



TRANSFORMING OPEN RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION THROUGH CHARM  
TORCH

DELIVERABLE D10.5 – TORCH: COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION REPORT 1

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION REPORT 1

This deliverable report highlights the results of the communication and dissemination action carried out to inform about TORCH and main outputs, thus, to maximize its impact among different stakeholders and reinforce its main goal to consolidate a common R&I strategy for European Universities. It is based on the previous deliverable of Communication and Dissemination strategy published in 2021 and provides an overview of TORCH communication activities within the first 18 months of the project. It also includes some insights and next steps planned for the second phase of the project.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Context and aims of this deliverable

TORCH (Transforming Open Responsible Research and Innovation through [CHARM](#)) is a project funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 programme which aims to develop a common Research & Innovation (R&I) agenda for CHARM-EU. TORCH aims to achieve this main goal through the consolidation of CHARM-EU's [vision and mission](#) based on transdisciplinarity and interculturality to solve complex societal challenges and by reinforcing teaching and research strategies as part of the Vision 2030 developed by the European Commission.

In order to reinforce this goal, the communication and dissemination and exploitation are key to increase the visibility and impact of TORCH with all stakeholders. A multi-level, evolving strategy is also essential to follow the pace of the project's development, particularly due changing situations such as the COVID-19 outbreak, which required a different and innovative approach to adjust the messages to be communicated.

This first Communication and Dissemination Report (D10.5) presents a summary of the actions performed, an evaluation of all the actions carried out in the TORCH project from February 2021 until June 2022), and the next steps to be developed. The document will also report on the various audience's perspective, with an outline of the issues, challenges, and key contributions to the transformational R&I agenda.

### The TORCH Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy: an overview

The overall objective of TORCH is to build up the R&I dimension of the CHARM-EU through the development of a challenge-driven transformative agenda based on a transdisciplinary and intercultural vision to solve complex societal challenges.

The TORCH communication and dissemination strategy was primarily designed (1) to inform about the project activities, and (2) to disseminate its main outputs, seeking to generate impact both at the internal level (TORCH partners) and at the external level with a variety of stakeholders (Business & Civil Society), thus contributing to achieve TORCH's main goal to consolidate a common R&I science agenda for the European Universities. The TORCH communication and dissemination roadmap focuses on public project's results boosting skills and knowledge transfer, sharing best practices, processes, and methodologies, and building sustainable networks.

In June 2021 a Communication and Dissemination Strategy and Action Plan (Deliverable 10.3) was designed to maximize the impact of the project by raising awareness on its activities, challenges and results towards a wide audience (internal, institutional, national, regional and European level) while contributing to shape a CHARM-EU R&I agenda to tackle global challenges such as climate change, sustainability, gender gap, inclusion and equity. This general objective has been defined based on the SMART methodology (Figure 1).

- S** Specific – Maximise the impact of the project in the society by raising awareness about its goals and activities and engaging the audience while contributing to overcome global challenges.
- M** Measurable - Different indicators - quantitative and qualitative - were developed to evaluate and monitor the impact of the project and its activities.
- A** Attainable – Together with all the work packages and under the umbrella of CHARM-EU, the messages and the different actions will be formulated according to the type of content and the target public, providing a successful transfer of knowledge.
- R** Relevant – This is a relevant goal not only for people involved in the project or the academic sector but also for business, civil society and policy makers given that it promotes an inclusive and transformative research and innovation agenda.
- T** Timely – A timeframe will be set in order to achieve this goal during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

Figure 1. SMART methodology.

Having these elements in consideration, the objectives and targets were defined as follows:

- SO1 – Awareness:** Raise awareness about project and its main activities as an important mechanism to promote R&I and Open Science within the alliance, universities, researchers, and business and civil society.
- SO2 – Transparency:** Clearly communicate about activities described in the scope of the project, ensuring transparency and accountability in its governance model.
- SO3 – Engagement:** Support the implementation of TORCH by communicating and dissemination the results sought by the project and beyond ensuring that the audience will properly benefit from the project's actions and outcomes.
- SO5 – Knowledge exchange:** Consolidate of a strong research community based on the intercultural and transdisciplinary approach and promote synergies between TORCH, internal and external actors, including citizens, business sector and policy makers.
- SO5 – Mainstream the communication:** To strength internal and external communication mechanisms and reinforce the TORCH identity, through the correct use of the visual identity manual and all the traits described in this strategy.
- SO6 – Impact:** To monitor the impact of the dissemination strategy at three levels: internal, institutional, and social to better know its effectiveness and seek to continue growing over time.

