



Circle U.
European University Alliance

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

A strategy for Circle U.



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circle-u.eu

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1 INTRODUCTION

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I) are both objectives and processes that need to be communicated and implemented in all levels of Circle U.'s organizational structure, activities, and community identity. Equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential for democracy and fundamental human rights, as well as for enhancing the quality of our activities and Circle U.'s legitimacy in society. The European University Alliance Circle U. is funded and supported by the European Commission. The "Implementation guidelines" [1] for the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity strategy state:

"European Union (EU) programmes should provide opportunities that are accessible for all. However, some people cannot benefit equally from these opportunities because they face various barriers. Inclusion of people facing access barriers or having fewer opportunities in education, training and youth work is a key objective of several policy initiatives. Whereas the EU educational, youth and sport programmes have focused on inclusion in the past, evaluation of and research point to a need for further widening access and inclusiveness." (p. 6)

In this sense, a Circle U. ED&I strategy will foster an inclusive academic environment that leverages diverse perspectives, drives innovation, and ensures that all members feel valued and supported. Circle U. commits to create a safe environment for students and staff and prevent sexual harassment, violence and all forms of discrimination. This approach not only enhances the academic and social experiences within the alliance but also strengthens our capacity to address global challenges collaboratively. The ED&I strategy is to be understood as an overarching strategic framework, not an action plan; specific action plans, need to be developed for relevant groups (see section 3.2) according to the needs and priorities the alliance decides on.

A joint ED&I strategy for Circle U. aims to mediate and enhance support for students, academics and staff from diverse backgrounds across its member institutions by developing a common vision for equity, diversity, and inclusion that can be accepted by all alliance members and for which responsibility is shared across the alliance. The strategy for the alliance emphasizes the need for intersectional approaches and thematic areas for future action plans (see section 3). By scaling up certain activities to alliance level, Circle U. can help foster a shared understanding between the partner universities and ensure all member institutions are involved in advancing ED&I initiatives. The hope is that this collective effort can contribute to develop pilot formats and resources within ED&I that is transferable to other groups, stakeholders, and alliances, integrating the representation of target groups in the process of developing activities and ensuring broad-based cultural change.

Circle U.'s Mission & Vision statement refers to diversity, equity and inclusion in several passages. Different aspects are addressed in the document (accessibility of education regarding age, class background, location, abilities; diversity of worldviews, multiculturalism & multilingualism; gender; health inequity) but not all of them have been addressed by existing or past initiatives and activities (see Appendix 1: Mapping of past and ongoing Circle U. activities). Gender has been addressed extensively in the ERIA report "Integrating Gender Balance at Circle U." [2] which provided the basis for the development for guidelines for a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) [3] and through several initiatives, such as the Women in Science Group and the Female Founders' Network. However, barriers to education due to inequality in terms of social class, north-south divide, or racism have not been significantly tackled by past Circle U. activities. Furthermore, all past and ongoing initiatives and programs so far significantly lack intersectionality by addressing specific target groups or forms of discrimination without considering the multidimensionality of possible factors and their interconnectedness.

The ERIA report's research revealed that the nine partner universities adopt highly diverse approaches to gender equality and diversity, significantly influenced by local contexts, including cultural factors, legislation, and funding. Each university's approach to gender equality, for example, varies, and while some institutions actively pursue diversity and inclusion targets, this is not universally the case among all member universities. Together with the outcome of a two-hour online workshop that aimed at collaboratively developing a strategic vision for Circle U.'s broader ED&I strategy, the ERIA report and its recommendations forms the basis for the

strategy outlined in this document in section 3. During the online workshop (see section 2), the participants collaboratively developed priorities that led to the formulation of five principles on an overarching level (3.1) and six recommendations (3.2) which we consider vital for making Circle U. a just, inclusive and diverse alliance.

