

## Inauguration of innovative education and research centre in Kalundborg

Kalundborg's new Helix Lab education and research centre officially opens on Friday 25 February. The initiative strengthens the collaboration between research and industry in Scandinavia's largest bio-industrial cluster, internationally recognized for industrial sustainability and circular production and home to more than 5,000 industrial workplaces across a number of Denmark's largest companies.

### The potential is put into perspective in a panel debate

The official inauguration is marked with an event attended by representatives from industry, universities, municipality, and region. The first Helix Lab Fellows and their supervisors are also invited. Guests will have the opportunity to attend a panel discussion with the participation of management representatives from DTU, Absalon, Novo Nordisk, and Kalundborg Municipality, who will give their perspective on Helix Lab and the potential of the initiative.

### Long-term relationships

*"Helix Lab will bridge the gap between industry and universities and support the development of concrete and relevant research projects for the students. The professional approach will reflect bioproduction, industry 4.0 and the industrial sustainability that characterises Kalundborg. Our role is to build close relationships between industry and universities and to support their joint development of project ideas. The goal is to create a lasting commitment between industry and universities, and develop collaboration across disciplines"* says Anette Birck, Head of Helix Lab.

### The Kalundborg model

For many years in Kalundborg there has been a close collaboration between industry, education, and the municipality to create more sustainable education, jobs, and research facilities in the area.

*"Kalundborg Municipality's development strategy states, among other things, that Kalundborg Municipality must be a good place to educate yourself. The establishment of Helix Lab is an important part of that part of the strategy – and a beautiful one. Over the past year we have been able to follow the construction from the naked field, to the construction of the impressive wooden structure, to the arrival of the first Fellows and now finally the official opening. Helix Lab is a great expression of what the partnership in Kalundborg can achieve when we set ambitious goals together,"* says Mayor Martin Damm, Kalundborg Municipality.

### The natural step towards ambitious ambition

University College Absalon runs Helix Lab, and Rector Camilla Wang welcomes the opening of Helix Lab, and views it as a natural step in relation to the existing engineering programmes in Kalundborg: *"The University College Absalon today offers bachelor of engineering programmes in biotechnology and mechanical engineering as well as the bio-analyst programme at Campus Kalundborg. Helix Lab is a strong next step, designed to allow graduate students from Danish and international universities to carry out their thesis project in close cooperation with industry, and at the same time they get free*

*accommodation at Kalundborg Collegium. The partnership's ambition is to strengthen the Kalundborg's cluster in biotech education, research and innovation and make it an international leader by 2030."*

### **Important practice experience**

DTU holds the chairmanship of Helix Lab's Board of Directors and from here it welcomes the cooperation with the companies and the practice experience this gives the students:

*"Helix Lab is an essential step in strengthening collaboration in the Kalundborg area. We want to build a strong education and research ecosystem in Kalundborg. Therefore, I am delighted that local companies are opening their doors, so our students get "real-life" experiences during their studies, making them better engineers,"* says Anders Bjarklev, Rector at DTU.

### **An important step**

Novo Nordisk, whose largest production site is located in Kalundborg, sees great potential in Helix Lab and the enhanced collaboration with both international and Danish universities and talents. *Kalundborg has the potential to be a world-leading hub in biotechnology education, research and innovation, and Helix Lab is an important element in educating and developing talent locally to establish a strong pipeline targeted at the local industry. In addition, the initiative creates a strong framework for research collaboration focusing on developing innovative and sustainable production technologies. This way Helix Lab is a lever for technological development and growth not only for Novo Nordisk and the industry in Kalundborg but for the manufacturing industry in Denmark in general,"* says Henrik Wulff, Executive Vice President of Novo Nordisk with responsibility for Production, Quality and IT.

### **A total grant of DKK 120 million.**

Several actors have contributed a total of DKK 120 million to the project. The Novo Nordisk Foundation has allocated DKK 65 million to finance equipment, staff, and the operation of Helix Lab during the first project period.

*"Helix Lab contributes to creating an attractive and innovative research environment in Kalundborg and thereby to strengthen the sustainable transition in Production Denmark. We are pleased to see that Helix Lab has got off to a very good start in relation to both students, laboratories, collaborations with Danish university environments, and collaboration with the local industry. This paints a nice picture of the ambition to further develop Kalundborg as a leading bio-industrial hub and is also an example of how to move education and research out from the big cities. Biotechnology is developing rapidly, and it offers many opportunities to further promote the sustainable transition,"* says Senior Vice President Claus Felby, Novo Nordisk Foundation.

### **About Helix Lab**

About 15 thesis projects will be available annually to students, and cooperation with national and international universities will ensure a broad recruitment base. Students are offered a 5-12 months stay in Kalundborg including student accommodation and access to the research facilities in Helix Lab.

At the same time, they maintain their links to the educational institutions where they are enrolled in a master's programme.

Several actors contribute a total of DKK 120 million to the project. The Novo Nordisk Foundation has donated DKK 65 million to finance equipment, staff, and operation of Helix Lab during a five-year project period. The first students started in Helix Lab in January 2022 and are integrated into the fast-growing educational environment locally, which already includes 300-400 students. It is planned to offer 75 Fellowships during the first 5-year project period.