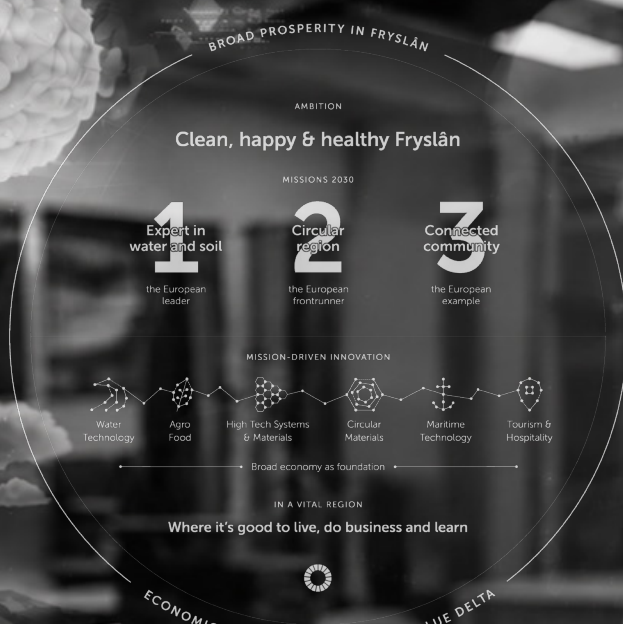




EDUCATIONAL AGREEMENT FRYSLÂN



2026
2030

**A LIFETIME OF
LEARNING
AND INNOVATING
TOGETHER**

**GLOBAL LEADER IN CIRCULARITY
ROOTED IN THE COMMUNITY AND CONNECTED TO THE WORLD
FOR A CLEAN, HEALTHY AND HAPPY FRIESLAND**



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COLOPHON

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1 > INTRODUCTION: A LIFETIME OF LEARNING AND INNOVATING TOGETHER

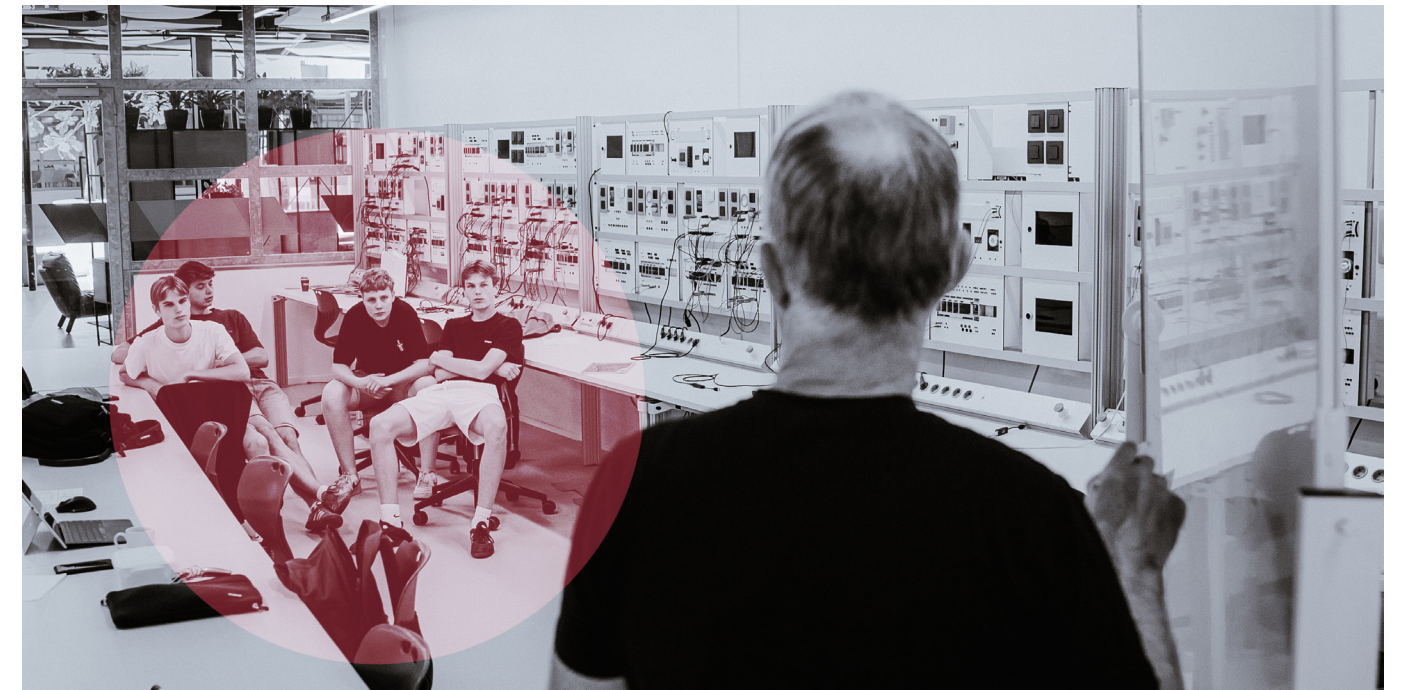
Under this Friesland Education Agreement (FEA) 2026–2030, we – as educational and research institutions: the secondary schools affiliated with VO Fryslân, Aeres, Firda, Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences and the University of Groningen – are building on the collaboration we have been forging since 2022 with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations. In doing so, we are working together for the community and the future of Friesland. We once again emphatically reaffirm our shared responsibility to harness education, research and innovation for the development of people and the future of Friesland – with the shared ambition of fostering talent and ensuring ‘the best place on earth, both now and in the future’.

For us, this agreement is more than just an administrative arrangement. It is a declaration of trust and a shared pledge: we give talent room to flourish, ensure that knowledge, professionalism and skills make a difference, and take joint responsibility for the future of Friesland. Within this partnership, we support and strengthen one another and contribute to a learning environment in which people and the region can develop together. Thus, we are building a Friesland based on broad prosperity, which is and will remain a vibrant and resilient region, whilst maintaining and strengthening its position as a leader in circularity. For us, this FEA is not, at its core, about systems or structures, but about people. About young people finding their way in a constantly changing world. About working people and adults who continue to develop. About people who discover their talents, put them to good use and thereby give meaning to their lives and work. We believe that every person has talent. We see learning as a force that helps people discover who they are and who they want to become. Through education, research and innovation, we create opportunities to develop our knowledge, professionalism and skills, bringing together mind, hands and heart. This is how we make a difference to people and their communities. Learners take away new insights and become champions and ambassadors of change in a world full of transitions and challenges. That is why we continue to improve our teaching, research and innovation, and why we are constantly seeking the right ways to equip people to be resilient and forward-looking. This is how we are working together to build a clean, healthy and happy Friesland, where everyone can play their part and no one is left behind. Because we know that a region grows when people grow.

Their individuality recognised. Their questions heard. Rooted in the community.

2 > CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES: OUR SHARED MISSION

Friesland is facing far-reaching social, economic and environmental changes. Technological developments, such as digitalisation and AI, are emerging in rapid succession and transforming the labour market. At the same time, demographic trends, such as an ageing population and a decline in the youth population, are creating new challenges. Issues relating to the economy, living conditions, health, sustainability, inclusion and livelihood security call for new knowledge, new expertise and new forms of skills and collaboration. We recognise that these developments present both challenges and opportunities. They call for renewal and innovation, but also provide scope to strengthen Friesland’s earning capacity and labour productivity, making the region fit for the future. This requires us to work together, forge new connections and support those who are adaptable, responsive and committed to continuous development. That is why we are committed to fostering a strong learning culture and a close link between education, research and innovation. It is precisely in light of these challenges that we are building on the collaboration that has developed over recent years. This is not based on individual ambitions, but on the realisation that the issues Friesland faces call for a common direction, collaboration and shared responsibility. Building on this shared foundation, we are realising our ambition and acting in accordance with our shared compass for Friesland. That compass takes concrete shape in the ambition that we champion as a region and towards which we are working together.



3 > GLOBAL LEADER IN CIRCULARITY: OUR AMBITION

Our ambition is clear: we want to further develop Friesland as a global leader in circularity. In 2025, Friesland was named the most circular region in the world – the result of years of collaboration, learning and innovation, rooted in the Frisian way of doing things: cooperative, self-directed and meaningful. This ambition is a direct response to the challenges Friesland faces. For us, circularity is not an end in itself, but a way of tackling economic, environmental and social issues in an integrated manner. We are therefore working towards a region in which prosperity, well-being and quality of life are in balance, and in which people can live healthy lives, develop themselves and make meaningful contributions to their community and society. What sets Friesland apart is that circularity is not an abstract ideal here, but everyday practice. Together, we are working on tangible and practical solutions to the major challenges of our time. Here, learning takes on meaning through doing. Here, we do not simply react to changes, but shape them together. Circularity is at the heart of the way we learn, work and collaborate, and is reflected in the links between education, research and innovation. We don't just talk about circularity; we put it into practice. Circularity is therefore not an end in itself, but part of a broader strategy. That course is determined by our compass of broad prosperity.



4 > BROAD PROSPERITY: OUR SHARED COMPASS

Broad prosperity serves as Friesland's guiding principle and shapes our ambitions and decisions. It helps us take a holistic approach to the challenges Friesland faces and focus on what really matters to people and society. It is our belief that genuine progress is achieved where prosperity, well-being and quality of life are in balance, and where people can live healthy lives, develop themselves and make meaningful contributions to their community and society. It is precisely through this lens that we are examining the changes Friesland faces. The population is ageing, the labour market is shifting and more work needs to be done with fewer people. At the same time, technological developments are changing the nature of work and learning. These developments have a direct impact on broad prosperity: they call for different ways of organising ourselves and for conscious choices about where we focus our efforts. Consequently, the importance of people who possess knowledge, expertise and skills, who are adaptable and able to work well with others, is growing.

