

## **Abertis Foundation Reinvents Its Chairs in Sustainable Mobility with a New International Model Led by UPM**

- **The Abertis Chairs are shifting towards a biennial award, with new academic activities and a boost to international coordination from 2026.**
- **This year, priority will be given to new academic and research activities before the new model is implemented.**
- **The UPM-led International Network of Abertis Chairs builds partnerships between some of the most prestigious universities in the countries where the Abertis Group operates to improve sustainable mobility through data analysis and the development of applied projects.**

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**Madrid, 29 May 2025.-** In line with changes in academic and corporate fields, and aiming to make a qualitative leap forward, the Abertis Foundation is committed to moving towards a new model of university-business Chairs that will take effect in 2026. This transformation is based on three strategic pillars: a shift to a biennial award ceremony, strengthening the Network as an international observatory on sustainable mobility, and pilot projects designed to assess public perception of sustainability and service quality on the Group's toll roads.

The Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM) will be coordinating this global Network leading a strategic partnership between universities and Abertis business units. The person at the helm of this partnership be Professor José Manuel Vassallo Magro, at the Department of Transport, Territory and Urban Planning Engineering at the UPM, who coordinates the transport economics and financing research area at the UPM's Centre for Transport Research (TRANSyT).

This approach not only fosters a constant exchange of knowledge, but also the design of tangible solutions through advanced data analysis, mobility scenario modelling, exploring of new technologies applied to transport, and the assessment of the social and environmental impact of infrastructures.

2025 will be a year of transition with an intense academic agenda oriented towards training, research, technological development and innovation. The new model also envisages priority courses of action that will include the organisation of conferences, workshops and seminars; the publication of studies with high social and scientific value; joint projects with academic and business partners; and opportunities for student and early-career researcher involvement.

These activities are being designed collaboratively by the Abertis Foundation, Abertis Group companies, UPM, and other partner universities—ensuring the continuity and social impact of the programme.

*"This new model of chairs will encourage students and researchers in each of the countries to take part as we build a valuable international partnership to tackle the challenges of sustainable mobility," stressed Elena Salgado, President of the Abertis Foundation.*

### **More than 20 years committed to academic research**

Since their launch in 2003, the Abertis Chairs have served as a key link between academia and the real-world challenges of sustainable mobility and transport infrastructure management. Over more than 20 years, the Network has expanded to seven countries—Spain, Brazil, Chile, France, Italy, Mexico, and Puerto Rico—promoting training, applied research, and innovation in partnership with academic establishments and the Group's business units.

Until now, the Abertis Awards were held annually in each country, and subsequently selected the world's best research project. This model has enabled 900-plus students and researchers of 15 different nationalities to take part, and 200-plus prizes have been awarded to research projects recognised for their originality, practical impact, and scientific excellence.

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