

Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025

September 2020



Introduction

Utrecht University wants to be a university where everyone feels at home and sees it as their social responsibility to contribute to equal opportunities for all. The university also believes in the power of diversity: a diverse population of students and staff enriches the quality of the academic debate. In short, Utrecht University stands for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

In order to achieve and support this aim, a diversity programme was launched a few years ago. Following an evaluation of this programme, a new EDI strategy and action plan was drawn up in the spring of 2020. This document sets out Utrecht University's vision, mission and strategy with regard to EDI.

This strategy and action plan has a horizon up to 2025, which coincides with Utrecht University's new strategic plan. At the same time, we would like to stress that this is not a static document. For the university, the EDI domain is relatively new and we emphatically want to be a learning organisation. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the emphasis is shifted during the process.

In recent months, the Black Lives Matter movement in particular has had a profound impact, also within the university. It has taught us to listen to the experiences of people both inside and outside the Utrecht University community when it comes to racism and discrimination. As a university we have the task of educating young people in an open community. We also have the task of contributing to the social debate through research. And it is our shared responsibility to prevent students and staff from being subjected to exclusion, humiliation, racism and discrimination. These changes will take time, but let us use the energy of global protests to accelerate this process.

Professor Janneke Plantenga, Diversity Dean

“I believe that the quality of education benefits from a more diverse curriculum.”

Fedoua Ouchan, student





VISION

Utrecht University wants to make a visible contribution to an inclusive university community, to a just society, and to equal rights and equal opportunities for all.

MISSION

The EDI mission is consistent with the Utrecht University mission. Utrecht University is working towards a better world and sees EDI as a central starting point for the policy domains of education, research and impact. The importance of EDI is reflected in our actions as students, managers and employees. These actions are focused on creating an open and inspiring community, where everyone can feel at home, with opportunities for everyone, and with space for new forms of thinking, learning and working.

IMPACT

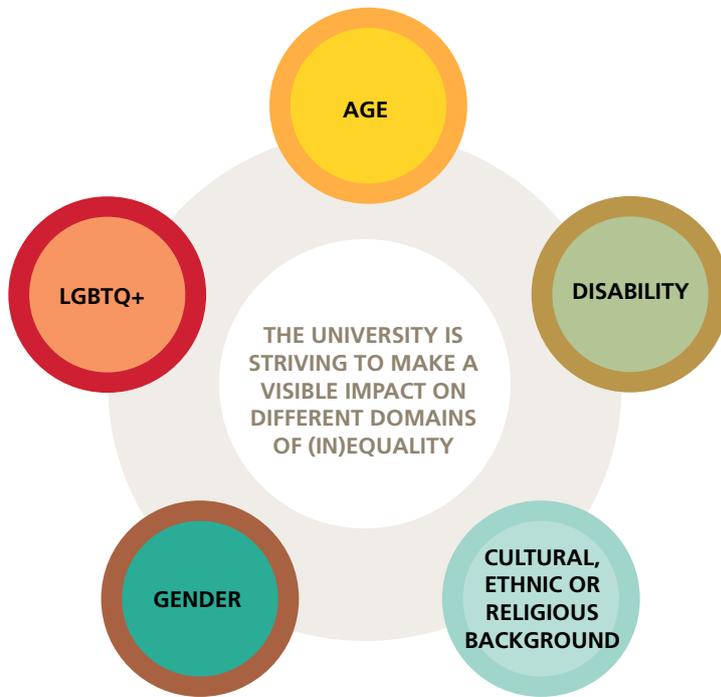
The EDI policy has several dimensions. Traditionally, the university has given a lot of attention to gender, age, LGBTQ+ and disability. In recent years, there has been more attention for ethnic and cultural background. Within Utrecht University, the EDI policy focuses on all relevant dimensions of equality and inequality, such as age, LGBTQ+, cultural, ethnic or religious background, gender and disability.

STRATEGY

Utrecht University wants to make the university more equal, diverse and inclusive by means of specific actions aimed at the objectives listed below.

At the same time, we realise that this strategy and action plan is not a static document. There are always new insights and developments that require adjustments or updates. Utrecht University wants to be a learning university; we want to learn from our students, our staff and our colleagues elsewhere. The aim is to always ensure an inclusive learning and working environment in which everyone can fully develop their talents.

This will not happen by itself. And an equal, diverse and inclusive university is not the result of policy alone. It also requires constant debate and discussion. We therefore ask that all employees and students take the responsibility to support these objectives and help to achieve a more equal, diverse and inclusive university.



OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been developed in accordance with the university's strategic plan.