1.1 DEFINING EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOR THE ALLIANCE

While equality ensures that everyone is treated the same, our adoption of the term equity reflects our commitment to recognizing diverse needs and circumstances, and providing tailored resources and opportunities to achieve fair and inclusive outcomes for all. In this way, equity and equality work hand in hand, as equity creates the conditions necessary for true equality to be realized within our community. In English, the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. As a result, we also refer to sources that define equality in our approach.

The Cambridge dictionary defines equality as “the right of different groups of people to have a similar social position and receive the same treatment” [4]. Chapter 3 of the charter of fundamental rights of the European Union [5] is on equality. Articles 20-26 protect the equality before the law, non-discrimination, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, equality between women and men, the rights of the child, the rights of the elderly, and integration of persons with disabilities. A global understanding of equality also relates to Goal 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” and Goal 10 “Reduced Inequalities” of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 [6].

The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy [1] focuses on “people with fewer opportunities”, defined as “people who, for economic, social, cultural, geographical or health reasons, due to their migrant background, or for reasons such as disability or educational difficulties or for any other reason, including a reason that could give rise to discrimination under Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, face obstacles that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under the Programme.” (p. 7)

The International Labour Organisation (ILO 2019) has also played an important role in setting standards in relation to gender-based violence. In 2019, it adopted the Violence and Harassment Convention which recognises everyone’s right to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. [16]

In addition, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has developed the Gender Equality in academia and research (GEAR) tool that refers to Horizon Europe. The GEAR tool offers guidance and information on how to implement a Gender Equality Plan in an organization to promote structural and cultural change towards Gender Equality. It also offers definitions on the central working terms [7] which we adapt for this strategy document. By way of introduction and differing from the following GEAR definitions, we would like to emphasize that our understanding of gender includes a broad spectrum that encompasses non-binary and other gender identities. This inclusive approach ensures that the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity, are respected and valued.

Gender Equality: Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, thereby recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Gender Equity: Provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men.

Inclusion: The practice or policy of including and integrating all people and groups in activities, organisations, political processes, etc., especially those who are disadvantaged, have suffered discrimination or are living with disabilities.

Diversity: Differences in the values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, skills, knowledge, and life experiences of each individual in any group of people. It is important to consider the lived realities of women and men in all their diversity.

Intersectional discrimination: Discrimination that takes place on the basis of several personal grounds or characteristics/identities, which operate and interact with each other at the same time in such a way as to be inseparable.

Despite widespread recognition of the importance of the intersectional approach, recent research indicates that it has not been effectively incorporated into the functioning of higher education institutions in many European countries [8][9]. In addition, there is a varied understanding of this approach across different policies of higher education and research institutions in Europe. Even when an intersectional approach is applied in practice, institutions often fail to acknowledge intersecting axes of discrimination and oppression beyond gender. Embracing the intersectional approach as a critical perspective on academic production acknowledges that inequality arises from multiple factors such as race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, age, functional diversity etc., which shape the social experiences of individuals, groups, and communities. Therefore, these axes must be taken into account in the process of production, analysis and revision of knowledge [8][10][11], as well as in designing and implementing policy actions. Another key characteristic of an intersectional approach is that it is inherently decolonial, which implies the deconstruction of traditional knowledge and inclusion of diverse perspectives in university curricula [11][12]. This indicates the importance of diversification of sources of knowledge and being sensitive to the context of knowledge production. It also invites us to think more about which voices can potentially be underrepresented in the system and how to mitigate biases to include these voices into designing and implementing different policy actions within the alliance.

1.2 ED&I IN THE CONTEXT OF A EUROPEAN ALLIANCE

We identified the specific context of being a European university alliance as a great opportunity to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in higher education. Our student communities are international and diverse, and so are our research and teaching staff members across the alliance. One of the basic principles of Circle U. is to offer an inclusive environment for international cooperation and learning and to make education accessible regardless of individual backgrounds.

