

Julius-Maximilians-

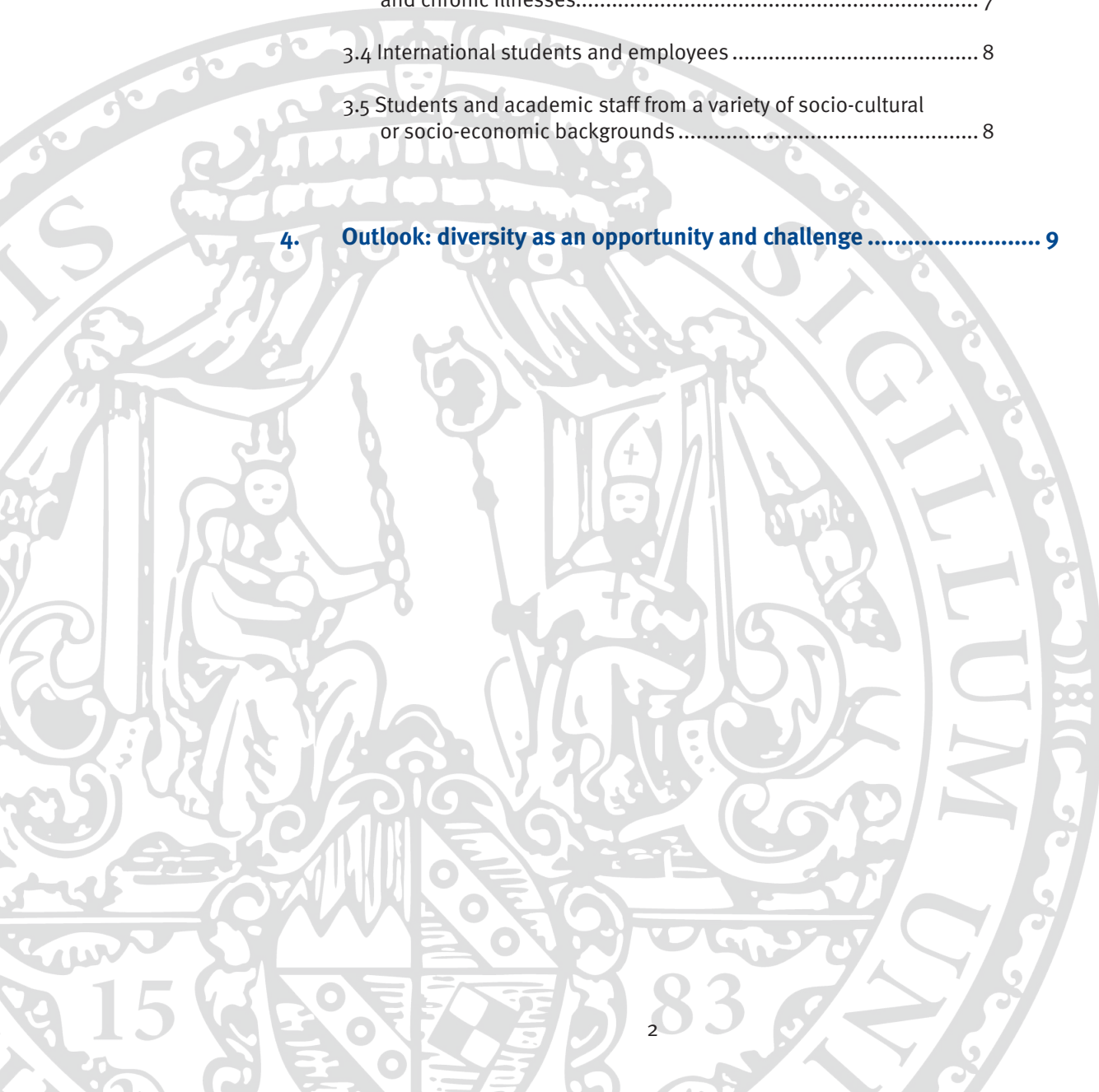
**UNIVERSITÄT
WÜRZBURG**

Diversity Policy Statement of Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg 2023-2027



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1. JMU's understanding of diversity

Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg (JMU) is committed to promoting a diverse and equal-opportunity university culture in all areas of its organisation and to countering discrimination. In doing so, it aims at creating the conditions for the best possible development of the individual potential of its students and employees.

