

His Majesty the King of Spain and the president of Portugal presided over the opening ceremony of the Universia IV International Meeting of Rectors in Salamanca

- The Secretary-General of the OECD, Ángel Gurría, and the chairman of Universia and Banco Santander, Ana Botín, will join them in presiding the event.
- More than 700 rectors and academics from around the world, together with politicians and business people, and representatives of Spanish and international institutions, will hold discussions in Salamanca on 21 and 22 May on the university of the 21st century.

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On 21 May, His Majesty King Felipe VI and the president of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, will preside over the opening ceremony of the Universia IV International Meeting of Rectors. They will be joined by, among others, the Secretary-General of the OECD, Ángel Gurría, and the chairman of Universia and Banco Santander, Ana Botín.

Universia's IV International Meeting of Rectors is held in conjunction with the University of Salamanca's 800th anniversary and will host, under the theme "University, Society and Future", a discussion in which experts from all over the world will focus on key issues facing universities currently and in the immediate future. More than 700 rectors and academics, together with politicians, business people and representatives of Spanish and international institutions, will be in attendance.

The debate will focus on three main areas of particular interest to the academic world: "Training and learning in a digital world"; "Research at universities: a paradigm under scrutiny?" and "The university's contribution to social and territorial development". The speakers include some very notable figures, such as those who make up the opening panel: Pam Fredman, president of the International Association of Universities, María José Alonso, professor at the University of Santiago de Compostela and member of the National Academy of Medicine in the US, and Leila Janah, founder and CEO of Samasource and LXMI, companies whose purpose is to end global poverty by providing job opportunities for people in disadvantaged socioeconomic situations.

The conclusions of the debate will be embodied in the "Salamanca Declaration", with the commitment by the authorities and rectors in attendance for universities to progress, through specific initiatives, in line with the needs of twenty-first century society.

Microbiologist, researcher and professor at the University of Alicante, Francisco Mojica, known worldwide for his research in genomics, related to immunity mechanisms in prokaryotic cells, will deliver the closing conference of this meeting, which will end on 22 May with an act chaired by Ana Botín together with the prime minister of Spain, Mariano Rajoy.

The conference will follow on from the meetings held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil, 2014), Guadalajara (Mexico, 2010) and Seville (Spain, 2005), and is backed by Banco Santander, the company that invests the most in supporting education worldwide (Varkey/UNESCO Report – Fortune 500) and which has more than 1,200 collaboration agreements with universities and academic institutions in 21 countries through Santander Universities (<https://www.santander.com/en/our-approach/inclusive-and-sustainable-growth/support-for-higher-education>), and which brings together more than 1,300 Latin American academic institutions through Universia (www.universia.net).

The debate can be followed via streaming, through the event's social networks and its official website: www.universiasalamanca2018.com. It will conclude with the publication of the Declaration of Salamanca, which will include the main conclusions and proposals to help build the university of the future and contribute to its purpose as a driver of progress and social development.