YOUNG ACADEMY TWENTE: WORK PLAN 2024-2025

“STRONG BASE, SHARED FUTURE”

WRITTEN BY YOUNG ACADEMY TWENTE

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UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

PREFACE

The Young Academy of the University of Twente (YAT) celebrates her 13th anniversary this year. Since the foundation of the National Young Academy of the Netherlands in 2005, almost all Dutch universities started their own local young academy as well, with ours being one of the oldest local young academies.

In this workplan, we (1) formulate our why, what and how, (2) inform the community about the strong base, and (3) look forward to the shared future that we have as YAT.

We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas on this workplan with us.

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1. YAT'S WHY, WHAT & HOW

1.1 WHY DO WE HAVE THE YOUNG ACADEMY TWENTE?

Our mission is to build a community of early career academics, facilitate a learning platform for academic leadership, and strengthen the societal impact of our university. This community goes beyond formal YAT members, including young academics at the UT in general.

1.2 WHAT DO WE DO TO ACHIEVE THIS MISSION BY 2030?

We are planning to outline our long-term view along three overarching questions:

1. **What does it mean to be a YAT member?**

The YAT as stepping stone for national and international communities such as the National, European and Global Young Academies | Involve all members in creating impact on the UT, through advice to the Executive Board or through creating a better academic environment at the UT | How do we interact with each other and with external partners?

2. **Who are our internal and external stakeholders and how do we reach out / create meaning for these groups?**

External orientation, outreach, and contribution to society | Help in ensuring recognizing and rewarding work on innovation, outreach and societal contributions by UT employees

3. **How do we become the representative voice of the young academic community at UT so that the community benefits?**

The YAT as a facilitator of learning and community building among early career academics at the UT | Create a community of early career teachers and researchers | Foster interdisciplinary projects

In addition, as an advocate for the interests of early career academics, we:

i. **Support.** We help to shape the future of our university, by supporting early career academics in their development as educators, scientists, leaders and entrepreneurs within and beyond their own fields.
ii. **Advise.** We provide solicited and unsolicited advice to the UT community (including the Executive Board or Strategic Board of the UT) along the lines of research, education, and innovation.
iii. **Connect.** We go beyond our daily business taking a radiating role in various ecosystems for the UT, connecting science and society, by expressing our passion to reach and inspire others.

1.3 HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THIS IN THE UPCOMING YEAR?

To achieve our why and what, we value our strong base while we will focus on a shared future - the so-called "strong base, shared future". In the upcoming academic year, 2024-2025, YAT's shared activities are centred around the following themes:

1. Team Science
2. Talent Recognition and Development
3. Education
4. Reducing Administrative Burden

In addition, we further elaborate on YAT as a stakeholder in challenging times, and on the importance of internal and external networks.

2. STRONG BASE

2.1 HISTORY & PROGRESS

In March 2011 the Young Academy of the University of Twente (YA@UT, now YAT) was established (as the first local Young Academy in the Netherlands, see Appendix B). Ever since, various cohorts (Appendix C) have sustained maintained this community of young academics, providing a safe environment to facilitate a learning platform for academic leadership. YAT became dormant during the Covid-19 pandemic but in the past years we were able revive and renew their activities (Appendix D). Efforts in the past two years include redefining our mission and making YAT more inclusive. It resulted in a significant increase of YAT's visibility across the UT and other universities in the Netherlands. Furthermore, we redefined the admission criteria, which now do not focus only on excellence in research and teaching, but also focus on being active as well as taking responsibility. Taking responsibility can be shown in different ways and can relate to for example the UT in general, climate, or social injustice.

To date, the UT is exposed to external threats, including increasing financial pressure, decreasing influx of students, and—moreover—an ever-changing demand of society. Foreseeing the difficulties that the UT might face, we asked our members in the beginning of 2024 what the UT should keep on doing or being. The three most frequently mentioned points were that "we feel connected, we feel at home, and we are a team at UT". Particularly, in a time wherein negative news is emerging at a fast pace, we believe YAT is needed to create a strong base for a shared future.

