Press release – Paris, 20 November 2026

# The 2026 Danone Institute International Prize has been awarded to Marta Guasch-Ferré for her research on nutrition and healthy longevity

**The Danone Institute and the French Foundation for Medical Research (FRM) have awarded the 2026 Danone Institute International Prize (DIIP), endowed with €120,000, to Marta Guasch-Ferré, Associate Professor and Research Group Leader at the University of Copenhagen. The Prize recognizes her contribution to nutrition science and will support new research exploring how diet influences the biological processes associated with healthy aging.**

The Prize was presented by Professor Umberto Simeoni, President of the Danone Institute and Chair of the Prize jury, during a scientific conference moderated by Nature editors and organized in Paris in collaboration with Nature Partnerships.

## About the laureate



Dr. Marta Guasch-Ferré is an Associate Professor and Research Group Leader at the University of Copenhagen and Adjunct Associate Professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Her research lies at the intersection of nutrition, healthy aging, and biology, with a particular focus on how dietary and lifestyle factors shape long-term health trajectories and how they may contribute to living longer in good health.

"*I am honoured to receive this Prize, which recognises the team work of my colleagues and collaborators through the years. What drives my research is understanding how diet can help us preserve our health, independence and quality of life as we age. The Danone Institute International Prize will allow us to explore how dietary patterns relate to the biology of ageing, and why these relationships may differ between individuals. Ultimately, we hope to translate these insights into practical nutritional strategies that help more people enjoy longer lives in good health.*"

**Understanding how diet can support longer, healthier aging**

Supported by a €100,000 grant associated with the Prize, the study led by Marta Guasch-Ferré at the University of Copenhagen seeks to understand how diet influences the biological processes that shape healthy aging, and why people following similar dietary patterns may experience different health trajectories.

At its heart is a key question: how does what we eat leave measurable biological signatures in our bodies, and what can these signatures tell us about healthy aging? By combining nutritional research with the study of proteins circulating in the blood, the project aims to better understand the biological pathways through which diet may influence health over time.

The study will focus on three questions:

- Why do some people maintain better health as they age than others?
- Through which biological pathways might diet influence healthy aging?
- At which points in the life course can nutrition have the greatest impact on long-term health?

By going beyond traditional approaches to nutrition research, this project aims to provide a deeper understanding of how diet interacts with individual biology over the life course. Ultimately, these insights could help pave the way for more precise, personalized nutrition strategies to support healthy aging.

Maxime Molina, Chairman of the Executive Board of the French Foundation for Medical Research: "*Understanding how diet influences our health and the way we age is a major public health challenge. This research closely aligns with one of the French Foundation for Medical Research's priority areas: environmental health, which explores how environmental factors, including nutrition, affect our health and contribute to the development of disease. By recognizing Marta Guasch-Ferré's work, we are pleased to support, alongside the Danone Institute, research that could open new avenues for prevention and help people live longer, healthier lives*."

**A rapidly evolving field of science**

The Prize comes at a time when research into nutrition and healthy longevity is gaining momentum. A new Future Insights Report developed by the Danone Institute with Nature Research Intelligence finds that scientific publications addressing nutrition and health span increased by 12% between 2021 and 2025, compared with 4% across biomedical science overall.

The report highlights three important shifts reshaping the field:

- **From lifespan to health span**: the focus is clearly shifting from simply extending life to maintaining health, physical and cognitive function, resilience, independence and quality of life for longer.
- **From individual nutrients to the broader dietary picture**: research is increasingly looking at dietary patterns and the combined influence of foods, behaviors and food environments.
- **From population averages to individual responses**: emerging research in precision nutrition is examining how differences in biology, microbiota or lifestyle may influence individual responses to diet and their relationship with long-term health.

Speaking about the report, Steven Riddell, Director Research Intelligence Solutions, Nature Research Intelligence said: "*The intersection of nutrition and healthy aging is accelerating rapidly and reflects growing scientific evidence that nutrition plays a fundamental role in shaping healthspan. By combining Nature Research Intelligence's global view of the research landscape with the Danone Institute's long-standing commitment to nutrition science, this report helps illuminate emerging opportunities to translate scientific knowledge into practical actions that can support healthy longevity across diverse populations.*"

Learn more about the Future Insights Report

**Turning scientific knowledge into healthier years of life**

As populations around the world live longer, a central scientific and public health challenge is not simply how to add years to life, but how to ensure that more of those years are lived in good health.

This challenge underpins the new chapter opened by the Danone Institute in 2025 around healthy longevity: exploring how nutrition throughout the life course can contribute to healthier aging.

The Institute's ambition is to advance scientific understanding, identify knowledge gaps and contribute to a more positive vision of aging in which nutrition is considered as one of the factors that can influence health trajectories throughout life.

This ambition is brought to life through a broad range of scientific initiatives, from the Danone Institute International Prize, its flagship scientific award organized in partnership with the French Foundation for Medical Research (FRM), to international conferences, research grants, scientific publications, and forward-looking initiatives such as this Future Insight Report. Together, they embody the Danone Institute's commitment to advancing science and delivering meaningful impact for health and society.

Professor Umberto Simeoni, President of Danone Institute and Chair of the Danone Institute International Prize Jury: "*The world is entering a new demographic era. Since 2020, there have been more people aged 60 and over than children under five, and* ***by 2050, a quarter of the global population will be over 60****. The challenge before us is clear: while life expectancy has increased significantly,* ***healthy life expectancy has not kept pace****. At Danone Institute, we are convinced* ***that nutrition can play a pivotal role in closing this gap,*** *especially from adulthood on, when aging is shaping but is still invisible. Nutrition has the potential to influence those aging trajectories to help people enjoy more years of life in good health. This is why* ***advancing science and fostering scientific collaboration*** *in this field is more important than ever.*"

**About Danone Institute**: Established in 1991, the Danone Institute is a nonprofit organization committed to advancing science and fostering collaboration in the field of nutrition and health**.** It operates through a network of research foundations acting at both global and local levels across three continents (North America, Mexico, France, Italy, Spain, China and Japan).

www.danoneinstitute.org

**About the French Foundation for Medical Research** (Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale - FRM) : For nearly 80 years, the **Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale (FRM)** has been one of France's leading independent organizations supporting medical research across all major areas of health. Entirely funded by private donations and philanthropic support, the FRM helps advance scientific breakthroughs and improve patients' lives.

**About Nature Partnerships**: As part of the publisher Spinger Nature, Nature Partnerships helps organizations and researchers advance their aims, grow their careers and connect with global scientific community. Nature Partnerships is affiliated with the scientific journal, *Nature*, and provides conferences and events, intelligence services, training and career development, and professional services to the research community.

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