

How to attract students to the gas industry: the Naturgas Energia R&D challenge

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A- Background

- A **shortage of talent** is currently the most important issue facing the gas industry worldwide
- The ageing of existing staff, the retirement of many gas experts and the ever **decreasing number of fresh professionals interested in the gas industry** have heightened the problem
- Naturgas Energia has launched a **pilot project to attract talent** to the gas industry by promoting gas **Research and Development projects** to high-level students through an Academic Focus Point (called Aula in Spanish) at the University of the Basque Country (Spain)
- We are going to describe the main steps that have been taken into account in order to constitute the named **Naturgas Energia Academic Focus Point or Aula**. Also, the main Aula experience is presented as an **example of good practice** to be shared with the Gas Industry worldwide

B- Aims

- The Naturgas Energia proposal aims **to attract the attention of university students** and foster their interest in the gas industry by focusing on the company's **Research and Development work**
- To establish a **Framework Agreement** between the University of the Basque Country – Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV-EHU) and the Naturgas Energia Group in order to foster **the Corporate Social Responsibility**



C1- Methods

- An Agreement for Scientific and Technology activities with the Faculty of Engineering which is an ongoing agreement. A **Particular Agreement is renewed every year**, as it includes the details of the specific projects to be worked on during each academic year
- Prior to August **the “Aula” Executive Committee define the projects** on which we want to work during the forthcoming academic year. Both Naturgas Energia and the Faculty of Engineering make proposals. We are open to the needs of all of the company's areas and departments



C2- Methods

- The proposed projects fit in with Naturgas Energia's R&D strategy, which basically includes work on matters related to the **safety of gas supplies, energy efficiency and sustainability** .



- Naturgas Energia has launched a pilot project to attract talent to the gas industry by promoting gas **Research and Development** projects to high-level students through an **Academic Focus Point** (called Aula in Spanish) at the University of the Basque Country (Spain). In the year 2010/2011 the first **five R&D projects** were launched **and** in the year 2011/2012 are **other seven** projects are on going

Academic R&D Focus Point in Bilbao Aula de Naturgas Energía January 2012



D2- Results

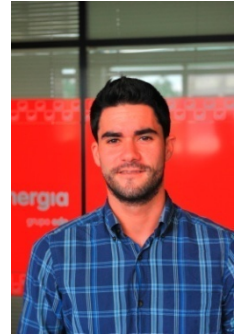
- **Two** “Aula” projects were accepted in **EGATEC 2011** European Gas Technology Conference, which took place in Copenhagen on the 12th and 13th of May. The works were about “*Hydrogen purification*” and on “*Design and optimization of a 10 m³ bio digester*” . We would like to offer our congratulations to the students, as the latter project, related to renewable methane, was awarded the **European third prize** in the conference activity known as the “**GERG Academic Network**”



- **Four** new “Aula” projects have been accepted at the **2012 GERG Academic Network Event** that will be held in Brussels on the 14th and 15th of June 2012

- *“... It is doubly satisfying: on the one hand you get to work on the project itself, and on the other you are doing useful work that may serve as a basis for future investments that Naturgas Energia wants to make...”*

Jose Pablo MORATO – “Aula” Student



- *“...I would just like to add that it is also very helpful to us to have the support of tutors that guide us through the realisation of the project and the periodic supervision of Naturgas...”*

Gonzalo MIGUEL – “Aula” Student

- *“...I think that it is a very good idea, because as well as finishing the project it is a very good thing that it is related to renewable energies, on which a heavy emphasis is currently being placed. I think it is great. Above all they give you the chance to work for a company...”*

Amaia SASIAIN – “Aula” Student





- Naturgas Energia was the host for the last **IGU Task Force 1** meeting and it was organized by the “**Aula de Naturgas**” in the Faculty of Engineering at Bilbao (Spain)

E1- Summary / Conclusions

- Naturgas Energia has launched a pilot project to attract talent to the gas industry by promoting gas Research and Development projects to high-level students through an Academic Focus Point (called Aula in Spanish) at the University of the Basque Country (Spain). The “Aula” set-up was in the year 2010/2011 and it began with five R&D projects. Due to the success of the initiative among the Academy, in the year 2011/2012 seven new R&D projects have been developed

- The main conclusions of the Naturgas Energia initiative have been the following:
 - 1. - Involve the best students of Engineering in gas matters.
 - 2. - Create an additional workforce for the R&D projects developed by the gas company.
 - 3. - Help to create a good image of the gas industry in the Academy by means of innovation.

E2- Summary / Conclusions

- *“...The “Aula” project of Naturgas Energia is a good example of how the gas industry and the academia could work together in order to cultivate human resources of post-degree to the gas sector...”*

IEDA GOMES, IGU TF1 Chair-woman

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