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Word from our Scientific Director: News from and for the VLAG groups

In the last month, we have started our visits to the VLAG groups. Previously, the visits to the PhD candidates have taken place, and now we are visiting a representation of the staff. We have had the pleasure to meet with four groups and look forward to hearing about the exciting new things that are happening in the remaining 18 groups in the coming months.

I thought it would be good to already give you a sneak preview of what we have been hearing this far.

[Continue reading online](#)

From the VLAG Office



Final call for creative VLAG PhDs, Postdocs, supervisors and other staff members!

We need your help to design a creative professional new logo or refresh the current design. Your design should fit the graduate school and its four research themes.

Please send your contribution (individually or as group) to [Cornelia](#) at the latest on **1 November 2022**.

Your contribution will help us to develop a final design. It might even be that a design is directly selected from the submissions! If your design gets selected, you can expect a surprise.

Conditions

- * The logo preferably contains colours, but should be recognisable in grayscale and black & white.
- * The logo design should contain the word "VLAG" and "graduate school".
- * VLAG office can commission the further development of a contribution to yield the final logo.

Wageningen University has been accredited to start a new postgraduate education programme, [the Engineering Doctorate \(EngD\)](#). This is a two-year programme in which one year is spent on training and education activities and one year on developing a design. The assignment for the design very often comes from the private sector, governmental and non-governmental organisations.

PhD trip MIB & SSB 2022 to the USA

From 28 May - 11 June '22, PhD candidates of the laboratories of Microbiology (MIB) and Systems and Synthetic Biology (SSB) partook in their bi-annual PhD trip, which started in San Francisco, continued in Los Angeles and finished in San Diego in California, USA. In total, 7 individual laboratories, 5 scientific institutes and 4 companies were visited by 34 participants under the supervision of Dr Raymond Staals and Dr Michelle Schorn.



PhD trip FPE 2022 to Singapore

From 20 – 30 May, the Food Process Engineering (FPE) group went with 45 participants on a PhD trip to Singapore. Singapore is a very good destination for food scientists as Singaporeans work on state-of-the-art food tech (e.g. fish/seafood replacers) and Singapore is also considered 'the gate' to the Asian market. The PhD trip committee set up a great programme with visits to universities, companies, a research institute, and a start-up incubator.



Lunch meeting Stress Management for WUR PhD candidates (8 November '22)

You are invited to join this lunch meeting, organized by WIMEK Graduate School, which will take place in FORUM (B0425) between 12:00 – 13.30 pm. A free vegetarian lunch will be served. Please register [here](#).

UNLOCK Microbial Potential

[UNLOCK](#) is an open infrastructure for exploring new horizons for research on microbial communities. The facilities will be [unlocked](#) on 3 November '22 from 13-18h in Impulse. On this day, there will be the chance to discuss future research plans involving the facilities of UNLOCK. [Register here](#) for the opening if you are planning to use facilities in the future or if you are interested in research on microbial communities.

Mindlab theatre performance – Social Safety

As a kick-off for its social safety programme, WUR invites all of us to join the [Mindlab theatre performances](#), specifically organised for our organisation from 28 November to 7 December. The show addresses a range of situations that can occur in the workplace. At VLAG Office, we are happy with the attention for social safety and wellbeing in academia, and hope that this show works as a conversation starter. We realise that a Dutch theatre performance with English captions is less than ideal for non-Dutch speaking colleagues, but hope that the post-show discussions will lead to further follow-up on this topic throughout all chair groups.

WEES is looking for you!

[Wageningen Evolution & Ecology Seminars](#) (WEES) committee are looking for new recruits to [join the committee](#). WEES is an initiative from PhD candidates and postdocs at Wageningen University to organize a continuing series of stimulating seminars on contemporary topics in evolution and ecology. They aim to bring together different groups at Wageningen University using a variety of systems, but with a common interest in evolutionary and ecological questions.

VLAG on LinkedIn

Would you like to be updated on postgraduate courses (in and outside WUR), conferences, vacancies etc. make sure to follow VLAG on [LinkedIn](#). Also if you would like to share news or events with the VLAG LinkedIn community, you can [send](#) your input to us.

From the VLAG PhD Advisor

Celebrating [where academia brings us joy](#) is of key importance: an experiment that surprisingly worked, a colleague who helped you, a student who got you to look at a problem in a different light... Last time, I wrote about sharing positives in doing PhD research, and sometimes we have to burst our bubble to do so: talking to others helps you broaden your view, or it helps you share your experience to expand theirs. Building mentoring relationships, both as mentor and as mentee, paradoxically helps you [develop your independence](#). Having a network of mentors for different aspects in your professional and personal life is a great way to find your way, and [advice how to build such a network](#) can be found easily. As a PhD candidate or a Postdoc, you are in an ongoing learning trajectory. Who in your surrounding could be helping you with critical insights for navigating your personal development?

Regards, [Jochem Jonkman](#)

From the VLAG community for the VLAG community

Contribution by PhD candidate Kesso Gabriele van Zütphen – Global Nutrition



A few days ago, as I was clearing up my desk, I came across a one-pager feedback that I had received from my supervisor a while ago regarding my PhD research proposal. I jokingly said to my husband I was totally going to frame it and hang it above my desk. That one-pager marked an important crossroad in my PhD journey and determined its course. As I picked up the piece of paper, I remember how this comment had struck me: “Your key research question concerns the identification of etiological factors of anemia in adolescents but, surprisingly, no data is foreseen to be collected on what is likely to be the primary cause of anemia in this risk group, namely menstruation!” [Continue reading online](#)

VLAG courses

Highlighted courses

Online course: [Bioinformatics with Linux and Python](#) (period between 20 February – 3 March '23)
Linux and Python, a dynamic, readable programming language, is a popular combination for all types of bioinformatics work, from simple one-off scripts to large, complex software projects. This workshop is aimed at complete beginners and assumes no prior programming experience. It gives an overview of the language with an emphasis on practical problem-solving, using examples and exercises drawn from various aspects of bioinformatics work. The course is scheduled in the mornings.

