

Call for Applications – Director General & Dean HEC Liège

Introduction

HEC Liège is seeking an exceptional leader to serve as its next Director General & Dean to start on October 1, 2027.

Working closely with University's governing authorities, faculty, students, alumni and external stakeholders, the Director General & Dean will provide the strategic, academic and executive leadership required to guide the School through its next phase of development.

This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of a recognized management school at a time of profound transformation in higher education, driven by technological disruption, evolving learner expectations, international competition and increasing financial pressures.

The document describes the school, the role of the Director General & Dean, the desired candidate profile, and, finally, the application process.

HEC Liège Presentation

HEC Liège has a unique identity that is deeply rooted in a region rich in diversity. Its DNA is composed of strong academic culture, a unique entrepreneurial spirit, an openness to the world and a united and committed community.

Institutional Context

HEC Liège, the Management School of the University of Liège (ULiège), was formed through the historic merger of two institutions with complementary strengths: the University of Liège and HEC Liège.

The School is a **flagship institution in the Liège region**, widely recognized for its academic excellence and strong reputation at both national and international levels.

As an AACSB- and EQUIS-accredited institution, **HEC Liège belongs to a highly selective group of approximately 200 business schools worldwide that hold both accreditations.**

HEC Liège operates within the framework of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (WBF), which finances partially and regulates its activities. This system promotes social inclusion through capped tuition fees, student grants, and open access policies. While operating for a large part under stable funding and a regulated program landscape, the School leverages its autonomy to innovate, develop partnerships, and expand national and international initiatives. It is strongly embedded in a dynamic regional ecosystem, engaging with institutional stakeholders, collaborating and competing with other universities, and contributing actively to regional economic development.

The School benefits from a modern, sustainable campus **in the heart of the city of Liège**, designed to foster innovative learning and working practices, supported by state-of-the-art digital technologies.

HEC Liège is **rooted in a dynamic and economically developed region at the heart of Europe**, within the cross-border Euregio Meuse-Rhine, a dynamic cross-border area encompassing neighboring regions in Germany, the Netherlands, and Flanders. This strategic positioning naturally extends to Luxembourg, a key partner for student recruitment, internships, and lifelong learning opportunities, while remaining closely connected to the broader Greater Region, which includes more distant parts of Germany and France.

These ties define a focused and high-impact regional ecosystem at the core of the School's influence. This unique positioning is a key driver of HEC Liège's international outlook, fostering strong academic collaborations with leading regional partners.

Beyond its strategic location at the heart of Europe, HEC Liège has developed a strong and diversified **international footprint** extending well beyond the continent. The School is particularly active in key regions such as Asia, Morocco, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where it has established long-standing academic partnerships, joint programs, and executive education initiatives. These international engagements contribute not only to the School's global visibility but also to the diversification of its activities and revenue streams.

Governance

HEC Liège governance model grants it substantial **autonomy** in strategic, financial, and operational matters, supported by its own administration, and has always been considered as one of its strengths. It is built on two key principles.

- **Representativeness.** It lies on the active involvement of all internal stakeholders, including students, as well as external partners, across both advisory and decision-making bodies.
- **Consistency.** The University of Liège is represented within both the School Board and the Executive Education Board, while advisory bodies appoint corporate representatives to the School Board, the Executive Education Board, and the University's Board of Directors. This reciprocal representation fosters strong alignment between academic governance and the needs of the economic environment, while maintaining close ties with the University's decision-making bodies to ensure overall institutional coherence.

From an operational standpoint, the **Management Board** is responsible for strategy implementation and day-to-day operations, while the **School Board**, fully representative of all internal and external stakeholders, serves as the main decision-making body. Major decisions are ultimately validated at the University level by the **Board of Directors**, ensuring alignment, accountability, and institutional coherence.

