

# CHAIR'S WELCOME



## Manuel Blanco Lage – Dean ETSAM School of Architecture Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

I am pleased to welcome you to the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, ETSAM, at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. The ETSAM is the first School of Architecture created in Spain, dating back to the 1840s. However, its origins can be traced to much earlier, to the Academia Real Mathematica, founded by Felipe II in 1582, after the initiative of Juan de Herrera. Our mission is to transmit knowledge with a commitment to society, in relation to spatial design practices and contemporary challenges. This gives us a special prestige, as evidenced by the more than 700 new students per year.

I find this to be a very favorable time for us to meet and discuss the future of liberal arts education. The framework, as the title of the conference indicates, is that of the New European Bauhaus (NEB), an open initiative now being developed. It was launched in early 2021 by the President of the European Commission, Ursula Von der Leyen, as a determined action to improve the lives of citizens. It calls for new ideas about the lived space that we all share, taking into account local culture, but at the same time strengthening the links that unite the different European countries.

The NEB is the seed of a project full of hope that has started in Europe, but its momentum is unstoppable and wants to spread to the rest of the world. Within Spain, our school of architecture is currently a reference institution in this field. The ETSAM cooperates with the Spanish Government, Directorate-General for Urban Agenda and Architecture, to analyze, promote and position our country's contribution to the NEB at an international level. We would like to encourage the participation of multiple agents and involve and share the different actions and proposals that are carried out in the country. And we intend to join efforts and ensure that the spirit of the NBE floods the policies of each town, city or region.

I reiterate my welcome and express my joy that we can share ideas for a new meeting space that would allow us to design the future. That space located at the crossroads between art, culture, social inclusion, science and technology that is the NEB.

*[Dean ETSAM School  
of Architecture Universidad Politécnica de Madrid]  
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