In its current mission statements, the University addresses diversity as a guiding principle of its organisational culture. Emphasis is placed on equal opportunities for all genders, family friendliness, the integration of people with different circumstances, and internationality.¹

By participating in the diversity audit of the Donors' Association for the Promotion of Sciences and Humanities in Germany (Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft) from 2022-2023,² the University engages in a process of reflection and work to further develop and strategically align its diversity-related structures and services. The present policy incorporates the first results of the joint work during the audit workshops at JMU (summer semester 2022).

The top priority of this policy and the audit process is the design and implementation of a co-ordinated and central diversity management system at JMU. A well-aligned diversity management is a building block for success in research, teaching, studies, further education, and transfer in all fields of action. It promotes a discrimination-sensitive interaction among all university members, enhances teaching/learning structures and access to university education, strengthens research groups and networks in accordance with the standards of the German Research Foundation (DFG), and builds bridges for the areas of further education and transfer. In this way, the diversity policy also supports the goals defined in the University's mission statement 'Science for Society' of valuing various perspectives, life situations, and backgrounds of experience, as well as creating a teaching, learning, and working environment which is sensitive to barriers and discrimination.

JMU believes that the promotion of diversity holds specific opportunities and added value for the further development of its organisational culture as well as for the improvement of quality in all areas. By recognizing and embracing the heterogeneity of its members, the University fosters innovation, collaboration, and excellence.³

In addition, the further development of the University's diversity management follows the legal framework and statutory requirements such as the General Act on Equal Treatment (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG)) and thus the prohibition of discrimination with regard to gender, ethnicity, age and disability or sexual orientation, religion and world views. Discrimination in the present sense means the less favourable treatment of a person as well as the adverse effects caused to them by the unequal treatment.⁴ Anti-discrimination measures and structures are therefore a key area of action within diversity management. By creating and expanding appropriate services, JMU is committed to further reducing disadvantages and increasing protection against discrimination.

Both approaches – the active promotion of diversity and the reduction of exclusion mechanisms and discrimination risks – represent the inseparable 'sides of the same coin' within JMU's understanding of strategic action.

As part of a participatory process at JMU, specific goals and measures were defined for a total of five key areas sought out for further development. The key area (1) anti-discrimination will consolidate all strategies, services, and measures against discrimination within a central structure. For the key areas (2) gender equity and compatibility of family and work/study, as well as (3) internationalisation, there already exist separate strategic concepts or these are currently in preparation. Therefore, only individual measures which are particularly relevant to collaborative efforts are listed here. The focus of the key area (4) inclusion will be on measures for students and employees. A new focus has been placed on the key area (5) students and employees from a variety of socio-cultural or socio-economic backgrounds.

¹ <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/en/university/mission-statement/>

² <https://www.stifterverband.org/diversity-audit> (only the Stifterverband's homepage is available in English: <https://www.stifterverband.org/english>)

³ Cf. de Ridder/ Jorzik (Hg.), Vielfalt gestalten. Kernelemente eines Diversity-Audits für Hochschulen, online publication retrievable via https://hs-duesseldorf.de/hochschule/verwaltung/diversity/konzept/hsd/Documents/Positionen_vielfalt_gestalten.pdf (only the HSD's homepage is available in English)

⁴ <https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/EN/about-discrimination/what-is-discrimination/forms-of-discrimination/forms-of-discrimination-node.html>

2. Where does JMU stand in the diversity management process?

Over the past two decades, the University Board, the Faculties with their Faculty's Women's Representatives, the University's Women's Representative and the Equal Opportunities Representative have consistently and successfully united forces to advance gender-related equity as a top level management task at the University of Würzburg. Progress has been made both quantitatively and qualitatively. In addition to many other visible and measurable successes, this includes the continuous increase in the proportion of female professors, the further development of target-group-specific concepts for staff development (and their recognition as 'excellent' by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for the call for proposals under their female professors programme ('Professorinnenprogramm III')), and the equal representation of men and women within the University Board.

The equal opportunity policy for studies, teaching, research, and academic self-governance (2021-25) builds on previous efforts and includes additional fields of action, such as a comprehensive target group-specific gender awareness and the reduction of unconscious bias. The guidelines for appointments also promote equal opportunities regarding appointment procedures. Measures for non-academic staff are addressed in a specific equal opportunity policy (2018-2023).

