

**CHARM-EU (CHALLENGE-DRIVEN, ACCESSIBLE, RESEARCH-BASED AND MOBILE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY)****DELIVERABLE 6.4. – CHARM-EU INCLUSIVITY PLAN REVIEW & KEY FINDINGS**

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## CHARM-EU INCLUSIVITY PLAN REVIEW & KEY FINDINGS

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHARM-EU shares the Inclusivity plan review & key findings 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 key lessons learned aspects about the design, delivery and, implementation and monitoring processes of the CHARM-EU and its Master's Programme September 2021 and February 2023.

Transforming CHARM-EU often starts with a transforming mindset to create the understanding that inclusiveness is everyone's business – and within everyone's power. A step-by-step approach has been taken to bring inclusion and diversity from the policy papers to our everyday higher education experience by transforming CHARM-EU's organisational culture, governance models and the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability. Bringing inclusion and diversity to the heart of CHARM-EU, in other words, means mainstreaming diversity and inclusion into every area of CHARM-EU. Indeed, it has been a big task and, some would say, ambitious and impossible. Together with all colleagues and various stakeholders since 2019, we have made many baby steps that have become big steps in transformations. CHARM-EU invites and inspires Everyone to leap to create a more inclusive higher education in Europe and beyond.

Agnes Sarolta Fazekas, PhD

CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Work Package Leader

## CONTEXT OF THE INCLUSIVITY PLAN REVIEW AND KEY FINDINGS

### Background and rationale

CHARM-EU is designed to foster quality, inclusiveness, and competitiveness across the European higher education sector. The composition of students and staff engaged in Higher Education has increased and diversified globally. Access to quality education and enhancing the social dimension of higher education are among the EU's central goals, specifically if we look at the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process (Fazekas, 2018). In this process, there is a clear vision for European higher education institutions to reflect the diversity of the population, promote and protect equal rights and safeguard access and inclusion in policies and practices. CHARM-EU has taken this aim seriously. To tackle global challenges, we need collaboration among sectors and disciplines and between various individuals, groups, and stakeholders. We need to understand better the complexity of societal structures, inequalities, privileges and oppressions, enablers and barriers which impact people's lives, especially those risks at exclusion. In CHARM-EU, together with various stakeholders and individuals, we are creating spaces for dialogue, mapping challenges and enablers, and identifying practices and policies that contribute to creating more inclusive higher education and, in general, inclusive and peaceful societies. A step-by-step approach has been taken to bring inclusion and diversity from the policy papers to our everyday higher education experience by transforming the organisational culture, governance model and the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability. Creating inclusive and diverse higher education is everyone's responsibility, not only of specific organisational units. 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. CHARM-EU invites Everyone to take steps together to create a more inclusive higher education in Europe and beyond.

## 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

The main aim of the CHARM-EU Inclusivity plan review & key findings highlights key findings and *lessons learned* aspects of mainstream inclusiveness and diversity in CHARM-EU's organisational culture and overall operation of its Master's Programme between 2019 and 2022.

## Target audience

1. CHARM-EU governance bodies and, where relevant, including EU bodies and CHARM-EU community and partner universities and their wider communities
2. 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 review & key findings 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 and reflect on how meaningfully bring life inclusion and diversity into 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 incorporated inclusion and diversity elements within those documents. It was deliberately avoided to duplicate this document, Inclusion Strategies and Action Plans of the CHARM-EU Partner Institutions.

## Chapter Structure

The document is divided into four two chapters.

1. *Context of the Inclusivity plan review & key findings* chapter orients the reader about the document's main aims and specific objectives and structure.
2. *Key findings of mainstreaming inclusion and diversity in CHARM-EU's culture and various areas of operation*
3. *Key findings of mainstreaming inclusion and diversity in CHARM-EU's Master's Programme.*

## TRANSFORMING CHARM-EU'S OPERATION

The current document's chapter structure reflects the [CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan](#) chapter 4, where inclusion and strategic diversity 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. In addition, an overview of CHARM-EU's Inclusion and Diversity work is also available in this document.

### Thematic areas/work packages

- Governance
- Curricula Design & Teaching and Learning Environment
- Mobility
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Monitoring, testing
- Tools and Resources
- Communication & Dissemination

## Governance | Inclusion Measures

### Overview & Key findings

The importance of having 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. Universities are about imparting knowledge and promoting equity, social justice, and respect for diversity among future leaders to create more just and inclusive societies. It requires both bottom-up and top-down vision and implementation. Inclusivity is everyone's job, including CHARM-EU and universities' leadership, academic staff and administrative or any support staff, diversity, Inclusion experts, students, business and society and many more. Inclusion needs to sit within core governance structures: Within CHARM-EU, the inclusiveness Team advised on policies, organisational structures, and educational methodologies. Between 2021 - 2022 CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team proposed and consulted with relevant parties for



