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young academy  
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**Young Academy Groningen  
 Self-evaluation report 2016-2021**

# Young Academy Groningen Self-evaluation report 2016-2021

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## 5-year lustrum movie of the YAG

Released on 7 April 2022 at the YAG lustrum celebration.



[Click on image to watch]

# 1. About the YAG

## 1.1 Mission and organisational structure

The Young Academy Groningen was founded in July 2016 as a platform for early career researchers (<10 years post-PhD upon admission) who engage with the University of Groningen (UG) community on behalf of early career researchers. The YAG operates by the following mission statements:

1. stimulate dialogue and collaboration between disciplines, within and outside of the UG
2. give a voice to early career researchers at the UG to influence policy
3. promote investment in the professional development of early career researchers at the UG
4. explore new approaches for connecting academia and society, with particular focus on the Northern Netherlands.

The YAG is headed by a board and organised in four working groups: Interdisciplinarity, Public Engagement, Diversity and Inclusion, and Policy. Each board member is also a member of one of the four working groups, which creates a direct line of communication between the YAG Board and the working group activities. The board and the working groups are supported by the YAG coordinator and the YAG student assistant(s).

The working groups have the following key objectives:

### *a. Interdisciplinary Working Group*

Stimulate dialogue and collaboration between disciplines, within and outside of the UG through creating platforms and facilitating opportunities for people from different disciplines to meet, exchange, and discuss ideas and perspectives on various scientific topics.

### *b. Public Engagement Working Group*

To maintain public support for science: without proper understanding of the additional value (and limitations) of science, support for investments in science crumbles. Therefore, the main goal is to engage the public in academic research.

c. Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

To create a more inclusive university that provides a safe and inspiring working environment for a diverse workforce.

d. Policy Working Group

To reflect on and change policies that concern early career researchers in particular, as well as the wider Dutch academic system more broadly with a current focus on career development, work pressure, and metrics.

Next to being affiliated with a working group YAG members are organized in *cohorts* with members who joined the YAG in the same academic year. YAG cohorts develop and realize cohort projects. The purpose of these cohort projects is to get to know the fellow cohort members and build a team, in addition to making a substantial contribution to the YAG.

See **Appendix 1** for an overview of activities of the working groups and of the cohort projects.

## **1.2 YAG Community and their relationship with the University**

To establish a community feeling within the YAG, a relationship with the board and the deans of the UG and keep up to date on current strategic topics the YAG organises a number of different meetings. These are:

Monthly member meetings: Sense of community in the YAG is established through monthly meetings which provide room for exchange and working group activities. The YAG regularly invites members of the UG community or external parties to present matters of interest to YAG members during these meetings.

General Assembly: In December and June the YAG holds General Assemblies where voting on any changes to YAG rules and regulations takes place. All YAG members are required to attend the General Assemblies.

Heidag: The YAG also has an annual meeting away day (“Heidag”) to engage in deeper discussions about the aims and objectives. Due to the pandemic, the Heidag did not take place in 2020 and 2021.

Board meetings: The YAG Board meets bi-weekly to discuss YAG- and working group-related items as well as current affairs of relevance to the YAG or broader early career community.

Working group meetings: Working groups meet approximately bi-weekly to discuss matters relevant to each working group and to plan or carry out activities.

Meetings with other university parties: The YAG board meets bi-monthly with the Rector Magnificus to discuss matters concerning the YAG and topics of interest for the early career community at the UG. The YAG board meets annually with each faculty board to discuss the so-called “speaking points”, i.e., topics of particular relevance that usually reflect working group activities (e.g., ius promovendi, teaching-free periods). Since 2021, the YAG board is invited to the College of Deans once per year.

### **1.3 YAG members**

Membership in the YAG is for a period of five years. During the initial 5-year start-up stage of the YAG, membership reached 36 active members in 2021. The number of members has decreased to a stable number of at least 30 members per year since the five-year tenure of the founding YAG members was completed in September 2021. Member selection is competitive, with approximately 50 applications for up to seven spots each year. Selection is based on academic merit but in equal measure on other aspects of academic citizenship and motivation to become an active member of the YAG and take up additional tasks to represent the early career community. The YAG aims for a balanced representation of gender, seniority (i.e., years after PhD defence), career stage and discipline in line with the composition of the academic community of the UG. See **Appendix 2** for a complete overview of the members of the six cohorts.

#### ***1.3.1 YAG members involved in other networks***

Being part of the YAG also inspires members to set up similar networks within their faculty. Until now this resulted in the following networks:

- YES BSS (Young Enthusiastic Scientists at BSS, network at the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences)
- YARN (Young Arts Research Network, network at the Faculty of Arts, first faculty network to be established)
- YSEN (network of the Faculty of Science and Engineering established by YAG members Marieke van Vugt and Martine Maan in October 2019)

- WISE: Women in Science and Engineering network was established by Shirin Faraji. The kick off meeting was in April 2021 (online) with 93 participants

### **YAG and De Jonge Akademie**

Since the YAG's inception in 2016, a total of 8 YAG members have become members of the Dutch National Young Academy (DJA): Merel Keijzer and Lude Franke, and Erin Wilson (2017), Bettina Reitz-Joosse and Han Thomas Adriaenssen (2018), Marie-José van Tol and Nanna Hilton (2019), Michel Vols (2020) and Lisa Herzog (2021). Marleen Kamperman was already a member of the Jonge Akademie since 2015 and became a YAG member when she started in Groningen in 2018. Martijn Wieling was already a member of the National Young Academy in 2014 when he joined the YAG in 2016 and was elected vice-chair of the DJA in 2018. In 2021, Marie-José van Tol was elected chair of the National Young Academy. Diederik Roest (2014-2019), Irene Tieleman (2013-2018), Jan-Willem Veening (2015-2020) became YAG members because they were members of the Jonge Akademie at the time when YAG was established. Jonge Akademie membership automatically qualifies for YAG membership.

### **YAG and international academies**

Some YAG members are also members of international networks. Two YAG members are members of the Global Young Academy (Lisa Herzog since 2017; Martijn Wieling since 2019).

### **Relationship to other local Young Academies in the Netherlands and to the DJA**

The YAG is in regular contact with other national Young Academies, through national meetings of all Young Academies that take place approximately twice a year. The local Young Academies meetings serve to exchange information on activities, discuss differences and good practices with respect to early career policy at the different Dutch universities (e.g., adjustments to tenure track criteria following the pandemic, ius promovendi), and to streamline activities that take place on the national level. The meetings are also attended by a representative from the DJA. Regular exchange with the DJA is also provided through the members who simultaneously are members of YAG and DJA.



## **2. Evaluation performance YAG**

The YAG was founded with the perspective of realising the following aspects for the UG:

- a. Educating/developing and involving early career scientific talent for and in administrative tasks
- b. Strengthening collaboration between disciplines
- c. Developing and strengthening public activities/outreach of the university.

These core tasks were translated into the four YAG mission statements by the founding cohort.

Core task 1 is reflected in “Giving a voice to early-career researchers at the University of Groningen to influence policy” and “Promoting investment in the professional development of early career researchers at the University of Groningen through tailored career paths”

Core task 2 is reflected in “Stimulating dialog and collaboration between disciplines, within and outside the University of Groningen”

Core task 3 is reflected in “Exploring new approaches for connecting academia and society, with particular focus on the Northern Netherlands”

In the following, we describe and evaluate how the YAG has realised these tasks in the past five years, also according to the perspectives of the UG community and the YAG missions. We, therefore, draw on data collected through interviews with members of the university community, and surveys with YAG members and other early career researchers at the UG.

### **2.1 Giving a voice to early-career researchers at the UG to influence policy & promoting investment in the professional development of early career researchers at the University of Groningen through tailored career paths**

The central questions that are addressed in this section are:

1. Have the members of the YAG gained a better understanding and feeling for the administrative ins and outs of the university and do they feel better equipped and challenged to contribute to this?
2. Has the YAG sufficiently expressed the early career researcher's voice/thoughts to the Executive Board and the university community?



3. Has the YAG improved the position of the University and the quality of research and societal impact through its contributions to policy/strategy?

#### *2.1.1 Administrative understanding of YAG members and confidence to contribute*

YAG members are actively involved in various university-wide committees as YAG representatives, including working groups on Reward and Recognition, the Open Science Project, and the Universitaire Commissie voor Wetenschapsbeoefening (UCW). These positions are experienced as insightful and valuable by YAG members. When asked whether the YAG has improved the members' understanding and feeling for the administrative ins and outs of the university, responses are uniformly positive. Moreover, members report that the YAG provides them with more exposure, access to relevant experience in the broader perspectives of academia and to national networks. This resulted in an improved representation of the UG in the DJA and thus a stronger Groningen point of view on a national level. The representation in the national academy also allows for a natural information flow about overlapping topics between these bodies, further strengthening the administrative understanding of the YAG members.

#### *2.1.2 Expression of the voice of early career researchers*

##### **Interaction with management**

The YAG board has actively built constructive and close working relations with the university leadership and administration, e.g., by meeting regularly with the Rector Magnificus. The YAG board regularly meets with faculty boards of all faculties and has initiated attendance at the meeting of the College of Deans once per year in 2021. In these meetings, the YAG board reflects on the situation and current topics in the early career community and exchanges thoughts on policy matters, career development, and length of the academic year.

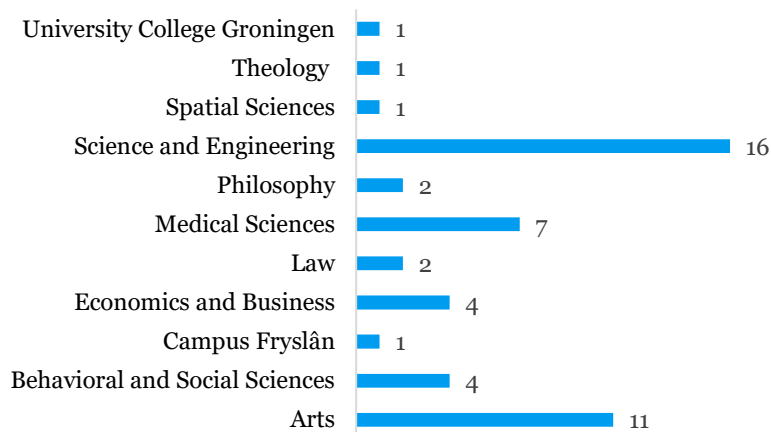
Both the Rector and the faculty boards communicate that YAG members generally make valuable contributions towards the strategy of the UG and the faculties in voicing the opinions and thoughts of early career researchers. The same message is conveyed by the support staff involved with strategy and policies. They notice how the YAG opens the eyes of management towards the problems early career researchers encounter and contributes to finding solutions (see interview quotes in **Appendix 3**). This resulted among other things in changes in policy with regard to promotion rights for associate professors.

## **Representing and strengthening the early career researchers community**

### Representation of the UG community of early career researchers within the YAG

The YAG currently consists of 37 members. The distribution of the members over the different faculties during the past five years is as follows:

*Table 1: Faculty affiliation of YAG members during the period 2016-2021*



This shows an imbalance in the representation of early career researchers, with fewer than expected members coming from the medical faculty/UMCG. This imbalance already occurs at application stage with many applicants coming from the Faculty of Arts and from FSE whereas relatively few applications come from early career researchers at UMCG. Informal conversations suggest that the YAG is less well known among UMCG colleagues. The YAG has tried to raise awareness of and interest in YAG membership among UMCG early career researchers through a promotion campaign, which has resulted in a higher number of applications from this faculty in 2021. Unfortunately, this did not result yet in a significantly higher number of members from this faculty. The YAG selection committee is looking for members who are keen to contribute to the academic community through engaging (also in terms of hours spent) in cohort and working group activities. The selection committee is especially keen on the motivation of the applicant and questions the applicant for the topics that the applicant him/herself brings up to be important (e.g., what are their plans within the YAG and did they already contribute to the topics the applicant him/herself points to be important). Thus motivation and the willingness to take the effort with in the YAG to spend the energy on it are important. Candidates are not selected based on size of faculty, and we aim to have all faculties of the RUG represented.

