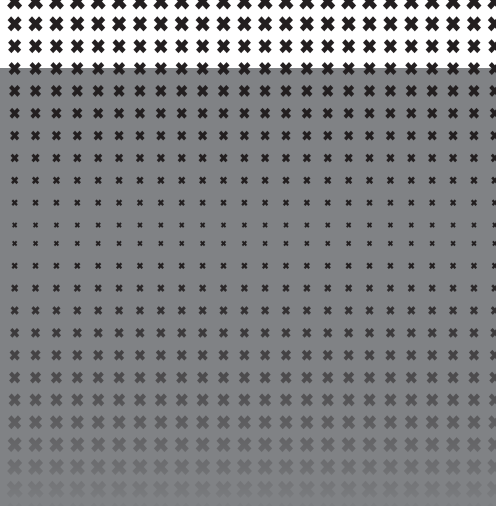


# An Eye for Talent

Strategic Plan

2011-2014



## Credits

### **Publication**

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# Contents

4	Introduction
5	Vision for the Future – 2020
16	Preamble
17	What are the objectives of the UvA and how will it achieve them?
18	Objective 1   Research
20	Objective 2   Education
23	Objective 3   Social responsibility and innovation
25	How will the UvA make this possible?
26	1   Quality of staff
28	2   An outstanding reputation
30	3   Reliable and sustainable services
32	4   Targeted campus infrastructure
34	5   Sustainability
36	6   Finance

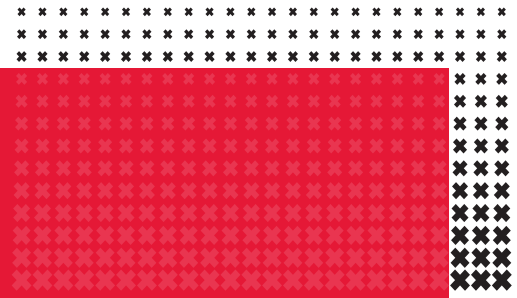
# Introduction

The publication every four years of a Vision for the Future and a Strategic Plan represents a key opportunity for the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and the Hogeschool van Amsterdam, University of Applied Sciences (HvA) to reflect on our institutions' activities and performance in a constantly changing environment. This is when we determine how to improve quality and results within our institutions, how to hold onto our uniqueness and authenticity, and how to express those qualities in a world ever more closely enmeshed with the world of teaching and research.

This document is the culmination of a period of intensive consultations, brainstorming, writing and discussion. Students and staff alike have contributed to the final product. This Vision for the Future looks ahead to the next ten years and forecasts in broad strokes what that future will hold. The Strategic Plans of both the UvA and the HvA cover a period of four years, present practical objectives and offer parameters within which individual faculties and schools can realise their own respective plans and objectives. The Strategic Plans have been approved by the representative advisory bodies of each institution.

To the uninitiated reader, such forward-looking plan documents may give the impression of having been written in a vacuum. Nothing could be less true. 'An Eye for Talent' picks up precisely where the last Strategic Plan, 'Learning to Excel', left off. In mapping our course for the coming years, we have looked back at the previous Plan and sought to draw relevant conclusions based on the results achieved. As always, a high standard of quality continues to be our top priority – a standard determined not by the average student or staff member but the ambitious ones. Though concerted efforts to improve study success have borne fruit, we still have a long way to go and must proceed with these efforts undiminished. The UvA will also continue to invest heavily in its programme of research priority areas. We have already made key improvements in the programme's administration and operational management, but there is plenty more we can do to enhance student and staff satisfaction. The previous Vision for the Future anticipated a future merger between the HvA and UvA. That objective has now been abandoned. However, our two institutions continue to seek cooperation and coordination in all fields of endeavour, from teaching to research to operational management.

If there is one lesson we have learnt from the previous Strategic Plans, it is that having too many ambitions only leads to a fragmentation of focus and of allocated resources. In drawing up these Strategic Plans we have therefore adopted a more critical approach in order to ensure the more targeted allocation of limited resources. As we take the next step forward in the development of our institutions, we will rely on our knowledge, inventiveness and energy – and a healthy respect for practical imperatives – to take firm hold of that future.



# Vision for the Future – 2020

## Introduction

*The University of Amsterdam (UvA) is a broad, research-intensive institution rooted in the history of Amsterdam, an internationally oriented academic community that can compete with leading universities in the Netherlands and around the world. The UvA provides academic training in all areas of science and scholarship and welcomes students and staff – from all backgrounds, cultures and faiths – who wish to devote their talents to the development and transfer of academic knowledge as a rich cultural resource and foundation for sustainable progress.*

### *Mission of the UvA*

*The Hogeschool van Amsterdam, University of Applied Sciences (HvA) trains a diverse mix of students in a broad range of professional fields, enabling them to fully develop their talents and practise at the top of their chosen professions. The HvA is a knowledge institution where teaching and research contribute to advancing community and professional practice in and around the internationally oriented city of Amsterdam.*

### *Mission of the HvA*

To plot a course for tomorrow, we first have to decide where we want to be next week. Without a vision for the long term, there is, after all, little point to an institutional plan for the short term. This is the underlying reason for this *Vision for the Future – 2020*.

In this *Vision*, we look ahead to the next ten years. How will higher education look then? What developments will play a role? How far will the UvA and HvA have come? What are our dreams for the HvA and the UvA?

A vision for the future must navigate between ambition and a sense of reality. On the one hand, it must allow for dreams and inspiration; after all, we don't want to wait for the future to happen but rather to shape and steer it ourselves. On the other, we are realistic enough to acknowledge that there are worldwide trends, and that we are players in a much larger game whose rules and outcome are not ours alone to determine. What trends should we take into account? Who do we want to work with and with whom will we coordinate our game plan? What are the parameters that will determine how we achieve our dreams over the next ten years?

### High expectations

Expectations for Dutch higher education are at a peak. In 2000, European government leaders formulated a number of ambitious

goals for Europe's knowledge economy. Out of this the Netherlands subsequently crystallised concrete targets. One of those targets is that half of the Dutch population will have participated in higher education by 2020. At the beginning of 2010, the Dutch Lower House went a step further, resolving that the Netherlands should eventually become one of the top five knowledge economies in Europe. Clearly, the universities of applied sciences and the research universities have their work cut out for them: to provide a large number of students with a first-rate education, to produce outstanding research and scholarship and to ensure that businesses and institutions benefit from that knowledge.

The imperatives of strong growth and high quality have significantly increased the pressure on higher education. In April 2010, having duly considered the situation, a committee that had been appointed to assess the future of the Dutch higher education system (*Commissie Toekomstbestendig Hoger Onderwijs Stelsel*) presented a number of recommendations. First, higher education should offer more tailored options for the highly diverse student population. Second, institutions should carve out clearer profiles by making choices and focusing on specific attributes and components. Third, admission should be more selective. Provided these

recommendations are adopted, the existing alliance between the UvA and HvA offers an excellent starting point for pursuing a new policy of differentiation.

### International top

Higher education is becoming increasingly international, and it is this trend in particular that will determine the shape of higher education in 2020. Dutch research universities and universities of applied sciences are becoming ever more embedded in the European academic world, starting with the introduction of a uniform degree structure under the Bologna Process, including Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes.

The trend towards internationalisation is further reflected in the growing popularity of the rankings – already an integral factor in the success of both the research and applied sciences universities. Various leading rankings place Dutch research universities among the top 200 universities worldwide. The most important measure of the UvA's international position is the Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities. The UvA aims to rank in the top 75 of this league table. Increasingly, ambitious students base their choice of university on such rankings, especially when it comes to Master's and PhD programmes. Today, the

competition to attract top talent is played out at the global level, with universities vying not only for staff but equally for students and doctoral candidates.