In addition to gender-related equity and equal opportunities, the general goals and strategies section ('Übergeordnete Ziele und Strategien') within JMU's staff development policy ('Rahmenkonzept für Personalentwicklung') also takes into account a family-friendly work culture.

Since 2008, JMU has been undergoing a structured and continuous improvement process within the framework of the 'family-friendly university' audit ('Audit Familiengerechte Hochschule'). A wide range of measures for the compatibility of family and career have been defined in the equal opportunity policies.

The University Board and the Health and Disabilities Representative as well as the central departments of the University's administration co-ordinate support for employees with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

Since 2008, a contact point for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses, the Kontakt- und Informationsstelle für Studierende mit Behinderung und chronischer Erkrankung (KIS), has been providing comprehensive and individual counselling and support services to enable JMU

students with disabilities and chronic illnesses to actively pursue their studies and graduate successfully. The contact point is a Bavarian and national best-practice example. It has firmly established itself as a support structure at JMU – even for internal staff and external institutions – which serves as a competence centre on the topic of studying and disability. As early as 2009, JMU also committed to implementing the recommendation of the German Rector's Conference (HRK) to establish 'one university for everyone' ('Eine Hochschule für alle').⁵ In 2021, the University of Würzburg also signed a statement to declare its commitment to unlocking potential by opening the way to doctoral studies and a career in academia for scientists and scholars with severe disabilities ('Potenziale erschließen – Schwerbehinderten Akademiker:innen nachhaltig den Weg zur Promotion und in die Wissenschaft öffnen').⁶

JMU's Conflict Management Service, Konfliktberatung, provides comprehensive, confidential, and open-ended counselling to all employees, and, if needed, the facilitation of conflict negotiations and help finding mediators for workplace conflicts. With its counselling services, events, and proactive internal communication, the University's Conflict Management Service operates in a visible and accessible manner.

Other aspects of diversity are also addressed by JMU formats such as the certificate 'GSiK: Global Systems and Intercultural Competence', the interdisciplinary Gender Forum JMU, the Master's programme 'Diversity Management' in affiliation with the Chair of Protestant Religious Education (since 2019) and the non-degree programme 'Critical Education on Anti-Semitism for Teaching' (since 2022), which is also offered there, as well as the new certificate 'Diversity3' in co-operation with the two other universities in Würzburg (i.e., the University of Music and the Technical University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt).

Since 2017, JMU has been offering the 'UNIversInternational' certification programme with a focus on linguistic and intercultural competence for non-academic staff.

JMU's Student Representation works on diversity-related topics within several student organisations, including an organisation against racism and group-related hostility ('Referat gegen Rassismus und gruppenbezogene Menschenfeindlichkeit'), an organisation for accessibility ('Referat Barrierefrei'), an organisation for queer:feminism ('Referat Queer:feminismus'), and an organisation for internationality ('Referat Würzburg International Network'). It also offers

⁵ <https://www.hrk.de/positionen/beschluss/detail/eine-hochschule-fuer-alle/> (only the HRK's homepage is available in English: <https://www.hrk.de/home/>)

⁶ <https://promi.uni-koeln.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Stellungnahme-Potentiale-erschliessen.pdf> (only the University of Cologne's homepage is available in English: <https://portal.uni-koeln.de/en/uoc-home>)

students contact points as well as discussion spaces to explore and analyse the topics of diversity and (anti-)discrimination.

Independently of this, international students (incomings) are supported by the Service Centre InterNational Transfer (SINT) and also receive individual support if required. Virtual and blended mobility projects provide mobility experiences for students whose physical mobility is restricted. JMU has introduced the position of an International Mentor for foreign students and researchers who wish to receive confidential support when dealing with conflicts in everyday university life.

The Welcome Centre assists international (visiting) researchers with administrative and practical questions regarding their start or stay at JMU.

JMU has had an internationalisation strategy since 2016. It is currently under comprehensive revision and re-alignment and is planned to be completed by the end of 2023.

JMU has also joined the European university alliance CHARM-EU, which promotes diversity as one of the most important and unifying cross-sectional issues within several strategic areas. JMU is actively involved in the relevant CHARM-EU working groups.

