

# Faculty Strategic Plan & Agenda 2022 – 2027

We are Humanities



Universiteit  
Leiden  
Humanities

# Faculty Strategic Plan & Agenda 2022 – 2027

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June 2022



Universiteit  
Leiden  
Humanities

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# Faculty of Humanities

The document before you is the Faculty Strategic Plan (FSP) of the Faculty of Humanities, presenting our mission, vision and strategic goals. The FSP was produced in consultation with the Faculty community and reflects the Faculty's shared ambitions for the period 2022 - 2027. The Strategic Agenda contains the policy intentions, which develop the strategy in terms of how it will be implemented in practice.

The FSP was developed simultaneously with Leiden University's Strategic Plan (page 30), which identifies important themes and actions. The challenges that confront the University are naturally also reflected in the Faculty of Humanities. For instance, the funding of university education and research is currently under pressure; and the consequences of the coronavirus crisis for society in general and specifically for students' education and their study choices remain unclear. A precondition for achieving our ambitions and realising our goals is that we have sufficient funds available. It is also necessary, in these times, to have shared goals and a connecting mission and vision, so that we can all work together as a Faculty and lead the way to a bright future.

## Our mission

The Faculty of Humanities stands for leading-edge research and education. Our basic principle is to maintain this level of academic excellence and to promote the essential values of the humanities in contemporary social, cultural, political and economic debates. Our global orientation, our broad disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise and provision of quality education, fuelled by our research, provide our students with the skills and knowledge they need to reflect and to act as critical and engaged citizens.

The Faculty recognises the importance of diversity, both in terms of people and in academic perspectives. We aim to achieve a stimulating, fair and sustainable academic environment that allows space for talent and respects everyone's needs. This healthy work and learning environment will necessarily have to operate with a smaller ecological footprint.

## Our Faculty

Rooted in centuries of tradition, the Faculty of Humanities looks to the future by developing new insights on human relations that enrich our understanding of cultures and languages in all their varied dimensions and diversity. We are proud to be the home of several unique knowledge centres, and to stand for innovative, pioneering research

that makes it possible to provide education of the highest quality. We investigate, interpret and explain many facets of human language, culture and expression: viewed from global and local perspectives, in the present and the past. We are also privileged to have a world-famous library. The global expertise within our Faculty of Humanities is unrivalled and gives our University a place among the leading higher education institutions worldwide. While we have already strengthened this position with the expansion and development of our academic communities in The Hague and Morocco, our Faculty wishes to increase our global potential by promoting relationships internally that help to bridge institutional divisions.

## Challenges

The Faculty of Humanities is a dynamic learning environment with an excellent track record. Yet we will be facing several challenges in the years ahead. The field of research funding is becoming ever more competitive, and this creates tensions in the area of staffing policy and individual career development. At the same time, the number of students keeps increasing, which means that staff are required to devote more time to teaching, while this is still an undervalued domain in staff appraisals. We need to reconsider how technological innovations, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, can be integrated in new, sustainable educational strategies for the near future. Meanwhile, the outside world often underestimates the value of the humanities, given the dominant constructs of economic efficiency and technology, when we exactly need a people-centred debate to respond effectively to today's challenges.

Internally we observe the challenge to create space for innovation and change; space that will enable us to address and encourage new initiatives. This will involve creating a more balanced workload and a well-organised foundation in the area of support processes and systems, and also

giving attention to these aspects in ongoing initiatives. The Faculty therefore espouses the strategic ambition 'Space for innovation' from the University Strategic Plan 'Innovating and Connecting' 2022-2027.



# Vision – implementing our mission in practice

The Faculty of Humanities builds on the collective specialist knowledge and creative scope of our institutes in the areas of history, art and culture, regional studies, artistic research, philosophy and languages. Humanities reflect how people understand the world, how they interact with it and 'create' it. We do this by asking fundamental questions that sometimes seem far removed from current problems, but in fact form the basis of our contemporary experiences; for example, we research how people dealt with changes in the past and how they can guide them in the present. This enables us to determine the kind of future we can or should imagine for ourselves, or must work to bring about. The Faculty will continue to contribute to this, as part of an open, productive exchange between the University and society. We will respond dynamically to society's changing needs, seek to create conditions where the voices of all strata of the population are heard, and communicate the results to a wide audience. At the same time, we will recognise freedom of research and the individual nature of research methods and will cherish unexpected outcomes. The University's core values are: connecting, innovation, responsibility and freedom.

Diversity and inclusion are integral to the Faculty policy on staff and students, which necessitates collective efforts and recognition of the difficulties and sensitivities inherent for all involved. There must be clarity about what these terms mean for everyone in the Faculty, and we need to be honest about our shortcomings and to acknowledge different views. Overcoming inequality will inevitably mean encountering many vulnerabilities and obstacles. But if we address this considerable challenge with sincerity, we will be pursuing the Faculty of Humanities' ambition to make an important contribution to a diverse and inclusive work and learning environment.



## The Faculty's strategy covers five broad themes

**Ambition A. To strengthen our position as a leading international university for research and education in the humanities**

- A1. To consolidate our strong disciplinary identity and also strengthen our multi- and interdisciplinary approach
- A2. To collaborate with other partners, both within and outside the University, to maximise the vision and input of the Faculty of Humanities in joint research on global themes
- A3. To create recognition of the Faculty of Humanities within society and to become more successful in the acquisition of funding
- A4. To consolidate and strengthen the links between education and research

**Ambition B. To provide a challenging, sustainable and dynamic learning environment**

- B1. To offer a wide and dynamic range of educational tracks
- B2. To implement sustainable educational innovation

**Ambition C. To optimally prepare students for a wide range of career options in their future working life**

- C1. To equip students to envisage and shape their own future as critical citizens and professionals within society
- C2. To enhance awareness and skills in the area of Digital Humanities in all study programmes

**Ambition D. To strengthen the culture and operation of our Faculty**

- D1. To intensify interinstitutional collaboration, integrated operational management and leadership
- D2. To encourage career development

**Ambition E. To improve the wellbeing of all staff members and students**

- E1. To promote an inclusive and supportive work and learning environment
- E2. To reduce the workload of all staff members

# MISSION FACULTY OF HUMANITIES



Leading-edge research and education: on humanities, for humanity.



