

FREEDOM TO EXCEL

Leiden University Institutional Plan 2015-2020



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

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FREEDOM TO EXCEL

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Introduction

Over the past five years Leiden University has been engaged in implementing its previous institutional plan, *Inspiration and Growth*. The strategy set out in this plan has proven to be successful.

More young people than ever have chosen to study at Leiden University: our student numbers have risen by more than a quarter since 2010. Moreover, a growing number of our students complete their bachelor's and master's programmes on time. The University has also become more international: we have more students, PhD candidates and academics from outside the Netherlands. Our faculties increasingly work together in effective partnerships; this is one of the successes of our policy of research profiling. Our Campus The Hague has developed into a full-fledged faculty, with activities that are closely linked to the profile of The Hague as the city of international law, peace and justice.

The University can look back on many successes over recent years, successes that are due to the dedication of our staff and students. With this new institutional plan, *Freedom to Excel*, we intend to proceed in this same direction with a set of new ambitions.

We want Leiden University to be a fruitful environment for excellent research, for stimulating the talents of all our staff and students, for successful study performance and for quality and innovation in education. Our aim is to achieve a greater and more visible impact for our research and education in society. We intend to be a university with an even more explicitly international image, and we are committed to further expansion of Campus The Hague.

The key theme of this institutional plan is 'freedom to excel', a theme that unites two core values that have characterised our University since its foundation in 1575. In a world in which freedom can be taken less and less for granted, Leiden University aims to be a leading international research university that offers its academics and students the opportunity to thrive in an environment where they can develop their potential to the full. We want to be an excellent university that promotes a safer, healthier, more sustainable and more prosperous world – locally, regionally and globally.

Vision, mission and core values

Vision

As a prominent European research university, Leiden University plays a leading role in research and in teaching. Good academic research and teaching are crucial for a secure, healthy, prosperous and fair world. The University is committed to developing, disseminating and applying academic knowledge, and is a reliable beacon in national and international societal and political debates.



Mission

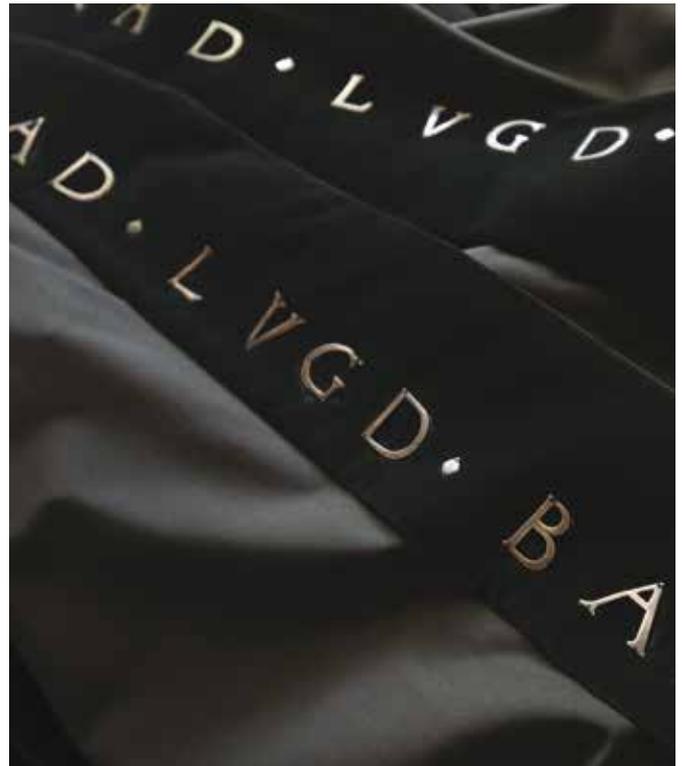
- Leiden University is a research-driven university that operates in the international arena. It covers a broad range of academic disciplines and programmes, and strives for excellence in all its research and teaching.
- Leiden University makes every effort to ensure that its research and teaching have maximum impact on culture, society and the economy. It achieves this in close collaboration with local, regional, national and international partners.
- Having deliberately opted for a disciplinary organisational structure, Leiden University focuses on both disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and teaching.
- Leiden University trains students and PhD candidates for academic positions both within and outside the academic world. Its graduates are able to critically assess scientific and societal problems and to make well-reasoned choices in finding solutions for these problems.
- Leiden University strives to create a close-knit academic community of staff and students. This community is nurtured by the experience, expertise and involvement of Leiden's alumni.

