ANNUAL REPORT 2019

# Preface from the board

Dear reader,

Welcome to the Student Union’s annual report of 2019, in which we reflect on the past year’s progress towards our ambitions. Based on the five ambitions as laid out in the strategic plan 2016-2019 and the aims formulated in the annual plan of 2019, we will highlight our successes and challenges.

As board of the Student Union we have seen many things happening in various areas at the Student Union during 2019. Amongst others, our strengthened collaboration with Novel-T resulted in the realisation of Incubase – a start-up incubator – and further growth of Create Tomorrow to an annual event.

We have also taken a critical look on ourselves and evaluated our transparency, participation and sports sector and continue to improve on these matters. Last, 2019 was also the year of making a new strategy for the upcoming years in which we decided to focus more on mental wellbeing, the changing student population and more connection and transparency towards student life.

This annual report will also give an overview of the multitude of other projects of the Student Union. We are content with the progress that has been made and we would like to thank all students, both in and out our organisation, who contributed to student community. Without them, this would not have been possible. Next to that, we are very thankful for the help and effort of all UT departments and employees. We are looking forward to 2020.

Best regards,

The board of the Student Union,

**2019-I**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Dirk Koelewijn | President, Policy & Strategy, Staff & Organisation |
| Arthur de Lange | Finance, Accommodation, Enterprises |
| Sietse van Mossel | Sports & Culture |
| Sjoerd Brüggenwirth | Academic Development, Education |
| Jeroen Bos | External Affairs, Entrepreneurship |
| Roos de Vries | Communication, Internationalisation |

**2019-II**

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| --- | --- |
| Dirk Koelewijn | President, Policy & Strategy, Staff & Organisation |
| Mohammed al Kathemi | Finance, Accommodation, Enterprises |
| Lisanne Venix | Sports & Culture |
| Sjoerd Brüggenwirth | Academic Development, Education |
| Mathijs de Ruiter | External Affairs, Entrepreneurship |
| Saikiran Samudrala | Wellbeing, Communication & Internationalisation |

# Preface from the supervisory board

Dear reader,

You are reading the annual report of 2019 of the Student Union. This report has been approved by us, the Supervisory Board. We are the organ that supervises the work the SU does: we need to approve budgets, appoint board members, approve year plans and also this annual plan. Furthermore, we handle the appeals on decisions by the board of the Student Union. If you ever have any comments or any things we should know, please feel free to contact us. You can find our contact details on the website of the Student Union.

In the past year, the Student Union has successfully written a new strategic plan and a covenant with the University of Twente. The Incubase has opened at the start of 2020 as part of the cooperation with Novel-T. Start-ups can now make use of the facilities and for the coming year, new members should be attracted. The organization of the SU has started working according to the new HR guidelines.

A start was made on increasing the rights of the umbrella associations, a test of which we will see the result in the coming year. There are thoughts of changing the structure in which the PCM is organized, with the goal of increasing their involvement and decreasing the bureaucracy. If the thoughts start to become reality, the input of participants will be necessary to ensure everyone is on board.

Best regards,

On behalf of the supervisory board of the Student Union,

Maarten Assendorp

Chairman of the supervisory board

# INDICATOR OVERVIEW

To each aim, a success indicator has been attached. The indicators mean the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicator** | **Description** | **Aim count** |
| SUCCESS | We consider the aim as achieved | 15/26 |
| ALTERNATIVE SUCCESS | We consider that an equal or better alternative to the aim is achieved | 2/26 |
| PARTIAL SUCCESS | We consider the aim to be partially achieved and that the part that has been achieved can be considered a success. This is usually due to a delay in progress or nearly having met the goals. | 6/26 |
| UNSUCCESSFUL | We consider this aim to be insufficiently achieved to call it a (partial) success | 3/26 |

# 1. We will focus internally on becoming a more stable and professional organisation

## Internal organisation

SUCCESS

### Aim: By the end of 2019, the community works according to the new HR guidelines.

Early 2019, the Human Resources (HR) guideline was introduced to streamline our HR operations. This guideline is used for the inflow of employees, monitoring their quality while working for the Student Union and the outflow of employees. The guideline is considered an important and valuable addition that was implemented shortly after its introduction. The aim can, therefore, be considered a success.

