

# Room for everyone's talent in practice

**ROAD MAP:** HOW WE ARE SHAPING A NEW SYSTEM OF RECOGNITION & REWARDS



At the end of 2019, the position paper *Room for everyone's talent* called for a new balance in the recognition and rewards of academics. The years 2020, 2021 and 2022 were a period of experimentation and learning (and COVID-19). Now, at the start of 2023, we as Dutch public knowledge institutions are outlining how we will put the five priorities from the position paper into practice for the long term.

## What has already been done

Many steps have been taken since the publication of *Room for everyone's talent* (2019). Each institution has set up a Recognition & Rewards committee. Universities and institutes have also written vision documents for their own organisations. Numerous experiments have been launched to put the principles of Recognition & Rewards into practice as well. In addition, new career paths have been created and assessment criteria have been changed. An example of this is the *Strategy Evaluation Protocol 2021-2027*, which was designed in line with the principles of Recognition & Rewards.

The countries around us are watching the Dutch Recognition & Rewards programme with great interest and are moving in a similar direction. In 2022, hundreds of scientific organisations from Europe and beyond agreed that the way in which research is assessed has to change. They did this in the *Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment*. Furthermore, the results of the international questionnaire about teaching, the *Teaching Cultures Survey*, show that academics would like to see more of an emphasis on teaching activities when being considered for a promotion.

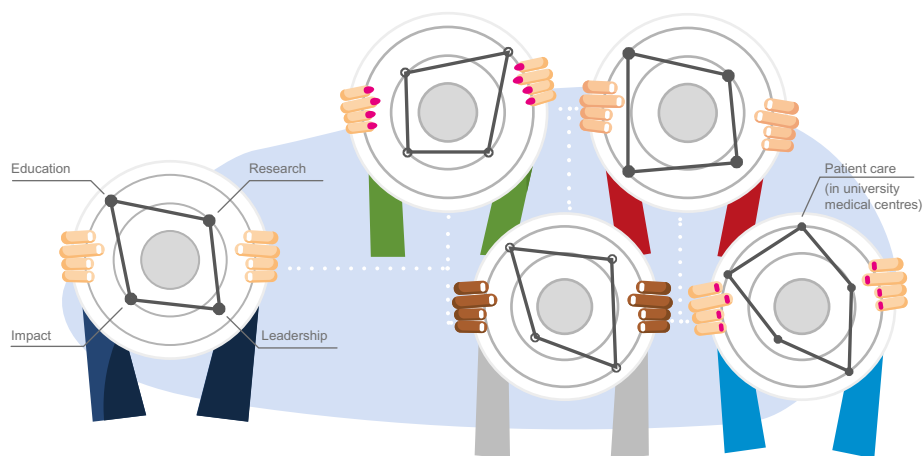
Now, in 2023, a new phase has begun in which we as institutions will be implementing new processes and tools to embed Recognition & Rewards in practice. This road map, structured around the five priorities from *Room for everyone's talent*, outlines what we aim to achieve in the years ahead.<sup>1</sup> The road map affirms our mutual trust and makes the collectively initiated culture change visible, sustainable and concrete.

1. This includes the fourteen universities (united in the Universities of the Netherlands, UNL), the four ideologically-based universities (united in the Network of Ideologically-based Universities, NLU), the seven university medical centres (united in the Dutch Federation of University Medical Centres, NFU) and the institutional organisations of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Dutch Research Council (NWO). Where relevant, these agreements also apply to research funders NWO and the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw).

This road map focuses primarily on academic staff. For university medical centres, this road map only concerns employees with academic duties. In the course of 2023, the national steering group for Recognition & Rewards will present a vision that indicates how other groups can be involved in Recognition & Rewards. Naturally, the organisations will involve local consultative bodies and representative advisory councils in the implementation of this road map.

# 1 Diversification and vitalisation of career paths

In 2023, we will create career and development paths for the positions of associate professor, assistant professor and professor<sup>2</sup> with profiles or areas of focus within research, education, impact, leadership and patient care.<sup>3</sup> During evaluations and annual appraisal interviews, supervisors will take into account the employee's desired career path. These efforts will bring the career paths in line with the principles of Recognition & Rewards.



2. The institutional organisations of KNAW and NWO use different levels.

3. The key area of patient care applies only to the academic staff of the university medical centres, such as the clinician-scientist.



# 2 Achieving balance between individuals and the collective

We will translate our strategy into a personnel plan, as is done in a Strategic Personnel Plan (SPP), for example. In this plan, departments and other organisational units describe the talents they need in order to realise their vision and mission. Diversification is key in this respect. They also indicate what they expect of employees with regard to their contribution to the collective. In addition, we will determine how the contribution to the collective will be rewarded and how this fits into career policy. We assume that each individual makes an active contribution to their own department, faculty and institution based on their unique strengths and expertise (academic citizenship). From 2024, we will take this contribution into account during evaluations and annual appraisal interviews. Conversely, the same applies to the meaning of the collective for the employee as well.

### 3 Focusing on quality

After signing the *Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment*, in 2023 we will show how we intend to translate the principles of this agreement within our organisation. With respect to the recruitment, development, appointment and promotion of academic staff, in 2024 we will specify which quality features will be used in the different key areas (education, research, leadership, impact and patient care). In doing so, we will take into account differences between disciplines, share good practices and engage in national coordination where possible. We will also actively involve the appointment advisory committees in these changes, for example by organising training courses.