HEC Liège governance environment is supported by a range of **advisory bodies**. The General Assembly ensures strong internal representation and engagement. High-level advisory boards composed of business leaders actively contribute to the School's strategic positioning and development. The Governance Council, who plays a pivotal role in shaping strategy and overseeing financial performance, with direct links to both the School Board and the University's Board of Directors, and dedicated bodies including HEC Connect, the Alumni Advisory Board, and the International Scientific Committee, supporting the School's growth, fundraising, and research ambitions.

Strategic Positioning

HEC Liège is currently implementing its 2024–2029 strategic plan, developed through a participatory process involving the whole community of the School.

HEC Liège's **mission and vision** are anchored in its dual identity as a public University-based business School, combining academic excellence with strong ties to the business world. Its purpose – “**We nurture the future**” – reflects a commitment to shaping agile, ethical, and innovative leaders equipped to address societal challenges. This is achieved through a synergy of education, research, and service & citizenship, supported by core **values** of citizenship, inclusivity, ethics, responsibility, rigor, and creativity.

The School's **vision** is to act as a catalyst for sustainable solutions and regional transformation, with thematic labs and restructured programs driving progress in **Sustainability & Transitions, Digital & Analytics, and Entrepreneurship & Innovation**.

Strategically, HEC Liège positions itself as an institution **deeply rooted in its ecosystem** while maintaining **strong global engagement**, with a clear focus on driving societal transformation. Its academic offerings span from bachelor to doctoral levels, with a significant proportion of international students and a high graduate employability rate. Research output is both academically rigorous and socially relevant, with a large share translated into managerial insights. The School's responsiveness to market and societal needs is reflected in its transdisciplinary initiatives and lifelong learning programs.

Programs, Students and Learning Experience

HEC Liège offers a **comprehensive portfolio of programs** across all levels: Bachelor, Master, Advanced Master, MBA, PhD, and Lifelong Learning. Fully aligned with European standards, these programs are co-designed by the **Program Committee** and key stakeholders to support the School's strategic priorities. They integrate core transversal themes, sustainability, digital transformation, including AI, and entrepreneurship, while fostering scientific rigor, critical thinking, and a strong sense of student responsibility.

HEC Liège maintains an inclusive admissions policy, consistent with the values of public education, while preserving academic excellence through selective progression criteria. The School actively fosters student engagement through initiatives that strengthen community life and support personal development. More than 3,100 students were enrolled during the 2025–2026 academic year.

The School places the development of **soft skills** – such as autonomy, adaptability, communication, teamwork, and critical thinking – at the heart of its educational strategy. Support services, career development, and student-led initiatives (e.g., student incubator, student associations) contribute to a vibrant learning environment.

Interculturality is at the core of HEC Liège's approach. Thanks to its globally relevant curriculum and multicultural classroom settings, HEC Liège now welcomes a strong **international student population**, representing more than 800 students, accounting for **25% of total enrollment (34% at the Master's level)**. Students from **80 nationalities** are enrolled, with **64% coming from outside Europe**, contributing to a rich multicultural learning environment. This diversity not only enhances classroom dialogue and broadens perspectives but also equips students with the intercultural competencies essential for thriving in global careers.

International outreach is central to HEC Liège's strategic vision, with internationalization embedded across programs and campus life to foster a globally engaged academic environment. HEC Liège ensures that all Master's graduates leave with at least one international experience (exchanges, double degrees, internships, or summer schools, ...), enhancing their global perspective and employability.

This commitment goes beyond student mobility, encompassing **offshore initiatives** and international teaching opportunities for faculty, all underpinned by a strong culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Research

HEC Liège Research, coordinated by a dedicated management board **PRISME**, is structured around seven strategic fields and is increasingly recognized for its societal relevance and impact.

The School supports its research ambitions through inclusive policies, clear career guidance, targeted recruitment, and measures such as balanced research time, publication incentives, sabbaticals, and international mobility.

Research is a cornerstone of the School's mission, serving as a key driver of academic excellence and socio-economic impact through applied projects, strategic partnerships, and active knowledge dissemination.

