

ACECH Annual Report

2022



**Asociación de Científicos
Españoles en la
Confederación Helvética**

Letter from the President

Dear members and friends of ACECH,

Statement from Santiago Fernandez Gonzalez

Following the General Assembly in October 2021, I was elected as part of new board of the ACECH. When I think about the work done from ACECH in 2022 we could summarize it as a year of transition from the pandemic time, which has limited in a big extend our social and professional interactions, to normality. Obviously, the end of the limitations imposed by the pandemic allowed us to undertake some of the previously programmed activities destined to address the goals of our association:

- To promote the interdisciplinary connection between Spanish scientist working in Switzerland we could finally organise the visit to the CERN, in October this year. This was one of the most expected meetings in the history of ACECH and counted with the participation of more than 100 Spanish researchers in a two-day event that included the General Assembly and our already classic “microcharlas”. Furthermore, we had the privilege to enjoy the talks from two of the most renowned Spanish scientists, Profs Minia Manteiga and Mariano Barbacid. The event counted with the support of the Spanish Embassy and the CERN itself, and it was also joined by some members from our sister associations from France (SIEF) and Italy (ASIERI). We would like to specially thank our former president Pablo Sinues, for his extraordinary work, which was critical for the success of this event.
- Furthermore, to further promote the visibility of our community in Spain, we continue with our full integration and collaboration with RAICEX, which allowed us to participate and reach some policy makers at national level as a single voice, representing the entire community of Spanish researchers abroad. This allowed us to participate in the elaboration of the “science law reform”. Moreover, as part of our role representing the Swiss Community of Spanish Scientist, we have participated in the “VII Jornadas de Diplomacia Científica” organised in Madrid in December 2022, and in the inauguration of the academic year of the Spanish Language Course at EPFL, which was integrated in the visit of the president of the Spanish Parliament, Meritxel Batet to the Swiss confederation.
- Another important activity we have been fully committed to in the past years is the promotion of the visibility of Women in Science. Following this priority, we have organised an event in Lausanne to discuss the main problematics that women encounter during their academic careers. This event was co-organised by the Spanish embassy.

- In addition, we have made an important effort to keep all the Swiss Spanish Community of Scientist informed and connected via our website, social media, and monthly newsletters, which are pivotal part of our communication strategy.

We have prepared several exiting events this year, which will include, amongst other topics, mental health and Science, celebration of Women in Science, and the promotion of the Swiss Science made by Spanish Scientist at Swiss and Spanish levels, a mentoring program for Young Scientist, as well as multiple socializing and networking events. We would like to invite all the community to actively participate in the programmed events and we hope to reach at least, a similar success than the one obtained during the past years.

Truly yours,

Santiago F. Gonzalez

Vision and Goals

ACECH is an independent non-profit organization created by and for the community of Spanish researchers in Switzerland. Funded in November 2017 and managed entirely by volunteers, the association aims at serving as a network for mutual support and strengthening the collaboration between Spain and Switzerland by channeling and disseminating the interests and activities of its members to the authorities and civil societies of both countries.

The work of the association develops around four main goals:

- **Representative** – Representation of the Spanish research community in Switzerland to the Spanish and Swiss authorities.
- **Social** – Support and collaboration between members.
- **Informative** – Scientific dissemination.
- **Sponsoring** – Promotion and mediation to create and reinforce collaborations between Spain and Switzerland.