The internationalisation of higher education is a reflection of and, at the same time, an engine behind the trend known as ‘globalisation’. Ensuring that graduates of the HvA and UvA are in the best possible position to start their professional careers in the global market carries with it an obligation to provide not only robust Bachelor’s and Master’s programmes, but also training in crucial international competences. In the quest for excellent career prospects, students look to the educational institutions with the highest national and international ratings. The UvA and HvA are determined to offer that excellence.

By joining forces, the HvA and UvA have carved out a unique position. The HvA’s focus on the area of professional practice and applied research complements the academically oriented programmes and fundamental research of the UvA. At the same time, the partnership amplifies each institution’s broader social impact. Even as the UvA trains the academics of the future, the professional workforce of tomorrow is acquiring new and practicable knowledge through HvA study programmes and through directly applying it towards practice-based

innovations and operations. And, thanks to that same partnership, ambitious students from the Netherlands and around the world have a wealth of opportunities to fully develop and demonstrate their wide array of talents.

### **Clearer research profile**

The UvA seeks to be a key player on the global stage and to play a leading role wherever possible. But this role can only be realised if it can generate truly world-class research in various specialised areas. This ambition will have an impact on the nature of the UvA’s research profile in 2020; most importantly, that profile must be more sharply defined than it is at present. The UvA is not large enough to be at the top in every field. Instead, it has chosen to define a clear, recognisable set of research priority areas that are earmarked to receive approximately 50% of their resources from government funding (first flow of funds).

By 2020, the UvA aims to rank among the global ‘top 5’ in three to five areas of research. Research of this calibre is almost always conducted in consortia. As a research university, the UvA is a member of a number of carefully chosen consortia of universities and research institutes. Of these, the League of European Research Universities and the Universitas 21 global network are two of the most important.

Each degree and doctorate (including joint degrees) awarded by the UvA’s Graduate Schools is a testament to the best possible training in that field. In addition to its top-5 position in several key areas in 2020, the UvA aims to belong to the top 20 in some 10 other fields of research.

The challenge is to achieve a clearer research profile at a time when there is an increasing preference on the part of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and Brussels to apportion research funds on a thematic and programmatic basis. We will need to take a much greater hand in steering research rather than just waiting to see what emerges. Furthermore, at the international level research is achieving new levels of scale and transdisciplinarity. If the UvA is to cultivate and conduct research on a par with its peers, we will first need to gain strength through well-chosen partnerships. Examples include close collaboration with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the institutes of the NWO, as well as other knowledge organisations in Amsterdam.

Particularly vital in this regard is our alliance with VU University Amsterdam. Time and time again, geographic proximity has proved a key factor in the success of higher education partnerships. The UvA and VU University



Amsterdam are two classic, comprehensive universities located within a stone's throw of each other, each with its own unique educational domain yet together possessing the capacity to complement and strengthen each other in the internationally oriented research arena. An alliance between the UvA and VU University Amsterdam lays a firm foundation for participating in major international research projects. It is therefore in the interests of both institutions to pursue a mutual relationship unencumbered by undue obstacles and formalities.

While our location in Amsterdam may seem an obvious trump card, it remains crucial at every step of the way to ask whether collaboration and coordination will actually add value to the UvA's research profile. We believe that, with VU University Amsterdam as our preferred partner, the UvA will be able to strengthen that profile by trading out disciplines, agreeing on priority areas and their allocation, and sharing facilities and services. The budget for developing that new profile will come from government funding for research, of which a small portion will be reserved for laying a fertile foundation for research-based teaching in the broad sense.

Following a successful initial evaluation of the quality of research within its lectorships, over the next decade, the HvA

will strive to embed that research in its professional programmes. A parallel initiative currently being undertaken aims to increase the capacity and visibility of HvA lectorships and research by clustering them into research programmes either within or spanning the individual schools. Through these research programmes, the HvA hopes to strengthen its bid for external contracts and indirect government and contract research funding (second and third flow of funds, respectively). Greater visibility will also stimulate practitioners to approach the HvA with their queries. Research at the HvA will therefore evolve in a direction that serves to reinforce its natural status as a knowledge institution.

### **Studying in a global metropolis**

If regional, national and international status can be taken as indicators of success, the HvA and UvA are in an excellent starting position. Located in a world capital – though overshadowed by New York or Beijing in sheer size, Amsterdam is nevertheless one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities – the city's unique social and cultural climate has been a magnet for international visitors for centuries. The UvA and HvA have yet to tap the full range of benefits that offers. To begin with, the number of foreign enrolments at both institutions – one of the measures of international standing – is

comparatively (UvA) to extremely (HvA) limited.

In order to claim positions among the international top by 2020, the UvA and HvA will have to make great strides to further internationalise their curricula. Among other things, this will require the creation of a learning environment whose standard of teaching and research guarantees that every student and teacher can develop the international and intercultural professional and social competences needed for their future advancement. It will also mean recruiting talent from abroad (particularly from China and India), and developing scholarships programmes and additional student housing. Additionally, we will need a personnel policy focused on actively scouting for top lecturers and researchers at home and abroad. The Amsterdam connection gives both our institutions an important trump card in the international market. Internationalising the UvA and HvA can also entail 'exporting' the cosmopolitan city of Amsterdam and intensifying collaboration and exchange with knowledge institutions elsewhere in the world.

### **Academic and professional**

Viewed from the international perspective, it would be very beneficial to reframe the partnership between the research

universities and the universities of applied sciences. Although the binary system that is standard in the Netherlands is not common in the rest of the world, there is general recognition of the distinction between academic and professional higher education. In this context two – ostensibly contrary – trends are visible. On the one hand, there are many institutions that specialise in one of these two types of education, under the motto ‘specialisation is the key to excellence’. On the other, there are institutions which emphasise that the difference between academic and professional education is not absolute but rather one of orientation, as borne out by the fact that numerous leading universities now incorporate both graduate schools and professional schools.

The HvA and UvA have opted for the latter course. By 2020, our two institutions will be bound together by close ties while each retaining a unique face. The reality is that many students do not fit neatly into one category or the other, but have an affinity with and are interested in both academic and professional training. Those students in particular will benefit from close collaboration between the research and the applied sciences universities, as it will enable them to combine elements of both in their studies, whether simultaneously, in succession or in the context of lifelong learning. If we are to do justice to students’

differing orientations, we must first delineate the nature of the relationship between our two institutions. Whereas study programmes at the UvA are academic in nature and structured in three phases (Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD), those at the HvA are offered in two phases (Bachelor’s and Master’s) and are characterised by a practical, vocational orientation. Provided our institutions succeed in developing the right combinations of programmes, the alliance between the UvA and HvA will offer students significant advantages.

### **Growth and diversity**

In addition to internationalisation, a second factor determining what higher education will look like in 2020 is the continuing unprecedented growth in the size and accompanying diversity of the student population. In Amsterdam, types of prior education and cultural backgrounds vary immensely from one student to another. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of students enrolled at the UvA increased from 23,000 to 30,000, and at the HvA from 25,000 to about 40,000. The demographic prognosis is that this growth will continue unabated until 2020, thereafter declining slightly and then stabilising. Such growth confronts us with a number of pressing questions, perhaps the most important of which is whether this strong growth and increasing diversity

spells an automatic decline in the quality of education.

The large influx of students demands a strategy that differentiates between levels and forms of education, something which, thanks to a joint management structure, the UvA and HvA are singularly well equipped to do, with study programmes at one institution being designed to dovetail with those at the other. By 2020 we will have different types of curricula for different categories of students, with greater differentiation based on the orientation and level of the individual study programmes. Where the HvA is concerned, the major challenge will be to enhance the quality of and differentiation among Bachelor’s programmes.

