

PRESS RELEASE

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Université Paris-Saclay launches a new staff training course in sustainable development

At the end of 2024, Université Paris-Saclay launched an unprecedented training course which will be deployed over the next two years to train approximately 16,000 staff members in sustainable development issues.

Global warming and biodiversity loss are major threats for our planet and societies. When the university was first established, Université Paris-Saclay decided to make sustainable development a key part of its institutional statutes. This symbolic act has meant that the university¹ has incorporated the major environmental challenges of the 21st century into all of its research, education and university activities, bringing together all of its services and departments.

Humanity has the possibility to take action collectively, and simultaneously reduce inequalities in different parts of the world; this is the challenge of the ecological transition. However, in order to appreciate what is at stake, we must first understand how these global changes work and their relationship with our lifestyles and consumption patterns. This is the very objective of the new training course "*Demain autrement*" (A different tomorrow).

The training course was developed using IPCC and IPBES reports and was coordinated by Sophie Szopa, a research director at the Laboratory for Climate and Environmental Sciences (LSCE - CEA/Université Paris-Saclay), also former Vice President at Université Paris-Saclay (May 2022 – June 2024).² The course aims to help staff at Université Paris-Saclay to familiarise themselves with the scientific bases which justify the need for an ecological transition, and give participants a shared foundation of knowledge in environmental issues.

At the end of the course, trainees will have explored the causes and consequences of climate change, biodiversity erosion and the extent of these disruptive changes caused by human activity, which can still be reversed. Participants will also learn about the ways to adjust and reduce these changes. Once trainees will have acquired this foundation, additional training courses adapted to specific jobs and areas of expertise may also be provided.

The training course was not designed with a passive learning approach, but intended as a shared adventure where each group will approach content through active participation, with a relative amount of autonomy. The course, which is currently only available in French, combines various types of content, alternating pedagogical documents, scientific games and discussions, all of which are led by PhD candidates who have been specifically trained to teach the course.

¹ Researchers and academics from Université Paris-Saclay contribute to various national and international bodies and groups of experts, including the Council of Economic Analysis (CAE - *Conseil d'analyse économique*), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

² Sophie Szopa was also Coordinating Lead Author of a chapter in the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report.

“Université Paris-Saclay has been committed to climate and biodiversity issues and the ecological transition more broadly speaking for many years now, as part of its missions in research, education, expertise and innovation. These issues play a key role in our sustainable development strategy, in which the university has committed itself to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, in line with national and European objectives, and its impact on biodiversity. The “Demain autrement” training course is unique in this respect, as it will train 16,000 staff members in sustainable development concepts and issues, giving them the keys they need to understand and act,” said Benoît Gabrielle, Vice President for Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility at Université Paris-Saclay.

The course has been funded by the government call for proposals, *Springboard*, and is currently being deployed by the university’s institute for staff training and skills observatory, the Diagonale - the department for arts, culture, science and society at Université Paris-Saclay, and the university’s sustainable development coordination unit.

The one-day training sessions will be taught in person on all of the university’s campuses in order to reach as many staff as possible. In the long-term, the *Demain autrement* training course will be made available in open access to all.

If you would like to attend one of the training sessions (which are taught in French only), please send a request via email to: service.presse@universite-paris-saclay.fr. We will inform you of any available sessions that you can attend.

ABOUT UNIVERSITÉ PARIS-SACLAY

Université Paris-Saclay was born from the shared ambition of French universities, grandes écoles and national research organisations. As a leading university in Europe and the world, it covers the fields of science and engineering, life sciences and health, and humanities and social sciences. The university’s science policy closely intertwines research and innovation, incorporating both basic and applied science to tackle major societal challenges. Université Paris-Saclay offers a varied range of undergraduate to doctorate level degrees, including programmes with its grandes écoles, all of which are focused on achieving student success and employability. The university prepares students for an ever-changing world where the ability to think critically, remain agile and renew one’s skills are crucial. Université Paris-Saclay also offers a comprehensive range of lifelong learning courses. Located to the south of Paris, the university extends across a vast and rich local area. Its location strengthens both its international visibility and its close ties with its socio-economic partners (major companies, SMEs, start-ups, local authorities, charities).

www.universite-paris-saclay.fr/en/

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