

City Centre Campus

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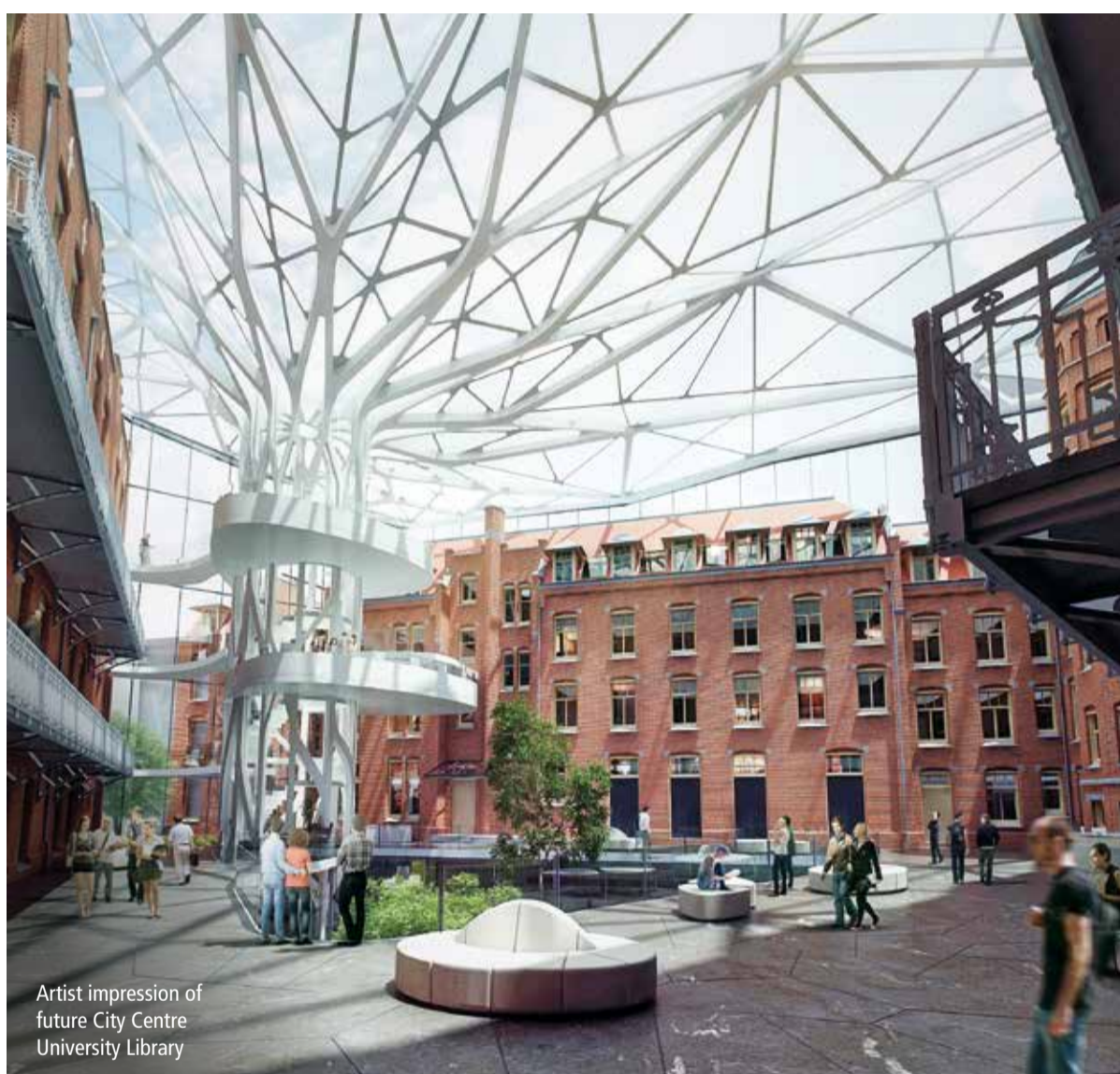


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The future of the City Centre Campus 'Understanding each other'



Artist impression of
future City Centre
University Library

The UvA's 10-point plan aims to achieve greater financial transparency and higher quality teaching and research, amongst other things. One of the points relates to the completion of the new University Library at the Binnengasthuis premises. We spoke to Cees van der Wolf, who started as director of Real Estate Development on 1 January, for more details.

The Executive Board issued the point plan as a response to those students and staff who had voiced dissatisfaction about financial management in relation to the construction of new sites, and the UvA's management structure. Two independent committees are currently being set up. One of these will investigate the UvA's finances in relation to real estate policy. The other will focus on the management structure.

