

Next Generation by Design, DXtera

Palau Macaya, Barcelona

Good morning,

The day before yesterday The New Yorker published its yearly innovation issue.

Its cover features a brilliant illustration by Tom Gauld, in which a woman walking a robot-dog crosses paths with a robot walking a real dog¹

This image, a mixture of paradox and everyday reality, emphasizes how AI and innovation are no longer mechanizations on the horizon, but part of the here and now.

Robots are the stars of the show in the much heralded fourth industrial revolution.

And as The New Yorker's cover suggests, they are the object, but also – to a significant extent – the subject.

Nothing lies beyond the scope of AI; ranging from enjoyment to industry, it encompasses services, decision-making and education.

As a university, it is naturally this last area that interests us most. Especially because the creation of the UOC, 25 years ago, was rooted in the initial rise of the internet, when we became the world's first online university.

It was this same desire to make the most of the opportunities that technology offers education what gave rise to the DXtera consortium of universities.



«Our overriding common goal can be no other than improving the quality of higher education. It's not so much about technology as it is about training and education. The normalization of AI within higher education must go further than simply having more and more apps and widgets»

¹ The cover is from the issue published on 20 May 2019; more details on the special innovation issue here: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cover-story/cover-story-2019-05-20>

And I stress this desire to make the most of opportunities because our overriding common goal can be no other than improving the quality of higher education.

It's not so much about technology as it is about training and education. The normalization of AI within higher education must go further than simply having more and more apps and widgets.

It should also identify needs and demands for educational innovations bringing improvements in learning.

It should include collaborations with the big tech companies so we can move forward together, creating, generating, sharing and multiplying our knowledge.

And it should also mean to find more new ways – such as DXtera – for universities to come together, developing higher education that is attuned to change, ready to improve, made for the future, and designed with students' and teachers' learning in mind.

Paraphrasing Federica Mogherini, high representative at the EEUU, we could say that “As well as sharing our workloads, We must also share responsibilities”². Our responsibility is to see past apocalyptic narratives and turn this fourth industrial revolution into an opportunity.

Within DXtera this makes us want to get more members, take more of a leading role, and influence the tech sector to see education as both a key partner and a key objective.

In terms of specific proposals, first of all this means focusing on the processing of data, something that can be used in all types of fields, from competency mapping to business intelligence systems.

But it also means designing educational applications that facilitate competency-based learning, ones that are more modular and more responsive to our world's complexity.

More competencies, more adaptation and more complexity. I think these three concepts are a good starting point for us to talk about AI and innovation.

This symposium's sessions are, needless to say, the most adequate place to do so.

² Federica Mogherini, [«Innovation in Development: The Future of EU International Cooperation»](#), speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the public debate with Bill Gates in the European Parliament



Thank you very much.