



**Plateforme collaborative Mondiale de formation  
doctorale**

**« Nourrir Soigner Protéger »**

**Memorandum of Understanding**

entre

**L'UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTPELLIER**

(France)

Etablissement Public à caractère Scientifique, Culturel  
et Professionnel, dont le siège se situe 163 rue Auguste  
Broussonnet 34090 Montpellier, n° SIRET 130 020 548  
00017, code NAF 8542Z,  
représentée par son Président, M. Philippe AUGÉ,  
ci-après dénommée l' « UM »,

et

**L'UNIVERSITE DE PRETORIA**

(Afrique du Sud)

et

Un consortium international d'établissements  
d'enseignement supérieur, dont :

**CHINA AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY** (Chine)  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL, CHINESE ACADEMY OF  
AGRICULTURE SCIENCE** (China)  
**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY** (USA)  
**UNIVERSITY CHEIKH ANTA DIOP OF DAKAR** (Sénégal)  
**UNIVERSITY LAVAL OF QUEBEC** (Canada)  
**UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA** (Etats-Unis)  
**UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA** (Espagne)  
**THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, ON  
BEHALF OF ITS DAVIS CAMPUS**(Etats-Unis)  
**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS** (Royaume-Uni)  
**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI** (Kenya)  
**UNIVERSITY OF SAO PAULO** (Brésil)  
**UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE** (Afrique du Sud)  
**UNIVERSITY OF YORK** (Royaume-Uni)  
**UTRECHT UNIVERSITY** (Pays-Bas)  
**WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY** (Pays-Bas)

Ce Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) définit les  
termes et l'entente entre les Parties pour collaborer au  
lancement et à la mise en œuvre de la Plateforme  
collaborative mondiale de formation doctorale "Nourrir  
Soigner Protéger".

**Feed, Protect, Care  
Global Collaborative PhD Platform**

**Memorandum of Understanding**

between the Parties, as follows:

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTPELLIER**

(France)

An experimental scientific, cultural and professional public  
institution, headquartered at 163 rue Auguste  
Broussonnet, 34090 Montpellier, France, SIRET n° SIRET  
130 029 796 00013, NAF Code 8542Z, duly represented by  
its President, Mr. Philippe AUGÉ,  
hereinafter referred to as "UM",

and

**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

(South Africa)

and

A global consortium of higher education institutions,  
including:

**CHINA AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY** (China)  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL, CHINESE ACADEMY OF  
AGRICULTURE SCIENCE** (China)  
**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY** (USA)  
**UNIVERSITY CHEIKH ANTA DIOP OF DAKAR** (Senegal)  
**UNIVERSITY LAVAL OF QUEBEC** (Canada)  
**UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA** (USA)  
**UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA** (Spain)  
**THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, ON  
BEHALF OF ITS DAVIS CAMPUS** (USA)  
**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS** (United Kingdom)  
**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI** (Kenya)  
**UNIVERSITY OF SAO PAULO** (Brazil)  
**UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE** (South Africa)  
**UNIVERSITY OF YORK** (United Kingdom)  
**UTRECHT UNIVERSITY** (Netherlands)  
**WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY** (Netherlands)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets out the  
terms and understanding between the Parties to  
collaborate in the launch and implementation of the Feed,  
Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform.

**Contexte**

En 2022, l'Université de Montpellier (UM) et l'Université de Pretoria (UP) ont décidé de collaborer au développement d'une initiative visant à créer une communauté mondiale de futurs leaders en sciences de la durabilité. C'est ainsi qu'a été conçue la Plateforme collaborative mondiale de formation doctorale Nourrir, Protéger, Soigner (ci-après dénommée la "Plateforme"). Les objectifs, la structure et les activités de la plateforme, la gouvernance et la gestion, ainsi que les dispositions en matière de ressources sont exposés dans la note conceptuelle de la plateforme figurant à l'annexe A.

UM et UP ont identifié conjointement, parmi leurs réseaux de partenariat stratégique, un certain nombre d'établissements d'enseignement supérieur de différentes régions du monde à inviter en tant que membres fondateurs de la plateforme.

**Objectif**

Le présent MoU a pour objectif de confirmer l'accord des parties selon lequel chaque institution sera membre fondateur de la Plateforme et sera représentée, à un niveau élevé, au sein de son Comité de Pilotage International (ci-après dénommé « le Comité »). Le Comité sera le principal organe de décision de la Plateforme et sera soutenu par un Bureau International financé et géré sous les auspices de l'UM et de l'UP. Les principaux rôles et responsabilités du Comité et du Bureau International sont décrits dans la note conceptuelle de la Plateforme figurant à l'annexe A.

