Strategy for 2025: rough outline
Starting points for a new strategy

• We are continuing down the path we have already taken
• We are looking ahead to 2030
• We are setting ambitions for the next five years
• We are combining university ambitions and faculty implementation in a single plan
• We are creating a strategy with the entire university community, alumni, strategic partners and external stakeholders
This is Utrecht University
Public organisation

We are a public organisation that works on the basis of equality, multiformity, inclusiveness, transparency and accessibility.
Our mission and vision

Utrecht University is working towards a better world. Our graduates have the knowledge and skills to make a substantial contribution to society. Our research is groundbreaking and focuses on solving major international issues. Our collaborative culture makes innovation, new insights and social impact possible.
Our core values

Our core values of *ambition, inspiration, commitment and independence* form the basis of our university community.
Across the borders of disciplines

MULTIDISCIPLINARY

Dynamics of Youth

Institutions for Open Societies

Life Sciences

Pathways to Sustainability

TEACHING MODEL

• Anchored in research
• Activating and personal
• Flexible and blended

COLLABORATION

• At the heart of society
• Alliance between UU, UMCU, WUR, TU/e
• Regional partners
• International networks
• Private partners

COMMUNITY

• Committed and people-oriented
• Global
• Locally anchored

SUSTAINABLE

• Sustainable Development Goals
• Sustainable business operations
• Lifelong Learning
• Sustainable working relationships
Urgent social problems exist
‘Ice loss on Antarctica has tripled in 10 years.’

Michiel van den Broeke
Professor of Polar Meteorology
'The task currently facing us is an onerous one: we need to completely re-organise the entire energy system.'

Detlef van Vuuren
Professor in Integrated Assessment of Global Environmental Change
‘The new wave of right-wing terrorism, which may be a reaction to jihadist terrorism, benefits from new Internet developments.’

Beatrice de Graaf
Professor of History of International Relations
‘New viruses will continue to emerge, also enhanced by the increased world population, connectivity of people by traveling, deforestation and climate change.’

Berend Jan Bosch
Associate Professor of Veterinary Medicine of Infectious Diseases and Immunology
'Even in the Netherlands young people don't have equal opportunities. There are distinct differences in wellbeing, mental health and social participation between social groups.'

Catrin Finkenauer
Professor of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences: Youth Studies
The world of higher education is changing
To summarise
To summarise

• We have a strong profile
• Major social challenges exist
• The international world of higher education is changing rapidly

We play our role by providing an international and modern environment that allows staff and students to develop and enables them to contribute to a better world.
What will this mean in 2030?
Students and alumni will come to Utrecht University because they will form part of a global community, receive high-quality education, gain the opportunity to develop both inside and outside the degree programme, focus on the social challenges in the strategic themes and are prepared for lifelong learning.
Staff will enjoy working at Utrecht University because they can work in a team on education, research, and operational management and on issues that contribute to a better world. They are given space to develop and the freedom to innovate and experiment.
Society will regard Utrecht University as an institution that works with partners to find solutions to social challenges, shares knowledge with society, contributes to public debate and is innovative.
Transformation catalysts: 
our ambitions for 2030
### What are our ambitions for 2030?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students and staff contribute to a better world. Our mission and the Sustainable Development Goals form an integral part of our education, research, impact and operational management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Our students and staff have the scope for personal and professional growth; staff and students take care of each other. We are constantly working to build a strong community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>We ensure an agile and innovative organisation with matching finances that facilitate the ambitions.</td>
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### In which areas do we wish to accelerate?

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<tr>
<td>![Icon]</td>
<td>Greater embedding of strategic themes and multidisciplinarity in education, research and impact</td>
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<td>Offering a secure, state-of-the-art digital infrastructure.</td>
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What do we need for this?