inclusion measures to be incorporated into the CHARM-EU Governance Model, which means that universities should meaningfully embrace inclusion and the diversity agenda within their strategies. Universities that demonstrate their commitment to the inclusion and diversity agenda as an integral and accountable part of strategic vision and missions will be able to raise their profiles and take their places among the leading innovative universities of the 21st century. In all strategic, operational decision-making, diversity and inclusion agenda and meaningfully including the voice and perspectives of underrepresented groups, students and staff are crucial. CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team proposed an Inclusivity Expert on the External Advisory Board. The person can provide an external perspective on inclusion and DEI on CHARM-EU's strategy and vision. They serve as an external independent source of advice and challenge and act as an external neutral rapporteur on the orientation and implementation of CHARM-EU's strategic commitments and obligations to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In the governance model CHARM-EU Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office safeguards CHARM-EU's statutory obligations; supports CHARM-EU to meet their equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination obligations; co-creates with and supports relevant teams and organisational units in implementing core values that demonstrate CHARM-EU's concrete commitments; within their structure promotes and protects the students' and staff members' rights to DEI and helps to resolve DEI-related issues and systemic barriers in a friendly way; collaborates with and provides an expert eye for the CHARM-EU Board to ensure that the decisions of the Executive Board are in line with equality, inclusion and non-discrimination obligations. DEI Office's specific responsibilities include: monitoring legislation across international, EU and national equality, non-discrimination, and equity legislative obligations; co-creating, supporting, and monitoring CHARM-EU inclusive policies and practices; maintaining a direct line of communication with students, including identifying their needs and support recommendations, and operating as the first point of contact for students' concerns (liaising with relevant CHARM-EU or institutional units as appropriate); acting as a point of contact for the CHARM-EU community (staff, teachers, researchers and students) and liaising with relevant CHARM-EU or institutional units as appropriate; collaborating and coordinating with partner institutions to meet student and staff access and support needs, ensuring a universal,

best practice CHARM-EU experience for the CHARM-EU community; supporting other CHARM-EU bodies and relevant organisational units, such as providing advice and training to Knowledge Creation Teams on inclusive teaching and learning practices; creating minimum standards and KPIs regarding accessibility and DEI are added to the activities and outputs across CHARM-EU, i.e., Knowledge Creation Teams, Thematic Offices, Communications, etc. and supporting the CHARM-EU community to meet them.

## Curricula Design & Teaching and Learning | Inclusion Measures

### Overview & Key findings

Access, Inclusion and Diversity are more than buzzwords. Preparing individuals to study and work in an interconnected world is essential. As a ‘test-bed’ new university model, CHARM-EU offers an extraordinary opportunity to innovate and apply inclusion by design – through our design in curricula design and teaching and learning. We seek to cater to the greatest extent of individuals taking a proactive rather than a retrospective approach by introducing the Universal Design Educational Models (Fazekas, 2018). CHARM-EU Work Package 6 Inclusiveness Team has drawn on best practices and influenced new inclusive practices within our partner universities, “showing” how to implement inclusivity rather than just “telling” people what to do. They tailored Inclusivity tips and “quick wins” for CHARM-EU educators to create an inclusive teaching and learning environment and other ideas, such as establishing an inclusive and warm welcome within our CHARM-EU modules. Together, these big and small steps start our holistic, inclusive journey within CHARM-EU. [Creating an inclusive and warm welcome in your CHARM-EU module | CHARM-EU](#); [Inclusivity tips for CHARM-EU educators | CHARM-EU](#), and [Inclusivity statement in the CHARM-EU Master’s Module descriptors | CHARM-EU](#) are some of the tools that have been shared and experienced, practised with colleagues. The word ‘transforming’ often starts with transforming mindsets to create the understanding that inclusiveness is everyone’s business – and within everyone’s power.

First and foremost, CHARM-EU crosses five EU member states, each with its own national higher education and equality and non-discrimination legislation, policies, and directives. CHARM-EU

Inclusiveness Team has collaborated with various Work Packages and stakeholders to create joint measures to respect the legislative space. Critically for the work of the Inclusiveness Work Package to succeed - i.e., mainstreaming inclusion and diversity – it was essential to create spaces for dialogue and discussion on why diversity and inclusion matter and how structural barriers exist and manifest in the experience of students. Work Package 6 has co-created an inclusivity processes workshop with staff and brainstormed and gathered student feedback. Various meetings and professional development were offered for Knowledge Creation Teams (academic staff) & various organisational units, i.e., CHARM-EU Academic Board, Joint Virtual Administrative Office, Board of Examiners, and the Project Management Team.

Collaborations (non-exhaustive list)

- Design & Review Meetings during the preparation for the Tracks and Modules (2020/2021)
- Professional Development Sessions (May 2021, January 2022)
- Teacher Induction Sessions (August 2021)
- Personalised Sessions for Inclusion and Diversity (Additional Personalised Meetings with Staff)
- Sessions on Need Assessment Protocols (January 2022, April 2022, and October 2022)
- Inclusiveness Session for Academic Board (February 2022)

## Mobility | Inclusion Measures

### Overview & Key findings

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. CHARM-EU benefited from the structures and mechanisms of the Erasmus+ Programme. The Erasmus+ and CHARM-EU must reflect on the structural barriers to access and participation (both face-to-face and online) for all, especially those at risk of exclusion (Fazekas, 2013) and address actions on how to enhance greater access and participation throughout the mobility experience. In collaboration with relevant CHARM-EU and partner universities' organisational units, CHARM-EU Work Package 6

Inclusiveness Team provided support during the mobility experience. Specifically, in 2022, during the CHARM-EU Master's Capstone Phase, dedicated CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members assessed the impact of structural barriers regarding mobility on the various circumstances of individuals. CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members explored the case with the student and prepared the case with the utmost respect to the confidentiality of sensitive and personal information. The case reports with the necessary justifications were submitted to the CHARM-EU Academic Board for review and approval. According to the experiences, it is essential to reflect on structural barriers in terms of access and participation in participating in an international Master's Programme is not only about studying but many aspects connected to the complex international college experience. Elements often beyond the CHARM-EU or any universities' competencies and refer to certain pillars within and between the EU Member States. Such as availability, portability of support structures and social affairs, such as access to affordable or accessible housing or administrative aspects for non-EU students, such as VISA arrangements (Fazekas, 2013).

