CHARM-EU: GOVERNANCE TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Figures & Tables

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: GOVERNANCE MODEL – TERMS OF REFERENCE

CHARM-EU is an alliance that was created in 2019 in response to the European University Initiative launched by the European Commission. The expanded alliance since 2023 is composed by nine universities University of Barcelona, Trinity College Dublin, Utrecht University, Eötvös Loránd University Budapest, University of Montpellier, Abo Akademi University, Julius Maximiliam University Würzburg, Hochschule Ruhr West and University of Bergen) that gather to create a Challenge-driven, Accessible, Research-Based and Mobile European University. The purpose of this new European University is to become a world example of the best of the European education, research and innovation tradition, offering a plural, inclusive, flexible, student-centred learning experience to citizens from the entire world. In other words, it is a test bed for innovation and a mean to improve our universities.

To ensure the cooperation between partner universities and the sustainability of the alliance, CHARM-EU has designed and implemented the governance and management model and this are the Terms of Reference that rule the alliance

The governance can be defined as "the manner in which power and authority is exercised in organisations in the allocation and management of resources". It relies on three main dimensions:

- Authority: who has a voice in making decisions?

- Decision-making: how are decisions made?

- Accountability: who is accountable?

This model was designed without prejudice to further rearrangements depending on the number of members, or the nature of the proposed activities. It is reviewed continuously to ensure its flexibility and consistence with the needs and activities of the alliance and updated once a year.

1. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

The governance of CHARM-EU started around the project and need to evolve to Alliance Governance. To respond to the needs of CHARM-EU, the governance has to be flat, flexible, bottom-up and allow the innovators take the lead. It requires both a common structure and local ones in the member universities, and they need to be strongly connected and operational at home level. Apart from these main characteristics, CHARM-EU is a learning organisation as part of its test-bed mission and its vision and values and it is implemented and run i in the same PDCA cycle as other CHARM-EU activities: design (Plan), implement (Do), evaluate (Check) and improve (Act).

The governance model is based on the experience of the previous years, what worked well, and adapted to the needs of the Alliance. The model allows for innovation within the Alliance through the Knowledge Creating Teams (KCTs). The KCTs can make proposals and work closely with the CHARM-EU operational boards. The thematic support offices with full- time or part-time staff located in the different universities allow flexibility, knowledge sharing and provide inter- institutional and intercultural diversity by adapting to specific needs and secure the visible representation of the Alliance in each member university and the continuous, comprehensive, and equal representation of each member university in the joint operation of the Alliance.

The governance model and positions[1] were designed with the objective to respect the core values of CHARM-EU and at the same time respect the partner peace. The following criteria were carefully taken into consideration while building this model:

- Keeping it flexible, operative, ready to handle emergency situations (unforeseen circumstances, changes within the teaching staff or with the students, external events, etc.)
- Mainstreaming intercultural atmosphere
- Having sustainability as a principle
- Incorporating good practices of partner institutions

This organisation ensures a multicultural, diverse, and inclusive environment and embeddedness of the knowledge of the Alliance members. The model is based on four main bodies:

- The Strategic Board, as the highest board of CHARM-EU, takes the strategic and financial decisions

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[1] *Positions within CHARM-EU governance model can be full time or part-time, but CHARM partners may also decide to fulfil a job with job sharing or to have more than one position fulfilled by the same employee.*

based on consensus, which enables the common strategy to be consistent with the members' individual institutional strategies.

- The Executive Board takes the day-to-day management decisions for the effective decision- making, implementation and follow-up of CHARM-EU activities.

- The Academic Council acts as advisory for the education and research decisions as well as for upholding the connection with the KCTs, and in charge of the day- to-day academic follow-up of the programmes and R&I projects, with clear division of roles between the Executive Board and the Academic Council. Thus, it also occupies a central place in the governance.

- The Student Council enables the governance to be student focused. The Student Council have access to the agendas of the meetings for the Academic Council and Executive Board.

All the boards take decisions based on a consensus. When there is no agreement, the issue is escalated to the higher board. If there are cases that don't follow these rules they will be detailed in the description of the specific board. The implementation started in the fall of 22023 and is deployed progressively. There will be a governance review every year through a report, which will be used to continuously improve the governance model and adapt it to the needs of the alliance. The implementation of new structures is proposed by the Executive Board, a task force is nominated, the result analysed by the Executive Board that brings to the Strategic Board for approval. Once approved, these Terms of Reference are updated and published.

Structure: Organisation chart and flow of information

Figure 1 CHARM-EU Organisation chart

Figure 2 CHARM-EU Flow of information

2. BOARDS AND COUNCILS

Strategic Board

Role

- The Strategic Board formally approves the strategic decisions for the Alliance and decides on the directions to take.
- Scope of decision:
- General strategy
- Integration and inclusion of a new member
- Exclusion of an existing member
- New programmes and projects
- Finance and budgets.
- Internal conflicts resolution (not resolved at the lower levels)

Composition

The Strategic Board includes:

- Ex-officio members: Rectors[2] of the member universities, one student representative, the chair of the Student Council. The Rector can be assisted by one Vice-Rector (with no additional voting right), and only in very rare occasions be represented by the Vice-rector.
- No voting members: Alliance Secretary General, Chair of the Executive Board.

Chair

One of the Rectors chairs the Strategic Board. The chair rotates every 6 months following this sequence: UB, TCD, UU, ELTE, UM, AAU, JMU, HRW, UiB. the one that is next in line is Deputy Chair. The order of the Chairs is established so that the Chair of the Strategic Board doesn't change at the same time as the Executive Board, and they are not from the same university.

Decision-making

Ex-officio members take the decisions by consensus and if needed, by qualified majority. They have a right of veto on key issues regarding finance and budgets in case they do not have the approval from their institution. In case of disagreement, there is a mediation procedure, which will be defined if needed.

