

BUILT TO CHANGE

University Development Plan 2026 – 2030

Our Mission and Our Pledge

“Built to change” is the Ruhr University Bochum’s motto. It encapsulates who we are at our core and what sets us apart from other universities:



→ Read more about the RUB claim

Built to Change

Built to Make Change Happen

The transformation of the Ruhr region from an industrial area into one of Europe's busiest science hubs is inextricably linked to the establishment of Ruhr University Bochum and its emergence as an internationally renowned research university. The major social, technological, and economic challenges facing this region have always been a driving force to help address them through the advancement of scientific knowledge in research, teaching, and knowledge transfer.

Critical self-reflection, coupled with the institution's capacity for renewal, paved the way for university restructuring and innovation. 'Making change happen' has thus become one of our core competencies.

Strength through Diversity

We were the first university in the Ruhr region to support a large number of first-generation academics in pursuing a university degree. We're proud that, to this day, we welcome students from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. In a time of growing social tensions, we consider ourselves a provider of opportunities and an integration engine driving a resilient democratic society.

Integration of All Disciplines on One Campus

As Germany's largest campus-based university, we bring together a uniquely diverse community of scholars and disciplines. This approach promotes interaction and fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, enabling us to address complex problems from a holistic perspective, find viable solutions, and drive innovative developments in research, teaching, and knowledge transfer.

Synergies with Industry, Politics, and Society

With our deep roots in the region, we learned early on to integrate cutting-edge research with societal needs and to collaborate closely with non-university partners. Our research consistently generates innovative solutions for policymakers, society, industry, and the workforce. That's what draws talented individuals from around the world to Bochum and makes Ruhr University Bochum a key driver of transformation in the city and the region.

Our Contribution for the World of Tomorrow

In these times of global upheaval, we are convinced that our expertise in making sustainable change happen will become ever more sought-after on an international level. As part of our region, we have overcome challenges that others have yet to face. In this context, we wish to share not only our knowledge but also our values – with all parties who are committed to academic freedom and democracy.

Our

Vision

As the Ruhr University Bochum community, we jointly strive for excellence that is inclusive of all. This means that we appreciate our diversity and support the various areas on campus in a way that is tailored to their needs and goals, keeping an eye on interdisciplinary potential.

We promote knowledge and technology innovations as well as social innovations in a responsible manner and with an ethical outlook. We leverage our advantage as a University Alliance Ruhr (UA Ruhr) partner university to jointly improve the quality and reach of research, teaching, and knowledge transfer, and to secure a place among the top 10 universities in Germany.

We are committed to fostering talent at every level – in research, studies, and teaching, as well as in knowledge transfer – both in academic and non-academic settings. In light of the ongoing challenges in the Ruhr region, in Germany, and throughout the world, we prepare our graduates for the demands of a dynamic academic environment and job market, as well as for active participation in society. As an attractive destination for talented individuals from around the globe, we enable researchers to forge successful individual career paths. A diverse, attractive campus and a strong sense of community are essential founda-

