

Summary Development Dialogue 12 April 2021

Present:

*Leo de Haan, Godfried Engbersen, James Nazroo, Ariana Need, Bart Roelofs (Committee)
Wim Vercooteren (Certiked)*

Hans de Bresser, Beate Volker, Dick Ettema, Pieter Hooimeijer, Ajay Bailey, Gery Nijenhuis, Ilse van Liempt (Geoscience)

Chair: *Tine Beneker*

The Future Wider Embeddedness of the RM Programme in the Department

The panel appreciates the idea and initiatives to broaden the programme as to better represent the research done in the department as a whole. The panel understands the needs to integrate theories and methods on governance and development in the curriculum. But the panel would, nevertheless, like to express the relevance of a clear focus of the programme.

Name Change

The programme management considers changing the name of the programme to better reflect the connection with the department wide *Urban Futures* Research Programme. The new name should also point to new research directions and cross border activities between areas of research within the department. Names suggested in brainstorm sessions so far has been Urban Futures or Inclusive Cities. The panel feels the new name of the programme ought to allow students to clearly deduce from this name the goals and contents of the programme. The name should include or should be supplemented by a clear narrative explaining to students what kind of knowledge and skills they will acquire in the programme. Identifying this knowledge and these skills is important for students to present themselves to future employers.

When the name Urban Futures would be chosen, the panel thinks it important to explain to incoming students that both the Global North and the Global South will be included and also that the new science on cities, including the inequalities in these cities will be addressed. The panel thinks the new name may need to be communicated to other universities in the region, in order to avoid any overlap. Macro-efficiency considerations may also play a role in the choice for the name. The panel feels the name should especially be suited to attract more students and to increase the intake of the programme.

External Possibilities for Sharing Electives and Opportunities to Specialise

The programme management wants to investigate options to collaborate with other programmes to share courses and to offer students more opportunities to specialise. Offering courses from other Faculties is welcomed by the panel, as this may add to the inter-disciplinary character of the programme. The panel feels this is important to do. The panel points to methods courses in programmes of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Utrecht University. These courses may be very suitable to share. The panel also mentions programmes in Brussels and Antwerp as candidates for exploring opportunities for collaboration.

The panel sees the stand-alone status of the programme as an important achievement. Now that the programme has a strong position, contacting other programmes to look for ways to collaborate is a good and logical step to take. The panel regards working together with programmes abroad and programmes in the field of sustainability as viable options.