



ON COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

**MISSION STATEMENT
2024-2028 and beyond**

VISION AND MISSION

New horizons for higher education: a student's perspective

The picture of the future below was jointly written by the students of ENLIGHT's Student Network: we are optimistic, enthusiastic, dedicated participants and fully support the vision for ENLIGHT as set forth here.

As students we imagine the future, a future where ENLIGHT has shifted the way we think about education. No longer will the focus be on exam success, and reproducing course books but on our ability to apply knowledge and skills to engage with the complex global issues we face today. Education will develop our self-knowledge and provide us with skills that seed a critical and creative mindset, so that we can innovate and make a difference when facing the challenges of tomorrow not only in our local communities but across the globe.

We envision ENLIGHT as an alliance of truly integrated European universities, an open space, co-created and governed at all levels with and for students, that offers a seamless European experience in education and research. It will give us flexibility and mobility tailored to our needs. We will be able to study abroad for short or long periods of time and will have unlimited access to flexible ENLIGHT courses, both in person and online. It will be easy for any student to be an exchange student, with smooth access to study across all ENLIGHT universities, as well as complementary resources in education and research. Thus we will gain a wealth of international experience that will benefit the rest of our lives.

The diversity across our alliance is an incredibly valuable resource. Each university is a regional hub of expertise, connected to its local industries and communities. Collectively, they open us up to a wide range of experience and opportunities, both within and outside the university, that would otherwise have remained unattainable.

Last but not least, ENLIGHT is about diversity. We imagine the European university of the future as an interconnected community, where we support and encourage each other. Thanks to the resources of our alliance, we will feel as much at home abroad as we do in our local student communities. Together we give shape to rich and diverse intercultural experience, both inside our lecture-rooms and at the pub. As we progress, this shared sense of commitment and belonging will support us on our path to becoming conscious global citizens ready to work together for a better, resilient future.

To fulfill this vision, we need ENLIGHT.

ENLIGHT – European university Network to promote equitable quality of Life, sustainability and Global engagement through Higher education Transformation

■ OUR ENLIGHT AMBITION

Through excellent transdisciplinary, and transnational and mission-driven education, research and innovation, ENLIGHT addresses major societal challenges of today across six domains: *Health and Well-being, Digitalisation, Energy and Circular Economy, Climate, Culture and Creativity and Equity*, in order to make a positive and transformative contribution to current societal issues and to construct a better future for generations to come.

ENLIGHT engages with today's complex societal challenges to empower our learners, teachers and researchers to shape a better future. For each of these focus areas a co-creative community of students, teachers, researchers and life-long learners work together with our cities and communities, to integrate teaching and learning, to foster knowledge creation and to nurture innovation synergies. During the next four-year phase, our proven shared strengths in each of these domains will lead to the development of stronger and more tangible collaboration in education and research, to generate societal impact.

ENLIGHT aims to establish an open, integrated space for learners, teachers and researchers, with free movement of students and staff, systemic sharing of resources, lifelong access to the best educational environment, and a connected research and innovation capacity that maximizes impact. We strive to transform

the way in which our universities address complex global sustainability challenges by developing new models and methodologies, through education and research, and in close cooperation with our cities and communities. ENLIGHT thus seeks to conduct an impact-driven and challenge-based transformation of European higher education to empower learners with state-of-the-art knowledge and skills, while synergizing our research and innovation potential with and for our societal partners.

The universities of our alliance complement each other extremely well since each is a quality-driven, comprehensive, research-intensive university and a dynamic hub in a unique and diverse regional ecosystem, placing ENLIGHT in an exceptional position to work on both regional and global challenges in co-creation with local cities, citizens and communities.

→ ***ENLIGHT is thus a driving force, transforming European culture and society through innovation in challenge-based, future-proof education and research.***

The ENLIGHT alliance is:

A LIFE-LONG TALENT HUB

to empower student, professionals and academics as engaged citizens with state-of-the-art knowledge, skills and innovation potential through high-quality transnational challenge-based education, while fostering flexible, personalized curricula adapted to the needs and demands of an ever-changing society, workplace, technology and the market.

A MEETING PLACE FOR DISCOVERY AND MISSIONS

to foster collaborative interdisciplinary and cutting-edge research on the grand societal challenges along our six challenge areas and beyond.

A LOCAL-TRANSNATIONAL CATALYST FOR IMPACT

to connect our nine regions and cities with and for local actors to develop challenge-based learning formats and spark new R&I actions and entrepreneurial ventures that are based on actual societal needs, in our local communities, Europe and the wider world.

