United Nations Academic Impact

Member Institution Handbook

2016



**Congratulations on becoming a new member of UNAI!**

 Your institution has joined over 1000 academic and research institutions who are members of United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI).

UNAI was established in 2010 by Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon. The aim of this initiative is to align institutions of higher education with the United Nations to further the realization of the purposes and mandate of the Organization through activities and research in a shared culture of intellectual social responsibility.

UNAI is a programme of the Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information. By becoming a UNAI member, each institution is required to complete a minimum of one activity per year in support of UNAI’s ten grounding principles:

1. A commitment to the principles inherent in the United Nations Charter as values that education seeks to promote and help fulfil;
2. A commitment to human rights, among them freedom of inquiry, opinion, and speech;
3. A commitment to educational opportunity for all people regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity;
4. A commitment to the opportunity for every interested individual to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of higher education;
5. A commitment to building capacity in higher education systems across the world;
6. A commitment to encouraging global citizenship through education;
7. A commitment to advancing peace and conflict resolution through education;
8. A commitment to addressing issues of poverty through education;
9. A commitment to promoting sustainability through education;
10. A commitment to promoting inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and the “unlearning” of intolerance, through education.

**To learn more and familiarize yourself with UNAI, we encourage you to visit:**

The UNAI website: <https://academicimpact.un.org/>

The UNAI Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/ImpactUN>

The UNAI Facebook account: <https://www.facebook.com/ImpactUN>

**Your First Steps as a UNAI Member**

1. Share that your institution has become a member of UNAI with your colleagues and students (through campus news, your institution’s weekly update email, alumni channels newsletters, etc.)
2. Contact your institution’s social media managers and notify them that your institution is now a member of UNAI; request them to:
	1. Follow UNAI on Twitter - @ImpactUN
	2. Like our Facebook page - facebook.com/ImpactUN
	3. Share any events/research related to the UN mandate with us through social media

**What Your Institution Can Do As a Member of UNAI**

This is by no means an exhaustive list of activities your institution can partake in as a member of UNAI.

It is likely that your institution is already taking part in activities that further the UN mandate, such as conducting research related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), encouraging students to be global citizens and/or ‘greening’ your campus (the use of solar panels, conserving water, recycling etc.). We encourage you to be creative and innovate in finding new ways academic and research institutions can further the UN mandate.

Below is a list of some of the official United Nations Observances that take place every year and may be of interest to your campus, as well as key events for the last quarter of 2015 with suggested events you may wish to initiate at your institution.

**For a complete list of UN observances click** [**here**](http://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/united-nations-observances/)

Be sure to share any UNAI events taking place at your institution with us over social media, or send any details to academicimpact@un.org to be featured on our website or in the newsletter!

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| **International Day**  | **Suggested Activities**  |
| February 4 - World Cancer Day  | * Campaign aiming to reduce cancer among faculty, staff and students (reducing smoking, encourage exercise and healthy eating)
* Lecture series highlighting the work of cancer researchers at your institution
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| February 20 - World Day of Social Justice  | * Event highlighting how your institution promotes gender equality, or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants
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| March 22 - World Water Day  | * ‘Bring Your Reusable Water Bottle’ campaign
* Highlight researcher whose work relates to water
* Organize clean-up of nearby lake, beach, river, etc.
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| April 7 - World Health Day  | * Coalition of departments who are improving health (School/Departments of Medicine, Rehabilitation, Public Health, Engineering) and develop a panel to discuss how they can work together
* Organize a charity drive for a health cause
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| April 23 - World Book and Copyright Day  | * Social media campaign asking students and faculty to post about books that have influenced them
* Tours of institution’s library/ies)
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| May 21 - World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development  | * Panel highlighting intercultural dialogue, diversity and inclusion
* Highlight diversity at your institution
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| June 5 - World Environment Day  | * ‘Walk/Bike to school’ campaign
* Highlight environmental researchers at your institution in lecture series
* Incorporate sustainable practices into curriculum
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| June 14 - World Blood Donor Day  | * Organize a blood drive
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| July 18 - Nelson Mandela International Day  | * Highlight students/faculty/staff at your institution who serve humanity in the fields of conflict resolution, promotion & protection of human rights, reconciliation, gender equality, poverty reduction, etc.
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| August 9 - International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples  | * Highlight indigenous services at your institution
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| September 8 - International Literacy Day  | * Organize a book swap for students and staff
* Organize a book drive for a disadvantaged school
* Highlight importance of literacy for critical thinking, participatory government, biodiversity protection, poverty protection, etc.
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| October 5 - World Teachers’ Day  | * Appreciation event for individuals who inspire and teach students to be global citizens
* Open house at institution’s School of Education
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| October 10 - World Mental Health Day  | * Highlight mental health services available at your institution
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| November 10 - World Science Day for Peace and Development  | * Organize an event bridging the gap between science and societies
* Essay competition amongst science students (Life Sciences, Engineering, etc.) discussing how their work contributes to a peaceful society
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| November 19 - World Toilet Day  | * Highlight that lack of toilets prevents proper sanitation and has dramatic consequences for human health, dignity and security, the environment and social and economic development
 |
| December 1 - World AIDS Day  | * Highlight AIDS research at your institution through a panel or lecture series
* Raise funds for UNAIDS
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**Other events coming up:**

The signing of the COP21 Paris Agreement

**When?** 22 April, Mother Earth Day, 2016 in New York

**What is it?** Following the adoption of the Paris Agreement by the COP (Conference of Parties), it will be deposited at the United Nations in New York and be opened for one year for signature. The agreement will enter force after 55 countries that account for at least 55% of the global emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification.

 **What can your institution do?**

* + - Organize a panel with climate, environmental, socioeconomic researchers and ask what they would like to see post COP21 signing of the Agreement
		- Incorporate research regarding the progress of the [Sustainable](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/) Development Goals into curricula and ask students to suggest how COP21 and the SDG’s intertwineOrganize a viewing party to watch the webcast of events related to adoption of the COP21 Agreement

Elections for the new Secretary-General

**When?** 2016, United Nations, New York

**What is it?** Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon concludes his term as the eighth United Nations Secretary General on 31 December 2016. The appointment of the new Secretary-General is a two stage process under Article 97 of the UN Charter. First, a recommendation by the Security Council followed by a decision by the General Assembly. The new Secretary General will assume the role in January 2017 and will serve a five year term, which can be renewed by member states for an additional five years.

**What can your institution can do?**

* + - Organize a discussion with researchers and students to analyse and suggest the strengths needed for the new Secretary General and relate to current events