

Opening of the 24th JENUI conference on teaching computer science in universities (JENUI 2018)

CosmoCaixa

President,
coordinator of the organizing committee,
deans, teachers,
welcome to Barcelona.

Welcome to the 24th JENUI conference on teaching computer science in universities, organized by Spain's Association of University Computer Science Teachers and the UOC's Faculty of Computer Science, Multimedia and Telecommunications.

My thanks and congratulations to all of them.

The satisfaction expressed in my greeting comes from what it means to jointly organize an event focusing on teaching – on innovation and teaching improvement – in a field such as computer science, so important both in our everyday lives and for our future.

It's important for all of society, but – please excuse me if this sounds egocentric – in particular for an online university such as ourselves.



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To a significant extent, this is the chief goal of conferences such as these: to be productive hubs for exchanges.

It's also the great strength of the technologies that have transformed our society, and will continue to bring more transformations.

I think it's fair to say none of us need any convincing about the potential and, at the same time, the inevitability of the internet.

Nowadays, knowledge is born, lives and multiplies online.

The net, as a nexus and springboard for knowledge and ideas, has become the most powerful tool ever known for development, research and innovation.

This conference relates strongly to this concept of a net, or web: a network of contacts, exchanges and discussion; a network of people who have met and shared experiences and ideas, a network of contents, programmes and methods.

Overall, a network with a will to make an impact on society.

I'd like to dwell for a moment on this last idea, because without a social impact, our work as teachers, researchers and administrators becomes meaningless.

It's not about selling snake oil, in the way of self-help books for examples – it's interesting to note how these books first appeared following the crash of 1929, and still seem to be fixed in the same mould –, it's about enabling education, research and support that adapt to students' needs, address society's requirements, and are guided by a shared desire for improvement.

Citing Marie Curie – excuse the length of the quote – "You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals.

To that end each of us must work for his own improvement, and at the same time share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to whom we think we can be most useful."

Her words conveyed great ambition then, and they still do today and will continue to do so in the future.

Their ambition is matched perhaps only by their necessity; if we see them as a spur, a form of motivation, they can help us to point our work in the right direction.

I am in no doubt that the work presented over the course of this conference on teaching computer science in universities will do just that. You need only look at its track record of twenty-three past conferences.



Thank you very much