Questions

'The UvA is developing city campuses based on the idea that clustering faculties allows them to work together better and be more efficient. This reflects a global trend,' says Cees. 'The board, which is responsible for that policy, is now facing questions from the academic community about finances and



Cees van der Wolf

developments related to real estate. Some members of that community feel that too much is being spent on real estate. Some question whether the development of campuses is really necessary, and whether it wouldn't be cheaper to modify existing UvA buildings, spread across the city, to meet new standards. It's logical that such questions be asked in a time when faculties are having to make savings on teaching and research.' Cees: 'New buildings facilitate the delivery of research and

Radboud Winkels, chair of the Central Works Council



'We're happy for the financial committee to get started.'

Radboud Winkels

The Executive Board has asked the Central Works Council to work with campaigning groups such as De Nieuwe Universiteit on setting up the investigative committees into UvA's finances and management structure and to formulate their stated purpose. Radboud Winkels, chair of the Central Works Council, explains.

'Our priority is to gain an insight into the UvA's financial situation, and related to that, its real estate finances. Are the UvA's debts a cause for concern? If so, what we can do to improve them? A proposal for

the set-up of the committee and for its stated purpose has now been made available to the academic community for consultation. We're happy for the financial committee to get started. We propose that the committees make regular, public interim reports. We hope to see a final report with recommendations this autumn. With the approval of the academic community, those recommendations will then be implemented.

As to what we think about the decision on the construction of the new University Library being presented to the academic community (point 5 of the 10-point plan, ed.), that came as

a surprise. It was supposed to have been presented to us anyway. I wonder how the Executive Board is going to approach the way it presents it to the academic community. What question do you present, and when? And what information do people need to make an informed decision? Do you reach enough people through a debate? Or should you wait? Maybe in two years a new democratic structure will be in place and the decision will pass through that automatically.'

The Central Works Council is the central representative advisory body for UvA staff.

Further information

The University of Amsterdam is building its City Centre Campus in and around the Binnengasthuis premises, one of the UvA's four open city campuses. By clustering related academic disciplines, the UvA hopes to strengthen ties within the university and encourage collaboration both within the institution and beyond with companies, authorities and civil society organisations. The City Centre Campus will be the home base for the Faculty of Humanities and the University Library.
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teaching as it is done in 2015. Study and workspaces with up-to-date facilities are indispensable today and that quality comes at a price.'

University Library decision-making

In connection with the many questions regarding real estate, the Executive Board has proposed suspending its decision-making process regarding the new University Library and handing the decision on its construction to the academic community. We asked Cees for details on this process. 'We are proposing a debate. There were a number of reasons behind the decision to move the University Library to the City Centre Campus. This is something we need to discuss. There are a number of questions, such as: is a new University Library necessary? What is the relationship between the University Library and the Faculty of Humanities? And who is helping to pay for the City Centre Campus? The University Library does have an overarching role

within the UvA, after all. And new campuses have already been completed for the other faculties. We need to understand each other. From my point of view this should bring us to a jointly held conclusion,' says Cees.

City Centre Campus

'We've been working on the development of the City Centre Campus for a number of years now. The University Library is an important part of that, and it is supposed to be the heart of the campus. It is to be a hub for activities serving the entire City Centre Campus. It's a place for people to meet and share their expertise. If we are to foster this in a natural way, the University Library needs a central position on the campus.' The debate within the academic community should clarify whether the University Library ought to be housed in a new development which fulfils modern requirements for research and teaching in the humanities specifically, and for the university as a whole. Cees thinks it should. ■

Maria Heijne, director of the UvA/AUAS Library, on the need for a new City Centre Library:



Maria Heijne

'All over the world, students are rediscovering the library as a place of study. The UvA is reflecting that development by placing a library on each campus, in the direct vicinity of its faculties. We want to place a new library on the City Centre Campus too.

This would serve as a meeting place for the whole campus, with study spaces and teaching and research facilities for all of the UvA's staff and students.

The future library will have teaching rooms and labs to foster expertise in digital education, venues for symposia, debates and film nights in the former surgical operating room, and the book collection in the former hospital wards. It is expected to be a showpiece for us to attract new students.

The Faculty of Humanities' collections and library facilities are currently spread across the Bungehuis, the Kunsthistorisch Instituut, PC Hoofthuis and the current University Library on the Singel. The new campus library will bring the four collections together in an open, accessible layout. Such a facility would currently be impossible in the existing University Library, which is made up of five ageing and partly historic buildings and doesn't have the space or facilities.

Bringing the collections together on one site and reducing the floorspace required (through shelfspace), we will also be making long-term savings.'

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

VOX-POP connects the city and university



From left to right: Tamara Breugelmans, Alein van der Staaij, Astrid Kerchman, Anna Bisperink

Marte Rijdsdijk, a student of Cultural Studies, has been the coordinator of VOX-POP's pop-up events at the Binnengasthuis premises for the past four months. 'At first all we had was a name, but now there's a lot going on: exhibitions, film nights and lectures. Word is spreading about VOX-POP.'