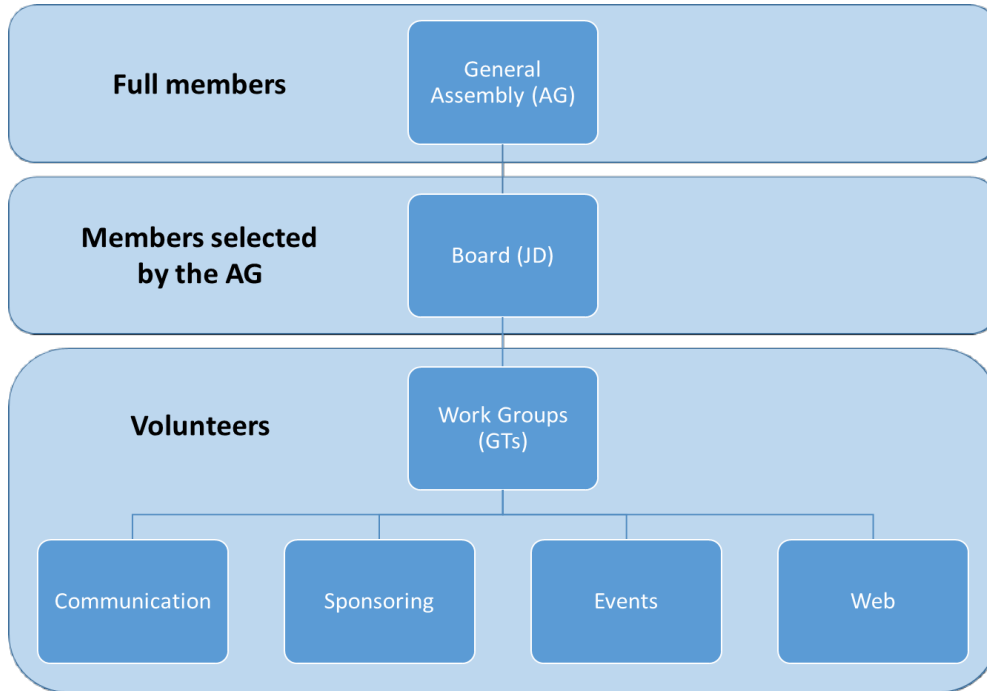
Main goals of ACECH

These goals are carried out through a series of both continued and eventual activities including networking, social and scientific events for members and public, distribution of relevant information among members, development of mentoring and support tools for young researchers and newcomers, collaboration with the Office for Education on outreach activities and bilateral discussions with the Spanish Embassy and Ministry for Education to advocate for better return opportunities and promote positive transformations of the Spanish science system.

ACECH belongs to the Network of Spanish Researchers Abroad (Red de Asociaciones de Investigadores y Científicos Españoles en el Exterior: RAICEX). This network, formed by 17 associations registered in different countries, appears as an answer to the growing need of joining and representing under a common frame the community of expatriate Spanish researchers interested in sharing and transferring their competences and acquired knowledge in a global and multilateral scientific context.

Structure

In 2022 the structure of ACECH board was as follows:



The board duties were distributed as follows in 2022:

- Santiago González President
- Raquel Rouco Vice-president

- David Salido Secretary
- Pilar Vesga Treasurer
- Clara Galán Events
- Paula Díaz Events
- Santi Erroz Communication manager
- Rocío Fuente Communication
- Daniel Rodríguez Communication
- Julia Coronas Communication
- Pablo Sinues RAICEX liaison & events

The volunteers were distributed into the different work groups:

- Natalia Guerrero Events
- Ana Humbert Web & Communication
- Natalia Méndez Communication
- Clara Martínez Communication
- Miriam Lopez Ferreiro Communication & events

New incorporations and changes approved for 2023

- Julia Coronas Communication manager
- Maria Rodríguez Treasurer
- Cristina Soriano Volunteer events
- Natalia Guerrero Volunteer events
- Silvia Crespo Volunteer events
- Lucas Morales Moya Volunteer communication
- Marcos Vazquez Nuñez Volunteer communication
- Miriam López Ferreiro Volunteer communication
- Pilar Vesga Volunteer treasurer & events

Members

A summary of the types of memberships and their benefits are shown in the following table:

Advantages and rights of ACECH memberships

	Full Members	Associated Members
Updates about activities and Scientific Events	✓	✓
Free Attendance to Events	✓	✗
Newsletter	✓	✗
Linkedin Acech Group (job offers, networking)	✓	✗
Dissemination of Scientific Publications	✓	✗
Executive Board and Task groups involvement	✓	✗
Personal Development (grants, courses, mentorship)	✓	✗
Attendance and Vote in the Annual General Assembly	✓	✗
Annual Fee (CHF)	50 / 25*	Free

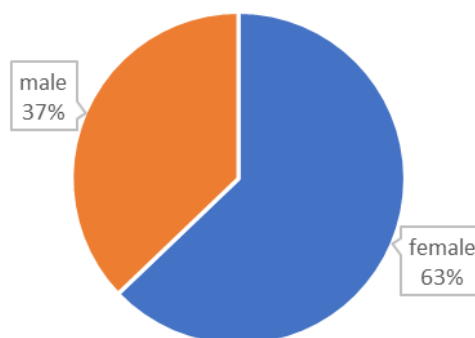
*Students and unemployed members

By the end of 2022, a total of **37 scientists** are **Full Members** with all the rights described in the statutes of the Association. Besides, other advantages offered were the free attendance and funding support for traveling to our scientific events, membership of RAICEX, publications dissemination, networking and access to our LinkedIn group where the job offers are posted. Moreover, **267 scientists**, who showed their interest in ACECH, received general information about our events and activities as **Associated Members** (*Friends*).

Some other figures and statistics updated (January 2023) can be found in the next graphics:

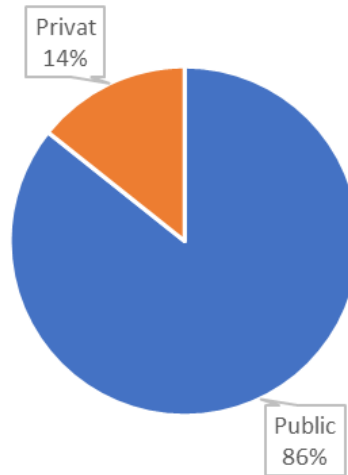
Gender Balance amongst members (Jan 2023)

% Female and Male members

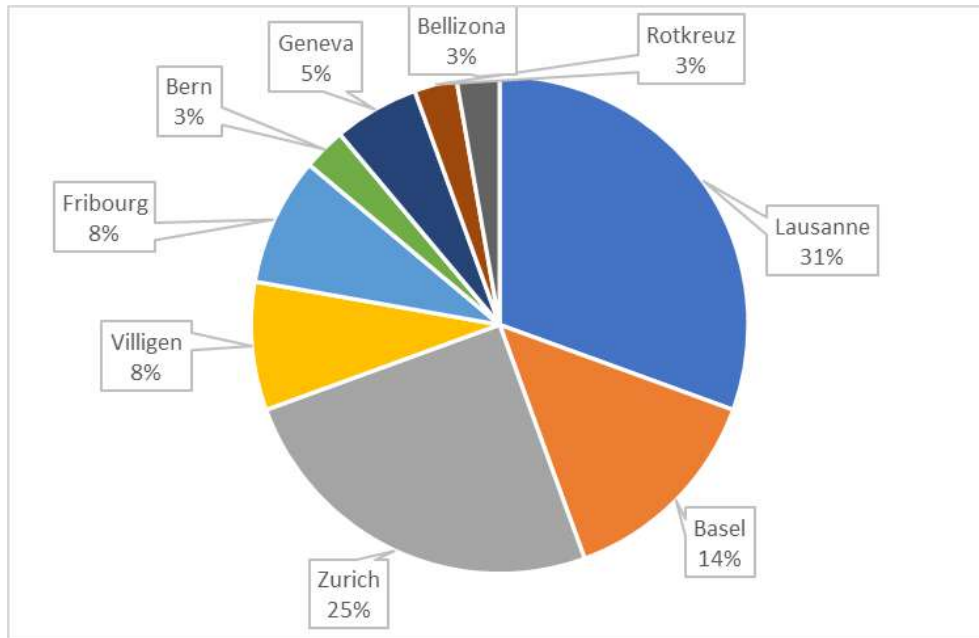


Distribution by type of sector of the institutions of the members (Jan 2023)

% Public or Private sector



Geographical distribution of the members (Jan 2022)



Actions

General Assembly 2022 at CERN and Nano Talks

CERN is one of the world's largest and most respected centers for scientific research and as such, the presence of the Spanish scientist community is very significant. Hence, the possibility of collaborating with such an organization remains crucial for ACECH.

