

With three nominees with unique and diverse activities, this year the jury needed two meetings to finally decide to award this student prize for exceptional achievement to the students of Project 'Gewoon Vega'.

The Gewoon Vega project was the product of a spontaneous conversation in a lecture hall. Students from different study programmes found a creative and positive manner to encourage the university community to eat vegetarian more often. The goal was to contribute to the realisation of Utrecht University's sustainability strategy. Their research laboratory was an ordinary university cafeteria in the city centre.

Together with the catering department, Gewoon Vega developed an appealing presentation of the vegetarian options, combined with useful information about the menu and how to reduce one's ecological footprint by choosing vegetarian options more often.

What made this project even more unique was the use of new scientific methods and techniques, such as eye tracking, benchmark measurements, nudging, and interviews and surveys among the cafeteria visitors. This gave Gewoon Vega many new insights into the effects of their campaign, which was another important aspect of their approach.

And last but not least, the supervisors noted how professional the project was conducted, as well as its advanced academic level.

The jury was impressed by the students' motivation, resourcefulness, commitment and perseverance. The group showed other students how inspiring and activating a university study can be.

This group of ordinary students conducted the project in their free time, while successfully managing to study and maintain their social lives.

The campaign was extremely fruitful, as research has shown that their approach led to significantly higher sales of vegetarian products. The jury hopes, and indeed has every confidence, that similar initiatives will follow in this project's footsteps, and is therefore pleased to honour these driven students and their sustainability project with the Student Prize.