The TORCH audience segmentation was designed focusing on an internal communication, including a bidirectional and intra-communication between the CHARM-EU alliance and its members, and an external communication including the local, national, regional and European scope. In each segmentation, internal and external, a series of groups have been identified to better tailor the

message to their interests (internal, external). The dissemination target groups include CHARM-EU and TORCH members (internal) students, academics, Business ecosystem and civil society entities, policymakers, media, Research Communities / R&I Organizations, international networks, associate partners and other European University Alliances among others. Communicating and exchanging best practices with these different groups is an essential task to ensure the visibility and the impact of the project.

To make the communication and dissemination strategy more effective, it was important to keep in mind that TORCH outputs were focused on knowledge sharing, innovative skills and methodologies and recommendations (reports, policy briefs for example). The focus on this type of project results, helped to define the timeline and the roadmap of the different actions to be taken and initially decide to focus more on the communication tasks and once published the results, start to put the effort on the dissemination and exploitation.

Therefore, at first the TORCH Communication and Dissemination strategy was aimed at communicating and informing about the project' ideas and goals to a broad audience. Key messages were design to reach out academics, business, and society as a whole. During this stage the objective was to answer *Who, what, How and Why* questions to ensure that the message is being transferred in a clear and effective way. Once the outputs started to come out from other work packages the communication and dissemination group started to produce different materials to disseminate and exploit these results properly.

## 2. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TORCH BRAND

TORCH is helping to develop the R&I and Open Science dimension of the CHARM-EU and contribute to the consolidation of CHARM- European University through the improvement of the academic and research networks that have already started with the activities of the alliance. Consequently, when designing the TORCH Communication and Dissemination strategy, synergies between both CHARM-EU and TORCH strategies were established, also building on the CHARM-EU audience that has been consolidating since 2019.

The first step to consolidate the TORCH brand was to design a visual identity and branding guidelines as part of its dissemination strategy. Aligned with the CHARM-EU branding, the TORCH logo was created and approved by the five partner institutions. A series of tools was also developed to transmit a coordinated message towards the audience. The next image shows the different variations of the TORCH logo (Figure 2).



Figure 2. TORCH logo.

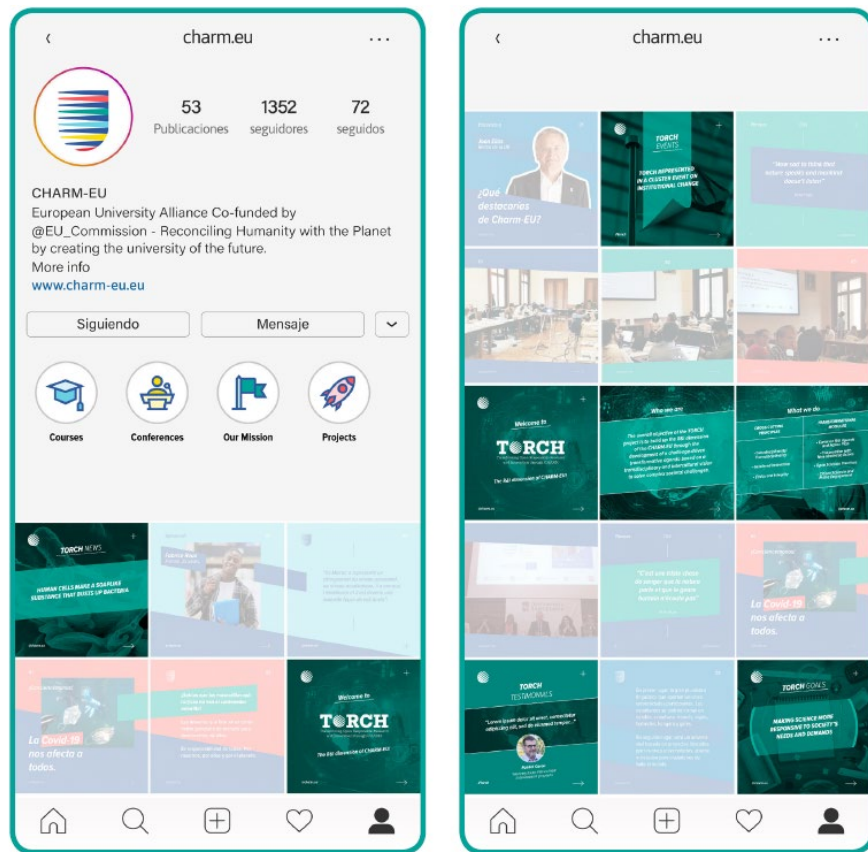
Other visual elements were also created such as partners' logos, stationary templates, power points and common disclaimers.