One of the main objectives set by ACECH since 2019, was to increase the involvement and participation of the southern part of Switzerland since the support coming from the northern part of the country is currently larger. In order to promote scientific activities, ACECH members will have the opportunity to claim travel support. The event was kindly sponsored by the Spanish Embassy in Switzerland, FECYT and the Ramon Areces Foundation.

Therefore, within this context, we planned to organize one of the main ACECH annual events housed by CERN during the course of 2020, in combination with the general assembly. Unfortunately, since CERN canceled all the events indefinitely due to COVID, the event could not take place. Finally, the General Assembly could take place on November 19th and 20th 2022. The event kept the original structure and also fostered the Italian (ASIERI) and French (SIEF) parallel associations of Spanish scientists abroad, allowing an unmatched collaboration opportunity among all sister associations. This event entailed seamless networking possibilities for attendees within an excellent environment as well as great visibility for ACECH. It also represented an opportunity to increase the engagement of members from the Geneva hub given the proximity of the location.

The first day of the event consisted of a tour through the CERN facilities organized by Jose Miguel Jimenez and Macarena González. During the talks, there was a message from Don Raimundo Pérez-Hernández y Torra, head of the Ramon Areces Foundation, a presentation from Eva Ortega Paino, the president of RAICEX (Red de Asociaciones de Investigadores y Científicos en el exterior); and two outstanding scientific talks in cancer biology and astrophysics by Mariano Barbacid and Minia Manteiga. We were also honored to close the act with some words of Celsa Nuño, the Spanish ambassador in Switzerland.

The ACECH General Assembly took place on the 20th of November with a high participation of full members. We counted with several short talks in musicology, bacteriology, developmental biology, museology and the emotions research. Finally, a summary of the year's activities and achievements was presented by our president Santiago Fernández González as well as a number of proposed activities and challenges for 2023.

ASIERI, SIEF Y ACECH



1. ENCUENTRO DE INVESTIGADORES ESPAÑOLES EN SUIZA, ITALIA Y FRANCIA

1ST MEETING OF SPANISH RESEARCHERS IN SWITZERLAND, ITALY AND FRANCE



#EventoACECH #CERN #Innovacion #Science #networking #aso_ACECH #Spain #Switzerland

19 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2022, CERN**- VISITA GUIADA AL CERN****- COMIDA***- Guided visit to CERN**- Lunch***PROF. DR. MINIA MANTEIGA OUTEIRO
PROFESORA DE ASTRONOMÍA Y ASTROFÍSICA,
UNIVERSIDADE DA CORUÑA, ESPAÑA***Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics University of A Coruña, Spain***PROF. DR. MARIANO BARBACID MONTALBÁN
PROFESOR E INVESTIGADOR AXA-CNIO DE ONCOLOGÍA
MOLECULAR, CENTRO NACIONAL DE INVESTIGACIONES
ONCOLÓGICAS CNIO, MADRID, ESPAÑA***Professor and researcher AXA-CNIO of Molecular Oncology, Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Oncológicas CNIO, Madrid, Spain***20 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2022, CERN****- ASAMBLEA GENERAL DE LA ACECH***- General Assembly ACECH*

SPONSORS:

**FUNDACIÓN RAMÓN ARECES**

GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA Y COMPETITIVIDAD



FUNDACIÓN ESPAÑOLA PARA LA CIENCIA Y LA TECNOLOGÍA



Science policy

From ACECH as part of RAICEX we aim to contribute from our experience to the improvement and development of a scientific framework in Spain. We created a science policy committee inside our association. This gave us the opportunity to be part of the RAICEX science policy and talent attraction committee to work in close contact with its sister societies of Spanish researchers' members of RAICEX. Thus, we were involved in specific actions such as providing advice on the new Science Law or developing reports like the ATRAE report to guide and improve the evolution of the science system in Spain for those scientists that want to stay or return.