A CO-CREATIVE COMMUNITY

of students, teachers, researchers, academics, and support staff to broaden horizons, connecting, provoking, inspiring and stirring new joint endeavours.

ENLIGHT partners



That transformative process, endorsed by all nine of our rectors, and set in motion in 2020*, is all the more relevant today in the light of the significant events and shifts that Europe and the world have witnessed since then - the global pandemic, the energy and climate crises, the war in Ukraine. Many priorities of the first phase of ENLIGHT have thus become more urgent, while the need for global, multidisciplinary and integrated approaches has never been stronger.

→ *ENLIGHT seeks to equip its learners with the right skills to address such acute, present and future challenges, as well as those that we may not yet identify or foresee.*

Our commitment to building future-proof education is at the core of our renewed mission, both in what we create together and in how we embed it at our institutions.

ENLIGHT education empowers students with deep knowledge skills, and broad and relevant competences so that may become globally engaged, future-ready citizens.



Figure 1. Competences of ENLIGHT curricula or course, teaching and learning methodology, and Challenge domains – D26, D53

ENLIGHT Future-proof education is built on sound educational principles developed in the first three years, setting out disciplinary and global competencies, educational models and methodologies - including challenge-based education approaches - to equip our students to address global challenges. It is an overarching dimension of ENLIGHT education that we will extend, upscale and embed across all our universities for the benefit of all ENLIGHT students.

* The ENLIGHT mission statement can be consulted here : enlight-eu.org/university-about-us/about-enlight.

■ THE ENLIGHT CHALLENGES

Health and Well-being - Digitalisation - Energy and Circular Economy - Climate - Equity - Culture & creativity

ENLIGHT engages with today's complex societal challenges to empower our learners, teachers and researchers to shape a better future. To structure this approach, we have established wide challenge domains, based on key determinants for (future) social welfare and sustainable development. These challenge domains are transversal to all disciplines and have been established to seed inter/cross/trans/multi-disciplinary approaches. Five such challenge domains were defined in the first three-year period of ENLIGHT, and will be deepened and strengthened in the next phase. A sixth challenge area, Culture & creativity, is now added since cultural diversity, heritage, and cross-cultural understanding are crucial if we are to progress to a sustainable and

socially cohesive future. For each of these focus areas a co-creative community of students, teachers, researchers and life-long learners work together with our cities and communities, to integrate teaching and learning, to foster knowledge creation and to nurture innovation synergies. During the next four-year phase, our proven shared strengths in each of these domains will lead to the development of stronger and more tangible collaboration in education and research, to generate societal impact.

→ *The ENLIGHT challenge domains are anchor points for our future-proof educational mission and our research and innovation agenda. They are the guiding action framework of our alliance.*

■ ENLIGHT – A TRANSFORMATIVE, IMPACT-DRIVEN ALLIANCE

With the launch of our research and innovation strand ENLIGHT RISE in 2021, we were able to define a shared ambition, linking our research agenda to the challenge domains defined in our Erasmus+ project. This provided the impetus for an integrated and comprehensive ENLIGHT strategy that pulls innovative education and cutting-edge research from all ENLIGHT universities together in order to achieve real societal impact. These combined efforts have set ENLIGHT on course to interweave knowledge creation through research and innovation, for and with society, for deep and structural cooperation, further enhancing the research-driven and challenge-based foundations of ENLIGHT education.

In light of the above, and in accordance with the *European Strategy for Universities* published in January 2022, the following eight principles guide our renewed mission and sharpen our common strategy for 2024-2028:

- Advance research, educate students, serve and engage both the local/regional European and global communities in a leading, diverse and internationally connected university where our staff and students learn, teach, create and innovate.
- Upscale and mainstream educational innovation, following our student-centred, challenge-based, transdisciplinary, transnational and research-driven education model.

- Extend low-hurdle, flexible and innovative learning opportunities, creating rich intercultural environments that enable our students to acquire future-proof skills, deepening their knowledge and developing critical, innovative and entrepreneurial mindsets.
 - Build knowledge-creating teams that enable learners, teachers and researchers to work together on impactful solutions for complex societal challenges forging coalitions for and with society.
 - Deepen our collaboration on an equal footing, sharing and promoting European values, diversity, inclusion and equity.
- Apply co-creation across disciplines, between staff and students, and with key stakeholders in our cities, territories and eco-systems, contributing to the knowledge economy, employment, creativity, culture and well-being.
 - Enhance, facilitate and proactively support lifelong learning and professional development.
 - Engage widely with our partners from across the world, sharing our impact-driven culture, and serving as a role model to support and set the standard for the European Education Area and European Research Area.

