

A close-up photograph of two people smiling. On the right, a Black woman with her eyes closed and a wide smile. On the left, the side of a white person's face, also smiling. The background is blurred.

# Diversity and Inclusion at Utrecht University

Highlights  
2018-2019



Utrecht University



# Foreword



How can we ensure that Utrecht University is as inclusive as possible? And how can we ensure that everyone feels welcome and is able to develop their full potential? These important questions were among those raised during the preparations for the 2016–2020 Strategic Plan. Students and staff indicated that the university should address the theme of Diversity and Inclusion.

This assignment was assumed by the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. The initial step was to draft a working programme, written under the supervision of Prof. Annetje Ottow, who led the Task Force until 1 January 2019. Once the working programme was established, the Task Force engaged with the various Faculty Diversity and Inclusion Coordinators in addressing the three lines of action: ‘Equal treatment and inclusion’, ‘Broadening participation and social commitment’ and ‘Intake and selection’.

We are now midway through the allotted time for the project and there is a great deal for us to be proud of. Page 4–5 lists the themes that we are working on. The Highlights section provides further details on some of the themes. However, I am fully aware that the work is far from done. This year the Task Force will be focusing on three main themes: Accessibility, Student Intake and Selection, and Inappropriate Behaviour. Of course we cannot do without the thoughts of Utrecht University’s community. Please let us know how Utrecht University can become more inclusive!