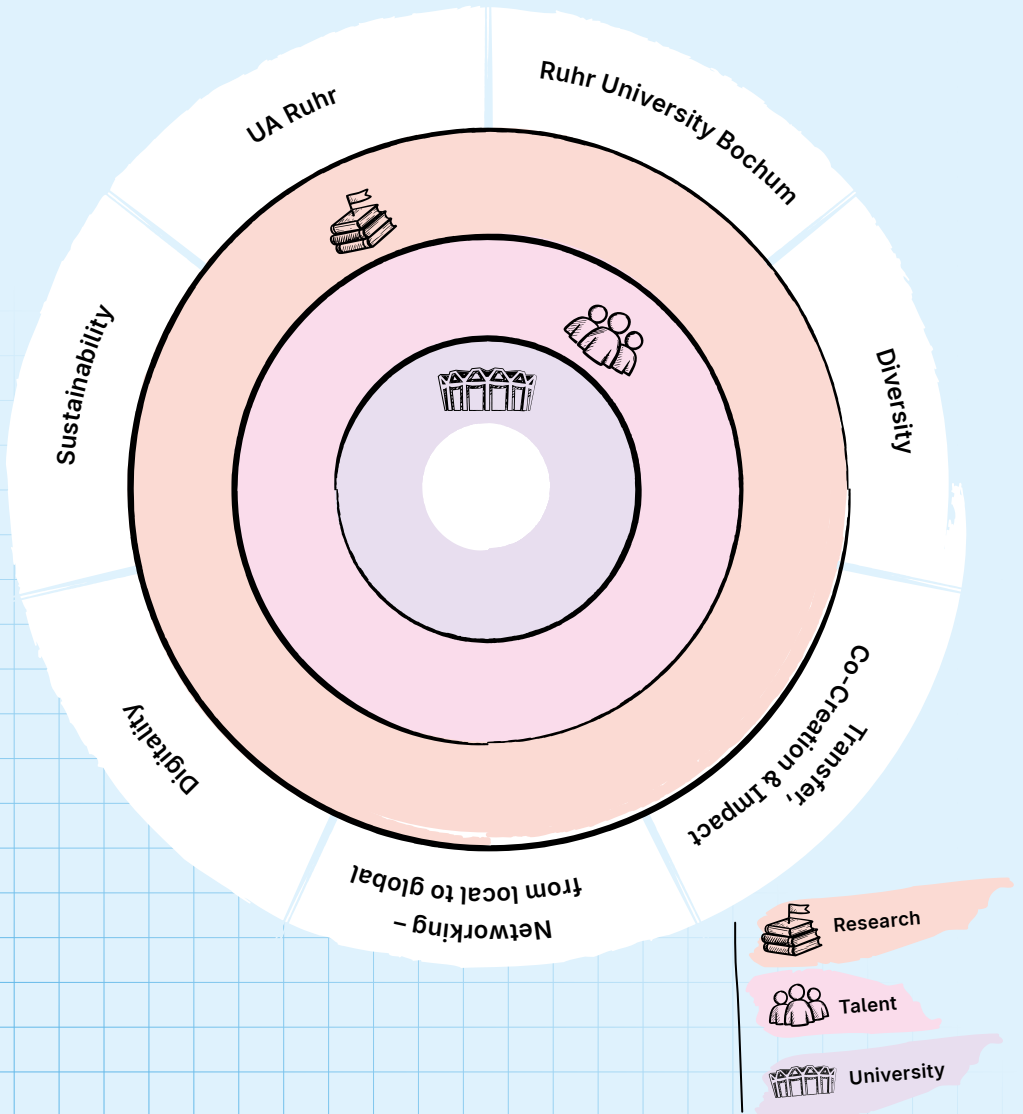
tions for feeling at home in our university community. We benefit from a vibrant campus and a high quality of life. As a local institution with an international outlook, we foster relationships within the region as well as with national and international partners, combined with a welcoming culture that promotes active dialogue.

We are a driving force and reservoir of know-how for the realization of sustainability. This applies not only to our activities in research, teaching, and knowledge transfer, but also to our collective actions as a university community. We therefore incorporate ecological, social, and economic sustainability into our organizational decisions.

As we continue to refine our processes, we make sure to minimize the time required for self-administration. In this context, we make use of the opportunities offered by digital technology to make research, teaching, and their administration more efficient.

Our Focus until

2030





The seal of Ruhr University Bochum features the brothers Prometheus and Epimetheus.
© Martin Steffen

Field of Action: Ruhr University Bochum



We harness the Ruhr University Bochum's vast potential for interdisciplinary collaboration to address pressing scientific and societal challenges by flexibly developing and optimizing our research structures. We aim to be an attractive study location and ensure optimal conditions for the education and support of students across all disciplines and career stages. In line with our goal of inclusive excellence, we are embedding diversity, equality, and inclusion sustainably into our structures. This approach will help to make the Ruhr University Bochum community and its culture resilient when facing threats to democracy.

In anticipation of demographic trends over the coming years, we aim to stabilize student numbers by attracting and retaining students, and to guide as many students and doctoral candidates as possible to successful graduation while maintaining consistent quality.



Building on our long tradition of promoting innovative teaching, we aim to place even greater value on committed teaching staff and develop appropriate remuneration measures. In the process, we foster a culture of collaborative co-creation in which students are active contributors to courses and constructive participants in committees, and where their feedback constitutes valuable input for ongoing development.

We are creating an attractive and international environment for study and work for our Ruhr University Bochum community.

To foster a sense of community, faculty, students, researchers, and staff in technical and administrative roles pull together to cultivate campus life and create attractive opportunities and spaces for interaction.

We implement responsible budget planning that gives equal consideration to environmental, social, and economic sustainability. We pursue a policy of consistent streamlining and digitization of internal processes with the goal of reducing the time spent on self-administration.



We are committed to structural and organizational reforms in order to effectively allocate resources in research and teaching based on quality criteria.

