



Utrecht University

Utrecht
University Fund

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Carrying our ambitions forward

The Utrecht University Fund has made a number of fantastic projects possible in 2018. Young researchers in Internal Medicine are receiving support for their scientific research thanks to a very special legacy. // **page 14** Student of Veterinary Medicine Anne Tersmette took part in the European Championship for Haflinger horses. // **page 24**



FOREWORD

Carrying our ambitions forward

In this Annual Report of the Utrecht University Fund, we look back on 2018. It was a year that began with a new initiative and ended with a remarkable bequest. It was also a year in which we raised an exceptional amount of funding to support us as we work to attain our objective: to help our university grow and flourish.

During a festive dinner in February, we presented the first-ever Agnites Vrolik Award to Daphina Misiedjan, who won the prize for her research into sustainable water management. Through this Award, our fund supports talented scientists who are contributing to finding answers to current societal issues. At the end of the year, Utrecht University received the largest legacy in its history. The remarkable story of alumna Annie van Leerzem can be found on page 14. In December of last year, the foundation known as ‘Stichting Jubileumfonds Veeartsenijkundige Hoogeschool 1921’ transferred its assets to the Utrecht University Fund. Together with the remarkable bequest, this means our fund was entrusted with contributions totalling over 2.2 million euros.

The Utrecht University Fund was hard at work the rest of the year as well, thanks to your donations and the enormous efforts of our director Fenna Hanraets and her team. During the many encounters organised in Utrecht and elsewhere, alumni were able to renew or strengthen their connections to their alma mater and also to one another. We were also able to support a series of initiatives in connection with education, science and student activities. This report presents a limited selection of the many projects supported. In it, you can also read about the unique opera Thijl, which is being performed by the Utrechtsch Studenten Concert, and about Oncofitness, a project that centres on physical therapy to benefit cancer patients.

Of course this is all possible only thanks to your generous donations, for which we are extremely grateful.

This year, not counting the aforementioned sum (from the bequest and Stichting Jubileumfonds), our fund collected 1.7 million euros: a new record. Along with individual giving, the named funds played an important role in this result as well, an overview of which has been included in this report. You can also find an interview with Bert van der Zwaan and Wilma Wessels, in which they discuss the Right to Learn Fund that they established upon Bert’s retirement as Rector Magnificus.

In 2018, Joost van Lanschot stepped down from our Board. We would like to thank him for his contributions and endless enthusiasm for our university.

Today, we are already well in to 2019, a year in which we began with the introduction of a new initiative: Utrecht 1636. Its goal is to create a circle of donors who are interested in being specifically involved with our fund. We intend keep moving along our chosen path, carrying our ambitions forward!

Warmest regards,

Lodewijk Hijmans van den Bergh
Chair, Utrecht University Fund

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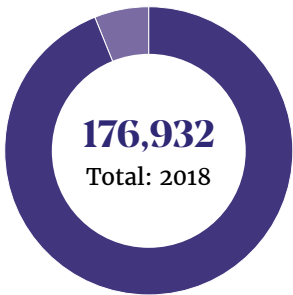


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What can the numbers tell us about 2018?

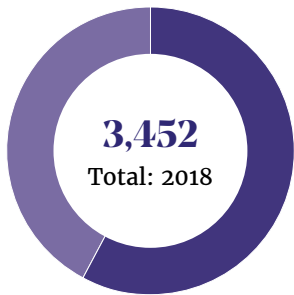
ALUMNI



- Registered alumni: 176,932
- International alumni: 10,836



- New alumni in 2018
- PhDs: 3%
 - Bachelors: 58%
 - Masters: 26%
 - Postgraduates and exchange alumni: 13%



- Attendance at alumni events
- Total no. of attendees: 3,452
 - Those attending an alumni event for the 1st time: 1,438

ALUMNI WORLDWIDE

Utrecht University alumni can be found in cities all across the globe.



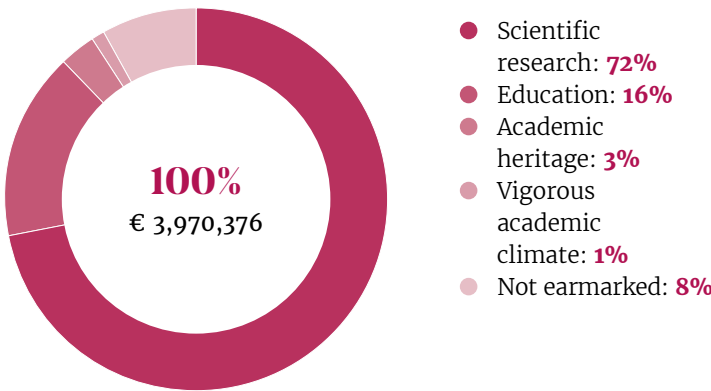
UU Alumni networks

UTRECHT UNIVERSITY FUND

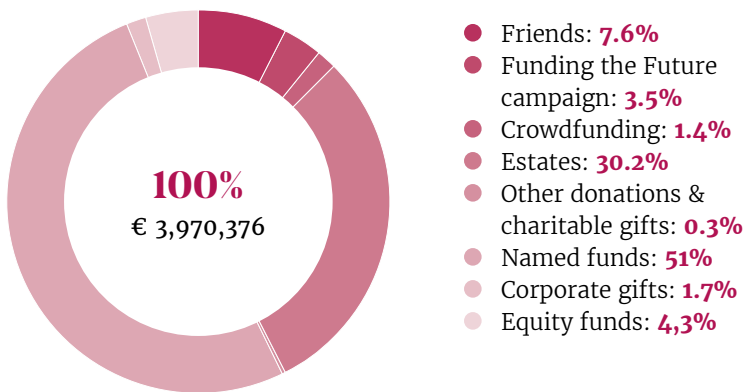
What is the total amount raised?



For what purpose are these funds intended?



Where have these donations come from?



