





CHARM-EU (CHALLENGE-DRIVEN, ACCESSIBLE, RESEARCH-BASED AND MOBILE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY)

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University



CHARM-EU INCLUSIVITY PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHARM-EU's (CHallenge-Driven, Accessible, Research-based and Mobile European University) mission and vision are in line with the European Union's core values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. CHARM-EU works towards a climate of respect, accountability, honesty, and integrity in the community, as described in one of its core values - inclusiveness. CHARM-EU's organisational culture and how its values and principles are implemented across CHARM-EU governance, activities, community, and stakeholders are crucial. The CHARM-EU university model aims to continuously improve and become a pioneer in increasing the quality, inclusiveness, international competitiveness, and attractiveness of the European Higher Education landscape. CHARM-EU is committed to promoting inclusive teaching and learning and working environments, access and participation of students and staff with various backgrounds, own lived experiences, and access needs in all aspects of higher education. In the context of CHARM-EU, inclusion is about reducing barriers to access and addressing disadvantages and for the programme to reflect the diversity of the population. The Inclusivity Plan was developed to showcase what it means to mainstream inclusiveness and diversity in CHARM-EU's organisational culture and overall operation. CHARM-EU's unique place within the global, European, and national higher education and the equality, diversity and inclusion environment, "Roadmap to Inclusion" on designing, implementing and evaluating inclusion and diversity in CHARM-EU and its Master's Programme. Shared experiences and elements of the roadmap will benefit various organisations, stakeholders and individuals who want to explore how meaningfully bring inclusion and diversity to their programmes, activities, and organisational structures.

Agnes Sarolta Fazekas, PhD CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Work Package Leader















CONTEXT OF THE INCLUSIVITY PLAN

Background and rationale

As a 'test-bed', a new university model, CHARM-EU aims to improve and promote the quality, inclusiveness, and competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area and beyond. It offers an extraordinary opportunity to innovate and implement Inclusion by Design which means planning and developing an inclusive organisational culture, operational working and learning environment that caters for the needs of the diverse student and staff to the greatest extent possible. CHARM-EU offers an untapped potential, opening a window to many global, European higher education institutions, stakeholders, and individuals to widen their perspectives, policies, and practices. Transforming CHARM-EU, where inclusion and diversity are at the centre of the organisational culture and all operational areas, often starts with a transforming mindset to create the understanding that inclusiveness is everyone's business — and within everyone's power. Step by step, we are shaping minds and changing organisational cultures to create a more inclusive and diverse higher education experience for All.

Inclusiveness is one of CHARM-EU's core values.

CHARM-EU represents an innovative model of 21st-century higher education where inclusion and diversity are interwoven in its DNA. One of CHARM-EU's core values is <u>inclusiveness</u>: "We strongly believe in the power of diversity. Learning and growing in a diverse environment leads to personal development and cultural enrichment. We want you to know that in CHARM-EU, we believe in fostering an open, welcoming, safe atmosphere where all forms of diversity are recognised, respected, and seen as a source of strength and benefit to the CHARM-EU community and beyond."¹

¹ https://www.charm-eu.eu/core-values















About CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team

Work Package 6 is an organisational structure of the CHARM-EU initiative focusing on inclusivity. Inclusion and diversity sit at the heart of the CHARM EU's culture, particularly the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability programme. In the current roll-out of the Master's Programme, CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team acts as an interim CHARM-EU Diversity Equality and Inclusion Office. It remains an expert group that continuously advises, supports, and collaborates with relevant organisational units, various student services and modules to safeguard that everyone is committed to creating an inclusive CHARM-EU experience. In the governance model, the new name is CHARM-EU Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office.

The main aim and specific objectives

The main aim of the CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan was to showcase what it means to mainstream inclusiveness and diversity in CHARM-EU's organisational culture and overall operation.