Leiden University works closely with its university partners, Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University Rotterdam. In the European context, the University also has a close working relationship with its partners in the League of European Research Universities (LERU).

Core Values

The motto of Leiden University is 'Praesidium Libertatis', bastion of freedom. The University operates in line with a number of fundamental principles:

- From its inception, Leiden University has stood for freedom of spirit, thought and speech, and for the independent development of research and teaching. It is a haven where all questions can be asked and answered freely.
 - Leiden University's academics are guided by the highest ambitions of quality and academic integrity. The University also strives to instil this attitude in its students.
 - The University has a clear responsibility towards society. In meeting this responsibility, it focuses not only on the present day but also on the interests of future generations.
 - The teaching at Leiden University is inspired and nurtured by academic research.
 - The academic community determines the content and structure of the University's teaching and research. Decision-making on these issues therefore takes place at the lowest possible level: in the programmes, institutes and faculties where possible, at University level if this has demonstrable benefits or is necessary.
- Leiden University promotes inclusiveness and diversity. It is open to all those who wish to study or work here, and to develop their full potential. The University is an open community where everyone who wants to contribute to its ambitions and to all that it stands for will feel at home and have equal opportunities.



Societal context

Leiden University is at the heart of a society that is highly dynamic. This offers both opportunities and challenges that have an influence on our chosen strategy.

Increasing globalisation and internationalisation

As a result of globalisation, more and more people are working in an international context, and the major societal issues of the present day place high demands on international academic collaboration. International cooperation in academic teaching is also increasing. As our staff and students come from all countries of the world, this imposes new requirements on the way we support our staff and guide our students.

Greater role for Europe

Europe is becoming increasingly important for universities, particularly in terms of the funding of academic research. We will therefore be looking to collaborate with other European partners more frequently, in particular with our LERU colleagues. We will do so to combine forces, and also because of the growing importance of interdisciplinary cooperation across the borders of both university and country.

Rapid technological developments

The rapid advances in technology have an enormous influence on the development of science, but they also result in ever higher expenditure on equipment and facilities. We are increasingly seeking collaboration with other partners in order to be able to meet these costs. At the same time, innovation in digital technology – open access, big data – makes it possible to gather and share scientific data and other information more rapidly. In teaching, developments in online learning,

such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), offer us new opportunities and new challenges.

Increasing diversity

Compared with twenty years ago, the demand for higher education has grown by 40%. Nationally, we are seeing an increase in the number of students from a multicultural background and a rise in the proportion of female students. Both the globalisation of education, which means that more and more students are coming to the Netherlands, and the interest in life-long learning result in a more diverse student body. Diversity creates opportunities. It engenders creativity and innovation, but at the same time it imposes new demands on how we support and supervise students, PhD candidates and staff.