Education, research and innovation therefore form the foundation for this broad prosperity and our circular ambitions. They enable people and organisations to cope with these changes, strengthen communities, stimulate economic growth and innovation, and contribute to a strong, inclusive and future-proof region. That is why we are working together to create a dynamic learning environment in which development, innovation and collaboration are the norm. We align ourselves with European, national and regional agendas – including the Blue Delta Economic Agenda (see image) and agendas relating to agriculture, nature, culture, language, healthcare and living conditions – and link these wherever possible. Broad prosperity is only truly meaningful if it is felt in people's everyday lives and in the sense of connectedness within the community. That is why we make targeted choices, work together and ensure that education, research and innovation are well distributed across the region. In doing so, we strengthen the vitality and resilience of Friesland and create opportunities for talented people. This is the aim of this agreement.





5 > EDUCATION, RESEARCH & INNOVATION: OUR STRENGTH

To realise our ambitions and act in accordance with our shared vision for Friesland, we are using education, research and innovation as a driving force for change and development. For us, education and research are inextricably linked and, together with innovation, form the basis for learning and renewal in Friesland. Through our interaction, we contribute to people's personal growth and to a Friesland that continues to develop. We do not view learning as a starting point or an end point, but as a continuous, circular process in which people discover, develop and apply their talents for the benefit of the community. For us, learning is more than just acquiring knowledge, expertise and skills. It is about personal growth, nurturing curiosity and the ability to make a lifelong contribution. This learning takes place both within and outside educational settings – online, on campuses, at workplaces and within the community. Together, practice-oriented, applied and scientific education and research form a rich spectrum of learning in which every talent can flourish and continue to develop. This is how we equip people for meaningful participation: as a professional and global citizen, as an entrepreneur, volunteer and co-owner of the community.

To make this possible, we in Friesland draw on a range of educational concepts and pedagogical approaches. It is precisely that diversity that is our strength. From craftsmanship and transformational learning to transition-oriented and design-based education: every perspective contributes to the way we shape learning. Together, we form a multifaceted learning environment in which education and research operate on an equal footing and in harmony. We work on the basis of a circular process of learning: not a linear path, but a continuous process across different stages of life and different contexts. Learning takes place both in the classroom and in practice, in close connection with the labour market and regional issues. Knowledge, expertise, skills and experience thereby reinforce one another: what we learn takes on meaning in practice and our experiences, in turn, feed back into our learning. This calls for flexible and responsive education and research that meets the needs of students, working people and employers. We encourage ownership of learning and career development and, in addition to professional expertise, we also strengthen social, reflective and civic skills, as well as critical thinking. We learn together – from, with and through one another. This creates a continuous process of lifelong development. The variety of educational approaches embodies unity in diversity: a vibrant Frisian learning environment in which every talent can flourish and through which we contribute to a resilient and future-proof region.

6 > KEY OBJECTIVES: OUR COMMITMENT

With this agreement, we are committing to our shared ambition, our direction and our strength to further develop Friesland into the most circular region in the world, a vibrant and innovative region where people can live well and continue learning – now and for future generations. This shared ambition is given direction through three interrelated key objectives:

- **STRONG KNOWLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURE:** Friesland needs a robust and interconnected knowledge infrastructure in which practice-oriented, applied and scientific education and research together form a rich spectrum and reinforce one another. It is within this context that innovation and talent flourish, knowledge is put to practical use and the region becomes better equipped to tackle social and economic challenges. That is why we are committed to:
 - strong links between foundational education and practice-oriented, applied and scientific education and research;
 - continuous learning pathways for learners and working people, centred on barrier-free learning;
 - high-quality learning and social spaces and dynamic campuses that contribute to broad prosperity and to an innovative, vibrant and resilient Friesland;
 - a strong link between education and the labour market (talent strategy);
 - strengthening cooperation within Friesland and linking our knowledge infrastructure with the Northern Netherlands via the University of the North, as well as with national and international networks, in a spirit of mutual connectedness that strengthens both Friesland and these networks.
- **ADAPTABLE (GLOBAL)CITIZENS:** We are building a Friesland in which people develop into world-wise, adaptable and socially engaged citizens and professionals: rooted in the community, open to the world and equipped to face the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow. We encourage people to realise their full potential, discover who they are and who they want to become, and to continue developing their knowledge, expertise and skills throughout their lives. Talent, development potential and accessibility form the starting point for this: it is talent that matters, not ability. With a range of education and research programmes centred on the learner, we enable everyone to develop without barriers. This creates an inclusive process in which everyone takes part and no one is left behind. That is why we are committed to:
 - education and development that equip people for a changing labour market and society;
 - broad-based education, including critical thinking, collaboration, reflection and dealing with diversity;
 - the promotion of lifelong development;
 - better opportunities for barrier-free entry, progression and transition;
 - a learning environment in which people feel seen, challenged and supported.

- **BROAD PROSPERITY AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY LEADERSHIP:** we are building a Friesland based on broad prosperity where everyone can thrive and strengthening our position as a globally recognised leader in the circular economy. Through education, research and innovation, we contribute to earning potential, vitality and resilience, and to the transitions that will shape the region's future. Guided by this ambition, we are applying our knowledge and innovative strength to address the challenges, tasks and opportunities within the region. That is why we are committed to:

- knowledge development and innovation that contribute to regional issues;
- strengthening Friesland's earning capacity, labour productivity, resilience and vitality;
- developing and retaining talent within the region;
- close collaboration with regional partners in the development, application and scaling up of knowledge;
- promoting prosperity, well-being and quality of life in a coherent and balanced way;
- consolidating and further developing Friesland's position as a leader in the circular economy, by strategically utilising knowledge, expertise and innovation to support the region's circular transition and strengthen labour productivity and innovative capacity.



7 > THE WORK AGENDA'S: OUR DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS FOR 2026–2030

Based on our ambition, our guiding principles and our strengths, and the three core objectives set out in this agreement, we are providing direction and purpose to three interlinked work agendas for the period 2026–2030:

- **EDUCATION**
- **RESEARCH**
- **OPERATIONS**

In these work agendas, we bring our shared vision to life. In this document, we set out the key development pathways, priorities and collaboration agreements required to build, step by step, a strong, agile and future-proof Friesland. In this regard, the work agendas build on what already exists in Friesland: existing initiatives, strong networks and valuable partnerships. At the same time, they provide scope to capitalise on new opportunities, strengthen links and work together to tackle challenges that call for innovation. The work agendas are elaborated in Appendix I. The work agendas thus form a bridge between administrative ambition and day-to-day practice. This agreement sets out the joint direction and shared vision for the future; the work agendas provide the substantive details, the organisational framework and the impetus for implementation.

This agreement provides direction. The work agendas create momentum. Collaboration makes it possible.



8 > COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP: OUR PRINCIPLES FOR COLLABORATION

Implementing the work agendas requires a way of working together that is suited to the challenges Friesland faces. That is why we operate on the basis of collective leadership, which is shaped by our cooperative tradition. We take responsibility within our own roles, work together where collective strength is needed, and link our actions to a shared ambition. This agenda provides the common framework within which education and research contribute to the region's development and serves as a framework for pooling the efforts, capacity and resources of all partners. In this context, we work on the basis of the following principles:

- **ROLE-RELATED OWNERSHIP:** we take responsibility within our own roles, mandates and expertise, thereby contributing to our shared ambition and core objectives;
- **MAKING THE MOST OF ADDED VALUE:** we actively seek partnerships in which joint efforts create added value, and we share knowledge and link initiatives;
- **TRANSPARENT COLLABORATION:** we are open and transparent about our interests, decisions and progress;
- **SHARED DIRECTION:** we recognise implementational differences, but are all committed to the common direction set out in this agreement;
- **ONGOING COORDINATION:** we will continue to meet, reflect and hold each other to account on our joint progress.

Our collaboration is shaped by the principle of doing things together for ourselves. We take the initiative based on our own sense of responsibility, forge connections where it is worthwhile and work together to achieve tangible results for Friesland – and we do this through varying coalitions. The way of working is elaborated in Appendix II. We are monitoring the implementation of this agreement and will maintain discussions on the matter. Through joint reflection and timely adjustments, our collaboration remains flexible and sustainable.

United in direction. Varying in roles. Sharing in responsibility.

9 > CLOSING STATEMENT: OUR SHARED PLEDGE

With this FEA 2026–2030, we are expressing our commitment to the future of Friesland. We believe in the power of people and in the talent of every individual. We regard education, research and innovation as the driving forces behind development, adaptability and renewal. We are building a Friesland where learning continues to flow, knowledge is shared and people continue to develop – as learners, as professionals and as human beings. A region where talent is given the space to flourish, where no one is left behind and where we take joint responsibility for one another and the community. We therefore declare that:

*We believe in the power of people.
We believe that every person has talent.
We believe in education, research and innovation as the driving force behind development and renewal.
We are building a Friesland where learning continues to flow, knowledge is shared and people continue to develop – as learners, as professionals and as human beings. Where circular learning is the norm.*

