3rd UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC 2022)
Guidelines for Knowledge Contributions
UNESCO Section of Higher Education
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Content

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

This global invitation is addressed to organisations or alliances that wish to produce and share knowledge, research, practices, or impactful ideas to enhance higher education institutions and systems, locally and internationally. The invitation is open to diverse entities (within and outside the UN system) willing to establish a partnership with UNESCO under the purpose and main themes of the WHEC2022. Eligible participants may include intergovernmental organisations, public agencies, international networks, think tanks, foundations, higher education institutions, and others. Note that there is also a special strategy and opportunities for engaging youth linked with the higher education sector.

Interested organisations can participate individually or under multi-country or multi-partner alliances, and may consider at least four types of activities:

- Activity A. **Elaborating an open knowledge product** (a document reflecting unique evidence or approaches to higher education at national, regional, or global levels).
- Activity B. Encouraging **policy dialogue by organising consultation meetings** and producing corresponding reports.
- Activity C. Elaborating one or more standard **policy briefs**.
- Activity D. Producing one or more **short videos** on a relevant higher education issue

A single organisation or an alliance may collaborate in all types of activities. Furthermore, one organisation may contribute both individually and as a member of an alliance.

To enhance synergies with the WHEC2022, it is strongly recommended that these activities are framed under the main themes or subthemes 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. Open Knowledge Products

Participant organisations or alliances can prepare and disseminate one or more special research or technical reports relating to the WHEC2022 purpose and its main themes or subthemes. The format of these reports (structure, size, graphic design) is flexible. We strongly recommend that the content of these reports connects with the WHEC2022 main themes or subthemes (**Annex 1**); however, organisations may choose "out-of-the box" topics as long as they enrich the availability and use of evidence or approaches and are consistent with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Examples of knowledge products include serial publications, flagship studies, research reports, literature reviews, policy documents, systematisation of practices, etc.

Knowledge products considered under this activity are open in the sense that they will become public goods. They seek to strengthen knowledge production and dissemination among stakeholders within and outside of higher education, within public and private sectors, at national, regional, and global levels.

Organisations or alliances may be interested in including the UNESCO logo and a specific reference to the WHEC2022 in their open knowledge product. For this case, a written request from the interested organisation(s) and authorisation from the UNESCO's Section of Higher Education will be required, and any organisations or alliances external to the United Nations System must include the following text in one of the first pages of the publication:

> *This report [publication, document, etc.] is elaborated and disseminated as a contribution to the 3rd World Higher Education Conference organised by UNESCO on May 18-20, 2022, with the purpose of enhancing the contribution of higher education institutions and systems world-wide, under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its pledge to leave no one behind, and looking at the Futures of Education. The content of this publication does not necessarily express the views of UNESCO or its Member States.*

We kindly ask that open knowledge products 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: *WHEC2022 Open Knowledge Product*.

Activity B. Policy Dialogue and Consultation

Participant organisations or alliances are invited to encourage policy dialogue by organising consultation meetings that will:

- Engage 8 to 12 persons participating on a voluntary basis.
- Take place between **August 1, 2021 and February 28, 2022**.
- Maximise participant 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 the consultation meetings may consider the following structure:

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

Organisations and alliances 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 official 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: *WHEC2022 Consultation Report*.

Activity C. Standard Policy Briefs

Organisations or alliances may prepare standard policy briefs which are expected to synthesise relevant theory and practice on a specific issue relating to one or more of the ten themes of the WHEC2022 (see **Annex 1**). We kindly ask that final version of policy briefs 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 one of these titles in the email's subject, as it corresponds with the submission:

- *WHEC2022 Standard Policy Brief – Individual*
- *WHEC2022 Standard Policy Brief – Alliance*

All documents complying with the requirements (be sure to see details 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 D. Short Videos

Organisations or alliances are invited to produce and submit 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**. 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.
- **Interview students and/or other higher education stakeholders on the same question to offer different perspectives.**
- **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 if 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: *WHEC2022 Short Video*.
- 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 organisations or alliances to keep in mind these other tips:

- Engage professionals 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.

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. WHEC2022 general consultation report form – independent Word file.
4. Standard policy brief template – independent Word file (applicable to documents submitted by individual organisations or alliances).

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 multiculturality 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 Standard Policy Briefs

Policy briefs are expected to approach challenges, issues or problems currently faced in the higher education sector. The following requirements apply to policy briefs prepared either **individually** (one organisation) or under an **alliance** (more than one organisation).

Requirements

Policy briefs should:

- Be original, synthetic, sound and updated.
- Be presented in the recommended format (**template available in a separate Word file**)
- Comply with these criteria:
  - Focus on a relevant, specific, current challenge, issue, or problem in higher education at a national, regional or global level.
  - Be based on rigorous literature review (including theory and practice).
  - Be framed in one of the ten main Conference themes or subthemes (see **Annex 1**).
  - Provide clear recommendations or options for solutions.
- Include a summary that does not exceed 250 words.
- Be written in English, French, or Spanish if possible.
- 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 name of the organisation or members of the alliance submitting the policy brief.
- 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 one of these titles in the email's subject, as it corresponds with the submission:
  - *WHEC2022 Standard Policy Brief – Individual*
  - *WHEC2022 Standard Policy Brief – Alliance*
  (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

Policy briefs 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).