Named funds

- Number of named funds: 27
- Capital appreciation of named funds in 2018: € 2,044,419

Steun.uu.nl

- Number of crowdfunding campaigns online at steun.uu.nl: 16
- Total revenue: € 52,346

Equity funds

- Number of university projects that secured funding from other equity funds with the help of the Utrecht University Fund: 17
- Financial support obtained from other equity funds: € 171,129

Funding the Future

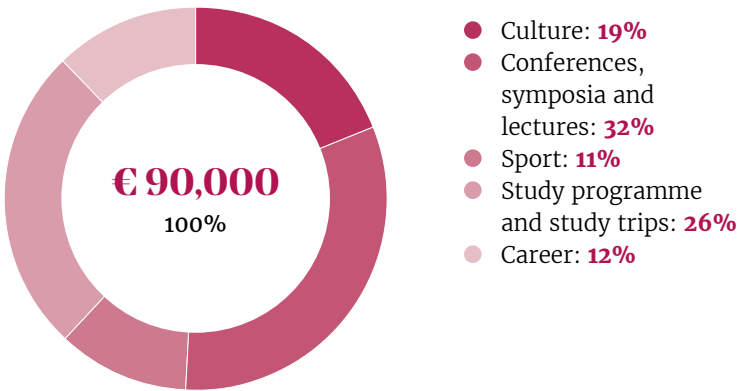
Total amount raised by the campaign
Funding the Future 2018: € 195,435

Earmarked for:

- Service dogs: € 13,573
- Student talent: € 139,103
- Refugee students: € 27,758
- Financial history: € 15,000

Friends

Friends: 12,724
Student Friends: 4,412
Donated by these Friends: € 301,017
Amount of this sum to be spent on subsidies for students: € 90,000



Alumni lend a hand

Utrecht University is working towards a better future. We are doing this through cooperation with the entire academic community. Alumni are an increasingly vital part of this community: they are joining hands with students, scientists, social partners, the government and the business community in order to find solutions to the major challenges of both today and tomorrow. To that end, our university operates through an active programme to reach, connect and involve our alumni, both with one another and with the university.

This is also why our staff manage an alumni database and organise activities especially for alumni. We communicate via means including the alumni magazine *Illuster*, our website and social media channels. The large-scale alumni survey in 2017 revealed that alumni feel a sense of involvement primarily with their own academic discipline or degree programme. A pilot involving alumni officers was therefore launched at two faculties in 2018. This pilot proved successful. In 2019, more faculties will be assigned an alumni officer of their own. And what’s more, our international alumni community is growing: there is an ever-expanding and increasingly active group of UU alumni who find one another in places all over the world.

Our university is providing its alumni with assistance in the form of scientific knowledge and information, career development, networking opportunities and events. We facilitate the Young Alumni Network, which brings together recent graduates. And we also organise various alumni activities such as the annual University Day, theme dinners and events – in Utrecht, various other cities in the Netherlands and in ten international cities as well. Turn to page 28 to learn more about a small selection of these activities.

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van den Bergh**
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For our growth & prosperity

The Utrecht University Fund helps Utrecht University to grow and flourish. Since the fund’s establishment in 1886 – making it the oldest university fund in the Netherlands – its goal has been to promote the vigour of the academic climate at our university. The Fund does this by forging connections between current students and staff of the university, its alumni and the city of Utrecht. It also assists the university in fundraising to support research, education, academic heritage and a vital study environment.

The aid from many volunteers and the financial support from over 14,000 friends and sponsors form an indispensable part of these efforts. Your contributions are what enables the Utrecht University Fund to make a difference, more and more each year. Some 70% of the money is used to support research that cannot be financed through the regular sources of funding, around 15% is spent on education in the form of scholarships, and the remaining funds are earmarked for the preservation of academic heritage and providing extracurricular facilities for students. It’s simply wonderful to see how we are able to generate real impact in this way. The stories in this Annual Report will tell you more about what we are working together to achieve.

The Utrecht University Fund is a registered foundation. Members of its Board of Directors serve on a voluntary basis and always include both a Utrecht University professor and a representative of the Executive Board of Utrecht University.

‘The Bright Minds Fellowship allowed me to discover what I enjoy and where my talents lie’

SUSAN VERSTEGEN IS THE FIRST PERSON IN HER FAMILY TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY

‘Suus, I think I know what’s going on. It’s the only reason you’d ever be calling me at work.’ My mother was as much on tenterhooks as I was’, Master’s student **Susan Verstegen** says of the moment she was able to tell her parents she’s been chosen to receive a Bright Minds Fellowship. ‘No one else in my family had ever gone to university before. I think my father got a bit choked up, truth be told.’

Susan is industrious and quite socially engaged. Maybe even a tad pushy in her rush to get ahead, she suspects. ‘But I never expected to get a scholarship. It’s a good sign for students that are a bit like me: if I can do it, they can too! It came as a complete surprise and I was absolutely over the moon. I’ve never replied to an email so quickly in my life.’

COMBATTING POLARISATION

Susan suspects that her involvement in the Dare to be Grey project may have had something to do with being chosen for the Bright Minds Fellowship. Together with twenty fellow students, she set up a campaign to help combat polarisation in society. ‘Zwarte Piet’, Islam, refugees – Dare to be Grey promotes an open discourse with space for more nuanced opinions. The project was extremely successful. ‘We won awards and received lots of invitations and media attention. I got so much out of that experience. Although most of my fellow students have moved on since then, I’ve stayed involved and am now treasurer of the foundation.’

MAKING GOOD AND PROVING IT

For Verstegen, being awarded the fellowship felt like serious recognition for her hard work.

‘It confirmed that, apparently, there’s something I’m good at and should pursue further. I really appreciate the financial independence the fellowship provides, too. But at the same time, there’s a certain pressure that comes along with this kind of fellowship. You want to make good on your potential and prove that you truly deserve the support. Luckily for me, I happen to find my work extremely enjoyable. I love attending uni and I’m surrounded by fun, motivated people here. That makes everything quite easy and boosts your energy, too.’

It also reflects the advice Susan’s parents gave her: ‘Do the things you enjoy’. Still, her decision to enrol in the International Relations in Historical Perspective Master’s programme was based on more than just potential enjoyment. ‘The programme looks at the historical roots of current conflicts, relationships and situations – and if you ask me, a solid grasp of those roots is essential to truly understanding such things. This aligns really well with my strong interest in safety-related issues: if you want to resolve conflicts or improve relationships, you have to know what has happened in the past so that, going forward, you can do better.’

