The university that listens

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UPC rector elections

15 November 2017

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Preamble

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The initial impetus to stand for these elections was responsibility. A shared commitment to the belief that discussion and reflection on what has been done, where we are, and where we want to go are crucial to the future of the UPC. A belief that frank, honest, public debate of ideas and proposals is the fuel that should drive us. Debate should be embedded in the foundations of a public institution such as our university, an institution that is open, fair, and essential to a country's progress and welfare.

My resolve was strengthened when I visited UPC campuses and schools and discovered their great dynamism. It was reaffirmed by the enormous talent and energy I found in them; the conviction, despite current difficulties and limitations; and the desire to advance in academic, research, and technology transfer projects. It was also reaffirmed by the need you transmitted to me to have faith in the future, to believe that your work is important to the institution, and because you want to feel cared for and supported.

During my career, I have been lucky to have been involved in almost all aspects of academic and professional life. I have always used the same recipe: approach it with optimism and dedication, look to the future, believe in your colleagues, be honest, share successes, and learn from failures. Wherever I have been, I have used this formula and the results have not been bad. Ultimately, the factor that determines what we do and what we are is very simple. In my case, it is the conviction that improving our own existence inevitably involves improving the life of those around us. Only with others can we progress and enjoy fully. The fractal structure of society is reflected in the greater scope of these principles as you assume greater responsibility.

I lead a team that shares and wants to share these values, a team with experience and conviction, with diverse backgrounds and outlooks, who are keen to listen, who are committed to the progress of Catalonia, who want to push forward an academic project that involves us all, so that we can face the great challenges ahead with ambition and as a team.

Our programme is rooted in the values of the federal origin of the UPC. These values have made us great; they reflect a global, plural conception of the university in which we all have a place. We hope we can continue to build on this, based on your contributions. I had the opportunity to understand the main characteristics of each area, each school, each unit, and each campus. I would have liked to speak to each one of you, but this was not easy to achieve with such a short electoral period and the complex situation in Catalonia. Nevertheless, I felt greatly rewarded by the warm welcome you gave me.

They say the future is determined by those who have clear ideas, who believe in what they do and try to achieve it with confidence, enthusiasm, and rigour, without diversions. This is the DNA of the UPC that we wish to transmit in my candidacy.

The future is in your hands.
Choose the UPC you want and love.
Choose to be heard.

Thank you.

Francesc Torres

01

Five statements

1.1.

The structure of the UPC should be designed to ensure its mission is accomplished as efficiently as possible.

Article 4. Objectives of the University

4.1 The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) is a university that creates and disseminates culture as well as scientific, humanistic, artistic, technical, and professional knowledge, in the spirit of universality that is the essence of the university concept.

The UPC serves society in various ways. All of them involve knowledge management, which meets the three fundamental aims of the UPC: teaching, research, and technology transfer. Knowledge management is made possible by the quality of teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff, and that of students. It seems reasonable to establish that the first action should be the definition of objectives to achieve the mission of the UPC. This should be followed by the adaptation of organisational structure to meet the objectives. Pressing needs arising from the current recession led to major organisational changes that were undoubtedly inevitable and necessary but did not entail calm reflection on the mid- and long-term impact on the institution.

It is vital to promote a global, unifying vision of the UPC in which we are all indispensable, a vision that moves away from the dichotomy of teaching and research. To request and receive the resources that are required to face the challenges ahead, we must be open to society and differentiate ourselves from competitors. It is vital to increase our relevance and impact outside the University, so that we are considered an

indispensable institution for the future of the country. Hence, we must make a firm commitment to basic and applied research and technology transfer. These activities are mainly driven by young talent and require quality teaching. Most technology transfer is carried out by our graduates. However, we are not a vocational training institution, and our students must learn basic, lasting knowledge that gives them the judgement and maturity they need for a successful professional future.

It is not necessary for everyone to know how to do everything, and excellence cannot be demanded in all tasks. The various aspects of university activity (research, teaching, management, university extension, and cooperation, among others) require an increasing degree of professionalisation. Each area should have its own operational framework, sufficient organisational support, and appropriate recognition so that every member of the university community can specialise in an area and feel that their activity is supported and appreciated by the institution.

A standard management model cannot be imposed on a complex, diverse structure. Depending on each case, efficient management can be achieved using a distributed or a centralised model. There is no one solution.

In the past, the UPC has more than shown its capacity to innovate in management and even to develop and implement its own tools, which have often been adopted by other entities. This way of utilising management results should be studied, as occurs in the area of research.

In a context such as the current one, characterised by economic recession and a lack of resources, efficient management is more indispensable than ever.

1.2.

One of the UPC's strengths is its diversity.

Poly: a prefix from Greek (*poly*) meaning more than one thing or abundance.

Polytechnic: an adjective meaning covering many technical arts or applied sciences.

Article 5. Basic principles

5.1 The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) is an interdisciplinary institution established to promote and pursue scientific, technical, artistic and humanistic research, and technical and cultural development; to educate students and provide them with the skills needed to engage in professional activities; and to provide scientific and technical support for the social, cultural and economic progress of society, particularly Catalan society, and the personal development of members of the university community.