Building on these solid foundations, the 2025–2029 Research Plan reinforces HEC Liège's ambition to position itself as an internationally recognized research-intensive business school. Fully aligned with leading international accreditation standards and guided by the Scientific Advisory Board (COSCI), the plan seeks to foster a dynamic research ecosystem that combines academic rigor with societal relevance.

It is structured around four strategic priorities:

- To deliver high-quality research results.
- To develop an international reputation for the quality of its research.
- To be internationally recognized for its economic and societal impact.
- To train and educate qualified and productive scientists.

Executive Education

HEC Liège Executive Education is a **leading provider of Lifelong Learning** in Belgium, with an expanding international footprint that directly supports the School's academic, societal, and global ambitions.

In response to a rapidly evolving and uncertain world, HEC Liège Executive Education prepares **responsible leaders** capable of driving transformation and creating impact. Through flexible and personalized learning pathways from short programs to Executive Masters and MBAs, it fosters personal development, operational excellence, and transformative capacity. Combining face-to-face and digital formats, it cultivates a learning community that values critical thinking, dialogue, and responsibility, enabling leaders to contribute meaningfully to organizational and societal changes.

Delivered through the HEC Liège Executive School, its portfolio spans customized in-company programs, open-enrolment courses in Belgium and at the international stage, all closely aligned with market needs.

By bridging academic research with professional practice, it emphasizes key themes such as digital innovation – including AI –, sustainability, and leadership or human resources management, while reinforcing strong synergies between executive education and faculty development.

As part of its executive education strategy, HEC Liège **Executive Education has established a strong presence in Asia and Africa**. Through the development of programs and academic partnerships in these regions, the Executive School contributes to the international visibility of HEC Liège.

Corporate links and Impact

HEC Liège maintains **strong and longstanding ties with companies and organizations**, embedded across its governance, pedagogy, research activities, and graduate employability. This close connection stands as a defining strategic strength, reflected in the active involvement of corporate stakeholders, including major companies, public agencies, and SMEs, both in governance and in the School's ongoing development.

The School benefits from a **powerful and highly engaged global alumni network** of over 20,000 graduates, holding leadership positions across industries and regions. This community constitutes a key strategic asset, enhancing the School's international influence, supporting its development priorities, and actively contributing to partnerships, innovation, and long-term institutional impact.

The School operates within a broad and well-established **ecosystem of partners** and sources of support, notably through HEC Connect which brings together about 150 companies and organizations. This ecosystem underpins diversified knowledge transfer through applied research projects, strategic initiatives such as chairs and labs, and dedicated engagement formats including podcasts and networking events. Exposure to real-world practice is an integral component of the School's teaching approach.

The renewal of the BSIS label confirms HEC Liège's strong socio-economic impact, while flagship initiatives such as the VentureLab, the Smart Cities Institute, the Digital Lab, the AR/VR lab illustrate its commitment to entrepreneurship, innovation, and regional development.

Resources

HEC Liège manages a €35 million budget, with half funded by **stable public support** from the Wallonia-Brussels Federation via ULiège, ensuring **financial resilience and continuity** for strategic initiatives. Despite structural constraints, the School actively diversifies its income through fundraising, private sponsorships, alumni donations, executive education, and consultancy – raising almost €7 million over the past three years. Financial risks are mitigated through a geographically diversified activity portfolio and a structured risk management system at both School and University levels.

To fulfil its missions, HEC Liège relies on a committed and dedicated workforce of 379 staff members (Academic, Scientific and Administrative), representing 248 FTEs, with a balanced gender distribution of 51% women and 49% men.

Position Description

HEC Liège, the Management School of the University of Liège, invites applications for the position of Director General & Dean. This position offers a unique opportunity to lead a dynamic and internationally recognized business school. This key executive role combines strategic vision, academic leadership, and operational oversight to ensure the continued development, reputation, and international positioning of the School.

As Director General, the successful candidate is responsible for implementing the School's strategic plan, chairing the Management Board and the School Board, and representing HEC Liège towards external stakeholders. He also oversees all administrative operations, as part of the School's autonomy, in coordination with the Director of administration & finance.