### Inclusion and diversity work

#### Overview & Key Findings

Work Package 6 has been an organisational structure of the CHARM-EU initiative focusing on inclusivity. It worked under the holistic, intersectional, human rights-based approach to diversity and inclusion. In the 2019 CHARM-EU Grant Proposal, the proposed working method envisaged the inclusion of experts working in one team/Work Package, separate from the other work packages and teams. In February 2020, a new collaborative model was initiated, focusing on the co-creation and CHARM-EU units and WPs of the design, development, and implementation of inclusive procedures, documents, and education materials. Throughout the CHARM-EU Initiative and its Master's Programme Sept 2021-Feb 2023, CHARM-EU Work Package 6 exceeded original outputs, and other outputs, protocols, and procedures were implemented. From 2020 onwards, inclusion and diversity have been mainstreamed in the CHARM EU's overall organisational culture

and operation, particularly the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability programme.

The four original outputs were: (1) Key findings of the CHARM-EU inclusiveness survey; (2) CHARM-EU Good practices in the field of inclusion and diversity (3) CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan (4) CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan review & overall key findings.

The working method resulted in an additional workload that was not envisioned at the beginning of the project. In practice, it meant that beyond the originally planned outputs, different outputs, protocols, and procedures had been included in the CHARM-EU and its Master's Programme, which resulted in the meaningful implementation of what mainstreaming inclusion and diversity means. During the roll-out of the Master's Programme, September 2021-February 2023 CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team acted as an interim CHARM-EU Diversity Equality and Inclusion Office. It remained an expert group that continuously advised, supported, and collaborated with relevant organisational units, various student services and modules to safeguard that everyone was committed to creating an inclusive CHARM-EU experience. In the new governance model, the new name is CHARM-EU Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office.

The original outputs of Work Package 6 were beneficial for both CHARM-EU & many stakeholders beyond CHARM-EU.

[Key findings of the CHARM-EU inclusiveness survey](#) have been proven not only beneficial for CHARM-EU but for the European Higher Education Area, as there are only a few comparative and detailed studies and research and overview of the equality, equity, non-discrimination legislative space and national and local (Higher Education Institution level) support structures between EU Member States.

[The CHARM-EU Good practices in the field of inclusion and diversity](#) summarised the wealth of practices in the field of inclusion and diversity from CHARM-EU partner universities. It aimed to inspire various higher education institutions, stakeholders, and individuals to leap to start or strengthen their journey in the field of inclusion and diversity. The output is an outstanding repertoire of practices compared to many other good practice collections publicly available, as it

offered in-depth information not only on successes and enablers but on challenges and many further insights through the unique criteria system that was established.

[The CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan](#) showcased what it means to mainstream inclusiveness & diversity in CHARM-EU's organisational culture & overall operation. Specific objectives were to support an understanding of how CHARM-EU has a unique place within the national, European & global higher education landscape and the inclusion diversity agenda. Circumstances & atmosphere were outlined where CHARM-EU has been developing from 2019-2022 and how inclusion and diversity have been incorporated into CHARM-EU's culture & various areas of operation. Concrete objectives and concrete actions were set for the CHARM-EU and its Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability.

The *CHARM-EU Inclusivity Plan review & overall key findings* shared key lessons learned aspects about the design, delivery and, implementation and monitoring processes of the CHARM-EU and its Master's Programme between Sept 2021- Feb 2023.

Work Package 6 identified key areas for improvement in terms of implementation, accountability, and monitoring of the concrete objectives for work packages listed in chapter 4 of the Inclusivity Plan. The grant proposal envisioned a more theoretical and value system understanding of inclusion and diversity. CHARM-EU Work Package 6 implemented many practical inclusion and diversity elements and structures, such as the inclusion and diversity aspects within the Admission Process, Financial Support Mechanisms, Governance Structures, Policies and protocols, procedures, Needs Assessment procedures and many more. CHARM-EU WP6 transformed many structures and addressed areas for gaps. CHARM-EU WP6 acted as a real-time icebreaker between 2019 and 2022 to ensure inclusion and diversity elements step by step become an integral part of the CHARM-EU operation and organisational culture. In the future, more resource allocation (i.e., time, human, and financial resources are needed). It should have been envisaged at the beginning of the grant proposal. The interim solution was throughout the CHARM-EU and Master's programme that Work Package 6 identified barriers or non-implementations of certain aspects, and not all, but many were resolved.



## Co-creation

Creating collaborations and co-production with work packages aims 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 and dialogue are supporting work packages to reflect inclusion and diversity when designing and delivering their work. CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team has been delighted to work with the CHARM-EU Student Representatives. Students' names are mentioned in this report to recognise their hard work and commitment to the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Work Package.

CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Student Representatives:

- Florian Pichon (University of Montpellier) CHARM-EU W6 Inclusiveness Student Representative (June 2020- December 2020)
- Anna Galmiche (University of Montpellier) CHARM-EU W6 Inclusiveness Student Representative (April 2021 - December 2021)
- Mathilde Delsart (University of Montpellier) CHARM-EU W6 Inclusiveness Student Representative (December 2021- March 2022)

## Monitoring & testing practices | Inclusion Measures

CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team has collaborated with relevant work packages and stakeholders and included inclusion measures in various programme elements, documents and protocols such as the [CHARM-EU Winter School Report: Design Exemplar | CHARM-EU](#), Surveys throughout the Master's Programme and many more.

## Tools and Resources | Inclusion Measures

CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team has identified the need for more resource and time allocation to make CHARM-EU tools and resources more accessible to the greatest extent of individuals. CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team has collaborated with relevant work packages and stakeholders and included inclusion measures in various programme elements, documents and protocols. A

concrete example is that among the CHARM-EU Podcast series, the Inclusion and Diversity Podcast episodes are available in the audio and written transcript in WORD format.