The greatest asset of an institution such as the UPC is its diversity. The UPC's progress is based on the projects promoted by its governing bodies and the initiatives of its staff. Teaching and research staff are called on to develop initiatives for teaching, research, and/or technology transfer, but some initiatives do not fit easily into one category. The institution should be flexible enough to accommodate such initiatives and benefit from them. Initiatives require the participation of a range of actors and are coordinated through the schools, departments, or institutions, depending on their characteristics. One distinguishing feature of the UPC is that its various areas can act independently. The wealth of diversity is a successful model that should be maintained. We should recover the values of the federal origin of the UPC that have made us great.

Architecture, engineering, and science form part of our DNA as a university.

All too often, this diversity has been approached with a certain degree of mistrust, when it is exactly what makes us strong and unique. Everybody should be welcomed by the institution; nobody should feel threatened by it.

The UPC is unique because of its diversity in knowledge and teaching, its distributed organisational and territorial structure, and its many, varied technological capabilities in research and technology transfer. Diversity puts us in an advantageous position, in line with society's needs today.

A diverse structure, with distributed intelligence, may require specific services and support in each case. However, this can make management more efficient rather than more complicated. With such a structure, management can be adapted to the university community's real needs to strengthen diversity, foster initiative, and create a strong, unstoppable wave front.

Initiative, decision-making, and each area's own culture must be stimulated by promoting a more federal, less centralised structure.

1.3.

Resources should be focused directly on teaching, research, and technology transfer.

Article 154. Allocation of expenditure

In the budget, the expenditure allocated to each type of activity is broken down into two parts:

a) Funds allocated to the structural units' ordinary activities, which should be distributed according to objective scales that tend to include periodic assessment of the activities.

b) Funds allocated to specific programmes and to stimulate units' strategic plans or general spending.

Those who carry out the basic units' daily activities must feel supported by the institution, whether their work is in teaching, research, or management. Objectives should be set that are focused on the needs of students, research, and technology transfer to prioritise the resources allocated to these areas. A method should be established to monitor the services provided by Management and Support Units (UTG) according to their contribution to the University's specific objectives, and to assess whether units have the resources they need to attain these objectives.

The workforce of teaching and research staff is showing signs of ageing. Over 700 professors are aged between 51 and 60 years, more than 400 are aged over 60 years, and 400 are aged between 41 and 50 years.

The workforce of teaching and research staff has higher salary costs due to ageing but contributes greater experience and ability in research and teaching.

It is vital to increase teaching and research staff's performance by relieving them of unproductive management duties, so that they can focus on tasks that they alone have the experience and knowledge to undertake. Such tasks contribute to the progress of the UPC and its graduates.

The workforce of administrative and service staff is younger, with most members aged 41 to 50 years. Resources should be allocated to this group so that they can specialise in areas that contribute to increasing the University's productivity. The capabilities and expectations of administrative and service staff should be considered in the process of specialisation, and their personal and professional development should be promoted so that they can provide the services that the University needs.

The University must have well-trained administrative and service staff to support teaching and research staff in the generation and presentation of proposals, the management and administration of the resulting projects, and the provision of associated technological support and scientific and technical services. This is particularly relevant in the current context in which the process of obtaining research funding is very competitive and requires a high level of extremely specialised management.

The high tuition fees that students pay, at around €40 per credit for bachelor's degrees and €50 to €75 depending on the type of master's degree, clearly means that we must provide quality teaching. In a technical university such as ours, it also entails teaching with a high level of experimentation, which can only be achieved if the right investments are made in teaching facilities.

Due to the evolution and implementation of information and communication technologies in society today, investments in this area should focus on providing excellent connectivity and on ensuring that internet resources are accessible and

available. This is associated with a need for more plug sockets, particularly in study rooms and libraries.

As a technical university, we must contribute to the production and industrial sector, particularly in Catalonia. We must use our research results and boost technology transfer to build a more advanced, fairer society in which local jobs are generated for our young, highly qualified talented people.

1.4.

The university management structure should encourage, in a coordinated way, the dedication of teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff.

Article 193. Applicable regulations and rights of representation, negotiation and training

193.3 Staff training and development will be rights and duties of the University and its staff. The University should organise courses, seminars, and all kinds of suitable activities to achieve these objectives.

It is important to increase the synergy, mutual understanding, and involvement of teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff to better meet UPC objectives.

The structure should encourage teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff to share each unit's objectives and day-to-day activities.

Students should feel that the University's services and support are easily accessible. Offices of student services that are only open an hour a day should be avoided. A digital society such as ours cannot accept a service with gaps. We should tend towards an online service that is flexible enough to allow personalised support when necessary.

The management and service structure should be focused on addressing the university community's shortfalls in tasks outside of their normal function for which they are not trained or suited.

An efficient management structure should boost the capabilities of all university staff. It should be based on transparency in all actions and smooth personal relations among all groups.

An efficient management structure will lead to a better service and better support for students and it will facilitate technology transfer.

Units' specific services must become more accessible. To achieve this, objectives and the elements needed to fulfil them must be identified. Teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff must be aware of units' objectives and adopt them.

Bottom-up communication must be improved, as this encourages feedback for the University's structure.

Communication barriers should be removed. Closed-door and single point of contact policies must be reviewed. Solving end users' problems is the path to efficiency and to better coexistence above all.

1.5.

Structural units should have enough management capacity to maintain their identity and carry out their functions.

Article 13. Nature

The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) is organised into structural units through which it carries out its functions and to which its staff are attached.

