



جامعة الأخوين  
أكاديمية العلوم والآداب  
AL AKHAWAYN  
UNIVERSITY

Dean of the School  
of Social Sciences,  
Arts and Humanities

Al Akhawayn University



## Candidate Pack

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## 01. Executive Summary

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Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco (AUI) is seeking an innovative and collaborative leader to serve as the Dean of its School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities (SSAH), with a start date of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026.

Established nearly 30 years ago, AUI is an independent, public, not-for-profit, coeducational university in Ifrane, Morocco. It currently has over 4,000 students and its medium of instruction is English.

Reporting to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Dean will serve as the chief academic and administrative officer of SSAH, providing leadership that fosters a culture of academic excellence, integrity, and critical inquiry.

The Dean will ensure innovation in liberal arts and sciences education, positioning the University to play a leading role in addressing contemporary challenges—such as the technological revolution, shifting societal values, and the evolving perception of liberal education. Fostering faculty and student success, the Dean will also promote operational effectiveness through strategic oversight, leadership and contributions to collective intelligence, and active alignment, ownership, and pursuit of institutional goals.

To apply please [click here](#). The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (Morocco time) on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026.



## 02. About Al Akhawayn University

AUI was founded by royal decree (a 'Dahir') in 1993 by King Hassan II of Morocco. It is as an independent public not-for-profit university established on the American liberal arts model. The institution opened its doors to students in January 1995, so is on the cusp of celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

AUI was first accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) in 2017 and was reaccredited for ten years in 2022. As the only English language institution of higher education in Morocco, and one of only three US-accredited universities on the African continent, AUI is a beacon for the liberal arts in the MENA region.

The majority of students are undergraduates, but AUI also offers several popular Master-level graduate programs.

Based on the principles of diversity and an international outlook, the university's mission is driven by values of human solidarity and tolerance. Al Akhawayn has modelled its administrative, pedagogical, and academic organization on the American university system, and English is the language of instruction.

For more information, visit [www.aui.ma](http://www.aui.ma)



University President Dr Amine Bensaid, and his predecessor Dr Driss Ouauicha



### 03. About the School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

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AUI has four academic units: the School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities (SSAH), the School of Science and Engineering (SSE), the School of Business Administration (SBA), and the Language Center (LC).

The School of Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities has 438 students and 115 full-time faculty. This high staff-student ratio is explained by the fact that SSAH delivers most of the General Education program requirements that *all* students at AUI are required to take. This provides students with a foundation in the liberal arts anchored in the values, culture, history, and future aspirations of the people of Morocco and the region. In addition, SSAH offers majors and minors in applied humanities and social sciences, such as Psychology, Communication Studies, International Studies, Human Resource Development, and Digital Humanities, where students learn to build, connect, and lead a better world.

The University is widely recognized as a leader in 21<sup>st</sup> Century liberal arts education. It has pioneering and very successful initiatives underway around employability and entrepreneurship, as well as around ensuring students gain lifelong value from their academic studies. It has also started strategic work on the impact of technology and the opportunities it offers for advancing liberal arts education.

With 4,100 students (up from 1,900 five years ago), AUI is on track toward its strategic goal of 5,000 students, supported by strong commitments to educational quality, digital transformation, and the integration of technology with the values and perspectives of liberal arts education.





## 04. Living in Ifrane

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AUI is located in the idyllic resort town of Ifrane, known for its picturesque alpine-style architecture. The town sits at an altitude of 1,668 meters in the Middle Atlas Mountains of Morocco. It is approximately 48 kilometres from the famous imperial cities of Fez and Meknes.

Originally built in 1928 as a 'Garden City' during the colonial period, Ifrane has around 15,000 year-round residents, but also the capacity to house over 100,000 visitors who flock to it during winter to experience snow, and during summer to escape the city heat.

Ifrane offers wonderful hiking and a relaxed pace of life typical of beautiful resort towns. The University is situated at one end of town on the road to Fes, while the AUI-owned Annex, where most faculty live, the Al Akhawayn School in Ifrane (ASI) and the Al Akhawayn Conference Center are all situated at the other end of town, around four kilometres away from campus, on the main road to al-Hajib and Meknes.

### Schooling

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Al Akhawayn School in Ifrane (ASI), which the University operates, is an American-style pre-K-12 school with about 250 students. Its Director reports to the VPAA. ASI is currently in the process of accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Its students have an

impressive record of gaining admission to some of the finest universities in North America, in Europe, and across the Mediterranean.

### International Transport Connections

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The closest major airport is Fès-Saïs Airport (FEZ), only one hour's drive away. This provides direct international flights to and from several European cities, including Paris, London, and Madrid.

### Language and Culture

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French and Arabic are most widely spoken, however English is also commonly used. Largely due to the presence of the University, there is a diverse expat community, offering opportunities to meet people from around the world. Ifrane hosts various cultural and outdoor events, and its unique architecture makes it a pleasant place to explore. Nearby attractions include the Azrou cedar forests and the ski resort at Michlifén.

## 05. Role Description

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The Dean leads all aspects of SSAH's academic programs, faculty affairs, student success initiatives, and resource allocation, while serving as the School's primary external representative.

