

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

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and updates about
Stichting IncLUision

September 2026

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Education is at the heart of IncLUsion. Our programme begins by creating access to Leiden University for students who, despite their academic backgrounds and ambitions, do not always have straightforward access to higher education in the Netherlands. After two years on the IncLUsion board, I have learned that what happens around the courses we provide can be just as meaningful: the support of a buddy, conversations at a Language Café, connections made during social activities, and celebrating together at graduation.

The 2025–2026 academic year was one of both continuity and development. We continued creating opportunities for students to participate in university education, while expanding partnerships and our network. For me, it was also my second and final year on the board, and my first as Chair. The role taught me a great deal about leadership and responsibility, while reminding me never to lose sight of the people behind our work.

Our students are not defined by the circumstances that brought them to the Netherlands. They are aspiring lawyers, psychologists, engineers, doctors, artists, and researchers, bringing knowledge, ambitions, and perspectives of their own. IncLUsion cannot remove every barrier they encounter, but we can help ensure that displacement does not have to mean the end of an academic journey.

Everything described in the pages that follow is the result of a collective effort. I am deeply grateful to our students, volunteers, university staff and partners, and my fellow board members for their time, trust, and commitment. As my time within IncLUsion comes to an end, I look back with pride at what we have achieved and gratitude for everything this community has taught me. I hope this report gives you an insight not only into what we accomplished in 2025–2026, but also into the people and mission behind it.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Zeynep Sezgin
Chair, Stichting IncLUsion Leiden
2025–2026





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DUTCH EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stichting InclUision Leiden wordt volledig gerund door een vrijwillig studentenbestuur en zet zich in voor het toegankelijk maken van hoger onderwijs voor asielzoekers met een academische achtergrond. Door deelname aan reguliere universitaire vakken, een buddyprogramma en verschillende ondersteunende sociale activiteiten wil de stichting bijdragen aan zowel de academische als sociale integratie van haar studenten.

Tijdens het academisch jaar 2025-2026 namen **145** studenten deel aan het programma, ondersteund door **57** student buddies en **19** taal buddies.

Naast het faciliteren van universitaire vakken organiseerde InclUision dit jaar elf sociale activiteiten, vier academische workshops en wekelijkse bijeenkomsten van het InclUision Taalcafé in Leiden en Den Haag. Daarnaast werd een samenwerking opgezet met **Leidse Laptops**, waardoor studenten zonder (geschikte) laptop toegang kregen tot de benodigde apparatuur voor hun vakken. Ook zijn onze administratieve processen verbeterd, werd een nieuwe samenwerking aangegaan met de **Faculteit Archeologie** en werden bestaande samenwerkingen met de **Faculteit Wiskunde** en **Natuurwetenschappen** verder versterkt.



Op organisatorisch vlak investeerde de stichting in haar zichtbaarheid en financiële continuïteit. De pagina van IncLUsion op de website van de universiteit werd vernieuwd, de aanwezigheid op sociale media werd versterkt en het programma werd actiever gepromoot binnen verschillende faculteiten, met meer buddy-aanmeldingen als gevolg. Daarnaast werd een eigen fondsenwervingspagina via het **Leiden University Fund (LUF)** gelanceerd en werd nieuwe financiering verkregen via **Fonds 1818**. De financiële middelen werden voornamelijk besteed aan reiskostenvergoedingen voor studenten, sociale activiteiten, kick-offs, graduation ceremonies en aanvullende ondersteuning.

IncLUsion sloot het jaar af met een gezonde financiële basis voor het komende bestuursjaar. De stichting blijft zich inzetten voor een inclusieve universiteit waar mensen die zich nog in een asielprocedure bevinden, niet alleen toegang krijgen tot onderwijs, maar ook de mogelijkheid krijgen om zich academisch, sociaal en persoonlijk verder te ontwikkelen.





1. MISSION & CONTEXT

Stichting IncLUsion Leiden is a student-led foundation committed to making higher education more accessible for refugees and asylum seekers with an academic background. Through collaboration with Leiden University, the foundation enables students to participate in regular university courses free of charge, while providing the academic, practical, and social support needed to navigate Dutch higher education.

At IncLUsion, we believe that access to education extends beyond the opportunity to attend lectures.

Successfully participating in higher education also requires a sense of belonging, access to information, opportunities to build meaningful connections, and the confidence to participate in an unfamiliar academic environment. Our programme therefore combines academic participation with community building, peer support, and activities that encourage personal and professional development.

Students who join IncLUsion often arrive with extensive academic knowledge, professional experience, and strong ambitions.



At the same time, many of them face barriers that complicate entering higher education in the Netherlands considerably. These barriers include an ongoing asylum procedure, preventing them from formally enrolling in Dutch universities, in addition to language barriers, interrupted educational pathways, or the practical and emotional challenges that can accompany forced displacement. Rather than defining students by these challenges, IncLUision aims to create opportunities for them to continue developing their knowledge, talents, and aspirations. To support this mission, IncLUision works closely with faculties, lecturers, university services, student volunteers, and external partners.