The structural units are:

a) Academic units that are directly responsible for the University's academic activity.

b) Administrative and service units that are responsible for supporting academic activity and managing or providing services for the University, the university community, or other units.

Preferably, structural units will be organised into campuses or by knowledge areas.

In the new organisational framework of management and support units (UTG), the executive capacity of the units' governing bodies or that of UTG boards should be strengthened to implement approved academic policies.

It is important to commit to strengthening the units' initiatives and to coordinate actions to avoid repetition.

To carry out their responsibilities, academic units need the support of administrative and service units. To achieve this, there must be full understanding and rapport between the two types of structural units. Duplication of tasks should be avoided, and actions must be coordinated without losing sight of the final objective: the academic activities.

Academic unit directors have overall responsibility for the correct functioning of their unit's academic activity. They must implement policy approved by their governing bodies, to whom they are accountable. Their responsibility cannot be diluted in committees and should be carried out with the required administrative support.

If our strength is our diversity, we should maintain academic units' initiative and independence, to advance towards shared goals with no distrust between us. Shared goals strengthen the UPC as a public, innovative, leading, quality university that we should promote and preserve.

02

The university community

The UPC is composed of the people who form part of the university community: teaching and research staff, administrative and service staff, and students.

The work of all university community members is vital to forge a modern university that is a driver of our society; involved in intellectual progress, knowledge generation, and moral development; and committed to society and the territory.

The UPC should be an active, participative university that is managed in a transparent, accessible way. It must serve a society that is increasingly competitive and globalised. Our university's international relations and university extension activity are crucial to ensure high quality in all our activities and to remain present in society.

Development cooperation is an activity that depends entirely on the international relations that can be established between the UPC and developing countries. In these countries, our contribution could help to improve living conditions and, above all, to train people. The set of values associated with this activity are inherent to our role as a public university.

We want our project to be collaborative. Everyone should be deeply involved in this project, because all the activities are important, and all the tasks are interconnected. The UPC community works well: we are at the top of international rankings and leaders in graduate employment figures. The challenge of our project is to defend the public service and optimise our results to become a benchmark of progress in Catalonia. This will enable us to demand the resources we need and deserve.

Unfortunately, in recent years a certain feeling of discouragement has taken hold in part of the administrative and service staff and teaching and research staff groups. We consider that our activities are under-acknowledged, and the academic career is not well defined. This situation is not just due to budget restrictions. Therefore, we aim to give fresh momentum to UPC governance based on trust and recognition of all its members' activities.

This candidacy draws on the plurality and diversity of the UPC and the concerns of its campuses and areas. We want to regain the excitement of continuing to build the UPC

day by day. We want to earn your trust with a commitment to efficiency and transparency, with moderation and agreement. We believe in a UPC that recognises the value of debate and disagreement to progress. This team must promote a practical, realistic programme to face the major challenges ahead, with caution and consensus.

The UPC should strive to lead in this knowledge society, based on excellence in research, knowledge transfer, and teaching of the highest quality. Its position should be maintained with the hard work of all members of the university community in a diverse, creative, dynamic environment.

2.1.

Teaching and research staff

Over time, teaching and research staff have taken on a wide range of increasingly demanding activities in teaching, research, technology transfer, and university management. It is vital to thoroughly assess teaching and research staff's responsibilities and consider the diverse tasks they undertake to improve quality and ensure recognition.

Research and knowledge generation are the basis of quality university teaching. Teaching activities require increasingly personalised support for students, which must be coordinated with competitive research. Knowledge transfer also requires suitable adaptation and training.

As a public university, we should have enough resources to meet our objectives, provide the highest quality of teaching, undertake competitive research and technology transfer that has an impact on our local environment, and fulfil our social commitment.

Unfortunately, the UPC faces significant ageing of the teaching and research staff workforce and a lack of generational replacement. Efforts to remedy this situation rely too heavily on hiring part-time adjunct professors. This problem affects us all, and particularly certain areas of the University such as architecture and construction. We

believe that to maintain and assure excellence in teaching and research, we must guarantee generational replacement, rejuvenate the workforce of teaching and research staff, and boost the hiring of full-time teaching staff. Similarly, it is vital to continue to implement job security policies for trained, accredited teaching and research staff.

We believe it is crucial to reduce obstacles to the promotion of teaching and research staff. The UPC has an increasing number of accredited teaching and research staff with decreasing opportunities for promotion. It is essential to recognise the work done by this group for the benefit of our university and to review internal promotion procedures and programmes to facilitate the promotion of all accredited teaching and research staff, as has been achieved at other universities in our environment. One of the most valuable assets of the UPC is its diversity. It is vital to recognise the strengths and assets of our institution, value them, and reinforce the drive and specific nature of each knowledge area. We should take advantage of our teaching and research staff's considerable wealth of talent and experience to improve our university and ensure that society values our activity.

Consequently, some of the priority objectives in the coming years should be:

Design a strategy for support and recognition of teaching and research staff, increase training offered in new teaching methodologies, and review internal assessment processes.

Advance in the creation of various teaching profiles based on time commitment. Clearly define the activities that are recognised within a teaching profile so that staff can meet their established time commitment.

Support research groups and researchers and promote the development of first-class scientific infrastructure.

Increase incentives for teaching and research staff in the areas of technology transfer and innovation.

Encourage trainee teaching and research staff so that they can develop a solid teaching and research career.

