



Faculty Strategic Plan 2021-2026, Update 2023

Introduction

With approximately 8,000 students in the regular programmes, i.e. excluding those in the Executive Programmes, and over 500 full-time equivalent of employees, UvA Economics and Business (UvA EB) is a major entity providing education and research in the areas of economics and business in Europe. Depending on the specific field, it ranks among the top 50 worldwide and top 10 in Europe.

In January 2021 UvA EB published its [Faculty Strategic Plan \(FSP\) 2021-2026](#). The FSP reflects on activities and performance, and sets the agenda for improvements and innovations for the coming 6 years. We are currently in the year 2023 and almost midway through the planning period. Since the start of the planning period, important external developments (such as the Covid-19 pandemic) and internal developments have taken place. Beginning of 2022 professor Roel Beetsma has taken over as Dean, while UvA EB has made substantial strategic progress since 2021. For this reason, the original strategic plan has been modified into the “Faculty Strategic Plan 2021-2026, Update 2023”.

Value proposition, mission and vision

UvA EB’s value proposition is *Impact through Engagement*.

UvA EB’s mission is

to offer an inspiring, international learning community to study business and economics, where both students and staff can reach their full potential.

We prepare students to become well-rounded global citizens and professionals capable of critical ‘cross-thinking’ and independent in-depth analysis.

UvA EB strives to conduct ground-breaking high-quality academic research on innovative themes relevant to business and society, offering research-driven teaching that meets the highest international standards.

UvA EB is committed to advancing the understanding of business and its role in society, including its economic and institutional context, and to leverage synergies within the UvA, the Amsterdam metropolitan area and beyond.

In accordance with its mission, it is UvA EB’s vision

to strive for societally relevant education and research. We aim to deliver outstanding graduates and make high-quality relevant scientific contributions to the academic field of business and economics.

UvA EB explicitly opts for a research-driven analytical profile.

That's why we want to attract highly qualified students from all over the world who are interested in the fields of business and economics and who want to develop their skills through a combination of rigorous academic thinking and practical content.

Teaching at UvA EB is research-driven and aims to deliver graduates who are able to analyse problems based on sound academic concepts and principles. A research-driven attitude helps students prepare for a career rather than for a specific job and facilitates employability during their entire working life in challenging jobs.

UvA EB manages to maintain a rich community of excellent and renowned international researchers who produce research outputs of the highest level and score high in international research rankings. Impact centres and cross-disciplinary initiatives have been set up or are being developed.

By providing appropriate incentives we stimulate staff to attract funding of projects through second- and third-stream financing.¹ The number of company-sponsored PhD and other positions has grown in recent years, and also the submission of grant proposals is slowly bearing fruits as evidenced by the growing number of successes.

To achieve its mission and vision UvA EB identifies four strategic priorities and three value drivers. Additionally it also formulated core values.

Core values

UvA EB has five core values which define our education, research and operational processes:

- *Responsible*
- *Critical thinking*
- *Analytical*
- *Engaged*
- *International*

These core values reflect how UvA EB defines itself and what we are strong at.

¹ Second-stream financing comes from the Dutch Science Foundation (NWO), the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (KNAW), the European Commissions, etcetera, while third-stream financing originates from private sector firms and public sector institutions, such as central banks, ministries, NGOs, etcetera.

Strategic priorities

Our strategic priorities are:

1. *Best prepare our students for their careers*
2. *Deploy our strengths to achieve impact on business and society*
3. *Leverage our knowledge networks*
4. *Achieve internal and external appreciation and recognition*

Strategic priority 1: Best prepare our students for their careers

A good - and perhaps the best - way to contribute to the local, national and international economy is through the students UvA EB delivers. Much has been accomplished, but improvements can still be made to enhance the study success of our Bachelor, Master, PhD and Executive Programmes. UvA EB aims to prepare its students optimally for a successful career in business and society. At the same time the optimisation of the education portfolio on offer is critical to ensure efficient use of resources, to maintain the financial viability of UvA EB, and to enhance its reputation. Related developments:

- Introduction of [Active Learning](#) as a didactic method to complement the implementation of the [Vision of Teaching and Learning](#), better known as 3RI (Research-driven, Relevant, Responsible and International), for improving the study programmes.
- To further improve study and student success, UvA EB intends to stabilise the intake of Bachelor students in specific programmes through selection quota and to steer the intake of students at the Bachelor and Master levels in line with our target numbers. For the current planning period UvA EB has formulated KPI's on our desired student intake and composition. We also plan to right-size the electives in the Bachelor and Master programmes.
- With the start of the Bachelor programme Business Analytics and the Master programme Data Science and Business Analytics, UvA EB has a rather well-balanced portfolio of programmes on offer. To complete our offer, UvA EB is currently in the process of starting a Master programme Business Information Technology Management.
- Driven by the recent developments in data science, AI and ChatGPT, and in line with the UvA Strategic Plan 2021-2026, UvA EB aims to incorporate the responsible use of AI into our education, equipping our students and teachers with the necessary knowledge and ethical guidance on AI.
- Geographical and cultural diversification remain a priority to ensure diversity in the student body and staff. UvA EB leverages diversity in its international classrooms in Amsterdam to develop a global mindset within education and among faculty. This is further developed in UvA EB's vision on internationalisation and the international classroom strategy.
- We have incorporated on a large scale elements of ERS (ethics, responsibility and sustainability) in our programmes, and will continue to do so further. To maintain the research-driven philosophy of our educational portfolio, we will align these elements in the tracks, minors, honours programmes, electives, etcetera with our outside-in research priority themes where possible (see strategic priority 2).

