

Inauguració *Research Showcase* UOC

Antiga Fàbrica Damm, Barcelona

Febrer 2015

Dear colleagues,

As you know my style of speech-making is strongly influenced by Fidel Castro. My speeches can last between five and seven hours. In fact in this speech I have fifteen ideas to develop. The first one is broken down into twenty-seven points. I'm joking. I will try not to be too boring. Let me congratulate you and all of us for the success of this meeting: the UOC Research Showcase.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate in particular the winners of the different awards for the recognition that they represent for their hard work.

Secondly, I would also like to thank and congratulate all the participants and speakers for sharing their research results with us.

Thirdly, let me congratulate and show my appreciation for the members of the OSRT and their work in organizing this important event. I want to congratulate professors Silvia Sivera and Elisenda Estanyol for receiving the PRAT GABALLÍ award for research into advertising and public relations, which recognizes their work to incorporate research into the professional sphere.

Last but not least, let me thank all of you for attending this Showcase, because it is very important for our institution that we all get acquainted and mutually share the progress with our research. You all know how important I think research is. Research is a crucial activity for the university.

«We could not be considered a leading university if we did not foster knowledge generation and research.»

The aim of this Showcase, which is to take place every two years, is precisely to favour mutual interaction and networking among UOC researchers and to raise the profile of our research achievements internally. I would like to point out that research is an extremely important indicator for our external recognition and notoriety.

Good research reinforces the strength of our brand and plays an important role in our marketing. In fact, good research and the academic notoriety of our researchers attracts good students to our university. At this point let me put forward an idea that other universities are exploring. Since research is interwoven with academic activity, could we think about getting students involved in some investigation activities so that they can get a taste of research as part of their training programmes? This could well be a very appealing experience for some students and a way to recruit future Ph.D. students.

Vice President Aymerich has been showing us how we should progress in the future to make sure that research at the UOC becomes as relevant as at the best universities around us. Indeed, this is a strategic issue for our

institution. In terms of our research focus this means that we need to develop excellent research. This will mean both providing the necessary support to the best research groups at the UOC and incorporating external research talent whenever possible. Thus, there is the possibility to host these excellent research groups within the IN3.



«The IN3 should be a research centre of excellence producing world-class research. Research groups led by experienced group leaders should find a space at the IN3 where they can develop their work.»

Although this means setting up a very demanding scenario for research at the IN3, it also means aiming to achieve our most ambitious objectives as a university. We will take the necessary steps in this direction.

Finally, let me remind you how important good research is, even if immediate applications cannot be foreseen. I will not comment on the structure of DNA, because many people have already pointed out the tremendous social and economic consequences that this discovery in basic science has meant. Let me though remind you about LEDs for lighting.

When back in the 60s the first LED was invented as a device, and during the 70s and 80s, it remained a laboratory curiosity, but we have seen that from the 90s onwards it has led to a fantastic revolution in the lighting industry. We could say that good engineering has made a scientific discovery into a successful technological device. In other words,

«good basic science will always offer a return on investment, even if it is only as a knowledge generator.»

We must not be mistaken and to illustrate my words, let me end by quoting Einstein:

“If instead of studying electromagnetic fields we had concentrated our efforts on making engineers solve lighting problems, we would have today the most formidable oil lamps.”

Thank you to everyone and see you again at the Showcase in two years' time.

Good luck!

Josep A. Planell