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[2] Rectors will be used indistinctly for Rectors, Provost and Presidents. The same for Vice-Rectors. Will be used indistinctly for Vice-Rectors, Vice-Provost and Vice-Presidents.

Frequency of meetings, agenda and minutes

The Strategic Board meets at least twice a year. The Chair will be in charge to prepare the agenda. The manager of the chairing institution will act as secretary.

The Strategic Board will be assisted by the Vice-Rectors at least for the first year. The Vice-Rectors will meet at least one month before the Strategic Board to discuss the agenda of the meeting of the Strategic Board proposed by the Executive Board. The meetings will be chaired by the Vice-Rector of the Strategic Board chairing institution. The meetings will be attended by one Vice-Rector of each institution, the Chair of the Executive Board and the Secretary General.

Executive Board

Role

The Executive Board is responsible for all tactical and operational matters for the Alliance and executes the strategic decisions approved by the Strategic Board. The board is responsible to supervise the implementation of the different actions by the thematic support offices and the management of the projects. The Executive Board will have clearly defined mandates from the Strategic Board and has the final responsibility for the integral execution of CHARM-EU with all the projects and programs that are in it.

Scope of responsibilities:

- Design and execution of annual work plans and schedules, programmes and projects and adjust when needed.

- Execution of the CHARM-EU budget by each CHARM-EU Director in the member universities

- Follow-up of the results of the past period and deliver an overview of the execution plan and schedule for the upcoming period of six months.

- Analysis of new projects and initiatives before submitting them for formal approval of the Strategic Board unless they received mandates from the strategic board.

- Composing the agenda for the Strategic Board meeting in consultation with the Chair of the Strategic Board and the Alliance General Manager

Composition

The Executive Board is constituted by the CHARM-EU Directors one per member institution, and the Alliance Secretary General. The Chair of the Board establishes and circulates the agenda of the meetings and invites students, KCT members, support staff or project representatives when needed. The secretary will be the manager of the chairing institution. The CHARM-EU Managers attend the meetings but do not have a voting

right.

CHARM-EU Directors divide tasks amongst them (portfolio-holders), that means that each of them is responsible for one of the areas of activity of CHARM-EU, prepares the planning, is responsible for the execution and the follow-up and report to the Executive Board.

The areas of responsibility are distributed in a balanced way and review and updated whenever needed by the Executive Board. The areas are educational innovation activities, research and innovation activities, students, knowledge creating teams, partnerships/external stakeholders, professional development and recognition, mobility, equity-diversity-inclusion, communication, IT, quality, projects, and the governance model. The Executive Board can decide to rotate responsibilities.

Chair

One of the CHARM-EU Directors chairs the Executive Board. The chair rotates every 6 months. The order is TCD, UU, ELTE, UM, AAU, JMU, HRW, UiB, and UB to avoid that Strategic Board and Executive Board would be chair by the same institution. The Chair circulates the information and the tasks to complete to the relevant boards and units (e.g. project management teams, support thematic office).

Decision-making

The decisions are taken by consensus. The Strategic Board will be responsible to find an agreement in the event that the Executive Board does not reach consensus.

Frequency of meetings, agenda and minutes

It is recommended that they meet every other week, or more frequently if needed. The agenda will be prepared by the Chair and the manager of the chair institution will be in charge of the minutes.

Student Council

The Student Council is the representative body of students enrolled on CHARM-EU programmes offered by member university partners. As CHARM-EU is a student-centred Alliance, the Student Council may contribute to strategic decisions and engages with high-level decision bodies such as the Strategic Board and the Executive Board.

Role

The main objective of the Student Council is to represent the views and experiences of students. They will discuss and provide feedback on decisions and activities of the Alliance, especially in all matters related to student affairs, student well-being and student life in general.

Composition

The Student Council comprises three groups:

- one student from each member university, appointed by the recognised student representative body in each of the member universities.
- one student from each cohort of each of the active CHARM-EU programmes, appointed by peers.
- and one alumnus, appointed among peers.

The members are appointed for a maximum of two academic years. If new members are required, they can be appointed whenever necessary.

Chair

The Student Council elects their Chair and a Deputy Chair, from the representatives of group one and two above. The Chair will rotate every six months.

Decision-making

The Student Council make decisions by consensus and in cases where they do not arrive to a consensus, by two-third qualified majority.

Frequency of meetings, agenda, and minutes

The Student Council meets at least six times a year, with more frequency if and when required. The Chair is responsible for the preparation of the agenda. The members rotate the responsibility of preparing the minutes. Meetings are held remotely (online) with a maximum of one face-to-face meeting per year.

Interaction with other bodies

Other CHARM-EU bodies may require student representation, both on a permanent and occasional basis. Members of the Student Council will nominate those students.

The Student Council may be requested to update the Executive Board on relevant matters (both strategic and operational).

- The Student Council will prepare a report on activities, ideas, requests, proposals, etc. for every Strategic Board meeting.

(see annex I for detailed explanation of the different roles of the members)

Academic Council

The composition, position and role of the Academic Council will depend on CHARM-EU activities and programmes (Doctorate, Masters, micro-credentials, research, etc.).

Role

The Academic Council:

- is responsible for the standards in teaching and research within the Alliance.
- oversees the academic matters and quality follow-up of all joint and common educational and research activities.
- advises the Executive Board about the relevance of new proposals.
- provides links with the Programme Boards, KCTs as appropriate.