## Communication and Dissemination | Inclusion Measures

### Overview & Key findings

CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team has collaborated with relevant work packages and stakeholders and included inclusion measures such as [Tips for creating more inclusive CHARM-EU events | CHARM-EU](#) or the Inclusion and Accessibility chapter in [CHARM-EU Branding Guidelines | CHARM-EU](#). There is still room for improvement, such as promotional materials and CHARM-EU videos that remain non-accessible, such as the unavailability of subtitles or transcripts or gender-natural language. CHARM-EU Work Package 6 has advocated for greater access and participation for individuals at various events by providing Speech to Text Service Provision. Speech-to-Text Reporters provide real-time captioning. Their expertise is essential for events to cater to the greatest level of attendees' access and participation needs. Inclusion by design means designing the environment from the beginning to the greatest extent of users (proactive) rather than a retrospective approach (fixing the environment afterwards). The feature has been in line with the core values of CHARM-EU.

### Events included Speech Text Service Provision

- CHARM-EU Days (23-24 November 2020),
- CHARM-EU Opening Ceremony of the Master Programme (1-2 September 2021),
- CHARM-EU Inclusion Conference (16 September 2022)
- CHARM-EU Annual Conference (13-14 Dec 2022)

### Events where CHARM-EU's inclusion and diversity work were in the spotlight

- 2 July 2020 [EUTOPIA Digital Inclusion Conference](#)
- 23-24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 CHARM-EU Days – [Inclusion Cluster](#)
- 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 [AHEAD Ireland Conference](#)
- 24 March 2022 [CHARM-EU Governance Forum](#)



- 17 June 2022 [17<sup>th</sup> June 2022 Inclusion Seminar - Eutopia \(eutopia-university.eu\)](#)
- 23 June 2022 [EU Education and Innovation Summit](#)
- 16 September 2022 CHARM-EU Inclusion Conference: [Post-Communication](#)
- 25 November 2022 [EUTOPIA Diversity Day roundtable: Inclusion practices and visions](#)

### Press releases & Podcast episodes

CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team is planning to expand raising awareness of relevant international days that are interlinked to CHARM-EU's values, vision and mission and the Master's Programme. [Press Releases that have been shared, i.e., on the CHARM-EU site, that highlighted thematic areas. IDPD2020, IDPD2021, World Mental Health Day 2022.](#)

Among the CHARM-EU Podcast series, three episodes have put inclusion and diversity in the spotlight. [Discussing inclusion and diversity in the higher education sector - Part 1 \(speaker.com\);](#)  
[Discussing inclusion and diversity in the higher education sector - Part 2 \(speaker.com\);](#)  
[Discussing inclusion and diversity in the higher education sector - Part 3 \(speaker.com\)](#)

### Cross-European University Alliance partnerships

The composition of students engaged in Higher Education has increased and diversified globally. The EU's central goals are equal access to quality education and enhancing the social dimension of higher education (Fazekas, 2018). Fostering access to quality education is a driver of economic growth and social cohesion and helps to safeguard human rights and promote quality research, innovation, and citizens' prospects. In the last two decades, in education and training policy, the questions of access and inclusion of under-represented groups have become increasingly important. European higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's population, promote and protect equal rights and safeguard access and inclusion in policies and practices. Still, many structural barriers to higher education hinder individuals' full and effective participation from various backgrounds, lived experiences, and access needs. The solution is that higher education institutions should embrace the values of inclusion and diversity and the principle of *Inclusion By Design* (i.e., taking a proactive rather than a retrospective approach).

They should keep questioning what is not accessible or not inclusive and have a continuous reflection. It is essential to reflect on the unconscious and conscious biases because of the many hidden factors in Higher Education and other social spaces. Higher Education Institutions, stakeholders and individuals should be reflective and ask about what is not inclusive and who is included or excluded from negotiations and decision-making processes. Stakeholders should work together and collaborate with and meaningfully include people whose own lived experiences provide insights into working towards a more accessible, inclusive education and future.

In conclusion, it is essential to create dialogues and collaborate, opening doors to various organisational units within and between European University Alliances, such as [CHARM-EU](#) & [EUTOPIA \(eutopia-university.eu\)](#), to develop a more inclusive higher education environment within Europe. CHARM-EU, specifically the CHARM-EU Work Package 6 Inclusiveness Team, has been delighted to work with the EUTOPIA Alliance and wishes to continue the collaboration in the future.

- 2 July 2020 [EUTOPIA Digital Inclusion Conference](#)
- 24 March 2022 [CHARM-EU Governance Forum](#)
- 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022 [Inclusion Seminar - Eutopia \(eutopia-university.eu\)](#)
- 16 September 2022 [Inclusion Conference 2022 | CHARM-EU](#)
- 25 November 2022 [EUTOPIA Diversity Day roundtable: Inclusion practices and visions](#)

### CHARM-EU Inclusion Conference

The CHARM-EU Inclusion Conference "*Creating an Inclusive University: Access and Participation in European Higher Education: Challenges and Enablers*" was held on 16 September 2022 in a hybrid format, hosted by Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). In line with the principles and values of the CHARM-EU and the European Union, the conference was based on celebrating diversity, inclusion, equality, human rights, and intersectionality.

The main purpose was to act as a catalyst for a shared dialogue between stakeholders and participants to discuss enablers and challenges to access and participation in higher education

and to identify steps to facilitate more inclusive higher education. It brought together people from diverse backgrounds and cultures from Europe and beyond.

Specific objectives were:

1. To identify challenges and enablers of access and participation in Higher Education more broadly, specifically in connection to the Sustainable Development Goal 4.
2. To share experiences & provide space for networking - discuss and map areas of further improvement of the inclusive university of the future, including the involvement of all stakeholders and students' voices.
3. To exchange knowledge and share policies and practices.
4. To realise Inclusion in Action: Identifying areas of action & recommendations for relevant stakeholders (EU/higher education/civil society/youth).

