

CIRCLE U. ACADEMIC CHAIR PROGRAMME

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2023

Version 2 (10 April 2023)

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1 CIRCLE U., OUR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE

Aarhus Universitet (Denmark), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Germany), King's College London (United Kingdom), Università di Pisa (Italy), Universität Wien (Austria), Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium), Université Paris Cité (France), Universitetet i Oslo (Norway) and Univerzitet u Beogradu (Serbia) are Circle U.: an inclusive, research-intensive, and interdisciplinary European university alliance working to provide outstanding education, research, and innovation to contribute to more sustainable, democratic, and healthier societies.

In 2020, we have joined forces to develop a new model of cooperation where education, research, innovation and service to society are better connected. During the pilot project (from November 2020 to October 2023) funded through Erasmus+ programme, we have worked closely with students, academics, researchers, staff and external stakeholders to test and identify new challenge-based educational formats and ways of working together to make Circle U. an international, inclusive, innovative and agile joint ecosystem.

In the next phase and through a new EU funded project in the coming four years, whilst continuously testing out new concepts in higher education and research cooperation, we will also scale up and offer a range of flexible learning opportunities, intensify our collaborations in all three missions and maximize our impacts through our joint ecosystem.

For additional information on Circle U., please visit our website: www.circle-u.eu.

2 OUR JOINT ECOSYSTEM

To fulfil our vision and mission, we have been developing a joint ecosystem offering a shared infrastructure as foundation for sustainable, impactful and ambitious collaborations across our universities. In the next phase, with the support of the academic chairs, we will consolidate and further develop this joint ecosystem and its core platforms to drive our vision towards a truly European university. Here are the main platforms of our joint ecosystem:

- The **Open Campus** will serve as the entry point for all educational opportunities in Circle U. This digital, integrated learning platform will be at the heart of Circle U., linking together the various other platforms, including services to support mobility and facilitate administrative and technical implementation. The Open Campus will be led by a dean and coordinated by **Universitetet i Oslo**.
- Launched in the pilot phase, the **Knowledge Hubs** are shared physical and virtual spaces where academics, researchers, students, staff and partners are developing research-based, trans- and interdisciplinary educational and research activities to tackle big societal challenges linked to our three priority themes: climate, democracy and global health. A fourth Knowledge Hub will be created in the next project phase.
 - The Knowledge Hub "**Climate**" will be led by an academic director and coordinated by **Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin**.
 - The Knowledge Hub "**Democracy**" will be by an academic director and coordinated by **Universitetet i Oslo**.
 - The Knowledge Hub "**Global Health**" will be by an academic director and coordinated by **Université Paris Cité**.
- Building on the results of the Think and Do Tank, the **Circle U. Teaching Innovation Lab (CU.til)** will support the development of innovative and creative teaching and learning formats that focus on research-based, trans- and interdisciplinary knowledge and societal engagement. The CU.til will connect teaching and learning support units across our universities and encourages research in education. The CU.til will be led by a director (or equivalent) and coordinated by **UCLouvain**.

- The **Circle U. Multilingualism, Interculturality and Language Lab (CU.mil)** will support the development of a multilingual, plurilingual and intercultural environment within the alliance and beyond, by sharing experiences and existing offers, developing joint courses and other language and intercultural learning experiences (including for less frequently used languages) and developing a language policy for the alliance. The CU.mil will be led by a director (or equivalent) and coordinated by **UCLouvain**.
- Building on the results of the Student-led sustainable innovation initiatives, the **InCU.bator** will offer a structured space and concrete support opportunities for students in developing innovative projects with a societal impact. It will thus put students at the centre of societal innovation and, with the support of external partners, foster an entrepreneurial mindset in the broad sense. The InCU.bator will be led by a director (or equivalent) and coordinated by **Aarhus Universitet**.
- Built on the results of the early-career researchers' forum, the **Community of Practice for Early-Career Researchers (CU.ecr)** will provide early-career researchers with opportunities for networking, exchanges, competence building, mobility as well as developing and maturing their research interests in close collaboration with colleagues from Circle U. The activities will be characterised by co-creative modes of cooperation. The CU.ecr will be led by a director (or equivalent) and coordinated by **Universität Wien**.

