



**University
of Antwerp**

Mission statement University of Antwerp

June 2023

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Through its free and innovative research, student-centred academic teaching and targeted service to society, the University of Antwerp aims to have a valuable impact on the development, dissemination and use of scientific knowledge. In this way, UAntwerp aims to permanently strengthen its commitment to the further development of a sustainable world and a democratic and inclusive society founded on human rights.

The University of Antwerp understands its **core tasks** as follows:

- Academic teaching, focusing on the person as a whole
- Creative and innovative scientific research
- Service to society and engagement based on our own expertise
- Forward-thinking valorisation of knowledge, with sustainable solutions for humans and the world

The University of Antwerp is guided in these tasks by the following **distinctive lines of strength**:

- Excellence emerging from a culture of quality, supported by a caring work and learning environment
- Academic freedom based on scientific integrity
- Students as full and co-creating partners
- At home in the city, but with a view to the world
- Diversity as added value, inclusivity as the standard
- Active pluralism as a basis for dialogue
- Encouragement for collaboration and interdisciplinarity

Our baseline: **Let's shape the future.**

4 core tasks

Proceeding from the mission statement, the University of Antwerp further elaborates its core tasks as follows:

Academic teaching, focusing on the person as a whole

We train students to become experts in their fields, while providing them with an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspective on knowledge. This will allow them to grow and develop themselves into professionals with a broad general education, in addition to being critical and independent global citizens who are empowered to find their own way. This educational path turns the focus towards both degree programmes and lifelong learning.

By devoting continuous attention to educational innovation, promoting self-reliance in students and providing for the professional educational development of our academic staff, we can guarantee the outstanding quality of the research-based teaching at the University of Antwerp.

UAntwerp offers its PhD students a doctoral study programme with a conscious focus on research competences and skills that they can also use outside the academic context.

Throughout their academic educational programmes, the University of Antwerp aims to contribute to the personal development of its students by providing them with opportunities for and actively encouraging community engagement.

Creative and innovative scientific research

The University of Antwerp is a dynamic and research-intensive university where scientific research is conducted that has both international scientific and societal impact. The University of Antwerp encourages creative and innovative scientific research, both fundamental and applied, proceeding from academic freedom and responsibility. The university offers space for the broad range of research questions and methods, and it actively supports open science.

To this end, the university's research policy creates a stimulating environment that allows researchers the time and space to enjoy performing cutting-edge research to the best of their ability. The university focuses on its strengths, with continued attention to global research and embeddedness within teaching.

Service to society and engagement based on our own expertise

The University of Antwerp aims to contribute to a sustainable, democratic and inclusive society in an expert and entrepreneurial manner. In these efforts, the university recognises the need for open dialogue, driven by standards and values. It supports and encourages its staff and students in this regard.

What distinguishes the University of Antwerp from activism is the multiplicity of perspectives inherent in its scientific methods. It promotes the public debate and visibly embodies its values through unifying science communication and targeted networking, both regionally and internationally. The university is committed to moral and global engagement, taking the worldwide Sustainable Development Goals as a guide, and it serves a leading role in this regard.

It cherishes its ties with its alumni as a source of mutual inspiration. In the spirit of its framework of values, UAntwerp permanently encourages its graduates to assume their social responsibility.

Forward-thinking valorisation of knowledge, with sustainable solutions for humans and the world

UAntwerp develops knowledge and expertise in partnership with government entities, private partners and citizens, with a focus on applications, either with or without a profit motive. It actively seeks possibilities for valorising knowledge in a sustainable and societally valuable manner. The university encourages enterprise and an entrepreneurial spirit amongst its students and staff. Attention to structural, forward-thinking solutions is essential in this regard. Where possible, our university also derives opportunities for further research and teaching from these valorisation efforts, without compromising its scientific independence.

Lines of strength

In its teaching, research and service to society, UAntwerp follows a resolute course, characterised by a number of distinctive lines of strength.

Excellence emerging from a culture of quality, supported by a caring work and learning environment

The University of Antwerp aims for further development, with intensive and ambitious commitment to all domains within which it is active. To this end, it works to develop a work and learning environment in which staff and students have the opportunity to excel. At the same time, the university devotes attention to and ensures both collective wellness and the personal well-being of each individual.

The University of Antwerp is characterised by a culture in which professional conduct and quality assurance are self-evident, proceeding from mutual trust.