CONTRIBUTING TO SAFETY

Susan is currently in the final phase of her work placement with the Royal Netherlands Army. ‘I’ve already written my thesis. It was a conscious decision to do that *before* my work placement, so that – hopefully – I can transition into a job right away, now that I’m already accustomed to working life. A job at the Ministry of Defence or some kind of intelligence work would be really cool. I’m interested in conducting research, sure, but preferably the kind with direct practical applications. While I’m a bit sad that my time at university is almost over, this Bright Minds Fellowship looks really good on my CV and will help me stand out when I enter the job market. And with everything I’ve learned during my studies, I hope to be able to make a big contribution to society’s interests – particularly in the area of safety.

If, before I enrolled, someone had told me about all of this, I never would have believed them. I’ve thought to myself at times: how did all this happen? And I’ve simply no idea – but the recognition and pride I feel from my family and friends definitely play a role and help make sure I do my very best. All in all, it’s a pleasant confluence of events that have given me the chance to discover what I enjoy and where my talents lie. I’m incredibly grateful to the university for this opportunity.’

Susan graduated a few weeks after this interview – cum laude – and let us know she’s accepted a staff position with the Royal Netherlands Army.

Donations from Friends – consisting of alumni, students and staff of Utrecht University – provide the basis for the Utrecht University Fund’s activities. Through an annual donation of at least 30 euros, Friends contribute to a flourishing university community. These donations make it possible to provide student grants, scholarships and special projects, among other things.

Susan was awarded a Bright Minds Fellowship. This is one of the scholarship programmes for talented Dutch and international students at our university. Thanks to the contributions from Friends of the Utrecht University Fund, more students are able to make use of these scholarships each year and our academic climate continues to become more diverse and international.

uu.nl/friend



The therapeutic effects of exercise on cancer patients



‘Take it easy and avoid overexerting yourself.’ Until the start of this century, this was the advice usually given to cancer patients during and after their course of treatment. Now, some twenty years later, there’s an impressive stack of publications showing that vigorous exercise can in fact be therapeutic for current and former patients. According to **Anne May**, a researcher at the UMC Utrecht’s Julius Center, the time has come to put these research findings into practice.

‘Our most important motivator is the desire to finally apply the years of research for the patients’ benefit’, explains Anne, an Associate Professor. Together with PhD candidate Anouk Hiensch and Assistant Professor Evelyn Monnikhof, and with support from the K.F. Hein Fund provided via the Utrecht University Fund, she is working to build a network of Utrecht-area fitness centres that specialise in serving oncology patients.

LOBBYING

‘Oncologists weren’t terribly eager to get involved in the initial studies. I had to really lobby for their interest. The same goes for the physical therapists. At first, I had to spend a lot of time explaining and providing evidence to support the fact that I wanted to conduct strenuous tests in which patients would push their limits, even while undergoing taxing chemotherapy. Now people just take my word for it.

INTENSIVE EXERCISE

Today, we have a great deal of evidence showing that intensive exercise is good for cancer patients. It can enhance their overall fitness and reduce fatigue. In many cases, however, patients don’t exercise or do so only for a short period, such as under the supervision of an oncology physical

therapist. The question is: what do people do *after* the medical programme has ended? Through this project, we hope to establish a link to the phase that comes after the medical aspect by providing gyms and fitness centres with the education needed to work with this particular target group. That way, current and former patients can start or stick with an exercise programme in a regular (non-medical) environment, but where they still have professional supervision.’

LIVING WITH THE EFFECTS OF CANCER

Anouk first became fascinated with exercise and cancer as a Bachelor’s student, when she attended a lecture on the topic. ‘More and more cancer patients are surviving longer with the disease, which means they are living longer with the effects of the disease. To be able to make such a big contribution to someone’s well-being through something as simple as exercise is a wonderful thing, one I’m happy to be part of.

FITNESS INSTRUCTORS

We have already visited a number of gyms to talk about the project and invited instructors to come to the Julius Center. The reactions have been really positive. Most fitness instructors are already familiar with the general principles of training. To work with cancer patients, however, you need specific expertise. What kinds of cancer are there? How does it take hold? What are the possible side effects of treatment? It’s also important that trainers are aware of potential red flags and know when to refer a client to another specialist, like a rehabilitation doctor.’

Anne: ‘Yet at the same time, a lack of knowledge often makes trainers overly cautious. We’re able to let them know that the most effective programmes in our study are fairly intense, and that it’s OK to urge the patients to keep going and finish the workout.’

Evelyn: ‘That way, the personal trainer knows that when someone says, ‘I’m really really tired’, it doesn’t necessarily mean that you should immediately send the person home to rest. Because it’s actually possible for exercise to have a positive impact on their cancer-related fatigue. You shouldn’t over-exercise, of course, but it’s okay to give your body a little jolt. As researchers, we’re not in a position to encourage patients to exercise while they’re receiving treatment. The doctor who’s administering the treatment, on the other hand, is.’

Anne: ‘Through presentations at symposia and other venues, we continue to urge doctors to recommend exercise to their patients.’

Anouk: ‘Many fitness instructors consider our programme to be a welcome solution. We also ask them what elements they’d like to see included in the education we’re planning to offer. There’s a great reciprocal exchange going on.’

EDUCATION

Anne, Anouk and Evelyn went looking for someone to permanently take on the role of teaching the course for fitness instructors. In Michel Meijers, they found such a person: in fact, he had already developed a programme called ‘training cancer patients’, aimed at teaching others to be oncology fitness instructors. Anne: ‘It’s great that Michel will be managing the education aspect, since (obviously) we’re researchers and not fitness instructors. We took his course ourselves, too, and supplement it with the findings from our research. That way, the investment benefits a programme that can go on without our involvement. And soon, there will be a new and readily-available avenue for former and current patients, so that they won’t have to expend their energy looking for the right place to exercise.’

The Utrecht University Fund also maintains relationships with other equity funds. It has a special partnership with the K.F. Hein Fund. This fund supports projects in the Utrecht region that have to do with culture, social work, the performing arts, public health, nature conservation and the preservation of monuments and historic buildings. The Utrecht University Fund submits special projects from Utrecht University to the K.F. Hein Fund, in cases when these projects reflect the latter’s objectives. In 2018, for instance, the K.F. Hein Fund provided financial support to Inclusion, Festival Europa and the university’s music festival, UUnited.

kfhein.nl

1.2 million for medical research

MEDICAL SCHOOL ALUMNA LEAVES HER ASSETS TO UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

Last year, Utrecht University received the largest bequest in its history. **Johanna Alida van Leerzem** left her assets, in the amount of 1.2 million euros, to the university where she studied medicine in the 1950s. The legacy will become part of the Utrecht University Fund. Through her bequest, Van Leerzem is supporting clinical scientific research conducted by young researchers in the field of internal medicine.