However, the remainder of the year showed us that a more extensive guide or policy would benefit the stability and continuity within our organisation. Therefore, we have gathered more knowledge and input starting in the summer of 2019, with the aim to create a more extensive version of the HR guideline. Although most of this HR policy has already been implemented in practice, the policy is expected to be set in Q1 2020.

SUCCESS

### Aim: By the end of the academic year 2018-2019, the Student Union is a more stable organisation that ensures continuity of knowledge.

Since the Student Union board is partially changing each half year, it is easier to ensure continuity than when the board would annually. However also changing partially each half year is still not ideal for ensuring continuity. Therefore a plan had to be made to improve the continuity of the organization.

To ensure more continuity of knowledge, we have conceived agreement documents for all portfolios, which have been finished in early 2019. These contain an overview of all (informal) agreements with the UT and other external parties. Furthermore, three positions for UT supporting staff have been filled with:

* David Korringa (ITC) as board advisor;
* José Franken (HR) as process advisor;
* Sandra Nienhuis (CES/SU) as history watcher (was already active at the Student Union).

Next to this, we have been – and still are - putting efforts in standardizing our internal processes to safeguard their continuity. This process is, however, time-intensive and this is therefore expected to be a long-term effort.

We believe that their appointment, together with the agreement documents, has positively impacted the knowledge and stability in our organisation.

## Student Union Network (SUN)

PARTIAL SUCCESS

### Aim: Release the alpha version of the Student Union Network (SUN) and develop the beta version before the end of 2019.

SUN is a member administration system that is linked to Osiris. This system should make it easier for associations to keep their memberships up-to-date.

Although the SUN team made great efforts and improvements on SUN, the project was unfortunately delayed by a delay in programming and delivery of essential components by the university’s Library, ICT Services and Archive department (LISA). The beta version is therefore expected to be finished in February 2020 and we expect to start deploying it with actual student data in a pilot with C.T.S.G. Alembic in March 2020. Further deployment is expected to follow this pilot, before the summer of 2020.

UNSUCCESSFUL

### Aim: Assure the continuity of the system by letting LISA maintain SUN. Meanwhile, leave the responsibility of developing and improving the system with the Student Union.

LISA was involved in the development, testing and legal aspects of SUN. However, LISA has indicated that they do not want to maintain an externally built system. The possibilities for long term support and maintenance therefore must still be investigated. In the meanwhile, the development team of SUN will take care of these matters.

## Financial transparency

SUCCESS

### Aim: Have three quarters of attendees of the Participants Council Meeting (PCM) understand the finances of the Student Union.

The Student Union has a wide scope and is involved in various projects. This means that understanding our finances can be difficult for an association or individual students outside the SU community. This is a problem that arises during our financial Participants Council Meeting (PCM).

In 2019, we have covered our finances during two PCM’s. In these PCM’s, we explain and discuss our financial structure, budget plan, results and other financial matters. In both meetings, we measured the participants’ understanding via a survey that was taken directly after the meeting.

For the first PCM, however, it was hard to draw conclusions from the survey results. Over 40% of the participants had filled in the neutral option, meaning that they could or could not understand our finances. In order to be able to draw conclusions from the second PCM, we have removed the neutral option for new surveys.

According to the survey results of the second PCM, 77% of the participants indicated to understand the finances of the SU. In addition, 91% of the participants indicated to consider us a financially transparent organisation.

SUCCESS

### Aim: Use visual marketing to present the structure and finances of the Student Union to the general student population.

Considering that our finances and financial structure can be quite complex, it is often difficult for students to understand what is done and for what reason. To enhance this, we have made a visual financial overview including the different parts of income, expenses and equity together with other facts and figures related to the Student Union. This visual overview has also been used during both PCM’s in which our finances were covered.

# 2. We encourage students to integrate, in order to create a community feeling at the ut

## International student activism

ALTERNATIVE SUCCESS

### Aim: The Student Union ensures that students whose visas are jeopardized because they have participated in activism are able to clearly demonstrate the extent of their activism to the deciding committee.