### Representation of the whole early career researchers community

To engage with early career researchers at the UG, the YAG organises the Early Career Research lunches. These lunches were the result of the first YAG cohort project in 2016.

By now, the ECR lunches have become a structural part of the YAG's activities and are attended by approximately 40 people. During these lunches, current topics like criteria for tenure and career development opportunities are discussed in order to collect opinions from the ECRs and be able to voice the collective opinion of the community on these topics (see **Appendix 4** for an overview of all the topics discussed). Next to this the YAG provides career-related skill and training opportunities for early career researchers (e.g., Workshop on Academia and Beyond: Post-Academic Career Paths) to empower this group to plan their own future and have their voices heard. To explore if early career researchers at the UG indeed feel represented by the YAG, a survey was carried out among the subscribers of the YAG newsletter (361 subscribers) 17 early career researchers (postdoctoral researcher to associate professor) completed the survey. Responses suggest that the ECR lunches are considered very informative and useful. That said, responses also indicate that almost 50% of respondents do not feel represented by the YAG towards the executive board and the university community. Responses suggest that some early career researchers do not know what exactly the relation between the YAG and the executive board of the university is and how the YAG represents the early career community's voice toward the executive board

Respondents also indicated that the focus of the YAG should be mostly on career paths within the university, including on aspects such as the tenure track and temporary contracts and the insecurity and instability they bring. Diversity and inclusion as well as mental well-being were other repeatedly-stated topics that the YAG should focus on to represent the needs and interests of the early career community at the UG. In terms of activities, career support and mentoring, tailored career paths, and grant writing are popular topics. In our view, these suggestions partly represent the topics we are indeed working on: We have zoomed in on mental health in academia and on career paths in a range of workshops. We have contributed to national actions with 'WO in Actie' at the opening of the academic year in 2019 and have organized an ECR lunch where representatives from HR explained their role and responsibilities toward ECR colleagues. In contrast, some of the suggestions are beyond what we can offer and responsibility of other organisations within the UG, such as the YoungRUG network, with whom we are planning to partner in future events. In contrast, some of the suggestions are beyond what we can offer and responsibility of other organizations within the UG. For instance, the most important support sources for grant writing and career mentoring are Talent Development and HR whom we have invited for early career researcher lunches.

### *2.1.3 Improved position of the UG and quality of research and societal impact through involvement of the YAG in strategy and policy*

The YAG mainly aims to improve the position and profile of the UG for research and impact through concrete activities like developing innovative ways of bridging disciplines (see 2.2 ) and public engagement (see 2.3). In addition to concrete contributions to research and societal impact, we engage with strategy and policy to improve the position UG and ultimately the quality of research and societal impact. Our main focus here is to improve academic life at the UG and, through highlighting and tackling pressing issues, to contribute to making the UG a work environment that is welcoming, supportive, and safe. This ultimately improves the reputation of the UG as an employer and consequently its profile and standing. We do this in various ways:

#### **Promoting and improving diversity and inclusion**

Numbers of female associate professors and full professors: While the number of female professors is increasing, this process is quite slow. The YAG has worked with the Diversity Office to uncover statistics on the proportion of female professors, which was provided to the university council in 2019.

The YAG monitors the development of a safe and inclusive working environment by raising this topic in regular meetings with faculty boards, and also by discussing these issues with relevant bodies such as the Diversity Office and Human Resources.

Establishing the **UG Inclusion network** (UGIN): the aim of this network was to collect ideas from the university community on how to promote diversity and inclusion, which could inform the then to-be-established Diversity Office. The UGIN network was kicked off with an event on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020 (online) and proceeded to have various meetings over 2020 and 2021, and once the Diversity Office was established in 2021, the outcomes of these meetings were discussed with the director of the Diversity Office.

The YAG published the report on [Harassment in Academia](#), which has led to discussions on social safety in the university with stakeholders inside and outside the university. The collaboration with the university board in publishing the report has been positively recognized by other academics within and outside the UG and provides the foundation for working together on this matter in the future.

## **Better work-life balance**

The YAG campaigned for shortening periods of active teaching and examining, such as in shortening the length of the academic year in line with international practices (or leave system as it is and having blocks free for researchers), in order to improve teaching/research balance for staff and reduce stress for staff and students.

The YAG supports initiatives to strengthen the support for families and dual career support for partners of young academic staff, for instance through suggestions to the Dual Career Support office on how to ease the search for employment among partners. These are major factors in the ability of the UG to retain young, talented academic staff and an important issue because of the University's unique position in the North of the Netherlands (see also 'In the Loop' cohort project in **Appendix 1**).

The YAG organises events on the topic, such as a Studium Generale webinar on [Hope, Health and Happiness](#) by Carol Graham and the seminar series on Mental Health.

### *2.1.4 Reflection*

Overall, we conclude that YAG members feel that they get to know better the administrative side of the UG and how strategy and policy are developed. Members have an influence on policies and are recognized by management as an important voice to be heard when determining actions. In this way the YAG has been successful in strengthening the administrative understanding and influence of this specific group of young researchers. This is also supported by the increased representation of the UG in the DJA. However, we do recognise the fact that the composition of the YAG is not an accurate reflection of the composition of the academic community as a whole. Especially membership of early career researchers from the medical faculty is low and should be increased. Recent activities (introduction to YAG activities by UMCG YAG members) have increased expression of interest from this group and we will pay particular attention to disseminating information for YAG events among UMCG colleagues to highlight the benefits of YAG membership. We will also encourage UMCG early career researchers to contact current members to discuss application material and interview process. Worrysome is also the fact that the community of early researchers within the university does not seem to be interested in or feel represented by the YAG. The low response to the survey, only 17 persons, is disappointing. On the one hand, this may not have anything to do with the YAG (a recent survey on open science yielded a response rate of approximately 5%, thus much lower), on the other hand it might mean that early career researchers enjoy the lunches but otherwise do not feel connected and addressed by the YAG. Moreover, they may be too busy to respond to a survey. It is a task for the

future to choose low-threshold activities and invest in communication to further alleviate the YAG's reputation of a "select club of high achievers".

The survey responses suggest to some extent that the community expects the YAG to act more as a "trade union" than as a channel to have the ideas and opinions of young researchers heard and translated into the strategy of the UG. Apparently, what the YAG stands for is not clear to this community and it is perceived as a kind of an elitist group with special privileges. As YAG, we realize that we need to be more transparent about regularity and content of meetings with faculty boards and the Rector Magnificus and more vocal about issues we are working on that are of immediate concern to early career researchers beyond the YAG. We have set up a communications team who will overhaul and more intensively engage in social media dissemination of information and ensure a more up-to-date, informative, and substantively valuable website. We hope that in this way unclarities among members of the early career community can be reduced. This is in line with a comment by the Rector Magnificus that the YAG should open up more to the broader community, especially the young researchers community (see comments in **Appendix 3**).

## **2.2 Stimulating dialogue and collaboration between disciplines, within and outside the University of Groningen**

This mission reflects core task 2: Strengthening collaboration between disciplines. The central questions to be addressed in this section are:

1. What has the YAG contributed to strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration in the University of Groningen?
2. What are the anticipated and realised effects of these activities?

Within the YAG interdisciplinary collaboration is strengthened in two structural ways: interdisciplinary PhD projects and interdisciplinary member projects. Below we reflect on the effectiveness of both and the lessons learned.

### ***2.2.1 YAG Interdisciplinary PhD projects***

As a reward for the time YAG members dedicate to the YAG initiatives and tasks, the executive board of the UG sponsors a number of interdisciplinary PhD positions. Each year 2-3 PhD positions are allocated on the basis of a competitive procedure in which the most highly-ranked proposals by YAG members are selected. All YAG members can submit project proposals, either together with another YAG member or a non-YAG colleague. The supervisors have to work in different departments to ensure the

interdisciplinary character of the PhD. The faculty of (one of) the YAG supervisors is the host faculty for the PhD student. The second supervisor must be employed by either UG or UMCG. All YAG members rank all submitted PhD project proposals except their own based on scientific quality and interdisciplinarity. This results in a ranking of projects where funding is allocated as follows: Priority is first given to YAG members that currently do not supervise a YAG PhD student and secondly to projects where both applicants are YAG members. The highest-ranking YAG PhD project proposals are selected for publication in a job advertisement on the university website. The PhD supervisors are in charge of recruiting a suitable applicant. In this way, the YAG gained considerable experience with the positive and negative effects of this type of position.

The interdisciplinary working group of the YAG evaluated the interdisciplinary PhD projects in 2021 in a session with several YAG supervisors and in a separate session with YAG PhD students. We also conducted an anonymous survey among YAG supervisors and PhD students. In total, 17 out of 27 supervisors, and 10 out of 15 students responded to this survey. In general, all interviewed supervisors and PhD students emphasised the positive aspects of the interdisciplinary PhD projects. For many supervisors it has been a unique and refreshing experience, and it also resulted in very innovative contributions to their fields leading to international peer-reviewed publications and successful grant applications. Below, we highlight some of the positive aspects that were mentioned but also the challenges from supervisors and students involved in interdisciplinary PhD projects.

### **Positive aspects**

#### *Supervisors:*

- See the student integrated in two complementary disciplines
- Insights in new/other fields
- Broad perspective
- Reflecting on own field
- Learn about other faculties and how they work
- Publications in top journals
- Successful creative research and innovative grant proposals

#### *PhD students:*

- Ability to learn from different disciplines
- Work on a completely new topic
- Supportive supervisors
- Always someone to ask questions to



## Challenges

### *Supervisors:*

- Having to learn about a new field/not mastering the other field
- Having projects take place partially in two different research groups or locations
- Organisational difficulties (planning, deadlines, meetings, agreements on bench fee)
- More time-consuming than other projects because need to become familiar with a different field and increased time spent on communication within the team
- Finding a common language and others with shared interests
- Finding an PhD student with the appropriate skills

### *PhD students:*

- Workload
- Splitting time between faculties, groups and approaches (e.g. attend meetings, presentations in both departments)
- Can feel like you do not fit in either department
- Finding others with shared interests
- Different communication / writing styles in different departments

The following recommendations are made to improve the success of interdisciplinary PhD projects:

1. The supervisors should have affinity with both fields and feel comfortable in supervising their part of the project;
2. There should be weekly team meetings including both supervisors;
3. There should be an active exchange about discipline specific incentives, traditions, publication cultures etc.;
4. Expectations on the time allocation of the student in both fields should be discussed in advance and repeated regularly depending on the final involvement of the project.
5. There is a need for clear formal agreements between faculties on practicalities (budget, bench fee, promotion premium, registration etc.).

A full overview of the evaluation and recommendations can be found [here](#) (in-depth interview) and [here](#) (survey results). For a complete list of all YAG interdisciplinary PhD projects, see **Appendix 5**.

### *2.2.2 Interdisciplinary YAG member projects*

Three times per year, YAG members can apply for funding (max. 2000 Euro per member/round) to realise a small project. Many of these projects are collaborative, i.e., pairs or groups of members apply for pooled funds. For an overview of member projects, see **Appendix 6**.

