

With the aim of championing the presence of women in the fields of science and technology

CaixaBank and Microsoft announce the WONNOW Awards to reward the best STEM students in Spain

- **Technical university degree students from 79 Spanish universities who have achieved 180 credits can submit their candidacy on the website www.wonnowawards.com until 30 April.**
- **The two companies have organised these awards for three consecutive years to promote diversity in STEM environments and to raise awareness around the need to acquire digital skills to access the job market.**
- **The awards offer a cash prize of €10,000 to the student with the best academic record, as well as 10 paid grants to work at CaixaBank in addition to the opportunity to take part in a Microsoft mentoring programme.**

Barcelona, 10 February 2020

CaixaBank and Microsoft have launched the call for entries to take part in a new edition of the WONNOW Awards, intended for students of STEM degrees - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - from Spanish universities. The goal of both companies is to promote the presence of females in the fields of technology and science and to raise awareness around the need for digital skills to achieve success in the job market.

For the CEO of CaixaBank, **Gonzalo Gortázar**, “this initiative, in addition to rewarding the efforts and talent of students in the final stages of their technical university degrees, contributes to championing the presence of women in the fields of science and technology, which are key sectors today and will be even more so in the future”.

Gonzalo Gortázar deems that “diversity is key in a company such as a CaixaBank, because it gives more and better managerial talent and, at the same time, reflects the commitment that we have to achieving a better and fairer society. The collaboration with Microsoft has undoubtedly resulted in a significant advancement towards meeting these goals”.

“Besides diversity, some of the other key pillars of CaixaBank's corporate culture include meritocracy, equal opportunities and the recognition of talent”, highlighted its CEO, adding that “all of this is well demonstrated by the winning students from previous editions of the WONNOW programme, many of whom are working in various areas of CaixaBank, helping to streamline the far-reaching technological shift that we are undergoing”.

The chairwoman of Microsoft Spain, **Pilar López**, states that “artificial intelligence could drive the medium-term creation of 133 million jobs in new work categories, and will help to address the most significant challenges we face as a company. The possibilities are endless, but there is a compelling need to train talent qualified in the most advanced technologies. At Microsoft, by joining CaixaBank for yet another year in holding the WONNOW Awards, on the one hand we want to reward the effort of university students in STEM degrees, as well as contribute to giving them more visibility, so that they can become benchmarks for other students and aid their integration into the labour market, as well as improve their professional development”.

Acknowledging and rewarding talent

The WONNOW Awards offer a cash prize of €10,000 to the student with the best academic record currently studying a technical university degree at one of 79 Spanish universities that run them. Similarly, the selection process chooses 10 students, who will have access to a paid internship to work at CaixaBank and take part in a Microsoft Ibérica mentoring programme.

In order to participate, candidates must have passed 180 credits of a STEM university degree. Those interested in taking part can submit their candidacy at the website www.wonnowawards.com until 30 April. Candidates must fill in a form, which includes certain questions to assess their achievements and discover their profile, since the initiative assesses their academic record as well as their personal merits. They must also attach their curriculum and the average grade of the first 180 credits passed.

Shared commitment to diversity and technology

The WONNOW Awards address two key matters for CaixaBank and Microsoft: diversity and commitment to digital abilities and technology.

The gender gap in the STEM sector is a reality. According to UNESCO, just 35% of students taking these kinds of degrees are women.

Through this initiative, for the third consecutive year CaixaBank and Microsoft seek to foster diversity, rewarding female excellence in technical university degrees, thus reducing the gender gap in these sectors.

The two previous editions have featured 700 female students from universities throughout Spain.

About CaixaBank

Diversity, meritocracy, equal opportunities and talent recognition are part of CaixaBank's corporate culture. A total of 41.2% of managerial positions at CaixaBank are currently held by women, and it has a commitment to reach 43% in 2021, and the Board of Directors is made up of 37.5% women, one of the highest ratios of the sector. The bank has a specific action programme to promote gender diversity: the Wengage programme, through which it promotes equal opportunities among both genders and boosts the role of women in the company and in wider society.

Furthermore, in January 2020, CaixaBank signed an Equality Plan to promote the principles of equal opportunities and diversity in work teams, increase the presence of women in management positions and strengthen measures to enhance the work-life balance. The plan features the scope of gender in managerial development programs and in recruitment and training processes, and the fostering of teleworking and flexibility.

As a result of this commitment, CaixaBank has received recognition by featuring in the international 2020 Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index, as well as receiving EFR Certification (Family Responsible Company) from the Másfamilia Foundation. It has received various recognitions, such as the 25th anniversary of the FEDEPE Award (The Spanish Federation of Female Managers, Executives, Professionals and Entrepreneurs). It also features on the EWoB Gender Diversity Index.

CaixaBank adheres to the Women's Empowerment Principles, of the United Nations; the Voluntary Agreement with the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, 'More women, better businesses', seeking better representativeness of women in management positions; and the Diversity Charter, to promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory measures.

About Microsoft

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) drives digital transformation for the smart cloud and Intelligent Edge era. Its mission is to empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more in their daily activity. Microsoft promotes a culture that allows its employees to connect their energy and passion for technology with this mission. And for this, diversity is crucial: a diverse and inclusive environment fosters better ideas, better products and better results for customers.