A joint strategic framework to mainstream equity, diversity, and inclusion on the level of the alliance bears significant potential and furthers positive synergy effects such as gaining cultural competence, mutual inspiration through exchanging best practices and knowledge sharing. As stated in the report “Integrating Gender Balance at Circle U.” [2], the different local contexts in relation to ED&I among the alliance partners represent challenges and inspiration at the same time. Circle U. develop a shared understanding of what constitutes success within ED&I. A strategic and intersectional approach to ED&I in Circle U. may benefit from the diversity of contexts in the member universities, as well as help promote an overall inclusive environment in the alliance. By leveraging international alliances, institutions can foster a more enriching and supportive educational environment through shared knowledge and resources. A collaborative effort opens the potential for mutual learning and collaboration, which can significantly enhance the capacity to meet diverse student needs and improve institutional resilience.

Additionally, a connected network of ED&I representatives from different European Higher Education Institutions may result in an increase in engagement and legitimacy for ED&I work on a European policy level, and reversely affect changes within local contexts at national level for the different universities involved in the alliance.

1.3 BUILDING ON THE GENDER-RELATED WORK IN CIRCLE U./ERIA

Previous activities related to ED&I (see Appendix 1: Mapping past and ongoing activities) clearly show that the main target group is students, and gender equality is a priority aspect in the broader area of work within ED&I. The focus on students is explained by the emphasis on educational and teaching innovation, which is central to Circle U., as well as ongoing efforts to increase student engagement. The importance of gender equality, on the other hand, is primarily due to the ERIA project.

The ERIA project was carried out jointly by members of the Circle U. partner universities and was co-funded by the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 Science with and for Society (SWAFS) programme and the Circle U. member universities. Coordinated by the Université Paris Cité, the project spanned three years (2021-2024). Its overarching objective was to pilot initiatives that enhance the interaction between academia and society, with a focus on common scientific agendas. Specifically, two activities within ERIA focused on gender equality: *Integrating gender-balance in the Circle U. R&I activities* (Activity 13) and *Actively participating in the Forum FOREU2 with other alliances including the exchange of best practices regarding gender equality* (Activity 14).

The Guidelines for Circle U.'s Gender Equality Plan [3] draw and expand upon the findings of the report "Integrating Gender Balance in Circle U. Activities: Contextualizing the Gender Dimension in the Alliance" produced within the ERIA project. This report extensively outlines the gender equality plans and actions across Circle U.'s member universities. It also offers initial insights and suggestions for shaping the upcoming Gender Equality Plan within the Erasmus+ project Circle U. 2030.

The report "Integrating Gender Balance in Circle U. Activities: Contextualizing the Gender Dimension in the Alliance" [2] highlights several key findings adopted in the "Guidelines for the Future GEP" [3] of the alliance. These findings emphasize the distinct national contexts and differences in Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) across universities, despite all institutions engaging in data collection. There is significant variation in organizational structures and levels of involvement, often compounded by a lack of leadership commitment, which results in mere compliance with EU requirements rather than proactive initiatives. Insufficient resource allocation further impedes the design and implementation of effective GEPs. Traditional university cultures and internal resistance, along with societal attitudes, cultural norms, and gender stereotypes, also pose substantial barriers. Additionally, the lack of work-life balance disproportionately affects women's careers, undermining gender equality efforts within the alliance. The development of an ED&I strategy defined in this document builds upon these key findings and includes the best practices identified in the Report in its priorities and recommendations.

2 DEVELOPING AN ED&I STRATEGY

The approach towards developing a joint ED&I strategy emphasized collaboration and co-creation with a variety of stakeholders across the alliance's member universities. The taskforce led by HUB consisted of members from Circle U.'s Work Package 1 (Management & Coordination) and representatives from the fields of ED&I and Human Resources within the partner universities (AU, KCL, UB, UPI, UiO).

Phase 1 [April-May 2024]

HUB, AU, and KCL undertook the initial brainstorming and task force development. This was followed by a comprehensive review of current activities, mapping ED&I efforts across Circle U. universities to highlight successes and identify areas for improvement. A task force was then formed, including additional representatives from UB, UPI, UiO, and CUSU. The process also involved consultation with the MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning) Officer to ensure thorough planning of all aspects of the task, including data collection and management.