### *2.2.3 Other YAG initiatives to promote interdisciplinarity*

In addition to structural interdisciplinary efforts in terms of PhD and member projects, the YAG engages in various other activities to strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration in the UG. This encompasses interdisciplinary colloquia and debates as well as early career researcher lunches and other opportunities for interdisciplinary exchange such as:

- [University Colloquium](#) with Carel van Schaik
- [University Colloquium](#) with Joshua Goldstein
- University Colloquium with University of Groningen NWO Spinoza PrizeWinners Cisca Wijmenga, Bart van Wees, and Lodi Nauta
- [Bovenkamer Session](#) with Dianne Fleischman
- [Pint of Science](#) event on Sustainability and the Farewell symposium about the future of the SSH domain and the power of interdisciplinarity
- ECR Lunch on [Applying for Interdisciplinary Grants](#), and videos highlighting our interdisciplinary research [projects](#).
- ECR Lunch on Team Science (collaboration of Interdisciplinarity and Policy working groups, March 2021)
- Speed dating sessions for early career researchers from different faculties in Gathertown.

A very successful case of YAG-generated inter-faculty collaboration was the gather.town experiment instigated by YAG-member Martijn Wieling. In this project, which involved YAG members from across the whole university, gather.town was piloted for education and informal gatherings during the pandemic.

### *2.2.4 Interdisciplinary seed grants for the wider UG community*

The YAG firmly believes in the importance of interdisciplinary research to be able to respond to the challenges of our complex world. Diversity of disciplines will boost research and education. As such the YAG observed that there were no low threshold funds available for exploratory, interdisciplinary research, education, or impact creation at the

RUG (or external). Based on its successful experiences with interdisciplinary projects, the YAG therefore proposed an initiative to the UG executive board and the College of Deans to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration between employees of different faculties through so-called ‘Interdisciplinary seed grants’. The aim of the interdisciplinary seed grants is that employees from two or more different faculties can start interdisciplinary research, education or impact projects supported by funding (2000 euro per person) from their faculties. The UG executive board is matching 1000 euro per faculty when the projects are linked to one of the four Schools. This initiative was met with enthusiasm and all faculties participate. The first call for projects was opened in spring 2022.

### *2.2.5 Reflection*

It can be concluded that the YAG successfully stimulated dialogue and collaboration between disciplines in the University, the highlight of this being the realisation of an interdisciplinary seed fund available to the whole research community. It is a task for the near future to communicate the lessons learned from interdisciplinary cooperation to the broader community and policy makers like the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Schools, and the Schools so hurdles can be removed.

## **2.3 Exploring new approaches for connecting academia and society, with particular focus on the Northern Netherlands**

This mission reflects core task 3: Developing and strengthening public activities/outreach of the university. The central questions to be addressed in this section are:

1. Which activities and initiatives did the YAG develop?
2. What were the results/effects of these activities?

### *2.3.1 Activities for societal groups*

Providing information for a wide audience is a major aspect in the societal agenda of the YAG. A clear outreach strategy has been developed by the YAG public engagement working group. YAG members participated in numerous public lectures, national newspapers, radio and television, festivals and vlogs/blogs. Top initiatives the YAG organised were ‘Kennis is Koning’ (2018) at King’s Day and Noorderzon (2019) with more than 1100 visitors. The proverb book (‘Achterhaalde Waarheid’) reached a broad audience with its promotion on RTV Noord and in national news (e.g., NRC recommended it as a Christmas present). Finally the YAG organised the University colloquium several times

and has been part of the Pint of Science as ways to reach the general public. For a complete list of public engagement activities, see **Appendix 7**.

### *2.3.1 Collaborations with societal institutions*

To reach the broad public the YAG collaborates with several partners within and outside the University. Within the university, the YAG collaborates intensively with the Scholierenacademie (e.g. for Noorderzon projects and MOOCs), ScienceLinx (e.g., Noorderzon and Night of Arts and Science), and Zpannend Zernike (annually). Outside the University we have structural collaborations with Dagblad van het Noorden (Vlogs), RTV Noord (follow-up of the announcement of the proverb book: Eva zoekt uit), and Universiteit van Nederland (several lectures and podcasts).

### *2.3.2 Reflection*

Within and outside the university the contributions of the YAG to public engagement are recognized resulting in follow-up initiatives like e.g. ‘Eva zoekt uit’ and our recurring presence at Noorderzon. This activity has very well developed over the years and we are proud of the results.

## **3. SWOT Analysis**

This SWOT analysis presents an overview of outcomes we described in Chapter 2 and is also based on conversations with YAG members and a survey among them (see **Appendix 8**), interviews with members of the university community, and the survey among early career researchers at the UG. Additionally, some other observations of YAG members are shared that were collected while discussing the SWOT in the monthly YAG meeting in March 2022.

**Strengths** that were identified include that

#### **...the YAG as community**

- Is an inspiring academic network that generates new interactions between disciplines in the University
- Is visible as indicated by a Twitter follower count of almost 1500
- Is recognized as organising events of relevance to UG early career researchers
- Is regularly invited into policy discussions for topics affecting early career researchers (both on university-wide as well as on faculty level)
- Has a good distribution of members across all the university’s faculties (except currently for UMCG)

- Has strong societal connections as illustrated by public engagement events
- Is connected well with local faculty, national, European, and global young academies
- Organizes events for all early career researchers in the UG beyond the YAG members
- Has set up an interdisciplinary PhD program that contributes to connections between faculties, novel insights beyond one's own discipline, and innovative research
- Is funded by the UG, which creates room to realize ideas
- Receives funded PhD positions, which are very hard to come by otherwise in some disciplines
- Receives funding for small interdisciplinary projects that otherwise would hardly be funded by any organisation

#### **...YAG members**

- Are increasingly consulted within their own faculties on various topics of relevance to early career researchers and science policy
- Bring fresh perspectives to policy discussions in faculties and on university level
- Have direct link to the executive board of the UG and the deans and faculty boards
- YAG members represent almost all faculties thus can be eyes and ears of the early career researcher community
- Have a diverse and international background

**Weaknesses** that were identified include that

#### **...the YAG as community**

- Operates too much alone, could increase the involvement of other groups in the university
- Is focused on noticing problems instead of thinking about creative solutions
- Is not visible enough to the community it ought to represent
- Does not communicate successes or activities well enough among members of the UG
- Because it is funded by the UG, the YAG may be seen as dependent on the executive board of the UG, hampering its critical voice

- Has no clear mandate from the university which might impact its reputation as lacking a clear profile
- Lacks a systematic structure to record outcomes of projects

#### **...YAG members**

- Are all research-oriented, which hardly takes Reward & Recognition suggestions into account
- Do not have enough time to engage in all possible activities or carry out projects
- Are selected, not elected, which limits how represented early career researchers at the UG feel

#### **Opportunities** that were identified include that

- Position in DJA through several of YAG members also being DJA members, which can boost YAG engagement in policy topic of national interest
- YAG could focus try to attract more postdocs and colleagues who are on teaching tenure tracks to serve and represent a broader share of the academic community
- YAG should include experts and stakeholders early-on in brainstorm processes to get activities properly off the ground
- YAG should inspire the university leadership with creative ideas about the ideal university of the future
- YAG should bundle resources with other bodies such as TAG and YoungRUG to increase impact and avoid duplicated effort
- YAG could use more creative methods to share insights and positions
- To increase effectiveness and visibility, YAG could engage more in and develop working relationships with existing local organizations of early career researchers, like YARN and YSEN, and help create similar organizations in other faculties
- YAG could build a relationship with the university museum to showcase the work of early career researchers

**Threats** that were identified include

- Outsiders see the YAG as a closed community where members get additional opportunities
- YAG is taking on too many projects, consequently not being time-effective
- YAG members do not receive structural time compensation for YAG activities members work on YAG projects in their free time. This results in more work pressure in the already-challenging work pressure situation and hampers engagement in more YAG activities and some members being “dormant”
- As a consequence of being in the YAG, members are asked to represent the YAG or early career researcher community in various other committees. This increases the opportunities for members but also adds further to the workload that is not compensated by most faculties
- The YAG rules and regulations sometimes feel like set in stone – more courage and creativity is needed to “overcome” practices that are no longer timely or useful

## **4. Overall reflection and strategy for the next years**

### **Reflection**

In the past five years, we developed a new community from scratch that now has a good representation of early career researchers, is inspiring, helpful in terms of networking and educational to its members, and generates new connections between disciplines in the UG. YAG members view the community as valuable, even though YAG activities add additional pressure to the workload. Interdisciplinary projects and public engagement activities are widely perceived as success. Indeed, the YAG and its members are regularly approached by media outlets and represented at local science-related events such as the European Night of Science and Noorderzon.

YAG membership can be seen as a jumping board toward membership in the national DJA, which gives a boost to the representation of the YAG on national level. The YAG is also well-connected to other local Young Academies, which helps disseminating and discussing ideas and identifying good and less good practice, for instance with respect to tenure track and promotion rights for associate professors. Although YAG members are represented in the Yung Academy of Europe and the Global Young Academy, this representation is not yet substantial.



YAG members are well integrated in consultations in faculties and UG-wide policy discussions, which signals that YAG members are perceived as bringing an innovative and creative perspective to the table. At the same time as allowing YAG members to broaden their networks and gain insights, such commitments further add pressure on the workload.

The YAG struggles with connecting to early career researchers who are not members of the YAG. Although attendance at ECR lunches is good and has remained stable throughout the pandemic, only few people responded to the survey and a substantial proportion indicated that they do not feel represented. It is possible that many topics of interest to YAG members are not of interest to the community the YAG strives to represent because YAG membership in the beginning and to some extent also nowadays is strongly determined by academic merit such as winning major grants or prizes. Through such successes, many YAG members are interested in career progression, promotion rights, and tenure track criteria but it is not clear to what extent these specific topics reflect the interests of the broad community. Having said that, the reason we have originated faculty-level young researcher networks is exactly that it allows a broader community of researchers to have a voice and connect to YAG benefits.

### **Future objectives and strategy**

Interdisciplinarity and public engagement: The YAG has set up an interdisciplinary PhD program and built an interdisciplinary community, which can be a leading example for the UG Schools. We are more than happy to share experiences with the Graduate Schools and Schools where requested. The YAG is also proud of its achievements in terms of public engagement and is regularly contacted to contribute to events. For the near future, we are in contact with the University Museum to provide public lectures linked to the Week of Science. The Public Engagement working group developed a list of potential partners in the region, to expand our public presence outside the city of Groningen. In the future, we aim to celebrate – and thereby share – these successes more with the university community to underline the value of the YAG to the UG.

Membership in and collaboration with other young academies: It is essential to consolidate the good relationships with DJA and other local Young Academies. The pandemic has resulted in meetings being online but there are plans for an in-person get-together which should help connecting. The YAG as such has no say in nominating members for membership in the DJA but can encourage members who are invited for an interview to seek the support from existing members.

Representation of all faculties: As detailed above, recruitment of members from UMCG has been a greater challenge than recruitment from other faculties. While we developed strategies to increase the number of applications and to support applicants, we feel that all members

need to commit to spending approximately 4 hours a week on YAG activities, so as to make sure that standpoints and activities do reflect the interests of the entire spectrum of disciplines. We are aware that this is a particular challenge for those with clinical tasks but are confident that by identifying and encouraging highly motivated candidates who are keen on contributing to university policy, diversity, interdisciplinarity, and public engagement, we will increase the member share from UMCG.

