



International Strategy of Charmo University (2020-2024)



Vision

Charmo University's international strategy is based on a philosophy that the University is building a better and more sustainable environment by involving itself in both local and global issues. We believe that multidisciplinary research, as well as teaching and learning according to high quality international standards contribute to the benefit of

humankind. Innovative and forward thinking beyond national limits as well as global cooperation with foreign partners will enable Charmo University to become a well-established higher education institution, which is internationally recognized for its quality education & research, openness, and social engagement.

Mission

The International Strategy of Charmo University aims to bring together staff, students and alumni, colleges (faculties), departments and divisions to offer high-quality research and education. Charmo University seeks to develop an understanding and appreciation for the complex cultural and physical world, in which students live, and to realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical and human development. Furthermore, Charmo University will help solve the challenges of the 21st century by:

- Providing a learning environment, in which faculty, staff and students can discover, examine critically, preserve and pass on the knowledge, wisdom and values that will help to ensure the survival of this and future generations and to improve the quality of life for all.
- Empowering our students to fulfill their academic and professional passions in a university that is diverse, welcoming and inclusive for all students, faculty and staff.
- Accelerating our development process to become a national leader in social sciences, sciences, education, and humanities.
- Creating innovative connections among education, humanities, sciences and language studies.
- Strengthening support for a dynamic faculty dedicated to teaching, mentoring, and research.
- Embracing a leadership position in Kurdistan and Iraq by making our community a model for partnership among academic, civic, cultural, health and psychological care, and business organizations.
- Attract and serve students from diverse social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds and to be sensitive and responsive to those groups, which have been underserved by higher education.

- Serving our community of alumni and friends through innovative and imaginative programs that enrich their lifelong relationship with Charmo University and that expand our collective contribution to the world.

Goals of internationalization

Improving the quality of education

Nowadays, it is globally recognized that the quality of higher education is a key element in preparing students to compete locally, nationally as well as internationally. Providing high-quality education is also key for universities to increase and achieve competitiveness, both on the national and international level.

Charmo University has already adapted its educational program to the Bologna Process and successfully implemented ECTS. Adhering to and implementing modern educational standards in student education enables the university to provide a highly desirable educational environment to its students and to graduate highly qualified professional and academics according to the needs of the labor market and society. It also is key in allowing the university to stay competitive.

To further improve the quality of education, Charmo University will seek to attract highly qualified academics and staff, both national and international, to work at the university.

Focusing on internationalization of its education and to facilitate its Internationalization-at-Home efforts, Charmo University also aims to increase inbound mobility of staff and students. For this, Charmo University will increase its international marketing efforts as well as start publishing university positions internationally. For this, Charmo University also will increase its efforts to make post-graduate programs more accessible for

and attractive to international students by increasing the number of programs taught in English.

These actions will be complemented by the university's efforts to increase the number of outbound mobilities by sending academic staff and students to universities abroad using different programs or approaches. For this, Charmo University seeks to increase the number of exchange agreements with international universities. Furthermore, Charmo University will focus on increasing the number of students and staff participating in international conferences and workshops abroad.

Taking part in academic mobility programs will be an amazing opportunity for the university's students to get intercultural experience, thereby developing their intercultural competences, and to complement their local education with an international study experience as well as to improve their language skills. For the academics and lecturers, the stay abroad will be an educational training experience, which gives them the opportunity to learn more about foreign educational systems, modern didactics and teaching models.

To support the internationalization of education and to better prepare our students and staff to go abroad, Charmo University will offer free English courses thereby raising English language proficiency considerably. The outcomes will be measured in the beginning of each year using internationally recognized testing methods such as IELTS and/or TOEFL.

The results will be measured as follows:

Activity: Creating a committee as well as an evaluation and reporting framework for monitoring and assessing the quality of implementing the Bologna Process

Indicators:

- Existence of the committee (benchmark: "yes" by 2020)

- Evaluation and reporting framework developed (benchmark: “yes” by 2020)

Activity: Increasing and assessing English language proficiency of university staff and students.

