

## Strengthening sciences at Maastricht University

The development of knowledge requires an appropriate educational and research infrastructure. It is also indispensable to plans for making the Chemelot Campus and the Maastricht Health Campus available for applications in new products, services, and processes. Maastricht University will be making a fundamental contribution in this regard, in terms of both teaching and research. This will involve:

- providing on-site teaching wherever the present or future needs of companies and students coincide;
- establishing research institutes where research programmes take shape in close contact and consultation with businesses;
- working together with institutions of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO) and Higher Professional Education (HBO) by creating learning continuity pathways;
- involving other knowledge institutions in the local and European regions in strengthening the knowledge component on both campuses.

The benefits of providing education on the campuses are evident:

- These are places where students, academics, trainees, R&D staff, and managers meet;
- Students discover the link between theory and practice;
- Easier for graduates to achieve the personal development needed to get a new job;
- Employers have a permanent pool of talent at their disposal;
- Scientists from home and abroad can use these locations to meet with commercial R&D workers and with companies' Marketing & Business Development staff;
- Ideas are channelled from basic research, through applied research, to market introduction, and new business;
- New companies (spin-offs) develop;
- The campuses act as magnets for the establishment of local and international companies.

In 2011, Maastricht University launched the Maastricht Science Programme Bachelor's variant. This includes practical modules at both the Chemelot Campus and the Maastricht Health Campus. Last September, 47 first-year students commenced this programme. From 2012 to 2015, approximately 100 students per year are expected to enter the three-year Maastricht Science Programme Bachelor's variant. Three quarters of these individuals will be doing an internship or a research assignment in the Meuse-Rhine Euregion.

In addition, two Master's degree programmes will be embedded in new research institutes. One is the Master's in Biobased Materials at the Chemelot Campus and the other is the Master's in Systems Biology at the Maastricht Health Campus. The former Master's starts in 2013, and the latter in 2014. The two-year Master's programmes are expected to have an intake of 50 students per year.

Together with RWTH Aachen University, Maastricht University will also establish the Research Institute for Biobased Materials at Chemelot.

RWTH has a long tradition of applied research in collaboration with industry. Maastricht University, too, is keen to implement the same approach. This centres around a high level of research valorization (turning innovations into business). For instance, the planned Institute for Biobased Materials will research the use of plant materials as a green raw material of the future.

As part of Brainport 2020, a study is still under way to determine the potential scope of cooperative ventures between Maastricht University and Eindhoven University of Technology at the Chemelot Campus.

Maastricht University has opted for an accelerated expansion of the sciences, one aspect of which involves investment in laboratory facilities at the Chemelot Campus. The estimated cost of this project over a ten-year period amounts to 74 million euro. In addition to its existing contribution to Maastricht University of almost 10 million euro, government funding and projected revenues from indirect government funding and contract funding (from independent public institutions and private institutions, which in this case amount to 40.5 million euro), the Province will provide 15 million euro during the first three years, in order to achieve real progress. In an effort to bridge the remaining funding gap of some 10 million, the Province and the university have joined forces to explore the option of state and/or European funding. In this way, they hope to achieve a balanced multi-year budget.

An Advisory Board is to be established to assess the science programmes' progress and results. Maastricht University will also submit an annual activity plan showing how the objectives are to be achieved. It will also render an account of the objectives already achieved.