Engagement with the early career researcher community: It is a major task for the future to better engage with other UG early career researchers. Although we have social media channels and a website, these are not always up-to-date. A dedicated communications team will boost the visibility of the YAG. The YAG coordinator, together with the communications team, will be responsible for communication of YAG events and initiatives to the early career and general university community and broader public. Cross-links with the Public Engagement WG should be established to utilize YAG social media channels for dissemination of scientific information as well. We have connections with the Public Engagement and Communication pillars of the Open Science programme for sharing information about initiatives and facilities for publicity.

To further improve awareness among non-YAG early career researchers about activities and how the YAG might represent them, the YAG should boost its effects by engaging more with local organizations of early career researchers (e.g. YARN, YES BSS, and YSEN) and help in setting up such networks in other faculties (e.g. UMCG). In addition, the new initiatives of the Teaching Academy Groningen and YoungRUG also provide opportunities to reach, but also benefit from, other stakeholders.

Another idea is to present our work in a regular YAG festival, following the model of the Education Festival organized by the TAG. The YAG should also make more of an effort to encourage “non-traditional members”, i.e., those without major grants but with other forms of achievement and evidence of academic citizenship to apply as this could also boost representation among a broader share of the community.

Time pressure and effectiveness: To ensure that YAG members use their YAG-time efficiently, we will increasingly take other parties/stakeholders along already during the brainstorming phase. As soon as a topic is addressed as being a YAG matter, we will involve relevant partners within the UG to prevent double work. To prevent YAG members being overloaded, compensation arrangements with their faculties should be discussed, as our members are frequently asked to represent early career researchers in various committees.

An issue that became apparent during the process of writing this self-reflection is that the YAG is a fluctuating organisation, where boards and members change per definition and

where the previous coordinator has left for a new position. This creates specific challenges with respect to keeping track not only of budget, but also of (failed) ideas, plans, activities, and connections. To this end, we will build a pipeline to systematically keep track of the output of interdisciplinary PhD students as well as outcomes of cohort and member projects.

## 5. Funding

The UG executive board makes funds and personnel available to the YAG to execute their tasks. The yearly budget amounts to 120.000 Euro, which is split into the following categories: Member projects (20.000€ per year), cohort projects (10.000€ per cohort), personal budgets for members (1000€ per member), YAG organisation (meetings, trainings, research minutes), support staff costs (coordinator and student assistant), and chair compensation (5000€ per year).

### Expenditures per year 2016-2021

Cost type /year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total per category
YAG Member projects	--	14.000	24.541	23.287	16.739	17.125	<b>95.692</b>
YAG Cohort projects	1.314	10.000	4.629	16.577	1.500	--	<b>32.706</b>
Personal budgets	17.000	22.000	30.000	23.000	23.000	30.000	<b>128.000</b>
YAG organization	12.185	42.668	37.777	27.402	8.928	6.932	<b>123.707</b>
YAG support staff	29.635	43.844	56.927	54.407	50.998	41.844	<b>248.02</b>
YAG chair	--	--	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	<b>20.000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>60.134</b>	<b>132.512</b>	<b>158.874</b>	<b>149.673</b>	<b>106.165</b>	<b>100.901</b>	<b>648.152</b>

### Funding, external income and carryover budget per year 2016-2021

Income and carryover/ year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Budget CvB	120.000	120.000	120.000	120.000	120.000	120.000
Carryover budget	25.000	69.611	67.462	26.382	22.553	13.835
External income	--	--	--	14.651 --		5.000
<b>Total available budget</b>	<b>145.000</b>	<b>189.611</b>	<b>187.462</b>	<b>161.033</b>	<b>146.382</b>	<b>138.835</b>

### Explanations on budget

#### *YAG member projects*

After an increase in YAG projects, the pandemic made it more difficult to initiate new projects. We expect this to increase again in coming years.

#### *YAG cohort projects*

The 2018 cohort project was not attributed in full to that year. Instead, some costs were made in the following years (Noorderzon 2019; proverb book 2020/2021), and part of the costs could be offset through additional funding for the Noorderzon event from NWO, the Institute for Sustainable Society, and the Nicholas Mulerius Foundation (10.650 € for Noorderzon and (3.000 €) proverbs book. After the success of the Noorderzon YAG contribution in 2019, the Board of the University and College of Deans agreed to provide structural financial support for organizing a Noorderzon activity each year and will therefore increase the YAG budget every year with 11.000€. Because of the cancellation of Noorderzon in 2020 and a slimmed version in 2021 the YAG did not ask for this additional budget as we did not spend it. In 2022, Noorderzon will take place in its old form again, with a substantial YAG contribution, and then this budget will be required for organization including training speakers and material. Because it became clear that the yearly projects would not all spend 10.000€ within the year their project starts, an agreement was made with the University Board in 2020 that the budget not spent could be carried over to the following years.

#### *Personal budgets*

In 2016, the YAG consisted of only 17 members, which explains the lower number in this category for this year. In 2020, we reached peak membership of 43 members as a consequence of the extended group of founding members. However, since 2019 members have to request their personal budget, which not all members do. This resulted in an

expenditure that was not significantly higher in 2020 compared to other years. We expect these costs to stabilize in the coming years.

#### *YAG organization*

In 2016, the YAG existed for only 6 months, which explains the lower amount in this category for this year. In 2017, part of the organizational budget was used to pay for the costs of recording 17 YAG member research minute videos, which explains the comparably high organizational costs in that year. In other years, we have 7 of these research minutes. Also, 2020 has been an unusual year. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions the expenses on the running budget have been lower than expected because hardly any renting or catering costs for meetings or events were made, which led to a significant reduction in meeting costs.

#### *YAG support staff*

Initially, we started with a YAG coordinator (0.5fte) and a student assistant. In 2016, the YAG existed for only 6 months, which explains the lower amount in this category for this year than for 2017 and 2018. The YAG coordinator was on pregnancy leave from September 2019 until January 2020 and a second student assistant joined the YAG in 2019 to cover some of the coordinator's tasks. Moreover, the YAG coordinator left in October 2021 and a replacement started only in February 2022, resulting in a reduction in coordinator salary costs (only 9 months in 2021). The current support staff situation is sustainable because one student assistant will leave in 2022 and will not be replaced.

#### *YAG chair*

In 2018, the YAG installed a finance committee which introduced the annual 5000€ compensation to the YAG chair to compensate for the additional time this role costs.

### **Financial prognosis**

The YAG budget was sufficient in the years 2016-2019 because of large carryover budgets originating from 2015 (25,000) and 2016 (where the YAG was only founded half way through the year). The YAG budget was also sufficient in Covid times partly because not all members requested their personal budget, partly because all events were held online and therefore did not cost anything. Despite these reserves, we expect a financial shortfall in the coming years. The reasons for that are that some of our activities were very successful and therefore became structural events and that will be held on location and partly involve catering again.

A better engagement with the early career researcher community is a major task for the future (see chapter 4). As responses from the survey and attendance numbers

suggest (see ¶ 2.1.2) , the YAG ECR lunch series is one of the events that is considered very informative and useful by the early career researcher community. Therefore, we want to continue to offer ECR lunches a structural event for the early career researchers. We estimate the costs for organizing this event to be around 7.000 yearly.

Moreover, we are asking for an inflation correction. The reasoning is that the current budget enables us to work on our mission with a range of activities. The carryover principle also enables us to work on projects spanning the year. However, in order to maintain our capacity, an inflation correction is required. Corrected according to the CBS inflation index, the current budget should be approximately 132.000. Without this correction, we expect a structural budget deficit. We therefore propose a budget increase from the current 120.000 to 139.000, plus the agreed upon 11.000 to organize the YAG activity at Noorderzon, thus in total 150.000.

## **Appendix 1: Overview of (i) activities of the different working groups and (ii) cohort projects**

### **(i) Working group activities**

#### **Working Group Interdisciplinarity**

- Overseeing and regularly evaluating the interdisciplinary PhD projects (see section 2.2.1) where YAG members act as supervisors;
- Setting up meetings where the YAG interdisciplinary PhD students can exchange experiences;
- Organizing ECR lunches with interdisciplinary focus and topics, university colloquia with speakers from outside of the UG, and “Bovenkamer sessions” for debates by speakers of polarized/polarizing perspectives;
- Holding “speed dating” events for ECRs from different faculties and “mystery meet-ups” where YAG-members from different disciplines are matched for lunch walks to facilitate interdisciplinary exchange;
- Workshop series on mental health in academia as viewed from different perspectives.

#### **Working Group Public Engagement**

- Share our passion for research to ignite the same scientific passion in others by visiting and performing activities with among others high school students;
- Increase awareness about different scientific methods and disciplines, thus correcting misperceptions about what science can and cannot do in cooperation with the Scholierenacademie;
- Increase the visibility of the YAG within the university, as well the visibility of the UG in the region via concrete public engagement activities like Noorderzon, Zpanned Zernike.

#### **Working Group Diversity & Inclusion**

- Uncover solid statistics about purported inequalities, such as the gender pay gap to underpin the necessary actions to be taken;
- Collaborate with Dual Career Support towards a more tailored support;



- Monitor the development of policy and practical initiatives for creating a more safe working environment;
- Organize ECR lunches in collaboration with HR and discussions with the deans of the faculties on topics related to diversity & inclusion;
- Maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Diversity Office on the UG's diversity policy.

### **Working Group Policy**

- Stays up to date on policy developments locally and nationally;
- Proactively take up issues that play within the early career community like:
  - Participation in “WO in Actie” activities resulting in a unique [opening of the academic year at the UG](#) with professors wearing red squares on their caps.
  - Opening discussion on shortening the academic year and by enabling teaching-free terms.
  - Extend Ius Promovendi - adjust the policy to enable every associate professor to be primary supervisor.
- Contribute to the discussion on how academic achievement is measured, through events on Reward and Recognition and PlanS, e.g., PlanS research lunch that culminated in a feedback letter to [cOAlitionS](#), an initiative of funders who push for full and immediate open access.

## **(ii) Yearly cohort projects**

### **2016 Early Career Research (ECR) lunches**

The first YAG cohort focused on establishing the YAG with its procedures and legislation. On top of that, this cohort established the Early Career Research lunches—regular lunch meetings intended for the wider university community to share knowledge and provide a platform for discussion. By now, the ECR lunches have become a structural part of the YAG's activities and are attended by +-40 people on average. A list of all lunches hosted by the YAG to date can be found in **Appendix 4**.

### **2017 Opening up**

The topic of the 2017 yearly project was “Opening up”. Opening up has various dimensions: opening up science, opening up the university to local businesses, and opening up to the general public. The yearly project started with [a day-long workshop on Open Science](#), for which influential open science proponents such as Simine Vazire (UC Berkeley) were invited in Spring 2019. Following this, the cohort partnered with

the Dean of Talent Development to organize workshops on industry collaborations for YAG members. Activities to open up to the general public were incorporated into public engagement activities (e.g. during Noorderzon and King's Day).

### **2018 Noorderzon & Proverb book**

The 2018 cohort focused on two projects, both related to public engagement:

Project 1 was to educate ECRs on how to engage to the public, both with children and adults, and to provide a platform (Noorderzon) where the gained knowledge and skills could be applied. The Scholierenacademie was involved in several sessions to give input on projects organized for children (55 ECR participated in these workshops). ZoooEva was hired to support, inspire and spark the public lectures provided by the ECRs.

Project 2 was to get early career researchers from different disciplines to collaborate in writing a book chapter that discusses the scientific merits of a well-known proverb.

