

# Higher education for a sustainable future

## Joint vision from the IAU Higher Education for Sustainable Development (HESD) Cluster members

As scholars representing universities from all over the world in the *IAU Global Cluster on Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development (HESD)*, meeting from 21 to 23 of March, 2022, we confidently affirm that:

- High quality, values based higher and further education are essential for making progress towards *Agenda 2030*;
- The interconnectedness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires more cooperation between the Goals in research, education, community engagement and global partnerships; Universities are evidence-based, and trusted entities for this needed collaboration at all levels
- Universities are key contributors in SDG achievement by educating students, citizens and leaders as critical thinkers and change agents. Universities shape society by relating academic findings to the real-world issues embedded in the SDGs and, as such, are central actors for a more sustainable future
- It is with universities and through their academic missions of scholarship and service that a sustainable recovery post pandemic can be ensured;
- Universities have unique capabilities to be organizational innovators modelling new sustainable development (SD) policies and governance internally and the needed scientific evidence and other discoveries to inform and shape that of others;
- Universities distinctly hold the appropriate knowledge and educational methods for the range of literacies, including digital and wellness literacies, needed for SD.

### OUR COMMITMENT:

We, within our respective mandates and in our areas of responsibility, taking into account our needs, capacities, available resources and institutional and national priorities, commit to:

1. **Bring sustainable development to the core of our mandate** as universities by embedding it throughout our research & innovation, curricula and learning outcomes, service to our communities, and institutional governance;
2. Enhance south-south, south-north, and triangular partnerships for a **fair and equitable cooperation** fostering diversity in **cooperation projects**;
3. Foster the importance of **multi and transdisciplinary approaches to sustainable development** that include community voice and direction, see interconnections, appreciate multiple views and embrace complexity;
4. Advocate for a **whole-institution and whole-university sector approach**, that strengthens teaching, research, community engagement, and advocacy for the self-sufficiency of each campus, and to constructively engage all sectors including government, business, and civil society;
5. Move from policy informing toward **policy shaping** that maximises higher education's engagement in SDG policy discussions and employs a strategic, systematic and holistic approach to transforming education;
6. **Equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities** for sustainable and resilient livelihoods of their choosing in the face of growing risk and uncertainty and to take an active role for society;
7. Harness the power of **digital tools, transformative technologies, and innovative pedagogies** as catalysts for implementing the SDGs mindful of the ethical responsibilities and appropriate skepticism that should accompany each innovation;
8. Explore new models of evaluating scholarship that includes diverse scholarly works assessed in light of their SD impacts and recognizes, compensates, rewards, and celebrates this ESD scholarship;
9. Call for **provision of public funding and other community resources** for universities to fulfil these promises.

Signatories: The members and focal points of the HEIs engaged in the IAU HESD Cluster

(see also: List of Cluster Lead institutions: <https://www.iau-hesd.net/contenu/4648-iau-global-cluster-hesd.html>)

Paris/online at the IAU HESD Cluster Meeting, 23.03.202

---

#### **International Association Of Universities**

International Universities Bureau  
UNESCO House

1 rue Miollis - F-75732 Paris Cedex 15

[i.toman@iau-aiu.net](mailto:i.toman@iau-aiu.net) - [www.iau-aiu.net/](http://www.iau-aiu.net/) - Twitter @IAU\_AIU LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/iau-aiu](http://www.linkedin.com/company/iau-aiu)

HESD: [www.iau-hesd.net](http://www.iau-hesd.net) Twitter @IAU\_HESD