

# #2023 OPEN UP

THE FINAL  
UPDATE



Fontys



**> CREATIVITEIT IS ... ANDERS DENKEN**

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## COLOPHON

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# Drivers of Growth

## AMBITION PROGRAMME #2023 OPEN UP

Fontys ICT has ambition! It is with good reason that our identity is 'Drivers of Growth'. We innovate professionally, educationally, and increasingly involve external parties in that. Businesses and institutions participate in education and research in all kinds of ways. We have developed ourselves well over the past five years and our ambition programme contributed to that greatly.

### How did the ambition themes come about?

It starts with the accreditation. As a study programme, you undergo self-evaluation and a visitation for this. It produces valuable feedback about the organisation and the way it operates. The feedback was analysed with the core team. We held many discussions (internally and externally) about what is expected of Fontys ICT. Representatives from businesses, civil-society institutions, government and our Strategic Advisory Board participated in these discussions. And we also sought input from our lecturers, support staff and students. Where do they see opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses? How is the ICT market developing? What are we

doing well and what could be done better? This exploration resulted in a great deal of feedback. From it, eight ambition themes were identified, project managers were appointed, and theme teams were formed.

### How did it go?

We have achieved a great deal, but also encountered the necessary challenges. During this period, we underwent reorganisation, sites were added and renovated, and we naturally had to deal with the impact of the Corona epidemic, for example. But persistence pays, we have given substance to our ambitions with perseverance and dedication. And now, five years later, we look back on the results that have been achieved with pride. You can read about it in this edition.

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**Programme manager #2023 Open Up**  
**Cees van Tilborg**

# Quality from connection

## FOREWORD

"The field of ICT is developing extremely rapidly. Whereas the world was in the past mainly automating existing processes, it's now - driven by AI and machine learning - automating itself. In automotive, care, finance: ICT is a source of innovation in every industry. As an ICT trainer, we don't have the luxury of resting on our laurels. We have to stay ahead of the game. That's why the connection with the world around us is very important. We are rapidly evolving from an educator to a knowledge/innovation institute that maintains an intensive relationship with the professional field and society.

**We see ourselves as  
Drivers of Growth.**

This is also reflected in our last ambition programme, Open Up. In addition to ambition themes that revolve around creating and maintaining a good foundation, such as Digital Excellence and Strengths Based Development, we're increasingly promoting themes with values that focus outwards, such as: Global Acting, Innovation Hubs, Knowledge Transfer and Impact on Society. It's important for our students and employees to ask themselves what their role is in the world, how they can contribute, and what is necessary for optimal preparation.

Today's ICT education is different from when I was studying information technology. Whereas before you had to go through a mountain of basics first, students now get down to concrete work much faster. They use smart tools and methods to achieve results. Research - examined under the ambition theme R&D - occupies a prominent role in our education. Because doing research is an effective way to learn and understand software and hardware, and then use it to create tools or products that benefit the world.



These developments raised the question: Who are we as Fontys ICT? What is our purpose, now and in the future? And how do we fulfil this purpose as effectively as possible? Extensive attention was paid to this under the ambition theme Identity. We see ourselves as Drivers of Growth. We deploy today's knowledge to contribute to the innovations and development of tomorrow's agile ICT professionals. Although we

have a large and diverse community (90 nationalities), I am of the opinion that we shouldn't do this alone. Quality arises from the connection, with the professional field, with societal organisations, with fellow colleges at home and abroad.

Connection is what the ambition programme brought us, throughout all layers of the organisation. Were great results achieved? Yes. Do we have plenty left to learn? Yes, developments force us to remain up to date and to keep appraising ourselves critically. I consider this method to be extremely valuable and am looking forward to the next ambition programme.

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**Director Fontys ICT  
Frens Vonken**



## EIGHT AMBITIONS, OUR DEVELOPMENT AREAS





# RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

# Research & Development

## TOOLS FOR AN EFFECTIVE RESEARCH CULTURE

**Project Manager:**  
Tom Langhorst

Fontys ICT is transforming from an education to a knowledge institute that seeks to contribute to innovation with, by and from ICT professional practice. Applied research plays a prominent role in that. An inquisitive attitude helps (future) professionals keep challenging themselves to come up with innovative solutions for practical problems. In an ideal world, 'being inquisitive' is the natural behaviour of every ICT professional and they find themselves in a research culture that reinforces that behaviour.