Stronger competition

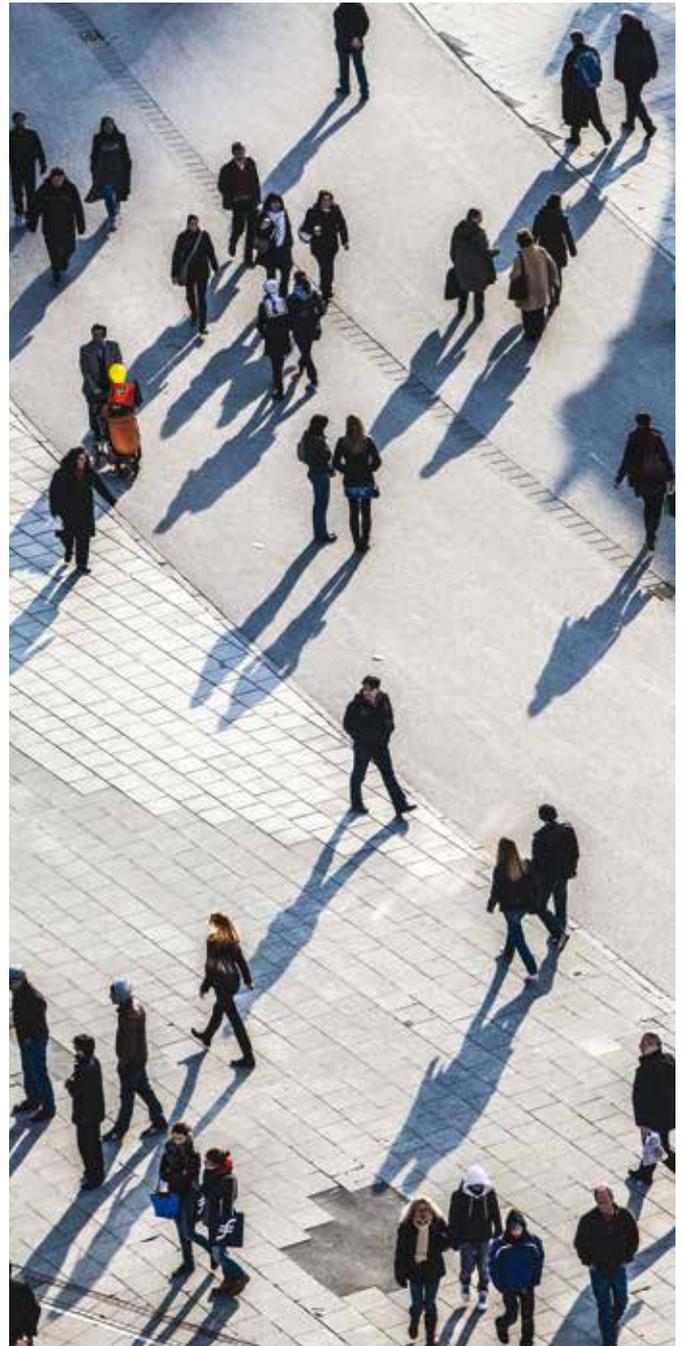
The demands from government are also changing. The Dutch government is initiating a National Science Agenda that encompasses important themes for the near future. The assumption is that universities themselves will be responsible for providing a greater share of their income. As a consequence, in order to be able to finance our research, we will in the future have to seek sources of funding in the national and international arena. In many instances we will do this in cooperation – but at the same time also in competition – with other universities. In terms of education, a gradual shift can be perceived towards more private forms of funding, which means that students are under increasing pressure to study faster and more efficiently. The teaching programmes offered to students therefore have to be of the highest quality and must provide incentives for them to develop their talents to the full.

A strong profile

In a rapidly changing world where competition is increasing, universities need a strong profile. In the coming paragraphs we will describe the six ambitions that will be key to our strategy for the coming years.

Leiden University's ambitions for 2015-2020 are:

1. An environment for excellent research
2. Activating talent
3. Innovation in teaching and learning
4. Greater impact and more innovation
5. Research and teaching in an international environment
6. Expansion of Campus The Hague



Ambition 1:

An environment for excellent research

Leiden is an internationally oriented research university. Our research is curiosity-driven. We aim to create an increasingly attractive and challenging working environment for leading academics and young researchers, where quality and excellence are the key criteria. Our research must continue to meet the highest international standards of quality and academic integrity.

Greater cooperation: disciplinary and interdisciplinary

Research at Leiden University has a strong disciplinary basis and is embedded in the faculties and research institutes. This will not change, but in responding to academic and societal questions, our academics will, of course, look beyond the borders of their own disciplines. It will become increasingly important to share the often costly research infrastructure. This, too, means that choices will have to be made and intensive collaboration will be more necessary than ever. This kind of collaboration – often at interfaculty level – will be the focus of greater attention. To make it easier for our researchers to look beyond the borders of their own discipline and of the University, we intend to establish a second workshop centre along the lines of the Lorentz Center. This new centre will focus on collaboration and knowledge sharing in the fields of social and behavioural sciences, humanities and law.

