4. Partners: we enhance our work through external cooperation

In order to innovate on an ongoing basis, we must encourage not only internal but also external collaboration. We realise that knowledge (including fundamental knowledge) is generated in interaction with others. We will expand and strengthen our external partnerships: at international, national and local level. At the latter level – that of the city and the region – we can contribute more to improvement of the living environment.

More collaboration with external partners will help us realise the ambitions set out in Chapter 1 (at the heart of which is academic innovation). Partners could include applied research institutions, universities of applied sciences, intermediary organisations, business and industry, and public and social organisations both in the Netherlands and abroad. External collaboration is useful because it:
• stimulates fundamental research, through private investments, for example
• fuels our research and education with insights, data and real-life issues
• helps us disseminate and utilise knowledge
• recognises the quality of our work and raises our profile
• helps us work towards a sustainable, prosperous and fair future for all

We already have a wide range of connections and networks in society – international, national and local – which we could utilise more effectively and/or expand. For example, we collaborate with leading international universities, among others in the League of European Research Universities (LERU), and in Amsterdam we participate in the City Deal Making Knowledge (City Deal Kennis Maken). In addition, every year, thousands of alumni start work or set up new businesses. Academics launch spinoffs or take their place on boards and committees. We want to make it as easy as possible for researchers and employees to engage in external collaboration.

In this context, we also want to focus more on the link with our immediate environment: the city and the region. As a public institution, we are part of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region, to which we contribute through knowledge transfer and by educating a highly qualified, assertive workforce. Conversely, the region provides us with fertile ground for education (real-life projects, internships, community service learning) and scientific research (inspiring ideas, living data, living labs). We also make the region more sustainable by promoting the transition from a linear to a circular society in conjunction with partners. We want to make it clearer to people what we (can) bring to the city and the wider surroundings, to strengthen our urban partnerships and to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the proximity of other Amsterdam-based knowledge institutions.

In the next few years, we are going to do three things:
1. substantially increasing partnerships for research and education
2. improving support for knowledge transfer
3. strengthening links with the city and the region

4.1 Substantially increasing partnerships for research and education

Impact and collaboration are increasingly important parameters in the quality assessment (SEP) and funding of research. They apply not only to applied research but also to the innovation of fundamental research and of research methods which are linked to social challenges and issues. At the UvA, we can take greater advantage of our location and of our good reputation in the field of research and education to substantially increase our collaborations and partnerships, in compliance with our core values. This requires us to invest (more) in external relationships and in our role in the European scientific ecosystem. Knowledge transfer is one of our core tasks. In addition: if we spend a little of our time on positioning ourselves and raising our profile in the academic world and in the community (regional or otherwise), this will generate more public and private funding in the future.

Many of the UvA's collaborations are based on specific projects. Our ambitions for the 2020s require us to invest in more meaningful, long-term partnerships that add value to society and to our academic standing. Undertakings of this type have in the past led to the establishment of ARCnl, the ICAI and Sarphati Amsterdam, and, in the case of education, to Amsterdam University College and a number of other joint degree programmes with VU Amsterdam. We also participate in the Knowledge Hub for Urban Inequality (Kenniscentrum Ongelijkheid in de Stad) (see Section 4.3). In addition, our academics can play a more significant role in administrative partnerships in the knowledge sector, such as, for example, the Knowledge Coalition (a partnership of umbrella organisations in the field of science/academia and business/industry). This will put us in a better position to influence political decision-making in the Netherlands and Europe.

In addition, in the 2020s we will invest more resources in demonstrating to prospective students, alumni, government and society how we are inspired by social challenges and the needs of society. To do this, we will use both existing channels (e.g. the work-study degree programmes and OPeRA, the schools outreach programme) and new mechanisms.

An active, outward-looking attitude is also needed when raising funds or in political and policy circles. The more visible our work and the more tangible our ambitions, the better we will be able to establish partnerships with public and private partners, which may lead to more (financial) contributions from social institutions, businesses and philanthropic organisations and donors.

Things to do
- Substantially increase partnerships, among others by releasing funds for the development of collaborative programmes.
- Value participation in external committees and lobby groups as an integral part of the university employee's role.
- Further professionalise fundraising as part of an integrated approach with external partners, partly in order to highlight the importance of the UvA's work to society.

4.2   Improving the support for valorisation activities

Many academics realise that both the societal value and impact, and the economic benefit of their research is becoming ever more important. They understand the importance of more large-scale strategic alliances and more stakeholders (from local to global scale). The UvA has now created a number of successful spinoffs, some of which have spread their wings. Nonetheless, there are undoubtedly more opportunities in this field than we are currently identifying in our research and education. In the 2020s we want to establish a more structured mechanism for this. We will compare successful knowledge transfer models of sister institutions with our current support structures IXA, UvA Ventures Holding, Matrix IC, ACE and Science & Business Amsterdam Science Park.