To keep this differentiated selection of programmes affordable, by 2020 programme organisation will have to be notably better both at predicting demand for programmes and at customising curricula to meet individual student needs. To accommodate the wide diversity in students’ prior education and cultural backgrounds, the HvA and UvA must continue to promote good links with different forms of secondary (or other prior) education. Wherever possible, students must be able to compensate for deficiencies, with support from the institutions.

## **'Excellence classes' for top talent**

Both the UvA and HvA seek to claim positions in the highest echelons of institutions of higher education. One way this will be achieved is by introducing 'excellence tracks'. It goes without saying that explicit responsibility is accepted for every student who enters our institutions with the right qualifications. But a university is never better than its best students. Alongside programmes that offer sufficient challenges for all students, top students must have the extra scope they need to excel. And the better the performance of the very best students, the stronger the stimulus will be for their fellow students to reach greater heights.

Though the distinction between research universities and universities of applied sciences lies basically in the orientation of their curricula, the statutory admission requirements, (university preparatory education, VWO, versus senior general secondary education, HAVO, and senior secondary vocational education, MBO) imply a real difference in level. But a distinction in level is clearly not what ought to define the partnership between the UvA and HvA. On the contrary, the HvA's practice-oriented study programmes offer sufficient challenges not only for students with a HAVO or MBO education but also for those with a VWO background who elect to base

their choice of study on professional prospects. It will be up to the HvA to achieve the status that universities of applied sciences have already gained in fields such as the arts across the broad spectrum of its study programmes. 'Excellence classes' can be an effective tool for this purpose.

## **Added value for society**

When assessing research universities and universities of applied sciences, society is increasingly focused on their social and economic impact. The leading institutions of the future will set themselves apart not only through the quality of their teaching and research, but also through the extent to which the greater community benefits from those activities. For a knowledge institution to really 'count', it must contribute to the economic and cultural wellbeing of the region. And that relationship works both ways: a top-class institution performs better in a flourishing socio-economic environment.

The 2010 OECD review of the Amsterdam-region knowledge economy makes clear that although the local knowledge institutions already have prize cards in their hands, there is still much to be won in the game with government and business players. Indeed, that untapped potential helps to explain why the Amsterdam region continues to

struggle to retain its position among the top-ranking European cities. It is only by joining forces with VU University Amsterdam and other knowledge institutions to raise product innovation, service provision and culture to a new level over the next few years that we will be able to claim a place in the Champions League of higher education.

## **Knowledge is gain**

In addition to teaching and research, the third task of higher education is valorisation, that is, deploying knowledge to benefit society. If we are to fulfil this task by 2020, greater efforts will need to be made in the areas of knowledge transfer and socio-cultural interaction. This requires cooperation between all the knowledge organisations in Amsterdam. The research universities and the universities of applied sciences will need to sit down with government and business players to agree on targeted investments in a number of key areas of – mainly regional – innovation. Possible areas of innovation include the creative industry (design and gaming), e-science, the life sciences and specific niches in the financial services market. The platform responsible for organising these cooperative endeavours is the Amsterdam Economic Development Board. The next ten years will also see Amsterdam Science Park and the Medical Business Park take their place as

premier locations where teaching, research and the business sector can scale new heights together.

The most valuable commodity the HvA and UvA have to offer is knowledge. But knowledge, too, can have a shelf life. To stay afloat in the modern knowledge economy, you need not only a good education but also to keep pace with ongoing developments. Undergraduate and graduate education is and always will be the key mandate of the HvA and UvA. At the same time, though, we can generate added value through contract teaching, courses, training programmes and postgraduate degree programmes, such as Advanced and Executive Master's, thereby meeting the rising demand for permanent education.

With 70,000 students today and an expected 100,000 by 2020, we have the potential to become a major player in Amsterdam's public life. However, we can only realise this potential if members of the education community make real and demonstrable commitments to the broader local community. Though many are already doing so, we can and must substantially expand that commitment and embed it more firmly in the life of the city. Both the UvA and HvA are outwardly orientated and foster intensive interchange between their various institutional premises and the surrounding communities. By 2020, the open city campus will

be a reality, facilitating the organisation of and engagement in a wide array of social, cultural and athletic activities throughout the city. Community internships and other initiatives will ensure that students make pivotal contributions towards the general welfare and wellbeing of specific urban districts. One precondition for realising this aim is a guarantee of sufficient housing for students, especially for the international Master's and PhD students.

Ultimately, the commitment of the UvA and HvA to the Amsterdam community will help each of us to project a clear and recognisable profile to the outside world. Both institutions stand for a strong brand. While distinctive, though, they are also clearly related, bound by their high standards, community engagement and rootedness in the city of Amsterdam.

### **Robust and sustainable**

To survive and thrive as a research university and university of applied sciences in 2020, our two institutions must be supported by robust and sustainable operational management – financially, materially and in terms of the workforce available for teaching, research and valorisation.

With respect to the various funding sources for higher education, a clear trend that is visible is the increasing withdrawal of the central

government. In 2010, the Dutch government financed roughly 63% of the costs of the UvA and 72% of those of the HvA. Students can still rely on student grants and loans to cover part of their tuition fees, but political signals clearly suggest that further cuts are imminent. With research universities and universities of applied sciences seeing a steady decline in net government contributions per student, by 2020 students will be paying more tuition fees out of their own pockets.

The central government's withdrawal of financial support means our institutions will have to look to other government bodies (European, provincial and municipal) and private bodies to acquire the necessary resources. In this endeavour, the first criterion for success is the provision of quality. By 2020 the relationship between performance and funding will be much more direct and individually based than was hitherto the case, when institutions automatically received most of their funds from the State. Where teaching and research are concerned, an investment in quality always assures a return. Research investments in particular will have to be sourced mainly from indirect government and contract research funding, and they will be performance based. In collaboration with regional partners, knowledge valorisation will need to be used to generate a greater share of the budget.

Scholarship programmes will be the tool of choice for businesses and government agencies to attract and bind talented students.

The government's withdrawal also sharpens the need for strong ties between research universities and universities of applied sciences on the one hand, and between students and alumni on the other. By 2020, the alumni community will be of greater significance to the UvA and HvA than ever before. Higher education institutions will be increasingly intent on promoting their qualities, and the place where a person earns their degree will become a defining attribute. As alumni come to identify more closely with their alma maters, their financial commitment will likewise increase.

Even if we are successful in attracting more private funds, the UvA and HvA will have to continue navigating a tight financial course. Only by doing so can we pursue our planned investments in housing and ICT facilities for students and staff. The administrative structure of our two institutions places a major responsibility on local units such as faculties, schools and support services, which is wholly in keeping with our stated mission of stimulating individual creativity and independence. At the same time, though, this structure places a heavy burden on the monitoring and control mechanisms and on the people responsible for them.

It is therefore up to us to balance the drive to vest initiative and responsibility in local units with the need to stay in control as an organisation.

Sustainability is a critical factor in everything we do. Our operational management is sustainable, and sustainability is a recurring theme in all our teaching and research. What we ultimately seek is to encourage a mentality that is keyed towards sustainability among students and staff.

The accommodations of the HvA and UvA reflect our universities' core ambitions. Together, the Amstel Campus, Science Park, Roeterseiland, the Binnengasthuis premises and Oudemanhuispoort, the athletics campus in Ookmeer and AMC-UvA represent a unique environment, a nerve centre to which students and staff from the Netherlands and abroad are drawn to pursue their interests in a relationship of engagement with each other and the city. Our physical concentration at a few key locations in the city, where student and staff facilities are clustered, provides an impetus for productivity. Researchers can work together more easily, exchange views and share knowledge. Students encounter each other more naturally and see their fellow students at work. And seeing others at work has a motivating effect. In essence, the HvA and UvA are pursuing an accommodations policy that will contribute to both the quality of

research and the rate of academic success.