2.2 CURRENT ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

Currently (Summer 2024), YAT has the following members:

- ITC: Fran Meissner & Caroline Gevaert & Elnaz Neinavaz
- ET: Canan Acar, Davoud Jafari, Kartik Jain & Mehrshad Mehrpouya
- EEMCS: Annika Betken, Gerwin Hoogsteen, Kuan Chen, Sophie Langer, Bettina Schwab, Tim Segers, Clara Stegehuis & Annemiek Witteveen
- BMS: Russell Chan, Caroline Fischer, Gréanne Leeftink & Julia Mikhal
- S&T: Christoph Baeumer, Sissi de Beer, David Fernandez Rivas, Sander Huisman, Dominik Krug, Guillaume Lajoinie, Anne Leferink, Linn Leppert, Chuan Li, Julieta Paez, Jelmer Renema, Rebecca Saive & Albert Wong

The board consists of five members: Bettina Schwab (EEMCS), Caroline Fischer (BMS), Canan Acar (ET), Guillaume Lajoinie (S&T) and Tim Segers (EEMCS). The board is supported by Laurens van der Velde (M&C), Laurette van der Woning (S&P) and Tineke van der Wal-Zoer (S&P). In addition, the board is consulting the advisory board (currently consisting of the YAT founders Jennifer Herek, Hans Hilgenkamp and Wilfred van der Wiel).

We strive for keeping a representative division over all faculties in members, as well as in the advisory board.

3. SHARED FUTURE

In the coming years, we are committed to continue to help the UT community as a stakeholder in the implementation of career tracks, several Building Blocks, extending Ius Promovendi, and improving the educational and research landscape for early-career academics at UT. We do not see ourselves as stakeholders of successful young academics, but as stakesholders of young academics in general, and therefore opened our working groups also for non-members to join. Below (3.1) we outline our objectives per working group of the YAT: Team Science, Talent Recognition and Development, and Education. Next to that, we discuss the additional topics that we find important to discuss next to the working groups (3.2). Finally, all the ideas mentioned in 3.1 and 3.2 will be included in the timeline of activities for 2024-2025 (3.3)

3.1 WORKING GROUPS

3.1.1 Team Science

Why do we have this working group?

Society demands that we work together and interdisciplinary as "teams". Interdisciplinary research is essential at the UT and beyond the university borders, but comes with a lot of challenges related to finding partners for collaboration, selecting journal to publish in, etc. The Team Science working group aims to make the UT a better platform for interdisciplinary projects to take off, especially for early-career researchers, who are still building up their network. We aim to organize funding workshops and matchmaking meetings for early career academics (like our joint event with the grants office last academic year) and create a platform to stimulate interfaculty research and make it easier for early-career researchers to apply for interdisciplinary grants.

What are we going to organize in the next year & how?

- Interdisciplinary Research Networking Event
- Panel discussion: "Overcoming interdisciplinary barriers"
- Grant Writing Workshop for Interdisciplinary Research in collaboration with the Grants Office

Who?

The responsible board member of this working group is Caroline Fischer.

Members that are actively contributing to this working group are Gerwin Hoogsteen, Elnaz Neinavaz, Clara Stegehuis, and Russell Chan.

3.1.2 Talent recognition & development

Why do we have this working group?

YAT members and many other UT members are excellent in their field and to make sure that they reach their fullest potential, attention for their development and the corresponding recognition and rewarding is necessary. This working group aims to create better recognition for the tasks that are typically performed by early-career researchers or teachers. In addition, focus for the development of early-career researchers and teachers is deemed important for the future of the UT as a whole. Especially in financially challenging times for the UT, it is important to mitigate the risk that talent development and recognition is becoming less important. By having this working group, we can still pay enough attention to recognition and reward. In addition, this working group can provide reflections on how changes regarding talent recognition and development are perceived, and how these changes affect early-career researchers and teachers in practice.

What are we going to work on & how?

Focus points have been and will still be an extension of the ius promovendi and the development and implementation of recognition and rewards (for example in designing the Career tracks).

Concretely, the activities in this working group are as follows:

- Talent Map – support in the process of the career tracks
- Further develop ius promovendi in a suitable way for the UT – advise & support
- A recognition and rewards seminar in collaboration with HR (possibly at the R&R festival)

Who?

The responsible members of this working group are Albert Wong until January, and by Mehrshad Mehrpouya from January onwards.

Members that are actively contributing to this working group are Albert Wong, Annemieke Witteveen, Mehrshad Mehrpouya, Kuan Chen, Kartik Jain, Fran Meissner, and Gréanne Leeftink.