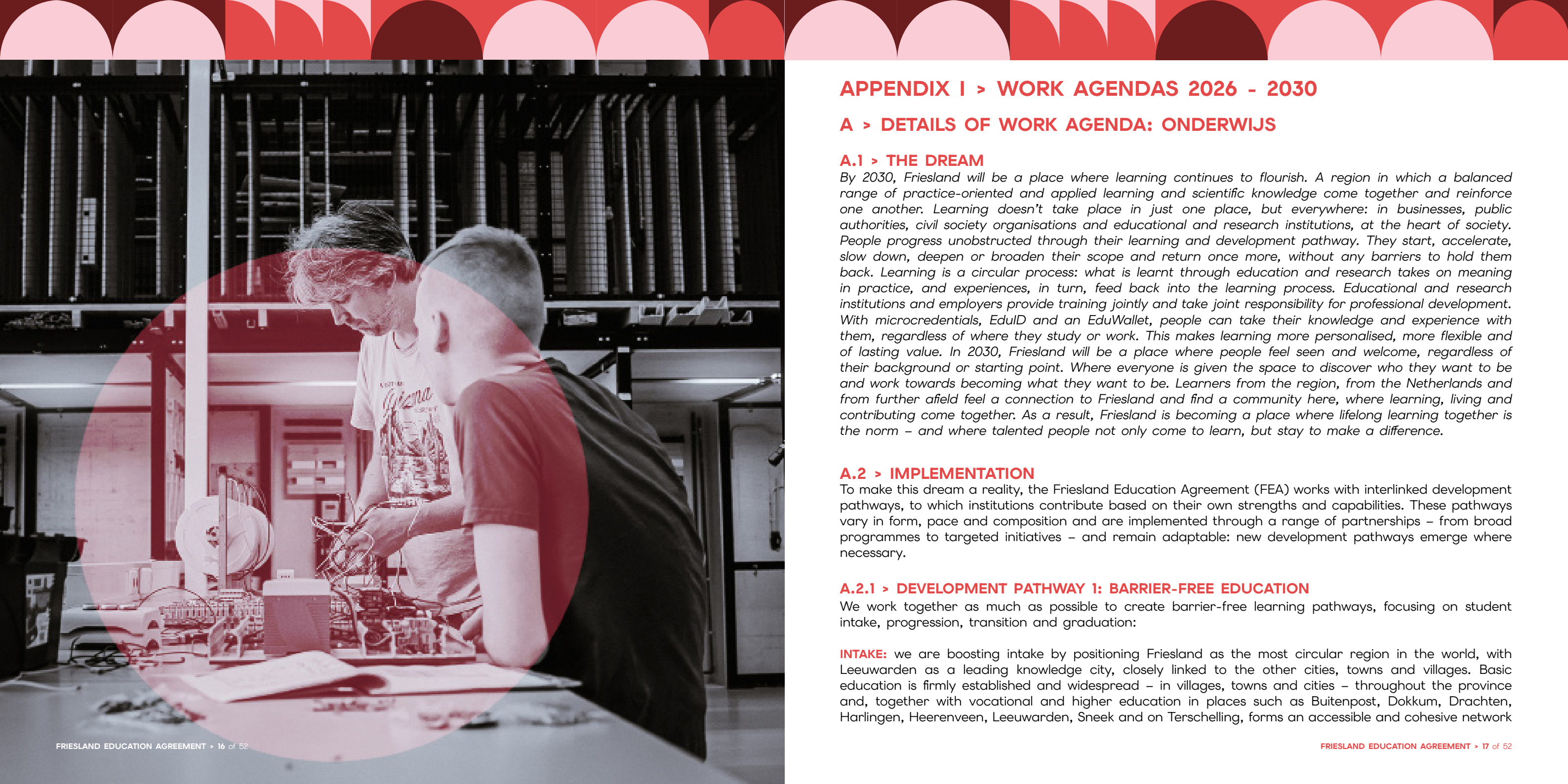
*By doing this, we are working to promote broad prosperity and to position Friesland as a leader in the circular economy.
Because the future is shaped where people continue to learn, innovate and take responsibility – for themselves, for one another and for the community.*

*We therefore declare that:
We will continue to learn,
We will continue to innovate,
We will continue to collaborate.*

*For Friesland.
For the community.
For the generations of today and tomorrow.*
Friesland, 31 August 2026

- Aeres
- Dairy Campus Wageningen Universiteit and Research
- Friesland Economic Board
- Firda
- Fryske Akademy
- Municipality of Leeuwarden
- Generation 2035
- Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences
- Inter-administrative Student Consultative Body
- NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences
- Province of Friesland
- University of Groningen
- Circulair Friesland Association
- Association of Frisian Municipalities
- VNO-NCW - SME North
- VO Fryslân
- Wetsus
- Wetterskip Fryslân





APPENDIX I > WORK AGENDAS 2026 - 2030

A > DETAILS OF WORK AGENDA: ONDERWIJS

A.1 > THE DREAM

By 2030, Friesland will be a place where learning continues to flourish. A region in which a balanced range of practice-oriented and applied learning and scientific knowledge come together and reinforce one another. Learning doesn't take place in just one place, but everywhere: in businesses, public authorities, civil society organisations and educational and research institutions, at the heart of society. People progress unobstructed through their learning and development pathway. They start, accelerate, slow down, deepen or broaden their scope and return once more, without any barriers to hold them back. Learning is a circular process: what is learnt through education and research takes on meaning in practice, and experiences, in turn, feed back into the learning process. Educational and research institutions and employers provide training jointly and take joint responsibility for professional development. With microcredentials, EduID and an EduWallet, people can take their knowledge and experience with them, regardless of where they study or work. This makes learning more personalised, more flexible and of lasting value. In 2030, Friesland will be a place where people feel seen and welcome, regardless of their background or starting point. Where everyone is given the space to discover who they want to be and work towards becoming what they want to be. Learners from the region, from the Netherlands and from further afield feel a connection to Friesland and find a community here, where learning, living and contributing come together. As a result, Friesland is becoming a place where lifelong learning together is the norm – and where talented people not only come to learn, but stay to make a difference.

A.2 > IMPLEMENTATION

To make this dream a reality, the Friesland Education Agreement (FEA) works with interlinked development pathways, to which institutions contribute based on their own strengths and capabilities. These pathways vary in form, pace and composition and are implemented through a range of partnerships – from broad programmes to targeted initiatives – and remain adaptable: new development pathways emerge where necessary.

A.2.1 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 1: BARRIER-FREE EDUCATION

We work together as much as possible to create barrier-free learning pathways, focusing on student intake, progression, transition and graduation:

INTAKE: we are boosting intake by positioning Friesland as the most circular region in the world, with Leeuwarden as a leading knowledge city, closely linked to the other cities, towns and villages. Basic education is firmly established and widespread – in villages, towns and cities – throughout the province and, together with vocational and higher education in places such as Buitenpost, Dokkum, Drachten, Harlingen, Heerenveen, Leeuwarden, Sneek and on Terschelling, forms an accessible and cohesive network

of learning and development centres. This is how we offer talented people the opportunity to develop, study, work and continue to live in Friesland. We are deliberately capitalising on Friesland's position as an international leader in the field of circularity to promote Friesland as a knowledge region, where students consciously choose to study because circularity is firmly embedded here in education, research, innovation and collaboration. In doing so, we link circularity to learning, working and living, and make Friesland an attractive place for anyone who wants to contribute to the future.

- **RECRUITMENT STRATEGY:** where possible, we adopt a coordinated recruitment strategy and examine how open days, where appropriate, can be organised in a more coherent manner, so that students make an informed choice to study in Friesland;
- **INTAKE IS PROGRESSION:** we are strengthening collaboration across the entire education spectrum, from primary and secondary education to vocational education (MBO), higher professional education (HBO) and university education (WO). Together, we are working to ensure a strong intake and a smooth progression between levels of education, with a particular focus on the transitions from secondary education to vocational education (MBO), higher professional education (HBO) and university education (WO), from vocational education (MBO) to higher professional education (HBO), and from higher professional education (HBO) to university education (WO). Through joint, continuous learning pathways, talent development, knowledge exchange and a shared progression agenda, we are creating barrier-free educational pathways, so that everyone can develop to their full potential, from toddlers to PhD students.
- **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INTAKE:** we are investing in a strong and accessible range of international education programmes, from international primary and secondary education to vocational and higher education. In this way, we are improving the living environment for international families, students and knowledge workers. We work together as much as possible to boost international student intake, with a particular focus on attracting talent to sectors facing staff shortages through vocational and higher education;
- **TRAINING PORTFOLIO:** we carefully tailor the range of courses in vocational and higher education to the needs of Friesland, ensuring that programmes are aligned with employers' requirements (across the board) and with the region's six economic priorities (focused on earning potential) – water tech, agri-food, high-tech, circular materials, maritime and hospitality. We thereby contribute to a well-functioning labour market and to society as a whole. We provide comprehensive training for employers whilst, at the same time, focusing specifically on the six key priorities of the circular transition, in close collaboration with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In doing so, we not only strengthen the link between education and the labour market, but also encourage innovation and boost labour productivity, ensuring that organisations remain future-proof and competitive.

PROGRESSION AND TRANSITION: we facilitate smooth, flexible and barrier-free learning pathways within and between secondary education, vocational education (MBO), higher professional education (HBO) and university education (WO), with the learner in the driving seat. Partners work together on a structural basis to improve academic success, reduce drop-out rates and retain talent in Friesland, in close collaboration with the local community.

- **CONTINUOUS LEARNING PATHWAYS:** we are strengthening continuous learning pathways across the entire spectrum of education, from pre-school to PhD. We are continuing to work towards smooth transitions between levels of education, including through fast-track programmes between secondary education and vocational education, progression routes between senior secondary vocational education (MBO) and higher professional education (HBO), and the further development of training institutes. In addition, we are exploring innovative pathways between universities of applied sciences and research universities, for example through a minor at a university of applied sciences that offers direct entry to a research university master's programme without the need for a pre-master's programme;
- **GREATER FLEXIBILITY:** where possible, we are making education more flexible across institutions, so that learners can combine modules more easily and follow personalised, continuous learning pathways;
- **LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS:** in future, learning outcomes will be recorded in an institution-independent manner wherever possible, including via microcredentials, EduWallet and EduID. This is a complex, multi-year development programme involving varying paces and a step-by-step approach. Based on the strong collaboration in Friesland and in conjunction with NPuls, we are working together on this wherever possible, with the aim of making learning more agile, responsive, accessible and future-proof;
- **GUIDANCE AND REFERRAL:** we are strengthening appropriate guidance and effective referral processes within and between educational institutions, so that learners can find their place at the level and in the institution that best suits their talents and ambitions. This ensures that no learner is left behind and that talent is retained.

STUDENT FLOWS: we are working to increase the number of learners and graduates in the region and strengthen their ties to Friesland, so that talent is retained in the region and can continue to develop here.

- **SLOW POTENTIALS:** we are reducing study delays by focusing specifically on 'slow potentials', including through targeted programmes such as boot camps, data-driven monitoring of academic progress and the exchange of effective approaches between institutions. The aim is to provide these learners with the best possible support so that they can obtain a qualification within the set timeframe.