- To (better) prepare students for their careers, UvA EB launched the EBCC (Economics and Business Career Centre) in 2022. It is responsible for intra- and extra-curricular skills courses that help prepare students for the labour market, for alumni relations and for the organisation of the Amsterdam Living Case Lab.
- Finally, we are incorporating new learning technology via the [Teaching and Learning Centre](#) to blend and digitise our programmes. Although we leverage the experiences of online teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic and are running a pilot with an online premaster, UvA EB continues to be an on campus faculty for students and staff to form a vibrant scientific community.

Strategic priority 2: Deploy our strengths to achieve impact on business and society

Research at UvA EB covers the broad domain of economics, business administration, econometrics, data science, business analytics, accountancy, finance and entrepreneurship, and is organised in two large departments: the Amsterdam School of Economics (ASE) and the Amsterdam Business School (ABS). These departments are home to groups of researchers that cover a wide range of relevant research topics.

UvA EB has a strong position as a research-based faculty with research-driven educational programmes. One of our objectives is to maintain a solid academic foundation, while simultaneously making our research impactful and relevant for business and society at large. At the start of the current planning period UvA EB has taken the initiative to strengthen research in areas with high societal relevance and impact via the so-called outside-in research priority themes. We have set aside funding to stimulate faculty in both schools to undertake research and achieve impact in these areas. As a result of the increasing interest in healthcare, driven in part by the Covid-19 pandemic, UvA EB expanded its four outside-in research priority themes with an additional outside-in research priority theme ‘Welfare and healthcare’. The first four broad areas are also tightly aligned with the societal Institutional Priority themes of the UvA as a whole (as established in the UvA Strategic Plan 2021-2026):

- *Responsible digital transformations*
- *Welfare and healthcare*
- *Resilient society and financial stability*
- *Sustainability and environmental economics*
- *Nudging for a better world*

Related developments:

- In 2023, UvA EB will update its research vision.
- By making substantial investments in the five outside-in research priority themes UvA EB also aims to leverage these in grant applications for 2nd and 3rd stream financing sources.
- To give further substance to impact, one of its three core mandates, UvA EB has developed its Impact Strategy. Core part of this strategy are the so-called “impact centres”. The Impact Strategy lays out how we develop and support our impact centres.

- Problems of high societal relevance are seldomly the preserve of a single (sub)discipline. Hence, our outside-in research priority themes and the impact centres that support these research priority themes serve to forge research relationships and stimulate collaborations within the school, across the schools and across the faculties of the UvA.
- We launched the initiative “A Sustainable Future” to encourage junior staff to broaden their research agenda by taking inspiration from the sustainability themes put forward by the SDGs.
- UvA EB continues to improve its public visibility and establish itself as a thought leader, for example through its impact centres, publications in top academic journals and publications aimed at policymakers and the broader public.

Strategic priority 3: Leverage our knowledge networks

For UvA EB it is important to stay in close contact with society and leverage our networks of students, employees, colleagues, alumni and external relations.

- Building on the close collaboration of our two Schools in the Bachelor programme Business Analytics and the Master programme Data Science and Business Analytics, UvA EB continues to invest in intra-section, inter-section and departmental collaboration by leveraging each other’s strengths. Therefore, UvA EB invests in creating a faculty-wide mindset.
- In addition to investing in faculty-wide collaborations, UvA EB is also committed to strengthening its collaborations on the Roeterseiland Campus (REC). In association with the Faculties of Law and of Behavioural and Social Sciences, UvA EB participates in REC Impact, the impact hub of the Roeterseiland Campus which is currently being developed. By joining forces, we aim to foster new and closer connections between academia and society.
- The Economic and Business Sciences are together with Social Sciences, Humanities and Law organised within the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Council. Via the cross-sector plan with the thematic focus ‘Prosperity, participation and citizenship in a digital world’ UvA EB stimulates interfaculty and university-wide collaborations.
- External relations and alumni networks are a growing asset for UvA EB. A lot of progress has been made with the ‘Your Future First’ programme to create synergy with and connect career services for students to our external relations and alumni networks (via student mentoring, help with recruitment, internships, etcetera). This programme is being developed further.
- The Executive Programmes are one of the most important vehicles for UvA EB’s connections to our external partners. It offers unique and high-quality programmes to the leaders and professionals of the future by creating value for our students, the industry and society at large.
- Although philanthropy benefiting the UvA (as with many continental European universities) is still underdeveloped compared to Anglo-Saxon universities, progress has been made with obtaining funds from external and corporate contacts in support of research projects. However, there is still room for improvement in asking external relations and alumni to help set the research agenda, creating alumni chapters across the world (in cooperation with the UvA), etcetera. UvA EB plans to invest in this area via the EBCC (Economics and Business Career Centre) and by rolling out both an Alumni and an External Relations Strategy. A number of successes have already materialized through the start of large-scale collaborations