Specific objectives were:

- 1. To provide an overview, in a nutshell, CHARM-EU's unique place within the global, European, and national higher education environment
- 2. To showcase a "Roadmap to Inclusion" how the cross-cutting aspect of inclusion and diversity have been incorporated mainstreamed into CHARM-EU organisational culture and various operations
- 3. To set inclusion and diversity strategic directions with objectives and concrete actions for the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability.

Target audience

The primary target audiences have been

1. CHARM-EU governance bodies and, where relevant, including EU bodies and CHARM-EU community and partner universities and their wider communities















Equality Divisions, Access Offices, or any equivalent student support divisions/offices of
the five CHARM-EU partner institutions have been the main target audience or any
equivalent organisational units responsible for addressing and catering to any issues under
the scope of equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, and diversity.

Inclusiveness is everyone's business – and within everyone's power. Everyone is active in guaranteeing the implementation of the core values and principles within CHARM-EU.

Who benefits from reading this report?

CHARM-EU shares this Inclusivity Plan with everyone in the higher education sector and beyond: students, academic staff and administrative and any support staff, higher education professionals, and any other stakeholders and policymakers interested in learning about CHARM-EU's journey to step-by-step transform its organisational culture and various operations. Readers should understand that this document is not a collection of policy documents.

Shared experiences and elements of the roadmap to inclusion benefit various organisations, stakeholders and individuals who want to explore how meaningfully bring into life inclusion and diversity to their programmes, activities, and organisational structures.

Design and Methodology

Due to the unique and evolving status of the CHARM-EU, this document provides a unique, hybrid perspective and structure. First and foremost, it is crucial to underline that CHARM-EU and its Master's Programme have relevant policies, protocols, and procedures across various areas. CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team ensured that inclusion and diversity elements were incorporated within those documents. It was deliberately avoided to duplicate this document, Inclusion Strategies and Action Plans of the CHARM-EU Partner Institutions. This document was created to build on the wealth of structures, policies, and practices and highlight the unique nature of the CHARM-EU Alliance and its inclusion and diversity duties and statutory obligations. CHARM-EU crosses five EU member states, each with its national legislation, policies, and directives and its essential to ensure that CHARM-EU adheres to all of them. Exploring cross-national, European,















and global aspects of inclusion and diversity dimensions exercise was itself essential for the Alliance and beneficial for external stakeholders in Europe and beyond.

Chapter Structure

The document is divided into four main chapters.

- 1. Context of the Inclusivity Plan chapter orients the reader about the main aims and specific objectives and structure of the document
- 2. Overview of the higher education landscape chapter supports understanding how CHARM-EU has a unique place within the national, European & global higher education landscape
- 3. Mainstreaming inclusion and diversity in CHARM-EU outlines the current circumstances and atmosphere where CHARM-EU has been developing from 2019-2022 and how inclusion and diversity have been mainstreamed into CHARM-EU's culture and various areas of operation.
- 4. Inclusion and Diversity strategic directions for CHARM-EU set objectives and concrete actions for the Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability duration.

OVERVIEW OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

The chapter overviews how social dimension, equality and inclusion have increasingly become prominent in global, European, and national higher education policies and practices.

Inclusion and diversity agenda in global education

The higher education landscape has been rapidly changing in recent decades. The student population has grown, and its composition has been diversified. One of the most significant challenges of today's society is fostering inclusive and quality education for all. Providing access ad safeguarding equality have become prominent in countries' higher education policies and practices. The United Nations Sustainable Development Strategy Framework has set 17 global targets planned to be achieved by 2030. An essential feature of this framework is that inclusion aspects are reflected in all 17 areas. Objective 4 (quality education) specifically aims to: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." 1













