



USC Campaign Programme 2024

For the elections for the University Student Council
of the Radboud University for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Introduction

As students, we started our academic journey at Radboud University to understand the world and help build its future. However, this future is becoming increasingly uncertain. The escalating climate and ecological crises are getting more dire every day. Without a livable planet, what future is left for us? We can still change course if we act now. Green+ represents students, not only today, but especially tomorrow. We will hold our university accountable to take action.

The Radboud University has called on students to contribute to creating a healthy, free world with equal opportunities for all through its slogan “You Have a Part to Play”. Many of us have heard this call and are willing to do whatever it takes to create a brighter future.

Meanwhile, the Executive Board of the university continues to make unsustainable choices that threaten that very same future. We need to hold them accountable and tell them that they “Have a Part to Play”, too. With your support, we can do so in the participational body for students, the University Student Council (USC).

For students to make an impact, a safe and welcoming environment on campus is vital. Although social safety and diversity have gotten attention lately, these face persistent issues at our university. We will stand for equity, representation and safety for all campus inhabitants, including the animals.

Our campaign programme is based on four core values: **Sustainability**, **Inclusivity**, **Animal Ethics**, and **Social Safety**. If we are elected to the USC, these will form the basis of all the advice we give the Executive Board. For each value we will describe what we want our university to be like and identify a number of key measures to create an ideal campus.

Sustainability

We want a sustainable, green campus with net-zero carbon emissions and a positive ecological impact. We want a university board that acts in line with the scientific findings from the IPCC¹, the IPBES² and other climate and biodiversity research that has been conducted in Nijmegen and across the planet.

Climate Action

- The university should declare a climate and ecological emergency.
- The university should be climate-neutral by 2030 and identify the necessary steps to reach this goal. Progress should be reported on in an annual public carbon footprint report.
- The university must develop detailed strategies to transition towards a climate-positive campus. Policy should aim for a climate-positive campus by 2050.
- University staff and student organizations should be firmly discouraged from flying. Currently, costs for flights for staff are reimbursed if a trip by car or public transport would take more than 7 hours. This limit should be raised to 14 hours. Flights within mainland Europe are not subsidized for anyone.
- All buildings on campus should have the 'A+++' energy label and be outfitted with rooftop solar panels combined with green roofs.
- The Spinoza building should be made into an example for renovating green and sustainably, setting the standard for future renovations to follow.
- The university should create a plan to reduce its data storage and cloud traffic, as these cause significant energy and water usage; particularly in regard to assessing which older data is no longer relevant to retain.

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; a UN-organisation that bundles research on climate change.

² Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: a UN-organisation that bundles research on biodiversity.

Material Use

- Materials should never become waste. The university adapts the circular principles of refuse, reduce, reuse, repair and recycle.
- Recycling bins, including organic waste, should be easily accessible in every building.
- Information regarding waste collection and recycling facilities, including battery collection points, should be easily accessible.
- There should be designated areas for recycling small electronic devices.
- The university should minimize the generation of laboratory waste by not only adopting sustainable practices such as reducing unnecessary experiments or optimizing reagent usage but also actively promoting innovative technologies and methodologies aimed at significantly reducing, reusing, and recycling lab materials.
- Study materials should be made available in digital form. Printed materials should be optional. Likewise it should always be possible to hand in assignments digitally.
- The university should facilitate students in selling their second-hand study books to new students. Existing book selling options can remain in place if they are effective, and when they have the interests of the students at heart. The profit can partly go to the study associations, so they get more income.
- When a new edition of a course book is released, it should only be made compulsory if the difference with the old edition is significant.
- The university should only provide or sell sustainably produced goodies, goodie bags and merchandise.
- Buying of furniture and other goods should be centralized with a priority given to second-hand items. Furniture that is no longer needed should be introduced in the second-hand market

Food

- All food and drinks offered on campus should be fully plant-based by 2030. This aim is openly communicated to let students and employees engage in the transition. Ambitious subgoals should be set and monitored.
- The supply of campus restaurants should consist of affordable, organic, sustainable and locally sourced products.
- When the contract with the SPAR ends, a shop with affordable, sustainable products should take its place.
- Plant-based milk should be the standard milk. When ordering coffee at a counter it is given as a default and all machines are filled with plant milk.
- As long as animal-based foods are offered, they are not actively promoted and no discounts are offered. Prices should reflect the actual cost of animal products by including environmental impact.
- For catered lunches plant-based should be the default (i.e. no animal-based foods are offered, except for people who specifically order it at an extra charge).