La Ciencia Española del Siglo XXI

The ACECH was invited, among with other notorious Spanish Residents in Switzerland to participate in the event “España en el Siglo XX” where our secretary David Salido Monzú presented “La Ciencia Española del Siglo XXI” giving an overview on differences and commonalities of the Spanish and Swiss Science systems and how we can learn from each other. The event was directed to a broad public mostly formed by high school spanish teachers.

Interviews at RNE in “Punto de Enlace”

Punto de Enlace is a program in Radio Nacional de España (National Radio of Spain) in collaboration with RAICEX where Spanish researchers abroad explain their work and activities. In March 2022, our treasurer Pilar Vesga was interviewed about her work in the University of Lausanne and Rocío Fuente was interview as part of the gender commission of RAICEX and ACECH.



<https://www.rtve.es/play/audios/punto-de-enlace/punto-enlace-pilar-vesga-investiga-salud-del-suelo-su-microbiotica-22-03-22/6461019/>

<https://www.rtve.es/play/audios/punto-de-enlace/>

Evening for Science and Music

ACECH was part of the event “Velada de ciencia y musica” where one of our members, Julia Coronas Serna, gave a talk about her research in yeasts at the University of Lausanne.



Velada de ciencia y música

16 de julio de 2022
17:00 horas
Kantonsschule Hottingen
 Minervastrasse 14
 8090 Zürich

PROGRAMA

17:00 h
Conferencia:
“las levaduras: más allá del pan y la cerveza”

A cargo de **Julia María Coronas Serna**, investigadora posdoctoral en la Universidad de Lausana (UNIL).

El pan, cerveza y vino son lo primero que nos viene a la cabeza cuando pensamos en levaduras, aunque en realidad éstas hacen posible la producción de multitud de alimentos fermentados. Sin embargo, más allá de la industria agroalimentaria las levaduras nos ayudan en la investigación biomédica, pues son uno de los modelos más utilizados. Julia María Coronas Serna nos muestra en esta charla divulgativa las posibilidades que nos ofrecen las levaduras para entender cómo se comunican nuestras propias células entre sí y cómo de ello puede derivar una mejor comprensión de las enfermedades humanas, así como el desarrollo de nuevos medicamentos. Para ello repasará los proyectos en los que está participando en la Universidad de Lausana (UNIL) y en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM).

A continuación

“Colores del siglo XX”:
Concierto de violín y piano
a cargo del Dúo Sensación

- 1. Claude Debussy (1862-1918)**
 Sonata para violín y piano en sol menor, L.140
 - Allegro Vivo
 - Intermezzo, Fantaisique et léger
 - Finale, Très animé
- 2. Enrique Granados (1867-1916)**
 Sonata para violín y piano
 - Danzas populares rumanas
 - Danza del Palo
 - En el lago
 - Danza de Baccara
 - Polka rumaná
 - Minicucula, danza rápida
- 3. Béla Bartók (1881-1945)**
 Danzas populares rumanas
 - Danza del Palo
 - En el lago
 - Danza de Baccara
 - Polka rumaná
 - Minicucula, danza rápida
- 4. Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)**
 Danza Española de “La vida breve”
- 5. Carlos Gardel (1890-1935)**
 El día que me quieras

Intérpretes:
Luis Albeniz (Violín)
Raquel Gargajo (Piano)

Organizan:


Scientific diplomacy event

ACECH participated in the “VII reunión de diplomacia científica, tecnológica y de Innovación española” in Madrid where different spanish associations of the RAICEX network as well as different spanish companies and associations met to find new perspectives and solutions for a changing scientific future.

