

On behalf of the chairman Morandini and the Board of the Friuli Foundation, it is a pleasure to express my greetings to all the distinguished participants in this important event: the knowledge festival. Our foundation inherited twenty five years ago financial and real estate resources but also, and by no means of lesser value and meaning, two thousand years of culture and tradition, it could be said inherited the very same identity of our people and of our territory.

To be more specific about knowledge let us recall here just the names of Paul the Deacon, writer of the *Historia Langobardorum*, and Paolinus of Aquileia, two of the most influential scholars of the Carolingian Renaissance; the second one appointed by Charlemagne as master at the Schola Palatina, the think tank that anticipated of more than four hundred years the establishment of the university institution in Europe.

Keeping account of this background it is not surprising that culture and education at every level are the foundation's main intervention areas in support of our community. We are aware that this represents the best way to honour the past and at the same time to deal properly with the future.

In particular we are convinced that the ability to be partner of a qualified knowledge network is the unique feasible strategy to help our land to face the difficult challenges of global competition, but also to help shape the paths of peace, sustainable development, environmental protection, health care, alliance between generations, summing up to form the global citizen of the future.

In this perspective the University, and a fortiori our University, plays a key role: on one side by contributing to build the network and, on the other side, helping many other local entities to get involved and to benefit from it. Indeed only the university world is able to keep up with the evolution of technologies by fostering integration between fixed capital investments and early preparation of human capital with attitude to problem solving, critical thinking and creativity in a permanent education framework.

That is why we reaffirm here our long term commitment to be alongside our University and in particular the enthusiastic support to our Magnificent Rektor for his initiative to organize here in Udine, with the cooperation of CRUI and in the framework of this festival, the G7 of knowledge: a unique opportunity to reflect on the knowledge's role as main driver of world cultural, social and economic development in the XXI century.

Finally we express a warm wish of a successful meeting and that all participants can also enjoy the many treasures of Udine and Friuli.