We foster a dialogue-oriented university culture that offers diverse opportunities for dialogue and participation.

Field of Action: UA Ruhr



The UA Ruhr's focus areas are developed through mutual academic amplification and complementary strengths to maximize synergies. As part of the Mercur Program, we support UA Ruhr-wide research networks on key interdisciplinary topics such as sustainability and collaborative research. Along with the excellent shared research infrastructure of the Research Alliance Ruhr, these efforts help strengthen the Ruhr as a science hub and boost its international visibility.



We aim to incorporate resilience into the UA Ruhr's academic programs by fully leveraging opportunities for collaboration, so that we can effectively manage staff turnover and changes in curriculum at any given location and ensure consistently high-quality education for our students. Through cooperation within the UA Ruhr, we aim to share and jointly utilize resources; to this end, we intend to establish simple and user-friendly processes to achieve synergies. This applies to administrative procedures and IT infrastructure as well as the technology transfer offices at all three partner universities.





University of
Duisburg-Essen (UDE)

Ruhr University Bochum
(RUB)

TU Dortmund University
(TU DO)

**We make use
of UA Ruhr
synergies.**



-> Read more about
collaborations within
UA Ruhr



A reproduction of Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* is on display at the university library (north side).
© Martin Steffen



**We foster
democracy and
diversity.**



→ Click here for the
RUB's diversity strategy

Field of Action: Diversity

Ruhr University considers diversity to be an asset (“diversity is our strength”). The university therefore strives to ensure the participation and nurturing of talent for all university members and to combat discrimination.

We promote gender and diversity research, not least in collaboration with the UA Ruhr.

We consider a heterogeneous composition of teams to be an asset in any research project and expect our members to be mindful of this principle in their approach to collaboration in research, teaching, and knowledge transfer.

We take a firm stand against any anti-democratic tendencies and strengthen democracy and diversity through our teaching and research, through professional development, scholarly reflection, exchange platforms, and value-oriented initiatives. We advise and support people who experience attacks and discrimination and combat denigration at all levels. We strive for consistent accessibility in physical, technical, and digital infrastructures and foster an inclusive culture in which every person feels part of a community, regardless of origin, cultural background, disability, or gender. This is how we collectively develop a strong *sense of belonging*.



Field of Action: Sustainability

As an organization, we forge a sustainable foundation for the academic community, steer sustainable development through our research, cultivate knowledge through teaching and learning, thus paving the way for opportunities of the future. We bring about tangible change through sustainable knowledge transfer, provide a clear vision of change through our sustainability communications, and translate discourse into action together with our strong community.



We aim to build better networks of activities across various research areas that address sustainability issues through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration – including at the UA Ruhr level – and to make these efforts more visible to the outside world. This will increase the accessibility of the Ruhr University Bochum’s research contributions to sustainable social development for both the business community and society at large. We intend to utilize cutting-edge research in order to accelerate sustainability-oriented technological change, promote social innovation, and further expand our outreach activities in the field of sustainability.

We consider sustainability essential to talent development. This is why we offer courses in the field of sustainability to all students. We promote lifelong learning with the goal of strengthening future-proof skills, adaptability, and a willingness to take on responsibility even beyond the undergraduate degree.



As an organization committed to sustainability goals, we strive to conserve resources. Going forward, we aim to transition infrastructure wherever possible to shared use on the RUB campus and within the UA Ruhr – in part to actively reduce the Ruhr University Bochum’s carbon footprint. We’re making new and existing buildings progressively more sustainable, including through the creation of flexible teaching and learning spaces. We are also consistently developing outdoor spaces and campus infrastructure, for example by creating attractive recreational areas outdoors. Ecological green space management and the promotion of climate-friendly mobility – such as e-mobility options and improved navigation for cyclists and pedestrians – continuously enhance the campus experience for students and staff.



-> Click here for the RUB's sustainability strategy

Our actions are guided by a commitment to sustainability.



Field of Action: Transfer, Co-Creation and Impact

By proactively and strategically promoting knowledge and technology transfer and embedding it as a core dimension within the Ruhr University Bochum, we are tapping into the enormous potential for transfer and innovation across the full range of academic disciplines our university. This is how we make a tangible contribution to technological and social innovation, societal progress, and the strengthening of the region's economy. With regard to startup support, Ruhr University Bochum has now established a strong and visible presence across Germany, including through collaboration with our UA Ruhr partner universities. Now, we must maintain this position and keep expanding startup support structures both at the UA Ruhr level and within the Ruhr University Bochum. To this end, we are strengthening the Worldfactory and utilize established technology transfer incubators in order to set up thematic regional transfer networks alongside cutting-edge research. We are also working with the federal and state governments, municipalities, and commercial enterprises to develop innovation and transfer centers – to begin with in the fields of chemistry and materials science. These co-creation efforts will facilitate the direct transfer of basic research findings into products and real-world applications.