[Advanced Organic Chemistry course 2022/2023](#)

This year we will have 7 brand new topics covered by Organic Chemistry lecturers. For registration as ORC PhD candidate you need to contact [ORC Office](#). All other PhD candidates can register [here](#).

[NanoBioPhysX course](#)

Interdisciplinary fundamental science and outreach course activity linked to the NanoBioPhysX club. For PhD candidates working on fundamental topics (experiment or theory) within the crossover field of **nanotechnology**, **biology**, **physics** and **chemistry**, interested in broadening their academic scope and societal reach.

Planned courses, which will open for registration shortly:

- **Advanced Course ‘Microscopy and Spectroscopy in Food and Plant Sciences’**
- **Intestinal microbiome of humans and animals**, 12 - 14 April 2023
- **Rheology**, 1 - 3 May 2023
- **Healthy Food Design**, 1 – 4 May 2023
- **Summer School Glycosciences**, 11 - 15 June 2023 in Groningen
- **Food proteins**, postponed to February 2024

For an overview of all courses regularly organised by VLAG take a look in [past courses](#) and contact the [VLAG office](#) for the planning.

Wageningen Graduate Schools (WGS) courses

BSc and MSc student supervision

Are you getting started with supervising BSc or MSc thesis students? Would you like to know more about what is expected from you as a supervisor, or about how to interact with your student? Visit and bookmark the new *Educational Training Advice intranet group* on [Supervising thesis students](#). The information on this page will help you on your way with supervising thesis students at WUR. It is an addition to the already existing [workshop](#) and [course](#) on student supervision, which come highly recommended! Complementary to these resources, you can participate in a [peer consultation group on supervision](#), to benefit from the supervision experiences from fellow PhDs, share your own, as well as consult with an expert educational trainer.

Highlighted courses

[Project and Time Management](#) (November, December '22)

Planning, control, monitoring and management of the research project and time are essential in accomplishing the PhD.

[Philosophy and Ethics of Food Science and Technology](#) (starts on 19 January '23)

This course includes hands-on dealings with ethical, philosophical, and societal issues surrounding science.

For a complete overview of all competence, skills and career development training activities by WGS, please click [here](#). Or click [here](#) for the direct links to the webpages of the other graduate schools.

Other courses and events

Conference Microbiome Interactions in Health and Disease (24 - 26 October '22)

The [Microbiome Interactions in Health and Disease](#) meeting will bring together leading scientists and clinicians from the fields of microbiology, gastroenterology, nutrition, cancer and public health to discuss the latest developments in this fast-moving area.

Course ERC consolidator and advanced grants (24 November '22).

You will learn how to develop an excellent ERC project and write a competitive proposal. People who intend to submit a proposal in the next round can register by sending an email to [Henriëke de Ruyter](#). Indicate in this email when you received your PhD, why you are a good ERC candidate and which chair group you are from.

FAIR Data Day (29 November '22)

[FAIR Data Day conference: 'Reusing data to advance science'](#) is an event organised by the National Programme Open Science (NPOS) and Research Data Netherlands (RDNL), which aims to bring together the research & data steward communities in the Netherlands.

Towards FAIR Data Management Course (30 November, 7 and 14 December '22)

Why should data be shared in a FAIR way? How does FAIR data look like, how to use, and how to create it? Which relevant platforms and tools exist and how to use them? [This PE&RC course](#) will address these questions.

Carbohydrate Competence Center Symposium (1 December '22)

The [Carbohydrate Competence Center Symposium](#) with inspiring keynote speakers, scientific poster presentations and ample opportunity for networking.

Integrated Modeling and Optimization (Fundamental) (12 - 16 December '22)

[The BioSB course Integrated Modeling and Optimization](#), will provide a theoretical basis, a variety of methods, and a computational hands-on experience to set-up systems biology models and handle numerical optimization.

Unite! Biomass Winter School (6 - 10 February '23)

[Winter School Plant biomass, a valuable resource for innovative materials](#) will focus on biomass valorisation: green and agri-food waste as well as wood residues can be used to produce biomaterials (or bio-sourced materials).

European Biopolymer Summit (8 - 9 February '23)

[ACI's 9th European Biopolymer Summit](#) will bring together senior executives and experts from biopolymers manufacturers, chemical companies, major associations, raw materials, and technology companies, consultants, to discuss the latest changes, challenges and developments within the industry.

10th International Granulation Conference (21 - 23 June '23)

The 10th [International Granulation Conference](#) will be the place to showcase the latest in agglomeration, granulation and particle technology.

Calls and grants

Data-driven discoveries in a changing climate call for 2023 (deadline 7 November '22)

The WUR investment theme “Data-Driven Discoveries in a Changing Climate” targets innovative project ideas that fit within the new WUR strategic research agenda to advance Wageningen Climate Solutions. For this call they will grant both wildcard projects and research projects.

For more information check the intranet group [Data Driven Discoveries in a changing climate](#).