

3rd UNESCO World Higher Education Conference ([WHEC2022](#))

Guidelines for UNESCO National Commissions

UNESCO Section of [Higher Education](#)

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Background

The UNESCO Section of Higher Education (ED/E30/HED) is responsible for supporting the Member States in strengthening their higher education systems under the human rights approach, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), and its pledge to *leave no one behind*. Within this framework, the Section promotes knowledge development, exchange, and dissemination; provides technical assistance; and develops policy recommendations to contribute to improving higher education capacities at national, regional, and international levels. Among its main upcoming actions, the Section will lead the organisation of the **3rd UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC2022)**, which is expected to take place in Barcelona, on May 18-20, 2022 (see **Concept Note and Executive Presentation**, available in separate files).

The WHEC2022 aims at *breaking away from the traditional models of higher education and opening doors to new innovative, creative and visionary conceptions that not only serve the current agendas for sustainable development, but also pave the way for future learning communities that overcome barriers, speak to all and are inclusive of all lifelong learners*.

The Conference and its preparatory events expect to define and prepare knowledge-based, participatory scenarios to shape a new era of higher education systems (norms, policies, structures, stakeholders) and institutions (universities, specialised entities, think tanks, networks), particularly after the COVID-19 global crisis.

The WHEC2022 will encompass the generation of data, information and knowledge; formulation of updated policy recommendations; identification and dissemination of innovative practices; networking and strengthening of partnerships; broad participation of country stakeholders (highlighting diversity and inclusiveness of higher education stakeholders, within and outside higher education systems, including professors, researchers, administrators, youth, entrepreneurs, policy makers, social leaders, etc.); elaboration and dissemination of a Higher Education Roadmap that is framed by the 2030 Agenda and looks at the [Futures of Education](#).

Opportunities to Engage in the WHEC2022

All UNESCO National Commissions are invited to participate in and follow-up on the WHEC2022 activities, promote higher education stakeholders' policy dialogue and knowledge production, and disseminate higher education resources that will become available through 2021 and 2022 and may be relevant at the country level. Note that there is also a special strategy and opportunities for engaging youth linked with the higher education sector.

These guidelines refer to four ways in which the National Commissions may consider getting involved in the WHEC2022's knowledge and policy dialogue strategy:

- Activity A. Encouraging **policy dialogue** in their respective country by promoting or organising **consultations meetings** and producing corresponding reports.
- Activity B. Promoting elaboration of a **country report** on the higher education situation, challenges and recommendations.
- Activity C. Animating production of one or more **short videos** in alliance with higher education institutions.
- Activity D. Promoting **dissemination events** to spread and stimulate the use of knowledge resources and the 2030 Higher Education Roadmap that will result from the WHEC2022.

National Commissions may collaborate in activities A, B and C. To enhance synergies with the WHEC2022 agenda, it is strongly recommended that these activities are framed under the main themes of the Conference (see detailed subthemes in **Annex 1**).

The contributions referred to in these guidelines will enrich the process of updating knowledge, explore paths on higher education, and prepare its roadmap within the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. As appropriate, the participant organisations or alliances may consider UNESCO's references listed in **Annex 2**.

Activity A. Policy Dialogue and Consultation

UNESCO National Commissions may encourage policy dialogue by organising consultation meetings in alliance with one or more higher education institutions. Please, as it may apply for your country, keep in mind that UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks have been also invited to organise consultation meetings. You may support, collaborate with them and promote synergies as appropriate.

A consultation meeting should have the following features:

- Engage 8 to 12 persons participating on a voluntary basis.
- Take place between **August 1, 2021 and February 28, 2022**.
- Maximise participant's engagement by promoting inclusion and diversity (gender, ethnicity, nationality, knowledge field, different capacities, work experience, etc.)
- Be conducted by one or more moderators.
- Last between 90 and 120 minutes.

The agenda for a consultation meeting may consider the following structure:

1. Introduction (Estimate time: 10%).
2. Presentation of the WHEC2022 purpose and scope (separate PowerPoint available) (Estimate time: 5%).
3. Questions and exchange (allocate maximum time possible) (Estimate time: 75%).
4. Wrap-up (Estimate time: 10%).

The National Commission and/or higher education partner organisation(s) are kindly requested to prepare a brief report of **1,200 words (Template available in a separate Word file)** that will integrate central ideas captured during the corresponding consultation meeting. The exchanges within consultation meetings may be conducted in any language. If possible, consider sending the corresponding report in one of the three languages of the Conference: **English, French, or Spanish**.

