

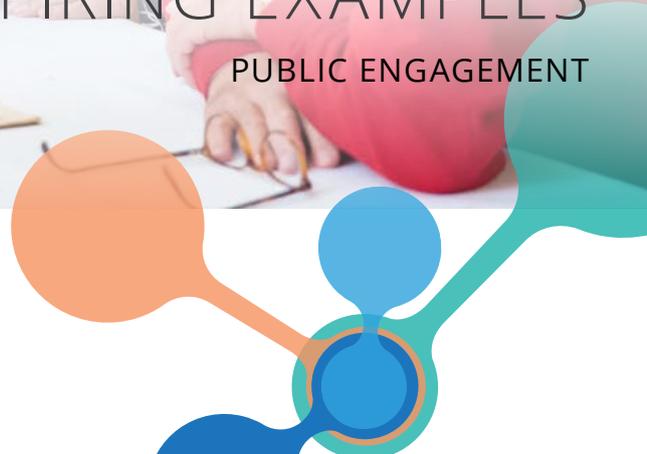


INSPIRING EXAMPLES

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Utrecht University





INTRODUCTION

Utrecht University is keen to have a high level of social engagement and to contribute to finding solutions to societal issues.

Public engagement is one of the ways that researchers can put this social responsibility into practice, in addition to for example policy engagement (aimed at policymakers and politicians) and business engagement (aimed at the business community).

By ‘public engagement’ we mean the various ways in which research activities and the findings and practical benefits of academic research can be shared with the general public. Engagement is a two way street – it involves interaction, with the goal of the activity benefiting both parties involved.

Public engagement offers benefits for the general public (greater involvement in academic research; more well-informed decision-making), researchers (new ideas, having their ways of thinking challenged, hearing the public’s perspectives) and the university (societal impact).

When researchers and support staff are looking to get involved in public engagement, all kinds of questions crop up. How do you engage with the public successfully? What are the kinds of things you might want to do or keep in mind? What have colleagues done that we might be able to learn from? How much time and money will it require?

The examples in this booklet can serve as inspiration and jumping-off points for a conversation about these questions between researchers and support staff. In order to give some structure to that conversation, we have also included a step-by-step plan. If you’d like to know more about one of the examples, get in touch with the researcher or department listed, or with the Public Engagement team.

**Miranda Thoen, Stephanie Helfferich and Eline Dondorp,
Utrecht University’s Public Engagement team**

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What do the icons mean?



What kind of public activity is it?



Which audience is involved?



During what research phase did the public activity take place?



How much time did it take to develop and/or prepare for the public activity?



How long did the public activity go on for?



What budget did the researcher have for the public activity? (excluding personnel costs)

€: < €1,000

€€: €1,000 – €20,000

€€€: > €20,000

STEP-BY-STEP PLAN

Have you ever considered involving the public in your research?

In order to design a successful public engagement activity, you can go through the following steps:

1. Why make use of public engagement?
2. What societal issue are you seeking to address?
3. Who might have questions, concerns or opinions about this issue?
4. How does your research touch upon this issue?
5. How can you involve the public in your research on this topic?
6. What do you need in order to do this?
7. Evaluate

1 WHY MAKE USE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

- Improves the quality and impact of the research
- Yields new insight and ideas for both the public and the researcher
- Generates public support for academic research
- Results in new partnerships
- Can help to obtain grants and funding
- Can yield new data

WHAT IS YOUR MOTIVE?

2 WHAT SOCIETAL ISSUE ARE YOU ARE SEEKING TO ADDRESS?

- Is it current?
- Is it urgent?
- Is this a long-term or a short-term issue?
- Is this issue local, regional, national or international in scope?

WHAT IS YOUR SOCIETAL ISSUE?

3 WHO MIGHT HAVE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR OPINIONS ABOUT THIS ISSUE?

- Which audience could make a contribution?
- Which audience might be interested?
- Which audience is likely to have an opinion on this issue?
- Which audience could offer insights or perspectives that you or your research project are still lacking?

WHICH AUDIENCE DO YOU WISH TO INVOLVE?

4 HOW DOES YOUR RESEARCH TOUCH UPON THIS ISSUE?

- Is your research question derived from the issue?
- What aspects of this issue does your research pertain to?
- What vantage points/perspectives on or insights into this issue might your research yield?

HOW DOES YOUR RESEARCH TOUCH UPON THIS ISSUE OR CHALLENGE?

6 WHAT DO YOU NEED IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO DESIGN AND COMPLETE A PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY?

- Planning: start thinking about what and who you will be needing in a timely manner
- Inspiring examples of public engagement activities
- Advice, support and expertise relating to concept development, implementation, organisation, drafting the budget, etc.
- Support from Communications, RSO, the University Museum/ Studium Generale, etc.
- Financial resources: how much?
- Human resources: how many people and who?

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

5 HOW CAN YOU INVOLVE THE PUBLIC IN YOUR RESEARCH ON THIS TOPIC?

- Start of your research: working with the public to formulate the research question; having public perspectives inform your research question
- During your research: citizen science (data collection by/ with the public); giving the public a glimpse behind the scenes; adjusting your research question to reflect public perspectives
- After the research: linking the results to societal issues and sharing them with the public; letting the public contribute ideas/join in the debate about the interpretation of the results and follow-up research

WHICH PHASE IS SUITABLE FOR YOU?

7 EVALUATE

- Decide on your goal and how you will measure the impact of your activity in advance
- Document lessons learned for future reference
- Share these lessons with colleagues

HOW WILL YOU EVALUATE THE RESULTS?

