Two and a half years ago, at a seminar titled Research Impact and Relevance, I started my opening speech with the following statement: ‘We cannot deny that the current system of research management result in **perverse incentives**’. 

This statement was based on the way we assess ‘indicators of impact’ to determine research careers. To a large extent this is based on bibliometric analyses, while we know that this does not always correlate with the real significance of the research performed, because factors like societal impact are not taken into account. Furthermore these type of analyses, like the h-factor doesn’t accommodate disciplinary differences.

Therefore, there is an urgent need for a broader discussion with all stakeholders in the research life cycle to find other ways to bring **more color and differentiation in the kinds of research assessment methods** and the ways they are applied in research policy.
Ladies and gentlemen, these are the real issues that need to be discussed today and explored in the next months and years to come.

One of the main messages I have today to young, but also established researchers is that issues like

**Internationalization, multidisciplinary research and talent programs are key issues to be developed further.** The only way we can do this is by broaden our view.

What have we accomplished in this field up to now? Well in close collaboration with our colleagues from Leiden University we created a **program called Quality and Relevance of Research.** We allocated **budgets for research on methods to express quality and relevance** in ways that do justice to the complex variety in outputs and activities of researchers and research groups.
Another recent development is that in 2015, at the Dies Natalis of our university, professor John Ioannidis of the Stanford School of Medicine, was appointed Honorary Doctor because of his broad and critical view on research in general. By providing him this honor we also gave a clear signal that we as scientific community at Erasmus University embrace the need for new approaches in research policy. You might have seen his recent paper that was published in Nature Human Behavior a couple of weeks ago, entitled A Manifesto for Reproducible Science. In this paper he highlights the importance of the reliability and efficiency of research.

Let me go back to the issue of internationalization. Internationalization has different faces within our academic community. For our different teaching programs it means exchange with universities abroad. We hope that by sharing other insights this adds to the development of our students as so-called T-shaped professionals.

We all know that both nationally and internationally we are facing challenges that cannot be solved by monodisciplinary
approaches. Broad societal issues like for instance climate change, sustainable energy supply, migration and diversity, challenges facing the food system and health care, can only be understood and solved by multi or interdisciplinary research. However, multidisciplinary research contradicts with the way in which we have organized the scientific system in disciplines. The current system has too much emphasis on the monodisciplinary organization of scientific and scholarly journals and their peer review system.

In my opinion Inter- and Multidisciplinary collaboration in international networks and consortia are crucial in knowledge accumulation. In the Erasmus Initiatives, a fund for excellent research at our university, a multidisciplinary design is the major prerequisite for a successful application. Currently we have developed already two initiatives: one on Smarter Solutions for Better Health and a second one Vital Cities and Citizens. Another one on Inclusive Growth and Prosperity is currently under construction.
Lets go to the **human factor**. Quality of research performance with **care for talent and ethical research conduct and scientific integrity** as leading principles, is fundamental. Managers of knowledge institutions, as myself, will also have to aim for diversity to offer the real opportunities to a different kind of researchers working for a different career, both inside and outside academia.

So what we need are teamplayers. My mission is that we strive for further enrichment of our science by working together with and learning from colleagues from other disciplines. Multidisciplinary research does not lead to superficiality but to new understanding and perception.

We must rethink the ways we **assess** and **evaluate** research and **review** research grant applications and scientific publications, but also explore new incentives for researchers to stimulate them to add to this joint effort.

Prerequisite, ladies and gentlemen, is that Universities must act together finding alternative ways to evaluate research: not by striving for productivity, but for relevance and quality. Also our publication culture must change to what it used to
be: a way to communicate research findings and results amongst scientists and societal stakeholders.

**Open Science** is therefore an important issue. Open Science is a commitment of all and not of a few. It is of the highest importance that we all can benefit from progression in scientific understanding and development.

I wish you a fruitful conference this afternoon.