When appointing and promoting academic staff, we will increase our use of evidence-based CVs and assessment portfolios. In these formats, candidates can describe their profile and achievements in a coherent narrative. In addition to their research and teaching results, this enables candidates to better showcase their contributions to data sets, software, exhibitions, innovations, policy reports, digital learning materials and open science. They may use appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods and indicators as supporting evidence in this regard.<sup>4</sup>



4. The focus in evidence-based CVs is on a qualitative assessment method, supported by sound bibliometric and other quantitative indicators where relevant. We are moving away from the inappropriate use of the Journal Impact Factor and the h-index.



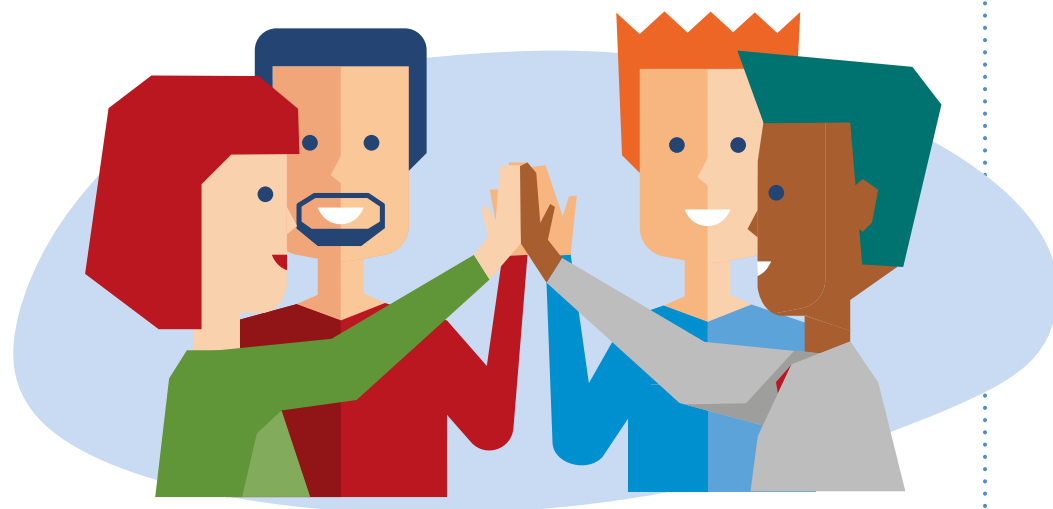
### 4 Stimulating all aspects of open science

In 2024, we will clarify how activities relating to open science and open education will be considered and/or prioritised as a topic of discussion in the development, assessment, appointment and promotion of staff. Within the institutions, teams are actively working on and with the principles of open science and FAIRification. Employees' efforts in this area will be part of the evaluation and annual appraisal interview.

## 5 Encouraging academic leadership

We want to achieve a healthy and open academic culture. Supervisors are primarily responsible for creating a socially safe and inclusive working environment where teamwork, talent development, and (academic) integrity are paramount. We will ensure that there is a focus on good leadership at all job levels. This applies not only to academics with an administrative or managerial role, but also to academics who supervise teams of students and doctoral candidates.

In 2024, we will clarify what good leadership means and how leadership plays a role in recruitment, selection, and personal and career development. We will also show how leadership fits into evaluations and annual appraisal interviews. In addition, leadership training programmes and courses will be developed for the various managerial levels. As institutions, we ourselves are responsible for creating the necessary preconditions to demonstrate good leadership.





## Other efforts

We will continue the broad dialogue about recognition and rewards. Throughout the process, we will remain open to hearing questions, concerns and dilemmas from the academic community, learning from this and adjusting our plans where necessary. We will exchange information on the online community platform RRview. We will use the Recognition & Rewards culture barometer questionnaire to visualise the progress of the culture change and assess whether the ambitions of the Recognition & Rewards programme are being recognised, experienced and shared within our institutions. As institutions, we will also provide transparent communication about the changes.

In 2023, the national Recognition & Rewards programme team will work with the steering committee to develop a format for a learning session with all organisations. The idea is that in 2024 and 2026, the Recognition & Rewards committees of various institutions will hold joint meetings to learn from each other.

Within the university landscape, there are various national frameworks for good working practices in academia. Examples include the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities (CAO NU) and the University Job Classification system (UFO) that forms part of it. To support the intended culture change, we will align these frameworks with the principles of Recognition & Rewards where necessary. To this end, we will collaborate closely with the employee organisations and jointly discuss developments in the area of Recognition & Rewards. In 2024, we will review the CAO and UFO together with the HR directors of the universities. In addition, the chairs of the national steering group for Recognition & Rewards will act as trusted advisers to the employers' delegation that negotiates the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities. It is also our intention to better harmonise the Collective Labour Agreements of the universities, university medical centres and research institutes with respect to Recognition & Rewards.

## COLOPHON

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[www.recognitionrewards.nl](http://www.recognitionrewards.nl)

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Network of  
Ideologically-based  
Universities