Due to the Dutch Modern Migration Policy Act, students from non-EEA countries are required to get at least 50% of their credits each academic year to prevent their residence permit from being withdrawn. Considering that this discourages international students from doing a board year, we set ourselves the goal to pair with the UT’s Centre for Educational Support (CES) to ensure that students could demonstrate the extent of their activities.

An initial procedure was drafted that included a recommendation by a committee of the Student Union. However, CES deemed the information in the procedure to be too sensitive to be shared with us. Following this, CES has decided to pick this up internally and involve us as an advising party. Altogether, this means that it is still ensured that students can clearly demonstrate the extent of their activism. It is only not the Student Union that ensures this, but CES.

UNSUCCESSFUL

### Aim: 20 associations and at least 50 students will participate in our first run of the Member for a Day platform. We will monitor the run and improve the platform as needed.

In 2018, the Student Union developed the Member for a Day Platform to allow students to ‘try out’ an association with a buddy to guide them. Though developed to meet demand from international students, this program is open to all students and associations (regardless of language).

The Member for a Day platform has been deployed and tested during the past year. Around the winter Kick-In, 30 associations and 15 students participated, while around 25 associations and 15 students participated around the summer Kick-In. The numbers clearly show that there is an interest from associations, but that student interest seems to be lacking.

A potential reason for this could be that associations usually only offer open moments early in September, while students might expect this to be there all year. We are investigating this and other potential reasons to see if we might be able to provide a more used service in the future.

## The student’s voice on internationalisation topics

SUCCESS

### Aim: Advise the UT on the implementation of at least 2 of the Program International Projects, using student opinions from sources such as surveys and forums.

The UT’s Vision 2020 has high ambitions for internationalisation. To realise these ambitions, this year, the UT launched its Program International Projects. Many of the projects will affect UT students, and so it is important that the voice of students is heard during development.

The portfolio holder Internationalization has been actively involved in the Program International Projects, both as member of its steering group as in the individual projects. From the six projects that ran in 2019, we have been extensively involved in two large projects, the contact centre (via working group) and the UT’s central student wellbeing plan (via steering group and work group).

The aim of the contact centre is to build a single contact point for students, as students have expressed a lot of interest and urgency for one contact point for all UT-related matters. Together with UniTe we evaluated most important phases of the project to match with student expectations. With our input, we hope that better and more relevant information will be easily accessible for students, in particular regarding extracurricular activities.

We have also been extensively involved in the UT’s central wellbeing plan, that is currently still being handled by the University Council. With the plan and our contribution to it, we hope to help shape the UT’s efforts on wellbeing, as well as gain input and means for our own plans and efforts.

# 3. The SU enables all students to develop themselves

## Competency development for part time activism

SUCCESS

### Aim: Organise four trainings for part-time activism based on their preferences of competency development.

In past years, we have tried to improve the development of full-time boards within the ‘Board Improvement Program’. This program offers activities and trainings for full-time boards. Part-time board members can only participate in some fragments of the program, and so this year we wanted to focus more on part time activism.

Four trainings that were focused on part-time activism were hosted during Q3 of 2019, as part of the Student Union Afternoon Sessions. In advance, we have discussed potentially interesting trainings with a couple of association boards, leading to the following subjects:

* Leading by influencing behaviour
* Leading by delegating
* Leading team-meeting
* Would you follow you?

## The student show-up was limited with approximately 10 attendants per session. We think the reason for this was that the students who came up with the subjects for the training were not involved in promoting it. Due to the limited show-up of students, it is decided to discontinue the Student Union Afternoon Sessions. However, the trainings were greatly appreciated by the students that did show up. Therefore, next year will be looked into other options which offer trainings accessible for all students.

## Measuring activism at the UT

PARTIAL SUCCESS

### Aim: Design and execute a research plan for measuring activism that is easily executable by both the Student Union and the associations.

It is important for us to have insight into the proportion of activism at the UT, so that we can improve our policy and stimulate activism further. A survey was conducted in each of the last few years, but it was barely useable. To get more useable insights, we wanted to gather data from associations to spot trends in specific sectors.