Phase 2 [June 2024]

The core taskforce planned and organized an online workshop, which included representatives from eight of the nine partner universities to collaboratively specify and define the strategic approach. Following the workshop, feedback was gathered from task force members to refine and enhance the strategy based on their insights and experiences.

Phase 3 [June-October 2024]

The first draft of the strategy was created and subsequently reviewed by UB and KCL. This revised version was then discussed in meetings with Work Package1 and then presented to the Management Board and the General Assembly of Circle U., incorporating further feedback and suggestions.

2.1 ONLINE WORKSHOP: REFINING THE STRATEGIC VISION FOR CIRCLE U.'S EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION STRATEGY (21.06.2024)

The primary goal of the two-hour online workshop was to complement, refresh, and enhance our existing ED&I ambitions with a clearly formulated vision. In preparation, participants received data on mapped activities that have occurred or are ongoing within the Circle U. network. These served as a foundation for the two discussion rounds in four breakout groups, enabling the participants to identify focus areas and opportunities to improve a collective approach.

The workshop brought together 20 participants from eight of the nine partner universities with functional roles within Circle U. or having expertise in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at a local level.

2.1.1 Workshop Key Objectives

- **Vision Formulation:** Identify areas we want to focus on as an alliance and develop a unified and compelling ED&I vision that reflects our shared values and goals.
- **Strategy Enhancement:** Brainstorm and develop strategies to refresh and enhance our ED&I efforts, ensuring they are comprehensive and impactful.
- **Outcome:** Formulate a set of principles for the Circle U. ED&I strategy.

The four breakout groups discussed three questions in each discussion rounds for 30 minutes.

Discussion Round 1: ED&I in the context of a European alliance

1. What can the context of an international network bring to ED&I?
2. What changes are we hoping to achieve as an alliance?
3. Think about short-term goals and long-term goals.

Discussion Round 2: Principles of ED&I for the Circle U. Alliance

1. What aspects do you think can facilitate the implementation of ED&I practices?
2. What aspects do you think can block the implementation?
3. What do you think are the priorities within ED&I for the alliance?

The discussion results are shortly summarized below and were integrated in the development of the strategy outlined in this document.

2.1.2 Workshop Discussion Summary

The group discussion emphasized the critical role of international support, as leveraging global alliances allows institutions to share resources and knowledge, enhancing their ability to support diverse student needs and strengthen institutional resilience. The discussion underlined mutual learning and collaboration across

different local contexts, highlighting the need for inclusive policies and practices to ensure active student participation, for example of first-generation students, and visibility of ED&I initiatives. The group concluded that by scaling up certain activities to the alliance level, Circle U. could ensure that all member universities, especially those with less developed strategies, are aware and involved. Circle U. creates an environment of exchanging practices, fostering a shared understanding of what constitutes success within ED&I

As a short-term goal, the workshop underlined the importance of initiating efforts with thorough research and comprehensive mapping of legislative and policy contexts beyond the gender-related work that was done in the report [2]. By understanding the current landscape and identifying gaps and opportunities, informed, impactful, and sustainable actions can be created for the long term. The workshop concluded with an advocacy for long-term cultural and systemic changes, emphasizing the involvement of more stakeholders in the implementation of an ED&I sensitive approach within the alliance.

3 AN ED&I STRATEGY FOR CIRCLE U.

By focusing on the following five strategic principles, the Circle U. ED&I strategy aims to leverage the strengths of its diverse member institutions while promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of its operations.

3.1 KEY STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Intersectional and Community-Focused Approach

We adopt an intersectional approach that considers multiple dimensions of identity to promote ED&I practices across the alliance. This approach fosters empathy and a sense of community by recognising individual experiences and challenges faced by different groups. Intersectional measures will address various aspects of diversity and include a variety of marginalised and/or underrepresented groups, ensuring Circle U. initiatives are comprehensive and inclusive for all.