As Dean, the successful candidate also presides over the School Board and participates actively to the University's academic and institutional governance, and represents HEC Liège within the University. As provided for in the organizational structure of ULiège, the Dean works in collaboration with the vice-Deans for studies and for research; each of them oversees matters within their respective areas of responsibility.

The position is offered for a four-year term, renewable once.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership and Governance

The Director General & Dean provides overall leadership for the School and ensures the effective functioning of its governance bodies.

- Lead the implementation of the School's strategic plan and ensure alignment with the University's broader policies and objectives
- Lead the Management Board as an aligned leadership team, facilitating constructive discussion and consensus-based decision-making
- Chair the School Board and contribute to key institutional decision-making
- Represent the School within the University and in external governance and public bodies
- Participate in University-level meetings and governance structures where the Dean is expected

2. Financial Management and Resource Development

The Director General & Dean ensures the School's financial sustainability and supports its long-term growth.

- Gain a strong understanding of financial frameworks governing relations between the University and the School
- Monitor revenues and costs, ensuring sound financial management
- Lead the annual budgeting process and define the School's medium-term financial trajectory
- Maintain the institutional relationship with the University, aiming to reach the best outcome for the School both financially and with respect to its autonomy
- Play a leading role in fundraising and resource development initiatives

3. Academic Excellence and International Positioning

The Director General & Dean is the guarantor of academic quality and global recognition.

- Promote high-quality, independent, and societally relevant research
- Promote academic freedom, disciplinary diversity and academic standards
- Lead the School's accreditation processes with major international bodies (e.g., EFMD, AACSB)
- Promote the School within international academic networks
- Develop and strengthen mutually profitable academic partnerships at national and international levels
- Represent the School in national and international academic and research institutions

4. Organizational Management and People Leadership

The Director General & Dean oversees the School's operations and cultivates a positive and high-performing organizational culture.

- Ensure effective management of all School activities within the framework set by the University and the School Board with the vice-Deans for studies and for research
- Lead faculty management, including regular engagement with academic staff
- Oversee administrative staff development in coordination with the Director of administration & finance
- Implement robust human resource management practices (planning, recruitment, talent development, performance review, succession planning)
- Foster a work environment based on fairness, respect, diversity, and inclusion
- Encourage innovation, creativity, and the recognition of individual and collective contributions
- Address and resolve conflicts where necessary
- Motivate and engage staff across all levels of the organization

5. Institutional Development and Cross-functional Coordination

The Director General & Dean ensures coherence across the School's strategic priorities and supports continuous improvement.

- Oversee strategic domains such as international strategy, risk management, and internal and external communication
- Contribute to the governance of affiliated organizations connected to the School
- Lead or support strategic initiatives, including KPI development, performance monitoring, and future program development
- Defend and promote the School's projects and priorities in relevant institutional governance bodies

6. Student Experience, Alumni Relations, and Executive Education

The Director General & Dean plays a key role in reinforcing the School's reputation among prospective students, participants, and alumni communities.

- Strengthen the School's attractiveness to high-quality students at all levels, including doctoral programs
- Promote international recruitment and visibility
- Develop and implement an effective alumni engagement strategy
- Support student supervision, including involvement in thesis guidance when appropriate
- Represent the School at events involving participants and partners in executive education at both national and international levels

Job Advertisement

The Opportunity

The School is entering a period of significant opportunity and transformation.

The next Director General & Dean will have the mandate to shape the School's future, build on its strengths and identify new avenues for growth, impact and differentiation.

Key opportunities may include:

- **Growth and Attractiveness.** Strengthening the School's visibility, reputation and attractiveness in order to improve high-quality student recruitment across programmes and markets.
- **Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation.** Leveraging AI and digital technologies to enhance teaching, research, student experience and operational effectiveness.
- **Financial Sustainability and Resource Development.** Diversifying revenue streams and developing new funding opportunities to support the School's long-term ambitions.
- **Academic Excellence and Impact.** Further enhancing the quality, relevance and international visibility of teaching, research and executive education activities.
- **International Development.** Expanding the School's global reach through partnerships, accreditations, faculty development and international engagement.