Indicators:

- % of students that increase English language proficiency from A2 to B1 (Benchmark: 50% per semester)
- % of students with English language proficiency level B2 (benchmark: 2020 20%, 2021 40%, 2021 60%)
- % of staff with English language proficiency level B2 (benchmark: 2020 20%, 2021 40%, 2021 60%)
- % of students provided with free English course (benchmark: increase by 25% each year with the goal of 100% in 4 years)
- % of staff provided with free English course (benchmark: increase by 25% each year with the goal of 100% in 4 years)

Activity: Enhancing the university’s engagements in internationalizing education by Internationalization-at-Home and increasing academic mobility

Indicators:

- Number of new Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and exchange agreements for both student and academic internationalization goals (benchmark: 2-7 p.a.)
- Selected positions at Charmo University are advertised internationally on English (benchmark: “yes” by 2020)
- Increase in % of the budget spent on international marketing (benchmark: 10% increase p.a.)

Internationalization at home / of the curriculum indicators

- Percentage of students taught at least one course in English by a foreign teacher (benchmark: 2020 10%, 2021 20%, 2022 50%, 2023 100%)
- Number of incoming international students that give at least one tutorial for Charmo students (benchmark: 2020 10, 2021 20, 2022 30, 2023 50)

- Number of incoming international teachers giving at least 1 course in English (benchmark: 2020 4, 2021 5, 2022 10, 2023 20)
- Number of students coming to CHU through mobility program from other universities (benchmark: 2020 10, 2021 15, 2022 20, 2023 40)

Mobility abroad

- Number of students sent abroad per academic year (benchmark: 2020 3, 2021 4, 2022 6, 2023 12)
- Number of academics sent abroad to get training in teaching methods and digitalization process (benchmark: 2020 2, 2021 4, 2022 8, 2023 16).
- Number of training courses given by international experts to academic staff (benchmark: 2020 1, 2021 3, 2022 4, 2023 5).
- Number of students participated in summer school training by foreign academics (benchmark: 2020 5, 2021 10, 2022 15, 2023 20)

Activity: Making post-graduate programs at CHU more accessible for and attractive to international students by increasing the number of programs taught in English.

Indicators:

- % of postgraduate programs with international students (benchmark: 10% p.a. increase)
- % of postgraduate programs taught in English (benchmark: 2020: 10% 2021: 20% 2022: 40%)

Activity: Increasing the number of students and staff participating in international conferences and workshops

Indicators:

- Increase in number of students and staff participating in international conferences and workshops per year (benchmark: 5-10% p.a.).

Improving the quality of research

To remain competitive in the highly internationalized world of research as well as to better fulfill its mission to solve the issues facing the local communities and global society by produce high quality research, Charmo

University continuously seeks to improve the quality of its research by enhancing both its input and output. Internationalization will play a key role at Charmo University to achieve this goal, thereby transforming the university in an increasingly international hub for science and research.

Charmo University has already taken action to improve its research infrastructure by establishing a dedicated research center (CHCRTC). Although some improvements have already manifested, the need to improve the quality of research remains, which in large can be achieved by internationalization.

Geographically, Charmo University is located in a very rich area of natural products including gas and petroleum oils highly attractive to local and foreign industries and businesses. Charmo University will strive to exploit this advantage by establishing cooperation with actors from respective industries, thereby acquiring external funding to be invested in the research center and respective areas of university.

Additionally, conducting research in areas of international interest and offering research opportunities for foreign researchers and scientists will increase the number of incoming researchers and international joint research projects. In the longer term, this will enable the university to establish and sustain a network of international partner institutions for joint international research cooperation, thereby enhancing the opportunities and resources for the university's own researchers to conduct high quality research.

To improve the quality of research further, Charmo University will increase the number of researchers and scientists sent abroad for trainings focusing on scientific methodology and improving research skills as well as for conducting research abroad.

In this regard, Charmo University will also strive to increase the number of PhD students conducting research at foreign universities and research centers funded by the *Split-Site Program* of the KR Government.

Activity: Increasing the acquisition of third-party funds from local and international companies as well as international organizations for joint international research projects.

Indicators:

- Increase in the amount of funding and support for international research projects (benchmark: 10% p.a.).
- Increase in the number of researchers who submit 2-3 joint international research projects per a year (benchmark 20% p.a.).
- Increase in the number of grant applications (benchmark: 10-15% per year)

Activity: Developing joint international research projects as well as a network for international research cooperation

Indicators:

- % of academic staff that submit at least 1-2 research proposals with an international partner (benchmark: 25% p.a.)
- Increase in the number of international research projects (benchmark: +4 p.a.)
- Increase in the number of international partner institutions with whom Charmo University is engaged in joint research collaboration (benchmark: +3 p.a.)
- Number of new cooperation agreements European universities for research opportunities (benchmark: 6 p.a.).

