

TORCH COMMON SCIENCE AGENDA: Driving Collaboration and Transdisciplinary Research to Address Global Sustainability Challenges



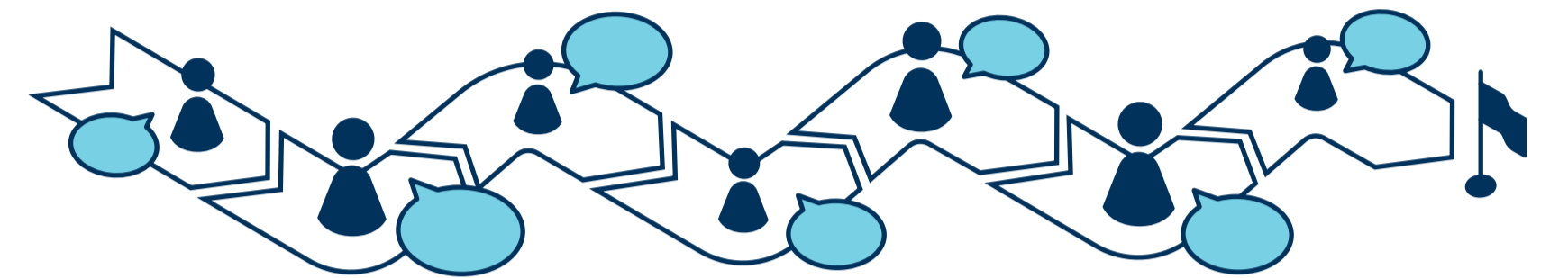
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OVERARCHING GOAL OF TORCH'S TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH AGENDA: to foster collaboration within CHARM-EU by exploring common research interests and to unite researchers around major societal challenges in order to engage in responsible transdisciplinary research.