Maintain this level of academic excellence and to promote the essential values of the humanities in contemporary societal, cultural, political and economic debates.



Provide our students with the skills and knowledge they need to reflect and to act as critical and engaged citizens.



A stimulating, fair and sustainable academic environment that allows space for talent and respects everyone's needs.

# 2027

## CHALLENGES



Research funding is becoming ever more competitive, and this creates tensions in the area of staffing policy and individual career development.



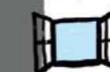
The increasing number of students requires staff to devote more time to teaching, while this is still an undervalued domain in staff appraisals.



We need to reconsider how technological innovations, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, can be integrated in new, sustainable educational strategies for the near future.



To withstand today's challenges humanities should be equal valued as economic efficiency and technology. We need a people-centred perspective!



Space for innovation and change is necessary.

AMBITIONS

GOALS

### AMBITION A:

Strengthen our position as a leading international university for research and education in the humanities

- 1 Consolidate our strong disciplinary identity and strengthen our dynamic multi- and interdisciplinary approach
- 2 Collaborate with internal and external partners to maximise the potential of our faculty in joint research on global themes
- 3 Recognition of our faculty within society and to become more successful in acquisition of funding
- 4 Consolidate and strengthen the links between education and research

### AMBITION B:

To provide a challenging, sustainable and dynamic learning environment

- 1 Offer a wide and dynamic range of educational tracks
- 2 Implement sustainable educational innovation

### AMBITION C:

Optimally prepare students for a wide range of career options in their future working life

- 1 Equip students to envisage and shape their own future as critical citizens and professionals within society
- 2 Enhance awareness and skills in the area of Digital Humanities

### AMBITION D:

Strengthen the culture and operation of our faculty

- 1 Intensify interinstitutional collaboration, integrated operational management and leadership
- 2 Encourage career development

### AMBITION E:

Improve the wellbeing of all staff members and students

- 1 Promote an inclusive and supportive work and learning environment
- 2 To reduce the workload of all staff members

Rooted in centuries of tradition.

Working on the future by developing new insights on humanities, which enrich our understanding of human culture in all its dimensions and diversity.

Proud home of several knowledge centres with innovative, pioneering research that makes it possible to provide education of the highest quality.

Global and local perspectives, in the present and the past.

A World famous library.

Global unrivalled expertise.

A place among the leading higher education institutions worldwide.

Academic communities in The Hague, Morocco and Leiden.

## OUR BASE

# Ambitions and strategic goals

**Strategy – focusing resources to achieve a well-defined set of ambitions – calls for clarity about the Faculty’s current situation and the direction we would like to take within the context of the overall values and goals of Leiden University. Where does our Faculty want to be in six years’ time?**

**Ambition A**  
To strengthen our position as a leading international university for research and education in the humanities

**A1. To consolidate our strong disciplinary identity and also strengthen our multi- and interdisciplinary approach**

As a Faculty, we help to determine the identity and function of the University as a whole. The Faculty of Humanities provides a unique and indispensable view of the world – of the *condition humaine* – as part of the wide range of academic disciplines at Leiden University. It is essential for our Faculty to profile ourselves to the outside world as – in the words of Ramsey Nasr – *foundational* not *ornamental* (<https://youtu.be/1M1zX9uXmvI>).

Our strength in research and education lies not only in the wide diversity of topics within the humanities, but also in the mix of disciplinary and inherently interdisciplinary subject areas. A challenge for the future is to enhance this richness while also increasing our collaboration, both within our Faculty and with disciplines outside the humanities.

**A2. To collaborate with other partners, both within and outside the University, to maximise the vision and input of the Faculty of Humanities in joint research on global themes**

No faculty is an island. Collaboration with others, both within and outside the University, is constantly ongoing and is also essential. Our Faculty has an excellent track record in ‘curiosity-driven research’, with many talented scholars acquiring research grants, showing how closely our research concepts and topics can be adapted to meet the trends of the Dutch Research Council (NWO), ERC and other funding bodies. We will continue to safeguard this quality in our scholars and to emphasise the importance of independent research. The current trend to expect immediate or demonstrable societal relevance of academic research – something we need to carefully assess – increases the need for interdisciplinary collaborative projects with partners in the academic world



and in society as a whole. Joint research of this kind will need to have a more prominent place within the Faculty’s research signature. It is a means to both secure funding and demonstrate even more clearly the importance of the humanities perspective for society. The Faculty of Humanities has the capability and the skills to accomplish this.

We will enter into more interdisciplinary research partnerships: within the Faculty, between faculties and with other partners. This will enable us to increase the impact of the varied expertise of our diverse Faculty, in order to address issues of both academic and societal importance. It will also ensure that the humanities approaches are more immediately available to deepen and contextualise the insights of other disciplines, such as the social, empirical and technological sciences. We will additionally further invest in SSH labs, which provide a basis for intensive research collaboration within this domain. Existing strengths in our research – especially the Faculty’s global orientation – are an important asset in further increasing our intended impact.

**A3. To create recognition of the Faculty of Humanities within society and to become more successful in the acquisition of funding**

This development in interdisciplinarity also entails that attention must be given to collaborative skills and opportunities among staff members. The Faculty has changed considerably over the past five to ten years, and has many young international staff members, who have helped to create a diverse and dynamic academic environment. We need to seize the opportunity to utilise the many talents within the Faculty and to consolidate the transformation of the Faculty’s image through productive and inspiring exchange.

The Faculty already has unique resources to achieve these goals. The Leiden-Delft-Erasmus (LDE) alliance offers many paths for developing interdisciplinary programmes. The large-scale presence of humanities at Campus The Hague can be strengthened by using the BA International Studies and BA Urban Studies as examples of ‘good practices’ for new interfaculty initiatives and the development of new interdisciplinary master’s programmes.

To achieve more interdisciplinary collaboration, as described above, and at the same time to safeguard our more autonomous research agenda, the support base must be expanded and bureaucratic obstacles must be overcome. We need to ensure easy exchange among our institutes, with other faculties and with society: our shared goal must be to create and perpetuate academic and socially relevant research of the highest level. Our staff need to know that their plans for innovation are welcome, whether they relate to a research proposal, an educational adaptation or a process of evaluation within the support system. In the area of students' needs, we can create more joint minor programmes, for example. We can also encourage internships in the countries of the relevant language & culture studies, by maintaining more intensive relations with universities in these countries.

