

## **Administrative response of the Executive Board EUR to the Proposal to Develop EUR Guidelines on Collaboration with the Fossil Fuel Industry. Version 26 March 2024**

This administrative response is a response to the Proposal to Develop EUR Guidelines on Collaboration with the Fossil Fuel Industry (hereinafter: proposal). This proposal was written by the team that was involved in the organisation of the EUR Sustainability Dialogues and has been commented on by other EUR colleagues involved. Among other things, this administrative response serves as a mandate for the Committee of Experts to be set up to formulate a set of useful guidelines, including an implementation plan.

The Executive Board greatly appreciates the efforts of the authors and would like to thank them for their efforts on this important theme for EUR. The proposal has a clear vision, which serves as important input for the Committee of Experts to be set up to formulate the guidelines to be drawn up for cooperation with the fossil fuel industry.

The Executive Board embraces the overarching objective that our education and research do not cause damage to the climate and ecosystems and strives to create the highest possible positive impact. When entering into collaborations with external parties, the Executive Board considers it an important condition that a collaborating party has a credible and feasible 'divesting in fossil' policy.

When embarking on educational and research projects, we evaluate how (prospective) collaboration partners define for themselves a 'moral minimum' with regard to divestment in fossil fuels. In doing so, we pay attention to which efforts and ambitions they actually demonstrate to contribute to a sustainable future above that lower limit.

Assignment to the Committee of Experts:

- The Commission is tasked with advising the Executive Board on guidelines for cooperation with the fossil fuel industry. In doing so, it uses the proposal, the administrative response and the recommendations of the University Council and Trust Fund as input.
- The Commission will be tasked with formulating guidelines for research, teaching and engagement that are manageable and unambiguous and do not unnecessarily exclude parties. Academic freedom is an important starting point here. In addition, they must do justice to the overarching objective as formulated above (reference is made to the text on page 4 of the proposal), including the formulation of a 'moral minimum'.
- The Commission is asked to ensure that the guidelines that are drawn up and imposed on our cooperation partners are compatible with what is reasonably possible and are in line with relevant existing policies, including those on engagement with third parties.
- The Commission is asked to consider the implications for employment practices and labour market policy when formulating the guidelines.
- The Committee is asked to have the advice to the Executive Board ready before the summer of 2024 so that the Executive Board can adopt the guidelines as of the next academic year (2 September 2024). In response to the proposal, the Executive Board provides the following points for attention with regard to the conditions for cooperation:
  - The proposal mentions five conditions for cooperation. The formulation used here indicates a necessity ('companies must'). The chosen wording should be adapted to a desired situation ('companies should').
  - In this light, the suggested condition 4 is seen as a desired end state. In reality, virtually every company (or person) is a direct or indirect user of fossil energy.
  - One of the conditions must be that a cooperating party must have a demonstrable and credible 'divesting in fossil' policy.