BETWETER FESTIVAL

Annual art and science festival in Utrecht

The Betweter Festival (Know-It-All Festival) is the annual art and science festival held at TivoliVredenburg. With a full evening's entertainment – including mini-lectures, interviews, music and movie screenings – the festival challenges visitors to put on their thinking caps. They can find out all about the wonderful world of science in a relaxed ambiance, while nursing a beer. This is a great event for anyone who wants to know more about how the world works, likes to seek out new experiences and cultivate their sense of wonder. The fact that visitors can actually have hands-on involvement in the scientific research makes this festival truly unique.

The Betweter Festival is an attempt to bring science and the general public into closer proximity. Jessie Waalwijk, Project Leader, explains: *'Science has long ceased to be the domain of old men in ivory towers – it's relevant to all of us. That's what we're showing people at this festival. Rapid societal changes need to be explored and put into context – science and art can help us with that.'*

Passing on knowledge

In 2016, researcher and Assistant Professor of Neuropsychology Anouk Keizer gave a talk on her research about self-image among people with anorexia: *'I've devoted the past eight years of my life to this topic, so it's wonderful to get the opportunity to share my key findings with people and be able to pass on the knowledge I've gained.'*

The Betweter Festival is organised by Utrecht University's 'Studium Generale' in conjunction with the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), HKU University of the Arts Utrecht, the University of Humanistic Studies (UvH) and TivoliVredenburg.



Festivals and venues



Adults (students, alumni and other interested individuals, both local and otherwise)



Talk: 12 hours, experiment: 32 hours



One night



The researcher does not require any funds



Photography: Jan Willem Groen

'MEDIA LITERACY BY MAKING MEDIA' EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE KIT

The key to getting young migrants involved?

After arriving in the Netherlands, young migrants complete a two-year educational programme in international transitional classes. The Utrecht-based school, Ithaka Internationale Schakelklassen, currently has a student body of approximately 775 pupils. Rob Bekker, an experienced language teacher, approached researcher Sanne Sprenger and asked her to develop a media literacy training programme for these students. In late 2016, Sanne and fellow researchers Koen Leurs, Hemmo Bruinenberg and Ena Omerovi developed a pilot course, funded by Ithaka.

In September 2017, the media researchers resumed this project when the Mediawijs door Media Maken (Media Literacy by Making Media) project received funding from the Dutch National Research Agenda as part of its 'Resilient and Meaningful Societies' focus area. In the spring of 2018, 50 students completed the new course.

Sanne: 'Learning to critically examine media, and make their own media, is especially important for young migrants. It helps them build bridges in a society they're still getting to know. And it also helps them stay connected with their home countries, while learning to take a critical look at what's going on over there. While it is more and more common for media literacy to be taught in classrooms, it turned out that insufficient attention was being given to the topic in international classes.'

According to the researchers involved in the project and teachers working with young migrants, the existing educational resources tend to use complex language, and can also be rather patronising and preachy. This programme, on the other hand, focuses on empowerment. That's why it gives students the opportunity to make their own audiovisual media items, such as interviews, propaganda movies, vlogs and video resumes. In this process, they can learn first-hand how media is tinged by vested interests or other journalistic considerations – and they can learn ways to express their own identities.

Dr Koen Leurs, Sanne Sprenger, MA, Hemmo Bruinenberg, Msc and Ena Omerović, MA are affiliated with Utrecht University's Department of Media and Culture Studies.



Children and science



Young migrants



Since September 2017, researchers have been working on this project a half-day a week; two researchers have been devoting a day a week to it



€€€



Photography: Team Mediawijs by Media Maken

LITLAB

Digital laboratory for literature research

LitLab is a digital laboratory for literature research in secondary schools. Through digital experiments, students in the final years of secondary school can gain experience with academic research in the field of Dutch literature, exploring a wide range of topics from Middle Dutch stories through to contemporary pop music.

The initiative was born out of Dutch Literature scholar Els Stronk's concern for the future of Dutch in the secondary school curriculum: 'Literature used to be a prominent part of the curriculum. Nowadays, the focus tends to be on practical skills, with literature having fallen by the wayside. I, along with a number of other Dutch Literature scholars at Utrecht University, discovered that secondary-school teachers are keen to have access to teaching materials that link the subject of Dutch literature in schools with academic research on Dutch literature. This gives students insight into the significance of Dutch literature for our society. That's why we developed LitLab in 2016.'

The goal of LitLab is to give secondary school students the opportunity to learn how to conduct research on Dutch literature. In doing so, LitLab focuses on relevant current issues. For example, students research how you can glean centuries-old ideas about nationalism from pop songs, what makes literature literature and how slavery was depicted in Dutch writing. The lessons tie into some of the most up-to-date academic research and for now are focusing on the use of digital methods and collections that are freely accessible for everyone. LitLab thus forms a bridge between students, teachers and academics.

Dr. Els Stronk is Professor of Early Modern Dutch Literature and Culture at Utrecht University's Department of Languages, Literature and Communication.



Children and science



Teachers and students in secondary education



From concept to a first design for the website in five months



During the research



€€



UTRECHT DAY OF PHILOSOPHY

Incorporating new insights from philosophy into public debate

On 21 April 2018, Utrecht University's Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies organised the first-ever Utrecht Day of Philosophy. The varied programme consisted of debates, a philosophy walking tour, lectures and interviews.

Two keynote speakers were invited for the morning part of the programme: German philosopher Dorothea Gädeke and Annemarie Kalis, Assistant Professor at Utrecht University's Department of Philosophy. Dorothea discussed the question of what we can learn from the South African philosophy of 'Ubuntu', which places humanity, or the quality of being human, at the centre of all philosophical endeavour. Annemarie, on the other hand, focused on the concept of self-control: What exactly is it we are doing when we exercise self-control?

