

UNIVERSITY OF
LUCERNE

RECTORATE

STRATEGY
2023 TO 2026



IN BRIEF

WHO ARE WE?

The University of Lucerne is a networked university specialising in human sciences.

WHAT DO WE WANT?

- Independent faculties
- Impactful academies
- University research centres
- Human sciences positioning

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO?

To develop and enhance:

- Health sciences and medicine
- Behavioural sciences and psychology
- University research centres

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF?

We pay particular attention to:

- Quality
- Funding
- Internationalisation
- Diversity
- Sustainability
- Open science

BASIC INFO

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Description

The 'Strategy 2023 to 2026' answers four questions:

- Who are we?
- What do we want?
- What are we trying to do?
- What do we need to be aware of?

The 'Strategy 2023 to 2026' was adopted by the University Council in 2022. It forms part of the performance agreement between the governing council of the canton of Lucerne and the University of Lucerne for the period from 2023 to 2026, and was incorporated into the revised University Act decreed by the cantonal council for 2023.

Values

Our 2018 mission statement sets out the values and principles for our activities and actions: Personal relationships and dialogue are important to us. We form a research, teaching, learning and working community shaped by respectful interactions, appropriate participation, transparent communication, attractive working conditions and mutual trust. Students receive high-quality teaching with a good supervisory relationship and fair performance assessments. All members of the university help to shape the university and take responsibility for its development.

We are convinced that a life with knowledge is better than a life without knowledge. Because knowledge enhances life, the purpose of science is to achieve a good life. Our task is therefore to make the world a better place, using science rather than politics.

Vision

We are a human sciences university. Over the next ten years, we want to become one of Europe's leading human sciences universities and work together with similar institutions.

WHO ARE WE?

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Mission

We are a university specialising in human sciences. We are interested in how people and their institutions behave, and how they experience their world, believe and hope, think and speak, govern and cooperate, make decisions and take action, and become and remain healthy.

This human sciences focus makes us the only university of this kind in Switzerland, but not on the planet.

We are rooted in central Switzerland and cannot achieve everything alone. We have therefore formed a network. Links with international organisations, leading university institutions and regional, and national and European partners enable us to have an impact that significantly exceeds our size.

Structure

We are divided into:

- Six faculties (of Theology, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law, Economics and Management, Health Sciences and Medicine, Behavioural Sciences and Psychology)
- Two academies (Graduate Academy, Further Education Academy)
- Two planned university research centres (for Digitalisation and Health)

Services are pooled under university management and the Vice Rectors for University Development, Research, Teaching & International Relations, and Personnel and Professorships.

The University Council is the university's top management and supervisory body. The rectorate is responsible for strategic and operational management, and represents the university in the outside world. Governance is via overall budgets and performance agreements – as is also the case between the supporting canton and the university as a whole.

WHAT DO WE WANT?

WHAT DO WE WANT?

Within ten years, we want to become one of Europe's leading human sciences universities and work together with similar institutions. We need the right conditions to achieve this.

Independent faculties

We want to create favourable conditions so that our faculties can operate independently as part of and within the context of the university. Pursuing high standards, they strive for visibility and a profile and to gain recognition. The faculties should be proud to be key, formative scientific stakeholders in Europe for their particular disciplines.

Impactful academies

The Graduate Academy is open to all doctoral and postdoctoral students at our university. It serves as the central point of contact for young researchers. With the Graduate Academy, we are seeking to enter into framework agreements with leading universities and higher education institutions in Europe and thus offer our researchers opportunities for exchange programmes and international collaborations.

Our Further Education Academy, which is also open to other key players in central Switzerland's educational arena, focuses on postgraduate education in academic professions. We offer collaborations that enable leading national and international organisations to further develop their academically qualified staff.

WHAT DO WE WANT?

University research centres

Together with the faculties and academies, we are seeking to tackle two social megatrends: digitalisation and health.

These areas pose challenges comparable to those thrown up by the coronavirus pandemic: in terms of molecular biology, the virus attacks everyone equally, but the impact varies from country to country and from canton to canton. This means that the differences cannot be explained from a molecular biology perspective, but only in terms of people and their institutions – i.e. in terms of human sciences. Human sciences are therefore ultimately the crucial factor. It is important to remember that human sciences are not sufficient on their own – natural sciences and engineering are also important. However, without human sciences we would be nowhere. And they are our focus!