Together with our partner universities, we participate through a joint UA Ruhr transfer company in the BRYCK Startup Alliance, a new deep-tech startup transfer and innovation center with strong ties to the regional industrial community, and leverage this as an essential extension of our local startup activities.

Our understanding of knowledge transfer also includes actively shaping social development processes through scientific expertise and participatory approaches; we will therefore strengthen the Ruhr University Bochum's role as a responsible actor and facilitator of transformation in the city and the region. Ruhr University Bochum members will continue to share their research findings with the public whenever possible – both in the spirit of an active open science approach and through engagement with non-academic audiences via multiple channels of science communication. They actively apply their knowledge to social initiatives, public discourse, and political decision-making processes to strengthen democratic collaboration and generate societal impact through science.



In order to embed knowledge transfer in teaching and studies from day one, we integrate entrepreneurship education and knowledge transfer into our academic programs, for example through research-based learning and *challenge-based learning*.



**We see ourselves
as responsible
transformation
facilitators.**



-> Click here for
the RUB's transfer
strategy

Field of Action: Networking – from Local to Global



To strengthen our dynamic partnership with the city and civil society, we are expanding our existing (institutional) networks with stakeholders from government, administration, business, and civil society in the city of Bochum and throughout the Ruhr region. In the process, we are also increasing the visibility and presence of Ruhr University Bochum in the city and the region. As part of our strategic internationalization goals, we are making study abroad opportunities and international exchange more accessible to all members of the Ruhr University Bochum community and are increasingly integrating global issues and international perspectives into research, teaching, and knowledge transfer. We are consistently developing our campus as a bilingual environment and strengthening our international welcoming culture to ensure that Ruhr University Bochum is a place where researchers, staff, students, and guests from all over the world feel at home and can conduct research, learn, and work effectively.



By increasing the visibility and attractiveness of our university among international researchers and students, we at Ruhr University Bochum are creating the bedrock for successfully attracting and integrating future professionals into the Ruhr science region and promoting international knowledge transfer as well as the establishment and maintenance of sustaina-



Ceramic wall (untitled)
by Victor Vasarely outside
Hörsaalzentrum Ost.
© RUB, Marion Nelle

-> Click here for the RUB's
internationalization
strategy



**We connect the
scientific community
across borders.**

ble international collaborations.

Our involvement in the European university UNIC (European University of Cities in Post-Industrial Transition) and the WUN (Worldwide Universities Network) ensures that we have a strong network across Europe and the world. To focus our future international networking activities in a sustainable manner, we are building an institutional portfolio of strategic partnerships, networks, and alliances. In the process, we are pursuing an approach that initiates and strengthens university-wide partnerships as well as discipline-specific partnerships among the faculties and central units, and UA Ruhr-wide collaborations.



Field of Action: Digitality



We wish to empower all members of our university to use AI responsibly, to understand the limitations of this technology, and to recognize, avoid, or manage the risks associated with its use.



We use reflective research on digital transformation and critical engagement with AI as drivers for innovative research, teaching concepts, and knowledge transfer.

We strive for better digital communication with all members of our academic community.

We are continuously developing digital internal processes and a reliable, scalable digital infrastructure. Aware of technical vulnerabilities, we also actively promote the strengthening of our digital resilience.



We must strengthen our innovative and experimental organizational culture to make the most of the opportunities offered by digital transformation – including to achieve efficiency gains within the organization. In this context, digitization projects are implemented strategically to avoid overwhelming the organization.



"DIS/PLAY", an art installation
by Ralf Bascker, in the MC building.
© CASA, Michael Schwettmann



Our innovation-focused organization is making the most of the opportunities presented by digital transformation.



-> Click here for the RUB's digitalization strategy



Class installation "Grand Vitrail Cinetic"
by Victor Vasarely at Hörsaalzentrum Ost.
© RUB, Katja Marquard

Contact:

Department 1 University Development and Strategy

E-Mail: dezernat1@ruhr-uni-bochum.de

*-> Read more about
the Department of University
Development and Strategy*

