

## ETHICAL FORUM 2022

### ***Is politics part of the universities' job***

*No one would deny the universities' right to enter the political domain in order to defend their own interests, or in order to campaign for material and institutional conditions favourable to the development of higher education and research generally. But universities often take a public stance on broader and more contentious political issues, for example on how to address the challenges of climate change, of immigration, of economic inequality or of international conflicts. They do so sometimes in the form of public declarations by their authorities, but also, for example, by allowing some people and not others to speak on their campuses, by subsidizing some student organizations and not others, by initiating or supporting boycott actions, by awarding honorary degrees for reasons other than academic merit, or by sanctioning professors who propagate politically deviant views.*

*In so doing, are universities going too far or not far enough? Should they stick to a more neutral position or should they instead become more engagées? Should they develop internal structures and procedures to control and validate "democratically" the political positions expressed by their rectors? Once the university adopts a particular political position, are its members bound by it?*

*What are the relevant legal and customary rules on these questions in Belgium's two Communities and abroad? And what should they be?*

Thursday December 1, 2022 – 2 pm – 6 pm