

UG Institutional Plan 2026–2031

Making an impact together

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Foreword by the Board of the University

From its very inception, the UG has been an international university with strong roots in the northern Netherlands. The UG was founded in 1614 by the city and province of Groningen to address the major social challenges of the time. Today, this close connection between local function and international character continues to form the basis for the impact we make with our education and research.

This Institutional Plan 2026-2031 builds on the connections we have made in the past, but also looks explicitly to the future. Whereas previous institutional plans stood alone, this six-year plan is the first elaboration of our vision for 2040: 'Towards the fifth-generation university'.

This vision for 2040 gives this institutional plan a clear focus by emphasizing the further development of the organization in line with this vision. Although this may not cover the full spectrum of activities within the UG, the vision is explicitly based on the disciplinary breadth of our institution, which is a prerequisite for the transition to the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary university that is central to it.

Our university has a profile with three strong domains: social sciences and humanities, medical sciences and science and technology. This makes us ideally suited to tackle societal challenges from a multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary perspective. In this way, we operate as a true fifth-generation university.

The institutional plan sets the course for the next six years, with an eye for the dynamic context. Strategic ambitions in times of geopolitical tensions, financial uncertainty and demographic decline force us to make choices. The current context of budget cuts means that the institutional plan, as the first six-year step towards realizing the 2040 vision, is based on realism. The focus is on continuing or further developing strategic initiatives that have already been launched, and financial scope must be created for new initiatives.

The paramount importance of financial feasibility encourages us to work (together) more efficiently and purposefully. In doing so, we keep a keen eye on opportunities that we can capitalize on. To this end, we position ourselves as an open, agile and independent university. These are the main lines of the strategy with which we are working towards our vision. This strategy is elaborated in the individual plans of faculties and services. In this way, the institutional plan and decentralized plans together form an integrated strategy.

The institutional plan is therefore not a static document, but the starting point for the strategic process for the next six years. During this period, we will monitor the progress of our plans and reflect on our role in a rapidly changing world. Where necessary, we will recalibrate our ambitions for education, research and organization.

This plan provides direction without being rigid. It provides a framework for responding optimally to the opportunities offered by the external world, but also gives us the opportunity to shape that world ourselves. Because the road to 2040 demands innovative thinking and the courage to push boundaries. In this way, we will continue to build on the unique character of the UG and strengthen our position as a powerful, international university with strong roots in the region. To make an impact together!



01 —

Mission, vision and core values



Mission

Our mission is clear and ambitious: we generate, share and preserve knowledge and information with the aim of contributing to solving societal and scientific challenges. Based on strong core disciplines and a healthy balance between fundamental and applied research, we push the boundaries of what we know through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration, among other things. We strive not only to use our knowledge to work toward a better world, but also to devise solutions together with societal stakeholders (co-creation).

We educate students to become critical and engaged global citizens, with the knowledge and skills to make a difference in a rapidly changing world. An entrepreneurial attitude and active knowledge sharing are central to this, so that our insights contribute directly to sustainable solutions. In this way, we not only strengthen global society and the national rule of law, but also make a substantial contribution to the broad prosperity of the Northern Netherlands as a driving force in a powerful innovation ecosystem.

Vision 2040: Towards the fifth-generation university

In Vision 2040, we build on more than four centuries of academic tradition. We explicitly choose to combine international academic excellence, social relevance and regional anchoring. We want to be an international leader and remain deeply rooted in the region — as a driver of innovation, knowledge development and broad prosperity: locally and globally.

To this end, we are making the transition to the fifth-generation university: an organization that strengthens cooperation with society and actively uses top-quality education and research for social challenges, in co-creation with society:

- We transcend disciplinary boundaries to understand and tackle complex, cross-border problems.
- We collaborate with public and private partners, policymakers and citizens.
- We are adaptive, including through the application of technology, and are open to experimentation and innovative forms of organization.
- We contribute to solving societal problems through education, research and impact.

First generation: retaining and interpreting knowledge.

The first generation of universities emerged in the Middle Ages and the centuries afterwards. It focused on the transfer of knowledge in a limited number of disciplines. Education was mainly focused on classical studies and theology. The university functioned as an authority on knowledge. Example: University of Bologna.

Second generation: scientific production of knowledge.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, universities developed into research institutions, shifting their focus from pure education to the generation of knowledge through scientific research. This led to the establishment of laboratories and research centers, and students became increasingly involved in research projects. Example: Humboldt University.

Third generation: societal use and valorization.

The third generation of universities, from the second half of the 20th century onwards, began to focus on training professionals. There was a greater emphasis on practice-oriented education and cooperation with business and industry increased. Universities became involved in the development of skills that are directly applicable in professional practice. Example: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

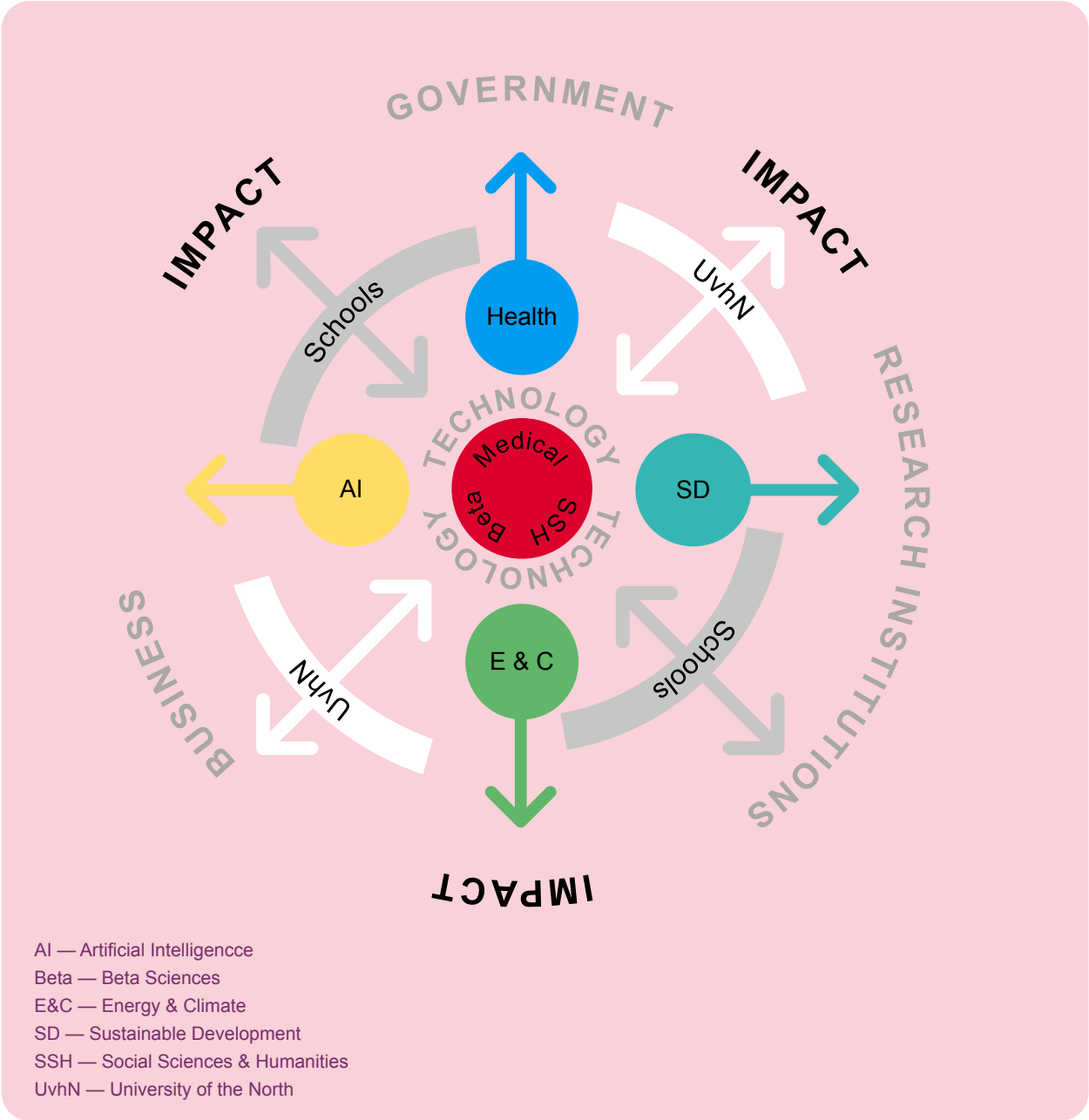
Fourth generation: innovation and entrepreneurship.

