



Utrecht University

Utrecht  
University Fund



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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# Pausing to reflect on progress

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In 2017, the Utrecht University Fund supported unique projects. With support from our crowdfunding platform, Joren Janzing made a film about climate-proofing the river Rhine for the future.  
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# Alive and kicking

Despite the venerable age of the Utrecht University Fund, founded in 1886, our objectives are very much alive. Contributing to the growth and prosperity of the university. And strengthen our alma mater's financial power.

These objectives produce tangible results. In 2017, a record amount of over € 1.4 million was raised on behalf of the university community. This was mainly due to an increase in Named Funds and a substantial donation from an estate. In addition, for the first time monies were raised through crowdfunding.

Just as important was that the Utrecht University Fund was also able to spend a record amount in 2017. This was primarily done by awarding grants from Named Funds. Other projects received support from the proceeds of the Friends Funds and the 2017 Funding the Future campaign. Contributions to two Utrecht University grant programmes deserve special mention. In 2017, the first Bright Minds Fellowships were awarded. These are intended for talented Dutch and EU students who contribute to the diversity of the university. Furthermore, support was provided to the Utrecht Excellence Scholarships to offer high-achieving students from outside the EU the opportunity to enrol in Master's programmes in Utrecht.

The new style and format of this Annual Report reflect the Utrecht University Fund's commitment to renewal. We are eager to tell the stories behind various projects to which the Fund contributed and we are pleased to share experiences from donors as well as recipients. The well-attended and lively Annual Meeting at the Municipality of Utrecht's new council offices in November was also an opportunity to share stories.

Renewal applies to the board of the Fund as well. We said farewell to Robert Croll and Marjan Oudeman, grateful for their contributions over the past few years. And we have welcomed Barbara Oomen and Anton Pijpers.

The success of the Utrecht University Fund is in large part the result of the hard work by the staff members of the Alumni Office. Therefore, a heartfelt thanks to the team led by Fenna Hanraets-van Charldorp.

Finally, we would not have been able to achieve these fantastic results without your support. Thank you very much.