Composition

The composition of the Academic Council will seek balanced inclusive representation from partner institutions and will have a diverse composition based on expertise. The Academic Council members are proposed by the Executive Board and approved by the Strategic Board. The Academic Council comprises the following members:

- The CHARM-EU Academic Director (Chair, rotating every 2 years)
- The local Alliance Academic Directors, except the one represented by the Academic Director. One will be vice-chair.
- The Chairs of the Programme Boards (who will be non-voting members)
- The Chair of the Student Council
- Head of the JVAO

The Academic Council may consult and be advised by an:

- Expert in mobility
- Expert in inclusivity
- Expert in quality
- Expert in assessment
- Expert in research, ethics and integrity

The Academic Council will have clearly defined mandates from the Executive Board. The Academic Council may advise on decisions to be made by the Executive Board involving employment of personnel, investments, spending, and external collaborations. Any decisions with budget consequences and related resourcing issues need to be approved by the Executive Board.

Chair

The Academic Council is chaired by the CHARM-EU Academic Director, the Chair will rotate every two academic years and there will be a Vice-Chair, the next in rotation. The rotation of the Academic Council Chair will be agreed in the first subsequent meeting, after the Strategic Board and Executive Board Chair rotation has been agreed and finalised. This will ensure that one Alliance partner will not be in a position to chair all three Boards. The Academic Council will propose the Chair and Vice-Chair to the Executive Board for final selection.

Decision-making

Agreements will be taken by consensus of the members. If there is no agreement, the issue will be communicated to the Executive Board.

Frequency of meetings, agenda and minutes

The Academic Council meets once a month, and if required more frequently. They will aim to meet one week before the Executive Board to allow for relevant items to be added to the EB agenda when necessary. The Chair prepares the agenda for the Academic Council and a member of the JVAO prepares the minutes.

Programme Boards

The operation and implementation of each CHARM-EU Programme will be managed by a Programme Board. The Programme Board will consist of one member from each of the Alliance members participating in (hosting) the programme.

Role

A Programme Board, with the support of the relevant Knowledge Creating Teams, is responsible for the final

design, day to day delivery, admissions, assessment, mobility and implementation of a programme in line with the quality standards and procedures set by the Academic Council and resources allocated. Programme Boards will report to the Academic Council on plans for the forthcoming semester prior to each Phase of a programme.

Composition

The composition of a Programme Board will include a Local Academic Programme Coordinator from each Alliance partner participating and hosting the programme. The Local Academic Programme Coordinators are proposed by the local Academic Council member following local consultation and approval by the relevant Executive Board member. **Local Academic Programme Coordinators are expected to be academics that have relevant subject-related knowledge of the programme and experience of local academic rules and procedures. They are also expected to consult with their local CHARM-EU Directors, Managers, and other relevant personnel in relation to any financial or staffing matters.** A Programme Board comprises the following members:

- A Programme Board Chair (recommended by the Programme Board and approved by the Academic Council)
- The Local Academic Programme Coordinators (this may be the local Academic Council member or an additional person who is also a module coordinator or lectures on the programme)
- Module Coordinators
- A representative of the JVAO
- One student per cohort from each active programme
- Expert in inclusivity to ensure inclusivity by design.
- Other experts may be invited as guests to participate when required.

On example of programme is the MSc Global Challenges for Sustainability. Five Local Academic Masters Coordinators (it is recommended that some may also be Module Coordinators); three Module Coordinators during Phase 1 meetings, nine during Phase 2 and one during Phase 3; One student per cohort; one expert in inclusivity who participates in the design stages.

Chair

Each Programme Board Chair will be elected from among the Local Academic Programme Coordinators and will be nominated by the Programme Board. The inaugural Chair will be nominated at the first meeting based on the needs of the programme in terms of governance and relevant academic experience. If possible given governance issues, the Chair may rotate every two academic years along with a Vice-Chair, who would be

the next Chair in rotation. The approval of the Chair and Vice Chair will be sought from the Academic Council.

Decision-making

Agreements will be taken by consensus of the voting members following discussions. If there is no agreement, the issue will be submitted to the Academic Council. The Programme Boards are responsible for decisions related to the academic content of the respective programme. Decisions effecting other programmes will be forwarded to the Academic Council for consultation.

Frequency of meetings, agenda and minutes

A Programme Board meets once a month, and more frequently, if and when required. They meet prior to the regular meeting of the Academic Council. The Chair prepares the agenda. The JVAO representative prepares the minutes or, if necessary, nominates a deputy from among the members of the Programme Board.

Knowledge Creating Teams

The governance and management of the Knowledge Creating Teams (KCTs) will be developed and detailed as the alliance grows. Their organisation such as their chair, how they interact between themselves, how many there are and which fields they cover and how often they meet will be determined in the future.

Role

There are several KCTs based on the needs of the Alliance activities and fields. The KCTs identify and alert on new challenges, new research and education topics and then propose initiatives/activities to the Academic Council. They have a key role in the development and implementation of CHARM- EU activities. For example, creation of new educational programmes, transdisciplinary common research activities or new projects. The KCTs are the ones developing and implementing activities, as they did with the Master.

Composition

The KCTs are composed of

- Academics (including educationalists and researchers)
- Representatives from Business
- Representatives from Civil Society
- Students

Decision-making

KCT members can propose new things by adding them to the agenda of a meeting or contacting the Academic Council to schedule a prospective meeting between the Academic Council and a representative of the KCTs. The Academic Council, after analyzation of the relevance and alignment with the CHARM-EU Strategy will

give green light for preparing the proposal. Once completed, the Academic Council will transfer the proposal to the Executive Board. They will make decisions about the resources and the organisation, submit the proposal for formal approval, unless they are mandated.

External Engagement Committee

This Committee terms of reference have been reviewed and detailed at the end of the year 2023.

Role

The External Relations Committee plays an advisory role by:

- Conducting an annual review and suggesting updates to the Alliance's External Relations Strategy, including offering guidance and expertise on the composition of external stakeholders.
- Identifying potential external stakeholders for engagement.
- Recommending approaches for effective communication with external stakeholders, in alignment with the Alliance's expansion plans
- Assisting in the introduction of external stakeholders to the Alliance through a designated point of contact within the Alliance (e.g., the Communications Officer, to be confirmed) to support Alliance initiatives.
- Facilitating the introduction of external stakeholders who approach the Alliance to a designated point of contact within the Alliance (e.g., the Communications Officer, to be decided).

