

**Utrecht University****Utrecht Young Academy**

Word of Welcome

Dear reader,

"To design well is to put a giant box around yourself and focus on one thing only", said industrial designer Chris Bangle in an interview in [Het Blad](#) (NRC, May 2021). The interviewer commented – tongue-in-cheek, I guess: "To think in the box, instead of out of the box." Reading this gave me a bittersweet feeling. For months now, I, as many others do, am to sit in a real-life giant box, right at the kitchen table of my home in Utrecht. I yearn to get out of the house and be reunited with my colleagues and students without the mediation of my laptop screen. On the other hand, to sit in the box deeply resonates with me in a positive way. I am utterly happy when I am 'in the box', in the sense of being in a state of deep concentration for a prolonged period of time. This is what drew me to academia in the first place: to exercise the privilege of unravelling complex issues and taking the hours to do so. This past year, especially when the schools closed down, these 'in the box' moments were rare. By having ample digital conversations with our Utrecht Young Academy members, I was assured I am not the only one who was deprived of these happy moments of solitude. Therefore, as chair of the Utrecht Young Academy I would very much like to encourage Utrecht University initiatives constituting full focus 'in the box' moments for the coming year, such as writing retreats. We might even call it: in the box fellowships. Because sometimes, bright minds are brighter in the box.



Yours,

Martine Veldhuizen

Chair of the Utrecht Young Academy



Utrecht Young Academy urges: "ABP, divest from fossil industry"

The Utrecht Young Academy has signed a letter of Scientists for Future together with all other Young Academies of Dutch universities. With this letter, academics of all research disciplines ask university boards to put pressure on the ABP pension fund. Academics want ABP to revise their investment policy in the fossil fuel industry as soon as possible and bring it in line with the Paris climate goals.

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KlimaatHelpdesk: over 200 experts answer questions

The KlimaatHelpdesk, an initiative of the Utrecht Young Academy and Scientists for Future, answers any question you may have about climate change. Over 80 questions have been answered on the website and over 200 experts have contributed their knowledge. The first KlimaatHelpdesk Live event, a live stream from Studio TivoliVredenburg, took place May 17.

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Travelling Concepts on Air

Travelling Concepts on Air is a podcast series created by dr. Tessa Diphoorn and dr. Brianne McGonigle Leyh, both member of the Utrecht Young Academy, that explores the promise and ideal of interdisciplinarity. Tessa and Brianne address the idea of travelling concepts by organizing monthly sessions wherein guest speakers will unpack various concepts, such as sustainability, war or citizenship, delineate how they are used in their disciplines, and discuss what this entails for interdisciplinary scholarship.

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Centre for Unusual Collaborations

Four teams from different disciplines and institutions within the strategic alliance between TU/e, WUR, UU and UMC Utrecht have received an Unusual Collaborations Grant for projects set to address societal challenges. Furthermore, three projects received a Spark Grant intended to initiate or explore unconventional and unexpected collaborations between colleagues from different disciplines.

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Ten new members join the Utrecht Young Academy

The Selection Committee of the Utrecht Young Academy finalised the admission procedure for new members in February and selected ten excellent academics from various backgrounds and disciplines. We look forward to the exciting new ideas and contributions of our ten new members. This year, potential candidates can be nominated by the deans of Utrecht University, programme directors of the Strategic Themes, and PhD-councils.

NOMINATION, SELECTION AND REGULATIONS

Strategic Themes at Utrecht University

Members of the Utrecht Young Academy engaged in dialogues with the directors of the four Strategic Themes at Utrecht University: Institutions for Open Societies, Dynamics of Youth, Pathways to Sustainability and Life Sciences. These discussions revolved around governance principles that could make the Strategic Themes more inclusive, diverse and transparent. The Utrecht Young Academy will continue to engage in fruitful conversations with the directors of the Strategic Themes.

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Multidisciplinarity as a research object



Road to Open Science

What is Open Science and what can it do

What barriers do academics encounter in multidisciplinary collaborations? Do they feel appreciated for their multidisciplinary work? What type of research best suits a multidisciplinary approach? Postdoctoral researcher [Ilona Domen](#) aims to answer these questions in her research project, funded and initiated by the Utrecht Young Academy.

for research? The relaunched [Road to Open Science podcast](#), hosted by Utrecht Young Academy member dr. [Sanli Faez](#), follows the path to open science through the perspective of researchers. It covers various aspects, from practicalities to policies and philosophies.

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Keep an eye out for...

THEORIELAB

It has become clearer than ever that conspiracy theories are very much alive, undermining the validity of academic values. The project [Theorielab](#) aims to provide both pupils and their teachers with evidence-based website on the context in which conspiracy theories arise and which people become susceptible to them. After summer, several members of the Utrecht Young Academy will also give guest lessons on conspiracy theories at secondary schools.

FOURTH GENERATION PROJECT

The slogan of Utrecht University is 'Bright Minds, Better Future'. But what does 'Better Future' actually mean? To understand this, the 2020 generation of the Utrecht Young Academy is investigating the diversity of ways in which Utrecht University uses the *future* or *futures* in its education, research and organisational strategies. The aim is to create an interactive tool for supporting *the future researcher*.

LEAN STARTUP METHOD

How can the student intake of the bachelor's degree in Dutch Language and Culture become more diverse? A project of the Utrecht Young Academy investigates this using two innovative methods from the business world: the Lean Startup Method and Sprint. Along with the publication of the results, Tessa van de Warenburg will explain more about the methods and results in an interview.

PRIVACY AND INCLUSION

How do you work with sensitive employee data in your efforts to create an inclusive workplace? The [Privacy and Inclusion](#) project creates a practical, evidence-based toolbox aiding employers in developing effective diversity policy that respects people's right to privacy. A survey will also provide insight on the factors involved in whether people want to share their personal data or not. In April 2021, the project group [published an article](#)

on their transdisciplinary approach.

The Utrecht Young Academy is looking for a student assistant for the academic year 2021-2022 for 8 hours/week (starting mid-August). Do you know a candidate who might be interested in the position? Please forward the [job description](#).

Check out our [website](#) or [follow us on Twitter](#) to stay up to date with our projects and events.

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uya@uu.nl
www.uu.nl/uya

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