**Lodewijk Hijmans van den Bergh**  
Chair, Utrecht University Fund

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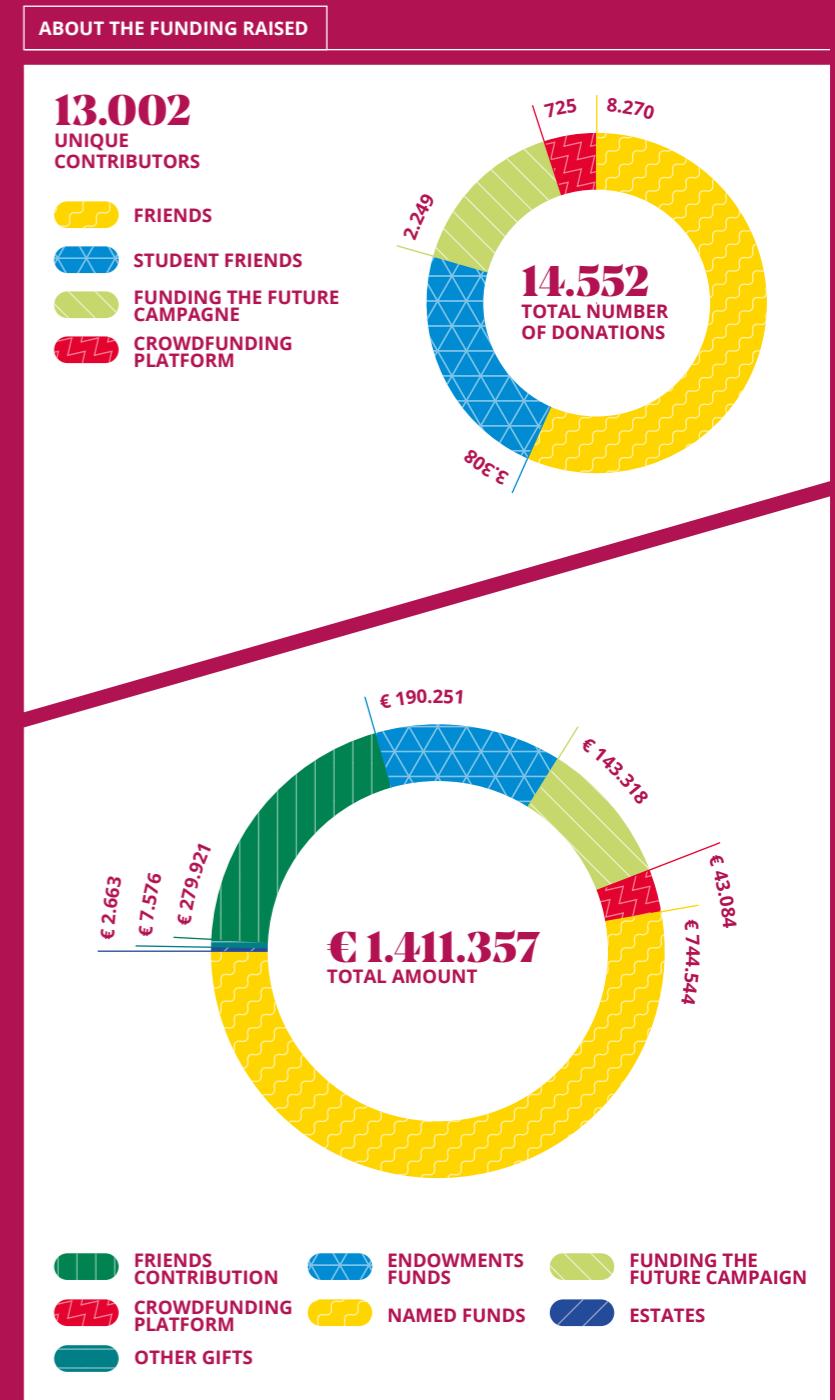
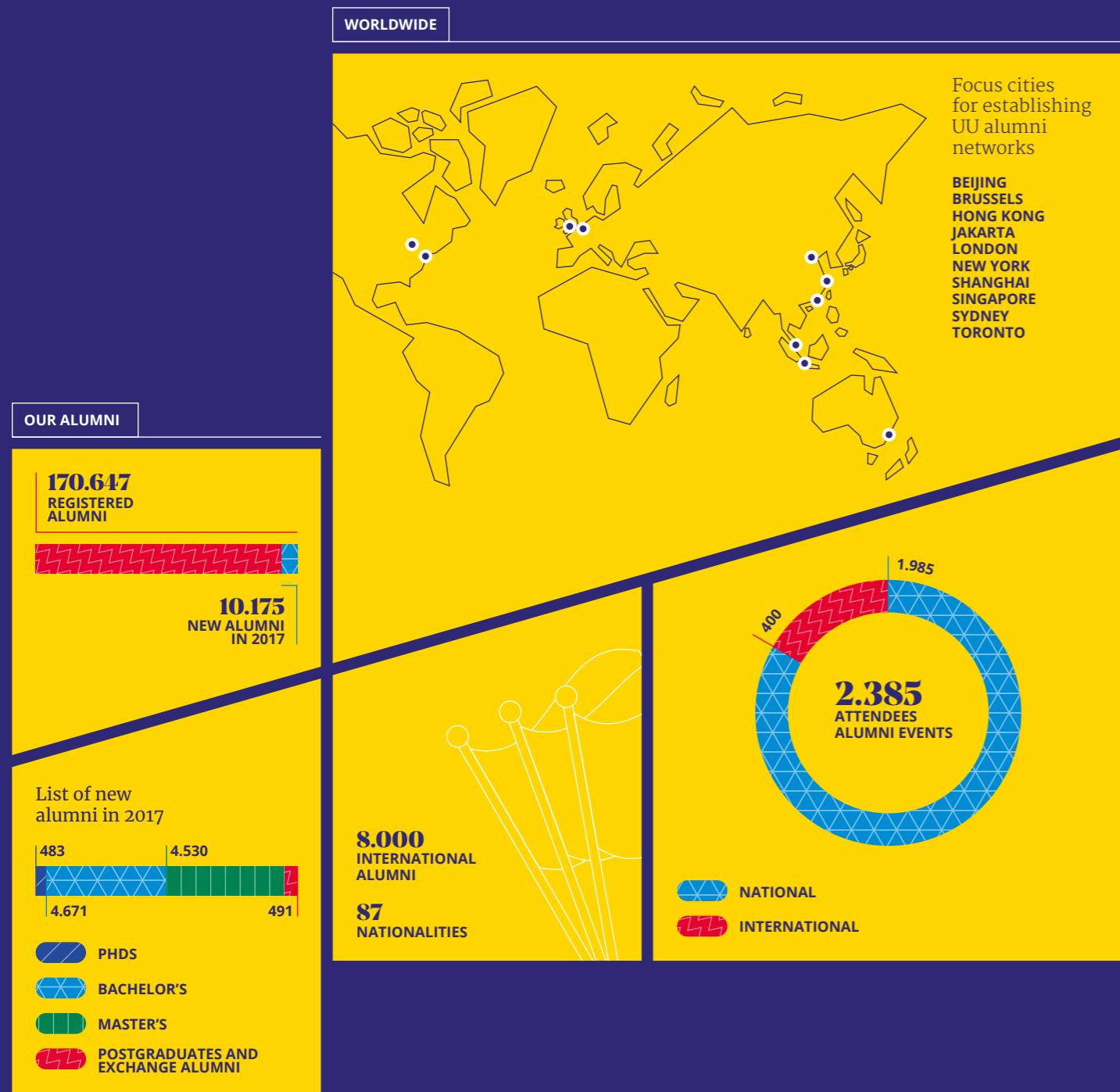
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# What do the figures tell us about 2017?



# We are here for you

Contact with alumni is very important to Utrecht University. Reaching, engaging and involving alumni allows them to make a vital contribution to research, education, reputation and job market orientation.