Composition

The External Relations Committee consist of:

- 8 to 18 members, with at least one representative from each institution and someone designated by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team. This may include academic staff, administrative staff, alumni, student representatives, external stakeholders, and/or partners.
- Members will be identified and appointed locally through a confirmed process in each institution, ensuring a balanced representation across institutions and genders.
- The Committee will represent all of CHARM's missions (research, education, and innovation) and include representation from the CHARM-EU Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Office.
- It will also include various external stakeholders, with suggestions from the CHARM-EU DEI Team, who can bring relevant lived experiences, expertise, and field-specific knowledge.

Chair

Members will elect their Chair every year, the rationales for this rotation are:

- Diversification of the role to maintain diversity in expertise and lived experiences, including gender balance, and consideration of the full spectrum, including non-binary individuals.

- Facilitating pathways to diverse leadership by enabling members to gain experience in the role.
- Utilizing previous Chairs as mentors for the upcoming Chair.

The Chair of the External Relations Committee will be invited to the Executive Board following a meeting of the External Relations Committee to update the Executive Board on the Committee's progress.

Annually, the Strategic Board will invite the Chair to attend a meeting, where an update will be provided on the Committee's progress.

Decision-making

The External Relations Committee does not have decision-making authority; its primary function is to provide advice to the Alliance through the assigned CHARM-EU Executive Board Member responsible for the Committee.

Frequency of meetings

The Committee will convene either in person or via Teams, approximately four times a year, on average. Meeting dates will be established in advance to encourage the participation of a majority of Committee members. Additionally, there will be an annual training session for the Committee members to deepen their understanding of the mission, values, and objectives of CHARM.

External Advisory Council

Role

The External Advisory Council follows up on the orientation and implementation of the projects and assesses the added value and the contribution to the mission and objectives and values of the Alliance. Its members are external to CHARM-EU partner universities, provide an external perspective, serve as an external independent source of advice and challenge and act as external neutral rapporteur, and gather once a year to advise the Strategic Board on their strategy. The meetings will be chaired by the Alliance Secretary General and the chair of the Executive Board will attend. The results are reported to the Strategic Board.

Composition

The External Advisory Council gathers stakeholders from the Society. All the members are external to the Alliance and the profiles can be:

- 1 student (from one of the European Student Associations)
- 1 member of the Bologna group/expert in the European Higher Education
- 1 member related to Research and Innovation
- 1 member of a Quality Agency

- 1 member from the Ministries
- 2-3 companies/employers
- 1 representative of an NGO
- 1 inclusion expert
- 1 Technology enhanced education expert.
- The chair of the Executive Board

Appointment procedure: The Executive Board proposes potential members, after consultation with the External Engagement Committee if needed, to be approved by the Strategic Board. The Alliance Secretary General assists the Chair of the Executive Council to provide the External Advisory Council periodical global updates on the alliance activity:

- Agenda, minutes, and documentation for the meetings
- Transferring feedback of the External Advisory Council to the corresponding CHARM governance bodies
- Informs or shows the result or effect of the previous advice of the External Advisory Council

Decision-making

It has no decision power; it only advises the Strategic Board and assesses the outcomes of the Alliance.

Frequency of meetings

They meet one month before the annual report on the strategic planning.

CHARM-EU Office

Role

The CHARM-EU Office is responsible for executing the management activities of CHARM-EU defined by the Executive Board and for coordinating the different thematic support offices.

Composition

The CHARM-EU Office is composed by the CHARM-EU managers and the heads of the support units. The CHARM-EU Managers will share the responsibilities of the office for the thematic support offices, in a similar way as the Directors in the Executive Board. The areas of responsibility can mirror the ones in the Board.

Chair

In analogy to the Executive Board, Managers rotate as chair with the Alliance Secretary General as permanent co-chair reporting to the chair of the Executive Board. The chair rotates every 6 months, the same rotation as the Directors.

Frequency of meetings

They hold regular meetings to ensure the day-to-day working of the Alliance. The CHARM-EU office meets online monthly.

Joint Virtual Thematic Support Offices

There are thematic support offices to complete the operational work of the Alliance. Some of them are specific to CHARM-EU with a staff that is dedicated to the Alliance full-time, like the JVAO. Some offices mobilise staff part-time for the Alliance. The staff from the Thematic Support Offices will be involved in CHARM-EU activities, such as the participation in projects through work packages. The different thematic Support Offices are the following:

Administration

Role

The Joint Virtual Administrative Office (JVAO) is responsible to handle the main administrative, organisational and financial processes of the alliance, and in particular the educational programmes handled by CHARM-EU. Specifically in the first year, one of the major activities is the management of the Joint Master's Programme Global Challenges for Sustainability. The role of the JVAO is operational.

Composition

The JVAO is formed by at least one officer per partner institution (depending on the evolution of the activities). Together they form a common office. Each Officer is responsible for coordinating one of the main responsibilities of the JVAO, for instance registration, education, mobility, boards, services, etc. Even though each of these main tasks is the responsibility of a different university, all officers will work on all tasks hand-in-hand, as a unique and united office. The appointment procedure is specific to each partner.

Meetings

The Joint Virtual Administrative Office will meet virtually weekly and have regular exchanges in order to ensure the delivery of all tasks and smooth communication within its members.

Roles of each officer

The role of each officer is twofold:

- Ensure that the tasks that they coordinate are planned assigning tasks among the other offices, the process is in place and ensuring the implementation.
- Be the contact point for each university, ensuring that information is shared with their university administration and delegate tasks to their university offices if needed in collaboration with the Manager. They are the main contact point for the students and the teaching staff to assist them for any of their needs (services, assistance, logistics, etc.). If needed, they redirect them towards

the appropriate service inside the university (medical support, sport facilities, student counselling, etc.), or bring the issue to the Manager or other Officers in case that other universities are affected.

