



university of
 groningen

faculty of spatial sciences

Career Guide

Career Guide

Faculty of Spatial Sciences

Start thinking about your future today! How can the university and the faculty help you prepare for the labour market? Find out what steps you can take to be more prepared when you leave the faculty with your diploma.





Our Career Services

- Career advice and support at the [Careers Company](#)
- Weekly workshops at the [Careers Company](#) and [RUG Career Services](#) to help you develop your skills and presentation
- Employability in your programme: in your educational programme there are a lot of courses which help you develop your employability skills
- Career events: [Ibn Battuta](#), [Pro Geo](#), [Geo Promotion](#) and [the Real Estate Club](#) organise several career events during the year. See the calendar for the events they organise. [See the current calendar](#).
- Internships: in your bachelor you can choose to do an internship in the third year and it is possible in a lot of our masters to do an internship.

General Career event calendar

Daily

- CV checks at the Careers Company and RUG Career Services

Weekly

- Workshops at the Careers Company and RUG Career Services

Year round

- 4 visits to corporations (organised by Ibn Battuta)

September

- Real Estate Young Talent Event (organised by the Real Estate Club)

November

- Master event Spatial Sciences

January

- Graduate Research Day Spatial Sciences

February

- 'Nationaal Geografisch en Planologie Symposium' (organised by Ibn Battuta and other geography associations)

March

- Master event Spatial Sciences
- Geo Promotion Congress

May

- Career day (organised by Ibn Battuta)

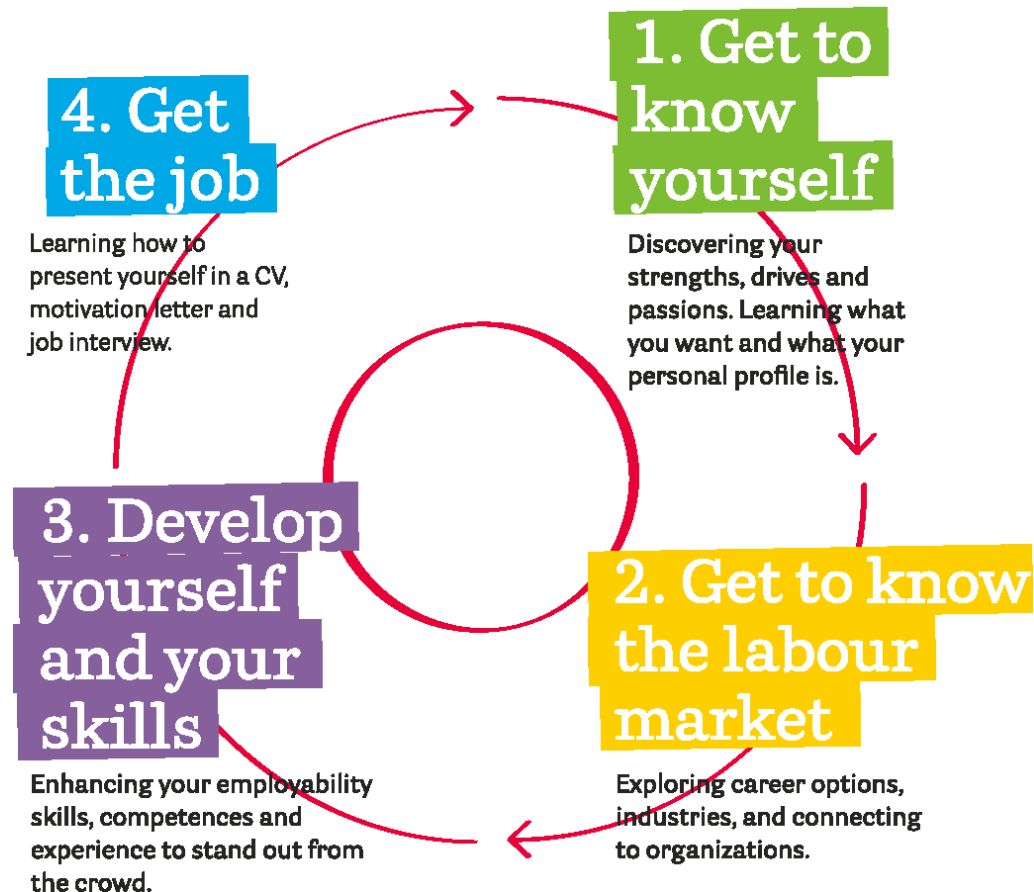
June

- Graduate Research Day Spatial Sciences



Milestones in your career development

There are many milestones on the path to career development. These phases in your transition from education to employment need attention if you really want to present yourself well and demonstrate your added value to employers. Four of the main ones are:





1. Get to know yourself

Discovering your strengths, drives and passions. Learning what you want and what your personal profile is.