3. Further development goals and measures

JMU believes that it is already well-positioned and active in several fields of action (gender equity, family friendliness, inclusion). In order to bring together all the existing structures and expand them with respect to current needs, a further development process was initiated at JMU as part of a diversity audit ('Vielfalt gestalten') during the spring and summer of 2022. All members of the University who were interested in the further development of its diversity management were able to participate in this process. The process was strategically co-ordinated by a governance group and a steering committee, which were set up at the start of the project. The joint working process will result in a centralised and visible structure for the management of diversity. Goals and measures have been defined for the key areas of anti-discrimination, gender equity and compatibility of family and work/study, inclusion, internationalisation, and students/employees from a variety of socio-cultural or socio-economic backgrounds.

Across all topics, the development of a suitable data base is considered a prerequisite for evaluating the success of the measures.

The availability of data on the key areas in focus is quite heterogeneous. While in the field of gender equity, regular monitoring and the publication of a gender data report have

been standard at JMU since 2018, data in other fields are scarce. The personal data collected on students, graduates, and employees capture only a few dimensions of diversity, such as gender, age, and nationality. Information on marital status and children is available for employees but not for students. Information on chronic illnesses or impairments – if reported – is available for employees; for students, data can only be extrapolated from national surveys. KIS collects data for its own counselling cases.

The regular surveys of first-year students and graduates conducted by the University's quality management unit, Referat A.3 Qualitätsmanagement, on topics such as academic prerequisites, prior knowledge/education, counselling and support services, preparatory or supplementary courses offered by the University, etc. provide important indications but need to be much more detailed in future in order to assess actual needs.

The systematic monitoring of diversity, combined with a survey of needs across all status groups at the University, will help to make visible current needs as well as past and future successes within the University's diversity management. This identification will serve to raise awareness and, as a next step, forms the necessary basis for a tailored, refined implementation of the measures and their evaluation in terms of effectiveness. For the future, the success of the additional measures put in place will need to be monitored regularly using a combination of qualitative and quantitative surveys.

In various areas, the need for a more effective internal communication was identified. Concepts for this are being developed in co-operation with JMU's Press and Public Relations Office. In addition, regular round tables with all diversity stakeholders will ensure an efficient and sustainable further development of JMU's diversity management. Besides, information will no longer be made available primarily via decentralised channels but will be collected on a central website. This intersectional approach will make it easier to connect with the relevant contact persons.

The following section presents both the objectives and the measures for their implementation within the different fields of action.

3.1. Anti-discrimination: expanding visibility, structures, and processes

Visible and easily accessible structures will be established to strengthen both prevention and action as well as to provide professional support to those affected by discrimination. To achieve this, an anti-discrimination policy will be developed and published, all support services will be brought together on a central and easily accessible website, and information and further education services will be made available to all JMU students and staff. All services offered will be monitored by an internal quality management sys-

tem and, wherever possible, will also be made available in English. For this purpose, the following measures will be implemented:

1. A **Code of Conduct** will raise awareness of any risks of discrimination. It will support the further development towards a diversity-sensitive university culture and provide the framework for a discrimination-sensitive interaction at the University. It will be presented to the public as part of the University's external presentation and will also be available in English..
2. JMU already offers contact points for many diversity dimensions. These will be clearly presented and regularly updated on a **central website**. This will make it easier for members of the University to access information. At the same time, this website will provide easy and, if desired, anonymous access to all contact points.

The central website will be designed to make diversity at JMU visible. To this end, the #WueSeeYou and #WueTogether initiatives of the Office of the University's Women's Representative will also be embedded in the homepage. #WueSeeYou consists of multimedia reports for which JMU members from different areas were interviewed about their individual paths to the University of Würzburg as well as about benefits and challenges resulting from their personal experience of diversity.

As an interactive online tool, #WueTogether is designed to give all JMU members the opportunity to display their diversity through anonymous self-identification, including the use of avatars: written information is fed into a 'word cloud', which visualises both the dimensions of diversity in terms of their representation/size as well as intersectional forms of diversity. The choice of avatars also illustrates how diverse JMU is or feels. Implicitly, the tool will also help to direct and evaluate the diversity management services provided.