## **Recruiting, binding and developing talent**

The globalisation of higher education, with its particular impact on research universities, is not an isolated trend. Economies and culture are becoming increasingly unfettered by national borders. Developments on one continent resonate on another. The 'global village' has become an everyday reality. Constantly connected as we are – to each other and to the rest of the world – via the electronic highway, the market for products, services and ideas has expanded into every corner of the planet.

While we might expect the significance of location to diminish, however, the reverse is true: the global citizens of today may participate in all manner of virtual communities, but they still want physical places to come together – arenas for intellectual debate, inspired brainstorming, sharing knowledge and innovative theorisation. Accordingly, the university – whatever its orientation – of the 21st century must work to define itself as a global intellectual hub. In defining that position, the local social and cultural context is at least as important as academic reputation and employment conditions. If the UvA and HvA are to be a hub of ideas, Amsterdam itself must be

seen as an international centre of socio-economic innovation and cultural inspiration. In this sense, the UvA, HvA and Amsterdam are inextricably linked: all three are vying for a position as a hotspot of ideas, culture and intellectual exchange.

Both the UvA and HvA have long histories of appealing to each new young generation. Even at a time when learning is increasingly being seen as an ongoing process rather than a completed state, the primary aim of higher education continues to be to prepare men and women for a career path. Both our institutions offer students a formative experience that couples learning with participation in culture, sports, debate and social development. For many people, the time spent at university represents a key phase in their life. Our institutions tap into that significance by encouraging and providing ways for students to actively engage both in and outside the classroom.

Sports appeal to the drive to achieve and excel. Institutions that value sports have added value for their students, staff and community alike. The HvA and UvA are making visible investments in good athletic facilities and the supervision of talented athletes. By participating in a wide range of sports practised at the highest level in Amsterdam, as well as in the organisation of major national and international sporting events, the HvA and

UvA are actively supporting the athletic aspirations of the city and of the Dutch Olympic Plan. One of these aspirations is to attract the *Universiade*, the World University Games, to Amsterdam – a possibility that is currently being explored in cooperation with TopSport Amsterdam. Sports, education, science and scholarship are a mutually enriching combination. The HvA and UvA have laid down extensive championship sports regulations for their students, and provide facilities for athletes at the Amsterdam Centre for Championship Sports and Education (*Centrum voor Topsport en Onderwijs*, CTO).

The competitive nature of relations between knowledge institutions around the world is a major factor in the recruitment, retention and development of the human talent upon which the UvA and HvA depend. That talent includes students, but equally, research and teaching staff. Achieving a place in the top ranks of higher education therefore requires a targeted personnel policy. By 2020, our policy for scouting for talent will be led not by the jobs that are vacant but the top talents that are available. Our two institutions are only as strong as the people working and studying at them – people who originate from every corner of the globe. High-level professionals are drawn to higher education institutions with solid reputations, good facilities and

personnel policies that promote and reward achievement.

A personnel policy premised on promoting talent rather than on permanent staff positions fits in with our vision of flexible staffing. Staff members should be empowered to contribute in their area of expertise as well as to develop further. At the same time, they should be able to teach subjects beyond their research focus. By 2020, the rigid relationship between time spent on teaching and time spent on research will be a thing of the past. That relationship will vary according to the area in which someone is most productive, and may therefore change over time. Keywords in the personnel policy of the future are ‘training’ and ‘personal development’. Supervisors will adopt a more creative approach during the traditional annual consultations with staff, emphasising the optimal development of individual skills and employability. Accordingly, career policy will be designed to link possibilities for promotion to agreements on career steps outside the institution if expectations or agreements are not met.

A personnel policy involving temporary appointments also ties in with the vision of the UvA and HvA as intellectual hotspots and centres for the transfer of ideas. The notion that equates higher education with lifetime employment has made way for

the understanding that the higher education institution of the 21st century needs enthusiastic researchers and lecturers who are equally engaged in scholarship and practice; indeed, it is with their discipline that their primary loyalty lies. Institutions of higher education offer a place and community in which they can carry out their work for a given period of time, whether that be for many years or just a few months. The strength of the UvA and HvA resides largely in our unfailing capacity to spot and attract new talent. And while retaining that talent is important, so too is mobility.

## Brief summary

The HvA and UvA are confident of a bright future. Together, we are helping shape higher education in Amsterdam in the spirit and traditions of that city, each guided by our own orientation and our own specific objectives.

For the HvA, that is as a reliable, engaged and ambitious university of applied sciences and the natural home base and meeting place for enthusiastic people who are keen to drive themselves, their organisations and their disciplines to the highest possible level.

The UvA, for its part, seeks to be known at home and abroad as a pioneering, determined, committed and fertile breeding ground for academic training and development *and* for social debate.

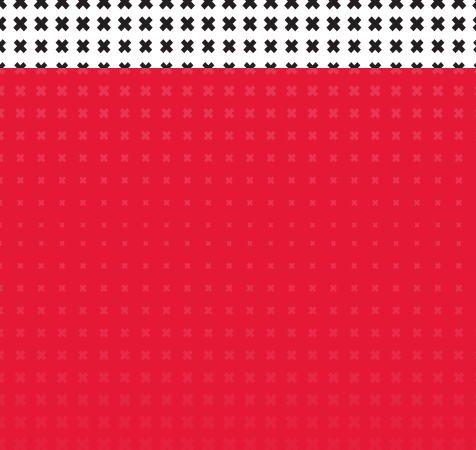
The future is not what fate decides to throw at us, but a reality we ourselves have the power to shape. The UvA and HvA are doing exactly what higher education ought to do, namely, *shaping the future*.



# Preamble

*High expectations can only be brought to successful fruition in a fertile climate, a climate predicated on the need for an intellectually challenging, inspiring and stimulating environment in which to work and study. A climate, moreover, in which students and staff are inspired to tap the full extent of their individual potential, where they are challenged to engage with societal and cultural issues and spurred on to adopt an enterprising attitude. For the UvA, a good academic climate also means a guarantee of scholarly independence and integrity, whereby inquisitiveness, authenticity and determination are seen as the key forces behind excellence in (fundamental) research and education.*





What are the  
objectives of  
the UvA and  
how will it  
achieve them?

# OBJECTIVE I | Research

*The University of Amsterdam (UvA) is a leading international research institution that values, stimulates and rewards excellent research. The UvA facilitates its academic staff in conducting pioneering research and promotes quality in a broad spectrum of research activities through selective investment in research priority areas. Benchmarking provides the main basis for the continuous improvement of our institution's research performance. Individual research is assessed in part on the basis of international recognition in the form of prestigious grants, awards and prizes and/or membership in leading academies of science and scholarship. The UvA also invests in fundamental research and the resulting innovations.*

## **Strategic investment in research**

Operating under a limited research budget means that developing excellence across the entire spectrum is not feasible. The UvA has therefore opted for focus and selectivity. A number of research priority areas have been identified and top scientists and scholars appointed to the research domains in which the UvA aims to raise its international profile.

The UvA will continue to develop these priority areas, in order to focus research efforts and make

concerted use of the limited research funds available. It will also concentrate on giving international visibility to these priority areas. Such measures should enhance the UvA's appeal to eminent international scientists and scholars, who in turn will act as magnets for important academic and private partners. In our efforts to realise these aims, we will coordinate with other universities in the Randstad metropolitan area<sup>1</sup> and with other knowledge institutions in Amsterdam in order to formulate a systematic research policy.