Tom Langhorst, Project Manager: "Practice-oriented research is developing strongly within higher professional education. But what characterises this type of research and how do we recognise its quality? Academic research has a long tradition, but we are at the beginning, especially when it comes to the integration of research and education. That's why we worked

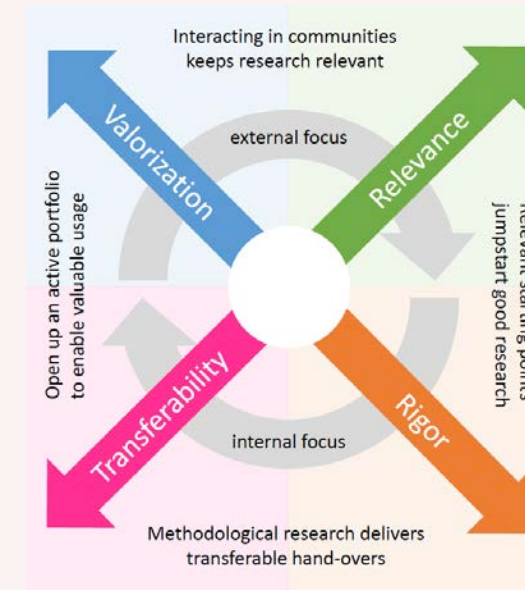
with the R&D team to create a good basis that contributes to the quality of our research, its positioning, and the transferability of acquired knowledge." The result is a model with four dimensions and a corresponding set of instruments. This makes quality visible, shapes the dimensions, and enables control.

### Teaching method

The dimensions of the model can be viewed on their own, but together they fit into what we call the regulatory cycle. "This creates a natural flow that helps students structure their project and focus on meaningful innovation." By transferring the model and toolset to education, we developed workshops and teaching material for education developers. For example, the 'solve problems methodically' learning pathway helps offer the tools across the entire curriculum. We also contributed to the development of the new Research Based Learning teaching method."

### Effect

"The dimensions and tools have an impact on how we approach research. Explicit focus on transferability and valorisation has produced positive effects. But a mind shift



**The model has been tested against existing models and (research group) research within higher professional education and Fontys. The model covers the national Basic-level Teaching Qualification (BKO) standards and Fontys SCOD model perfectly.**

was necessary first. The semester structure in education made it complex to carry out longer running research projects well. Now, students no longer always start from scratch, but often based on the results of a previous project. This took some getting used to, but once students start seeing the bigger picture and realise their contribution really matters, reservations give way to ownership. And that is good to see," says Tom. The emphasis on valorisation made students think about the value they can offer with their project. This helps manage the client's expectations of yields better."

### Culture

"The model and the toolset have given us a good starting point to grow further in our ambition to merge education and research into a knowledge institute. But we are not there yet. There are still a few implementation steps to go before we can truly speak of a research culture."





# KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



# Knowledge Transfer

ON THE ROAD TO A KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

**Project Manager:**  
**Constanze Thomassen**

**“Knowledge Transfer is our core activity, which we want to do at a high level,” says Project Manager Constanze Thomassen. “We already did this for our students in the programmes, but now that we’re transitioning from an educational institute to a knowledge institution, it also means opening doors to the world around us. We want to be a place, a platform for knowledge and research, for everyone who is professionally interested in ICT.”**

The team got to work on the theme broadly and enthusiastically. Due to Covid, among other factors, it was not possible to tick off the entire wish list. For example, the development of short courses for IT professionals was temporarily suspended. We would have been asking too much

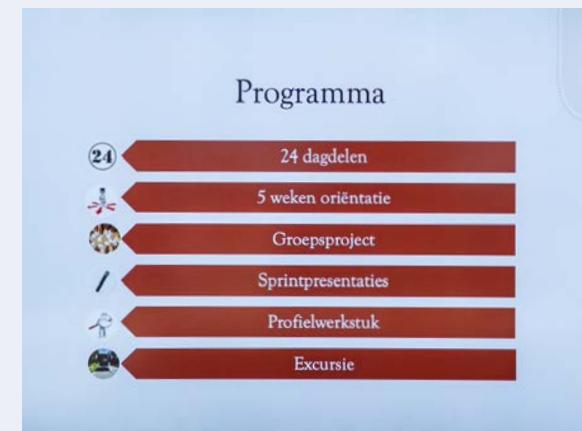
of the lecturing team during this extraordinary time. However, great results were achieved, which will have great value in the future as well. The highlights:

## **Connection with secondary education**

“We wanted to create a better connection with secondary education. To this end, we developed the HAVICT programme. Through this programme, Havo 4 students can come and get a taste of IT one afternoon a week. They work on experiments and assignments at our premises. The pilot with two secondary education institutes in Eindhoven was a success. We’re now looking at expanding to Tilburg and introducing it in the so-called national Havo P programme. This offers Havo students the opportunity to learn in a more practical way. We may be involving other Fontys education programmes as well.”

## **Master’s programme**

“We wanted to offer our most analytical students better opportunities with a Master’s degree in IT at level 5. The accreditation process for this was completed successfully.



**“We wanted to create a better connection with secondary education. To this end, we developed the HavICT programme.”**  
**- Constanze**

We sought a distinctive position in the market, wrote a profile, went through the macro-efficiency test and set up the basics. All this led to a positive recommendation. The development team structured the Master's programme substantively and welcomed the first students.”

## **Alumni**

“As a graduation coordinator, I also had a personal ambition. Although we have an outstanding network of companies and organisations around us, we didn't do enough for our alumni. From Knowledge Transfer, we made the first steps towards an active alumni policy. A great achievement is the organisation of our successful IT Festival (celebrating 50 years of IT education in Eindhoven), which returns annually and in which alumni play a major role. An alumni coordinator was later appointed upon recommendation of our team. Looking ahead, I hope the alumni coordinator will make himself obsolete. That means we have such a strong connection that alumni will do it themselves.”



# INNOVATION HUB(S)



# Innovation Hub(s)

HYBRID ENVIRONMENT THAT FACILITATES INNOVATION

**Project Manager:**  
**Ferry Wonders**

**Fontys ICT InnovationHub(s) are vibrant open environments where education and practice-oriented research connect. There is space for learning, presenting, experimenting and exhibiting. Students work on innovative ICT solutions in collaboration with lecturers, researchers and professionals from the work field. The Innovation Hub(s) ambition team achieved results in relation to three pillars:**

## **Work environment**

Theme team leader Ferry Wonders: "We have established the first hub at Strijp TQ over the past four years: Fontys Innovation Lab. The space is mostly open with various work and presentation areas and has a number of labs (CreateLab, DemoLab, MakeLab, UX-Lab) with a specific design and tooling. Accessible workshops familiarise them with the

research possibilities offered by the labs." Former theme team leader Sandra Verhoeven adds: "Users collaborate intensively in small groups on projects and prototypes and exchange ideas in the social meeting places. An important element in the design of the environment is that we always sought input from our colleagues and students. The insights we gained from discussions, surveys and participation sessions contributed to a substantiated vision of the accommodation for Fontys ICT."

## **Visibility**

Ferry: "The Fontys Innovation Lab is geared towards interaction between students, lecturers and professionals from outside. However, that doesn't happen automatically. People first need to get to know it and then start using it. It requires constant energy and attention. The building is equipped with recognisable branding and signage inside and out to increase visibility and promote use. In addition, we organised all kinds of activities to enable visitors and users to experience the environment for themselves. By collaborating with (inter)national events such as Dutch Design Week, STRP, GLOW and Night of the Nerds, we have really raised the profile of the hub amongst internal and external stakeholders.



**"We succeeded in creating a vibrant hybrid learning/work/research environment that forms an important connection between Fontys ICT's internal and external world."**

**- Ferry**

Besides, all these activities have generated good media exposure in regional and national media."

## **Connecting**

Sandra: "Het Fontys Innovation Lab is intentionally located off-campus to promote connection with the surrounding businesses. We encourage this by organising lunch sessions, project fairs and knowledge events. Innovation Insights and Updates Available are striking examples of this. We are also involved in setting up and maintaining SPARC, activities with a fixed group of partners in the work field. SPARC partners are intensively involved in research projects as clients and assessors and regularly serve as guest speakers." Ferry: "We succeeded in creating a vibrant hybrid learning/work/research environment that forms an important connection between Fontys ICT's internal and external world. It is obviously important that the Fontys Innovation Hub(s) are maintained and developed further. That is why we are now transferring our lessons learned to various parts of the organisation and recommending the appointment of an Innovation Manager to support further development."