In the afternoon, attendees could choose from various options. There were lectures about topics such as conspiracy theories, animal ethics and street politics, and debates about fake news, democracy and climate change. There was also the option of going on a philosophy-themed walking tour around Utrecht. Philosopher Paul Ziche showed attendees the homes of various well-known philosophers and talked about how philosophical concepts are reflected in urban architecture, and how you can view the city through a philosophical lens.

The Utrecht Day of Philosophy is the initiative of Ingrid Robeyns, Professor at the Ethics Institute: 'The field of philosophy contributes to reflecting on all aspects of life in a thorough, critical and nuanced manner – including the fundamental issues that occupy all of us. During this day, we use the latest insights from the world of philosophy to broaden and inform debates about issues faced by contemporary society.'

It will only be possible to organise a follow-up to the inaugural Utrecht Day of Philosophy if more capacity and support are made available, or if the organisers are able to join forces with another organisation with experience of running these types of events.

Professor Ingrid Robeyns' research is situated at the intersection of analytical political philosophy, ethics, economics and social sciences.



Lectures and debates



Everyone in Utrecht and beyond who is interested in philosophy



300 hours of preparation (26 weeks)
70 hours of organisation for the day itself (not including speaking time)



One day



€€



SCHIMMELLAB

World fame – a fungus with your name

In 2017, the Utrecht University Museum and the Westerdijk Fungal Biodiversity Institute joined forces to undertake a citizen science project. Museum visitors could submit soil samples from their own gardens in order to identify new fungi.

The year 2017 was the ‘Westerdijk Anniversary’ – commemorating the centennial of Johanna Westerdijk becoming the first female professor in the Netherlands. Various initiatives were organised to mark the occasion, including an exhibition at the Utrecht University Museum and a citizen science project. As part of the exhibition about Johanna Westerdijk, visitors could pick up a research kit from the SchimmelLAB (FungusLAB) that they could then use to take a soil sample in their own yard. These samples were sent to the Westerdijk Institute, which investigated them searching for new fungi. And with success: in May 2018, 292 samples had yielded a total of 87 new varieties of fungi. Jan Dijksterhuis then presented a number of them at the Utrecht University Museum.

People were able to watch the identification process in a video on the website, which also displayed the number of fungi found per sample and the total number of fungi found. All participants also received regular updates by email. The new fungi were named after the people who submitted them, and have also been included in the Westerdijk Institute’s fungi collection – the largest collection of living fungi in the world.

The Westerdijk Institute is very pleased with the results and will be organising a follow-up project for all the Dutch islands and across Europe.



Citizen science



Visitors to the Utrecht University Museum



During the research



One year



One week



Preparation: €
Processing the samples: €€€

Dr Jan Dijksterhuis is a researcher at the Westerdijk Fungal Biodiversity Institute.



Photography: Lize Kraan

LOWLANDS SCIENCE

Festivalgoers subject themselves to unique experiments

Lowlands is a temporary city of 60,000 residents where music, theatre, comedy and culture take centre stage. For the past three years Lowlands Science has been a fixture on the programme. Visitors can take part in a range of studies conducted by universities, universities of applied sciences and research institutes from all over the country.

One example is the research project by Iris Sommer, Professor of Psychiatry, about the relationship between sleep deprivation and hallucinations. Lowlands offered a fantastic opportunity to collect data in a natural setting. Iris Sommer: 'We wanted to know more about hallucinations. They can be induced by external factors, including dancing and sleep deprivation. There were plenty of people at Lowlands who met those criteria.'

During the festival, Iris and her team studied more than 700 visitors using a questionnaire, EEGs and a virtual reality experience. The researchers explained to each visitor that hallucination is an integral part of human perception, and that while many people do not suffer from any adverse effects, there are some who do. We need more effective treatments to help this minority. Researchers can learn a lot from conducting measurements on healthy people.

Taking part in Lowlands Science has yielded a wealth of information. According to Iris Sommer, it was 'a fantastic research reality!'

Until 2017, Dr Iris Sommer worked at UMC Utrecht, where she studied schizophrenia and the origin of hallucinations. In September 2017, she was appointed Professor of Cognitive Aspects of Neurological and Psychiatric Disorders at UMC Groningen.



Citizen science



Lowlands Festival attendees



During the research



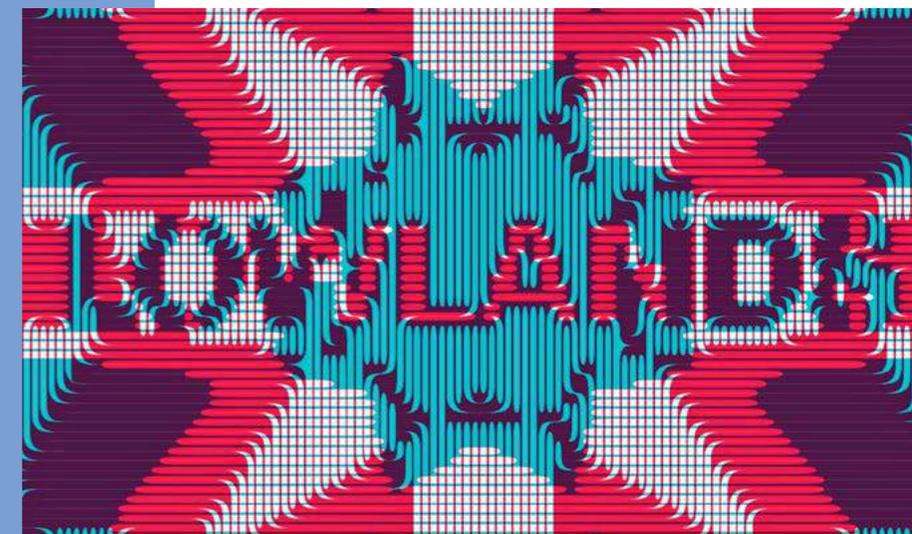
The team worked on the project intensively during the summer months



Three days



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MUSIC BY OCEANS

Music meets science

Does the Atlantic Ocean sound different to the Indian Ocean? Are currents in arctic oceans different to those in tropical oceans? Composer Stef Veldhuis worked with oceanographers Erik van Sebille and Will de Ruijter to find answers to those questions. Thousands of deep-sea probes all over the world collect data that are used for weather forecasts and climate models. These data were used to form the basis for musical elements such as pitch, dynamics and rhythm. On 31 October 2017, a string quartet played the pieces that emerged from this project, and researchers told the audience about the ocean currents that the compositions are based on.

