

EU Research Strategy of TU Dortmund University 2026–2030

Status May 2026

Vision and Strategic Framework

TU Dortmund University sees itself as an active player in European research and as a contributor to an open, high-performing, and internationally connected research landscape. The **European Research Area (ERA)** and the **European Higher Education Area (EHEA)** serve as key reference frameworks for this development. They create the necessary structural conditions for excellent, interconnected scientific systems and strengthen collaboration between universities, research institutions, industry, and society. Universities play a key role at **the interface of research, innovation, and societal development**, making a substantial contribution to advancing Europe's scientific and technological goals.

TU Dortmund University regards European collaboration as a key prerequisite for scientific excellence and for addressing global challenges. It participates in European research programs that place a particular emphasis on promoting **research, innovation, and exchange** among researchers and institutions, thereby strengthening the European idea of an open, knowledge-based scientific community.

In this context, TU Dortmund University aims to further strengthen its position within the European Research Area and to leverage its existing scientific potential more broadly and effectively regarding European collaborations. With its distinctive profile and strong transfer capabilities, EU funding programs, particularly Horizon Europe (2021-2027) and the EU research and innovation framework program (FP10) that will launch in 2028, are more than just third-party funding; they are a key driver for strengthening the university's **international research profile**, enable access to **excellent interdisciplinary and intersectoral research**, enhance the university's position as a reliable **project partner** in the European Research Area and facilitate **knowledge and technology transfer on the European level**.

TU Dortmund University's EU Research Strategy builds upon the [Research Strategy 2023–2027](#) and the [Internationalization Strategy](#). The objective is to systematically align European research activities with the university's strategic priorities, to continuously integrate European funding instruments into institutional development, and to secure an early positioning in future program, particularly with regard to the FP10 framework programme starting in 2028. A core element of this strategy is to create a supportive environment which assists the researchers in their efforts to secure and implement European collaborative projects, increases the university's visibility and attractiveness at the European level and establishes European collaboration as an integral part of scientific excellence.

The **EU Research Strategy 2026–2030** incorporates strategic measures across three action areas: projects, people and politics. It combines European research excellence with international attractiveness and active participation in political decision-making processes with regards to research policies.



The action area **projects** focuses on strategically expanding the university's participation in EU research and innovation programmes. The central focus lies on strengthening the competences with regards to European research funding and grant proposals, promoting individual excellence, taking on coordinating roles in collaborative EU research projects, as well as intensifying innovation and transfer activities.



The action area **people** focuses on positioning TU Dortmund University as an internationally attractive place of research. Internationally focused recruitments, targeted support for international early career researchers and an increased visibility for European research activities will strengthen the university's international profile sustainably.



The action area **policy** intensifies the European networks of TU Dortmund University and its presence in the research policy area. The expansion of its strategic partnerships, the active participation in European networks and governance processes as well as a stronger presence on the European level form the basis for an active role in developing European research and innovation agendas.

The strategy forms a clear framework to strengthen **European excellence, international visibility and institutional impact**.

Building upon the jointly developed structures and formats within the **Ruhr Innovation Lab (RIL)**, TU Dortmund University will expand its cooperation with the Ruhr University Bochum in the area of European research activities. The measures derived from the strategy will, where appropriate and feasible, be consistently considered and implemented together, in order to systematically capture synergies and optimally leverage complementary strengths. Measures which are part of the Ruhr Innovation Lab are marked with **[RIL]**. Additional measures, that are not yet part of the Ruhr Innovation Lab but could potentially be jointly implemented in the future, are marked with → **[RIL]**

In addition, suitable measures are to be examined within the framework of the **University Alliance Ruhr** to identify opportunities for joint implementation.

Designed as a **living document** to be updated ahead of the launch of the new FP10, the strategy also provides a foundation for internal discussion.

Members of the university are invited to participate in the continued development process.

ACTIONA AREA 1: PROJECTS

TU Dortmund University strengthens its positioning as a competitive player in the European Research Area (ERA) by strategically expanding its participation in EU research and innovation programmes.

Objectives

- Advancing researchers' competencies with regards to European grants and proposal-writing
 - Enhancing individual scientific excellence at the European level (ERC)
 - Strengthening the profile as a coordinating institution in European consortium projects
 - Expanding the focus towards European innovation and knowledge transfer
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Status Quo

TU Dortmund University already has a solid foundation in European research funding with visible established competitive grant acquisition structures as well as successes with regards to individual grants of excellence and participation in collaborative projects. At the same time, its role as a coordinating institution has been so far only selectively established and leaves room for more development potential. Initial activities are underway in the area of innovation- and transfer-oriented programs, which can be further systematized and expanded in the future. In this context, it is important to further develop existing strengths, to expand the participation in European research funding programs and, in particular, to increase TU Dortmund University's visibility and impact in the European research and innovation area in a strategic and sustainable manner.