The fourth generation, which emerged in recent years, emphasized innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration. Universities began to focus on solving complex social issues by bringing together different disciplines. Collaborations between universities, business and government (the so-called triple helix) became important, and the focus shifted to social relevance and impact. Example: Eindhoven University of Technology.

Fifth generation: a societal platform for societal challenges.

In the fifth generation, knowledge sharing and participation in society are the norm: the university as a network organization that works even more interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary than it does now. Societal challenges are the organizing principle for education, research and cooperation – in line with the public responsibility of the university.

For a broad-based university such as the UG, this means that the three domains of Life Sciences and Health (including medical sciences), science and technology and the social sciences and humanities will collaborate more closely. They will come together in task-oriented networks, which will serve as meeting places for robust disciplinary knowledge and adaptive social practices for students, researchers, governments, social organizations and businesses. The regional ecosystem acts as a 'laboratory' in this regard, ensuring that the international relevance of the UG is rooted in locally proven significance.



Priorities

In the perspective of the fifth-generation university, acting together is a core quality. We focus on major challenges facing the world, including our region. With these themes, we build bridges between disciplines and partners, and bring knowledge and action together. Consider the challenges that are our priorities at the time of drafting the institutional plan:

Energy transition

The UG is closely involved in the development of sustainable energy systems and technologies, as well as the social aspects of the energy transition. Through partnerships with governments, businesses and knowledge institutions, the UG provides knowledge for policy, innovation and behaviour.

Digitization and artificial intelligence

The rise of AI and digital technologies asks new questions about ethics, inclusion, work and education. The UG conducts research into the impact of AI and digitization on society, integrates these issues into education, and uses digitization to support and innovate education, research and business operations. In addition, the UG is working on digital sovereignty and encourages the responsible use of AI both within and outside the university.

More healthy years for everyone

Health is more than the absence of disease. The UG takes an interdisciplinary approach to healthy lifestyles, prevention, healthcare innovation and social determinants of health. In close collaboration with the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG) and regional partners, the UG contributes to a healthier region.

Sustainability and broad prosperity

The UG focuses on sustainable development in a broad sense: ecological, economic, social as well as cultural. The contribution to broad prosperity in the Northern Netherlands is central to this. Think of quality of life, education, the labour market and sustainable economic growth.

Security and resilience

As a result of geopolitical developments, the Netherlands, as part of NATO and the European Union, is rapidly reinventing itself in terms of security, resilience, sovereignty and independence. Safeguarding our freedom, stability and values demands a collective approach (Whole-of-Society approach). The UG has the relevant expertise to make a significant contribution to this.

Core values

Core values define the culture of the University of Groningen; they guide how we make decisions and how our staff, students and other stakeholders work together. Our core values are:

Academic freedom.

Education and research take place in a context of freedom of thought and expression. The UG adheres to UNESCO's definition: Academic researchers and teachers have "the right, without constriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof, freedom to express freely their opinion about the institution or system in which they work, freedom from institutional censorship and freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies."

Integrity

Integrity underpins all scientific research, organizational processes and behaviour at the UG; integrity and academic freedom go hand in hand. They form the core of our research and teaching activities, at all levels of the organization, and in our interactions with each other. Integrity translates into honesty, respect, sincerity, openness, transparency and responsibility in everything we do. The UG's rules of conduct for scientific integrity and the Dutch code of conduct for scientific integrity serve as our guidelines. We expect our students, staff and management to endorse these principles and make a constructive contribution to their observance.

Inclusivity

Diversity and inclusivity are important aspects of academic success. That is why we value the views and contributions of all our staff and students. Every individual in our academic community is important, which is why there is a high level of engagement. The university's strategy and policy are widely supported because we promote continuous interaction between staff, students and representative bodies; everyone feels part of the university.

Sustainability

The university embraces sustainability. We respect the environment through the rational use of natural resources and by reducing the ecological footprint of the various processes involved in our research, education and daily activities step by step. Where possible, we consistently integrate sustainable and responsible behaviour into our education and research, as well as into our daily activities. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals guide these efforts.

Openness

The university has an open culture. Openness therefore characterizes both our education and our research. Research results are made available to the scientific community and to society. We also have a transparent management culture and we use a consultation model for management. Our open culture should make it easier for young researchers to find their place in education and academia, and to contribute to society.

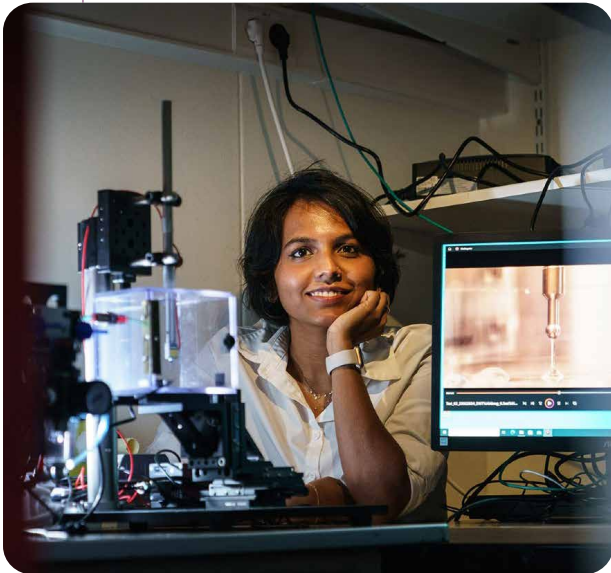
Some core values, such as academic freedom and openness, are under pressure (see '3. Changing environment' below). That is why these core values are given explicit attention in our strategy for the next six years.

While some core values are strongly socially determined, the core value of academic freedom is strongly internally driven. The different foundations of the core values and the internal and external views on them sometimes create tension and dilemmas. For example, how does academic independence relate to openness? Openness enables us to work on solutions to social problems, even when external pressure sometimes attempts to influence the direction of our research and education. We are keen to discuss such dilemmas during the term of the institutional plan, both internally and with partners, financiers and other stakeholders in society. In this way, too, we ensure that our core values remain relevant and decisive for our strategy and that we keep our strategy up to date and alive.



02 —

Responding to a changing environment

**Highlight: HTRIC**

Health Technology Research & Innovation Cluster (HTRIC) is a striking example of an interdisciplinary partnership, in this case between the UG, UMCG, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences and the Life Cooperative business group.

HTRIC connects knowledge from various disciplines to health technology and clinical practice for the benefit of new developments that promote healthy aging, improve quality of life and increase efficiency in healthcare. HTRIC is supported in the realization of its ambitions by the Ubbo Emmius Fund.

The UG is developing and unfolding its strategy for 2026-2031 at a time of great external turbulence and internal transformation. The world, and with it the UG, is changing rapidly as a result of geopolitical tensions, technological disruption, increasing social demands and expectations and demographic shifts.

This changing environment is not only a challenge, but also a powerful driver for innovation:

Geopolitical uncertainty and international tensions

> responsible international cooperation

The globalization of science is taking place in a world that is increasingly characterized by geopolitical tensions, trade conflicts and restrictions on international cooperation. Issues of sovereignty, knowledge security and digital autonomy directly affect university practice.

> Nevertheless, international cooperation remains essential for scientific progress, talent development and innovation. The UG is strengthening its network with a focus on reliability, shared values and risk management. It actively seeks partnerships that promote mutual knowledge exchange and sustainable impact.

Uncertainty in funding and increasing accountability

> sustainable and transparent funding of our ambitions

The financing of higher education is under pressure. Competition for resources is increasing at both the national and European levels, while structural financing is lagging behind growing expectations.

> In implementing its strategy and pursuing its existing, regular objectives, the UG will explicitly link (choices regarding) results and activities to financial feasibility, for example by focusing on appropriate opportunities within thematic subsidy streams, public-private partnerships and regional programmes such as Nij Begun. Transparency and effectiveness in the use of resources are essential in this regard.