Secondly, in March 2021 a dedicated section for TORCH was launched as part of the CHARM-EU website: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/torch>. It included its own specific menu and colors design to distinguish from the rest of the website. A specific news session also appears in the TORCH section. On the CHARM-EU Homepage, TORCH appears in different locations (main menu as research, carrousel, research news). At the beginning of the project, it has also been agreed to use the



CHARM-EU social media channels and newsletter to boost TORCH communication and dissemination. This was an opportunity to engage with an existing audience and also to grow together both the European Alliance and its R&I dimension. Together with the social media channels, the website is being used to reach out multiple audiences, showing the challenges and possible benefits of TORCH.

One of the main traits of the communication and dissemination strategy of TORCH is “quality over quantity”. To reinforce these messages, a Brandbook for social media was developed. Thus, depending on the type of content, there is a consistency on the design of the message, which also helps to consolidate TORCH image through a common look & feel. Below an example of this structure on Instagram (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Example of Look & Feel TORCH Brandbook.

At first, these channels are considered the main tools to communicate about TORCH while there were no finished outputs of the project. During the second phase of the project, the focus will be directed at the dissemination and exploitation of the delivered outputs.

All these actions were coordinated via WP10 and WP11 coordinated by the University of Barcelona. The team involved in these work packages served as a bridge between TORCH and the partner institutions to keep a fluid and constant communication and help to ensure a multiplier effect on the results of the project.

### 3. TORCH EVENTS

During the first phase of the project (February 2021-June 2022) all the TORCH events were organised in a virtual format due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

#### Virtual Kick-Off-Meeting

The first official TORCH event was on February 8-9, 2021 with the Kick-Off Meeting where participants had the opportunity to meet and discuss the project's overview, learn from European Commission's Officers about the Project monitoring/evaluation workflow, and discuss the framework, steps and actions to be taken in order to achieving the project's objectives. Although it was an internal meeting with the participation of the European Commission, was an important step to link the communication to an external audience. A [news article](#) was launched on the website and also posts on social media informing about the meeting. The first Twitter post about the launch of TORCH had more than 8000 impressions and approximately 40 interactions (Figure 4).



Figure 4. First TORCH tweet in February 2021.

#### First TORCH Annual Forum

On 2 March 2022 took place the first TORCH Annual Forum: Sustainability in a (post?) pandemic world: asking the right question on the role of Universities in R&I today in a virtual format, due to the pandemic situation. The event was officially hosted by the TORCH partner, Eotvos Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) which included official speeches from both ELTE and UB as the project coordinator. The target audience of the event was the external audience (business & civil society) and other European University alliances to exchange ideas and best practices. Both groups were represented in the programme and also as a registered participant. A session was dedicated to Business & Society and academic cooperation, building synergies between TORCH and the external audience.

With over 180 people registered and more than 10 European Alliances representing their SWAF projects involved, the TORCH Annual Forum addressed how European Universities alliances can contribute to a European internal market for knowledge and maximize the impact of R&I in a (post?) pandemic world for a better, inclusive, and sustainable future. In order to disseminate about the first biggest TORCH international event, a social media strategy took place followed by the multiplier effect applied at each partner university as for example the [University of Barcelona website](#). A

dedicated poster was created to help with the dissemination (Figure 5) and a [designed programme](#) published for participants. As final report with the main results was published after the event.