■ THE ENLIGHT JOURNEY SO FAR

In the first 3-year period of our alliance, ENLIGHT has focused on development, installing sound management and governance, raising commitment and engagement across our institutions. We have established the architecture of an open integrated space in order to support and develop our shared potential in education, research and innovation for addressing the broad societal challenges set out in our 2020-2023 E+ project. We have used this time to develop, test and refine our ideas on key qualifications for new curricula, societal partnership structures, inclusive and sustainable mobility, governance structures, quality assurance and impact assessment. We have designed tools and policies for inclusive and green mobility and an ENLIGHT interconnected digital campus; setting up first activities between our institutions and their socioeconomic environments through Regional Academies; establishing a method and tools for ENLIGHT impact measurement and arriving at a first global impact assessment.

Above all we have placed a strong emphasis on quality and educational strategy, developing innovative pedagogical methods and bringing together academic and educational expertise to design and run

over thirty innovative educational pilots that address a wide range of societal and environmental challenges.

→ *We have thus, in a short period of time, generated both confirmed results and success stories, as well as a base of knowledge, experiences and opportunities and shared priorities that will now serve as a solid model for the next step.*

During the next phase of ENLIGHT, our emphasis will be on building upon these foundations in order to embed, upscale and mainstream our initiatives. We will incentivize and support our academics and researchers to engage with the full range of opportunities available to them. And, to unlock the full potential of ENLIGHT, we will capitalize on the existing complementary strengths and capacity at each of our partner institutions.

→ *Although ENLIGHT is still in its first phase, the results of our alliance are already highly promising. Thanks to our ambitious objectives, shared strategy and growing institutional commitment across the alliance, ENLIGHT is truly becoming an innovative and inclusive European university community. The deep and long-term transformation of Higher Education we aspire to is starting to take shape.*

■ THE ENLIGHT ROAD AHEAD

In the next phase, ENLIGHT will focus on sustainable implementation and growth: consolidating and extending **the ENLIGHT open space**, upscaling and mainstreaming the ENLIGHT model, implementing the tools we have developed to bring ENLIGHT opportunities into curricula. We will provide incentives to knowledge creating teams that boost the bottom-up capacity of our communities to engage with ENLIGHT and integrate research and innovation in our educational programmes. We will consolidate our ENLIGHT networks, strengthening the connections between key institutional leaders in order to embed ENLIGHT in our universities.

A key achievement of the first ENLIGHT phase is that joint capacity built by setting up **expert ENLIGHT staff networks** and putting in place **cross-alliance ENLIGHT tools** that capitalize on our complementary strengths. In the next phase, these

instruments will be improved and deployed to their full potential to strengthen cross-alliance transversal links across the main 'empowering' actions – **future-proof education, knowledge creation, staff development, campus and community**.

ENLIGHT mobilises all four missions of our universities – education, research, innovation and service to society. The task we set ourselves today is to consolidate the reach of ENLIGHT across these core missions within our universities, facilitating wide engagement with the opportunities of ENLIGHT and drawing upon the immense potential of our students, academics and staff to create new capacity for tackling major societal transitions. The aim of our management and governance is thus to move now from a project structure to **a strong and integrated European University**.

To reach this goal we have set three overarching objectives:

1. ENLIGHT will become an open integrated space for all our community, providing lifelong access to the best and most stimulating teaching, learning and research environment that our universities have jointly on offer, connecting research and innovation capacity and maximizing impact. For this, we will embed ENLIGHT both strategically and operationally across all our institutions, consolidating our shared long-term ambition, values and identity to build a durable and lasting alliance.

- **We will build on the strengths of our governance structure** for permanent intensive cooperation, shared and balanced participation, mutual coordination and integration of core activities, setting up an ENLIGHT central office to facilitate governance and decision-making, and strengthening the active role of students.
- **We will progressively extend the ENLIGHT open space** of shared resources, widening the range of services

and resources available to our students and explore further development that includes talent recruitment, international outreach and strategic global partnerships, and shared research infrastructure.

- **We will ensure a durable and balanced embedding of ENLIGHT** bringing university leadership into executive oversight and aligning ENLIGHT actions with the core missions of our universities, supported by a shared

quality approach which drives mutual acceptance and automatic recognition between our institutions.

