

CaixaBank and Microsoft launch the ninth edition of the WONNOW Awards to promote and shine a spotlight on the talent of women in STEM

- **The awards are aimed at female students at Spanish universities pursuing degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics**
- **A total of 15 students will have the opportunity to work for six months in core areas of the CaixaBank Group and will have access to a mentoring programme with Microsoft; one student will be recognised for having the best academic, professional, personal and social record, receiving a cash prize of €10,000 as well as the opportunity to participate in mentoring**
- **To participate, students must have earned at least 180 credits in a STEM degree programme and submit their application through the website www.wonnowawards.com by 30 June**

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CaixaBank and Microsoft have launched the 9th edition of the WONNOW Awards, an initiative that aims to promote and shine a spotlight on the talent of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields, as well as to reduce the inequality gap and encourage teenage girls to pursue vocations in science and technology. Apart from the recognition itself, these awards, over the years, have become a gateway to the job market in a sector where women are underrepresented.

The WONNOW Awards will offer 15 selected students the opportunity to gain professional experience at the CaixaBank Group for a period of six months, also receiving mentoring from Microsoft. Those selected will have the opportunity to be part of a dynamic work environment and apply their knowledge to real projects, contributing to the development of technology solutions while working and learning alongside top leaders in the industry. They will also receive specialised mentoring from Microsoft, enabling them to acquire new knowledge in the fields of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data analysis and programming.

In addition, both entities will award the student with the best academic, professional, personal and social record with a financial endowment of €10,000 to continue or further her studies, training or business projects. The winner will also have access to mentoring from Microsoft.

Submission of applications

To participate in the WONNOW Awards, students who have completed at least 180 credits of a STEM degree can submit their application through the website www.wonnnowawards.com until 30 June.

These awards have become an established fixture in the university world, with 1,080 applicants from Spanish universities submitting applications in the last edition. Since its creation in 2018, a total of 5,922 students from all over Spain have applied for the WONNOW Awards.

More than a third of the winners selected in previous editions of the awards now form part of the CaixaBank Group. Patricia Andolz, winner of the first edition, continues to work at VidaCaixa today. Additionally, from among the winners of the first edition, Carlota Armillas is the only Spanish woman to win a scholarship from the Bill and Miranda Gates Foundation in the last 15 years. Fátima El Baghdadi, among the winners of the second edition, also took home an award in the Rising Star category of the Globant Awards 2020: Women That Build.

Persistent gap in STEM that highlights the urgency of promoting female talent
In Spain, the presence of women in STEM remains very low — women represent only 27% of STEM employment, and just 5.5% of employed women work in these professions, according to the latest data from the SEPE's Observatory of Occupations and the ONTSI — a gap that widens in advanced technological fields such as Artificial Intelligence, where only 2.5% of positions are held by women.

CaixaBank's commitment to diversity and business excellence

CaixaBank promotes the WONNOW Awards as a demonstration of the bank's support for and recognition of women's leadership. Diversity, meritocracy, equal opportunities and recognition of talent are pillars of the bank's corporate culture.

As part of this strategy, CaixaBank promotes gender diversity through initiatives that make an impact both internally and externally, based on the conviction that this brings value to teams, companies and society.

In addition to the awards for academic excellence (WONNOW Awards), CaixaBank supports various awards and acknowledgements for women's leadership in business (CaixaBank Women in Business Award and Self-Employed Professional Woman Award), sports-related initiatives (sponsorship of the women's national basketball team) and the rural environment (AgroBank Chair: Women, business and rural environment, or a study of the gender gap in the agricultural sector by ClosingGap).

About Microsoft

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) creates AI-driven platforms and tools to offer innovative solutions that meet the constantly evolving needs of its customers. The technological company undertakes to ensure that AI is widely available and to do so in a responsible manner, with the mission of helping every person and every organisation on the planet to move in their day-to-day.

Microsoft is a diverse company in every respect. Its mission as a company is inherently inclusive. Internally, the company promotes a culture that allows its employees to connect their energy and passion for technology with this mission. And for this, diversity is crucial. The company is committed to digitisation and the development of digital skills as its main focus for reimagining Spain, with the aim of leveraging technology in an inclusive way, allowing for diversity and talent no matter the gender.