Both YAG events were a great success: More than 1100 visitors visited the activities and the evening lectures provided by early career researchers. The proverb book ("Achterhaalde waarheid") was published in 2021 by In Boekvorm Uitgevers, with 20 chapters written by 31 UG researchers. The book has been sold 753 times (including the 500 books the YAG bought), which according to the publisher is a good number. The book was also featured in the national press (e.g., [NRC](#)).

### **2019 SOCRATES (later merged to Knowlands) & In the Loop**

The 2019 cohort worked on two projects:

1) *SOCRATES (Knowlands)*. During the Covid-19 pandemic "De Scholierenacademie" started the "Knowlands" project to explain several types of research methods via online "lespakketten". The project was officially introduced to high school teachers on November 4, 2021. During that day, the 2019 cohort hosted workshop sessions with high school teachers. All videos, events and relevant information are accessible through the Knowlands website (see [Knowlands](#)).

2) *In the Loop*. In the Loop (ITL) is an internal information platform specifically designed to help streamline the presentation of information for early career researchers, new staff, and their families. This has a community building element and enhances equality and access to information. The ITL project was delayed due to

Covid-19 since it required the involvement of CIT staff, who were extremely occupied providing support for online education and events. Despite these setbacks, the In the Loop website will be launched in mid-April 2022.

### **2020 Podcast series: Humans of RUG**

The 2020 cohort produced a [podcast series](#) of eight episodes about individuals (humans) at the University of Groningen (the name was inspired by the famous Humans of New York storytelling series). Who are the individuals that make a university flourish? When thinking about the faces of a university, professors and students may be the first people that come to mind. But there are so many more people: beadles, technicians, study advisors, secretaries, and many others.

They all bring their stories with them when they come to study and work at the university, and they experience new stories together. Without them, the University would not be what it is. “Humans of RUG” is a podcast series that showcases, in conversations with various guests, the many human faces of a large university such as the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. It was developed with help from podcast producer Wim Brons. It looks at the history of the RUG, its students and professors, the support structure within departments, but also how the University is perceived by and interacts with the outside world, the city of Groningen. As such, it makes different parts of the university more visible to one another and to the outside.

The first episode was released on October 14, 2021 and then one episode every week on a [website](#), YouTube and all well-known podcast players (such as Apple podcasts and Spotify). At the time of writing (March 2022), the eight episodes have been downloaded >700 times.

### **2021 Failing forward**

The cohort 2021 project is entitled “Failing forward” and seeks to reframe failure in a constructive way to fuel personal and societal development. In a hypercompetitive environment, it is crucial to highlight that failure is also part and parcel of academic success. The broader aim is to balance the record, provide some perspective and encourage colleagues and aspiring scientists to keep trying in the face of recurring rejections and disappointments. The current objective is threefold, namely to 1) assemble a collective CV of failure, 2) write a comic book for children showcasing stories of failure, and 3) organise an exhibition in collaboration with artists at Wongema.

## Appendix 2: Overview of YAG cohorts from 2016-2021

Selection process: The YAG membership call is published annually in the autumn. Applicants are asked to submit a CV and motivation letter, both of maximum 500 words. The selection committee consists of one member of the YAG board (who takes the role of the selection committee chair), two YAG members, and two external members, usually from faculties that otherwise are not well-represented in the selection committee. All selection committee members review and independently score the applications and meet to discuss who is invited for an interview. Interviews are held in February and focus on ideas and plans for YAG membership as well as positions on current academic affairs.

### 2016 Cohort



Dr. Han Thomas Adriaenssen  
Dr. Pratika Dayal  
Dr. Rudolf Fehrmann  
Prof. Merel Keijzer  
Dr. Martine Maan  
Dr. Cyril Moers  
Prof. Mladen Popovic  
Dr. Bettina Reitz-Joosse  
Prof. Diederik Roest  
Prof. Irene Tieleman  
Dr. Marie-José van Tol  
Prof. Michel Vols  
Dr. Marthe Walvoort  
Prof. Martijn Wieling

### Cohort 2017



Cao, M. (Ming)  
Friederich, S.M. (Simon)  
Keizer, J.P. (Joost)  
Pyott, S.J. (Sonja)  
Stulp, G. (Gert)  
Täuber, S. (Susanne)  
Vugt, M.K. van (Marieke)



## Cohort 2018 (and guests)



Bolderdijk, J.W. (Jan Willem)  
Bringmann, L.F (Laura)  
Nanna Hilton  
Kamperman, M.M.G. (Marleen)  
Kretschmer, T. (Tina)  
Olivier, J.D.A. (Jocelien)  
Peels, S. (Saskia)  
Rauws, W.S. (Ward)

## Cohort 2019



El Aidy, S. (Sahar)  
Faraji, S.S. (Shirin)  
Leliveld, M.C. (Marijke)  
Merkouris, P. (Panos)  
Nikolova, M.V. (Milena)  
Paridaen, J.T.M.L. (Judith)  
Perez Parra, J.A. (Jorge)

## Cohort 2020



Billerbeck, S.K. (Sonja)  
Costa López, J. (Julia)  
Guimarães, M.H.(Marcos)  
Herzog, L.M. (Lisa)  
Kooi, C.J. van der (Casper)  
Linsi, L.A. (Lukas)  
Loo, H.M. van (Hanna)

## Cohort 2021



Cheruiyot, D.K. (David)  
Jonge, de L. (Léonie)  
Leruth, B.J.J. (Benjamin)  
Metting, E.I. (Esther)  
Paap, M.C.S. (Muirne)  
Schulz, K.A. (Karsten)  
Seri, M. (Marcello)

## Appendix 3: University community on the YAG and their activities

❖ Cisca Wijmenga, Rector Magnificus of the UG:

*“If we look back at the last 2.5 years the YAG contributed to two very important issues: 1) ius promovendi and 2) social safety with the harassment report”*

*“Cohort projects are an excellent way to communicate with the academic community. I encourage the YAG to open itself more to the broader community and even involve other communities, e.g. TAG, YoungRUG, and in particular early career researchers in a broader aspect, for example by organizing an event called YAG Day” (Cisca Wijmenga, Rector Magnificus of the UG)*

❖ Dicky Tamminga, senior advisor Talent Development (translated from interview):

*“I still remember the U4 ~leadership programme for University board members , at which YAG members demonstrated their experience of the tenure track system by means of a series of sketches. Afterwards, I was told by participating deans that it opened their eyes to how the tenure track is experienced can be quite different from how we intended it. The YAG brings the ECR perspective in policy discussions, which is very valuable.”*

*“The enthusiasm of YAG is limitless. They are all nice people to work with. YAG members think in terms of opportunities and want to 'go outside', making connections with society, within departments, between different groups within the university, to set an example. This is highly visible and is accompanied by unbridled energy. The YAG has a pioneering role and performs it with verve. The Scholierenacademie recognizes that it can sometimes be difficult to achieve a multiplier effect. Through the ECR lunches and personal networks, I think you do manage well to create momentum for innovation/change. I therefore see YAG members as the directors and decision makers of tomorrow. That there will be innovative, energetic minds who are not afraid to tackle/change things where necessary, and this seems immensely beneficial to me.”*

*“The YAG has improved the position of the University, and I also see room for further growth from my perspective. In the collaboration we have had with the YAG, the Scholierenacademie initially acted as a service. YAG members had a plan for a public engagement project and we facilitated, based on the idea that we were taking care of the YAG members as much as possible. Over time, the collaboration became more reciprocal, with YAG members also wanting to know/learn more about the supplying education/the living world of students and teachers/to learn transferable skills. I think that is a nice development. We can still get more out of this.”*

*“The YAG has made science visible in a very nice and different way, e.g., Noorderzon, podcasts, corona walks. A highlight was also King’s day, which made the playfulness of science very clear.”*

❖ Jan Willem Romeijn, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy

*“The YAG represents early career researchers very well, and it is a real community. People know how to find each other. The YAG functions well as a communication channel between faculties, and a ‘sounding board’ for all organizations. It is a place to share good practices. The YAG is also closely connected to DJA, because DJA members are (or were) also YAG members, so that you can easily get informed on national initiatives.”*

❖ Marion Stolp, Director of the office of the university

*“Initiatives such as the YAG tell you where things aren’t going the way they should or where people experience problems in the organization. Normally, with established lines of communication, you have less access to such perspectives because of all the layers through which information has to travel.”*

❖ Casper Albers, Director of Research, Department of Psychology

*“The YAG has a lot of very nice projects for the general public to show what we’re doing at the university. It’s very important to show people what we are doing with their tax money and the YAG has many great initiatives for dissemination such as the proverb book.”*



## **Appendix 4: The Early Career Research (ECR) Lunches 2017 - 2021**

The first YAG cohort focused on establishing the YAG with its procedures and legislation. On top of that, this cohort established the Early Career Research lunches– regular lunch meetings intended for the wider university community to share knowledge and provide a platform for discussion. A list of all lunches hosted by the YAG to date can be found below:

### **2017**

- February: ECR kick-off lunch as part of the Young Academy's 2017 Yearly Project focusing on Talent Development
- April: Transitioning from independent researcher to leading your own research group.
- June: Work / life balance
- November: Mentoring
- December: Engaging in outreach Meeting with Wim van Saarloos

### **2018**

- January: Turning your Research into Outreach
- February: Applying for Interdisciplinary Grants
- May: The Two Body Problem: Dual Careers and Academia
- October: The Dutch National Research Agenda
- December: Academia and Family

### **2019**

- February: Finding Funding for Interdisciplinary Research
- April: Pitch your Research
- May: How should we judge the quality of your research?
- October: Inclusion in Academia
- November: Work pressure and WO-in-Actie

### **2020**

- February: Create Your Own Stage For Public Events
- June: Research Lunch Recognition and Rewards
- October: Industry Relations: Who, How, Why?
- November: Shortening the Academic Year
- December: Interdisciplinary Matchmaking Lunch

### **2021**

- March: Team Science (30 attendees)
- April: Allies and Sponsoring (45 attendees)
- May: Catchy Ways to Communicate Your Research (75 attendees)
- November: The (ab)use of Bibliometrics in Assessing Research Impact (30 attendees)

## Appendix 5: YAG Interdisciplinary PhD-projects 2017-2021

### 2017

**Saskia Nijmeijer**. Supervised by: Marie-José van Tol (UMCG) & Merel Keijzer (Arts). Topic: *Learning to preserve: foreign language training as a cognitive vaccine to prevent old-age disorders*

**Masha Medvedeva**. Supervised by: Martijn Wieling (Arts) & Michel Vols (Law).

Topic: *Automatic detection of linguistic patterns in big legal data*

**Vincent Leeuwenburgh**. Supervised by: Marthe Walvoort (FSE), Rudolf Fehrmann (UMCG) & Hilde Jalving (non-YAG member). Topic: *Novel tools to dissect and monitor tumor metabolism in melanoma patients*

### 2018

**Sean Gryb**, supervised by Simon Friederich (UCG – Philosophy) and Diederik Roest (FSE – VSI). Topic: *The Epistemology of Cosmology*

**Lionel Newman**, supervised by Marieke van Vugt (FSE – Bernoulli) and MingCao (FSE – Discrete Technologie en Productie Automatisering). Topic: *The compassionate robot*

### 2019

**Joelle Jagersma**, supervised by Sonja Pyott (UMCG) and Jocelien Olivier (FSE-GELIFES). Topic: *Impact of hearing loss on cognitive and social function*

**Aude Giraud**, supervised by Martine Maan (FSE-GELIFES) and Han Thomas Adriaenssen (Philosophy). Topic: *Inheritance of acquired characters: past and present controversy – and the way forward.*

