AUF STRATEGY
2017 - 2021 SUMMARY OF PLANS APPROVED BY THE GENERAL MEETING IN MAY 2017

Building the New French-speaking Academic Area

Our purpose at AUF is to serve our members, to support them as they face challenges, and, via our role as a network leader, to help them find the answers they need. We are developing a new French-speaking Academic Area rooted in an acceptance of these challenges and a common desire to rise to them by sharing the French language, which gives the Area its unity. AUF supports its member institutions throughout this development process.

AUF
Agence
UNIVERSITAIRE
DE LA **FRANCOPHONIE**

A NINE-POINT STRATEGY

The context

The context of higher education and research worldwide is characterised by: globalisation and the development of a knowledge economy that gives institutions an enhanced role via development initiatives; rapid growth in many countries of higher education, which goes hand in hand with the aspirations of young people to achieve higher qualifications; and a fall-off in the use of French in the academic environment in many fields and the need to spark renewed interest in speaking and working in French. The French-speaking academic area is increasingly diversified, in particular at the regional level.

TACKLING THE MAIN CHALLENGES

→ Challenges within institutions in terms of training quality, research and governance

→ Challenges relating to graduate employability; the need to establish dialogue with economic players to adapt professional training and develop entrepreneurship

→ Institutional challenges involving enhancing the role of universities as drivers of economic, cultural, linguistic and intercultural development

→ QUALITY FIRST

1. HELP GUARANTEE TRAINING QUALITY

In academic terms, guaranteeing training quality involves improving proficiency in French, providing high-quality teacher training, developing training quality benchmarks, setting up new training organisations that use digital technology, emphasising the importance of soft skills and community awareness in training, and developing accreditation and quality assurance procedures.

2. HELP STRUCTURE AND DEVELOP RESEARCH IN A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK, AND SUPPORT THE INVOLVEMENT OF MEMBER INSTITUTIONS IN THIS PROCESS

Structuring research involves setting up national research and innovation bodies, encouraging active solidarity between member institutions in the field of research and innovation, and setting up accreditation and quality assurance procedures.

3. HELP IMPLEMENT GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES RELEVANT TO THESE NEW CHALLENGES

The development of governance and quality assurance procedures within member institutions has many structural consequences, as does designing strategic educational projects. Setting up French-language academic accreditation systems is an important question in many regions.

→ QUALITY AND GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

4. ESTABLISH OR INTENSIFY DIALOGUE BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND ECONOMIC PLAYERS

This dialogue relies on the establishment of national or regional consultancy bodies bringing together the world of higher education and research, its governing authorities, and representatives of its socio-economic environment. It also involves helping member institutions set up regular consultations with socio-economic players.

5. ENSURE THAT BASIC TRAINING TAKES FULL ACCOUNT OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE LOCAL OR NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS OF MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

Basic training must contribute to the entire higher qualification chain by including the development of intermediate professional training, with a view to improving the participation of economic players in the design and implementation of vocational training.

6. DEVELOP THE CULTURE AND PRACTICE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The aim is to encourage students and graduates to set up companies, and to support institutions to stimulate a culture of entrepreneurship in training and research programmes as a factor of quality and relevance.

→ PROMOTING UNIVERSITIES THAT DRIVE GLOBAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

7. ENHANCE THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEMBER INSTITUTIONS TO ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

The aim is to develop specific activities that encourage member institutions to contribute to economic, social and environmental development and allow them to take part in building public policies that respond to major social challenges, particularly relating to UN sustainable development goals.

8. ENHANCE THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEMBER INSTITUTIONS TO LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL CULTURE

The idea here is to develop the use of the French language in higher education, and to play an active part in promoting cultures and languages in all their diversity. It also involves taking part in the development of scientific culture in French among young people via research initiatives.

9. ENHANCE THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEMBER INSTITUTIONS TO INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL OPENNESS

The aim is to enhance the role of universities in maintaining peace, in particular by teaching mediation for crisis and conflict resolution and by sharing best practices internationally by embracing their international dimension. It also involves helping to reinforce the international dimension of member institutions internally, and to enhance their international profiles by fostering relations with other international networks.

How will the strategy be implemented?

The AUF has drawn up this strategy based on an analysis of its position, its environment, and current initiatives, especially at regional level. This analysis is the result of broad-based consultation of its member institutions. Its main strategic levers are as follows:

A central and regional organisation to manage, coordinate and analyse initiatives, with three new departments: digital technology; monitoring, innovation and expertise; and partnerships. Regional departments deploy this strategy, adapting it to regional contexts; they are the driving force behind inter-regional cooperation initiatives.

Digital tools used coherently to serve our member institutions as effectively as possible: new digital learning workspaces, new tools for sharing the results of research, a digital observatory of professions and training, and a new model for the Campus Numérique Francophone (CNF).

The member network, a pool of high-level expertise and a permanent source of innovation, must be described and promoted to develop active solidarity between institutions.

Partnerships must be established to build strong relations between academic, political and socio-economic players and to increase the ability of the Agency and its member institutions to take action.

French, our common language, is a key development lever for member institutions, which can rely on our ten regional branches to suggest relevant solutions that take their different contexts into account.

The promotion of the French-speaking world thus relies on the solutions it is able to implement in response to the challenges it faces. Our vision opens up important development perspectives within the framework of fruitful international and continental partnerships, especially in the major geographical areas in which the Agency operates.