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THRIVE

Strategic Plan

2024–29

AUP The American University of Paris

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Dear Members of our Global AUP Community,

After over a year of concentrated, coordinated and collaborative exchange across our community of students, faculty, staff, alumni and the Board of Trustees, I am pleased to share with you our new 5-year Strategic Plan 2024-2029: THRIVE.

Building on the University's strong foundations, which emphasize transdisciplinary, transnational thinking and a hybrid approach to learning through a liberal arts education and its many applications, the Plan envisions a continued commitment to AUP's academic distinction in research and teaching; enhanced reputation and reach; yet stronger connections to the city of Paris and deeper partnerships worldwide. It sets a course for carefully managed, sustainable growth, as well as for deeper and lifelong engagement through initiatives that strengthen community and connection and opportunities for faculty research and for personal and professional growth.

With its three arcs, "Amplification through a Distinctive, Recognized Global Education," "Progress through Multidimensional Partnerships," and "Transformation through Connections, Collaboration and Community," the Plan sits within a fifteen-year framework that lays out the path toward long-term vitality: a larger, more connected, and internationally recognized university. *Thrive*, *grow* and *transform* are the themes chosen for the ways in which they speak to an overarching characteristic of AUP as a learning organization; a community constantly engaged in questioning the status quo and dedicated to inquiry and to knowledge-making, as well as to personal, professional and institutional self-improvement.

The trajectory put forth by the Plan envisions that by 2037, AUP will be recognized as the premier liberal arts university in Europe and for its excellence in delivering an intellectually demanding,

transformative, and hybrid education that prepares diverse, curious and independently minded students to explore the world, engage across cultures, and enact change globally. By enhancing academic and experiential programs and their recognition, empowering students in their intellectual and pre-professional growth, developing new partnerships, and investing in our community of faculty, staff and alumni, we will grow in size and reputation, and continue to uphold and advance our mission.

AUP has grown in so many ways since 1962 and yet, at its core, this contemporary, transformative, global liberal arts education, pursued in community and close collaboration, as well as through connections and with a mandate to open minds to new perspectives, ideas, and cultures, remains timeless—as does our belief that this AUP education is the very best preparation for lifelong success and leadership in a world held in common.

Realizing the vision we have for AUP, for our community, and relationships worldwide is a tremendous opportunity as well as a significant responsibility for every one of us. This Plan is also, therefore, a call to action for each individual and department, in their own way and with purpose, to embrace the possibility of these priorities and to recommit to our mission to engage and educate students at the highest level and, with them, to grow and thrive at AUP in the world as it is now and as it will change.

The engagement that has led to this strategic plan has brought me into contact and conversation with many, many members of our community—on campus and worldwide—and I have such deep appreciation for the shared spirit and purpose, the intellectual curiosity, and the creative thinking that I experience every day and have so enjoyed in this process. The AUP community *is* thriving, and I could not be more confident about our collective future.

Sincerely yours,

Sonya Stephens

Strategic Plan 2024–29

The Introduction

In 2023, The American University of Paris arrived at the end of one Strategic Plan—Navigating 21st Century Pathways (2020–23)—and began defining a new set of ambitions. With the arrival of Sonya Stephens as the University’s new president, the Leadership Team and wider AUP community embarked on a strategic planning process that spanned 18 months. This document presents the steps that were taken to develop the University’s next Strategic Plan, the methodologies and approaches used to define critical goals and priorities within it, and the resulting thematic Arcs that will give structure and forward direction to the work of the University and its global community over the next five years.

Background & Context

This 5-year Strategic Plan (2024–29) has been crafted from a significant body of existing work at the University. Many documents were reviewed, and many conversations across the campus have informed the Plan, as has significant community feedback. Consultation—from faculty, staff and students to our Board of Trustees and alumni—was broad, and the ideas shared were both generous and generative in terms of shaping these aspirations and enhancing them with the opportunities and programs that will make them come to life and engage us all in advancing AUP.

Our previous Strategic Plan, Navigating 21st-Century Pathways (2020–23), which was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and leadership transitions, charted a clear direction in a number of important areas. These ambitions, defined by the university

community and its leadership, represent both achievements and learning opportunities that are tributaries of the next Strategic Plan.

This period saw growth in the University, notwithstanding the temporary challenges of Covid-19. Signature efforts and programs have taken shape and evolved within a shared culture of intellectual curiosity, and we have leveraged and increased prestigious partnerships. All of these speak to AUP’s growing reputation and the opportunities before us to further elevate our work, our students’ success, and the University.