The successful candidate will be expected to assess these and other opportunities, define strategic priorities and mobilise stakeholders around a compelling vision for the School's future.

Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will combine academic legitimacy with executive leadership capabilities.

- **Academic credibility**
 - PhD in Management, Economics or a related discipline, or equivalent academic standing.
 - Internationally recognized academic and/or professional record.
 - Strong understanding of teaching, research and higher education.
 - Ability to engage credibly with faculty and accreditation bodies.
- **Executive leadership**
 - Proven experience leading complex organisations or academic institutions.
 - Strong strategic, financial and organisational leadership capabilities.
 - Leadership skills that foster cohesion and engagement.
 - Demonstrated success in business development, fundraising or revenue diversification.
 - Ability to build partnerships and influence stakeholders at senior levels.
 - Experience leading organisational transformation and change.
- **Personal qualities**
 - Integrity, credibility and sound judgement.
 - Outstanding communication and relationship-building skills.
 - Ability to inspire, influence and unite diverse stakeholders.
 - Resilience, adaptability and results orientation.
 - Commitment to public service and societal impact.

Desired skills and qualities

- **Academic competencies** (*ability to maintain credibility with faculty and accreditation bodies*)
 - *Teaching & Education:* International academic credibility in leading teaching, programme development and executive education.
 - *Research & Impact:* Strong internationally recognized research record and contribution to high-impact scholarship at the individual and collective level, including competitive funding.

- **Executive Leadership Competencies** (*ability to develop and lead the institution*)
 - *Vision & Strategy*: Ability to define and execute a long-term strategic vision for a complex academic institution.
 - *Leadership & Representation*: Strong executive presence and ability to align internal and external stakeholders.
 - *Branding, Marketing & Student Recruitment*: Proven capacity to strengthen institutional brand and attractiveness to high-quality students.
 - *Finance & Funding*: Experience in financial sustainability and diversification of funding sources.
 - *Technology & AI Transformation*: Ability to lead digital transformation and integrate AI in academic and operational processes.
 - *People & Organisation*: Experience in leading and developing high-performing academic and professional teams.
 - *Quality, Accreditation & Risk*: Experience with international accreditation and institutional quality assurance.
 - *ESG & Societal Impact*: Commitment to responsible leadership and sustainability.
 - *Change Management*: Ability to lead organisational transformation.
- **Personal Competencies** (*individual ability to perform the role effectively*)
 - *Personal Skills*: Strong leadership, integrity and interpersonal effectiveness.
 - *Languages*: Ability to operate fluently in French and English; additional language skills (e.g., German, Dutch) are an advantage.
 - *Mobility & Location*: Willingness to work at School's premises in Liege and relocate to the City area, and availability and interest for international mobility.

The School recognizes that no candidate is likely to meet every criterion outlined in this profile. The selection criteria describe the ideal combination of experience, competencies and personal attributes sought for the role. Candidates who can demonstrate strong credentials across a substantial proportion of these areas, and who have the potential to succeed in the position, are strongly encouraged to apply.

Why Join Us?

This role offers a rare opportunity to lead an institution with strong foundations and significant growth potential.

The next Director General & Dean will have the mandate, visibility and support required to shape the future of the School and strengthen its position among leading European management schools.

Application Process

Applications should include:

- A curriculum vitae;
- A letter of motivation showing relevant experience/expertise in research, teaching and leadership;
- A brief statement outlining the candidate's vision for the future development of the School.

And should be submitted to Ms. Sylvie Borrás, Director of administration & finance at HEC Liège (sylvie.borras@uliege.be), by October 31, 2026, at the latest.

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidentiality.

For further information about the position, contact Ms. Marie Lambert (marie.lambert@uliege.be).

For further information about the process, contact Ms. Sylvie Borrás (sylvie.borras@uliege.be).