Alongside access to academic courses, students are supported by a buddy programme, and can participate in social activities, language café's, and academic skills workshops. Together, these initiatives seek to foster an inclusive academic community in which students not only study, but also feel welcomed, connected, and empowered to shape their future. As a fully student-run foundation, IncLUision also serves as a bridge between students, faculties, and the wider university community. By bringing together people with different backgrounds and experiences, we hope to contribute to a university in which diversity is recognised as a strength and equal access to education is actively supported.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The IncLUision board consists of seven students from Leiden University who carry out their responsibilities on a voluntary basis alongside their studies. Each board member holds a different portfolio while also working closely as a team to support the program's mission. The board is comprised of the following members:

Chair

The Chair provides overall leadership and safeguards the long-term direction of the foundation. The Chair prepares and leads board meetings, monitors the functioning and wellbeing of the board, and ensures that responsibilities are followed. The Chair also represents IncLUision in contacts with university departments, external organisations, and other stakeholders.

Chair 2025-2026: Zeynep Sezgin

Chair 2026-2027: Sinte Bras

Secretary and Vice-Chair

The Secretary is responsible for the administrative organisation of the foundation. This includes preparing agendas, taking minutes, maintaining internal documentation and supporting communication with university

departments and external partners. The Secretary also maintains contact with the faculties and supports the practical coordination of course offers and registrations.

Secretary 2025-2026: Annelies van Heemst

Secretary 2026-2027: Corina Stam

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for the financial administration and financial health of the foundation. This includes drafting and monitoring the annual budget, processing reimbursements, maintaining the financial records and preparing financial reports. The treasurer also maintains contact with the audit committee.

Treasurer 2025-2026: Sinte Bras

Treasurer 2026-2027: David Venderbos

Student Coordinators

The three Student Coordinators are the primary points of contact for InclUision students. Their responsibilities include reviewing student applications, conducting interviews, selecting students and coordinating their placement in university courses. Throughout the semester, Student Coordinators support students with practical questions, course participation and communication with lecturers or university services. They also monitor students' progress and help identify situations in which additional support or referral may be needed.

Student Coordinators 2025-2026:

Jonathan Verkuil, Shahinda Hammoud, and Liz Zeng

Student Coordinators 2026-2027:

Martijn van Wezel, Elisabeth Bodin, and Rocio del Alba Salinas Torrez

Community Coordinator

The Community Coordinator is responsible for strengthening the InclUision community and increasing the organisation's visibility, both within and outside the university. The role includes coordinating the buddy programme, training and supporting the buddies, organising social activities and events, managing social media and PR strategies, and contributing to the recruitment of students, volunteers, and future board members.

Community Coordinator 2025-2026:

Liza Risseeuw

Community Coordinator 2026-2027:

Martina Ramoneda

Board members of 2025–2026 with Dr. Michael Schmidli at the graduation ceremony of semester 1



Supervisory Board

IncLUision operates under the supervision of a three-member Supervisory Board, or the Raad van Commissarissen. The Supervisory Board consists of experienced former board members and supports the foundation in safeguarding legal, financial, and strategic continuity. Its responsibilities include advising the board, monitoring the organisation's long-term development, supporting board transitions, and formally approving the appointment of new board members. The Supervisory Board also provides institutional memory within an organisation whose operational student-led board changes annually.

Chair: Willem Jan de Voogd

Secretary: Muriel Verhagen

Treasurer: Marius Ceulen

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee monitors the financial administration of the foundation and supports both the Treasurer and the Supervisory Board in safeguarding responsible financial management. The committee reviews the financial records at several moments throughout the year, carries out sample checks, and gives advice based on the annual financial report. It is chaired by the financial supervisor of the Supervisory Board and includes individuals with relevant knowledge of IncLUision's financial processes. The committee ensures accountability and transparency, supporting a growing educational and community programme.

Chair: Marius Ceulen

Bariş Ateş

Else de Wit

Maurits de Vries



3. EDUCATION

Study Programme

This year, we were able to welcome as many students as last year, with a slightly larger group in the first semester. Most participants completed their semester with a certificate of participation, a tangible recognition of their efforts. Compared to last year, the ratio of graduated students was a bit lower this year. While it is to be expected that numbers like these fluctuate, we were also a bit stricter in awarding the certificates, making sure that this reflected the actual effort put in by each individual student.

	Semester 1 2024-2025	Semester 2 2024-2025	Semester 1 2025-2026	Semester 2 2025-2026
Enrolled	67	78	79	66
Graduated	58	65	53	46

Each semester, a course manual is drafted in cooperation with partner faculties. Students rank their top six preferred courses, and we match them with their highest possible preferences, with a maximum of two courses per student per semester. This year, we were able to enrol students in more courses than ever. Despite a decrease in offered courses due to budget cuts, we were able to create new partnerships, notably with the **Faculty of Archeology** and **LUMC**.

