

In this issue

1. Research Funding Support Managers Network
2. Summer Schools
Utrecht Network Staff Mobility week
3. 2015 AGM and Staff Training Event
4. MAUI Site Visit Initiative
Joint MAUI/Student Mobility Task Force meeting
6. News in brief

Welcome

Spring is here!

This issue will focus on the long list of activities which are in preparation at the moment: the workshop right before the annual meeting in Tartu focusing on the support provided by universities to welcome new staff; research managers meeting in Utrecht to discuss joint forces under Horizon 2020 and beyond; our partner networks in the US and Australia informing us of links with our network; application phases for the two summer schools of the Network being about to close. We are still in the planning and design stage of our brand-new website for the Network, but it will be launched this summer. Together with all the fun facts of our member institutions, which are introduced in this edition of the newsletter, it will then show you another and different face of the Utrecht Network – The European Network with a global outlook. Enjoy!



Sabine Pendl
President, Utrecht Network

Research Funding Support Managers Network

In May 2014 the Utrecht Network organised a workshop on 'A new generation of European Programmes for Education and Research: Synergies between Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020'. Most participants were either involved in Erasmus+ or in Horizon 2020. The Erasmus+ colleagues often knew each other and some meet occasionally. The Horizon 2020 colleagues were on a different level and do not have many links to colleagues in other Utrecht Network universities.

The workshop was very informative and supported the idea that strengthening the networks of staff involved in research funding support has an added value.

At various universities there are processes, procedures and facilities to support researchers who want to apply for external project funding or personal grants. We all can learn a lot from the experiences and expertise at other universities. Therefore it was suggested to share this information in a follow up activity for staff involved in support for research funding. Utrecht University offered to initiate this next step and to facilitate the first event. Based on the expression of interest of the research oriented participants of the workshop it was decided to organise a Utrecht Network staff training on Research Funding Support.

The main target group for this staff training is (administrative) staff involved in research funding support (e.g. Research Support Offices, Grant Offices, Research Offices), especially from Utrecht Network partners and the members of the LERU community of European Research Project Managers.

At this training good practices and questions from the participating universities will be discussed. The training will be organised from 21-25 June and will coincide with the annual Research Funding Days at Utrecht University (22-23 June). The purpose of the Research Funding Days is to help researchers make the most of the opportunities on offer and inform them about national and international funding programmes and conditions.

The Utrecht Network staff training will give inside information about mechanisms for research funding support at Utrecht University and other universities. However an important feature of the event will be that the need, interest, prospects and options for the formation of a network of Research Funding Support Managers at Utrecht Network universities will be discussed.

For further information please see www.utrecht-network.org

Utrecht street



Looking forward to summer!

The Utrecht Network will be offering two summer schools in 2015.

The **Professional English Summer School** will take place at the University of Hull (UK) from Monday 29 June – Friday 10 July 2015. The programme 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 but who wish to update or further refine their language. For only 250€ you can increase your language proficiency and get to know friendly colleagues from other Utrecht Network member institutions.

The summer school on **‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity’** will take place at the University of Antwerp (Belgium) from Sunday 5 July – Saturday 11 July 2015. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity was the motto of the French Revolution (1789) and it summarises boldly the founding ideas of modern Europe. The question that the summer school sets out to answer is what remains of these core values in Europe in the 21st century?

The school is intended for advanced undergraduate students with at least two years of academic experience, regardless of their study background, with an interest in getting acquainted with the topic from a multidisciplinary approach. Eligible students are entitled to a 250€ subsidy from the Network (the Hospitality fund).

Further information can be found at www.utrecht-network.org/en/site/summerschools and <http://lefsummerschool.eu/>



The University of Hull campus



University of Antwerp campus

Utrecht Network Staff Mobility week



The Task force for Staff Training, together with the University of Bergen is planning a Utrecht Network Staff Mobility Week in Bergen in from 21–22 October. The theme will be Erasmus+ with emphasis on Action 1 – mobility of individuals.

The Erasmus+ programme appears to be a real evolution of the concept of ‘Erasmus mobility’, developed over almost three decades. It includes clearer demands on language competences and ambitious aspects of language learning and measuring language competences, as well as new digital tools for registering and monitoring student exchange. In addition to this, partner countries are now involved as the whole world is opened up for Erasmus mobility.