Newsletter & social networks

An important pillar of ACECH is communication (AKA Marketing, Media or Press). The responsible members of the Board together with some voluntary members are in constant collaboration to perform marketing activities and improve the communication between the members and the Board:

- Newsletter: a new monthly newsletter will be sent to all the active members and will include the latest news and job opportunities relevant for Spanish Scientists living in Switzerland.
- Social Media: Job opportunities, news, activities etc. are regularly posted in the Social Platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter). Common shared posts also take place with other associations (e.g., RAICEX, Spanish Embassy).

El rincón de ACECH (ACECH's corner)

Every month, a member of ACECH is interviewed about their research in order to give them visibility. The interviews are published on our website and are shared in our social networks.

https://www.acech.ethz.ch/?page_id=997

Women in science day

ACECH in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy we organized an event in June to honor the Swiss women's strike. The round table counted with Spanish and Swiss women from Universities and Industry as well as Governmental institutions which gave a point of view of the difficulties and challenges that women face in the different environments in both countries. The aim will be to establish a bridge between both countries and discuss how they could benefit from one another's experiences and suggest possible solutions to already mentioned challenges.

Start of the Academic course 2022/2023 with the Spanish Congress President Meritxell Batet

The Academic course 2022/2023 from University of Lausanne started in a very special way counting with the presence of the Spanish Congress President Meritxell Batet and the Spanish Ambassador in Switzerland, Celsa Nuño, the rector of the University of Lausanne Frédéric Herman and the linguistics Professors Mónica Castillos LLuch (UNIL) and Johannes Kabatek (UZH). Several representatives of ACECH were present as well and our President Santiago Fernández Gozález had the opportunity to introduce our association and our activities within Switzerland as well as our collaboration with RAICEX.



Strategic Plans for Next Year

ACECH General Assembly - KKL Luzern

The General Assembly of the ACECH is being planned for 7TH October 2023. To honor our commitment to attract members of social sciences, the Kultur und Kongresszentrum in Luzern (KKL) will hold our annual meeting. The KKL is a great location to be reached by members coming from all over Switzerland and it has a huge architectural and artistic importance.

The structure of the event is planned to follow what was achieved in previous years inviting notorious Spanish Scientist within Switzerland or Spain to present their work. We will also invite our collaborators in the FECYT, Ramón Areces Foundation and RAICEX to join these events. Spanish diplomatic representatives in Switzerland will also be invited to the event because in ACECH we believe that the connection between policy and science has to be strengthened in order to benefit from each other's knowledge and improve the conditions of our researchers here and back in Spain.

Also, the program will include a tour within the facilities, a networking aperó and our traditional short talks which we believe are really beneficial to increase the visibility of our members within the resident spanish researchers in Switzerland. Other events such as a round table or other cultural activities are being evaluated to complete the program.

Recruiting of Social sciences, company and non-academic related members.

ACECH is in continuous search for new members and associates. With this goal in mind, the new members of the Board have designed a new campaign to increase the reach of ACECH.

The organization wants to increase the scope of their activities not only to the scientists working in academia, but also to social scientists and those working for the private industry.

This new campaign will have two pillars: (i) Distribution of posters and brochures in diverse locations across Switzerland (e.g., Embassy, universities, Consulates...). (ii) Virtual communication through e-mails using the communication of other associations (e.g., postdoc associations, students etc.).

ACECH's corner starts a collaboration with the Spanish Embassy in Switzerland

The Spanish Embassy in Switzerland has noticed the ACECH's corner launched in 2022. They suggested increasing our outreach with a common collaboration to help expand the network of the association and finding notorious researchers living in Switzerland. Moreover, the format of the interviews is in the process of being upgraded to digital format to increase the outreach and visibility of our interviewed members.