with private sector firms. During this planning period we strive for a more strategic and systematic approach to building connections with our alumni and external relations.

- Economics and Business faculty cannot solve fundamental societal problems alone. Most problems require an interdisciplinary approach and the involvement of multiple parties, both in research and in education. Therefore UvA EB invests in a contact database to help accelerate projects by bringing the right parties together, launching projects, contributing knowledge and generating impact, while not compromising our independence.
- The impact centres form major vehicles for collaboration with external partners outside the UvA.

Strategic priority 4: Achieve internal and external appreciation and recognition

UvA EB values its staff and students and encourages both internal and external appreciation and recognition for their commitment and engagement. Diversity, inclusiveness and sustainability are an integral part of the UvA EB culture and our human resource management strategy. Therefore, we invest in an open culture and work consciously on achieving these objectives. We view scientific integrity as essential and we support the development of Open Science/Open Access.

- This priority is closely linked to the national discussion on ‘appreciation and reward’ (*erkennen en waarderen*). Appreciation and reward covers the whole spectrum of activities of our staff. In line with the UvA Strategic Plan, UvA EB wants to ensure that all areas of our activities are appropriately recognised and rewarded.
- The appreciation for teaching should be at par with research. To demonstrate our appreciation for good teaching, UvA EB has annual awards for best teacher of the entire faculty and of individual programmes. Both staff and students are involved in the selection and awarding process. In line with UvA’s lecturers policy, UvA EB values its scientific staff in both the D-line and the U-line, and has developed an educational development offer for them.² In addition, we are developing further the career track for tenured staff with an education assignment solely, the D-line.
- UvA EB will also recognise and value impact, e.g. by making it an integral part of our human resource management strategy for reward and promotion.
- External appreciation will be obtained by showing great case studies, acting as “thought leaders”, appearing in rankings and obtaining accreditations.
- We plan to revisit our position on participation in (business school) rankings.
- UvA EB also aims to be a professional service organisation committed to supporting students, lecturers and management. Together with the Schools and the UvA organisation, our Faculty

² Dutch description used to distinguish academic staff, who combine teaching and research (assistant professors, associate professors and full professors), and academic staff with a teaching task only (lecturers). The first group is described as the so-called U-line, the second group as D-line.

Office and the Education Service Centre continuously work on developing high-performing processes, systems and (management) information provision. We strive for efficiency through simplicity, harmonisation and ongoing improvement, while keeping in mind the importance of the human dimension and remaining attentive to diversity and inclusion.

Value drivers

In addition to the four strategic priorities UvA EB also acknowledges value drivers which support our mission and vision. UvA recognises three value drivers which embody UvA EB's organisational DNA:

- *Quality over quantity*
- *Internationalisation*
- *Enhancing collaborations with internal and external partners*

1. *Quality over quantity*

The future of UvA EB will revolve less around growth in student numbers and more around attracting the best students and faculty in the (inter)national markets. High-quality students and thus graduates raise our reputation in both the education market and the labour market.

2. *Internationalisation*

UvA EB continues to provide its students with a diverse learning experience to prepare them for a global labour market and equip them to operate in different countries and cultural settings. With its vision on internationalisation and the international classroom strategy, UvA EB is pursuing internationalisation in all of its study programmes, both in content and in student body and staff, at all levels of the organisation. In this light, UvA EB also closely follows the national debate on internationalisation and its outcomes.

3. *Enhancing collaborations with internal and external partners*

Big societal challenges require an interdisciplinary approach. UvA EB therefore seeks to collaborate across departments and with other disciplines in the UvA to explore and develop opportunities in research and education. Furthermore, UvA EB continues to seek collaborations with other faculties for activities where economies of scale or specific competences matter, with a particular focus on the Roeterseiland Campus (REC). In addition, many multinational companies, (inter)national non-governmental organisations, as well as important regulatory bodies, are located in the Amsterdam region, which provides excellent opportunities for collaboration and serves as source of inspiration and empirical data for UvA EB's research and impact activities. Finally, Amsterdam is a hotspot of entrepreneurial activities in the Netherlands and offers excellent research and employment opportunities for our graduates.