UAntwerp strives to ensure respectful interaction amongst and between students and staff. It contributes to the well-being of students by adopting an integrated approach to their reception and guidance, as well as by addressing various academic, social, psychological and material challenges. Its human resources policy combines the pursuit of excellence with a work environment in which shared responsibility and empathetic leadership allow for a path of growth and development that takes into account everyone's talents.

Academic freedom based on scientific integrity

UAntwerp guarantees its staff and students the opportunity to think freely about scientific questions and research methods, as well as to report their research results. This academic freedom also applies in teaching and whenever members of the university community participate in the public debate based on their expertise. At the same time, the university expects its staff and students to use this freedom with integrity and, in the process, to avoid submitting to dogmatic restrictions, personal gain, outside interests or other non-scientific motivations.

Students as full and co-creating partners

We aim to realise the academic and societal ambitions of UAntwerp through mutual responsibility with students. Our baseline—‘Let’s define the future!’—reflects the fact that our students also play a major role in designing this future. UAntwerp realises its mission and vision in co-creation with and with the participation of its students. Through engaged effort and an appetite for and appreciation of initiative, the university cultivates a sense of responsibility amongst its students so that they can work together as full partners in the design of the institution’s academic and societal policy.

Students wishing to serve as student representatives or who would like to help enrich the experiences of their fellow students receive support for these forms of engagement. Every student receives the opportunity to develop both within and outside the walls of the university, and to help build UAntwerp and the future.

At home in the city, but with a view to the world

Thanks to its history and location, the University of Antwerp is closely tied to its unique urban environment. It plays an active and involved role in regional and urban development, including in social, economic, educational, cultural and ecological terms. The university is therefore a natural partner for various actors, including the city and port, the province, business and civil society organisations. UAntwerp attaches particular importance to the structural collaborative partnerships with Antwerp University Hospital, the Antwerp Management School, the Institute for Tropical Medicine and the Antwerp University Association.

The University of Antwerp regards the Antwerp region as a laboratory of the metropolis: the region is an international meeting place for researchers and students who can use the exchange of knowledge, academic research and cultural perspectives to contribute to building up society and providing answers to the global challenges of our times.

The University of Antwerp encourages internationalisation and global engagement in the areas of teaching, research and service to society. It is an active player in the international scientific world, and it is a leader in networks of partners from the whole world, including the Global South. The university is committed to both sending and hosting researchers, lecturers and students from throughout the world, as well as to expanding scientific collaboration.

Diversity as added value, inclusivity as the standard

UAntwerp regards diversity as a source of enrichment to humanity and the world, as a vital element of our society. For the university, this calls for a policy aimed at inclusiveness, emerging from mutual respect, and proceeding from the basic principle of equality amongst people.

The University of Antwerp aims to attract students and staff in all their diversity and to provide each individual with equivalent opportunities to develop and apply their talents. It makes a targeted effort to improve inflow, progression and outflow of students who face unequal opportunities for various reasons. Within the university community, students and staff can count on personal recognition and guidance.

Active pluralism as a basis for dialogue

The University of Antwerp is actively pluralistic and, in this vein, it seeks to encourage a substantive dialogue between individuals and groups, each with its own interpretations and ideological convictions.

The university ensures an open forum, within which all topics are open to discussion and within which everyone can be heard in mutual respect. It invites everyone to participate and to seek nuance, with an active interest in each other's basic principles.

Encouragement for collaboration and interdisciplinarity

Today's societal challenges, and particularly the wicked problems, are explicitly transdisciplinary and global. For this reason, the university encourages multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary partnerships at the local, regional and international level.

The University of Antwerp encourages connection between various scientific fields, and it attempts to avoid compartmentalisation in research, teaching and service to society. In this way, it also creates additional opportunities for innovative social entrepreneurship that better corresponds to the active needs of citizens within society.

The University of Antwerp is open to partnerships throughout the world and in all scientific fields, based on mutual trust and on the condition that they correspond to the university's mission and values, with respect for academic independence. UAntwerp emphasises its engagement for equal collaboration and partnerships worldwide, and particularly in the Global South.

Collaboration, both internal and external, is woven into the DNA of the University of Antwerp. The university and its staff are enthusiastic partners on which people can rely: reliable, loyal, constructive and critical.