All this constitutes a huge challenge for the administrators of Erasmus mobility. One thing is to have the mobility tools work in practice. Another thing is to find the best practice, taking into consideration the interests of students, universities and administrators.

There will be presentations from the Task Force, University of Bergen and participants, which will be starting points for workshops and discussions. There will also be time for networking and getting to know beautiful Bergen.

There will be a small excursion on the 23 October.

Utrecht Network members will be invited to send one participant per institution. A detailed programme will be presented before the AGM, and registration will be opened in June.

2015 AGM and Staff Training Event

The 2015 Utrecht Network AGM will be held at the University of Tartu, Estonia on 7–8 May 2015.

Items for discussion at the meeting will include a proposal with regard to new membership, developing further the Network's relationship with the European Commission, the Network's participation as a full member in European projects and the developing links with South American associations.

Progress against the Network's new strategic plan will be monitored and areas of new activity identified. There will be the opportunity to hear about initiatives developed by member institutions and these initiatives will be explored further in dynamic working groups. Participants will also get the opportunity to learn about the Estonian language and culture!

An introductory session for new representatives has been developed by the Steering Committee and will be available for all interested members. The session will introduce members to the work of the Network and introduce the Steering Committee and Task Force Chairs. It will enable members to indicate any areas of the Network's work of particular interest to themselves or their institutions.

The AGM will be preceded by a Staff Training event (5–7 May 2015). The event has the theme of 'Facilitating Researchers' Mobility: Quality Services and a Welcoming Culture'. The purpose of this training event is to bring together Network staff dealing with research mobility to share ideas and good practice on how to deliver quality services for researcher mobility.



The importance of research mobility is well recognised throughout Europe and the world.

The training event will consist of presentations, workshops and networking opportunities designed to stimulate discussion and the sharing of good practices. The event is organised in a way to have relevance for individuals working at either the strategic or practical levels of institutional activity involving researcher mobility. The importance of research mobility is well recognised throughout Europe and the world and this workshop will support the efforts of the Utrecht Network members in developing their services in this field.

Above;

The University of Tartu, Estonia, venue for the 2015 AGM.



Further information about the AGM can be found at: <http://utrecht2015.ut.ee/agm> and information about the Staff Training event at: <http://utrecht2015.ut.ee/erasmus-training>

MAUI Site Visit Initiative (Mid-American Universities International)

The MAUI partnership was founded in 1992 and links were developed during the late 1990's with the Utrecht Network with funding from the EU and the American government.

One of the first phases of the grant was for each side to send teams to visit partner institutions. At that time, the teams from MAUI visited only Network institutions from EU member nations because of the funding sources. Once that grant ended, our exchange was extended to all of the Utrecht Network members and, in addition, the Utrecht Network has expanded significantly. This has resulted in a number of Utrecht Network institutions which have not received a visit from us.

Several years ago, MAUI initiated a new programme to visit or re-visit our Utrecht Network student exchange partners. Our initial priority was to visit newer members of the Utrecht Network and especially those in eastern Europe who had joined after the initial grant. In addition to these institutions joining the Network after the initial grant, many of

our study abroad staff had not visited those particular countries. We therefore felt the need to expand our knowledge of the many opportunities available.

The first visits were in 2012. Susan Potrafka, Missouri University of Science and Technology, and Emily Hassenstab, University of Nebraska at Omaha, visited Utrecht Network members in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland. In 2014, Kate Wozniak, University of Missouri-Kansas City, and Ann Marie Park, University of Nebraska-Kearney, visited members in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. This year, Thomas Saville of Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Justine Hamilton of the University of Kansas have visited the universities of Bologna, Ljubljana, Graz and Leipzig. With these visits, we also begin re-visiting some of the original members of the exchange.

Another feature of our visits this year is that our team has participated in the Utrecht Network Student Mobility Task Force meeting which was held in Graz. In addition to these specific MAUI site visit teams, we have found that a number of our members have bilateral linkages with Network institutions and they have volunteered to conduct a site visit on our behalf. In some cases, those members have volunteered to add on visits to other, nearby Network institutions as well. In this way, we hope to reach most of the Utrecht Network members within the next five or six years.

Thomas Saville
Associate Director for Study Abroad
and Exchanges, Center for International
Education, Southern Illinois University,
Carbondale



Joint MAUI/Student Mobility Task Force meeting

On 19 March members of the Task Force Student Mobility met with MAUI representatives in Graz. It was a pleasure to welcome Thomas Saville (Southern Illinois University Carbondale), who has been working with the MAUI-UN Exchange since its beginning.

