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## Welcome

With this issue comes an update on our recent initiatives outside our key activities – at the same time as the Task Forces are working on their activities for the year, the Network is actively involved in three projects of high importance: CALOHEE is a follow-up on the famous Tuning project; Mastermind focuses on the actual non-traditional prerequisites students should have when applying for admission; and in IMPALA the Network will contribute its expertise in a cooperation with South African universities.

Non-European links are also the main topic of our other articles, where our long-standing cooperation with the MAUI and AEN networks are highlighted. Best practice developed here will be used for further collaboration with networks interested in cooperating with us, such as the REARI-RJ Network (universities in the state of Rio de Janeiro) and the Columbus Association. The success of each of these initiatives always lies in the activeness of our individual member institutions which then contributes to the visibility of the Network as a major player in the European landscape of Higher Education!

Enjoy reading the good news!

Sabine Pendl  
President,  
Utrecht Network



IMPALA

## IMPALA – developing links with South Africa

Internationalisation and Modernisation Programme for Academics, Leaders and Administrators (IMPALA) – Erasmus+ Key Action 2

The IMPALA project's aim is to set up a network of European and South African universities and educational organisations to respond to the needs in the South African higher education community. It aspires to develop clear and viable internationalisation strategies within the South African partner universities and give them a much needed head start for future international cooperation initiatives. The project seeks to bring the South African partner universities to a more advanced level in terms of management and strategies of internationalisation through the training of staff and the strengthening of structures and policies.

The IMPALA project is composed of 9 full partners: 5 European higher education organisations (University of Antwerp, University of Bologna, University of Graz, Utrecht Network, Academic Cooperation Association – ACA) and 4 South African universities (Cape Peninsula University of Technology, University of Limpopo, University of Fort Hare, University of Venda). The University of Antwerp acts as project coordinator, and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology takes the role of joint coordinator. The IMPALA project also includes one associated partner, the International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA).

The objectives stated will be accomplished through four Task Forces that will work on different subject areas: Staff Training, Policy Development and Implementation, Academic Issues and Mobility. A large group of South African university staff

(academics, university management, administrators) will be trained, attend workshops and participate in site visits. Internationalisation university strategies and management structures will be defined and implemented according to the needs and nature of the partner university. Quality assurance in higher education including the establishment of joint programmes and credit recognition in the European and South African context will be studied and compiled. Barriers to mobility will be identified, tips and tricks to overcome these barriers will be formulated. The project will produce a 'Handbook for Academics and Administrators' on internationalisation in all its aspects based on the outcomes and achievements of the project. It will also produce a 'Handbook for Students' including tips and tricks for a smooth mobility period abroad.

The ultimate goal of the IMPALA project is to translate the policies and strategies into action, and to lay the foundation of a solid partnership of a European network of universities and a South African network of universities that will engage in consortium-to-consortium cooperation initiatives.

The Utrecht Network's representative on the project board is Patricia De Clopper, University of Antwerp. The Utrecht Network will have representatives on all four Task Forces. Further information on the remit and activities of the Task Force will be circulated to members and expressions of interest in participating in the Task Forces will be invited.

Cape Peninsula University of Technology



## Mastermind Europe

At the Utrecht Network AGM at Queens University, Belfast, we will devote some attention to ‘masters admission for a diverse international classroom’.

*Kees Kouwenaar, coordinator of the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project ‘Mastermind Europe’ will give a presentation and then lead a dynamic working group session on the Toolkit that Mastermind has developed to assist masters programmes in adapting their admissions procedures to suit the increased diversity of students who apply for admission.*

These can be students from other domestic universities, international students, students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and students with work experience between Bachelors and Masters degrees.

The Mastermind Toolkit helps to articulate more precisely what subject-related knowledge and skills, what general academic competencies, and – if applicable – what personal competencies and traits are deemed necessary for successful admission – and completion. In these basic categories of admission requirements, the Mastermind Toolkit links practical experience with competency-assessment for admission with existing generic tests and research findings. It offers a model for a coherent admission framework, helping to distinguish what admissions officers may be looking at (e.g. test results or motivation statements) and what they

**mastermind** EUROPE  
 Master's admission  
 for a diverse international classroom



may want to be looking for (i.e. what the applicants have to be good at and how good they have to be).

The Mastermind Europe project has been testing and is still testing its Toolkit in Focus Group meetings with academic masters coordinators in various corners of Europe: Barcelona, Helsinki, Amsterdam, and Milan. In the second round of these Focus Group meetings, one may also be held in Graz. The Mastermind Europe consortium consists of 5 universities (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Universities of Helsinki, Graz and Ljubljana and Politecnico di Milano), 3 associations of universities/higher education (The German Rectors Conference, the Catalan Association of

Public Universities, and the Academic Cooperation Association), and 2 private companies (StudyPortals and Ziggurat).