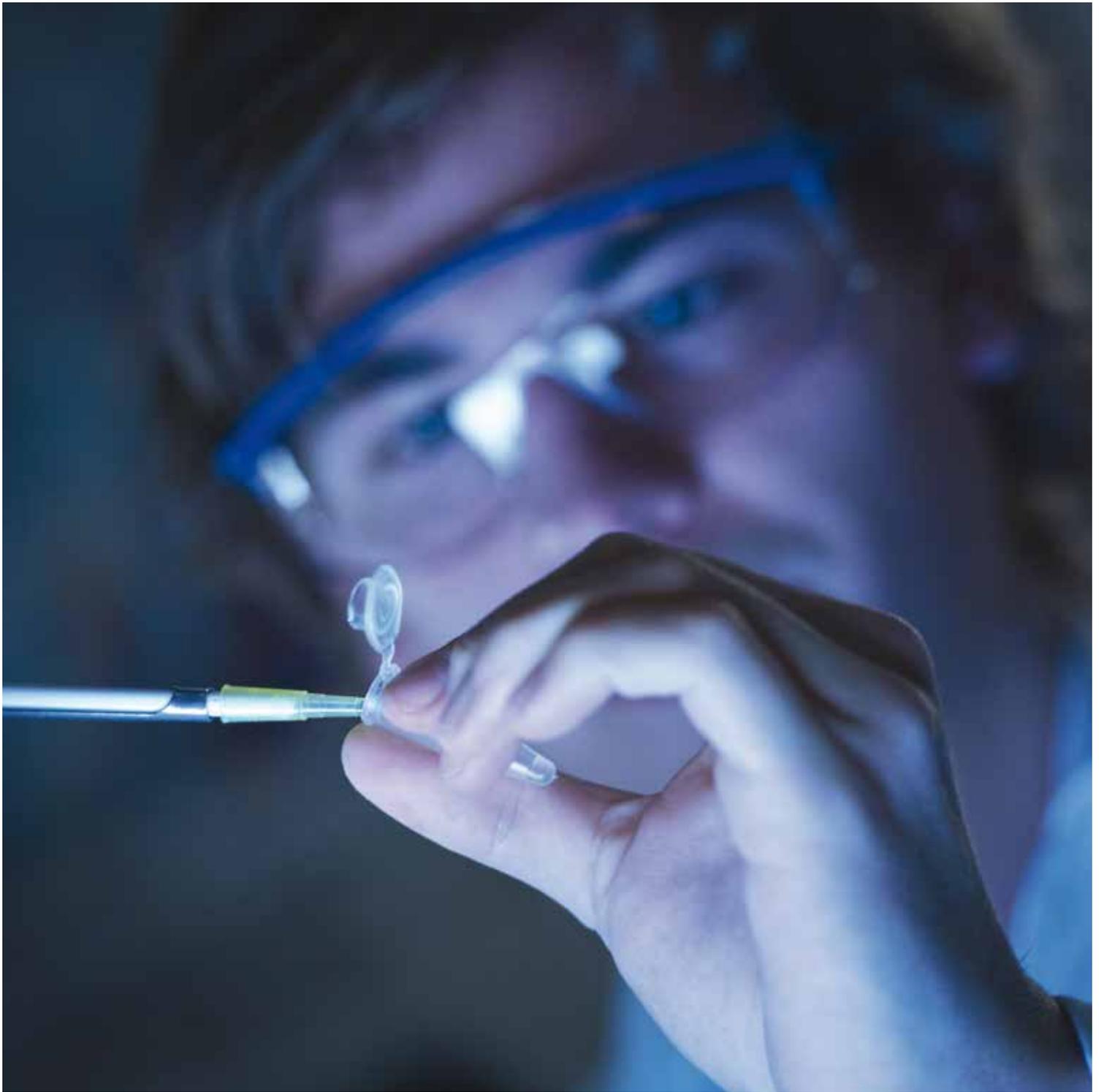
Stronger research focus and more scope for top talent

The importance of strengthening our research and our research partnerships in a European and global context, including in our research profile areas, will continue over the coming period.