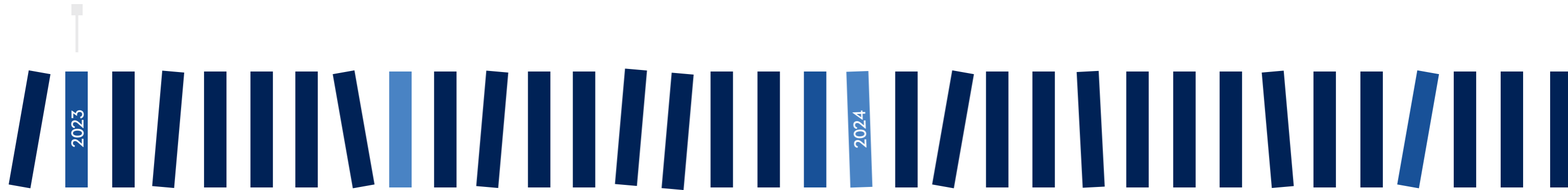
The new Strategic Plan for AUP builds, then, on our previous ambitions, this trajectory of amplification, and a sense of shared responsibility for creating a yet greater and more sustainable AUP. The strategic planning process offered a new moment of institutional analysis, ideation, iteration and growth. The goal of strategic planning is for us to articulate—and substantiate—a value proposition that is both distinctive and compelling to new generations of internationally mobile students: that of an education rooted in our global and American identity; in a transdisciplinary, hybrid liberal arts and pre-professional/experiential educational model; and in our location in Paris. This is both our purpose and our lifeblood.




1,182
students enrolled
56
languages spoken
on campus

Timeline

The development of the Strategic Plan followed a rigorous 18-month process that included research, market analysis and community consultations.



Phase 1: Research & Listening

JANUARY Leadership Team designs strategic planning process and reviews the 2020–23 Strategic Plan: Navigating 21st-century Pathways.

FEBRUARY President starts listening sessions with departments and units across the University that take place over the entire calendar year.

MARCH Leadership Team members lead strategic workshops, meetings and retreats with their respective teams and units.

APRIL AUP conducts its first-ever benchmarked Alumni Attitude Study to understand alumni needs and identify opportunities to improve engagement over the course of the next Strategic Plan.

AUGUST AUP completes brand positioning project to give direction to the strategic positioning and messaging of the University moving forward.

SEPTEMBER President and Provost regularly engage with the Diversity Council, Faculty Executive Committee, Faculty Senate and Student Leadership throughout the Fall semester.

Phase 2: Discussion & Development

SEPTEMBER Comprehensive community survey including faculty, staff, students, trustees and the President’s Alumni Advisory Council to identify institutional priorities from a community perspective.

OCTOBER Board of Trustees meeting centered on the priorities that emerged from the Research & Listening phase as well as on critical ideas about institutional growth and the composition of the student body.

NOVEMBER Leadership Team Retreat to further synthesize and deliberate the information, data and other inputs gathered throughout the Research & Listening phase.

DECEMBER Leadership Team drafts first iteration of broad themes (Arcs) and priorities of the new Strategic Plan based on community input gathered over the past 12 months.

Phase 3: Review & Approval

JANUARY Leadership Team engages students in the priorities and themes of the draft plan through the Student Senate and gatherings organized by the Student Government.

FEBRUARY President Stephens meets with each of the faculty standing committees, with Student Senate, and with a group of student leaders to deepen her understanding of the curricular, para-curricular and social opportunities that might be prioritized in the Plan.

MARCH Virtual presentations of potential plan directions and priorities to over 180 faculty and staff, and separately to the President’s Alumni Advisory Council, through six online sessions to collect further feedback.

APRIL Leadership Team conducts six Future Crafting Sessions to further workshop critical themes of the Plan with faculty, staff and students and extract insights from community perspectives.

MAY First-ever AUP Retreat brings together over 150 faculty and staff in discussion over key themes of the Strategic Plan, including professional development and community. The Leadership Team finalizes the Plan ahead of the board meeting at the end of the semester.

JUNE Approval of the main themes and priorities of the Strategic Plan by the Board of Trustees.

JULY–NOVEMBER The Leadership Team finetunes the priorities under each Arc and prepares the Strategic Plan for public sharing with an official launch in December 2024.

DECEMBER End of the strategic planning process and start of the 2024–29 Strategic Plan: THRIVE



Based on the wide range of studies, the integral surveys of key constituent groups, the various community consultations and working sessions, and the intensive work of the Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees, a number of opportunities emerged, which were then shared with the wider community. These clearly build upon existing strengths and foundations laid out in previous strategic plans, but seek to elevate AUP in critical areas that support its core mission.

Opportunities

- Highlight the myriad ways in which the **city of Paris** contributes to the life and liberal arts learning experience of AUP students, embracing and spotlighting the courses, service opportunities and experiential learning that enrich the student experience.
- Review and reinvigorate the **first-year experience**, building upon the foundation of a First-Year Success (FYS) pilot and the legacy of FirstBridge to shape an experience that equips students with the tools, knowledge and confidence to successfully navigate their first year at AUP.
- Develop newly imagined **student experience trajectories** that scaffold intellectual and pre-professional growth through to a student's eventual graduation and connect the dots between AUP's exciting curricular and co-curricular offerings to create a meaningful and complete degree-seeking experience.
- Enhance the hybridity of our curriculum by elevating AUP's approach to the liberal arts through **pre-professional programs, experiential education and career development**, including internships.