Until now, the UvA has allocated a modest budget and toolset to its third statutory task: the valorisation of research (knowledge transfer). In recent years this budget has amounted to around 3 million euros (just over 1% of the research budget), using direct income and external grants, including the IXAnext programme, which will come to an end in 2021. This 3 million euros is enough to cover the growing demand from UvA academics for advice on grant applications and legal issues and support for the setting up of a business. It will not, however, be sufficient to enable the planned quantum leap in knowledge transfer. And we don't want to wait until researchers themselves see opportunities to increase the impact of their research. As a university, we want to take an outsiders view to assess the value of our research to society.

Knowledge transfer activities benefit not only from funding but also from convenience, from the availability of space, for example, (other) facilities and start-up capital for new businesses (e.g. the Amsterdam Student Investment Fund and the Proof of Concept Fund). We are intensifying investments in a productive environment for research and innovation on our campuses. Examples of this include Amsterdam Science Park, the Humanities Lab AVS (Amsterdam Venture Studio) and the Amsterdam Law Hub on the Roeterseiland Campus. We are elaborating on this for the Roeterseiland Campus and the University Quarter in the concept of the Amsterdam Research Based Campus (see also Section 7.1). UvA Ventures Holding concentrates on innovation and spin-offs.

Things to do
- Substantially increase investments in knowledge transfer, using the central budget, contributions from the faculties, as clients, and from UvA Ventures Holding.
- Organise knowledge transfer models more efficiently through coordination between the UvA (IXA) and group companies such as UvA Ventures Holding, Matrix IC and Science & Business ASP.

| Strategy | Education & research | Students | Partners | Responsibility | Staff | Organisation |

4.3   Strengthening ties with the city and the region

Together, higher education and science are one of the strengths of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region. There is no other city in the Netherlands where this sector has such a strong presence, with more than 10,000 academics and 100,000 students combined between the UvA, VU Amsterdam, AUAS and other universities of applied sciences, NWO and KNAW institutes, SURFsara, institutions such as Sanquin and NKI-AvL, and the recently established AMS. We plan to make better use of this situation in the future than we do at present.

In the city centre, we want to complete the University Quarter as a central location for the Faculty of Humanities. Our intention remains to provide a base for the relevant KNAW institutes in the vicinity wherever possible. This will ensure that Amsterdam continues to be a leading European hub for the humanities. In Amsterdam Science Park we are investing in an innovative sustainability space (Sustainalab). We are also collaborating with AUAS' Faculty of Technology and we are building LAB42 for the information sciences and ICAI. We continue to invest in the AI technology for people initiative, which focuses on the opportunities and threats of artificial intelligence for society. This is an Amsterdam-based partnership between knowledge institutes and the City of Amsterdam but it has a global impact. As the UvA we want to be a hub for AI. We are intensifying collaboration with businesses and institutions in the fields of AI for Health, AI for Business and AI for Citizens and are obtaining national and European funding for this. In the field of quantum software, we are also collaborating in a world-leading Amsterdam-based initiative (with VU Amsterdam): the QuSoft research centre.

We continue to participate in initiatives that encourage close collaboration between academia, professional practice and policy. An example of this is the Knowledge Hub for Urban Inequality (Kenniscentrum Ongelijkheid in de Stad), which brings together data from and on the region with academics from a range of different disciplines to strengthen the basis of municipal policy. Another example is the Amsterdam Educational Research Centre (WOA), which brings together professionals, policymakers and academics in the field of education.

In our education too, we are putting the city and the region high on the agenda, giving students opportunities to get involved in real-life projects, undertake internships and participate in various forms of community service learning. This encourages the engaged, proactive attitude that we expect of our students (see Section 3.3). The UvA's broader collaboration with the city will also be strengthened through our alumni policy.

The region must know where to find us. Innovation Exchange Amsterdam (IXA) is currently the shared 'front door' of the UvA, VU Amsterdam, AUAS and Amsterdam UMC for anyone looking to collaborate with researchers. At policy and staff level, as things stand, there is no such link yet between the UvA and the region.

Things to do
- Make existing initiatives (University Quarter, Amsterdam Science Park, Knowledge Hub for Urban Inequality) a success and expand on them.
- Expand collaboration around AI technology for people and a start-up system with Amsterdam-based knowledge institutions, the Amsterdam Economic Board and the municipality of Amsterdam.
- Make the UvA more accessible as a collaboration partner for the city and the region.