

ESOF: A NEW FRONTIER FOR INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

A new frontier for innovation and research, a new season for the community, a new dawn for the concept of sociality: the developments of the last few months offer us the possibility to write a new page that, through an ethical approach, learns how to take advantage of science as a tool for freedom.

When we talk about innovation, very often, all too often in truth, we tend to narrow the field down to science and technology. But this interpretation is only partial, lacking interpretation of an essential component, namely the social aspect. The challenge of this historic moment is to enhance social innovation, to move the concepts of research and innovation away from self-celebratory and elitist boundaries and to project them towards the community in its broadest sense, emphasizing the need to ensure real and tangible consequences for the most fragile and sensitive groups of the social fabric. Research, technological and social innovation are contiguous and complementary areas: social innovation can and must become a strongpoint to exorcise and combat the spectres of loneliness, abandonment, absence, becoming the natural point of arrival of the achievements of research and technology.

ESOF becomes a window on the real world after the pandemic, it ignites hope for a definitive return to a lifestyle that puts the conditionings of these last few months behind it and frees the mind from legacies and suggestions that must give way to new impulses. It is down to research and innovation to seize the opportunity to transform a delicate and complex situation into a perspective of growth and improvement for the community. ESOF can draw up answers on two different levels. The first: this is the event that confirms the superiority of science over the emergency, of research over the virus and innovations over pathology. The second: is that we can draw lasting results from ESOF, and answers can emerge that, when we have overcome the emergency stage, will become innovative, effective and, structural solutions.

Finally, there is a cultural aspect to focus on: if science is the tool and freedom is the goal, ethics is the path that unites them. Only knowledge can lead to awareness and, therefore, to the autonomy of thought and true independence understood as freedom, but only a responsible approach can define the boundaries of progress that does not conflict with the right, above all of life, on which our society is based. The process of maturation cannot ignore the awareness that the individual must be put in a position of feeling part of a community in its fullest and most welcoming sense. The model to which we strive is that of the "learning community", in which the principle of lifelong learning becomes central in the formative process and feeds a virtuous path that strengthens the social fabric and accompanies the process of community growth towards the future.