The Dutch government has made the availability of additional funding (first flow of funds) contingent upon external funding from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), from regional governments or semi-public institutions, from European sources and from the private sector. Midway through the term of this Strategic Plan, the UvA will conduct an evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the research priority areas. In any given priority area, a flexible approach will be taken to the time commitment of academic staff so as to allow research time to be expanded if increased external funding becomes available.

## **Excellent academic staff as human capital**

Although growth in scale, teamwork and interdisciplinarity are important in many fields of research, the UvA also acknowledges that research achievements and reputations are the result of excellence of the individual scientists and scholars. It therefore nurtures excellence among its academic staff, even if their work does not yet contribute to the UvA's strategic development of the research priority areas.

## **Sourcing additional research funding**

The UvA seeks to source additional funding for research

and therefore expects all its academic staff to acquire external funding. Although expanding the acquisition of indirect government funding (second flow of funds) continues to be crucial, the capacity to source funds from a broader pool of public and private sector parties (particularly European and industry sources) is an important indicator of success. With this in mind, we are systematically working towards forging partnerships with major national and international organisations.

### **Excellent PhD programmes**

The UvA recruits outstanding PhD students and offers them a stimulating environment in which to conduct their research. High-quality PhD research and training are at the heart of a research-intensive university, both as contributions to ongoing research and as an investment in the future.

1. An area in the west of the Netherlands including the four largest Dutch cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) and their surroundings.

## Aims

A recognisable, clear set of research priority areas, with roughly 50% of research resources (man-hours, facilities, support) government-funded by 2014.

A growth in (i) publications in peer-reviewed A-journals and (ii) citations, with respect to research (priorities); growth in publications in leading journals.

A growth in acquisition of key awards (Spinoza, KNAW professorships) and revenue for indirect government-funded research (NWO, ERC Start/Advanced grants, Veni-Vidi-Vici) and contract research funding.

## OBJECTIVE 2 | Education

*Education and research are equally important at the UvA. Charged with preparing generations of ambitious students to become both internationally oriented professionals and responsible citizens of the world, the UvA's large and heterogeneous student population presents a unique challenge. An academic education is the focus of everyone at the UvA and is offered within the best possible academic environment. Thanks to outstanding teachers, facilities and students, the UvA offers challenges and a stimulating environment in which to study.*

*Influenced by its location in Amsterdam, it is only natural that the UvA has an international outlook. Students often encounter this international approach during their studies: they travel abroad, they come from abroad and they take courses taught in English. At the same time the UvA works with specific universities both in and outside Europe.*

*Ultimately, the UvA seeks to achieve its educational objectives through a strong emphasis on research, a well-balanced and differentiated range of study programmes and an ambitious study environment.*

### **Greater differentiation for maximum personal development**

The UvA has a fast-growing and diverse student population which is expected to continue to grow until at least 2020. The need to respond to the ambitions and talents of all these students has led to the introduction of new Bachelor's programmes intended to complement existing disciplinary programmes, and to a differentiation in levels, for example in the form of Honours programmes and classes with restrictive admission. Additional interdisciplinary and liberal arts Bachelor's programmes will be developed to complement existing disciplinary Bachelor's programmes. The common denominator in all the Bachelor's programmes is the focus on academic training.

To continue to guarantee the quality of programmes, programme capacity must keep pace with the current growth in programme numbers. One option is selective admission, another is greater reliance on instruments for referring students to suitable programmes, such as intake interviews. A clearer differentiation between the different types of Bachelor's programmes in terms of content focus and didactic approaches will better equip the UvA to recommend alternatives.

The UvA's relationship with the Hogeschool van Amsterdam, University of Applied Sciences (HvA) has a vital role to play here. The intensive partnership between the two institutions provides excellent opportunities for referring students to programmes that best suit them. Together, the UvA and HvA offer a large and diverse range of study programmes.

### **Study success and quality**

Improving the quality of study programmes and increasing study success across the board continue to be key aims, aims that can be achieved through measures such as the use of academic plans. From the UvA this will require raising the standard of didactic resources such as student supervision, assessment and feedback, and support to students during the learning process.

Especially study programmes with a high enrolment may eventually need to take nationwide measures to restrict capacity in order to maintain quality; examples include enrolment quotas and local selection. Such measures will build a more stable foundation for the way programmes are organised and thus guarantee the quality of the programmes in the years ahead. 'Matching interviews' can play a key role in this process, particularly for programmes with

a comparatively high dropout rate in the first Bachelor's year.

### **Connection with research and the job market**

The UvA's Graduate Schools offer a diverse range of Master's programmes that train students to enter the job market or continue on in research. The programmes tailored to the job market are academic in orientation but also allow for the fact that most graduates will ultimately go on to careers outside academia. As an example, the UvA is currently investing in its first-level secondary school teaching qualification programme, offered by the Interfaculty Teacher Training Programmes, where Education minors and Master's programmes are taught in close cooperation with relevant faculties.

The UvA is particularly intent on expanding the total number of Research Master's programmes and on developing these programmes in the context of its research priority areas. The common denominator in all the Master's programmes (whether regular, selective or Research) is the central focus on academic training in an academic climate that fosters optimal interaction between students and lecturers. In addition to the Master's programmes, the Graduate Schools are also responsible for

the PhD programmes. In this context, due to economy of scale the UvA often collaborates in research schools with other universities, but the final responsibility always lies with the UvA's Graduate Schools.

### **Ambitious study environment**

Education at the UvA is designed to challenge students to perform optimally and seeks to create a committed and ambitious academic environment for students and teaching staff alike. The UvA has pledged to ensure that every student can earn a diploma without delays. Fulfilling this pledge requires good student career advising and an inspiring curriculum that is not only feasible but also commits students to their programme.

Accordingly, individual programmes are taking steps to organise activities on a smaller scale within the existing financial constraints. From the lecturer's perspective, an ambitious study environment demands not only expertise in a particular field but also a wide range of didactic skills. Equally important is ensuring a sufficient measure of educational leadership within each programme, a goal the UvA is promoting through a permanent programme of teacher professionalisation.

## Interdependence of teaching and research

Research-based teaching and learning are at the heart of every phase of every study programme. Lecturers at the Bachelor's level have teaching qualifications, doctoral degrees and proven expertise in academic research. Though they may not – or may no longer – be actively involved in research themselves, they are always expected to keep abreast of developments in their field, thus helping to maintain the high academic standard. One option at the lecturers' disposal is sabbaticals, in which an exemption from teaching duties enables them to participate in research for a given period of time.

The UvA regularly reassesses its entire range of study programmes with a view to preserving the link between academic research and the fast-changing job market, and always with quality as the main criterion. Even when faced with making changes, the range of Bachelor's and Master's programmes on offer must always remain broad and of an exceptionally high standard. One way the UvA is assuring this range and standard is by forming partnerships and joining forces with local institutions such as VU University Amsterdam, and with other universities in the Randstad metropolitan area and abroad.

## International orientation

The UvA participates in two international networks – the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and Universitas21 – and has mapped out an internationalisation strategy based on three key aims. Firstly, the UvA aims to prepare its students for careers in the global job market. At the same time, it seeks to attract the most talented students from around the world to study at the UvA. Thirdly, the UvA wishes to establish its position as an institution whose international orientation is reflected in its curricula, personnel policy and support facilities. This trend to become more international fits in with the UvA's profile and tradition, as well as with its location in the cosmopolitan centre of Amsterdam.

## Aims

More than 70% of students to complete their Bachelor's degree within four years by 2014.

