



POLITECNICO
DI TORINO

PRESS RELEASE

POLITECNICO DI TORINO CELEBRATES 60 YEARS AT THE SITE IN CORSO DUCA DEGLI ABRUZZI

Formattato: Italiano (Italia)

First-hand accounts and documents, many of which unpublished, presented at a seminar and in an exhibition provide opportunities to reflect on the University's past, present and future role in the processes of construction of the city of Turin in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Turin, 5 November 2018 - Politecnico di Torino (Turin Polytechnic) has just celebrated the 60th anniversary of the inauguration of the site in Corso Duca degli Abruzzi 24, a ceremony that took place on 5 November 1958 in the presence of the then President of Italy, Giovanni Gronchi. To mark the occasion it has prepared a series of events that focus on the design and construction of a building complex largely overlooked by historiography, made possible following extensive research in public and private archives, mainly conducted at the University.

The events that led to the construction of the original building, and subsequent development projects, were the subject of a meeting on "*Politecnico di Torino and the construction of the city in the twentieth century: the site in Corso Duca degli Abruzzi on the sixtieth anniversary of its inauguration*". Participants included Professor **Carlo Olmo**, historian and Emeritus Professor at the Department of Architecture and Design, Professor **Rodolfo Zich**, former Rector of Politecnico di Torino and responsible for its so-called *doubling* along Corso Castelfidardo, and Professor **Antonio De Rossi**, coordinator of the Masterplan group. The meeting was chaired by Professor **Sergio Pace**, the Rector's Adviser for Libraries, Archives and Museums and the closing address was by Professor **Juan Carlos De Martin**, the Rector's Delegate for Culture and Communication. Speakers included the President of Piedmont Region **Sergio Chiamparino**, Turin's Mayor **Chiara Appendino** and Deputy Mayor **Guido Montanari**.

The history of the Engineering centre began on 16-18 May 1939 when, during a visit to Turin, Benito Mussolini approved the "extremely modern" preliminary project for the new Politecnico di Torino in an area near the Molinette Hospital. This marked the start of a difficult history, characterised by decisions and second thoughts, that went through the 1942 bombing of the former Industry Museum, in Via dell'Ospedale, and remained unresolved after the end of World War II. In the second half of the 1940s, when lectures and laboratories were mainly at Valentino Castle (Castello del Valentino), the idea of a new site was not abandoned: following some uncertainty, the *ex Stadium* area delimited by Corso Peschiera, Corso Castelfidardo, Corso Montevecchio and Corso Duca degli Abruzzi was established as the definitive choice. The building complex erected here was inaugurated in 1958. It was then extended in the last decades of the twentieth century with the development of the "Cittadella" campus and today more development projects are still in the pipeline and will be implemented over the coming years.

A large number of documents are also on show in an **exhibition** housed within the building complex: a series of drawings and photographs illustrate the guiding thread from the initial projects to transform the area through to the major development plans for the coming years under the **Masterplan project**, which will involve all aspects of the city's socio-economic system and be of strategic importance for the entire urban area.

Thanks to this initiative, the area delimited by Corso Castelfidardo, Via Paolo Borsellino, Corso Ferrucci and Corso Peschiera will once again undergo a series of transformations, the effects of which will extend far beyond the University. Some of the most innovative projects include a *Welfare House*, open to the university community, a *Learning Centre*, focused on innovative

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teaching methods and implemented in partnership with the Fondazione Cottino, and a *Digital Revolution House*; the linchpin of the project will be a cultural centre and large library that will act as catalysts and aggregators for the city. Meanwhile, there are also plans to extend the School of Architecture along the River Po, which will include the redevelopment of a significant part of the Torino Esposizioni complex.

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