Evidence from rankings and publications has shown that our academics produce research of the highest quality, from a national, European and global perspective. These successes are above all the achievement of the researchers themselves, who are driven and determined in their search for new knowledge. In order to safeguard our future success, the University aims to continue to attract the best academics to Leiden. Talent acts as a magnet to attract more new talent. We aim to offer our researchers an excellent working environment where they can carry out their groundbreaking research: an environment where there is a strong focus on providing equal opportunities for talented individuals, both men and women. The University provides its academics with state-of-the-art ICT services and infrastructure, and is planning to establish a Centre for Digital Scholarship to support academics and students in the use of new digital technologies.

Better supervision and more support

Leiden University offers optimum opportunities and facilities for our academic staff to practise science at the highest level. We aim to maintain our success in attracting national and European research subsidies, and will do everything possible to support our researchers with their grant applications. We will focus greater attention on our young researchers, PhD candidates and postdoctoral staff, increasing the supervision they receive, in order to prepare them for a future within academia and outside the academic world. Our intention is to maintain our strong scientific position in the Netherlands and Europe and to further strengthen our international position.



Ambition 2:

Activating talent

Students at Leiden University are challenged to excel and to develop to their full potential. The University does its utmost to create a stimulating academic working and learning environment.

More emphasis on students' own responsibility

Students at Leiden University have a high level of responsibility in designing their own study programme, both within and outside the curriculum. Our honours programmes give our highly talented and motivated students the opportunity to deepen their knowledge or broaden their studies.

Greater dedication and participation

Leiden University requires from its students dedication, good results and active participation in the academic community. The University in its turn does its best to ensure an optimum match between students and their programme. In our teaching programmes we aim to stimulate students to develop their talents to the full and to graduate within the prescribed time. Students are challenged to play an active role as co-researchers. Leiden wants to have a leading position among Dutch universities as regards the study performance of our students. Master's programmes will become more challenging and more attractive, and stricter demands will be placed on selection for admittance to these programmes.

At the same time we believe it is important for students to participate in the many student associations that characterise student life at Leiden University. Both in the study associations and in the many student and sports clubs in Leiden and The Hague students develop skills that are not necessarily part of their curriculum, and they make friendships that can have a major influence on their future life.

Scope for new skills

Academic competences, the ability to think critically and creatively and the capacity to resolve problems remain key factors in our teaching. In addition, Leiden students will develop skills, known currently as 21st century skills: the ability to work together in teams, international and intercultural competences, entrepreneurship, leadership and digital skills. These skills will equip our students better for the job market and the world of the future.

More focus on equal opportunities

Leiden University promotes diversity within the academic community and aims to offer all students - including those from a migrant background or with a different sexual orientation - equal opportunities to develop their talents. Conscious attention is paid in our teaching programmes and in the international classroom to sharing international knowledge, global awareness and intercultural skills.





Ambition 3:

Innovation in teaching and learning

Teaching at Leiden University is strongly founded on our research. Leiden aims to hold a leading position nationally in the research on pedagogy and new teaching methods, and to be visible in the international arena.

More support

At Leiden University, teachers are given full autonomy in order to provide up to date, inspiring and academic education. At the same time they also need support, for example, in the use of new technologies in teaching and in managing the changing expectations of students regarding the study programme and the study environment. Providing a greater level of support to lecturers will be a key activity in the coming period.

Scope for innovation

Leiden University aims to improve its teaching by facilitating technological and pedagogical innovations and by creating even more scope for the professional skills and autonomy of our lecturers. They will be given the opportunity to experiment with online teaching methods, such as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) and SPOCs (Small Private Online Courses). Moreover, the University will investigate through scientific research which interventions in the teaching process are most effective.