The Alumni Office manages the alumni database and is responsible for alumni engagement and policy, alumni communication, marketing and fundraising.

## Do you know how to find us?

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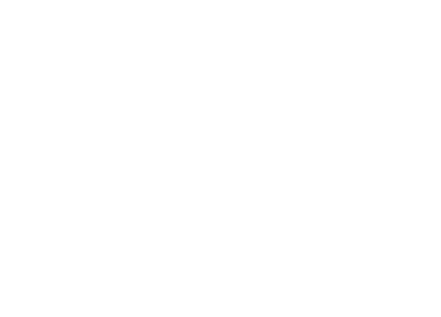
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# Our relationship with alumni

Utrecht University and the alumni community maintain a mutually valuable relationship. Working from our university, the Alumni Office assumes responsibility for alumni engagement and policy, both nationally and internationally, through activities such as:

- Organising alumni activities and events, such as University Day, wETENschap, theme dinners and international gatherings;
- Facilitating the Young Alumni Network;
- Alumni research – in 2017, the Alumni Office interviewed 5,035 alumni during a large-scale alumni survey in cooperation with the LifeLong Learning programme;
- Communication, including the alumni magazine Illuster and our own social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter).

Utrecht University provides help to alumni in the form of scientific knowledge and information, career development, networking, research internships and events.



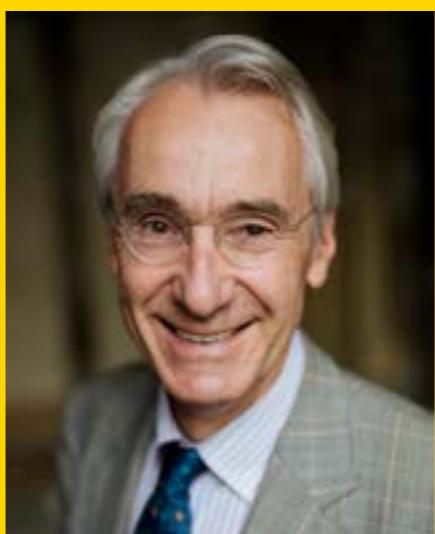
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**President of the Executive Board  
of Utrecht University**

# For growth & prosperity

The Utrecht University Fund traditionally connects the university's students and staff, its alumni and the city of Utrecht.

## BACKGROUND

The fund was established in 1886, making it the oldest university fund of its kind in the Netherlands. The goal is and has always been to promote the academic social climate at Utrecht University. In the founding year, alumni raised over 18,000 guilders. This was a considerable sum at the time and dozens of student initiatives could be supported immediately.

## MISSION

The Utrecht University Fund wants to contribute to the growth and prosperity of Utrecht University with respect to education, research and the academic social climate. This includes support for student activities and grants, assuming responsibility for preserving academic heritage and enabling special facilities for science and education where public funding is lacking.

## SUPPORT

The help from many volunteers and the financial support of more than 13,000 Friends and sponsors are essential. You support the fund's mission with your contribution. By giving to the academic community, you ultimately contribute to a better future.

## ADMINISTRATION

The board of the Utrecht University Fund comprises five volunteer board members and a representative from the Executive Board of Utrecht University.



**'Focusing on  
*refugee status*  
is counter-  
productive'**

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LAIAL ALLAHAM GOES BACK TO UNIVERSITY IN Utrecht

'During my first year in the Netherlands, I felt hesitant to tell people that I am a refugee. You lose your identity. If you get introduced as a refugee, this is all people see. You are nothing else. Just a refugee.' **Laial Allaham** - a law graduate from Damascus, Syria - came to the Netherlands three years ago. Realising her Syrian university degree would not help her to find work, she was determined to go back to university and qualify herself in international law. Gradually she is restoring her self-confidence and identity.

'You get well-intended praise when you achieve something, as if it were a big surprise that - despite being a refugee - you are a capable person. I'm sure people mean well, but focusing on the refugeeship is counterproductive. Thankfully, I am better now at dealing with it: I feel welcome here. In general people are very kind, open and willing to help.'

#### **LEAVING SYRIA**

After graduating in 2009, Laial worked at a university near Damascus for a few years. Then the area became disconnected and it was too dangerous to go out due to bombing and other safety concerns. 'It felt like life was over. Being alive is not just breathing. Not just sitting at home being afraid. For me the only option was to get up and do something. My family didn't agree with me leaving Syria, because they were scared.' She smiles shyly: 'But hey, I am stubborn. Even if something were to happen, I would not regret trying to get away. You don't make a decision like this if you have something to lose.'

To Laial Europe was just a continent. The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium? They all seemed the same. 'My priority was to get out of Syria. From Damascus I went to Lebanon and from there to Turkey. Because of all the adrenaline I wasn't scared. You simply don't have time to panic; you just have to act. From Turkey I traveled to Greece by boat. I had a

friend in the Netherlands who told me that the people were friendly here. I managed to fly to the Netherlands and applied for asylum.'