In 2019, a research plan has been designed and executed to measure student activity and its trends. However, it appeared to be very difficult to find a digital tool to execute the survey that was user-friendly for both the Student Union as our student organisations. Therefore, we have this year used a less user-friendly version and outsourced the development for a custom system that does allow an easy execution.

Out of the almost 130 student organisations, 53 have filled in this less user-friendly survey, providing enough data to get a broad idea on the trends concerning student activities (full report can be found [here](https://su.utwente.nl/en/activism/activismmonitor/)). With the new user-friendly system, which is completely ready for deployment, we aim to increase the participation further next year and investigate why people do not become active.

## Competency development in curricula

SUCCESS

### Aim: The possibility of bringing back a minor for boards in a more suitable way is explored. If possible, the Student Union aims to help the UT bring it back.

The ‘Boards minor’ had been halted, as the level of education was not good enough. The SU thinks the ‘Boards minor’ lowers the threshold to participate in full time activism. Therefore, we in 2019 we wanted to introduce a new ‘Boards minor,’ where the SU would be involved in the design of this new minor.

Following the loss of accreditation for the board minor, three students have been performing a research how this minor could be brought back in a format that could be accredited. After finishing their report, it has been used in discussions within the faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social sciences (BMS) regarding the possible reintroduction of the minor.

Following these discussions, BMS said that they want to start the boards minor again in 2020. We are currently in contact with BMS and its student assessor to monitor the progress of the minor’s reintroduction.

## Student entrepreneurship

*Considering that the result on student entrepreneurship all mostly relates to the realisation of the Incubase, we have decided to merge the two sections “The role of the Student Union in the Centre for Entrepreneurship” and “Student entrepreneurs in the Bastille” into one student entrepreneurship section. The Incubase is considered to replace the Centre for Entrepreneurship in this section.*

SUCCESS

### Aim: Start building the new entrepreneurial square in the Bastille (floor 2).

Before the summer of 2019, the UT’s executive board has approved our plans for building and realizing a start-up incubator on the second floor of the Bastille together with Novel-T, later named to the Incubase. The Incubase consists amongst others of flexible working places, rentable offices (cubicles), meeting rooms, a pitch room and a bar. The construction of the Incubase has been finished in December 2019, with the official opening following in early February 2020.

SUCCESS

### Aim: The SU facilitates improving the facilities for student entrepreneurs.

With the realisation of the Incubase, we have brought improved facilities for student entrepreneurs to a single and centralized location in the Bastille. The Incubase not only contains the brand-new physical locations, it also takes the programs and events offered by Novel-T to the same location. Altogether, we believe to have facilitated that students now have everything they need to work on their start-up within the Incubase.

SUCCESS

### Aim: The SU helps in creating awareness around entrepreneurship amongst students.

From the approval of the plans for the Incubase, we have been working with Novel-T and the UT to create increased awareness amongst students. Together, we have brought student entrepreneurship and Incubase to the local and regional press, our promotion platforms and to events like the UT Challenge. Aside from this, the UT has also been awarded the title of *Most Entrepreneurial University* for the fourth time in a row. For the longer term, it is expected that the Incubase itself will also be an important element to create awareness.

ALTERNATIVE SUCCESS

### Aim: Attract 3 new start-ups to the Bastille building together with Hardstart.

In close collaboration with Novel-T and the UT, we have attracted more than three new start-ups to the Bastille as members of the Incubase. Due to inactivity on the side of Hardstart, however, we decided not to collaborate on this matter with them. Nevertheless, it is expected that the Incubase will attract a lot more start-ups, aiming for 30 new start-ups in the first year.

# 4. All students look back on a great student time, and amongst other things, they are proud of Twente’s student life

## Sustainability

PARTIAL SUCCESS

### Aim: The SU will bring different parties together and help promote student initiatives concerning sustainability.

Students and associations are becoming more and more invested in improving sustainability on campus. The SU wants to respond to the needs of students by bringing expertise to the associations that need it. We want to work together with students who can help other associations work on their sustainability, as well as improve within our own organisation.

