

Sylvie Retailleau appointed CEO of Universcience.

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I strongly believe that science is essential, not a luxury limited to periods of prosperity. It is crucial to our freedom and our ability to choose our future collectively. The scientific approach remains one of the most powerful tools for developing critical thinking and resisting simplistic or conspiratorial narratives and misinformation. A society that supports its scientific and cultural institutions reinforces its own ability to think, debate, and anticipate.

Yet, science alone is not enough; we also need education, culture, and industry. Together, they help us make sense, understand, and build the world. The Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie and The Palais de la Découverte are remarkable tools of public service, unrivalled in France, they place science and technology at the heart of society and promote France's position in science and technology internationally. They play a central role in collaboration with their partners and the rest of the world.

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By decree issued by the Council of Ministers on 17 December, and following a proposal from the Board of Directors, the President of the Republic has appointed Mrs Sylvie Retailleau as CEO of Universcience, the public institution that brings together the Palais de la Découverte and the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie. She succeeds Bruno Maquart for a five-year term.

Professor of Physics at the University of Paris-Saclay, Sylvie Retailleau, served as Minister of Higher Education and Research from May 2022 to September 2024. She was previously President of the University of Paris-Saclay from March 2020 to May 2022, the ComUE (Community of Universities and Institutions) "University of Paris-Saclay" in 2019, and Paris-Sud University from June 2016 to January 2019.

She also chaired the research commission of France Université and was a member of several councils and committees of major French and international institutions. She is committed to the development of sciences with and for society, particularly regarding scientific demonstrations aimed at young people in the field of "Art-Science". She has achieved several milestones promoting sustainable development as well as the participation of women in science and technology.

Sylvie Retailleau's responsibilities will include defining a new cultural, scientific and economic model for Universcience, creating the conditions for the reopening of the Palais de la Découverte in early 2027, and developing proposals for the renovation of the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie within a constrained budget.

NOMINATIONS

On 5 December, Universcience's Board of Directors was renewed. Five people were nominated by the Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Space:

Laure Danilo, Heritage Curator, Director of Scientific Culture and of the Muséum d'Orléans for Biodiversity and the Environment, and President of the Association of Museums and Centres for the Promotion of Scientific, Technical, and Industrial Culture.

Raphaël Gaillard, Psychiatrist, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Paris-Cité, Academician, and Author.

Étienne Ghys, Mathematician and Perpetual Secretary of the Académie des Sciences.

Laurent Le Bon, General Heritage Curator and President of the Georges Pompidou National Centre for Art and Culture.

Sylvie Retailleau, Professor of Physics at the University of Paris-Saclay and former Minister of Higher Education and Research.



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ABOUT UNIVERSCIENCE

Universcience, the main French public institution of promotion of scientific, technical, and industrial culture, comprises The Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie and The Palais de la Découverte. The Palais de la Découverte will reopen fully renovated in 2027. During renovation work, its demonstration activities continue on the temporary structure, Les Étincelles du Palais de la Découverte.

Its mission? Making people discover and love sciences through exhibitions designed for self-guided exploration, as well as participatory scientific demonstration, presented by experts, where learning meets performance. Universcience wakes up curiosity, encourages dialogue, and introduces a scientific approach -observation, experimentation, deduction- giving everyone the basis for critical thinking.

Its strength? At Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie and Palais de la Découverte, people of all ages dream, discover and learn!

KEY FIGURES

2.5 million visitors per year on average at Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie and at Palais de la Découverte

1 million visitors per year on average to its exhibitions in France and abroad

One in two visitors is **under the age of 26**

More information universcience.fr

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