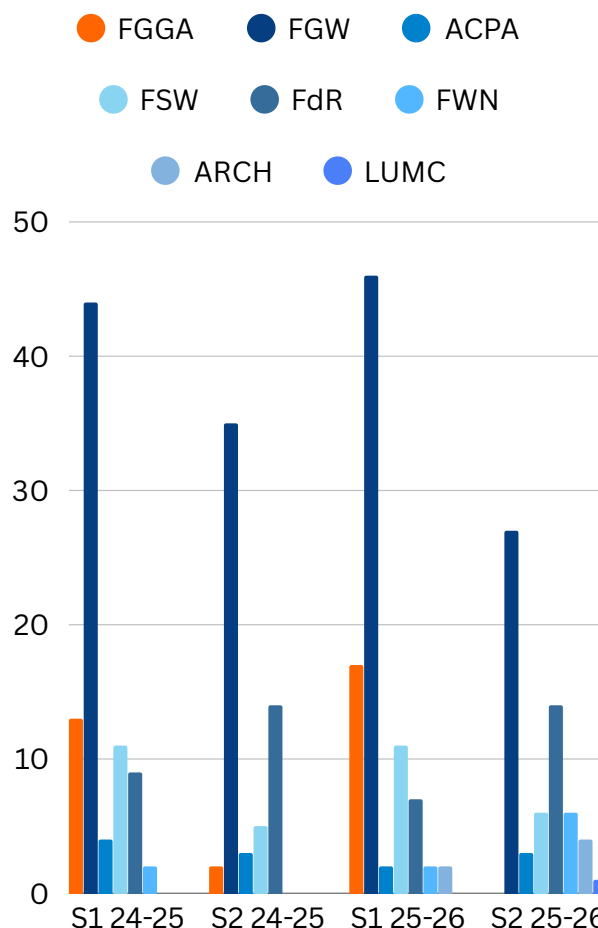
We were not yet able to enrol students in the offered LUMC course, due to its high workload.

We also strengthened our collaboration with the **Faculty of Science**, specifically with the **Institute for Computer Science (LIACS)** and the **Institute of Environmental Sciences (CML)**, which bore fruit particularly in the second semester.

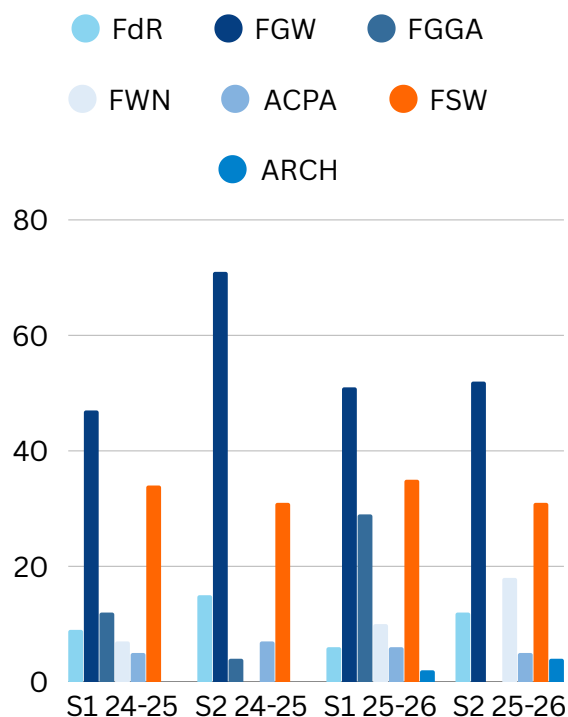
TEC

Each year, we take steps to streamline our administrative processes when it comes to course offerings and enrolment. From this year onward, Leiden University has started using TEC to fill out the prospectus. TEC is the authoritative curriculum system of Leiden University, in which data and all courses are recorded. Through our contact persons at the administrative offices of the university, InclUision was able to get involved in TEC at the end of this year. While we have not yet been able to use the programme during the current board year, it will grant the next board the opportunity to make the course manual more insightful and user-friendly for our students who are new to the university, and will make work behind the scenes more efficient.

Courses offered per faculty this year:



Enrolled IncLUsion students per faculty this year:



POPcorner Academic Workshops

This year, IncLUsion collaborated with **POPcorner The Hague**, a student office of Leiden University that offers extra support to students by improving their study skills, encouraging their personal development, and helping them find their way in university life.

Together with POPcorner, we organised four practical academic workshops specifically for IncLUsion students. This collaboration helped make academic support more accessible, practical, and closely connected to our students' everyday needs. In total, **14** IncLUsion students joined the workshops.

The following workshops were given:

- **Study Skills workshop:** making study time more effective.
- **Time Management:** helped students prepare a planning that includes their classes, deadlines, study, and personal time.
- **Multiple-Choice Exams & Exam Confidence:** shared strategies for approaching multiple-choice exams, exam-related stress, and exam preparation.
- **Presentation Skills:** provided practical tips and hands-on practice to help students feel more prepared and confident when giving presentations.



Our students during one of the workshops

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4. COMMUNITY BUILDING

Buddies

The buddy programme remains one of the cornerstones of InclUision, providing students with personalised support while fostering a sense of belonging that lies at the heart of the programme. Throughout this academic year, **57** voluntary student buddies supported the InclUision students across both semesters.

Buddies serve as approachable first points of contact, offering guidance on academic matters, campus facilities, and social opportunities while also providing a welcoming presence during students' transition into Dutch university life.

Each buddy pair was matched with a group of approximately three to five students. Groups were formed based on shared courses, faculties, and language backgrounds, with the aim of creating meaningful connections.

At the start of each semester, a kick-off event provided buddy groups with the opportunity to meet one another in an informal setting, helping to break the ice and establish connections from the outset. While the buddy programme continues to be highly valued by both students and volunteers, maintaining long-term engagement and ensuring the most suitable matches between buddies and students remain ongoing challenges.