European University



The European higher education landscape

It is in the European Union's and all EU Members States' shared interest to continuously advance higher education. The principles of inclusiveness are part of the core values of the European Union and are enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Erasmus+ Programme. In EU education and training policy, the questions of access and inclusion of under-represented groups have become increasingly important. The EU's central goals are enhancing access and participation in quality education and the social dimension of higher education. The topic is on the agenda not only because the Member States should follow equality legislation and the European Union's social dimension plans but because the economy needs to employ people with different backgrounds and circumstances just as it is for the people themselves to be employed. Fostering access to quality education drives economic growth and social cohesion, creating awareness, safeguarding human rights, research, and innovation, and contributing to citizens' prospects. Specifically, in the context of EU policies, social inclusion in higher education has gained further importance over the last couple of years. (Fazekas, 2018). Increasing social inclusion in higher education is one of the four key goals of the 2017 European Commission's "Renewed EU agenda for higher education" (European Commission, 2017). The European Commission Communication confirms it on "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture" (European Commission, 2017a). The "Social Inclusion Policies in Higher Education: Evidence from the EU" report reviews different policies that promote access to higher education, participation, and completion by students from under-represented groups (Kottman et al., 2019). In the current labour market atmosphere, where there is more competition among employees to fill jobs, more excellent opportunities should be fostered for people with various backgrounds to participate and gain access to employment. European higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's population, promote equal rights, and safeguard access and inclusion in policies and practices. Access, participation, and non-discrimination are considered on various grounds, but there is still room for improvement as many people still face barriers to accessing and inclusion in higher education. It becomes even more important when we consider groups at risk from social exclusion.















European Universities initiative

At the 2017 Gothenburg Summit, EU leaders outlined a vision for education and culture. In its December 2017 Conclusions, the European Council called on the Member States, the Council and the Commission to take forward the European Universities Initiatives that aim to stimulate the international competitiveness of higher education institutions. European Universities are transnational alliances that will lead the way towards the future of universities, promoting European values and identity and revolutionising the quality and competitiveness of European higher education. The initiative provides opportunities to support diverse cooperation models for European Universities through the Erasmus+ calls for proposals. The alliances include partners from all higher education institutions and cover a broad geographic scope across Europe. They are based upon a co-envisioned long-term strategy focused on sustainability, excellence, and European values. They offer student-centred curricula jointly delivered across interuniversity campuses, where diverse student bodies can build their programmes and experience mobility at all levels of study. Central to their actions is to adopt a challenge-based approach according to which students, academics and external partners can cooperate in inter-disciplinary teams to tackle the biggest issues facing Europe today. After the 2022 Erasmus+ call for proposals, there are 44 European Universities involving around 340 higher education institutions in capital cities and remote regions of 31 countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, Norway, Serbia, and Turkey. The European Universities Initiative brought together a new generation who are creative and socially driven, cooperating across languages, borders and disciplines to address societal challenges and skills shortages faced in Europe. It has been designed to significantly strengthen students' and staff's mobility and foster European higher education's quality, inclusiveness, and competitiveness.

The establishment of the European Universities Initiatives has created a new structure between the national and university level and EU level in higher education policies and practices.

https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area/european-universities-initiative_en_















CHARM-EU - one of the Alliances of the European University Initiative

In January 2019, the CHARM European University (CHallenge-driven, Accessible, Research-based, Mobile European University) Alliance was born out of this vision, co-funded by Erasmus+. The CHARM-EU Alliance is one of the European Universities Initiatives. It has been selected among the 17 European Universities in the first (2019) open call. It is composed of five higher education institutions: the University of Barcelona, (coordinator) Trinity College Dublin, Utrecht University, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), and the University of Montpellier.

CHARM-EU has committed to promoting common European values emphasising the richness and diversity of the European and global perspectives. Through a challenge-driven curriculum, CHARM-EU aimed to empower and inspire students and staff to become critical thinkers capable of confronting societal challenges linked with the theme of 'reconciling humanity with the planet' and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Diversity has been on CHARM-EU's agenda since its creation, meaning that inclusiveness infuses all aspects of the operation of CHARM-EU. In CHARM-EU, we firmly believe that diversity is an unmatched strength and enriches our culture. Day by day, we work on shaping an inclusive CHARM-EU, which is accessible and open, reflects the diversity of our societies and understands the people and communities; whom we collaborate with. It can be achieved by continually reflecting and challenging conscious and unconscious biases, how we think and design, implement, and monitor our higher education environment to perform to our best and feel valued, respected, and motivated.