Newsletter & social networks

ACECH aims to continue its work with the Newsletter and the social networks and expand its collaborations with other fellow associations in Switzerland like 500 Women in Science (500WS), Pint of Science CH or Association of Spanish Women in Switzerland (AMES, Asociación de Mujeres Españolas en Suiza).

Gender equality actions.

International Women's day: ACECH will gather short videos of members and fellow women in Science in Switzerland to show their work and shortly explain their research. This is aimed to be released on the 8th of March, the International women's day to give visibility and support to all expat women researchers in our network. This will also give opportunities for networking and outreach to our associates. ACECH will also collaborate in other actions with RAICEX such as a video interviewing one of our members and a spanish politician.

Frauen Streik anniversary: as every year, Switzerland celebrates gender equality in June. ACECH aims to open a collaboration with "500 Women Scientists" and the "Asociación de Mujeres Españolas en Suiza" to commemorate this date.

ACECH Network - Buddy Program

ACECH network is an initiative whose main aim is to allow ACECH members to contact and help each other, by the generation of a sort of social network. In a first step, we will ask our members whether they are interested or not in participating, and if so, to what extent will they be ready to help others. It could be either giving professional and career advice or establishing scientific collaboration, as well as reaching other social aspects, such as helping them stabilize in Switzerland, finding a place to stay, understanding the educational system, or simply organizing regular and local social and networking events to better get to know each other. Once the data is gathered, we will establish a secured system by which only full members are allowed to access and to find the contact details of other members willing to be contacted. In the long run, a mentoring network could be developed on the basis of this information. We are positive that ACECH network will be extremely useful, not only for the Spanish researchers newly arrived in Switzerland, but also for the more senior members of our association.

Round tables

A series of round tables on site and online are planned for the next year in order to open debates about important topics often forgotten for researchers. So far, the first round will take place in Zurich about the topic of Mental Health in Research. Several organizations like MeWell Zurich, Mindful[L], Nightline or “How are you?” will be contacted to participate in this event as well as the proper departments of ETH and UZH on the 10th of October, the international day of mental health. Other ideas for round tables are being gathered but the aim is to have at least two round tables with this format in 2023.

Science policy collaboration with RAICEX.

Following the work initiated in 2022 in the draft of the new Science Law and the ATRAE report, ACECH aims to strengthen this connection by supporting RAICEX initiatives. In 2023, Spain is going to be presiding over the European Commission and RAICEX has proposed to organize an event to gather all the associations of Spanish researchers worldwide. The value of this event is of high importance and ACECH aims to send representatives to support this initiative. It will take place in Brussels in October 2023.

Swiss Science Made in Spain

One of the main goals of ACECH is to promote and give visibility to the Science made by Spanish researchers in Switzerland. Following this goal, we are organizing the first the first Spanish Science Swiss Made (SSSM) meeting will have the presence of 10 outstanding Spanish researchers representative of different stages of their career, working in Swiss institutions. The event, that is born with the intention of being bi-annual, will focus this time on the field of Biotechnology, one of the stronger areas of the Suisse economy.

Scientific event in collaboration with SIEF and Instituto Cervantes Lyon.

