University of Zurich UZH

Global Affairs

Global Strategy 2022 – 2030

Table of Contents

1   Vision: We Share One World

We all share one world. A world composed of an intricate diversity of societies, histories, visions, environments, and therefore of many realities at local, national and regional levels. A world in which many of the challenges faced by our societies know no borders. To name just one: We need to transition to a system that's compatible with Earth's planetary boundaries. Thus, international collaboration is of outmost importance for our common future.

Global universities are uniquely positioned to be major actors of positive change. They are repositories of the learnings from the past. Their research creates the knowledge to better understand the present, drives evidence-based policy making and shapes tomorrow. They educate future generations and foster change-makers. They are guided by their societal responsibility.

The university of the future needs to be permeable and remove barriers to interaction both within the institution and beyond it, across organizational and national boundaries, between different groups and communities, technologies, and disciplines. An interconnected world demands interconnected thinking and acting.

As a comprehensive and global university, UZH is aware of its responsibility and will work at local, national and international levels, for the one world we all share.

2   The Strategy and its Guiding Ambitions

An effective and comprehensive strategy for internationalization is linked to the university's vision and values[1]. The importance and relevance of internationalization are explicit in all key UZH policies and strategies.

UZH is internationally minded and locally connected. UZH is a signatory of the Magna Charta Universitatum[2]: as such its community strives to adhere to the principles of academic independence, equality, diversity and inclusion in all activities.

Pressing societal, economic and environmental challenges need to be tackled. Activities need to go beyond universities to include industry, policymakers, diplomacy, NGOs and civil society at large. The future requires true long-term thinking which must come with the ability to be lean and agile, to act quickly and to change the course of action when needed. Designed for an important decade and aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the strategy is called "Global Strategy 2030".

Everyone at the university, at all levels and whatever their role in and exposure to internationality is, contributes to UZH's role, action and perception in Switzerland and in the world. The brand "UZH" will be positioned and developed as a synonym for world-class competencies. This is the Global Strategy of the entire university.

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[1] https://www.uzh.ch/en/about/basics.html
[2] http://www.magna-charta.org

3 The 5 foci of our global Strategy

To balance long-term thinking and agile acting UZH builds its Global Strategy 2030 along the following five foci, each one with its own set of actions to be reviewed every two years and adjusted where necessary.

3.1 The World @ UZH

UZH is a truly open-minded and engaged university: its members embody a global outlook and mindset. A diverse and culturally rich environment is actively fostered to generate creative and innovative outputs, interesting debates, and an inspiring learning, research and working environment on campus in Zurich.

Vision 2030

- UZH proposes a consistently open and inclusive welcome culture at all entry points visitors or (prospective) community members make first contact.
- UZH lives a vibrant and inclusive culturally diverse community with multifaceted salient voices. It attracts talent from all across the globe to study, teach, work and conduct research at UZH.
- In addition to language skills, intercultural competences form a valued and endorsed aspect of the UZH Community.
- UZH embraces a "global dimension" in all aspects of teaching and learning.

3.2 Internationally Connected

UZH joins forces all around the world with partners, universities and beyond, to conduct impactful research and innovation, offer top-quality education, and tackle complex challenges. It remains firmly embedded within the European Higher Education Area and committed to the goals of the European Research Area as an active partner for research, education, innovation and knowledge translation. Simultaneously, it expands its expertise and engagement to partners outside of Europe.

In 2021 UZH's network of key partners and alliances included in particular: ETH Zurich and the University of Geneva in Switzerland; LERU, Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, University of Vienna and Charles University Prague in Europe; Kyoto University and The University of Queensland in Australasia; Makerere University in Africa, and the global Universitas21 network. Data and the analysis of the impact, diversity, and depth of our partnership activities will guide UZH's future partnerships and networks.