Each faculty to offer a diverse range of programmes in terms of both type (broad Bachelor's) and level (Honours).

A substantial qualitative and quantitative rise among incoming foreign Master's students by 2014.

# OBJECTIVE 3 | Social responsibility and innovation

*The UvA has set itself the mission of making valuable social and economic contributions to society through a commitment to education and research. Entrepreneurship is encouraged among students and academic staff alike, and is helping to shape the knowledge and innovation agenda of the city of Amsterdam. In this role, the UvA is collaborating with businesses and various social organisations, including cultural and government institutions.*

## Networking in the metropolis of Amsterdam

The UvA has joined up with various other knowledge institutions to put Amsterdam on the map as the nation's knowledge centre. As home to roughly 20 per cent of the country's students and academic workforce, and boasting a first-rate research infrastructure, the city of Amsterdam already occupies a unique position. The key to strengthening the UvA's research position in the national and international arenas lies in the expansion of these partnerships. When it comes to innovation, Amsterdam's international reputation, standard of services and facilities and business climate offer a wealth of opportunities.

The municipality, business sector and knowledge institutions are currently hammering out a framework within which to

collaborate to make optimal use of these opportunities. Such an arrangement will benefit all parties – regional, national and international. A case in point is the Economic Development Board Amsterdam, in which the UvA and VU University Amsterdam have joined forces with regional businesses and local government to promote further advancement in a number of key specialised economic sectors, including ICT, Creative Industries, Financial Business Services, Life Sciences, Trade & Logistics, Flowers & Food, and Tourism & Conferences.

## Students of and for the city

The UvA is keen to contribute to the development of the city and region, most importantly by creating opportunities for primary and secondary school pupils, promoting talent and opening the

door to more students from abroad. The UvA caters for an extremely varied mix of students, including those wishing to return to school later in life.

## Innovation and knowledge valorisation

Valorisation refers to the way in which the UvA deploys its research to make social and economic contributions of benefit to society. In its efforts to strengthen the innovative potential of the business sector, the UvA actively pursues research grants and seeks out practical applications for its research results, thus generating funds for further research, applying knowledge for education and publication, and making contributions in the social and economic sectors. Though traditionally associated with research in the natural sciences, the UvA also aims to expand valorisation initiatives in the arts and social sciences.

## Advancing entrepreneurialism

The UvA is committed to ensuring that research results are suitable and available for application, and to raising researchers' awareness of opportunities for entrepreneurship. Initiatives in teaching and research (such as the Amsterdam Centre for Entrepreneurship, in particular) and guidance in the marketing of research results are

key means by which the UvA seeks to promote entrepreneurship among its students and staff.

### Science Park and research infrastructure

The development of Science Park represents one of the keystones of the UvA's collaboration with industry. Under the long-term plan, Science Park will develop to become the premier science and business park in the Netherlands by 2020 and will assume a prominent position in the fields of ICT and Life Sciences. Further impetus in the Life Sciences will be provided by the Medical Business Park at the Academic Medical Center (AMC-UvA). Together, Science Park and the Medical Business Park will help the UvA tap the city's excellent potential as a knowledge hub as well as attract international businesses and talent both now and in the years ahead, while at the same time reinforcing Amsterdam's position as a European city with growth potential.

Science Park will also provide a prime location for developing elements of our national research infrastructure, such as the supercomputer.

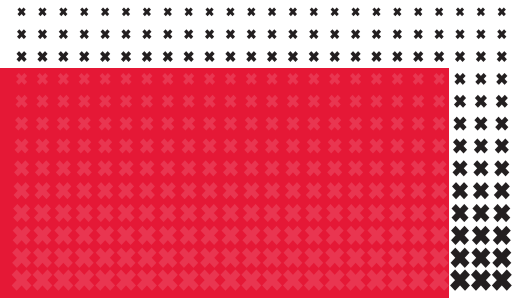
## Aims

To expand social impact (number of spin-offs, patents, licence agreements, professional publications) based on the NWO assessment method (ERiC).

A growth in the number of partnership agreements (relative to 2010) with business and government parties in all seven key districts of the metropolitan area of Amsterdam.

An integrated framework to support knowledge transfer in Amsterdam.





How will the  
UvA make this  
possible?

# I | Quality of staff

*The UvA is an attractive employer, offering interesting jobs, a stimulating academic environment and opportunities for staff to take initiatives and develop their skills. As an institution, the UvA is multifaceted, determined, dynamic, internationally oriented and ambitious – all qualities that provide an excellent foundation for research and education of the highest standard.*

*Having set itself the notable ambition of using the research priority areas to shape its profile, the UvA is now investing in seeking out and recruiting talented individuals in these areas, in defining clear career pathways for academic staff and offering the appropriate training, and in further professionalising its teaching activities. Continuous efforts are also being made to ensure broad employability and consensus on areas of responsibility among support staff. Finally, the UvA is developing an assessment policy that appeals to the creative and achievement drive of supervisors and staff. The UvA seeks to be a sustainable employer, characterised by an external awareness that is reflected in respect for its workforce and continuity in employability. ‘Employment security’, not ‘job security’, is the UvA’s mission.*

## **Flexibility and security**

A situation characterised by growing numbers of students versus diminishing budgets demands a more flexible approach to staffing. Essentially, staff need to be equipped to look beyond the limits of their own discipline and to adapt their teaching and research activities accordingly. Temporary positions and appointments will become more common at all levels of the organisation. However, the demand for flexibility requires an extra assurance of security in return. It is the UvA’s responsibility to support its staff in their professional development, to offer career guidance, performance feedback, clarity regarding career prospects and a stimulating working environment, and to be attentive to individual circumstances.

## **Diversity as a driver of performance**

A high-performing university needs a diverse workforce with a wide spectrum of talents, competences and skills, and, therefore, a recruitment and selection policy keyed to fulfil that need. In turn, supervisors must have a clear idea of – and recognise – qualities that distinguish a desirable candidate. Diversity also places demands on how we all interact with each other. In promoting internationalisation, it is essential that a climate of respect and hospitality be fostered.

## Lifetime employability

A sustainable employment relationship and a guarantee of employability do not equate with holding a single job for life. Sustainability is centred on balanced employment relations. As an employer, it is in the UvA's interest to mobilise the talents of its staff. Naturally, staff members themselves are equally keen to develop and tap in to their own individual potential. Yet the aspirations of employer and employee do not always align. This means the UvA must constantly strive to achieve balance in the face of ever-changing conditions, and to work to ensure employees' continuing employability. When the qualities of an employee correspond with organisational ambitions, that employee will succeed in his or her job and, by extension, be in a strong position to find employment elsewhere. This entails a responsibility for both employer and employee.

As a good employer, the UvA will ensure that employees are equipped to translate the changing requirements of the modern world into their daily practice and personal performance. The UvA will discuss employees' performance and personal development with them on a regular basis and create working conditions in which staff can develop the full range of their talents and make suitable choices. It is up to the staff members

themselves to use that knowledge, insight and support to shape their own job prospects, advancement and careers.

## Aims

A 10% rise in the rate of in- and outbound staff by 2014 and a flexible workforce\* of at least 25%, preferably split between various levels and positions.

An increase in the percentage of staff with a basic teaching qualification (*basiskwalificatie onderwijs*, BKO) to 90% by 2014; senior teaching qualification (*seniorkwalificatie onderwijs*, SKO) programmes to be integrated in all faculties; two Educational Leadership groups in place.

50% of academic and support staff to have taken part in a professionalisation programme by 2014.

\* This does not include appointments within the meaning of Article 2.3(10) of the Collective Labour Agreement Dutch Universities (CAO NU).

