



**MEDIA CONTACT:** Marie Frocrain : [marie.frocrain@sciencespo.fr](mailto:marie.frocrain@sciencespo.fr) / 01 49 54 37 71

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### **Universities ask G7 leaders to prioritize future generations**

EVANSTON, Ill. — The U7+ Alliance today [issued a statement](#) asking G7 leaders to take into account the interests of future generations as the world recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic and seeks to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Alliance, a group of universities spanning six continents and representing all of the G7 nations as well as 10 other nations, urged world leaders to harness opportunities for equitable resource-sharing across generations and recognize universities' role as primary global actors.

“As an alliance of universities, we sit at the crossroads of generations—in a space where knowledge is generated and new, bolder visions for the future are imagined—and have committed to serving as platforms for open intergenerational dialogue,” the statement reads.

The G7 leaders are set to arrive today in the UK with coronavirus recovery topping the agenda. Resilience against future pandemics, the Alliance statement says, hinges on the education of citizens. “The preparation of the next generation of leaders must be a paramount concern,” the statement reads.

On climate, the Alliance emphasized the commitment of its members to addressing environmental issues through providing access to related courses, [facilitating intergenerational dialogues](#) and actively working to [reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions](#) from by 2030.

The Alliance also urged the G7 to incorporate the intergenerational lens as they advocate for the values of democracy, human rights and free speech. It also called on world leaders to promote access to higher education for youth from marginalized backgrounds.

The U7+ Alliance is the first international coalition of university presidents aimed at structuring and advancing the role of universities as global actors across the multilateral agenda. Alliance members meet annually to establish a common agenda and identify key areas for coordinated action. [Sciences Po](#) hosted the first Summit in Paris in July 2019 under the high patronage of French President Emmanuel Macron.

In 2020, Northwestern was the first U.S. university to [host](#) the U7+ Summit, bringing together nearly 100 university leaders from 48 institutions across 17 countries who [unanimously voted](#) to prioritize intergenerational justice.

This year, Northwestern University has been elected to serve as the first [Secretariat](#) of the Alliance, which will be housed at the [Roberta Buffett Institute for Global Affairs](#) and led by Annelise Riles, Executive Director of the Buffett Institute and Associate Provost for Global Affairs at Northwestern. As Secretariat, Northwestern will convene a series of intergenerational roundtables, which will bring together students, faculty and administrators from across the U7+ network for discussion and debate on critical global challenges. Northwestern leaders and faculty will also play a role in each of the U7+ Alliance's working groups dedicated to taking concrete [actions](#) toward fulfilling commitments ranging from improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions to developing students' inclusive leadership and global citizenship capacities.