Social activities

Throughout the academic year, InclUision organised **11** social activities that complemented the academic programme and contributed to creating an inclusive and supportive community. Several of these activities were organised in collaboration with other student organisations, further strengthening InclUision's embeddedness within the wider Leiden University community and providing students with opportunities to expand their networks beyond the programme itself.

The kick-off and graduation events, held at the beginning and end of each semester, represent important milestones for students. The kick-off events welcome new participants into the programme, introducing them to their fellow students and buddies. The graduation ceremonies recognise students' achievements and celebrate the completion of their courses.

Additionally, graduation facilitates an environment where students can meet relevant organisations that can help them further their academic and professional development after finishing the InclUision programme, including **UAF**, **Ithaka**, **Meeting Point**, and various InclUision alumni.

The primary objective of the social activities was not actually the activities themselves, but rather the connections they fostered. Activities were designed to create accessible, relaxed, and informal opportunities for students to interact with their buddies and peers, and build lasting social networks. This is why many activities were organised in collaboration with other student organisations and associations: this way, InclUision students got to meet other LU students outside of the InclUision community.



Panel with UAF, Ithaka and an alumnus during graduation

By encouraging participation and facilitating interaction, these events helped reduce feelings of isolation, strengthen students' sense of belonging, and contribute to a positive and supportive learning environment. Together, the buddy programme and the social activities form an integral part of the community that IncLUision offers its students.

Semester 1 activities:

- **Kick-off (August):** orientation and introduction for newly admitted students.
- **Game night (October):** evening filled with card- and board games during which the buddy groups got to know each other.
- **Film & Food (November):** co-hosted with **Meeting Point**, movie night followed by a dinner.
- **Creative evening (November):** co-hosted with Dutch student association **Panoplia**, evening filled with creative painting activities.
- **Winter Dinner (December):** co-hosted with **Meeting Point**, annual winter potluck dinner.
- **Graduation (January):** celebrated the IncLUision graduates of the first semester with a ceremony and a panel featuring relevant organisations that can further help IncLUision students.

Semester 2 activities:

- **Kick-off (January):** orientation and introduction for newly admitted students.
- **Iftar (February):** cosy iftar dinner with IncLUision students and the buddies.
- **Trivia Night (April):** co-hosted with study association of Middle Eastern Studies **L.S.V. Sheherazade**, a trivia quiz themed 'Around the World'.
- **Spring Dinner (May):** co-hosted with **Meeting Point**, annual spring potluck dinner.
- **Graduation (June):** ceremony and a celebration featuring guest speakers in a panel.

Kick-off



Game night



Creative evening with Panoplia



Trivia night with L.S.V. Sheherazade



5. LANGUAGE CAFÉ

As part of our efforts to facilitate the integration of our students into both the Dutch academic environment and Dutch society more broadly, InclUision has continued to develop and expand its Language Café initiative over the past 12 months. Although the initiative officially launched in February 2025 following our receipt of the LUF RAP Prize, the concept had been in development for several years. Since the founding of our organisation, students have consistently expressed a desire for opportunities to practice

Dutch in an informal and supportive setting. Since its launch, the Language Café has hosted numerous sessions attended by both students and volunteer language buddies. During these sessions, participants watched and discussed Dutch news, explored everyday topics, and practised commonly used Dutch expressions. The primary aim of the initiative has been to strengthen students' conversational Dutch skills and increase their confidence in using the language in daily life.