Activity: Increasing in the number of international publications with international partners and in high impact journals

Indicators:

- Increase in the number of publications with at least one international partner (benchmark: 25% p.a.)
- Number of publications in high impact journal (benchmark: at least 1 p.a.)

Activity: Sending researchers and scientists abroad for trainings focusing on scientific methodology and improving research skills as well as for conducting research.

Indicators:

- Number of scientists and researchers sent abroad for trainings or research stays (benchmark: 2020 4, 2021 8, 2022, 10, 2023 12)

Activity: Internationalizing doctoral education by increasing the number of doctoral students from Charmo University taking part in the *Split-Site PhD Program* for internationalization of doctoral education funded by the KR Government

Indicators:

- Increase in the number of PhD students taking part in the Split-Site Program of the KR Government (benchmark: Increase of 30% p.a.)

Preparing students for a globalized world

In a globalized world, it is important that Charmo University provides its students and graduates with the knowledge, skills and competences to navigate the increasingly international work environment and to enable them to successfully work and compete in an international context. Similarly, the university is challenged to adapt its curriculum to build the required skills and competences in order to offer competitive education that addresses the needs of the increasingly globalized labor market.

To better prepare its students for a globalized world, Charmo University will actively work to implement international experiences as part of each students' education.

For this, Charmo University will increase the number of cooperation and exchange agreements with foreign universities, especially from Europe, subsequently providing an increasing number of students with the opportunity to participate in international student mobility. Upon their

return, the students will be required to share their experience gained abroad with other students, thereby maximizing their impact and rendering them useful for Internationalization-at-Home-related activities.

Furthermore, Charmo University will also strive to increase the percentage of incoming international students and staff actively involved in Internationalization-at-Home-activities. Additionally, Charmo University has already developed a plan to offer various activities including international students and staff such as student conference, poster competition, and research activities.

Charmo University believes that modern communication technologies as well as the trend of digitalization open new opportunities to conduct Internationalization-at-Home, thereby providing students with the knowledge, skills and competences necessary to meet the challenges of globalization. Therefore, Charmo University will explore the concept and opportunities of virtual mobility e.g. by hosting online-seminars. A piloting activity will be developed.

In next four years and as an institution-wide objective, Charmo University will be focusing on creating a multi-cultural environment that embraces culture diversity while reducing racial and religious division on its campus. We believe that learning in a multicultural environment will generate a new generation with the knowledge and intercultural competences necessary to thrive in an international environment and to build successful international careers.

As a complementary activity, Charmo University will increase cultural awareness among its students and staff by providing trainings and seminars. For this, Charmo University will bring in international experts. Consequently, students and graduates will be able to understand and accept other people's choices and lifestyle, thereby creating the precondition to engage with other communities around the world.

Activity: Increase the percentage of incoming international students and staff actively involved in Internationalization-at-Home activities; offer various activities including international students and staff such as student conference, poster competition, and research activities.

Indicators:

- Number of Internationalization-at-Home activities involving international students and staff (benchmark: 2 student conference, poster competition and research activities p.a. with the goal of 10 activities until 2022)
- Increase in % of incoming international students and staff actively involved in Internationalization-at-Home-activities (benchmark: increase by 25% in the next for 4 with goal of 100%)

Activity: Use modern communication technologies as well as the trend of digitalization for Internationalization-at-Home and explore the concept and opportunities of virtual mobility.

Indicators:

- Exploration study conducted and prerequisites for virtual mobility identified (benchmark: “yes” until 2021)
- Piloting activity developed and implemented (benchmark: “yes” until 2021)

Activity: Creating a multicultural university environment.

Indicators:

- Adoption of a diversity index to measure cultural diversity (benchmark: “yes” by 2021)
- Consecutive increase in diversity p.a. shown (benchmark: “yes”)

Activity: Increasing multicultural awareness among its students and staff through taking part in international and exchange programs.

Indicators:

- Number of new cooperation agreements with stakeholders and universities from abroad for increasing awareness of culture and mobility opportunities. (benchmark: 6-8 p.a.)

- Number of experts from other universities delivering their knowledge about multicultural awareness by providing seminars and workshops for the students and staff (benchmark: 5 p.a.).
- Number of students and academics sent to universities abroad every year to get experience in an international environmental study (benchmark: 8 students, 2 academics p.a.).
- % of exchange students sharing their experience with other students during Internationalization-at-Home-related activities (benchmark: 100%)

Increasing the global visibility of Charmo University

In an increasingly globalized and highly competitive world, universities are required to be locally engaged while at the same time being visible internationally. Being a rapidly developing but still young higher education institution, Charmo University is especially challenged in achieving both international reputation and visibility. Therefore, as part of its international strategy, Charmo University is devising measures to answer this challenge and to increase its international visibility.