Demographic trends and regional challenges

> contributing to a resilient and vital region

Parts of the Northern Netherlands are facing population decline and aging, with direct consequences for the labour supply, demand for education and the future of facilities. This makes programmes with low enrollment vulnerable.

> There is a global talent race for students, as a result of growing mobility and scarcity in the labour market. This offers opportunities for the university to create added value: by training young people for future-oriented professions, by retaining and attracting talent to use knowledge for vital regions and by contributing to broad prosperity. Through close collaboration with partners in the region and by organizing itself sustainably, the UG remains relevant and resilient in a changing demographic landscape.

Doubts about legitimacy and trust in science

> strengthening trust and social cohesion

Science is no longer automatically perceived as authoritative. We ask questions about the independence, transparency and social relevance of universities, which has consequences for our legitimacy.

> The UG therefore wants to take up the challenge and define its role in society more explicitly, for example through Open Science, citizen engagement, Challenge-Based Learning and transdisciplinary collaboration. Our internal culture remains focused on openness, integrity and inclusivity.

Three pillars

The above developments underscore the need to rethink our culture, structure and way of working. In order to complete the transition to a fifth-generation university, the UG is positioning itself as an open, agile and independent university. These three pillars connect our strategic actions to our mission and vision, while taking into account the context in which the strategy is implemented:

Openness

Openness is the foundation of our academic legitimacy and social relevance. By engaging in dialogue and collaborating with citizens, businesses, governments and other knowledge institutions, we are an active part of society and contribute to a resilient and informed society. At a time when trust in science is under pressure, transparency is essential. By making data, knowledge and processes accessible, we increase the impact of our work and strengthen the reputation of the UG.

Agility

Agility is a prerequisite for remaining relevant. The university operates in an environment characterized by rapid technological innovations, geopolitical shifts and fluctuating funding streams. The ability to respond flexibly to social and technological changes is therefore crucial. We do this by taking a critical look at our own organization and introducing efficiency in the way we organize ourselves and make decisions, but also by modernizing our business operations so that we can make optimal use of technological developments such as AI. Responding to change is only possible if there is sufficient financial strength. We also become more agile by making education more efficient and flexible, without compromising on quality. We are joining forces for this task, with faculties and services reinforcing each other.

Independence

Independence means being firmly anchored in academic freedom, ethics and public responsibility. If we want to determine our own academic course, regardless of political or external interests, this requires robust structures, diverse sources of income and internal capacity to make strategic choices. The UG remains an independent beacon of knowledge and reflection, rooted in academic freedom and ethical research. Amidst social, technological and geopolitical dynamics, it safeguards its autonomy and guarantees reliable, free and open science. We do this by safeguarding academic freedom, reducing dependence on Big Tech companies, guaranteeing the value and quality of research and university degrees and maintaining transparency and integrity in research funding.

Three cross-cutting themes

In addition to these three pillars, we see three issues that affect the entire UG and have therefore been included as cross-cutting themes:

Digitization and Artificial Intelligence

Digitization is a key condition for realizing the UG's ambitions over the next six years, and AI is inevitable given its impact on education, research and organization.

Close-knit university community

Our close-knit community is a unique selling point of the UG and forms the basis for realizing our strategic ambitions.

Towards a healthy financial situation

A healthy financial balance is a prerequisite for all strategic ambitions and initiatives in the institutional plan.

Below, we outline the ambitions and objectives for the next six years based on these pillars and cross-cutting themes: the core of our institutional plan for 2026-2031.

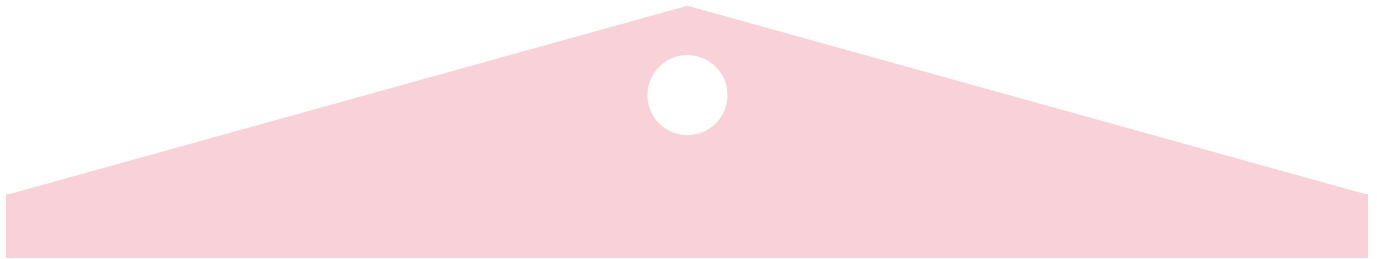
03 —

Strategic priorities and ambitions 2026 — 2031

**Highlight: Minor Expedition to the Healthy North**

The Minor Expedition to the Healthy North is an example of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education. In this minor, students from Noorderpoort, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, and the UG jointly focus on a complex social problem in the field of health. In order to successfully tackle such challenges, it is important that all parties involved have a voice, from the municipality to the residents. That is why the traditional classroom is regularly exchanged for the real world, in this case the Appingedam region. Students learn not only from teachers, but also from each other, from the residents involved, and from the professionals dealing with the issue.

Strategy at a glance



Openness

Active involvement
 in society

Openness: acting across
 disciplinary boundaries

Openness through
 collaboration outside
 academia

Open through making
 knowledge publicly
 accessible

Open through boundless
 education and research

Open through an
 entrepreneurial culture

Agility

Towards a flexible
 network organization

Agile through flexible
 education

Agile through good external
 relations

Agile through efficient
 and sustainable business
 operations

Agile through harmonization

Agile through financial
 strength

Independence

Strengthening the
 value of science

Independent through
 profiling

Independent through
 fundamental research

Independent through academic
 freedom

Independent through digital
 autonomy and freedom of
 choice in IT solutions

Independent through quality

Digitization and Artificial Intelligence in education, research and organization

A close-knit university community

Towards a healthy financial situation



Openness Active involvement in society

Openness is the foundation of academic legitimacy and social relevance. By engaging in dialogue with citizens, businesses, governments and other knowledge institutions, we are an active part of society and contribute to a resilient and informed society.

At a time when trust in science is under pressure, transparency and dialogue are crucial. By making data, knowledge and processes accessible, we increase the impact of our work and strengthen the UG's position among the world's best.

This is reflected in our strategic ambitions:

- Open by acting across disciplinary boundaries
- Open by collaborating outside academia
- Open by making knowledge publicly accessible
- Open by providing boundless education and research
- Open by fostering an entrepreneurial culture

Open by acting across disciplinary boundaries

The social challenges of our time range from climate change and energy transition to health, digitization and sustainability. They are too complex to be understood or solved from a single discipline. That is why the UG explicitly opts for interdisciplinary research and education in order to understand and investigate complex issues.

The UG encourages and facilitates interdisciplinary research and education by identifying societal challenges as priorities and investing in supporting structures. This is clearly reflected in the Schools for Science & Society. These Schools are network platforms where researchers, residents, professionals and policymakers share knowledge and collaborate. Each School focuses on a specific challenge – the themes in question may change over time, with existing themes being incorporated into the regular structure and new themes being addressed in the form of a School. We currently have the following Schools:

- Wubbo Ockels School: energy transition for a sustainable planet
- Aletta Jacobs School: healthy aging and public health, working toward a healthy society
- Jantina Tammes School: digital innovation, artificial intelligence and technological progress.
- Rudolf Agricola School: social and administrative dimensions of sustainable development: how policy, administration, communities and knowledge contribute together to a just and resilient society.

Open by collaborating outside academia

In addition to disciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration, transdisciplinary education and research goes further by also involving social actors, such as the business community and government, in understanding and researching social problems. By focusing more strongly on transdisciplinary education and research and the facilities required for this, the UG wants to be more open to its surroundings.

The UG does this through the University of the North: a partnership between educational institutions in the north of the Netherlands that is committed to a strong, coherent knowledge chain from vocational education to university. This allows us to facilitate collaboration between education, research and practice, and to play an active role in the further development of the regional knowledge and innovation ecosystem.

Through the further development of our Impact organization, linked to the University of the North, we support our interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and the resulting societal impact. We encourage our researchers to be guided by societal challenges. In doing so, we focus on strategic agenda setting at the regional, national and European/international levels and the development of consortia, innovation ecosystems and external (campus) collaboration.