- **RETENTION RATE:** we are improving the retention rate of national and international students by working with employers to give them a better understanding of career prospects in Friesland. By doing this, we make what is currently often unknown and unappreciated visible and attractive, address the brain drain and turn talent retention into a shared regional challenge.
- **ADDITIONAL TOOLS:** together with our partners, we are exploring which additional measures could help to strengthen talent retention, such as regional trainee schemes in sectors facing labour shortages, a potential Frisian Impact Fellowship for graduates and a stronger link between housing and employment, for example through a scheme for first-time buyers.
- **ALUMNI:** we are engaging alumni as ambassadors for Friesland and exploring how we can keep them involved with the region, both as a network and as role models for current students, and in the context of lifelong development.
- **CONTINUOUS LEARNING:** we actively encourage (continuous) learning across the entire spectrum of education. We support pupils and students in their transition from secondary education to vocational education (MBO), higher professional education (HBO) and university education (WO); we encourage MBO students to progress to an associate degree or bachelor's degree; and we encourage HBO students to continue their studies at university level. In addition, we provide learners with information about progression opportunities within full-time, part-time and work-based learning programmes, and we create flexible development pathways that contribute to lifelong learning.



A.2.2 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 2: LIFELONG DEVELOPMENT

We are building a cohesive and recognisable Lifelong Development (LD) ecosystem for Friesland, in which learning throughout life is a matter of course and accessible to all. Educational institutions operate on a demand-driven basis and coordinate their LD activities amongst themselves, with employers and with the Fryslân Werkt labour market region. This creates a coherent range of services for working people, employers and partners, enabling us to respond to rapid labour market shifts and sectors facing labour shortages. Cooperation between educational institutions and employers is already strong, with long-term sector-wide agreements that effectively match supply and demand. At the same time, Friesland has a high proportion of small SMEs, where pooling demand is more complex. Better coordination and cooperation make it possible to respond more effectively to changes in the labour market. There is a Northern Human Capital Agenda to which employers and educational institutions are affiliated, and work is also underway on a Frisian version.

- **REGIONAL LIFELONG DEVELOPMENT FUND:** along with local authorities and employers, we are exploring the possibility of setting up a regional LD fund, which all Frisians can use as an incentive for further training and reskilling and which will relieve employers (particularly smaller SMEs) of as much of the burden as possible;
- **CATALYST FOR INNOVATION:** we use LD as a catalyst for innovation by working with employers to identify current learning and development needs and together translating these into suitable programmes for retraining, reskilling and further training. Our approach is demand-driven, ensuring that learning and work reinforce one another and that both professionals and organisations continue to develop;
- **FRISIAN SME ACADEMY:** in close collaboration with SMEs, we are exploring the development of a Frisian SME Academy. We are already working closely and successfully with a large number of SMEs. At the same time, we see that it is precisely smaller SMEs that often find it more difficult to access education and have less access to the time, resources and networks needed for training. Together with and on behalf of (small) SMEs, we want to address this issue. The Frisian SME Academy will be an accessible hub to which businesses can turn for collaboration, retraining and further training on topics such as finance, HR, digitalisation, AI and automation. In this way, we strengthen the link between education and the real world and ensure that smaller businesses can also get involved.
- **PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS:** we enter into LD agreements with public organisations regarding further training, retraining and coursework, on the basis that these should, where possible, be organised through public educational institutions in the region;
- **PERMIT HOLDERS:** we are exploring the development of an educational programme for refugees with a residence permit by linking existing initiatives, such as IKS, UAF, Grotius and NT2 programmes, where possible, so that permit holders can participate sustainably in learning, working and living together in Friesland.

With LD, not everything can or needs to be done at the same time. Partners make informed choices, build on what works and focus on areas where joint efforts add value.

A.2.3 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 3: ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In the field of entrepreneurship, we are continuing and strengthening cooperation between institutions and SMEs through the FRIS programme. Through FRIS, we are developing a coherent, joint programme in the field of entrepreneurship, enabling learners to follow a specialised entrepreneurship learning pathway alongside their regular course of study.

- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP LEARNING PATHWAY:** in addition to their regular study programme, we offer learners a specialised entrepreneurship programme, open to (international) students at various levels (multi-level), aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills, setting up one's own business and business succession;
- **FACILITIES, EXPERTISE AND GUIDANCE:** where possible, we organise and make available not only the programme, but also facilities, expertise and guidance, on a collaborative basis;
- **TOP ENTREPRENEURS FUND:** as part of this approach, we utilise the Top Entrepreneurs Fund, financed by organisations including FB Oranjewoud, through which students are supported each year with funding and mentoring from experienced entrepreneurs;
- **FOUNDED AND TOPMINOR BOOST YOUR BUSINESS:** through a number of universities of applied sciences and research universities, we are continuing our collaboration with Founded as a northern start-up and social innovation programme, and with the Topminor 'Boost Your Business' via De Noorderlingen;
- **FRISIAN ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR:** we are continuing to develop this initiative, including through the introduction of the Frisian Entrepreneurial Student of the Year award, linked to the Frisian Enterprise of the Year award, in order to raise the profile of and reward entrepreneurial learners;
- **WILLY WORTELS:** we are specifically looking for ways to better develop innovations from PhD students, 'practors', lecturers and researchers, by connecting these 'Willy Wortels' with entrepreneurial students or by providing them with more targeted entrepreneurship skills.

A.2.4 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 4: SPARK THE MOVEMENT

Through the SPARK the Movement programme, we are continuing and strengthening cross-institutional collaboration in the field of education for sustainable development, in partnership with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations and with the support of the Circular Friesland Association. The programme promotes transformative learning and is based on a 'whole-school approach', in which sustainability and circularity are linked to education, organisation and regional collaboration. The programme will run until 2027. We will then bring SPARK the Movement to a close – as a programme organised separately from educational institutions – but we will emphatically continue to build on its philosophy, the movement and our mutual collaboration as the substantive basis for the further development of education and collaboration with our partners.

- **CONTINUATION:** after 2027, we will persevere with the philosophy, movement and collaboration of SPARK the Movement within and between educational institutions;
- **EMBEDDING:** together, we are exploring how the principles and working methods of SPARK the Movement can be embedded in a sustainable way within educational institutions and in their collaboration with one another. We want to take greater joint ownership of the philosophy behind SPARK the Movement and its further development;
- **RCE ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** we are exploring how the status of the Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development, recognised by the United Nations, can be sustainably embedded so that the RCE's international recognition, networks and working methods continue to contribute to transformative learning and sustainable collaboration beyond 2027. Over the coming period, we will work together to further develop exactly how this ownership and these safeguards will take shape;
- **CIRCULAR FRIESLAND ASSOCIATION:** together with the Circular Friesland Association (CFA) and its affiliated SMEs, we are exploring how we can best safeguard and strengthen the crucial role of education within the association and in the transition to a circular economy, also beyond 2027.





A.2.5 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 5: STUDENT WELL-BEING

As educational institutions, we are actively committed to the well-being of our learners, equal opportunities and an inclusive learning environment. Each institution has its own policies, facilities and initiatives in this regard. At the same time, we recognise the added value of learning from one another and working together wherever possible, without relinquishing the individual responsibilities of institutions. As part of this joint exploratory study, we are focusing on the following areas:

- **SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE:** we are investigating how knowledge, expertise and best practices in the field of student well-being can be shared more effectively, including on issues such as loneliness, substance use, inclusivity and social safety;
- **JOINT PROGRAMMING:** we are exploring whether it is possible and desirable to develop joint programmes linked to specific days and themes, such as Blue Monday, Loneliness Awareness Week, Orange the World, Purple Friday and Ketikoti;
- **CONNECTING NETWORKS AND COMMUNITIES:** we want to raise the profile of each other's networks and communities – including those focusing on diversity and inclusion, first-generation students and learners with specific support needs, such as neurodiversity – and, where possible, bring them together. This means that, depending on where they are studying, learners can make use of a broader and more accessible network for support and socialising. Building on this connection, we actively seek to collaborate with entrepreneurs, public authorities and welfare and advocacy organisations to work together towards an inclusive community;
- **COLLABORATION WITH WELFARE ORGANISATIONS AND LEEUWARDEN-OOST:** we are actively seeking to forge links with welfare organisations and are continuing our collaboration with Leeuwarden-Oost. In this district of Leeuwarden, educational institutions, together with welfare organisations, residents and other partners, contribute to equal opportunities, talent development and well-being by bringing together education, community engagement and support within the neighbourhood;

This initiative aims to support learners in discovering who they are and who they want to become, and provide them with the space to flourish in a diverse, inclusive and safe environment – both personally and in terms of their development of knowledge and skills.

A.2.6 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 6: A LEARNING COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Within the FEA, we are strengthening the learning ecosystem through interaction, exchange and collaboration focused on broad prosperity (our guiding principle) and circularity (our ambition). We do this through the following initiatives:

- **WEEK OF THE REGION:** we are continuing the Week of the Region, during which learners, lecturers and researchers collaborate across multiple levels and disciplines to address current social issues, together with entrepreneurs, public authorities and civil society organisations from Friesland. This week takes shape through practical experience, with teams given the freedom to develop initiatives from the ground up and organise the week together;
- **FRISIAN EDUCATION CONFERENCE:** we are exploring the possibility of organising an annual Frisian education conference covering the full spectrum of education – from primary and secondary schools to vocational, higher professional and university education – which will always focus on a topical theme and provide opportunities for networking, knowledge-sharing and joint reflection;
- **TALENTHOUSE:** we actively contribute to the development of a Talenhouse, aimed at fostering a stronger international environment for international knowledge workers;
- **YOUTH PLATFORMS:** where possible, we support youth platforms such as the Inter-Administrative Student Consultative Body, study associations, Generation 2035, Tienskip and the Wadden Region Youth Council;
- **HYBRID TEACHING:** we encourage a hybrid approach to teaching, both in person and online, in which professionals from the field deliver some of the teaching and lecturers also remain actively involved in professional practice, so that knowledge, skills and experience remain closely linked;
- **PUPIL AND STUDENT COUNCILS:** we encourage pupil and student councils to come together, learn from one another and jointly put overarching issues on the agenda in bodies such as the Frisian Education Council and the Broad Administrative Consultative Body.