En tant que membre fondateur de la Plateforme, chaque institution s'engage à :

- Sélectionner 2 doctorants par an pour participer à la Plateforme et s'assurer que le financement de ces étudiants est géré pour la durée de leurs études doctorales. Les critères et les processus de sélection des doctorants sont décrits dans la note conceptuelle de la Plateforme, à l'annexe A.
- Participer activement, à un niveau élevé, au Comité de Pilotage International de la Plateforme et, s'il est élu, accepter de coprésider le Comité pour une période pouvant durer jusqu'à trois ans.
- Prendre en charge les frais de participation en personne à une réunion du Comité une fois tous les 18 mois, la première réunion devant se tenir à l'UP le 23 mai 2023.
- Convenir et promouvoir le développement ultérieur de la Plateforme et soutenir les efforts de collecte de fonds à entreprendre par le Bureau International.

**Background**

In 2022, the University of Montpellier (UM) and University of Pretoria (UP) agreed to collaborate in developing an initiative aimed at building a globally connected community of future sustainability science leaders. This resulted in the design of the Feed, Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform (to be referred to hereinafter as the "Platform"). The Platform objectives, structure and activities, governance and management, and resourcing arrangements are set out in the Platform concept note provided in Appendix A.

UM and UP jointly identified, from amongst their strategic partnership networks, a number of higher education institutions from different regions of the world to be invited as founding members of the Platform.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this MoU is to confirm the Parties' agreement that each institution shall serve as a founding member of the Platform and be represented, at a senior level, on its International Steering Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee). The Committee shall function as the Platform's main decision-making body and shall be supported by an International Office funded and managed under the auspices of UM and UP. The main roles and responsibilities of the Committee and the International Office are set out in the Platform concept note provided in Appendix A.

As a founding member of the Platform, each institution shall undertake to:

- Select 2 doctoral students per year to participate in the platform and ensure that funding for these students is managed for the duration of their doctoral studies. Criteria and processes for selecting doctoral students are provided in the Platform concept note in Appendix A.
- Commit to active participation, at a senior level, in the Platform's International Steering Committee and, if elected, agree to serve as Co-Chair of the Committee for a period of up to 3 years.
- Cover the costs of attending an in-person Committee meeting once every 18 months, with the first meeting to be held at UP on 23 May 2023.
- Agree on and promote the Platform's further development and support fundraising efforts to be undertaken by the International Office.

### Financement

Le présent MoU n'engage aucune des parties, à l'exception de l'UM et de l'UP, à fournir des ressources financières pour soutenir le Bureau International de la Plateforme et/ou les activités annuelles de la Plateforme qui seront organisées par ce Bureau. Toutes les parties sont néanmoins encouragées à envisager d'accueillir les activités annuelles de la plate-forme et à couvrir les coûts locaux associés, par exemple pour la location de locaux, la restauration, le soutien administratif local, etc. selon les besoins.

### Durée du protocole d'accord

Le présent MoU est à titre gracieux et peut être modifié par consentement mutuel des représentants autorisés des parties. Le présent protocole d'accord prend effet à la signature des représentants autorisés des parties et reste en vigueur jusqu'à ce qu'il soit modifié par une partie et sur la base du consentement mutuel de toutes les parties. En l'absence d'accord mutuel entre les représentants autorisés des parties, le présent protocole d'accord restera inchangé et prendra fin trois ans après la date de son entrée en vigueur.

Si l'une des parties souhaite se retirer de la participation à la Plateforme doctorale de collaboration mondiale et à son Comité, elle doit en informer l'UM et l'UP par écrit et inclure une proposition visant à garantir que les doctorants qu'elle a sélectionnés pour participer à un cycle de deux ou trois ans des activités de la Plateforme ne soient pas désavantagés ou empêchés de participer à ces activités ou au réseau d'anciens étudiants de la Plateforme.

### Litiges

En cas de difficulté sur l'interprétation ou l'exécution de l'Accord, les Parties s'engagent à s'efforcer de résoudre leur différend à l'amiable.

En cas de désaccord persistant, les tribunaux compétents de la Partie défendante pourront être saisis.

### Funding

This MoU does not commit any of the Parties, except UM and UP, to contribute financial resources in support of the Platform's International Office and/or the annual Platform activities to be organized by that Office. All Parties are nevertheless encouraged to consider hosting annual Platform activities and cover associated local costs, e.g., for venue hire, catering, local administrative support, etc. as required.

### Duration

This MoU is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized representatives from any of the Parties. This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the Parties' authorized representatives and will remain in effect until modified by any one of the Parties and on the basis of mutual consent by all Parties. In the absence of mutual agreement by the Parties' authorized representatives this MoU shall remain unchanged and end three years after the date on which it comes into effect.