From the University of the North, we establish connections in the region via campuses in the northern Netherlands, such as Campus Drachten, Campus Eemsdelta, the Safety Campus Assen, the Greenwise Campus in Emmen and the Master Plan Campuses for the Groningen Metropolitan Region. At these campuses, knowledge institutions and companies work closely together on innovation, with each campus having a specific (regionally driven) focus.

These ecosystems make an important contribution to the implementation of Nij Begun's economic and social agendas. The UG plays a crucial role in these long-term plans to structurally strengthen the economy in Groningen and North Drenthe and increase broad prosperity. The university provides the knowledge and talent needed to strengthen the region's economy, including the renewable energy, industry, health and agriculture sectors, and to contribute to an attractive vision for the future. The UG also works with regional partners and sectors to promote broad prosperity, such as improving quality of life and equal opportunities.

For both education and research, we actively seek to develop and apply our knowledge to social issues in co-creation, for example by providing concrete advice, products and/or services, not to mention the contribution made by our alumni. In this way, we make a direct impact, both in the region and beyond.

The UG is deeply rooted in the northern Netherlands and at the same time an internationally oriented university. This unique position enables us to make a local social impact while contributing to national and international challenges. In this way, regional innovation forms a blueprint for national transitions, we supply talent for a global labor market, and we connect opportunities in our environment to our international network. Our regional roots thus form a springboard for innovation, talent development, and knowledge sharing that transcends borders.

In its teaching, the UG actively shapes the connection between disciplines and between education and the social and scientific environment. We strengthen interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education in order to optimally prepare students for a labour market in which they will work on complex social and/or scientific problems. We do this on the one hand by stimulating interdisciplinary collaboration within education and on the other hand by strengthening collaboration with external partners.

A substantial part of the UG's education will be organized as a Living Lab, Challenge, or other interdisciplinary form of education that connects students with social partners and students from vocational and higher professional education institutions to tackle real-world challenges together. Internships and other work-study programmes, both curricular and extracurricular, can also lead to these connections between disciplines and with external partners. Study associations play an important role in connecting studies with the professional field.

Lifelong Development (LLO) offers opportunities to connect workers, organizations and the region more closely. Our ambition for the coming years is to further establish ourselves as a provider of education for professionals and as a knowledge partner for LLO. We want LLO to be broadly embedded in UG education in five to ten years' time. That is why we are working towards a central structure that promotes, facilitates and initiates LLO education in a labour market-oriented and demand-driven manner. Cooperation between educational institutions, employers and other regional parties is crucial in this regard.

Staff shortages are a specific issue for which the labour market calls on the UG. The UG wants to make a significant contribution to solving staff shortages in the North and the rest of the Netherlands by training students in sectors experiencing shortages, such as education (Northern Educational Alliance), science and technology (the Beethoven North programme) and healthcare.

The UG wants to be a reliable and attractive partner. That is why we are working towards demonstrably (certified) safe, careful and lawful handling of our data and information. This enables the UG to deal transparently, reliably and with integrity with information and data shared with us. We also set criteria for how our partners handle the knowledge and information we share.



Highlight: Beethoven Noord

The UG is one of the partners in Beethoven Noord, a partnership aimed at reducing the labour shortage in the Dutch microchip industry, a sector that is crucial for modern technologies such as smartphones and medical equipment. The northern Netherlands expects to be able to supply 3,200 additional engineering graduates between 2025 and 2030.

To this end, a number of new programmes are being developed, such as an Instrument Maker programme (MBO), an Associate Degree in Analysis Techniques (HBO) and an Engineering Doctorate in Autonomous Systems (WO).

We are building a digital environment that is accessible and removes barriers to internal and external digital collaboration: a digital infrastructure and working environment that is interoperable, flexible, safe and future-proof. We ensure digital accessibility for everyone, including people with disabilities. This enables us to collaborate seamlessly and inclusively with our national and international partners and to be compatible with their technologies and platforms.

In addition, we pay attention to knowledge security risks and make conscious considerations in sensitive partnerships, such as potential collaborations with the ministry of defense or with the fossil industry or in the context of debate and/or conflict. An advisory team on sensitive partnerships advises the BoU and Faculty Boards on possible sensitive collaborations with knowledge institutions, governments and the business community, as well as broader dilemmas in (international) partnerships. Based on this, guidelines for consideration in the case of sensitive partnerships are drawn up.

We want openness and accessibility to be reflected in our physical buildings. That is why we are creating open buildings that invite collaboration, meetings and exchanges between the university, regional knowledge institutions, citizens, social partners and the business community. This requires the physical space, facility services and IT facilities to be coordinated. This requires the joint development and use of Real Estate and the immediate surroundings, both internally and externally, bringing together wishes and facilities. This enables us to be an open and inviting place for students, staff and partners.

Open by making knowledge publicly accessible

The UG endorses the principle that scientific and educational knowledge should, in principle, be publicly accessible and usable. That is why the UG embraces Open Science as the key to transparent, inclusive and socially relevant science, in which knowledge sharing, collaboration and reuse are central. This means that research data, publications, methods and software are shared in a careful and accessible manner, with respect for ethical, legal and security aspects. We are committed to a different way of valuing and rewarding research, in which recognition is given to various scientific contributions such as data stewardship, team science and social engagement. In addition, we encourage the use of open access publications and FAIR data principles, and we offer infrastructure and expertise to provide researchers with optimal support in this regard.

The UG also promotes Open Education. This means using freely available educational materials that can be adapted and shared again, but also focusing on the co-creation of open learning materials and solutions with social partners. This creates added value for the entire learning community: teachers, students and external partners.

We promote dialogue about scientific knowledge, collections and the scientific process with a wider audience, such as citizens, policymakers, journalists and schoolchildren. Such activities, which enable us to reach a more diverse audience than through academic publications, are valued just as much as 'regular' output.

All this enables the UG to strengthen its social role and impact, actively sharing and utilizing knowledge both within and outside the academic world. This facilitates collaboration and co-creation with universities, businesses, governments, citizens and social organizations.

Open by providing boundless education and research

Knowledge exchange, collaboration and talent development do not stop at national borders. The UG is an international university, actively connected to the global academic and social community. We create a learning and research environment that attracts talent from all over the world and contributes to shared knowledge development. This international anchoring strengthens our academic quality and makes the university attractive worldwide as a collaboration partner. At the same time, we remain firmly rooted in the northern Netherlands: the knowledge, talent and collaboration that we attract from around the world contribute directly to innovation, broad prosperity and social development in the region.

We strengthen the international character of education and research by focusing on recruiting international talent at the master's and PhD levels and by establishing sustainable partnerships with a select number of universities that match our educational and research profiles. With these institutions, we develop joint programmes, curricula and PhD tracks based on reciprocity and shared quality assurance.

International learning experiences are a structural part of every programme, whether physical, virtual, or in the international classroom. Strategic partnerships and international hubs increase accessibility and make exchanges more efficient. Double, dual and joint degree programmes are examples of how education, research and international talent come together.

Through ENLIGHT, an alliance of European universities, we are actively working to transform the education and research landscape in Europe through integrated mobility, joint programmes and innovative, challenge-based education. In this way, we are educating a new generation of European citizens who, in collaboration with society, will be able to tackle the major social challenges of our time.