Principle 2: Inclusive representation and participation

Circle U. secures leadership commitment to actively endorse and anchor ED&I initiatives and thereby legitimizing actions relating to ED&I, i.e. through funding of flagship initiatives. Responsibility for the development and implementation of the ED&I strategy is shared across the alliance and paired with local ED&I measures in place. In addition, representation of all stakeholder groups, including students, faculties and staff, is sought in governance processes. Facilitating their active participation in decision-making processes further strengthens ED&I efforts. Structured responses to resistance factors will help to reach a high level of acceptance within the alliance. Collaboration across member universities on joint ED&I projects, sharing resources, best practices, and lessons learned will advantage collective strengths. Establishing communities of practice among staff fosters a supportive network, while supporting small-scale, bottom-up activities and student initiatives ensures broad-based engagement and innovation in ED&I efforts.

Principle 3: Visibility and Transparency

Circle U. will increase visibility of ED&I initiatives through dedicated platforms and transparent communication. Information about opportunities and initiatives will be easily accessible to all members, as the alliance aims to foster awareness and participation. Communication strategies will be developed and implemented taking into account our diverse communities. We aim to be inclusive, multilingual, and culturally sensitive to ensure broad reach and engagement. Communication strategies will make use of research and data alongside ongoing policies to ensure continuous improvement and a fact-based approach.

Principle 4: Empowerment through Education and Training

Circle U. will provide education opportunities that build ED&I competencies among all members and ensure that training opportunities are available to everyone, from management to students. Additionally, support for international experience will be prioritized by making it accessible to all students and staff, addressing barriers to participation, and promoting inclusive opportunities for global engagement. Enhancing staff mobility will further promote cross-institutional learning and collaboration, strengthening the alliance's overall commitment to ED&I principles.

Principle 5: Shared university and alliance responsibility

Circle U. develops and implements a unified ED&I strategic framework, building on the policies, initiatives, and actions of its individual member universities. While each university remains primarily responsible for ED&I, given the need to tailor these efforts to their local contexts, the Circle U. ED&I strategy aims to create a shared vision for equity, diversity, and inclusion. This common vision will promote and ensure an inclusive environment across all joint initiatives within the alliance.

3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the above principles, we recommend six short-term and long-term goals to further the implementation of the ED&I ambitions for the alliance. Recommendations 1-4 are short-term goals, while recommendations 5 and 6 are long-term goals.

Recommendation 1: Monitoring of ED&I Strategies at each partner university

Regular research and mapping of legislative and policy will make sure that we understand the ED&I landscape within Circle U. This approach helps identify opportunities for improvement and potential areas for advocacy. By staying informed and aligned with national and international standards, the alliance can strategically develop and implement inclusive policies and initiatives that foster diversity, equity, and inclusion across member universities.

Recommendation 2: Establishing a Working Group within the alliance

A working group consisting of experts from within the universities of the alliance should be established to accompany and monitor the implementation of ED&I principles and initiatives. Firstly, such a working group ensures commitment and accountability among stakeholders across the alliance, fostering a culture of continuous improvement in ED&I practices. Secondly, the working group can provide expertise and guidance to ensure that initiatives are tailored to address the specific challenges and opportunities within each member university. Thirdly, regular monitoring allows for timely identification of barriers, enabling prompt adjustments and improvements as needed. Fourthly, the working group serves as a platform for sharing best practices and lessons learned, promoting collaboration and collective learning across Circle U. Lastly, having a dedicated group demonstrates a proactive approach to advancing ED&I goals, enhancing the alliance's reputation as a leader in fostering inclusive excellence in higher education and society at large. Building on the joint efforts of the EU alliances to exchange good practices that have led to the FOREU2 Report on "practices and measures taken/to be taken to ensure the mainstreaming of the gender dimension in R&I long-term strategies" [13] a Circle U. Working Group dedicated to ED&I will further contribute to and benefit from being involved in the Diversity & Inclusion Hub of the Inter-Alliance Network [14].