A four-block structure reflected the overall aims and objectives. Following the opening ceremony, the conference started with a comprehensive panel discussion. A bold but ambitious plan was made to open these professional circles to share their vision and mission for the higher education inclusion agenda. It outlined barriers and enablers to accessing and participation for all, especially underrepresented groups or those at risk of exclusion. The diverse panel discussion included representatives of the Sector for Higher Education Policy at the European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC), Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe, CHARM-EU Alliance, EUTOPIA European University Alliance, student representatives of European Digital UniverCity (EDUC) Alliance, European Network on Independent Living, (ENIL) European Student Union, (ESU) European University Association (EUA) and the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLL). During the second session, two-panel discussions involving the voices of students and educators provided an opportunity to share personal experiences and discuss and map out areas of further improvement for the inclusive university of the future. This section provided a great opportunity to collect and reflect on the lessons learned regarding the CHARM-EU work and to present the best practices of its partner universities. In the

first afternoon workshop, participants worked in small groups. They discussed the questions of what the inclusive university of the future looks like and how it is possible to support its creation. Finally, the groups shared their vision and specific policies and practices to support the design and implementation of inclusive measures. Key points and takeaways identified during these sessions will be used to prepare a call to action, including a list of concrete recommendations, and share it with decision-makers at the EU, national and regional levels.

### Recognitions

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021 [COFACE Families Europe reflecting on CHARM-EU's work on inclusion](#)

COFACE Families Europe [COFACE Families Europe \(coface-eu.org\)](#), a European network of civil society associations representing the interests of families (all types, without discrimination), has published a media release for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Brussels on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2021. Their report highlighted 45 already existing European practices that boost the shift towards fully inclusive societies. The selected initiatives reflected the so-called „S.H.I.F.T. principles”: Support, Human Rights, Independence, Families, and Social Transition. As inclusion is one of the core aspects of CHARM-EU, the Alliance was featured and mentioned as a European best practice of inclusivity in COFACE’s latest report. They stated: *“CHARM-EU is committed to promoting inclusive teaching and learning environments, access and participation of students and staff with various backgrounds, own lived experiences, and access needs in all aspects of higher education. Inclusion and diversity have been profoundly interwoven into the DNA of CHARM-EU.”* They highlighted that CHARM-EU contributes to the S.H.I.F.T. principles in many ways, such as creating an inclusive teaching and learning environment, providing resources on inclusion, ensuring digital accessibility etc. Furthermore, the report also places the Alliance’s work on inclusivity in the context of the United Nations and the European Union.

[New report shedding light on the S.H.I.F.T. towards meaningful inclusion in Europe | COFACE Families Europe \(coface-eu.org\)](#)

ELTE CHARM-EU Awards presented at the end of a successful academic year

7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 [ELTE - CHARM-EU Award for the recognition of the CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Work](#)

Prof. Dr Imre Hamar, Vice-Rector for International Affairs and Head of CHARM-EU-related cities at ELTE, opened the event. The Vice-Rector highlighted that all ELTE faculties are involved in the CHARM-EU activities and that more than 100 ELTE colleagues have already worked on the project. Following the opening speech, ELTE experts working in [CHARM-EU](#) summarised the activities carried out in each project's Work Package and within the CHARM-EU [Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability](#). The ELTE CHARM-EU Award ceremony was held as part of the ELTE's local event. The annual award is given to those teachers, researchers and colleagues working in the Alliance, as well as representatives of partner institutions collaborating with the ELTE, who has played a key role in ELTE's work at CHARM-EU and have made a significant contribution to ELTE's achievements and successes within the Alliance.

#### TRANSFORMING CHARM-EU'S MASTER'S IN GLOBAL CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME.

##### Admission | Inclusion Measures

Inclusion and diversity in the context of CHARM-EU have been both about reducing barriers to access and addressing disadvantages and for the programme to reflect the diversity of the population (reflecting European and global context). Any point calculation process should thus reflect both these considerations. During 2020 the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team has proposed and consulted with relevant parties for inclusion measures to be incorporated in the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability Admission Procedure. An inclusive protocol during the Admissions Process of CHARM-EU Master's supported the engagement of underrepresented groups and those who have faced barriers in their educational journeys. More information about the Admission procedure is available on the website: [Admissions | CHARM-EU](#) and the [Rules and regulations](#) of the CHARM-EU Admissions. In order to ensure access and inclusion, applicants of under-represented communities (i.e., in terms of age, gender, family status, disability, migration status, membership of the Roma and Travelers' socioeconomic

background and more) in all aspects of higher education, among others), could be considered for 10 additional points, and were able to declare their circumstances in the application procedure and provided a relevant rationale and supporting information when the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team were in contact with contacted them. It was agreed that once a student has met any inclusion criterion regarding under-represented communities and disadvantages, they receive the full 10 points. The declaration of this possibility was optional for the applicants.

Reaching out to underrepresented communities – a proactive approach.

During the promotional timeframe of the Master's Programme, two strategies were adopted to share and increase awareness with prosperous applicants that the programme aims to be inclusive. On the CHARM-EU website, under the Master's Programme information, a subsection, [An inclusive program | CHARM-EU](#), was inserted about the inclusive approach of the programme.

Information on the website was divided into different sections. First of all, CHARM-EU's commitment towards inclusion and how it is embedded into the core values of CHARM-EU. It was followed by a key statement that CHARM-EU welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the master's specific requirements, regardless of their backgrounds, own lived experiences, and access needs. Language is powerful; therefore, a human-rights-based language was applied, and access and participation needs were deliberately used instead of special needs (Todd, 2014). Disclosure is a right and choice for individuals, which is completely up to the individual. It was stressed in the paragraph in combination with information about the confidentiality of information. Information about CHARM-EU's capacity and commitment to providing support structures and prohibition of discrimination on any grounds has been indicated. Last but not least, information was available about the CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team and possibilities for contact information for questions and queries.

