Framework

“Horizon 600” – the university’s 600th anniversary – embodies the strategic plan for the UCLouvain community between now and that auspicious occasion in 2025. Supported by the Rectoral Council, it defines the direction and develops the action plan that will determine the institution’s future.

Vision

In 2025, UCLouvain will confirm its position as an open, innovative university and intensify its activity as a collaborative and socially committed university. By mobilising its entire community, it will successfully achieve the objectives defined in five plans that focus on student support, human resources, internationalisation, the economic, ecological and social transition, and open education and open science.

Mission

The Horizon 600 Strategic Plan is the common thread of UCLouvain’s strategic vision. This comprehensive plan provides coherence to the projects carried out by all of the university’s legal entities and enables them to move towards a common goal: to shape an open, innovative, collaborative and socially committed university in accordance with the essential missions of education, research and serving society.

The Horizon 600 Strategic Plan affects UCLouvain’s entire academic community, including its 33,500 students and some 6,000 staff members. It mobilises and stimulates numerous local, regional, national, European and international partnerships.

600 YEARS IN PERSPECTIVE

In 2025, UCLouvain will commemorate its 600 years of existence with numerous events, including a Musée L exhibition, a cultural season, the publication of dedicated books and the awarding of honorary doctorates in conjunction with KU Leuven.
Introduction

The year 2025 will mark the 600th anniversary of our alma mater. This important milestone is ideal for setting new objectives for, and with, the entire university community.

After several months of analysis and dialogue with a view to developing the plan collectively, the Horizon 600 Strategic Plan was approved by the various university bodies. This ambitious document summarises the priority challenges for the next five years: student support, human resources, internationalisation, the economic, ecological and social transition, and openness through digital technology. Now it’s time for action. We are counting on everyone’s participation to make this strategic plan a success.

Since its foundation on 9 December 1425, the Université de Louvain has undergone a few revolutions but also, like the whole of society, continuous evolution. Horizon 600 is firmly in the latter category. We look forward to our 600th year!

Vincent Blondel
Rector
Strategic orientations

OPEN

UCLouvain is rooted in society and proactively assumes its role as a driver of change, by being open to people and the world.

An open university means:

- **intensifying the institution’s influence** through a proactive policy, promoting inclusion, diversity and sharing as sources of enrichment;
- **supporting and enriching learning experiences** and giving students the means to develop their talents as they pursue their academic and extracurricular goals – all this in an intercultural environment;
- **strengthening the international dynamic** as a tool for shaping the citizens of tomorrow, developing collaborations that offer innovative training, and participating in the development of a more sustainable society on a global scale;
- **being part of open education**, participating in the democratisation of science and culture by sharing data and scientific publications, and disseminating free educational tools.

INNOVATIVE

The university is an incubator for responses to the technological and social challenges to which society is, and will be, exposed.

An innovative university means:

- **promoting interdisciplinarity and creativity**, combining diverse expertise and disciplines in the service of education and research, stimulating the emergence of innovative ideas and concepts;
- **cultivating research excellence** by extending the frontiers of knowledge, continuing to position the university in international networks, and emphasising research;
- **educating individuals to face tomorrow’s challenges** through enhanced course offerings that broaden student experiences, internationalise curricula and impart sustainability-related knowledge and skills;
- **transforming the learning environment** by designing new learning spaces, developing educational tools and using digital technology.
COLLABORATIVE

The quality of education and research at UCLouvain is based on its collective strength, which makes it possible to meet societal challenges.

A collaborative university means:

- deploying human resources policy comprehensively and fairly, in line with the means allocated to the institution to allow staff members to accomplish their missions;
- mobilising, developing and recognising every individual’s skills in order to support their development at every stage of their career and provide a fulfilling and satisfying working environment;
- amplifying the culture of continuous improvement, maintaining a sense of belonging, ensuring the continuous evolution and efficiency of tools and processes, and pooling resources and developing networking in order to work in an agile and constructive manner.

SOCIALLY COMMITTED

UCLouvain plays a major role in its local and global environment. The expectations of its community and of society regarding the university’s role as an insightful and engaged partner are growing.