That's partly because of all the initiatives led by students, staff and local residents. For example, students on the Cultural Studies programme at the Faculty of Humanities recently organised a series of film nights on Fashion in the suburbs

and an exhibition with photographer Hans Eijkelboom. Local resident Bert Nap organised an event with the Fokkens sisters, authors of the book 'Ouwehoeren' in which they describe their experiences working in Amsterdam's red-light district.

Crowdfunding

Anna Bisperink, a student of Cultural Studies, came up with the idea of the Eijkelboom photo exhibition. 'We emailed him and didn't really think he would ever do it.' But he was enthusiastic, much to the delight of Anna and her colleagues. Using crowdfunding, they raised the money for photo prints, advertising and insurance.

Recommended

Organising a pop-up event is

something they would recommend. 'You have the freedom to come up with a concept and the UvA provides a space to do it,' says Anna. According to the four women, the experience is more valuable than a work placement. 'You're personally responsible for implementing your ideas,' says Alein van der Staaij.

New initiatives

VOX-POP will be taking a break during July and August. 'But in

the new academic year we'll be in full swing again,' says Marte. 'Next year I'd also like VOX-POP to work with cultural organisations like the Special Collections or the Academic Club. And if there are any ideas for summer events, we can still go ahead and do them.' ■

The pop-ups are designed to be temporary and they show the breadth of the humanities.

Fancy organising a VOX-POP? www.voxpop-bg.humanities.uva.nl

‘We look after the maintenance of the City Centre Campus’

His responsibilities include the day-to-day maintenance of the buildings in the City Centre Campus and the areas immediately surrounding them. ‘From paintwork to paving, cutting the grass, cleaning, replacing lights and replenishing toilet paper.’ Paul Kleingeld is the facility manager for UvA Facility Services at the City Centre Campus.

The UvA’s Real Estate Development department recently completed the building at Turfdragsterpad 15-17. That is the point from which Paul’s department gets to work on the fixtures and fittings.

Entry posts

Paul also monitors the adherence to entry times. ‘In many parts of the city centre you can only load and unload between 7.00 and 11.00, and after that entry is blocked by road posts. We’ve taken over the management of the posts at the Binnengasthuis premises from the municipality in response to complaints from local residents. I now keep a close eye on the adherence to these time limits. The UvA might occasionally ask for an exception if loading and unloading is taking longer than expected.’

Bicycle management

Paul offers another example. ‘We’ve also been responsible for bicycle management for the past few years, to prevent the parked bicycles of our students and staff causing a nuisance in the city centre. We’ve worked with the municipality to have extra bike racks installed and have appointed bicycle managers ourselves. They’re responsible for ensuring that bikes are parked neatly. Of course we hope that this makes life easier for everyone.’ As facility manager, Paul deals with many other people both internally and externally. These include colleagues in the faculties, the Real Estate Development department, and Executive Staff, as well as residents, the police, municipality and so on. I attend many meetings and try to talk to everyone in a way that helps us find the best solutions.’

Construction work at the City Centre Campus

- The front of the University Theatre, Nieuwe Doelenstraat 6, is being painted and will be ready in late June.
- The front of the East India house / Bushuis, Kloveniersburgwal 48, is being painted.
- The Service and Information Centre, Binnengasthuisstraat 9, moved to the Roeterseiland Campus in early June. The building is now being refurbished inside. UvA staff will be moving in here at a future date.
- The Media and Culture building at Turfdragsterpad 9 is being refurbished. Some small construction jobs are being carried out here until late June. The cooling system, located between the two buildings on the Turfdragsterpad, is also being removed. This will create an open viewing space. ■

Do you have any questions about these construction activities? If so, please contact Paul Kleingeld, p.j.kleingeld@uva.nl or 020 - 525 69 62. Facility Services will keep residents up to date through neighbourhood announcements.



Paul Kleingeld

Current schedule

depending on a positive decision about the University Library in the second half of 2015.

Planning schedule	Future Art History and Cultural Studies building	
2015	Completion Opening	
2016		Technical detailing Archaeological investigation Stripping of existing buildings Construction
2018		Completion

The planning schedule for the other buildings is not yet confirmed.

Further information

If you have any questions or comments about the construction of the City Centre Campus, please contact area manager Chérie van der Meer, omgevingsmanager-binnenstad@uva.nl or 06-2115 5032.

City Centre Campus map



IN BRIEF

ACADEMIC CLUB 20TH ANNIVERSARY

The Amsterdam Academic Club opened its doors for the first time 20 years ago, in September 1995. It is a special milestone which the Academic Club will be observing quite elaborately. From 3 September, special lectures and debates will be held every Thursday at 17.00. Every Friday at 17.00 there will be live music including jazz and tango. For more information visit aac.uva.nl/agenda.