1. **Increasing awareness** regarding EDI both within and outside the university.
2. Actively **supporting and promoting the strategy** of Utrecht University, in which public values such as equality, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and mutual respect are formulated as important points of departure.
3. Encouraging students and staff with diverse backgrounds to come to Utrecht University and ensuring that they feel **welcome and valued**.
4. Stimulating **an inclusive, open and safe learning and working environment**, in which there is open debate and discrimination is not accepted.
5. Developing a **robust and reliable monitoring system** for the intake, transfer and outflow of students and staff, so that progress with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion can be determined as objectively as possible.

GOVERNANCE

The importance of the EDI theme requires a clear structure in which the tasks, powers and responsibilities are clearly defined.

Diversity Dean and Steering Committee

A Diversity Dean has been appointed within the framework of this strategy and action plan. The Diversity Dean is responsible for the programme, chairs of the EDI Steering Committee and is the figurehead of Utrecht University on this subject. The Diversity Dean reports directly to the Executive Board.

The EDI Steering Committee consists of representatives of each faculty (including University Medical Center Utrecht (UMCU)/Medicine), the University Corporate Office (UBD), two young involved Utrecht University staff members and two student members. The faculty representative is also responsible for the content of the faculty EDI programme and for the implementation and support of the programme at faculty level. The steering committee members are appointed by the Executive Board on the recommendation of the Diversity Dean.

Organisation and EDI office

The Diversity Dean and the EDI Steering Committee are supported by the EDI Office. The programme and the EDI Office are coordinated by a programme manager. The EDI Office consists of the direct project support of the programme and a virtual team formed by EDI experts/ coordinators from relevant University Corporate Office departments. Organisationally, the programme is part of the HR department; the HR Director regularly meets with the Diversity Dean.



Action Plan 2021–2025

The five objectives are detailed below in terms of activities, objectives and results. The objectives have been formulated for a period of four years until 1 January 2025.

Progress will be monitored annually and an updated annual plan will be drawn up accordingly. The annual plan will include the projects to be carried out that year.

In addition to ongoing matters carried out in cooperation with others, the EDI organisation will focus on three topics in 2021:

- Optimising the current intake and selection policy for students from the EDI perspective (Objective 3.1).
- Stimulating an inclusive curriculum, in terms of content, instructional formats and structure (Objective 4.1).
- Stimulating integrated reporting of diversity data to gain insight into the student and staff population by gender, migration background, socio-economic background, LGBTQ+ and disability (Objective 5.1).

These topics have been chosen mainly on the basis of experiences in recent years. Many still regard a diverse intake as an external factor; as the coincidental result of the registration process. However, the question is why certain groups of students come to Utrecht University less often. With the Diversity, Inclusion and Selection (DIS) project, aimed at a more diverse intake and transfer of students, we want to make intake an explicit part of the policy, by addressing the information material, the role models, the role of student societies, etc.

But a more diverse intake alone is not enough; students must also feel at home. This implies that we need to think about content, the instructional formats and the structure of the curriculum, and that we critically question the current teaching materials and increase our knowledge about visible and hidden mechanisms of under-representation and exclusion. Increasing freedom of choice and offering other forms of education such as community engaged learning (CEL) can also be a way of meeting the demands and needs of a more diverse student population.

Policy must also be supported through knowledge, for example knowledge about intake, transfer and outflow. Our knowledge about cultural, ethnic and religious diversity is particularly limited at the moment. This makes it difficult to formulate targets for minorities, for example. Together with Statistics Netherlands, we want to gain more insight into the cultural, ethnic and religious diversity of our students and staff. If possible, we also want to check this against the cultural and ethnic diversity of pre-university education (VWO) students and jobseekers.

*“Inclusivity means
that everyone has a seat
at the table.”*

Douglas Dorothal, student



OBJECTIVE 1



Increasing awareness with regard to EDI both within and outside the university.

ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTES TO	RESULTS
1.1 Draw up and implement a coherent communication strategy to raise awareness of the EDI strategy and activities, including stimulating familiarity with and findability of the EDI Office, both physically and online.	Increasing knowledge and awareness with regard to EDI of the Utrecht University community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publication of a public-friendly strategy and action plan;• Setting up an EDI Office;• Development and implementation of a communication strategy.
1.2 Develop training programmes with regard to EDI and give advice on the optimisation of existing Utrecht University training programmes, such as academic leadership.	Creating awareness and increasing support.	Specific Utrecht University training programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unconscious bias;• Inappropriate behaviour;• Active bystander;• Intercultural skills.
1.3 Organise activities on EDI-related dates, such as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, International Women's Day and Coming Out Day.	Cooperation with other organisations on EDI strengthens expertise, increases effectiveness and leads to new initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least one of the annual activities is organised together with the University of Applied Sciences;• With regard to refugees, we work together with the municipal authority.
1.4 Develop and maintain contacts with existing networks and societal stakeholders (such as the municipal authority and Utrecht University of Applied Sciences) in the development and organisation of EDI activities.	Cooperation with other organisations on EDI strengthens expertise, increases effectiveness and leads to new initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least one of the annual activities is organised together with the University of Applied Sciences;• With regard to refugees, we work together with the municipal authority.