### 2020

**Anna Langener**, supervised by Laura Bringmann (BSS – Psychological methodology) and Gert Stulp (BSS – Sociology). Topic: *Using multimodal data to understand the social environment and its effect on wellbeing*

**Tabea Hoffman**, supervised by Ward Rauws (Spatial Sciences) and Jan Willem Bolderdijk (FEB – Marketing). Topic: *Fostering pro-environmental behaviour in neighbourhoods by managing social norms*

**Silvia Stopponi**, supervised by Saskia Peels (Arts) and Malvina Nissim (Non-YAG, Arts). Topic: *The application of Natural Language Processing to ancient Greek, in particular on the use of language models to study the Semantics of ancient Greek words and to detect semantic change*

**Stefan Sliwa**, supervised by Milena Nikolova (FEB) and Lukas Linsi (Arts).

**Panagiotis Kelefiotis Stratidakis**, supervised by Sahar el Aidy (FSE – GBB) and Shirin Faraji (FSEZIAM).

### 2021

**Chris Boettner**, supervised by Pratika Dayal, Kapteyn Institute (FSE) and Irene Tieleman (GELIFES - FSE).

**Marthe de Roo**, supervised by Tina Kretschmer (FBSS) and Catharina Hartman, (UMCG). Topic: *Eat, sleep, play, repeat: Genetic and environmental origins of health habits in early childhood*

**Ronje Eike** supervised by Marie-Jose van Tol (UMCG) and Susanne Täubner (FEB)

## Appendix 6: YAG Interdisciplinary member projects

### Content:

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## Highlighted projects

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Marieke van Vugt and Marie-José van Tol: Multi-disciplinary investigation of mechanisms underlying rumination</i></li> </ul>
<p>The aim of this project was to collect data in an experiment which introduced cognitive science tools to study the effect of depression on thinking. A second aim was expanding that laboratory study with smartphone measurements of thinking in real life. The money was used to hire a student assistant, Marlijn Besten, to carry out the project. Due to the data that the researchers collected in this project they were able to secure a fully funded interdisciplinary PhD project from the BSS competition, which is supervised by Marie-José van Tol, Marieke van Vugt, and André Aleman. The YAG project funding was able to kick-start an interdisciplinary project, which has now solidified into an interdisciplinary PhD project. The project was further able to generate follow-on funding in the form of an NWA Idea generator grant to extend the small experiment to a full clinical trial.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Jan Willem Bolderdijk and Nanna Hilton: The truth about proverbs</i></li> </ul>
<p>The Dutch language features a rich collection of proverbs, such as “Al is de leugen nog zo snel, de waarheid achterhaalt hem wel” and “Zoals de waard is vertrouwt hij zijn gasten”. Proverbs capture folk wisdom and have been around for ages. But can we still trust them today? In the “proverbs” book, young researchers, applying state of the art knowledge of their respective disciplines, discuss the validity of specific proverbs. Thanks to the funding provided, the promotional booklet has been printed and distributed at various occasions, including during the new member inauguration ceremony.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Joost Keizer &amp; Susanne Täuber: Diversity and Inclusion in the Modern Museum</i></li> </ul>
<p>History complicates modern museums. Recently, cultural institutions have thought hard how to better include people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds in the narratives they tell. But the direction of the narrative is still top-down. Those excluded still depend on the majority including them and allowing them to be part of the story. This project was a pilot for a larger project that aims to design a new model for inclusion and diversity inside modern museum displays.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Bettina Reitz-Josse &amp; Julia Costa Lopez: Uses of Latin in Political Discourse</i></li> </ul>
<p>The project investigates the use of the Latin language in current political discourse, specifically the use of Latin words, phrases and whole sentences by politicians and political intellectuals, the use of Latin in public culture, and its use in ‘unofficial’ arenas - for example in online fora and on twitter. This pilot research project will be used to establish the direction and scope of a larger-scale investigation.</p>

## 2017 YAG Interdisciplinary member projects

Applicant(s)	Project title (€)	Outcomes
Simon Friederich	Article publication: The epistemology of the multiverse	<p>YAG member Simon Friederich has started a project to stimulate the dialogue between disciplines by making his work in the Philosophy of Physics and Epistemology better known and accessible to practitioners in the Physics field. He will be writing an article on his work on the epistemology of the multiverse, which will be published in Scientia's bimonthly series of outreach research publications. As a philosopher, it can be difficult to reaching out the practitioners in different disciplines, in this case Physics. By sharing his work with the readers of the 'Physical Science' section of Scientia, he will be able to capture their attention and show that philosophical inquiries can contribute significantly to their discipline. Scientia, much like the YAG, aims to bridge the gap between science, policy, research and education.</p> <p>Simon Friederich will be exploring a relatively new and rather successful approach for connecting academia and society by making his research available for a broader audience.</p> <p>Note: publication of this article is planned in March 2018</p>
Bettina Reitz-Josse & Joost Keizer	Towards a History that Never Was: Classical Antiquity in Groningen	<p>The Romans never advanced far enough North to reach Groningen. Roman soldiers and citizens might have passed through the region now known as Groningen; they never settled there. There are no classical remains left in Groningen soil, no monuments – nothing. Nor was the lack of historical material later dressed with fictitious accounts of Roman presence, as would be the case in so many other European cities that had lacked a real Roman presence and wanted to trace its ancestry back to Roman politics, ethics, and culture. Groningen remained ‘Gronings’: a local community proud of its own, indigenous past that had no need of a Roman ancestry. Yet many early modern paintings and sculptures depict classical scenes – from the Roman and Greek past as well as early modern imitations of that past – or cast contemporary people and events in a Roman style. In 1669, Anna van Ewsum commissioned a</p>

		<p>sumptuous grave memorial for her deceased husband for the local church in Midwolde the style and themes of which resembles grave memorials in Rome, complete with classical putti and garlands. Around 1700, Hermannus Collenius, born in Kollum in 1650, painted a Vanitas picture that includes a bust of Aristotle and ancient Roman remains for an unidentified person from Groningen. Around 1729, Hendrik Trip commissioned from the painter Jan Abel Wassenbergh, born in Groningen in 1689, a picture of Danae for the elaborate mantelpiece he installed inside his home at the Martinikerkhof 10, now known as the Feith-Huis. And when Collenius was asked to paint an allegory on good government he opted to paint it in antique terms, with the goddess Minerva present.</p> <p>The aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To collect systematically instances where Classical antiquity is depicted or referred to in early modern artworks made in Groningen and for Groningen patricians.</li> <li>• To begin to explain the reasons why the Groningen nobility began to legitimize their power and prestige by referring to Classical antiquity.</li> <li>• To introduce the Groningen community to the presence of Classical antiquity in their region, and to the ways in which the Greeks and Romans changed Groningen – without ever setting foot there.</li> </ul> <p>Practical Execution: Two student research assistants, one with a background in Classics, the other in Art History, will collaborate on this project and together start collecting and researching instances of Classical presences in Groningen. This is a pilot project: the collection and findings which result from their work will form the basis for further research and eventually a conference and/or exhibition in Groningen. In collaboration with the project leaders, the students will also design and prepare a suitable presentation of their research during the Week van de Klassieken (5-15 april) for the general public (e.g. a mini-lecture on location or a guided tour).</p> <p>This project is an interdisciplinary collaboration between Classics and Art History, which will bring Groningen citizens into contact with new research into Groningen's Classical Past. It invests in</p>
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		research talent and introduces students at an early stage to interdisciplinary collaboration and academic outreach.
Merel Keijzer	Winterschool: Multilingualism	<p>Following the Conference of Multilingualism from 6 - 8 November 2017, a Winterschool on Multilingualism is being organised at the University of Groningen, targeting PhD students and Early Career Researchers. In nine 3-hour sessions, led by international well-known and leading researchers on bi- and multilingualism, participants are familiarized with essential methods and techniques used in collecting and analyzing multilingualism data, which will help steer their early research careers and hand them professional development tools. Each workshop therefore includes hands-on experiencing using the method or technique demonstrated. The goal of this project is to allow Early Career Researchers at the University of Groningen to attend this workshop for free, to promote investment in the professional development of Early Career Researchers at the UG.</p> <p>The workshop brings together methods and techniques used in the fields of sociology, psychology, and cognitive neuroscience, as applied to bilingualism and multilingualism settings. It is a great opportunity for Early Career Researchers to work on their professional networks and look for collaborations, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>The outcome of the workshop is an international event bringing together early career researchers on bi and multilingualism, handing them the tools to develop professionally and form collaborations with others outside their immediate disciplines but still working on bi and multilingualism topics. The research tools and skills taught to Early Career Researchers are expected to benefit them throughout their careers.</p>
Martine Maan	Subsidy: 'De Balts' theatre performance	In the summer of 2017, the bi-annual conference of the European Society of Evolutionary Biology was organized in Groningen. On this occasion, public outreach programmes on evolution are organised and will be hosted by the Noorderzon performing arts festival. The program is co-organised by the

		<p>European Society for Evolutionary Biology, the Groningen Institute for Evolutionary Life Sciences (GELIFES) and the UG science centre, ScienceLinx. One of the events during this program is a theatre show:</p> <p>'De Balts' is a Dutch-spoken theatre performance by Mirthe Dokter en Tim Hammer, directed by Karin Netten and developed in collaboration with UG biologists. The show focuses on a crucial aspect of evolution that is sometimes forgotten: reproduction. In addition to survival of the fittest, evolutionary change involves competition over reproductive opportunities. In a 20- minute performance, the actors explore the various ways in which animals attract, impress or deceive potential mates - and also asks how we humans solve this problem. The show will be staged on four consecutive days at Noorderzon, three times per day. After Noorderzon the show will go on tour.</p> <p>This project helps organize activities that connect academia and society.</p>
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### 2018 YAG interdisciplinary member projects

In 2018 the YAG had 30,000 euros to spend on YAG projects. In 2018 we received 7 requests for funding YAG member individual projects, which were all of high quality and could be funded. Another major project that was funded was the Kennis is Koning Kings Day event (see below).