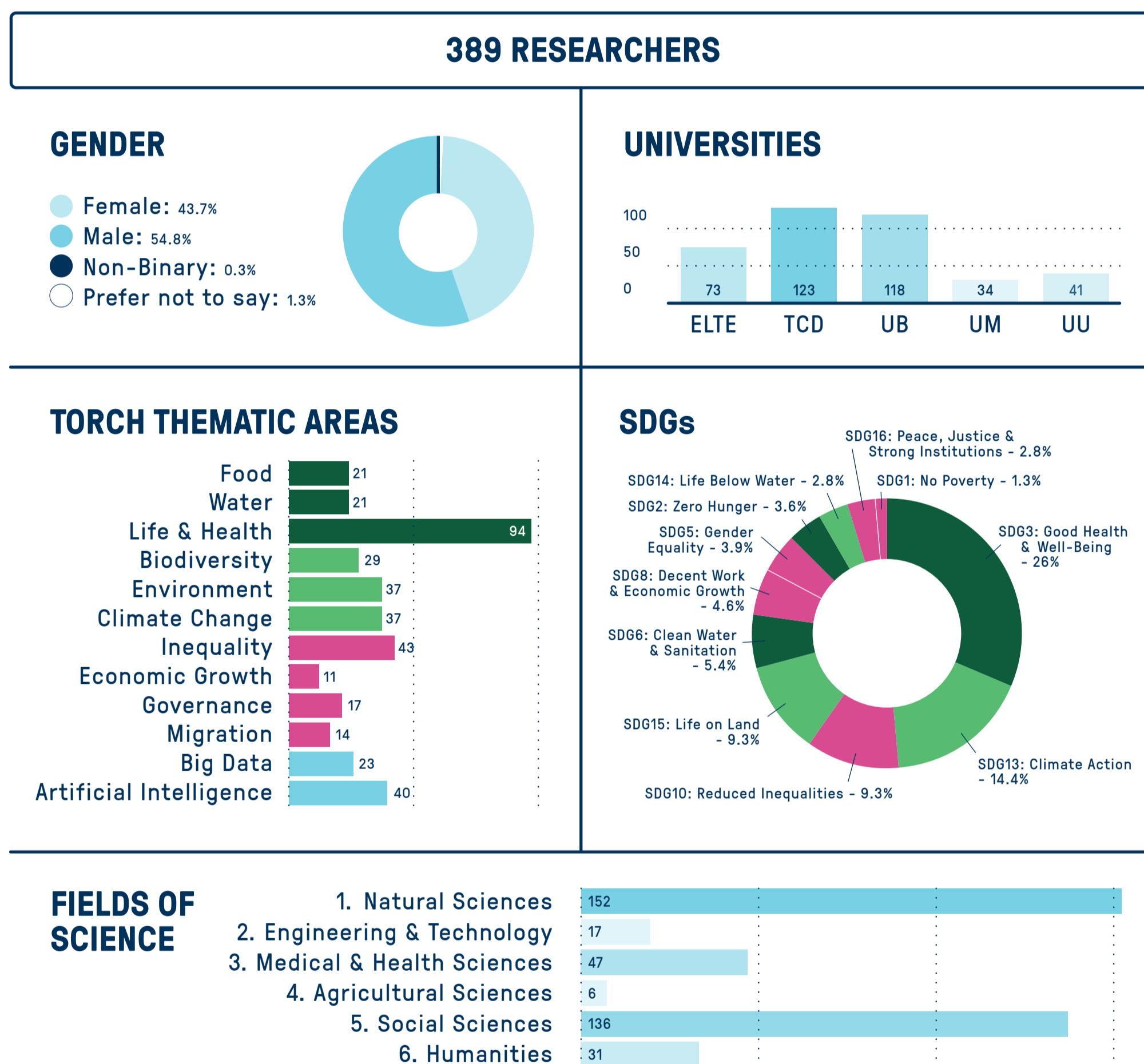
- **Common Science Agenda:** a challenge-driven framework to deliver relevant research proposals relevant for the society.
- **Bottom-Up Collaborative Methodology:** multidisciplinary research teams assemble around researchers' and universities' priorities, centred on specific SDGs.
- **Implementation Approach:** deployment of specialized tools and the experience of RMA units to support networking and research teams, and to target EU research funding.
- **Action Plan:** proposal for the creation of a joint CHARM-EU research support structure focused on transdisciplinarity.

1 A Multi-Step Collaborative Process to Define Priorities and Develop Research Challenges



STEP 1. COLLATING RESEARCH INTERESTS

Questionnaire 1: research field; expertise; interests linked to TORCH thematic areas and SDGs.



STEP 2. INSTITUTIONAL VALIDATION OF PRIORITIES BASED ON STEP 1 RESULTS AND UNIVERSITIES' STRATEGIC PLANS

Three SDGs selected.