A.2.7 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 7: LEEUWARDEN STUDENT CITY

We are continuing Leeuwarden Student City (LSC) as a joint initiative involving educational institutions, public authorities and businesses, aimed at enhancing student life in Leeuwarden and strengthening the bond between students and the city. By doing so, we support students, encourage sport and socialising, and contribute to an attractive, inclusive and vibrant student community. At the same time, through LSC, we want to actively contribute to positioning Friesland as the most circular region in the world, by making sustainability and circularity an integral part of student life. We are continuing LSC's work until 2030 and are collaborating with public authorities and businesses to achieve a balanced and sustainable budget, so that every student in Friesland can take advantage of a rich and meaningful student life.

- **INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES:** through LSC, we organise, amongst other things, introductory activities to welcome students and strengthen their connection with the city;
- **SPORT AND SOCIALISING:** we facilitate sport and social interaction for learners as a key part of an attractive and inclusive student life;
- **BROAD-BASED URBAN CONSULTATION:** we remain committed to the broad-based urban consultation process between the municipality of Leeuwarden, student associations and the student union Inter-Administrative Student Consultative Body, and wish to further strengthen this collaboration and expand it where appropriate.

We wish to further strengthen these activities and, where appropriate, expand them. In this context, some of the options we are exploring include the following:

- **CULTURE PASS:** we are exploring the development of a culture pass, which will enable learners to access cultural facilities at a reduced rate;
- **MEDIAHUIS NOORD:** we are exploring agreements with Mediahuis Noord regarding free or reduced-price access to news for learners;
- **LIBRARIES AND TRESOAR:** we are exploring arrangements with libraries and Tresoar regarding a free or reduced-price subscription;
- **STUDIUM GENERALE:** we are exploring whether collaboration is possible on organising two major inspirational lectures a year, partly in view of the fact that a number of institutions are co-owners of Studium Generale.

We want to bring these initiatives together on a single student platform or app, as a central, interactive hub where students can find everything relevant to their student life in Leeuwarden.

- **FACILITIES AND ACCESS:** through this platform, we provide access to services such as the culture pass, sports facilities, free tickets or discounts, and an overview of cultural institutions and their programmes, with easy access via QR code or digital access;
- **PRACTICAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT:** through this platform, we also provide practical information and support for student life, such as tips, facilities in the city and opportunities to meet other students;
- **EVENTS CALENDER:** together with partners in the fields of marketing and events, we are exploring whether the city's events calendar can also be integrated into the platform, so that students can access activities, events, lectures and cultural programmes in Leeuwarden all in one place. The aim is for students to settle in quickly, get to know the city and take an active part in social and cultural life.

Finally, we would like to explore how other educational institutions – in vocational and higher education – in Friesland and those studying there can be better involved, so that they can also benefit from introductory activities and facilities. In doing so, we will focus in particular on the vocational education (MBO) centres in Buitenpost, Dokkum, Drachten, Harlingen, Heerenveen and Sneek, so that learners throughout the province can benefit from the network, the programmes and the support offered by LSC.



B > DETAILS OF WORK AGENDA: RESEARCH

B.1 > THE DREAM

By 2030, Friesland will be a region in which educational and research institutions collaborate closely with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations on research and valorisation. Together, we are working on solutions to social issues, in collaboration with Europe and international partners. Global challenges take on a local significance here, whilst Frisian solutions find their way to Europe and the wider world.

Friesland, together with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), forms a single, cohesive knowledge and innovation ecosystem. Education and research reinforce one another within strong (hybrid) research groups at the interface between practice-oriented, applied and scientific research. Working closely with partners, they make a direct contribution to innovation and practical solutions, such as through hubs and campuses where learning, research and application come together. Together, these hubs and campuses form a connected network, each with its own distinct profile yet collectively forming a single entity, linked to the Northern Netherlands, Europe and beyond. This is where education, research and practice come together, giving rise to new insights and applications. In this way, we are developing Friesland into a region that translates complex issues into workable solutions – rooted in the region and connected to the world.

B.2 > IMPLEMENTATION

To make this dream a reality, the Friesland Education Agreement (FEA) works with interlinked development pathways, to which institutions contribute based on their own strengths and capabilities. These pathways vary in form, pace and composition and are implemented through a range of partnerships – from broad programmes to targeted initiatives – and remain adaptable: new development pathways emerge where necessary.

B.2.1 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 8: HYBRID RESEARCH GROUPS, HUBS AND CAMPUSES

We are strengthening the Frisian knowledge and innovation ecosystem by bringing together practice-oriented, applied and scientific research – where it adds value – within hybrid research groups and linking this to hubs and campuses as places where education, research, innovation and practice converge. Hubs and campuses are a shared responsibility of the parties involved and operate within the framework of broad prosperity and the associated (economic) agendas – often in collaboration with SMEs. The current overview of hybrid research groups, hubs and campuses can be found in Appendix III.

- **METRO MAP:** we are making the knowledge and innovation network integral and visible in a publicly accessible metro map of campuses, supported by data-driven insights and regular impact reports. Using this metro map, we illustrate how hubs and campuses relate to one another, where strengthening or pooling resources offers added value, and where there are opportunities to deepen mutual and cross-sectoral links;

- **INVESTMENT RATIONALE:** in line with regional, national and European agendas, and based on a clear investment rationale and coherent development pathways ('trains'), we make well-founded decisions regarding the further development, review or – where necessary – discontinuation of activities;
- **NEW HYBRID RESEARCH GROUPS, HUBS AND CAMPUSES:** where relevant, we are exploring the joint development of new hybrid research groups, hubs and campuses;
- **NORTHERN COLLABORATION:** we position the Frisian hybrid research groups, hubs and campuses as an integral part of northern collaboration, including through the Groningen Agreement and the University of the North (UoN);
- **KONNECT:** we are continuing the Konnect programme (2025–2029), part of the UoN, which helps SMEs, the education sector and the research community to connect more effectively and collaborate, thereby boosting the innovative capacity of the Northern Netherlands;
- **YNBUSINESS:** we are drawing on the experiences of Frisian hubs and campuses that receive resources from Konnect to further develop and refine the campus structure, whilst ensuring a better alignment with the frontline organisation Ynbusiness.

B.2.2 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 9: INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN COLLABORATION

We are strengthening the international networks of educational and research institutions in Friesland by better linking collaboration, knowledge-sharing and joint positioning.

- **EUROPEAN KNOWLEDGE AGENDA:** we are working towards a joint European knowledge agenda and community, which ties in with our hybrid research groups and campuses as shown on the metro map;
- **GRANT ADVICE:** we deploy grant advisers in a targeted and coordinated manner to capitalise on European opportunities;
- **COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE:** we operate within an informal community of practice in which expertise is shared and utilised with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness and quality of our European engagement without setting up new formal structures;
- **FRIESLAND EUROPAPACT:** we are linking this commitment to the Friesland EuropaPact (FEP), which brings Europe closer to Friesland and Friesland closer to Europe. Within FEP, we work alongside entrepreneurs, public authorities and civil society organisations to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and joint European funding applications, including through masterclasses and voucher schemes.

B.2.3 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 10: RESEARCHER/ENTREPRENEUR IN RESIDENCE

We are exploring the possibility of temporarily bringing leading national and international talent to Friesland each year, in the form of a top researcher or top entrepreneur, to inspire and empower learners, lecturers, researchers and partners through new perspectives, up-to-date knowledge and national and international experience.

- **WORLD-CLASS TOPTALENT:** we are exploring whether this expert, where appropriate in terms of subject matter and where financially feasible, could commit to a defined period as a researcher in residence or entrepreneur in residence. In this role, the expert would work with one or more hybrid research groups and/or campuses on a specific issue and actively contribute to education and knowledge-sharing, such as through guest lectures, masterclasses, workshops and interaction with learners and professionals. The initiative focuses on Friesland's strategic priorities. Funding is being explored through a combination of public funds and contributions from foundations and public authorities.





C > DETAILS OF WORK AGENDA: OPERATIONS

C.1 > THE DREAM

By 2030, the way educational and research institutions in Friesland are run will reflect the same ethos as learning and research themselves: circular, interconnected and dynamic. Institutions will retain their distinct identity, but share what makes them stronger. This will create room for quality, sustainability and social impact. Our digital and physical environments are seamlessly integrated: systems reinforce one another and technology is a binding rather than fragmenting force. We are doing this with the support of SURF and NPuls, and through the safe and responsible use of generative AI via EduGenAI. With an EduID and EduWallet, learners can move freely between education, research and professional practice, taking control of their own learning and development pathways. Digitalisation and AI underpin this as a silent force: they remove complexity and create space for creativity, interaction and development.

Our campuses and buildings are sustainable, inclusive and welcoming. They are inspiring places to work and learn that function as vibrant innovation ecosystems. As employers, too, educational and research institutions form a circular community. We make the most of the wealth of talent in society and offer people the scope and opportunities to work with us and develop their skills.

C.2 > IMPLEMENTATION

To make this dream a reality, the Friesland Education Agreement (FEA) works with interlinked development pathways, to which institutions contribute based on their own strengths and capabilities. These pathways vary in form, pace and composition and are implemented through a range of partnerships – from broad programmes to targeted initiatives – and remain adaptable: new development pathways emerge where necessary.

C.2.1 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 11: CIRCULAR PROCUREMENT

Together, we are exploring whether and where collaboration in the field of circular procurement delivers demonstrable added value in terms of effectiveness, costs and social impact. We are doing this through the:

- **CIRCULAR COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT PROGRAMME:** we use this programme as a tool to support and accelerate the transition to a circular economy through procurement. In doing so, we actively draw on the expertise and network of the Circular Friesland Association (CFA), so that practical experience and innovation from the region can be applied within our organisations.