## **Want to know more?**

[Fontysictinnovationlab.nl](https://fontysictinnovationlab.nl)



# IDENTITY



# Identity

## DRIVERS OF GROWTH

**Project Manager:**  
**Anke Bardie**

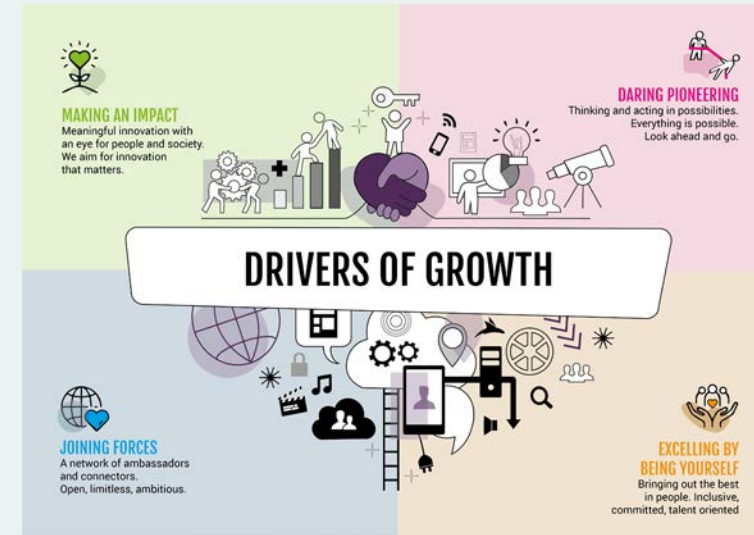
**Good profiling is required for the transition from educational institution to knowledge institute. We, prospective students, lecturers and partners need to define, know, recognise and appreciate our new role and values. This means we must clearly show who we are, what we stand for, and what results we achieve.**

Theme team leader Anke Bardie: "Over the past four years, the Identity ambition theme team has, in varying compositions, examined our institute's identity and positioning and looked for ways to communicate this to all stakeholders effectively. We spoke to colleagues, students and working professionals extensively during our exploration. That produced a clear shared perspective upon which we elaborated in various communications."

### Who are we?

"The Fontys ICT-compass gives us a strong foundation for articulating, illustrating and strengthening our identity. We stand for: 'daring pioneering', 'excelling by being yourself' and we are 'making an impact' by 'joining forces'. Together, these values underpin our motto: 'Drivers of Growth'. The compass has been embraced by the organisation. It has contributed to the new Fontys ICT story. Consciously or unconsciously, the narrative has changed from 'what we/they do' to 'why and how we do things together'.

The compass points have been brought to life in the organisation by, amongst others, Drivers of Growth ambassadors who have initiated projects and workshops. You see our story recognisably reflected in our accommodation, we communicate it in the onboarding of new employees, we use it in brand activation campaigns, and anyone who is interested can play the Expedition Fontys ICT board game. We bring our values to life by these and other means.



**"The compass gives us a strong foundation for articulating, illustrating and strengthening our identity."**

**- Anke**

### Dialogue makes a difference

This process has contributed to re-evaluation of our self-image. That said, we don't pretend we are quite there yet with our story, compass, and more. An identity is constantly evolving. We are and remain in dialogue with one another about it. Therein lies the greatest value I think. The continuous dialogue about identity helps with our internal and external profiling and it promotes a connection between colleagues. I am proud to be a part of Fontys ICT, and I believe many of my colleagues feel the same way."





# GLOBAL ACTING



# Global Acting

INTERCULTURALLY AWARE

**Project Manager:**  
**Ineke Huyskens**

**The ICT field of expertise is not limited to national borders. IT talent from around the whole world works on solutions for global challenges at Brainport. Fontys ICT and its partners from the business world have gained a strong international profile in recent years. Working and learning in a multicultural environment is enriching, but also presents challenges.**

Ineke Huyskens, Ambition Theme Leader: "Global Acting is a broad and highly relevant theme. It goes far beyond exchange projects. We asked ourselves what it means to our students to be 'global citizens' and how we as an institute approach intercultural education and our role in global society. We have made great strides and I am very proud of the results."

