

Address of University of Iceland Rector Jón Atli Benediktsson, HEInnovate Workshop, Sept 24, 2019

Dear Guests,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this workshop where we will explore the innovative status and potential of the University of Iceland.

Our society, local and global, faces great challenges which have to some extent been defined in the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. In order not to repeat the mistakes of our past and to best utilize our earthly resources we need to find innovative solutions. The University plays an important part in addressing these challenges by delivering high quality research and innovation through motivated employees and students. The current policy of the University specifies innovation as one of its focus areas and we foresee an even greater emphasis on it in the future. In order to address these societal challenges, and also to continuously challenge ourselves, what we know and think we are capable of, the University is committed to enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship through the strengthening of know-how, opportunities and support to its staff and students. In order to optimize our resources and time we have now asked you to help us, dear participants, set the course in the right direction.

The workshop is a part of a process that started with us participating in an online self-assessment provided by HEInnovate, which is an initiative of the European Commission and the OECD. The experts behind HEInnovate have analyzed the results and I am happy to say that they are here now to present to

us their findings. I would like to welcome our two independent experts, Göran Melin and Martin Wain, who will be facilitating the workshops today. They come from the Technopolis Group and are experts in analysis and evaluations of research and higher education policy. Their role is to assist us, here at the University, in identifying the current status of entrepreneurial and innovative activities with the aim of defining a future action plan with prioritized tasks.

I look forward to this workshop and I hope we will have fruitful discussions not only for the better of the University of Iceland but society at large. Göran and Martin, I give the floor to you.