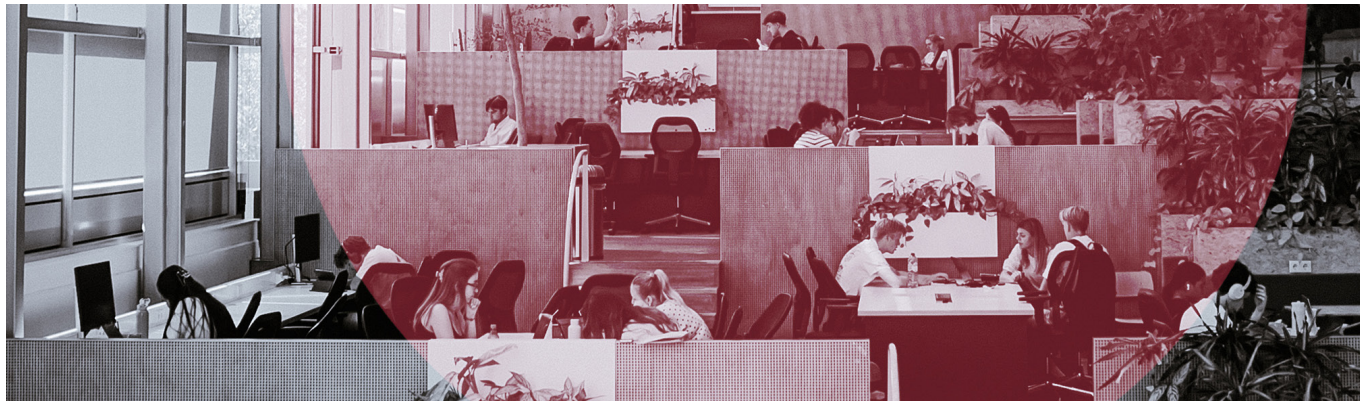
C.2.2 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 12: REAL ESTATE

We collaborate on real estate matters through regular real estate consultations, during which we coordinate our approaches to under- and overcapacity, the optimisation of existing real estate, new-build projects, campus development and the shared use of facilities, with the active involvement of partners such as local authorities. We are utilising this partnership to ensure the efficient use of resources and to increase social value.

- **ENERGY AND WATER:** we are exploring ways to reduce energy and water consumption in our buildings and use water and energy more efficiently. In doing so, we draw on our collective knowledge and build on the expertise available in the region;
- **CLIMATE-AND CO2-NEUTRALITY:** by sharing knowledge and experience, we are working together towards climate- and CO2-neutral buildings and campuses. In doing so, we draw on our collective knowledge and build on the expertise available in the region;
- **ACHMEA TOWER:** together with the municipality of Leeuwarden, the province of Friesland and Harns Invest, we are exploring the feasibility, preconditions and added value of developing the Achmea Tower into an iconic study and meeting place for learners. We are investigating whether the upper floors can be converted into contemporary study spaces, so that studying, collaborating and socialising come together at a central regional hotspot next to the station and the city centre.

C.2.3 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 13: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

We are exploring how we can work together to engage with public authorities in discussions regarding public transport concessions and the accessibility of educational and campus sites, including connections to the Wadden Islands, in consultation with the concession-granting authorities – the Province of Friesland and the national government.



C.2.4 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 14: DIGITALISATION

We are each working at our own pace on the digitalisation of education, research and operational management, whilst at the same time strengthening, where possible, co-ordination, knowledge-sharing and collaboration within Friesland. We utilise national support organisations and programmes, such as SURF, Edu-V and NPuls, as starting points for joint development.

- **SURF:** we use SURF to provide a shared digital infrastructure and to facilitate collaboration and interoperability within education and research;
- **EDU-V:** we are joining forces with Edu-V to establish secure, flexible and future-proof standards for digital data exchange and digital learning resources;
- **NPULS AND EDUGENAI:** we utilise NPuls to digitalise, increase flexibility and innovate in education, including the development and use of digital learning materials and shared digital resources, with generative AI via EduGenAI providing safe and responsible support for education and research;
- **KEY TEAMS:** we link this to national key teams for development, coordination and implementation.
- **CENTRE FOR TEACHING & LEARNING:** we are exploring how we in Friesland can best coordinate our administrative approach to digitalisation and how staff working on digitalisation can meet, share knowledge and exchange best practices, including via the Centre for Teaching & Learning. We ensure that systems are properly integrated, including EduID, EduWallet and other IT solutions for digital identity, access and data sharing;
- **AI-FACTORY, BACH & BEETHOVEN:** We are exploring how the AI Factory and the Beethoven and Bach programmes offer further opportunities for education, research and innovation. Wherever possible, we are strengthening collaboration so that staff working on flexibility, digitalisation, cyber security (NIS2), resilience and privacy can systematically share knowledge, learn from one another and work together within the Frisian context, as well as collectively when opportunities arise elsewhere.

C.2.5 > DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY 15: PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION

We collaborate in the field of people and organisation where this contributes to attractive, inclusive and future-proof employment practices, whilst respecting the individual responsibility of each institution.

- **EXCHANGE AND SECONDMENT:** we are exploring how staff exchanges and secondments can be better facilitated, so that knowledge and experience can be utilised across institutions and staff can develop their skills more broadly;
- **FURTHER TRAINING AND RETRAINING:** where possible, we organise joint further training and retraining for staff and arrange this amongst ourselves, so that professional development becomes a natural and accessible part of their entire career;
- **BAAN AFSPRAAK BANEN:** we are exploring a joint approach to the Baan Afspraak Banen (BAB) job agreement scheme, with the aim of actively offering opportunities within educational and research institutions to people with a disadvantage in the labour market;
- **TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE PLANNING:** we are exploring further collaboration on talent development and workforce planning, such as jointly addressing labour market shortages, sharing expertise in the field of organisational development and enhancing staff well-being and long-term employability.



APPENDIX II > WAY OF WORKING 2026–2030

2.1 > OUR MOTTO: DOING THINGS TOGETHER FOR OURSELVES

The Friesland Education Agreement (FEA) calls for an approach that is in keeping with the collaboration within the region. We take responsibility for our own contribution, reach out to one another where collaboration is needed, and organise the practical implementation as much as possible. For the period 2026–2030, we are opting for a more streamlined and flexible approach. Not a complex programme with a separate management layer, but not a non-binding collaboration without clear agreements either. We are combining flexibility in implementation with clear agreements on ownership, progress and results. The principle of doing things together for ourselves guides our actions. We do this on a per-development-pathway basis in varying coalitions, often through triple-helix collaboration between the education sector, businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations.

- **OURSELVES:** because each partner takes responsibility based on their own remit, expertise and position;
- **TOGETHER:** because the challenges facing Friesland require collaboration between education, research, public authorities, businesses and civil society organisations;
- **DOING:** because the value of the agreement must ultimately be reflected in its implementation, in the results achieved and in a tangible strengthening of Friesland.

2.2 > OUR COLLABORATION: LIGHT ON ORGANISATION, FOCUSED ON RESULTS

The FEA's operations are deliberately organised on a small scale. Development strategies are not implemented through cumbersome programmes or extensive accountability structures, but through coalitions that operate on the basis of a shared purpose, clear ownership and a limited number of concrete outcomes. It is precisely this lean organisational structure that calls for a focus on results. That is why, for each work agenda and each development pathway, we always work on the basis of the same minimum implementation rationale:

- a clear vision of the objective;
- a limited number of concrete results or milestones for the coming period;
- explicit ownership;
- a recognisable coalition of committed partners;
- a steady cycle of progress, reflection and adjustment.

For each development pathway, this is presented in a concise implementation format, setting out the objective, ownership, partners involved, the next milestones and progress in broad terms. This ensures that implementation remains flexible and practical, without losing sight of coherence, progress and accountability.

2.3 > OUR COORDINATION: FRISIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL

Administrative coordination for the knowledge institution takes place within the Frisian Education Council. Each educational and research institution is represented on the council by one director. The council monitors the progress of the agreement and discusses how its implementation is going. The council has five tasks:

- setting, and where necessary adjusting, the shared direction;
- prioritising topics and development pathways;
- monitoring progress and results;
- addressing and resolving bottlenecks;
- taking administrative decisions where necessary.

The Frisian Education Council is therefore not only a forum for consultation, but also the hub where the education sector comes together, sets out a common course and acts collectively in relation to other partners within the triple helix. At the same time, the consultation process is directly linked to the triple helix networks in Friesland, where joint initiatives are also shaped in collaboration with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations. In this collaborative effort, the Frisian Education Council and these networks help to set priorities and provide administrative support where breakthroughs or additional coordination are needed. This is essential, as a large proportion of the ambitions set out in the FEA can only be realised through close collaboration within the triple helix. The Frisian Education Council comprises administrative representatives from Aeres, Firda, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, the University of Groningen/Campus Fryslân, VO Fryslân, the province of Friesland, the municipality of Leeuwarden and the Association of Frisian Municipalities. The council meets every quarter, with the chair and secretary responsible for the agenda, preparation and follow-up. Other partners within the FEA – including Dairy Campus/Wageningen University & Research, the Friesland Economic Board, the Fryske Akademy, the Inter-Administrative Student Consultative Body, the Circulair Friesland Association, VNO-NCW MKB Noord and Wetsus – are involved as agenda members. Issues that require broader coordination or concrete action within the triple helix framework are addressed through these networks and taken forward to the appropriate forums.

2.4 > OUR DIRECTION: WORK AGENDAS AND DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

The FEA is implemented through three work agendas, namely education, research and operational management. Fifteen development pathways have been identified within these work agendas. The work agendas provide coherence and direction. The development pathways are the level at which implementation takes place. Not every development pathway requires the same approach. Some pathways focus on implementation and scaling up, whilst others focus on exploration, design or connection. That is why each development pathway works with a suitable coalition, building on the cooperation, expertise and networks that already exist in the region. Here, the FEA serves as a common framework rather than an additional hierarchical layer. Implementation takes place within and between the institutions and through collaboration with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations.

2.5 > HOW WE WORK TOGETHER: OWNERSHIP AND ROLES

Each work agenda and development pathway has a clear division of roles.