## Highlights:

### Global Acting & IT Minor

"We developed a very special minor in collaboration with universities of applied sciences in Belgium, Spain, Austria and South Africa. Students spend six months working on an overarching assignment in the area of 'sustainable development'. This minor offers students not one but five overseas experiences. Each university of applied sciences focuses on a different ICT field of expertise. That way, they work together on a good end result."

### Intercultural Awareness Edubadge

In addition to the standard curriculum, we are busy developing an Intercultural Awareness learning pathway. Students attend workshops and learn to interpret intercultural differences and to work on their communication skills. Together, this forms an extracurricular portfolio for which students earn an Edubadge. We see that businesses have a particular interest in professionals with international skills.

### Professional development

Intercultural skills are naturally also important to our own organisation. With the help of an external training agency, we provided a series of workshops around intercultural awareness and skills. Over 100 employees attended the training courses, with a number being trained to deliver the courses to colleagues.



**"Thanks to the exchanges, they are capable of really reflecting on their development. You do not achieve that by being stuck in a classroom with each other."**

**- Ineke**

### Research

The team was awarded a European grant for research into international awareness and intercultural skills. The research will take shape in the near future.

### Profiling

We are one of the frontrunners in this area at Fontys. We actively share our knowledge within Fontys, amongst others, with the Internationalisation strategic working group. Our developments attract plenty of attention from overseas universities of applied sciences and universities.

### Future

Internationalisation and global acting have become fixtures within the organisation. We have developed an extensive network of universities of applied sciences and universities overseas with which we organise exchanges. Business serve as clients and assessors. The number of exchanges has increased ten-fold since the start. Our progress has also led to a greater focus on the future. There is a vacancy for an Intercultural Development Project Manager. The incumbent will be responsible for further development of our intercultural organisation for and with our students and employees."



## IMPACT ON SOCIETY



# Impact on Society

ACTIVELY WORKING ON A BETTER WORLD

**Project Manager:**  
**Danny Bloks**

**The purpose of research and education is not just to train valuable professionals, but also to be meaningful to society. The Impact on Society theme team explored the role the organisation and ICT play in society and how we can contribute to a better world.**

Theme team member Monique Vissers: “There are two main directions to explore in our activities. The first is impact awareness. If you don’t develop software in a conscious way, it can have a negative impact on society. How do you prevent that? And the second is positive impact: How can we use ICT to contribute to solutions for sustainable development goals (SDGs)? We achieved impressive results in both pillars.

**The highlights:**

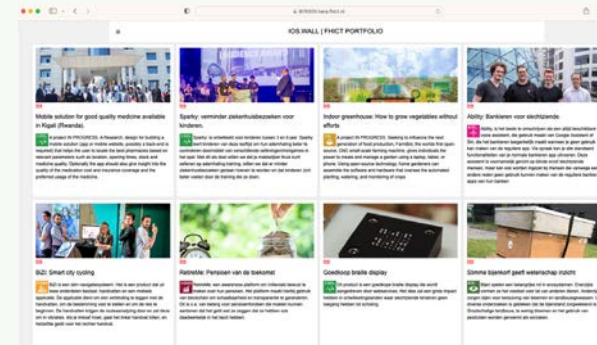
## Integration in the curriculum

Monique: “We have integrated a great deal of social awareness into the curriculum. That way, our students are exposed to thinking from a social perspective and they reflect on their roles as professionals. We offer the SDG challenge in the starting semester. Students are introduced to the SDG philosophy and get to work on conceiving and achieving an ICT solution for one or more SDGs. In addition, we have introduced Fix U, a work/learning concept that entails students spending a week working in groups on a solution for a societal challenge.

And they can make use of so-called ‘expert cards’ for every ICT development. Technology Leaders like Elon Musk and Edward Snowden ask critical questions on these cards. This helps students reflect on the development and make ideas better and richer.”