We kindly ask that consultation reports are submitted via email to the WHEC2022 Secretariat (whec2022@unesco.org) as soon as they are ready and no later than **March 15, 2022** (11:59 pm, Paris time). Please insert this title in the email's subject: *Consultation Report – UNESCO National Commission*.

Activity B. Country Report on Higher Education

A National Commission may prepare a report describing an updated situation of higher education in their country with special focus on challenges and recommendations for the future.

Depending on the local context, the report may give special attention to one or more of the main themes or subthemes of the WHEC2022 (see **Annex 1**). Final versions of reports should be submitted via email to the WHEC2022 Secretariat (whec2022@unesco.org) as soon as they are ready and no later than **March 15, 2022** (11:59 pm, Paris time). Please insert the following title in the email's subject: *Higher Education Country Report – UNESCO National Commission*.

All documents complying with the requirements (please see detailed requirements in **Annex 3**) will become available on the Conference's participant page, in a collection of resources for the WHEC2022 and future higher education initiatives.

Activity C. Short Videos

UNESCO National Commissions may encourage the production and submission of good-quality and creative videos on higher education challenges. Keep in mind that videos should:

- Be short - no longer than **4 minutes**.
- **Focus on a specific question relating to the Conference purpose or main themes from a national perspective.** See below a list of **illustrative** questions (*do not hesitate to think creatively and pose challenging, innovative questions and solutions*):
 - How higher education may become more inclusive?
 - How to help students enter, stay and complete higher education?
 - How higher education can respond to changing workforce needs?
 - How higher education may contribute to the sustainability of the planet?
 - How to overcome the digital divide in higher education?
 - Which strategies or practices lead to greater quality in higher education programmes and services?
 - How contributions in higher education are essential for developing sciences, humanities, arts?
 - How to promote international mobility and/or exchanges in higher education?
 - What skills does higher education need to develop for present and upcoming generations of youth?
 - How higher education systems may help humans to face challenges posed by the SDGs?
 - How has higher education evolved around you?
- **Tell a compelling story or pose a clear argument** that promotes awareness among key higher education stakeholders, communicates inspiring ideas, invites higher education institutions to change and innovate, and/or provide evidence of good practices to face higher education challenges
- **Comply with ethical criteria:** property rights in the use of content and images; ensure consent of individuals participating in the video and its sharing on various social media platforms (including *Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.*); **include credits and mention social media accounts** as appropriate.
- **Be in English as possible** (if audio uses another language, consider translation into English: subtitles, captions) and saved in a **MP4 format**.
- Be submitted as a shared file (use OneDrive, Google Chrome, WeTransfer or similar platforms) via email to the WHEC2022 Secretariat (whec2022@unesco.org) as soon as they are ready, between **August 1, 2021 and March 15, 2022** (11:59 pm, Paris time). Please insert the following title in the email's subject: *Short Video – UNESCO National Commission*.
- Only original pieces will be taken into account: the delivered work should be original and unpublished work and confirmed as such when submitted to UNESCO.

We invite National Commissions to keep in mind these other tips:

- Establish an alliance with one or more higher education institutions to engage higher education experts, professors or students specialised in journalism, communications, social media, knowledge management, community engagement, higher education and/or related fields.
- Consider creative, diverse, and visual resources: real people, images, sounds, music, pictures, digital animation, etc.

Activity D. Dissemination Event

The National Commissions are welcome to promote a dissemination event to spread and stimulate the use of knowledge resources and the 2030 Higher Education Roadmap that will result from the WHEC2022. These events may take place in **May 2022 or the five months following the Conference**. The format of the event (in-person, hybrid or online) may vary in terms of the specific agenda and duration. Short, well organised, high impact events are recommended to actively engage national stakeholders interested in improving higher education: Government entities, universities and other higher education institutions, youth organisations, the private sector, international organisations, civil society organisations, the media, and

others. Consider all UNESCO sectors: education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, communication, and information. Consider alliances and synergies with higher education institutions, ministries of education (or higher education), and (if applicable) [UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks](#).

Please send a brief report on the event or events organized by the corresponding National Commission to whec2022@unesco.org no later than **November 15, 2022**. For each event, the information may include details such as: place and date, agenda, organizers, sponsors, participants, materials used, etc.

