).

**Research Interests**

Lluís Montoliu is a biologist, geneticist and biotechnologist based in Madrid, Spain, at the CNB-CSIC, where he has been leading his laboratory since 1997. His laboratory is interested in understanding how genes are organized within mammalian genomes and has used different genetically-modified animals (mostly mice and zebrafish) to investigate the role of several non-coding DNA regulatory elements. He has also generated numerous animal models to study human rare diseases, such as albinism, and pioneered novel technologies such as artificial chromosomes or gene editing (CRISPR) tools for the production of new mouse models of different types of albinism. Since 1993 he has been investigating the visual alterations associated with albinism, using genetically modified animals, mice and rabbits. In 1996 he described the key elements regulating the mouse tyrosinase gene, mutated in oculocutaneous albinism type 1 (OCA1). In 2006, his group discovered that the visual abnormalities associated with albinism are independent of pigmentation and can be rescued upon providing L-DOPA genetically. Since 2009 his group is leading the albinochip project, aiming to genetically diagnose all people with albinism in Spain. He has co-authored over 100 scientific publications and six patents. He has organized numerous congresses, courses, seminars, workshops and symposiums on animal transgenesis, cryopreservation, animal models to study human rare diseases, pigmentation, animal welfare, biotechnological applications of genetically modified animals, bioethics and albinism, including the biennial European Days of Albinism (EDA) conference series, since 2012.