

## UvA-wide dialogue on collaboration with third parties/fossil fuel industry

### Notes of the Round Table discussion on *Effects of a possible decision*

Roeterseiland Campus 06-06-2023

#### Question:

**Depending on what UvA decides to do, how can we support the positive effects? How can we mitigate the negative effects?**

#### Scenario 1

If we decide to stop collaboration with the fossil fuel industry, how can we influence these effects: We lose influence on fossil fuel industry and slow down energy transition.

- *What is our influence on the fossil fuel industry and energy transition:* regarding the first scenario the question came up: how much influence do we have now?
  - o How can we define (i.e., what does influence mean here) and or measure our influence on the fossil fuel industry and the energy transition?
    - Does influence mean to be in direct contact with the fossil fuel industry? Does influence means the UvA has power over the industry?
  - o The influence of the UvA on the industry might be bigger if we stop collaborations (instead of continuing them).
  - o The university is a small player in the big fossil fuel industry therefore it feels that the influence will also be small.
  - o In terms of UvA's influence on the energy transition how about UvA's own use of fossil fuels on campus, there is a need for more information on this.
  - o Should UvA actively exert influence on the fossil fuel industry at all? Is that the role of the university?
- *Other ways to influence the fossil fuel industry and energy transition:*
  - o Influencing the government/policy
  - o Shifting public opinion
  - o Working in an alliance with other universities (collective action)
  - o UvA will maintain influence through doing research as it is still possible to research the industry based on secondary material and specific topics can be chosen that will influence the fossil fuel industry and energy transition (e.g., research on sharpening regulation for the fossil fuel industry). This research should all be made public and should be shared with stakeholders.
  - o Having a dialogue with the fossil fuel industry.
  - o The UvA can collaborate with sustainable third parties and movements. This might result in even more sustainable solutions and/or an acceleration of the energy transition.
  - o Establish indirect collaborations with third parties via a general, independent fund to be used by researchers. (all Dutch) Universities can be part of this fund, supervised by the government.

## Scenario 2

If we decide to continue working with the fossil fuel industry: We established we want to accelerate energy transition we need change and cannot continue as we have done so far.

What MORE can we do to accelerate the energy transition and how to increase the sense of urgency?

- *Ways to make change and increase the sense of urgency inside the scope of collaborations with the fossil fuel industry:*
  - Have tight contracts which should preferably be defined by the individual researcher and have agreements on data, publications etc. in order to safeguard the independence of the researcher during the collaboration.
  - Be more transparent on what collaborations look like now. Also, make sure to have a database which makes it easy to get information on collaborations (e.g., information on how much is funded, who is funding, which other stakeholders are involved). Make sure to present this information in a way that is easy to understand for both the public and students.
  - Make all the results coming from these collaborations open source.
  - If the UvA decides not to stop the collaborations it is important to show how the collaborations impact/benefit the society.
  - Are there ways to change the funding structure and take other conditions that will mitigate any greenwashing impacts of the collaboration?
  - Start projects with incubators to accelerate the energy transition.
  - Set up an ethics committee.
  - Continue to evaluate the collaborations (also after projects have been finished).
- *Ways to make change and increase the sense of urgency outside of the scope of collaborations:*
  - The UvA can still make a symbolic statement about the climate emergency if it decides to not stop the collaborations with the fossil fuel industry. And the UvA can continue to raise public awareness about the climate crisis via for example events.
  - Introducing a mandatory course on climate change that is interdisciplinary. It is important to make it practical and not ideological as it is important for the UvA not to decide for students what the values should be. It would be nice if such a course is also open for the public.
  - Other student initiatives can be stimulated that make a positive impact on society.
  - Influencing the government/policy to accelerate the transition.
  - Talk about values with the fossil fuel industry itself.