#### A4. To consolidate and strengthen the links between education and research

The Faculty of Humanities has a strong reputation in the area of academic education, with scholars able to make connections between their research and their teaching, thus enabling students to come into direct contact with research techniques and strategies. Securing this linkage continues to be an important ambition, but the balance between research and teaching needs to be carefully managed, taking into account considerations on planning and efficiency, so that the Faculty remains viable in a changing environment. Sustainability must become a central focus of our future vision on research and education.

As a Faculty, we approach sustainability from several directions. Firstly, it refers to student and staff requirements, and the need to create an inclusive work and learning environment where all possible efforts are made to guarantee stability in the long-term. Secondly, it refers to the need to reflect on how we operate as an



institution, by looking critically at our energy consumption and behaviour. The gradual realisation of the Humanities Campus in Leiden, with planned completion in 2029, is providing us with state-of-the-art, sustainable buildings. Thirdly, in the area of research and education – and in the spirit of interdisciplinarity – the field of Environmental Humanities offers great potential to develop new conceptual frameworks together with other faculties.

#### Ambition B

To provide a challenging, sustainable and dynamic learning environment

##### B1. To offer a wide and dynamic range of educational tracks

We will work to maintain quality through constant educational innovation. This means that we will recognise when innovation – didactic, methodological and technological – can improve existing practices and can respond to changing expectations of our staff and students. In order to remain attractive and relevant, we need to take this into account. Today's students have grown up in a time of social and digital media, which entails expectations and experiences that in turn offer new opportunities and challenges for educating them to become critical and engaged citizens.

Our long-term goal is to maintain an attractive educational portfolio, which *both* upholds Leiden University's traditions *and* moves with the times. The wide diversity of our current education is a great asset, because it provides students with an optimal variety of perspectives, methodologies and didactic styles. However, we are confronted with dilemmas about how high-quality education can be organised with the financial challenges that we are now facing. Additional government funding for small-scale study programmes may not be enough to

finance their continuation in their current form. From the budgetary point of view, we will have to consider carefully the performance and relative value of each study programme within the context of the Faculty whole.

##### B2. To implement sustainable educational innovation

As a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, we showed that rapid adjustment in times of emergency is possible, and the efforts and input from all parts of the Faculty ensured that the quality of our education was maintained under difficult circumstances. Although the Faculty had already started to introduce digital tools and online platforms, our experience in 2020-2021 revealed the advantages of integrating multiple methods in our teaching, and of aiming for an effective combination of online and on-campus teaching. Personal contact will continue to be the core of our educational philosophy, but we now have an entirely new set of instruments available, allowing us to think innovatively about final projects, learning objectives and so on. This has also paved the way for reflecting on the full meaning of Digital Humanities, which refers not only to including new methods and approaches in our academic education, but also to reviewing what education and research actually involve in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### Ambition C.

To optimally prepare students for a wide range of career options in their future working life

##### C1. To equip students to envisage and shape their own future as critical citizens and professionals in society

We provide our students with a wide variety of opportunities, supported by high-quality and committed teaching staff. A safe and inspiring learning environment

depends on the input of both staff and students: our students must also be committed and accept their own responsibilities. This goes beyond the immediate interaction in the lecture hall or university, because students also represent their university in society. We aim to create a flourishing academic community, in which all academic and support staff and students work together.

An academic education in the humanities offers students a wide spectrum of opportunities for starting their career. In-depth study of a specific area of interest gives students essential knowledge and skills that enable them to find their place in society. Our graduates are our best proof of the all-round value and viability of a humanities education. In line with Leiden University's general strategy to improve learning tracks, our Faculty will encourage students to develop an image of their 'future academic self'. This involves asking them to form a picture of their own identity, choices and progress as an individual, while creating their own pathway through the matrix of our Faculty of Humanities, *en route* to the wider world after graduation. It is vitally important to encourage students to take responsibility for their own educational 'self'. Simply by placing the student in an interactive learning environment, which shows interest and engagement in their progress, our study programmes make a positive contribution to multiple processes of self-development.

## **C2. To enhance awareness and skills in the area of Digital Humanities in all study programmes**

Digital Humanities will have a more central place within education, so that students develop skills that are relevant for the world in which they already operate today. Digital Humanities comprises several different aspects. Firstly, it relates to education that is supported with digital resources, such as online learning, using collaboration software for remote education or applying

gaming techniques. Secondly, it refers to research that is supported with digital tools and methods, such as searching in digitised sources, detecting trends by means of big data and using visual representations. Thirdly, digital technologies and media are themselves the subject of research, for instance relating to ethical, philosophical and privacy issues, such as the susceptibility of AI to gender, race and other biases; this is crucially important now that algorithms already dominate large parts of our social interactions, and computers are attaining (and exceeding) the level of human intelligence. The humanities can play a vital and unique role in this research.