Recommendation 3: Involvement of key stakeholders

Stakeholders to be involved in the developing of flagship initiatives include the internal Circle U. ecosystem, in particular student representatives and work packages with related tasks and deliverables. Further important stakeholders are ED&I representatives from the partner universities, existing local initiatives of the partner universities, associated partners and relevant public stakeholders. Within the alliance's ecosystem,

future collaboration is planned specifically with the taskforce T4.7 (Gender Balance) in WP4 (Research and Innovation Support) whose task it is to develop a Gender Equality Plan and formalize the Women in Science Group, WP2 on inclusive mobility, WP3 with regard to offers in the Open Campus and the activities of the Knowledge Hubs, and WP5 with the Female Founders Network.

Recommendation 4: Create and maintain an alliance ED&I toolbox

The creation of resources to enhance ED&I practices is essential. This involves establishing a database or a common platform that reports, using common indicators, the ED&I analysis of each university involved in the alliance. The toolbox brings together existing resources from the partner universities and will contain new tools to be developed in the future. Among other things, it will refer to existing offers across Europe such as the UniSAFE Toolkit that was designed to address gender-based violence in higher education institutions and research organisation [15]. Additionally, a common platform should be developed to aggregate and disseminate publications with an ED&I perspective, facilitating dissemination and collaboration.

Recommendation 5: Thematic Areas for Concrete Measures

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) will be developed by WP4 in close cooperation with the ED&I working group and address key aspects such as sexual harassment and a gender-just environment. We recommend that the working group will develop recommendations for further concrete measures to be implemented at the alliance level. These activities can also arise from the Flagship Initiatives, for which an annual call will be launched from 2025 onwards. Local events are subject to the guidelines of the respective institution. We further recommend that concrete measures developed within the context of the alliance will have to take into consideration one or several of these thematic areas:

- 1 Work-life balance, mental health and organizational culture
- 2 Career advancement, competency development and training
- 3 Integration of equity, diversity and inclusion perspectives in research and teaching content
- 4 Student engagement and recruitment
- 5 Non-violence and anti-discrimination

Recommendation 6: Appointment of an ED&I Coordinator at Circle U.

Having a dedicated coordinator ensures that ED&I principles are prioritized and integrated into the core functions of the alliance. This includes developing and implementing strategic initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across all member universities. Secondly, an ED&I coordinator can coordinate efforts to address systemic barriers and promote a more inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Thirdly, together with the MEL officer, the ED&I coordinator can serve as a focal point for gathering data, monitoring progress, and assessing the impact of ED&I policies and practices within Circle U. This role not only fosters accountability but also facilitates continuous improvement in ED&I efforts. Ultimately, appointing an ED&I coordinator demonstrates a commitment to fostering a supportive and equitable community within the alliance, enhancing its reputation and effectiveness in addressing contemporary societal challenges.

4 DATA, MONITORING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

To enhance ED&I efforts, it is crucial to adopt data-driven decision making by leveraging data and research to inform policies and practices. This approach ensures that ED&I initiatives are evidence-based and address specific needs and challenges within the institution. Additionally, establishing mechanisms for continuous improvement and accountability is essential. Regular review and assessment of ED&I initiatives through feedback loops and transparent reporting not only enhances their effectiveness but also uphold accountability standards, fostering a culture of continuous learning and advancement in ED&I outcomes.

In relation to principle 3 (Visibility and Transparency), any ED&I initiative, i.e. the calls for flagship initiatives, should include a dimension of data collection. Tools for continuous data collection for assessing impact related to ED&I include indicators (see below), the logic model (see Appendix 2: Circle U. Strategy Logic Model), and an ED&I toolbox (recommendation 4).

In accordance with the “Implementation guidelines” [1] for Erasmus+ projects, the European Commission defines Key Performance Indicators (KPI) (p. 10-11) related to ED&I that will be used to collect relevant data in the context of Circle U. activities.