The CHARM-EU structure, values, mission, vision, and educational principles represent inclusiveness. CHARM-EU's ambitious vision, core values, and meaningful implementation have been pioneers and models in the European Higher Education Area and beyond.















In addition to the core values, CHARM-EU educational principles represent the guiding concepts that underpin the design of a CHARM-EU educational experience and are listed in various documents such as the Educational Principles and the Pedagogical Guidelines and the Teaching and Learning Handbook.

"Inclusivity: CHARM-EU educational programmes are designed to respect the diversity of students and are adapted to different students' learning needs and preferences, considering their backgrounds or abilities. They will enable all students to take part in learning and fulfil their potential. Where possible, any barriers that prevent students from learning are minimised or removed."3

The national higher education landscape

The CHARM-EU Final Report: Key findings of the CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Survey is a complementary document to the CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan. The primary purpose of the CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Survey was to understand better and map inclusion, diversity, and nondiscrimination policies and practices in Higher Education. It was aimed to explore the policies and practices of the five-member higher education institutions and identify policies, practices and tools that support the access and participation of students and staff with various backgrounds, lived experiences and access needs.

https://www.charm-eu.eu/sites/default/files/2021-02/Educational Principles%281%29%282%29.pdf















Levels and interconnectedness of higher education policies and practices

Levels and interconnectedness of higher education policies and practices have been visualised in the following graphic but deliberately not elaborated on in this document.

> Inclusion and diversity agenda in global education The European higher education landscape **European Universities initiative** CHARM-EU - one of the Alliances of the European University Initiative Higher education policies and practicies at national and university level

MAINSTREAMING INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY IN CHARM-EU

Changing organisational structures for realisation mainstreaming

Year of late 2019 and early 2020, structural changes were made to ensure inclusion and diversity be mainstreamed into CHARM-EU work packages and overall operations. Mainstreaming diversity and inclusion meant incorporating and enriching CHARM-EU with knowledge, skills, and experiences about diversity and inclusion. It was not about re-inventing the wheel instead of joining forces. CHARM-EU grant proposal has highlighted that the work package (CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness) aims to ensure inclusivity in all areas of CHARM-EU design, delivery, and activities of different work packages. One of the main findings at the beginning of the project implementation (the late year 2019 and early 2020) was that the proposed working method envisaged that experts work in one team/Work Package, separate from the other work packages and teams. It detected that it would not render the desired outcomes if the team members of WP6 were not actively involved in the rest of the project. Two strategies were adopted.















Concrete implementation of mainstreaming inclusion and diversity

CO-CREATION:

Creating collaborations and co-production with work packages to support and co-create design teams' design. It aimed to safeguard that inclusion and diversity sit at the heart of the CHARM EU's culture and design and delivery of the work packages. The inclusivity checklist, review and co-creation of documents & dialogue are supporting work packages that reflect inclusion and diversity when designing and delivering their work.

CREATION & REVIEW:

It meant for CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team to develop and implement inclusive procedures, documents, and education materials.

CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Leader actively followed the project's developments and scanned, which required input and review from the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team. CHARM-EU WP6 Team Members had dedicated roles and tasks of activities. Where applicable, they in the additional work package and provided concrete inclusivity input and advice from the design phase onwards. While this approach meant an increase in the workload of the CHARM-EU WP6 team members, it resulted in more inclusive outputs that were also more widely supported by the other teams. In many cases, input given to another team was discussed amongst the members of WP6 so that the different views were incorporated to form more comprehensive advice and inputs.

The repertoire of outputs (non-exhaustive list)

CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team collaborated with other work packages, and relevant organisational units in various actions and (co-)produced various documents in the following main areas (non-exhaustive list).

