



***Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) Statement to the  
Education post-COVID-19: Extraordinary session of the Global Education Meeting (2020 GEM)***

Higher Education plays a vital role in educating the current and next generation of leaders, driving the research agenda for both the public and private sectors, and playing a critical role in shaping the direction of national economies.

The [Higher Education and Sustainability Initiative](#) (HESI) is a partnership that convenes over thirty Higher Education Sustainability Networks and UN agency members. Created preceding the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 in 2012) HESI accounted for more than one-third of all the voluntary commitments that were launched at Rio+20 with commitments from over 300 universities from around the world. Through its strong association with the United Nations, HESI provides higher education institutions with a unique interface between higher education, science, and policymaking and is working to deliver the following outcomes:

- Convening and sharing best practices
- Raising the profile of the higher education sector's role in educating for sustainable development through advocacy and communications
- Recognising and supporting initiatives led by UN agencies and Higher Education Sustainability Networks
- Catalysing new areas for action

In this era of uncertainty that has caused the biggest education disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HESI looks forward to working with others to address some of the most pressing questions, including how can we redesign higher education in support of sustainable development, a green recovery, and regenerative pathways for education while also ensuring the quality of education, equity, and gender equality everywhere, to build the world we want.