



Agenda

January 28 -- New Years drinks at 18pm at the Stelling (WN)

February 26 -- Famelab 2016 Prerounds

March -- PhD Movie

June -- PhD day

More information about the events on www.provu.nl

Dear PhD candidates and postdocs,

As the holidays are coming closer, many of you will be occupied with trying to get things done before heading back home. Autumn has been quite hectic for ProVU as well; we have said goodbye to several board members, fortunately also welcomed new board members, and have met several times with the VU board to fight for a better implementation of the new PhD rules. As you will read in this newsletter, thanks to an outstanding contribution of our OR members, the abolishment of the reimbursement for printing theses has been extended until April 2016. This means that all PhDs **defending before 1st of April 2016** can still get the University wide reimbursement of 500 euros.

ProVU has several ambitions for the following year. To better represent PhDs at higher level, we would like to set up a board of representatives, including at least one or two members of each faculty. If you would like to be our eyes and ears and represent your faculty at the university level, please send us an email! In addition we have several events planned for 2016. We will screen the PhD Comics movie (date still to be decided) and are looking for a committee to organize the PhD day in June. Most importantly, however, we warmly invite all PhDs and Postdocs to join our yearly New Years drinks on January the 28th 2016! The New Years drinks will be organized at the Stelling in the W&N building, starting 6 PM.

For now I wish you the best of luck finishing your papers and the like, and of course happy holidays!

On behalf of the ProVU board,

Samantha Scholte (Chair)



ProVU is looking for you!

Are you interested in representing all PhD-candidates and Postdocs of the VU University (VU) and the VU University Medical Center (VUmc)? Advocating the interests and rights of all PhD's? You may want to join our board. We are specifically looking for a new secretary and new general board members. Are you up for the challenge? Send an email to board@provu.nl and we will contact you!

Help us with the PhD Day!

The PhD Day is an event for PhD of all over the VU, a chance of meeting and knowing more about our environment and the chances that we are offered.

The ProVU is usually the organiser of such events and is now looking for you to join our special **PhD Day committee!**

The aim is the complete organisation of a full day of seminars and workshops for PhDs of both VU and VUmc, therefore if you are willing to invest yourself in a big project, this is your opportunity!

What you will be asked to do:

- Being efficient and coordinated in the committee
- Contact companies / printers / etc. for sponsoring
- Speak/write banners and PR material in English (Dutch is a pre)
- Keep in close contact with the ProVU board regarding finances and your schedule / proposals
- Help organise your own idea regarding the theme or a specific workshop
- Build your own advertising campaign

Contact us at board@provu.nl to join the team! If you enjoy it, we will be glad to have you joining permanently ;)



Stepping back of Anna and Jagna

During the last year, the ProVU board has undergone a lot of changes and is now arriving at a stable form. These changes have been possible thanks to the combined work of all the participants, but we are now looking for new participants in this adventure, in particular due to the stepping back of two of our members.

In the last month, both the Chair of the former iProVU, now merged into the social section of ProVU, Jagna Wisniewska, and the Secretary of the ProVU, Anna Emanuel, have stepped back from their positions. We would like to thank them sincerely for their work inside of the ProVU and the effort they invested in our projects.

Printing thesis reimbursement

This year, a big topic of discussion has been the request of the VU to cancel the 500 euros reimbursement for the printing of the thesis at the end of a PhD. This step was taken by the VU with the goal of decentralizing responsibilities regarding PhD trajectories from university to faculty level. Given the short notice, however, at most faculties reimbursement mechanisms are not yet in place. For this reason, ProVU requested and obtained an extension in the terms of the reimbursement, which means that all PhDs can still get a reimbursement for their thesis if their defense is before the 1st of April 2016. By that time, all faculties should have implemented a new reimbursement plan.



Introduction Day, welcome new PhDs!

To welcome new PhDs and PostDocs i-ProVU organized the **Introduction Days**.

On Saturday October 3rd we started with a **guided tour** around the city centre of Amsterdam to learn why the canal houses are leaning forward and how to distinguish real space cakes from placebo. Afterwards, was the **photo competition**, in which the two groups of participants were rambling through the city to photograph themselves in front of its most known monuments. We concluded the afternoon with a **gezellig dinner** in one of the restaurants near Rembrandtplein.