## 2 | An outstanding reputation

*The UvA is inextricably linked to the city of Amsterdam. Fusing an academic attitude with qualities typical of Amsterdam, the UvA is strengthening its profile both at home and abroad by highlighting the features that set it apart as an institution. To begin with, its position as a thriving centre of knowledge, insight and opinion, and a powerhouse where keen, inquisitive minds are united in their determination and commitment. A meeting place where independent and unconventional thinkers are stimulated to reflect on their respective disciplines and the world around them. A place where scholars and scientists are on a never-ending quest for fresh perspectives, new developments and groundbreaking insights and solutions. Equally, the UvA is an institution with a commitment to the community and to investing in links with Amsterdam's diverse businesses and networks, in which its alumni are playing an increasingly important role. This 'University of and for Amsterdam' is clearly reflected in the UvA's open city campus.*

### Shared vision and aims

The UvA's reputation will be strengthened when staff and students know and recognise the 'story' of the UvA and are willing

and able to propagate it. That story is bound up with the UvA's mission, core values, multi-year objectives and strategies. The UvA currently has more than 30,000 students, 5,000 staff

members and many guests and partners from at home and abroad who have chosen to share in the life and work of the UvA community for shorter or longer periods. While there are immense differences between all these people, their shared love of knowledge and their ambition to grow and develop make them members of a community with countless links with the city of Amsterdam. The UvA stimulates interaction within this community of people and disciplines, together with dialogue on themes relevant to both the institution and the academic community as a whole.

### Recognisable external profile

The UvA strives to be as open as possible about its agenda and to generate support for its interests through clear communication towards and consultation with external target groups and stakeholders (such as business and government). It seeks to be a recognisable voice and actor, to communicate in a proactive and targeted manner and to give an honest and complete picture of its educational, research and commercial activities.

### Strong international research profile

Strengthening the UvA's research profile serves various ends. It enhances the institution's appeal for top foreign scholars and scientists and spurs good students

on to apply to UvA Master's programmes. Spotlighting the quality and results of research at the UvA will advance the UvA's aim of collaborating with foreign universities and businesses. Efforts outside the Netherlands are currently targeting countries and groups of particular relevance to the UvA's research priority areas.

### **Good ties with government and opinion leaders**

The UvA systematically invests in its relationships with decision-makers and opinion leaders that have a voice in shaping the institution's agenda and reputation. By maintaining strong ties with stakeholders at the municipal, provincial, national and international levels, the UvA is able to foster specific, strategically chosen objectives.

### **Important role for alumni**

The UvA has tens of thousands of alumni in the Netherlands and abroad, including many in positions of influence. They know the UvA inside out and often have a strong sense of loyalty to their alma mater. Realising the vital role alumni can play in strengthening the UvA's reputation and position, the UvA is investing in an alumni policy designed to draw these potential ambassadors into the pursuit of the institutional goals.

## Aims

A substantial rise in the number of staff members and students who say they feel a higher-than-average commitment to the UvA.

Relevant external stakeholders in the Netherlands to be aware of the UvA's aims and to endorse them.

Alumni to make positive contributions to the public image of the UvA.

# 3 | Reliable and sustainable services

*The UvA provides reliable and sustainable services specifically keyed to its wide-ranging teaching and research activities. All are supplied at the lowest possible cost and with the greatest possible efficacy. The service units are strategic support partners for faculty-based teaching, research and innovation. Ensuring the future success of this partnership requires organisational improvements UvA-wide, as well as an improvement in student and staff services. Equally important is the further professionalisation of UvA staff.*

## **Quality stimulus for better services**

The quality of the services available to students and staff must be improved. Though great strides have been made in boosting internal services within the UvA, much still remains to be done. Support units need to gain a greater stake in teaching and research while at the same time increasing the reliability of the services they provide. A disciplined approach to work must be taken at the UvA with respect to curbing the internal bureaucracy.

Shared services and faculty services cannot achieve this alone. They will need support from the Executive Board, the deans, the directors and the staff in general.

It is only by boosting 'organisational quality' UvA-wide to a higher level that performance in the areas of teaching, research and innovation can follow suit. Not doing so would be to leave opportunities untapped.

If the UvA is to perform better, further improvements must be made in how data is collected and information supplied. Looking ahead, several complex projects are planned for the next few years, specifically in the areas of accommodation and ICT. Achieving the rollout of the new student information system within the set deadline and budget will demand a concerted effort. But improving the use of existing information systems must take precedence over investing in new systems, starting with the

integration and simplification of processes.

## **Professional support**

A climate of openness and trust, in which operations are managed with an awareness of the impact that actions will have on teaching, research and innovation, plays an important part in the degree to which students and staff feel connected with the UvA. Services should always be provided on site, in so far as possible, with a willingness to take initiative and cooperate being a requisite for success. Additionally, the learning capacity of the organisation as a whole must be strengthened, in part through the further professionalisation of the staff. The UvA funds training for staff and promotes an attitude of individual responsibility. Staff members should be allowed to work on a project basis and to take a process-oriented approach.

## **Increasing responsibility and accountability**

The UvA bears a responsibility towards its internal and external stakeholders: internally, and most importantly, to its own students and staff, and externally, to the government and society at large. Meeting that responsibility requires a sound organisational basis. In other words: a solid financial policy, sufficient management control and lawful and justified operations. A maximum coordination of

administrative processes, a stricter monitoring of established parameters and sufficient checks on annual plans will ensure the UvA can take timely action when and as needed. Accountability requires an attitude of openness as well as discipline from employees at all levels of the organisation.

### **Cooperation with HvA**

Our partnership with HvA will ensure a more effective, efficient and better provision of specific services. This partnership will assume more concrete forms in the period ahead.

## Aims

To increase student satisfaction with the educational structure, as measured by the (Dutch) National Student Survey (NSE), by 1 point relative to 2010, from 4 to 5.

To increase staff satisfaction with overall service provision to at least a 7 out of 10 (relative to the 6.2 average in the 2010 UvA Employee Monitor).

To increase the quality and efficiency of services over the long-term through cooperation between the support services of UvA and HvA.

## 4 | Targeted campus infrastructure

*The UvA seeks to create an optimal study and research environment for its students and staff. The network of four open city campuses currently under development – where the majority of the UvA's facilities and activities will soon be clustered in high-quality premises – testifies to the UvA's dedication to excellence in teaching and research.*

### **Solidarity with each other and with society**

The UvA's Accommodations Plan promotes a sense of solidarity among students, lecturers and researchers mutually and between these groups and the city. The UvA's open city campuses provide natural and convenient spaces in which to meet each other:

- *Binnenstad* (City Centre): in and around the grounds of the Binnengasthuis. This area accommodates the Faculty of Humanities, the University Library, the heritage collections and the Aula.
- *Binnenstad Oost* (East City Centre): in and around the Roeterseiland complex. This campus is home to the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economics and Business. It is also to become the site of the UvA's cultural student centre. The UvA, HvA and city of Amsterdam are currently working together to transform the neighbourhood around

Weesperplein into an attractive 'knowledge quarter' in the heart of the city (with the HvA developing Amstel Campus at the top of the Wibautstraat).

- Science Park, Watergraafsmeer. This location houses the Faculty of Science, Amsterdam University College, sports facilities, laboratories for spin-off companies and the SARA supercomputer.
- AMC-UvA is developing the fourth city campus, to house the Faculty of Medicine and a range of other facilities. VU University Amsterdam accommodates the Faculty of Dentistry (ACTA).