- Secure additional **accreditation** for undergraduate and graduate programs, including further RNCP accreditation, expanding the institution's visibility, recognition and opportunities for academic achievement.
- Establish and shape a full **residential life program** that provides significant community-building and co-curricular opportunities to students while leveraging the tremendous growth of AUP's housing operation in terms of size, team and expertise.
- Create a vibrant, technology-rich and service-oriented culture and space on campus, which use co-located, critical learning services—including ITS, the Library, ARC and ACE—to develop a **state-of-the-art student learning hub**.
- Continue to **recruit and retain talented faculty and staff** by investing in the institutional work culture, providing meaningful professional development opportunities.
- Celebrate and make more visible **faculty and staff accomplishments**, and provide support for research and creative activity, as well as for other forms of professional development.
- Invest in and more closely align AUP's **research centers** with the curriculum, ensuring that they realize their full potential—particularly in their research activity and collaboration with other institutions—and contribute to the AUP educational experience.
- Reimagine and resource AUP's **academic technology services** to fully realize the potential of emerging technologies, including AI, to enhance learning and ensure the University's future is supported by forward-thinking, ethical policies and practices.
- **Build new partnerships and strengthen existing ones** with selective US institutions and international institutions to enhance reciprocity and better define the AUP experience for visiting students, fostering lasting alumni connection and relationships that enhance the post-graduation experience for AUP's global community.
- Meet the needs of the growing AUP community and support planned future growth by **expanding the campus** in the 7th *arrondissement* and optimizing AUP's existing spaces to better serve all constituents.
- Invest in **institutional research** to enhance evidence-based decision-making, improve institutional effectiveness, and support the successful implementation of the Plan.
- Invest in AUP's **brand** and further refine AUP's **key messaging and positioning** to ensure continued alignment with the idea behind the global explorer while better reflecting the new brand positioning, Amplifying You, and spotlighting the spirit of courage, independence, openness and curiosity that characterizes all members of AUP's global community.



The entire community was engaged in crafting the plan.

3 board meetings and
4 leadership retreats

6 Future Crafting Sessions with
180 faculty and staff

7 individual studies

2 large-scale internal surveys

150 faculty and staff at the first-ever AUP Retreat

8 academic departments and all standing committees consulted

2 sessions with SGA and Student Senate

1 Alumni Engagement Study

100s of suggestions, ideas and comments reviewed

See the annexes (p.22) for a detailed overview of the strategic planning process.



These, then, are the opportunities to further our mission: to build upon valuable work done in the course of previous strategic plans and the day-to-day work of an institution that continues to transform itself, to innovate and re-imagine, to learn and to grow, to offer an exceptional global liberal arts and pre-professional education, and to educate students to make a difference in the world.

The Horizon

The American University of Paris at 75

A 15-year framework allows us to look to a longer-term horizon with the flexibility of intervening plans that can respond to changes in the landscape while working towards objectives, with milestones and metrics, derived from our enduring strengths, value proposition and ambitions. This framework sets out a core agenda of excellence, growth and reputation, while each subsequent plan to 2037 establishes goals that move us closer to the vision of AUP at 75.



75th anniversary of AUP

2037
2036
2035
2034
2033



1962
AUP founded

2037
AUP turns 75

2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032



PHASE 1
2023–24
Research and planning

PHASE 2
2024–29
First Strategic Plan: THRIVE

PROCESS
2023–37
A 15-year framework for AUP at 75



At The American University of Paris, we understand that a successful community is grounded in shared values and that ethics are rooted in our practices and communications. These require the development of skills, compassion and curiosity as well as a willingness to tolerate the discomfort and uncertainty that encounters with different points of view generate. Given the inherent diversity of cultural, social and gender backgrounds at AUP—a diversity we expect only to grow in complexity—it is foundational to our vision and essential for the community-building we prioritize that we all learn and practice mutual respect and effective communicative relationships. The goal is always to speak in ways that invite others to listen and listen in ways that invite others to speak—to reach mutual understanding, even and especially when we cannot come to agreement.

A healthy community can only be sustained in an environment conducive to growth and evolution. Given the severity of the current climate crisis, AUP will work to increase support for environmental efforts on campus, to further develop an understanding of sustainability through our curriculum, and to effect ongoing progress for AUP and the world's future.

Who are We?

Chartered in 1962, The American University of Paris is a private, independent, international university located in the heart of Paris, in the city's historic 7th arrondissement. AUP students, faculty and staff come from all over the world. The primary language of instruction is English. The University offers both Bachelor's and Master's degrees through programs of study across the disciplines, rooted in the American liberal arts tradition.

You can read more about the University's founding and history at aup.edu/about/history, or visit the Timeline at aup.edu/timeline.

Our Mission*

The American University of Paris offers a student-centered, intellectually demanding, and career-enabling learning experience in a dynamic European capital. Here, curious and courageous thinkers embrace disciplinary and cultural diversity. Together, we develop creative approaches to enduring questions and contemporary global challenges. Engagement with Paris and an exceptionally international community shapes our research, learning, and campus life.

**Pending approval by the Board of Trustees in February 2025*

How Do We Do This?

The University achieves its mission by offering students programs of study that combine liberal arts inquiry with preparation for professional life. Whether pursuing majors in social or natural sciences, humanities, arts, or pre-professional and applied disciplines, students benefit from the dynamic and engaging teaching of a world-class faculty in small classroom settings. A host of opportunities for direct experience of Paris, France and other nations, and many cultures combines with a wealth of intellectual exchanges on campus. AUP's integrated learning model blends classroom learning and its practical applications, preparing students to reflect and apply, to analyze and act. In these ways, an AUP education supports professional skill development and cultural fluency—the sense of global engagement and the capacity to negotiate difference that emerge from the distinctive diversity of AUP's students, faculty, and staff. AUP students forge lifelong connections to one another and to the University. Upon graduation, they continue to benefit from the global network as part of the alumni community.