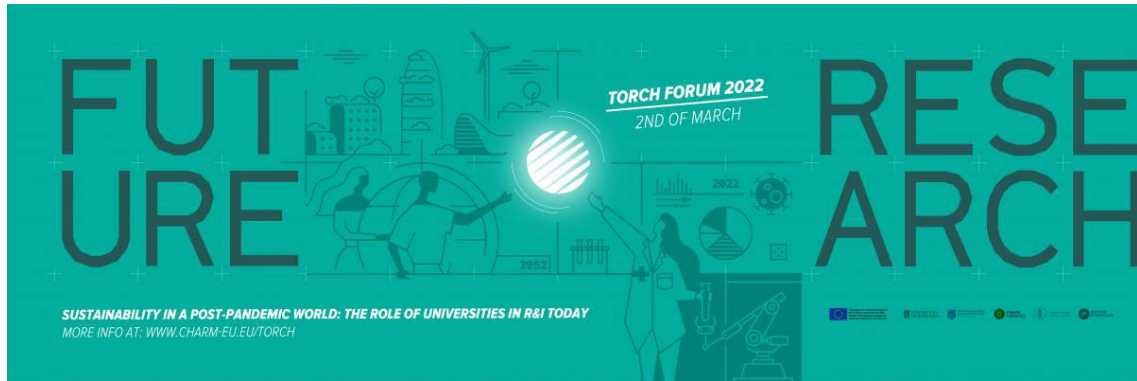


Figure 5. Poster for 1<sup>st</sup> TORCH Annual Forum.

As a result of the event, a final report has been published and shared with the alliances that participated at the event and all the videos were posted on the CHARM-EU YouTube channel for those who were not able to attend live. Documents and video are available [here](#).

## 4. TORCH COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION CHANNELS: FIRST RESULTS

### Website

As previously highlighted the first TORCH Communication channel was a specific session dedicated to the project at the CHARM-EU Website: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/torch> The aim of this page is to inform about all the TORCH's updates, events, and developments. There is a specific menu and news session dedicated to TORCH. It is constantly updated by the TORCH coordinator (University of Barcelona) with the help of other partners.

Since the launch of the website, the TORCH main page had more than 5,000 views; 4,000 visits and more than 1,800 entrances<sup>1</sup>. The most visited pages were the main home followed by "Who we are" and "Work Packages" in which the audience can download the different TORCH public documents.

The CHARM-EU / TORCH website is constantly evolving according to both projects' needs. Currently a "Announcements" and an "Event" page were launched to promote internal and external actions, the first with a dedicated box for Research.

### Social Media

TORCH uses the same social media channels as CHARM-EU in order to boost both projects and link the synergies between research and education. The most used social media channel is Twitter (mostly used by academics and business sector) followed by Instagram (students and universities) and LinkedIn (Academics, Business, and international organisations). Facebook and YouTube are also used with the aim to reach a broad audience.

### Twitter

Currently the CHARM-EU account (@charm\_eu) has 1.414 followers. It is the most successful social media account with increasing interactions and followers. In the last 28 days, the account obtained 12.8 K impressions<sup>2</sup>. Since March 2021 more than 30 tweets were published about TORCH and R&I initiatives which does not include retweets from other partners and related news. During the same period the account had more than 600 clicks to the links and more than 2.000 likes. During the first year of the project, Twitter was used to inform the CHARM-EU/TORCH community about TORCH (Figure 6).

For the next phase of the project that will be focused on the dissemination & exploitation, the objective is to increase TORCH's visibility on Twitter by posting live events, related news, and TORC outputs.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Google Analytics data from 1 March 2021 until 1 June 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Twitter Analytics.



Figure 6. Example of a tweet explaining TORCH.

### Instagram

The CHARM-EU Instagram account (@charm.eu) currently has 826 followers and 194 publications (June 2022). It was created to reach the youngest audience, mainly students and official accounts from policy makers, projects and civil society. It is the platform where education and research come together by using visual elements. Analysing the graphic below we can see the profile of the Instagram followers (Figure 7).

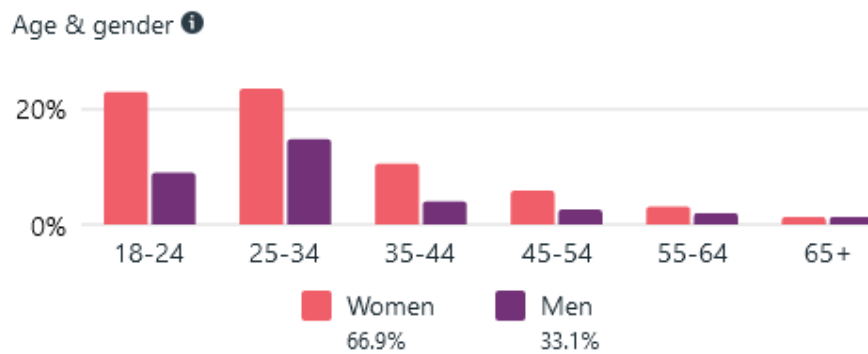


Figure 7. Age & Gender Instagram followers. Source: Meta Business Suite 2022.