Discover what you like to do by:

- participating in extracurriculare activities such as being active in a student/study association, in a sportsclub or in a committee;
- taking the [MyPlan Career Assessments](#) to see how your interests relate to your career path (license code: RNVWJD9T);
- taking a workshop at the Careers Company or Next to discover your skills;
- participating in activities organised by the study associations (see calender)
- visiting career fairs and master events to see what career path holds your interest
- scheduling an appointment with the career advisors of the Careers Company
- doing an internship during your study
- going abroad to gain international experience
- Get more out of your programme by doing an honours track



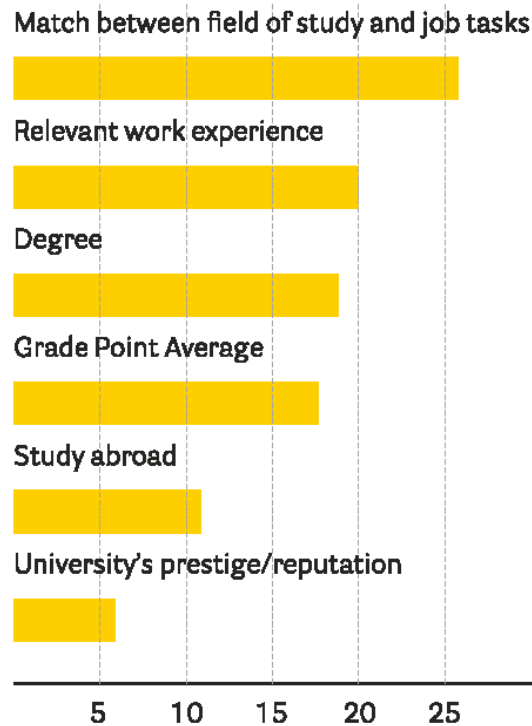


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2. Get to know the labour market

Exploring career options, industries and connecting to organisations.

Study has shown the relative importance of CV attributes according to employers (in %)



- It is important to choose a field of study that interests you and gives you access to the career path you want to take. By getting to know yourself you will find out what you like and what you want to do after you receive your diploma. You can then make decisions based on the vision you have for yourself.
- Relevant work experience is also important. That also means that it is important to do an internship and/or extracurricular activities that will help you gain experience in your field of study.
- Get a step ahead by getting good grades and lifting up your grade point average.
- If you have the possibility, study abroad! This is appreciated by future employers.

Source: EU, *The Employability of Higher Education Graduates* M. Humburg, et al., 2013

From Feb Career Guide

Facts about graduates of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences

- Graduates get a paid job within an average of 4 months after graduating.
- Graduates earn around 2100 euros gross income per month at their first job.
- Graduates on average think the programmes of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences prepare you pretty well for the labour market.
- Graduates on average think the programmes form a very good base to prepare you for developing your skills and knowledge further.

Source: WO-monitor 2014



Tips for finding out more about the labour market!

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Interested in research?

Maybe the Research Master in Spatial Sciences is the way to go for you! Visit our master event and check [the website](#) to find out more. You can also pursue a PhD after your master. Check the [website of our Graduate School](#) for more information.

Go to career events!

Ibn Batutta organises a Career Day and 4 visits to a company a year. These are great ways to get to know the labour market and find out which career path you would like to follow. You can have contact with alumni at the Alumni event Pro Geo organises each year.

As a bachelor student, visit the university Master Week!

Find out what specialisation interests you. You can make decisions based on this in your bachelor by choosing certain electives or doing an internship in a certain work field.

The Master Week is held every year in November and March.

Apply for an internship during your study!

Discover what the labour market is like! Gain work experience in your field of study. Find out what your strengths are and what you still want to learn. Develop yourself and your skills by taking up this opportunity!

Bachelor student

You can do an internship in your third year as an elective for 10 ECTS. Contact Chris Diederiks (h.c.diederiks@rug.nl) if you would like more information about this.

Master student

It is often possible to do an internship, usually in combination with your Master Thesis. Contact your mastercoordinator for more information about the possibilities.

Visit career websites and view job vacancies!

Know what employers are asking for! Visit different career websites and check the university career database (Studentportal/Career) to view different job vacancies. What skills are employers asking for and what kind of experience? Also find out what kind of jobs are out there. When you know this, you can get a head start by choosing a certain course and developing those skills now!



3. Develop yourself and your skills

Enhancing your employability skills, competences and experience to stand out from the crowd.

Employability skills

You need employability skills to stand out from your competition. Employers like you to have these skills and they scan for these on your CV. These skills will help you not only get the job you aim for, but they will also help you keep the job.

Learning and developing yourself while studying

You will develop a lot of employability skills during your study. You work in teams, lead your team and enhance your communication skills to give voice to your opinions. To get all your tasks done and deal with deadlines you have to be organised and plan your week. You also work on your own, so you need to learn what will motivate you. As you can see it is important to take initiative and learn how to solve problems. When you work in a team, take charge sometimes and see if you can take what you have learned in your courses to the next level.

