Profile for Rector Magnificus

Working at VU Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (in short VU Amsterdam) has a clear ambition: to contribute to a better world through outstanding education and ground-breaking research. Established in 1880, VU Amsterdam strives to be a university where personal education and societal involvement play a leading role. A research university where people from different disciplines and backgrounds collaborate to achieve innovations and to generate new knowledge.

Our teaching and research encompass the entire spectrum of academic endeavour – from the humanities, the social sciences and the exact sciences through to the life sciences and the medical sciences – all structured into four profile themes: Human Health and Life Sciences, Connected World, Governance for Society and Science for Sustainability. This is how we encourage multidisciplinary cooperation, which is exactly what is needed to tackle the societal issues of today, and the challenges of tomorrow.

For the coming years, VU Amsterdam has chosen an ambitious strategy: VU Strategy 2020 – 2025. The strategy centres on three priority areas: Sustainable, Enterprising and Diverse. These give direction to our actions and to the content of our core tasks of education, research, knowledge transfer and operational management. The campus of VU Amsterdam campus is easily accessible and located in the heart of Amsterdam’s Zuidas, a truly inspiring environment for teaching, research and valorization. More than 5,600 employees work at the VU Amsterdam, where more than 30,000 students are engaged in academic studies in our nine faculties.

The Executive Board

The Executive Board is charged with the administration and management of the university, with regard to both the development and implementation of policy. The Executive Board consists of three members: a President, who is responsible for institutional strategy, national/international external relations and valorization; a Rector Magnificus, who is responsible for teaching and research; and a third member, who is responsible for operations. As a collegial Board, the Executive Board manages VU Amsterdam, in close cooperation with the deans of nine faculties and the directors of nine Staff Departments. The members of the Executive Board are appointed by and accountable to the Supervisory Board of the VU Foundation.

The areas of focus of the members of the Executive Board are evenly divided into portfolios. The portfolio of the Rector Magnificus encompasses the core areas of teaching and research, monitoring academic integrity and the quality of teaching and research. The Rector supervises the deans of the faculties and serves as the primary point of contact for the University Student Council (USC) with regard to teaching and research.

The guiding principle for the development of the VU Amsterdam strategy is the VU Strategy 2020 - 2025, with a mission statement that was formulated jointly by the Executive Board and the broader organization: We take responsibility for people and the planet by delivering university-level, value-driven education, research and knowledge transfer. We educate and train students and professionals, imbuing them with know-how and ‘A Broader Mind’. We pursue pioneering research, both within and between academic disciplines. As free thinkers with a focus on diversity, meaning and compassion, our students and staff have a deep connection with one another while being fully engaged with society as a whole. That is the mission of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
Within the university, the Executive Board would like to see a climate in which people reflect on their own conduct and that of others, call each other to account and cope with contradictions, dilemmas and conflicts in an open and constructive manner. The Executive Board promotes this manner of cooperation and sets an example in this regard. The Executive Board actively manages for a clear allocation of responsibilities, based on the notion that the skill of the professional is central and must be able to come into its own. The university’s core values are responsibility, openness and personal engagement.

Priority areas

The three priority areas formulated in the VU Strategy 2020-2025 serve as the guiding principles for action within the university: **Sustainable:** Proceeding from taking responsibility for humans and the planet, ‘sustainable’ is interpreted broadly within VU Amsterdam. Sustainability is about more than just the environment, it also extends to economic, human, cultural and societal aspects. Sustainability is also a vital issue for VU Amsterdam as an organization. **Enterprising:** Proceeding from the need to create added value for society, to cooperate and to innovate, an enterprising attitude is important. This entails recognizing, creating and taking advantage of opportunities. Being creative and courageous. Taking personal responsibility. Daring to take risks and not being afraid to experiment. **Diverse:** Diversity is woven into the very identity of VU Amsterdam, and it contributes to the quality of teaching, research and collaboration. Everyone within the VU Amsterdam community should be capable of bridging differences in terms of ethnic, cultural or religious background, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, educational background and academic discipline.

Teaching and research profile

The VU Amsterdam mission is to train people to become critical academics and scientists who, based on their commitment to society, can go on to play important roles in the international and intercultural society of the future. The university therefore places a strong emphasis on the academic development of its students, in addition to focusing on its core values. Teaching and research are strongly linked to each other.

VU Amsterdam educates students in the research areas in which the university is strong and in which there is a high demand for highly educated professionals. With 45 Bachelor’s programmes and 100 Master’s programmes, post-graduate and PhD education, VU Amsterdam offers a wide range of programmes in which students are

VU Amsterdam Leadership profile

The leadership within VU Amsterdam and the associated manner of cooperation has been elaborated into four principles under the heading of ‘the Art of Engagement’.

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<th>Principle</th>
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<td>Contribute to the greater whole</td>
<td>This entails thinking beyond our own components to consider what would be best for VU Amsterdam and committing to mutual agreements.</td>
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<td>Exhibit courage in clear choices</td>
<td>This entails daring to choose and to stand behind one’s choices. Allow others space and trust for application.</td>
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<td>Be clear and transparent</td>
<td>This entails clear expression and calling other people to account, keeping an open mind with regard to interests and making information widely available from a position of trust.</td>
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<td>Listen and allow space for growth</td>
<td>This entails delaying judgement, listening well, giving and receiving feedback, and creating a safe and open climate.</td>
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The Executive Board also applies these principles to its own actions and calls other people within the organization to account with regard to practising this Art of Engagement.
challenged to realize the fullest potential of their studies and themselves. An Honours Programme and the Amsterdam University College have been established in collaboration with the University of Amsterdam (UvA). A collaboration with the University of Twente in the fields of teaching, research and valorization was launched in 2019 with the joint Bachelor’s programme in Mechanical Engineering.