The TORCH social media brandbook is used at different post publications, including the firsts to communicate about the project.



Figure 8. Instagram Carrousel to explain the TORCH project.

From March 2021 until June 2022, the Instagram reached 85,227 accounts, 5,607 visits and gained more than 300 followers. The post mentioned about introducing TORCH reached more than 800 people which was followed by the [intro video announcement](#) of the TORCH Forum with more than 500 reaches. Considering the target group of Instagram, the focus will be to continue to develop content for this audience with interactive elements that helps to increase TORCH visibility to the general audience.

### Facebook

CHARM-EU / TORCH Facebook (@charm.eu.initiative) is linked to the Instagram account and is mainly used to post the TORCH news. Since March 2021, the page reached *98,469 accounts and had 2,451 page visits. The number of likes increased 4% with 184-page likes. The most viewed post on Facebook was the promotion of the TORCH Forum reaching more people than 83% of the 50 most recent Facebook posts and stories.*

### LinkedIn

CHARM-EU / TORCH have an official LinkedIn page ([www.linkedin.com/company/charm-eu](http://www.linkedin.com/company/charm-eu)) which mainly included official information, news, and events. With 757 followers, the LinkedIn account had more than 2.5k post impressions in the last 30 days (10 June 2022) and more than 260 search appearances. According top LinkedIn Analytics, the page reached more visitors from the educational field followed by media and communication.

### YouTube and promotional videos

The YouTube account (<https://www.youtube.com/c/CHARMEuropeanUniversity>) works as a video repository for TORCH. A specific playlist was created to showcase all the TORCH videos, including the recording of the TORCH Annual Forum sessions. Currently TORCH has 6 recorded videos, and it is working in a promotional video to be launched very soon.

### External Newsletter

TORCH has a specific session on the CHARM-EU newsletter with main features and actions. With an audience of more than 1200 subscribers, the newsletter is launched according to the needs of both projects. The last launched in February 2022 highlighted the TORCH Annual Forum with a total opening rate of 1,358. <sup>3</sup> In November 2021 another edition was launched, also highlighting TORCH updates and achievements.

The editions are available at the following links:

- February 2022: <https://mailchi.mp/charm-eu/newsletter-february2022>

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Mailchimp report.

· November 2021: <https://mailchi.mp/charm-eu/newsletter-november-21>

## Podcast

CHARM-EU has created a podcast with the aim to share information about the alliance and have meaningful discussion about the topic of higher education and sustainability. To help with the TORCH visibility an episode was launched with Dr. Jordi Garcia Fernàndez, Vicerector for Research at the University of Barcelona to introduce TORCH to the CHARM-EU audience. They discussed how and why

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A couple of new episodes are being prepared to be launched in the second half of 2022.

## 5. TORCH PUBLICATIONS: THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING KNOWLEDGE

As previously described the first phase of TORCH focused on communication since the project's public outputs were being produced. This led to a communication strategy based on informing the audience about TORCH. Currently we have achieved a new phase in which the outputs are starting to get ready which will allow us to work on the dissemination and exploitation of the results with adjusted messages to a more specific audience. Meanwhile, all the technical reports were published on the TORCH page under work package deliverables ([www.charm-eu.eu/torch/workpackages](http://www.charm-eu.eu/torch/workpackages)). A policy brief has been drafted and is pending to be approved before making it public.

Finally, as a pilot of the creation of dissemination material, an article on WP4 Common Science Agenda results was published with graphic material to support the information. The article is available [here](#). To support the article, an [infographic](#) was created, which is also currently being distributed for dissemination amongst the 5 partner universities and related media, mainly academics, other European University alliances and research networks. The goal of the dissemination & exploitation process will be to translate the outputs into dissemination material to reach a more specific audience. This task will continue to be improved in the upcoming months.