More effective knowledge sharing and quality assurance

Knowledge sharing by lecturers across the borders of their own discipline is given shape in our newly established Teachers' Academy. The University will give greater weight to teaching performance as a factor in staff promotion. We will also further develop our quality

culture; our internal quality assurance system will be structured so that it better meets the need for continuous improvement and corresponds more closely with the already well-developed quality awareness of our academic staff.





Ambition 4:

Greater impact and more innovation

Leiden University wants its research and teaching to have greater impact in society. To this end, many of our researchers enter into long-term collaborations with partners within academia and in society, and with the business sector and the general public. We encourage an open attitude towards parties within and outside the University and a climate of open innovation. Much of our research is curiosity driven: extending the boundaries of knowledge forms an aim in itself, irrespective of any direct economic, societal or cultural effects. It is precisely in this type of climate that scientists often develop ground-breaking knowledge that – directly or in time – can have important effects in society. This principle of curiosity-driven science is something we will continue to cherish.

Our vision: a safe, healthy, sustainable, prosperous and fair world

Our academics produce knowledge that benefits society. The impact of this knowledge is visible and tangible in countless ways, but we want to make our contribution to society even more apparent. Our academics also exercise influence on public opinion with their expert analyses of current events in society. Another focus area is entrepreneurship: the University will continue to focus on entrepreneurship in the broadest sense of the word, and on collaboration within the Leiden Bio Science Park, one of the most successful science parks in Europe with businesses in the bioscience and biomedical sector. The University also aims to broaden its cultural impact, for example by contributing to the rich museum sector of Leiden and The Hague and through knowledge transfer in the area of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Greater focus on openness and the network university

Leiden University will continue to create a climate of open research and innovation, where structural partnerships with external partners will be a key feature. The University intends to establish a Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation with other partners in the region, where we will provide support to new entrepreneurs and encourage the creation of spin-off businesses. Sharing knowledge and collaborating with partners will more than ever become key factors in the practice of science. The university of the future will be very much a network university. Leiden University aims to further strengthen the impact of its research, particularly in the region of Leiden and The Hague and in the province of South Holland.

New forms of teaching

Teaching at Leiden University has a broad impact, through the role played by Leiden graduates as professionals in society, in the economy, in academia or through their activities in the cultural arena. The continuous development of knowledge and skills is becoming ever more important. The University intends to respond more fully to the growing need in society for life-long learning, and will achieve this by means of online courses, education for the third age (HOVO) and programmes for professionals. The University will make increasing use of online working methods, and will investigate the potential added value of a so-called extension school. Such a school can offer, bring together and support activities, including online activities, in post-experience education.

Ambition 5:

Research and teaching in an international environment

The environment in which our students and staff work is rapidly becoming more international. This makes the University even more attractive to excellent academics and students, but it also sets a number of challenges.

International community increasingly important

Our research and teaching are enriched through intensive contacts with researchers from throughout the world and through the contacts with international students. We intend to place greater emphasis on creating international classrooms, for instance by providing a broader range of English-taught bachelor's programmes, more online courses, and a stronger focus on bilingualism. With their international research and international classrooms, universities – more than any other institutions – contribute to a safe, healthy, sustainable, prosperous and fair world: this is something that Leiden University strongly advocates.

More international students

Given the importance of a good mix of international and Dutch students, we will make even greater efforts to increase the number of international students from *different* countries. The University aims to create international classrooms by making the range of programmes more attractive and more international, encouraging interaction between Dutch and international students and by more targeted student recruitment. A more integrated approach to recruitment, alumni policy, teaching partnerships and research collaboration

will make Leiden and The Hague a more attractive destination for international students, PhD candidates and scientists. The prime objective is to increase the number of those students that match the ambitions of the University.