Should any one of the Parties wish to withdraw from participating in the Global Collaborative PhD Platform and its Committee, they shall notify UM and UP in writing about their intention to do so, and include a proposal for ensuring that any of the PhD students they may have selected for participation in a two or three year cycle of the Platform activities are not disadvantaged or prevented from participating in those activities or the Platform's Alumni network.

### Disputes

Any dispute relating to the validity, interpretation or implementation of the Agreement shall be settled amicably between the two Parties.

In the event of unresolved disagreement, the dispute shall be settled by the Defendant's relevant courts.

## Appendix A.: Platform Concept Note



### Feed, Protect, Care for Sustainable Futures

#### A Global Collaborative PhD Platform

The University of Montpellier (UM) in France and the University of Pretoria (UP) in South Africa have joined forces to develop an initiative that will convene and connect the next generation of sustainability scientists from across the full spectrum of scientific disciplines and across the world in equitable partnerships and lifelong networks of expertise and influence. The Feed, Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform has been conceptualized as an innovative and unique response to the imperatives of open science and open education. With its focus on the interconnected societal missions of feeding, caring for and protecting people, places and the planet, the Platform will serve to strengthen and secure the capacity of the global scientific community to inform and support critical transformations to sustainable futures at local to global levels.

The Platform was launched in 2023 under the co-leadership of UM and UP and on behalf of a global consortium of an additional 15 founding member institutions (see Box 1 below), which will convene annual cohorts of at least 30 PhD students from all major regions of the world. The ambition is to extend the global reach of the consortium and, by implication, the inclusivity and diversity of the PhD cohorts and their longer-term partnerships and networks.

During Phase I of this ambitious initiative, covering the period from 2024 to 2026, the Platform's thematic focus will fall specifically on the complex and urgent challenges of building sustainable food systems at local to global scales.

#### 1. Background

UM and UP have worked together in a strategic partnership since 2018 and with a primary focus on research and education in the areas of sustainable food systems, climate change and biodiversity, and one health. The relationship has been strengthened by engagements at the highest level of institutional and political leadership. The two universities share a commitment to building a transformative global knowledge commons by means of equitable and open collaboration on the key challenges of our time. Both universities see the value of extending their bilateral collaboration to a multilateral level to amplify investments and accelerate the achievement of impact at scale. These persuasions led to the UM-UP agreement to develop the Feed, Protect, Care, Global Collaborative PhD Platform.

The development of the Platform will draw on the strategic, multilateral partner networks and related experiences of both universities, including UM's leadership of the Montpellier Université d'Excellence (MUSE) consortium, which brought together 16 academic institutions for purposes of addressing interconnected agricultural, food, environment and health challenges, and UP's African Global University Project and Future Africa, a pan-African platform for transdisciplinary, challenge-oriented research.

At UM, the Feed, Protect, Care, Global Collaborative PhD Platform will be implemented as part of the international portion of the France 2030-funded IDéES program, which seeks to develop global infrastructures, referred to as “Key world initiatives”. At UP, the Platform will be implemented by Future Africa as part of its work in the challenge domains of Sustainable Food Systems and Sustainability Transformations.

## 2. The Global Context

The Feed, Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform has been conceived in a contemporary global context that confronts the world of science, broadly defined to include all disciplines and fields of research, with several critical opportunities and challenges, including:

- **Mobilizing science in support of global sustainability transformations**  
Global sustainability challenges – as exemplified by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as regional frameworks such as Africa’s 2063 Agenda and the European Green Deal – and the related imperatives of urgent social transformations are of central concern to each of the Platform’s founding members. The Platform’s focus on Feed, Care and Protect addresses the key interconnected, systemic challenges of sustainable development.
- **Ensuring scientific rigor, increasing scientific relevance**  
In their commitment to advancing science as a global good, improving its rigor and amplifying and accelerating its impact on policy and public action, the Platform’s founding members advocate and support the principles and practices of open science and open education. This includes a focus on inter- and trans-disciplinarity as powerful approaches to co-creating actionable knowledge and thus increasing the relevance, utility and impact of science. This focus will be central to the Platform’s work.
- **Building sustainability science capacities at scale**  
Doctoral education is key to the development of vibrant knowledge societies and their equitable participation in the multilateral system. By investing in young researchers and embedding their education in global networks of mutual learning and collaboration, the Platform will contribute to building the global knowledge commons that will inform and support future sustainability transformations.
- **Strengthening effective and equitable international scientific collaboration**  
Effective and equitable international scientific exchange, benefit sharing, and collaboration is essential for generating the global solutions required to address global challenges. In an increasingly multi-polar world, characterized by the resurgence of nationalism – including scientific nationalism – strengthening such collaboration is a priority. The Platform will deliver on it by facilitating meaningful connections between future generations of sustainability scientists from all parts of the world, fostering the endurance of those connections over time and thus shaping the scientific communities we need to design our common future.