3. In accordance with Art. 25 para. 2 of the Bavarian Higher Education Innovation Act (Bayerisches Hochschulinnovationsgesetz (BayHIG)), a **contact person for anti-discrimination** will be appointed – if necessary, initially on an interim basis. For intersectional experiences of discrimination involving concurrent, overlapping, or interrelated dimensions of diversity, as well as for all dimensions of diversity for which there exist no specific counselling services, a low-threshold anti-discrimination contact point ('Kontaktstelle Antidiskriminierung') will additionally support individuals regardless of their status at the University and, if required, refer them to any relevant external counselling services. Additionally, a permanent networking structure will be established,

which will regularly assemble all relevant JMU counselling services for an exchange of ideas. The continuous professionalisation and further education programmes at JMU will be expanded and co-ordinated together with all counselling centres (e.g., racist or antisemitic discrimination, dealing with intercultural challenges, etc.).

4. Following the example of some major American universities, **digital affinity spaces**⁷ for each of the diversity dimensions will offer students and employees the opportunity to exchange information, which will contribute to the empowerment of the parties affected. The central diversity management will also make existing networking opportunities more visible, especially those offered by student groups and initiatives.
5. In order to raise public awareness and support further cultural change, **education and training programmes** are offered to JMU students and employees (analogous to the awareness-raising formats in the field of gender equity). Following a joint initiative of the Office of the University's Women's Representative and Training and Development for Academic Staff, for example, an unconscious bias workshop has been added to JMU's Leadership Certificate as a mandatory module. These measures go hand in hand with making diversity at JMU visible via the central website. They complement the events and courses for the 'Diversity³' certificate, which are jointly organised by Würzburg's three universities, and will also be accredited for students within the General Transferable Skills (ASQ) pool and the Free Elective Area ('Freier Bereich'). Within the framework of the 'ProfiLehre' training programme for teaching staff, courses for teachers will be expanded and offered on a regular basis.
6. All endeavours will be accompanied by intensified **PR for diversity** in co-operation with the Press and Public Relations Office. Rainbow flags are hoisted on special action days, the #WueSeeYou and #WueTogether projects are promoted through posters and flyers, JMU's weekly online magazine einBLICK features reports on campaigns and events, etc.

3.2. Gender equity

One of the central and overarching aims of JMU is to promote comprehensive gender equity at all levels as a strategic management and cross-cutting task. In recent years, the University has made considerable progress in terms of gender equity, which will be consolidated by the current equal opportunity policies for the academic (2021-2025) and the non-academic staff (2018-2023). The main concern here still lies in the comprehensive implementation of the goals formulated within the equal opportunity policies – such as increasing the proportion of women at management levels,

⁷ See, for example, the affinity spaces at Harvard University: <https://edib.harvard.edu/affinity-spaces>. The implementation of digital 'safe spaces' is currently also being launched in Germany, see, for example, FAU's diversity management initiative at: <https://www.gender-und-diversity.fau.de/2022/11/04/vernetzung-von-erstakademikerinnen-an-der-fau-foerdern/> (only the homepage of the FAU's Office of Equality and Diversity is available in English: <https://www.equality-and-diversity.fau.eu/>)

are living with a mental illness ('Studierende mit psychischen Erkrankungen – Wie erkenne ich sie und wie gehe ich damit um?'). Future plans also include launching a group support service for students with mental health problems called Wue-HOPES ('Würzburger Hilfe und Orientierung für psychisch erkrankte Studierende'), which is modelled after existing services at other universities.⁸ This kind of group offer is being provided in close co-operation with existing psychotherapeutic counselling structures at Studierendenwerk Würzburg and in conjunction with educational campaigns run by the University's health management project, Gesunde Hochschule, which seeks to implement a holistic, integrated, and sustainable health management system at the University of Würzburg. There will also be networking opportunities here (see section 3.1, 'affinity spaces').

3.4 International students and employees

To promote JMU's status as a university with strong international ties, it needs to convey an increased **sense of welcome** at all career levels, which will also promote the University's international reputation as an attractive place to study and work. A prime objective here is the fundamental revision of the current **internationalisation strategy**, which will include setting up a core record on internationalisation data. The completion of the strategy is scheduled for the end of 2023; the results of the participatory workshops conducted during the audit process will be incorporated into the strategic concept for internationalisation.