Strategic Measures

Already implemented

- Continuous development of the service portfolio of the Office of Research Support Services to provide optimal support for researchers throughout the entire project cycle [RIL]
- Institutional co-financing of staff positions (part-time) for ERC StG and ERC CoG
- Financial support for writing EU research proposals in a coordinating role
- Highlighting of existing recognition structures for engagement on the European level

Currently in the implementation phase

- Early identification of suitable funding opportunities via strategic EU project scouting

Prospective

- Consolidation and expansion of institutional EU project management competencies to reduce the administrative burden on researchers throughout the entire project duration → [RIL]
- Facilitation of transfer potential and competencies via strategically integrated support services → [RIL]
- ERC program to expand individual research excellence on the European level → [RIL]

Indicators

- Increase in the amount of EU third-party funding per professorship
- Increase in the number of ERC grants
- Increase in the number of coordinated EU research projects
- Increase in the number of EU projects funded by transfer-oriented programs (EIC, EIT, KIC, ERC PoC)

ACTION AREA 2: PEOPLE

TU Dortmund sharpens its focus and visibility as an active and attractive place of research for international researchers.

Objectives

- Enhanced international attractiveness of the institution as a place of research
 - Targeted recruitment as well as support of international early-career researchers and established scientists
 - Increased external visibility and appreciation of EU-related activities
 - Enhanced internal visibility and recognition of European research activities
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Status Quo

TU Dortmund University shows an increasingly pronounced international focus. The number of international researchers is rising in different status groups, thus mirroring the objectives of the Internationalization Strategy. The participation in European mobility and qualification programs underlines the alignment with the European Research Area and the growing embedment into the respective funding structures. Similarly, active participation in structured European programs provides a solid foundation to further expanding international activities.

There are already established formats and communication approaches for raising the profile of European research activities which can be further systematically and strategically focused in the future. Overall, this demonstrates a solid foundation for the consistent development of TU Dortmund University's international profile and strategic position in the European scientific and talent competition.

Strategic measures

Currently in the implementation phase

- Creation of attractive conditions in the Research Alliance Ruhr (RAR) [RIL]
- Expansion of the range of events with a European focus [RIL]
- Development of EU-compatible standards for researchers [RIL]
- Expansion of online presence of European research activities → [RIL]
- Internationally oriented recruitment strategy to attract outstanding international researchers

Prospective

- Systematic exchange on EU topics at TU Dortmund University to support internal networking and collaboration efforts among researchers → [RIL]
- Support for highly qualified, attractive external candidates in submitting competitive MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship applications via a MSCA Masterclass → [RIL]
- Subject-based clustering for greater thematic visibility and improved cooperation and funding opportunities for scientists

Indicators

- Increase in the share of international research staff and professors
- Increase in the number of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Increase in the number of MSCA Doctoral Networks
- Increase in researchers' internal and external visibility through EU-focused events and news articles

ACTION AREA 3: POLICY

TU Dortmund University intensifies its involvement in European cooperation structures and its involvement in European research-policies by increasing participation in European partnerships, networks, and governance processes.

Objectives

- Strengthening international networking and research prospects
 - Promoting exchange, knowledge transfer and collaboration
 - Improved access to funding information and opportunities to influence policy
 - Membership in a European University Alliance and other European university networks
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Status Quo

TU Dortmund University actively participates in key European networks and cooperation initiatives. There are well-established activities, particularly in programs designed to promote cooperation and exchange, which provide a solid foundation for further intensification of international networking activities. The involvement of researchers in the peer-review processes of European funding programs is also evident and contributes towards stronger involvement in strategic decision-making processes. Building upon these well-established structures and activities, TU Dortmund University can strategically expand its international networks, its visibility and its influence in the European Research Area.

Measures

Currently in the implementation phase

- Establishment of an EU-liaison person on UA Ruhr level [RIL]

Prospective

- Establishment of coordinated processes to facilitate participation in European boards, working groups and stakeholder processes → [RIL]
- Creation of a central knowledge repository for international research activities → [RIL]
- Strategic expansion and intensification of participation in EU wide university and research networks as well as stakeholder processes → [RIL]

Indicators

- Increase in the number of Erasmus+ Key Action 2 projects
- Increase in the number of COST Actions
- Increase in the number of reviewers for European projects
- Increase in the participation of university members in international advisory committees
- Increase in the participation of university members in scientific committees
- Increase in the number of hosted conferences with international participation
- Membership in a European University Alliance or another European university network