‘It’s a radically different way to approach our data’, says Erik van Sebille. For his research he uses data generated by the Argo probes, which drift at a depth of one kilometre and surface every ten days to transmit the data they have collected via satellite.

‘Those probes yield a wealth of data, but often we don’t get much further than making visualisations and infographics. How can we use our other senses to engage with these data? Could we hear something that we’re unable to see?’

Composer Stef Veldhuis transformed the ocean data into music: ‘Some compositions are an interpretation of the journey the probes took, while others are inspired by the temperature or the salinity of the oceans.’ There is also an interactive website where visitors can make music themselves using live data as it is transmitted by the probes.

Dr. Erik van Sebille is an oceanographer and climate scientist. His research focuses on how oceans transport organisms and plastic waste between different oceanic regions.

Until December 2016, Professor Emeritus Will de Ruijter was Professor of Physical Oceanography.



Festivals and venues



Music lovers



From January 2017 until the symposium on 31 October 2017



The symposium (complete with a musical performance) took place after the research project was completed



One afternoon



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Photography: Sebastiaan ter Burg

POWERSAVER GAME

Using an online game to save energy at home

There is a growing need to find more sustainable ways of living and make more efficient use of energy at home. Powersaver Game can be played online on any device. Participants learn in a playful way how to save at least 15% on energy consumption at home. Over a five-week period, they get assignments every two days that are about ways to cut down on energy usage in their home life. The energy savings generated by completing the assignments are measured using the smart energy meter in the homes, and translated into game scores.

Computer scientist Jan Dirk Fijnheer is doing research into the use of persuasive games and gamification in relation to sustainable energy consumption (i.e. the consumption of natural gas and electricity) in the home. He developed the Powersaver Game with this in mind: 'The research focuses on how a game can bring about long-term changes to people's attitudes and behaviour in relation to the use of sustainable energy in the home.'

Two large-scale studies are being conducted that involve various experiments. One is a media comparison study, as part of which Jan Dirk is looking into the impact of playing a game on people's attitudes and behaviour in relation to sustainable energy consumption in the home. The second study is a value-added study, in which experiments are used to investigate the impact of playing competitive games and the personalisation of avatars on people's attitudes and behaviour in relation to sustainable energy consumption in the home.

Jan Dirk Fijnheer is part of the Interaction Technology research group at Utrecht University's Department of Information and Computing Sciences as an external PhD candidate, and is affiliated with InHolland University of Applied Sciences.



Citizen science



Households



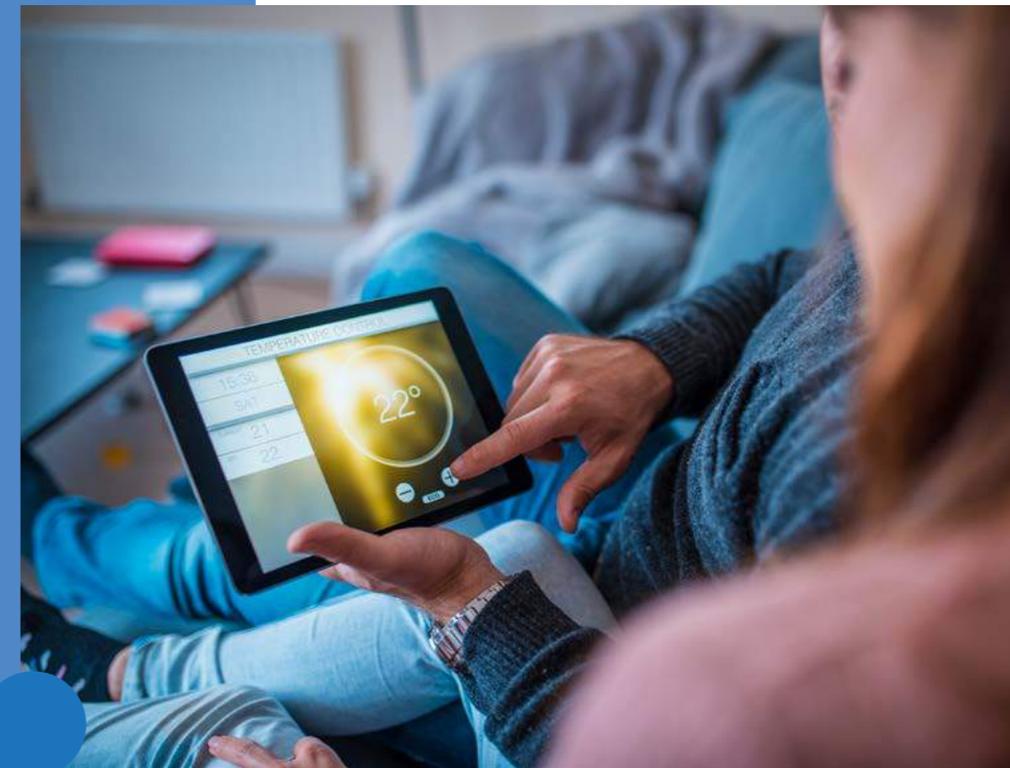
During the research project



A year and a half



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SCIENCE & FICTION

A series of screenings organised by the Louis Hartlooper Complex and Utrecht University School of Governance

Since 2010 Utrecht University's School of Governance and the Louis Hartlooper Complex movie theatre have been organising a science-themed series of film screenings every year, complete with scientists in attendance to provide background information. Under the banner of 'Science & Fiction', cutting-edge science and cinema are brought together under one roof. Inspired by Louis Hartlooper, the renowned film narrator from the silent-film era, researchers will give a brief introductory talk before every movie. Afterwards cinemagoers will have the opportunity to ask their own questions.