A socially committed university means:

- mobilising its expertise to contribute to the development of sustainable and resilient learning ecosystems, stimulate dialogue and invigorate its network of graduates;
- supporting sustainable campuses by building a more ecological and inclusive ecosystem for the greatest number of people on each campus;
- promoting diversity, equality and inclusion as UCLouvain seeks to recognise and value the diversity of people in all its activities;
- increasing the contribution to regional development by proposing, in the Walloon and Brussels Capital Regions where UCLouvain is located, to help build local learning ecosystems nourished by cutting-edge research and innovative local courses.
“TO ENABLE STUDENTS TO FIND THEIR WAY, GET INVOLVED AND DEVELOP, THE UNIVERSITY HAS A DUTY TO PLACE THEM AT THE HEART OF ITS MISSIONS, BECAUSE WITHOUT STUDENTS, THERE IS NO UNIVERSITY.”

Philippe Hilgsmann, Vice-Rector for Student Affairs
THE PLAN

Student support

To enable students to find their way, get involved and thrive as citizens, UCLouvain aims to support them in their academic and extracurricular lives. This holistic vision is coupled with a differentiated approach depending on the campus, faculty and course.

Commitments

1. Making UCLouvain admission possible for everyone who desires a university education.
   The institution aims to make every student’s journey an experience that enables them to determine what they will do in the world.

2. Helping students achieve academic success.
   UCLouvain is strengthening its links with secondary and higher education establishments in the Walloon-Brussels Federation. In advance and with a view to providing better guidance, it raises awareness and supports young students in their choice of studies. Examples: providing secondary schools the educational resources used in the first year of the bachelor course; establishing a network of secondary school teachers as ambassadors to and from UCLouvain.

3. Adapting to the changing student population.
   UCLouvain surveys incoming students to sound out their aspirations and needs in academic and extracurricular areas, for example in terms of social assistance.

   The university takes into account the environment in which students live in order to respond appropriately to their difficulties. It recognises their commitment in order to value the skills they develop. Different forms of recognition of student commitment will be studied.

5. Exploiting the specificities of the different campuses.
   Student life policy is based on transversal coherence while adapting to the context and realities of the campus on which students live.

6. Reinventing the relationship with students.
   To encourage and facilitate contact, UCLouvain uses communication tools used by students themselves. A student app, UCLouvain Mobile, has recently been launched.

7. Continuing to raise awareness concerning entry into the work force.
   UCLouvain monitors its network of graduates and documents their realities in order to better support students’ transition to professional life.

Learn more about the student support plan  
www.uclouvain.be/h600

33,500 STUDENTS RECEIVED SUPPORT IN 2020–21 THAT HELPED THEM ACHIEVE THEIR ACADEMIC GOALS.
“THIS PLAN AIMS TO EFFECT A MAJOR CHANGE BY RELYING ON A HIERARCHY OF BETTER TRAINED MANAGERS AND OFFERING A REWARDING WORK ENVIRONMENT.”

Didier Lambert, Vice-Rector for Personnel Policy
THE PLAN

Human resources

UCLouvain has more than 6,000 staff members, with different profiles, realities and statuses. In this rich and complex professional environment, the human resources policy aims to be inclusive and understandable for each individual. Its overall objective is to improve everyone’s quality of life and ensure well-being at work.

Commitments

1. **Improving work life quality.**
   Professional well-being depends on many factors. UCLouvain takes action in support of telework, replacement, career development, equity and safety policies.

2. **Attracting, retaining and developing talent.**
   As an employer, UCLouvain constantly strives to increase its influence by defining its assets and refining its communication and attractiveness.

3. **Developing integrated training paths.**
   In order to strengthen the implementation of human resources policy throughout the management hierarchy, UCLouvain offers a digital training portfolio and three training paths for new employees, leaders and managers.

4. **Managing careers and recognising professional investment.**
   The importance of evaluation, the deployment of new forms of recognition, the encouragement of internal mobility and support for the end or extension of careers are all processes for which UCLouvain is developing tools for line managers.

5. **Intensifying digitisation and improving processes.**
   The administrative simplification brought about by digitisation responds to a need for efficiency and requires a thorough review of processes. Some procedures are already completed, while others are in the process of being changed or are still being considered.

6. **Promoting diversity, gender equality and inclusion.**
   UCLouvain continues its commitment and combines action, analyses, and surveys to emphasise openness, balance and equity.

Learn more about the human resources plan
www.uclouvain.be/h600

334 individuals BEGAN THEIR INTEGRATED TRAINING COURSE IN 2021.
“TO MEET THE CHALLENGES FACING EUROPE AND THE PLANET WE MUST MOBILISE ALL OUR CREATIVE STRENGTH. WITH SIX OTHER WORLD-RENNOWNED INSTITUTIONS, WE HAVE FORGED A COMMON VISION OF WHAT THE UNIVERSITY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY.”