## 3. The Feed, Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform

### 3.1 What is the Platform’s fundamental purpose and what is it intended to achieve?

The Platform’s **vision** is one in which social transformations to sustainability are inspired, informed, and supported by a collaborative global community of future sustainability scientists who share a common purpose and collaborate as equal partners. Its **mission** is to build that community at scale and ensure its readiness to produce knowledge that meets the highest standards of scientific rigor and relevance.

The Platform's [strategic objectives](#) are to:

- Build a truly global community of future sustainability science leaders through the internationalization of doctoral education and the development of lifelong networks of expertise and influence
- Increase the impact of sustainability science through the promotion and support, at doctoral level, of inter- and trans-disciplinary research approaches and the development of expertise at the science-policy-society interface
- Facilitate longer-term research opportunities for, as well as career development prospects of early career sustainability scientists
- Advance the practices of open science and open education through the development of new and equitable global partnerships

### [3.2 How will the Platform operate and what will it do?](#)

The Platform will bring together higher education institutions (universities and analogous organizations) from all regions of the world, with each selecting and supporting 2 doctoral students to participate in the Platform for at least 2 and preferably 3 years. Given that the Platform is not intended to function as a joint doctoral program, the terms and conditions, including timeframes, of selected students' PhD studies will not be affected by their participation. They will, in other words, continue to receive supervision from their home institutions and will graduate in accordance with examination processes and timelines determined by those institutions.

The Platform will financially support selected PhD students' participation (travel, accommodation and subsistence) in Platform activities, which are described below.

[Phase I](#) of the initiative (2024 – 2026) will be launched with a consortium of up to 20 institutions (see point 3.4 below), bringing together a cohort of 40 doctoral students per year. During this phase, priority will be given to students focusing on any aspect of sustainable food systems.

In [Phases II and III](#) of the Platform (of three-year duration each) will be open to participation by additional institutions and to additional thematic foci in the Feed, Protect, Care framing.

[Platform activities](#), which will be agreed by the International Steering Committee (see point 3.3 below) and coordinated by the Platform's International Office (see point 3.3 below), will include:

- Annual PhD field schools, which are in-person events for doctoral students, lasting at least 5 days, and hosted by UM or UP or any other Platform member institution. If resources allow for it, bi-annual events will be considered. In addition to a focus on systems transformations, the events will provide joint training and networking on cross-cutting issues at the science-policy-society interface, including for example, introductions to science in multilateral policy fora and global assessments, relationships between science and the private sector, between science and the media, and between science and other knowledge systems, as well as the essentials of data science.
- Additional virtual events as needed and ongoing exchanges with and between the cohort of PhD students via a dedicated virtual research environment.
- Mobility exchanges, to be agreed on a case-by-case basis between those institutions participating in the Platform and with a focus on both South-South and North-South exchanges.
- Networking opportunities, with opportunities for doctoral students to engage with senior representatives of international initiatives operating in the sustainability science arena,

including for example, expert panels (such as IPCC, IPBS, HLPE/CFS, One Health HELP), CGIAR, Future Earth and the World Climate Research Programme.

- Further opportunities to develop bilateral and/or multilateral research partnerships, including between students' supervisors.

In addition, and depending on successful fundraising, the Platform will award an annual [Innovation and Impact Potential Prize](#); the terms and conditions of this award, as well as the selection process, will be defined and overseen by the Platform's International Steering Committee.

Once graduated, those doctoral students who have participated in the Platform and joined at least two annual in-person events will become members of a [Feed, Protect, Care Alumni Network](#). Looking at shaping future academic communities, the exact purpose, nature, and scope of activities of the Alumni Network will be determined during the first year of the Platform's operations and on the basis of brainstorming with the first cohort of participating doctoral students.

### 3.3 How will the cohort of PhD students be selected and how will they benefit?

PhD students are at the heart of this innovative multilateral initiative. The Platform will create a safe and equitable space for them to

- Engage in collective learning and capacity development at both professional and personal levels
- Develop networks with their peers in different countries and regions of the world
- Initiate new bi- or multi-lateral research collaborations
- Learn about and connect with global sustainability science and policy initiatives

The process of selecting students (e.g., by nomination or application) will be chosen and managed by each member institution and in line with their specific student enrollment and programmatic arrangements. Institutions are encouraged to seek the engagement of candidate's PhD supervisors in the process.