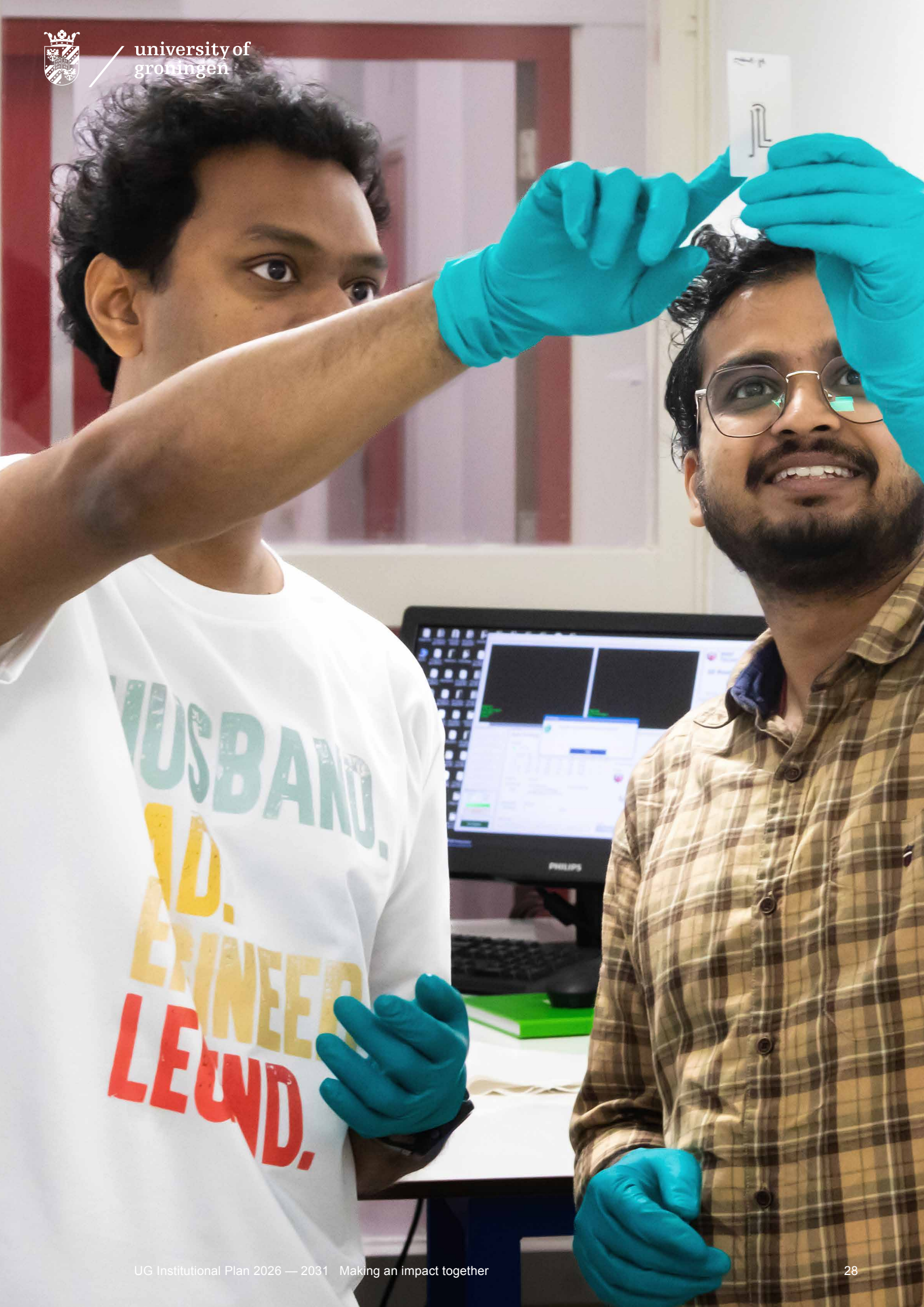
Open by fostering an entrepreneurial culture

The UG aims to be a university where openness and an entrepreneurial attitude are encouraged as a bridge between knowledge and societal impact. An entrepreneurial culture focuses on initiative, creativity and responsibility. Knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship as such is a powerful way to achieve the transitions to sustainable energy, healthy aging and digitization.

That is why we encourage students, researchers and staff to develop entrepreneurial skills, set up start-ups and translate research into applications with social and/or economic value. This support includes coaching, networking, (assistance in obtaining) funding and accommodation in incubators.

This focus brings about a change in the way employees are rewarded and valued. We pay attention to the skills and activities that reinforce openness, an entrepreneurial attitude and collaboration. We will also recruit based on these skills and we are committed to further implementing shared leadership responsibility, giving employees the space to develop ideas and to experiment.

In this way, we promote an entrepreneurial university culture in which students, researchers and employees see an entrepreneurial attitude as a path to social impact. We also ensure that the Northern Netherlands becomes a thriving, modern ecosystem for knowledge-intensive startups, spin-outs and partnerships.



Cross-cutting theme —

A close-knit university community

The UG strives for a future-proof, inclusive and socially connected university community.

We are building a strong, international community in which structural networks exist between disciplines, generations and functions. These networks promote innovative collaboration, dialogue and personal development.

Culture of connectedness and respect

We strengthen the mutual connection within our diverse community of students and staff. Central to this is a culture in which collaboration, knowledge sharing and mutual support are self-evident and in which everyone feels safe, seen and appreciated. We respect diverse perspectives, backgrounds and beliefs and encourage open dialogue, in which there is room for differences of opinion. This culture of inclusive exchange strengthens mutual connectedness and contributes to a critical, resilient university. We have a shared duty to contribute to this.

Sustainability

The core value of sustainability is also reflected in the design of our community. Students and staff work together on green projects, for example in Living Labs. In addition, student associations and representative bodies put sustainability high on the agenda, for example by organizing campaigns and offering a subsidy and label programme for sustainability.

Leadership as a shared responsibility

In a dynamic and complex environment, leadership is indispensable. We invest organization-wide in strengthening leadership skills in line with our vision of leadership. A mandatory leadership programme helps managers to perform their tasks and responsibilities more efficiently and effectively, with an eye for both performance and productivity as well as a healthy and safe working environment. Leadership is not limited to a managerial position, but is a shared responsibility of everyone at the UG.

Collaboration within and between teams

Our impact begins with collaboration. We connect employees and ideas within teams, across disciplines and with regional and international partners. Through openness, transparency and accountability, we create an environment where differences are valued and the conversation about vision, ideas and backgrounds is ongoing. A close-knit internal community contributes to the resilience and innovative strength of our university.

Social safety and diversity

A socially safe environment, based on inclusion and equality, is the foundation for effective work and study. We make our values and standards of conduct clear so that employees and students know what we expect from each other.

With targeted support and training, we help students, staff and managers to recognize signs of integrity violations and social insecurity and to discuss them with each other. A visible and accessible support structure ensures that reports and complaints are treated seriously, carefully and confidentially. In this way, we are building an open culture in which respectful conversations are possible, even when there are differences of opinion, and in which polarization gives way to constructive dialogue.

Our university has a great diversity of staff and students. This diversity of perspectives, cultural background, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, distance from the labour market and educational background contributes to innovative solutions in education, research and business operations. The UG remains committed to safeguarding and promoting this diversity. Supporting and, where necessary, protecting people from disadvantaged groups is therefore a structural focus area. We strive for diversity at all levels of our organization.

Whereas in recent years the emphasis has been on attracting diverse talent, in the coming years attention will also be paid to retaining this talent. This asks for an inclusive and safe study and working environment in which equality is the norm, everyone feels at home and heard and every talent is given the opportunity to contribute and develop.

Wellbeing

Students at the UG are mentally resilient and able to successfully shape their own personal and professional development. To this end, the UG supports students in their personal and professional development and pays attention to a healthy lifestyle for students. Students are also supported in community building, with a safe, supportive and inclusive community at the heart of every phase of their studies. In addition, we improve the learning environment for students by improving the studyability of the educational programmes on the one hand. On the other hand, we support teachers, tutors and study advisors in monitoring, guiding and coaching students and promoting their wellbeing.

Committed and well-equipped employees are needed to meet the challenges of the future. This asks for working conditions that focus on a healthy work-life balance. We will therefore continue to work together in a structured manner to reduce and manage work pressure, so that everyone has sufficient scope to take leave and maintain a healthy work-life balance.



In doing so, we encourage and support employees to take control of their own lives and make conscious choices that suit their personal situation and career stage. We facilitate hybrid working and, as an organization, take into account life events that employees may experience. By investing in this, we not only increase the wellbeing of employees, but also strengthen their commitment, employability and agility.

Active student life

Student development does not only take place within the walls of the university, but in a broader context. Groningen traditionally has a rich student culture. The UG supports an active student life in various ways. On the one hand, by offering student organizations such as study and student associations and sports and cultural associations facilities in the areas of sports, culture and integration. On the other hand, by actively involving students in the university's administration, for example through student assessors.