In collaboration with Sustain, the Kick-In is working on a more sustainable Kick-In. This entails interventions to decrease the carbon footprint of the nine introduction days in August for the long term.

## Mental welfare

SUCCESS

### Aim: The SU facilitates a campaign with workshops where students can actively participate and learn how to tackle mental health issues.

Stress and other mental health issues are receiving more attention, not only in Twente but on a national level as well. Students of today experience a lot of stress and pressure from their surroundings.

The past year, we have organised initiatives related to tackle mental health issues. First, we organised multiple workshops for tackling (mental) health issues during the health week. In addition, we have had a *This is Me* campaign to address mental health issue, specifically focusing on international students and integration. Next, 2019’s Student Union Afternoon Sessions have had offered trainings on financial impedance, expectation and time management which are mainly focused on mental welfare of students and we organised a workshop for handling stress and reaching goals together with Audentis.

SUCCESS

### Aim: Collaborate with the UT in terms of information provision and setting a strategy for the upcoming years.

As mentioned before in the aim related to the Program International Projects, we have been involved in two projects. First, we have collaborated with the UT on information provision by supporting and advising on the plans for one central location that provides all relevant information to students, the contact centre. Next, we have been working with the UT’s Centre for Educational Support (CES) to set the strategy for the coming years with the UT’s student wellbeing plan. Implementation of the plan is expected to encompass 2020-2023.

To safeguard the attention for mental wellbeing, we have also decided to allocate student wellbeing as a portfolio to one of our board members. This with the clear intention to keep collaborating with the UT on wellbeing.

## Individual sports and culture offer

SUCCESS

### Aim: Together with Culture & Events and Sports Centre, figure out how the individual culture and sports offer can be improved and matched with the interests of students.

The Student Union is responsible for all the student sports and culture on campus. In recent years, we have seen a change in the environment on the UT campus. Besides joining sports and culture associations, students want to partake in individual sports and culture activities as well.

The cultural courses have been reorganized in 2018-2019. It has been evaluated at the end of the year. In that academic year, 69 UnionCard holders have been participating in cultural courses, which is a nice result. Therefore, the cultural courses have been continued in the academic year 2019-2020. Also, we contacted the AKI ArtEZ (Academy for Art and Design Enschede) again and together we will look into reviving our collaboration in 2020.

Since this year the Student Union and the Sports Centre expand the programs of the individual sports courses and groups lessons. Now, there are plenty more moments in the week you can join a group lesson.

Sports Centre has discovered options for mental health courses for students with a UnionCard. We therefore stay in contact and advise Sports Centre when asked for.

## Five years of the UnionCard

SUCCESS

### Aim: Improve our UnionCard collaborations with external parties.

Since the introduction of the Unioncard, we have seen a growth in the number of students who join sports and arts associations. We have also seen that a larger proportion of these students choose to participate in individual sports and arts courses. We want to encourage both trends in the upcoming years. Because of this, our collaborations with external parties had to be reviewed.

Following a long period of discussions and negotiations with the Saxion University of Applied Sciences, it has been decided that it was no longer financially responsible to continue the collaboration with Saxion. Therefore, the collaboration with Saxion on the UnionCard was stopped as of September 2019.

To fill up the gap left by discontinuing the collaboration with Saxion, we have set up new UnionCard collaborations with Optisport (squash) and Sportaal (swimming). This enables UT-students to still be able to swim and play squash without any extra costs.

In addition, we have contacted AKI ArtEZ to renew the old and outdated contract. We have agreed with AKI ArtEZ on the intention to have a new and stronger collaboration, on which talking will continue into 2020.

UNSUCCESSFUL

### Aim: Simplify the use of the UnionCard by evaluating all the steps in the process of acquiring and using the UnionCard.

We noticed that DMS, the program used for registration of the Unioncard processes, is not the most user-friendly system. That is why we want to evaluate the processes behind acquiring and using the UnionCard.

Over the past year, our staff has put a lot of time and efforts into the administrative system that is used for acquiring and using the UnionCard, DMS. However, both we and other Dutch universities are experiencing a lot of problems with DMS. Although a large desire exists, it appears to be very hard to find a feasible replacement for DMS.