Increase the recruitment of full-time teaching and research staff and reduce the recruitment of part-time professors, so that all departments have similar ratios of full-time staff.

Within the generational replacement plan, study the possibility of voluntary partial retirement for contractual teaching and research staff, so that younger talent can be hired.

Review internal processes and procedures for promoting teaching and research staff to ensure that accredited members are promoted. Formulae should be explored to avoid current regulatory barriers and obtain suitable funding.

Support the proposal of an agreement with the Government of Catalonia for internal promotion of contractual associate professors to full professors, through merit-based recruitment.

Maintain and strengthen job security programmes for young, trained, accredited staff.

Evaluate teaching and research staff's participation in university extension and management activities, to recognise the value of these responsibilities to the UPC and expand the range of activities that are recognised in assessments of time commitment.

Maintain fluent, frequent dialogue with contractual and statutory teaching and research staff representatives.

Increase teaching and research staff's performance by relieving them of unproductive management activities and stimulate the core areas of teaching, research, and knowledge transfer.

Promote teaching and research staff's participation in international exchange and mobility programmes. These activities should lead to the establishment and development of joint research areas, both new and existing, to reach a good level of recognition of our research activity globally. An institution's reputation is one of the main indicators used to compile international rankings. International relations should

also lead to partnerships to improve technology transfer through participation and leadership of collaborative projects with other universities, research centres, and companies. Partnerships will provide opportunities for participation in various types of calls, such as those of the Spanish National Plan for Scientific and Technical Research or the Horizon 2020 programme.

2.2.

Administrative and service staff

Administrative and service staff play a key role in the twenty-first century university.

We are emerging from a recession that has entailed drastic budget cuts and decapitalisation of resources, accompanied by increasingly complex management. Consequently, administrative and service staff and teaching and research staff have been required to make a considerable effort. We want to maintain current working conditions and recover rights that have been lost, as far as is possible in the institution's economic environment.

The administrative and service staff workforce is also aging, and a generational replacement plan is required. Hiring in areas of the greatest strategic value should be prioritised. The aim is to strengthen the workforce and employ more people to reduce workloads.

To meet its objectives, a modern university must effectively manage all the processes and procedures required to carry out its functions. Therefore, it is vital to recognise and boost the dedication and professionalism of administrative and service staff and promote their involvement in the projects and objectives of schools, departments, and institutions.

To achieve the most efficient management, we should adapt it to the real needs of the university community and the various units. Consequently, we need to consider the decentralisation of some services to provide better territorial support.

The capability and experience of administrative and service staff should be considered and strengthened in the specific activities of managing teaching and research, and a spirit of collaboration should be promoted with teaching and research staff and students. We wish to establish a close, transparent connection between all members of the university community.

Efficient management should also be based on resource optimisation. It is vital to share experiences, reduce the complexity of processes and procedures, eliminate unnecessary redundancy, and focus on the community's priority objectives.

The experience of the Libraries, Publications and Archives Service (SBPA), which is highly valued by the community, should be used to help increase the visibility of teaching and research staff activity and highlight their scientific and academic output. A commitment should be sought to improve the library service for students and extend opening hours.

The University must have well-equipped, trained administrative and service staff, with the technological tools required to ensure that they can carry out their management and service tasks efficiently in a work environment that fosters professional and personal development. We must advance in the perception of transparency, guarantee equal opportunities in all recruitment processes, and avoid bias.

The twenty-first century university moves in a global environment. The number of international students and researchers at the UPC is increasingly significant. Teaching and research should be developed and managed in this global environment.

It is vital to:

Create a framework of trust in which everyone feels comfortable in their workplace.

Consider and support the initiatives of administrative and service staff, as they have talent and experience in their assigned responsibilities, and they are the people who must carry out the University's day-to-day activity confidently.

Design an efficient training system and a plan of support and recognition for administrative and service staff.

Improve training plans for administrative and service staff in languages and technological skills.

Encourage the dedication of administrative and service staff and teaching and research staff in a coordinated way that is closely related to meeting the units' objectives.

Promote the involvement, integration, and participation of the entire university community and reduce communication barriers to better meet the University's objectives.

Boost the specialisation of administrative and service staff in specific management tasks, particularly those of greater added value.

Support administrative and service staff in the definition and development of their tasks and resolve the problems of those who offer a direct service to university community users.

Recognise the importance of the administrative and service staff's involvement in units' academic and research projects. Foster this involvement in the priority objectives of the UPC.

Monitor the current UTG model and the services it provides to enhance efficiency, based on the general approaches presented in the UTG round table. This should involve changing the way procedures and activities are prioritised rather than organisational change. It should also address how the available resources are assessed.

Review and adapt the list of administrative and service staff jobs.

Review the characteristics of each service to adapt them to current institutional needs.

Maintain frequent, fluent communication with contractual and statutory administrative and service staff representatives.

2.3.

Students

Polytechnic: an adjective meaning covering many technologies, sciences, and arts.

Students are the reason for the University's existence: without students, there is no university. It is essential that they feel welcomed, enjoy participating in university life, and are excited about graduating.

We believe that competencies should be developed so that students receive high quality training, develop a critical and entrepreneurial spirit, and adopt ethical and social values.

The University should represent a unique, exceptional experience in students' lives and guarantee a comprehensive, quality education for them. The University should enable graduates to join the labour market under the best professional and personal conditions to ensure that they feel rewarded in their professional lives for having chosen the UPC.

