

Letter of Recommendation

As the six higher education institutions initiating the PHUSE project funded by swissuniversities, we are jointly committed to advancing the integration of Planetary Health at the scientific, educational, and institutional levels across Swiss higher education.

While we, as project partners, are grateful for the solid foundations established and the valuable momentum generated through the PHUSE project to date, we are convinced that lasting impact can only be achieved through sustained institutional engagement. Ensuring continuity is essential for embedding these important developments into the sustainability culture of Swiss higher education institutions in a meaningful and enduring way.

The PHUSE partners strongly recommend Swiss higher education institutions with health-related study programmes to establish long-term structures to sustain a planetary health culture, in line with the considerations outlined in the attached letter. The examples of the Medical Faculties in Lausanne, Bern, Basel, St. Gallen and Geneva, all of which have started to introduce paid roles dedicated to Planetary Health (e.g., professorships, scientific collaborators or coordinators responsible for education, research or sustainability measures), show that creating durable structures and dedicated human resources is crucial for strengthening the culture of Planetary Health at Swiss higher education institutions.

As the founding partners of this project, we are collectively convinced that such institutionalization is of high relevance. We therefore wish to encourage all institutions—if they have not already done so—to take the necessary steps to ensure continuity in this crucial area.

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Embedding a Planetary Health Culture within Health Faculties

Recommendations for Permanent Human Resources

To anchor Planetary Health as a core element within the culture of health faculty or departments – particularly in this rapidly evolving field –, we recommend establishing **two long-term positions** dedicated to coordinating Planetary Health education and research and advancing sustainability measures.

A) **Position: “Specialist Planetary Health Education and Research”**

Job objectives:

The job holder

- implements, coordinates and evaluates transformative Planetary Health education in the faculty/department.
- develops, coordinates, and strengthens research initiatives on Planetary Health at the faculty/department.
- establishes and maintains solid collaborations with relevant partners, in particular the national PHUSE project.

Main tasks (key responsibilities):

Education

- Lead curriculum development and integration of transformative Planetary Health content into the faculty’s/department’s undergraduate programs.
- (Further) develop and refine Planetary Health courses and learning resources (e.g., modular e-learning, fact sheets, interactive lecture materials, transformative courses).
- Ensure evaluation and quality assurance through continuous review of curricular integration and yearly updates of learning resources to maintain didactic effectiveness.
- Develop and deliver training for lecturers/teachers on Planetary Health and transformative education for sustainable development.

Research

- Support Planetary Health–related research within the faculty/department.
- Supervise or co-supervise master’s theses and dissertations, in collaboration with faculty professors if required.
- Assist with research funding applications and acquisition of third-party funding.

- Promote the integration of Planetary Health into the faculty's/department's research agenda and networks.

Collaboration & Networking

- Maintain and expand cooperation with relevant experts within the faculty/department and beyond.
- Provide feedback to and actively participate in the national PHUSE network.
- Engage in continuous interfaculty, interuniversity, and external communication to increase visibility and impact (e.g., co-organizing events).

B) Position: “Sustainability Coordinator”

Job objectives:

The job holder

- establishes a sustainability culture within the faculty/department by assessing and reducing the environmental footprint of training and research.
- establishes and maintains strong collaborations with suitable internal and external partners.

Main tasks (key responsibilities):

- Assess the overall environmental impact of the faculty/department, including research activities.
- Develop of Planetary Health-aligned sustainability strategy for environmental protection, mitigation and adaptation measures across key areas at faculty level (e.g., research, procurement, mobility, food, etc.).
- Implement the sustainability strategy and monitor progress.
- Support the socio-ecological transition within research activities and infrastructures.
- Raise awareness and mobilize the faculty/department community around sustainability and Planetary Health principles.
- Engage in continuous interfaculty, interuniversity (e.g., collaboration with the Sustainability Office), and external communication to strengthen visibility and impact, including co-organization of events.

Financial Resources:

To operationalize the above positions, an annual budget of 10'000 - 40'000 CHF is recommended to cover essential tools, including apps, equipment, and licenses for key learning management systems and related resources.