Buddy training for the language buddies during the kick-off event for semester 2

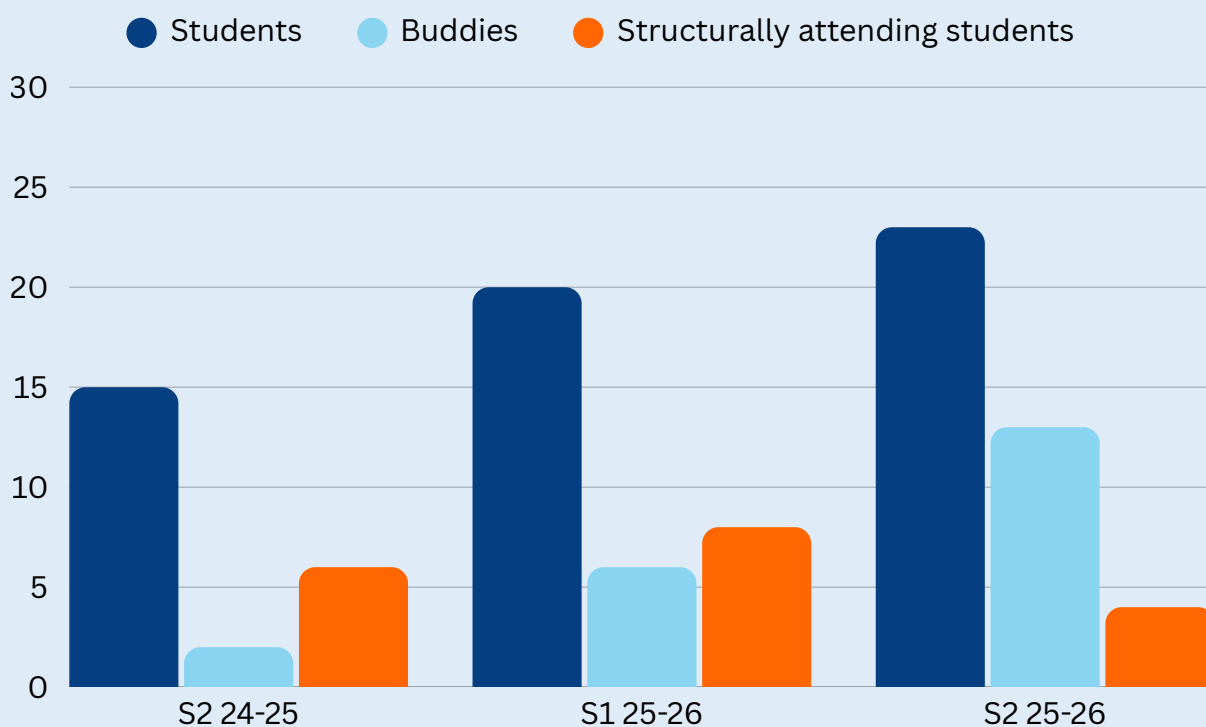


While the first semester following the launch of the Language Café largely focused on experimentation with scheduling, locations, and communication methods, the 2025–2026 academic year saw the implementation of a more structured and consistent approach.

Sessions were held on a biweekly basis, with two sessions every two weeks at fixed times and locations: one in Leiden and one in The Hague. To improve planning and attendance management, registration forms were distributed prior to each session, allowing coordinators to estimate participant numbers and invite an appropriate number of language buddies. These forms also enabled us to monitor attendance patterns.

In addition, a dedicated pool of 19 Language Café buddies was recruited. Volunteers received introductory materials about InclUision and the Language Café, as well as a briefing with the coordinators before their first session. To ensure consistency across sessions, we developed themed PowerPoint presentations with a standard structure. These materials were inspired by the widely used methodology of **Het Begint met Taal** and further informed by the experiences of **Ekklesia**, which has a well-established language programme in Leiden. The Language Café was actively promoted during events and through dedicated promotional materials. This resulted, among other things, in a high turnout of language buddies in the last semester.

Attendance during language café's this year.



Despite these improvements and the introduction of a more structured format, several challenges remain:

- **Inconsistent participation:** Despite fixed schedules and locations providing more structure, attendance remained inconsistent throughout the year. While many students and language buddies registered at the start of each semester, only a limited number attended regularly. Late cancellations and no-shows were common, occasionally resulting in sessions with very few participants. To address this issue, we will evaluate alternative formats, including a one-on-one matching system between students and language buddies.
- **Development of learning materials:** Although the Language Café focuses on conversational Dutch rather than formal language instruction, creating engaging and effective session materials proved challenging. Feedback from both students and language buddies highlighted the need for more structured resources. In the coming year, we will explore additional lesson plans and materials that can support both independent learning and session facilitation.
- **Organisational capacity:** Organising and facilitating the Language Café requires a substantial time commitment from coordinators and board members. Balancing these responsibilities alongside other organisational tasks has proven challenging. As a result, we will investigate alternative approaches that reduce the administrative burden while maintaining support for students.

6. PR & VISIBILITY

This academic year, InclUision further strengthened its public visibility and PR strategies with the aim of increasing the organisation's visibility both within and beyond Leiden University. Greater visibility contributes to several key objectives, including the recruitment of student- and language buddies and prospective board members, raising awareness of InclUision's mission, expanding the organisation's network, and creating new opportunities for fundraising. Through a combination of online communication and an increased presence within the university, InclUision has taken important steps towards building a stronger and more recognisable profile.

Social Media

This year, InclUision made more active use of its social media platforms, particularly Instagram and LinkedIn. On Instagram, regular posts and stories were shared throughout the year to highlight social activities, programme events, and student experiences. By providing timely updates and showcasing the community behind InclUision, the organisation was able to increase interaction and engagement while reaching a broader audience.

LinkedIn also received greater attention as a platform for professional communication. More frequent updates were shared to highlight InclUision's achievements, partnerships, and developments, increasing the organisation's visibility among university staff, partner organisations, alumni, and potential supporters. Together, these efforts contributed to a stronger online presence and helped communicate the impact of the programme to a wider audience.

Newly purchased banners



Visibility within Leiden University

Increasing awareness of IncLUision within Leiden University remained an important priority throughout the year. Several new initiatives were introduced to ensure that more students and staff became familiar with the foundation.

1. With an increased budget for PR, two banners were designed (see the photo on the previous page) and purchased: one promoting IncLUision as a foundation, and one specifically promoting the Language Café. These banners are used during activities, Language Café sessions, and external events to promote IncLUision and recruit buddies, prospective board members, and new student applicants.

2. One of the most visible initiatives was the display of promotional slides on digital screens across the university's faculties where IncLUision courses are offered. These slides highlighted the programme, its objectives, and opportunities to become involved as a student or language buddy. This increased campus-wide visibility and contributed to a higher number of applications from prospective buddies while also raising general awareness of the organisation.