Johanna Alida (Annie) van Leerzem was born in Rotterdam on 25 January 1933 as the only child of Jacob van Leerzem, who had married Petronella Naaktgeboren (four years his junior) in 1930. The economic crisis in the Netherlands was at its most severe. Annie's father worked as marine engineer in the maritime shipping industry, and although his job frequently took him away from home, it also meant the family was reasonably well-off. Still, Annie's entire life was to be marked by this period of economic malaise and war. As a young girl living in the Polderlaan in Rotterdam-Zuid, she must have been able to see the devastating bombing of Rotterdam from the window of her parent's upstairs apartment. And the Dutch famine of 1944-45, the *Hongerwinter*, which the family spent in Rotterdam (where her father worked as an inspector at the Dutch Coal Authority during WWII) must have left a deep impression on her as well. She retained sober and frugal habits for the rest of her life, even when – after attending university – she would have been able to afford a bit more luxury.

'GYMNASIUM' IN ROTTERDAM

Immediately after the war, Annie's parents enrolled her in the prestigious 'Gymnasium Erasmianum' grammar school. For several years, this school had been housed in a modern building across from what was then the city hospital, in the district that would later become known as the Museum Quarter. In the meantime, her father had once more taken a position with the Holland America Line. He made long voyages and sent his wife and

daughter packages and cards from distant lands. Returning from his travels, he brought not only exotic fans and shawls for his wife, but books and coats for Annie as well. She was a diligent and clever pupil with a natural talent for the exact sciences – which she probably got from her father. Because her course package was heavy on maths and science, she found herself in a small class with four boys and just one other girl. After exactly six years, Annie sat her final exams in the summer of 1951.

MEDICINE IN UTRECHT

No one knows exactly what motivated Annie van Leerzem to enrol as a medical student in Utrecht. There was no medical school in Rotterdam at that time, meaning she had no choice but to leave her hometown. In those years, the Faculty of Medicine in Utrecht was closely intertwined with what was then still known as the City and Academic Hospital. This hospital, located alongside the railway, was housed in a diverse collection of buildings, partly dedicated to teaching and research and partly used for patient care. As a result of the rapid post-war growth in the number of medical students, this complex of buildings was straining at the seams. In the 1950s, the study of Medicine was undergoing sweeping changes thanks to efforts to modernise the training programme, but also as a result of the emergence of new disciplines such as social medicine and radiology. The introduction of antibiotics and psychopharmacology, as well as the rise of new technology, brought numerous changes as well.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

In any case, Annie was properly prepared when she arrived in this new world. Her parents spared neither expense nor effort in ensuring their daughter was able to pursue her education. They not only paid her 325-guilder tuition fees and the enrolment fee of ten guilders, but they also paid for her books, a dissection kit and a microscope – which cost the princely sum of 750 guilders – along with a mechanical stage to go with it for another 100 guilders. Annie was scrupulous in attending every lecture and practical. She filled dozens of exercise books with her notes and sketched hundreds of diagrams of cells, joints, organs and other parts of the body. In 1959, she graduated from what was then the Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht as a general medical practitioner.

TO BILTHOVEN

By this time, Annie's father was chief engineer for the Holland America Line, which meant he was often away from home. Annie and her mother spent the first year of her studies staying with family in the Utrecht city centre. Shortly thereafter, the family moved to the Bilderdijklaan in Bilthoven.

NEVER PRACTISED

Although Annie retained an interest in the medical profession for the rest of her life, along with her listing in the medical register for general practitioners, she never actually practised medicine. Caring for her parents took precedent and demanded all her time and attention. Both of her parents passed away within a short span of time in the late 1990s, when Annie herself was already in her sixties. She continued to live alone until the time of her death on 25 January 2018, leading a sober and relatively solitary existence. With her bequest, Annie is contributing after all to the medical science for which she had such a passion.

Private contributions to academic education and research are becoming increasingly vital in today's radically changing society. More frequently than ever, alumni, current and former staff and other stakeholders are choosing to designate a portion of their estate or entire legacy to benefit an academic purpose. The Utrecht University Fund facilitates such donations.

uu.nl/en/organisation/alumni/make-a-contribution/bequests

The legacy of Annie van Leerzem has been used to establish a named fund: the Leerzem Family Fund. The fund's resources will be used to benefit patient-related medical research and fundamental scientific research conducted by the Internal Medicine and Dermatology unit at the University Medical Center Utrecht.

uu.nl/organisatie/alumni/van-leerzem-fonds

Alumnus Prof. Carlo Gaillard, internist/nephrologist and head of this unit: *'The fund provides us with the opportunity to promote and support original clinical scientific research by promising young researchers over a longer period. In addition to existing sources of funding, this offers them an important helping hand. And it is especially meaningful that the source of this funding was herself a UU alumna.'*



Largest — and forgotten — Dutch opera takes the stage

They're the Oscars of the opera world: the International Opera Awards. Nominees answer to such illustrious names as 'Opéra National de Paris' and 'Staatsoper Berlin'. In the midst of these, the greatest opera houses in the world, stands one amateur orchestra: the Utrechtsch Studenten Concert was nominated in the Rediscovered Work category for their performance of 'Thijl'. Alumnus **Jaap van Hellenberg Hubar** says: 'It's unbelievable! If they only knew how much hard work went into getting this opera on stage.'

With the 39th anniversary of the USC approaching, student in the Art Policy and Management Master's programme and chair of the USC anniversary committee Jaap knew he wanted to do something big. 'We have a tradition of celebrating our anniversaries by putting on an opera. I liked the idea of dusting off the Dutch opera 'Thijl'.'

OVERCOMING HURDLES

Jaap's proposal didn't exactly meet with immediate and universal enthusiasm. Not least because a rather large number of hurdles would need to be overcome in order to perform Thijl. 'The Dutch composer Jan van Gilse completed the opera during World War II. The piece, based on the tale of Tjil Uilenspiegel, has been performed in its entirety only once. That was in 1980. Recordings of that single performance are rare to non-existent, which means nobody knows what it sounds like.'

