

A photograph of the TU Dortmund University building, a tall, modern structure with a glass facade and a green 'tu' logo on top. The building is surrounded by cherry blossom trees in full bloom, with pink flowers in the foreground and background. A semi-transparent white box with a green border contains the title text. In the foreground, there are red umbrellas and people sitting at tables, suggesting an outdoor cafe or seating area. The sky is blue with some clouds.

The Internationalization Strategy of TU Dortmund University

The Internationalization Strategy

of TU Dortmund University – June 2022

Preamble & self-conception

TU Dortmund University cooperates in many ways with universities all over the world. The country focus on the USA with excellent relations to local universities and numerous student exchange agreements is unique in North Rhine-Westphalia. As part of the University Alliance Ruhr (UAR), TU Dortmund University is represented with joint liaison offices in New York and Eastern Europe. Here, research contacts are expanded and joint study and teaching projects are supported. In order to anchor internationalization in all areas of the university, both the mobility of students and the mobility of university staff in the scientific and non scientific fields are essential. Beyond this, TU Dortmund University has to remain attractive to international students by offering unique degree programs in English, so that the number of international students seeking a degree at TU Dortmund University will continue to increase in the future.

Goals and fields of action until 2026

Against the background of increasing globalization and worldwide competition for the brightest minds, the progressive internationalization of the university is a declared goal of TU Dortmund University. In the course of cross border cooperation, internationalization at all university levels represents an important pillar for making TU Dortmund University an attractive location for research and teaching in the long term and increasing its visibility in the national and international environment.

TU Dortmund University has developed measures in five fields of action to promote, among other things, the mobility of students and researchers more strongly, to increase the visibility of Dortmund as a research location, and to expand resilient networks and strategic cooperation with excellent universities worldwide. The newly established International Project Team, an interdisciplinary team consisting of scientists and administrative staff, supports the development and implementation of the fields of action.

Fields of action

for internationalization



1. Studies and teaching



2. Research and science



3. Strategic relationships and partnerships



4. Marketing, Networks and recruiting



5. Internationalization @home

Field of action 1:

Studies and teaching



Status quo & achievements to date

Currently, more than 4,100 international students from more than 115 nations are enrolled at TU Dortmund University and an increasing number of Dortmund students are completing part of their studies or an internship abroad (488 outgoings in the academic year 2019 / 2020). Every year, more than 200 exchange students also come to TU Dortmund University through the various exchange programs (204 incomings in the academic year 2019 / 2020).

Targets until 2026

- Expansion of the international study program (English language, joint / double degrees) from currently 14% to 30% within the subject degree programs (excl. teacher studies)
- Increase in the proportion of international students from currently 13% to 22%.
- Increase of Erasmus mobility in all areas (studies, internship, teaching, work shadowing, further training) for outgoings and incomings
- Implementation of the objectives of the new Erasmus program generation until 2027 (digitalization, inclusion & diversity, Green Erasmus and civic engagement)
- Increase of the number of international scholarship holders on site
- Improved accessibility to TU Dortmund University through the provision of hybrid teaching offers

Measures to achieve these goals

- Increased establishment of English language courses at the Master's level and increased introduction of English elements at the Bachelor's level
- Expansion of joint / double degrees with reliable, long standing partners
- Expansion of structured doctoral programs
- Introduction of focus departments that aim to increase the implementation of internationalization measures: Physics, Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Statistics, Biochemical and Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, Business and Economics, Cultural Studies, Social Sciences
- Adaptation of processes (Erasmus Without Paper) and adaptation of the Campus Management System HISinOne for international exchange activities
- Simplification of recognition processes for study achievements earned abroad
- Introduction of hybrid models for strong digital, international teaching
- Introduction of optional colleges for international students to offer optimal preparation for studies at TU Dortmund University

Field of action 2:

Internationalization in research and science

Status quo & achievements to date

TU Dortmund University explicitly supports international cooperation in research and science and is pleased to welcome more than 30 visiting professors and scholars every year. These come through a variety of programs, including Alexander von Humboldt (“AvH”), Gambrinus, or even the newly introduced TU Dortmund Visiting Professor & Visiting Scholar Program. International researchers and teachers receive extensive support from the International Office in cooperation with the according institutions at the university in terms of formalities, finding accommodation and arranging childcare (e.g., daycare, school).