### **Ambition D. To strengthen the culture and operation of our Faculty**

#### **D1. To intensify interinstitutional collaboration, integrated operational management and leadership**

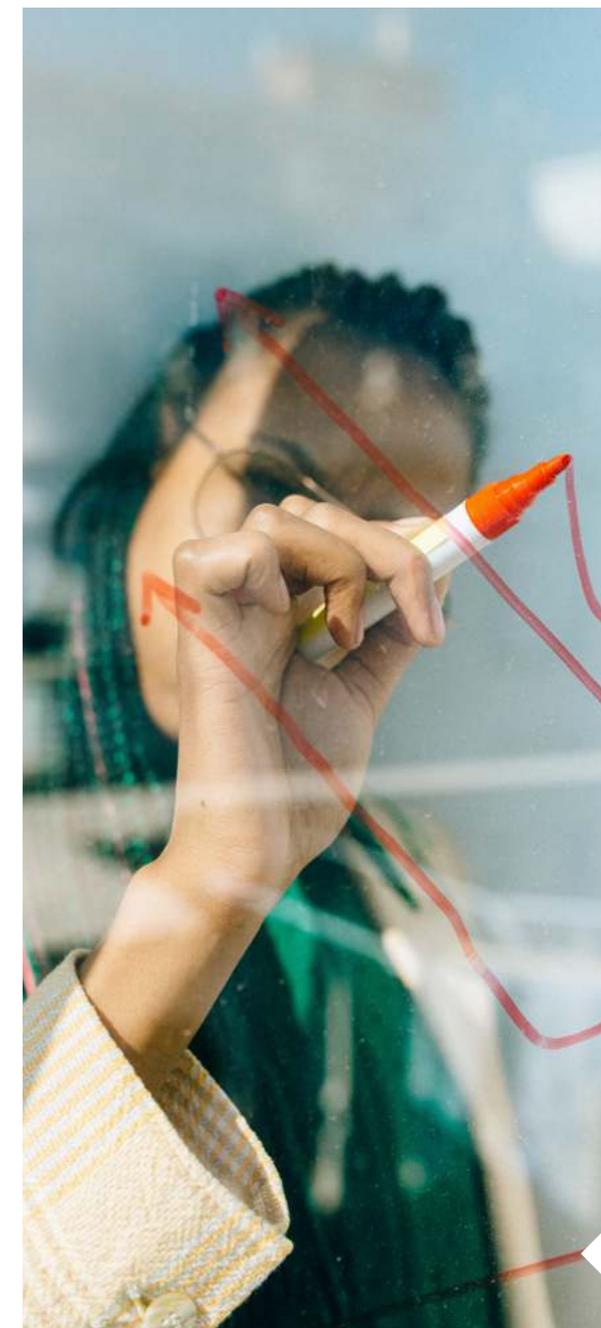
Every organisation is formed by its people, its processes and its infrastructure. All three of these must be dynamic and able to adapt to changing circumstances. In our Faculty, the distribution of tasks across individual institutes with different identities can be an obstacle to cohesion and collaboration. At all levels and within the entire Faculty, our staff members need to have a sense of connectedness. This means that we need to increase the sense of belonging of all staff members, and to create a transparent culture where everyone feels at home. The Faculty's various institutes fulfil the key management tasks, including budget responsibility and staff management. However, they are 'academic' institutes, not just 'research' institutes, and their staffing and budgetary tasks entail that they have important responsibilities for our study programmes. It is important that the responsibility for the study programmes and other matters

is shared to a greater extent, without detracting from the primary responsibilities of the study programme boards, who have the task of monitoring the quality of our curricula.

#### **D2. To encourage career development**

In Humanities, giving lectures takes up the largest proportion of time for most of the academic staff. This means that there is imbalance between our two core activities, namely teaching and research. As long as better research funding is not attainable, we need better consultation, joint planning, a shared infrastructure, clear responsibilities and transparent decision-making in order to minimise this imbalance. This ties in with the above comment about how the appraisal and rewarding of staff performance must be brought more into line with their actual work activities.

Teaching and outreach deserve appropriate recognition as academic activities alongside research. The Faculty fully supports a sustainable exchange between research and teaching, the cornerstone of our concept of academic excellence. Research output metrics should not be the sole determinant of career development. Moreover, the societal impact of research must be appreciated and taken into account. The efforts of staff members in managerial and administrative roles need to be recognised in terms of access to career opportunities. It is our ambition to create greater diversity of career paths to enable and encourage personal development. The Faculty of Humanities will make every possible effort to secure sufficient and non-fragmented research time for academic staff, but a broader approach to our concept of careers must form the basis for improved wellbeing of staff members in the longer term.



**Ambition E.**  
**To improve the wellbeing of all staff members and students**

**E1. To promote an inclusive and supportive work and learning environment**

Every organisational strategy relies on the staff being able and willing to identify with its ambitions. A condition for achieving this is to ensure that our Faculty operates as a safe and healthy environment for all staff members – both academic and support staff – and students. It is important that appraisals are fair, that everyone feels they have the opportunity to express their concerns and knows they are supported by colleagues and the organisation as a whole. This is a shared responsibility of all staff members. An important issue relates to the many tensions created by an annual funding deficit, as a result of which the resources – particularly staff members' time – do not correspond with the increasing demands. Furthermore, the Faculty must aim for a better reflection of the diversity found in surrounding society, as regards both the staff and the students, by being more aware of cultural differences and heterogeneous identities.

Professional independent thought is respected at all levels, indicating that staff members are trusted in their respective roles. Our staff members, whether academic or support staff, need the space to show their expertise, an appraisal method that does justice to this expertise and career prospects that ensure everyone feels their contribution is valued. In this connection, the Faculty will as soon as possible also explore the main findings of the 'Academia in Motion' report (when completed) and will implement these findings. This means that the appraisal of staff members will be based on a wider spectrum of factors. Performance and development interviews and appraisals will, as usual, take account of quantitative research and academic achievements, but equal weight

and value will be given to the more qualitative aspects, such as performance in teaching and societal impact. The staffing policy must be realistic and supportive.

In addition to staff wellbeing, the wellbeing of students is also an ongoing concern, and this acquired an acute character due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Under those circumstances, many students struggled with maintaining a positive outlook on their future. This underlines the need to improve the support services we offer to students in Leiden and The Hague. Positive initiatives towards this have already been taken, such as the Caring Universities project, the Wellbeing Weeks, POP Corners, student mentors and the appointment of wellbeing officers. In line with University-wide ambitions, more attention is required for implementing a clear, responsive and efficient study guidance system and an integrated approach to student wellbeing. The Faculty can contribute to these valuable goals by recognising the needs of our students and, as far as permitted by Faculty possibilities, providing support for them.

**E2. To reduce the workload of all staff members**

This last ambition is of crucial importance. Achieving our ambitions is conditional on reducing workload and work pressure, and making them more manageable. It is essential that staff have space and time within their appointments for innovation and change, for job satisfaction and being able to respond creatively to the many challenges being faced. For both academic and support staff, this is a precondition for a healthy work environment where staff members can excel. For academic staff, specifically the ratio between teaching, research and administration is highly relevant. This is an integral focus area for this Strategic Plan; the effect on workload must always be considered when developing new policy and activities ensuing from this plan.