**Prof. Janneke Plantenga**

*Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force*

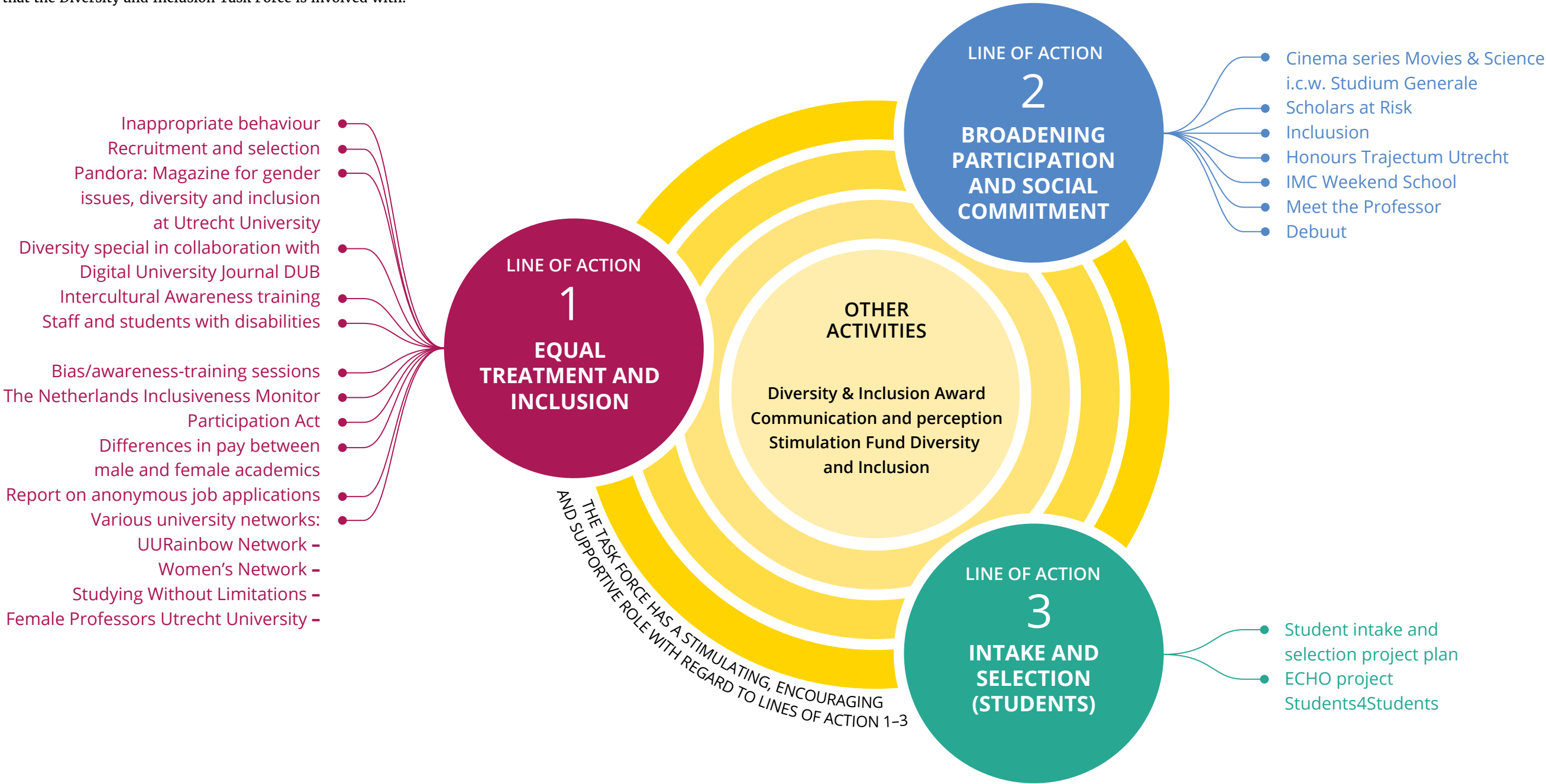


## Three lines of action

The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force assumed its duties in late 2016 and will continue working until 2021. It is a university-wide committee with various objectives: promoting discussion about diversity and inclusion, promoting diversity policy and supporting initiatives in this area. The Task Force members were invited due to a combination of their expertise, background and position. The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force is focusing on three lines of action: ‘Equal treatment and inclusion’, ‘Broadening participation and social commitment’ and ‘Intake and selection’. The illustration on the following pages provides an overview of the various initiatives and projects related to the lines of action. In a number of cases, the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force initiated activities or is involved in projects. The Task Force is in close contact with people involved with diversity and inclusion at Utrecht University.

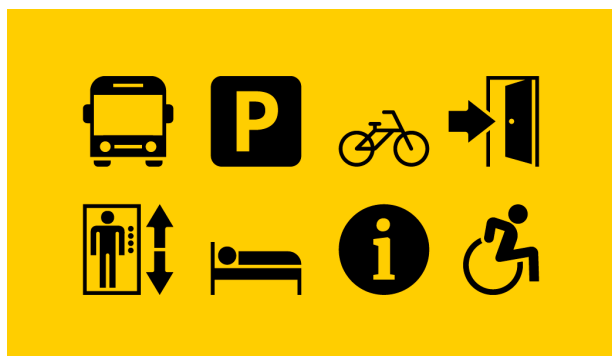
# Utrecht University Diversity and Inclusion Task Force

Activities, topics and themes related to diversity and inclusion that the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force is involved with.





## Accessibility



Around 10% of all students at Utrecht University have an impairment. Their participation in education, aided by measures such as improving physical accessibility, is one of the main themes of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. The Department of Real Estate and Campus has already realised a number of adaptations and an action plan has been drafted outlining further points for improvement for 2019. Digital information on the accessibility of university buildings and facilities has recently been updated. On 19 November 2018, Utrecht University signed the letter of intent to promote the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In 2018, students founded Studying without Limitations. More information about this Platform can be found on page 8 and 9 in the section on Utrecht University networks.

## Intake and selection of students

Utrecht University would like all prospective students, whatever their background, to feel welcome at the university during the process of applying, matching and selection, and naturally also when they begin a degree programme. Everyone who is qualified to enrol in an academic programme should have equal opportunities to do so at Utrecht University. In the project, which began in 2018, degree programme departments investigate whether the intake and admission procedures raise any barriers which could lead to undesirable selection taking place. Vice deans, directors of education, Boards of Studies and study societies all play important roles in executing this plan. The members of the intake and selection project group are supporting various degree programme departments in this endeavour.

*“This project is important because it reduces obstacles for qualified students and increases equal opportunities. The quality of academic education is improved when there is a variety of perspectives.”*

**Yasmina El Haddad, Student Intake and Selection Project Coordinator**



## Inclusion

Inclusion offers asylum permit holders and asylum seekers the opportunity to take courses at Utrecht University for free. Upon completion of the course, Inclusion students receive a participation certificate. Over 400 refugee students have already participated in Inclusion since 2016. The students are not just from Utrecht, but also come from other regions. Their average age is 30, with 70% of them male and 30% female. On average, 40% are from Africa, some 40% are from Syria, with the other 20% from other places. About 40% of the Inclusion students are asylum seekers while 60% are asylum permit holders. The concept of the Inclusion programme has now been copied by other universities in the Netherlands and abroad.

*“Inclusion means connections, friends and support. The Inclusion team helps me to get the best out of me.”*

**Salma Fayad, Inclusion student who has completed a UU Master's programme**



On 26 March 2019 the initiators of Inclusion, Hilke Grootelaar, Elena Valbusa and Marij Swinkels, received Utrecht University's Silver Medal.