Enhancing your skills

To enhance your skills, you can take workshops at the Careers Company and Next. When you participate in extracurriculare activities such as being active in a student/study association, in a sportsclub or in a committee, you will gain experience in teamwork, leadership and taking initiative and solving problems.



Source: Job Outlook 2015, National Association of Colleges and Employers, from Feb Career Guide



4. Get the job

Learning how to present yourself in a CV, motivation letter and job

Develop the skills that will help you get a job and keep a job now, before it is too late! Don't wait until after you graduate to develop these skills. You might already need them when you are nearly finished with your programme. You also need to make a good impression. Here are some tips to help you get the job!

Take workshops!

You can take workshops at the Careers Company and RUG Career Services about CV and motivation letter writing. You can take a workshop about the kind of questions and answers at your job interview. You can learn how to present yourself well. You can learn how to use LinkedIn to make a good impression. And more!

Find out what workshops there are at the [Careers Company](#) and at [RUG Career Services](#) and try some out!

Check the following pages!

On the next pages there are some basic tips about your CV, motivation letter and job interview.

Get your CV and letter checked!

You can get free CV checks at the Student Team walk-in hours at the Careers Company and at the Career Services I-Shop. They can also check your motivation letter. If you want more personal advice you can make an appointment with the Career Advisors of the Careers Company.

Review your online activities and profiles!

Are you on Social Media, like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or YouTube? Employers take a look at your profile. It is a good idea to check your online accounts for anything that might represent you in a negative way. You can also add relevant experience to your profile when applying for a job. Employers also hire more and more through Social Media. LinkedIn is especially important. You can take a workshop at [RUG Career Services](#) about how to create a professional and interesting LinkedIn profile.



Tips on how to create a winning CV!

Employers often spend only 30 seconds scanning a CV to determine whether the profile matches their requirements. So your CV should make a good first impression! It might also be helpful when you change your CV to highlight what is important for the job you are applying for. Here are some tips for you:

Show what makes you unique

The greatest challenge is to stand out, as you can be up against hundreds of other candidates. Employers don't just buy skills, they buy solutions. So try to think of ways to show how you can make the company more successful.

Choose a clear lay-out

Employers initially only quickly scan your CV, so make sure it's clutter-free and easy to read. The last thing a recruiter wants to do is go hunting for essential information. Try not to hide anything, be clear and keep it short, preferably 1 page, max 2 pages.

Tailor your CV to your audience

There is no one size fits all formula. This means that each time you apply for a position, you should tailor the document to the specific role and organisation.

Keep it error-free

It's deceptively easy to make mistakes on your CV and exceptionally difficult to repair the damage once an employer sees it. As well as checking your spelling and grammar, make sure your employment dates match and you've provided the correct phone number and address.

Keep your CV up to date

To avoid forgetting certain achievements and missing important pieces of information, revisit your CV every month to add anything of importance and remove any information that is no longer relevant.

Describe your experience

You can make a solid impression if you quantify and qualify your specific successes, achievements and responsibilities. Our tip is to use action verbs and bullet points and to be as specific as possible.



Tips on how to write a great motivation letter!

Your CV makes a good first impression and highlights the skills the employer seeks, your motivation letter introduces you more and it tells your story by highlighting your strengths and motivation. A logical and engaging structure are key. Here are some tips for your letter:

Lay-out

Set it out like a business letter: brevity adds power. So never exceed one A4 page in length.

Introduction

Introduce yourself and explain why you are writing. If you are responding to an advertisement, state where you saw it.

Why this job?

Explain why you are interested in the job and the organisation. Tailor the letter to the organisation.

Why you?

Explain why you are well suited to the position. Refer to relevant skills, experience and knowledge you have and match what you say to the requirements in the job description. Highlight key evidence. Try to avoid listing all the things

Conclusion

Emphasize your desire to join the organisation and end on a 'look forward to hearing from you' statement, followed by 'yours sincerely'.

Motivation letter checklist:

- Check the spelling and grammar and get someone else to read it through
- Don't start every sentence with I
- Give evidence for your claims
- Be enthusiastic and interested
- Be authentic



Tips on how to ace your job interview!

Your CV makes a good first impression and they want to hear more after your great motivation letter. You get invited to a job interview! Here you have to sell yourself. The first 30 seconds are the most important. Think about three P's: Prepare, Practice and Perform. Here are some tips for your job interview:

First impressions count

Greet your interviewer with a smile and a firm handshake. You have to sell yourself before you can sell anything else. First impressions are lasting. Pay attention to your appearance and dress professionally.

Be prepared

Know your CV and the job description back to front. Do your research. Practise the interview.