4.1 INDICATORS FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The KPI of the European Commission related to the additional funding of “people with fewer opportunities” are:

- Does the project address inclusion and diversity?
 - Yes
 - No
- Number of persons with fewer opportunities reached (total of the below #s):
 - People with disabilities
 - People with health problems
 - People who face barriers linked to cultural differences
 - People who face barriers linked to education and training systems
 - People facing social barriers
 - People addressed by the project who are facing economic barriers
 - People who are facing barriers linked to discrimination
 - People who are facing geographical barriers

For mobility related activities the data collection will be handled by the mobility offices in each partner university in accordance with the standardised Erasmus+ procedures and follow all privacy regulations. For internal Circle U. activities, the steering committee will develop an analogous standardised procedure in collaboration with the MEL officer.

Further specific indicators for Circle U.’s ED&I strategy will be defined by future action plans and should be aligned with the Commission’s KPI and the thematic areas laid out in recommendation 5 (section 3.2) and include specific, measurable actions. Critically, every action plan must address the impact dimension. This ensures that all plans are focused on driving meaningful change and improvement.

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APPENDIX

1 MAPPING OF EXISTING AND PAST ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	TARGET GROUP	INFO
Reports/Documents		
Joint Mentorship Framework	Potential and first year students	https://www.circle-u.eu/resources/mentoring/
Report „Integrating Gender Balance in Circle U. Activities: Contextualizing the Gender Dimension in the Alliance“	Circle U. community, ED&I representatives	https://www.circle-u.eu/resources/equality-diversity-inclusion/integrating-gender-balance-in-circle-u-activities.pdf
ForEU2 Report „Practices and measures taken/to be taken to ensure the mainstreaming of the Gender Dimension in R&I long-term strategies“.	Wider audience in EU alliances	https://www.circle-u.eu/resources/equality-diversity-inclusion/gender-dimension-in-ri-strategies.pdf
Groups/Initiatives		
Circle U. Mentoring Community	Community for practitioners (teaching and admin staff)	
Bridging Initiative	First year students	https://www.circle-u.eu/news/2022/bridging-the-way-from-high-school-to-university.html
Female Founders Network	Female student founders	https://www.circle-u.eu/news/2023/creating-a-student-led-female-founders-network.html ; https://www.circle-u.eu/events/2023/female-founders-retreat-in-paris.html
Women in Science Group	Working Group of WP4 to embed gender equality in Circle U.'s academic activities	
Working Group Learning Analytics	focus on new students	https://www.circle-u.eu/news/2023/making-sense-of-attribution.html
Trainings		
Diversity, Inclusive Communication and Cooperation	Circle U. staff and students	https://www.circle-u.eu/resources/training-sessions/diversity/
Virtual Staff Week in inclusion and mobility	Mobility staff	https://www.circle-u.eu/events/2022/virtual-staff-week.html
Conferences/Meetings		

Circle U. National Conference Diversity in the Making	Circle U. community	https://www.circle-u.eu/resources/publications/national-conferences/diversity-in-the-making-aarhus.pdf
Conference „European Universities as Actors in Multilingualism“	CU.mil with other experts and policy-makers.	https://www.circle-u.eu/events/2023/european-universities-as-actors-in-multilingualism.html
Engaging with Diversity – Work Lunch on Inclusion & Diversity in Higher Education	Staff	https://www.circle-u.eu/open-campus/administrative/events/engaging-with-diversity.html
Seed Funding Projects		
WIIIDE – Working on Inclusive Identities, Intersectionality & Diversity in Teacher Education	Teacher Educators	https://lehrerinnenbildung.univie.ac.at/arbeitsbereiche/inklusive-paedagogik/forschungsprojekte/laufende-projekte/wiide/
SEGRETI – “Science, Environment and Gender: The Reception of “Silent Spring” nowadays”.	Researchers	https://www.unipi.it/index.php/english-news/item/27235-silent-spring-by-rachel-carson-as-the-core-of-the-university-of-pisa-project-financed-by-circle-u-seed-funding-scheme

2 CIRCLE U. ED&I STRATEGY LOGIC MODEL

The logic model for the Circle U. ED&I strategy serves as a tool for monitoring and visualizing the processes, enabling stakeholders to clearly understand the sequence of actions and their intended outcomes.