VU Amsterdam has a total of nine faculties, including the Faculty of Medicine, which is a component of the Amsterdam UMC. The Dental Faculty – the Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam (ACTA) – is a joint faculty with the University of Amsterdam. The faculties bear primary responsibility for the quality of teaching and research, and they form the foundation for the academic staff. A large share of the scientific research is organized in interfaculty research institutes, in which faculties collaborate across disciplinary boundaries.

VU Amsterdam allows ample space for long-term research on fundamental questions, as well as for research that is geared towards current applications. In order to fulfil its social responsibility, VU Amsterdam focuses on the social relevance of its teaching and research, in connection with value-driven science and scientific innovation within the university.

The mission of the Rector Magnificus

As the Rector, you are the leader and figurehead of the university’s academic community. You represent high academic quality and integrity in teaching and research, and you develop it further based on your vision of the future of scientific teaching and research.

In close collaboration with the other members of the Executive Board, you build on the national and international reputation of VU Amsterdam, according to the university’s core values. Together with the deans, you manage actively according to the priority areas and profile themes of the VU Amsterdam Strategy. You provide inspiration, direction and support in order to strengthen entrepreneurship in the broadest sense, as well as for purposes of teaching and research collaboration across and between disciplines.

You reinforce the vision on teaching and implement the ambitions aimed at the quality and flexibility of teaching. Your attention is directed towards strengthening active learning, supported by blended learning, as well as towards the further digitalization of teaching, educational support processes and the further elaboration and expansion of the concept of Life Long Development within VU Amsterdam. Your actions underscore the aim of ‘A Broader Mind’, the goal of which is to ensure that VU Amsterdam students are not only trained to a specific end, but also encouraged and supported in their personal development, academic exploration and social development.

You realize the ambitions of the recently formulated vision on research. More specifically, you strengthen the scientific and social impact of research at VU Amsterdam, create a strong focus in research and within the profile themes, encourage collaboration between researchers with internal and external parties, and promote accessibility and transparency through the steps that the university is taking within the framework of Open Science.

You maintain an open, collaborative and supervisory working relationship with the administrators of the faculties. You understand where the diversity of faculties could add value or pose obstacles, as well as where connections can be made. You actively contribute to the implementation of the Recognition & Rewards aspiration, which seeks a new balance between individuals and teams, diversification of careers and academic leadership. In doing so, you encourage the rich variety of diversity within the academic community and bring together a variety of interests and perspectives. You have an eye and feeling for the entire workplace, know what is going on amongst students and staff, and build a good working relationship with the participatory bodies.

You maintain constructive working relationships with the administrative bodies of the Amsterdam UMC, the Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam (ACTA) and Amsterdam University College (AUC). You contribute to effective collaboration with partners in higher education and research, including the University of Twente, as well as with local and regional authorities. You actively participate in the relevant national bodies, such as the Association of Universities in the Netherlands. You build the international profile of VU Amsterdam by exploring and perpetuating partnerships.

You play a leading role in the public debate based on your scientific authority and your social commitment, and you maintain visibility in this regard through various types of (social) media.
Job requirements and profile for the Rector Magnificus

You are a leading authoritative scholar and full professor with a solid international network. You possess administrative talent and ambition, as well as administrative experience within a university or academic institution. You have developed into a multidisciplinary thinker, embracing and representing all fields of study and possessing an academic authority that extends beyond your original specialization.

You are used to working at the interface of management and science, and you have demonstrable experience in leading complex improvement processes in teaching and research. You recognize opportunities in teaching and research, and you promote promising innovations through interdisciplinary collaboration. Your administrative style combines a sensitive, listening attitude with decisiveness and resolve.

As the Rector of VU Amsterdam, you embrace and actively embody the university’s core values and leadership principles. You are transparent and firm in your actions, you identify and call to account ineffective conduct and you are accountable for such conduct yourself. You possess a strategic vision on the implementation of diversity and inclusiveness in sustainable teaching and research developments and are able to bring together the existing variety of interests and perspectives.

Your work is driven by a passion for both teaching and research, as well as by a sincere interest in and understanding of the interests of students and staff. You have a well-developed feel for the administrative and organizational relations within the university, in which faculties and services, as well as the participatory bodies, are important partners. Experience with a transparent and professional manner of cooperating with the participatory bodies is important.

You possess outstanding communicative skills in both Dutch and English.

You perform your role and function within the context of a collegial board. You understand the value of teamwork and knowledge exchange with your fellow board members. You are capable of jointly embodying the fundamental values of VU Amsterdam and placing the university on the map.

Appointment

The appointment is for the period of four years, with the possibility of re-appointment for the same period. In addition to the Supervisory Board, the members of the Executive Board and representatives of the deans, directors and participatory bodies are involved in the appointment process. The participation body has the authority to advise on the proposed appointment.

An assessment is part of the procedure.

You must be able to submit a Certificate of Conduct (VOG) prior to the appointment.

Terms and conditions of employment

The position is valued according to the Executives’ Pay Standards Act (WNT2) and the associated salary rules.

Reactions

In this procedure, the Supervisory Board of the VU Foundation will be assisted by Eugenie van Leusen and Pieter Cortenbach of Vanderkruijjs. Interested parties may express their interest by sending a letter (including a current CV) to vu@vanderkruijjs.com by July 23.

For more information, interested parties may also contact Pieter Cortenbach or Eugenie van Leusen by telephone at +31 20 7267270.