Gert den Toom: 'Science & Fiction is a fantastic opportunity to bring topics from the field of public governance and management to the attention of a broader public. The department is closely involved with what's going on in the "real world" and is keen to demonstrate that. This joint venture with the Louis Hartlooper Complex is a great example of that.'

Life in the city

Science & Fiction 2018 was about the challenges big cities are facing: does 'public space' still exist and who feels at home in it? The Louis Hartlooper Complex screened four films that invited people to reflect on questions such as: do we truly live 'together' or are we just a collection of individuals? The film *Overleven in de stad* (On Living in the City) explored issues such as shifting identities, diversity, the formation of group identities and exclusion. It also touched on local politics and quality of life for people living and working in cities.

Previous events

Topics that were explored in previous versions of the screening series included 'Mind the Gap' (about groups in society that barely interact with each other, don't understand each other or find themselves diametrically opposed on either side of a divide) and 'Do It Yourself', about citizens having to do, wanting to do, and doing more and more themselves.



Lectures and debates



Cinemagoers



Developing a screening series takes the organisers about 100 hours



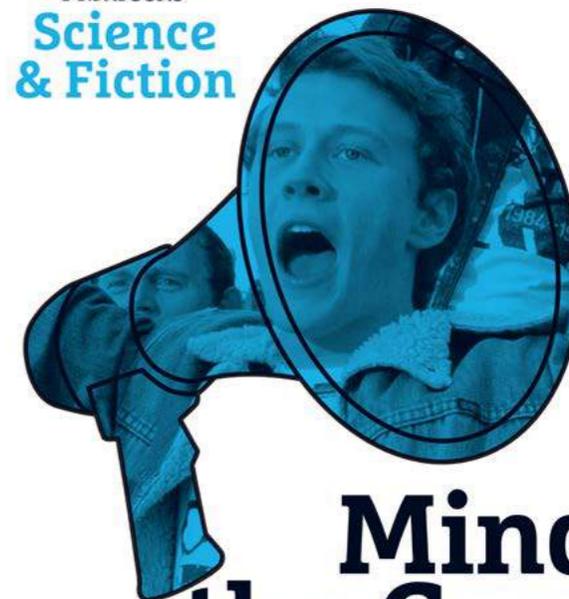
One series consists of four movies on four evenings



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Gert den Toom is the Communications Officer for Utrecht University's Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance, who organises the Science & Fiction screening series together with colleagues and the Louis Hartlooper Complex.

Filmreeks
Science & Fiction



Mind the Gap!

Dinsdag 16 mei
Elena

Dinsdag 30 mei
Looking for Eric

Dinsdag 13 juni
Welcome

Dinsdag 4 juli
Pride

LOUIS
HARTLOOPER
COMPLEX

Utrecht University

USBO

STREET POETRY

Inventory of poetry in public spaces

A wealth of poetry can be found in public spaces in the Netherlands and Flanders, but no one knows exactly how many poems, where and by whom. The Straatpoëzie (Street Poetry) website aims to be an inventory of all poetry in public spaces in the Netherlands and Flanders, essentially functioning as an archive for literary heritage.

On www.straatpoezie.nl you will find an interactive map with the locations of poetry in public spaces. Anyone can search for street poetry here – for example if you want to know where you can find poems in your own neighbourhood or where to look for poems by your favourite poet.

Anyone who spots a poem while out and about can add it on the website. All the data in the Street Poetry database will be used by Kila van der Starre for her PhD research into ‘poetry beyond the printed page’ – the phenomenon of poetry in public space. The website also has ideas for teachers seeking to incorporate street poetry in their lessons.



Citizen science



Poetry lovers (and potential poetry lovers) and teachers



During the research project



Kila started thinking six months beforehand about the best way to design the website and what functionalities should be included



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Kila van der Starre is a literature scholar and is working on her doctoral thesis about Dutch poetry beyond the printed page.



Photography: Ossip van Duijvenbode

TER INFO (FYI)

Talking to kids about terrorism

Suppose a terrorist attack takes place. How can teachers best go about talking about this in the classroom? Beatrice de Graaf, Professor of International Relations and an expert on terrorism, joined forces with Information Science, Educational Theory and History students to develop a web-based mobile app with information and educational material for teachers. The app is called Ter Info (Dutch for FYI) and it facilitates discussions about terrorism with children in a clear, factual and supportive way that helps bring people together.

'I have three children in primary school', says Beatrice de Graaf. 'I notice every day just how aware they are of what's going on in the world. Once children get to a certain age they start watching current-events programmes and they are fully aware of who Donald Trump is, for example. So when the school asked me whether I could come and give a few brief lessons about terrorism, I started thinking how about I might be able to roll something like that out on a broader scale.'

The mobile website is targeted at pupils from various backgrounds and age groups. A range of articles and assignments address questions like: What actually happened? How can we explain that? How can we deal with it? What does it mean for the pupils themselves? Utrecht University is providing support to those intending to use the app in schools, and is documenting users' practical experiences to help improve the platform.

Prof. dr. Beatrice de Graaf is Professor of History of International Relations at Utrecht University.