#### **SIGNING UP AT UNIVERSITIES**

'The first year I stayed at an Asylum-seekers centre (AZC in Dutch), where I taught myself (basic) Dutch. The rest of the time I just had to wait and be patient. I wanted to start a master's programme and visited open days at all the universities. I signed up for Tilburg and Leiden, but was not accepted. It was very disappointing because it meant another year of waiting. But then, by chance, I read about InclUUsion on Facebook. I was so very, very happy.'

Through InclUUsion Laial registered for three courses at Utrecht University. 'At first I was concerned that writing and reading academic English would perhaps be a bit of an obstacle for me as I had no experience with that. But thankfully I finished all the exams and papers successfully. By this time I was lucky enough to have been appointed a house in Breda and I had a residence permit. A lot of other students were still in an AZC and in a waiting process which made studying more difficult for them.'

In September 2017 Laial started a Master's programme in Utrecht: Public International Law. During the admission interview she was able to tell the coordinator a lot about what she had learned during the courses she did

through InclUUsion. It increased her self-confidence and helped her to get accepted into the Master.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY TO DO RESEARCH**

'Now I just try to concentrate on writing my thesis and on building a life here, because you cannot be on hold all the time. Life is mysterious. I had, for instance, never pictured myself living in the Netherlands. Not for one minute had I imagined it. So I don't have a lot of expectations for the future. I will see how it is going to end. I do miss my family that is still in Syria, but I don't miss my country. Because the things that I do miss, simply don't exist anymore. So even if I would go back, I won't find it there.'

Laial joined a network of Syrian lawyers. 'Within the network we do research and visit places like the Red Cross, the Tribunal in The Hague and the International Criminal Court, to try to understand why they are not dealing with the conflict in Syria adequately.'

Every day I wake up to very bad news about streets I walked on and about people I knew. It is getting crazier and crazier. You don't know what to feel anymore; now everyone is just killing everyone. I see many people wanting to help, for example by doing research about my country. I also feel that I have a responsibility to do this research myself, to write about it and explain more. As a Syrian, I have good understanding of the culture and history and I have experienced what really goes on there. Maybe it is not about the result itself - I know I'm not going to change the war - but about the feeling of obligation to do everything that is in my power.'

The donations from Friends - consisting of alumni, students and staff of Utrecht University - are the foundation of the Utrecht University Fund's activities. Through their annual gift of at least € 30, Friends contribute to a flourishing academic community. These donations make student grants, scholarships, special projects and more possible. A great example of a special project is InclUUsion, which gives refugees the opportunity to take various courses at Utrecht University for free.

Would you like to become a Friend of the Utrecht University Fund? Please visit [uu.nl/friend](http://uu.nl/friend).



# 'Second-to-none for learning how to lobby'

The Utrecht University Fund supports student organisations and individual students by annually making a study budget of € 60,000 available, funded by donations from Friends. Grant applications are reviewed by STUF, the Utrecht University Fund's Student Committee. The money is awarded to extracurricular projects that contribute to the personal and academic development of students. For example, Utrecht students were given the opportunity to learn how to lobby and give speeches in practice during a Model United Nations meeting at Harvard.

## STUF 2017 2018



Nico Graat



Rozemijn Jansen



Christien van Campen



Jesse Wijlhuizen

Students can become a Friend of the Utrecht University Fund for € 10 a year and support STUF. For more information, please visit [uu.nl/stuf](http://uu.nl/stuf).

MUN-ing. The verb does not appear in any conventional dictionary. 'It's a game in which you simulate United Nations conferences', Psychology and Liberal Arts & Sciences student **Fabio van Laar (23)** explains. 'MUN stands for: Model United Nations. The largest conference – the MUN-ing equivalent of World Cup final, so to speak – is the annual MUN at Harvard'. This year, Fabio and his fellow Utrecht University Model United Nations (UUMUN) students represented Utrecht University at the renowned American university.

'It's a year of rigorous practice in order to be able to lobby and give speeches as effectively as possible at Harvard. UUMUN is second-to-none for learning these skills, even outperforming the best university degree programmes.'

MUN-ing is not free. At least not if you want to compete in the 'World Cup' at Harvard. The 17-strong delegation of students from Utrecht University received a grant from the Utrecht University Fund in order



to help pay for their travel and accommodation expenses. Fabio: 'Yes, sometimes it's that straightforward: without this money, it would be difficult to participate in the conference. And Utrecht University might not have been present at the most important MUN conference of the year.'

### HONOURABLE MENTION

Fabio's performance did not go unnoticed: after four days of lobbying, giving speeches, drafting resolutions and getting very little sleep, he received an honourable mention from the organisation, nice! However, that was not the Utrecht student's only reason for being there. 'At Harvard, we could finally apply the acquired diplomatic skills at a high level, in an international setting. That's fantastic, of course.'

The Harvard MUN is not only the most prestigious, but also the largest UN simulation: some 3,000 students from 69 different countries participate. 'All of us stayed in a huge hotel. At breakfast, I shared a table with students from all over the world. We would set aside the simulation game and ask our table companions what it was like to study in their native country. That provided impressive insights.'

