



KIC main line Practice

Practice-oriented instruments

Each year, the Taskforce for Applied Research SIA contributes 18 million euros to the Knowledge and Innovation Covenant (KIC 2020-2023) by encouraging practice-oriented research that connects with this. This amount is part of the 118 million euros that NWO annually allocates to the KIC.

The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences and the Taskforce for Applied Research SIA are partners of the Knowledge and Innovation Covenant. In the practice-oriented research, knowledge development and dissemination takes place in networks of universities of applied sciences, knowledge institutions, companies, public organisations and provinces. Lectors and Centres of Expertise at universities of applied sciences provide the mutual connections. The universities of applied sciences will contribute at least 32 million euros each year to realising the missions with the help of practice-oriented research. In regional incubators for innovation (such as campuses, testbeds and living labs), universities of applied sciences work together with their regional partners from the field: SMEs, public institutions, and educational and knowledge institutions. Universities of applied sciences make a valuable contribution to the Mission-Driven Top Sectors and Innovation Policy through research, the translation of research results into practice and education, and attention for human capital. For each Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA), there is a university of applied sciences thematic roundtable. These have been established to ensure that everybody active with respect to a certain theme is involved in the discussions that are led by universities of applied sciences board members. Possible

parties from universities of applied sciences are Centres of Expertise, lectors platforms, field labs, SPRONG consortia and representatives from the Sectoral Advisory Bodies of the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences. More information about the thematic roundtables can be found on the [website of the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences](#).

Four instruments

There are four instruments that make it possible for practice-oriented researchers to build up innovation networks and jointly work with partners from the region and SMEs. These are SPRONG, L.INT, KIEM and Innovation Traineeships.

- SPRONG is aimed at encouraging powerful research groups at universities of applied sciences. A SPRONG group consists of a collaboration between (at least) two universities of applied sciences and partners from the field such as companies from professional practice (e.g. SMEs), public institutions and government bodies. Strong SPRONG groups have a powerful influence on the quality of the research conducted at the universities of applied sciences involved. In the first round of SPRONG, **17 research groups** were awarded funding with a total budget of **17 million euros**.



SPRONG project: The Circular Leap

'The Netherlands will be 100% circular in 2050. We can only achieve that if we design products differently and find other ways to organise processes. Many companies have not yet adjusted to this fact. As an innovative industrial region, the South Netherlands has a higher than average amount of challenges, but is also strongly organised to tackle these. The Circular Leap lays the foundation for an **industrial circular transition**.'

Dr Jifke Sol, Fontys University of Applied Sciences

Consortium partners: Brainport Smart District, Midpoint Brabant

- L.INT is aimed at creating new lector positions with a connection between the university of applied sciences and a research organisation (such as TO2, an NWO institute, a KNAW institute and government knowledge institutions). This connection strengthens the knowledge and innovation chain by bringing together science, policy and practice. The scheme provides opportunities for senior researchers, lectors and students, and contributes to a larger availability of well-trained professionals.
- KIEM/GoChem/GoCI – KIEM is a low threshold scheme to encourage SMEs to do exploratory research in collaboration with a knowledge institution. The KIEM scheme is open for universities of applied sciences, universities and other institutions for scientific research. GoChem and GoCI are thematic programmes aimed at, respectively, the chemical and creative industry in which SME representatives, knowledge institutions and

financiers jointly work on facilitating innovation in the SME sector.

- Innovation Traineeships (pilot) is a new c aimed at encouraging collaboration between SMEs
- and universities of applied sciences through Innovation Traineeships that are linked to educational programmes at universities of applied sciences. An innovation trainee does 18 months of practice-oriented research at an SME, first as an intern and, after graduating, as an employee of the company. The university of applied sciences supervises the trainee throughout the entire research project.



Would you like to know more?

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L.INT lector: Healthy Urban Development

Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment have jointly appointed **Dr Hanneke Kruize** as lector of Healthy Urban Development. She will focus on the development of evidence-based, practice-oriented design principles for a healthy living environment. The lector Healthy Urban Development will work in living labs with researchers, students and residents on the design and monitoring of green urban spaces and how people use and experience these. Examples are living labs at Cartesiushoek Utrecht, Merwedekanaalzone Utrecht, Stille Stad Amersfoort and Zusterparken in municipalities of the Province of Utrecht.