JVAO Officers profile

Each officer must be fluent in English as well as in the local language(s) of the university, in order to communicate effectively with other officers and their administration. They should be knowledgeable in the field they coordinate, must be skilled in project management, teamwork and have basic knowledge of the functioning of a university and higher education programmes. They should have good knowledge of the functioning of their own university and work in close communication with the managers to identify and communicate with relevant people.

Relation with other CHARM-EU structures

The JVAO works in strong collaboration with the Academic Council, the academic staff and coordinators of the different educational programmes. Its role is to assist them, but it will also ask their collaboration when needed for certain tasks. The JVAO also works closely with their university administration to deliver the best studying conditions. They manage the student and staff support of programmes at CHARM-EU level and at the local level.

Information Technology

Role

The Joint Virtual IT Office (JVITO) was defined in 2022 in the following way: *The CHARM-EU-IT network is closely linked to the existing IT organizations or departments of all partner institutes. Part of this network is the creation and consolidation of a Joint Virtual IT Office (JVITO). At least two representatives with different and complementary backgrounds of all CHARMEU partners will take part in the main JVITO which is formed to answer to different contexts and is made up of smaller international teams that work on needs and challenges for digitalization of each partner institution. IT experts and (enterprise) architects will work together with educationalists, KCT, external stakeholders and find out the needs for the CHARM-EU education and research/research support activities. These activities will additionally closely be connected to the activities of the other alliances and the digitalization agenda of the EC and IT development in Europe.*

By the end of Dec 2026, a structural solution will need to be adopted to cover the costs of the JVITO. JVITO contributes to CHARM_EU projects, including opportunities for experiments with new IT-approaches, software and or hardware. The JVITO has an operational and advisory character. It is meant as a:

- support-office for technology enhanced learning and teaching (e.g. key users of relevant applications, such as VLE, feedback tools, etc.).

- a body for collaboration on IT-related topics, answering to the needs of CHARM, network of staff for exchange of knowledge and skills for IT-related topics in the CHARM-EU Alliance in a more general sense.

- The JVITO will work on the basis of the following principles: it will adhere to the general CHARM principles, including striving for sustainability and supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion, whenever applicable.

- strive to mainstream the intercultural atmosphere and incorporate good practices of all partner institutions.

- take into account the user perspective of the IT set-up by periodically reviewing operational activities through the lens of user journeys.

- strive for interoperable solutions that fit into the larger landscape of the European IT context in higher education, preferably based on open-source concepts and/or open standards; comply with, and actively contribute to, European-level policy around digitalization in higher education (Digital Education Action Plan).

Composition

The JVITO is composed of at least two representatives per institution with different and complementary backgrounds of all CHARM-EU partners.

Role of each officer

The role of each JVITO Officer is twofold:

- to act as main contact point for their institution's project staff to assist them for any of their IT-related needs in CHARM, or to connect them to the relevant IT-experts at the partner institution if this is necessary for a specific question.

- to act as support-office for IT and technology enhanced learning and teaching for CHARM activities, whereby each partner university takes leadership responsibilities for one or more specific IT-topics2(for instance, key usership for tools connected to the topic will lie with the institution who has accepted responsibility for the topic).

Meetings

The members of the Joint Virtual IT Office will meet virtually on a regular basis, depending on need, and will

have regular exchanges to ensure the delivery of all tasks and smooth communication among its members.

Chair

One of the JVITO Officers will be appointed as Chair of the Joint Virtual IT Office by the Executive Board. The chair's role is the general coordination of the JVITO: to call meetings, to prepare and lead them and see to the follow-up, and generally to keep an overview of the work that is being done.

JVTO officers' profile

Each JVITO Officer must be fluent in English as well as in the local language(s) of the university, in order to communicate with other Officers and their internal organisation. They should be knowledgeable in the field they coordinate, must be skilled in project management, team management and have basic knowledge of the functioning of a university and higher education programmes. They should have knowledge of the functioning of their own university and be able to quickly identify and communicate with relevant people for any demand. Their workload is hard to determine in this stage. A preliminary estimate is 1 day per week per person x 2 persons = 2 days per week per institution. This will of course also depend on the specific personal responsibilities. The workload could also shift over time.

Relations

One of the CHARM Managers will be connected to the JVITO on a permanent basis (i.e. not rotating). Their role is to act as the linking pin between the JVITO on the hand and the CHARM-EU Office, CHARM-EU Executive Board and other bodies from the CHARM governance structure on the other hand. This CHARM Manager should have affinity with IT, and preferably also with IT project management. Their responsibility is to advise the JVITO about when and for which decisions to seek approval from the different CHARM governance bodies and how to prepare the decision-making process accordingly. They should also alert the JVITO about developments elsewhere within the Alliance which can be relevant to the JVITO but may be taking place outside of the direct vision of the JVITO.

IT Steering Committee

CHARM-EU is an alliance, not an independent institution and not a legal entity, therefore strong links must exist to ensure that activities are aligned as far as possible with the strategic choices of the individual institutions. In addition to the JVITO, an IT Steering Board shall be constituted. The IT Steering Board shall consist of each partner institution's CIO or a mandated person in the CIO's name. It has an advisory function for any matters concerning IT in CHARM, and it may give solicited or unsolicited advice. The final decision-making remains with the Executive Board or the Strategic Board. The IT Steering Board meets twice a year (e.g. a month before the sprint meeting) or more, depending on need. It is administratively supported by

WP7 initially, gradually moving this responsibility to the JVITO as the project advances.

Quality

CHARM-EU has a full-time quality officer that handles the all the matters linked to quality such as the accreditation of joint programmes, the development of quality policies and procedures and to ensure their respect, to develop quality improvement and enhancement plans based on outcomes of internal quality assurance.