### RIOTS AND EXTORTION

The Utrecht student got to talking with a student from Venezuela. 'Obviously, I am aware of the political instability in that country. Still, it makes so much more of an impression when someone my age shares her first-hand story. She told me that people, including university professors, were fleeing her country. She expressed her concern that the country was falling apart. Riots in the streets, extortion by the police, empty

supermarkets: these are everyday occurrences. Consequently, she didn't want to complain that it was rather hard to study because of computers not being updated, or losing Internet access again.'

Does Fabio plan on using the valuable experiences gained from MUN-ing in the future? 'It's possible. Who knows, I might work for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at some point. Lobbying is a skill that every top diplomat must possess, but a lobby degree programme doesn't exist. Thanks to my participation in UUMUN, I still managed to acquire it. I can recommend UUMUN to everyone who wants to learn how to lobby and present as effectively as possible. That includes budding scientists who must obtain grants for their research.'

**'Adjustments  
must be made  
due to climate  
change'**

ENTHUSIASTIC STUDENTS MAKE SCIENCE FILM ABOUT THE RHINE

It all started with the ancillary channel near Nijmegen. 'Because the river needed more room, a parallel waterway – the ancillary channel – was created', said Earth Sciences student **Joren Janzing (21)**. To Joren and fellow student Stan Schouten, it was extremely interesting. 'This type of project shows that we have already begun making the adjustments that are necessary due to climate change. We wanted to find out how other cities and countries in the Rhine river basin are preparing for the effects of climate change.'

Although Joren and Stan both grew up in Nijmegen, they did not get acquainted until they came to Utrecht to study Earth Sciences. Interested in getting more out of their studies, both enrolled in the Honours programme which encouraged us to take a creative approach to our studies.'

#### RHINE IN THE LEADING ROLE

Joren explained that he and Stan, who also happened to be housemates, enjoyed watching the Dutch documentary series *De oevers van de Yangtze* (*The Shores of the Yangtze*) in which the filmmaker offers a look at China based on his conversations with the local people he meets along the banks of the river Yangtze. The students wanted to do something similar, but with the river Rhine in the leading role. 'And our documentary had to have an earth sciences angle, of course: how do all of these people in the Rhine river basin deal with a potentially widening river? Stan and I knew how it had been tackled in Nijmegen. But what kind of problems are the Swiss and the Germans facing? And how do they solve those problems?'

The two Utrecht students assembled a crew, with friends and acquaintances acting as camera operator, sound engineer, editor and composer, and went in search of money to finance their

documentary. 'We needed money for more than just film equipment. We wanted to spend more than a week travelling along the river to interview people. That meant covering travel and accommodation expenses for six. We really wanted a drone too, simply because that kind of device produces stunning visuals.'

#### GLACIER LAKE

In their search for funding, the options they found included the Utrecht University Fund's crowdfunding platform: 100% of the donated money goes to a project that the donor wishes to support. This type of grant enabled the students to travel to Switzerland and Germany with good equipment in the summer of 2017. 'It's fascinating to know that we live on the banks of the same river without feeling very connected with the Swiss and Germans.'

'Equally fascinating is the variety of problems caused by climate change that these residents experience. For example, the people in Switzerland's Grindelwald faced the problem of a huge glacier lake. There was a danger that all that water might come gushing down. That would be disastrous for the village situated below. That's why they dug a two-kilometre tunnel right through a mountain, allowing the water to calmly be drained to the river.'

#### HUGE SCREEN

Joren and Stan received a limited number of credits for the film project. 'I've never put so much work into so few credits', Joren admits with a laugh. 'Of course, that was not the reason for doing it. Not anymore. But neither of us could ever have imagined ahead of time that the project would turn out so big.' After the trip, the filming and the editing, their documentary *Upstream* premiered at Inscience, the international film festival for science films, in November 2017. 'The theatre was pretty full. For me, the best part was that huge screen that we were now going to watch our film on. Up until then, we were used to watching the documentary on a computer screen.'

#### SAFE PLACE TO STAY

In the meantime, *Upstream* has been screened at a variety of conferences. There will be additional screenings, most likely including locations abroad. 'People who see our documentary gain insight into what we are already doing to adapt our surroundings to climate change. For many, it's an eye-opener; most people associate climate change with reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. But there is so much more, and so much has already been done. Not only near Nijmegen, where Stan and I both marvelled at the ancillary channel, but also on the banks of many rivers. And all this to be able to keep providing everyone a safe place to stay.'

The Utrecht University Fund has a crowdfunding platform for the benefit of the academic community. University departments and student organisations alike are welcome to use this platform for their project. In 2017, a dozen or so projects were supported in this way, including a research project about excavations near Athens; a scholarship fund for University College London; and the development of the science film *Upstream* about the Rhine river basin.

You can find a list of current special projects on our crowdfunding platform [steun.uu.nl](http://steun.uu.nl).





