

**University Council  
Consultation Meeting  
Erasmus University Rotterdam**

**Date and Time:** 12/12/2023, 14:00 – 16:30

**Location:** Polak 1-21

**Present in the Meeting:** Ivonne Cune-Noten (chair), Annelien Bredenoord (Rector), Ed Brinksma (Chair EB), Ellen van Schoten (Vice-chair EB), Ann O'Brien, Ernst Hulst, Sebastiaan Kamp, Pedro van Gessel, Joseph Ayinla, Albert Wagelmans, Timo Zandvliet, Cagla Altin, Yasin Demir, Nawin Ramcharan, Rami Elorabi, Aki Negate, Linqendo van der Klooster, Emre Ulusoy, Linda Dekker, Emese von Bone, Aleid Fokkema, Tom van Dijken, Achraf Taouil, Anthony van der Linden, Wesley Hennep, Katarzyna Lasak, Rosita Boedhai-Jansen, Natascha Kraal, Max Wagenaar, Roxanne Austin (Clerk), Ellie Cercel (Minutes), Sophie Luck (M&C), Feba Purwani (EM).

## **01 Opening**

### **01.01 Setting of the agenda**

The agenda was set without adjustments.

### **01.02 Minutes and action points of the previous consultation meeting**

The minutes and action points of the previous Consultation Meeting were set without adjustments.

### **01.03 Announcements**

- *Consent to website pictures*

The M&C Officer requested the permission of the Consultation Meeting attendants to take pictures during the meeting for the website of the University Council. No objections were made to this request.

## **02 Agenda items Consultation Meeting**

### **02.01 Budgets HeQa Programmes**

The UC engaged in fruitful discussions with the HeQa policymakers and received answers to most of the remarks. However, the UC would like to discuss with the members of the Executive Board several points regarding CLI and Erasmus X, specifically.

Regarding Erasmus X, the UC had reservations concerning the Inclusion project, specifically in which way it contributes to inclusion in comparison to other projects, such as IDEA, as well as how it is organized and how the money is well spent. In the view of the EB, the development of a program on inclusive education is defined within the scope of Erasmus X, and it aligns with the priorities outlined in the Educational Vision, thus benefiting students.

The remarks of the UC on CLI focus on the fellowship project, particularly on its outcome measurements and the potential impact on the 2024 budget. With 53 fellowships awarded already, exceeding the initial target of 50, the UC seeks the opinion of the EB on the surplus, considering CLI's plan of sponsoring 7 more fellowships in the upcoming year despite an existing budget surplus. The Executive Board views the increased fellowship number positively, as it fosters the professionalization of more teaching staff than initially planned. In addition, the UC shared the concern that the one-day-per-week setup may not allow sufficient time for teaching staff to engage in the fellowship activities and requested the opinion of the EB. The EB acknowledged the remark of the UC and encouraged the UC to partake in a separate evaluative discussion on the program setup, where the UC addresses and

elaborates on the concerns, to ensure its optimization in the future. The CM might not prove as an adequate place for this discussion, however.

**Action point:** the HeQa TF will address the topic of *CLI Fellowships* in separate discussions with CLI project leads.

## **02.02 EUR Meerjarenplan 2024-2027**

The UC engaged in fruitful discussions with the policymakers regarding this agenda item and predicted the consent on the policy plans. However, there are several areas where the UC would like to share its advice with the EB.

Mainly, the UC expressed its concern regarding the impact of the volatile political landscape on educational funding.

The Executive Board encouraged a calm and thoughtful approach to the issue. Although it is too early to be precise, the EB is expecting an alleged funding decrease of 250M euros within the whole educational sector. Despite these concerning predictions, EUR is only minorly affected, as it boasts solid financial reserves and has excellent strategic positioning. The EB is determined to tackle this issue on the one hand through measures aimed at cost reductions and income increases, as well as through collaborative efforts with all faculty deans to ensure a collective effort is made. Also, the EB is aware of the future impact on the first money stream and has outlined some projects that will be discussed with representatives of the faculties. The EB foresees an upward potential in the second and third money streams, but there are no financial targets yet; more exact KPIs are expected in the future. The EB also considers interim and critical re-evaluation and re-prioritization of their current plans, possibly elaborating within the Erasmus Perspectives, increasing research personnel, and developing a research vision (i.e., similar to the Educational Vision), and a monitorisation of flexible employment contracts.

The UC shared its support with the plans of the EB and will elaborate on the advice in writing. In prior talks with the CPC policymakers, the UC expressed the wish to be involved early in the future financial processes, starting from January 2024. The UC would like to extend this wish to the EB.

## **02.03 Order Regulations for EUR Buildings, Grounds and Facilities 2024**

The councilors shared with the Executive Board several remarks which will be further elaborated in the advice letter. The UC would like to remark that the text in the Dutch policy document is not fully clear, and the English translation requires some corrections. Additionally, a councilor mentioned that they were unable to trace the newly introduced regulations on mandatory employee passes in the proposed regulations. Also, the council would like to see a better alignment between this regulation proposal and the EUR Houserules Manifestations. The EB acknowledged the remarks shared by the council and will provide a written reply to the issues to be raised in the letter as mentioned above.

In addition, the regulation of mandatory employee passes and the reasoning behind it was discussed. Specifically, the UC was critical of this development, considering that in 2020, the EB decided to eliminate physical student passes. The EB provided clarification for this confusion. Specifically, the recent decision which requires all employees to carry their EUR employee pass whilst on campus came from a security research that addressed the concerns of IT personnel who are employed in areas vulnerable to attacks, such as cyber-attacks, and requested an increase in security in their designated locations. The EB further elaborated that, should a situation arise where student identification is required, the QR code option provided in the Osiris mobile application suffices for this need.