Children and science



Teachers



During the research



One year and two months, from the start of the project to the completion of the pilot project in schools



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Photography: Ruud Bisseling

MEET THE PROFESSOR

Professors pay a visit to primary schools by bike

During 'Meet the Professor', 140 professors from Utrecht University get on their bikes to head over to primary schools throughout Utrecht. Pupils in the last three years, from groups 6, 7 and 8 (aged 9–12), then get to spend an hour firing off a barrage of questions at them, all right there in their own classroom.

Staying curious

Professors from all of Utrecht University's faculties take part in the project, which reaches more than 3,000 pupils every year across a highly diverse range of primary schools throughout the city. Through these visits Utrecht University wants to show pupils how important it is to stay curious and keep on asking questions. In 2017 Harold van Rijen participated in 'Meet the Professor' for the third year running: 'I think days like these are really important for the pupils, especially those for whom setting their sights on a university education may not previously have been an obvious choice.'

Golden envelope

Prior to each 'Meet the Professor' event, the participating classes receive a golden envelope every month containing lesson ideas and a hint about the identity of their professor. This lets the class begin to learn more about who their professor is going to be, while at the same time discovering new things about science, research and the university.

Students

In addition to the professors and primary schools, every year students in teacher training or Educational Science programmes at Utrecht University, HU University of Applied Sciences and the Marnix Academie take part in the project as well. The professors are assigned a student who then gives them pointers on how to teach primary-school pupils in interesting and interactive ways.



Children and science



Primary school pupils from groups 6, 7 and 8 (aged 9–12)



Seven months



Over a six-month period, pupils get hints about the identity of their professor, with the actual visit taking an hour



The researcher does not require any funds

Meet the Professor is an initiative by the [Wetenschaps-knooppunt Utrecht](#) (Utrecht Science Hub), which brings primary schools and Utrecht University together.

[Dr Harold van Rijen](#) is Professor of Innovation in Biomedical Education.



Photography: Jos Kuklewski

YES, I DO

Large-scale digitisation project surrounding marriage registers

The **Ja, ik wil** (Yes, I Do) project is a large-scale digitisation project involving registers of intended marriages in Amsterdam from 1581 through to 1811. Researchers from Utrecht University's Department of Economic and Social History working alongside the Amsterdam City Archives have opened up this rich source of information and, for the first time, made it available for research purposes.

The project was headed up by Professor of Social and Economic History Tine de Moor: 'A huge number of volunteers helped us go through all the registers. They contributed to the project by scrutinising the deposition-for-marriage registers and then entering the data into digital forms – this would be information such as the ages of the bride and groom and their ancestry or religion.' The researchers can then use these data to find out more about marriage customs and practices, life expectancy, social environment and migration/immigration in the early modern Netherlands.

There is no other resource like this, anywhere in the world, that has collected this kind of information so comprehensively and for such a long period for a city of Amsterdam's size. In the past, various initiatives have sought to increase access to this resource, but until now they were rather piecemeal in scope. The 'Yes, I Do' project is changing this and helping to finally make this wealth of information available, both for academics and regular Dutch people looking to find out more about their Amsterdam ancestors.

Dr Tine de Moor is Professor of Social and Economic History.



Citizen science



Volunteers that made a contribution to the research project by studying the registers and digitising these data



During the research



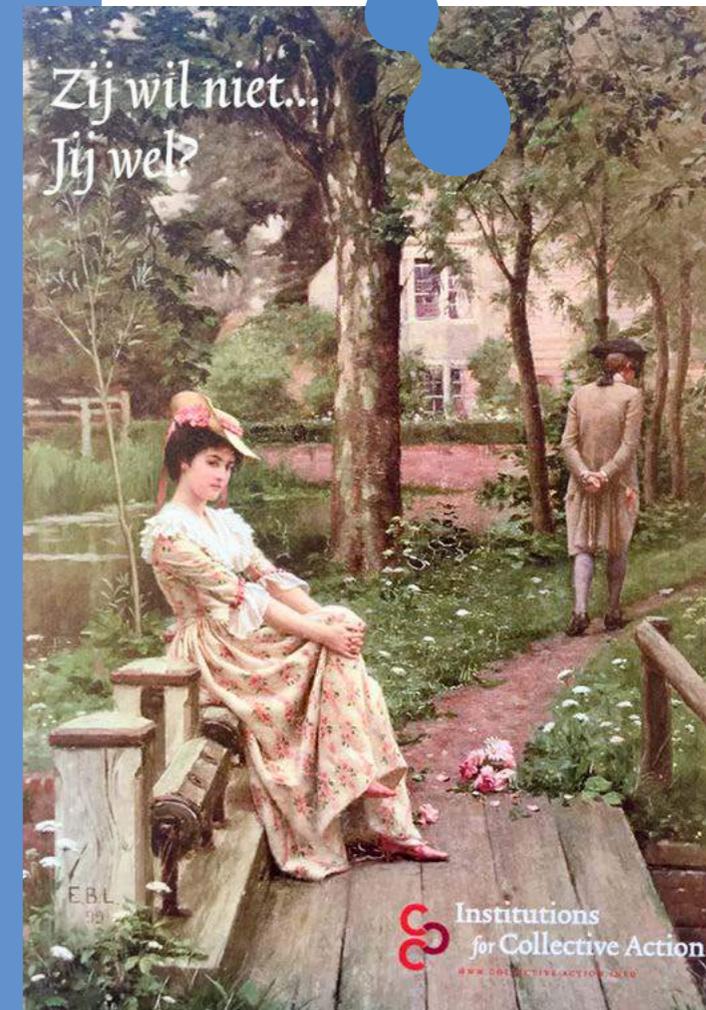
Preparations took one year, the implementation of the project took two years



The project took place between 2015 and 2017



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STUDIUM GENERALE

The platform for knowledge and reflection

Studium Generale organises around 80 public events every year, situated at the crossroads of academia and society. Especially nowadays, when people find themselves confronted with an endless flood of information, hypes and trends, it's important to be able to assess the value and reliability of the information with a critical eye. The Studium Generale programme aims to contribute to this with a series of debates, lectures, lectures and talkshows about a range of different topics – ideally looking past the boundaries of individual academic disciplines, and always beyond the hot-button issue of the moment. The events are free and open to anyone willing to engage with new perspectives and provocative questions.