The criteria for student selection include:

- Stage of PhD studies: to ensure that students can participate in at least 2 annual Platform field schools, selection should favour students who are already registered but are still in the earlier stage of their PhD studies
- Thematic focus: students should be involved in research that is related to the agreed overall thematic focus of each Phase of the Platform's activities, with Phase I focused on transformations to sustainable food systems
- Motivation: students should ideally have a strong interest in transdisciplinary research for sustainability transformations and demonstrate the open-mindedness required to engage effectively in interdisciplinary and intercultural exchange, dialogue and collective learning
- Language: students should feel comfortable about participating in an English-speaking working environment

In addition, selection processes should respect the principles of inclusivity and diversity. Gender and disciplinary balance should be prioritized without leading to preferential treatment, and family obligations, including child care, should not pose obstacles to participation. Each institution will select two preferred candidates and identify one or two additional backup candidates. The names of all candidates from each member institution will then be submitted to the Steering Committee for final validation. This step is intended to ensure that each cohort of students is balanced in terms of gender and disciplinary orientation.



The institution hosting the Annual PhD field school will be allowed to select a limited number of additional students to participate in the meeting hosted at their institution.

### 3.4 How will the Platform be governed and managed?

The Platform will be governed by an [International Steering Committee](#), which will

- Comprise one senior representative of each of the Platform's founding member institutions. The Committee may decide to coopt one or two external advisors
- Be co-chaired by two Committee members, one from the global South and one from the global North, with both elected by the Committee as a whole and serving for a period of up to three years
- Meet virtually at least once a year and in person at least once every 18 months
- Assume responsibility for
  - Deciding on and overseeing the design and implementation of the Platform's overall strategic orientations and activities
  - Advising on and, where possible, supporting Platform fundraising actions and, more broadly, committing their institutions to the further development of the Platform
  - Promoting the Platform's visibility and extension to new member institutions
  - Evaluating the outcomes of Phase I and determining parameters for the development of Phase II and III activities

The Platform's [International Office](#) will be supported by and co-located at UM and UP. It will be:

- Led by two Scientific Co-Directors, appointed by UM and UP respectively, and supported by a relevant complement of professional support staff
- Accountable to the International Steering Committee
- Responsible for:
  - Implementing, on approval of the Steering Committee, Platform activities
  - Communications and outreach, including expansion of the Platform via engagement with new member institutions
  - Developing and maintaining linkages with relevant international initiatives
  - Fundraising
  - Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

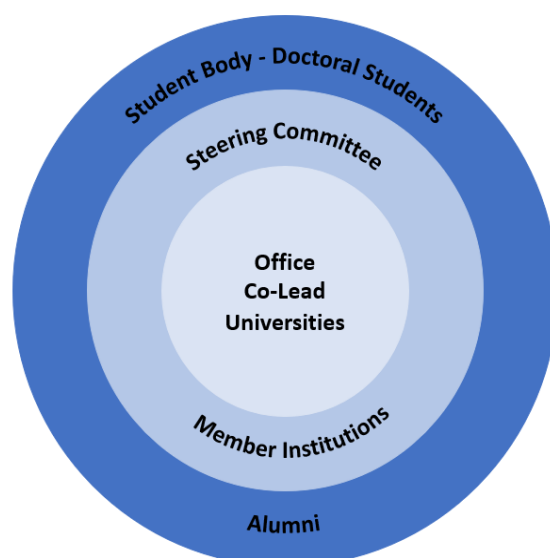


Fig 1.: Platform structure



### 3.5 Who are the Platform's members, what is expected of them and how will they benefit?

The Steering Committee is comprised of founding member institutions, all of whom are strategic partners of both UM and UP.

Box 1.: Founding members of the Feed, Protect, Care, Global Collaborative PhD Platform

#### *The University of Montpellier (co-lead)*

<https://www.umontpellier.fr>

*With its 17 faculties, schools and institutes and 73 research structures, the University of Montpellier brings together a vast academic community. With more than 50,000 students and 4,800 staff, the University is now one of the largest universities in France and a founding member of the European University Charm-EU.*

*The PEI Programme (Programme d'Excellence I-Site) lead by the University Montpellier gathers the forces of 16 institutions (6.000 academic staff) towards a common ambition: strengthening and promoting in Montpellier a thematic research-intensive university that is internationally recognized for its impact in the fields of agriculture, food, environment and health.*