The opportunity to look beyond the horizon

SUPPORT FROM THE OLAF SCHUILING FUND FOR WRITING A THESIS

Waiting to see which thesis topic was left: it was not what **Wout Hanckmann** (23) wanted. Consequently, well before his fellow students started to even contemplate their thesis, the Earth Sciences student reached out to the lecturer of a course that captivated him. The lecturer had a topic for him. Nothing about water, which was what Wout had in mind, but about a mineral that bonds and neutralises radioactive materials in the subsoil. Wout was keen, but one thing was standing in the way: funding.

'I had no idea how much it would all cost. But I quickly understood that funding was needed. For example to lease a massive instrument that you can use to conduct magnetic research. That instrument is housed in a meteorological institute in Belgium, which meant there were also travel and accommodation expenses involved. And on top of that, there was the purchase of chemicals, syringes, tubes, gases etc.'

#### WEIGHING UP

His adviser – who had actually been one of Professor Olaf Schuiling's students – told him about the Olaf Schuiling Fund. Wout wrote a research proposal and submitted a funding application. They were approved and he was able to get started. 'In the beginning, I was really in over my head. I looked around and thought, *what in the world do I do?* Ultimately, however, being thrown in the deep end like that proved quite educational. I learned how to plan and how to manage your research funding. Should I order a half a kilo container, or an entire kilo? How long do I spend synthesising? How much time is lost when something goes wrong? You become inventive because you have to come up with your own solutions.'

#### INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Wout's interest in the world began at a young age. As a boy, he loved browsing the atlas. His favourite TV shows were nature and travel programmes. He would repeatedly ask his parents when they would exchange France for a

new holiday destination. 'Don't get me wrong, I liked France, but I have always been very curious about what else is out there. What's beyond the horizon?'

His curiosity and interest were not satisfied at school. Wout was not excited by maths or language. Unsurprisingly, his marks left something to be desired. 'I was forever the subject of discussion. Always just squeaking by. It wasn't until university that I felt intrinsic motivation. Finally, I could do things that I like.'

#### PRESSURE TO ACHIEVE

Wout on his research: 'When radioactive waste is put in the ground, there is the danger that it will leak and end up in the water. In my research, I studied a mineral that can bind radioactive materials in clay and neutralise them. It's very difficult to quantify, but we have demonstrated that oxidation of the mineral influences the magnetic moment per gram of material. That notion already existed, and now I have actually proven it.'

His effort and the enjoyment he got from doing the research paid off: his thesis earned a nine. 'Obviously, you want to do good work regardless, but the fact that I received funding may well have been an extra incentive. Actually, I liked the pressure; I needed it to achieve.'

#### SOUTH AMERICA

Earth sciences is not the only field in which he is interested. Wout is also studying Spanish. Simply because he enjoys it. Incidentally,

Chinese appeals to him, too. As does physics. And education. Nevertheless, he has already made his Master's choice: Earth Surface and Water.

First, however, Wout has two gap years. To earn money, he spent six months working at a chemical company as an assistant in the R&D department. Soon he will leave for South America, where he plans to spend a year and a half continuing his Spanish studies and doing humanitarian work.

'I definitely don't see myself spending my life doing the same thing. It's just not who I am; after a couple of years I want to do something completely different. After my Master's, I would like to do something with a start-up. Being sent to a faraway country to get water projects off the ground sounds fun and worthwhile.'

Wout also sees the possibility of pursuing a PhD. Figuring out the exact details of his future is something to worry about later, though. First, he will board a plane to South America.

Setting up a Named Fund with the Utrecht University Fund is a unique way to designate a larger donation for a specific purpose. The initiator chooses the name and objective of the fund. A substantial difference can be made in a chosen research area this way. Earth Sciences student Wout Hanckmann's research thesis was made possible by support from the Olaf Schuiling Fund.

For a complete list of Named Funds, please see [uu.nl/namedfund](http://uu.nl/namedfund).



# 'I had to pinch myself sometimes'

'When I received the email about my scholarship and admission, I cried for ten minutes. Then I called my mother and we cried for ten more.' **Stefan Vukojevic (22)** from Serbia, received an Utrecht Excellence Scholarship last August to study Multi-disciplinary Economics (a research Master's programme) at Utrecht University.

'I am the black sheep of the family', Stefan jokes, because he is the first in his family to obtain a bachelor's degree. 'My parents always worked very hard and struggled to provide for us. They stimulated us to do well in school and I think they did a perfect job. But unfortunately, there was no money for my brother and I to go to university. To give you an idea: the minimum wage in Serbia is only two hundred euros a month.'

But Stefan did not let finances get in the way of his dream to go to university. At school he worked hard and made sure that he was always among the top students of his class. 'The faculty in Serbia took care of the tuition fees for my first bachelor year because I performed so well in high school. And then because I was among the top five students in the first year, I got a scholarship for the second year and the same again for the third year.'

'Funding the Future' is the Utrecht University Fund's annual fund-raising campaign amongst Utrecht University's Friends, alumni, staff and students for enriching education and research.