Dana Samson, Pro-Rector for International Affairs
International collaboration is crucial to educating tomorrow’s citizens and meeting society’s major challenges. UCLouvain is a driving force in this realm. It actively participates in the construction of European higher education and research areas by getting involved in influential networks such as The Guild, and above all by creating, with six other Circle U. universities, the European university of tomorrow.

**The Circle U. vision**

Deeply inclusive, focused on excellence and interdisciplinarity, Circle U. brings together the skills of students, staff, civil society, business and private sector partners to develop expertise and hatch solutions for a common goal: to make Europe and the planet healthier, more peaceful, more sustainable, more democratic and more prosperous.

**Circle U. commitments**

1. **Creating a European campus with an infrastructure that facilitates in-person and virtual exchanges.** The idea of a “Schengen of education” entails facilitating access for all alliance members to courses, programmes, infrastructure and resources.

2. **Developing innovative teaching methods.** The goal of revisiting the boundaries between teaching and research is to offer students the opportunity to acquire skills and adopt values that enable them to navigate a constantly changing world.

3. **Invoking European values to address major global challenges.** Alliance members together create knowledge, solutions and policies. In implementing commitments, particular attention is paid to inclusion, equity, diversity, accessibility and sustainability.

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An alliance of seven universities
- Aarhus University (Denmark)
- Humboldt University of Berlin (Germany)
- King’s College London (United Kingdom)
- University of Paris (France)
- University of Belgrade (Serbia)
- UCLouvain (Belgium)
- University of Oslo (Norway)

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**334,000 students AND 51,000 STAFF ARE AT THE HEART OF THE CIRCLE U. ALLIANCE.**

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Learn more about the internationalisation plan
[www.uclouvain.be/circle-u](http://www.uclouvain.be/circle-u)
“THE GOAL IS TO MAKE UCLouvain AN ‘OPEN LABORATORY FOR ECONOMIC, ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION’, WHERE EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INVESTMENT IN MAKING OUR CAMPUS MORE SUSTAINABLE ARE FULLY ARTICULATED IN ORDER TO RESOLUTELY COMMIT OUR UNIVERSITY TO MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE.”

Marthe Nyssens, Pro-Rector for Economic, Ecological and Social Transition and Society
Economic, ecological and social transition

Because aligning itself with the interests of future generations is in its DNA, UCLouvain firmly expresses its commitment to sustainability. In the face of the climate emergency, the university is acting and positioning itself at the forefront of the search for ways to achieve the economic, ecological and social transition to a sustainable society, for the greatest number of people and on each of its campuses. Its aim is to support the development of knowledge, educate its students, develop its campuses and thus contribute, as a university, to these crucial systemic changes.

Commitments

1. **In education: educating all students about sustainability.**
   UCLouvain is offering a MOOC, “Introduction aux enjeux du développement durable et de la transition”, while giving greater visibility to courses and programmes on sustainability and economic, ecological and social transition. It also aims to integrate cross-curricular learning outcomes related to sustainable development into all bachelor courses and to set up a transdisciplinary minor in ecological and social transition.

2. **In research: advancing knowledge concerning these naturally cross-disciplinary issues.**
   Meeting economic, ecological and social transition challenges will require input from all fields of science, whether technological, medical, human, or social. This essential crossing of disciplines requires stimulating and supporting inter- and transdisciplinary research.

3. **On campuses: creating sustainability for everyone and on every campus.**
   Each of UCLouvain’s seven campuses is unique. Together, they form an ecosystem with common objectives, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2035. The university is leading an ambitious, concrete action plan to achieve greater sustainability in:
   - energy and buildings;
   - mobility;
   - consumption and investment;
   - food;
   - biodiversity;
   - territorial development;
   - culture.

Learn more about the economic, ecological and social transition plan: www.uclouvain.be/universite-transition

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**TOP-RANKED** Belgian university in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, the only global performance tables that measure the achievement of the UN’s sustainable development goals by higher education institutions.
“THIS WIDE-RANGING PROJECT IS BASED ON A VALUE: OPENNESS. IT CONCERNS THE ENTIRE UCLOUVAIN COMMUNITY AND EXTENDS WELL BEYOND. WE ARE COMMITTED TO ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE FOR ALL.”

Yves Deville, Rectoral Advisor for the Digital University and Open Science.
Open education and open science

UCLouvain was a pioneer and is now a leading university in open education and distance learning. It also partakes of the global approach of open science, which aims to make research and scientific data and their dissemination accessible to every level of a society in search of knowledge.