To help in finding an alternative for DMS, we are setting up a working group with some of the stakeholders. In addition, we have also had a general review of the UnionCard model by an external party that contains conclusions and recommendations regarding acquiring and using the UnionCard. We agree on the outcome of this review and are exploring how to use it in 2020.

## Visibility of culture associations

PARTIAL SUCCESS

### Aim: Together with Apollo, set up at least two campaigns to promote the visibility of culture associations.

At the start of 2019 too many students did not know about the broad range of culture activities that are available on campus. It would be nice if even more students would participate in these cultural activities.

Therefore, over 2019, we have organised multiple initiatives to promote the visibility of culture associations together with Apollo, as well as some initiatives that did not make it. From April to August, we placed a piano in the atrium of the Bastille, giving students the much-used possibility to let other visitors enjoy their musical skills. Next to this, Apollo and the Student Union have opened of a painting wall in the Bastille where students with a UnionCard can create their own masterpieces in arts from September, around 15 students were present. Lastly, a Carillon workshop was organised that drew 13 people which is a relatively high amount of people.

One plan, that wasn’t executed, was the ‘Week of Amateur Art’ (WAK). Unfortunately, there were not enough students to fill the committee to organise it. We hope to organise the event next year, during Apollo’s lustrum.

However, despite the initiatives that have been organised, it is not certain that the visibility of culture associations has increased. Mainly members of cultural associations were present, so not many other people have been reached.

# 5. In order to reach these goals, each student is familiar with the SU.

PARTIAL SUCCESS

## The individual student

### Aim: Organise SU forums for students every quartile with a minimal attendance of 40 students per session.

Our mission is to stimulate the academic development and welfare of all UT students. At the start of 2019, our attention was mainly focussed on the student associations and organisations because they are easily accessible for us. However, in 2019, we wanted to focus more on involving the individual student, by giving them the opportunity to join input or brainstorm sessions about relevant topics like sustainability or the mental welfare of students.

During the year we have organised five forums open for individual students. These forums were accessible to every UT student. The subjects of the forums were:

* International Student Handbook
* UnionCard
* Student Wellbeing
* Umbrella structure sports
* Vision Culture

The attendance rates did, however, differ per forum. Although the overall average attendance is 40 students, this amount could not be reached for the vision culture and student wellbeing. For the latter, this might be due to the sensitivity of the subject.

## Communication channels for student activism

PARTIAL SUCCESS

### Aim: Together with UT employees and students, create a concrete plan of action to clarify current channels, and begin implementing this plan.

It can be a hassle to give and receive information about extracurricular activities at the UT. Associations often use many different channels to reach students, creating unnecessary spam for students and extra work for associations and the UT.

We are working together with the Marketing & Communication of UT on a project to develop one communication channel for providing information to students and the project is called Easy Student Information Experience (ESIE). We have a position in the steering group of the project. The aim of this project is to investigate the current information source/channels and improve the information provision through personalization. At the moment the project is well advanced and a pilot with the system is expected for September 2020. The pilot will start with the study associations in the ET faculty.

PARTIAL SUCCESS

### Aim: Implement the new marketing strategy and extend the corporate identity of the SU to create clearer brand recognition for students.

Student Union has so many initiatives and all the initiative is an individual brand itself for example Buddy, pick up service, UnionCard and UnionDeals. However, there is no correlation with the student Union to have clear brands recognition. In 2019, all these individual brands are summarized and (re)branded to the most logical combination to have a clear linkage with the brand Student Union. For example initiatives like Buddy and Pick-Up Service are for new students joining the UT, but so is Kick-In. To create more visibility of the services and the Student Union the services will be given the names Kick-In Buddy and Kick-In Pick-Up Service. Similarly, Union card and Union Deals will be a sub-brand of Union Services. All these revised brands are going to part of Student Union corporate identity. Furthermore, we investigated all touch points for students with all Student Union services/facilities to improve the customer (Student) experience with the Student Union and the visibility of the Student Union.