

**Unanimously elected by the members of the jury of the award**

**PROFESSOR JEAN-LAURENT CASANOVA, WINNER OF  
'ABARCA PRIZE' IN ITS FIRST EDITION**

- His work has revolutionized the study of infectious diseases in humans, including COVID-19, and has solved the so-called "infection enigma," a discovery that will change the management of infectious diseases around the world.
- Prof. Casanova works at Rockefeller University Hospital in New York and collaborates with the French National Institute of Health, as well as being a member of the international consortium COVID Human Genetic Effort.
- The winner will receive his award next Wednesday, October 27, at an official ceremony that will take place in Madrid, and that can be followed in streaming (broadcast).

**Madrid, October 25, 2021.**-Prof. Jean-Laurent Casanova, researcher at Rockefeller University Hospital in New York and Head of Laboratory at St. Giles Laboratory of Human Genetics of Infectious Diseases, professor at the University of Paris and Head of Laboratory at *Laboratory of Human Genetics of Infectious Diseases, Necker Branch - Imagine Institute*; collaborator of the French National Institute of Health and member of the international consortium COVID Human Genetic Effort; investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; with a brilliant professional career of more than 30 years, he has been chosen the winner of 'ABARCA PRIZE', the International Award for Medical Sciences *Doctor Juan Abarca*, in its first edition. This award will be presented at a ceremony to be held next Wednesday October 27 in Madrid.

An international jury formed by diverse personalities, composed of Dr. Richard Horton, editor-in-chief of the medical journal *The Lancet*, Prof. Silvia G. Priori, Italian cardiologist and researcher and the National Center for Cardiovascular Research (CNIC) and former president of the European Heart Rhythm Society; the Spanish paleontologist Juan Luis Arsuaga, director of the Centro Mixto UCM-Instituto de Salud Carlos III for Human Evolution and Behaviors and co-director of the deposits at Sierra de Atapuerca, and Professor Federico de Montalvo, Doctor of Law and President of the Bioethics Committee of Spain since 2019, and chaired by Professor Alberto Muñoz, renowned researcher of the Higher Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) at the Institute of Biomedical Research of Madrid (IIB), deliberated on October 6 on the finalist candidacies, also prominent in each of their fields, based on the impact, depth and transcendence of the researches presented.

As a result, Professor Alberto Muñoz, on behalf of the entire jury of 'ABARCA PRIZE', proceeded to the drafting and reading of the minutes in which Prof. Jean-Laurent Casanova is recognized as the winner of the award, highlighting the relevance of his work in terms of the magnitude of his research, which has meant a revolution in the study of human infections and genetic variations that affect the capacity of a person to fight infections, which represents the resolution of the so-called "infection enigma".

#### [Jury Minutes - 'Abarca Prize'](#)

Professor Casanova has won this award among a score of nominations received by the organization of the prize and four finalists of the highest order.

'ABARCA PRIZE', endowed with 100,000 euros and a diploma, recognizes a person from the field of research and science from anywhere in the world, whose work has contributed in a transcendental way to the improvement of the health of individuals and populations. The award ceremony will take place on October 27 in Madrid. The ceremony can be followed by means of a high-quality audiovisual broadcast (streaming) at the following link:

#### [Award Ceremony 'Abarca Prize'](#)

### **Professor Jean-Laurent Casanova and the "infection enigma"**

Prof. Casanova's findings have generated in the medical-scientific field a new perspective in the study of certain infectious diseases by viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites.

Their findings have revealed that any life-threatening human infectious disease can be caused, at least in some patients, by genetic mutations that affect a person's ability to fight off those infections.

His studies cover a wide range of mycobacterial diseases including, among many others, tuberculosis, pneumococcal disease, encephalitis by herpes simplex, fulminant viral hepatitis, disease associated to the vaccine against yellow fever laryngeal papillomatosis due to HPV, or COVID-19, among others.

His work has revolutionized the study of the molecular and cellular basis of the gigantic interindividual clinical variability in the course of infection so, in essence, Prof. Casanova has solved the so-called "infection enigma". At the same time, he has created a new field of research, both from the point of view of knowledge of pathogens, and with a wide practical application, given that these findings also provide approaches for therapies based on genetic diagnosis and targeted administration of certain cytokines.

The impact of Prof. Casanova's scientific research will change the management of infectious diseases worldwide and may be key to preserving life in the face of disease.

**About 'ABARCA PRIZE'**

The International Award for Medical Sciences *Doctor Juan Abarca*, '**ABARCA PRIZE**', is born in 2021 with the purpose of highlighting to international society the impact of medical and scientific advances and innovations. To this end, this award is given to a person from the world of research and science from anywhere in the world, whose work has contributed in a transcendental way to the improvement of the health of people and populations.

'**ABARCA PRIZE**' is inspired by the foundations of the permanent commitment to the progress and health of people, intrinsic values of *Dr. Juan Abarca* throughout his professional career.

For further information:

Press Office Abarca Prize  
[press@abarcaprize.com](mailto:press@abarcaprize.com)