ATAM (Telefónica) celebrates its 50th anniversary

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ATAM, a social entity linked to Telefónica, celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2023 at the service and promotion of the social integration of people with disabilities. It reaches half a century of existence with its sights set on reformulating what a support entity means in a world transformed by technology and under the new paradigm of care in which the aspiration of the person to develop their life project, to live integrated into the community and to do so in accordance with their own preferences prevails.

The history of ATAM began in 1973 when a group of Telefónica employees sought support to create an entity to help people with disabilities from the families who worked at the company. Today, half a century later, ATAM is an open organisation that now reaches more than 40 companies. It currently has more than 43,000 participating members, and its programmes and activities reach more than 10,000 people with disabilities in all Spanish provinces.

In these five decades of service, ATAM has witnessed an accelerated mutation in the profile of its beneficiaries and their needs, which have little to do with those that were once considered predominant. In recent years we have witnessed a progressive ageing of the population, which is reflected in the fact that the average age of its members has increased by 12 years, a deterioration of mental functioning indicators or problems of social disconnection such as unwanted loneliness. These years have also brought a change in approaches to care, now directed towards equal rights for people with disabilities, inclusion in the community, or the principle of self-direction over their lives.

On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, and in the midst of this profound transformation, ATAM will hold an edition of ‘Singular Future: science, technology and humanism’ on 25 October. This conference will offer a retrospective look at all that has been achieved and advanced by social entities in these five decades, but will also deal

with the analysis and reflection on the current situation and the future of a sector in which technical and productive advances are modifying the social experience and are having an impact on people's health, disability and ageing.

To this end, there will be relevant specialists in complexity sciences applied to the understanding of life and health, such as Ricard Solé (Pompeu Fabra University and the Institute of Complexity in Santafé, New Mexico); Marta Bertolaso, biologist at the Biomedical Campus in Rome; and the Dutch psychiatrist Jim van Os, who will offer his vision of the approach to mental illness from an approach that integrates health care with social intervention.

As technology must also be at the service of social care, different experts will show the advances that are being made to be able to keep people at home safely, avoiding their institutionalisation in centres and guaranteeing greater levels of well-being.

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