



## ELLIS Alicante Unit Foundation awarded the Social Innovation Prize by the AEF

**Alicante, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.** – The jury of the annual Awards of the [Spanish Association of Foundations \(AEF – Asociación Española de Fundaciones\)](#) has conferred the Social Innovation Prize 2022 upon the [ELLIS Alicante Unit Foundation | 'Institute of Humanity-centric AI'](#). Three other foundations have also been distinguished in the seventh edition of the AEF Awards: Lola Manterola and Diego Megia, creators of the Cris Foundation against Cancer, in the Philanthropic Initiative category; the Youth Business Spain Foundation (YBS), in the Collaboration category; and the Llorente y Cuenca Foundation and the 'Transparent' campaign, in the Communication category.

With these awards, the AEF recognizes the Spanish philanthropists and foundations that best represent the values of the third sector in the fulfillment of the general interest.

### SOCIAL INNOVATION AWARD

The ELLIS Alicante Unit Foundation carries out scientific research of excellence in Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Social Good. Its objective is to contribute to facing the great challenges of the XXI century through basic and responsible scientific research in Artificial Intelligence. To amplify its positive societal impact, the Foundation also develops activities for the training of young research talent, the dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge and thought leadership on the ethical aspects of AI.

Upon the creation of ELLIS Alicante in 2020, the Foundation joined the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Between March 2020 and April 2022, it led a work team composed of more than twenty researchers from different universities and research centers in the Valencian Region under the name "Data Science Against COVID-19" ("*Ciencias de datos contra el COVID-19*").

The work was structured in four areas: the modeling of aggregate human mobility, which allowed controlling the impact of confinement measures; the development of computational epidemiological models to predict the evolution of the pandemic; the development of predictive models at the subregional level (Department of Health) to estimate the relevant variables to guide public policy decisions and the prevalence of the disease; and the application of citizen science through a large-scale online survey called 'Covid19Impactsurvey.org'.

Faced with an unprecedented social emergency in recent world history, ELLIS Alicante implemented innovative strategies of social action, based on scientific research and channeled through political action. As a result, the work of ELLIS Alicante has contributed to the definition of public policies in the Valencian

Community during the coronavirus pandemic with an impact on its 5 million inhabitants. In addition, it has had social relevance at a global level and has received recognition from the international scientific community.

The AEF Social Innovation Award recognizes ELLIS Alicante as an inspiring example of interdisciplinary, interinstitutional and intersectoral collaboration, with the aim of ensuring that public policies are effectively based on data and scientific knowledge.

### #DEMOS2022 – Awards Gala

The awards ceremony will be held on November 29<sup>th</sup> within the framework of #Demos2022, the Forum of foundations and civil society. The awards consist of a diploma and an art piece.

The AEF is the most representative entity of the foundational sector in Spain and the second in Europe. It organises #Demos2022 on November 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> in a face-to-face and online format. The purpose of this event, unique in Spain, is to promote new approaches and projects that respond to the current needs of society from an innovative perspective.

### About ELLIS Alicante | [www.ellisalicante.org/ia](http://www.ellisalicante.org/ia)

**ELLIS Alicante is a non-for-profit foundation** focused on **ethical Artificial Intelligence (IA) research** in the area of the relationship between people and intelligent systems. Our name, The **Institute of Human-Centered AI**, defines what and how we want to play our role in this 21st century society: we firmly believe in the power of technology as a generator of progress and universal well-being. We aim to be the European and world benchmark for **AI research by and for people** and are the only ELLIS unit dedicated exclusively to this area. We are part of the European network of excellence in Artificial Intelligence ELLIS (European Laboratory for Learning and Intelligent Systems - [www.ellis.eu](http://www.ellis.eu)). We are the only Spanish ELLIS Unit, the only one created from scratch, with the spirit of a scientific startup, the only one devoted exclusively to this research area. At ELLIS Alicante, we address three areas of fundamental research: 1) **AI that understands us**; 2) **AI that interacts with us**; 3) **AI that we trust**.

ELLIS Alicante is led by Dr. Nuria Oliver ([www.nuriaoliver.com](http://www.nuriaoliver.com)), a world renown AI expert who is devoting her scientific work to AI for Social Good.

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