#### *The University of Pretoria (co-lead)*

<https://www.up.ac.za/>

*The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of Africa's top research-intensive universities and one of Africa's largest, with over 50,000 students and 2,200 academic staff. UP advocates transdisciplinarity as a pathway to societal impact. It has 9 faculties that span the knowledge spectrum from classic academic fields to rapidly evolving new fields of study, and more than 70 research entities. UP's African Global University Project mobilises and harnesses powerful international partnerships for greater leverage, innovation, and impact.*

*Future Africa is the University of Pretoria's pan-African platform for collaborative research that works across scientific fields and disciplines, and with society, to address Africa's biggest and most urgent contemporary challenges. Its fundamental purpose is to develop and unleash the potential of African sciences to inform and support global sustainability transformations at local to global levels.*

#### *The Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences*

<https://gs.caas.cn/>

*The Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) is a national comprehensive agricultural research institution with 36 research institutes, in affiliation to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China. As the education arm of CAAS, the GSCAAS is a legal entity of higher education institution mainly focusing on graduate education, with more than 6,000 students and 2,732 graduate supervisors, of which doctoral students covers more than 35% of registered students. With an overall competitive edge in the disciplines of agriculture and life science, it has been ranked among China's first-class graduate schools, and offers 52 Master's and 44 Doctoral programs to domestic and international students. It is always striving to provide solutions to a broad range of challenges in sustaining agricultural development through scientific innovation, technology transfer and education in agriculture.*

#### *Michigan State University*

<https://msu.edu/>

*Founded in 1855, Michigan State University is a top 100 global research university. MSU is an inclusive, academic community known for its traditionally strong academic disciplines*

and professional programs, and its liberal arts foundation. MSU's cross- and interdisciplinary enterprises connect the sciences, humanities, and professions in practical, sustainable, and innovative ways to address society's rapidly changing needs. As a public, research-intensive, land-grant university funded in part by the state of Michigan, its mission is to advance knowledge and transform lives by providing outstanding undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, conducting research of the highest caliber that seeks to answer questions and create solutions, advancing outreach, engagement, and economic development activities. The MSU community includes more than 12,000 faculty and academic and support staff, over 51,000 students, and an alumni network nearly half a million strong.

#### *University Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar*

<https://www.ucad.sn>

With over 85,000 students and around 3,000 academy staff, Cheikh Anta Diop University is the leading French-speaking university in West Africa. It comprises 6 classical faculties, 7 graduate schools, 21 university institutes and seven doctoral schools. Its principal mission is to train managers for Senegal and other countries, through initial and continuing training, to serve the economic, social and cultural development of the country, Africa and the world. To this end, it promotes excellence, quality, equity, solidarity and openness to the world. Research fields include science and technology, health sciences, economics, law and politics, and the humanities and social sciences. Interdisciplinarity enables us to offer platforms that can respond to urgent development issues through high-quality research and training.

#### *Université Laval*

<https://www.ulaval.ca>

Université Laval is a major teaching and research university with a global vision, recognized for training socially engaged and committed leaders. Its study environment and culture of sustainable development contribute to community well-being.

Université Laval's accomplished and respected professors make the institution a world-renowned hub for research and innovation. Armed with a transdisciplinary approach, they are committed to making positive impacts in the communities where they work.

More than 56,000 students registered for at least 1 of the 3 semesters offered in 2021–2022. In addition to its regular student body, Université Laval welcomes more than 930 resident physicians and more than 500 postdoctoral fellows every year.

More than 500 postdoctoral fellows from around the world promoting innovation and advancing sustainable research at Université Laval. Contributions from fellows enrich our 275 centers, chairs, institutes and other research clusters. Come expand your horizons with leading researchers renowned for innovation.

Ranked as one of the top 10 employers in Québec, Université Laval has 1665 professors 2410 lecturers, and other teaching and research staff and 3165 administrative and support staff.

#### *University of Arizona*

Established in 1885 and synonymous with academic and research excellence, the [Carnegie-recognized R1, University of Arizona](#), is the state's [land grant institution](#). Ranked among the nation's [top 50 public universities](#) by U.S. News & World Report and #16 for the employability of its graduates, UArizona is in the [top 4% of all universities](#) - both public and private - with more than \$954 million in research and development activity in FY23 as ranked by the National Science Foundation.

The University is ranked #1 in astronomy and astrophysics, #2 in U.S. water resources, #5 in NASA-funded activity, and #6 in the physical sciences. As a member of the [Association of](#)

[American Universities](#), the 71 leading U.S. public and private research universities, UArizona is recognized for advancing interdisciplinary scholarship and entrepreneurial partnerships.