- An inclusiveness checklist as a compass for designing inclusively from the beginning instead of fixing the environment afterwards
- Guidelines to support the promotion of initiatives and programmes would reach diverse students and stakeholders with information that was experienced as inclusive and inviting













- Continuous review and co-creation of documents and procedures to ensure inclusion, diversity and inclusion aspects were taken into meaningful account
- Active dialogue with work packages and Knowledge Creation Teams (KCTs) supports reflect aspects of inclusion and diversity in the design and delivery of their work.
 - Creating an inclusive and warm welcome in your CHARM-EU module
 - Inclusivity statement in the CHARM-EU Master's Module descriptors
 - Inclusivity tips for CHARM-EU educators
 - CHARM-EU Pedagogical Guidelines (chapter Inclusive Education)
 - Hybrid Classroom Handbook: (chapter on Inclusion & Diversity)
 - CHARM-EU Branding Guidelines (chapter on Inclusiveness and Accessibility)
 - **CHARM-EU values** (Core value: Inclusive)
 - **CHARM-EU Grant Information** (information on CHARM-EU Grant under Fees)
 - An inclusive program (Master's Programme Information)
 - CHARM-EU Student Services Policy (chapter on Inclusion, disability and accessibility service)
 - Rules and regulations Admissions (chapter on Inclusion)
 - Website Accessibility Policy
 - CHARM-EU's inclusivity featured at the EUTOPIA Digital Inclusion Joint Conference on 2nd July 2020

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND CONCRETE ACTIONS FOR THE CHARM-EU AND ITS MASTER'S IN GLOBAL **CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

In this chapter, inclusion and diversity strategic directions with objectives, concrete actions, and recommendations have been set and designed for the CHARM-EU and its Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability.













Thematic areas/work packages have listed actions and recommendations.

- Governance (WP2)
- Curricula Design & Teaching and Learning Environment (WP3/4)
- Mobility (WP5)
- Monitoring inclusion testing inclusive practices (WP7)
- Tools and Resources (WP8)
- Communication & Engagement (WP9)

How to use the table?

- Objective: a thing aimed at or sought; a goal.
- Action: what action needs to take place
- Indicator: Relevant quantitative and qualitative indicators showing whether and to what extent the objectives are being achieved

Additional columns are to be added for CHARM-EU and any organisations.

- Time frame: the amount of time dedicated to this action.
- Monitoring/Review timeframe: Times when there is a monitoring/review process
- Organisational unit: Who is responsible for the action & monitoring the progress

Objective: a thing aimed at or sought; a goal.	Action: What action needs to take place	Indicators: Relevant quantitative and qualitative indicators showing whether and to what extent the objectives are being achieved		
Governance WP2				
To embed inclusion/diversity in governance-related strategy, policy & practices documents.	 A section/chapter on inclusion/diversity and non-discrimination matters is written. The governance model includes strategic and operational duties and monitoring mechanisms within the area of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and non-discrimination 	 A section/chapter on access & inclusion and non- discrimination matters is written (1) or missing (0). Established meaningful strategic and decision- making routes (qualitative monitoring mechanism to establish) 		











Ensure diverse governance and management bodies of CHARM-EU Transitioning, pathways to leadership: to ensure diverse governance and management bodies of CHARM-EU	 To diversify the pool of nominees/candidates To check recruitment procedures. To set up a mentoring programme for underrepresented individuals who need support to become part of the governance structures To set up financial means (A budget is needed for supporting activities linked to improving diversity and 	 Numbers of underrepresented groups/individuals in governance bodies Number of individuals who are participating in mentoring programmes 		
	inclusivity. Stakeholders can contribute in different ways. For example, enterprises with internships (degrees, Master's) are available for Mentoring programmes and underrepresented individuals who need support to become part of the governance structures			
Insights into the participation of underrepresented groups	 Meetings with a number of under-represented students and staff. 	 Number of meetings that took place 		
Data collection about applications/admissions	 systematic collection of relevant, comparable data is necessary to improve the evidence base for policy development 	The ratio of students and staff with various backgrounds participating in CHARM-EU		
CHARM-EU Financial Scheme to support access & inclusion of underrepresented students	 To establish a Social Inclusion Grant Scheme. Data collection to review the use of financial programmes and the planning/informing funding decisions 	 Number of individuals who applied Number of scholarships were granted. Amount of scholarship 		
Strengthening collaboration with stakeholders	Diversify portfoliosDiversify the pool of networks/stakeholders	 Number of stakeholders in business & society 		
Curricula Design & Teaching and Learning (WP3/4)				
To embed inclusion/diversity in Curricula Design & Teaching and	 A section/chapter on inclusion/diversity and non- 	• A section/chapter on access & inclusion and non-		