AN OPERA OF MYTHICAL PROPORTIONS

The length of the opera and the size of the chorus posed major obstacles as well. 'The piece lasts a good three hours. Besides the symphony orchestra, we had to put together an absolutely gigantic choir.'



There were also 65 solo roles to be assigned – an insane number.' To summarise the challenge: Thijl is an opera of mythical proportions, the largest opera ever performed in Dutch, for which we have no recording or sheet music. 'Well, except for the sheet music handwritten by the composer Van Gilse, with his own dubious penmanship, that is. And still, we decided to go for it. I think it was probably good that none of us had any actual experience with such a megalomaniacal project – otherwise one of us would surely have suggested choosing a different opera.'

CROWDFUNDING

When putting on such an enormous production, you welcome every bit of help you can find. 'One of the first and most crucial institutions we turned to was the Utrecht University Fund. With their help, we launched a crowdfunding campaign that raised no less than 17,500 euros. Which is a great result, obviously, but there was another area where the Fund was perhaps even more valuable. They have quite a vast network and access to thousands of graduates – and they granted us the use of that gigantic network. I frequently presented the project at UU alumni events so that more and more people would hear about what we were doing.'

THIJL 2.0

While Jaap was busy increasing the name recognition of their soon-to-be-performed anniversary opera, director Wim Trompert and an artistic team set to work on the story. 'The result was a kind of Thijl 2.0. One that is a good forty-five minutes shorter than the original, and that has a more logical and emotionally gripping structure as well.' Next, half of the 90 USC members started digitising the sheet music.

'45 of us settled in behind a computer screen in order to convert every one of Van Gilse's handwritten notes into a digital version. That meant months and months of tedious and painstaking labour.' Once the students had succeeded in persuading eight soloists to take part – performers who sing at the highest level in the Netherlands – the USC then contacted the National Military Museum in Soesterberg. 'It struck us as the ideal location. The museum was amenable, even though in the beginning they had no idea what they'd said 'yes' to. They probably thought: that's nice, a student club wants to come put on a school musical here. Luckily, they realised in time that we were planning to basically take over the premises for a few weeks.'

BRIGHT BLUE SHIPPING CONTAINERS

The students built their own theatre on the grounds of the museum, which included arranging 86 bright blue shipping containers. 'Those containers were delivered to Soesterberg over the course of two days, meaning about forty transport movements by a convoy of five heavy trucks. The containers served as the stage set, but also as a windbreak, dressing rooms and storage space. Several aircraft belonging to the museum had to be towed elsewhere to make room.'

REVIEWS

On the opera's opening night, 30 June, the performance is not entirely sold out. The audience does, however include a reviewer from newspaper *De Volkskrant*. The following day, they write that the Utrechtse Studenten Concert has achieved an impressive feat 'by bringing this all-but-forgotten opera to life in a professional – and I dare say spectacular – fashion'. Reviews in the *NRC* and *Theaterkrant* were similarly positive, which was obviously quite thrilling for Jaap and his colleagues. 'I'll never forget reading the reviews in my room in student housing and checking the online system for ticket sales. Every time I hit 'refresh' we'd sold another 20 tickets. Until the show was completely sold out.'

Regrettably, Thijl did not take home the Opera Award on 29 April 2019. But according to Jaap, 'It was an amazing prize just to be nominated.'

Our crowdfunding platform steun.uu.nl exists for the benefit of our entire academic community. Scientists and student organisations can use this platform to set up crowdfunding campaigns of their own. This is a way for benefactors to assist in carrying out scientific research and to support student initiatives in Utrecht and our education in general. By leaving a message, they can tell others about their donation and involvement in our cause. In 2018, crowdfunding made it possible for students of Veterinary Medicine to organise Carriage Driving Day ('Dag van het Aangespannen Paard'). And Feminer – a foundation dedicated to creating a future where men and women enjoy equal career opportunities – was able, via our platform, to raise the funding it needed to put on its annual dinner.

steun.uu.nl

‘By helping just a little bit, you can eliminate obstacles and create more equal opportunities’



Many times, it’s an astonishingly small gesture that opens the big doors’, **Bert van der Zwaan** says, gazing at his wife. She is **Wilma Wessels**, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Geosciences, and together they established the ‘Right to Learn Fund’ following Bert’s retirement as Rector Magnificus of Utrecht University. Through the fund, the couple hope to remove the barriers that keep people in disadvantaged groups from making the most of their talents.

Wilma Wessels: ‘Bert has had a great deal of contact with refugees in recent years. He met people for whom a tiny bit of support – like 500 copies of a document so that a whole group of refugees could learn Dutch – had been extremely meaningful and even life-changing, in some cases. And through *Meet the Professor*, he also encountered disadvantages caused by a person’s circumstances rather than any lack of ability on their part. This is extremely distressing. Everyone has the right to learn. Whatever kind of training or education it may be, learning is a basic human need.’

Bert van der Zwaan: ‘What’s more, I saw how children in underprivileged neighbourhoods take it for granted that they will remain in that same social class their entire life. If you ask them what they want to be when they grow up, they all say a professional footballer or a hairdresser. Whereas at a ‘rich, white school’, you hear kids say: “I’m going to be a doctor”. That really makes you aware of the injustice of such different starting points.’

WW: ‘We both grew up in families where it wasn’t normal to attend university. At school, they told me I should teach handicrafts – even though I was the best in the class and the boys were all advised to go to medical school when they got older!’

BvdZ: ‘As she said, it wasn’t at all assumed that we would go to university: I was the first person in my entire family. At the same time, we didn’t have anything holding us back either; there were no real societal obstacles for us. But the world has rather lost its innocence since then. There’s a fundamental flaw in the fabric of society. The ‘yellow vests’ protesting in France are not some short-lived, isolated phenomenon. We’re facing a real problem in terms of the relationship between the wealthy upper layers of society and the much less affluent lower class. The segregation is increasing.’

WW: ‘Our own shared background plays a role in the desire to contribute to more equal opportunities. While this fund won’t enable us to remove all financial and mental obstacles of course, it is at least a way for us to do something to help a broad group of people who can benefit from some added attention.’