Educational Support

The Joint Virtual Educational Support Office (JVESO) unit, composed of educationalists, is still to be created.

Research and Innovation Support

The Joint Virtual Research and Innovation Support Office (JVRIO) has been defined during 2023 as part of the pilots and action plans of the Research & Innovation dimension (TORCH), with a member of each university coming from their Research and Innovation Support Office, and with a coordinator from one of the partners. It is work in process before the approval.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The role of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office (DEI) is to have inclusion profoundly and systematically interwoven into the core strategic governance and management model supports CHARM-EU's reputation as an innovative and pioneering university model and a role model for social inclusion in the framework of diverse and complex societies. CHARM-EU Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office is responsible for:

- safeguarding CHARM-EU's statutory obligations,
- supporting CHARM-EU to meet their equality, inclusion and non-discrimination obligations,
- co-create with and support relevant teams and organisational units in implementing our core values that demonstrate CHARM-EU's concrete commitments.

Communication

The Joint Virtual Communications Office (JVCO) office is responsible for both the internal and external communication of the Alliance. It aims at promoting the activities of CHARM-EU and to broadcast the information. To do so, they use different channels such as newsletters, CHARM-EU website, social networks, press and events.

Mobility

The role of the Joint Virtual Mobility Office (JVMO) is to manage and develop mobility procedures, staff mobility (teaching/professional development), transnational online learning, student mobility (studies, traineeship, blended mobility), mobility for Doctoral candidates and mobility components linked to micro-credentials.

Main boards' description

	Strategic Board	Student Council	Executive Board	Academic Council	CHARM-EU Office
Role	Formally approve strategic decisions and decide on the directions to take	Represent the views and experiences of students, ensure their representation in the governance, discuss and provide feedback on decisions and activities of the alliance, prepare a report for Strategic Board meetings	Responsible for all tactical and operational matters, execute the strategic decisions, responsible for the implementation of the different actions by the thematic support offices and the management of the projects	Responsible for the standards in teaching and research within the alliance, oversee the academic matters and quality follow-up of all joint and common education and research activities, advise the Executive Board about the relevance of the new proposals, provide links with the KCTs	Responsible for executing the management activities of CHARM-EU defined by the Executive Board and for coordinating the different thematic support offices
Composition	Ex-officio members: Rectors of the member universities in rare occasions they can be represented by the Vice-rector. No voting members: Alliance Secretary General Chair of the Executive Board	One student from each member university elected by the student representatives from their home university. One student per member University participating in the CHARM-EU programmes. One alumnus. Students are appointed for a maximum of 2 academic years	One CHARM-EU Director per member institution Alliance Secretary General CHARM-EU Managers attend the meetings. Can be invited when needed: students, KCT members, support staff or project representatives	CHARM-EU Academic Director Local Academic Directors (except the one represented by the CHARM-EU Academic Director) One student Chief of the JVAO	CHARM-EU Managers Heads of thematic support offices
Chair	One of the Rectors Rotation every 6 months	Chair elected by the Student Council. Rotation every 6 months.	One of the CHARM-EU Directors Rotation every 6 months	CHARM-EU Academic Director Rotation every 2 academic years	One of the CHARM-EU Managers Rotation every 6 months
Decision-making	Consensus Qualified majority if needed with a right of veto on finance and budgets	Consensus Two-third qualified majority if needed	Consensus Strategic Board is responsible to find an agreement if the Executive Board doesn't reach. Consensus	Consensus If needed, the matter will be taken to the Executive Board	
Frequency of meetings	Twice a year	Every two months	Twice a month	Once a month	Once a month

Figure 3 Terms of Reference Table

3. STAFF IN THE MEMBER UNIVERSITIES

The partner universities organise their own internal CHARM-EU Governance with their CHARM-EU Director, their CHARM-EU Manager and the support officers, project managers, etc. that work within their institution. The internal governance differs from one partner university to the other (Faculty, Rectorate, etc.). but the tasks and responsibilities remain the same for all partners.

CHARM-EU Directors

Role

There is one CHARM-EU Director position per partner university. The CHARM-EU Directors are leaders with academic, programmatic, managerial responsibilities. They are the primary liaison between CHARM-EU and the leadership of their university. They are responsible for CHARM-EU decision-making and activities in CHARM-EU and within their home university as local executive heads of the Alliance preferably in close relation to the Rector. If the Rector had delegated the oversight of the internal structure/operation of CHARM-EU to for instance a Vice Rector, the Director directly reports to that person. CHARM-EU Directors represent and transfer CHARM-EU's interests to their university and based on that provide local direction for the staff of their university. They work in collaboration with the partners and need to be able to reconcile the interests of the Alliance with the ones of the university. They are full member of the Executive Board, which meets every month. They assume the Chair of this board with a rotation between the different directors.

Each CHARM-EU Director is assigned a specific area of responsibilities within the Alliance described in the Executive Board chapter. This is determined by the Executive Board and validated by the Strategic Board. In this way they form the daily management team of the Alliance together with the Alliance Secretary General and collaboration organising the agenda of the meetings, reporting to the Strategic Board, managing the governance of the Alliance, sharing internal and external communication.

Profile and tasks.

The profile of the CHARM-EU Director can vary from one partner university to another. They preferably are academics with high-level administrative experience. They need a high-level of mandate and responsibility within their university, to be in close contact to the Rector or Vice-rectors able to transfer their decision to CHARM-EU, and able to communicate with the Deans, Vice-deans and different Heads (professors) of faculties and departments. Design and Execution of annual work plans and schedules, programmes and projects and adjust when needed.

- Execution of the CHARM-EU budget.

- Follow-up of the results of the past period and deliver an overview of the execution plan and schedule for the upcoming period of six months.
- Analysis of new projects and initiatives before submitting them to approval of the Strategic Board.
- Composing the agenda for the Strategic Board meeting in consultation with the Chair of the strategic board and the alliance General Manager.

