

Dear invitee,

we are excited to invite you to the upcoming CHARM-EU First Generation Networking event, organized at Hochschule Ruhr West. This email contains important information regarding the event, please read it carefully.

We look forward to welcoming you online on **23 September 2025**, and in person on **19–20 November 2025** in **Bottrop/Germany** for this unique networking opportunity. Please find the event description in the annex.

Event objective:

This networking event will bring together students, as well as teaching and administrative staff from CHARM-EU partner universities, to explore ways to empower first-generation students and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across institutions. First-generation students are those who are the first in their family to attend university, often facing unique challenges in navigating higher education. Through workshops, presentations, and networking sessions, participants will share best practices and collaborate on joint projects aimed at strengthening DEI within the CHARM-EU alliance.

Our goals are :

- Adapt good practices to empower first-generation students permanently.
- Identify structures and framework conditions how to empower first-generation students.
- Connect existing initiatives in this field.
- Establish partnerships for joint projects on first generation students and anchoring it as a permanently cross-cutting issue.
- Adapt good practices to foster and establish DEI in general permanently.
- Facilitate networking opportunities to enhance collaboration between participants.

We warmly invite individuals, regardless of their formal role within their institution, who are passionate about supporting first-generation students and committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. This event is designed for those who are eager to actively contribute, collaborate, and invest time in building lasting impact. Participants will be asked to complete a few preparatory tasks between the online and in-person sessions to help set the stage for collaboration and ensure the event's objectives are effectively met.

Registration:

Kindly confirm your participation by completing the [registration form](#) before **15.08.2025**.

Event Details:

Online preparation

Date and time: 23rd September 2025, 2 PM CET/CEST

Location: MS Teams

In-person event

Date: 19th-20th November 2025 (times tbd)

Venue: Hochschule Ruhr West, Campus Bottrop, Lützowstr. 5, 46236 Bottrop

Contact information:

Please don't hesitate to reach out to us in case of any questions. You can reach us via email:

birgit.weustermann@hs-ruhrwest.de

More information will follow soon!

We look forward to meeting you all online and in Bottrop!

Kind regards,

On behalf of the organizing team from HRW,

Prof'in Sabrina Eimler

Klara Schneider

Birgit Weustermann

ANNEX: Description of the networking event

The main purpose of the event is to learn about perspectives and best practices to support first generation students in completing their studies. For this goal we will connect our initiatives, analyse data and create joint projects.

We therefore propose the following procedure:

1. In the online meeting on 23rd of September we share and discuss a draft for a semi-structured interview guide for focus groups. In order to facilitate student participation and integrate students' perspectives from different organisations, we invite you to collect focus group data (either online or in person) from 2 groups with 5 to 7 student participants. The plan is to use a similar interview guide and share a common coding scheme to apply to the collected data from the group interviews. Data collected can serve, e.g. for comparison, as a basis for discussion and also as a source for in-depth interest groups and future initiatives.
2. In the personal meeting on 19th -20th of November we would like to come back to the data collected in the focus groups. Also, we will invite and introduce Arbeiterkind.de, a German initiative bringing together first generation students and mentors dedicated to address needs, challenges and specific views and talents of first generation students in higher education. In addition, we try to attract some of our local students.

As a source of inspiration, we would like to invite participants to share successful initiatives from your countries and/or institutions in a poster session.

Overall, we hope to identify key moments and best practices for our target group. We will do this in interactive exchange formats essentially working in small groups.

3. In doing this, we hope to inspire sustainable cooperation in joint projects after the meeting.