

### GUNi IS

GUNi is a network created in 1999 by UNESCO, the United Nations University (UNU) and the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC). It was founded after the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education to give continuity to and facilitate the implementation of its main decisions. Ten years later, in 2009 GUNi played a significant role in the second WCHE, following its mandate to further reflection and action frameworks to facilitate the exchange of value between higher education and society globally.

The Network comprises UNESCO chairs, higher education institutions, research centres and networks involved in innovation and the social commitment of higher education. It has 214 members in 79 countries and is represented across the world by five regional offices (sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and North America). The UPC, in Barcelona, Spain, hosts its presidency and the International Secretariat.

### GUNi AIMS TO

GUNi's **mission** is to strengthen the role of higher education in society contributing to the renewal of the visions, missions and policies of higher education across the world under a vision of public service, relevance and social responsibility.

In the beginning of this century there is a strong need to establish new bases for a sustainable global society that, taking into account environmental limits, re-examine the dynamics of global economic, political, human, social and cultural models, as well as their local manifestations. We are currently experiencing a crisis of civilization, in which we must facilitate the transition towards a paradigm shift aimed at rebuilding society, with the collective desire and responsibility of attaining a better world for future generations. There is a requirement to reconsider what the social contribution of higher education should be.

GUNi encourages higher education institutions to redefine their role, embrace this process of transformation and strengthen their critical stance within society.

Therefore, GUNi's **goals** are to:

- Encourage higher education institutions to reorient their role to broaden its social value, embrace this process of transformation and strengthen their critical stance within society.
- Promote the exchange of resources, innovative ideas and experiences to facilitate higher education's role for supporting social evolution.
- Foster networking among higher education institutions and cooperation between them and society.
- Help bridge the gap between developed and developing countries in the field of higher education and foster the cooperation North–South and South–South.
- Allow the collective and cooperative reflection, exchange and production of knowledge regarding what social responsibility and relevance in the emerging Planetary era should mean.

### GUNi DOES

#### HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WORLD REPORT

The Report is a collective work published as part of the GUNi series on the social commitment of universities. It is the result of a global and regional analysis of higher education in the world, with a specific subject chosen for each annual edition. The Report reflects on the key issues and challenges facing higher education and its institutions in the 21st century. It is currently published in English, Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese and Arabic.

#### INTERNATIONAL BARCELONA CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

The GUNi Conference is an international forum for debate on the challenges that face higher education. Each edition of the Conference

deals with a hot topic that is chosen as a key working-subject for a period. Held every two years in Barcelona, and attended by renowned experts, university leaders, academics, policymakers and practitioners from all over the world, the Conference addresses innovative proposals and ideas, as well as the results of the latest research on each subject.

### NETWORKING

GUNi reinforces and expands its network by encouraging the dynamic involvement of a wide range of actors in higher education in its activities. It fosters cooperation between them and promotes debate and the creation and exchange of knowledge on higher education worldwide through both on-site and online activities. The website and the monthly Newsletter are cornerstones of the accomplishment of this objective.

### KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

GUNi.KC is created as a virtual meeting point with the objective to support the creation, transfer and application of knowledge. Through a variety of specific topics focused on the transformation of higher education and its role in responding to global challenges, GUNi.KC will offer tools to stimulate the direct participation of the affiliates in order to facilitate the exchange of expertise, resources and good practices that returned as a knowledge gain to community members.

### RESEARCH PROJECTS

GUNi undertakes research projects on higher education by its own initiative, alone or in collaboration with other institutions. So far three Delphi surveys have been conducted – one for each of the three first reports issued by GUNi – addressing research on Financing Higher Education, Accreditation and Social Commitment and Higher Education for Human and Social Development.

In addition GUNi undertakes research projects on higher education for public and private not-for-profit institutions.

[www.guninetwork.org](http://www.guninetwork.org)