In recent years, attention has correctly been drawn to the heavy workload at the University, including our Faculty. While some of the causes are beyond our control – such as underfunding of humanities education and research, and excessive competition for research grants – there are also internal causes, such as the many administrative (and other) requirements and uncertainty about responsibilities (who is actually permitted or required to do what?). Despite the heavy workload, our staff members have a great commitment to delivering high quality outcomes, particularly for themselves; this is simultaneously a blessing and a pitfall, which can result in work imbalance. To achieve our strategic goals with respect to 'people and organisation', we will therefore focus on issues within our immediate control that promote a healthy work balance, and will incorporate them in a modern staffing policy geared to the future.



# STRATEGIC AGENDA 2022-2027

## Faculty Strategic plan



### AMBITION A:

Strengthen our position as a leading international university for research and education in the humanities

1. Intensify our strong disciplinary identity and our dynamic multi- and interdisciplinary approach

- 1.1 A Faculty-wide research agenda, identifying themes:
- The World of Languages and Cultures
  - People, Migration and Mobility
  - The Construction of Heritage
  - The Human Digital World

Themes to strengthen our position:

- Methodologies of the Humanities
- Environmental Humanities and Sustainability
- Health Humanities

1.2 Create a more detailed profile when the necessary funding becomes available

1.3 Developing policies in the area of open science and regional policy

1.4 Strengthen our position in Digital Humanities and the Digital (AI) Lab after 2025

2. Collaborate with internal and external partners to maximise the potential of Leiden Humanities in joint research on global themes

- 2.1 playing a pioneering role in multi- and interdisciplinary teams, by creating flexible 'hubs' created around:
- substantive themes (see 1.1)
  - advanced research methodology and theory development
  - excellent research facilities (see also 2.3)

2.2 Developing support activities for young talented scholars to enhance our international and interdisciplinary image

2.3 Utilise and work closely with joint research facilities (including labs in the SSH domain)

3. Recognition of our faculty within society and to become more successful in acquisition of funding

3.1 More interdisciplinary research collaborations (partnership strategy)

3.2 Acquire funding for research and educational innovation linking up with important issues in society (Horizon Europe, NWA, Comenius, regional funds and LDE)

3.3 External Advisory Councils for research and education at institutes

4. Consolidate and strengthen the links between education and research

4.1 Encourage 'enquiry-based' learning' in our study programmes



### AMBITION B:

To provide a challenging, sustainable and dynamic learning environment

1. Offer a wide and dynamic range of educational tracks

1.1 Explore new interdisciplinary education at Campus The Hague (Strategic Agenda for Campus The Hague): minors, MA (or other) programmes and education for professionals

1.2 A Faculty plan for increasing flexibility (in line with the University 'flexible learning pathways')

2. Implement sustainable educational innovation

2.1 Strengthen the international character of our education by developing several different forms of mobility

2.2 'In-person education' as base and high standards for 'blended learning'

2.3 Innovative learning methods (University-wide educational innovation and teacher development agenda)

2.4 One 'teacher support desk' for didactic and ICT assistance for teaching staff



### AMBITION D:

Strengthen the culture and operation of our faculty

1. Intensify interinstitutional collaboration, integrated operational management and leadership

1.1 Continuing more integrated management in the institutes and the Faculty as a whole, and intensified joint action of institutes, study programmes and support services

1.2 Investigating possibilities for recruitment, selection and career policy that will give greater value to collaboration and interdisciplinarity

2. Encourage career development

2.1 A strategic multiyear plan for each institute and Faculty Office department and an annual 'staffing review' ('vlootstouw')

2.2 Improving the quality of performance and development interviews (ROGs)

2.3 Identify career development via teaching and options for strengthening these career paths

2.4 Identify career paths and opportunities for support staff



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### AMBITION C:

Optimally prepare students for a wide range of career options in their future working life

1. Equip students to envisage and shape their own future as critical citizens and professionals within society

1.1 Investigating the possibilities introducing a societal learning pathway in specific study programmes and for integrating this within existing courses

1.2 Investigating the possibilities of courses 'Sustainability and Humanities'

2. Enhance awareness and skills in the area of Digital Humanities

2.1 Integration of Digital Humanities in education attention to the digitisation of society as a topic in education and research



### AMBITION E:

Improve the wellbeing of all staff members and students

1. Promote an inclusive and supportive work and learning environment

1.1 Develop and implement an inclusive recruitment and selection policy

1.2 Training courses for inclusive and intercultural education, study guidance and teacher development

1.3 Plan of approach for how we can ensure the wellbeing of students

2. To reduce the workload of all staff members

2.1 Better correspondence between efforts and budgets, improving policy attention for reducing workload

2.2 Investigate possible changes in the education and research to reduce workload

# Strategic Agenda

The Strategic Agenda comprises the translation of the mission, vision and strategic ambitions of the Faculty Strategic Plan to the tactical level. For each ambition, the proposed tactical policy intentions and choices are stated, for example to investigate whether a certain development will actually yield the desired results and is feasible in practice. Development of the policy intentions is broadly scheduled to start in the first half of the strategic period (September 2022 to the end of 2024) or the second half of the strategic period (2025-2027). The Strategic Agenda is not an operational implementation plan, but will be further developed via the work plans of departments and institutes.

The financial and organisational implications and risks will be defined in detail at a later time, on the basis of the following principles and/or financial framework:

- ▷ A budget of around € 500K per year in the period 2022-2027 is available for implementing the various plans in the context of the Faculty Strategic Plan (partly funded from the Faculty's 'policy margin' budget). This is temporary funding.
- ▷ If the development of the Strategic Agenda results in additional structural costs, these must be covered within the budget; in other words, because the development concerned results in savings or generates new structural income, or can be funded through cost-cutting or termination of (other) structural activities.

The Strategic Plan and Strategic Agenda will be reviewed after three years (half-way through the period covered by the plan). This will allow the Faculty to make adjustments to policy developments and to achieve the strategic ambitions with flexibility.

## Ambition A

To strengthen our position as a leading international university for research and education in the humanities

### A1. To consolidate our strong disciplinary identity and also strengthen our multi- and interdisciplinary approach

A1.1. We will develop a Faculty-wide research agenda, identifying themes that we aim to give special attention to and prioritise in the allocation of research funding, research support and assistance with funding applications (LRS) and marketing.