**Commitments**

**OPEN EDUCATION AND DISTANCE LEARNING**

- Including open education and distance learning in the education mission.
  - UCLouvain continues to develop three distinct lines:
    - open education resources, including OpenCourseWare, which is accessible to and usable by all, for teaching and learning.
    - MOOCs that anyone can take and online courses reserved for the student community.
    - digital teaching and learning tools.
- Deploying an open education culture at all institutional levels.
  The university stimulates the use of the most relevant platforms and tools to support the cross-cutting needs of the teaching and student community.
- Investing in open education networks and projects.
  To increase its international visibility, UCLouvain produces, shares and exchanges within national and international partnerships.
- Promoting an inclusive pedagogy and ensuring accessibility
  Open education makes it possible to better adapt to the variety of profiles and needs at UCLouvain by ensuring that everyone, regardless of their situation, has access to digital tools and resources.

**OPEN SCIENCE**

- Anchoring open science, in all its dimensions, in the actions of research institutes.
  UCLouvain is committed to making open access, open data and open source common practices in the scientific community.
- Nurturing an open science culture at all university levels.
  This culture aims to improve the quality and reliability of research through principles such as inclusiveness, fairness, equity and sharing.
- Increasing its international visibility through its investment in open science.
  UCLouvain actively contributes to national and international networks promoting open science such as Circle U. and The Guild.

680 FREE education resources

HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE ON THE UCLOVAIN OER INSTITUTIONAL PLATFORM SINCE 2020.
A shared dynamic

Detailed and wide-ranging, the Horizon 600 Strategic Plan is supported by the entire UCLouvain community. Approved by the university’s authorities, the plan responds to needs and requires every university community member to be a stakeholder. Staff leaders provided the following feedback and insights:

“The objectives are in symbiosis with the strategic approaches of the Human Sciences Sector, which promotes multidisciplinary research in close contact with society. It also places openness to the world and responsible citizenship at the heart of its courses.”
Geneviève Schamps and Jacques Grégoire, Vice-Rectors of the Human Sciences Sector

“Horizon 600 is a living dynamic, deeply imbued with the values of excellence, collegiality, humanism and academic freedom of which our eternally young alma mater is the repository.”
Alexia Autenne, Director General, and Jean Hilgers, Chairman of the Board of Governors

“UCLouvain has adopted an ambitious, motivating and modern battle plan. Academic staff, together with other staffs, want to be proactive and enthusiastic actors in this plan.”
Luc Vandendorpe, Academic Staff President

“In a challenging context, this plan intends to implement realistic actions that favour staff and the economic, ecological and social transition, to propel UCLouvain towards new horizons. We will be partners in its implementation, which must serve our entire community.”
Benoît Thirion, Technical and Administrative Staff President

“By supporting transdisciplinarity and intensifying our collaborations with Circle U. partners, the Horizon 600 Strategic Plan opens new possibilities for UCLouvain researchers.”
Jean-Christophe Renaud, Research Council President

“A key measure for the scientific community is the training of thesis supervisors. Through such training, we hope to see an improvement in relations with PhD students, leading to a reduction in the risk of burnout and dropping out.”
Aurore Potalivo Richardson-Todd and Axelle Koch, Scientific Staff Presidents

“Health in the Horizon 600 Strategic Plan? It’s much more present than it seems: prevention through the ecological and social transition, international collaboration, artificial intelligence, digital health, human resources management to preserve psychological balance, and concern for student health. Yes, we can!”
Frédéric Houssiau, Vice-Rector of the Health Sciences Sector

“Horizon 600 is an ambitious and bold plan that makes choices without scattering resources, giving pride of place to two strategic components that prepare our future and are at the heart of the concerns of the Science and Technology Sector, namely the economic, ecological and social transition plan, and positioning in the Circle U. European alliance.”
Michel Devillers, Vice-Rector of the Science and Technology Sector

“Horizon 600 represents an opportunity to imagine the university of tomorrow. It will have to address current issues in order to meet our access to education needs. This can only be done by implementing concrete measures to support the student community.”
Eva Pigeon and Maxime Geerts, Co-Presidents of the Louvain Student General Assembly
2021-2025 UCLouvain Strategic Plan

4 strategic orientations
The university defines itself:

1. open
2. innovative
3. collaborative
4. socially committed

5 priority action plans
The above four values translate into and are embodied by five detailed, ambitious plans that resolutely address the future and its major challenges.

1. Student support
2. Human resources
3. Internationalisation
4. Economic, ecological and social transition
5. Open education and science