### **UArizona Research, Innovation & Impact (RII)**

The Office for Research, Innovation and Impact advances the world-class research enterprise at the University of Arizona, a top-ranking public institution with over \$824M in annual research expenditures. Our bold, forward-thinking innovators are focused on transformational discoveries and inventions that address the world's most complex, pressing challenges. We support researchers with resources, training, and specialized facilities, and foster collaboration across disciplines through university institutes and centers. By providing hands-on research opportunities, direct access to faculty and professional mentorship, and programs that help encourage an entrepreneurial mindset, we prepare students to leave UArizona and thrive. Through an unwavering commitment to our land-grant mission, we stimulate economic development, societal impact, and improved life and health in Arizona and beyond. [Read more about who we are and RII.](#)

[The University of Barcelona](#)  
<https://web.ub.edu/en/home>

The University of Barcelona has 17 faculties, 10 affiliated centers and a doctoral school through which all its academic programs are run, specifically, forty-six doctoral programmes in different areas of knowledge, from the most experimental to the most humanistic, with approximately five thousand students, depending on the academic year. It also has a Science Park, a Science and Technology Centre service, 18 research institutes, and more than 6,300 active teachers and researchers. The UB has also more than 62.000 students and almost 2,400 administrative and service staff.

Since its foundation in 1450 the University has the mission to provide a public service for higher education, with the highest level of quality, through study, teaching, research and effective management of knowledge transfer. The UB's values are derived from the principles set out in its Statutes, which are shared by the entire university community: freedom, democracy, justice, equality and solidarity.

The UB has as well an active network. It is member of the CHARM-EU, an innovative higher education project that seeks to tackle interdisciplinary challenges while promoting accessibility and mobility. Additionally, the university is a member of LERU, a consortium comprising 23 research-intensive institutions dedicated to advancing innovation in Europe. The UB has been honored with the HR Excellence in Research recognition from the European Commission, demonstrating their dedication to fostering a supportive and stimulating research environment. It has also participated in the Erasmus+ program from its inception and reached a perfect score on their Erasmus Charter for Higher Education. The University is committed to achieving excellence, promoting sustainability, fostering inclusivity, and embracing digitalization.

The combination of all these factors has paved the way for the UB to retain its position of leadership among Spain's universities in the main international rankings.

[The Regents of the University of California on behalf of its Davis campus](#)  
<https://www.ucdavis.edu/>

The University of California, Davis is one of the ten campuses of the University of California, an institution created by the State of California in 1868 to impart higher education and to plan and carry out research programs for the purpose of the preservation and extension of knowledge, including the awarding of advanced degrees at the M.A., M.S., and Ph.D., and professional level. It was created by the Organic Act of 1868, which established it with appropriate judicial and financial support at the State level, and as a Land Grant Institution of the United States under the Morrill Act

of 1862. Its chief campus officer is the Chancellor. In order to accomplish its mission, it is organized into the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the College of Engineering, the College of Letters and Science, College of Biological Sciences; the Graduate School of Management, the School of Education, the School of Law, the School of Medicine, the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing, the School of Veterinary Medicine, Graduate Studies, UC Davis Continuing and Professional Education, the Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Agricultural Cooperative Extension.

#### *University of Nairobi, Kenya*

<https://www.uonbi.ac.ke>

The University of Nairobi, is a corporate body established by an Act of Parliament Cap 210 of the Laws of Kenya and is the pioneer institution of University education in Kenya and the East African region. It is a research intensive university with a reputation for excellence and a strong and vibrant research culture. The University is engaged in high level manpower training through the development of strong, diversified academic programs and specializations in sciences, applied sciences, technology, humanities, social sciences and the arts. To date, the range of programs offered number approximately two hundred.

The staff population of the University of Nairobi stands at 2,220 academic staff with PhDs, 450 professors and 5,525 administrative and technical staff. With a student population of 84,000. The vision, mission and core values of the University demonstrates the importance placed upon research activities within the University.

The University of Nairobi has established research institutes in focus areas of expertise, which are inter-disciplinary centers of excellence in research and development. The university also hosts a number of Centers of Excellence which have been set up by the government or private stakeholders in collaboration with the University to serve the East African region.

#### *The Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture*

<https://www.esalq.usp.br/>

The Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture (ESALQ) is located in the city of Piracicaba, São Paulo State, Brazil. It is one of the 42 academic units of the University of Sao Paulo, the first ranked and biggest university in the country. ESALQ has 800 faculty and staff members along with nearly 3,400 undergraduate and graduate students and is considered a center of excellence for undergraduate and graduate programs in agricultural, environmental, biological and applied social sciences. It offers 7 undergraduate programs and 15 graduate programs, in its 12 departments and 120 laboratories. It has graduated 17,000 students and 11,000 Master and PhD students. ESALQ permanently keep agreements with foreign institutions, exchanging students and faculty members, and offering double degree programs in Agriculture and in Food Sciences with French institutions. Future Africa is an opportunity to deliver and to develop knowledge in tropical agriculture, the ESALQ 's excellence area, and to help the global sustainability and food production.

