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MCO Connect - Issue 1, February 2022



## Welcome from the President

Welcome to the first edition of **MCO Connect**, a new initiative from the Magna Charta Observatory.

As we help to enable signatories to embrace the [Magna Charta Universitatum](#) (MCU 2020), we thought it would be helpful to introduce a newsletter to share information on a regular basis and seek your engagement in activities relating to university values and current issues.

The pandemic has caused us to reflect on how we might best respond to the climate emergency: in the words of the MCU 2020, how we should 'engage with and respond to the aspirations and challenges of the world... and contribute to sustainability'. The number of people participating in our online webinars is many times more than the number who had previously attended our in-person events.

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## Be an Ambassador for the MCO

The Observatory's objective is to play an active role in guaranteeing the respect, protection and promotion of the fundamental values and university rights set out in the Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU), signed in Bologna in 1988 and developed in the [MCU 2020](#). The MCO acts as the guardian of these values and assists signatories and other universities in the understanding and implementation of them.

Senior leaders from higher education institutions around the world, known as 'ambassadors', work with the MCO to fulfill these responsibilities. They work with the Living Value pilot sites, contribute to events organized by the MCO, assist with gathering information, developing guidelines and resources, undertake reviews and provide quality assurance or reports where necessary.

As part of its strategy the MCO wishes to increase the number of ambassadors and countries from which they come. Applications and nominations are being accepted until **February 21, 2022 for up to 10 new ambassadors**. [Apply here](#).

[Read more ...](#)

## In case you missed it...



### Free to Think 2021 report

Scholars at Risk (SAR) released its annual report on its Academic Freedom Monitoring Project called, [Free to Think 2021](#).

To mark the release of the report, SAR held a virtual symposium with sessions on protesting military rule in Myanmar, responding to the crisis in Afghanistan, protecting expression in Belarus and legislative attacks on academic freedom in the United States. You can watch the recording on the symposium on their [website](#).

### IAU Horizons

In the latest issue of the International Association of Universities (IAU) [Horizons](#), MCO President Patrick Deane and Secretary-General David Lock co-authored an editorial speaking to the importance of university values in leadership.

The theme of the issue is "*Leadership for a Sustainable Future - Higher Education and Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals*". You can find their article on page 52 of the online publication.

### Sign the MCU 2020

More than 900 universities around the globe signed the original 1988 Magna Charta Universitatum, however not all of those original signatories have signed the new **MCU 2020** to declare their support of the responsibilities, values and principles outlined in the document.

It is free to sign the MCU 2020 and signatories join a worldwide consortium of universities dedicated to upholding the principles of academic freedom, autonomy, research, education and the pursuit of strengthening the role of universities in the preservation of the planet and to promote health, prosperity and enlightenment around the world.

If your university has not signed the MCU 2020, you are [invited to apply](#) to become a signatory and attend the annual signing ceremony, to be held in-person at the University of Bologna this coming September.



**Learn more ...**

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