We want to promote UPC research groups' activities because they have unquestionable intrinsic value and are key to student participation. Student involvement in research and technology transfer is vital to the future of these activities. It should open up a wide range of opportunities for students in their profession and help them to join the labour market rapidly at the end of their studies.

The latest graduate employment surveys show that the UPC leads Spanish universities in graduate employability. Students should perceive that the UPC offers them the opportunity to launch a successful professional career in the desired area. The employability offered by the UPC continues to be very vocational, as graduates work in the area that they have chosen and in which they have trained.

Students and alumni should be the best ambassadors of our university. We must increasingly value the impact of reputable professionals with UPC qualifications who work in our country and abroad. We know that alumni are those who are most interested in maintaining and increasing the University's prestige, as it increases the value of their UPC qualification.

Since the Bologna Declaration, the UPC has advanced towards these objectives. We should continue to progress in this direction. To achieve this, we must act in every stage of student life: the start of their studies, during them, and at the end.

In the induction and adaptation stage:

Ensure that we are a welcoming UPC: students should feel that the UPC's priority is the induction and adaptation of first-year students. Students profiles are varied, and we should help them to fit in and feel comfortable. In the year group, it should be clear that the students are very welcome at the University. We should extend and improve orientation days for new students when they join the University. Specific days should be organised to provide guidance on university services and extracurricular activities.

Increase the success rate and reduce the dropout rate by supporting students in the adaptation process. Suitable tutoring actions and plans should be defined and reinforced so that students are well guided and supported during their university life in general and during the first year particularly.

In the training and university life stage:

Provide the highest quality teaching that incorporates new technological methodologies and resources, increases students' motivation, and maintains the spirit of a close relation between teaching staff and students.

Review the current offering of activities for students and create new services adapted to the interests and needs of bachelor's degree and master's degree students.

Adapt study areas and services, such as libraries or study rooms, by reviewing their opening hours and improving connectivity when necessary.

Promote the international mobility of this group.

Promote coordination between the professors who are responsible for schools' international exchange programmes and students to encourage this type of activity, and keep information updated by increasing the flexibility of administrative

procedures. We should also be a university that hosts the best students from around the world on exchanges.

Ensure that the Student Council, student delegations, and other student associations have a relevant role so that they are effective channels for student participation in university life and politics. Maintain regular contact with student representatives in the University Senate and schools' other governing bodies to discuss Executive Council or student initiatives.

Establish communication channels between students and mechanisms of participative debate, particularly among representatives. Communication channels can be used to provide information about students' activities and promote student associations' social and cultural activities, which complement and expand on the state-regulated education.

Safeguard students' interests, advise students, and analyse proposals presented by student representatives.

Increase the University's support for students' extracurricular activities by promoting associations' activities and adapting and improving the resources available to them.

Demand that the government introduces a fairer pricing policy for the fee per credit and the grants policy, so that they are brought into line with the cost of studies in other universities.

Improve the policy of Equidad grants and expand recognised concepts in the area of grants so that students can exercise their right to higher education regardless of their financial situation.

Define specific actions to launch students' professional careers. Our teachers' commitment to research and technology transfer creates numerous connections with the industrial sector and Spanish and international research. This diversity is what enables students to launch and further their professional careers in a wide range of

areas. It also means that UPC graduates' transition into work is strongly vocational: students work in the area they have chosen and enjoy. This candidacy is committed to facilitating and boosting the mechanisms by which students participate in this environment (initiation grants, educational cooperation, bachelor's theses, master's theses, among others).

In the final stage of studies, we should ensure that the UPC favours students' transition to work. The University must be able to boost students' careers successfully, in either a professional or a research pathway. To achieve this, the University should:

Promote student activities in the research groups, units, and schools and in companies, particularly in the local environment, during bachelor's degree and master's degree studies.

Promote projects in which companies get involved in student tutoring and training.

Expand the offering of student training activities on entrepreneurship and company creation.

Promote the corporate UPC spirit among students and alumni.

03

Our commitment

3.1

A university with its own defined identity and personality

The uniqueness of the UPC lies in its polytechnic nature. This characteristic puts the University in a leading position, enabling it to train professionals who join the labour force rapidly and therefore have a greater impact on economic sectors. Architecture, engineering, science, and technology are drivers of growth in twenty-first century society, a society that needs professionals with increasingly interdisciplinary backgrounds and greater strategic vision.

At the UPC, we have not taken full advantage of the multidisciplinarity that is one of our features. We have been able to grow vertically and achieve outstanding results in many of our knowledge areas. However, we have not known how to grow sufficiently in a horizontal direction or form the partnerships and collaborations required to train the professionals that our society demands today. We should highlight our uniqueness and connect all our knowledge areas to generate innovative, interdisciplinary, contemporary professional profiles with a strategic vision. This characteristic should be considered a great competitive advantage over other universities that do not have our polytechnic nature.

Therefore, we are the university that has the most direct impact on the country's economy. We carry out knowledge and technology transfer not only through agreements and research projects with industry, but also with the architects, engineers, and graduates we incorporate into the job market and the production sector. This is illustrated by the high number of students who are hired by the companies at which they have completed placements through educational cooperation agreements, and in Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU) reports on our graduates' transition into work.