Core Capabilities

Independent, Creative Thinkers

Students will think critically about their place in the world and their role in its future. Grounded in the liberal arts tradition of independent inquiry, they will be able to navigate resources, evaluate their findings, and articulate well-reasoned arguments.

Engaged, Lifelong Learners

Students will be knowledgeable in one or more disciplines while benefiting from a larger interdisciplinary context. They will use a range of modes of analysis, including quantitative, qualitative, visual, digital and textual, with care and resourcefulness. They will continue to meet the challenges of intellectual, personal and professional growth in meaningful and balanced lives beyond the University.

Responsible Actors, Empowered Leaders

Students will apply their knowledge and skills to the global challenges of the 21st century. Their core values of curiosity, integrity and collaboration will enable them to act with commitment and ethical responsibility.

Adaptable Communicators with a Global Perspective

Students will be skillful at engaging diversity and difference in an international setting. They will hone their intercultural awareness and abilities. Students will also understand that exciting ideas and valid viewpoints are articulated in a multiplicity of languages and language competencies, and across a variety of cultures. They will demonstrate mastery in communicating in English, and be confident in their interactions with the French environment in which AUP is located.

Core Values

- The American University of Paris commits to the **highest standards of academic rigor and integrity**, and to academic freedom.
- The American University of Paris commits to an **academic culture of engagement, global citizenship, and community** that fosters in students and faculty a critical sense of commitment to and responsibility for a world of interdependence.
- The American University of Paris commits to a **multilingual, multicultural learning environment** where students develop a capacity for ethical and political judgment that is alert to all forms of diversity.
- The American University of Paris commits to **bringing out the best in all community members**, inspiring them to excellence and equipping them to live actively and compassionately to create a just and sustainable world.
- The American University of Paris commits to **maintaining the exceptional space of the AUP classroom**, where a diverse body of students and faculty meet to articulate civic values and negotiate difference, as together they question, reflect upon, and work toward creative solutions to real-world problems.





The Plan: THRIVE

The Plan foregrounds notions of *thriving*, *growing* and *transforming* as its themes because they speak to an overarching characteristic of the institution: AUP is a learning organization that is constantly engaged in questioning the status quo and dedicated to knowledge-making and to institutional and self-improvement. The University represents a growth mindset that is shared by and connects students, faculty, staff and alumni worldwide.



Growth

Personal, intellectual and professional development. A larger community of students

Recognition

Through further accreditation and visibility in France and worldwide

Community

By investing in and connecting people and connected spaces

What is THRIVE?

THRIVE is a guiding philosophy that embodies the spirit of AUP. It reflects our commitment to continuous improvement, not just in size or scale, but in the quality and impact of our educational offerings. THRIVE represents our ambition to nurture a community that is intellectually curious, globally minded and socially responsible. It is a mindset that drives us to push boundaries, innovate and evolve in ways that align with our core values. At its heart, THRIVE is about creating a space where every member of the AUP community feels empowered to reach their full potential, contribute meaningfully and experience a sense of fulfillment and purpose.

Therefore, based upon the opportunities identified through the rigorous research and listening phase of the strategic planning process, THRIVE captures the pursuit of the tangibles and intangibles that help the University and all its members thrive:

- * Amplifying the visibility, reputation and reach of AUP, in France and worldwide.
- * Enhancing academic and experiential programs along with the recognition of these programs through accreditation and validation.
- * Empowering students in their intellectual and pre-professional growth with dedicated and scaffolded trajectories through a challenging contemporary curriculum.

- * Developing new partnerships that enable the growth of the University, increasing its reach and reputation and offering new opportunities for all constituents.
- * Shaping an expansive community created by core commitments, fostered with critical investments and by collaborative, connected, connecting spaces.
- * Sustainable and managed growth in the size of AUP, with the same commitment to small classes, mentored intellectual growth, and intimacy.



Success breeds success; it is self-perpetuating. A thriving, more prosperous and slightly larger AUP is a more sustainable AUP, and our growth will enable new investments in AUP's programs, people and places, as well as greater visibility and impact.

The Three Arcs

To support the University's ambitions and achieve the most tangible parts of AUP's transformational trajectory, three arcs have been developed to serve as thematic thrusts and to group the institution's priorities and most critical goals in a way that will focus our efforts and resources over the next five years. Inherently, each Arc has a clear and defined ambition that helps guide its subsequent goals and allow all projects, initiatives and programs to be connected to the plan.



Amplification through a Distinctive, Recognized Global Education

The ambition is to elevate AUP's educational experience and global academic reputation by enhancing the quality, diversity and recognition of the educational offering, ensuring that AUP students become vibrant and confident independent thinkers with the curiosity to explore, the passion to engage and the capability to lead.



Progress through Multidimensional Partnerships

The ambition is to expand and deepen partnerships that enhance AUP's reach, reputation and impact, fostering reciprocal relationships that drive innovation in education and growth in professional development and deliver a wide range of new opportunities for all members of the University.