### **Responding to the perceptions of students and staff**

ICT is a field undergoing fast-paced development. The UvA works to ensure that students and staff can always access the resources they need for their academic and research work, anytime, anywhere. Having focused primarily on operational

management over the past few years, ICT innovation is now shifting its focus to teaching and research, with the aim of making information more quickly available and easier to access. It goes without saying that an effective information system is a chief means by which the UvA will be able to boost study success.

### **A knowledge centre for the 21st century**

Far-reaching digitisation of academic media and communication has propelled the UvA to develop a new vision for the University Library. The physical collection will shrink in size even as the range of facilities is expanded with well-equipped study centres and longer opening hours. Because access to scientific and scholarly material is vital to the work of researchers, lecturers and students, the University Library will continue to provide the same access to materials as before, but also expand the scope of its academic collection via Open Access.

### **Good housing for students in Amsterdam**

The fact that Amsterdam has insufficient student housing is a real threat to the national and international competitive position of the city of Amsterdam and the UvA. The need to attract more international students in the years ahead means the future success of



the UvA will depend in part on investments in student housing by the housing corporations, property investors and the municipality.

## Aims

To finish the building projects in the Accommodations Plan within the set terms and budgets and within the scope of operations.

To develop campuses in close consultation with future users to ensure that both the general and ICT infrastructures best reflect the needs and wishes of students and staff.

A maximum commitment by the UvA to complete 9,000 student housing units (including 3,000 furnished rooms for international students and 250 additional units for PhD students) within the planning period.

# 5 | Sustainability

*Sustainable operational management is a key priority at the UvA. The UvA will be benchmarking its operations against the Green Label for universities and will also give sustainability a prominent place in all its study and research programmes.*

## **Sustainable operational management**

It is up to the UvA to create conditions that will foster sustainable behaviour among its students and staff. In the process, it can also achieve key objectives such as reduction targets. A plan with fixed targets has been drawn up for such areas as construction, building management, energy management, transportation, purchasing and consumption. The joint UvA-HvA Sustainable Operational Management Task Force is charged with implementing measures to achieve these targets. Working in cooperation with local government and businesses, the UvA and HvA are rolling out an original and ambitious programme of sustainability projects, including the HvA's Amstel Campus and the joint UvA, City of Amsterdam and NWO Science Park initiative.

The UvA-HvA Sustainable Operational Management Task Force is continuing its efforts towards sustainable operational management by setting policy and drawing up a change programme that will raise awareness of the

importance of sustainability among students and staff. The UvA has committed itself to achieving the following sustainability targets:

- a 30% improvement in energy efficiency in 2020 relative to 2005, in accordance with long-term agreements regarding energy efficiency (MJA 3);
- a 40% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> by 2025 relative to 1990;
- 50% of purchases to be sustainable by 2012.

## **Broad focus on sustainability in education**

With courses on offer covering environmental law, sustainable management, globalisation and biodiversity, water management and sustainable chemistry, the faculties at the UvA cover a broad range of sustainability themes. The success of the new Future Planet Studies Bachelor specialisation has also prompted plans for a subsequent interdisciplinary Master's programme. By making sustainability an increasingly self-evident part of its curricula,

the UvA hopes to engage students and staff in this theme.

## **Facilitation and promotion of sustainability research**

The UvA is supporting research in a number of key thematic areas, including Sustainable Cities, Sustainable Chemistry, Electricity Generation and Transport, Sustainable Enterprise and Regulations, and the Value of Nature. Initiatives in these areas link up with existing faculty-based activities.

## Aims

An annual reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from UvA buildings by 3% each year (benchmark year: 2010).

To reduce energy consumption in all UvA buildings by 2% each year (benchmark year: 2005).

To apply Senter Novem criteria to 100% of all purchases (European tenders and multi-quote projects) by 2014.

## 6 | Finance

*The UvA is eager to claim its place as a contender in the international arena of university research. This will require at the very least maintaining, or even enlarging, the current level of available financial resources. One portion of those resources comes from government and students, another from contract research, business commitments and private funding. With the lump sum value of government funding declining, contributions from participants and interested parties must rise. This shift will result in more diverse income flows in future, as well as a more direct link between income and performance than was previously the case. Increased versatility and competitive power will be vital to meeting this challenge.*

### **Decentralised pricing policy**

The UvA is no longer able to provide education for which neither students (nor their employers) nor the State can or will pay. With fees for a growing number of programmes (contract education) being deregulated, new pricing policies are being determined locally within the institution in so far as possible, acknowledging that each programme is itself the best judge of its costs and market. The programmes also have the best insight into which niches of the

education market carry the highest potential for the UvA. In determining prices, they must at the very least ensure that the marginal costs will be covered. One option is to partner with commercial parties, with commercial teaching and research activities administered mainly through UvA Holding.

### **Increased scale of research and programme-based funding**

Research funding bodies such as the NWO and EU Framework

Programmes emphasise the cooperative and large-scale nature of research. It is in precisely these areas that the UvA can still improve. Greater emphasis on the research priority areas is one way in which the UvA is working to gain a greater share in these resources, for example by strengthening partnerships with independent regional research institutes (including NWO Science Park and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, KNAW). At the same time, the UvA must guard against an erosion of its own infrastructure by requiring external parties to provide sufficient research funds to cover all costs. Aside from the NWO and KNAW, indirect government financiers also include all research councils that award public research funds to competing proposals for individual projects.

### **Internal funding to reflect new priorities**

Wishing to maintain the symbiosis between research and education, the UvA has decided to differentiate in the allocation of education funding on the basis of level and final objective as from 2013. New policy, to be developed in the period ahead, will link the price per academic credit to strategic policy on education and research. Also, by treating indirect government funding as an indication of proven research quality in internal allocation decisions, the UvA will be able to

ensure that sufficient matching funds are always available – if necessary, by drawing on the policy budget.

### **Tapping other sources**

The chief aim of knowledge valorisation is to use research and education to contribute to general social and economic interests. The period ahead will also see the UvA working to generate more revenue from licences, patents and spin-off companies (e.g. by selling shares). This will be administered through UvA Holding.

Until now, fundraising has contributed only a small share of the UvA's resources. Though this share could never achieve American dimensions, even modest amounts are often sufficient to help launch new research. Fundraising can also be an effective way of encouraging alumni, regional stakeholders and the general public to take an interest in the institution. Accordingly, the UvA is doubling its efforts in this area, under the guidance of a new fundraising committee chaired by the president of the Executive Board.

### **Driven, realistic and professional**

The UvA is conscientious in how it manages the public and private funds entrusted to it, and makes every effort to invest them wisely and in accordance with its statutory duties. Resources are

only allocated on the basis of realistic and professional project and business plans with clear quality criteria. The same applies to new research and study programmes. In essence, any funding application must provide clear insight into the cost structure and cost-effectiveness of all the proposed activities.

### **Solid financial policy**

The UvA has no equity available to fund start-up costs of research and study programmes. This equity is tied up in the renovation of almost all the UvA's building complexes in the period between 2005 and 2020. In developing an infrastructure to match its ambitions, the UvA is maximising its use of space and boosting sustainability. The share of the costs being invested in accommodation (at most 12% of annual resources) is being closely monitored based on sector benchmarks. While the current Accommodations Plan is within budget and conforms to growth forecasts, the planned pace and financing are only viable if the value of the UvA's equity remains constant (minimum solvency 20%). The UvA has also laid down a balanced operational budget for teaching and research in 2012, pending alignment with the reserve policy.

## **Aims**

The UvA to be 'in control' (Management Control level) by 2014, with a balanced multi-year operating budget for teaching and research in place by 2012.

A 10% rise in income from contract teaching and contract research by 2014 relative to 2010.

To double Amsterdam University Fund revenues by 2014.