The Belfast Mastermind session will be co-ordinated by Kees Kouwenaar. Kees is senior advisor international strategy at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam and has worked in international education since 1982. He initiated and now coordinates the Mastermind Europe project. Kees has worked in internationalisation of education, internationalisation of research, capacity building in universities in developing countries, and international recognition of degrees and diplomas.

## 2016 AGM and Workshop

The 2016 Utrecht Network Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 28 April – Friday 29 April 2016, hosted by Queen's University Belfast.

### AGM Workshop

Prior to the AGM, a workshop will be held on Wednesday 27 April – Thursday 28 April. The theme of the workshop is the intercultural preparation of outgoing students. The workshop is aimed at those staff in member institutions working with students preparing to undertake periods of study abroad (International Officers, Study Abroad advisors, Erasmus+ Coordinators, Academic Coordinators of Joint Programmes). The workshop will focus of ways to maximise the intercultural experience of outgoing students. Participants will learn methods and tools to support students before, during, and after their mobility period.

### AGM

Following its successful introduction during the 2015 AGM, a ‘new faces’ session will be held prior to the formal meeting. The session is aimed at members attending the AGM for the first time, although all members are welcome! The session will provide an introduction to the Network and background information to the agenda items.

The AGM will focus on issues of significance for the Network including the preparation of a new Strategic Plan, changes to the Statutes, developing links with consortia in South America and South Africa, the Network's role

in European projects and proposed changes of activity for the Task Forces. A presentation and dynamic working group session will be given by the Mastermind Europe Project. There will also be dynamic working group sessions held on the internationalisation of curricula, giving members a chance to input into the development of this area of work.

An optional social excursion will take place on Saturday 30 April to the North Antrim Coast and in particular the World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway. Members may also end their visit to Northern Ireland by sampling Irish whiskey at the Bushmills Distillery!

## CLOSING IN ON ERASMUS+

*A training seminar was held at the University of Bergen in October. The event was organised by the Utrecht Network Staff Training Task Force and the Student Mobility Task Force.*



'Closing in on Erasmus+ participants'

The topic of the training seminar was the Erasmus+ programme with special emphasis on language competence and language requirements, the Inter-institutional Agreement and the Learning Agreement.

A total of 19 people from 14 Utrecht Network universities participated in the event (Malta, Bochum, Tartu, Lund, Bologna, Graz, Utrecht, Vilnius, Ljubljana, Masaryk, Strasbourg, Thessaloniki, Helsinki and Bergen). The size of the group provided a good arena for discussions.

The first part of the seminar was dedicated to 'language competence'. An overview of language requirements for incoming student mobility was given with discussion afterwards. There was also a contribution given on the European Framework of Reference on Languages, its design and how it has been used.

The second part of the programme focused on the Inter-institutional agreement (IA) with interesting presentations from Strasbourg and

Malta. The discussions showed a great diversity in institutional strategy towards the administration of the IAs with some institutions having literally thousands of agreements.

The third part of the seminar focused on the Learning Agreement. Some examples of 'best practice' were presented. It was of particular interest to learn how Masaryk University has adapted the LA to an online interactive document which can be updated. This serves as an excellent tool both for the student and the administrators and enhances the quality of the mobility arrangements.

The seminar focused on sharing practices and experiences, and it was very clear that the universities have worked hard to adjust the proposed LA format to their existing systems and needs. The group concluded that not having a LA would complicate communication between universities, yet the need for simplifying the form was underlined in all discussion groups. The timing is another big

problem. It is sometimes impossible to fill in the necessary information on courses to be taken because it is not available. The wording of the LA is also very absolute with 'minimum requirements'. The final part of the LA (tables C and D) is redundant since every university that participates in Erasmus+ mobility is expected to issue a transcript.

The Student Mobility Task Force led workshops were very successful, with lively input from participants. It is hoped that participants took away with them new ideas for good practice within their institutions.

There were two dinners included in the seminar as well as an excursion to the Hanseatic Museum and Mount Fløyen.

## Summer Schools 2016

The Professional English Summer School will take place at the University of Hull (UK) between Monday 27 June and Friday 8 July 2016.



The language course is intended for doctoral and postdoctoral candidates as well as newly appointed academic staff at member institutions who already have a relatively good command of English (min. B2/max. C1), and who wish to update or further refine their language.

The intensive school on Global Societal Challenges will take place in Rimini (Italy) from Monday 19 September until Friday 23 September 2016.

The school is intended for doctoral candidates in the field of social sciences and humanities (10-15 participants). The participants should preferably be in their second year of research, and thus able to present their theme, methods and – if possible - findings there. Sessions dealing with the academic substance of societal challenges, sessions dealing with various (interdisciplinary) approaches and methods to capture that theme, as well as discussions on how academics could contribute through their work to public debates on challenges in societies will make up the school. Four lecturers from Utrecht Network member institutions will constitute the academic team of the school.

