

VISION, MISSION, VALUES OF SAINT JOSEPH UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

The French text of this policy was approved by the University Board during its 183rd meeting on October 28, 2015 and updated during its 212th meeting on February 23, 2022 and its 225th meeting on October 15, 2025

SAINT JOSEPH UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT: A VISION FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS, A MISSION AND VALUES

Saint Joseph University of Beirut is the product of the Jesuit Founders' **long-matured and long-desired dream** back in 1875. Their vision was to form leaders of social and national transformation, armed with values of probity and excellence, in civil and religious disciplines.

One hundred years later, the re-founders of 1975 renewed the mission and vision within the Charter of USJ, **pursuing the rebuilding of the cohesion and continuity of the University's institutions** over values that combine unity with participation, authenticity with modernity, technicality and professionalism with the highly believing and humanistic culture. Today, with the 150th anniversary of the University in 2025, and faced with its many own challenges as well as those of the surrounding environment, **the University, as an academic community regrouping Jesuits and laypersons, is renewing its vision.**

It is preserving the same pillars for its vision, favoring for the future the idea of a University which aims to maintain excellence in training and relevance in research. It aims at relying upon the know- how-to-be skills as well as the formative humanism, while adapting it to the specificities of Lebanon, and the Near and Middle East.

It also promotes **the idea of the University as a crossroads**, which presents itself as a cultural interface that seeks to help individuals and communities respond to a fundamental challenge of the 21st century: How can the community become a community in relationship with others, and how can the individual become the individual in relationship with others while still being rooted within their community?

The mission of the University is articulated around three dimensions: the **creation** of new knowledge (research), the **transmission** of this knowledge (teaching), and putting this knowledge **at the service of the society** (service). In order to carry out this mission, the University positions itself as an establishment of Francophone language and culture, which privileges **multiculturalism** and **trilingualism** (French, Arabic and English) and that adopts **innovation** and **digital transformation**.

Being accessible to all social classes and communities, and at the service of the nation and the region, it promotes, through its teaching and research, issues such as **sustainable development**, primacy of **human rights, justice, democracy, dialogue of civilizations** as well as **issues of meaning**. Being open to the international sphere, it is determined to benefit from the extraordinary potential that is represented by the global network of Jesuit and Catholic universities.

The vision and mission are built on values that combine namely the Jesuit pedagogical tradition, autonomy, collaboration, participation, freedom of conscience, political independence and social engagement, all centered on academic, professional, and ethical training of excellence, completed by an authentic culture that is founded on the issues of sense making, at the service of the promotion of the individual.

This is how education, as a concept, shall keep its strength and preserve the intensity of its content, and this is how the USJ Spirit shall continue to evolve dynamically and efficiently.

VISION

The Vision Components

A vision drawn by an organization certainly must express what this organization aspires to accomplish and achieve in the medium and long terms. It defines the future state that this organization and its environment wish to attain. This vision is intended to become that of every member of the community, as long as they can recognize themselves in it and identify with it.

What we, the whole community of the University, need to accomplish in the next ten years is reflected in **the following intertwining elements**:

- **We want our University to continue to be a reference of excellence in terms of university training.**

Thus, we shall work on acquiring the culture of Quality as a national and international requirement. This culture should, through best practices in university pedagogy, lead to self-assessment and ultimately to accreditation of the activities of the central offices of the University as well as the programs of the faculties. The assessment practice shall thus become an inherent part of the University's identity. To the technical approach adopted, shall be added the major concern to ensure the human and social training of students. Always **at the service of excellence**, our University should review and strengthen its academic programs in both senses of the term: by pursuing their alignment with the requirements of the Bologna Process, on one hand, and putting an end to the programs which have lost relevance with time, on the other hand. This review shall be tied to **a better identification of new programs** that meet real needs and a better awareness of sustainable development, as well as the concepts of justice and social responsibility.

Finally, Saint Joseph University of Beirut shall be open to new audiences in Lebanon, the Arab world, and at the international level, by creating programs in English, on one hand, and developing relevant lifelong training curricula, on the other hand.

- **We want our University to continue developing quality research, innovation, and the creation of new knowledge, which are an integral part of our training, and to ensure they meet national, regional, and international needs.**

We shall work on creating **new doctoral schools** covering all disciplines, reinforcing those already existing and **promoting publications**. We therefore envision our University multiplying the number of its PhD candidates.

- **We want our University to confirm and strengthen the remarkable position of the instructor-researcher.**

We shall strive to employ the biggest number possible of full-time instructors in order to ensure a long-lasting and committed team.

The instructor-researcher shall know how to enhance their pedagogical approaches, both classical and digital, and how to become a **promoter of the creation of knowledge**. An instructor-researcher, as defined by the Instructor and Researcher Code, shall not be confined to transmitting knowledge but shall lead quality research works that are innovative, relevant and of interest for Lebanon and the region. They shall introduce the student to becoming an active actor of their own learning and a researcher as soon as they enter the University.