## Tool and platform

Rens van der Vorst, theme team member: “In addition to offering projects, we looked for ways to increase the awareness of students. We introduced TICT, or the Technology



**Projects with impact**  
**“Sparky is a wonderful example of a student project with a positive impact. This game helps young patients between the ages of 3 and 6 gain better control of their breathing. You can find 20 more positive projects on the portfolio site.”**

See:



Impact Cycle Tool for this ([www.tict.io](http://www.tict.io)). This is an online tool that students can use to ascertain the impact of their software/hardware on society. For example, is it addictive? And does it make us better people? Over 1,600 projects within Fontys and beyond have already been analysed using the TICT. A valuable tool.

In addition, the successful methodologies, projects, games and models for social awareness have been collected on ipfor.tech. This platform (live since 1 July 2023) offers all the materials and inspiration that employees, students and the outside world can use. Ipfor.tech therefore showcases Fontys ICT as an international knowledge organisation for the design of technology with a positive impact.”  
To find out more: see [ipfor.tech](http://ipfor.tech)

## Impact Lab

Monique: “Our theme has also been given a physical space, the Impact Lab in the TQ building. This is a place where development teams can speak to one another face-to-face, where they can find inspiration in books and quotes, and where they can evaluate the impact of their ideas and developments using games designed by the theme team. We would like to set up an Impact Lab at every site.”



## STRENGTH BASED DEVELOPMENT



# Strength Based Development

THE POWER OF INFORMALITY

**Project Manager:**  
**Bartosz Barszkowski**

**Fast growth, more locations, more diversity through international students and colleagues, transformation from an educational institute to an (open) knowledge institute, the introduction of research-based learning, lecturer-researchers increasingly taking on the role of coaches: all of these changes place considerable demands on the organisation. The Strengths-Based Development thematic team looked into the development of organisation and colleagues.**

Thematic team leader Bartosz Paszkowski: "How can we make our organisation and colleagues flourish in this context? We started our work with a standard project plan, but it quickly became apparent that this working method did not suit us. We therefore deliberately chose to first take the

time to think carefully. To reflect on what colleagues really consider important and where we could make a difference, as a thematic team. We then started to collect that information through interviews and brainstorming sessions." Highlights of our efforts:

## **Mapping the learning landscape**

"What tools can colleagues use for their development, how do they utilise them and how do they experience the process? Can this be improved upon and made easier? We mapped the learning landscape and developed overview maps that support the quest for development. By zooming in on the range of training programmes, your personal ambition, role and development path, you can more effectively engage in a discussion about your development with our People Managers. Linking insight into the learning landscape with developments inside and outside Fontys creates valuable input for strategic policy."

## **The power of informal**

"During our exploration, we also found that in personal development, the informal flow is incredibly important and valuable. Colleagues (un)intentionally get together to



**"How can we make our organisation and colleagues flourish in this context?"**  
**- Bartosz**

exchange stories, look at each other's approaches and learn from the other's experiences. Therein lies a special and practical strength. We soon came to the conclusion that we should facilitate these informal networks much more, by making them visible and giving them a place. For example, a rose garden was set up at location R10 by several colleagues. A place to meet informally and reflect on work, one's profession and personal development. That turned out to be a hit."

## **Conditions for growth**

"We realise that the achievements of our thematic team can be difficult to quantify. We are moving towards an open network organisation and we have noticed that the stories colleagues share with us and each other have changed. I consider that a great sign of development. Looking to the future, our advice is to continue to focus on good support, space for reflection, room to allow for making mistakes, informal contact and activities with no obligation to achieve results. By doing so, you contribute to an open atmosphere in which people dare to be vulnerable, all of which are crucial conditions for growth."



# DIGITAL EXCELLENCE



# Digital Excellence

FACILITATING LEARNING AND INNOVATION

**Project Manager:**  
**Wilrik de Loose**

**“We are committed to a modern working environment that makes the creativity, interests and ambitions of our colleagues visible and where we develop excellent digital solutions together,” says Merel Veracx, former ambition theme leader. Fontys ICT wants to lead the way by facilitating optimal learning and innovation with its own ICT environment.**

Wilrik de Loose, interim theme team leader: “There is no lack of ambition in our team, but we have had the necessary challenges. Reorganisation, changes to team staffing and the overarching structures at Fontys have not made it easy. But we have still achieved important results and above all, learned a great deal.”

