

Strategic Plan

2020-2023

MISSION AND AIMS

This plan affirms that the purpose of WUN is to strengthen member universities, and their international engagement and prominence, by:

- Fostering distinctive international research collaborations directed at problems of global significance.
- Nurturing research talent, particularly of early career researchers.
- Promoting the development of global citizens through targeted programs for undergraduates.
- Informing academic policy and practice through analysis and information exchange.
- Building partnerships with relevant national and international bodies.
- Communicating WUN's strengths and achievements to ensure visibility and impact.

STRATEGIES

Foster Research Collaboration

The WUN research agenda will focus on projects that the network can undertake with clear distinction. WUN can bring great leverage—the “WUN Advantage”—to research by facilitating comparative analysis empowered by an exceptional constellation of disciplinary expertise and the geographical and cultural diversity of its member universities.

Although WUN is open to supporting strong projects in any area where there is a clear WUN Advantage, the most consistent advantage is likely to fall within the broad domain of *sustainable development*. This signature, which is substantially aligned with the network's historical focus, identifies a domain of great societal importance and significant funding opportunity, and it provides a powerful bridge to an emerging imperative in undergraduate and postgraduate education.

Nurture Talent

To help early-career researchers establish collegial networks, WUN will continue to serve as a clearing house for postgraduate and postdoctoral research opportunities available within member universities. Support for this will be enlarged to help identify more of the opportunities available nationally and internationally.

Develop Global Citizens

WUN has historically involved itself in undergraduate education through initiatives, such as summer schools, that enlarge students' access to research in a multicultural context. WUN will continue to promote the engagement of students in research, including exploiting opportunities that arise from advances in online education.

Inform Policy and Practice

The diversity that confers a WUN Advantage in academic research can also benefit member universities in tackling shared problems of policy and management. Where a shared challenge can be beneficially addressed by information exchange and/or comparative analysis, WUN may establish an initiative to examine it, and recommend solutions.

Build External Partnerships

WUN will build external partnerships with national and international organizations where the partnership can elevate the profile of WUN and its members, and/or enlarge member universities' access to resources and channels of influence. The opportunities to develop such partnerships are increased by WUN's focus on sustainable development.

Communicate Our Strengths

WUN will promote the achievements of the network and its members through its web site, newsletter and webinars, and through such activities as publication partnerships. We will secure opportunities for WUN leaders to be featured at major international conferences and forums.