High-profile themes that enhance the visibility of the Faculty's identity:

- The World of Languages and Cultures (in line with the Humanities Sector Plan 2022),
- People, Migration and Mobility,
- The Construction of Heritage (in line with the University's interdisciplinary research area Museums, Collections and Society and the Humanities Sector Plan 2022),
- The Human Digital World (Human-centered AI & Digital Humanities) (in line with the University's interdisciplinary research area Society, Artificial Intelligence and Life Sciences, the recent publication of the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), the National Research Agenda (NWA), the LDE theme Digital Society and the Humanities Sector Plan 2022).

These themes are interrelated. For instance, the Faculty has strong expertise in the field of languages and cultures of different regions of the world. The interaction between these is linked not only through cultural heritage, but also migration and mobility; and it will gain a new dimension and new research opportunities through Digital Humanities.

- ▷ The development of the research agenda covering the high-profile themes will start in the first half of the strategic period.

Themes where we wish to strengthen our position:

- Methodologies of the Humanities (visualising, intensifying and thematising the diversity of established and innovative research methods in the humanities). The purpose of this theme is to promote the development of the humanities and to strengthen research techniques, also in education;
- Environmental Humanities and Sustainability (in line with the University's interdisciplinary research area Liveable Planet – Sustainable Futures, the National Research Agenda (NWA), Naturalis and the LDE theme Sustainable Society);
- Health Humanities (aimed at developing a basic provision, together with the strong focus on health research in Leiden University's strategy, in partnership with LUMC, and the LDE theme Healthy Society and EUniWell).

A research agenda with the required staff deployment and funding will be developed for each of these themes. In view of the close links between research and education, a clear relationship must be established with study programmes.

- ▷ The development of the research agenda will start in the first half of the strategic period.

A1.2 The Faculty will create a more detailed profile within the context of the ongoing sector plans when the necessary funding becomes available. The relevant plans include the overall Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) sector plan *Samen Vooruit* (Ahead Together) (2022) and the cross-sector theme *Welvaart, participatie en burgerschap in een digitale wereld* (Prosperity, participation and citizenship in a digital world). We will make a contribution to these on the basis of our broad expertise.

In the Humanities *Tradition in Transition* sector plan (2022), the Faculty of Humanities has identified the following themes as aligned with our profile:

- Human Artificial Intelligence: *Data and platforms for social, cultural and economic innovation*
- Cultural Heritage & Identity: Material and immaterial heritage and Collections, management and transfer
- Languages & Cultures: Integrating disciplinary language & culture study programmes (school languages)

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

A1.3 In line with the University's Strategic Plan, the Faculty will develop policies in the area of open science and regional policy.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

A1.4 In line with the University-wide digital agenda, we will strengthen our position in the area of Digital Humanities in the form of the Leiden University Center for Digital Humanities (LUCDH) and the Digital (AI) Lab after 2025. This will include the infrastructure required to help students in Leiden and The Hague develop digital (and other) skills and to serve as a hub for researchers, such as a skills media lab.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.



## A2. To collaborate with other partners, both within and outside the University, to maximise the vision and input of the Faculty of Humanities in joint research on global themes

A2.1 We will play a pioneering role in terms of collaborating in multi- and interdisciplinary teams, by creating flexible ‘hubs’ of researchers, teaching staff and PhD students that transcend the boundaries of institutes and faculties. This is in line with the University’s Strategic Plan. The ‘hubs’ can be created around:

- substantive themes (see A1.1),
- advanced research methods and theory development,
- excellent research facilities (see also A.2.3).

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

A2.2 We will develop support activities for young talented scholars to enhance our international and interdisciplinary image. We will focus especially on:

- the PhD community, postdocs and new teachers (*docenten*) and lecturers (assistant professors/UDs);
- external PhD candidates, with the aim of more effectively involving them in developments within the University, where possible and desirable.

The Faculty has acquired a more diverse and dynamic character over the past five to ten years, with the appointment of many young international staff members. We need to create the conditions that will allow them to develop their talents and feel free to look beyond the boundaries of their own discipline, both within and outside the Faculty.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

A2.3 We will aim to utilise and work closely with joint research facilities (including labs in the SSH domain) within Leiden University, in the form of a shared infrastructure for intensive research collaboration. If possible, this will include setting up an ACPA lab and facilities for video editing.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period. Collaboration in the SSH domain has already started.

## A3. To create recognition of the Faculty of Humanities within society and to become more successful in the acquisition of funding

A3.1 We will develop a partnership strategy based on the guiding principle of supporting the Faculty’s goals. See also A1.1. The aim of the partnership strategy is to enter into more interdisciplinary research collaborations within the Faculty, between faculties and with other partners, in order to address issues of both academic and societal importance. At the same time, however, we will not lose sight of our disciplinary strengths.

Appointing knowledge brokers could be considered, as an element of the partnership strategy or in its further development. Knowledge brokers can provide support to enhance partnerships in all phases of collaboration (‘from coffee table to consortium’).

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the second half of the strategic period.

A3.2 We will aim to acquire funding for research and educational innovation linking up with important issues in society, especially in the context of Horizon Europe, the National Research Agenda (NWA), Comenius, regional funds and LDE. Applications for such funding will obviously have to be consistent with and contribute to our own research

ambitions and educational vision. The aim is to increase the number of *successful* applications, not the number of applications.

▷ The development of this policy intention has already started.

A3.3 We will appoint external Advisory Councils at the institute level, to advise on education and research. In this respect, we will follow the example of the Faculty’s Societal Advisory Board and the experiences of institutes (and some study programmes) that already have a council of this kind. An Advisory Council’s perspective can help the institute to reflect on its own activities. The Council can also assist with generating more publicity within society for our research and education.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

## A4. To consolidate and strengthen the links between education and research

A4.1 We will encourage ‘enquiry-based learning’ in our study programmes, and their learning pathways for research skills will be made more explicit and visible for students. In the bachelor phase, the learning pathways will culminate in a final bachelor’s project that is more closely linked with the research agenda of the institute(s).

▷ The implementation of this policy intention will take place in the first half of the strategic period.



## Ambition B To provide a challenging, sustainable and dynamic learning environment

### B1 To offer a wide and dynamic range of educational tracks

B.1.1 We will strengthen the range of education at Campus The Hague. In line with the Strategic Agenda for Campus The Hague, we will develop new interdisciplinary education programmes in the form of minors, explore new MA (or other) study programmes and develop an education for professionals programme in conjunction with other faculties.