Transformation through Connections, Collaboration and Community

The ambition is to create a vibrant, interconnected community that thrives on collaboration, leveraging the diverse perspectives and experiences that are inherent to AUP's global community to drive transformative change and growth within and beyond AUP and, most critically, for every member of its global community.



Transform



Progress



Amplify



1 Learn and practice **mutual respect and effective communicative** relationships to reach mutual understanding.

2 Rigorously maintain the norms for an **inclusive, welcoming and empathic culture.**

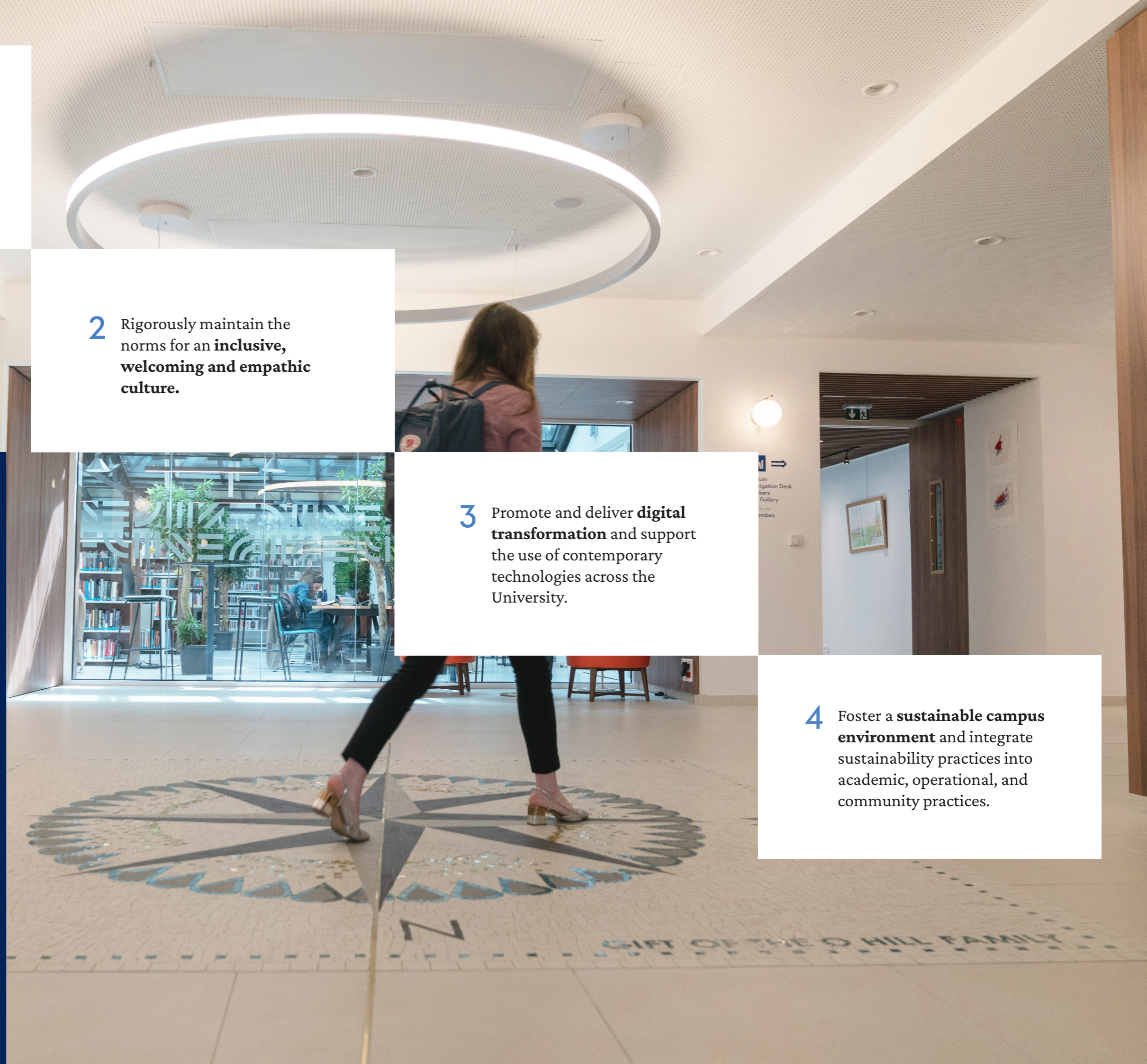
3 Promote and deliver **digital transformation** and support the use of contemporary technologies across the University.

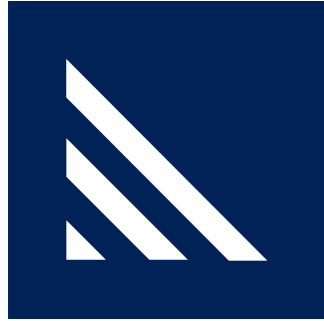
4 Foster a **sustainable campus environment** and integrate sustainability practices into academic, operational, and community practices.

Overarching Goals

At the heart of THRIVE lies a commitment, represented by these four goals, to fostering a community grounded in respect and understanding, where inclusive practices are prioritized, and a culture of empathy flourishes.