General remark: UNESCO policy is to publish under Open Access (license CC BY SA 3.0 IGO). Rights of the submitted content should be secured by the author(s) and will require the signing of a formal Grant of Rights. This form will be sent to all who have submitted policy briefs, consultation meeting reports, country policy reports, videos or other knowledge products that are selected for publication.

Contact Information

For further information, please send an email to the WHEC2022 Secretariat: whec2022@unesco.org

Related Resources

1. WHEC2022 concept note – independent PDF file
2. WHEC2022 executive presentation – independent PDF file
3. UNESCO National Commission consultation report form – independent Word file.
4. UNESCO National Commission Country Report template – independent Word file.

Annexes.**Annex 1. WHEC2022 Main Themes**

1. Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education.
 - 1.1. Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy and society.
 - 1.2. Disruption effects on higher education (public, private).
 - 1.3. Response of higher education to COVID-19 crisis.
 - 1.4. Moving ahead to the “new normality” and facing new emergencies.
 - 1.5. Innovative solutions and lessons learned from COVID-19 disruption.
2. Higher Education and the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).
 - 2.1. Relevant research agendas for human development.
 - 2.2. Global citizenship: embedding the 17 SDGs in teaching, learning, research.
 - 2.3. SDG4: progress, gaps, and options (role of higher education to improve the whole education system and the teaching profession).
 - 2.4. Capacity building for research in higher education institutions and other actors.
 - 2.5. Third mission of higher education institutions: community services and local practices adopting global perspectives.
3. Inclusion in Higher Education.
 - 3.1. Leaving no one behind: enabling vulnerable groups to enter, transit and complete higher education.
 - 3.2. Equity policies and equal distribution of opportunities; right to higher education.
 - 3.3. Financial support to youth from low-income families (including scholarships).
 - 3.4. Enhancing gender equality in higher education.
 - 3.5. The value of ethnic diversity and multiculturalism in higher education.
 - 3.6. Universal service and design to ensure inclusion of individuals living with disabilities.
 - 3.7. Diminishing inequities, promoting diversity and maximising outcomes for all graduates.
4. Quality and Relevance of Programmes.
 - 4.1. Diversification and flexibility of curriculum, programmes, and courses.
 - 4.2. Expanding use of ICTs and AI to enhance learning and collaboration.
 - 4.3. Quality assurance of innovative higher learning modalities and spaces.
 - 4.4. Partnerships for success: students, teachers, employers, communities.
 - 4.5. Advancing learning skills for evolving workforce paths.
 - 4.6. Innovative post-secondary options in tertiary education.
5. Academic Mobility in Higher Education.
 - 5.1. National and institutional policies and practices for widening access to students with different backgrounds.
 - 5.2. Institutions as lifelong learning communities for all.
 - 5.3. Teachers and researchers in an increasingly diverse campus.
 - 5.4. Building a global campus of learning, teaching and research.
 - 5.5. Acknowledging talents, skills, knowledge, and competences for diversity.
 - 5.6. Recognition of qualifications concerning higher education.
6. Higher Education Governance.
 - 6.1. System level governance in higher education.
 - 6.2. Higher education institutions governance and responsiveness to dynamic contexts.
 - 6.3. Participation, diversity, and pluralism in higher education.
 - 6.4. Institutional autonomy, organisational effectiveness, and accountability.

7. Financing Higher Education.
 - 7.1. Financial options for access, quality, equity and inclusion in higher education.
 - 7.2. Per-student investment in higher education.
 - 7.3. Optimising public investment in higher education: impact and accountability.
 - 7.4. Private sector investment in higher education.
 - 7.5. Cost-effectiveness in higher education.
 - 7.6. Developing/sustaining a global fund for higher education.
8. Data and Knowledge Production.
 - 8.1. Monitoring higher education in the framework of SDG4 and the 2030 Agenda.
 - 8.2. Towards global quality standards of data collection, processing and delivery.
 - 8.3. Machine learning, big data and data analysis in higher education.
 - 8.4. Use of information for policy decision making and organisational quality improvement.
 - 8.5. Mapping global quality, equity and inclusion.
9. International Cooperation to Enhance Synergies.
 - 9.1. Articulating intergovernmental initiatives in favour of higher education.
 - 9.2. Collaboration strategies of international donors and sponsors in higher education.
 - 9.3. Higher education and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
 - 9.4. Links with open sciences and open learning movements.
 - 9.5. Networks, platforms and knowledge management for advancing international cooperation.
 - 9.6. Use of knowledge, technology, and innovation to promote collaboration.
10. The Futures of Higher Education.
 - 10.1. Higher education for the global common good beyond 2030.
 - 10.2. Critical risks and challenges for higher education beyond 2030.
 - 10.3. Long term trajectories in higher education for sustainable societies.
 - 10.4. Implications of disruptive change for educational, research, and civic missions.
 - 10.5. Epistemologies, research and knowledge for the common good.
 - 10.6. (Re)emerging institutions, models, governance and practices.