3 THE ACADEMIC CHAIR PROGRAMME

Since the launch of Circle U., the Academic Chair Programme has been the backbone of our alliance's ecosystem, ensuring strong, sustainable and concrete connections between academics, researchers, students, and associated and global partners. The Academic Chair Programme ensures strong and sustainable connections across our universities, between education, research and service, between students and staff, and between our universities and the society.

The academic chairs are the enablers of our vision and mission. They drive bottom-up initiatives and collaborations across the alliance to ensure that the alliance reaches its full potential, as well as helping embed Circle U. in our communities and involving other stakeholders. Through the programme, the academic chairs have the opportunity to test new and innovative ideas, to establish strong links to leading education and research environments at the most prestigious European universities, and to be at the forefront of new developments in socially engaged education and research and education.

The academic chairs also contribute to the realisation of the EU-funded projects and the corresponding work programme by developing activities linked to specific deliverables and milestones. In this perspective, the academic chairs will work in partnership – and be supported by – the respective Work Package coordinators and leads, comprising an interdisciplinary and intersectoral team of academics, administrative staff and student representatives.

The academic chairs dedicate 20% of their working time to the development of activities and are located at their home university. But they are expected to spend time at other Circle U. partner universities and to attend meetings to facilitate collaboration, communication, and dissemination. The modalities for compensation and any other possible support are decided by each partner university.

For additional information on the modalities, please contact your home university: berlin@circle-u.eu

4 ROLE, MISSIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ACADEMIC CHAIRS

The academic chairs are at the heart of our transformational cooperation process. They tie our nine universities together, develop joint initiatives in line with project goals, co-create new opportunities for students, researchers, academics, staff and partners, and connect Circle U. to society in innovative and meaningful ways.

The **main role and missions** of the academic chairs are to:

- Develop and lead challenge-based as well as trans- and inter-disciplinary teaching, learning and research initiatives;
- Link education and research within and across disciplines;
- Engage students to take an active role in knowledge creation and socially engaged research and innovation;
- Stimulate new models of academic and research collaboration and partnership, and share them across the alliance;
- Contribute to the realisation of the EU-funded projects and the corresponding work programme;
- Represent and champion Circle U. internally, nationally, and internationally, as well as with external stakeholders.

Each academic chair works primarily within one platform or hub alongside chairs from other universities. In this perspective, the academic chairs are expected to contribute to the development of activities and share specific expertise and experience.

5 PROFILE OF THE ACADEMIC CHAIRS

Beyond the strong academic and scientific profile, expertise and experience in fields directly related to the platform the candidate is applying, we are looking for people who can bring exciting and innovative ideas, an interdisciplinary profile, and a strong commitment to linking education and research to foster transformative impacts on society.

The academic chairs are also expected to have excellent communication skills in English, both oral and written. Proficiency in other European languages used by the Circle U. partners will be an advantage.

6 THE 2023 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Initially hoping to recruit 35 chairs across 7 universities, we exceeded expectations and have 46 Academic Chairs in place in the current project phase up to October 2023. In the next phase, as we will consolidate and further develop our joint ecosystem, the number of academic chairs will increase. Each university will appoint one academic chair to each Knowledge Hub, while it will be up to each university to appoint chairs to the other platforms – although partner universities are encouraged to appoint chairs in all shared platforms.

If the Academic Chair Programme is at the heart of our alliance, it is crucial to ensure the necessary flexibility in its implementation so that the programme aligns with internal regulations, specificities and available resources. If the management of this call of interests may vary, the core elements of this call have been agreed by the Management Board of Circle U. and should thus be followed by each of the partner universities.