Extra focus on equal opportunities

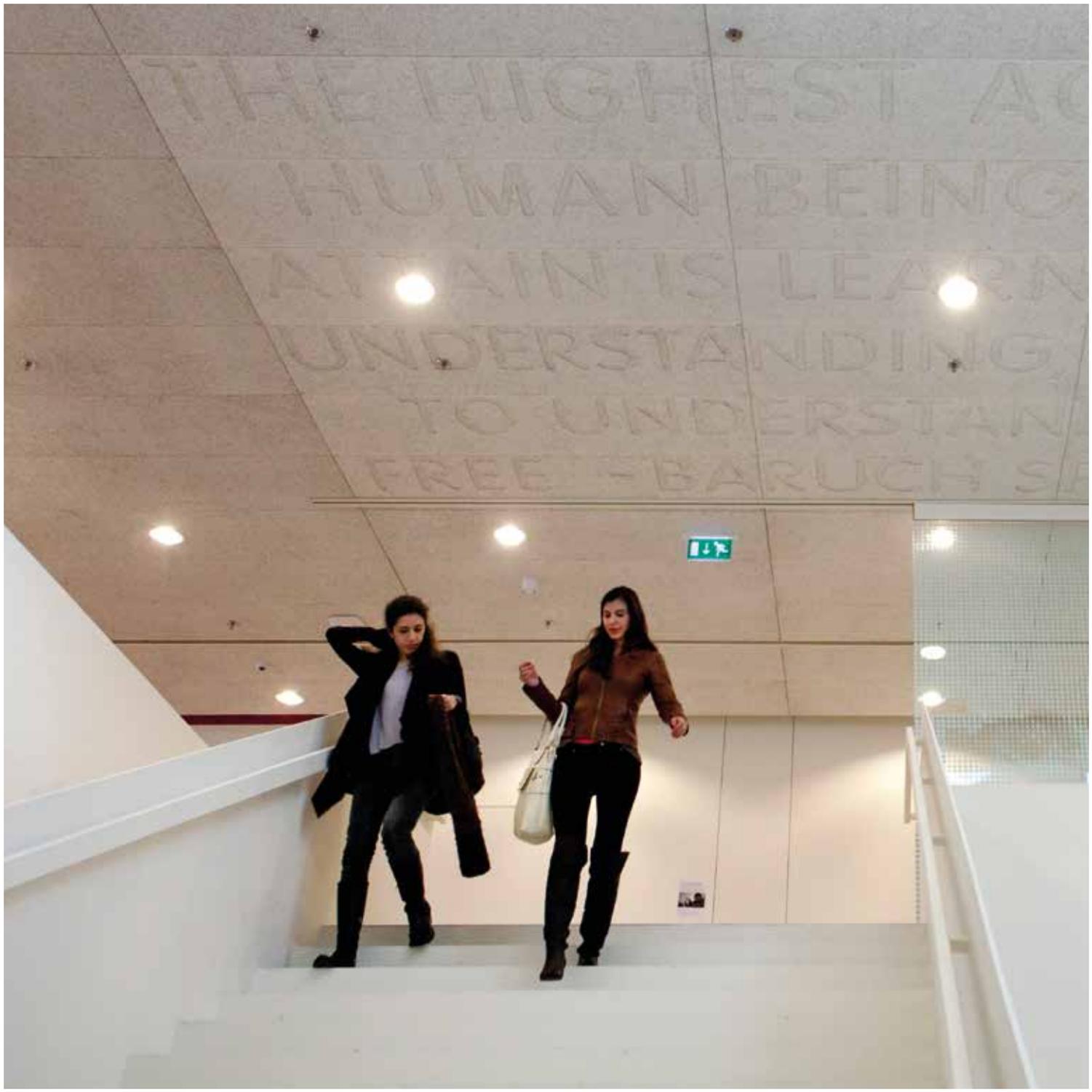
A broader, international orientation will lay the foundation for a truly international university community. Leiden University therefore intends to focus further attention on diversity in the composition of its staff and on better integration of its international staff and students in the academic community. Access to and participation in research and education should be equal for every student and every member of staff. A balanced language policy will ensure that language is not a barrier to participation within the University community.