Further information on how to apply will be available at:

[www.utrecht-network.org/activities/summer-school/](http://www.utrecht-network.org/activities/summer-school/)

[www.lefphdschools.eu](http://www.lefphdschools.eu)

## Young Researchers Grant Scheme 2016

Another successful call for applications for the YRG took place during autumn 2015.

Ten grants were awarded by the Utrecht Network and two by the University of Basel. As the table below illustrates, the grants are actively encouraging mobility at postgraduate level between the Network's member institutions.

Sending University	Receiving University	Level	Subject area	Duration
Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave	Universität Basel	PhD	Foreign language didactics	1 month
Masarykova univerzita	University of Hull	PhD	Philosophy, Aesthetics, Art history	1 month
Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem	University College Cork	PhD	Humanities (religious)	1 month
University College Cork	Helsingin yliopisto	PhD	Humanities	2.5 months
Helsingin yliopisto	L-Università ta' Malta	PhD	Theology	1 month
University of Hull	Universität Basel	PhD	Astrophysics	2 months
Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza din Iași	Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz	PhD	American and Gender Studies	1 month
Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie	Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz	PhD	Sociology	33 days
Univerza v Ljubljani	University of Hull	PhD	Law	1 month
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki	University of Hull	PhD	English Literature	1 month

Funded by the University of Basel

Sending University	Receiving University	Level	Subject area	Duration
Universität Basel	University of Hull	PhD	Physics	2 months
Universiteit Utrecht	Universität Basel	MA	Neuroscience and Cognition	6 months

The call for 2017 applications will take place during summer 2016. Further details will be provided on the Network's website ([www.utrecht-network.org](http://www.utrecht-network.org)). Due to the changes in the Network's calendar the period of mobility will be 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018.

## Welcome to the new AEN Secretariat

Western Sydney University has taken on the AEN Secretariat role for the 2016/2017 term.



I am looking forward to working with each of you over the next two years, and I will endeavour to provide the same level of organisation and expertise as Anouk van der Vorst has over the last two years of Deakin University's term. I am currently acting in the role of Manager, International Mobility at Western Sydney University International, and prior to this my role was Study Abroad and Exchange Coordinator for The Americas, Spain, Italy, and the ISEP Exchange Network.

My passion for student mobility began when I undertook my own overseas study experiences at University (in Mexico). Through this experience, I got to see firsthand how formative overseas study could be for a student, and how much of an impact the experience continues to have both personally and academically after returning home. I began my career in Higher Education working in student administration as a student services officer. In August 2013 I came to work at Western Sydney University as a Study Abroad and Exchange Coordinator, and in January 2016 I took on the role of Acting Manager, International Mobility.

I recently completed a Master of Higher Education with a specialisation in Leadership and Management at Macquarie University, where I also completed a Bachelor of International Studies with a major in European Studies. I love to travel and experience new cultures and languages, which keeps me passionate about student mobility. I do speak Spanish, however not nearly as well as I did when I returned from my own exchange semester in Mexico, so I have started taking conversational classes to help me improve.

I am a Sydney local, and grew up close by to our Parramatta campus so I am very familiar with the area and am a great point of contact for your students who want to know about life in Western Sydney. It is an exciting time to work at Western Sydney University as our new Vice Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover has a strong international focus. Since he came on board in 2014, there has been a huge amount of change and growth at the University, including the change of our name and visual identity from 'University of Western Sydney' to Western Sydney University. There are exciting things in store for Western Sydney University as we are at the epicenter of growth and development in the greater Sydney region. A renewed focus on international programs is also leading to exciting new programs and opportunities being developed for both local and international students.

I look forward to working with each of you during our term as AEN Secretariat.

Caroline Reid  
AEN Secretariat

## CALOHEE Project

### Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe

*The Utrecht Network is a member of the Advisory Board of the project. On 19 February the first joint meeting of the Advisory Board and the Quality Assurance Board took place in Brussels.*

The situation of HE in Europe is rather unique since specialisation already takes place at Bachelor level – with both positive and negative effects. For the European Commission therefore skills are of major importance and because of this high relevance is given to this project. With the leadership provided by Robert Wagenaar, CALOHEE can build on proven experience from the beginning of ECTS and also 15 years of TUNING worldwide. Already in that period the paradigm shift from expert driven teaching and learning to student-centered learning has started.

In this new 2-years project with an approved budget of 500.000€, assessment periods in the following 5 areas will take place: civil engineering, nursing, education, physics and history. In each of these peer group two coordinators of motivated academics from selected institutions are responsible for the development of a conceptual framework which then will be finalised in an assessment plan and white paper.