6.1 RECRUITMENT

The academic chairs are recruited from academic, research and teaching staff under permanent or longer-term temporary contract in one of the partner universities. We are seeking academic chairs at all career stages. Given that vacancies for the academic chairs are different in the partner universities and recruitment is also dependent on funding, the number of academic chairs appointed may vary at each university.

6.2 TERMS

The academic chairs have a **two-year term**, with the potential for a further extension of up to two years. This means that academic chairs appointed during the pilot phase, could be reappointed for the next period. Each university will have the flexibility to decide on the renewal process of the current chairs, which should include elements of assessment. In the same perspective, each university could decide of a longer term to ensure continuity but should also consider the necessity to reach out more academics.

6.3 OPEN POSITIONS AS ACADEMIC CHAIRS AT HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

Considering the renewal of current academic chairs and the priority given by Humboldt Universität zu Berlin to the different platforms of the Circle U. ecosystem, the following positions as academic chairs are open:

- Knowledge Hub “Climate” (2 positions)
- Knowledge Hub “Democracy” (2 positions)
- Knowledge Hub “Global Health”

6.4 TIMESCALE

The appointment of the academic chairs should be finalised – and thus endorsed by the Management Board – by 31 October 2023. Considering the flexibility in managing this call, the timescale may vary at each university. At Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, the timescale will be the following:

CALL OPENS	CALL CLOSES	FINAL RESULTS ANNOUNCED
19 th July 2023	30 th August 2023	31 October 2023

6.5 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Together, we support an inclusive culture, equality and diversity for our staff and students. We are committed to encouraging further growth from diverse groups, and we are committed to ensuring that the Academic Chair Programme includes academics, researchers and teachers of all abilities and under-represented groups.

ANNEXE – EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION FORM

Send your completed Application Form to berlin@circle-u.eu by 30th August 2023.

1 ABOUT YOURSELF

First name	
Last name	
Job title	
Department/School	
Faculty	
Email address	

2 PLATFORM THAT YOU ARE APPLYING TO

Please tick the platform that you are applying to be the Academic Chair of. If you intend to apply to more than one platform/knowledge hub, please list the priorities (1 as your first choice and so on)

YOUR CHOICE	PLATFORM
	Knowledge Hub “Climate”
	Knowledge Hub “Democracy”
	Knowledge Hub “Global Health”

3 PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Please indicate what kinds of projects and initiatives you would seek to undertake as part of your role as Academic Chair (you may select more than one):

YOUR CHOICE	PROJECT/INITIATIVE
	Development of a joint study programme or blended learning offering
	Development of an internship programme in the private sector or in research
	Create integrated & innovative mobility schemes
	Foster targeted multilingual opportunities
	Establish and foster cooperation with non-EU partners
	Strengthen and develop cooperation with Associated Partners
	Secure third-party funding for strategic and multidisciplinary projects

4 STATEMENT OF MOTIVATION

Please provide a Letter of Intent stating why you are applying for this role, including a brief description of your proposed project/initiative(s) (max 400 words)/

5 ENDORSEMENT

Please seek the endorsement from your Head of Department/Head of School AND your Faculty Executive Dean with their signature. (If Head of Department is yourself, please seek endorsement from a senior academic of the Faculty, such as Vice Deans of the Faculty.)

Dear selection panel member for the Circle U Academic Chair Programme,

With this statement, I would like to express my support for (academic's name) to apply to the Circle U Academic Chair Programme. I have read the Terms of Reference for the Academic Chair; I am aware that the Academic Chair will be expected to dedicate approximately 20% of their time on Circle U activities. Our Department/School will provide the necessary support for (academic's name) to make suitable arrangements to help them to achieve their objectives for Circle U.

(Please add any further comments if applicable).

(Please print your full name here)

Head of Department/Head of School, (Department/School name)

(Please print your full name here)

Executive Dean, (Faculty name)

6 CV

Please attach a short CV to this application form.