3. In addition, IncLUision's webpage on the Leiden University website was completely redesigned. The updated

page features a clearer structure, a renewed visual design, and new photographs that better reflect the programme and its community. Information for prospective students, buddies, and other interested parties has been made more accessible, making it easier to learn about the programme and the opportunities to become involved.

4. Finally, this year [IncLUision's page](#) on the **Leiden University Fund (LUF)** fundraising platform was set up and launched. This new page provides greater visibility for IncLUision's mission while creating an additional channel through which supporters can contribute financially to the ANBI foundation.

By establishing a presence on the LUF platform, IncLUision has strengthened its long-term fundraising capacity and increased opportunities to secure financial support for the continuation and further development of the programme. The page also serves as an important tool for communicating the social impact of IncLUision.

7. LAPTOP PROVISION

Over the years, InclUision has experienced that some students have had difficulty accessing online materials and submit essays. Previously, InclUision forwarded her students without a laptop to **SHout!**, an organisation in Leiden that helps young people in financial need. However, due to our increased collaboration with the Faculty of Science, where some courses have a strict requirement for students to own a personal laptop, we saw that the demand for laptops had increased. This, combined with the previous experiences of students studying at other faculties, led this year's board to conclude that every student needs a working laptop in order to study effectively at Leiden University. Therefore, we started to assess the number of students that needed a laptop. We found that a large number (around 50%) of our students who needed a laptop were students aged over the age of 30.

They could not be helped by SHout!, due to their age policy. Eventually, a solution was found through the foundation **Leidse Laptops** – part of the foundation **Allemaal Digitaal**. They collect used laptops, mostly laptops that are no longer needed by municipalities and national government bodies, and refurbish them. These laptops are granted to organisations that work with people with lower incomes – such as InclUision – to reduce inequality and increase the digital participation of a vulnerable part of society.

The setup of their organisation matched well with that of InclUision, and we received fifteen laptops in 2025. We will receive thirty more in 2026. The laptops that were received in December 2025 were handed out over the course of the second academic semester of 2025-2026, and were all allocated based on a personal inquiry and a first-come, first-served basis.

The new collaboration with Leidse Laptops underlines the digital needs that were already present in our organisation, and the need to close the digital gap in order to achieve equal access to education for all InclUision students.



7. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW & BALANCE

The academic year 2025-2026 marked a continued period of financial growth and stability for Stichting InclUision. With strong financial support and a growing community of students and partners, we were able to expand our activities, strengthen student support, and increase our visibility. A key budgetary priority this year was the rise in transportation costs and the corresponding increase in travel reimbursements. Despite these pressures, we closed the year with a healthy financial buffer and a stable outlook, allowing us to plan future improvements with confidence.

Subsidies, grants, and donations:

- **Leiden University (SOZ):** The yearly subsidy from Leiden University forms the backbone of our budget. This annual contribution of €10,000 is intended to support educational activities and is primarily allocated to travel costs and fostering a sense of community.
- **Leiden University Fund (LUF):** InclUision is supported by the Leiden University Fund (LUF). This year, we launched [our own dedicated donation page](#) on the LUF website, making it easier for donors to support our initiatives directly.
- **LUF RAP grant:** In November 2024, InclUision's Dutch Language Café was awarded the RAP grant by the Leiden University Fund (LUF). This funding is specifically designated to cover the costs of the Language Café. Throughout 2025-2026, we continued to make use of this grant, and we expect to do so for at least two more years.
- **InclUision Utrecht:** A donation of €1,250 was received from our sister organisation at Utrecht University. This contribution is not tied to a specific purpose and is therefore used flexibly in support of our activities.
- **Fonds 1818:** For the upcoming three board years, starting in 2026-2027, InclUision will receive a total of €8,000 to invest in both online and physical resources. These include university- and course-specific materials, as well as language and cultural learning books for students to keep.

Spendings of 2025-2026

The academic year 2025-2026 was a successful year for Stichting InclUision, during which we were able to support and further grow our community while maintaining a strong and stable financial position. We were able to provide financial support and reimbursements for student travel costs on an unprecedented scale, helping more students than ever before participate in our programme. We closed the year with a healthy and reliable financial position, providing the next board with the resources and flexibility needed to continue building on this momentum and creating lasting impact for students in the years ahead.

Category	Amount (€)	Percentage (%)
Travel reimbursement for students	€9.827,86	63.16%
Social activities	€1.150,21	7.39%
Kick-off	€1.463,75	9.41%
Graduation	€1.256,35	8.07%
PR costs	€456,61	2.93%
Website and bank costs	€378,92	2.44%
Language café	€662,98	4.26%
Board activities	€244,69	1.57%
Miscellaneous	€119,94	0.77%
Total	€15.561,31	100%

Balance 2025-2026

Balance Stichting IncLUision per 01-08-2025			
<i>Activa</i>		<i>Passiva</i>	
Bank	€14.090,08	Equity	€18.319,90
Garantiesubsidie LUF	€4.229,82		
Total activa	€18.319,90	Total passiva	€18.319,90

Balance Stichting IncLUision per 01-07-2026			
<i>Activa</i>		<i>Passiva</i>	
Bank	€10.137,36	Equity	€13.704,20
Garantiesubsidie LUF	€3.566,84		
Total activa	€13.704,20	Total passiva	€13.704,20