BvdZ: ‘Another reason Wilma and I decided to set up this fund is that we are eager to ‘give back’ in some way. It might sound more than a little cheesy, but the university has truly meant a great deal to us. And it still does. It’s our home base, which we are very privileged to have. Of course, this is absolutely not a one-way street. We have to dispense with the idea that giving money is enough – ‘look how selfless and generous we are’. What is truly essential, rather, is the eradication of barriers faced by all parties, and that everyone is able to benefit from their elimination. What might people from different backgrounds have to offer us? What do they bring to the table, in terms of cultural wealth? What kind of lived experience can they share? Multifformity is absolutely crucial to the university. And the university is not (yet) multifform enough.

WW: ‘Perhaps in the long term, similar initiatives – such as *Inclusion*, the *buddy project*, *Meet the Professor* and the *Junior Summer School* – could be brought together under the Right to Learn name. We’re equally fond of all the projects, as they all share a common goal: to give young people with desire and ability the chance they deserve!’

Lieke Dekker, member of Wetenschapsknooppunt staff and applicant on behalf of the buddy programme, Debuut: ‘In 2019, support from the Right to Learn Fund will enable us to improve our buddy programme and expand it from fifteen to thirty pupils, which we’re extremely excited about. Debuut matches pupils in the last year of primary school, whose parents and siblings did not attend university, with current UU students from a similar background. Each buddy pair spends nearly a year exploring the university and taking part in UU activities together. This provides the pupils with an opportunity to get to know the university, as well as giving them the role model they may be lacking at home.’

In many cases, donors who contribute larger amounts decide for themselves which purpose they’d like their gift to serve. To do this, they set up what’s called a ‘named fund’. The founder gives the fund a name and determines its objective. The goal of the Right to Learn Fund, for instance, is to encourage pupils and students from disadvantaged backgrounds to make the most of their talents on their way to, or during, higher education. The Utrecht University Fund manages the administration of these named funds. There are currently twenty such funds, and that number continues to grow. For a complete overview, see page 22.

uu.nl/en/organisation/alumni/well-spent/named-funds

Decide for yourself how your gift will be used

Named funds make up a growing share of the Utrecht University Fund portfolio. In 2018, there were 27 such funds. And more and more donors are expressing interest in establishing a named fund.

When a named fund is set up, the founder – who may be either a private individual or a foundation or other organisation – gives the fund a name and designates its purpose. The Utrecht University Fund manages the fund’s assets and allocates the resources available for spending in accordance with the goal of the fund in question. In other words: as a donor, you determine the impact of your gift. It is possible to establish a named fund for a donation totalling 50,000 euros or more.

A named fund can also be set up by arranging a bequest to the university, whether of your entire estate or a specified legacy. You also have the option of combining a charitable gift now with an additional donation from your estate later on. Many times, a named fund is established by a living donor and then supplemented by a legacy after their death.

It’s possible to contribute to an existing named fund as well. Of the 27 named funds managed by the Utrecht University Fund, twelve funds also take part in fundraising to support their respective goals. An overview of the named funds in 2018 is provided on these pages.

Would you like to contribute to an existing named fund? If so, please visit: uu.nl/en/organisation/alumni/well-spent/named-funds.

Establishing a named fund? If so, please visit: uu.nl/en/organisation/alumni/make-a-contribution/set-up-a-named-fund.

Named funds that actively solicit donations. You are most welcome to donate to these funds.

Named funds that do not engage in active fundraising.

*

New

The **ROSANNA Fund for women** promotes the academic development of talented women at Utrecht University.

The **Yvoor Fund** stimulates the wide-ranging international development of ambitious Utrecht students.

The **BINF Fund** supports scientifically relevant and socially irrelevant research projects in the field of bioinformatics, which have difficulty securing funding through regular channels.

The **Hofvijver Fund** is an initiative of the Hofvijverkring donation group in The Hague and is intended to promote scientific research and education in Utrecht, such as by awarding grants to talented PhD candidates.

The **Minderhoud Fund** was founded through the legacy of an alumna and grants scholarships for prestigious study projects or work placements of U.V.S.V./N.V.V.S.U. members.

The **Olaf Schuiling Fund** enables fundamental research in the field of geochemistry for which regular resources are insufficient.

The **Ronald van Kempen Urban Geography Fund** aims to stimulate doctoral and post-doctoral scientific research in the field of social geography and urban planning.

The **Friends of Veterinary Medicine Utrecht University** strives to make the difference for animals by supporting scientific research, relevant projects and care that will yield long-term improvement in the health and well-being of animals.

The **Dr. A.F. Monna Fund** is aimed at promoting education and research in mathematics at Utrecht University’s Mathematics Institute.

Friends of the Botanical Gardens enables projects in connection with nature education, biodiversity, science education and culture that take place in the Botanical Gardens.

* The **Right to Learn Fund** encourages pupils and students from disadvantaged backgrounds to make the most of their talents on their way to, or during, higher education. *See the full story on page 20.*

* The **UCU Scholarship Fund** provides scholarships to students at the University College Utrecht who would be unable to afford the study programme without financial support.

* The **Veterinary Medicine Anniversary Fund** supports veterinary scientific research and promotes research aimed at reducing the use of animal testing.

* The **Professor A.R. de Bruijne Fund** supports teaching and research in the field of notarial law at Utrecht University.

The **Truida Schok Fund** was established via a legacy and provides assistance with housing costs to international students who are studying at Utrecht University via an Utrecht Excellence Scholarship.

* The **Leerzem Family Fund** was established using the bequest of medical school alumna Annie van Leerzem. *Read her story starting on page 14.*

The **Aurelius Fund** supports talented (preferably non-EU) students at Utrecht University who are enrolled in a medical or biomedical sciences or life sciences programme.

The **Christiane Seidel Fund** strives to promote knowledge of the German Language and Culture at Utrecht University and thereby in the Netherlands in general.

The **Complex Systems Fund** stimulates scientific research and education at Utrecht University that is related to the study of complex systems.

The **Godard Van Reede Fund** finances research into the societal role and position of the noble class in Utrecht, along with that of the members of the Bailiwick of Utrecht of the Teutonic Order, within Dutch society.

The **Maria Naundorf van Gorkum Fund** promotes the proper medical care of animals, as well as the shelter and temporary housing of stray, injured or ill animals and the finding of proper homes for adoptable pets.

The **Trappeniers-Wols Fund** supports experimental research and doctoral projects, preferably (though not exclusively) in the fields of the exact and life sciences.