Different topics, different formats

Not every topic calls for the same format or approach. That's why Studium Generale works with a range of different formats. The Science Cafe in TivoliVredenburg offers people the opportunity to get to know the science behind a topic of universal interest in an informal setting. Every month the get-together will focus on a different topic, from humour and stress to love and violence. In an engaging, visually appealing talkshow format, academics from a range of different disciplines talk about their research, with plenty of opportunity for questions from the audience. Another popular event series in an equally informal setting is the Philosophy Cafe, where philosophers share their views on time-old moral dilemmas and hot current social issues.

Maud Radstake: 'Some issues need to be explored more broadly and in greater depth. That's why, every season, Studium Generale organises series of multiple lectures focusing on one central issue – for example sustainability, the future of digital technologies or the relationship between the individual and the collective in contemporary society. Because there is never just one simple or unequivocal answer to these kinds of complex questions, we bring in academics from various different backgrounds. Some of the lecture series make up part of a course that can be taken for credit, but they're always open to the general public as well.'

Other formats include 'TV Shows Dissected', where academics come and analyse their favourite TV series from different academic and scientific perspectives, 'Movies & Science', which takes a feature or documentary as a jumping-off point for in-depth discussions, and the Betweter Festival (Know-It-All Festival), the annual art & science festival with mini-lectures, music, film and live scientific experiments (see page 10).



Lectures and debates, festivals and venues



Adults (students, alumni and anyone interested, from Utrecht University or beyond)



8 hours



A half-day



The researcher does not require any funds



Dr Maud Radstake is the Studium Generale director.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Academics and teachers working together to develop new teaching materials

Within the different learning communities of the Wetenschapsknooppunt Utrecht (Utrecht Science Hub), academics, teachers and educational developers are working alongside each other translating current academic research into teaching materials. This enables students to get to know science, research and Utrecht University in a hands-on, exploratory way. The learning communities' output are made available to schools from all across the greater Utrecht area in the form of teaching materials and opportunities for teachers to further professionalise.

In 2017 a learning community was established in connection with the research done by Joyce Endendijk at Utrecht University's Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences. She studies gender stereotyping. This learning community focused on the question 'How do children develop gender stereotypes and what are the consequences of these stereotypes?' Joyce: 'The main thing I remember from the learning community was the kids' eagerness to get involved with science hands-on. Their curiosity and hunger for new knowledge was inspirational. I also felt like they already had really sharp critical faculties as far as research was concerned. For example, they already knew that when you do an experiment that involves showing participants cards with images of different toys printed on them two different times, you have to make sure you duplicate as many of the original conditions as possible (with the exception of the specific aspect you want to investigate).'

'We did some of the preparations with a teacher, which really provided added value – after all, they know their own pupils best. We discussed what experiments would and would not work in the classroom. We also converted a computer assignment that I use to research gender stereotypes into an experiment that involved the children showing cards depicting toys to each other. This format works better than the computer assignment in the classroom because it enables the children to see for themselves and experience what exactly is being investigated in a more direct, hands-on way.'

The learning communities are an initiative of the Wetenschapsknooppunt Utrecht (Utrecht Science Hub), which brings primary schools and Utrecht University together.

Dr Joyce Endendijk is based within the Department of Education and Pedagogy, where she is researching gender stereotyping.



Children and science



Primary-school teachers in the greater Utrecht area and researchers at Utrecht University



During the research



24 hours



Three months



The researcher does not require any funds



Photography: Lize Kraan

CASH BOOK OF THE NETHERLANDS

University professor and NTR search out the financial history of the Dutch

It all started during the Science Weekend in October 2017. People could stop by Utrecht University with their old financial paperwork, such as cash books and passbooks. On that first day and in the months that followed, hundreds of Dutch people shared their cash books with the researchers at Utrecht University. The first results of people's rummages through the attic could be seen in 2018, on the NTR television programme *Kasboekje van Nederland* (Cash Book of the Netherlands). This was the first public-private partnership between a university and a public broadcaster.

'Money is something that occupies us every day. We want to use unique sources and stories to get an understanding of how Dutch households and small businesses go about organising their financial affairs', explains historian Oscar Gelderblom. 'It's largely unexplored territory – most sources in archives tend to be about banks or other financial service providers. With Cash Book of the Netherlands we tapped into a resource that enables us to gain insight into the financial affairs of regular Dutch people throughout the 20th century. That, in turn, enables us to ask new questions: Why did almost no one use banks and insurance companies in the 1960s? Why is it that nowadays we borrow money when we want to buy something expensive, rather than saving up for it the way people used to? Who really had hold of the purse strings – the man or the woman?'

The researchers have received around 1,500 cash books so far, containing some 7,500 person-years worth of financial data. The team is hard at work sorting through and scanning the sources and undertaking a preliminary analysis of the data. And they're not the only ones: a lot of people who made their cash books available for this project were inspired to pore over them themselves as well. The researchers behind the project are delighted about that: 'These fantastic resources make people's family histories really come alive for them.'



Citizen science



Adults who are interested in their family's financial history



During the research



The researchers, students and volunteers have invested a total of around 5,000 person hours in the project to date



From October 2017 until end of June 2018



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Dr Oscar Gelderblom is Professor of Financial History at Utrecht University. Cash Book of the Netherlands came about as part of the Netherlands Academy for Scientific Research (NWO) project 'The Dynamics of Inclusive Finance in the Netherlands, 1750-1970'.