The Utrecht Excellence Scholarships (UES) annual project is part of the Funding the Future campaign. This grant programme has changed the life of Serbian student Stefan Vukojevic amongst others. Funding the Future also supports several projects in the field of education, research and academic heritage each year. In 2017, the chosen projects comprised scientific research on fungi, the digitisation of old maps, and the construction of an apiary in the Botanical Gardens.

The Utrecht University Fund would also like to request support for the various Funding the Future projects in 2018. Please see [uu.nl/fundingthefuture](http://uu.nl/fundingthefuture).

## MORE DUTCH THAN SERBIAN

Stefan always knew he didn't want to stay in Serbia. 'I never felt that I fitted in with the culture. In a way I was always more Dutch than Serbian. More efficient, if you like. This is why I didn't feel stressed about moving away. Also, there was no time for me to worry, because on the eighteenth of August I defended my Bachelor's thesis in Serbia and six days later I arrived in Utrecht.'

'For me this opportunity is truly life changing. It is a dream come true, because I could never have done a Master's programme without the scholarship. Initially I had to pinch myself sometimes to be sure that this was really happening, but now I am starting to get used to it.'

Of course, moving to another country also means getting used to other things. For instance, Stefan misses his friends and his mother's cooking. And he is still trying to get his head around why the Dutch have their lunch ('broodje kaas') and dinner so ridiculously early. On the other hand, he loves the fact that everyone in the Netherlands travels by bike. He soon realised he would be lost without one himself, so the day after his arrival he bought

a bicycle. 'I bought a book to learn Dutch as well. Hopefully it won't be too difficult for me because I already know German, English and Latin.'

## A FEELING OF PRESSURE

'I think one of the reasons I got this scholarship is because of all my extracurricular activities. Amongst other things I was president of the Serbian debating network, Open Communication, and board member of the Red Cross New Belgrade. At the moment I don't have time to do additional work, because the research Master in Utrecht has proven to be very demanding so far.'

Although Stefan is doing well, he explains how a scholarship doesn't come without a feeling of pressure. 'When an exam didn't go as well as I had hoped, I am always worried that I will have to take the course again the next year, which would automatically mean losing the scholarship. So it can be rather stressful. But it is something I sort of got accustomed to, because I have always had to perform extremely well to get through. It can be motivating, but I think it is a challenge for my mental health as well.'

What are Stefan's plans for the future? Going back to Serbia (permanently) is certainly not at the top of his wish list. 'Although living in Serbia with a Dutch salary, would be pretty nice', he says laughing. 'I tend not to look any further than five years ahead. After finishing my research Master programme I would like to do a PhD, preferably here in Utrecht. And after that who knows where life will take me.'



# How do you become who you are?

The K.F. Hein Fund provides financial support to projects in the province of Utrecht in the field of culture, social work, performing arts, public health, nature conservation and the preservation of monuments and historic buildings.

In 2017, this fund made generous contributions via donations to the Utrecht University Fund to a variety of unique Utrecht University projects, such as research on the development of clinical applications for growing 'mini organs' (organoids); digitising 40 years' of the university newsletter U-blad; and research on the interaction between parent and child at Utrecht University's Child Expertise Centre.

For more information about this fund, please visit [khein.nl](http://khein.nl).

The main question occupying the scientists involved in Utrecht's YOuth study is a big one: how do you become who you are? An answer is not readily available. Youth researcher **Carlijn van den Boomen (31)** is focusing on the interaction between parent and child in her research.

'There are so many factors imaginable that play a role in a child's development. The child's genetic profile. The parenting the child receives. The child's relationship with siblings. The neighbourhood where the child grows up. The school the child attends. All of that – and more – has an undeniable effect on a child's development. But the question is: which influence is responsible and to what extent with respect to how a child develops.'

Carlijn's research examines one of the many facets that can play a defining role in child development. 'I look at the interaction between parent and child. At the Child Expertise Centre, we have a parent and

his or her 10-month old child read a book, do a puzzle and play with toys together. We film the interaction between the two and analyse the footage. We code and classify the behaviour of parent and child. From this, we deduce how enterprising the child is, or how sensitively he or she responds to the parent. A 15-minute video often provides an hour's worth of behavioural analysis work. In other words, one needs a lot of time in order to correctly interpret that behaviour. And proper training.'

## RELIABLE METHOD

Coding, classifying and analysing behaviour using video footage is a proven research method in clinical practice. A number of different methods for doing so are available. 'However, the reliability of these measurements is often unknown. In this huge research project we cannot afford to ignore this uncertain reliability; we must be sure that a method is reliable. To this end, we wanted to train four people to apply the methods in question. The money from the K.F. Hein Fund made this possible.'

The Utrecht researcher compares the university's huge YOuth study to a giant jigsaw puzzle. 'The interaction between parent and child is just one of many puzzle pieces. Still, logically it is one of the pieces that can complete the puzzle. It is of the utmost importance that the interpretation of this interaction is measured as reliably as possible. Only then will we

have completely reliable scientific evidence at the end of the study, and we will be able to explain how it is that a child developed into the person that he or she is now.'