**Action points:** the EB will give a written reply to the remarks of advice of the UC regarding *Order Regulations for EUR Buildings, Grounds, and Facilities 2024*.

#### **02.04 Compensation student members participation**

The UC would like to discuss with the Executive Board the difference between the points the UC raised in the past regarding compensation of the participatory bodies and the current proposal. Specifically, the proposal seems to enforce a decentral compensation for the program committees, and there seems to be no central overall agreement regarding the faculty councils, as it will be regulated within each faculty, separately. This proposal brings us to the starting point of our conversations about the compensation of the participatory bodies.

According to the Executive Board, the proposed framework offers a unified plan for the compensation of participatory bodies as well as manoeuvring space, allowing each faculty to determine, based on the level of workload required and their size, what compensation level is most appropriate locally. It also ensures that the central bodies do not interfere with the affairs of the decentralized bodies, allowing them space for self-regulation. Also, the EB is aware that an extra amount of funds was made available from the Ministry for the funding of student activities in participatory bodies.

The framework was accepted by all faculty representatives; the EB encouraged the UC to formulate their opinion on the framework and share it with the different faculties.

Also, the framework was allegedly influenced by decisions made within UNL, where it was discussed that the program committees have more reduced tasks compared to faculty councils, and there were objections that the minimal payout offered was too large in this circumstance. Thus, no uniform decision was made within UNL.

**Action points:** The EB has offered to share an action plan in Q1 2024 that will tackle staff and program committee compensation.

#### **02.05 State of Affairs Culture Campus, Convergence, and the Arts Institute**

The UC requested an update on the Culture Campus, Convergence, and the Arts Institute. A written update concerning the Arts Institute was shared with the UC before the meeting.

Regarding the Convergence, the Executive Board informed the councillors of a positive response from the participatory members in continuing the Convergence efforts, which for the previous years have been bottom-up. In the near future, there will be plans for top-down approaches of formalizing the management structure and normalizing their financial arrangements to ensure that the growth of the Convergence will be strategic and well-planned. These plans will be addressed in a meeting this week. The decision of TU Delft to create a campus in Rotterdam and how it will impact the convergence efforts, will also be on the agenda.

In reply to this update, the UC members shared several questions. Firstly, the UC inquired what financial investments will be required, considering an increase of 1.6M has already been communicated to the UC through the Meerjarenplan.

Secondly, the UC inquired how the Rotterdam infrastructure would support the TU Delft expansion plans. According to the EB, they are planning to avoid areas of different interests and maximize synergies, such as EUR benefiting from TU Delft laboratory technologies or more student housing. It is, however, too early to indicate where the development will be located.

Regarding the Culture and Campus, the EB shared that the financial model for moving buildings was not adequate. An improved financial model will be developed in Q1 2024.

#### **02.06 Campus safety regarding the Palestine-Israel conflict**

The UC would like to hear the standpoint of the EB on a few points regarding the Palestine-Israel conflict and recent campus events, with an emphasis on ensuring neutrality.

- *How does the EB look at students returning to campus after being involved in military actions abroad? Students that were here went abroad and might return, seeing this conflict. How will it influence the way we work together on campus, and do you foresee any issues regarding this?*

The EB acknowledged this as a complex and novel situation. Although investigating the alleged matter is within their scope and they are navigating what their role should be, the Executive Board emphasized the importance of pursuing factual information and avoiding hypothetical speculation on the matter.

- *Can you reflect on the recent teach-ins?*

The EB acknowledges that EUR is a university open to academic dialogue and respect for freedom of expression. They shared that, although retrospectively some events were more akin to an occupation, the teach-ins respected the *Houserule for manifestations* and did not interfere with the primary processes of EUR. Adding onto that, they consider the teach-ins to be a channel for communicating concerns and emotions and bridging with one another in these times of turmoil, as long as they do not become channels for discrimination. The teach-ins were also encouraged in discussions with the Minister of Education and university representatives. The EB maintained that EUR welcomes everyone from the community, regardless of their position in the world.

### **03 Any other business**

#### **03.01 Ending of HeQa in relation to continuity**

The lack of clarity on the embedding of the current HeQa projects in the future within the EUR, has created uncertainty in the contracts and positions of affected employees, leading to some seeking employment elsewhere. These risks affect the continuity of the projects that will become embedded. The UC would like to discuss the views of the Executive Board regarding this matter.

The Executive Board was aware of these concerns and took several approaches. Firstly, they scheduled the spring bilateral discussions earlier than usually planned, during which the project leads will present their proposals on dealing with the budget and staff. Thus, the decision-making process taking place in spring will bring forth more clarity on the future of the contracts. Additionally, the EB encouraged the project leads to be transparent with their employees about employment expectations. It is a difficult matter, the EB shared, as the contracts are temporary as they are funded through a temporary money stream.

The UC inquired whether there are plans already in sight on which HeQa projects should be embedded within the EUR. According to the EB, there is a list of ca. 25 favourable projects, however, more prioritization is probably required. The decision-making shall take place before the Erasmus Perspectives of 2025. The UC requested to be kept closely informed of developments. The EB agreed to this request, with hopes of sharing a timeline in the upcoming weeks and a project list in February 2024.

**Action point:** the Executive Board will share with the UC a timeline for the *Ending of HeQa projects* in the upcoming weeks. The Executive Board will share with the UC the HeQa project list in relation to the *Ending of HeQa projects* in February 2024.