- **We want our University to give appropriate importance to student life and needs.**

We consider that the **sense of belonging** that the students have towards their *Alma Mater* is the pledge of survival for the University community.

We would like to see a University that considers its students as autonomous adults, which calls for moving toward a discourse that favors active participation and shouldering responsibility. A University which namely ensures a deeper understanding of **citizenship and general knowledge** subjects, in support of the promotion of the individual.

We shall seek to reinforce **student participation** in University activities, to involve them in decision-making bodies, to provide them with adequate orientation so as to continue their university path, and to offer them a well-adapted training that could pave the way for them to enter the labor market.

In view of ensuring jobs to the young graduates, it is wise to **promote relationships with enterprises**, in order to establish lasting ties rooted in a shared interest.

- **We want our University to increasingly become a large crossroads where interreligious, intercultural, multilingual, civic and convivial paths intersect.**

At the core of this crossroads, the educational act, rooted in the **Jesuit pedagogical tradition**, shall focus on training in **mediation** for the biggest possible number of actors of the University, faculty and staff, students and alumni. USJ shall develop its national mission as a **meeting point for coexistence**, for ethical and humanistic reflection, for a laboratory of democracy, and for participation in the service for all. A meeting point for all these denominations, but also a place of objective research for Lebanon and the Arab world; a meeting point that confirms its 7th Day mission of being at the service of the development of the City, especially its marginalized and underprivileged populations; and finally a meeting point that is open to all men and women who wish to join the Saint Joseph University but cannot afford it.

- **We want our University to have an increasingly relevant mission in the health field.**

Hôtel Dieu de France, the University Hospital, and its network, along with the Faculty of Medicine and its affiliated institutions, and other faculties and institutions that are active in the health field, shall reinforce their synergy to better put their skills, know-how and devotion at the **service of patients** in Lebanon and the Arab region, and to train the medical and healthcare staff on the most advanced skills. These two missions are prioritized due to both their scientific and human importance.

Given its history and context, *Hôtel-Dieu de France* shall be called upon to reinforce its role within its humanitarian mission, serving all social classes.

- **We want our University to continue to develop its mission in the field of entrepreneurship.**

We shall seek to create trainings adapted to this purpose, to propose adequate coaching, and to ensure a supportive environment for the funding of **entrepreneurship projects**. The synergy with Berytech shall be reinforced in this regard.

- **We want our University to strengthen its ties with its Alumni.**

Our University shall view its Alumni as partners who actively support their *Alma Mater*, and shall seek to build lasting relationships with entrepreneurs looking for our top graduates.

- **We want our University to enhance, in accordance with our Charter (Art. 5), its role in the promotion of the Lebanese, Arab and international culture.**

We shall seek to strengthen the synergy between the University's academic institutions and its numerous cultural venues (theaters, museums, cultural centers, etc.) and to multiply the various initiatives that take into consideration the diversity of target audiences.

- **We want our University to keep on developing a strategy of international cooperation, while remaining anchored in its Francophone tradition.**

We shall rely on the quality of the trainings provided by its members and the work of its research teams, which operate at the highest international standards.

The Means of the Vision

In order to achieve these various objectives – of excellence in training, development of research, recognition of the instructor-researcher, increased interest in the student's status, and the University's national role, the University should equip itself with the means to achieve its ambitions:

- Our University must fearlessly knock on doors (in the evangelical sense of the term) in order to raise the needed funds to give itself the means namely to support research in many domains, to grow its student body by integrating the most underprivileged and to develop its facilities and infrastructure.
- Our University shall develop its infrastructure. It shall renovate its Rectorate, its campuses and its regional centers by adopting a green university approach. It shall establish a central Campus space connected by footbridges over the 65,000 m² area on Damascus Road, where two new campuses will be built. It shall ensure a better visibility of its other campuses, namely the historical campus on Huvelin street and the technological campus in Mar Roukoz.
- Our University shall work to ensure that the University hospital, *Hôtel-Dieu de France*, remains a center of medical excellence, supported by the Faculty of Medicine and other academic institutions in the health sector, by contributing to the development of its infrastructure, equipment, and human resources.
- Our University shall mobilize its different actors in a spirit of solidarity and teamwork in order to prompt them to see themselves as partners in a smart and creative university community.

MISSION

It is by answering the question: “Why maintain and develop this Lebanese private university, *founded and animated by the Society of Jesus*, when there already are many universities in Lebanon, and more broadly in the Near-East?” that the Saint Joseph University intends to define its mission for the next decade.

In other words: What is the specificity that we, as university leaders, instructors-researchers and staff members, want to prioritize? How do we intend to differentiate ourselves within our environment?