OBJECTIVE 2



Actively supporting and promoting the strategy of Utrecht University, in which public values such as equality, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and mutual respect are formulated as important points of departure.

ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTES TO	RESULTS
2.1 Advise on improving accessibility of buildings and standardising accessibility requirements and conditions for new construction and renovation.	Improved accessibility of work and study environment.	More accessible Utrecht University buildings for staff, students and guests with disabilities.
2.2 Advise on improving digital accessibility in online and blended education.	Improved accessibility of online work and study environment.	More accessible online Utrecht University facilities for staff, students and guests with disabilities.
2.3 Connect and monitor activities aimed at primary and secondary education, such as Meet the Professor, Honours Trajectum Utrecht, Weekend School, Pouwer College, Science Programmes, etc. (widening participation).	Strengthening language, study and presentation skills and attitude; strengthening vision on science, career development and study choice.	Offering programmes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debuut• Honours Trajectum Utrecht• (IMC)Weekend School• Internships at Utrecht University via Pouwer College• U-Talent UP• U-Talent Girls Club• Speed Coaching.
2.4 Develop and provide training and work experience places for refugees with and without residency status.	Greater intake of refugee students at Utrecht University, improved study success, and increased diversity among the staff population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offering training programmes in in which at least 50 refugees a year take part;• Creation of at least 5 work experience places a year.
2.5 Improve the involvement of alumni as ambassadors in achieving the overall objective: an equal, diverse and inclusive university.	Reinforcing the importance of EDI, also outside the university community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication aimed at alumni will include attention for EDI at least once a year;• Involvement of alumni from target groups in their own activities, such as meetings or lectures.

OBJECTIVE 3



Encouraging students and staff with diverse backgrounds to come to Utrecht University and ensure that they feel welcome and valued.

ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTES TO	RESULTS
3.1 Optimise the current intake and selection policy for students from an EDI perspective (e.g. through visual material, role models during provision of information, selection criteria, etc.).	Achieving a more diverse intake and transfer of students; increasing awareness on the themes of diversity and inclusion and creating a more inclusive learning environment for students.	Implementation and completion of Diversity: Intake & Selection (DIS) project aimed at a more diverse intake and transfer of students, especially students with a different ethnic or cultural background.
3.2 Monitor gender relations in senior and other academic positions and at the start of an academic career (PhD positions).	Increased percentage of female academics.	Gender targets set for associate professor and professor positions and additional measures (gender quotas) if applicable.
3.3 Advise on the optimisation of the recruitment and selection policy for staff from an EDI perspective (e.g. with regard to job vacancy texts, recruitment channels, composition/working method of Appointments Advisory Committees (AAC) and targeted use of affirmative action policy).	Increased diversity of the current staff population.	Diverse Recruitment & Selection Toolbox available

*“Open up.
See what the other
is capable of.”*
Denise Langreder, student



OBJECTIVE 4



Stimulating an inclusive, open and safe learning and working environment, in which there is open debate and discrimination is not accepted.