Strategy

- To participate in the global follow-up of the execution of activities and projects.
- To participate in the analysis and proposal of new initiatives to the Strategic Board.
- To develop, implement and support the vision, mission and objectives of their university.
- To develop and promote a clear sustainable strategic vision for CHARM-EU within their university.
- To align the CHARM-EU strategies.

Management

- To participate in the Executive Board.
- To execute, follow-up and report on the specific area of responsibility to the Executive Board of CHARM-EU.
- To ensure the annual planning.
- To be responsible for leadership, management and development within the framework of the university's mission and strategic direction.
- To oversee management and operation for the Alliance CHARM-EU within their university.
- To lead, manage and ensure the development of all staff dedicated to CHARM-EU in their university.
- To assign CHARM-EU staff's workload.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- To identify internal staffing needs.

Representation & Communication

- To represent CHARM-EU in the university's meetings or assist the Vice-Rectors when they are the representatives.
- To represent the interests of the local CHARM-EU office within the alliance.
- To attend the CHARM-EU Executive Board meetings.
- To develop effective internal communication channels for staff, students and stakeholders.
- To build networks and partnerships across the Charm-EU team, University and external stakeholders.
- To promote CHARM-EU internally and externally or assist the Vice-Rectors when they are the representatives.

- To represent CHARM-EU's vision and values or assist the Vice-Rectors when they are the representatives.

Finance

To be responsible for the effective economic management and deployment of resources within their university in continuous communication with the strategic and financial leadership of the institution in collaboration with the CHARM-EU Manager of their university.

Teaching & Research

- To analyse the creation of new programmes and projects (educational or R&I) with the Executive Board and Academic Council, to encourage the continuous improvement in teaching and learning and research practice.
- To analyse the creation of new programmes and projects internally in the partner University with the senior management
- To facilitate academic leadership in teaching and learning.
- To oversee quality assurance for the alliance's programmes.
- To support KCT (Knowledge Creating Teams) members.
- To encourage the continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Infrastructures & Resources

To ensure that coordination and management of the support infrastructures and other resources are executed efficiently.

Appointment procedure

This position has to be adapted to the local needs and functioning of each university; therefore, the appointment procedure is specific to each partner and their responsibility.

CHARM-EU Managers

Role

There is one CHARM-EU Manager per university. This is the administrative and organisational role that complements the CHARM-EU Director's. Like the Directors, the Managers are given specific areas of responsibility for the alliance, discussed in the Executive Board and then validated by the Strategic Board.

Their role is to coordinate the workload inside their university, to ensure a good internal communication and a good communication with the other CHARM-EU Managers. They oversee the local support staff. They participate in the Executive Board meetings every other month and are part of the CHARM-EU Office. Each manager acts as a deputy for the CHARM-EU Office with a rotation. The CHARM-EU managers are chairing

the CHARM-EU offices at the local CHARM-EU organisations.

The CHARM-EU managers are administrative staff. Their tasks and profile can vary from one university to another:

- To participate in the Executive Board.

- To plan, execute, follow-up and report on the specific area of responsibility to the CHARM- EU office.

- Local coordination of CHARM-EU activities.

- Serve as an interface between the faculties and services of their university and the Alliance and report on the activities.

- Coordinate planning and execution of tasks of the support units.

- Ensure decisions from the Executive Board are applied in the CHARM-EU Office and support units.

- Support the Directors to mobilise and federate human, financial and material resources within their university.

- Ensure that information transferred to partners.

Appointment procedure

The appointment procedure is specific to each partner.

Support Offices Staff

Apart from the positions described above that are fully dedicated to the alliance, some staff are working on CHARM in addition to other tasks and missions in their home university. They form part of support units in the governance of CHARM. There are several support units called Thematic Support Offices:

- Joint Virtual Administrative Office (JVAO)

- Joint Virtual IT Office (JVITO)

- Joint Virtual Quality Office (JVQO)

- Educational support

- Research & Innovation support services

- Diversity-Equity-Inclusion (DEI) Office

- Communication

- Mobility

Staff from the partner universities working in those fields dedicate part of their time to the alliance and form a shared support unit for CHARM-EU. The Thematic Support Offices are formed by the staff of the different local support offices of each partner universities. Their work is divided between tasks related to the alliance and related to their home university. All cooperating universities ensure the presence of adequate structures

at the local level and at the Joint Virtual IT Office. Each member of the JVITO adheres to their work contract and work conditions in their university. They have a double reporting line: at their own line management and to the local CHARM-EU Managers. Each university must ensure appropriate resources (financial, physical and human) for the completion of the Joint Virtual Offices. These offices will support the work package activities of the different projects, together with other specific profiles that will be needed depending on the project. The concept is shown in the next figure:
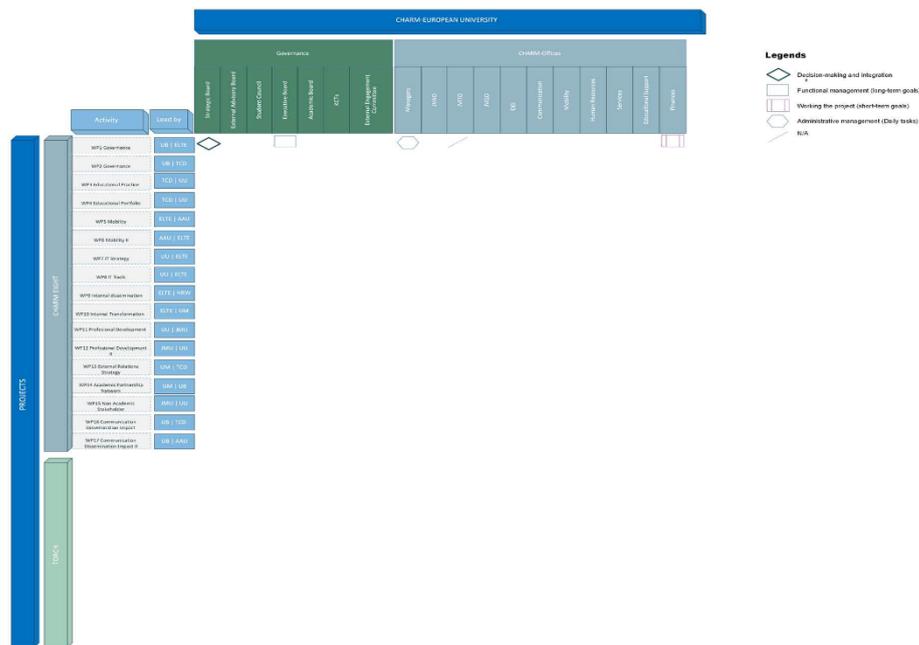

