



MANIFESTO 2024

Universities for the country's sustainable development

Let's accelerate the implementation of the 2030 UN Agenda, let's increase the commitment to sustainable development

Recognizing the fundamental role that universities play in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 UN Agenda and the commitment made by the Italian university system on the issue in recent years,

this **Manifesto**

calls on universities to be increasingly proactive in implementing concrete initiatives, according to the action lines outlined below:

- adoption of **sustainable development as a paradigm** of reference for the organization, strategies, and interventions of the Universities in all their institutional missions;
- commitment to include reference to the 2030 UN Agenda in universities statutes and strategic plans, defining and implementing initiatives aimed at fostering **environmental, social, intra- and intergenerational justice**, (also inspired by articles 3, 9, and 41 of the Italian Constitution);
- **commitment to combat discrimination** and economic, social, and territorial inequalities, adopting an **approach based on inclusion and respect for people's rights**, both through institutional missions and organizational activities, and through co-constructive and participatory cultural processes implemented in university communities and their territories;
- promotion of **peace among peoples as a universal value** for sustainable development, opposing all forms of national or local identity obsession, including through the development of welcoming programs for scholars from countries where conflicts and human rights violations are ongoing and the development of programs of ethical *due diligence* of research projects, respecting the principle of free cooperation among researchers;
- strengthening **collaborations and partnerships** with civil society, businesses, and public institutions – on the local, national, and international levels - to enhance the knowledge on sustainable development, including in industrial policy-making and **decarbonization*** of university campuses and cities. This includes the creation of mitigation and adaptation plans

for climate change, with the aim of accelerating decarbonization and strengthening the fight against the underlying factors of climate change;

- enhancement of **university education and education for sustainable development**, which adopts systemic and interdisciplinary approaches, recovers the value of ethics, acknowledges the link with the community and the territory, and assumes a strong responsibility in the training and development of citizenship skills of students and faculty and technical-administrative staff;
- leveraging the **in-house expertise of the universities in the implementation of the 2030 UN Agenda**, adopting an approach aimed at countering the concentration of intellectual property and fostering the dissemination of knowledge in society, inspired by the **criteria of open science**. These include educational experimentation laboratories and living labs to support political authorities, social organizations, and businesses in organizational choices, investment and decarbonization processes of cities and territories for an equitable transition to sustainability;
- commitment to work, also with the involvement of the students, for the **regeneration of places**, with particular attention to university neighborhoods and districts. This includes the promotion and support of residency, accessibility, the right to study, and the development of specific campus sustainability protocols, taking a leading role towards the territory concerning the ecological and digital transition and the adoption of development models based on the principles of circular economy;
- commitment to establish, on the basis of existing virtuous examples, an **integrated University structure for sustainability**, equipped with its own financial resources and qualified managerial and staff figures (sustainability, energy, mobility, resources and waste, food, diversity and inclusion, innovation, etc.);
- **continuous measurement and monitoring** through appropriate indicators and evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness of policies and actions for sustainable development, to improve policies and enable their public accountability;

The Network of Italian Universities for Sustainable Development (RUS), within CRUI, undertakes to promote and monitor the implementation of this Manifesto, through the Capacity Building and Best Practice Technical Working Group, the RUS Working Groups, and the regional sub-networks.

*The goal of decarbonization refers to the gradual reduction in the use or elimination of fossil fuels, considering the overall energy chain of energy carriers used and the entire life cycle of energy-consuming systems, products and services.