- **We will consolidate the long-term viability of our alliance** defining together partner contributions to a joint ENLIGHT budget, developing a fundraising strategy and enhancing our strong connection with European Strategic agenda.
- **We will strengthen the ENLIGHT Student Network** to organise community activities and encounters with and for students - social, cultural,

sporting- to reach a wider student community of ENLIGHT ambassadors, and develop a strong sense of belonging across a lifelong ENLIGHT alumni community.

- **We will foster new bottom-up initiatives** expanding our ENLIGHT+ seed-funding to develop collaborations between our academics and central services to create a vibrant, green and inclusive ENLIGHT Community, widely accessible, both on campus or online.

2. ENLIGHT will boost international learning across our inter-university campus, consolidating and widening access to flexible future-proof learning opportunities, building capacity for innovative transnational education and ensuring a seamless mobility experience for all our students and staff.

- **We will diversify and boost all forms of mobility, incorporating windows for flexible international learning** into curricula to support and widen all forms of educational cooperation – short and long, formal and informal, virtual, hybrid and physical – across disciplines, allowing for flexible and self-directed learning, making mobility more efficient, inclusive and green and ensuring that mobility opportunities are fully integrated and automatically recognized.
- **We will expand our ENLIGHT Digital and Open Campus**, extending the functionalities of our **ENLIGHT Course Catalogue** to connect our learning environments so that ENLIGHT resources are easily accessible, allowing for smooth cooperation and seamless mobility.
- **We will internationalize and enrich our teacher education programmes**, to enhance learning opportunities, integrating ENLIGHT educational research and expertise for teacher-training but also to upskill practising teachers via **life-long learning**.
- **We will develop a lifelong learning portfolio** aligned with the up-/reskilling needs of our local Regional Academies and credited with micro credentials.
- **We will develop a professional development offer** beyond teaching that targets relevant future-proof skills, including academic leadership and mentorship, with programmes to expand professional horizons, seed cooperation and mutual understanding for staff across all partners, in order to raise our game for the long-term ambition of ENLIGHT and seeding the ENLIGHT mindset widely.
- **We will develop global partnerships in education to attract and retain talented students**, academics and researchers within the ENLIGHT network and Europe.

3. ENLIGHT will build impactful knowledge-creation, empowering academics for team-based science to provide a strong impetus to our mission-oriented and challenge-driven approach, deepening our societal engagement and bringing our ENLIGHT eco-systems together for maximum impact both in education and research.

- **We will set up cross-institutional knowledge-creating teams, ENLIGHT Thematic Networks** to stimulate new initiatives in research, education and service to society across the six ENLIGHT challenge areas – from grant applications, PhD education, citizen science, challenge-based courses to joint degrees - these networks will be the creative engine of ENLIGHT, connecting students and academics, with researchers, entrepreneurs, companies, local and regional actors, and civil society stakeholders.
- **We will build shared know-how and joint capacity** for research and innovation to embed **inclusive excellence** across all universities, with a special focus on doctoral students and early career researchers, capitalizing on the **ENLIGHT R&I Observatory** and mobilizing our networks **as well as** developing system-wide strategic sharing of resources that support and promote open science, data and education.
- **We will tackle societal transition through educational innovation**, targeting future-proof skills and global competencies, supported by high-quality teacher-training and professional development, incubating new joint programmes, seeding educational cooperation at all levels and incorporating societal stakeholders for innovative challenge-based education.
- **We will generate rich and diverse opportunities** through our **ENLIGHT European Dialogues** bringing research and education communities and our regional ecosystems together to work on impactful and innovative solutions to societal challenges.
- **We will expand our distinctive impact-driven culture** across ENLIGHT to foster “agents of change” who positively impact their community - learners, teachers and external stakeholders – raising ‘impact literacy’ and ‘readiness’ in and beyond our alliance.
- **We will disseminate and apply our ENLIGHT impact methodology** in cooperation with our peer alliances to assess long-term impact and monitor how European Universities Alliances are transforming the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
- **We will deepen the connections** between universities, citizens, communities, businesses and industries through greater public engagement and outreach in order to promote joint knowledge generation based on shared values, mutual respect, trust and understanding.

With these objectives, ENLIGHT consolidates and confirms its trajectory, taking our alliance to the next level to become a fully-fledged European University and a game-changer in the transformation of higher education in Europe - a goal that we will achieve by empowering our students, academics and staff to take full advantage of our shared ENLIGHT potential.

