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The Prince and Princess of Asturias open the Agri-Food Science and Technology Park of Lleida

■ They visited the two chromatographs the UdL has installed in the H science block

Prince Felipe and Princess Letizia, accompanied by the minister of Science and Innovation, Cristina Garmendia, opened the Agri-Food Science and Technology Park of Lleida yesterday. The 300 guests invited to the ceremony, who waited for over an hour while the dignitaries visited the PCiTAL, saw the prince unveil the plaque that marks the official opening of the facility, which is equally funded by the University and Lleida City Council.

Before the opening, the mayor Àngel Ros, gave a brief speech to welcome the prince and princess and to thank all of the businesses and institutions that had placed their trust in the Park. The mayor was in fact the only dignitary

who could be heard. Although people did the best they could to get close to the royal guests, they were unable to hear the prince, or the other PCiTAL host, the rector Joan Viñas.

The visit around the Park focused on the H3 science block, which houses infrastructures for UdL research groups, company laboratories, and public and private R&D centres. The tour included a visit to the facilities of the technology-based company Indra, which was the first to establish itself on the PCiTAL. There, the prince and princess showed an interest in the Headmouse, a virtual mouse for the disabled developed by the Indra-Foundation Adecco-UdL chair that is directed by the robotics lecturer, Jordi Palacin. The research and technology transfer centre for bread, Innopan, also welcomed the retinue led by the prince and princess. Felipe was more eager than Letizia to taste the beer bread there and he must have liked it as it was among the other types of bread they were given as complimentary gifts.

The tour also included a visit to the two chromatographs that the UdL's technical science services have installed in the PCiTAL H3 science block.



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Joan Viñas, Cristina Garmendia, Princess Letizia and Prince Felipe

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One of them is used for chemical research and the other for biomedical research. The vice-rector for Scientific and Technological Policies, Ramon Canela, was responsible for explaining how these sophisticated devices were used to the prince and princess.

The Agri-Food Science and Technology Park of Lleida was built at a cost of 13.5 million euros and over 700 people currently work there. In addition to the companies on the Park, the incubators, business associations and technology transfer centres, the PCiTAL also houses three UdL spin-off companies: Summa Precisió, Trigen Solar and USE-IT.

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