Green Campus

- The campus should be a haven for bikes, pedestrians and public transit, with much fewer cars. This should be a 50%-reduction in traffic by 2030. The RU can do this through removing outdoor parking spots for employees and creating better bike facilities.
- Costs for remaining on-campus parking places should be increased. Options for free parking should be removed, except for people with disabilities. The discounted monthly subscription plan for parking should be discontinued. Costs for work-home travel with a car should only be reimbursed to a P+R location on the outskirts of the city.
- The university should create and implement plans to re-green the campus together with students and ecologists, which includes converting unused spaces into habitat for wildlife, planting trees, making space for water, and adding vertical plants to the sides of all buildings. Native plant species should be used to promote biodiversity. Existing plans for greening should be given priority in the time planning.

- No additional plastic plants are purchased.
- The budget reserved for biodiversity and sustainability should be increased and at the very least adjusted for inflation.
- The university should research together with students and staff how to reduce the negative impacts of the bright artificial night light - which harms wildlife and sleep patterns - while safeguarding the feeling of safety across campus.

Independence from Polluters

- The university should cut ties with the fossil fuel industry and the animal agricultural industry, as well as other polluting companies. Likewise, the university should not collaborate with companies that violate human rights or animal rights.
- The university should stop offering polluting companies marketing opportunities like on-campus advertisements, the introduction market, career day events, and internship offerings.
- The university should not engage in new public-private research partnerships with polluting companies. Any existing partnerships should be ended as soon as possible.
- The university should not allow representatives of polluting companies to serve on any of its advisory organs.

Student Participation

- It should be possible for students in every program to have access to sustainability-related and interdisciplinary courses as part of their curriculum, also at faculties outside of their own. The university should give more central support for teachers and students to realize this.
- An assessment framework on social and ecological sustainability should be developed to help student organizations evaluate and adjust their practices. A certification system is implemented based on their sustainability levels which provides incentives such as funding opportunities.

Inclusivity

We want an inclusive campus that is open and welcoming to all students. We strive for a curriculum that teaches from a wide range of academic perspectives without biases and omissions that come from a history of colonialism, racism and sexism. Diversity should be valued and celebrated.

Diversity

- There is a rich history of literature and research by people of different genders, cultures and backgrounds, which should be reflected in the curriculum.
- At least 40% of all full professors should identify as female in 2030. All departments should take their responsibility in addressing representation.
- Radboud employees should represent the differences in society, therefore recruitment should aim to diversify teams.
- The pay gap, in terms of gender or otherwise, should be mapped and met with a plan of action.
- To address complex issues of discrimination, the university should consider principles of intersectionality theory³.
- Radboud should make an effort to lessen unequal treatments between students at university and those at HBO and MBO.
- Accreditation of student associations currently requires 50% of students to be Radboud students. This restriction should be removed, so that more students from HAN and MBO schools can be included.
- The university should facilitate projects where students of the university, HAN and /or MBO schools work together.
- The university should make sure their activities do not support wars and genocides. This includes cutting ties with complicit Israeli, Russian and Chinese universities and companies.
- The university should make an effort to actively support students that want to escape oppressive regimes, even when their country is the aggressor.

³ The theory that the overlap of various social identities, such as race, gender, sexuality, and class, contributes to a specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination.

- Students from all countries should feel welcome and safe at our university.
- Diversity on campus should be celebrated by facilitating cultural and religious traditions and customs. No student should be negatively affected as a result of their customs during their classes and exams.
- Keti Koti should be a day off at Radboud so students and employees can celebrate the breaking of chains.

Accessibility

- Every building should be accessible to every student.
- Gender-neutral facilities should be the norm. All toilets should be gender-neutral and the sports center should offer gender-neutral changing facilities.
- Everyone should be able to have a place to study and have the necessary facilities. Any individual request for additional accessibility needs should be complied with.
- Resources and support for people with ADHD, autism, dyslexia and other forms of neurodivergence, should be extensive and proactively promoted. The current program should be evaluated on whether they effectively address students' needs.
- There should be a point of contact or website where students can relay their issues and concerns regarding accessibility. This should lead to swift action on problems that need to be addressed.
- All teachers and professors who give courses in English should be able to express themselves well in English. If they are not able to, the university should offer them support.
- Courses in each Dutch study program should be accessible to students who are not academically proficient in English by providing support or alternatives to English material.
- A student's financial situation should never impact their access to the curriculum. Currently there is not enough supply of study books at the library. All material should be offered digitally or in ample supply at the library. There should be no mandatory contributions, such as buying a lab coat.

- Sustainably produced menstrual products should be provided free of charge in all toilets just as toilet paper, as these products are part of the basic hygienic needs for circa half the campus population.

Flexibility

- Flexibility should be the norm, so that every student can tailor their academic experience to fit their personal situation.
- Courses with mandatory weekly components should offer a reasonable alternative to all students.
- Lectures should always be available to watch online.
- Freedom to choose courses should be maximized. Entry requirements for any course are to be minimal and presumed knowledge clearly stated.
- The central university library should have full opening hours during holidays and weekends.
- Part-time or flexible study programs should be available for bachelor and master students at all faculties.
- The university should end the binding study-advice.