Applicant(s)	Project title (€)	Outcomes
Martijn Wieling	Hoe gedraagt je tong zich onder invloed van alcohol. (Lowland Science) (€2000)	<p>The funding (EUR 2000) was used as a partial contribution towards the purchase of equipment necessary for the experiment (breathalyzer + mouth pieces, network attached storage and two second-hand laptops) and the creation of a movie (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzoCsZw4Ck8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzoCsZw4Ck8</a>).</p> <p>The results have been accepted for publication in the proceedings of the International Congress on Phonetic Sciences 2019 in Melbourne, which is the most prestigious conference on phonetics worldwide (held every 4 years). The pre-print can be found here: <a href="http://www.martijnwieling.nl/files/Wieling2019">http://www.martijnwieling.nl/files/Wieling2019</a>.</p>



		<p><a href="#">pdf</a>. In addition, the project has received much media attention (top 4):</p> <p><a href="#">NU.nl checkt dagelijks berichten op betrouwbaarheid. Bewering: "Je spreekt een vreemde taal beter na het drinken van alcohol."</a> (online), <i>NU.nl</i>, November 9, 2018.</p> <p><a href="#">Je kunt proefpersonen in een universiteit niet zomaar vijf biertjes laten drinken</a> (online), <i>ScienceGuide</i>, August 24, 2018.</p> <p><a href="#">Taalonderzoek tussen de Lowlands-optredens</a> (online), <i>Kennislink</i>, August 23, 2018.</p> <p><a href="#">RUG-wetenschappers onderzoeken op Lowlands of je met alcohol op beter bent in een vreemde taal</a> (newspaper), <i>Dagblad van het Noorden</i>, August 20, 2018.</p>
Simon Friederich	Scientia (€2000)	<p>In this project, an accessible introduction to Simon Friederich's research was written by science journalists working closely together with him. This permitted the dissemination of his otherwise rather abstract work in the philosophy of cosmology to a much broader audience. The article was featured both internally and externally in the news of the faculty, and is used by Simon as a popular introduction to his work in various contexts. It contributed to the YAG mission goals "outreach" and "interdisciplinarity." The online open access article, also available as an e-book and an audio book, is accessible via this link:</p> <p><a href="https://www.scientia.global/dr-simon-friederich-a-rare-universe-the-multiverse-debate-through-the-lens-of-philosophy/">https://www.scientia.global/dr-simon-friederich-a-rare-universe-the-multiverse-debate-through-the-lens-of-philosophy/</a></p>
Jan Willem Bolderdijk	Proverbs (€1424)	<p>The Dutch language features a rich collection of proverbs, such as "Al is de leugen nog zo snel, de waarheid achterhaalt hem wel" and "Zoals de waard is vertrouwt hij zijn gasten". Proverbs capture folk wisdom, and have been around for ages. But can we still trust them today? The "proverbs" book aims to find out. Young researchers, applying state of the art knowledge of their respective disciplines, will discuss the validity of specific proverbs.</p> <p>Thanks to the funding provided, the promotional booklet has been printed and distributed at various occasions, including during the new member inauguration ceremony. As intended, after reading the booklet, a number of additional</p>

		early career researchers stepped forward, and are now contributing novel chapters to the proverbs booklet. The full book is scheduled to be presented at the Weekend van de Wetenschap 2019.
Marthe Walvoort	Symposium NextGenChem@NL (€2000)	In 2018, Marthe received project funding from the YAG to help cover the costs for the symposium NextGenChem@NL, held on June 7 in Amsterdam, of which I was a co-organizer. The event is a yearly-recurring one-day symposium that brings together young principal investigators (assistant/associate professors, tenure-trackers, VENI/VIDI/ERC-StG laureates) working across the breadth of chemical sciences in the Netherlands. Since its first edition in Eindhoven in 2014, this event has yearly attracted between 30 and 40 participants. Enough funding was attracted to make this event available at no cost to the ECRs. The contribution from the YAG was used to cover the expenses of the location, lunch, coffee/tea, drinks and dinner. We think this event fits nicely with the aims of the YAG that is to stimulate interaction and dialogue between early career researchers from Groningen, and also from the greater Netherlands.
Diederik Roest	PoetrE=mc <sup>2</sup> (€2000)	In this project, four scientists were paired with poets. After some brainstorming and interaction, these meetings have resulted in separate poems to match the scientists' favorite equations. At the moment, there is an ongoing search for a suitable graphic designer that can transfer these four science and art expressions into a reproducible outcome such as a poster. The plan is to report with clear outcomes and deliverables on this project by the end of 2019.
Marieke van Vugt and Marie-José van Tol	Multi-disciplinary investigation of mechanisms underlying rumination (€4000)	The aim of this project was to collect data in an experiment which introduced cognitive science tools to study the effect of depression on thinking. A second aim was expanding that laboratory study with smartphone measurements of thinking in real life. The finding was used to hire a student assistant, Marlijn Besten, to carry out the project. The researchers finished collecting data from a group of 40 participants, and are currently analyzing the dataset. Due to the data that the researchers collected in this project they were able to secure a fully funded interdisciplinary PhD project from the Social Sciences competition, and

		<p>which is supervised by Marie-José van Tol, Marieke van Vugt, and André Aleman. Marlijn has since become the PhD student of the project leaders and they are using the results to design a much larger and better study that also includes heart-rate monitoring and EEG. The YAG project funding was able to kick-start an interdisciplinary project, which has now solidified into a PhD project.</p>
<p>Simon Friederich and Diederik Roest</p>	<p>Probabilities in cosmology Workshop (€4000)</p>	<p>The aim of this project is to organize an interdisciplinary workshop in the area between physics and philosophy on the Probabilities of Cosmology.</p> <p>The workshop will bring together physicists and philosophers whose work has a particular bearing on the project topic. We plan to invite six particularly stimulating researchers out of a list of preliminary seven candidates, namely, Christopher Smeenk (philosophy of physics), Katie Robertson (philosophy of science), Ben Freivogel (cosmology), Klaas Landsman (mathematical physics), Erik Curiel (philosophy of physics), Sabine Hossenfelder (theoretical high energy physics), and Harvey Brown (philosophy of physics). In addition, we will launch a call for papers and help fund contributions by young researchers, so that we will have a colourful and rich programme for two days.</p> <p>The workshop stimulates the dialogue between disciplines at the University of Groningen. We also aim to increase diversity by featuring upcoming female invited speakers who serve as role models because the foundations of physical theories is an area of academia with a particularly low share of women researchers until now. The workshop will be carried out in 2019 together with Science Linx.</p>

## King's Day 2018

On King's Day, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Young Academy Groningen hosted a wonderful [Science Fair](#) at the Harmony court yard during the King's visit and tour of Groningen. Young Academy members used their expertise to create a fun and educational activity from diverse disciplines for all the little scientists from Groningen and beyond.

### Activities:

- Robotic fish: Networks and Robotics
- Old Dutch Dead Sea Scrolls Throwing: Theology
- How does your ear hear: Otorhinolaryngology
- Good organs for sick people: Surgery
- Sugar - what is it exactly?: Chemical Biology
- What is so special about gravity?: Particle Physics and Gravity
- A knack for languages: Applied Linguistics
- The future of Groningen: Spatial Sciences
- Cold Molecules: Partial Physics and Gravity
- How does your tongue move?: Information Science
- Royal Mindtricks: Neuroimaging
- GEN.ERATE: Science LinX
- Science Dominoes: Science LinX

## 2019 YAG interdisciplinary member projects

In 2019, a total of six member-led projects were organized. Another major project that was funded was the Noorderzon event (see below).

Applicant(s)	Project title	Outcomes
Jocelien Olivier	Neural Knitworks	<p>We visited two schools, one in Groningen (de Feniks, Gravenburg, 4-5 year olds) and one in Hoogezand (de achtbaan). We taught the school children about the brain, nerve cells and how everything connects, moreover we visited an extracurricular care (buitenschoolse opvang) at Zernike and explained them about the brain and the Neural Knitwork project. Besides children, we also actively promoted the project among biology students of the UG. We organized drinks and promoted the project. This all resulted in more than 150 neurons.</p> <p>We collaborated with Science LinX on the organization and financing of this project. ScienceLinX also promoted the project among people from Groningen by arranging knitting evenings at knitting shop "het Achterpand" and we were present on the national knitting day in the Suikerunie building. Also, <a href="#">a webpage</a> was created</p>

		<p>to help with the project. Another 150 neurons were collected during these events. We made a piece of art by hanging all neurons in one big tree. People who visited the Aa-kerk during the Night of Art and Science could visit the tree. During the evening of the night of art and science, 4 neuroscientists (Sonja Pyott, Romy Smit, Carlien Wolters and Jocelien Olivier) were present to explain about the Neural Knitworks project. The aim was to promote brain research to the society. This mission was successful as we reached many people from all ages.</p> <p>We extended this event to Noorderzon, where it was also highly successful. Around 200 children made a neuron. A poster of the tree from the night of art and science was presented during this festival and we used some of the neurons made for this night to decorate the Noorderzon activity ‘Zenuwachtig wol’</p> <p>The project was <a href="#">broadcast</a> at Oogtv and <a href="#">an article</a> was written in Dagblad van het Noorden.</p> <p>Supports YAG Mission 4: connecting academia and society.</p>
Saskia Peels	Greek Gods	<p>In this project, a set of educational materials for secondary school children has been developed, between May and September 2019. This module, consisting of two lessons together called: <i>Aan wie moet ik mijn geitje offeren?</i> It’s main topic is Ancient Greek polytheism. The main audience is 12-16 year old pupils of pre-university education. In total, 45 sets of printed materials have been produced (now sold out!), digital copies are distributed to other interested teachers from now on.</p> <p>The project came to be in cooperation with the Scholierenacademie (UG) and a student assistant. The educational materials have been presented at the VCN Nazomerconferentie and the Expertisecentrum Vakdidactiek Noord. The Scholierenacademia is promoting the module on their website and through LinkedIn and other communicative channels.</p>

		<p>The requested budget was used for the student assistant, an illustrator and printed materials. Extra costs were made, and almost all these costs were covered by the Scholierenacademie.</p> <p>With the help of the student-assistant, engaged through the YAG subsidy, and the help of of the Scholierenacademie, an activity for the YAG's Noorderlichten: De Universiteit van Noorderzon was developed, called: Op zoek naar Griekse goden: puzzelen, graven en ontcijferen, also on Ancient Greek polytheism, but aimed at primary school children (6-12).</p> <p>Supports YAG Mission 4: connecting academia and society.</p>
Martijn Wieling	Lowlands Science	<p>The YAG funds were used for conducting public engagement activities by Martijn Wieling and his student Gregory Mills at the Lowlands Science experiment 'Hoe ontstaat en verandert taal?' The funding was used as a partial contribution towards the purchase of equipment necessary for the experiment (audio recording equipment), the car rental for transport of the team to Lowlands, and the creation of a <a href="#">movie</a> about the Lowlands Science experiment. This was the second time that a UG team was present at Lowlands Science (Wieling and team were also present in 2018), also made possible by the YAG contribution.</p> <p>At Lowlands Science, the team investigated a novel spoken interaction game how a language originates and if speech changes by participants adjusting their speech to one another. Initial results show that participants showed convergence in their speech even after a game of only 15 minutes. Particularly, the utterances of "KA" were more similar at the end of the experiment than at the begin of the experiment for the majority of speaker pairs. At present, we are working on a submission to the International Seminar on Speech Production 2020 in Providence, USA. In addition, the project has received attention from various national media:</p> <p>The results of the project enabled the fourth mission of the YAG: "to explore new approaches for</p>

		connecting academia with society”. In addition, it contributed to the third mission of the YAG: “to promote investment in the professional development of early career researchers at the University of Groningen”.
Bettina Reitz Joosse	Digitizing Fascist Latin Texts	<p>The objective of the project is to create a fully operational digital library of fascist Latin texts from the period of 1922-1943 with at least the following content: The source texts in their original languages, supportive visual materials, English translations, brief introductions to each text or group of texts and relevant metadata.</p> <p>The aim of the library is to preserve these texts in a durable and transferable form, to make them available, in a scholarly and responsible way, to a diverse public of academics, students and interested laymen and present them in their historical and cultural context.</p> <p>The project ties into three of the YAG missions by making the texts available for interdisciplinary use, offering a ReMA student the chance to gain experience in an international research project as well as the opportunity to use these materials for their own research, and by making these texts and their context available not only to academics but to the general public.</p> <p>This project is ongoing. Supports YAG mission 1 – cooperation across disciplines, mission 3- professional development of early career researchers and mission 4 – connecting academia and society.</p>
Susanne Täuber and Nanna Hilton	Experiences of harassment among staff at UG	<p>The project is an exploratory study of experiences of harassment among staff members at the University of Groningen. The project aims to get an understanding of employees’ exposure to harassment.</p> <p>The project ties into the broader goal of the YAG’s diversity and internationalization working group to “promote and maintain the university’s diversity and inclusivity of all academics, with a specific focus on early-career researchers” and specifically</p>

		<p>“to identify issues that may be at the root of inequality related to gender, nationality, race, religion, language”</p> <p>The project is ongoing. Supports YAG missions 2 – influence policy and 3- invest in the professional development of early career researchers.</p>
<p>Jan Willem Bolderdijk Nanna Hilton and Saskia Peels</p>	<p>The truth about proverbs</p>	<p>The Dutch language features a rich collection of proverbs, such as “Al is de leugen nog zo snel, de waarheid achterhaalt hem wel” and “Zoals de waard is vertrouwt hij zijn gasten”. Proverbs capture folk wisdom and have been around for ages. But can we still trust them today?</p> <p>The “proverbs” book aims to find out. Young researchers, applying state of the art knowledge of their respective disciplines, will discuss the validity of specific proverbs.</p> <p>Thanks to the funding provided, the promotional booklet has been printed and distributed at various occasions, including during the new member inauguration ceremony.</p> <p>Seven chapters have been written. This project requests funding to pay for the remaining 13 chapters of the book. This project is ongoing. Supports mission 3 – invest in the professional development of early career researchers and 4 – connecting academia and society.</p>

### *YAG at Noorderzon 2019*

From 16-20 August 2019, Young Academy Groningen hosted Noorderlichten: Universiteit van Noorderzon at the Noorderzon Festival in Groningen. The activities hosted were a science fair with multiple activities for children 6 and up during the day, and four mini-lectures of 15 minutes in the evening, aimed at everyone 12 years and up. Young Academy members and other scientists in their network used their expertise to create a fun and educational activity from diverse disciplines for all the little scientists from Groningen and beyond and provided short educational talks on a multitude of topics for a broad audience.