More sustainable international collaboration

Leiden University will develop strategic collaboration programmes for a small number of priority regions, starting with China, Indonesia and Latin America. In the framework of these programmes, the University intends to develop strategic and sustainable partnerships with universities, institutions and government bodies. These partnerships cover the areas of research, teaching and societal impact. The University will also further expand its collaboration with LERU partners in research, teaching and the development of greater entrepreneurship among students and staff.



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Ambition 6:

Expansion of Campus The Hague

Our Campus The Hague in the centre of the city is one of the three core locations of Leiden University, along with Leiden city centre and the science campus to the west of Leiden. In 2010 the Campus had 800 students; in 2014 this number had risen to 2,500. Our ambition is to have 4,000 students in The Hague by 2020. Students and staff in The Hague are full-fledged members of the Leiden University academic community.

International law, peace, security

Leiden University has strongly expanded its activities in The Hague over recent years. Our successful Campus adheres closely to the themes that characterise the city of The Hague as the city of international law, peace and security, and as the centre of Dutch public administration and international governance. Our contacts with ministries, international and European organisations, the diplomatic sector and the legal institutions in The Hague will be further intensified.

Strengthen and expand relations

Over the coming years the University will further expand the relationship with the city and other prominent players in The Hague, in both education and research, as well as in innovation. We will strengthen Campus The Hague and broaden the range of programmes offered in The Hague, both regular bachelor's and master's programmes, and professional programmes for those who already have experience in the job market. The University will also be developing an ambitious research programme on governance and global challenges in line with the profile of The Hague.

Building on belonging

An important task for the University in the years ahead is to encourage our students in The Hague to develop a sense of belonging to the Leiden academic community and vice versa. Attention will be paid over the coming period to determining how Campus The Hague with its diverse programmes and institutes can best be structured to develop its plans for the future.



Epilogue:

People, resources, organisation

The ambitions of Leiden University will place serious demands on the organisation, the working environment and on the support and facilities for its staff.

Decentral management

Leiden University has traditionally been structured in such a way that management takes place at the lowest levels in the organisation, usually in the faculties and where possible in our 27 institutes. This management philosophy has served the University well, and is the most appropriate structure for a research university where academics themselves play a key role in determining the direction of the University's teaching and research.

A strong staff

The University is committed to retaining, rewarding and attracting staff of the highest quality, in teaching and research as well as in the indispensable support positions. Over the coming years, greater attention will be paid to scouting for excellent academics, and developing a new career policy with a greater emphasis on supervising PhD candidates and postdocs. Lecturers will also be offered a targeted range of training programmes. Our efforts to promote professionalisation, expertise, community formation and the development of new competences, will be focused equally on our academic and our support staff.

Excellent facilities

Excellent staff need excellent facilities. To meet these needs the University is working on an ambitious facility development programme. Over the coming years we will be constructing a new science faculty that is due to be completed in stages. The University is also embarking on the large-scale renovation and modernisation of the Humanities complex in the centre of Leiden, and Campus The Hague will have a new location for research and teaching in the Wijnhaven district. The facilities of our University libraries will be expanded over the coming years, including the addition of an Asian Library that will house one of the world's most important collections on Asia.

Healthy finances

Leiden University is in a healthy financial position, which we intend to maintain. Careful choices in how we apply resources on the basis of the institutional plan and an effective planning and control process will ensure that the University's finances remain in good order.

Societal responsibility

Leiden University takes its societal responsibility very seriously, not only in its teaching and research, but also in its operational management. This will become even more apparent in the attention that will be focused specifically on measures in the area of sustainability, the environment and security.



This is the public edition of *Freedom to Excel*, Leiden University's institutional plan for 2015-2020

The full text can be found on: www.leiden.edu

The full text and the public edition are available in both English and Dutch

Editorial: Strategic Communication and Marketing,
Leiden University

Photography: Marc de Haan, Jorg Hackemann / Shutterstock.com (5)
and Jurriaan Brobbel (16)

Design: Ratio Design, Haarlem

Printing: UFB, Leiden University

Further copies are available from: communicatie@leidenuniv.nl

February 2015



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