International Students

- International students add to the diversity of knowledge, cultures and perspectives. This should be reflected in the internationality policy.
- Non-Dutch courses should not offer educational materials that are only available in Dutch.
- The university should offer international students help with finding non-Dutch speaking internships.
- Dutch lessons should be offered for free and without conditions for all international students and staff providing practical communication skills that help make the most of their time here.
- When students participate in participational bodies, everyone should be able to speak the language that they can express themselves in, translators should be available when necessary.
- Radboud should take part in tackling the housing crisis by making unused space available for student housing and engaging with involved parties.

Animal Ethics

We want a campus that recognises and respects the rights of all animals. Non-human animals have intrinsic value and are not here to serve humans.

Animal Experimentation

- The university should be free of animal testing by 2030.
- The university should publish a strategy on how to achieve the transition to animal-free research and allocate funds for the transition.
- The university should convert the Central Research Facility (Centraal Dierenlaboratorium) animal testing laboratory into a center that facilitates animal-free research.
- Performing tests on animals should be removed from the curriculum, so that the new generation of students learns to carry out research using the latest innovative technologies instead.
- Systematic reviews should be standard practice before deciding to include animal testing in a study.
- Preregistration of research done on animals should be made mandatory, to prevent unnecessary duplication.
- The university should facilitate the local TPI-group⁴ by working together with RadboudUMC and providing a point of coordination and funds.
- The number of all animals used and killed should be published, whether they fall under the WoD⁵ or not.
- The university should not allow their animal tests to be performed in other countries, especially those that do not comply with European welfare standards.

⁴ Transition Program for Innovation without the use of animals: a governmental programme to transition away from animal testing, and local groups with the same name also exist.

⁵ Wet op de Dierproeven, law that describes rules regarding animal testing. The animals that fall under this law are: living non-human vertebrates, including independently feeding larvae and fetuses of mammals from the last third of their normal development, and living cephalopods.

Campus Wildlife

- The campus should be a sanctuary for local biodiversity by placing shelters for animals, such as insect hotels, bird houses and bat boxes.
- The university should reduce the frequency of mowing, stop the use of leaf blowers in green areas and stop the pruning and cutting of trees to help protect insect populations.
- Several places on campus should be left intentionally unmaintained to create a refuge for native species.
- The campus should be fully free of pesticides and lethal 'pest' control (for rodents, insects and weeds), and instead apply animal-friendly (preventative) measures.

Animal integrity

- The university should not use animals for entertainment, nor allow others to do so under their jurisdiction. This includes horse drawn carriages, petting zoos and pets kept in association rooms on campus.
- Animals need to express their natural behavior. Campus buildings are often not suitable for them. When an animal is kept on campus its welfare is integral. Confines that are proven to be unfit, like putting fish in a small bowl, should not be allowed.

Social Safety

We want a campus where every student can feel safe from violence, aggression, abuse, bullying, peer pressure and other forms of physical, emotional and verbal mistreatment.

Transgressive Behavior

- Transgressive behavior has no place in society, and so it should not occur at the university. The university must continue to make an emphatic effort to speak out against this behavior and to prevent it.
- There needs to be a university-wide code of conduct for all students in order to prevent transgressive behavior. This code should be drawn up together with a wide panel of students, so it covers all bases.
- When there is a case of transgressive behavior, it should be as easy as possible to report it. Violations always need to be addressed and people involved should get appropriate help, education or repercussions. It should also be possible to report anonymously.
- All professors, teachers, and teacher's assistants should get mandatory training in maintaining a safe environment.
- The ombudspersons for students and personnel need to be enabled to execute their function effectively so they are able to discover patterns that threaten social safety. This includes them regularly advising the executive board and having their recommendations addressed.
- The right for protest is fundamental. Nonviolent protests should always be facilitated on campus. If debates become polarized, the university should organize respectful discussion.

Student Organizations

- It should be mandatory for all board members of accredited student organizations and participational bodies to participate in a workshop on inclusivity and social safety from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office, so that all students feel welcome to join any association they like.

- To safeguard social safety, the university should hold student organizations that stimulate the overconsumption of alcohol accountable, even if this happens off-campus. Boards should receive training on how to deal with alcohol (abuse) within their association.
- The total budget for board months should be at least doubled. Students who are doing a board year for an accredited student organization or are part of one of the university's participational bodies should be exempt from tuition, as is the case at other Dutch universities.

Privacy and Tech

- The university manages a lot of personal data from students. To protect their privacy, enough resources need to be spent on cyber security.
- The university should not engage in buying or using personal data that is collected using smart devices, like smartphone location data.
- Algorithms have often shown bias and discrimination as seen in the Dutch childcare benefits scandal. The university should address these risks carefully.
- Technologies like generative AI face risks regarding ethics and sustainability. Therefore, teaching responsible use is necessary. They should not be restricted at university, nor be encouraged.