Figure 4 Example of the interaction between Governance and Projects

4. CHARM-EU CENTRAL STAFF

Alliance Secretary General

Role

The Secretary General plays a key role in the functioning of the Alliance. The Secretary General reports directly to the Rectors of the Alliance and the Executive Board. The Secretary General is responsible for coordination, and communication within the Alliance.

The Secretary General supports the Executive Board. The Secretary General oversees the CHARM-EU Office as the main management structure of CHARM-EU.

The Secretary General is responsible for:

- Coordinating the Staff 'Central' CHARM-EU
- Ensuring and monitoring the development, execution, and implementation of the decisions of the Strategic Board and of the Executive Board.
- Ensuring and monitoring the governance model of CHARM-EU, in collaboration with the Executive Board.
- Ensuring and monitoring the daily functioning of the CHARM-EU Office.
- Ensuring relationships between the partners and represents the Alliance at the administrative level.
- Organising and giving administrative support to the meetings of the Strategic Board and Executive Board, under the supervision of the Chair of the respective Board.
- Reporting, in collaboration with the Executive Board, to the Strategic Board.
- Ensuring the external relations of the Alliance (e.g. other alliances, European Commission, etc.).
- Ensuring the financial reporting and financial matters that imply the Alliance, together with the Managers of the partner Universities.
- Performing any other function entrusted to him or her by the Strategic Board or the Executive Board.

Any other responsibility the Strategic Board and/or the Executive Board consider it belongs to the Secretary General.

Appointment procedure

The Secretary General is appointed by the Strategic Board on a proposal from the Executive Board, with a three-quarters majority vote of the Strategic Board. For reasons of continuation, implementation of structural governance and working towards a legal entity, in this first phase the Secretary General will be a

member of the senior management staff of the University of Barcelona, as it has been budgeted in this University as the Coordinator and responsible of the Grant Agreement between the Alliance and the European. This can vary if CHARM-EU becomes a legal entity.

Officers

There are some full-time officers in CHARM-EU: one organisation officer, one quality officer and one communication officer for the whole Alliance.

Organisation Officer

The organisation officer is a key element in the design and consolidation of the workflows of CHARM-EU.

The main tasks are:

- Design and management of collaborative tools.
- Support to project planning and follow-up and reporting.
- Process workflows.
- Design, management, and exploitation of databases: participants, academic staff, students, stakeholders, directory (searching for IT solutions to support this database).
- Alliance documentation archive: latest versions of regulations, deliverables, projects in which it participates.

Quality Officer

The Quality Officer oversees the quality model of the Alliance and of its implementation and development. The joint quality supporting unit of quality managers of each institution supports the Quality Officer.

Communication Officer

The Communication Officer is in charge of internal and external communication and events of the Alliance and the dissemination of results and activities.

Project Support Officer

The Project Support Officer is responsible for looking for new projects and support the CHARM-EU team in preparing projects.

Officers' appointment procedure

In the future, these responsibilities can be full time positions of the legal entity, if CHARM-EU has one or will be attributed to one or two of the alliance members by the Strategic Board, the institutions in collaboration with the Alliance Secretary General will then be responsible for the recruitment and training of these officers. If this is the case, it will need to be reflected in the alliance member's respective budget.

ANNEX 1. DETAILED ROLES OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

This document, unanimously approved by the CHARM-EU Student Council on January 24, 2024, serves as a supplementary annex to the Terms of Reference and aims to define and clarify the functions of each of the members of this council, to ensure its proper functioning. All responsibilities will change every 6 months.

Chair

- Represents the StC as a whole inside and outside the Alliance.
- Creates the Agenda for the StC meetings and coordinates them.
- Must convene the Student Council at least once a month.
- Coordinates the StC meetings.
- Should be invited to the Academic Council once a month and be a voting member.
- Chair or a representative of the StC may be requested to update the Executive Board on relevant matters, and the Chair may request to attend if it is necessary, with voice but without vote, to deal with any matter of interest to students.
- Is responsible to bring information from all boards that attends back to the StC.
- Oversees the inclusion and representation of each new university within the CHARM-EU alliance.

Vice Chair

- Replaces the Chair in case he is unable to attend to his duties.
- Co-creates the agenda with the Chair for each StC meeting and request additional points from the other StC members.
- Co-coordinates the StC meetings with the Chair.

Head of Communication

- Establishes a collaboration with the CHARM Communication Team to utilise their channels with the purpose of increasing visibility of the students within the alliance.
- Schedules communication plans in agreement with the members of the StC.

Secretary

Has a role of note taker. If cannot attend, a replacement will be appointed in the meeting.

All Members

- StC members should try to attend the monthly StC meetings and if not, if required to catch up on minutes and ask questions to the Chair or Vice-Chair if necessary.
- Organize informative talks about Alliances and CHARM-EU academic offers, once a year.
- They have, maximum, 2-year mandate.

Meetings

If the Chair or the Vice Chair cannot attend the meeting, the meeting will not run.