3.1.3 Education

Why do we have this working group?

The Education working group within Young Academy Twente (YAT) is essential for several reasons, stemming from the unique challenges and opportunities in the realm of academic education.

1. Ensuring high-quality education
    a. As a university, one of our fundamental roles is to provide high-quality education. YAT members, being actively involved in educating students, are committed to upholding and enhancing the quality of education and creating optimal conditions for both the junior staff and the students.
2. Promoting educational innovations
    a. Innovation in education is crucial for adapting to changing educational needs and improving learning outcomes. Innovation can be a vector of both quality and efficiency. The working group will push for the adoption and integration of educational innovations, fostering an environment where new teaching methods and technologies can be explored and implemented effectively. It is also important that efforts are invested both in innovation itself, and in making the improvement perennial. This is intrinsically linked to the involvement of early academics in the UT's vision on learning and teaching.
3. Supporting the early career academics
    a. Early career academics face unique challenges, particularly in balancing teaching and research responsibilities. The working group will represent their needs, advocating for necessary facilities, support in obtaining University Teaching Qualifications (UTQs), and other resources essential for their professional development. The YAT wants to promote a training that aligns with the needs of the junior staff, and which is thus both effective and efficient.
4. Addressing the recognition & rewards issue for education
    a. There is a recognized gap in the recognition of educational contributions, both from a financial standpoint, and from a career perspective. Many early career academics invest significant time and effort into teaching without adequate acknowledgment. Furthermore, we can expect a generally higher education workload in the coming years. It is crucial to young academics that this workload is transparent, fair, and adequately valued alongside research accomplishments so that education can become a drive for early scientist.

In summary, the Education working group is there to have an education community in which they learn from each other's good practices and challenges, while advocating for the appropriate recognition and reward of education.

What are we going to work on & how?

- Activities/events (we want to realize at least three of the following ideas):
    - Workshop on educational innovations in collaboration with CELT
    - Inspiration session on best and worst practices in teaching (possibly with the teacher of the year)
    - Initiate an inspirational session with other local young academies in which we discuss collaboration in education (coherence, content, teaching strategies, etc.)
    - Be present at the UT introductory day for new staff where we can explain more about the culture, expectations, and organization to new UT young academics.
    - Little scientists
- Advisory activities:
    - Increasing the added value of the UTQ – being a stakeholder (advise)
    - How to make our education more efficient without decreasing its quality – being a stakeholder in the building blocks (advise)
- Other:
    - Creating and handing out the "Education Support Spotlight"

Who?

The responsible board member of this working group is Guillaume Lajoinie.

Members that are actively contributing to this working group are Sissi de Beer, Anne Leferink, Julia Mikhal, and Linn Leppert.

3.1.4 Reducing administrative burden

Why do we have this working group?

The administrative burden of researchers at the UT, and also at other universities, is increasing. This bureaucracy can be very important, for example to ensure safe studies with animals and humans, or to ensure equal testing conditions for students. At the same time, researchers are currently facing a situation in which bureaucracy takes a major amount of their time, restricting their teaching and research activities, and favouring paper solutions, for example in Unit 4 and Hora Finita. As another example, ethics proposals contain many formal steps that could be reduced and streamlined. Especially in the current financial circumstances, it is important that we spend our time as efficiently as possible. In particular, young researchers are disproportionately affected by an increased workload given the cancellation of starters and incentive grants.

What are we going to work on & how?

We see ourselves as a think-tank to discuss which bureaucracy is needed, where it may be reduced and how it could potentially be replaced in the interest of UT researchers. This includes:

- Identify the processes with a high administrative burden for academics, followed by a brainstorm on possible alternatives to reduce the administrative burden of these processes. This will be done in coherence with boundary conditions like law, formal responsibility, and finances.
- Talk to different stakeholders within and beyond the UT about these alternatives and reductions, for example the METC for ethical approvals.
- Exchange with other young academies and universities about how they try to reduce administrative burden.

Who?

The responsible board member of this working group is Bettina Schwab.

Members that are actively contributing to this working group are Tim Segers, Kuan-Hsun Chen, and Chris Baeumer.