Talent development and sustainable employability

We are working on the talent development and sustainable employability of all our employees (academic and support staff). Lifelong learning, qualifying for a new role or position (horizontal and vertical) and individual agility will be even more necessary than before due to the current situation. This asks for new ways of working together. We make the opportunities for mobility and development visible and accessible, so that every employee can continue to develop within or outside our university. For academic staff, we will continue to focus on diversifying and revitalizing academic careers. We value a wide range of contributions to the organization, in line with the UG's strategy, with a particular focus on leadership development. We regard the positions of assistant professor and associate professor as independent positions that add value, rather than merely as stepping stones to higher positions.

Alumni

Our alumni are of great value. As former students and former employees, they remain connected to the UG and are part of our community. By actively involving alumni in networking, knowledge exchange and lifelong learning, we also strengthen the UG's connection with society.



Agility

Towards a flexible network organization

Agility is a prerequisite for remaining relevant. The university operates in an environment characterized by rapid technological innovations, geopolitical shifts and fluctuating funding streams. The ability to respond flexibly to social and technological changes is therefore crucial.

We do this by taking a critical look at our own organization and introducing efficiency in the way we organize ourselves and make decisions. By using modern technologies such as AI, business operations can be modernized. Responding to changes is only possible if there is sufficient financial strength. We also become more agile by making education more efficient and flexible, without compromising on quality. We are joining forces to tackle this challenge, with faculties and services reinforcing each other.

This is reflected in our strategic ambitions:

- Agility through flexible education
- Agility thanks to good external relationships
- Agility thanks to efficient and sustainable business operations
- Agility thanks to financial strength
- Agility through harmonization

Agility through flexible education

The UG strives for a more flexible organization of its educational curricula, enabling students to shape their studies better. This requires a shift towards more flexible study paths. This can be achieved within the programme, but also between bachelor's and master's programmes. A first step in this direction is to create a more flexible transition from bachelor's to master's programmes by making greater use of minors as preparation for a master's programme. This will give our own students more scope to shape their own preferences for further education. In addition, we want to offer HBO students better opportunities to continue their studies at the UG by offering more transition courses as minors in HBO. For both groups, it is important that we prevent or remove unnecessarily high barriers for admission to master's programmes.

Flexible education also means that we are better and faster able to adapt our education to changing (social) circumstances. To this end, we are taking a critical look at our internal processes for making changes to our education, in order to organize them efficiently. This also requires our programmes to strengthen their ties with businesses and social institutions, so that we know immediately what the needs of the labour market are.

We are innovating our education by facilitating and encouraging collaboration between programmes and faculties. Programmes can collaborate more by exchanging educational content, developing joint educational programmes and teaching jointly. Better collaboration leads to better and more efficient education and contributes to the broader development of students.

Agility thanks to good external relationships

We keep our finger on the pulse of society, specifically when it comes to policymakers and our stakeholders. Through our Public Affairs department, we maintain regular contact with the departments of Education, Culture and Science and Economic Affairs and where relevant, with other ministries such as Finance, Health, Welfare and Sport, and Infrastructure and Water Management. We actively bring our priorities with regard to higher education, research, internationalization, the labour market and regional knowledge development to the attention of policymakers.

We also maintain close relationships with political groups and parties in the House of Representatives and the Senate. These contacts are crucial for highlighting the importance of academic education and research. We lobby various standing parliamentary committees during debates and roundtable discussions, the budget cycle and debates on legislation and regulations. We provide factual information and propose solutions for topics ranging from student housing and international enrollment to knowledge security, public-private investment policy and the financing of research and education.

At the European level, we build lasting relationships with European institutions, the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU, network organizations such as The Guild, the European University Association (EUA), Coimbra Group and UNL/UMCNL/Neth-ER, and the Brussels lobbyists of SNN and the NG4 municipalities (Assen, Emmen, Groningen, Leeuwarden). Via ENLIGHT European University Alliance, we also maintain close contacts with the European Commission. In this way, we promote our strategic interests and solutions in the field of research, innovation and education in the European decision-making process, strengthen our position in the European knowledge and innovation system, and respond in a timely manner to changes in European policy, including Horizon Europe and Erasmus+.

Agility through efficient and sustainable business operations

The UG is working towards efficient business operations, decision-making and management that facilitate rapid change and optimally support internal and external collaboration. To achieve this, we are focusing on the harmonization, optimization and professionalization of both governance (the organization of decision-making and the transparent allocation of responsibilities) and operational and decision-making processes (such as digitizing, shortening, merging, or aligning processes).



Highlight: WIJS

The WIJS project is an initiative of the Municipality of Groningen, WIJ Groningen, the UG, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Alfa College and Noorderpoort. WIJS gives students from all participating educational institutions in Groningen the opportunity to develop socially in a meaningful way by allowing them to use their knowledge for the benefit of the city of Groningen and its residents.

Students do internships, carry out research assignments, provide advice based on their field of expertise, and organize all kinds of activities for and with other city residents and local entrepreneurs. In doing so, they contribute to Groningen and learn from people from all walks of life.

The starting point is that responsibilities are assigned as low as possible in the organization. We are also developing a culture in which behaviour that is consistent with transparency, formal processes and ownership is encouraged and valued. All this enables the UG to respond more quickly to changes, facilitate innovation and remain an attractive partner for collaboration.

The UG wants to make its operations as sustainable as possible. We invest in energy-efficient buildings, responsible food and sustainable mobility, among other things to reduce CO₂ emissions, water consumption and waste. The Green Office initiates and coordinates a wide range of sustainability projects.

Agility thanks to financial strength

The UG is creating greater financial strength in order to be able to absorb risks and continue to invest in renewal and innovation. To achieve this, we are aiming for a structural profitability of 1 percent, or a small financial surplus. In addition, the ambition is to make conscious and coherent choices in which finances are explicitly taken into account, but in line with our strategic ambitions. It is important that tasks based on temporary resources do not become structural in nature. At the same time, temporary resources can be used to alleviate the costs of structural tasks.

In this way, the UG strives for a stable and future-proof funding base that offers scope for innovation and freedom of choice. By diversifying internal and external sources of income, we reduce dependencies and increase the resilience of our research and education portfolio. We also strengthen our financial position through strategic activities that generate income, such as international collaboration and participation in European research and education initiatives (FP10, Erasmus+, Competitiveness Fund).

Through a funding strategy, we identify where our opportunities lie and how we can deploy our efforts and support in a targeted (effective and efficient) manner. This increases our share in the acquisition of second and third-stream funding, which helps us maintain our education and research capacity and output. In addition, knowledge valorization, entrepreneurship, public-private partnerships and our involvement in regional programmes such as Nij Begun contribute to innovation, social impact and access to external resources.

Finally, we are improving the quality and availability of financial management information in order to provide administrators with the information they need to make strategically sound decisions. We approach partnerships and external funding in a conscious and careful manner, so that our academic freedom and public responsibility remain guaranteed. In doing so, we ensure transparency in funding streams and responsible choices in sensitive or risky partnerships.

These actions enable the UG to develop a healthy financial reserve that can be used to respond to (unexpected) setbacks, threats and opportunities.

Agility through harmonization

The UG is a single community in which faculties and services reinforce each other. That is why we encourage university-wide thinking and action, while remaining mindful of differences. We focus on connection, shared responsibilities, trust and exemplary behaviour. This ensures that fragmentation or conflicts of interest are overcome and that we can switch gears and reach decisions more quickly. It also facilitates cooperation with the business community, government and citizens, because we speak with one voice to the outside world.

In addition, in the coming years we will be building a more coherent and efficient organization in which education, research and support are organized according to uniform frameworks and processes. We are harmonizing the educational and research frameworks across all faculties. We will centralize support processes where this benefits quality and professionalization. We will develop a uniform internal structure of faculties with departments that support both education and research. This will increase agility and cooperation within and between faculties and strengthen the position of the university as a whole.

Cross-cutting theme —

Digitization and Artificial Intelligence

Digitization is a key condition for realizing the UG's ambitions over the next six years. In order to be open to society, operate flexibly as a flexible network organization and strengthen the independence and value of science, an organization-wide digital transformation is necessary.

Only in this way can the UG remain up to date, relevant and future-proof – and sovereign. Digital transformation is not only about innovation and new technology, but also about sustainably supporting digital working methods. Without stable, secure and reliable IT services, digital transformation is neither scalable nor sustainable.