Targeted communication

Targeted communication was implemented towards European and global networks working towards the rights and inclusion of communities. They were reached out to their publicly available website and email contact details via email and social media channels by the CHARM-EU Work Package 9 Communication Team Leader and the CHARM-EU Work Package 6 Inclusiveness Team Leader. The proactive approach increased awareness for individuals from under-represented communities to consider and take a leap to apply for the programme. Research and projects highlight (i.e., Fazekas, 2018) that educational programmes that do not proactively indicate their inclusive approach and its practical implementation may consider by underrepresented communities the programme is not embracing inclusion and diversity.

The CHARM-EU Inclusion measures assessment approach.

An inclusive and human-centred approach was created according to the core values of CHARM-EU's inclusiveness ethos. This application process enabled CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members to understand better the individual's life circumstances and eligibility for the inclusion points.

#### Disclosure and confidentiality measures

Any information collected or related communications were stored and managed by the Inclusiveness Team in compliance with GDPR and confidentiality agreements between the applicant and CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members.

#### Creating a safe and welcoming space

The CHARM-EU Inclusion Points assessment procedure was conducted by two experts from the CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team. Two experts from WP6 Team have been working as a duo. Where necessary, they requested a consultation with the Inclusiveness Team Members—working as a duo supported creating a safe and welcoming space for applicants to disclose their circumstances and what structural barriers they face in access to and participation in higher education.



## 1. Getting in contact

Individuals applied through an online application platform where they could indicate a yes or no by ticking the box for Inclusion Points. The information for a request for Inclusion Points was filtered and sent to the dedicated CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members. When considering applying for the CHARM-EU Inclusion Points, applicants must ensure they meet the criteria by self-assessing their eligibility circumstances beforehand.

## 2. Required Documentation

The applicant was requested, where possible, to provide justification and relevant documentation. It was requested to submit any supplementary documentation, i.e., nationally/regionally or locally authorised/official documents (if possible, with English translation) or any other documentation that applicants considered relevant.

## 3. Elaboration of circumstances

In combination with the document provision, it was required for applicants to explain their circumstances to the dedicated CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members. The following options were offered, and CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members scheduled a meeting with the applicant. The approach beyond document provision enabled a human-centred approach for both individuals to share their circumstances and CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members to understand better the individual's life circumstances and eligibility for the Inclusion Points.

- A short 5–10-minute call either via phone call, any video call or any equivalent tool that is accessible.

OR

- Approx. 100 words elaborating briefly on why the individual considers themselves eligible for inclusivity points

OR

- A short 1–2-minute video/audio recording in reply to this email elaborating briefly why the individual considers themselves eligible for inclusivity points



#### 4. Evaluation Process

After the application process, CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members evaluated the applications by using an assessment criteria system. The list of eligible applications was sent to the CHARM-EU Academic Board for final review and approval. The applicant was notified about the result by the CHARM-EU Academic Board in due time.

#### 5. Role & Responsibility of the CHARM-EU Academic Board:

The Academic Board reviewed all the applications and considered the following aspects:

- Academic achievement
- Personal background and circumstances, as demonstrated by various factors, including educational experience.
- As demonstrated by extracurricular activities, community service, work experience, and interpersonal skills.

#### 6. Questions, Queries

Applicants were encouraged to share any questions and comments with the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team at [charmeuwp6@elte.hu](mailto:charmeuwp6@elte.hu). The Team was delighted to hear from individuals to help improve the CHARM-EU experience regarding inclusion and accessibility.

### Minimise financial barriers | Inclusion Measures

#### CHARM-EU Grant

##### Overview and key findings

The CHARM-EU Grant aimed to minimise barriers that hinder the access and participation of students who meet all the admission requirements and cannot access other grants and scholarships. Originally a financial aid structure was not built into the design of the Master's Programme. CHARM-EU Work Package 6 Inclusiveness Team has proposed a financial aid measure in early 2021. Many consultations and collaborations took place with relevant work

packages, including the Finance Team and CHARM-EU leadership. As a result, CHARM-EU established the CHARM-EU Grant in the spring of 2021. The financial aid model was designed and divided into two grant models: total (tuition fee or mobility cost) or partial. During the 2021 Application period for the CHARM-EU Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability, 10 EU students were supported with CHARM-EU Grant, and 1 non-EU tuition-fee waiver was granted. During the 2022 CHARM-EU Master's Application Period, CHARM-EU needed to consider its limited capacity and resources. Therefore, the grant was limited to 5% of the total students enrolled in the 2022 edition of the Master's. Information about the CHARM-EU Grant and any further financial aid were available on the CHARM-EU website: [Tuition fees | CHARM-EU](#)

### The CHARM-EU Grant assessment approach

An inclusive and human-centred approach was created according to the core values of CHARM-EU's inclusiveness ethos. This application process enabled CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members to understand better the individual's life circumstances and eligibility for the grant.

### Disclosure and confidentiality measures

Any information collected or related communications were stored and managed by the Inclusiveness Team in compliance with GDPR and confidentiality agreements between the applicant and CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team.

### Creating a safe and welcoming space

The CHARM-EU Grant assessment procedure was conducted by two experts from the CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team. The two experts from WP6 Team have been working as a duo. Where necessary, requested consultation with the Inclusiveness Team Members—working as a duo supported creating a safe and welcoming space for applicants to disclose their circumstances and what structural barriers they face in access to and participation in higher education.