- An agile, innovative and integrated organisation
- A campus that facilitates meetings
- A modern and digital infrastructure
- A diverse and multi-faceted organisation
In short
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>We have a strong profile</th>
<th>OUR MISSION</th>
<th>Utrecht University is working towards a better world.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>OUR CORE VALUES</td>
<td>Ambition, inspiration, commitment and independence.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>OUR TASKS</td>
<td>Quality in education, research, impact and operational management.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STRONG DISCIPLINES</td>
<td>Geosciences, Humanities, Law, Economics and Governance, Medicine, Science, Social and Behavioural Sciences, Veterinary Medicine.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STRATEGIC THEMES</td>
<td>Dynamics of Youth, Institutions for Open Societies, Life Science &amp; Pathways to Sustainability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We see challenges</td>
<td>IN THE WORLD</td>
<td>Climate change, food supply, inequality, health care &amp; polarisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN HIGHER EDUCATION</td>
<td>Globalisation, flexibilisation, digitalisation &amp; open science.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AT DUTCH UNIVERSITIES</td>
<td>Financing, workplace stress, wellbeing students &amp; institution’s strengths.</td>
</tr>
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<td>We play our role</td>
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Follow-up process
Rough planning general chapters

1 FEB
Start faculty processes

1 MAR
1 APR
20 FEB – 2 APR
Discussion meetings with students, staff and external stakeholders

1 MAY
1 JUNE
START APR – START JUNE
Aligning university and faculty processes

4 MAR
Discussion of outline with Supervisory Board

17 FEB
Publication on website for open consultation

13 FEB
Discussion of outline with University Council

29 JUN
Discussion of full version with University Council

1 JUL
Discussion of full version with Supervisory Board
De informatie in deze presentatie is met zorg samengesteld,
maar er kunnen geen rechten ontleend worden aan de inhoud.

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1. Foreword

You have in your hands the outline of the 2025 university strategy. In the strategy, we keep one eye on the 2030 horizon and consider what this means for the period 2020-2025. The strategy translates university ambitions into lines of action and activities for the faculty. We have formulated a joint strategy for Utrecht University, based on the conviction that this will give us more focus in the activities we carry out and allow us to act with greater decisiveness. This is essential because the world around us is changing rapidly and universities are facing great challenges.

The aim of this outline is twofold: on the one hand, the text will allow us to discuss, refine and supplement our ambitions within the university and with external partners in order to ultimately formulate a strong and broadly supported strategy for the years ahead. On the other, the outline provides faculties with the framework within which university ambitions can be translated into lines of action and activities for each individual faculty.

Process

The outline was created with input from numerous parties inside the university. An environmental analysis was started in the summer of 2019, bringing together important developments in politics and society that form the context within which the new strategy will be elaborated.

Between November 2019 and January 2020, six study groups – consisting of a broad cross-section of students, PhD students and staff – formulated ambitions for the coming years on specific themes:
• Academic community
• Attracting, stimulating and nurturing talent
• Digital University
• Global University
• Multidisciplinarity
• University & Society

The study groups presented their input for the strategy at a 24-hour meeting on 21 and 22 January, at which 115 students and staff discussed the future of the university. These discussions have been given a place in the outline.

In order to involve the entire university community in the formulation of the strategy, ‘wish trees’ were installed in various locations from the beginning of January. Staff and students could post their wishes for the university on these trees. The Executive Board also received written input from various parties, such as the University Council and the Utrecht Young Academy. This input was also taken into account in the discussions.

The Executive Board and deans then jointly defined the broad outlines of the new strategy, based on all the input provided. In the coming period, the outline will gain further shape and will be discussed with various groups both inside and outside the university. An online consultation and open meetings will also be organised so that the entire university community can provide input. The university component will be submitted to the University Council for approval before the
summer. The faculty component will be submitted by the deans to their faculty council for approval before the summer.

2. Mission and vision
Utrecht University is a public organisation that receives public funding. Public values such as accessibility, equality, pluralism, inclusiveness and transparency form the starting point of our strategy and activities.

Our university’s mission is as follows:

**Utrecht University is working for a better world.** Our graduates have the knowledge and skills to make a substantial contribution to society. Our research is ground-breaking and focuses on solving major international issues. Our collaborative culture makes innovation, new insights and social impact possible. The core values of ambition, inspiration, commitment and independence form the basis of our university community.

