

The Netherlands can be proud of its science and its scientists. Dutch science enjoys a prominent role on the world stage. The Government of the Netherlands wants to maintain this leading role and has formulated a number of ambitions for 2025.

2025 Vision for Science: choices for the future

The plans of the government regarding science policy are presented in the document '2025 Vision for Science: choices for the future'. The Dutch House of Representatives and the Senate have yet to approve the plans.

The ambitions of the government are the following:

- Dutch science is of worldwide significance.
- Dutch science has even closer ties with society and the private sector; it has maximum impact.
- Dutch science continues to be a breeding ground for top talent.

Ambition: Dutch science is of worldwide significance

The government wants to ensure that Dutch science maintains its international position. Leading research is already being conducted in various areas. The government wishes to retain opportunities for creativity and innovative ideas. In this way, science can contribute even more to tackle societal challenges as well as increase economic growth.

Matching EU subsidies

When scientists receive a European grant, the amount is often not high enough to carry out the complete study. The institution also pays part of the cost. This is called matching. Since the government wishes to build upon past successes in Europe and encourage research institutes to compete for European projects, they will reserve an additional €50 million for matching from 2015 onward. This will provide an extra incentive since institutes will be able to cover part of their matching obligation from this additional €50 million rather than having to call on their primary budget.

National Science Agenda

By the autumn of 2015, the government wants to have a National Science Agenda. Scientists, entrepreneurs, civil society organisations and the government will work together in creating this agenda. The National Science Agenda should challenge and inspire both researchers and civil society and lead to ground-breaking scientific discoveries. Societal challenges and economic opportunities will be taken into account.

We shall strive to facilitate international cooperation, and we shall structure our system in such a way that we are flexible enough to respond promptly to social and scientific challenges which have yet to emerge. This will avoid fragmentation and will strengthen the position and recognition of Dutch science in international partnerships. Therefore, The National Science Agenda fits in well with the European research program Horizon 2020.

Renewing infrastructure

Large-scale research facilities make the Netherlands attractive to scientists and the innovative industry. To maintain this position, the IT infrastructure must be renewed. A permanent commission for large-scale research infrastructure is to be established within the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

Ambition: Science with maximum impact

In 2025, Dutch science should have maximum impact on society and the private sector. That is why the government wishes to:

Make science accessible to everyone

The government has the ambition to have sixty per cent of all publicly funded scientific articles available in Open Access by 2018. In 2024 this should be 100%. Publicly financed research should be available to anyone who wishes to consult it.

Participative public

The government actively promotes science communication. The existing 'Weekend of Science' is to be expanded to become a large-scale and prestigious event with activities nationwide. By 2025, the government would like to have improved the outreach and impact of science communication by, for example:

- Public participation in scientific research;
- Engaging the public in formulating research questions to be addressed;
- Debates about the potential impact of new technology on society.

Confidence in science and scientific integrity

Science has an important position in society. Therefore an active policy to safeguard quality and integrity is essential. The government wants to stimulate replication studies. This means that research should be reproducible. The government also wants to strengthen the position of the National Board for Research Integrity (LOWI).

Strengthening cooperation between science and the private sector

Cooperation between scientists and entrepreneurs can lead to scientific breakthroughs. This could offer new opportunities for society or the economy.

Stimulate entrepreneurship

Universities and universities of applied sciences should encourage entrepreneurship as a possible career for graduates. This is accomplished through the Valorisation Programme.

Better use of patented knowledge

Industry should make better use of patents arising from the results of scientific research.

Strengthening the knowledge function of the universities of applied sciences

For example through more practical research and professionalising the organisational structure. And through partnerships with the universities and to enhance the capacity to acquire to European grants and subsidies.

Closer cooperation between government and science

Governments should consult scientists in solving important societal challenges. The National Science Agenda should be guiding here.

Ambition: science as a breeding ground for talent

The government wishes to give scientists the opportunity to develop their talents to their full potential. In order to achieve this, the government will be taking the following measures:

- **Challenging scientific talents to pursue a broad career**
The government wishes to encourage scientific talent to become fully involved in all aspects of research, education, entrepreneurship and other ways of putting scientific knowledge into practice.
- **Attracting international talent**
Institutions should devote attention to positioning the Netherlands as an attractive location in which to pursue a scientific career. The international position of Dutch science can also be strengthened by involving representatives of Dutch research in overseas missions.
- **More PhDs in private sector companies and the central government**
The government will enter an agreement with the private sector with the objective of increasing the number of PhDs working in the private sector and in central government by several hundreds. The government also wishes to create greater opportunity for differentiation in PhD-level education.
- **Promoting equal opportunities for women in science**
The Netherlands will align its policy and action with the European initiatives and adopt an active policy intended to ensure that the male-female balance is at or above the European average by 2025.
- **Give scientists more space**
The government wishes to place the researcher himself – or herself – at the centre of its policy. In the future, scientists need to devote less of their time to apply for grants. NWO and the universities will work towards this. The pressure to publish articles and papers should also be reduced. The new standard evaluation protocol (SEP) emphasizes the broad quality of the researcher's work.