### Eligibility criteria



- low-income/ low socioeconomic background
- instability of income
- employment circumstances
- loan
- geographical location
- Civil/Family circumstances
- health and other social needs
- with children/caring
- Disability/mental health, chronic illnesses
- Immigration status
- Orphan status
- have been displaced within or beyond their home country due to conflict or violation of human rights, such as persecution, refugee, asylum seeker, an individual with long residency in the EU but who is unable to access government support, a stateless individual, undocumented individuals
- Any other hardship or experience of discrimination and emergency can be documented/justified to be eligible.

#### 1. Getting in contact

Once students have been successfully admitted, they could apply for a CHARM-EU Grant by contacting CHARM-EU and the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members via [charmeuwp6@elte.hu](mailto:charmeuwp6@elte.hu). When considering applying for the CHARM-EU grant, applicants were required to make sure that they met the criteria by self-assessing their eligibility circumstances beforehand with the criteria.

## 2. A short explanatory letter

A short explanation was requested for any applicant to be considered for the CHARM-EU Grant. The short letter, a minimum of half to 1 pager, where applicants explained why they needed the CHARM-EU grant.

## 3. Required Documentation

The applicant was requested to provide justification and relevant documentation in all cases. It was requested to submit any supplementary documentation, i.e., nationally/regionally or locally authorised/official documents (if possible, with English translation) or any other documentation that applicants considered relevant.

## 4. Elaboration of circumstances

In combination with the document provision, it was required for applicants to explain their circumstances to the dedicated CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members. The following options were offered, and CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members scheduled a meeting with the applicant. The approach beyond document provision enabled a human-centred approach for both individuals to share their circumstances and CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members to understand better the individual's life circumstances and eligibility for the CHARM-EU Grant.

- Short 5-10 minutes call either via phone call, any video call or any equivalent tool that is accessible.
- Short 1-2 minutes video/audio recording elaborating briefly on why the applicant considers being eligible for the grant

## 5. Evaluation Process

After the application process, CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team Members evaluated the applications by using a complex assessment criteria system. The list of eligible applications was sent to the CHARM-EU Academic Board for final review and approval. The applicant was notified about the result by the CHARM-EU Academic Board in due time.

## 6. Role & Responsibility of the CHARM-EU Academic Board:

The Academic Board reviewed all the applications and considered the following aspects:

- Academic achievement
- Personal background and circumstances, as demonstrated by various factors, including educational experience.
- As demonstrated by extracurricular activities, community service, work experience, and interpersonal skills.

## 7. Questions, Queries

Applicants were encouraged to share any questions and comments with the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team at [charmeuwp6@elte.hu](mailto:charmeuwp6@elte.hu). The Team was delighted to hear from individuals to help improve the CHARM-EU experience regarding inclusion and accessibility.

## Key findings & recommendations

### GRANT

- To increase the amount of tuition fee waivers and grants for all students, especially non-EU students.
- To consider a setup of a CHARM-EU fund and explore ways of collaboration with business and society stakeholders.

### LIVING & ADDITIONAL COSTS

- To provide general, additional basic information for students in financing their cost of living during the Master's.

### VISA ISSUES

- To streamline support for students regarding VISA issues with CHARM-EU organisational units and relevant external units, such as embassies or global mobility agencies.

## REACHING OUT

- If CHARM-EU is committed to being a truly inclusive university, it must also reach out to groups whose social status makes it more difficult for them to access a university
- Different scholarships should be advertised to reach the target audience (e.g. Roma or disability-related organisations)

## TRANSPARENT BUDGETING

- CHARM-EU grant should be budgeted by the principle, **#InclusionbyDesign**, meaning in advance each year in consultation with CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team - in the new structure, CHARM-EU DEI Office.
- Transparent and pre-defined number of scholarships should be advertised each year

## KEEPING IN THE CENTRE THE UNIQUE APPROACH

- Person-centered, personal contact with students, not bureaucratic approach, e.g. video-interviews with students in need, individual, personalised services

## FOLLOW-UP & EVALUATION

- Follow-up, consultation, and regular feedback of students during the year are needed.

### Additional financial aid opportunities

CHARM-EU encouraged students to check other grants and opportunities at the European, regional, and national levels, including the opportunities available in their institution.

CHARM-EU provided a list of available grants and scholarships from different countries and institutions (a non-exhaustive list)



## Europe/ European Union

- [Social Inclusion Policies in Higher Education: Evidence from the EU](#)
- Erasmus+ Supplementary Grant:
- [Students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions](#)
- Higher Education: Latest update on fees and financial support to students in Europe | EU Commission Press
- [National Student Fee and Support Systems in European Higher Education 2020/21](#). Published: 2020-12-07
- [European Funding Guide](#)

## Spain

- [Higher Education Funding in Spain](#)

## Ireland

- [HEA – Higher Education Authority](#)

## The Netherlands

- [Higher Education Funding in the Netherlands](#)

## Hungary

### Ministry/Higher Education Authorities:

- <https://www.tka.hu/nemzetkozi/6403/osztondijak-felsooktatasi-intezmenyeken-kivul#%C3%BAt>
- <https://tka.hu/nemzetkozi/6398/szocialis-alapu-osztondijak>

## ELTE

- <https://www.elte.hu/osztondijak-penzugyek>
- <https://www.elte.hu/osztondijak-penzugyek>
- [https://www.elte.hu/dstore/document/2060/ELTE\\_HJK.pdf](https://www.elte.hu/dstore/document/2060/ELTE_HJK.pdf)

## ELTE EHÖK

- <http://ehok.elte.hu/nu/index.php/palyazatok-es-osztondijak/>

## France

- For students living or working in France, or with one of the parents paying taxes in France, or with refugee status or subsidiary protected person: [CROUS scholarship](#).
- For international students, [scholarships are listed here](#). For more information, contact the [Campus France office in your country](#).

