



Alliance of world  
universities

Press release

## 45+ WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITIES LAUNCH THE U7 ALLIANCE

**This unique international alliance of university presidents will hold its first global summit in Paris on 9-10 July 2019, under the high patronage of the President of the Republic of France Emmanuel Macron.**

**This inaugural 2019 summit will tackle 5 major global challenges: the key role of universities in a global world, climate change and cleaner energy, inequality and polarized societies, technological transformations, and community engagement and impact.**

The U7 Alliance is an international alliance of university presidents who will engage both in discussion and in concrete action by making commitments that universities may take to address the most pressing global challenges in a multilateral context. It is the very first alliance of university presidents aimed at structuring and advancing their role as global actors across the multilateral agenda.

In the context of this alliance, university presidents will take stock of their unique civic and social responsibility as global actors, and pledge to take concrete action within their institutions for a local, regional and global impact. The founding members of the U7 Alliance have agreed to meet yearly for an annual summit to discuss a common agenda and establish a space for universities' action in today's global landscape.

As France holds the French presidency of the G7 in 2019 and seeks to promote the role of universities in the multilateral agenda, the first U7 Alliance summit will be held in France on July 9-10 2019, under the high patronage of Emmanuel Macron, just prior to the final meeting of the sous-sherpas taking place on July 11-12 in Paris. For this 2019 inaugural summit, universities from G7 countries will attend and special invitations have been extended to institutions in 14 countries worldwide (Morocco, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Australia, India, South Korea, Singapore, Mexico, Argentina). These 45+ universities represent over 2 million students in the world.

The summit will conclude with a series of concrete commitments, as discussed during the summit and voted by the university presidents, that will be presented to President Macron, in view of the broader G7 discussions to be undertaken in Biarritz.



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### **The ambition of the U7 Alliance: contribution to multilateral discussion**

The U7 Alliance forms a unique forum for discussion between university presidents in the fields of higher education and research. It commits leading universities worldwide to demonstrating the defining role they play, and the responsibility they carry, in the multilateral framework.

3 main reasons call for such action:

- Firstly, G7 support of primary education must be followed by action in the field of higher education: the rise in demand for higher education over the past 20 years will continue in the decades to come. Universal access to primary education should be met with increased access to higher education.
- Parallel to this, in the major industrialized countries, higher education faces significant challenges related to funding, digital technology, ability to promote access to employment for entire age cohorts while contributing to economic growth in a totally globalized environment, responding to growing demands for mobility, supporting scientific research to respond not only to the great challenges of the contemporary world, but also to those we do not know yet.
- Finally, in a changing geopolitical context, academic discussions and relations between universities are essential to leverage international dialogue. In this context, universities have gradually become diplomatic and political actors.

### **The objectives of the U7 Alliance for the 2019 inaugural summit of Paris**

The U7 summit generates a favorable space for debate and reflection on the future and the role of universities as engaged global actors. Hosted at Sciences Po, its first edition will end on the 10th of July with the announcement of commitments taken by universities as global actors that have an impact on the multilateral agenda, and that are in a position to create norms for the sector and beyond.

The U7 Summit is not designed as a scientific colloquium nor a place to advocate for more support for the academic sector. This summit will allow a collective reflection on how the U7 Alliance of world universities will showcase their joint willingness to work together at the global level as engaged universities, within the realm of a yearly summit.

Over two days, the 45+ presidents of universities will collectively prepare commitments on 5 key topics for the future of universities around the world, under the general baseline "The inherent responsibility of being a world-class university today": 1. Universities as key actors in a global



world; 2. Climate and energy transition; 3. Inequality and polarized societies; 4. Technological transformation; 5. Community engagement and impact.

The final commitments of the 2019 U7 Alliance Summit will be issued end of day on July 10.

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## **Annex**

### **46 universities will attend the inaugural U7 Alliance Summit**

- University of Cambridge - Great Britain
- Imperial College London - Great Britain
- University College of London - Great Britain
- University of Edinburgh - Great Britain
- London School of Economics and Political Science - Great Britain
- Freie Universität Berlin – Germany
- Universität Heidelberg – Germany
- Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich – Germany
- University of Mannheim – Germany
- Technical University of Munich – Germany
- Università Bocconi – Italy
- University of Naples Federico II – Italy
- Sapienza University of Rome – Italy
- Columbia University, New York - United States of America
- University of British Columbia – Canada
- McGill University – Canada
- Université de Montréal – Canada
- University of Ottawa – Canada
- University of Toronto – Canada
- Hitotsubashi University – Japan
- Keio University – Japan
- Osaka University – Japan
- The University of Tokyo – Japan
- Ashesi University – Ghana
- University of Cape Town - South Africa
- Université Cheikh Anta Diop – Senegal
- University of Ibadan – Nigeria
- Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny - Ivory Coast
- Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique – Morocco



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- Australian National University – Australia
- Seoul National University - South Korea
- Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico – Mexico
- National University of Singapore – Singapore

Invited by the French Universities' Steering Committee:

- Aix-Marseille Université
- Université de Bordeaux
- Université Côte d'Azur
- Ecole Polytechnique
- Université Grenoble Alpes
- HEC Paris
- Université de Lyon
- Université Paris Diderot
- Université Paris Saclay
- Université Paris Sciences et Lettres
- Sciences Po
- Sorbonne Université
- Université de Strasbourg

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