In recent years, Utrecht University has developed and implemented a consistent strategy that has helped us achieve a great deal. We are proud of the high quality of education and research. In the research arena, the Utrecht profile is characterised by four strategic research themes: Institutions for Open Societies, Dynamics of Youth, Pathways to Sustainability and Life Sciences. The four themes originate in the focus areas launched by the university in 2007, in which researchers from different faculties were brought together to focus on a particular research theme based on the conviction that answers to major social issues can only be found in collaboration between different disciplines. Strong disciplines and fundamental research are the starting point for interfaculty collaboration. The strategic themes are now indispensable to the university profile. In addition to strategic themes, the university offers scope for new developments in research via the focus areas: breeding rooms for innovation that are always related to one of the strategic themes.

The Utrecht education model, which was introduced in 2002 and revised in 2012, has proven its worth in terms of student appreciation and academic success. In addition to commitment, activating and personal education, the interdependence of education and research, a cross-faculty approach to students and flexibility are important principles. We integrate contact teaching with online learning, whereby these two methods reinforce each other. Utrecht University is characterised by multidisciplinarity and collaboration across faculties, both in education and research. Here, multidisciplinarity is always based on strong disciplines.

Collaboration and community are key concepts within Utrecht University’s organisation. In various contexts, at various levels and across organisational boundaries, staff, students, lecturers and researchers collaborate on education, research and impact. We have an active and lively student life. The university is also working with partners at home and abroad to resolve social challenges.

3. Which challenges is the university facing?
The world around us is changing at lightning speed and there are urgent global challenges that require solutions. Climate change is leading to major social issues in terms of the energy transition and a healthy urban life. The gap in society, between rich and poor, between people with high and low levels of education, is widening. On average, we are living longer and this is raising all kinds of issues regarding healthcare and health. And how can we feed the world? Radicalisation threatens our institutions.
All these challenges call for academics who can help to find solutions and contribute to the social debate and for graduates who will soon be able to contribute to these solutions in society.

Higher education is undergoing changes all over the world following a number of major developments. Globalisation has dramatically increased the mobility of students and academics in recent years. This offers opportunities for international cooperation in the field of education and research, while at the same time presenting our university with organisational challenges in areas such as housing, language policy and inclusiveness. The competitive strength of countries such as China is increasing, which calls for successful cooperation within Europe.

A second development is digitisation. A data-driven approach offers new opportunities for education and research, for remote collaboration, for modern forms of teaching and for enhancing the quality of education and research. At the same time, digitisation also presents us with major challenges in the areas of information security and our own personal well-being: continuous accessibility and constant access to information can lead to stress and health problems. As knowledge rapidly becomes obsolete, different demands are being placed on the workforce. Lifelong learning is becoming the norm, which is also placing different demands on the education offered by the university: greater flexibility, modularisation and unbundling are called for. The Bachelor's and Master's degrees are just one step in a person's development. These days, an alumnus is a student for life.

A fourth major development is open science: practising science in such a way that research results become freely accessible at the earliest possible stage, regardless of the form of scientific output. This allows valuable knowledge to be shared and used by researchers, companies and social institutions. This also includes the demand for open access to research data and publications and for a different system of recognition and appreciation, as well as the social role played by universities in terms of public engagement. Open Science is fundamentally changing the universities.

There are various issues at national level that are relevant to the development of the university and that require urgent solutions. This concerns subjects such as funding for higher education, work pressure among employees and the well-being of students.

Both the major social challenges and the developments in higher education are affecting Utrecht University's choices and require an answer in our strategy. Based on these developments, Utrecht University drew up a strategic plan in 2016. This plan is still up to date and has barely lost relevance. The starting point for the new 2025 Strategy is therefore continuity: in the new plan, we are building on the existing plan and will continue what we started in 2016 and before then. The new strategy identifies new challenges and highlights the areas in which we need to accelerate in order to handle them.

4. Lines of continuity

In view of the social challenges and international developments in higher education, we are continuing a number of key points from the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan:

- Strategic themes
  The strategic themes are now indispensible to our profile. As a result, the themes will be embedded even more strongly in education and research in the next planning period.
• **Open Science and public engagement**
  In the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, Utrecht University formulated its ambition to be a pioneer in the field of Open Science. The Open Science programme was launched in 2018 and focuses on Recognition and appreciation, public engagement, open access and research data management. The programme will be continued in the coming years.