First, in its overall research activities, Charmo University should increase its focus on global problems, especially in the field of global health, climate change, economics and technology. Despite having limited resources as young university, this can be achieved e.g. by finding local solutions to problems, which are prevalent in countries and communities around the globe. Publicizing those findings and/or presenting them in international conferences abroad or at Charmo University is expected to increase the visibility of the university and its researchers.

Moreover, providing local solutions to global problems can facilitate multidisciplinary international research cooperation, in turn further increasing the institution's international visibility. Therefore, Charmo University will strive to engage increasingly in joint international research cooperation.

Charmo University is the first university in Kurdistan Region of Iraq that implemented the Bologna Process as well as to open unique departments and programs such as Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Oil, Gas & Energy Management, Special Education etc., which are new to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Engaging in such pioneering activities as well as building a unique portfolio of educational programs and departments will also help Charmo University to win international recognition and visibility. Involving international partners in these activities and study programs should be a central objective for Charmo University.

Furthermore, to increase the university's international visibility it is necessary to improve the quality of its website both in terms of accessibility for an international audience and comprehensiveness of information offered. Therefore, Charmo University will revise its website accordingly, ensuring that comprehensive information on the university is easily accessible as well as that important local and international activities are publicized while also making the website available in English, Kurdish and Arabic languages. For this, Charmo University will contract external web-development experts as well as send IT staff abroad for trainings and workshops focusing on web-development. As a result, we expect to improve the quality of our website and to increase the overall number of visits to the university's website.

Activity: Introducing a focus on global issues in research conducted and publicizing and presenting findings to an international audience

Indicators:

- Number of (international) research projects that focus on global issues (benchmark: 2 p.a. until 2022)
- Number of publications that focus on global issues (benchmark: 4 p.a. until 2021 with the goal of increasing it to 10 until 2023)
- Number of international conferences on global issues hosted at Charmo University (benchmark: 1 p.a. until 2023)

- Number of researchers presenting their research at international conferences (benchmark: 4 p.a. with the goal of increasing it to 10 until 2023)

Activity: Engaging in pioneering activities and building a unique portfolio of educational programs and departments, where possible with international partners

Indicators:

- Adopting the development of unique and innovative study programs as central policy for developing the university's educational portfolio (benchmark: adopted by university council "yes" until end of 2019)
- Number of pioneering activities developed (benchmark: 2 until 2022)
- Number of innovative/unique study programs developed (benchmark: 2 until 2022)

Activity: Enhancing the quality of the university's website by contracting external web-development experts and implementing capacity-building program for the university's IT staff.

Indicators:

- Contracting with external web-development professionals for one year (benchmark: "yes" until end of 2019)
- Number of IT staff trained (benchmark: 6 Number until 2022)
- Number of trainings and workshops for IT staff organized abroad (benchmark: 2-3 p.a.)
- Revised website available in English, Kurdish and Arabic languages (benchmark: "yes" until end of 2020)
- Increase in number of visits to the revised university's website (benchmark: 200% increase in relation to visits generated by previous website)
- Increase in quality of website (accessibility, comprehensiveness of information etc.) measured by visitor survey (benchmark: rating for each category at least "good")

Supporting the Community Engagement through internationalization

As a public higher education and research institution, Charmo University is committed to contribute to the overall public good. Therefore, serving society by addressing its most compelling and immediate social issues and needs is at the core of the university's mission. Reducing the rate of widespread poverty, taking on environmental challenges, improving public health and enabling locally controlled and sustainable economic development are objectives that should drive the university's public engagement in the future. Likewise, such public engagement should not be understood as charity work, but needs to be recognized as a university's true mission and purpose: improving people's lives and providing the condition for a peaceful and prosperous society. Here, internationalization can empower the university to better fulfill its mission by making international experience and expertise locally accessible as well as by identifying and transferring international standards and best practices on how to address social challenges and engage with the community.