STEP 3. GROUPING RESEARCHERS AROUND SDGs

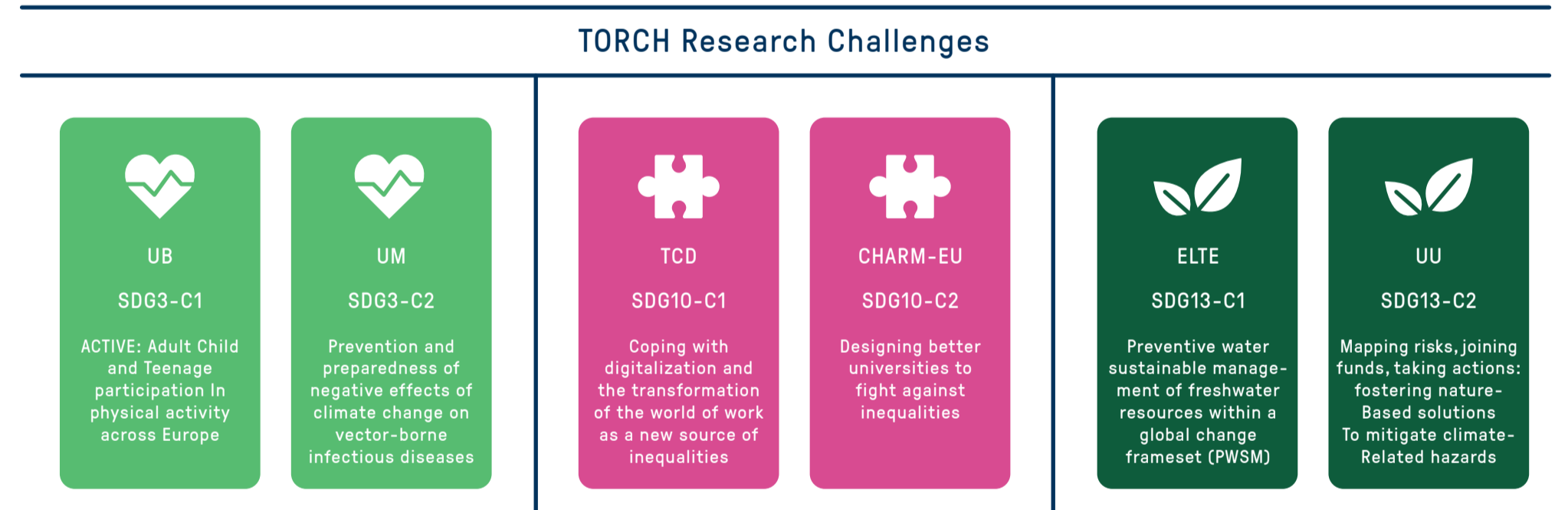
Questionnaire 2: individual research proposals linked to selected SDGs.

Proposals grouped into general topics to form 3 multidisciplinary expert focus groups which then define specific research challenges.



STEP 4. DRAFTING RESEARCH CHALLENGES

Six proposals by multidisciplinary teams.



2 Developing Six Research Challenges



HOW

- Each university and the Alliance adopt one challenge and their research support unit provides support.

RESULTS

- Outcome: 6 researcher teams created and submitted 3 proposals to EU calls.
- Researchers clustered together based on interests and expertise (can be scaled up).
- Tools implemented to facilitate networking:
 - [Guide of Experts](#)
 - [Collaboration Networks Apps](#)

WHAT WE LEARNED (TO SHAPE THE ACTION PLAN)

- Research Challenges: SDGs offer opportunities for consortia rooted in CHARM-EU.
- Multidisciplinary Networks: strong connections & multidisciplinary teams formed; effort invested creates momentum for future initiatives.
- PIs: procedure required to identify and incentivize potential PIs.
- Learning by Doing: TORCH team learned of researchers' needs for team/project support.
- Increased Commitment: CHARM-EU partners strongly support the initiative.
- Horizon Europe: challenges well aligned with Horizon calls, confirming potential.
- Role of RMAs: need for efficient decision channels within CHARM-EU and dedicated research support to facilitate cooperation.

3 Action Plan: Joint Support Strategy for Research Projects



OBJECTIVES

- Enhance cooperation.
- Foster transdisciplinary collaborative research driven by societal challenges.
- Support RRI.

TWO-STAGE ACTION PLAN:

1. Create Network of Research Support Offices (NRSO):

- Involve RMA units from each partner.
- Facilitate collaboration in research proposals (matchmaking).
- Share good practices.
- Organize short visits and plan job shadowing (mutual learning).
- Advise on CHARM-EU governance.

2. Explore possible Joint Virtual Research Support Office (JVRSO):

- Based on NRSO input & focused on long-term structural cooperation.
- Tasks to include: research proposal support; competency mapping; strategic advice on R&I.
- Benefits & expected outcomes: common science agenda & collaboration on EU proposals reinforced; research group competencies mapped; scientific networks created within CHARM-EU; promotion of internationalization and excellence in transdisciplinary research; professional development and mobility of R&I support staff; strategic knowledge and knowhow concerning EU/national R&I policies.



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