# 'Maureen wanted to donate her paternal inheritance to the sciences'

A small table stands next to Rien Wols' (64) chair in his living room. The table groans under two stacks of novels. One stack is books that he has finished; the other are books to be read 'I just had my birthday. As a Dutch-language specialist, one tends to receive quite a few books', he explains. Novels by Murakami and Tommy Wieringa: these are titles his father-in-law Nestor Trappeniers, who passed away in 2004, would have pushed aside 'Nestor was truly a man of science. On occasion, he would pick up a novel. He would thumb through it quickly and mumble: "Hmmm, no formulas..."'

When asked whether he understands Nestor Trappeniers' scientific work, an emphatic 'no' is Rien's answer. 'I did try to read his inaugural lecture. Yet those formulas are not for me.' Nevertheless, the Trappeniers-Wols Fund that he established with his wife Maureen Trappeniers, who passed away in 2016, aims to promote experimental research in the sciences in Utrecht. 'It was established in memory of Nestor. The inheritance that my wife received from him was the first part of the assets that we wanted to donate to science.'

**More and more people are including science as a charitable cause in their will. By designating part or all of their estate to the Utrecht University Fund, they ensure that a new generation of students and researchers at Utrecht University can develop, and in turn make a valuable contribution to society. This story is an example of a combination of a living donation and an estate. A unique and personal interpretation of giving to science.**

For more information and advice, please contact Robbert Jan Feunekes at [r.j.feunekes@uu.nl](mailto:r.j.feunekes@uu.nl).



## DETAILED CONVERSATIONS

Rien and his wife Maureen spoke on occasion about what they would like to do with their money after they died. 'Those exchanges tended to involve vague ideas, however. It's not really something you want to think about in specific terms if there isn't any reason to.'

When Maureen fell ill and knew that she wouldn't recover, the conversations became more detailed. During this time, Maureen's mother passed away, and money from Nestor's estate subsequently became available. What to do with that part of the family's assets?

Rien suggested the Utrecht University Fund. 'The fund helped me tremendously in the late 1970s. Back then, as I was nearing completion of my Dutch degree, I had various part-time jobs. Financially speaking, it wasn't really helping much. But increasing my work hours to earn money wasn't a wise idea: it would be at the expense of my graduation. And I needed to graduate as quickly as possible. You see, I had been accepted into a post-doctorate programme to become an archivist, which also included a paid internship.'

## HELPING HAND

Rien contacted a student counsellor to ask whether any financial support might be available so that he could finish his dissertation

on courtly love songs in the Gruuthuse manuscript on time. 'Fortunately, the Utrecht University Fund offered a kind of transitional arrangement. It was an interest-free loan that allowed me to focus on my dissertation, and I was able to finish on time and enter the archivist post-doctoral programme.'

Rien is forever deeply grateful to the fund for the assistance offered. 'Indeed, they really helped me at the time. I experienced first-hand how nice it is to have an institution that supports you, allowing you to continue. That's what Maureen and I wanted to make possible for other students or academic staff: a helping hand to keep everything rolling.' Considering that both Rien and Maureen had completed a degree in the humanities, it seemed obvious that the donation would go to the humanities. 'But Maureen didn't want that. She wanted to donate her paternal inheritance to the sciences.'

## DO SOMETHING IN RETURN

Sometimes, Rien ponders what might have happened if he had not been able to avail himself to the interest-free loan from the Utrecht University Fund back in the late 1970s. 'Most likely I would not have been able to enrol in the archivist programme. Which means I would not have become an archivist at the Brabant Historic Information Centre, something that continues to give me great pleasure to this day.' In fact, there is even the possibility that without the financial support he would never have met Maureen. 'I commuted every day from Utrecht to Den Bosch for my archivist job. Maureen, who took a job as curator at the Noordbrabants Museum after she earned her Art History degree at Utrecht University, did the same. We got to know each other during those daily commutes.' Rien agrees that it is of course impossible to know how life would be if things had gone a bit differently. 'Let me just say that I'm pleased that with the fund we are able to do something in return for science and for scientists.'

# Exchanges between the university and the city



Once a year, the Utrecht University Fund invites its donors to a meeting to thank them and let them see what has been accomplished with their support.

The theme of the 2017 Annual Meeting, which was held on Friday, 24 November at the Municipality of Utrecht's council offices, was 'Utrecht and the University'. With over 150 guests in attendance, the evening opened with a speech by the chairman of the Utrecht University Fund, Lodewijk Huijman van den Bergh. The president of Utrecht University's Executive Board, Prof. Anton Pijpers, discussed why the city of Utrecht is important for our university. 'But that is vice-versa', Jeroen Kreijkamp, Utrecht Municipal Executive member, subsequently explained.

Following a video summarising the supported projects, Anton Pijpers accepted the check for the proceeds of the 2017 Funding the Future campaign from Lodewijk Huijman van den Bergh on behalf of Utrecht University.

It was an informative and above all an inspiring evening that brought together supporters, students, staff and administrators.

An Annual Meeting will be held in 2018 on 23 November. More information about this will be provided online at [uu.nl/alumni](http://uu.nl/alumni).



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