The second part of the Introduction Days, started on October 5th on the VU with a guided tour around the **campus grounds**. Next we listened to a presentation about the PhD experience at the VU and explaining how to arrange **administrative issues** after arrival in the Netherlands. We finished the evening with a **borrel** in the Basket.





**Come celebrate the start of
a new year with us during
our New Years drinks!**



**18th of February, 6 PM at de
Tegenstelling (W&N, D-103)**



In April 2014 elections for the Works Council (Ondernemingsraad), the university's representation council, were held. ProVU obtained 7 seats – 2 more than in the previous council period! Some highlights on what we have achieved in the past year:

Firstly, ProVU members are spread out across different committees/topics within the council. We head three committees: research and education, communication and legal affairs. One of us is also on the daily board of the council.

A fierce debate has been going on about whether PhD candidates should be considered students or employees. Last year, **we actively fought to maintain employee status** by joining forces with other Dutch councils and sending a joint letter to all the university executive boards with a strong statement against student status. Our university fortunately decided to abstain from participating in a nationwide experiment with student PhDs, thus keeping employee status.

We campaigned for the best **doctorate regulations** – regulations which are flexible enough to accommodate for differences between faculties and candidate backgrounds, yet which ensure that there are financial means to follow courses and that courses are available. Please contact us if you come across any problems with the doctorate regulations because we have ensured that an elaborate evaluation be done of the whole process.

We have kept an active eye on the **university budget**, for example making sure that budget evaluation includes that enough allocations are made for the doctorate regulations costs.

At all times we fight for **more communication in English** so that English-speaking students and researchers feel welcome on the campus and at their workplace.

We are actively involved in **new data management policies** – who owns scientific data, how is data stored, etc.

Additionally, we very carefully look at the position of young researchers in **reorganizations, faculty fusions and new housing plans**, the outcome of the **employee satisfaction survey**, democratizing **university governance** and have a voice in electing new executive board members. Within the research and education committee we meet with the *rector magnificus* every 2-3 months to discuss **vision on education and research**.

ProVU is there to represent you, so if you have concerns about any issues, do not hesitate to contact us. We are also looking for new, Dutch-speaking, council members (for details see the ad).

Yours,

Laura, Tamara, Jona, Karin, Boris, Seline en Hans



ProVU is looking for new University Council representatives!

The Works Council/University Council (Ondernemingsraad) is an organ that actively participates in decision making within the university. The Council gives approval or advice on important financial, judicial, education, research, housing and other matters directly affecting the employees and our university as a whole. Following elections in spring 2014 ProVU obtained 7 seats in the Council. Because of members finishing their PhDs we are now looking for candidates to fill vacancies from January 2016 until April 2017.

What are the requirements?

- Dutch-speaking (you don't have to be a native speaker or speak perfect Dutch, but do need to be able to have good written and oral communication skills)
- You are a PhD candidate, postdoc, lecturer or have affinity with these groups
- Willing to spend 8 hours per week (you will be compensated in money or time)
- Willing to learn about our university: the structure, how decisions are made, what our vision is for the future, etc
- You enjoy discussing and debating about a wide variety of issues affecting all employees of the university

How much time does it take?

You are paid for and expected to work 8 hours a week. If you have a contract for 4 days or less, you can choose to have a paid extra day. If you have a contract for 5 days/36+ hours, you will be compensated in time. In practical terms, this means that taking a seat in the Council is time-neutral. You will receive an extension of your contract depending on your Council term.

How can I apply or ask for more information?

To apply send an e-mail to Laura at L.M.Henderson@vu.nl with a CV and short motivation. If you have any questions you can also e-mail Laura at the same address about your inquiry.

More informations are available on our website at provu.nl.



Are you working or studying in science and engineering?

If you are aged between 21 and 40 and think you can explain a scientific concept in just three minutes, you could win some fantastic prizes.

Engaging with people outside the scientific community allows scientists to not only enthuse people about their work and science in general, but to justify their use of public funding. What are you waiting for?



FameLab is one of the biggest science communication competitions in the world.

If you think you can explain a scientific concept to a general audience, in just three minutes, then why not enter? You could become the new face of science, represent The Netherlands at the FameLab International final in the UK, and open doors to global opportunities in science communication!

[Click here to register](#)