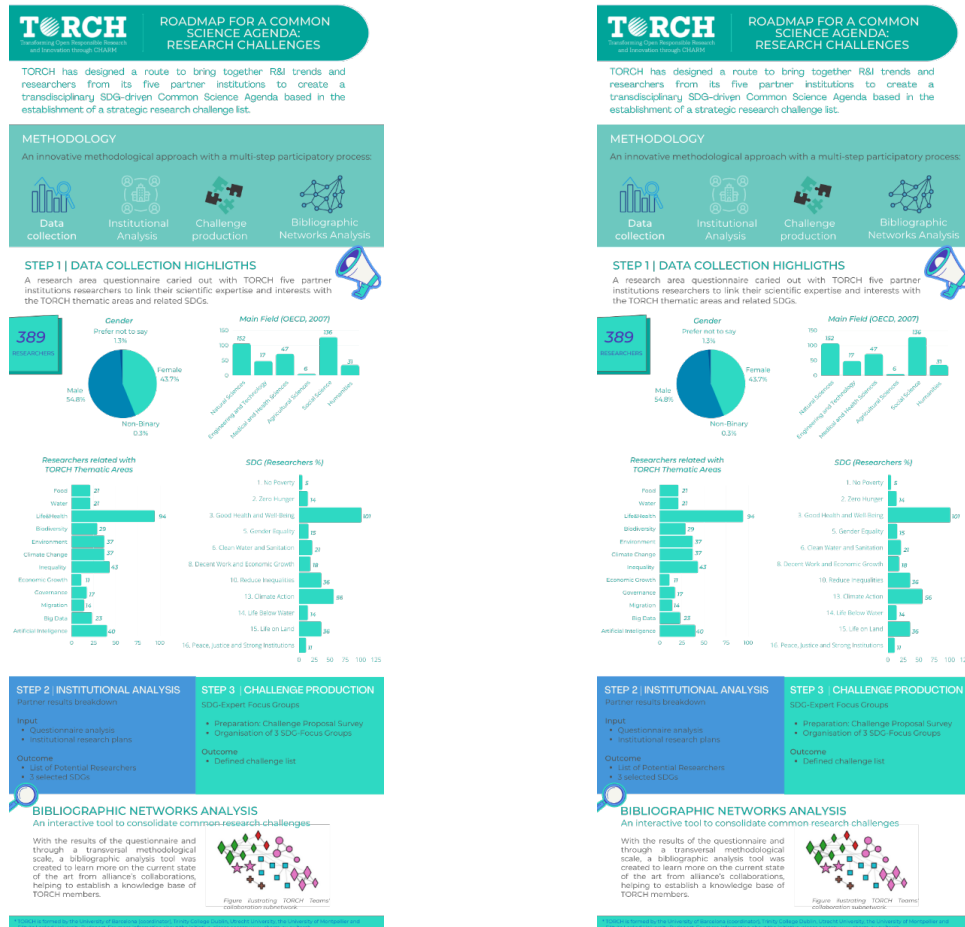


Figure 9. Infographic created to disseminate about WP4 Common Science Agenda results



## 6. EXTERNAL NETWORKS AND CONNECTIONS

### Participation at external events & publications

TORCH participated in a series of external events, mainly giving presentations about the project to a broad audience. The following list highlights the events in which TORCH has been active participant (From newest to oldest):

#### **2nd exploratory event towards a European Universities Initiatives Thematic group (19 May 2022)**

Doris Alexander, Associate Director of European Engagement (CHARM-EU, Trinity College Dublin) presented the CHARM-EU and TORCH journey and main achievements. She also discussed about the What, how and with whom approach in TORCH and stressed how the Knowledge Creating Teams (KCTs) are important and robust synergistic connection between education and research.

Link to the news: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/2nd-exploratory-event-towards-european-universities-initiatives-thematic-group-0>

#### **“Cross-border R&I in the European Universities Initiative” organised by CIVS and supported by its R&I project: RIS4CIVIS (25 March 2022)**

During a roundtable, Prof. Dr. Jordi Garcia Fernández, Vice-Rector for Research (University of Barcelona) and TORCH representative emphasised how TORCH is contributing to the strategic priority areas of the European Research Area action plan 2022-2024.

Link to the news: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/torch-participates-roundtable-discuss-european-universities-impact-ri>

#### **Workshop “Gender Equality Plans in the R&I sector (12 November 2021)**

The main topics discussed were how to approach gender equality, from an institutional as well as national point of view; and this topic was also extrapolated to research careers and its dimensions. Dr. Montserrat Puig, Vice Rector for Equality and Gender from the University of Barcelona (TORCH Coordinator), discussed the key role of gender equality in the development of European Universities initiative.