Photography: Marieke Wijntjes

YOUth-LECTURES FOR CHILDREN

Lectures for YOUth study participants

May 2015 saw the start of the YOUth research project: a large-scale, long-term study into the development of brains and behaviour. YOUth monitors a total of 6,000 children from conception through to early adulthood. In order to offer something in return for those young people who participated in the project, the KinderKennisCentrum (Child Expertise Centre) is organising lectures especially for children.

The YOUth participants themselves as well as their parents and friends are welcome to attend the lectures. Communications Advisor and organiser Marije Witsenboer explains: 'The lectures are a great way to thank the children for their participation and give something back. We ask them what they consider interesting topics for a lecture, and then we find a researcher who can come and talk about the topic in question. I think it's important that children become aware of the tremendous breadth of the research being done at Utrecht University. The lectures give them an opportunity to get to know the university, and academics, in turn, get the chance to meet an audience that in many cases will be new to them.'

Marije says that there are a number of things you need to pay attention to when organising this type of public-engagement activity for children. 'Make sure there's a lot of interaction and variety. Children like being able to do or experience something for themselves. Possible examples are voting on a given statement, performing an experiment or doing an activity as a group.'

Peter Bos gave a lecture about the topic 'substances in your brain': 'It's a lot of fun to share your research with this target group – it makes for an interesting change. It's challenging and requires thorough preparation, but it's a lot more dynamic than teaching university students. The children's openness and enthusiasm makes it a really rewarding experience.'



Children and science



Children who are participating in the YOUth study and their parents and friends



Three months



One half-day



The researcher does not require any funds

Marije Witsenboer is the Communications Advisor for Dynamics of Youth and Utrecht University's YOUth research project.

Dr Peter Bos is researching the impact of hormones on human behaviour and the link with neurological factors.



Photography: Lize Kraan

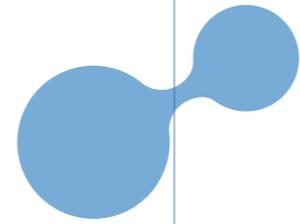
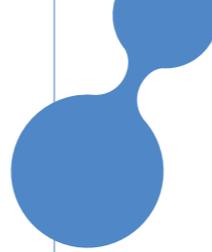
INCLUSION IN UTRECHT: A FILM INTERVENTION

From parochialism to an inclusive city

In Utrecht various social groups live alongside each other harmoniously, but also to an extent in their own separate bubbles. Why do we see some people as ‘us’ and others as ‘them’? Madelijn Strick and Lars Tummers worked with local residents to make a video about social segregation.

The film brings together various social groups from Utrecht, including university students, people from Turkish or Moroccan migrant backgrounds, people from a quiet neighbourhood of mainly white, higher educated residents, and people whose family have been living in Utrecht for generations. The film involved people responding to a questionnaire in which they were asked about their experiences of sharing the city with various other social groupings. The film encourages people from a variety of different backgrounds to see themselves and the other without judgment or prejudice. Through this project, Madelijn and Lars want to show Utrecht residents that we all have much more in common than we might think.

Madelijn Strick explains how they got local residents involved in their project: ‘The Utrecht residents taking part are from a number of different social groups – it’s an extremely diverse cross-section of the population. We are sharing the design, results and conclusions of the research project with participants via interactive discussions and clear and comprehensible explanations. By doing this we are sharing the process and results of academic research with a diverse group of local residents. In a follow-up session we asked them to share their experiences with us and tried to get a sense of the extent to which their knowledge and understanding of academic research expanded in the course of the project.’



Citizen science



Utrecht residents



During the research



Nine months



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Dr Madelijn Strick is a Lecturer in Social, Health and Organisational Psychology and a member of the Utrecht Young Academy.

Dr Lars Tummers is Professor of Public Management and Behaviour and a member of the Utrecht Young Academy.



HIP&CO

A gaming app for children with chronic illness and their friends

Heidi Lesscher is involved in the 'playing = growing up healthy' project in her capacity as a neurobiologist. She, along with colleagues from the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital and from the domain of game research, wants to use gaming to improve the social lives of children with chronic illnesses. Last year they participated in Hacking Health Utrecht 2018. Heidi and her teammates Merel van der Vlist (Utrecht University) and Anouk Tuijnman (Trimbos Institute) set out to find ways to help children with chronic illnesses to spend more time playing with their peers.

Heidi: 'Seven people joined us during the hackathon: a graphic designer and programmer with a game design company, a statistician who has experience with children with psychological problems and gaming in an educational setting, two IT trainees with a background in biology, an industrial designer and an Artificial Intelligence expert.'

On Friday night they came up with a plan which they then ran past the 16-year-old president of the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital Children's Council the next day. That yielded very valuable input. 'She asked important questions, such as: Have you thought about the fact that some children are deaf or blind?'

During the hacking weekend we came up with the idea of one overarching game containing a collection of different gaming ideas as a way of encouraging sick children to do more with their friends. Heidi: 'It doesn't always need to be face-to-face, but they do have to do it together.' The researchers want to use the game to find out more about gaming behaviour and how playing games can help children with chronic illnesses. They can do this, for example, by asking children questions in the app. 'Because they invite friends through the app we can keep track of how often they use it and how many children they play with. That tells us more about social interaction and play. We can also ask questions about how they're doing, so that we can learn more about the children's development and the impact the game is having on that.' They are currently working on a plan to further develop this game, and use it in their research into play.



Children and science



Children with chronic illnesses



During the research



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Dr Heidi Lesscher is a neurobiologist at Utrecht University's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and is researching the topic 'playing = growing up healthy' at the University's Kinder Kenniscentrum Children Expertise Centre).



Photography: Ivar Pel

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