By continuously evolving workplace support and enhancing both academic and operational systems, AUP aims to create an environment that enables every member to feel valued and empowered. The plan also emphasizes sustainability and innovation, integrating these principles into the university's daily practices and long-term vision, driving AUP toward a resilient, adaptable, and engaged future.





1. Amplification through a Distinctive, Recognized Global Education

The American University of Paris has already differentiated itself by offering in the heart of Europe a curriculum that is anchored in the American liberal arts tradition while being truly global and interdisciplinary in its approach and perspectives. At the same time, pre-professional programs and experiential opportunities have enriched that learning experience and deepened students' preparation for successful careers.

Growing the distinction of AUP's teaching and research—and of the broader student experience—means strengthening and resourcing departments, centers and programs through investment in diverse, exceptional appointments and important intellectual directions as well as in the institutional infrastructure to support the success of individual and collective enterprise. This includes much greater investment in educational, administrative and information technologies, more expansive use of technology in the learning experience, and significant new investments in supporting pre-professional opportunities and in evaluating institutional effectiveness.

Over the next five-year period, we will therefore:

- 1** Invest in **distinctive transdisciplinary programs** that address far-reaching questions and contemporary global challenges.
- 2** Support faculty in their **development of a curriculum** as infused with global questions and examples as our classrooms are with diverse and international perspectives.
- 3** Scaffold an **inclusive, individualized student trajectory** to assure intellectual and personal growth and success as well as engagement with and connection to AUP.
- 4** Develop and make more visible and accessible **integrated and experiential learning** experiences.
- 5** Invest in research, make visible, recognize, support and celebrate **scholarship, thought leadership in more public forums, and teaching excellence** as well as student achievements and collaborations.
- 6** Seek and secure **external recognition** and accreditation at the institutional and program levels.
- 7** Design a technology-rich **Learning Commons** with the services, tools and resources that support discovery, learning and mastery.
- 8** Develop distinctive **seasonal and summer offerings**.
- 9** Continue investment in **information technology and digital transformation** to ensure the highest quality of service from our systems and infrastructure.
- 10** Assure **curricular effectiveness** so that all new investments in technology, people and curriculum are possible and recurrent.



2. Progress through Multidimensional Partnerships

One of the ways in which AUP has been effective in building its success and visibility is through partnerships, especially academic partnerships that reflect a shared mission and common goals for global education. This has predominantly meant hosting students from partner institutions here in Paris, a commitment that will continue and be strengthened with a dedicated pathway for visiting students to ensure that they derive maximum benefit from their AUP experience.

Over the next five years, we will broaden our approach to partnerships, fostering established relationships to explore shared goals and mutual interests and to serve AUP's growth and success. Partnerships in new regions will be identified to respond to the opportunities of this Plan. Partnerships may serve many different ambitions of the Plan and the communities and relationships we value; they may be local to AUP in Paris; they may foster collaboration among American or international organizations and institutions in Europe; or they may cement our educational roots in the United States and our more global vision and presence worldwide.

Partnerships are conceived in a broad way and include but are not limited to other institutions of higher (or K–12) education; cultural institutions; nonprofit or corporate entities; American organizations in Paris and Île-de-France; French or international organizations in Paris, in France or worldwide; foundations; libraries; government offices or agencies; professional organizations, including those that serve higher education; and study abroad and intercultural experience providers.

Most importantly, within the Plan, all partnerships are conceived of as value-generating, and many will have the additional virtue of being either cost-saving or revenue-generating. In addition, all partnerships will be based on shared benefit and mutual interests, which means they will support our priorities and ambitions alongside those of our partners in ways that are mutually reinforcing.



Through partnerships we will:

- 1 **Share the expertise, values and perspectives** of AUP faculty, staff and students with a wide range of organizations, locally and internationally.
- 2 Enhance AUP's **reputation** and reach in key regions, including regions in which AUP is currently underrepresented.
- 3 Leverage existing consortial opportunities and develop new ones to serve shared priorities and to enable and **promote our contribution to higher learning** in an international context.
- 4 Develop **shared curricular opportunities** with Parisian and international institutions, and space for diverse modes of delivery through multi-site degree objectives.
- 5 Enable **mobility and the exchange of ideas**, approaches and practices in ways that complement AUP's own programs, individual growth, and institutional development.
- 6 Increase opportunities for **academic study and experiential learning** for students and opportunities for scholarly research and **professional experiences** for faculty and staff in France and worldwide.
- 7 Increase opportunities for **practical experiences**—including community connection, service, professional site visits, pre-professional modules and study trips and practicums—in Paris and internationally.
- 8 Develop opportunities for **cost-sharing** or other forms of consortial effectiveness.
- 9 Strengthen our location in **Paris** as a key component of both our intellectual identity and our value proposition for partners, bringing our expertise and values to partnerships.
- 10 Build a connected and engaged community of **alumni and friends** that serves as an asset to the university and enriches the lives of current students and alumni.



3. Transformation through Connections, Collaboration and Community

Among the most important investments we can make will be those in building and sustaining community at AUP. Our multi-site campus and historic buildings, combined with a location that offers many other attractions and distractions, do not always lend themselves to a socially vibrant campus, even when the opportunities for such intellectual and social engagement are ever-present and often competing.



