



SUSTAINABILITY ENGAGEMENT

We, the signatory university members of the European University ENLIGHT, are committed to sustainable development and to combatting climate change. This is in line with [our ENLIGHT mission statement](#).

We will join forces to address major ecological, social, cultural, and economic challenges that our societies face today and in the future. In our joint mission, five **flagship challenges** have been identified as follows:

- **Health and wellbeing**, as our health is jeopardised by several factors ranging from pollution and diet to demographic and epidemiological shifts and unequal access to healthcare.
- **Digital revolution and artificial intelligence**, as they are transforming the way we live and work.
- **Climate change** that is threatening our ecosystems and impacting land use and the relationship between cities and their surrounding rural areas.
- **Energy use and the circular economy**, as our resources and energy supplies will have to sustain 10 billion people by the middle of this century.
- **Equity**, as our societies are increasingly polarised and lacking in resilience.

We regard these five flagship challenges as causes of fundamental societal transitions, and as such understand these pertain to the United Nations' **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs).

As higher education institutions, we act as regional, national, and global innovators preparing society for necessary transformation through appropriate **governance, research, education** and **transfer** activities, as well as sustainable **operations and facilities**. We believe that universities are **key contributors** to a sustainable development, and we take that responsibility.

We do not want to limit ourselves to theoretical considerations but want to lead by example. Therefore, we are committed to the following engagements:

Governance

- Introducing an institutional culture of sustainability into all levels of our universities by exchanging best practices of sustainability measures with the partners and learn from the frontrunners, capitalise on experiences, and implement them in other ENLIGHT partner universities.
- Sustaining the development of green offices in each of our universities.
- Developing a sustainable and inclusive personnel policy that pays attention to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and further social factors.
- Engaging all parties and stakeholders in a regional participatory process by implementing ENLIGHT Regional Academies. Also, organising ENLIGHT Living Labs that bring together interdisciplinary groups of students and researchers to work in close interaction with local public and private stakeholders on sustainability issues.

- Under the guidance of the ENLIGHT Impact Taskforce, assessing, monitoring, and evaluating the introduced measures with the help of consistent benchmarking to measure and ensure the sustainability and added value of our collaboration.
- Exchanging sustainability reports which include good practices, indicators showing the progress and the action plan of the university for the coming year with a yearly award for the best achievement.

Research

- Developing a common, sustainable Research and Innovation (R&I) action plan within ENLIGHT RISE through the creation of the R&I Support Group to foster joint research activities that predominantly address the five flagship challenges and that make effective use of emerging synergies as well as research strengths with a high potential for innovation.
- Introducing the R&I Observatory, a supportive structure for talent development and career guidance that delivers evidence-based policy recommendations to modernise and innovate researcher assessment systems as well as to better stimulate diversity and reward social engagement along career paths.
- Disseminating our knowledge by developing common approaches for assessing Open Science research and rewarding the universities' efforts to make data FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) and to increase society's trust in science.

Education

- Stimulating the integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into existing curricula: educational programmes that complement existing study programmes, newly developed educational options across all disciplines and study levels at our universities, as well as innovative methods of teaching, learning, and assessment.
- Promoting the concept of global citizenship. In particular, the educational vision of the ENLIGHT Global Engagement Module draws on activating students and providing personalised feedback, both among students and by the teaching staff to create awareness on sustainability issues.

Transfer

- Implementing ENLIGHT Living Labs as well as the ENLIGHT European and Global dialogues to foster transparent and continuous collaboration. Furthermore, creating multi-faceted partnerships and networks with external partners from the private, public, and non-profit sectors as well as the civil society to address sustainability issues, support innovation and wider dissemination of knowledge on a local, national, and international level.

- Disseminating state-of-the art research findings on sustainable development through a variety of third-mission events like the ENLIGHT Demo days or the ENLIGHT dialogues and by making them accessible to the general public.

Operations and Facilities

- Promoting sustainable student and staff mobility by introducing a green travel policy that provides clear guidelines for students and staff in ENLIGHT collaborations. This means encouraging consideration of the added value of international meetings to make informed choices between physical, virtual mobility and low-emission transport.
- Embracing a circular economy whose key building blocks are resource efficiency, recycling, reuse, waste reduction, reducing consumption and pollution with the long-term goal of achieving climate neutrality as soon as possible.

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