Annex 2. UNESCO Relevant Documents

- [*Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action*](#) (for the implementation of SDG 4).
- [*Making Higher Education more inclusive*](#) SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee Report (July 2020).
- [*Leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development*](#). Note by the Secretariat on the World Social Situation 2016.
- [*Promoting Inclusion Through Social Protection*](#). 2018 Report on the World Social Situation.
- [*Inequality in a Rapidly Changing World*](#). World Social Report 2020.
- [*Inclusion and Education: 2020 Global Education Monitoring*](#). (GEM) Full Report.
- [*Inclusion and Education: 2020 Global Education Monitoring*](#). (GEM) Summary Report.
- [*The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*](#). Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019. New York: United Nations.
- [*The Sustainable Development Goals Report*](#) (2020).
- [*Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*](#). World Youth Report (2019).
- [*UNDP Support to the implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development*](#).
- [*Successfully achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: what is to be done?*](#)
- [*Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals*](#). (Report of the Secretary-General).
- [*Long-term future scenarios and the impact of current trends on the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals*](#) (Report of the Secretary-General).
- [*Implementation of education for sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*](#). (Report of the Director-General of UNESCO).
- [*Progress in the implementation of resolution 2/3 on investing in human capacity for sustainable development through environmental education and training*](#). (Report of the Executive Director).
- [*Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and monitoring at subnational level*](#).
- [*Right to education: the implementation of the right to education and Sustainable Development Goal 4 in the context of growth of private actors in education*](#). (Report of the Special Rapporteur).
- [*Education for sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*](#). Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2019. 74/223.
- [*Framework for the Implementation of Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\) Beyond 2019*](#)
- [*UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021*](#).

Annex 3. Requirements for UNESCO National Commission Country Reports on Higher Education

Higher Education Country Reports are expected to describe an updated situation of higher education in their country with special focus on challenges and recommendations for the future.

Requirements

Higher education country reports should:

- Be original, synthetic, clearly written and updated.
- Be presented in the recommended format (**template available in a separate Word file**)
- Comply with these criteria:
 - Present an updated description of the higher education system in the country. At a minimum, consider these aspects: (a) historical enrolment and graduation rates (last decade); (b) the quantity and types of higher education institutions; (c) the legal and institutional framework of higher education; (d) others as relevant.
 - Report an analysis on the challenges of higher education with special attention to quality and inclusion (keep in mind potential topics relating to the ten main Conference themes or subthemes – see **Annex 1**).
 - Be based on rigorous literature review (including theory and practice) and accurate, updated data as available.
 - Provide clear recommendations or options for solutions.
- Include a summary that does not exceed 250 words.
- If possible, be written in English, French, or Spanish.
- Use Calibri 11 font, left alignment and single spacing.
- Limit narrative (including footnotes) to a maximum of **4000 words** (but exclude bibliographical references and any annexes if the latter are needed).
- As possible, follow the [Style Manual for English texts-intended for publication by UNESCO](#), particularly what refers to quotations (p. 26) and bibliographical references (p. 39-44).
- As relevant, consider the list of UNESCO reports provided in **Annex 2**.
- On the cover page, identify the UNESCO National Commission that has submitted the country report.
- Be submitted in a Word file via email to the WHEC2022 Secretariat (whec2022@unesco.org) as soon as they are ready and no later than **March 15, 2022** (11:59 pm, Paris time). Please insert the following title in the email's subject: *Higher Education Country Report - UNESCO National Commission*.
- Only original pieces will be taken into account: the document should be original and unpublished, and confirmed as such when submitted to UNESCO.

Optional features

Country reports may:

- Below the title, identify its author(s): name, title, and organisation.
- Be supported by consultation and/or other methodologies (interviews, surveys, etc.) to collect data.
- Use tables, figures, infographics, illustrations (properly designed, these may highlight key messages and add value to the document).