

A photograph of a window with multiple panes of colored glass in shades of green, yellow, orange, and purple. The sun is shining through one of the panes, creating a bright lens flare. The view through the window shows a building with a clock tower.

**An overall
Impression
of 2015**

Bright minds, **better future**



Marjan J. Oudeman,
LLM, President of the Executive Board
Prof. Bert van der Zwaan, Rector Magnificus
Prof. Anton Pijpers, Vice-President.

Our students and staff are what makes Utrecht University a world-class institution. Education at our university is characterised by its quality, small scale, and intensive approach. Each year sees another cohort of students reach graduation, heralding the promise of a better future.

Through state-of-the-art pioneering research, Utrecht University also makes important contributions to resolving issues that face society. Research conducted at our university stands out thanks to its disciplinary quality, themed focus, and multidisciplinary collaboration.

In 2015 Utrecht University welcomed numerous exciting developments. The university made major investments in innovation, digitalisation, study and research facilities, as well as in promoting the personal development of both students and staff. This annual review provides an overview of some of these remarkable advancements.

Thanks to the commitment and engagement of everyone involved – students, staff, partners, representative bodies, and the Supervisory Board – Utrecht University is perfectly positioned to move forward to an even better future.



JANUARY

Collaboration with NIOZ

In January, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ), and Utrecht University embarked on a new joint effort, signing a cooperation agreement on water and climate. NIOZ and Utrecht University have collaborated on a wide range of projects over more than 25 years. This new agreement enabled leading academics and research groups (primarily in the sciences and geosciences) to make even greater use of each other's knowledge, laboratories, and other facilities. Research into deep-sea coral is just one of the recent projects conducted jointly by Utrecht University and NIOZ researchers.



Student engagement

The University Council's student body has conducted a study into the various ways to increase student involvement in the university's teaching activities. The University Council students looked for effective incentives to make students express their opinions and to attract their interest. They believe that students should be the co-producers and not just consumers of their own education. Based on their study, the student body wrote a report including recommendations and suggestions, which

they were invited to present to the Minister of Education, Jet Bussemaker. The Ministry showed a lot of interest in the report in which the students suggest, among other things, to organise more informal meetings between students and teachers, such as 'after-exam get-togethers'. Another idea is to establish an education parliament in order to discuss degree programme-wide issues two to four times a year.

*a large-scale digital testing facility
for up to 500 Chromebooks*

International One Health Congress

Recent outbreaks of zoonoses – infections that can be transferred from animals to humans – such as Ebola, MERS, and avian flu have demonstrated the global impact of these types of diseases and emphasised the importance of close international collaboration. This issue was the main focus of the International One Health Congress, attended by scientists from as many as 60 different countries in March. One Health is an important area of research in Utrecht University's strategic theme of Life Sciences, and work is underway to develop a One Health Centre at the Utrecht Science Park. This was the third congress of its kind; previous editions have been held in Melbourne (Australia) and Bangkok (Thailand).

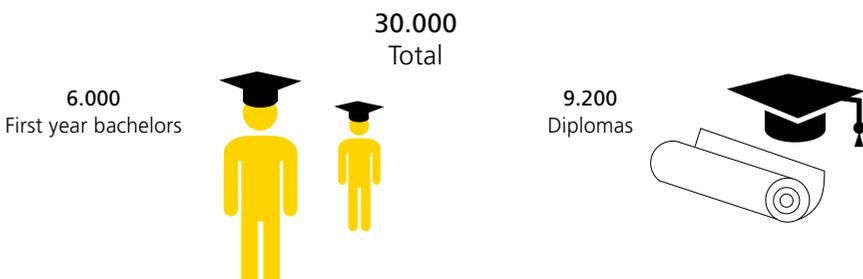
Educate-it

The university-wide educational innovation programme Educate-it, running from 2015 until 2017, aims to provide support for lecturers in adapting their teaching for the future and further enhancing quality. The programme consists of four subsidiary projects: E-lectures, E-assessments, Electronic Learning Systems (ELS), and Innovation projects. Research and quality and staff professional development are key themes across the entire programme. As part of the E-assessment subsidiary programme, Utrecht University achieved a first in March with the delivery of a large-scale digital testing facility for up to 500 Chromebooks. The facility allows students to complete digital tests simultaneously in large groups, securely and reliably.