If you are interested in further details you can either have a look at the homepage [www.eurashe.eu/projects/calohée/](http://www.eurashe.eu/projects/calohée/) wait for reports on recent developments which will be sent out regularly via the UN distribution list, or you can contact Sabine Pendl.

## Focus on MAUI

The Utrecht Network through its links with the MAUI Network (Mid-America Universities International), offers its students the opportunity to apply for placement in the USA. The arrangement with the MAUI Network is a reciprocal one and in return Utrecht Network member institutions offer study placements to MAUI students.

The MAUI Network comprises of eleven American universities on fourteen campuses. In each edition of the Newsletter we will be highlighting one of the MAUI institutions to enable Utrecht Network members to better promote MAUI institutions to their students. The first member is the University of Missouri-St Louis, home to the MAUI Secretariat.

### University of Missouri-St. Louis

As well as having a campus that spreads across 470 acres and a student body that represents 70 different countries, the University of Missouri-St Louis (UMSL) is home to the Mercantile Library – an expansive research library and the oldest library west of the Mississippi River – and the Touhill Performing Arts Center, a landmark performance facility

designed by the same firm that created the Louvre pyramid. It currently hosts over 100,000 visitors every year who come to enjoy orchestral performances, ballets, and a wide range of multicultural programs. UMSL has state of the art facilities including a brand new center for Recreation and Wellness that houses a 2-story climbing wall, a zip line and bouldering cave, and a range of fitness equipment and sport courts available to students for free!

St Louis is home to over 50 unique neighborhoods – that’s just the ones within the city limits! – with a multitude of parks and business strips. The Delmar Loop, noted as one of the top 10 streets in the USA, is easily accessible by the public train and boasts more than 145 businesses including a boutique hotel and several entertainment venues, which host

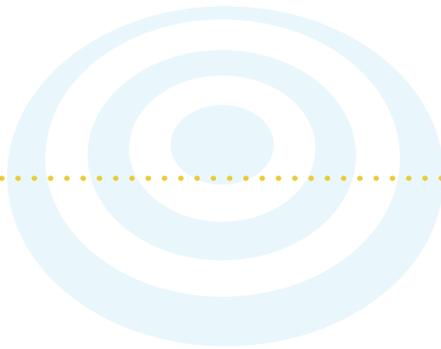
bands and performers from all over the world! Nearby is beautiful Forest Park, a 1,300-acre landscape that accommodates not only the St Louis Art Museum, Missouri History Museum, and the Science Center, but also one of the best zoos in the USA and The Muny, an open air theatre – all absolutely free to the public!

Like the city of St Louis, there is no lack of variety when it comes to choosing your course of study at UMSL. While offering all the general classes that other universities provide, UMSL goes beyond and teaches courses that focus on unique interests such as: Irish Literature and Film, Micro-brewing, History of Feminism and Witchcraft, Veteran Studies, Art of Storytelling, Archaeological Field Work, Printmaking and Screen-printing, Beginning Fiction Writing, and many more.



left:  
University of Missouri-St Louis  
below:  
Touhill Performing Arts Centre





# NEWSinbrief

## 30th Anniversary and Rectors meeting

The Utrecht Network will be celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2017. To mark the occasion a Rectors meeting will be held prior to the Annual General Meeting. The venue for both the Rectors meeting and the AGM will be the University of Hull, UK. The Rectors meeting will take place on Wednesday 26 April 2017 concluding with a reception and dinner in the evening. The meeting will celebrate the successes of the Network's first thirty years and help shape the strategic direction of the Network going forward.



## Developing links with non-European Networks

One of the strategic goals of the Utrecht Network is to expand the cooperation with non-European networks. As the experiences with MAUI and AEN have been very positive new forms of working together with other regions shall be developed. With REARI-RJ, the network of universities in the region of Rio de Janeiro, already first contacts have been established and a meeting at the next FAUBAI conference will take place.

Recently also the Columbus Association has expressed interest in establishing a collaboration with the Utrecht Network. Best practice models will be used, but the focus should also be in meeting the needs of both our partners and us.

More details will follow!

## Partner meetings at NASFA

The NAFSA conference this year is taking from 29 May – 3 June in Denver, Colorado, USA . Both AEN and MAUI will be hosting networking events with Utrecht Network partners.

The MAUI event will be held from 2 – 3.30 pm on 1 June 2016. Further details on both the AEN and MAUI events will be sent to members when available.



## Contact

For further information about the Utrecht Network, please contact:

Fiona Miller  
Executive Secretariat  
Utrecht Network  
c/o The University of Hull  
Hull, HU6 7RX, UK

info@utrecht-network.org  
www.utrecht-network.org



[www.utrecht-network.org](http://www.utrecht-network.org)

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