- **ADMINISTRATIVE OWNER:** administrative owners are designated for each work agenda. Together, they ensure administrative oversight and act as commissioning bodies; they link the work agendas to the relevant triple helix networks and are accountable for progress, coherence and prioritisation;
- **PROJECT LEAD:** at least one leader is appointed for each development pathway: a director, manager, programme leader or other senior professional from one of the institutions or from among the partners. The project lead organises the implementation, brings together the relevant stakeholders, monitors progress and ensures that results, bottlenecks and decisions are identified in good time;
- **COLLABORATION COALITION:** each development pathway is supported by a coalition of professionals and partners from secondary education, vocational education, higher professional education and university education, and, where relevant, also from public authorities, the business community and civil society organisations. The composition varies per pathway and is tailored to the nature of the challenge;
- **FEA COORDINATORS:** each institution and its affiliated partners appoints a coordinator who maintains an internal overview of the work agendas and development pathways, organises links with their own organisation and supports senior management in preparation and follow-up. The coordinators also identify, from within the institutions, where development pathways intersect, where coordination is needed and where there are opportunities for a joint approach;
- **SECRETARY:** the secretary of the Frisian Education Council monitors the pace of implementation, supports the Frisian Education Council and identifies overlaps, coherence, opportunities and bottlenecks. The secretary also ensures that issues affecting several development pathways or work agendas are placed on the agenda in the appropriate forum. The secretary thus plays a modest but crucial role as a unifying force in the implementation process.

2.6 > OUR CYCLE: IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

To link organisational efficiency to results, the FEA operates on a fixed quarterly cycle.

- Quarterly schedule: progress meetings are held every quarter: within development pathways and coalitions; between project leaders and administrative owners; and within the Frisian Education Council, broad reflections are made on progress, milestones, bottlenecks and necessary decisions, and where appropriate, these are also discussed within the triple helix framework. The key focus is always on:
 - what has actually been achieved;
 - what requires extra connection or support;
 - where adjustments are needed;
 - and which issues require administrative decision-making.
- Annual cycle: each year, we assess which results have been achieved, which milestones have been realised and which areas require adjustment. In the process, consideration is also given to which development pathways require acceleration, where new opportunities are arising and which priorities need to be adjusted.

It is not the scope of the plans that is key, but the coherence between progress, discussion and course correction. With this in mind, we adopt a learning-based and adaptive approach, focusing on insight, monitoring, appreciation and reflection (IMAR). This approach makes progress visible and open to discussion, without placing an unnecessary burden on implementation. Where development pathways are working well, they can be left alone. Where progress is lagging or circumstances change, we make adjustments, reassess or halt the process where necessary.





APPENDIX III > OVERVIEW OF HYBRID RESEARCH GROUPS, HUBS AND CAMPUSES

3.1 > INTRODUCTION

Below is an overview of hybrid research groups, hubs and campuses relevant to Friesland. This overview is not exhaustive and evolves in line with societal, global and domestic challenges. There is already a great deal in place within this network, but greater cohesion and focus are needed to increase its effectiveness and impact. Collaboration within the triple helix provides guidance in this regard. We are strengthening the network by improving links between hybrid research groups, hubs and campuses, stepping up collaboration and working across sectors. This creates a single, coherent network in which knowledge, research, innovation and practice reinforce one another – like a clear diagram of lines and junctions, similar to a metro map. The result is greater coherence between initiatives that contribute to earning capacity and those aimed at vitality and resilience. Hybrid research groups, hubs and campuses play a complementary role in this regard.

3.2 > WATER TECHNOLOGY

The Leeuwarden Water Campus is at the heart of Frisian water expertise and innovation. This is where education (vocational, higher professional and university), research and innovation come together to focus on water quality and water technology. Within this ecosystem, practors, lecturers and researchers work closely together, ensuring that the full spectrum of knowledge – from professional expertise to fundamental science – is represented. To further strengthen this capacity, we are organising the campus structure in an increasingly coherent manner. Initiatives such as the Centre for Innovative Water Expertise (CIWE) and the Centre of Expertise in Water Technology (CEW) are being linked in a smart way. WETSUS, the leading international, mission-driven and fundamental water technology research institute, plays a unifying role, with 60–70 PhD students at any one time and a Master's programme in Water Technology with around 40 students. WETSUS is the driving force behind the firmly established knowledge and innovation cluster centred on water technology. In addition, WETSUS acts as the central hub for the unique, continuous learning pathway in water technology in Friesland. This learning pathway begins with a talent programme designed to inspire pupils in primary and secondary education to take an interest in technology in general and water technology in particular. This early career guidance ties in seamlessly with further education at senior secondary vocational (MBO) and higher professional education (HBO) levels, academic programmes at university level and PhD programmes. The result is a comprehensive development pathway in which talent can develop within the region, from initial exposure to cutting-edge research. The Water Alliance, which focuses on entrepreneurship and market development, fosters an entrepreneurial environment in which students and graduates at all levels are sought after as interns, final-year students or employees. In addition, the Water Application Centre (WAC) serves as an important hub where educational and research institutions and businesses can carry out experiments in the field of water technology. The Green Transition programme strengthens this ecosystem through public-private partnerships. Taken together, this constitutes the prime international example of a fully integrated water technology chain, in which science and practice go hand in hand and Friesland further strengthens its position as a global knowledge leader.

3.3 > SOIL

In LINE with and closely connected to the Water Campus, we are working on the development of a Soil Campus. This campus ties in with the existing Soil Knowledge Centre. The Soil Campus focuses on soil quality, sustainable land use, climate adaptation, nature-inclusive solutions and spatial planning. Within the Soil Campus, practice-oriented, applied and scientific education and research are brought together within a single, cohesive ecosystem, in direct collaboration with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations. By systematically linking knowledge of water and soil, we create a solid foundation for future-proof agriculture, a healthy living environment and broad-based prosperity in Friesland.

3.4 > AGRI-FOOD

Friesland is the Netherlands' leading agricultural province and boasts a robust ecosystem comprising agricultural businesses, the processing industry and a high-calibre knowledge and innovation base. In the coming years, we will embark on a targeted transition from bulk production to nutrient specialisation and from low cost to added value. This will mean we can supply sustainably produced, healthy products and contribute to the health of people, the soil and the living environment. Educational and research institutions are already working closely with businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations in this respect, both in initial education and lifelong development (LD), as well as in the field of research. Building on this solid foundation, we are strengthening and making the entire food chain more sustainable, from primary production to the consumer. We do this through specialised campuses and programmes, including the Dairy Campus. This is Wageningen University & Research's leading research and innovation centre dedicated to the future of dairy farming. On campus, researchers, farmers and businesses are working together on practical innovations to make the dairy sector more sustainable. The research focuses on various themes, such as biodiversity, smart farming, green energy, feed efficiency, resilience, emissions and soil. In addition, we have the Bakery Sweets Centre, an innovation centre dedicated to the development of sustainable and innovative bakery and confectionery products. Through the Soil Campus, the Soil Knowledge Centre and the Healthy Soil Coalition, we are developing new transition models based on the principle of healthy soil. The 'Closing the Nutrient Cycle' programme focuses on restoring the cycle between consumption and the soil. This initiative ties in with the Northern Programme's 'Green Transition', 'Fascinating' and 'Re-Ge-NL' programmes, in which entrepreneurs (farmers and producers), public authorities, and educational and research institutions are working together to develop a regenerative agricultural system.

We are working towards a coherent approach in which water technology, soil, agri-food and the living environment are developed in an integrated manner. These areas are inextricably linked and require an integrated approach. By making this interconnection explicit and reinforcing it, we are taking steps toward an integrated and circular approach, in which systems reinforce one another and contribute to a sustainable and future-proof region.

3.5 > HIGH-TECH SYSTEMS AND MATERIALS (HTSM)

Within HTSM, the focus is on autonomous systems as part of the smart industry and high-tech manufacturing sector. Our ambition is to become the Netherlands' fourth tech region and a key European player, with autonomous systems as our distinctive specialism. This positioning is embedded within the Drachten Innovation Cluster and Campus Drachten. This is where education, research and innovation come together to focus on advanced manufacturing technology, robotisation, digitalisation, data and AI. Research and education are inextricably linked in the national positioning of the Northern Smart Industry: from vocational training and further education to applied and scientific research. These continuous learning pathways are directly linked to the practical and innovation challenges faced by businesses in the Drachten Innovation Cluster. In Drachten, efforts are being focused on the development of a business school, instrument training programmes and the Institute for Autonomous Systems as a driving force for talent development, knowledge valorisation and industrial innovation. Drachten's international standing is being strengthened through European collaboration, including within the European Digital Innovation Hub and the Northern Netherlands AI Coalition. As a corollary, we are strengthening the manufacturing sector's capacity for innovation and contributing to future-proof employment and regional economic growth.

3.6 > LIFE SCIENCES & TECHNOLOGY (LS&T)

The educational institutions wish to work together to establish a strong foundation in the field of LS&T, whilst strengthening their existing study programmes and research portfolio. The existing infrastructure and laboratories in Leeuwarden provide a solid foundation. This is in line with the Wennink Report, which focuses on key strategic technologies, strong regional ecosystems and making better use of talent and innovative capacity. Furthermore, this fits in well with the region's existing infrastructure and expertise in the fields of water technology, soil and HTSM. We are therefore exploring how this cluster can be further developed and how, in collaboration with the business community, we can expand the network and increase its impact.



3.7 > CIRCULAR AND BIO-BASED MATERIALS

Within Friesland, we are strongly committed to circular and bio-based materials. Heerenveen is a key hub in this regard and home to the National Circular Plastics Test Centre and a cluster of companies active in recycling and circular applications. This cluster in Heerenveen forms part of a wider northern network of strong and cohesive clusters in Emmen, Heerenveen and Delfzijl, within which the supply chain – from raw materials to end use – is being continuously strengthened. In addition, educational and research institutions are working together with the Circulair Friesland Association on the potential development of a Biobased Campus, in keeping with our position as a European frontrunner in this field. The bio-based sector brings together the entire supply chain: from cultivation and processing to the design and application of bio-based materials. The aim is to develop new revenue models and applications. In parallel with this, LD programmes are being developed in which farmers, construction companies, architects and educational institutions work together on retraining and further training. Thus, knowledge is directly translated into expertise and practical applications. This campus is closely linked to the Biosintrum knowledge centre and the Soil Campus, which is yet to be developed.

