

Ladies and gentlemen, a warm welcome to you all.

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Rotterdam and the Erasmus University for this second annual SURF Masterclass on Research Support. The second! As you know ONE annual meeting is an incident, but two implies starting a tradition. So today marks the start of a new tradition: may many meetings follow!

It indeed is an honor for us to host these two days at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. You are a select group of research support staff, supporting research at all Dutch universities and other research institutions. And it is excellent that you meet and jointly work at this masterclass. The topic: *Support 4 Research* is as important as it is challenging and the task you have set for yourself is by no means easy: *really* and *substantially* supporting research, facilitating the whole research life cycle in an unprecedented manner.

It is especially important that you *collaborate* on this important topic. On too many topics universities try to invent the wheel in splendid isolation. Inefficient, inappropriate and hampering rather than boosting collaboration. In that sense, you lead the way in science, demonstrating what collaboration can bring.

Many people expect that science increasingly will be open. This means that we increasingly will share data and knowledge in national and international research consortia. A great vision of the future. And this important development is facilitated by your work. As such, this masterclass may also help in shaping the agenda for research directors and

university leaders. I firmly believe that there is room for improvement and more collaboration on those levels as well! Do feel free to indicate what is needed from our side to improve matters!

The needs from your work are many therefore: not only on a practical level, but also on for instance a technical level, on a legal level and a policy level. These are challenges we all face as research and education communities and ones we can best tackle together. For this co-operation is essential. Within one institution as well as between the institutes.

And this is the intention and goal for this masterclass. Co-operation also between research supporting bodies and working groups geographically scattered around the Netherlands and from abroad. Fortunately, you are tied together by the professional networks created at events such as the current one. These professional and personal ties make maintaining relations a lot easier when everyone is back at their institutes.

A final word from a scientific and managerial angle, being a dean as well as a part time scientist. Humble in the presence of so many experts in the room, I would like to contribute to the discussion that it is crucial to work together with researchers in shaping research support. Sense of ownership and influence is important here. Technical innovation is difficult, but social innovation and implementation often are at least as difficult, especially amongst professionals. We need to develop smart solutions that will be embraced by researchers because they make their lives easier, not harder. Co-creation and co-operation again is of great importance.

So, there is a lot of important work to be done. I will not keep you any longer from it. But I do want to thank the organising committee for putting this Masterclass together. I wish you all a good and fruitful Masterclass. I hope the results from it will lead to inspiration for the future, to better collaboration and to practical progress. Like we say here in Rotterdam: Make it happen!

Thank you!

Werner Brouwer

dean IBMG, vice rector research EUR

September 22, 2016