• **Internationalisation**
  Students gain international skills with a globalising labour market in mind; top research is by definition international and the issues on which the university is working in education and research are global. In order to strengthen our international profile, an internationalisation programme was launched in the previous planning period. This programme will be continued and its objectives are still up to date.

• **Digitisation and innovation in education and research**
  Educate-it and Research IT are two programmes that have contributed to a modern and innovative education and research environment in recent years. In the coming period, we will examine the form in which the activities will be continued.

• **Sustainability**
  In recent years we have been working on a sustainable business operations. There is a solid foundation, but we are nog there yet. The goal of a fulle CO2-neutral university in 2030 still remains. Working towards a better world goed beyond sustainability and will broaden the coming period to more topics of the sustainable development goals.

• **Diversity and inclusion**
  In the previous planning period, the university set itself the goal of becoming more diverse as an organisation in the broad sense of the word. Diversity contributes to the quality of academic debate and, as a public organisation, the university has a responsibility to reflect society as a whole and to ensure a culture of inclusiveness. This ambition remains intact.

5. **What are our ambitions for 2025?**

Utrecht University is formulating the following three main ambitions for the years ahead.

1. **Students and staff will contribute to a better world.**
   **The Sustainable Development Goals will form an integral part of our education, research, impact and operational management.**
   There are major and urgent social challenges that require a solution. The university is willing and able to contribute, both in terms of education and research as well as in our own organisation and operational management. In this way, we will be able to realise our mission: Utrecht University is working for a better world.

Possible themes for lines of action:
- Linking education and research to SDGs
- Alliance UMCU, TU/e, WUR
- Open Science
- Public engagement
- Internationalization
2. **Our students and staff will be given the scope to develop; staff and students will take care of each other. We will constantly work to build a strong community.**

A strong community with great interconnectedness, in which people support each other and feel connected with each other. The university’s capital is people. If we wish to realise our ambitions, the well-being and development of our students and staff will determine our success.

Possible themes for lines of action:
- Recognition and rewards (for students, scientific and support staff)
- Vitality and well-being
- Diversity and inclusion
- Implementation Strategic Housing Plan
- Leadership

3. **We will ensure an agile and innovative organisation and finances which facilitate the ambitions.**

The world around us is changing rapidly, as a result of digitisation and globalisation. We must be in a position to respond quickly to this changing world, and this requires us to invest in a culture that is more adaptive and open and to create soft spaces for experimentation.

Possible themes for lines of action:
- Digital data infrastructure, national and international
- Inspiring and challenging learning environment for students
- Infrastructure for online education and meetings

If we wish to achieve the above ambitions and respond appropriately to social developments, we will have to accelerate in a number of areas in the coming years.

1. Greater embedding of strategic themes and multidisciplinarity in education, research and impact.
2. Recognition, rewarding and well-being of staff and students, without a strict separation between academic and support staff.
3. Embedding the Sustainable Development Goals in education, research and operational management in order to contribute to urgent social issues.
4. Making education more flexible and preparing students for lifelong learning.
5. Strengthening strategic alliances both nationally and internationally.
6. Offering a secure, state-of-the-art digital infrastructure.

6. **Follow-up**

The new strategic plan will contain a university part with joint ambitions and a concrete implementation of the university ambitions per faculty. The universities’ ambitions will be further elaborated in the coming period. The first draft (version 0.1) is available on 31 March 2020. The university council has the right of consent to the university section.

Deans of the faculties will formulate, together with students and staff, in which way the faculty will contribute to the university profile and the universities ambitions. They do this in line with the
conversations during the 24-hour session and the building blocks as provided by the study groups. In the faculty part of the strategic plan deans will:

- Formulate the narrative of the faculty, or University College Utrecht, placed in the context of the university. Each faculty describes the most important faculty-specific challenges and indicates how it contributes to university-wide ambitions (one page per faculty – approx. 500-700 words).
- Indicate how the faculty will contribute to the three university-wide ambitions by formulating concrete lines of action and results per ambition. (three pages per faculty - approx. 2000 words).

The faculty council has the right of consent to the faculty part.