In concrete terms, for the time span 2025-2028 this entails two master's programmes and two tracks:

- Exploring the feasibility of an MA Play and Game Studies
- Exploring the feasibility of an MA Environmental Humanities
- Exploring the feasibility of an MA track Heritage & Society
- Exploring the feasibility of an MA track Digital Media
- Exploring whether some MA (or other) study programmes might fit better in the range offered at Campus The Hague instead of Leiden.
- Exploring the possible options for providing continuing education, further training or specialist education for professionals, on condition that these activities are integrated in a University-wide structure for Lifelong Development.

We aim to collaborate with other faculties in jointly developing the new study programmes and possibly in jointly providing funding (in advance) for them.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period, with the exception of the last point on Lifelong Development: exploration and integration of this will take place in the second half of the strategic period.

B1.2 We will draw up a Faculty plan for increasing flexibility, in line with the University-wide policy of 'flexible learning pathways.' This will involve investigating the possibilities for students to take courses offered by multiple study programmes within the Faculty, the University or the LDE alliance, provided that they fit in with their regular study programme. In connection with this, we will also investigate possible ways to increase the interrelationships between the language & culture study programmes, in cases where developing a broad-based language & culture study programme has not been productive. Good guidance of students in their choice process will be an integral part of this action plan. Attention will also be given to the need to prepare students for a role in secondary school teaching.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.



### B2 To implement sustainable educational innovation

B2.1 We will strengthen the international character of our education by developing several different forms of mobility. In addition to encouraging in-person mobility in the form of a regular exchange, summer schools, a course at a Dutch institute abroad, such as the NIMAR, or short-term mobility, we will explore the possibilities of 'internationalisation at home'. This involves using digital learning tools in collaborative online international learning and the 'international classroom' as educational formats. Acquiring an international experience will thus become accessible and inclusive for the largest possible group of students, with the greatest possible diversity.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.



B2.2 Our academic education is based on 'in-person education': face-to-face interaction between teaching staff and students in tutorials and lectures. In line with the University-wide digitisation agenda, we also aim to develop and implement high standards for 'blended learning' (digitally supported learning, such as the 'flipped classroom'), giving specific attention to students who cannot attend in-person tutorials and lectures due to a disability or illness.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the second half of the strategic period.

B2.3 We will work on further developing innovative teaching methods, building on good examples within and outside the Faculty, in line with the University-wide educational innovation and teacher development agenda. We will support and combine research on educational innovation, for example in the context of Comenius, the Senior Teaching Qualification (SKO) and the Leiden Teachers' Academy (LTA), and will communicate the results within our Faculty community.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

B2.4 We will ensure that teaching staff can contact a single, easily accessible helpdesk, combining a range of services, for support in the areas of ICT, didactic methods and collaborative options outside the Faculty.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention has already started.

### Ambition C.

To optimally prepare students for a wide range of career options in their future working life

#### C1. To equip students to envisage and shape their own future as critical citizens and professionals within society

C1.1 We will investigate the possibilities for introducing a societal learning pathway in specific study programmes, where appropriate, and for integrating this within existing courses. Using these learning pathways, students work on societally oriented goals, such as formulating policy memoranda or consultancy assignments in collaboration with e.g. cultural institutions, local authorities, companies and NGOs. We are therefore taking our education outside the walls of the University and bringing society into the lecture hall. Examples include 'community-based research', the collaboration in The Hague SouthWest with Campus The Hague and the

partnership in the context of Learning with the City (Leren met de Stad)/City Deal: Research (Kennis Maken). Students also work on their own personal development through in-depth study of literature, art, criticism and so on.

► The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

C1.2 We will investigate the possibility of providing courses in the area of 'Sustainability and Humanities'. Examples could include developing a Faculty-wide range of courses, such as a core curriculum, or integration of these courses in the study programmes.

► The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.



#### C2. To enhance awareness and skills in the area of Digital Humanities in all study programmes

C2.1 We will strengthen the integration of Digital Humanities in education:

- In the same way as other transferrable skills, integrating Digital Humanities knowledge and skills in the learning outcomes of existing study programmes, and introducing organisational preconditions, for example in the form of an education portal;
- Using digital tools and methods in research;
- Giving substantive attention to the digitisation of society as a topic in education and research.
- We will develop the vision memorandum into a Digital Humanities action plan 2022-2025.

► The development of this policy intention has already started.

### Ambition D.

To strengthen the culture and operation of our Faculty

#### D1. To intensify interinstitutional collaboration, integrated operational management and leadership

D1.1 We will continue the already commenced development of more integrated management in the institutes and the Faculty as a whole. An aspect of this is intensifying the joint action of institutes, study programmes and support services. We will aim for clearer communication about the prospects for permanent appointments and promotions. The use of strategic staffing plans as the basis for decision-making and development will be further elaborated in the years ahead. See D2.1. We will continue with the further professionalisation of education support and organisation (Teaching and Student Affairs/OSZ).

► The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

D1.2 We will investigate possibilities for recruitment, selection and career policies that will give greater value to collaboration and interdisciplinarity. This relates not only to more broadly defined job profiles in line with the Recognition and Rewards programme but also to the format of the 'performance and development interviews' (ROGs), structural attention for development of managerial qualities, teacher development, and career policy for administrative & support staff. See also D2.2.

► The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.





## D2. To encourage career development

D2.1 We will ensure that a strategic multiyear plan is formulated for each institute and Faculty Office department and that a 'staffing review' (*vlootschouw*) is conducted each year. The strategic staffing plan will reflect the optimal structure of each institute or department, with an orientation towards the desired situation. It will be a clear analysis based on strategic goals to assist in making policy choices for the most effective deployment of staff in the years ahead. It will also assess whether staff members are ready for a new step or challenge. A full review of the support departments in the near future will also be used to create a viable staffing plan.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

D2.2 We will make further efforts to improve the quality of performance and development interviews (ROGs) by providing managers with training, so that they can effectively apply the principles of Recognition and Rewards for both academic and support staff. 'Employability' will be a recurrent topic in the interviews, including development of skills and competences, and development assessments. Career development goals and agreements will be set down in a personal development plan.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the second half of the strategic period.