3.2 ADDITIONAL POINTS OF ATTENTION

3.2.1 YAT as a stakeholder in challenging times

Currently, the world within and outside the UT is perceived as challenging. The UT is exposed to threats, including increasing financial deficits, decreasing influx of international students, and—moreover—ever-changing demand of society. We as YAT feel responsible to contribute to the UT in such challenging times in the following four ways:

1. As an advisor in which we provide the organization with solicited and unsolicited advice;
2. As an ambassador within our faculties;
3. As a test panel (since we are a very heterogeneous group of people);
4. As an observer when we feel like this is necessary.

In addition, it is important to communicate clearly about the role that you do or do not have. As an example, when a YAT member is part of a working group, it should be stated explicitly whether the YAT member is speaking from the "YAT role" or from his/her individual role. This is necessary to avoid any misunderstandings about YAT's point of view within the UT.

The support mechanism (including communication, policy and governance advice) of YAT will make sure that YAT is able to fulfil the roles above. For example, this is done by initiating advisory meetings with relevant stakeholders, clear documentation and communication of YAT's position and advice on critical issues, and by advising on the enhancement of ambassadorial roles of YAT-members within the faculties.

3.2.2 The importance of internal and external networks

We as YAT members should ensure that that YAT remains a stakeholder both within the UT, as well as within the national landscape of early-career academics. In our network with representatives of all 12 local YA's in the Netherlands, we will share our documents, and ensure that their impact can go beyond the UT only, and facilitate national debates. For example, we connect with scientist, staff and student associations who share our concern about the internationalisation discussion, climate crisis, and budget cuts and complement the ongoing initiatives at the UT.

Moreover, in 2024-2025, we would like to improve the way of working with "De Jonge Akademie" (DJA). This will be done by hosting two-monthly meetings with UT representatives in DJA and the YAT board.

Finally, as YAT's visibility across universities in the Netherlands has increased, members will be more frequently asked to contribute in interviews and sharing their visions. Therefore, we need to create a "flowchart" that can be consulted before giving solicit and unsolicited advises to each other or to the media.

In summary, the following activities will be worked on:

- Regular meetings with UT representatives in "De Jonge Akademie"
- Regular meetings with other local young academies
- The creation of a flowchart with the do's and don'ts in the media/press together with YAT's communication advisor
- Increased participation in national and international academic events

The entire board is responsible for coordinating the involvement of YAT in internal and external networks.

3.3 TIMELINE WITH ACTIVITIES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025

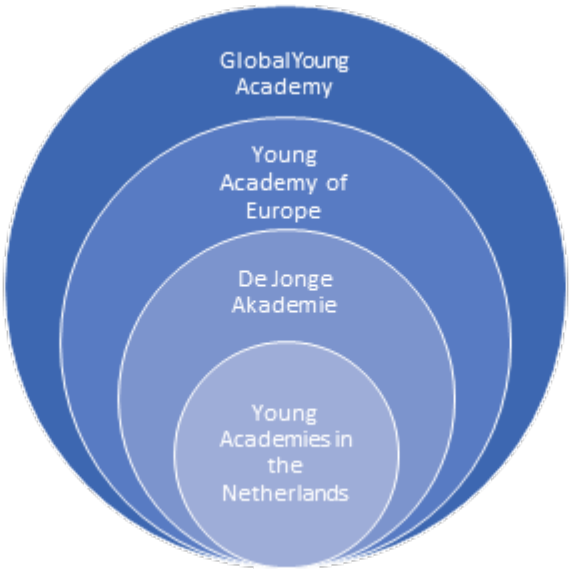
Note: these activities are only the general activities that are being organized. Working-group related activities and other one-off activities are not in this overview.

2024	July	General Assembly
	July	Summer drinks with members, alumni & advisory board, including an official welcome of our new members and board by the Rector. During the summer drinks, the YAT Education Support Spotlight is also awarded.
	September	Members meeting
	October	Meeting with UT members national YA (YA@UT) and board YAT
	October	Meeting board P-NUT & YAT
	October	Members meeting
	December	Meeting with YA@UT and board YAT
	December	Members meeting
2025	February	Meeting with YA@UT and board YAT
	February	General Assembly
	February	Advisory board meeting
	March	Selection round new members
	March	Members meeting
	April	Meeting with YA@UT and board YAT
	April	Members meeting
	June	Meeting with YA@UT and board YAT
	June	Members meeting
	June/July	General Assembly
	June	Summer drinks (with YAT alumni, advisory board, rector, members, winners of the education support spotlight)

4. APPENDICES

4.1 OVERVIEW OF DUTCH LOCAL YOUNG ACADEMIES

This appendix gives a comprehensive overview of all Young Academies (YA) in the Netherlands. Including small historic details, contact details, budget, spendings, themes, activities and size and other relevant elements. Noteworthy; all information displayed below, was found on the websites of each YA.