- USJ intends to answer these questions with a set of elements which, if taken separately, can only partially characterize it, but when taken as a whole, form a somehow strong “trademark”:
- A University that is open to all: to all social classes, to all Lebanese citizens, regardless of their religious affiliation, to students from the region (Syria, Iraq, Gulf countries, etc.) and from around the world.
- A University committed to developing lifelong training for all its alumni and for key actors of the Lebanese society and the region.
- A University rooted in French culture and language, that promotes multiculturalism and trilingualism (French, Arabic and English).
- A University that is at the service of the country and the broader Near and Middle East, and that incorporates its commitment to sustainable development, human rights, democracy and justice into both its courses and the choice of its research projects.
- A University that prioritizes, in both its teachings and research, questions of meaning, as well as the teaching and research related to the religious traditions present in the Near-East, and particularly their interreligious dimensions.
- A University that dedicates significant human and material resources to research, innovation and digital transformation, areas that fall under its three core missions:
 1. To create new knowledge (research);
 2. To transmit this knowledge (teaching);
 3. To put this knowledge at the service of society (service).
- A University that is internationally open and draws on the extraordinary potential offered by the global network of Jesuit and Catholic universities.

VALUES

In its Charter, first drafted in 1975 and updated in 2024, the Saint Joseph University of Beirut (*Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth-USJ*) outlines its goals, mission, and the values that continue to guide its work today and into the next decade.

The Board of Trustees, created in 2021, supports the University's undertaking.

The Society of Jesus ensures that the University remains faithful to this Charter, particularly in matters related to spirituality, ethics, and social responsibility.

Academic Excellence and Humanism

USJ is committed to providing a high-quality academic and professional education, rooted in a spirituality and a culture grounded in the search for meaning and dedicated to the promotion of individuals. The University aims to form ethical professionals and responsible citizens who think critically, exercise sound judgment, and commit themselves to serving the common good. It also welcomes the acknowledgement of God, who transcends human values and is honored in the Constitution of Lebanon.

Collaboration Spirit and Interdisciplinary Dialogue

USJ believes that every academic discipline has the right to develop independently while respecting its own methods and knowledge. At the same time, it actively fosters a spirit of collaboration and interdisciplinary dialogue, and believes that this interdisciplinary convergence is a source of intellectual enrichment, a driver of innovation, and a way to serve the human person in all their complexity.

Linguistic and Intercultural Openness

USJ embraces trilingualism in French, Arabic, and English, and encourages both the study and use of languages. It views linguistic openness as a means of cultural enrichment, a catalyst for dialogue among peoples, and a pathway to understanding of the world. This approach is central to the University's mission to prepare individuals capable of navigating multicultural contexts with respect and discernment.

Participatory Engagement

USJ encourages the active participation of all members of its university community, including students, academic and administrative staff, alumni, and other stakeholders. All are invited to take part in building a shared academic home. This participatory approach is rooted in the recognition of every person's skills and responsibilities, as defined in the University Bylaws. It reflects a dynamic vision of university life based on shared responsibility, open dialogue, and collective contribution.

Respect and Freedom of Conscience

USJ firmly believes that no form of discrimination, whether religious, sectarian, or political, should ever be tolerated. The University expects its members to cultivate mutual understanding and respect within a diverse environment. This principle goes beyond tolerance. It affirms that true freedom lies in freedom of conscience, which is essential to foster dialogue among civilizations and form individuals who are free, responsible, and respectful of others.

Independence and Pluralism

USJ, firmly committed to upholding Human Rights, protects its independence from all political ideologies in order to preserve academic freedom, the integrity of its mission, and the diversity of perspectives. The University actively promotes a diverse academic and administrative community as a key foundation for open and critical thinking. It places strong value on freedom of information and democratic debate as essential tools for forming citizens who serve society.

Solidarity and Social Commitment

USJ places solidarity and social commitment at the heart of its mission. The University strives to form citizens who are alert to injustice and ready to take action in support of the common good. This commitment is reflected in projects, partnerships, and a teaching approach that remains connected to social realities. It aims

to encourage active participation, both individual and collective, in building a more just and compassionate society.

Institutional Autonomy

USJ places great importance on maintaining its independence from all external influence. It actively protects its academic mission, governance, and finance. This independence is seen as essential to preserving academic freedom and staying true to the University's educational and scientific mission.

Jesuit Pedagogy and Personalized Support

USJ, as a Jesuit university, embraces a holistic approach to education rooted in encouragement, guidance, and the daily practice of discernment. Students are invited to always do more (*magis*), to push beyond their limits. To support this growth, every student is guided with due regard to their person and learning approach (*cura personalis*). The dedication of instructors and staff to the individual development of students is a cornerstone of this Jesuit educational tradition. The goal is to form free, responsible, and committed individuals who combine academic excellence with human and spiritual depth.

Sustainable Development and Environmental Responsibility

USJ recognizes its responsibility in building a more just and sustainable future. It promotes environmentally conscious practices and raises awareness across the University community about ecological challenges. It integrates the principles of sustainable development into its teaching, research, and governance, adopts eco-conscious policies, and supports concrete initiatives that contribute to ecological transition.

Inclusion and Diversity

USJ values social, cultural, and intellectual diversity. It is committed to making education accessible to all and to creating an inclusive environment where every student has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of background or personal situation. The University offers tailored support and fosters a culture of mutual respect, grounded in the belief that diversity strengthens the entire university community.