Learning related strategy, policy & practices documents. All academic staff and students enhance their skills, knowledge and attitudes toward equality, diversity, and inclusion.	discrimination matters is written. Academic staff participate in professional development sessions in the field of inclusion/diversity. Recognition of the training. This recognition will be "useful" if the person wants to upgrade. Basic training on equality, diversity, and inclusion for all (new) students and new academic and administrative staff Recognition of the training. This recognition will be "useful" if the person wants	discrimination matters is written (1) or missing (0). The ratio of participants to staff who participated in seminars/training. Series of meetings (e.g., six sessions/ every three months) Number of trainings for teachers, academics The ratio of individuals who participated in seminars/training. Suggested at the beginning of each semester
Students' access, participation, completion	 Setting up effective monitoring and review of access, participation, completion, and outcomes. 	The ratio of enrolment/drop- out/completion of studies/
	Mobility WP5	
To embed inclusion/diversity in mobility-related strategy, policy & practices documents. Fostering the mobility of underrepresented groups	 A section/chapter on inclusion/diversity and non-discrimination matters is written. Reaching out to underrepresented groups with information about the support measures available during mobility Dissemination to overall/diversity networks 	 A section/chapter on access & inclusion and non- discrimination matters is written (1) or missing (0). The ratio of individuals who participated in mobility schemes A number of overall diversity networks/units mobility information was disseminated about mobility
Ensure financial support for the mobility of underrepresented groups	 mobility opportunities Set up peer-to-peer support opportunities Review the success and support needs of peer-to-peer support To ensure financial schemes for underrepresented groups 	schemes The ratio of individuals who participated in peer-to-peer support Number of individuals who applied •















Monitoring To embed inclusion/diversity in testing/piloting related strategy, policy & practices documents. To ensure user experience and inclusion/accessibility testing	 A section/chapter on inclusion/diversity and non-discrimination matters is written. To organise user experience sessions, To create forms to enable feedback provision 	 A number of scholarships were granted. Amount of scholarship Ces (WP7) A section/chapter on access & inclusion and non-discrimination matters is written (1) or missing (0). Number of individuals who participated in user-testing Number of sessions, forms
	Tools and Resources (WP8)	<u> </u>
To embed inclusion/diversity in toolkit-related strategy, policy & practices documents. Resources & tools	 A section/chapter on inclusion/diversity and non-discrimination matters is written. Inclusion/diversity and non-discrimination matters are written in toolkits 	 A section/chapter on access & inclusion and non- discrimination matters is written (1) or missing (0). Number of tools (toolkits) (1 completed & 0 missing)
Со	mmunication & Dissemination (WI	P9)
To embed inclusion/diversity in communication-related strategy, policy & practices documents.	A section/chapter on inclusion/diversity and non-discrimination matters is written.	A section/chapter on access & inclusion and non- discrimination matters is written (1) or missing (0).
Events	 To ensure that individuals' various needs are catered to at any event planning and implementation, using the Inclusiveness checklist and guidelines. 	 Number of accessible events A number of individuals requested access provisions.
Communication channels	Follow the communication/branding guidelines which WP6 provided	Number of materials that follow/comply















A WAY FORWARD

Ensuring the full and equal exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms must be safeguarded in various policies and practices. Nevertheless, many social barriers limit the full, effective, and equal participation of people with different backgrounds, life experiences and access needs. CHARM-EU has been continuously working to contribute to the development of a more inclusive higher education experience.

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