MARCH



STUDENTS





JULY

Grand Départ Tour de France in Utrecht

On 4 and 5 July 2015, the Grand Départ of the Tour de France was held in our city. Utrecht organised an activation programme to raise the city's profile while promoting the Tour. The activation programme included four themes: Sport, Knowledge, Culture, and Economy. Utrecht University joined forces with University Medical Center Utrecht, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, and Utrecht School of the Arts to provide the activation programme for Knowledge. With the slogan "No top performance without knowledge", the activation programme focused on the themes of innovation, nurturing talent, and the importance of exercise and health for society.

University and hospital install 6,500 solar panels



Utrecht University and University Medical Center Utrecht were awarded a government grant to install solar panels on many of their buildings. This will involve a total of 6,500 solar panels, 4,300 of which are set to be installed by Utrecht University on buildings at Utrecht Science Park (starting in early 2016). As a result, Utrecht Science Park will have the largest surface area of solar panels in Utrecht and rank among the top 10 for solar panels in the Netherlands. By 2020, Utrecht University aims to generate 50% of the energy it consumes through renewables, including by means of geothermal heating, wind energy, and sunlight.

Student awards

At the opening of each new academic year in September, Utrecht University awards prizes to students who performed outstandingly in their studies or extracurricular activities in the previous year. The 2014–2015 Exceptional Extracurricular or Social Achievements Award, given to a student or group of students who performed exceptionally in this category, went to Karin van Trijp. Karin was successful in combining excellent marks with great social engagement. Alongside her studies, she spearheaded a project in Bulgaria to offer orphaned children an unforgettable holiday, served as a cub scout leader, and worked as a residential committee member at the student accommodation Casa Confetti. The Best Master's Thesis Award was won by Kinanya Pijl, a Master's student in legal research, for her 'quest for safeguards to guarantee an Internet based on international Human Rights.

115.000

12.000
Donors

Spinoza Prize

Birgit Meyer, Professor of Religious Science, was one of four leading Dutch academics to be awarded the prestigious Spinoza Prize by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) on 15 September. The Spinoza Prize is the highest award in the Dutch academic world, consisting of an award of €2.5 million to be spent on research of the recipient's choice. Meyer intends to use the money to set up an eight-year project involving a comparative study of West Africa and the Netherlands, exploring the ways in which religion is represented in these regions.

SEPTEMBER



PUBLICATIONS

8.000



The Spinoza Prize is the highest award in the Dutch academic world



OCTOBER

Utrecht Psalter included in UNESCO list

The Utrecht Psalter was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. This list of documentary heritage of world significance includes the original diary of Anne Frank, the archives of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), and Karl Marx's plan for the Communist Manifesto and his annotations to Das Kapital. The richly-illustrated book of Psalms is almost 1,200 years old, and it has been stored in the Utrecht University Library since 1716. From 21 October until 22 November, the Utrecht Psalter was exhibited at Museum Catharijneconvent. The Psalter can be viewed at www.utrechtpsalter.nl.

FINANCES: BUDGET 2016

ca € 790.000.000

€ 450.000.000
Government funding



€ 345.000.000
Other funding and income
from work for third parties

UtrechtInc included in Europe's top 10 business incubators

The business incubator UtrechtInc placed 6th in the European top 10 of the UBI Index 2015, an international ranking of university business incubators. "Start-up innovations are increasingly developing solutions for major challenges in society. This position in Europe's top 10 is an acknowledgement of the impact made by our start-ups," says Roel Raatgever, the managing director of UtrechtInc. This incubator, jointly run by Utrecht University, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, and University Medical Center Utrecht, has provided support to 150 start-ups since 2009, including funding, office accommodation, and coaching.

Sustainable labour market

The conclusion that the Netherlands does not yet have a sustainable labour market was reached by six Utrecht University professors from various disciplines at the *Blik op de Wetenschap* conference. Their essay, *Towards a Sustainable Labour Market*, was written in preparation for the conference. There are several structural imbalances, including a strong division between insiders and outsiders, such as people participating in the labour market and those outside it. But even among those who do participate, there is often "under-utilisation" (of women, ethnic minorities, and older people) or "over-utilisation" (and the excessive pressure of work and time constraints that this involves). Despite this, the researchers concluded that a sustainable labour market is within reach. However, it will not happen automatically: "There need to be changes in behaviour on the part of employers and employees with regard to the regulations concerning redundancy and dismissal, training, flexibility, pay, social security and pensions," says Joop Schippers, one of the six professors.

