

Rector's speech

Doctoral Awards Ceremony

Acting Rector Anne Borg's speech

Doctoral Awards Ceremony 13 November 2019
The Aula, Main Building, Gløshaugen

«Dear new doctors, Honorary Doctor Professor Dr. Vishantie Sewpaul, honored guests, dear colleagues and friends.

Congratulations! Today we are celebrating the creation of 193 new doctors at NTNU who have defended their thesis from July 2018 until December 2018; 80 of whom are here today.

You will soon receive your doctoral diplomas, as tangible proof of your accomplishment; the highest academic degree achievable.

There are no shortcuts to a doctorate. It is about ambition, it is about hard work, it is about having a goal and never losing sight of that goal.

This has been common knowledge in these halls for more than a century. If you look over the entrance to the library, you will see this wisdom from 1910, etched in stone:

Per aspera ad astra – through adversity to the stars.

It is also about striving for quality.

Quality is essential in all research, whether it is basic or applied, whatever the area and no matter who does it. The demand for quality must and should be absolute.

In NTNU's main strategy, Knowledge for a better world, the most ambitious goal of all is that by 2025, all our departments have academic groups proven to be at high international level in at least one of their core areas.

Ambitious as well as crucial, as we aim to become outstanding by international standards.

This also requires us, throughout the university, to seek collaboration with other leading knowledge communities in the world.

Five years ago, in 2014, May-Britt Moser and Edvard Moser from NTNU were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. They have over years, achieved extraordinary academic breakthroughs and built the internationally leading Kavli Institute for Systems Neuroscience.

How did they get there? Among their many notable qualities – in addition to their scientific curiosity – is their ability and strong dedication to collaborate with the very best peers and colleagues throughout the world. International collaboration is a major tool for improving quality, developing talent, and creating outstanding research environments. It is also about recognition and visibility.

In this context, *mobility* is important. Every doctoral candidate at NTNU should be part of an international research community.

While working on your doctorate, you have already drawn inspiration from international research in your field. Many of you have collaborated with international colleagues and spent valuable time at universities abroad.

I will strongly encourage you to further develop an international network in the years to come. Knowledge knows no boundaries, and nor should we.

International collaboration is also key to solving the major challenges in the world; climate change, pollution, migration, hunger, conflicts and terrorism.

All global challenges will require research-based solutions, and combined efforts across international borders.

The UN has approved 17 sustainability targets, to which we at NTNU are committed. A commitment we take most seriously; sustainability will be both a target and a guideline in our overall priorities.

Again, you have now achieved the highest academic degree achievable. And no matter what subject, the knowledge you have acquired and conveyed to society will make a difference.

Like ***Jimita Toraskar***. Jimita's PhD work focused on understanding breast cancer metastasis. In her thesis, she reported a novel form of protein that increased the ability of breast cancer cells to spread in the body.

She is currently working as a scientist at PubGene AS in Oslo, where she analysis medical data from patients and provide doctors with additional scientific information to support their clinical decision.

Another good example is also here today:

Kine Berild Norheim had supervisors from three departments and two faculties, both from Trondheim and Ålesund – a truly interdisciplinary supervisory team!

Her thesis is about building innovation capability in and between companies in industrial clusters in Norway. The studies aim to strengthen knowledge on how to increase innovation capacity and strategic robustness in companies.

I would have liked to mention each and one of you, but that would take the rest of the day.

I therefore let Jimita and Kine represent all the valuable knowledge sitting in this room today.

The Doctoral Degree Awards Ceremony is the final chapter of your education at NTNU. That does not mean that your ties to NTNU are cut from today. On the contrary: We consider you to be our ambassadors, and an important part of our national and international network.

And above all, you are ambassadors for knowledge. Knowledge deserves the best ambassadors it can get. I trust you to be the best knowledge ambassadors ever!

And I trust you to use your knowledge to make a difference. To make knowledge for a better world.»