Targets until 2026

- Increase in the proportion of international scientific staff from currently 12% to 20%
- Increase in the proportion of international, outstanding young scientists and scholars
- Increased transfer of technology into practice
- Increased visits by professors and researchers (AvH scholarship holders, Gambrinus, Visiting Scholar Program, etc.)
- Increase of EU third party funds raised on average per professorship
- Expansion of research cooperations in profile areas

Measures to achieve these goals

- Expansion of the Welcome Service
- Increased international job advertisements for scientific employees
- Foundation of an International Entrepreneurship & Research Office
- Increased communication in English and German to the employees of TU Dortmund University, e.g. in circular e-mails, on the websites, in the ServicePortal, as well as in documents
- Joint information events with the Office of Research Support Services and the International Office on EU third party funding
- New guesthouse for international scientists



Field of action 3:

Strategic relationships and partnerships

Status quo & achievements to date

TU Dortmund University cooperates with universities all over the world in many ways: It has 113 partnerships at university and department level worldwide. In addition, there are approximately 350 cooperation agreements between the individual departments of TU Dortmund University with universities in primarily European countries within the framework of the Erasmus Program.

The country focus on the USA with excellent relations to local universities and numerous student exchange agreements is unique in North Rhine-Westphalia. As part of the University Alliance Ruhr, TU Dortmund University is represented with joint liaison offices in New York and Eastern Europe. Here, research contacts are expanded and joint study and teaching projects are supported.

We continuously strive to maintain and further expand our partnerships worldwide. In particular, maintaining and expanding our relationships within the EU are a priority for TU Dortmund University in the coming years.

Targets until 2026

- Participation of the departments in all Erasmus program lines, e.g., cooperation and partnership projects supporting digital competences in higher education or innovative learning and teaching methods; Erasmus Mundus to promote transnational excellence degree programs for highly qualified students
- Strengthening cooperation with universities from Eastern Europe and Asia
- Maintaining and strengthening the focus on the USA

Measures to achieve these goals

- Qualitative relationship management of existing cooperations
- Expansion of joint / double degrees with, e.g., funding by Erasmus Mundus
- Offer of information sessions to learn best practices
- Development of standard models by the administration for international programs (joint / double degrees or English language Master's degree programs)
- Increased approach of departments for cooperation with universities in Asia and Eastern Europe
- Implementation of incentives for departments to participate in the above activities

Field of action 4:

Marketing, networks
and student recruiting



Status quo & achievements to date

TU Dortmund University strives to improve the awareness of TU Dortmund University and the research location Ruhr Area abroad. This is achieved, among other things, through a strong presence at international university and career fairs – especially with regard to the University Alliance Ruhr. Here, strategic priorities are set through the selected participation in fairs. In addition, a recruitment strategy is to be further developed together with the representatives of the English language degree programs to attract suitable students for the respective degree programs.

Targets until 2026

- Expansion of alumni network
- Expansion of university marketing abroad
- Further development of international social media strategy with a focus on LinkedIn and TikTok
- Strong internal marketing of international awards, research, etc..

Measures to achieve these goals

- Increased participation in international fairs of the departments to attract students to the independent international degree programs.
- Increase marketing via social media channels, such as Instagram, TikTok, WeChat, Twitch, or Sina Weibo to market the independent international degree programs
- New award for internationalization in research, teaching, transfer



Field of action 5: Internationalization@home

Status quo & achievements to date

TU Dortmund University encourages students and employees to get involved in international activities on the campus in Dortmund. The International Office provides a variety of opportunities for this: The International Meeting Center (IBZ) regularly hosts events where students from all countries can meet and network on site. In addition, Dortmund students can get involved in mentoring projects or buddy programs and thus support their international fellow students. Students can also obtain the certificate „Studium International“ if they get involved internationally alongside their studies and develop their skills through language courses, local integration projects, or internships abroad.

This pillar of internationalization at TU Dortmund University is an important component of the overall internationalization strategy, so that students who cannot realize a stay abroad can also gain international experience during their studies at TU Dortmund University.

Targets until 2026

- Further development of the high standard of counselling and support on site
- Increase of intercultural competence on site (students and employees)
- More attractive campus design

Measures to achieve these goals

- Improvement of Welcome Services through cooperation with the City of Dortmund and the Residents' Registration Office
- Extension of the buddy programs to international scientists as well
- Expansion of departmental buddy programs
- Expansion of the offer for intercultural competence building through additional formats
- Continuous further development of the range of foreign languages offered on site
- Campus redevelopment by involving the Department of Arts and Sports Sciences, e.g. by exhibiting sculptures
- Better socializing opportunities on campus, also in the evening hours, e.g. by cooperating with the Studierendenwerk Dortmund to open a beer garden close to campus