By foregrounding connections, collaboration and community as a priority, AUP will build upon similar commitments to those expressed above in relation to academic excellence and partnerships in ways that position the University and its valued constituents to be more cohesive, supportive, supported and connected. This priority recognizes that excellence comes first from individuals and the conditions in which they pursue their work and affiliation with AUP. It addresses opportunities for deeper student engagement; commitments that enhance the working environment, conditions and professional opportunities for faculty and staff; spaces that enable connection, collaboration and community; enhanced internal communications; and infrastructure that enables our alumni worldwide to remain a part of the University and to engage with it. By investing in individuals and the resources and infrastructure (including systems) that facilitate their work, AUP will support individual and collective growth and student success.

To meet the bold aspirations of this priority and our deep commitment to inclusion and success for every individual at AUP, we will:

- 1 Develop a **student experience** that fosters connection and engagement, from pre-orientation through graduation, in ways that connect to our unique mission to provide a global liberal arts education in Paris.
- 2 Increase the number of AUP-controlled **residence halls** and strengthen the **residential program** in AUP Housing to foster community and to support the transition to life at the University and in Paris.
- 3 Assign more and enhanced **space to students** for study, student government, club and other activities, social life, and wellness.
- 4 Support and promote **dynamic careers for faculty and staff**, prioritizing opportunities for faculty research and professional development for all.
- 5 Through competitive compensation and benefits, as well as through other actions in this Plan, establish AUP as an **employer of choice**.



- 6 Improve **internal communications**, centralizing resources and events for easy and direct access and enhancing internal information sharing.
- 7 Create innovative co-working spaces alongside a rethinking of offices and remote work at AUP, **fostering a collaborative work environment**.
- 8 Strengthen **staff representation, collaboration and recognition** in creative and meaningful ways to honor contributions.
- 9 Attend to the **wellness and space needs** of the AUP community, creating new spaces for conviviality at work.
- 10 Build a **sustainable fundraising program** by engaging a diverse portfolio of donors and potential donors who will provide philanthropic investment in the priorities of the university.

A Call to Action

This Plan invites further engagement as we develop the ideas and programs that will bring it to life and move the University forward in a shared vision for our collective and future growth.

AUP has grown in so many ways since 1962 and yet, at its core, this contemporary, transformative, global liberal arts education, pursued in community and close collaboration, as well as through connections and with a mandate to open minds to new perspectives, ideas, and cultures, remains timeless—as does our belief that this AUP education is the very best preparation for lifelong success and leadership in a world held in common.

Realizing the vision we have for AUP, for our community, and relationships worldwide is a tremendous opportunity as well as a significant responsibility for every one of us. This Plan is also, therefore, a call to action for each individual and department, in their own way and with purpose, to embrace the possibility of these priorities and to recommit to our mission to engage and educate students at the highest level and, with them, to grow and thrive at AUP, in the world as it is now and as it will change.



Annexes



Review, Consultations and Community Engagement

The Strategic Plan is based upon the review of many documents and significant engagement with members of the community. First, there are echoes of the last plan, Navigating 21st-Century Pathways (2020–23), interrupted by Covid-19 and leadership transitions, whose unrealized ambitions continue to present important opportunities for us. Secondly, there are the phases of work that have shaped and continue to inform our brand positioning and key messaging respectively, drawing on a shared sense of both AUP’s history and of our deeply felt and continuing value proposition.

These efforts build upon the outstanding work of faculty and staff across AUP—on the creativity, innovation, commitments and aspirations that they bring to the educational experience—and seek to find ways to enable, in the first case, and to describe, in the second, what makes AUP so distinctive. There has also been considerable preparatory work on the part of the Leadership Team, firstly to bring these different expressions of AUP and the ongoing work of the University into a frame for review, discussion and ideation, both internally and with the Board of Trustees; and, secondly, to engage in the hard and detailed process of conceptualizing, in terms of resource planning and timeline, to realize our ambitions and to grow.

Through the wide-ranging community consultations, there were a number of internal issues that surfaced—things that we know we have to “fix,” questions of internal structure to better serve the mission and any new initiatives, and impediments to our daily work or a culture of positive engagement. These are “the givens.” One might argue they are not “given” if they persist as challenges in the organization—they are imperatives. Nevertheless, it is both a given that we will address them and that we will not build our Strategic Plan exclusively to do the work of administrative improvement. We will, however, prioritize those institutional administrative efforts that are necessary for the successful realization of our next Strategic Plan and for the effectiveness of the organization.

In 2022–23, President Sonya Stephens met with each department and program. The goal was to get to know the faculty, understand the challenges and opportunities of each program, and listen for ideas and aspirations to galvanize the community in advancing AUP. This was complemented with regular meetings with the Diversity Council, an early and subsequent meeting with the Executive Committee of Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate meetings, and regular opportunities to engage with Student Government, both through meeting with the presidents of the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Councils, and by meeting with the Student Senate on a few occasions. Interim Provost Hannah Westley undertook a similar listening tour in Fall 2023, contributing what she learned to the shaping of the priorities in this Strategic Plan.