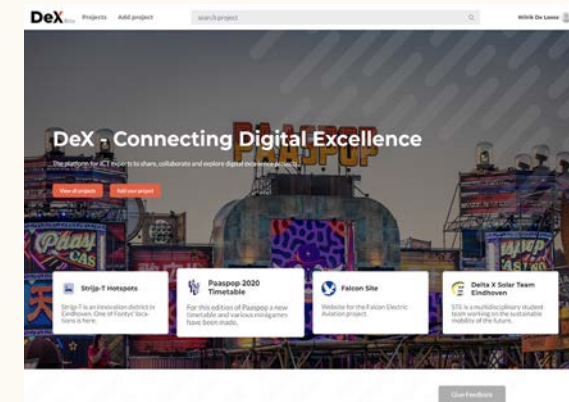
## The highlights:

### The right foundation

“The first development path is described as ‘the right foundation’. Your own ICT landscape needs to be in order if you want to be able to collaborate effectively and successfully. However, there are all kinds of connected systems and interests in a Legacy environment. Merel has taken on the role of IT Architect to facilitate development and steer it in the right direction. She maintains oversight, prioritises, and directs the development of the landscape. A Change Control Board has been established to give users a say in the development. This body collects, assesses and implements the changes that employees and students desire. This has given ICT development a much stronger foundation in our organisation.”

### DeX Innovation platform

“Our second pillar in Digital Excellence is the facilitation of innovation. We wanted to make all those valuable developments (ideas, knowledge, tools, apps and demos) of our students, lecturers and researchers far more visible so



**“There was no lack of ambition in our team, but we have had the necessary challenges.”**

**- Wilrik**

that others can learn from them and progress faster. I worked on DeX, a sharing platform, along with a number of students. The first version proved to be lacking the desired quality, but gave us a good insight into the requirements and now serves as a demo for further development.”

## Insights

“We gained a number of important insights while working on this theme. For example, the execution of long-term projects proved a challenge in a semester structure. The break can get in the way and requires an effective hand-over and coordination. We also came to the conclusion that you cannot simply place larger developments in the hands of a team of students and lecturers. Some projects are large, comprehensive and far-reaching. You are better off with a full team working on that. A Scrum/Agile approach can help with that too. What's more, it is advisable to involve research groups closely in the development of digital excellence. Our insights and recommendations have been consolidated in a comprehensive advisory note to the extended leadership team to deliver digital excellence at the level it deserves.”



# Look to the future

As a higher education institution, we exist first and foremost to train young people to become skilled professionals who can make a meaningful contribution to the professional practice. That is our core mission. To do that well, we intensively involve the professional field in our education. The organisations we work with provide context, assignments, sparring opportunities, assessment and validation. This is of great value for the development of our students and lecturers.

Nevertheless, we also look an important step ahead. We not merely aim to serve professional practice, but to innovate it as well. We conduct research, develop knowledge, tools and working methods that advance other ICT professionals, in solving problems and developing new technologies. We are transforming into a knowledge institute. A place where value is created for society.

Fontys ICT now comprises a diverse community where people of no fewer than 90 nationalities come together and combine their perspectives to create surprising new insights, knowledge and products. With the growing importance of ICT in the world and the needs of the professional field in Brainport and Midpoint, our organisation will continue to grow.

Our challenge is to offer all the international talent that comes together and works together here, the space to develop and express that talent to the highest level. To forge a culture where you can experiment and pioneer to your heart's content. A place where we join forces to provide answers to global societal issues through smart and social ICT solutions. Together, we create an impact.

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**We are Fontys ICT,  
Drivers of Growth.**



# AFTERWORD



## New ambitions

The current #2023 Open Up ambition themes were deconstructed on 1 August. The results have been embedded into the organisation as much as possible. Where that is not the case, we will complete this in the next six months. How are we going to proceed? We are now considering how to develop a new ambition plan. There are plenty of ideas and wishes. The external visitation that will take place in November as part of accreditation is important in the development of a new ambition plan. The study days on 23 and 24 October play a role in this too.

- › Do you have an opinion?
- › What do you think Fontys ICT should devote more attention to?
- › What role could you play in that?
- › Contact us and let us know!

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