OCTOBER



Start-up innovations are increasingly developing solutions for major challenges in society

STAFF

6.700

(excl. faculty of Medicine)





Teaching buildings

On 3 November, Utrecht University opened two sustainable teaching centres: Koningsberger Building for the Faculties of Geosciences, Sciences, and Medicine (Biomedical Sciences) at the Utrecht Science Park; and the historic building at Janskerkhof 2-3a for the Faculty of Law, Economics, and Governance. Both buildings include features like energy-efficient lighting, and users are invited to separate their waste using waste containers with different compartments. The Koningsberger Building is named for Professor Koningsberger, a biologist at Utrecht University and the first professor during World War II to make a stand for Jewish colleagues who were banned from the University. The building at Janskerkhof dates from 1246 and has been owned by Utrecht University since 1816.

NOVEMBER



State Secretary opens ultra-powerful MRI scanner

On 6 November, State Secretary Sander Dekker from the Ministry of Education opened the uNMR-NL research facility at Utrecht University, which maintains a national MRI scanner for molecules. With its ultra-powerful magnet, the facility is among the best in the world. It can be used for chemical, material, and biological research by scientists and businesses. The uNMR-NL was made possible thanks to an investment of €18.5 million from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). “This national facility will be a boost to our research, our knowledge-intensive economy, international competitiveness, and prosperity. The uNMR-NL stands for investing in our future,” says Marjan Oudeman, who is president of the Executive Board.

The uNMR-NL stands for investing in our future



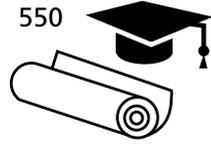
Science Café; showcasing science

Making science visible for wider society is one of the key objectives of the Centre for Science Communication and Culture. In 2015, Studium Generale – a division of the centre – joined forces with the city music centre TivoliVredenburg to launch the Science Café. The first edition, on the theme of humour, attracted more than 500 visitors and proved a resounding success. In 2016, a series of different editions of Science Café is scheduled to take place.

Comprehensive Career Services established



In order to provide students with even better preparation for the labour market, Utrecht University launched the Career Services initiative. It brings together all faculty and university activities relating to training courses, careers information, coaching, and networking to help students explore and prepare for the world of work. Career Services has a digital service desk for students, businesses, organisations, and study programmes, as well as various physical service desks at the university and faculty level. Since its launch, more than 1,000 students have already made use of Career Services; cooperation agreements have been signed with Shell, ING, and YSE; and various study programmes have included opportunities for students to explore the labour market.



Baby Max becomes one of the first participants in the YOUth study

One of the very first participants in the large-scale YOUth study was born in November 2015. The baby, named Max, will join many other babies who will be born in the years ahead in the Utrecht region, and who will all take part in a study of the relationship between brain development, behaviour, and environmental factors. This study is part of the strategic research theme Dynamics of Youth and one of two large-scale studies within the KinderKennisCentrum (ChildResearch-Center). The YOUth Baby & Child study starts during pregnancy and runs to the age of 7. The YOUth Child & Teenager study starts at ages 8, 9, or 10 and continues to the age of 16.

New research centre for energy, coatings and materials

As the world's population grows, it faces major challenges in finding a sustainable solution for depleting raw materials while still continuing to meet the demand for production materials. Thus, Professor Bert Weckhuysen took the initiative to establish the Advanced Research Center Chemical Building Blocks Consortium (ARC CBBC). At this research centre, Utrecht University will work closely with the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Several businesses and affiliated universities are also participating in the national centre. The partners aim to achieve a joint investment of €11 million every year.

DECEMBER



PROFESSORS

550 (incl. faculty of Medicine)



300 (excl. faculty of Medicine)