Overview Dutch YA

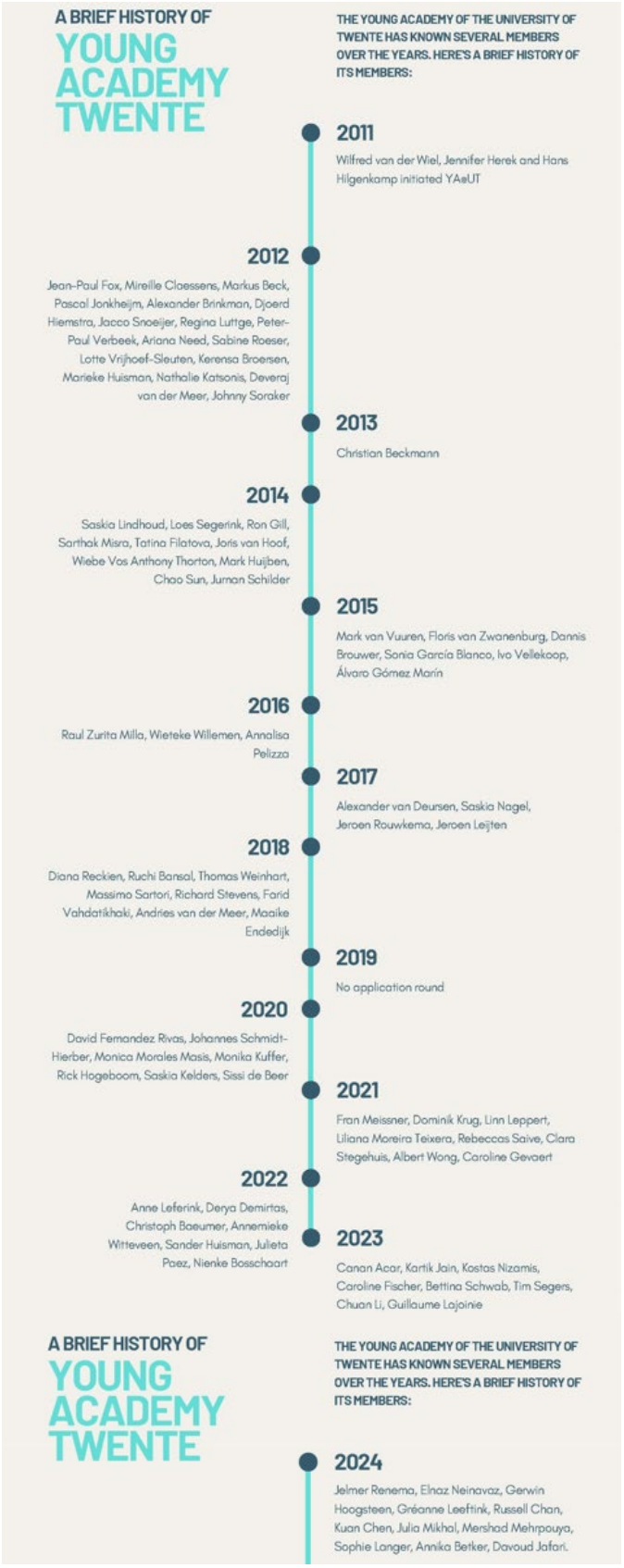
#	Young Academy of the University of Twente	YAT
1	Amsterdam Young Academy	AYA
2	Utrecht Young Academy	UYA
3	Maastricht Young Academy	MYA
4	Young Academy Groningen	YAG
5	Radboud Young Academy	RYA
6	Tilburg Young Academy	TYA
7	Young Academy Leiden	YAL
8	Delft Young Academy	DYA
9	Wageningen Young Academy	WAY
10	TU Eindhoven Young Academy of Engineering	EYAE
11	Young Erasmus Academy	YEA