ENLIGHT will become a role-model for societal engagement across European higher education, connecting European eco-systems, breaking new ground and bringing solutions to the complex societal challenges faced within Europe and beyond, to make a durable and lasting contribution to the knowledge economy, employment, creativity, culture and well-being. With our distinctive impact-driven culture, we aim to inspire our peer alliances and increase the quality, performance and competitiveness of European Higher education.

We will build solid, long-term partnerships and cooperate transnationally towards excellence and inclusion, fostering an approach to higher education based on teamwork, democracy and shared European academic values in a spirit of mutual benefit and reciprocity, engaging with a rich network of global partners to make a valuable contribution to European attractiveness.

The future is ENLIGHT!

ENLIGHT NETWORKS

- **Diversity & Inclusion Network:** connects the respective diversity and inclusion offices of all partners to lower the threshold for students from underrepresented groups to engage in international learning experiences.
- **ENLIGHT Challenge-based Education task force:** unites educational experts who have defined common educational principles and versatile future-proof skill-sets for our challenge-based learning.
- **Green Office Network:** connects the respective green offices of all partners to work on sustainable solutions and tools to reduce the carbon footprint of internationalization.
- **Impact Taskforce:** brings together our experts in HE policy to develop an Impact methodology for assessing the long-term impact of our alliance and to enhancing impact awareness.
- **ENLIGHT Innovation District:** gathers our innovation officers to foster academy-industry collaboration, entrepreneurial and innovation capacity across all sectors
- **Mobility taskforce:** gathers mobility officers and international offices to analyse, consolidate and diversify mobility practices, to seed matching across programmes, optimise mobility tools and tracking of ENLIGHT "mobility" experiences.
- **Open Science Network:** links the Open Science experts of all partners. To encourage OS principles and practices among academic peers.
- **Regional Academies:** gathers learners and academic staff, companies, business incubators, local government, policy makers and civil society at each institution, strengthening the connection with regional stakeholders. The local Regional Academies are connected via the European Dialogues.
- **R&I Support Network:** mobilizes our research support offices to identify synergies between partners for different funding sources to support ENLIGHT applications.
- **ENLIGHT Student Network (SN):** brings together our student representatives actively engaged in governance and development of ENLIGHT. Our SN is the gateway to connect student associations and campus activities across the alliance.
- **Teacher Education Network (TEN):** brings together teacher education programs and educational science experts to empower current and future teachers and includes the LLL dimension of teacher development.
- **ENLIGHT Think Tank:** laid the groundwork for our challenge-based approach to education and R&I bringing together interdisciplinary groups of key experts and academics to define and refine pilot actions in each challenge area. In the second phase, to boost the creative power of ENLIGHT we will set up thematic networks and a future-proof learning incubator in a bottom-up project-driven approach.
- **ENLIGHT Young Researcher Network:** brings together the ENLIGHT Doctoral Network with the RISE Early Career Researcher Network.

ENLIGHT TOOLS

- **ENLIGHT Stepping Stones:** our framework for integrating flexible 'windows' for high-quality international learning experiences in educational programmes. It includes both physical and online teacher exchanges, virtual exchange, collaborative online learning, 'low intensive short-term' blended and 'high-intensive long-term mobility' (see Future-proof learning incubator, mobility task force, digital campus).
- **Competence Framework:** defines learning outcomes and guidelines for designing ENLIGHT courses in a wide variety of formats, from micro-credentials to joint programmes.
- **Digital Campus:** connects our learning environments, incorporating the ENLIGHT Course Catalogue, promoting our best course offer across all ENLIGHT universities.
- **R&I Observatory:** our online portal that centralizes benchmarking and analysis of our R&I strength, synergies and potentialities to support our impactful R&I agenda, and identify research-derived educational gaps and opportunities.
- **European Dialogues:** our visible annual event bringing together academics, researchers, students and our regional ecosystems to address identified societal and environmental challenges (Think tank, Regional Academy).
- **Impact Toolkit 1.0:** for impact-directed education and research, taking qualitative and quantitative criteria for impact assessment as part of a functional methodology and toolkit (Impact Taskforce).
- **Community Challenge Database:** the online portal for connecting our regional ecosystems to share identified challenges.
- **ENLIGHT+:** to foster new dynamics and "raise up" excellent ideas across all levels of our alliance in order to develop and enrich our community, including green transition and inclusion.
- **Teaching and Learning Conference:** our visible annual event that showcases ENLIGHT future-proof education, to foster peer learning and teacher professionalization.
- **Virtual Teaching and Learning Lab:** our platform for sharing good teaching practices and education innovation materials.