The **Martijn Zwart Fund** provides financial contributions to American and Canadian students so that they can pursue education or conduct research at the James Boswell Institute at Utrecht University.

The **Cor and Tine Drooger Fund** supports scientific research and education in the Geosciences, specifically in palaeontology and bio-geology.

The **International Economic Law Fund** was founded through the legacy of professor emeritus Verloren van Themaat and promotes education and research in the field of international public economic law.

The **Swaantje Mondt Fund** allows UU PhD candidates to conduct a portion of their research abroad, while enabling international PhD candidates to do the same at our university.

The **Scrinierius Fund** provides student loans and grants to students in Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Science programmes.

‘You can achieve a lot through hard work’

The Utrecht University Fund supports student life at our university by making 80,000 euros available for grants each year. This funding comes from donations made by Friends of our Fund. Both student organisations and individual students may request funding for extracurricular activities that contribute to students’ personal and academic development. The student committee of the Utrecht University Fund evaluates these requests. In 2018, for example, two Biology students published a children’s book about the human body, dozens of student symposia were held and numerous students received financial support which enabled them to attend conferences in other countries.

Members of the 2018-2019 Board of the Utrecht University Fund Student Committee:



Rozemarijn van Rhenen



Daan Verkaik



Froukje Smits



Myrthe Buckens

By donating 10 euros per year, students can become a Friend of the Utrecht University Fund. This is also a way for students to contribute to grants aimed at student life. Following a recruitment campaign in September 2018, the Fund acquired some 1,250 new Student Friends.

uu.nl/stuf

Last summer, student of Veterinary Medicine **Anne Tersmette** saw her childhood dream come true: taking part in a major dressage competition, guiding her own horse through a routine set to music. She learned a great deal from the intensive process leading up to the big day. ‘There’s no way Aron and I could have achieved this without perseverance.’

Aron and Anne have been a duo for twelve years, which means the Haflinger and the Veterinary student have been through quite a lot together. They have trekked through Poland and the Czech Republic, travelled through Germany and the Netherlands with a cart and taken part in competitions against horses of a different breed. ‘Technically, Haflingers are ponies, which means they have relatively short legs’, Anne explains. ‘They’re very different than the horses you see competing in dressage at the Olympics. As far as I know, the Haflinger registry is the only breed-specific registry to hold its own European Championship.’

And that is precisely the EC that Anne took part in for the first time last summer, following a year of highly intensive preparation. In the period leading up to the tournament, she trained five or six times a week. ‘There were nights when I’d had dinner with friends and then I had to go practice with Aron afterwards, even when the weather was rough.’ With a laugh: ‘I guess you could say I now have some idea of what top athletes have to sacrifice for their sport.’



A WELCOME GIFT

In addition to the intensive training programme, Anne also had to take care of all the logistical and financial aspects herself. The trip to Stadl-Paura in Austria, the vaccinations and blood tests for Aron, food and lodging while there and the entry fee itself: all told, the adventure came with a price tag of some three thousand euros, which is why she went in search of sponsors.

Tersmette’s tutor in the Veterinary Medicine programme told her that the Utrecht University Fund supports students’ participation in extracurricular projects when those projects contribute to their personal development. As a result, she applied for funding: ‘The thousand euros from the Utrecht University Fund was an incredibly welcome gift, as were the other contributions from sponsors.’

A CHILD’S DREAM

Those sponsors helped Anne make her childhood dream come true. ‘As a kid, I was one of those horse-crazy little girls. Riding my bike to and from school, I was busy imaging the perfect routine in my head. And now here I was: performing my own dressage routine to music from *Game of Thrones*, in front of an audience. It was really amazing.’

Anne took sixth place, a result with which she’s since made her peace. ‘But I was really disappointed at the time. I’d ridden better on other days and the actual prizes stopped at fifth place. Still, I realise that – at the time – it was a new experience for both of us.’

SETTING GOALS

The student compares the intensive road to the European Championship with that of her study programme. ‘I was quite naive when I started the Veterinary Medicine programme as well; I had no idea what it entailed.

And when I graduate soon, that’s only the beginning, really. Getting ready for the EC was also a kind of big, exciting voyage of discovery. And it didn’t really start until I arrived in Austria. This whole adventure reinforced the idea that if you set a goal for yourself and work hard, you can achieve that goal.’

After the European Championship, Aron and Anne took two months off – but new goals have already been set in the time since. ‘We’ve gone up several levels in the last few years in the regular competitions we enter. Now, I’d like to move up to ZZ light and maybe even the sub-top class after that. Every time I think to myself, ‘All right, we’re just about out of our depth now’, we come first or second in a group of “real” dressage horses. I take that as a sign that Aron and I still have plenty of room to learn and grow.’

Donations make research possible



The unusual combination of dogs and defence runs through **Emmy van Houtert's** life like a connecting thread. Since 2017, the PhD candidate has been affiliated with the 'V-PWR project', a study the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine is conducting into service dogs and how they help veterans suffering from PTSD. 'It's truly to remarkable to hear about the affect one of these dogs can have on an entire family.'

As a toddler, Van Houtert wrapped her arms around the neck of the family's Rottweiler, Bora. Her parents had bought Bora because her father's job with the Ministry of Defence meant he was frequently away on deployment for long stretches. Van Houtert: 'My mother felt safer with the dog around.' She later studied Animal Science in Wageningen and conducted her graduation project among the military dog handlers at the Woensdrecht air force base. The V-PWR research project on which Van Houtert is currently working is an initiative of UU researchers Nienke Endenburg and Joris Wijnker.

PIONEERING

She was allowed to choose the topic of her own doctoral research assignment. Veterans with a service dog report feeling better than before. But what does that mean, in concrete terms? And what about the well-being

of the dogs? 'Dogs like these are much more than a mere tool. People get attached to them and the well-being of one impacts the well-being of the other', Van Houtert explains. 'Especially in 2017, not much was known about this topic, so we're really doing pioneering work here.'

For that reason, she began by reviewing the literature. Her conclusion: we really don't know anything yet. 'Although a few pilot studies have been conducted in the past, there were no control groups or long-term studies. And there had been no studies whatsoever into the dogs' well-being, despite the fact that it's ethically relevant in these cases. If we're going to put animals to work for us, we have a duty to make sure we're treating them properly.'