## Inappropriate behaviour

Utrecht University is paying special attention to inappropriate behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour is not condoned at Utrecht University. In order to emphasise this message, information provision has been improved, while the code of conduct and complaints procedure have been updated. An online training course is being developed for managers and lecturers, while students and staff are more clearly informed about all relevant information when beginning studies or a job at Utrecht University. Staff and students who would like to discuss inappropriate behaviour that they or others have experienced can always turn to a Confidential Counsellor. Utrecht University wants all students, staff and guests to feel safe and welcome.

Still from the animation Inappropriate Behaviour.



*“Staff and students who experience inappropriate behaviour can request a meeting with a Confidential Counsellor. This does not imply that there already is a complaint, but is intended to explicate matters, and decide what the subsequent steps could be and whether to take them.”*

**Jeanette van Rees, Confidential Counsellor for Inappropriate Behaviour**



Raising the rainbow flag at Utrecht University Hall on Coming Out Day in 2017.

## Debuut

Debuut is Utrecht University's buddy programme for primary school pupils whose parents never followed higher education or did not do so in the Netherlands. Debuut participants are assigned a Utrecht University student buddy, if possible one with a similar background. The two then get together regularly to introduce the pupil to Utrecht University during their final months of primary school (group 8) and their first months at secondary school. They visit a professor, speed date with students at the University Museum and attend children's lectures organised by MuseumJeugdUniversiteit, a foundation connecting museums, children and academics. In 2018, 15 pupils and students participated. In 2019 the number of participants is 30.

*"By participating, I would like to contribute to the development of Group 8 pupils, so I can give them something I myself missed at the time."*

**Najoua Haireche,**  
Debuut student buddy

The Debuut team.



## Various networks

- **Studying without Limitations** was founded in 2018 by students with the financial support of the Stimulation Fund Diversity and Inclusion. It is a peer to peer group for students with a disability.
- The **Female Professors UU (FPUU) network** organises theme meetings for female professors. Topics that have been discussed recently include research about women conducted by female academics and scientific harassment.
- Utrecht University's **Women's Network** provides a platform for staff members who are interested in gender and diversity policy. Its objective is to increase awareness surrounding (gender) diversity among academic, support and management staff.
- Since 2018, every month a **participants' lunch** is organised for staff members employed at Utrecht University under the Dutch Participation Act. This Act obliges Dutch companies to hire people with an illness or disability. The participants' lunches allow them to become acquainted with each other in a welcoming and informal setting, sometimes focusing on specific themes.
- There is a **UURainbow network** for the LGBT+ staff community. This network is intended for all staff who identify as lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex or otherwise sexually and/or gender diverse. Anyone wishing to show their support for LGBT+ colleagues is also welcome.

*"I find it important to be able to be myself among students and colleagues."*

**Dr. Johan Rozenbrand**, one of the founders of the UURainbow network and Assistant Professor at the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the Faculty of Science

## Stimulation Fund Diversity and Inclusion

The Stimulation Fund Diversity and Inclusion was established in 2018. Each year the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force makes available €50,000 for projects and activities that promote diversity and inclusion among students and staff. Applicants can request up to €5,000 funding for each project or activity. Up until now, 14 initiatives have received a contribution, as listed on the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force website.

*Projects that received financial support included:*

- **Utrecht University participation in Utrecht Canal Pride 2018.**
- **Sharing diversity practices:** By developing knowledge clips, lecturers are given practical aids to deal adequately with the different groups of Utrecht students.
- **Acquaintanceship dinner 'Utrechters talk to Utrechters':** During this dinner, Utrechters with other native languages meet University staff and students.

Studying without Limitations during the presentation of the Diversity & Inclusion Award: Annemarijn Douwes, Soete Meertens, Denise Langreder, Sophia Bats, Richard Horenberg and Annetje Ottow (Vice-President of Utrecht University's Executive Board).

## Diversity & Inclusion Award

The Diversity & Inclusion Award was established to draw attention to and express appreciation for initiatives of students and staff who contribute to a more inclusive Utrecht University. In judging the nominations, the Award committee takes special note of the innovational value, continuity and the bonding qualities of the initiative in question.

In 2019 the first Diversity & Inclusion Award was presented to Richard Horenberg, founder and chair of Studying without Limitations (see page 8).