8. STUDENT VOICES

"For many asylum seekers, studying at a university like Leiden can seem like an impossible dream. Through IncLUision, that dream becomes a reality. The programme offers much more than education; it provides hope, stability, and a sense of belonging during a period often marked by uncertainty and stress. It gives students the opportunity to learn, develop their skills, and become part of the academic community. For me, IncLUision was a source of motivation and support that helped me continue my educational journey. It reminded us that asylum seekers are not only people seeking protection, but also individuals with talents, ambitions, and dreams." - **A.M.**

"As a displaced researcher from Yemen with a PhD in Computer Science, the IncLUision programme was more than just an educational opportunity for me. Before joining the programme, my academic journey was disrupted by displacement, making it difficult for me to reconnect with university life. Through IncLUision, I had the opportunity to attend courses at Leiden University and regain confidence in my academic future. The programme provided a welcoming and supportive environment that helped me reconnect with the academic community and continue my personal and professional development. I extend my sincere thanks to the IncLUision team for their dedication and support. Their efforts provide invaluable opportunities for displaced students and researchers to rebuild their academic careers and explore new horizons." - **M.A.**

"The IncLUision programme helped me not only with my academic path, but also on a much deeper level. As a refugee who had to start life again from zero, being in a university environment meant a lot to me. Having the chance to talk with people, classmates, and teachers, and to share ideas with them, gave me confidence. It helped me feel part of a community again and prepared me for the next steps in my life, whether in work, further studies, or my artistic path. I also truly valued the freedom to express my thoughts and feelings openly. I enjoyed every day I spent at the university, and I am very grateful for this opportunity." - **M.B.**

“When I was first introduced to the InclUision programme at Leiden University by COA, I was overjoyed and excited, but at the same time, I was very worried about my ability to adapt to the new academic system and to the students and professors at the university.

I was going through a difficult period in my life, living in isolation, alienation, and loneliness due to the long waiting periods for my residence permit, and I lost many of my academic and practical skills. With the InclUision programme at Leiden University I was given the opportunity to enrol in various courses, which helped me regain my academic identity during those challenging times. I felt like I was part of the academic community, not an outsider. I gained the confidence to continue my studies and achieve my career goals. We all benefit, as participants and as the university, from this exchange.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the buddy system and the InclUision coordinators at Leiden University for their warm welcome and for helping us adapt to our new academic life and learn how to use and benefit from the university's facilities. Thank you for your time, effort, and patience. I urge Leiden University to continue and expand its InclUision programme, where everyone feels a sense of belonging and empowered to contribute to building a better and more equitable society. Leiden University is not just a place for intellectual growth, but a community where everyone feels welcomed, safe, and valued.” - **S.A.**



9. OUTLOOK & BUDGET

2026-2027

As IncLUsion continues to evolve, we are driven by the same values that shaped our past year: growth, connection, and access to education. Based on our experiences and community feedback, we've set the following strategic goals for the coming academic year:

1. Buddy Committees

Over the past year, we successfully expanded our buddy network through enhanced PR efforts, resulting in increased recruitment and stronger engagement within the buddy groups. Building on this momentum, we aim to create more opportunities for buddies who wish to take on a more active role within IncLUsion.

To achieve this, **we propose the introduction of two buddy-led committees.** The first is an Activities Committee, consisting of enthusiastic buddies who will support the organisation of additional social activities and outings for IncLUsion students, complementing the two recurring activities each semester and our annual collaborations with Meeting Point. The second is a PR Committee, made up of buddies who are interested in promoting IncLUsion across the university, increasing our visibility, supporting recruitment efforts, and helping us reach new students and volunteers.

These committees will not only strengthen the sense of community within IncLUsion but also provide buddies with meaningful opportunities to contribute their skills and take greater ownership of the programme.

2. Community Building

To further strengthen the IncLUsion community, we aim to **continue organising activities in collaboration with other student organisations and associations.** These partnerships provide accessible and low-threshold opportunities for IncLUsion students to meet fellow university students in an informal and welcoming environment, helping them expand their social networks and strengthen their sense of belonging.

At the same time, these collaborative events increase IncLUsion's visibility within the university community. They offer valuable opportunities to introduce new students to our mission, recruit prospective buddies, and inspire future board members to

become involved in the organisation. By maintaining and expanding these partnerships, we hope to further foster an inclusive, connected, and engaged community.

3. Language Café

As IncLUision continues to develop its programme, we believe it is important to **evaluate whether the Language Café remains the most effective way to support students in improving their Dutch language skills**. Given the availability of several high-quality language programmes and conversation initiatives in the region, an alternative approach may be to focus on connecting students with these existing opportunities rather than organising a parallel programme ourselves.

In this model, IncLUision could play a facilitating role by informing students about suitable language courses and conversation groups, assisting them with referrals or registrations, and, where possible, providing financial support to reduce barriers to participation. This would enable students to benefit from specialised language education while allowing IncLUision to concentrate its resources on the areas where it can have the greatest impact. Following this evaluation, IncLUision may decide

either to continue the Language Café in an adapted format that better complements existing initiatives or to phase out the café and focus its efforts on guiding students towards external language-learning opportunities that more effectively meet their needs and contribute to their long-term integration.