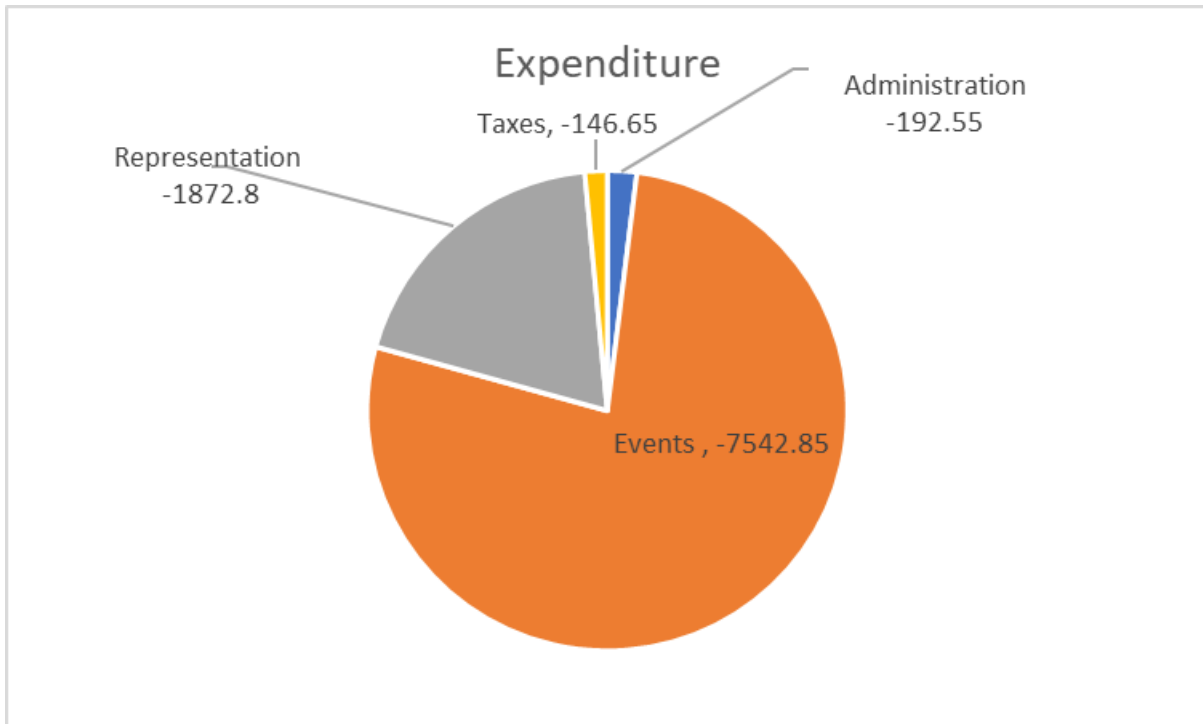
On the occasion of Ramón y Cajal’s year, the “Instituto Cervantes de Lyon” has proposed to organize a scientific event. The aim of this event will be to give visibility to the members of SIEF and ACECH, at the same time the connections with SIEF will be reinforced.

Treasurer Report

Only volunteers manage ACECH and the membership fees of the associates provides its economical independence. This has allowed ACECH to organize several activities during 2021 even though, due to the COVID crisis, some of them had to be postponed. The total amount of income (5007.59 CHF) and the expenditures (9754.85CHF) were divided as follows:



Member Fees	1400 CHF
Embajada de España en Suiza	1555.68 CHF
Fundación Ramón Areces	2051.91 CHF
Total	5007.59 CHF



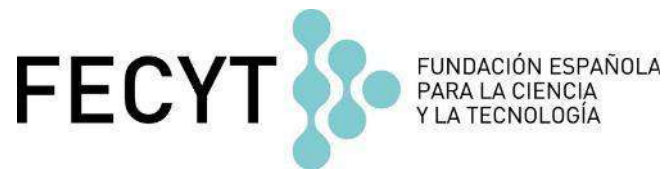
Administration	192.55 CHF
Representation Expenses	1872.8 CHF
Events	7542 CHF
Taxes	146.65 CHF
Total	9754.85 CHF

Sponsors and Partners

Fundación Ramón Areces



FECYT: Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología



AECID: Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo



Embajada de España en Suiza



RAICEX: Red de Asociaciones de Investigadores y Científicos Españoles en el Exterior



The European Organization for Nuclear Research, CERN



Contact



You can find more information on www.acech.ch, and contact and follow ACECH on:

Email: info@acech.ch

Twitter: https://twitter.com/aso_acech

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/acech/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AsoACECHSuiza/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/aso_acech/