We were equally happy to get the chance to meet Jami Lewis, from Texas State University San Marcos, one of the youngest member universities in the MAUI network. They were joined by Nathalie Hennebelle from Strasbourg, who recently took over as the European MAUI contact person.

Discussions revolved around better promotion between the networks and how to improve selection of the Utrecht Network students applying to study at MAUI universities. Means of promotion mentioned were different types of study abroad fairs, student involvement in promoting host and home universities, uploading the fun fact sheets collected by the Task Force Student Mobility on the MAUI Homepage and a database called Studio Abroad used by many MAUI members to supply information to their students.

Tom and Jami had visited the University of Bologna and the University of Ljubljana before travelling to Graz and continued on to visit Leipzig University afterwards.

FUN FACTS

It is a fact that a student's choice of destination for studying abroad is not only dependent on academic facts and the course catalogue. Students are also interested in the country, the city and the culture.

The Task Force for Student Mobility, within the Utrecht Network, has started collecting interesting information and facts about the universities within the Network. These facts can be funny, weird, extraordinary, impressive, and/or serious – it is entirely up to you what kind of facts you would like to present for your university and city.

The fun facts material will be available for all universities within the Network and you will be able to find them on the Utrecht Network website.

Here are a few examples of facts that have already been collected:

Helsinki, Finland

- 15.8 inhabitants per km.
- Midnight sun and the long period of darkness during winter.
- Famous Finns, Finnish design innovations and brands: Sauna, Jean Sibelius, Artek, The Moomins, Linux, Marimekko, Angry Birds, Alvar Aalto, Iittala and of course the one and only Santa Claus.

Graz, Austria

- The Hollywood star and former Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, grew up in a small village close to Graz. And you can actually go see the boat of promise where Arnold asked his wife (well former wife) to marry him.
- Graz has been awarded the title of UNESCO World Heritage site.

Aarhus, Denmark:

- The Danish Crown Prince Frederik graduated in Political Science from Aarhus University in 1995.
- Danish people are the happiest on the entire Earth.

Utrecht, The Netherlands:

- In Utrecht we do everything by bike!



Student Mobility Task Force/MAUI representatives (L-R)

Trine Høj Eriksen (back)
 Petra Rabitsch (front)
 Gérald Zimmermann
 Lucie Durcova
 Rita Vienazindiene
 Maarit Haukka
 Doris Knasar
 Jami L Lewis
 Nathalie Hennebelle
 Thomas A Saville

NEWSinbrief

Partner meetings at NAFSA

The NAFSA conference this year is taking place 24–29 May 2015 in Boston, USA. Both AEN and MAUI will be hosting networking events with Utrecht Network partners. Details are as follows:

AEN-UN Luncheon

Following a very successful and enjoyable catch-up during NAFSA 2014, Deakin University would like to invite all partner universities to save the date for this year's AEN-UN NAFSA Luncheon:

WHEN: Tuesday, 26 May 2015 from 12pm until 2pm

The location is yet to be confirmed, an official invitation with further information will be sent to members in due time. In the meantime, if there are any topics you would like to see discussed during this meeting, please contact Anouk van der Vorst at anouk.v@deakin.edu.au. The AEN partners look forward to seeing you all at NAFSA 2015!

MAUI-UN Networking event

The MAUI Network would like to invite Utrecht Network members to a networking event from 2–3.30 pm on Wednesday 27 May at Westin Boston Waterfront Hotel.

The MAUI partners look forward to meeting Network colleagues, both old and new.



Utrecht Network website

The Network will be launching a new website in summer 2015. The website will be a significant promotional tool and will increase the Network's visibility.

An intranet section is also being developed, which will serve as an information point for members of the Network. The Task Forces will have sections on the intranet which will enable the Task Forces to promote their activity to members. Members will be able to view progress to date on the website at the AGM in May.

Young Researchers grants

During autumn 2014 the Student Mobility Task Force, on behalf of the Network, co-ordinated the application process for the 2015 Utrecht Network Young Researchers grants.

The grants are designed to broaden mobility between the Network's institutions. All ten grants were awarded and sixteen Network institutions will be involved in the process (sending and receiving institutions).

The most popular receiving institutions this year are Aarhus Universitet, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi and Lunds Universitet.

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

 **UNIVERSITY OF Hull**

Designed by the University of Hull