The UG operates in a context in which legislation and regulations governing privacy, security and artificial intelligence are becoming increasingly stringent. Attention to compliance with these laws and regulations and the security of the digital environment will remain important focus areas. At the same time, we see data and information not only as something for which we must be accountable, but also as strategic assets for the university: indispensable building blocks for the quality of research, education, impact and operations. That is why we are working to gain more control over data by professionalizing data management into a fully-fledged discipline.

We are also creating more insight into and overview of current data and information flows with the help of architecture. This is also necessary in order to make smart, safe and responsible use of AI to optimize our own organizational operations. In addition, we are committed to data-informed decisions, whereby the UG is growing from a data-aware to a data-informed organization and is making optimal use of relevant information in strategic decision-making and prioritization. An important part of this is increasing the data literacy of employees, so that the entire organization can grow along with technological and digital developments.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI is a disruptive, transformative technology. Governments and companies are investing billions, and the range of applications continues to grow. At the UG, many students and staff also use AI tools, which have a major impact on the way they learn and work. However, they often work with limited support and training, sometimes without secure tools and without a structure for sharing knowledge and experiences.

The UG recognizes the complexity of dealing with AI and the tension between speed and control. Our approach is based on fundamental human rights, core academic principles and our own core values. This means that we are also mindful of the impact of AI on the climate (energy consumption and e-waste).

To provide structure and direction, we are setting up a UG AI network, with an AI Office at its core. With our AI network, we channel support, connect knowledge and energy, offer a clear and open structure for finding and sharing, assign tasks and roles clearly, improve compliance and collaboration, strengthen our grip on quality and assurance, and reduce duplication of work. In doing so, we are laying a solid foundation for the expected increase in the use of AI. With the AI Office, we are creating a clearer point of contact, both within and outside the UG, so that we can share our knowledge and expertise. At the same time, this network form provides scope for domain-specific needs and innovations.

AI in Education

UG students are trained to become competent and responsible users of AI, in line with academic practices, attitudes and core principles: academically AI literate. This prepares students well for the changing labour market and enables them to make a meaningful contribution to solving societal and scientific challenges. To this end, our students need to have access to high-quality, safe and sustainable AI tools more than they do now. We make it clear to our students what constitutes desirable and undesirable use of AI, adapt our teaching methods and learning outcomes and establish rules for the use of AI. The challenge here is to equip students with the right academic skills, with and without the use of AI. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, because the impact of AI varies depending on the field of work, programme and discipline.

The UG also uses AI to improve the quality and accessibility of education, enrich teaching methods and work more efficiently. For example, AI can be used to better tailor education to the personal needs of students and as a tool for developing teaching materials. Teachers have access to secure AI tools and are trained and guided in their responsible use. Teachers are better equipped to find appropriate support and to find and share innovative applications.

AI in Research

AI is not just a tool in everyday work, but a potentially transformative force for scientific research. We work with high-quality AI research infrastructure, such as high-performance computing, data platforms and secure research environments, which support researchers in analyzing large and complex datasets. This enables us to discover patterns, model processes, and simulate scenarios that were previously out of reach.

In research, too, AI asks us to reflect on responsible use and ethical implications. The Jantina Tammes School at the UG forms a network that brings together the scientific expertise of the faculties in the field of AI. It actively analyzes the latest developments and shares insights. At the UG, we study AI from very different scientific perspectives, which enables a unique multidisciplinary approach. The Center for Information Technology (CIT) and the University Library (UB) also offer expertise and support on the application of AI for research and manage excellent facilities. The AI Network connects and strengthens these knowledge hubs and activities.



Highlight: AI Factory

The national government and the region have jointly realized the arrival of the AI Factory in Groningen. This is a powerful innovation hub where businesses, researchers and governments work together to build the technologies of tomorrow and share knowledge. Think of experimenting with AI applications, secure data storage and the use of a supercomputer with enormous computing power. Thus, the AI Factory is a breeding ground for innovation, from smart agriculture to better healthcare, and from energy networks to security and manufacturing. As the UG, we are proud of our contribution to this groundbreaking initiative. The collaborating knowledge institutions have proven to be a success factor for the arrival of the AI Factory in Groningen and will make an important contribution to its rollout in the coming years.

Independence Enhancing the value of science

Independence means being firmly rooted in academic freedom, ethics and public responsibility. If we want to determine our own academic course, regardless of political or commercial pressure, this requires robust structures, diverse sources of income and internal capacity to make strategic choices.

The UG remains an independent beacon of knowledge and reflection, rooted in academic freedom and ethical research. At a time when digital technology and the data economy are increasingly influencing education and research, preserving academic autonomy is more important than ever. We do this by safeguarding academic freedom, reducing dependence on Big Tech companies, ensuring the value and quality of our research and university degrees, and maintaining transparency and integrity in research funding.

This vision is reflected in our strategic ambitions for 2026-2031 as follows:

- Independence through profiling
- Independence through fundamental research
- Independence through academic freedom
- Independence through digital autonomy and freedom of choice in IT solutions
- Independence through quality

Independence through profiling

The UG is characterized by many strong disciplines, organized in the three balanced domains of science and technology, life sciences & health (including medical sciences) and social sciences & humanities. They form the foundation on which the fifth-generation university is built. Based on its profile as the most diverse university in the Netherlands, strong connections between the three domains enable interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration on major societal challenges.

A clear and distinctive profile is essential for the independence of the UG: it enables the university to determine its own priorities, make strategic choices and maintain its scientific course in a changing national and international environment. By investing in strong, coherent research areas and educational profiles, the UG can further strengthen its position as an autonomous and influential knowledge institution.

At the national level, we are actively seeking to connect with the 4TU network (Delft University of Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University & Research) based on our technical profile. This collaboration offers the opportunity to combine the unique technical and technological expertise of the UG with the applied strength of the technical universities, with the UG as a broad university with strong domains in life sciences & health and social sciences & humanities being an interesting partner for collaboration. In this way, the UG contributes to joint research programmes, knowledge sharing and innovation at the intersection of technology, sustainability and social transitions. This strategic collaboration not only strengthens the UG's technical profile, but also secures its independent position within the national university landscape.

Based on this unique profile and its position as the only university in the northern Netherlands, the UG is preeminently the scientific knowledge institution that makes a regionally embedded (inter)national impact.