3.5 Students and academic staff from a variety of socio-cultural or socio-economic backgrounds

There has been an increase in public awareness of potential problems around the accessibility of academic degrees and careers for students and academic staff, e.g., from non-academic homes, from financially disadvantaged backgrounds, or from other intersectional circumstances. These groups are underrepresented at all university status levels. Social inequality research also refers to this as a 'leaky pipeline' and has been able to demonstrate that the higher the qualification level, the fewer the representatives from non-academic families.⁹ The reasons for this unequal participation are complex. However, evidence points to structural causes that may lead to (self-)selection. In order to reduce this unconscious and possibly unintentional (self-)selection and to capitalise on the potential of students and staff with different socio-cultural or socio-economic backgrounds at JMU, the following measures will be implemented:

1. **Knowledge about the target groups** at JMU that may be affected by socio-cultural or socio-economic disadvantages will be improved through internal surveys. To this end, JMU will network with universities already experienced in this field and obtain support by seeking external expertise. A survey (see 3. 'Further development goals and measures') will provide important and practical starting points: demographic factors, composition of students and employees, educational history, articulated needs, etc. First insights are expected to be gained from the JMU graduate survey in the autumn of 2023. The interactive online tool #WueTogether will also provide valuable data from self-identification.
2. The next step will be to establish or advertise **services** which provide support particularly in areas where a high demand is expected (see results of the surveys and #WueTogether). Here, special care will be taken to avoid any stigmatisation. Both the ZBL, the University's centre for academic education and teaching ('Zentrum für wissenschaftliche Bildung und Lehre'), as well as the ZBL's Writing Centre seem perfectly equipped to reach these target groups with their open and low-threshold services.
3. **(Peer) support programmes** based on best practice models (e.g., German University Foundation's Tandem Scholarship Programme (Deutsche Universitätsstiftung – 'Tandem Programm')¹⁰, University of Cologne's First Generation Doctorate Programme 'Erste Generation Promotion'¹¹, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen/Nuremberg's Guide for First Generation Academics ('Wegweiser für Erstakademiker*innen')¹²) will be made visible and considered for co-operations and adaptations at JMU. The provision of affinity spaces where all those affected can interact with their peers would also make sense here (see section 3.1).
4. **Co-operations with existing networks** (such as the non-profit organisation for first-generation students Arbeiterkind.de¹³) will be strengthened and external partners will be approached to raise awareness and encourage their involvement. As teachers play an important role in reaching future students, JMU's school network will be mobilised. This is achieved through specialised training courses for teachers and systematic training of uni@school tutors to enable teachers to scout for talented students.

⁸ <https://www.uni-hamburg.de/en/campuscenter/beratung/beratungsangebote/psychologische-beratung/hopes.html>

⁹ <https://www.hochschulbildungsreport2020.de/chancen-fuer-nichtakademikerkinder> (the pages presenting the cited results of the higher education report (Hochschul-Bildungs-Report) are not available in English). All previous research on this topic has been on non-academic family backgrounds; figures for other groups are not yet available.

4. Outlook: diversity as an opportunity and challenge

JMU embraces the challenge and opportunity to work collectively as a university community to bring about a shift towards a culture in which diversity is a lived reality. The first milestones in this dynamic and participatory process are the establishment of a central and collaborative diversity management system and the provision of a set of practical guidelines. In the future, diversity as a practised mission statement will be brought together with JMU's other (sub-)strategies – equity, internationalisation, staff development, inclusion, transfer, etc. – and be made visible as an integral and comprehensive strategy. This will involve reviewing JMU's diversity policy and its associated measures on a regular basis and adapting them when circumstances and needs change.

Publisher
Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg
The President: Prof. Dr. Paul Pauli
Sanderring 2, 97070 Würzburg, Germany

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info@uni-wuerzburg.de
www.uni-wuerzburg.de

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Press and Public Relations Office
Sanderring 2, 97070 Würzburg, Germany
presse@uni-wuerzburg.de
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¹⁰ <https://www.deutsche-universitaetsstiftung.de/stipendienprogramme/tandem/> (the pages of the Deutsche Universitätsstiftung are not available in English)

¹¹ <https://www.egp-verein.de/> (the EGP's pages are not available in English)

¹² <https://www.gender-und-diversity.fau.de/diversity/diversitaetsdimensionen/soziale-herkunft-und-bildung/wegweiser-fuer-erstakademikerinnen/> (only the homepage of the FAU's Office of Equality and Diversity is available in English: <https://www.equality-and-diversity.fau.eu/>)

¹³ <https://www.arbeiterkind.de/> (Arbeiterkind.de's pages are not available in English)