We have a direct responsibility for the economic growth of the country. We should be aware that our decisions have a direct impact on the country's development. If the research that we undertake cannot be used by companies, if our graduates receive outdated training that is not linked to the real needs of our society, then we will enter a negative dynamic that will lead to an impoverished society and university. In contrast, if we make the right decisions, those that our society demands while respecting the University's autonomy, we will contribute to the creation of a virtuous circle that will help us to grow as a country and as a university.

We demand a different, unique UPC that is a leader in research and teaching and takes strategic decisions for the country. We want to help this university to advance and for it to lead us, as our Statutes indicate, towards a fairer society that is more sustainable, more just, and more respectful of people and the environment.

We want all the campuses to have the equipment and facilities they need to meet their strategic objectives and to promote actions that cement their identity. Examples are the Island of Architecture project, or pending projects of the Diagonal-Besòs Campus.

The structure should lead to a situation in which all teaching and research staff can access a minimum level of similar services, regardless of their physical location and department. To achieve this, the existing management and support unit (UTG) models need to be reviewed and their services standardised. This action must be carried out even though the diversity of the UPC and the principles of flexibility and efficiency may mean in some cases that certain services are more important or are boosted more than others. We propose an analysis of the UTG, with the participation of administrative and service staff and with a clear methodology to improve the model.

Administrative and service staff who support research should work in the place where the research is developed. Departments, institutes, and schools should continue to support management, preferably in situ, and maintain their identity. Teaching and research staff, students, visitors, and external staff should identity the actual location of the units, and a customer service office should be available. It makes no sense to

leave buildings without administrative and service staff. However, it is a logistical problem to bring together administrative and service staff in spaces that are probably no longer available. The increase in physical distance between teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff contributes to the distancing and disassociation of administrative and service staff from the projects of teaching and research staff and/or units.

3.2.

A university for excellent teaching

The main objective of the UPC is none other than comprehensive training of future human capital in engineering, architecture, and technology. Teaching at the UPC must be innovative, integrating, relevant to society, responsible, and excellent to train men and women who can develop their talent, be critical, and lead social and technological changes that will guide us to a better future.

The transformative capacity of the University is mainly expressed through teaching. Therefore, teaching should be one of the core areas of university activity.

Increasingly, society demands global solutions to global problems. To achieve this, interdisciplinary training is required, as well as collaboration with the business sector, and interdepartmental participation. In this, the UPC – and probably only the UPC – can excel.

Quality teaching requires teaching staff who are motivated, experienced, knowledgeable, and capable of transmitting their knowledge. Clearly, we have professors like this: the quality of the UPC teaching staff is unquestionable. However, teaching has often been considered a secondary activity in our university. The University should recognise the value of the quality teaching provided by teaching staff who decide to focus their efforts in this area.

To achieve excellence in teaching, this candidacy proposes the following actions:

Recognise teaching activity as one of the core areas of the University's activity.

Improve the resources available to offer quality teaching.

Prioritise investments in updating laboratory and workshop equipment so that quality practical training can be offered.

Foster collaboration and coordination between departments.

Focus teaching of bachelor's degrees and master's degrees on the professionalisation of future engineers, architects, and scientists. Every school should transmit the nature of each field and operate in the more federal model that we want to promote.

Ensure that postgraduate teaching advances in the specialisation and develops its interdisciplinary and polytechnic nature.

Promote training of teaching staff in the area of teaching innovation.

Expand interdisciplinary training programmes by involving companies that collaborate in the tutoring of projects to promote young talent.

3.3.

A university that values research and technology transfer

We all know what our community wants: to meet the urgent need to halt the ageing of the teaching and research staff workforce by employing new members and clearly defining the academic career so that it attracts young talent; to rejuvenate and provide training and suitable resources for administrative and service staff so that they can work effectively in an increasingly complex, competitive environment; to increase and update laboratory equipment and teaching infrastructure to ensure the level of experimentation that our studies require and to boost services, infrastructure, and network contents; and to boost the job security of research support staff and the maintenance of large infrastructure and research laboratories created for research projects. The solution is not further spending cuts – enough cuts have been made already – but better funding.

We cannot, nor should we, renounce better funding from the Government of Catalonia. In funding negotiations, our strength will be society's perception of the UPC. If our contribution to economic growth is highly visible and our ties to local industry are considered strategic, nobody can deny us better financing. Competitive research projects and technology transfer allow us to have a big enough impact on society to be perceived as an essential actor in the growth of Catalonia, so that we can demand the funding we need and deserve. The activities of UPC entities created for these purposes must be boosted, including internal bodies associated with research and technology transfer and external bodies such as those that form part of the UPC Group: the CIMA Foundation, the Innovation and Technology Centre Foundation (CIT UPC), the Fundación Politécnica de Cataluña, the Mediterranean Technology Park (PMT), UPCnet, and IThinkUPC.

To deal with the complexity of creating proposals and the subsequent execution and development of competitive research projects, teaching and research staff should be partially freed from management and administration responsibilities for which they are not trained. This will allow them to focus exclusively on research and project development. Furthermore, administrative and service staff should have the level of specialisation required to undertake administrative, promotion, and project management tasks professionally and effectively. The more effective we are at managing projects, the more profitable they will be and the greater our contribution to financing the University's needs for improvement and investment.