Independence through fundamental research

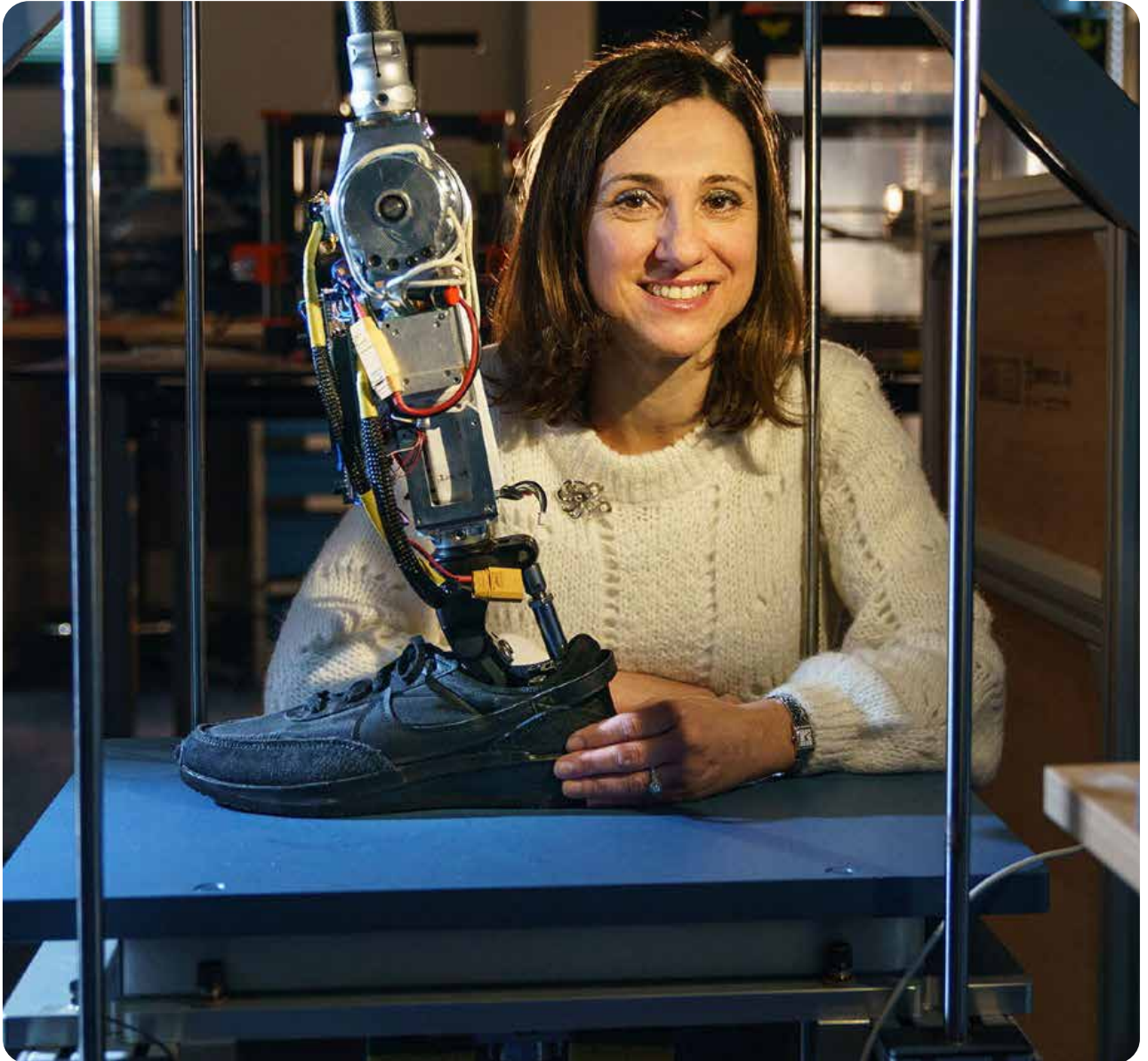
We cherish an environment in which academics are given the space to develop groundbreaking knowledge through fundamental research, independent of direct social or economic application. This fundamental research is the basis and therefore a necessary condition for the social application of scientific knowledge. By linking this knowledge to interdisciplinary research, in which different scientific disciplines collaborate, new perspectives and solutions to complex issues emerge. This collaboration is further strengthened by transdisciplinary research, in which not only scientists, but also social partners, citizens and other stakeholders are actively involved. In this way, the university remains a source of new insights that enrich science, education and society in the long term.

We cherish a culture in which curiosity and scientific integrity are central, and we increase the visibility of (the value of) fundamental research both within and outside the university. By protecting and stimulating fundamental research, the UG remains independent in its scientific course and less dependent on short-term interests or external agendas. This guarantees academic freedom, strengthens the credibility of our science, and contributes to sustainable knowledge development as a public good.

Independence through academic freedom

The UG stands for academic freedom. This is one of its core values. The UG promotes a culture in which research, reflection and dialogue are central, while observing professional standards and social responsibility.

At a time when academic freedom is under pressure, we emphasize the importance of this freedom. Not to shut ourselves off from society, but precisely to remain open, accountable and reliable. Independence enables the university to use its own strengths to guide research, education and social cooperation. Institutional autonomy is not a privilege, but a prerequisite for the credibility and sustainability of the university as a public institution.



Highlight: Groningen Engineering Centre 2.0

In line with societal challenges and needs, the UG is strengthening its technical profile. This is reflected, among other things, in the Groningen Engineering Centre 2.0, a university-wide platform for technology. Through GEC 2.0, technology is linked to social sciences, humanities and economics in order to find solutions to major societal problems from an interdisciplinary perspective and in collaboration with external partners.

Like other Dutch universities, the UG is engaging in a broad dialogue on academic freedom. Academic freedom is considered an active value: a right that deserves protection, but also a responsibility that requires care, professionalism and respect. Only by jointly safeguarding this freedom and independence can the university continue to fulfill its role as an open, reliable and internationally respected institution of knowledge.

Independence through digital autonomy and freedom of choice in IT solutions

The UG strives for digital autonomy and freedom of choice in IT solutions and wants to process data using systems that are in line with public values and Dutch and European legislation and regulations. To achieve this, we will both reduce our dependence on Big Tech companies and increase our control over how we handle data and information at the UG. This includes greater insight into and overview of data use, clear processes and the assignment of responsibilities.

This will enable the UG to retain control and oversight of its own data and information, thereby remaining independent of influential companies, political whims and foreign powers (both financially and in terms of security and privacy). It also makes it possible to protect research data, take legal and ethical responsibility, and ensure that students, staff and partners can rely on the security of their data.

Independence through quality

The UG ensures that education and research are of a consistently high quality, so that students and researchers can develop to their full potential and the university remains at the forefront nationally and internationally, recognized as a top-100 university. Through internal quality assurance and external accreditation processes, we guarantee a culture of continuous feedback and improvement in both education and research.

The UG stands for professional and ethical scientific conduct and ethically responsible research. The university is bound by national guidelines for research quality assurance: based on these guidelines in the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP), a comprehensive and independent external assessment of the research (per institute) takes place every six years. This assessment not only looks at academic quality, but also at the social impact of the research and the viability of our research institutes. The results serve as input for our policy to reward and stimulate excellent research and to offer talent room for further development.

Guaranteeing the quality of education at the UG is essential for the value of the degrees we award. The UG aims to strengthen the quality of education by focusing on the quality culture at the UG, in addition to the comprehensive Plan Do Check Act toolkit. In doing so, we rely on the responsibility of professionals, shared ownership and mutual trust.

Within centrally established frameworks, faculty boards, participation bodies, programme management and teachers, as competent professionals with sufficient autonomy, can make decisions that best suit their faculties, programmes, disciplines, staff and organization. Accountability is ensured by faculty boards, programme management and teachers making their results transparent both vertically (formally hierarchical) and horizontally (informally collegial) and reviewing them with the representative bodies. In addition to formal dialogue, the UG facilitates the horizontal exchange of results, ideas and insights by supporting and expanding horizontal dialogue. In this way, the UG is developing into a learning organization, where open dialogue at all levels of the organization leads to continuous quality improvement.

Academic success and student success are central to education at the UG. We see academic success and student success as two goals for maintaining the high quality of our education. We achieve academic success by ensuring that final qualifications match the demands of the labour market and society, and by ensuring that the curriculum is manageable. The UG wants to improve the studyability of its programmes so that students can follow the education properly without unnecessary stress or overload. To this end, it is important that the study and exam load is evenly distributed, that the courses are well aligned, and that students receive clear information about their learning process. We achieve student success by focusing on personal and social development, student wellbeing, and by ensuring that students feel at home in our institution.

All of this strengthens the independence of the university by ensuring that our degrees and research results are recognized worldwide. It also contributes to the openness of our organization, thanks to transparent quality criteria and accountability.

Highlight: SOCION

SOCION is a consortium led by the UG that builds on the insights of the Sustainable Cooperation (SCOOP; NWO Gravity) research programme.

It combines scientific insights from psychology, history, demography, philosophy and sociology. Using advanced methods, it generates new insights into how shared values, complex social and psychological mechanisms and (historically changing) institutional provisions influence individuals, groups and institutions at different levels and over time. SOCION is made possible in part by the award of the prestigious NWO Summit Grant.

Cross-cutting theme —

Towards a healthy financial situation

A healthy financial balance is a prerequisite for the realization of all strategic ambitions and initiatives in the institutional plan. Where possible, these ambitions and initiatives also contribute to strengthening our financial situation, for example by increasing our income and making our processes more efficient.

This is particularly relevant in the context of the budget cuts that the UG will face during the term of this institutional plan, partly as a result of the Schoof Coalition Agreement, the Balanced Internationalization Act and the predicted decline in student numbers. Parallel to this institutional plan, the UG Austerity Plan is also being implemented, in which proposals are being developed for how we as the UG can achieve the austerity targets. In addition, the various organizational units are taking financial measures where necessary and appropriate. This should ensure that the UG has a structurally sound financial balance in 2031.

The goal is to remain financially healthy in the future, to reach a balanced distribution of resources, and to continue to use our resources in a targeted manner to achieve the UG's strategic goals. That is why a new internal allocation model will be developed and implemented during the term of this institutional plan.

By managing our resources responsibly, transparently and strategically, we can achieve our ambitions even in challenging times: delivering excellent education and research, strengthening our social impact, and building an open, agile and independent university.





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