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ESADE - SERES Foundation conference cycle

Strategic alliances and co-responsibility are fundamental aspects in relationships with suppliers

- **The meeting, organised jointly by the SERES Foundation and ESADE, brings together executives from Leroy Merlin, Grupo Siro and Danone to discuss the impact of supplier policies on their value chain**

Tuesday, 30 January 2018 - "Incorporating ethical, social and environmental quality in the company value chain is an essential aspect which guarantees the company's proper functioning and articulates an optimal Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy". This was stated by **Ignasi Carreras**, director of ESADE's Institute of Social Innovation, during the "Co-responsibility in the development of policies with suppliers" conference, organised by the SERES Foundation and ESADE. Likewise, Carreras pointed out that "one of the dominant trends in the relationship between companies and suppliers is the 'generation of shared value', although only a small number of companies have adopted it."

For her part, **Lucila García**, deputy general director of the SERES Foundation, stressed that "75% of companies have created or adapted their products and/or services within the framework of CSR." This can be seen in the latest edition of the 'Report on the Social Impact of Companies', which the entity has developed in collaboration with Deloitte. In this sense, García indicated that "decisive steps are being taken in terms of sustainability within companies", although she stressed that "it is necessary to transfer them to the rest of the supply chain as well".

Commitment to the business community

At present, the French multinational Leroy Merlin has more than 1,700 merchandise suppliers, from local SMEs to large multinationals, of which 85% are Spanish companies. In this sense, **Eduardo Nussio**, director of Leroy Merlin's Materials Market, signalled his company's commitment to its suppliers and insisted that, "to fortify the relation between both parts, it is necessary to work along the lines of transparency and closeness".

For her part, **Carmen Cobián**, Grupo Siro's director of Institutional Relations, said that "it is key to share and generate mutual knowledge to address common collaborative projects for the benefit of both parties." In addition, she stressed that "the criteria for selecting suppliers in Grupo Siro are based on sustainability, proximity and efficiency". In this sense, the company has carried out different projects, such as the 'Hormiga Project' or the 'Siro Agro Project', which consolidate and strengthen the link between the company and its suppliers.

Borja la Fuente, Danone Iberia's CSR Manager Public Affairs, stressed that the company's sustainability policies are linked to the value chain. From the company, they have launched different action plans, such as the 'Livestock Plan', which aims to strengthen the links between the supplier and the company.

Promoting a culture of collaboration

For Nussio, "it is essential to build an intense and long-term relationship with suppliers to foster a culture of collaboration." In this way, "we strengthen not only the ties between both of us but also

the development of the market". On the other hand, Grupo Siro has developed a relationship model based on strategic alliances, recognised in 2016 with the AERCE Award for the Integration of Suppliers in the Value Chain. For Cobián, "the relationship with suppliers is based on a "win-win" philosophy, in which transparency, trust, stability and the long-term are essential aspects of this relationship model". On the other hand, La Fuente indicated that, to achieve an optimal relationship with suppliers, it is necessary "to work for a common benefit and create strategic alliances and, for this, it is essential to understand what our partners and society want and what they need".

About the SERES Foundation

SERES Foundation, a non-profit organisation, promotes the engagement of companies in the improving of society with responsible actions aligned with the company's strategy and generating value for all. Today 140 companies and institutions are part of this project. The aim of the Foundation is to promote the social actions of companies and to transform business reality to build a better and healthier society and a stronger company. SERES strives to promote individual and collective learning, encouraging more and better social action, solving real social problems and creating value for companies. The Foundation is committed to social innovation, it sees it as an indispensable element in meeting the challenges that are presented to current business managers, through: the creation of value, metrics and sustainability over time. In order that this whole message is heard by society and is relevant, the SERES Awards for Innovation and Social Commitment in the Company, we recognise innovative social initiatives which are aligned with the strategy of the company.

About ESADE and ESADE Alumni, its alumni network

Founded in 1958, ESADE Business & Law School has campuses in Barcelona and Madrid and is present in São Paulo, Lima, Mexico City, Bogotá, Santiago de Chile and Buenos Aires. It has signed collaboration agreements with more than one hundred universities and business schools around the world. Each year, more than 11,000 students participate in its courses (MBAs, Executive Education, university degrees and masters in Business Management and in Law). ESADE Alumni, the ESADE alumni association, has a network of more than 63,000 alumni, who hold positions of responsibility in companies on five continents. Through close to 100 professional groups, it promotes continuous training, professional development and entrepreneurial initiative. It has an international network with alumni of up to 126 nationalities, present in more than one hundred countries and, since 2007, carries out the ESADE Alumni Solidarity project, which is pioneering in Europe, thanks to which more than 1,800 alumni have contributed their talent, experience and management capacity on a voluntary basis to more than 450 third sector entities. The association benefits from the ESADE BAN investors network, which was named the best network of private *business angels* in Europe by the European Business Angels Network (EBAN). ESADE also participates in the ESADECREAPOLIS business park, a pioneering centre dedicated to innovation where the university and the company merge together. With a clear international vocation, ESADE systematically maintains its position at the top of the world's main rankings of business schools (*Financial Times*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *The Economist* and *América Economía*). ESADE is a member of the Universitat Ramon Llull (www.esade.edu).

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