'GOED FOUT': WARTIME DESIGN EXHIBITION

The UvA's Special Collections is hosting the GOED FOUT exhibition until 6 September. The exhibition examines an under-represented aspect of the Netherlands' history of occupation: Dutch graphic design in and around World War 2. In artistic terms, excellent design was produced on both sides of the war. The exhibition brings these contrasts together. More information: www.bijzonderecollecties.uva.nl

PUBLICATION DETAILS

The City Centre Campus newspaper is published by the UvA. The newspaper is distributed among local residents, businesses, students and employees.
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Trailblazing at the Binnengasthuis premises



CREA, the UvA's student cultural centre, moved from the Binnengasthuis premises to the Roeterseiland Campus in 2012. Director Sjoerd Jans reflects on the years of trailblazing work at the Binnengasthuis premises.

'In 1984 we were given the key to the building at the Turfdraagsterpad, the former Orthopedics department at the Binnengasthuis. We took a DIY approach to converting the hospital wards into ballet and music studios. Thanks to a grant scheme I was fortunately able to take on six temporary construction workers. The building wasn't actually really suitable for music and dance, with all those

wooden floors, which caused a lot of noise, both inside and for the neighbours.'

Knees in your neck

'When two additional spaces became available in the building next door, we created a theatre there, which was the start of CREA Theater. To furnish it I bought old tiered seating from the Shaffy Theater, a steel frame with boards. You'd be sitting

'We took a DIY approach to the work.'

Sjoerd Jans

with someone's knees in your neck during the shows. But it was practical, because you could seat 30 to 100 people.' Step by step, the venue became more professional. 'It was a great luxury, having our own building to come up with activities and the CREA Café. A café with a terrace which got by far the

least amount of sun anywhere in Amsterdam, and yet was always full.'

Mirror ceiling

'We decided to put in a mirror ceiling at the entrance to give it greater cachet. That caused quite a fuss. The fire service was worried that everyone would have glass landing on their head in an emergency. Two gentlemen from the fire service visited me in my office, and the box of mirrors was on the table. I wanted to show them that the mirrors were stuck onto fire-resistant plastic. So I picked at the plastic to loosen it and put a match to it. It immediately caught fire and I thought: there goes the mirror ceiling. But a week later the fire service gave permission after all.'

Theatre festival

'I have good memories of our theatre festival in 2007, marking 375 years of the UvA. We used the whole building for that. The façade was the set, the strip by the water was the theatre floor and there were all sorts of things happening on the water. An orchestra played on the first floor and on the second singers performed from the windows, tied to the frames with ropes around their waists to prevent them falling. It was the kind of experience you never forget.' ■

CREA has now moved to the Roeterseiland Campus. For more information on CREA, visit www.crea.uva.nl

Lessons for future moves

Give clear information, including about any problems



Sjoerd Jans from the research organisation ASVA has been investigating the internal communications relating to the move to the Roeterseiland Campus.

Open and honest communication to all stakeholders about future moves is one of the areas the UvA could improve on, according to the ASVA research. This valuable research has presented learnings that can inform the move to the City Centre Campus. There were some problems in the information provision to students and staff prior to the move of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences to the Roeterseiland Campus. For a long time, it was unclear what the move date would be, for example, and what facilities there would be for study associations. Annoyance about the lack of communication led to the protest demonstration 'REC de verhuizing' ('REC the move'). The ASVA research organisation catalogued the experiences of stakeholders in order to come up with specific areas of improvement for future internal moves, including the move to the City Centre Campus.

Lessons learned

The researchers' message is simply: provide clear

information sooner. For example, involve student organisations with plans at an early stage, share information during lectures and tutorials, and use posters and online channels. But the most important lesson is to communicate about everything, including problems. If faculties and the Real Estate Development department, which are both responsible for communication, provide clear information promptly to students and staff, there will be a greater sense of understanding if things go wrong. The research organisation also came up with areas for improvement for student organisations too: put agreements with the UvA in writing, or keep files, and ensure good handovers between student boards for the sake of continuity.

Campus discussion

The Roeterseiland Campus has already made a step in the right direction. Here students have initiated a campus discussion to be held every eight weeks between all stakeholders about ongoing issues. Similar discussions will be set up for the City Centre Campus in due course in consultation with student councils and study associations.

For more research results visit www.campus.uva.nl/nieuws

Students and staff needed

The Faculty of Humanities would like to talk about the City Centre Campus with everyone who will be working and studying there in future.

Would you like to contribute to a discussion on the future of the campus?

If so, contact herhuisvesting-fgw@uva.nl