NEW METHOD OF MEASUREMENT

So far, Van Houtert has developed a measurement method. 'This involves measuring the hormone levels in the bodies of both dog and veteran, as well as their overall activity. Both can tell us something about how the dog and the person are feeling.' V-PWR is also working to set up control groups: one containing people with no dog (yet), one made up of veterans without PTSD and a 'pet group' consisting of dogs from breeds similar to that of the service dog. When the time comes, this will allow Van Houtert to measure differences in the well-being of

veterans with and without a service dog, and with and without PTSD – as well as differences in well-being between service dogs and pets.

FUNDING THE FUTURE

'This research is entirely dependent on donations and charitable gifts', Van Houtert says. 'Because this area of research is still in its infancy, and specific measurement methods have yet to be developed, it's difficult to obtain support from the major funds. The Utrecht University Fund's assistance in putting the project in touch with the 'Funding the Future' fundraising campaign therefore provided a welcome boost. And not only financially, but because the fund arranged a great deal of publicity for our project as well. As a result, we received donations from private individuals and other organisations, too.'

TAKING WALKS

Van Houtert has met many veterans with service dogs in the course of her research. Time and again, she is impressed by how these people are benefiting. 'Service dogs can tell how a person is feeling by looking at body language and facial expressions, and then act accordingly. What's more, a dog is also a good motivator to get outside a take a walk, which helps reduce stress and/or over-stimulation.' Recently, Van Houtert visited a veteran who already had pet dogs of his own, but still needed a service dog. 'The service dog is truly focused on him, unlike the other dogs in the house. It's been a great help to him, and to his family, because the dog's helped him feel better. That's the kind of story that makes our research especially valuable.'

'Funding the Future' is the name of the annual fundraising campaign organised by the Utrecht University Fund. Each year, friends, alumni, staff and students give generously to the projects selected by the Fund. In 2018, all of you helped raise the fantastic sum of 191,555 euros, an amount that was distributed among four worthy projects. In addition to the V-PWR study, the Utrecht University Fund provided support to excellent students through the Utrecht Excellence Scholarships, and to refugee students via Inclusion and the 'Netherlands' housekeeping book' research project, which aims to map out the financial history of the Netherlands.

In 2019, the Utrecht University Fund is once again asking for support for a new group of four deserving Funding the Future projects.

uu.nl/en/organisation/alumni/contribute/funding-the-future

Where impact gets rewarded

FIRST AGNITES VROLIK AWARD FOR RESEARCH INTO SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

On 22 February 2018, Daphina Misiedjan won the first-ever Agnites Vrolik Award. She received the award during the inaugural edition of the Agnites Vrolik Banquet. The Utrecht University Fund was able to introduce this special award thanks to the bequest of Dentristy alumna Cobi de Bree. Each year, the Fund will present a cash prize of 25,000 euros to a talented scientist affiliated with our university who is conducting research that contributes to finding solutions to current challenges faced by society.

Through this award, the Fund is demonstrating that the research conducted at our university has a vital impact and will be rewarded. Daphina Misiedjan is conducting research into the role of law in the fair and sustainable distribution of water across our planet. The award was named in honour of Dr Agnites Vrolik, who studied mathematics and physics and was the first chairperson of the Utrecht University Fund. And now, this festive awards banquet marked the start of a new tradition.

‘This award is chiefly a pat on the back urging me to carry on with my research and offering support for my further development, and I’m extremely pleased to receive it.’ — Daphina Misiedjan



CERTIFICATE FOR ALL NEW SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

On 3 October 2018, our university extended a warm welcome to all new students with a scholarship. On that date, all new students who have been awarded a Utrecht Excellence Scholarship, a Holland Scholarship or a Bright Minds Scholarship were presented with an official certificate by Board President Anton Pijpers. For Utrecht University Fund donors, this was a fine opportunity to see for themselves how happy students are to have been given the chance to attend Utrecht University. Scholarship alumni and students who are now beginning the second year of their studies thanks to a scholarship were also on hand to welcome their successors to Utrecht.



UCU CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!

University College Utrecht celebrated its twentieth anniversary in August. In 1998, Utrecht became the first Dutch university to open a college based on the Anglo-Saxon model in which students explore broad-based learning. Twenty years on, UCU is among the faculties that launched the pilot involving an alumni officer in 2018. This means a special effort was made to invite alumni for the celebratory anniversary week, which included an exhibition and documentary. Alumni, students and donors had an opportunity to exchange experiences during the anniversary dinner.





The Utrecht University Fund is extremely grateful to its Friends and donors for their loyal support. We therefore invite these benefactors to take part in the Annual General Meeting each year. In 2018, we met in Museum Speelklok for an afternoon centred on the theme of diversity. Haza Rahim (Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences and winner of the 2018 Young Lecturer Award) spoke about diversity in education. We can all look back at a successful year, in which each of your donations was put to use where it will be truly valuable. Lodewijk Hijmans van den Bergh presented the proceeds from the 2018 Funding the Future campaign to Board president Anton Pijpers. In a video, various recipients of financial support from our fund – such as student and Syrian refugee Dima Allaham and Phy Hnin Thwin, a student from Myanmar – talk about why they are so glad to have been chosen. They also personally thank the donors for their contributions.

This video is still available if you'd like to watch it:
www.uu.nl/organisatie/alumni/utrechts-universiteitsfonds/jaarbijeenkomst-2018

It's a festive occasion each and every year, this traditional 'homecoming' when alumni pay a visit to their alma mater. The 2018 edition was held on 14 April. Following a morning programme that included tours of the Hubrecht Institute, the Utrecht Science Park and Fotodok, we zipped along to University Hall in auto rickshaws. This year's theme was the *Future of Work*. In two rounds of lectures, scientist from a broad range of disciplines at Utrecht University shared their knowledge of and ongoing research into changing staffing policies, algorithms, networks and increasingly flexible employment relationships. The day concluded in festive style with the presentation of the Vliegthart Thesis Award, which was won by Aafje de Roest (Master's student in Dutch Literature).



ENDOWED CHAIR

Prof. Stijn Ruiter has held an endowed chair at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences since 2014, where he focuses on research into social and spatial aspects of criminality and other deviant behaviour. Ruiter is a senior research and MT member of the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR), a national research institute belonging to the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). The Utrecht University Fund strives to make more chairs and endowed chairs possible in 2019 and beyond.

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