#### *University of the Western Cape*

<https://www.uwc.ac.za>

UWC is a research-led university responsive to the needs of a changing world through excellence in teaching, learning and research and the generation and application of new knowledge.

Firmly anchored in its local and sub-regional context and inspired by its distinctive academic role in building a more equitable and dynamic society, the University continues to empower

*its students, staff and partners to advance its mission of serving the greater public good and searching for humane and sustainable solutions to the challenges of our time.*

*This is pursued through high academic standards, intellectual rigour and productive partnerships and networks beyond the confines of disciplinary and geographic boundaries.*

#### *University of York*

*The University of York is a member of the UK's Russell Group, we are a dynamic, research-intensive university. We were ranked in the Top 10 of UK Universities based on the quality of research outputs as evaluated in the Government Research Excellence Framework 2021.*

*Our teaching, learning and student experience is outstanding, recognised by a Gold rating from the Office for Students in the 2023 national assessment (Teaching Excellence Framework).*

*We nurture our highly talented students from all backgrounds by giving them opportunities to develop and grow in an ever-changing world. Through York Futures, our innovative employability programme, we support our students' career ambitions and help them meet the needs of global employers. Our three faculties and 30+ academic departments undertake groundbreaking research that underpins our teaching. Today we're home to more than 20,000 students and 5,000 staff.*

#### *Utrecht University*

*[www.uu.nl](http://www.uu.nl)*

*Utrecht University is research university with 40.000 students. It has focused its research in four interdisciplinary research themes: Life Sciences, Pathways to Sustainability, Dynamics of Youth and Institutions for Open Societies. The university is also a trailblazer in the field of educational innovation and it is one of the founding partners of the European University CHARM-EU. Teaching and research are strongly connected. The university believes in the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion. All this provides a solid base from which to work with others around the globe on the societal issues of the future.*

#### *Wageningen University & Research*

*[www.wur.nl](http://www.wur.nl)*

*Wageningen University & Research is a collaboration between Wageningen University and the Wageningen Research foundation.*

*'To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life'*

*That is the mission of Wageningen University & Research. Over 7,600 employees, 13,100 students and over 150.000 participants to WUR's Life Long Learning from more than hundred countries work everywhere around the world in the domain of healthy food and living environment for governments and the business community-at-large. The strength of Wageningen University & Research lies in its ability to join the forces of specialised research institutes and the university. It also lies in the combined efforts of the various fields of natural and social sciences. This union of expertise leads to scientific breakthroughs that can quickly be put into practice and be incorporated into education. This is the Wageningen Approach. Collaboration with other parties such as government, business and NGOs is indispensable. This is in line with the Finding Answers Together ambition. The scientific quality of Wageningen University & Research is affirmed by the prominent position we occupy in international rankings and citation indexes.*



Institutions that want to join the Platform as new members will be required to send a written motivation, indicating their interest in the Platform and their willingness to sign the MoU. Decisions on the admission of new members will be made by the Steering Committee.

The number of new members that can be admitted will be determined at the start of each Phase and will depend on the overall number of participating institutions, as well as the balance of members from the global north and south.

The main [obligations](#) associated with becoming a member institution include

- Selecting 2 doctoral students to participate in each Phase of the Platform and ensure that support for those students is secured for the duration of their doctoral studies.
- Committing to active participation, at a senior level, in the Platform's International Steering Committee
- Covering the costs of attending an in-person International Steering Committee meeting once every 18 months
- Promoting the Platform's further development

The [value proposition](#) of joining the Platform as a member institution includes the opportunity to participate in a multilateral initiative with global impact when it comes to advancing open science and open education and shaping the transformative potential of tomorrow's scientific communities. In addition, member institutions stand to strengthen their own sustainability science capacities and access to equitable global research partnership opportunities.

### 3.6 How will the Platform be financed?

UM and UP have committed seed funding and agreed to lead on fundraising to launch Phase I of the Feed, Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform. These resources will support initial Platform activities as set out in point 3.2 above, as well as the human resource and operational costs associated with the effective functioning of the International Office. Fundraising will be required for purposes of supporting, in the longer-term, Platform activities and the International Office. As members of the International Steering Committee, founding member institutions will be expected to advise on and support fundraising efforts. In addition, they will be asked to cover the costs of their participation, every 18 months, in an in-person Steering Committee meeting and will be encouraged to consider hosting an annual Platform field school.

## 4. Contact points for further information

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