### CHARM-EU scholarship: minority ethnic background or displaced Ukrainian citizens

In 2022 CHARM EU invited applications for the following scholarship [Extraordinary call for applications | Master's in Global Challenges for Sustainability | CHARM-EU](#), which will pay EU fees and provide a living stipend of €16,000. Applicants must be EU citizens from a recognised ethnic minority group or a displaced Ukrainian citizens eligible for EU fees under the Temporary Protection Directive: [Temporary protection \(europa.eu\)](#). Applicants needed to indicate in their application materials that they were applying for this scholarship and needed to contact [charm-euoffice@ub.edu](mailto:charm-euoffice@ub.edu).

### Participation in the Master's | CHARM-EU Needs Assessment

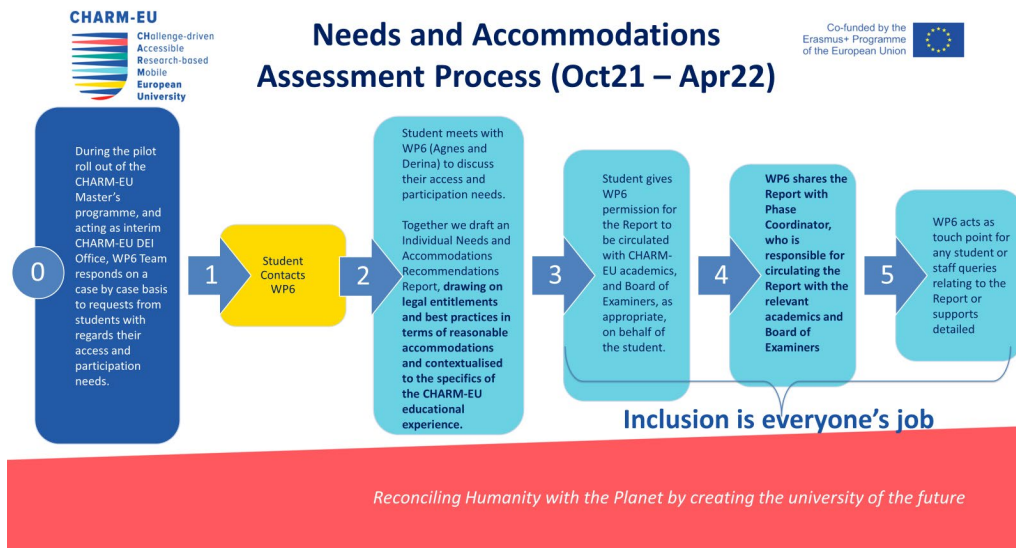
Legal background and rationale

CHARM-EU is bound by equality, equity, and non-discrimination legislation at the international, European, National and Local levels. Access and participation of individuals with disabilities are specific within the legislative environment. Many countries have signed and ratified, and specifically, the EU signed and ratified, the UNCRPD 2006 [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\) | United Nations Enable](#). Further information is available by accessing the Council Decision of 26 November 2009 concerning the conclusion, by the European Community, of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [EUR-Lex - 32010D0048 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) *"In this respect, the European Union sets a precedent, since it is the only regional organisation to date that has acceded to the CRPD. The EU (then European Community) signed the Convention on 30 March 2007, the opening day for signature. Following the adoption of Council Decision 2010/48/EC6 and the subsequent deposit of the formal ratification instruments with the UN Secretary-General in December 2010, the CRPD entered into force for the EU on 22 January 2011. Hence, in line with the instrument's legally binding nature, all EU legislation, policies and programmes must comply with the Convention's established obligations. Moreover, the EU is obliged to protect the rights of persons with disabilities within its jurisdiction and also within its public administration."* (Anglmayer, 2016, p. 6-7) ([EAV assessment \(europa.eu\)](#)).



## The CHARM-EU Individual Needs and Accommodations Assessment Process

A holistic CHARM-EU Needs Assessment has been designed and carried out by CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team. The CHARM-EU Individual Needs and Accommodations Assessment Process details the reasonable accommodations and recommendations which should be fully provided to the student throughout the CHARM-EU Master's Programme. A document is developed in conjunction between the individual student and the dedicated WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members. Students need to provide relevant documentation for the justification of certain circumstances. Academic staff/lecturers, Board of Examiners, etc. will not have access to confidential and sensitive information about the student (such as medical or any sensitive personal information). The student holds the decision regarding the disclosure of any information regarding their access or participation needs or their Individual Needs and Accommodations Assessment Report. Students can use their Individual Needs and Accommodations Assessment Report to request reasonable accommodations, assessment supports, etc., as appropriate. Requests must be shared with the appropriate academic staff/lecturer or Board of Examiners in due time. At the end of April 2022, the CHARM-EU WP6 Needs Assessment was modified. Since May 2022 CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team has sent the CHARM-EU Needs Report to the CHARM-EU Chair of the Board of Examiners (and a copy of their Secretariat) for approval. Once the CHARM-EU Needs Report is approved, CHARM-EU DEI distributes the Report to the student, relevant CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team Members, CHARM-EU Chair of Board of Examiners, Track/Modules Coordinators, CHARM-EU Chair of Portfolio Assessment Committee and their Secretariats to take the necessary actions.



### Key findings

Conduction of the CHARM-EU Needs Assessment is needed to overview due to insufficient resource capacity (not foreseen in the 2019 Grant Application) of the CHARM-EU WP6 Inclusiveness Team (2019-2022).

- A detailed resource allocation review with Partner Universities and Partner Universities' Support Offices' needs is due in 2023
- The establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Partner Universities Support Offices is due in 2023
- A review of steps in the current process (May 2022 – December 2022) is due in 2023.
- A CHARM-EU Reasonable Accommodation Policy is due in 2023.

### 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.

## LIST OF LITERATURE

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