In the Fall Board Retreat, the AUP Board of Trustees deliberated at length on the question of growth in student numbers and the composition of the student body. With their broad agreement in February on the idea of managed and sustainable growth in size, an understanding of space constraints and needs, and the direction of the Plan—its three Arcs—the ideas were shared back with the community for feedback.

In Spring 2024, in addition to the presentations on strategic directions and the Future Crafting Sessions described below, President Stephens also met with each of the faculty standing committees, with Student Senate, and with a group of student leaders to deepen her understanding of the curricular, para-curricular, and social opportunities

that we might prioritize in the Plan. Following pages share additional insights from key initiatives in the strategic planning process and ultimately present the collectively identified opportunities that emerged from this year-long process and that ultimately helped to shape the arcs and priorities of the Plan.

The Strategic Planning Survey

In Fall 2023, we also conducted a survey of students, faculty, staff, trustees and the President's Alumni Advisory Council. A set of shared aspirations emerged from the survey:



Reputation, visibility, and formal recognition



Career preparation and internships



Professional development for faculty and staff



More spaces for collaboration



Improved first-year experience



The composition of the student body



Improved partnerships



Diversity, equity and inclusion



Sustainability



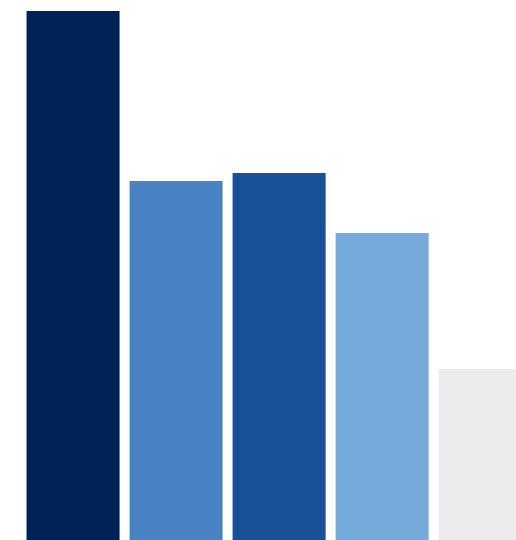
Our location in Paris



Residential life programming

Alumni Attitude Survey

In addition, in Spring 2023, AUP conducted its first benchmarked Alumni Attitude Survey, which supports the creation of a more formal approach to engaging our alumni. Of the 7,645 surveys presumed delivered, 465 alumni responded (6.08%). The Affinity Index of AUP alumni—measured by comparing AUP responses to those of alumni at over 320 other institutions over a 20-year period—is 78% (compared to a benchmark of 79%). The Alumni Attitude Survey helps us understand what our alumni would like AUP to offer them and how we might improve engagement over the course of the next Strategic Plan, not least by providing infrastructure (an Alumni Association), enhancing communications about the University with our alumni community, and increasing the vibrancy of AUP event offerings to alumni.



Alumni want more opportunities to...

- 62% network with other alumni
- 42% mentor students
- 43% attend events*
- 36% serve as ambassadors
- 20% help recent graduates find jobs

Data from 2024 Alumni Attitude Survey
* Globally & at AUP

Other Studies

Alongside this community engagement and the Alumni Attitude Study, the Leadership Team sought expert advice on a number of questions pertaining to the Plan and the University's future opportunities, including:

- A review of the AUP Library and Learning Commons
 - A collections study | July 2024
 - A strategic review of academic and IT resources in a blended model | June 2024
- A space study covering current campus optimization and future needs
- A benefits study for US-based employees
- Two audits of the campus-wide ERP projects
- A brand positioning and key messaging project

Preliminary Presentations

The results of the survey and preliminary thinking on the three Arcs of the next Plan for AUP were presented to faculty, staff and students. These sessions were held virtually and were attended by over 180 members of the AUP campus community and, separately, were shared with the President's Alumni Advisory Council. The goal was to ensure that all members of the community had the same information and to close the initial feedback loop, prior to in-person ideation and suggestions related to the main Arcs of the Plan in the Future Crafting Sessions.

Following the presentations, faculty, staff and (separately) students were invited to discuss the Arcs and themes deriving from them, to interrogate their relevance and importance to the community, to affirm the directions and commitments that they represent, to share ideas for how we might bring them to life in operationalizing the Plan, and to comment on current constraints and future opportunities in ways that ensure the Plan brings attention to these.

G L O B A L COMMUNITY PROGRESS EXPERIENTIAL PARTNERSHIP CONNECTION
EXPERIENTIAL PARTNERSHIP G L O B A L COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE DISCOVERY
COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE EXPERIENTIAL PARTNERSHIP G L O B A L AMBITION
PARTNERSHIP CONNECTION COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE EXPERIENTIAL B O L D
EXCELLENCE DISCOVERY PARTNERSHIP CONNECTION COMMUNITY PROGRESS
CONNECTION AMBITION EXCELLENCE DISCOVERY AMPLIFY G L O B A L
EXPERIENTIAL PARTNERSHIP G L O B A L AMBITION PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENTIAL
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EXCELLENCE EXPERIENTIAL PARTNERSHIP G L O B A L DISCOVERY EXCELLENCE
G L O B A L COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE TRANSFORM AMBITION CONNECTION
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EXPERIENTIAL B O L D G L O B A L

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