A technical university such as ours has technology transfer in its DNA. Our research is mainly applied, which means that the establishment of contracts and agreements with companies and institutions arises naturally and frequently leads to patents. We are the university with the highest number of patents applied for and exploited, to the benefit of the industrial and business sector. Unfortunately, in assessments of teaching and research staff activity, engineering projects and technology transfer are not considered as important as publications in high-impact journals. If we have a comprehensive view of the University's mission, all the activities that allow us to meet objectives should be duly recognised and valued. In addition to an evaluation using the same method as in any other scientific university, the UPC should assess itself based on technology

transfer. We call for an assessment that considers all the aspects inherent to the UPC, including architectural and engineering projects.

Efficiency should be increased to make research and technology transfer activities easy and convenient. Teaching and research staff must focus on technological and research aspects and be freed from administrative and financial management tasks that are outside their area of expertise. To achieve this, we should strengthen the Technology Transfer Centre (CCT) and the Specific Projects Bureau (GPE), so that they can offer better support. We should progress in the automation of management tasks, resolve current problems relating to the electronic signature of documents, and improve existing tools such as DRAC.

We should take advantage of and boost the flexibility and ease of management offered by entities such as the Innovation and Technology Centre Foundation (CIT), which was established to make UPC research capabilities available to companies. CIT activity should be encouraged and promoted to facilitate our research centres' technology transfer. The CIT can provide the technical and administrative support required for management, so that research centres are freed from tasks that do not correspond to them. The aim is to increase the University's portfolio of companies and clients, its international presence, the number of teaching and research staff involved, and the creation of spin-offs. We cannot ignore the situation of job insecurity that is experienced all too often by research support staff, nor that of laboratories and equipment acquired for research projects that we are cannot always maintain in the best conditions. Some of the returns from technology transfer should be allocated to increasing the job security of research support staff and maintaining equipment and laboratories created for such projects.

A specific vice-rector's office will be dedicated to promoting and coordinating issues relating to technology transfer and relations with the relevant government body and the industrial environment, in accordance with the research groups and units that are involved. Technology transfer is crucial to the country's economic growth. It is also a strategic activity because it contributes to launching our students' professional careers in their chosen field, in a wide range of industrial and technological areas and sectors. We want to implement an active policy of incentives so that part of the overheads

maintains the sustainability of the activity that generated them. In specific cases, this may involve a reduction in teaching hours.

In the area of information and communication technologies (ICT), the task of providing UPCnet services throughout the UPC will continue to be reinforced, with the support and participation of UPC teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff who are experts in this field. This will provide opportunities to develop new, advanced ICT services and maintain and strengthen the leadership that the UPC has always attained in this area. Initiatives such as the ICT Plan need to be recovered and the use of open-source software by the university community should be boosted. The recently created IthinkUPC, an ICT consultancy offering advanced market-oriented services, should continue its function of highlighting the knowledge gained over the years at the UPC and ensuring that any returns benefit the entire university community.

Likewise, the UPC Foundation should continue to develop the lifelong training activities that are its responsibility. It should take advantage of its ability to introduce up-to-date training programmes that meet market demands, as this is another way to recognise the value of research and knowledge developed at the UPC.

3.4.

A university that is open to the world

The groundbreaking internationalisation efforts of our university in recent years will be maintained. We will draw on the experience gained by teaching and research staff who have been involved in this activity and that of specialised administrative and service staff. Knowledge exchange in a global, interconnected world is crucial to ensure high quality in any activity.

Exchanges between UPC students and students from the best universities in the world will enable our bachelor's degree, master's degree and postgraduate students to gain high-level training and knowledge and expand their cultural experience. We should also be a university that hosts the best students from around the world.

We should strengthen relations with other universities to facilitate exchanges among the corresponding teaching and research staff. Such exchanges will help to establish and develop new and existing joint areas of research, which will result in a high level of recognition of our research activity globally.

International relations will also lead to the establishment of partnerships that can help to improve technology transfer, through participation and leadership of collaborative projects with other universities, research centres and companies. These partnerships will foster participation in a wide range of calls, such as those of the Spanish National Plan for Scientific and Technical Research or the Horizon 2020 programme, by activating the internal resources required to make participation easy and habitual.

Development cooperation is another activity that depends entirely on the international relations that can be established between the UPC and developing countries. In these countries, our contribution can serve to improve people's living conditions and, above all, their education. The leadership that the UPC has shown in this activity is an asset that should be preserved and valued.

We are familiar with and back the 2017–2021 UPC Internationalisation Plan. We support its strategic challenges and its objectives for internationalisation of the institution, its people, teaching, research, and technology transfer by strengthening strategic partnerships and developing the right tools and resources to undertake this process successfully. It is extremely important to involve teaching and research staff in internationalisation and recognise their participation in international committees, the prestige they have accumulated during their professional and academic activity, and their networks of international contacts.

3.5.

A university that is in touch with society

Commitment and connection to society are also achieved through the high number of university extension activities organised by schools and campuses. In assessments of teaching and research staff, the university extension activities they undertake are

often consigned to a lower level, below research and teaching. They are even sometimes considered a kind of avoidance of the main teaching activity. If we defend the plurality and diversity of our university, we should also value, to a fair extent, our teaching staff's university extension activities and draw on them as one more element of feedback to maintain the direct, essential connection with society.