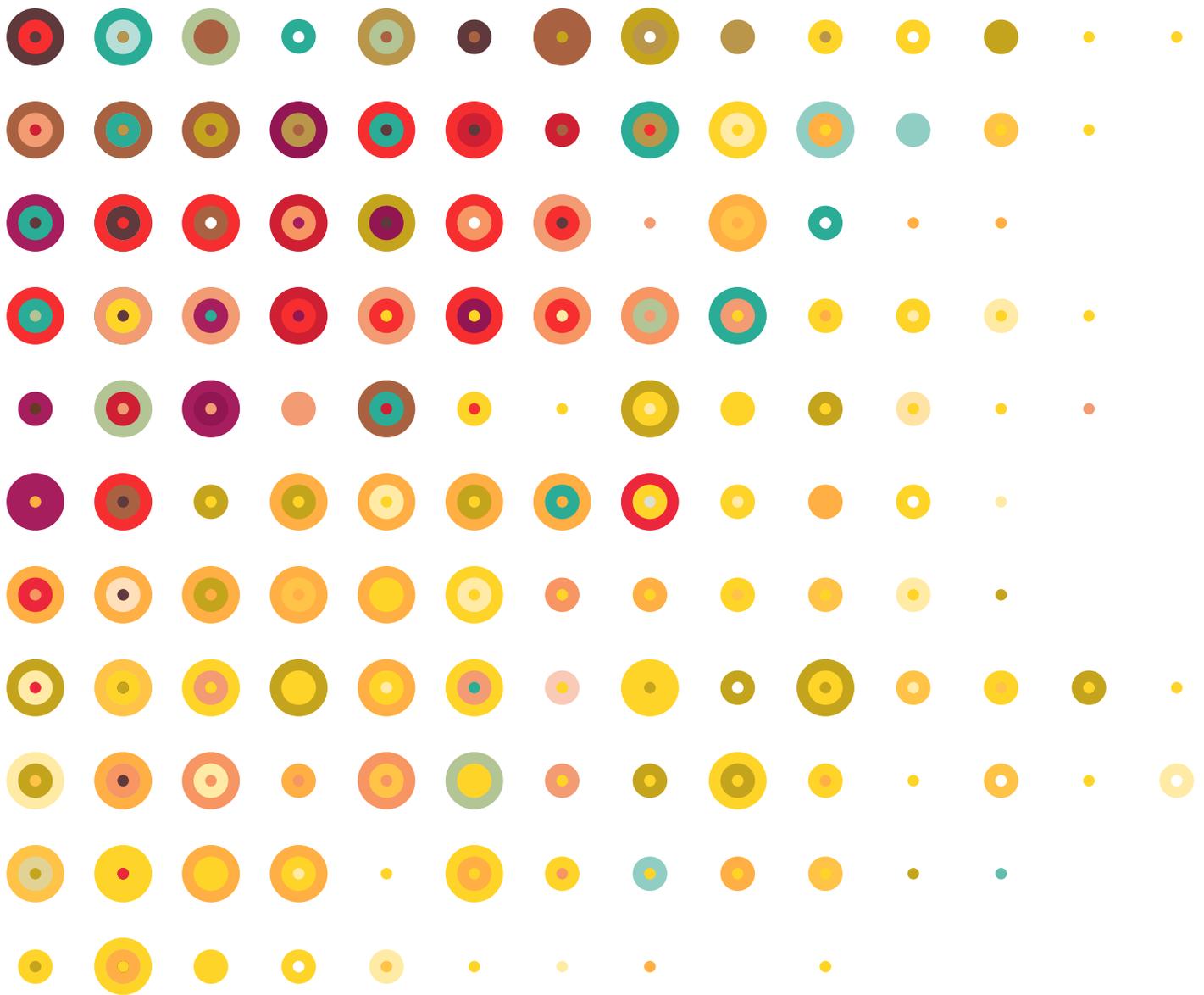
ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTES TO	RESULTS
4.1 Stimulate an inclusive curriculum, in terms of content, instructional formats and structure.	More inclusive higher education, which recognises which various experiences and backgrounds of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two-year Utrecht Education Incentive Fund (USO) project on an inclusive curriculum will start in 2020. Three faculties will work together in this project; The result will be a curriculum scan and a toolbox for all Utrecht University degree programmes; Promotion of the existing Diversity Toolbox in Education.
4.2 Stimulate visible role models in higher positions, such as faculty and other boards, directors of education and research, professors and research directors, professors and associate professors.	Improved accessibility and perceived accessibility of Utrecht University for a more diverse student and staff population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate whether targets can be set for other target groups; • Encourage debate on discrimination; • Actively shape incentive policies concerning ethnic and cultural diversity; • Make role models more visible in communication, images, gatherings, etc.
4.3 Coordinate and facilitate EDI-related Utrecht University networks for staff and students in the development of annual plans/activities and joining (other) initiatives within and outside Utrecht University.	Promotion of a more inclusive university community through networks that create a safe place for meeting and discussion.	<p>Facilitation of networks such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainbow Network • Participants Network • Utrecht University Women's Network • FPUU Female Professors Network. <p>A network coordinator will be appointed within the programme for this purpose.</p> <p>Student network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unimpaired Studying Platform (<i>Platform Onbeperkt Studeren</i>, POS).

OBJECTIVE 5



Developing a robust and reliable monitoring system for the intake, transfer and outflow of students and staff, so that progress with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion can be determined as objectively as possible.

ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTES TO	RESULTS
5.1 Stimulate integrated reporting of diversity data to gain insight into the student and staff population by gender, migration background, socio-economic background, LGBTQ+ and disability.	Increased insight into the backgrounds of the current student and staff population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual report on data on students and staff with regard to migration background, functional disability, social class and LGBTQ+ (as far as possible);• Participation in Cultural Diversity Barometer (SER/CBS).
5.2 Monitor and report annually on the composition of faculty and department boards, appointments of directors of education and research, academic staff positions from an EDI perspective. (see objectives for 4.2.).	Insight into diversity of board composition, partly in view of inclusive administrative careers.	Annual report on composition of boards and committees.
5.3 Analyse the outflow of certain groups in order to gain more insight into the reasons for departure of students and/or staff.	Insight into scope of and reasons for the outflow of Utrecht University students and staff. Based on this, it can be determined whether additional policies are needed with regard to diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of outflow data (figures and qualitative analysis) on aspects of inclusion for inclusion policies;• An inclusion survey is conducted among students and staff every two years.



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