D2.3 We will identify the opportunities for career development via teaching, and will investigate options for strengthening these career paths. We will also include a training budget for this, in order to support staff members who wish to further develop and professionalise their teaching tasks.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the second half of the strategic period.

D2.4 We will identify career paths and opportunities for support staff in order to encourage their career development.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the second half of the strategic period.

**Ambition E.**  
To improve the wellbeing of all staff members and students

## E1. To promote an inclusive and supportive work and learning environment

E1.1 We will develop and implement an inclusive recruitment and selection policy, giving attention to groups who are currently underrepresented in our staff. This policy will apply to both academic staff and administrative & support staff.

▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

E1.2 We will offer training courses for inclusive and intercultural education, teacher development (intercultural teaching) and intercultural study guidance. These training courses will ensure that positive attention is given to diversity and inclusion in our teaching and learning environment. All staff participating in our study programmes will be stimulated to participate in a training programme for inclusive education.

▷ The development of this policy intention has already started.

E1.3 We will work with students, study associations and staff to develop a plan of approach for how the Faculty can ensure the wellbeing of students. Developing a 'work plan for student wellbeing' is a first step in this, so that we can move, at the Faculty level, towards an integrated approach to student wellbeing as a policy dossier and strategic goal.

The work plan will be aligned with the national vision on student wellbeing, and is a means for the Faculty to implement the five University focus areas, giving special attention to the specific needs of our students. The plan is intended to create an open, safe and inclusive environment, where attention is given to physical, social and mental wellbeing, and students can flourish in both their academic and personal development.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.

## E2. To reduce the workload of all staff members

E2.1 We will continue not only to work for a better correspondence between efforts and budgets, but also to improve policy attention for reducing workload, for instance by using sabbaticals, allowing space for individual approaches, working more emphatically with one another on the basis of trust and having a clear policy on working from home.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.



E2.2 We will investigate possible changes in education and research to reduce workload. Examples here could be more efficient organisation of the thesis process, use of different forms of teaching and assessment to reduce grading time and support with grant applications for research. This will be further developed in the Faculty's Work Balance action plan.

- ▷ The development of this policy intention will start in the first half of the strategic period.



# Summary Leiden University Strategic plan 2022 – 2027: Innovating and Connecting

As a university we are at the heart of an increasingly complex and rapidly changing society. This challenges us to innovate. It is important that we are attuned to these developments and are able to respond in a fitting and alert fashion. Guided by our core values of connecting, innovating, responsible and free, we focus in this new strategic plan (Innovating and Connecting – 2022-2027) on stronger connections. This will enable us to forge more connections between disciplines, to work with others on creating new chances and opportunities for research and teaching, to achieve greater synergy between our university and society, and to develop a strong university community. This is how we will continue to innovate and pioneer, and increase our social and scientific impact. To strengthen these connections, we will work in the years ahead on the following six strategic ambitions:



## 1. Space for innovation

Realising change and innovation requires space. In the years ahead we will create more space to make the workload manageable and to provide more opportunities for our staff to pursue their ambitions. We will do this by improving our processes and systems (making them smart and simple), by providing better support for research and teaching, and by creating frameworks for our teaching. We will also bring more focus by differentiating in terms of goals and ambition level, and will make our quality assurance more efficient and development oriented.

## 2. Pioneering interdisciplinary research and teaching

We will ensure that the quality of our individual disciplines remains high. This will serve as the basis for a firmer interdisciplinary focus. And our interdisciplinary research will offer space for free and fundamental research. To achieve this we will create ‘interdisciplinary hubs’ with space for experimentation and collaboration. We will continue to develop our interdisciplinary research programmes, and will add ‘Europe’ as an extra programme. We also aim to expand our range of interdisciplinary education, and will facilitate broad-based academic practice through an open-science programme.

## 3. Future-proof student development

We aim to provide an innovative, flexible, high-quality, future-proof academic education. Our vision on teaching and learning (Learning@LeidenUniversity 2017- 2023) is based on the principle of inquiry-based learning and focuses on broad student development within an enriching academic environment. In the years ahead

we will invest in inquiry-based and activating learning, and will give societal issues a more prominent role in our teaching. We will also ensure that students have more opportunities to develop within an international environment, and will increase our activities in the area of personal and professional development during and after students’ initial studies, to give them the opportunity to work on their future academic self.

## 4. A healthy, engaged and learning community

We will continue to build an open and learning organisation where students and staff feel at home and can make the most of their potential. We will invest in the adaptive and relational leadership that will serve this ambition, and will continue our steps to support our staff’s well-being by reducing their workload and developing an evidence-informed vision and policy. For students we will intensify our focus on prevention, and will work on a study environment that promotes wellbeing in the widest sense of the word. We will also improve the opportunities for staff exchanges and will develop an inclusive language policy.

## 5. More value through strategic collaboration

Collaboration is essential to improving the quality of our teaching and research, generating societal impact, attracting funding and raising our profile. Our campuses in Leiden – in the city centre and on the Leiden Bio Science Park – and The Hague will serve as important infrastructure at the local, regional and international level. In the years ahead we will intensify our participation in regional ecosystems, expand our activities in The Hague and strengthen our network in Leiden. We will also deepen existing collaborations

with partner institutions in Europe, China, Indonesia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and will build on our partnerships in and with Africa.

## 6. Ample scope for talent and development

We will improve the opportunities for the professional growth of all our staff, academic staff and organisational & policymaking staff alike. We will ensure a good balance between individual growth and team development, and will develop an integrated talent policy and increase the possibilities for professional development. This will make it easier for us to do justice to people’s different qualities and take more account of the many tasks within the University. We will pay specific attention to career options in our teaching as well as to the continued professional development of our lecturers. We will also provide greater clarity about careers, and will substantially reduce the percentage of lecturers on temporary contracts and will aim for more permanent contracts instead. Temporary contracts will be for a pre-agreed, fixed period. Furthermore, in years ahead we will take part in the discussion on redefining the term ‘excellence in academia’, both nationally and internationally.

Read more about the Strategic plan at [strategischplan.universiteitleiden.nl/en](https://strategischplan.universiteitleiden.nl/en)



Universiteit  
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Read more about the Faculty Strategic Plan at [universiteit.leiden.nl/hum-fsp](https://universiteit.leiden.nl/hum-fsp)