4. Fundraising

With the launch of IncLUision's dedicated [LUF fundraising page](#), the organisation now has a valuable platform to increase both financial support and awareness of its mission. In the coming year, we **recommend further developing this page by incorporating testimonials from buddies and students that highlight the impact of the IncLUision programme**.

In addition, we recommend exploring new communication channels and outreach strategies to broaden the page's reach. By identifying audiences that are likely to support IncLUision's mission, including alumni, university staff, local organisations, and socially engaged individuals, the organisation can strengthen its fundraising efforts while increasing visibility within and beyond the university community. A more strategic approach will help ensure the effectiveness of the page.

Budget outlook 26-27

Looking ahead to the 2026-2027 academic year, Stichting InclUision expects its total income to decrease slightly compared to 2025-2026. This is primarily because the increased financial capacity during the current academic year was largely the result of the financial surplus transferred by the 2024-2025 board. While our structural sources of funding remain stable, we do not anticipate a similar one-time increase in available resources.

As a result, we expect our overall expenditures to decrease modestly as well. In particular, we aim to achieve small savings on social activities and travel reimbursements while continuing to offer the same high-quality support and sense of community that students have come to expect from InclUision. These adjustments are intended to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the foundation without compromising the student and buddy experience.

At the same time, increasing accessibility remains one of our highest priorities. Any additional funding, grants, or donations secured during the 2026-2027 academic year will therefore be directed primarily towards expanding the travel reimbursement budget. By doing so, we hope to further reduce financial barriers to participation and ensure that transportation costs do not prevent students from fully committing to and engaging in the programme.



10. REFLECTION SUPERVISORY BOARD

The Supervisory Board was able to operate as usual during the academic year of 2025-2026. The administrative and juridical aspects of the Board were dealt with the year before, which meant that the Board could focus purely on its responsibility to supervise and advise the InclUision board where necessary. It looks back on a year in which the board members worked hard to contribute to the main goal of the foundation: making education accessible for refugee students in the Netherlands.

Throughout the year, the Supervisory Board was available for individual or board-related advice. The ties with the InclUision board members are close, which means that communication is often conducted through WhatsApp or by phone calls. This was experienced as enjoyable and efficient on both sides. The Supervisory Board was happy to function as a 'listening ear' when board members needed it. The Supervisory Treasurer oversaw the audit committee, which continued to work to ensure that the foundation's finances were in order and to provide the board's Treasurer with advice when needed.

Moreover, the Supervisory Board again had an active role in the appointment of new board members.

In a joint board meeting in April 2026, the Supervisory and InclUision Board considered the new board applications and discussed which candidates would be the right match for the open positions. Despite some difficulties with filling all positions, the Supervisory Board was happy to support and advise board members in throughout this process. It is very fulfilling to see a fresh, enthusiastic team start yet another board year for this wonderful foundation!

The Supervisory Board has decided to be more physically present for the board members and the students. This can be done by visiting a graduation or kick-off event. It will also continue its usual tasks as described above. With that goal in mind, the Supervisory Board looks back with joy on the board year 2025-2026 and looks forward to the coming year, in which the InclUision board will accomplish great things for the academic lives of refugee students in the Netherlands.

11. REFLECTION AUDIT COMMITTEE

Policy

The most notable change in this year's budget is the increase in travel reimbursements for students. This was a key policy objective of the Treasurer, and it has been successfully achieved. At the same time, several planned cost-saving measures have been implemented, including a reduction in the budget allocated to social activities. Historically, this expense represented a significant portion of the budget. It has now been reduced based on the expectation that shorter activities will encourage higher attendance among board members.

In addition, efforts were made by the Community Coordinator to establish an [online donation page](#) through the Leiden University Fund (LUF). This initiative was successful, and the donation page has officially been launched, potentially generating an additional source of income.

Budget

During the Q2 audit conducted by the Audit Committee, it was observed that the foundation's equity had grown to a relatively high level. The committee therefore advised that, in the future, it may be appropriate to consider temporarily suspending certain incoming revenue streams.

This point was also raised by Jeroen van 't Hart (Director of Student and Educational Affairs) during a meeting with the Treasurer held this summer. However, the current budget indicates that total equity has decreased slightly. For this reason, it was not recommended to reconsider incoming revenue streams at this stage. Instead, the advice is to wait for the financial results of the upcoming board year before making any decisions.

The expected budget for the new financial year also showed that the income category "Other Donations" was budgeted at €500, despite there being no confirmed funding source for this amount. The expected budget will therefore be revised by reducing this projected income and making minor corresponding adjustments to the planned expenses.

Conclusion

The Treasurer has managed the foundation's finances effectively throughout the 2025-2026 financial year. This is reflected in the successful achievement of the board's financial objectives and the renewed success in developing additional sources of income. Furthermore, all expenses for the year have been reviewed and found to be in good order.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

The board of 2025-2026 is deeply grateful to all the people behind the organisations, institutes, and partners that support and contribute to IncLUsion's mission. Appreciation for donations, advice and practical support go to all of them.



Above all, the board of 2025-2026 would like to express its sincere gratitude to all the students of this academic year, with whom we have had the honour of meeting, forming friendships, and learning from throughout the year.



Want to support IncLUision?
DONATE HERE

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