Answer the question

Answer questions thoughtfully and well. Your interviewer may well try to catch you off guard. It's not a crime to ask the interviewer to repeat the question if necessary, but don't try to evade it.

Why should they hire you?

Most jobs will list qualities they're looking for - a team worker, a good communicator - so it is important to think of examples of how you have demonstrated these skills thus far.

Be positive

Interviewers like to see someone who enjoys a challenge and is enthusiastic, so make sure you show energy, a sense of humour and style.

Body language and manners

It is not what you say, but how you say it and present it. Chances are that interviewers will pay attention to your etiquette, so sit up straight and try to maintain eye contact.

Ask questions

It is a good idea to draw up a list of questions for your potential employer beforehand. You could ask about the company or position, recent developments, or relevant questions that interest you.

In closing

At the end of the interview, ask politely about the next steps in the application procedure.



Adresses and contacts

Careers Company Spatial Sciences

Zernike Complex, Duisenberg building, ground floor

[Website](#)

RUG Career Services I-shop

Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 19 (Near the Academy building)
next@rug.nl

[Website](#)

Ibn Batutta

Zernike Complex, Duisenberg building
Ground floor, room 5414.0020

[Website](#)

Pro Geo

Zernike Complex, Duisenberg building
Ground floor, room 5414.0023

[Website](#)

Geo Promotion

Zernike Complex, Duisenberg building
Ground floor, room 5414.0023

[Website](#)

Real Estate Club Groningen

board@reclubgroningen.nl

[Website](#)

Faculty contact for Career Services

Linnet Deen

Zernike Complex, Mercator, room 0024

L.Deen@rug.nl

Study advisor

Nienke Harteveld

Zernike Complex, Mercator, room 0018

N.Harteveld@rug.nl



Experiences in the workforce

“The Master of Population Studies degree has equipped me with a large backpack of methodological and theoretical knowledge which I use in my daily work and which also combines policy interventions and daily life practices. Furthermore, by doing an internship I got ‘easily’ enrolled into a working career. I highly recommend students to do an internship (combined with the Master’s thesis) to get to know more about how it is to work, to expand their network and to increase the chance of getting a job soon. If I had not done the Master’s in Population Studies programme, I would not have had the kind of opportunities (personal and career) I have now.”

Auke Vlonk, Population Studies graduate 2008

Researcher and advisor at Aimtrack

[Read more](#)

“I knew that I was interested in the brick world and its environment. Therefore, I decided to start with two masters in Groningen: Socio-Spatial Planning and Real Estate Studies. After my graduation in 2010, I started with an internship at an engineering company. I did this, because I thought an internship would help me to get acquainted with the work field and to support the decision to start to work in the field I’m interested in. During my internship I conducted my master research and apparently I did well, as the engineering company said they would be happy to hire me as an advisor. (..) After all I feel the internship helped me to expand my network, helped me to understand how to be a professional and use my knowledge and skills I gained during my studies and extracurricular activities. As a student there’s so much you don’t know and the way companies work you can only discover while working for them.”

Kasimir Hogendoorn, Real Estate Studies graduate 2009

Socio-Spatial Planning graduate 2010

Advisor and project manager at Procap

[Read more](#)



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In the third year of your bachelor you can choose the course 'Stage' (10 EC) as an elective

"It has given me the experience in the work field I needed to better understand, in combination with the theories learned, the design of the space surrounding us. Professionally speaking the internship has given me a network that I can use in the future when I graduate. The internship has helped me to develop myself personally as well. Working in a team has taught me that I really do already know a lot about everything involving their work. It has made me more confident and given me the believe that I will make it in an organisation like the city of Westerveld. I also found out exactly which master programme I am going to do and I have a better idea of what my future will be in this work field. In short, the internship had taught me things that you can't learn in class. I recommend everyone to step out of the classroom and find out what the future might hold by doing an internship. "

Marit Gorter

Third year bachelor student (Human Geography & Urban and Regional Planning)

Academic year 2015-2016



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“In semester 1A and 1B I have chosen to take the course Internship. In these 6 months I could choose between a minor or several electives and I took this opportunity to do something I really wanted. During my study of Spatial Planning and Design I haven’t seen a lot of the workfield, an internship really adds to my education. With an internship you can experience what is like to work in the labour market and to orientate on a master programme. Besides that it is also a nice change that you don’t have to take a class, do assignments and take an exam. I have chosen to do my internship at advice and engineering agency Grontmij in Groningen. The different projects Grontmij takes on was something I liked. While working for Grontmij I have contributed to various assignments. I have noticed as a third year student Spatial Planning and Design that I already have a significant amount of theoretical knowledge that is very applicable at a company such as Grontmij. In short, the internship is the best opportunity to practice what you have been taught, gain work experience and develop yourself further.”

Mervin Rozema
Third year bachelor student (Spatial Planning and Design)
Academic year 2015-2016