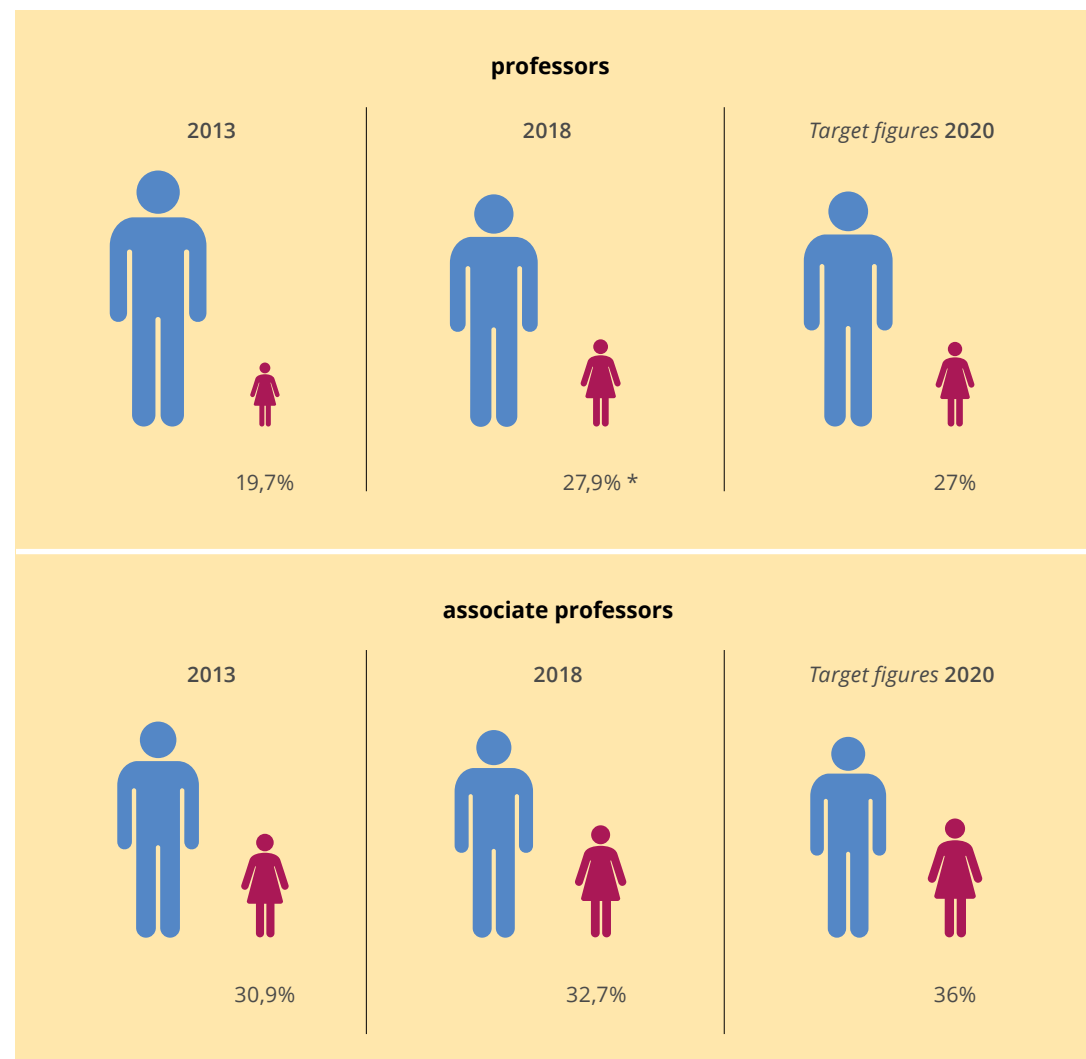
*"We were able to set up Studying without Limitations for students with disabilities with the financial aid of the Stimulation Fund Diversity and Inclusion."*