3.8 > MARINE AND MARITIME TECHNOLOGY

Friesland has a robust and diverse maritime and marine ecosystem that encompasses the entire supply chain: from shipping, yacht building and shipbuilding to the use and management of the sea. On Terschelling, the main focus of education and research in the field of shipping is at the Willem Barentsz Maritime Institute, whilst research into marine applications is based in Leeuwarden. South-West Friesland is home to a dynamic cluster of businesses and expertise in the fields of yacht building and shipbuilding, with a strong national and international position. In addition, we are exploring ways to further strengthen the maritime knowledge infrastructure in the municipality of South-West Friesland, so that three strong and cohesive clusters centred on maritime businesses and education can develop in Friesland: on Terschelling, in Leeuwarden and in South-West Friesland. In Sneek, we are exploring the development of a Maritime Campus, with a focus on electric sailing and bio-based shipbuilding, where education, research and innovation come together in the field of sustainable maritime technology. To this end, we are working closely with leading institutions, such as the Wadden Academy, Wageningen Marine Research and the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ). Together, they focus on ecology, sustainability, the use of the sea and the balance between economic activities and natural values. In Leeuwarden and on Terschelling, we are strengthening the link between maritime technology and marine knowledge, so that education and research reinforce one another. The Maritime Simulation & Training Centre (MSTC) also plays an important role as a national simulation centre for Dutch educational institutions. The MSTC supports education, training and research and operates as an independent national facility. Within the FEA, we are exploring the formation of a hybrid maritime-marine research group, in which researchers from vocational, higher vocational and university-level education will collaborate on a structural basis with businesses, public authorities and educational and research institutions based in Sneek, Leeuwarden and on Terschelling. This research group strengthens the links between shipping, yacht building, shipbuilding and marine expertise, and explicitly connects these with other campuses. In this context, we are exploring, in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence, the establishment of a Naval/Maritime Campus on Terschelling, bringing together education, research and innovation in the fields of maritime safety, resilience and marine applications.

3.9 > HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

Friesland is developing forward-looking research in the fields of tourism, hospitality and leisure, with a focus on sustainable destination development, quality of life and the regional economy. In the European Tourism Futures Institute (ETFI), the region has an internationally recognised centre of expertise for futures studies, scenario planning and strategic innovation in the hospitality sector. Within the FEA, we are exploring the development of a hybrid research group on hospitality and tourism, in which practice-oriented, applied and scientific research are systematically integrated. This research group links regional practical issues to international knowledge development and explicitly connects hospitality research with other fields, including water, soil and agri-food.

3.10 > BROAD PROSPERITY

Broad prosperity provides an overarching perspective because our campuses and hybrid research groups contribute to the prosperity, well-being and quality of life of the region. Across the full spectrum of practice-oriented, applied and scientific research, we are exploring the formation of a hybrid research group on broad prosperity, in collaboration with the Friesland Planning Office. Within this research group, institutions work together with public authorities, civil society organisations and businesses on broad prosperity issues that directly affect the quality of life, the resilience of communities and the sustainable development of Friesland. The group acts as a connecting hub between the various thematic hybrid research groups and campuses, and provides knowledge and practical insights for policy and practice.



3.11 > HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

In the field of health and well-being, Friesland has a strong and growing ecosystem of living labs and innovation hubs, within which collaboration is becoming increasingly prominent. Examples of these include the Frisiuslab at Frisius MC, the innovation initiatives at Nij Smellinghe Hospital, the Inclusivity LAB and the Leeuwarden-Oost programme. These places demonstrate how education, research and practice come together and work jointly to drive innovation in the field of health and well-being. Within the FEA, we are building on these examples and are committed to further strengthening and scaling up our collaboration. The existing infrastructure forms the basis for the development of hybrid research groups focusing on health and well-being, in which professionals, researchers, learners and community partners collaborate on a structural basis to address societal challenges. These hybrid research groups focus on innovations that enhance health and well-being, including applications of digitalisation, artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as innovations relating to lifestyle, prevention, healthy living environments and social resilience. By integrating education, research and practice, these groups help to improve health and well-being in Friesland. Health is closely linked to several campuses within the network, such as Agri-food, the Water and Soil Campus, and Vitality and Elite Sport. It is directly linked to food quality, lifestyle and the social environment. So, we approach health as a holistic endeavour that connects and strengthens our various campuses.

3.12 > FRISIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The Frisian language, multilingualism and culture form an essential pillar of Friesland's identity, social cohesion and quality of life, as also set out in the Agreement on the Frisian Language and Culture 2024–2028 between central government and the region. Within the FEA, education and research teams – including the Fryske Akademy as a partner and leading knowledge institute in the field of the Frisian language, multilingualism and culture – work closely together with the aim of ensuring that practice-oriented, applied and scientific research function as a single, coherent whole as far as possible. Language and cultural research are explicitly linked to social issues such as education, participation, inclusion, democratic engagement and regional development. At the same time, we view the Frisian language and multilingualism not only as cultural capital, but also as a source of economic and innovative strength. We are therefore exploring how multilingualism can be more closely linked to regional innovation, including through a potential hybrid research group, applications in healthcare, education and digital technology, and the positioning of Friesland as a multilingual living lab. In this way, language and culture strengthen both the sense of community and Friesland's national and international profile.

3.13 > SAFETY AND RESILIENCE

Across the Northern Netherlands, we are working together to promote safety and resilience. In Friesland, the focus is on strengthening resilience in villages, towns and cities, including through projects relating to crisis management, quality of life and social resilience. This concerns safety in the broadest sense: ranging from physical and social safety to health, water safety and dealing with social disruption. In addition, we are strongly committed to defence-related knowledge development, in collaboration with the Royal Netherlands Air Force and the Royal Netherlands Navy. This will take shape, amongst other ways, through the development of a Marine/Maritime Campus on Terschelling and an Air Force Campus in Leeuwarden, where education, research and innovation will come together to address security, technology and operational issues. In addition, we have adopted a demand-driven approach to working in collaboration with partners such as the Friesland Safety Region and Frisian authorities on issues relating to safety in the broadest sense, crisis management, health, water safety and the living environment. Here, we are linking defence, civil security and social resilience, and contributing to a resilient Friesland – prepared for both everyday and exceptional challenges. At the same time, we recognise that defence investment can also provide a boost to wider regional innovation. We are therefore exploring how defence and civilian innovation can be more closely integrated, for example through dual-use applications in the fields of water safety, drones and maritime systems, and by strengthening the link between Leeuwarden Air Base and the HTSM agenda. By doing so, we harness security and resilience not only as a protective force, but also as a driving force for technological development and economic vitality.

3.14 > ELITE SPORT AND VITALITY

Friesland is a cradle of sport. NOC*NSF and Topsport Noord are based in Heerenveen and support elite athletes in the region. Together with sports organisations, educational institutions and professional clubs, we are working to strengthen the environment for elite sport. Within the FEA, we are exploring the development of a hybrid research group focusing on elite sport and vitality, which will bring together education and research in the areas of performance, health, nutrition, recovery, simulation-based learning and talent development. In doing so, we will establish explicit links with the field of health and well-being.

3.15 > MEDIA AND DIGITAL INNOVATION

Through the Media Innovation Campus (MIC), we are working on research and innovation at the intersection of media, technology and society. The MIC focuses on issues relating to multimedia, communication, marketing and transformative media, and serves as a centre for innovation and practical applications in the fields of entrepreneurship and media innovation. In this area, we work closely with media partners such as Mediahuis, Omrop Fryslân and various communications and marketing agencies, and we bring together education, research and practice. At the same time, the impact of digitalisation, artificial intelligence and robotisation is growing rapidly. These developments affect all sectors and organisations. In Friesland, this applies in particular to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), where the digital revolution is sometimes still unknown or untapped, but where there is a great need for knowledge, skills and practical applications. We see this as a clear social and economic challenge. That is why we are working towards the further development of the MIC into a Media and Digital Innovation Campus, bringing together media, digitalisation, AI and media literacy. The MIC Lab for Transition Communication will also be part of this ongoing development. This lab researches and develops the role of communication and media in societal transitions, such as circularity, health and digitalisation, and looks at how these contribute to broad-based prosperity in the region through behavioural change and engagement. This campus focuses on supporting SMEs, civil society organisations and public authorities in the areas of digital transformation, new revenue models, organisational and talent development, and the responsible use of AI. Knowledge and expertise in the fields of data, AI, media and digital literacy are brought together and made accessible to the region. An important step in this process is to build a bridge with the AI Factory in Groningen and link it to the MIC. This creates a strong link between fundamental and applied AI knowledge, media innovation and regional practice; it enables us to strengthen digital resilience, innovative capacity and entrepreneurship in Friesland; and it helps us build a future-proof knowledge base in the Northern Netherlands.

3.16 > ORANJEWOUD EXPORT ACADEMY

The Oranjewoud Export Academy supports SMEs in the Northern Netherlands in their export and internationalisation efforts by bringing together entrepreneurs, experts and knowledge institutions within a practical and results-oriented platform for international growth. Driven by the conviction that the Northern Netherlands has great international potential, the Oranjewoud Export Academy helps businesses translate their export ambitions into concrete strategies, knowledge development and collaboration. Through programmes, masterclasses, coaching, practical networking opportunities and the inclusion of the regional Export Alliance, among others, the Oranjewoud Export Academy strengthens businesses' international competitiveness. To this end, the Oranjewoud Export Academy is already collaborating with various educational and research institutions to better link knowledge, research and young talent to SMEs operating internationally. The Frisian education and research institutions wish to explore how this collaboration can be further strengthened and broadened, so that businesses can gain even better access to talent, knowledge and innovation in the areas of internationalisation and exports.



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