One of the reasons for the existence of universities is the training of future graduates. We should attract the best students, because they make and will make our university exceptional. Students should consider that the UPC is a university in which they can realise their projects, a prestigious university with international recognition that is in touch with society and its business sector, that is innovative and committed to social and human development. Promotion is a crucial aspect in this respect. The University should also meet and have the following objectives:

Promote bachelor's degrees and master's degrees.

Communicate and promote activities with social actors outside the University: secondary and upper secondary schools, primary schools, social and business associations and organisations, government bodies, other universities and entities with an international reach.

Announce successful actions and research results in the media.

Communicate and promote university community activities (those of students, teaching and research staff, administrative and service staff, and alumni).

Develop talent promotion programmes.

Actions in this area should focus on:

Promoting technology and science among upper secondary, secondary, vocational training, and primary students, to create interest in technology careers.

Increasing the number of students who choose the UPC as their first option and raising the admission mark for degrees. As a secondary objective, places on bachelor's degree and master's degree courses should be filled by the students with the best profiles. To

meet these objectives, we should promote courses much more attractively, particularly those for which there is lower demand.

Increasing the number of news items relating to UPC research and students' projects in the media. The presence of the UPC in the media needs to be improved. The UPC as a university and source of knowledge and development should have a voice and be the mouthpiece for its students and researchers.

Improving UPC relations with government bodies and private entities to create synergies and support for projects developed within the university community.

Achieving group feeling and the pride of belonging among the entire university community and ensuring that students and alumni are the best promoters of the UPC brand.

Helping students, teaching and research staff, and administrative and service staff from the UPC to develop their professional and personal projects with the required resources and in a suitable environment.

3.6.

A university that is responsible, transparent, and open to everyone; a university that respects and listens

One of the university community's singularities is the selection process that all members must go through before they can form a part of it. A good example of this are the university entrance exams for students and the recruitment processes and public examinations for contractual and statutory teaching and research staff and administrative and service staff. We must be deserving of society's trust in our institution. Consequently, we must assume responsibility before society for all our actions, not just those relating to financial management. All the University's governing bodies must be accountable for their actions. They must be transparent and acknowledge responsibilities for all the activities they undertake. To further develop transparency and the participation of the university community in the governance of

the UPC, documents sent to the Governing Council will be available at least two days before sessions.

As a public institution, we must be open to everyone, without prior judgement or impositions. We must respect people, their freedom of thought and expression, and the basic principles in our Statutes.

We must feel obliged to listen to everyone, not just members of the community who approach the University's governing bodies. We must listen to society and take its demands into consideration, to create and maintain curricula that meet these demands; facilitate graduates' transition into work and professional success; and carry out research that fosters the country's development and economic growth, while respecting people and the environment.

We want a UPC that is respectful of people and society, their initiatives, and their diversity. We do not seek a university that imposes uniformity. Instead, we opt for a university with a federal structure that respects and fosters the unique characteristics of our schools and campuses, does not discriminate based on territorial location, and is fair and equitable in the allocation of resources to all structural units.

Only with respect, listening to everyone, openness to the world, responsibility, and total transparency can we fulfil the task and merit the trust that society has given us.

3.7.

A university that is committed to society

Clearly, the major transformation our society has undergone in recent years at local and global level has been catalysed by the application of technology in its many forms. As established in our Statutes, we are a higher education, public service institution that prioritises the areas of engineering, architecture and science. Our activity has a clear impact on society in the short-, medium- and long-term. We seek excellence in architecture, engineering and science, but in no case can we consider that our activity overlooks the social changes that technology causes. We are people who work with people, whom we train both in science and technology and with the ethical values that

society demands. The concepts of sustainability, respect for the environment, respect for privacy and people's freedom and diversity should permeate the education that our students receive.

We must increase collaboration with industry and the business sector. Our curricula should meet industry's current and future demands for the training of our graduates. As a technical university, we are almost obliged to listen to companies and the industrial sector. We should take advantage of the professional profile of adjunct teaching and research staff at the UPC so that they facilitate ties with industry and help us to create updated, attractive curricula. The boards associated with schools and committees for university-business relations should be useful tools to maintain this permanent connection with society. In this area, we should take advantage of the large number of educational cooperation agreements that our schools have signed, which enable our students to carry out external placements in companies and institutions. This is another point of contact for determining the needs of companies and obtaining the feedback we need on our training.

Accessibility, inclusion, gender equality, and fairness are values that are inherent to the UPC. We must continue to devote efforts and resources to make them part of everyday life, as this is the best indicator of their attainment. The Spanish third equal opportunities plan is a good instrument to achieve this.

We want to strengthen the role of the Centre for Development Cooperation (CCD) in the development of cooperation and development initiatives, to channel the actions of university community members in this area and in awareness-raising and training activities. These should be the objectives of a committed public university.

We must ensure equal opportunities for all groups in the university community. This can be achieved by promoting activities of the Accessibility Chair: Architecture, Design and Technology for All in training and in the development of research projects relating to universal access, design for all, and disability.

The team

The people in this team have held various academic posts and have extensive management experience. Their names are:

Jordi Berenguer Sau, Gabriel Bugeda Castelltort, Agustí Fernández Jiménez, Núria Garrido Soriano, Santiago Gassó Domingo and Santiago Silvestre Berges.

The Executive Council will have a very similar structure to the current one. For more effective management, the offices of the vice-rectors will be organised into three main areas: knowledge, institutional and academic.