Since the Kurdish community has not very well recognized these issues, Charmo University has to work on changing the perspective of its students' and staff to not think of the university's community engagement as a mere philanthropic activity, but as a genuine task and obligation of every scientist and academic. For this, Charmo University will focus on enriching the public discourse in Kurdistan Region of Iraq by organizing debates and conferences with both local and international participants thereby raising awareness to public issues while also rendering serving the community an intrinsic value of its students' and staff. Additionally, said debates and conferences with international participants will not only help to devise the most effective strategies to meet the problems and challenges by making international experience and expertise accessible, but in the long term will help to develop a model university for Kurdistan Region with best practices established for conducting outreach activities and achieving social impact.

In addition, Charmo University will provide training seminars, workshops, conferences and campus visits for the general public and various community groups on educational, medical, social and political topics. For this, Charmo University will invite international experts who have documented experience e.g. in promoting social awareness on gender equality, women's right, education, social justice, and environmental sustainability, to train local students and staffs. Further, Charmo University will sent a selected number of its students and staff abroad to take part in social awareness activities, which will complement their local trainings and experiences. Once returned, those sent abroad will share their knowledge and experience gained by presentations, talks and seminars as part of the university's internationalization at home efforts.

On the same line, Charmo University has defined both social activity and volunteer service as core subjects in its educational process, thereby further facilitating the social engagement and commitment of its students and staff. Many such activities have been implemented already, for example medical students conducting health awareness project and participating in implementing the "Children Dream Project" involving 98 children who lost their fathers due to the fighting with the ISIS terrorist group. Other activities included the cleaning of the university campus and national parks located around Chamchamal City, in which almost all students participated. Charmo University has also established a Gender Center to reduce gender inequality and gender violence. This center has also implemented many activities documented on the university's website.

Through our engagement efforts, we will combine the university's knowledge and expertise with the community's experience to address social issues and to promote the idea of a fair society. We expect that our students' social activity and volunteer work will play a vital role in all sectors of public life not only around Chamchamal City, but in all of the Kurdistan Region. Further, student civil engagement for all of society will be activated and as consequence of that, Charmo University hopes to reduce

gender inequality and increase the respect to women's right in our society. We also expect better relations with our partners by developing our university's community engagement program to achieve a higher impact.

Activity: Increasing and enhancing the university's civic engagement activities through international mobility

Indicators:

- Increased percentage of students going abroad for activities concerning social engagement (benchmark: at least 30% per year)
- Priority to topics such as women's right, religion, children's right, gender equality, and multicultural awareness for stays abroad (benchmark: at least 30% of all stays).

Activity: Increasing and enhancing the university's civic engagement activities through internationalization at home

Indicators:

- Number of debates and conferences on social issues with international participants and experts conducted annually (benchmark 2 per year)
- Increase in the number and the role of both international students and staffs engaged in social awareness activities (benchmark 25-30% per semester)
- Increase in provision of seminars and workshops in the field of gender inequality and women's right awareness (benchmark: at least one per year).
- % of Kurdish students and staff that participate in at least one of these workshops p.a. (2020: 40% 2021: 60% 2022: 80%)
- Participation of international students and staff in satisfaction survey before and after taking social and volunteer activities and its result (benchmark: 60% with satisfaction rating 7 out of 10).

Linking the international strategy and the university development plan

For the purpose of implementing the activities defined above and to ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes, Charmo University will link its international strategy to the university's development plan, thereby rendering internationalization the key driver for the university's development in the foreseeable future. As a result, Charmo University will make internationalization a key priority in developing its infrastructure, educational programs and scientific activities and will commit the majority of the university's efforts and resources to fulfill its vision to become a highly internationalized educational and scientific institution operating according to international standards.

Creating an institutional monitoring and reporting mechanism

In order to monitor and evaluate the internationalization process and its achievements, CHU will establish a dedicated committee composed of selected university staff and academics tasked to monitor the implementation of the internationalization process and its outcomes. As part of their duties, the committee members will provide one comprehensive report at the end of each semester, which is to be presented to the university council as the institution's main governance body for discussion and approval.

Activity: Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the internationalization strategy, its goals and achievements; for this, establishing a dedicated committee responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reporting as well as developing a reporting framework based on the indicators provided in the international strategy.

Indicators:

- Committee established to monitor and evaluate the internationalization process, its goals and achievements as well as for

identifying problems impeding the internationalization efforts (benchmark: established “yes” until 2020)

- Reporting framework developed (benchmark: established “yes” until 2020)
- Number of reports submitted to the university council (benchmark: 1 report per semester)
- Approval of the report by the university council (benchmark: approved “yes”)