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<https://vbn.aau.dk/en/persons/romeo-turcan>

1. In your opinion, what is AAU's biggest challenge?

"What is the great peril represented by the present situation? Ignorance. Ignorance even more than poverty. It is in such a situation, faced by such a danger, that we think of attacking, mutilating, and stripping all [educational] institutions, whose precise purpose is to pursue, combat, and destroy ignorance!" (Victor Hugo, 1848). Not much has changed!!!

University autonomy – organizational, staffing, financial and academic autonomy – is constantly threatened. To realize its vision as a global leader in inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral, technology and international, impact focused, PBL research-based teaching and teaching-based research AAU must safeguard and promote genuine university autonomy.

2. Why are you running for the university board?

I consider that university autonomy and academic freedom are essential pre-requisites for the pursuit of knowledge, research and teaching. As a member of the Governing Body I will defend passionately university autonomy and academic freedom.

3. How can the identified challenge be addressed?

Effective engagement of the academic community and key stakeholders in university affairs will be a key objective. As a member of the Governing Body I will scrutinize critically and oppose policy which diminishes and/or does not respect academic freedom and university autonomy. I will meet and communicate with staff and other key stakeholders to ensure that I can effectively represent their views and that they are aware of developments.

4. Why vote for you?

I am committed to the goals and values of higher education strengthened by my earlier experience in the private and public sectors and by my multi-disciplinary background in engineering and social sciences. Prior to commencing my academic career I worked in a range of posts involving public policy intervention in restructuring, rationalizing and modernizing business and public sectors such as power, oil, military high-tech, management consulting, and higher education. I started and as CEO led a branch of an international NGO.

I thus bring wide ranging business, academic, and fund-raising experience, which I will use to help defend the university from external and internal challenges. At the same time I will seek to identify, create and pursue growth and development opportunities to foster the international recognition and reputation of the university.

Since 2012, I have been the main applicant and coordinator of four EU funded projects, incl., Marie S. Curie ITN, with a total value of more than 55 mil DKK.

I received my PhD and MSc from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, and my first degree Diploma of mechanical engineer from Air Force Engineering Military Academy, Riga, Latvia.

5. What is a special cause that you want to fight for in the university board?

International recognition for the distinctive learning, teaching, research and knowledge transfer undertaken at AAU. This will involve a pro-active agenda for the future engaging the whole university community - students and staff – in addressing European priorities identified in Horizon Europe and global agendas such as the UN SDGs and embedding internationalization in all curricula and university activities.