Key responsibilities include:

### Strategic Leadership and Management

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- driving excellence and innovation in liberal arts and sciences education;
- demonstrating visionary and servant leadership in meeting the challenges and seizing the opportunities associated with contemporary paradigm shifts, as well as in achieving School and University-wide goals;
- promoting a positive, accountable culture centered on scientific rigor, innovation, collaboration, and operational reliability;
- serving on the Deans' Council and representing SSE in University-wide leadership forums and external academic bodies;
- recommending budget needs to secure necessary resources for academic programmes and initiatives.

### Academic Oversight and Operations

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- providing strategic guidance on program development, curriculum, faculty recruitment, promotion, and research priorities;
- overseeing quality assurance, accreditation, and assessment processes, ensuring timely and accurate reporting and data-driven decision-making;
- overseeing the extension and growth of curricular and co-curricular programs;
- delegating academic operations, scheduling, and student affairs to dedicated personnel to ensure focus on achieving strategic goals.

### Faculty Affairs

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- fostering faculty engagement, development, and growth through mentoring and policy guidance;
- providing timely recommendations to leadership on faculty appointments, evaluations, contractual renewals, and recognition.

### Student Success, Research, and Employability

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- championing initiatives that improve student outcomes and engagement;
- overseeing student advice and development in an engaged liberal arts and sciences context;
- driving employability initiatives and applied co-curricular elements of the academic program;
- overseeing the resolution of critical student issues in collaboration with advisors and support staff.

### External Relations and Partnerships

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- building strategic partnerships with academic institutions, employers, and community organizations that advance excellence and innovation in liberal arts and sciences education;
- overseeing the narrative and messaging of SSAH degree programs and special programs.



## 06. Person Specification

The successful candidate will combine personal scholarly credibility with proven academic leadership skills. They will be an effective administrator who can articulate a compelling strategic vision for the development of SSAH's academic offering and profile.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate evidence of the following:

- a PhD in a discipline appropriate to the School;
- a track record of teaching, research, and service appropriate for appointment as an associate or full professor at AUI;
- a minimum of 5–7 years of experience as Department Head, Chair, Associate Dean, or Dean with demonstrated success in academic leadership;
- excellent presentation, written, and oral communication skills in English

The following additional attributes would be desirable, but are not considered essential:

- prior experience of working in an American-modelled or American-style international university.





## 07. Appointment Details and How to Apply

Al Akhawayn University is being assisted in this appointment process by the international executive search firm Society ([www.society-search.com](http://www.society-search.com)).

Applications should consist of:

1. a thoughtful covering letter (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification;
2. an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
3. names and contact details of three referees (although referees will only be approached at the final stage of the process, and only with your express permission).

General advice on how to write a [strong covering letter](#) and a [strong CV](#) can be found on our website.

To upload your documents via Society's website, [click here](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (Morocco time) on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

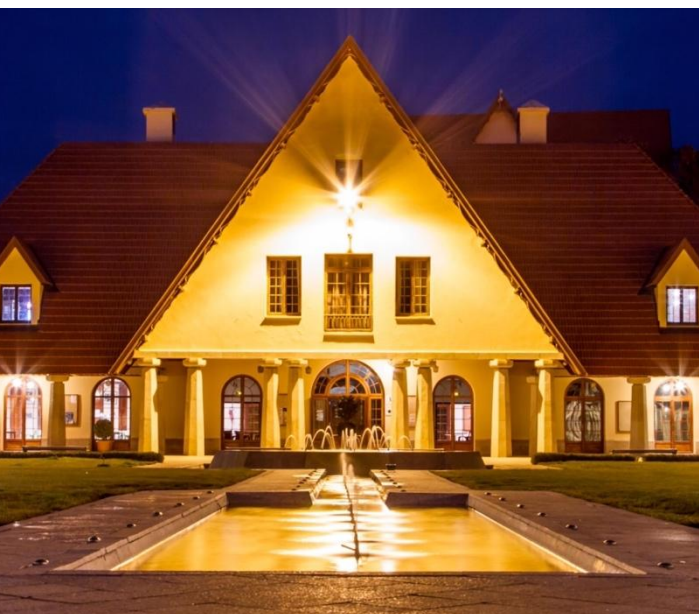
Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview on during February.

An appointment will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references. The appointed candidate will be offered a salary commensurate with their experience and the seniority of the role.

We are committed to ensuring that anyone can access our application processes. This includes people with hearing, sight, mobility, and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to this document in an alternative format, wish to apply in a different format, or need any other reasonable adjustments made for you (including at interview), please contact us at [inclusion@society-search.com](mailto:inclusion@society-search.com). We also welcome suggestions or comments about any more general access improvements we should consider.







Society is a global executive search firm and a certified B Corporation. 10% of our profits go to charitable causes through The Society Foundation. With colleagues in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, we solve senior hiring challenges for responsible businesses and purpose-driven organisations around the world.

We believe that the right candidate, placed in the right organisation at the right time, can initiate a chain reaction of transformative change that will help to deliver a more inclusive and sustainable future.