Vision 2030

- UZH's partnership activities, initiatives and collaborative impact are intensified and widely visible around the globe. This includes a growing number of cross-border research, teaching and innovation partnerships.
- UZH's partnership activities are consistently underpinned by the ethical principles of UZH and embedded in a sound and transparent due-diligence process.
- UZH maintains a small number of institutional key partners with like-minded universities in selected regions of the world.

- UZH fosters a select number of university networks, both at institutional level (general) and at faculty level (thematic), and actively engages and shapes their agenda.

3.3   Global Thinkers and Shapers

As the largest comprehensive Swiss university, UZH plays a pivotal role to set a strong example of active engagement in tertiary education in the national higher education sector. It encourages its students and staff to be internationally mobile and experience other contexts. Evidence has demonstrated that an international experience provides not only a key opportunity to learn languages and intercultural skills, but also adds to increasingly important transversal skills, such as problem solving, resilience or effective communication.[3]

Vision 2030

- All students have the opportunity to gain a significant international experience as part of their degree program at UZH.
- UZH students – from Bachelor to Master to PhD level – make use of these opportunities and as a result gain a significant international experience as part of an UZH degree program.
- UZH researchers are actively and visibly contributing to academic and innovation activities abroad.
- UZH staff proactively seek out professional exchanges with peers around the globe and at partner universities and organizations.

3.4   Societal Responsibility

Humankind is facing increasingly complex, systemic and global challenges. Stronger exchange and collaboration between science, technology, business and society is crucial to tackle them. By increasing its engagement as a stakeholder in national and international policy making and diplomacy, the scientific community can bring its values of rationality, transparency and universality and help underpin a better global governance and build trust between nations and societies.

Vision 2030

- As world-class university in the center of Europe, UZH is committed to sharing its collective knowledge and scientific discoveries with governments, international organizations, businesses, NGOs, and society at large, thus contributing to evidence-based policy making and science diplomacy[4].
- In the global effort to address humankind's challenges UZH helps identifying possible strategies, their respective benefits and liabilities, what individuals and societies think about them and how they will use them.
- UZH actively and systematically promotes its societal role on every level. It promotes cross-disciplinary research, teaching and learning, and values social engagement of students and researchers. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030, the protection of human rights and academic freedom, diversity, equality and other principles provide a guiding framework.

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3 https://www.erasmusskills.eu/eskills/tools/guide-for-practicioners/_intro/Guide_for_Practitioners.pdf, p 16 ff.
4 Royal Society/AAAS, New Frontiers in Science Diplomacy (London: Royal Society, 2010): https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/publications/2010/new-frontiers-science-diplomacy/

University of Zurich

3.5 UZH on Stage

Top performance in research, the excellence of its students and graduates, civic engagement, and involvement in selected partnerships all contribute to the global reputation of UZH. The development of this reputation is supported by professional communication services, proactive dialogues with diverse realms of society and successful outreach programs.

To expand UZH's reputation further bold steps are necessary: new contemporary forms of branding, bundling of or at least coordinating existing communication activities, the participation in and the development of open platforms to tackle attractive challenges, mobilizing UZH members and alumni to be the university's ambassadors.

Vision 2030

- UZH recognizes the contribution of its international brand and reputation to its mission. Measures are implemented to increase the positive image of UZH as well as UZH's recognition value in the world by targeted promotion on national and international level.
- UZH engages in initiatives, platforms and challenges worldwide as a means to strengthen its global engagement and foster international outreach.
- UZH expands its international alumni network and engages consistently and proactively with its members as ambassadors and supporters for UZH's global ambitions.

4   Annex

The fundamentals for the new Global Strategy 2030 are UZH's mission statement and its following policies:

1. Mission Statement
https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/about/basics/mission.html

2. Strategic Principles
https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/about/basics/strategy.html

3. Quality Development
https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/about/basics/quality-development.html

4. Diversity Policy
https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/about/basics/diversity.html

5. Sustainability Policy
https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/about/basics/sustainability.html