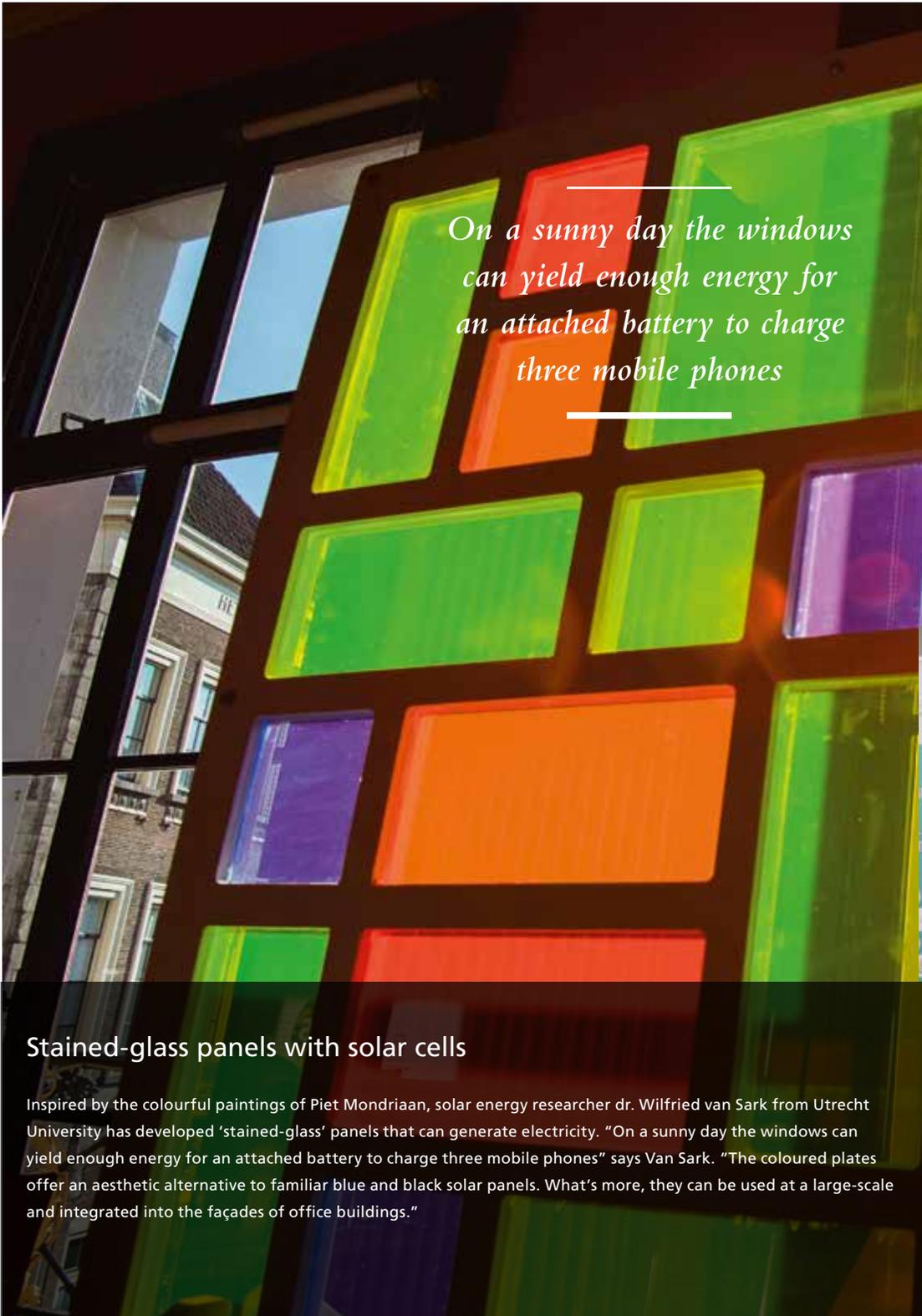
80 (excl. faculty of Medicine)

Production and Design: Communication & Marketing Utrecht University.

Photography: Suzanne Blanchard, Jan Willem Groen Fotografie, Thijs ter Hart, Brechtje Jansen, Gwenda Knobel, Hans van Leeuwen, Robert Oosterbroek, Ivar Pel, Ed van Rijswijk, Kees Rutten, Jeannette Schols, Solvin Zankl-GEOMAR, Bert Spiertz, Beeldbank Utrecht University

Printing: ZuidamUithof Drukkerijen

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*On a sunny day the windows
can yield enough energy for
an attached battery to charge
three mobile phones*

Stained-glass panels with solar cells

Inspired by the colourful paintings of Piet Mondriaan, solar energy researcher dr. Wilfried van Sark from Utrecht University has developed 'stained-glass' panels that can generate electricity. "On a sunny day the windows can yield enough energy for an attached battery to charge three mobile phones" says Van Sark. "The coloured plates offer an aesthetic alternative to familiar blue and black solar panels. What's more, they can be used at a large-scale and integrated into the façades of office buildings."