**Richard Horenberg**, chair of Studying without Limitations

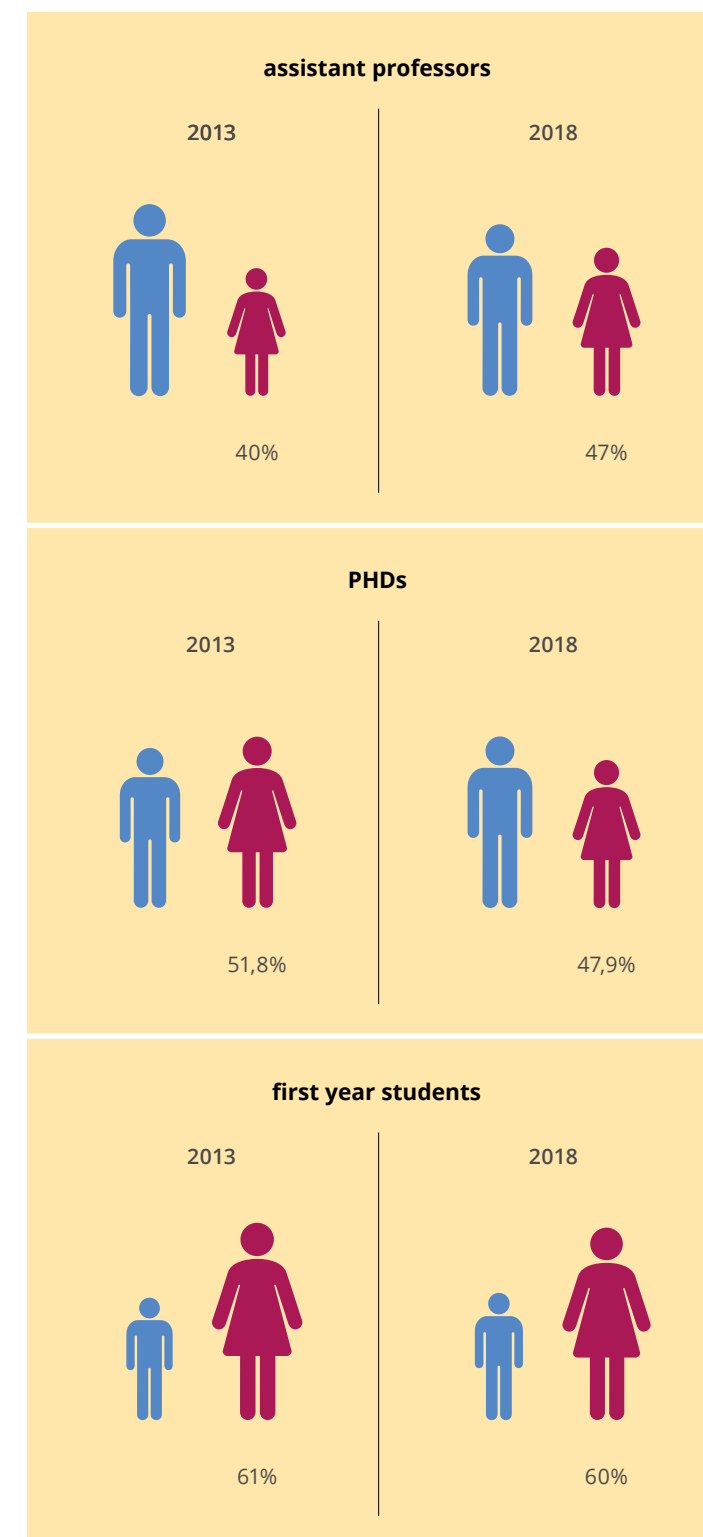


# Gender balance in student population and academic staff

Utrecht University values equal treatment and inclusion. The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force monitors data concerning gender balance in student population and academic staff. These visuals display the percentages of female scientists and their proportion to male scientists. Target figures for professors and associate professors set by Utrecht University's Executive Board for 2020 are also included.



\* Included in this figure are the Westerdijk professors appointed under the incentive programme of Minister Jet Bussemaker. At the time the university's target for female professors was set, the arrangement for Westerdijk professors did not yet exist.



- **Professors**  
In five years the number of female professors rose by 8.2% to 27.9%. In 2017 this was over 2%. The reason for this is an obvious one. In 2017 and 2018 as part of the incentive programme of Minister Jet Bussemaker 19 female Westerdijk professors were appointed at Utrecht University. The target for 2020 is to reach 27%. However, when this target was established, the appointment of the Westerdijk professors had not been anticipated.
- **Associate professors**  
Due to the promotion of internal associate professors to Westerdijk professors a limited overall growth of 1.8% has taken place between 2013 and 2018. In order to achieve the target for associate professors of 36% by 2020, focused policy is required.
- **Assistant professors**  
There has been a growth of 7%. The growth has mainly taken place in the period up to 2017, then the percentage of assistant professors stabilized.
- **PHDs**  
The total number of PhD candidates has increased over the course of six years by about 41 FTE. This increase is entirely related to male PhD candidates. The percentage of female PhD candidates dropped by 3.9% in the same six years and was 47.9% in 2018. This percentage is roughly the same as that of female assistant professors.
- **First year students**  
Between 2013 and 2018 around 60% of first year students matriculated at Utrecht University were female. This ratio is considerably higher than the gender balance data in academic staff.



# Utrecht University stimulates equity, diversity and inclusion within education, research and the organization

- For news, events and background information, please visit the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force website: [uu.nl/diversity](https://uu.nl/diversity)
- Subscribe to the quarterly Diversity and Inclusion Newsletter on [uu.nl/diversity](https://uu.nl/diversity)
- Do you have ideas to make Utrecht University more inclusive? Please get in touch with the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force via [diversity@uu.nl](mailto:diversity@uu.nl).