Link to the news: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/torch-participates-workshop-gender-equality-and-ri-sector>

#### **TORCH represented during the European Researchers’ Night (24 September 2021)**

European Researchers Night is part of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions umbrella, and it’s a research communication and promotion event taking place across EU Member State. Dr Nina Shiel explored current practices in Responsible Research and Innovation across the Alliance as part of the TORCH project.

Link to the news: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/charm-eu-and-torch-represented-during-european-researchers-night>

### Cluster event on Institutional Change (1<sup>st</sup> July 2021)

The event organised by [DG RTD-REA](#) brought together the European University Alliance projects funded under H2020 SwafS call, including the case of the CHARM-EU R&I dimension and focused on building synergies in Open Science and societal engagement.

Link to the news: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/torch-represented-cluster-event-institutional-change>

### European Research Area and Innovation Committee's 'Triangle Task Force' Guidelines Paper (2nd of June 2021)

The aim of the report is to provide stakeholders, who are involved in the reform of research evaluation, with guidelines designed to foster Open Science and gender equality. The paper highlighted how TORCH project intends to upskill researchers and change policies within the partner universities. They highlight how the Alliance's module will implement insightful content and innovative methodology in order to consider all aspects of Open Science.

Link to the news: <https://www.charm-eu.eu/charm-eu-featured-european-research-area-and-innovation-committees-triangle-task-force-guidelines>

### Horizon Results Booster

In March 2022, TORCH Communication and Dissemination Group found at the [Horizon Results Booster Platform](#) an opportunity to strengthen its own strategy, reinforcing its impact with external actors and connect with other related projects. Horizon Results Booster is a package of specialised services to maximise the impact of R&I public investment and further amplify the added value of projects and facilitate the creation of R&I clusters and their dissemination. It will help to speed up the journey towards creating an impact, providing support to remove bottlenecks.

The application has been approved and it is currently being in the first phase designed together with other European University Alliances. The application is focused on the Modules A and B of the platform service which is to identify and create the portfolio of R&I project results and help projects from the portfolio to design and execute a portfolio dissemination plan. By June 2022 TORCH was in the step 1 of forming the project group. The list of the 13 alliances that agreed to join this initiative with TORCH is listed below:

- RIS4CIVIS (CIVIS)
- Arqus Research & Innovation
- Una.Resin (UNA Europa)
- UNITE!

- FIT FORTHEM
- TRAIN4EU+ (4EU+)
- FilmEU
- AURORA RI
- RI4C2 (EC2U Alliance)
- SMART-ER (ECIU)
- ENHANCERIA (ENHANCE) alliance
- BoostEuroTeQ (EuroTeQ)
- EU-CONEXUS RFS project (EU-CONEXUS)

The next steps will be to analyse the results of the initial survey and to design the portfolio to be approved and shared between the alliances.

## 7. EVALUATION, LESSONS LEARNED AND NEXT STEPS

This first Communication and Dissemination Report showcase the main actions carried out to inform about TORCH based in the project's needs and the communication and dissemination roadmap that has been previously designed. It has been shown that, at first the actions were designed to a broad audience to communicate and raise awareness about the project. This is due the fact that the outputs were still in the production stage. Therefore, it has been putting more emphasis in consolidating the TORCH brand, increasing awareness and engagement as described in the specific objectives. On the other hand, using the existing CHARM-EU community to promote TORCH helped to increase awareness about both projects however, sometimes it is important to highlight the difference to ensure the audience tag TORCH as the research dimension of a European University. To overcome this challenge, specific traits were designed for TORCH such as the logo or the Brandbook for social media. There is a good internal collaboration between partners led by the University of Barcelona and that set the framework for action. With the new outputs this internal communication will need to be reinforced to also disseminate at each partner university, which will boost the multiplier effect of the dissemination.

Starting the new phase of the project, the focus will go towards maximising the impact of TORCH outputs, targeting specific audiences to help to create a direct knowledge exchange with the society. In order to continue to improve this strategy, a variety of elements are being developed such as a promotional video, a leaflet, podcasts episodes and publications. It is essential to continue to communicate with the different work packages and stakeholders involved to guarantee a proper and multidimension dissemination and exploitation of the results.