CHARM-EU Annual Conference

European universities' cooperation: Towards sustainable, transdisciplinary partnerships

13 January 2021

(Online)

Utrecht 900 years

Concept note:

Cooperation between different stakeholders in Higher Education is becoming more relevant to enhance sustainable innovation, digital transformation, citizen wellbeing, equitable and inclusive societies, and economic development. This vision has been reinforced particularly by the European Universities Initiative and through a number of European policy/action areas including the New European Green Deal, EU Digital Education Action Plan, New European Bauhaus, the New European Research Area (ERA), the European Education Area and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The CHARM-EU Annual Conference will provide a platform for the European Universities Initiative to strengthening its strategic partnership across the EU between higher education institutions. With this conference we want to focus on the innovation and trends in Higher Education and how European University Alliances deliver a contribution in this development during the first phase and in the future during the next roll out.

A strategic and coordinated action towards enhancing 'knowledge square' cooperation (education, research, innovation, and business & society), based on a transdisciplinary approach, could have a major impact in addressing societal challenges. During the last two years, the European Universities Initiative is proving to be an effective means to foster this cooperation whilst developing a new university model and citizens of the future through education, research, innovation, external engagement and digitalization.

At the CHARM-EU Annual Conference, different elements of this topic will be discussed, including the benefits of multistakeholder cooperation at local, national, and regional levels, the importance of a common agenda based on knowledge sharing and how to consolidate this interaction to develop innovative solutions to meet societal challenges in a just and inclusive way.

AGENDA

09:30 – 10:45 Opening Ceremony

Session 1| Innovation and trends in HE: Setting the framework and looking forward.

- Prof. Henk Kummeling. Rector. Utrecth University
- Prof. Ludovic Thilly, Chair. Coimbra Group
- Michael Gaebel, head of the Higher Education Policy Unit. EUA

Panel discussion

10:45 – 11:15   Short break

11:15 – 11:30 Session 2 | European universities and current developments in HE | An introduction to the thematic sessions

This introductory session will present the importance of the topics to be discussed during the breakout sessions as means to strength the cooperation between different actors to develop innovative solutions to meet societal challenges. The plenary will underline the bottom-up transformative process of EU universities, while showcasing the importance of the involvement of different stakeholders in this endeavor.

- Doris Alexander, Assoc. Director of European Engagement at Trinity College Dublin

11:30 – 13:00 Thematic break-out sessions

Introduction to a specific topic and discussion.

Themes

1. **EDUCATION |** Designing Transdisciplinary Education for a European University

2. **INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION |** Transforming Higher Education Institutions through Transnational Co-creation

3. **GOVERNANCE |** Governance Challenges in the European University: Establishing Governance, a Legal Entity and Staffing Plan

4. **DIGITALISATION |** Developing an Effective IT Strategy and Architecture for the European University / Innovation and digitalization in the European University

5. **STUDENT PERSPECTIVE |** Student's perspectives on Challenge-Based education in Hybrid Classrooms

13:00 – 14:00 Break and cultural event provided by UU

14:00 – 15:00 Session 3 |Advancing education for sustainable development: vision for the future

The European Universities initiative is a flagship of the European Education Area and through the deepening cooperation amongst alliance members and across alliances, we can rethink how education, research and innovation can take on board core values: sustainability, inclusion and diversity. In this session, panelists will discuss transformative ideas having European universities alliances as drivers of change to improve citizens' quality of life. It will reflect how the European universities are working to boost a sustainable development, -fostering critical thinking, creating inclusive communities, building transdisciplinary dialogue, social innovation. It will open a conversation about rethinking the future of education to foster our common goals on the path towards a more sustainable and inclusive future.

 15:00 Closing

Background information

- New European Bauhaus
- EU Digital Education Action Plan
- Communication on a new ERA for research and innovation. European Education Area European Commission. 2020
- Achieving the European Education Area by 2025 – Communication. European Commission. 2020.
- Political Guidelines. A Union that strives for more. My Agenda for Europe. Ursula von der Leyen
- European Research Area
- EUA Study: The Role of Universities in Regional Innovation Ecosystems (2019)
- A European Green Deal. Striving to be the first climate-neutral continent
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- EUA-IEP