### **Day Activities:**

- ‘Design your perfect garden’ by Sander van Lanen
- GEN.ERATE: Science LinX
- Pregnancy Quiz: ‘What’s right and what is wrong?’ by Jocelien Olivier, Lillian Peters and Stella Weiland
- ‘Zo ouder, zo kind’ by Jennifer Klop-Richards and Anouk Sluiter-Oerlemans



- ‘In the Wheelbarrow with Einstein’ by Diederik Roest
- ‘Improving Donor Organs’ by Cyril Moers
- ‘Is this right?’ by Tina Kretschmer’s team
- ‘Follow the Turtle by their DNA’ by Andrea Cabrera
- ‘Finding Greek Gods: puzzle, dig and decipher’ by Saskia Peels and Tim de Groot
- ‘Snack Time’ by Jan Willem Bolderdijk and Jan Koch
- ‘Happytown: Building a child-friendly city with LEGO’ by Ward Rauws and Mohamed Saleh
- ‘Neural Knitworks’ by Jocelien Olivier and Wanda Douwenga
- ‘Help the doctor, look at the brain’ by Anouk van der Hoorn
- ‘Crack the Code of Life: What do you know’ about DNA by Judith Paridaen
- ‘The Rubber Arm Illusion’ by Warner Hoornenborg
- ‘Magical Molecules’ by Marleen Kamperman and Anita Nagelkerke
- ‘Can we guess where you’re from?’ by Nanna Hilton and Eva Smidt
- ‘Language from Ear to Eye’ by Leanne Nagels with SemCogKids

### **Mini Lectures:**

- ‘A future-proof city: How do we make a good city for an unknown future’ by Ward Rauws
- ‘The effects of learning a new language at an older age’ by Merel Keijzer
- ‘About perceiving and not perceiving’ by Iris Sommer
- ‘Are criminals taking over the Netherlands?’ by Michel Vols
- ‘Never waste a good crisis’ by Melanie Bakema
- ‘The social impact of your toilet paper’ by Nienke Busscher
- ‘Indiana Jones, Nazi’s and Migrations’ by Daan Raemakers
- ‘Rowing in antiphase – a myth or a possibility?’ by Laura Cuijpers
- ‘The Braincomputer’ by Niels Taatgen
- ‘A place for energy transition: the transformation of your backyard’ by Christian Zuidema
- ‘Watching chemistry happen with light’ by Shirin Faraji
- ‘Biological solutions for philosophical puzzles? Identity and individuality’ by Han Thomas Adriaenssen
- ‘Brain tumors, genetic mutation visible on MRI!’ by Anouk der Hoorn
- ‘Homo Sapiens Urbanus?’ by Martin Boisen
- ‘Playing in the office park or working in the Noorderplantsoen?’ by Sander van Lanen
- ‘Lazy and orgasmic’ by Anton Scheurink
- ‘The beauty of Dungleish’ by Wander Lowie
- ‘The different sides of sugar’ by Marthe Walvoort

## 2020 YAG interdisciplinary member projects

In 2020 the YAG had 30,000 euros to spend on YAG projects. In 2020 we received 10 requests for funding YAG member individual projects, which were all of high quality and could be funded. Because of the current circumstances, two projects were ultimately not funded as the events the funding was related to did not take place. The 8 projects that were funded are described below.

Applicant(s)	Project title (€)	Outcomes
Jorge Perez	Increasing awareness of software correctness (part 1) (€1600)	The YAG funding was used to employ a teaching assistant (Joël Plantinga) who is working together with Niels Alberts (Scholierenacademie). They have worked on designing a lesson to show pupils (VWO3 level) the importance of software correctness. In short, Joël has designed a guest lesson (Wetenschapsdate) that teaches students what is meant by software correctness, why it's important, and which shows them the (very) basics of designing protocols. Joël has designed a first version of the lesson, which was already tested at Bornego College; after this initial test, we figured out that we underestimated the level of the high school students. Joël has updated it and we might want to test it again. However, due to the fact that this is not an option at the moment, we are also at the moment opting to digitalize the lesson so the lesson can also be used for distance learning.
Ward Rauws	Studentification (€2000)	Knowledge about studentification and its effects in Groningen is minimal. Therefore, we decided last year to expand knowledge development by focusing student projects on the various dimensions of studentification. In this way, we aim to contribute to bridging the existing knowledge gap and supporting effective policy-making. With the requested funding, we would like to bundle and synthesise the findings of the student research projects in an accessible, easy to read and attractive booklet. We have produced a beta- version last year, and this has been well received by policy-makers, the CvB of the RUG and Hanze and by citizens. This year we extended the projects to report on, covering a broader range of topics from which the city and university can learn. With the proposed publication, we also aim to trigger a more open debate on the implications of and solutions for studentification.

Martijn Wieling	Spraaaklab (€2000)	The CvB of the university of Groningen has financed a mobile laboratory for the Faculty of Arts to use for collecting experimental data (specifically: articulatory and speech data). Besides using it for collecting data, we also would like to use it at outreach (and public) events – and of course also events organized by the YAG. While we will give tours of the mobile laboratory, the lab is too small to host presentations. As the lab will have a nice canopy attached to one of the sides, we would like to give short presentations outside of the lab for groups of up to 15 people. Consequently, we would like to apply for YAG funding to finance part of the equipment needed for this. Specifically, we would like to ask for funding for an ultra-short throw projector suitable for outside presentations, a portable projector screen which can be used outside, and a set of 15 headphones and a microphone for the audience to hear the presenter. The equipment (projector, projector screen, etc.) has been acquired, but given that the mobile laboratory is not finished yet (and due to COVID-19 there are no public events) it has not been used yet.
Marcos Guimarães	Demonstrations Lab (€2000)	This project is a ‘kick-start’ for a long-term project. We envision a large lecture demonstrations lab, containing demonstrations from different sciences, which can be accessed by local high school and university teachers in the area, similar to other universities in the world. By making the lectures more appealing with real-life demonstrations, we aim to make young people more interested in science, in addition to providing better teaching tools for the lecturers.
Joost Keizer & Susanne Täuber	Diversity and Inclusion in the Modern Museum (€3000)	History complicates modern museums. Recently, cultural institutions have thought hard how to better include people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds in the narratives they tell. But the direction of the narrative is still top-down. Those excluded still depend on the majority including them and allowing them to be part of the story. This project is a pilot for a larger project that aims to design a new model for inclusion and diversity inside modern museum displays.
Jorge Perez	Increasing awareness about software	Despite its scientific and societal relevance, the lay public knows little about software correctness. Motivated by this state of affairs, last March I proposed the YAG project Increasing Awareness about Software Correctness. The current project

	correctness (part 2) (€2000)	proposal is about engaging with a wider audience via a video animation that presents software correctness to wide audiences in an accessible and engaging way, based on our group's research expertise and ongoing projects.
Bettina Reitz-Joosse & Julia Costa Lopez	Uses of Latin in Political Discourse (€4000)	In this project, we aim to investigate the use of the Latin language in current political discourse. Specifically, we look at the use of Latin words, phrases and whole sentences by politicians and political intellectuals, the use of Latin in public culture, and its use in 'unofficial' arenas - for example in in online fora and on twitter. Our aim is to conduct a small pilot research project, which we will use to establish the direction and scope of a larger-scale investigation.
Marie-José van Tol	Interdisciplinary mystery lunch walks (€1000)	One of the greatest things about the YAG is meeting other Early Career Researchers coming from other faculties and with different disciplinary background. However, due to the enduring corona-measurements, we don't get to meet each other regularly and therefore spontaneous interdisciplinary exchange happens rarely. For this reason, the Interdisciplinarity Working Group has started organising Mystery lunch walks!

## Appendix 7: YAG Public Engagement Activities

For a list of public engagement activities, see as follows:

- [Kennis is Koning](#) “science fair” during the kings visit to Groningen on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018
- [Zpannend Zernike](#) 2018/2019
- We recorded videos to explain our research to a wide, non-academic audience (e.g. Dagblad van het Noorden [vlogs](#), MOOCs, 1-minute [YAG videos](#))
- [ECR lunch](#) on communicating research to the public with guest speaker Arjen Dijkstra from the Scholierenacademie
- [Universiteit van Noorderzon](#)
- [Nacht van Kunst en Wetenschap](#)
- *Videos* and *texts* to explain research to a wide, non-academic audience for the [Dagblad van het Noorden vlogs](#), [Universiteit van Nederland podcast](#), Blog of the University ([upside down world](#)/ [making connections](#)/ etc...)
- [Scholierenacademie MOOC on sustainability](#)
- Proverbs book (see cohort project 2018)
- Humans of the RUG podcast (see cohort project 2020)
- Soon broadcasted: RTV Noord, weekly item on scientific question with Eva Holscher (Eva zoekt uit)

## Appendix 8: Voices of YAG members

A survey was carried out among current members of the YAG, with questions pertaining to the value of YAG membership, and effects of YAG membership on learning about the organization and its processes. YAG members find their membership a valuable experience, as evidenced by the following selection of responses to the question “What does being a YAG member mean to you?”

*“First of all, being in the YAG has completely changed my career. I don't think I would have gotten my permanent job, without all the opportunities that I had as a YAG member. Secondly, the YAG has been such a source of joy in my work. I don't think I would have felt so firmly settled in Groningen without the YAG, at all.”*

*“It has been a big privilege being part of such a dynamic and creative group of people. Without exaggeration, it has been one of the best parts of my work since joining the RUG.”*

*“To broaden my academic horizon, both content-wise (meeting people who do research on similar topics or topics that can lead to interdisciplinary projects) but also network-wise. Knowing the situation at other faculties/departments is truly helpful to understand the academic world. These are all things that helped me become a better academic.”*

*“I got embedded in a vibrant community of researchers that care about their work, their institutions and society. This is providing many opportunities for outreach, for discussions on many levels, and maybe for collaborations.”*

*“It has meant discovering the UG from a whole different perspective, from top to bottom, also from the perspective of different faculties having different issues and challenges than my own faculty. Really enlightening!”*