Overview Dutch Local Young Academies							
	Founded in	**Size**	**Annual budget**	**Support**	**Website**	**Member compensation**	**Activities**
Young Academy Twente	2011	32 members, incl. 5 board members.	-	0.2 fte policy advisor and project officer <0.1 fte M&C	https://www.utwente.nl/en/young-academy/	-	
Amsterdam Young Academy	06-11-2018	52 members, incl. 5 board members, 7 alumni, members stay for 4 years	10k For activities, 57.5k for grants program	0.6fte; 2 VU and 2 UvA staff members	https://amsterdamyoungacademy.nl/	-	AYA TEDtalk | Symposium | Sustainable guide for meetings (food/drinks in particular) |Research; assessment motor expertise restoration and pandemic nursing |Funding projects | Campaign about impact/dealing corona pandemic
Utrecht Young Academy	2016	44 members incl. 8 board members, each year 8 new members. Stay for a 5-year period.	130k/y 65k for support staff, 15k for logistics (meetings, running costs, PR), 20k for projects, 30k unclear	0.6 fte policy officer and student assistant	Htpps://www.uu.nl/onderzoke/utrecht-young-academy	-	Podcast, vlog, symposium, interdisciplinary courses, stadium generale, platform interdisciplinair onderzoek, open science, festivals, diverse andere projecten op onderwijs gebied, klimaatverandering, diversiteit
Maastricht Young Academy	2017	18 members, incl. 2 board members	70k, 57,500 for grants programme, 10k for yearly activities, 2,500 other	?	https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/research/maastricht-young-academy		Position papers, growing up in science event, topical film screenings, sponsor intercultural training, annual interdisciplinary grant of 15k

Young Academy Groningen	2016	42 members, incl. 4 board members. 5-year member period	150K plus 2 PhD positions annually (interdisciplinary/to be divided among members) Staff costs 51k, projects 30k, chair 5k, 64k other	0.5 fte policy advisor; 0.2 fte student assistant	https://www.rug.nl/research/young-academy/?lang=en	1k research budget/time equivalent; board chair 5k		Podcast, Festival Noorderlichten, lunches, internal platform for young staff, working groups
Radboud Young Academy	10-2020	25 members, incl. 2 board members	50k	0.6 fte coordinator	https://www.ru.nl/english/research/other-research/radboud-young-academy/	Members are compensated for 0.05 fte, board members 0.1 fte		RYA Recognises and Rewards prize, open science team, starting up activities
Tilburg Young Academy	2021	12 members, incl. 3 board members	8k for activities	0.2 fte policy advisor; student assistant	https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/nl/onderzoek/tilburg-young-academy	Board chair 0.2 fte		Prizeless Ideas event
Young Academy Leiden	2019	23 members, incl. 2 board members	50k	0.1 fte policy advisor (part of the board), 0.1 fte student assistant (50% paid YAL budget)	https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/yal	0.1 fte from YA budget; Managers have to declare 4 hr/wk will be available for members and this will be deduced from teaching/admin.		Escape box, YAL away day, digital early career bulletin
Delft Young Academy	15-02-2022	11 members, also forming the board (rotating)	?	0.2 fte policy advisor	https://www.tudelft.nl/onderzoek/samenwerking/delft-young-academy	-		Manual for foreign academies that gets started in NL, Climate helpdesk, analyses academic year
Wageningen Young Academy	2016	18 members, incl. 3 board members. 5	20k	?	https://www.wur.nl/en/Value-Creation-	-		Lectures, reports, stadium generale, masterclass: writing day

		year member period			Cooperation/Wageningen-Young-Academy-3.htm			
TU Eindhoven Young Academy of Engineering	2018	35 members, incl. 4 board members	20k with additional budget on request	0.2 fte senior policy advisor	https://www.tue.nl/en/our-university/community/tue-young-academy-of-engineering/	-		Retreat, lectures, advice and discussion panels, interdisciplinary event
Young Erasmus Academy	2013	25 members	50k	0.1 fte policy advisor	https://www.eur.nl/onderzoek/young-erasmus-academy	-		Public talks, lectures, research, outreach platform

4.2 YAT MEMBERS & ALUMNI



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