Human sciences positioning

For students, researchers, employees and the general public, we are a personal research and educational institution at the heart of Switzerland and Europe. With our focus on human sciences, we take a forward-looking approach to our research and teaching, and thus make a valuable contribution to empowering people and their institutions.

'Moving Human Sciences' is the brand promise we make to our stakeholders. This has a dual meaning: firstly, it demonstrates the power and potential that lies in human sciences, and secondly it highlights a desire to promote human sciences as a discipline.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO?

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We have four blueprints in place for 2023 to 2026: one for health sciences and medicine, one for behavioural sciences and psychology, and one for each of the two university research centres.

Health sciences and medicine

The blueprint for the Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine is rooted in the corresponding department, which was founded in 2019. This incorporates health sciences and medicine and moves away from expensive medical specialisations, focusing instead on family medicine and primary care from cradle to grave and establishing a profile in the field of rehabilitation. We are pooling existing resources in the Lucerne region, strengthening the University of Lucerne's health sciences orientation, carving out a niche on a national level, and tackling demographic trends.

Behavioural sciences and psychology

The blueprint for the Faculty of Behavioural Sciences and Psychology covers timescales, content and funding. In terms of timescale, there are plans to establish the faculty in 2023, launch a behavioural sciences research laboratory, work with existing professors to provide elective courses on inclusion, corporate and resilience research for all faculties, and establish the first new chairs of Psychology. The first bachelor's degree course will then begin in autumn 2024, followed by the first master's course in psychology in 2027. Here, we will focus on three practice-orientated specialisations that have little or no representation in Switzerland, are linked to our existing strengths, and for which there is proven demand:

- Health and rehabilitation psychology
- Legal psychology
- Child and adolescent psychology

We will have to finance the establishment of this faculty using third-party funds, just as we did with the Faculty of Economics and Management and the Department of Health Sciences and Medicine.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO?

University research centres for digitalisation and health

The blueprints for the institutions to tackle the two megatrends 'digitalisation' and 'health' will follow in subsequent steps, as we cannot achieve all of these goals in one go. Structurally, these blueprints will involve establishing university-wide centres for 'Digital Innovation' and 'Health, Integration and Well-Being' to promote and link up the different faculties' research initiatives.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF?

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We are a young institution. As is often the case with young people, we have big plans and big ambitions, and want to prove ourselves. It is important that we work consistently yet also sustainably in pursuing our goals. The following key areas are particularly important for our development:

Quality

Prompted by Swiss Accreditation Council requirements set out in 2021, we have developed a Quality Assurance and Development handbook. Handbooks such as these are like cookbooks: it is not the book that determines the quality of the food, but rather the chef. Also, a good restaurant needs more than just a good chef – it also needs good service. Quality therefore covers a broad range of meanings for us. It relates to research, teaching, and quality of service, or in other words: achieving high quality levels is dependent upon all of us!

Funding

We are supported but not run by the canton of Lucerne. Our funding primarily comes from three sources:

- The supporting canton ensures that we can operate by providing a basic contribution (base funding).
- Research and teaching are funded by cantons (Intercantonal University Agreement, or IUUV) and the federal state.
- Third-party public funds (e.g. SNSF) and private donations enable excellence and profile development. These third-party funds are particularly important given our vision.

The university management ensures efficient financial management and oversight. The University Foundation mostly supports university initiatives (and as a secondary tier also faculty projects) by raising money, advising the faculties, institutes, centres and chairs, administering the funds raised, and providing annual updates regarding the funding acquired and deployed.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF?

Internationalisation

Internationalisation is key to implementing our vision. On an institutional level and for all of us, it is about boosting our international visibility and reputation, developing university members' international and intercultural skills, increasing our international competitiveness, strengthening international research collaborations, enhancing our attractiveness to international students and improving domestic students' ability to study abroad, thus supporting quality goals, and strategically expanding cooperation agreements.

Diversity

Diversity is the human wealth of a community. We are a community of various different disciplines, methods and paradigms, of people with different characteristics, orientations and professions, and of researchers, students, teachers and employees. We want to ensure equal opportunities. In terms of gender equality, the proportion of professors who are women remains too small. This requires active input from all those involved in the appointment process.

Sustainability

Our activities are conducted in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable way. We are developing a mandatory and verifiable sustainability strategy to ensure this.

Open science

Science is not a secret society. We support free access to science and research. The more quickly as diverse a range of people as possible gain access to research findings, the greater the potential for further knowledge and discoveries.

MOVING HUMAN SCIENCES