



4TU.Strategy 2030 4TU4Society



Mission & core values

CONNECTING

REPRESENTING STRENGTHENING

4TU is the federation of the four technical universities in the Netherlands (Delft University of Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University & Research).

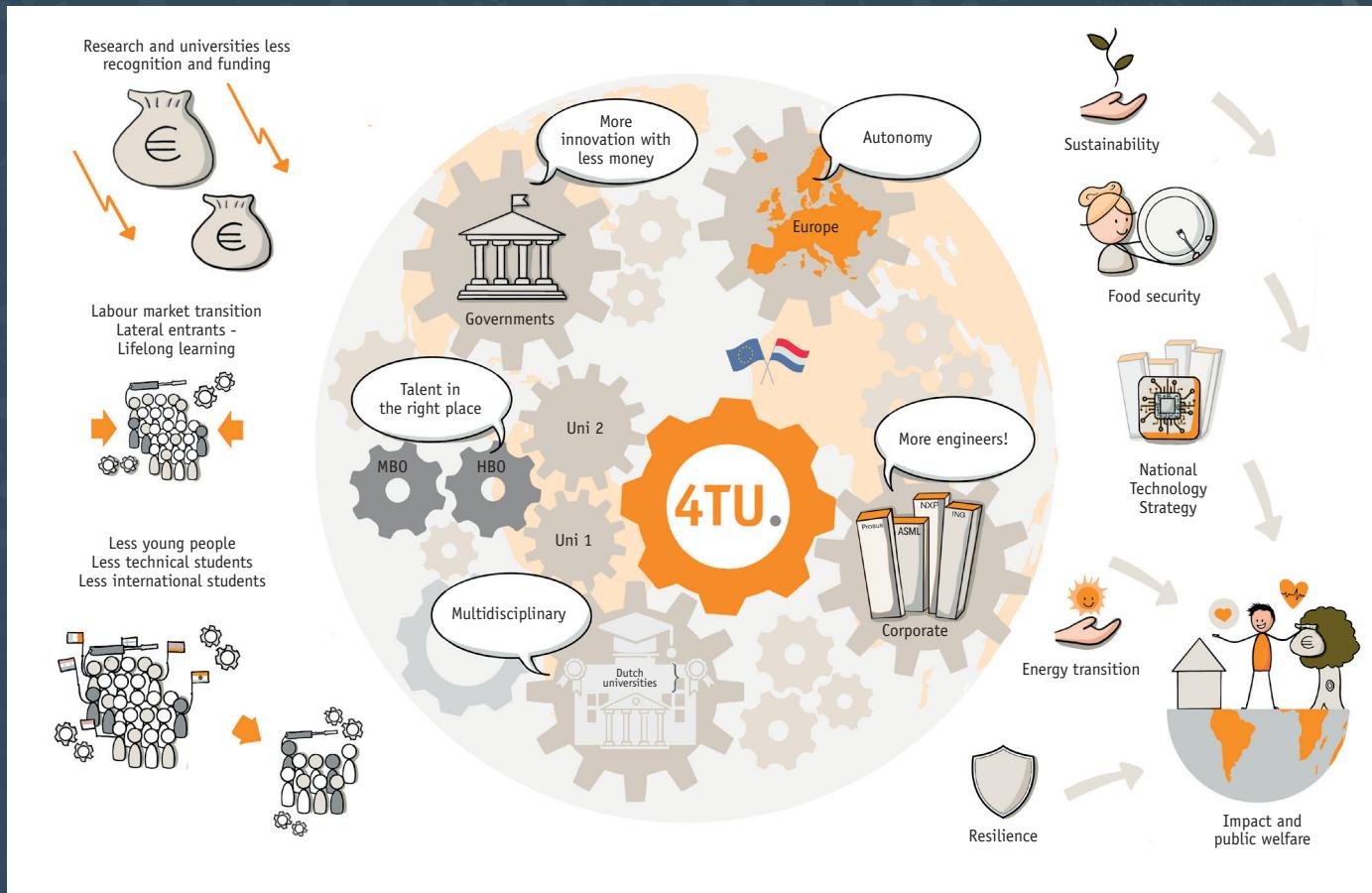
The mission of 4TU is to increase the **impact of education and research at the technical universities, enabling an even stronger contribution to the development of solutions to societal challenges** such as food security, the energy transition, resilience, affordable healthcare, climate adaptation, and the housing shortage.

4TU does this based on its core values:
connecting, representing and strengthening.

CONNECTING

REPRESENTING STRENGTHENING

Vision



4TU in context

The context of the Dutch technical universities has changed significantly in recent years and continues to evolve. The role of technology is increasing, as are uncertainty and complexity.

Demand for engineers and innovative solutions to societal challenges remains high and continues to grow, including in areas such as the energy transition, sustainability, and food security.

In addition, the changing geopolitical situation calls for greater strategic autonomy and resilience in the Netherlands and Europe.

This makes it essential for the Netherlands to continue developing new technologies, as set out in the National Technology Strategy (NTS) and the Draghi report on Europe's competitiveness, while also strengthening the resilience of the Netherlands and Europe. Together, these factors are key to our broader welfare.

Despite the growing need for innovation to address societal challenges, fewer resources are being allocated to research and education. At the same time, labour shortages are already severe, particularly in healthcare, technology, and education. Political and demographic developments, such as an ageing population, fewer young people, and reduced international talent, will further shrink the workforce.

Together, these pressures create areas of tension in which the technical universities must operate, in close collaboration with partners within and beyond the education sector, including other universities, universities of applied sciences, higher secondary vocational education institutions, and corporate and public organisations.



Positioning of technical universities

The Dutch technical universities are part of the 14 Dutch universities united in the umbrella organisation UNL (Universities of the Netherlands). The universities' core tasks are education, research and valorisation.

Within this framework, the technical universities focus primarily on technology and are strongly oriented towards solving societal challenges. In this context, we pay particular attention to the non-technical aspects necessary to achieve concrete solutions.

Positioning of 4TU

4TU connects the four technical universities in the Netherlands and ensures joint representation.

In doing so, 4TU strengthens its collective commitment to shared challenges, increases the impact of the technical universities, and enables a stronger contribution to the development of solutions to societal challenges.

"This collaboration is more relevant than ever. By sharing knowledge and experience conducting joint research, and providing students with a broad education, we can directly contribute to major current issues.

At the same time, we're building a future in which technology and innovation make a difference for everyone."

Sjoukje Heimovaara, chair 4TU.Federation

4TU does this by:

CONNECTING

We bring the four technical universities together (scientists, professionals and infrastructure) and we seek connections with other stakeholders in the technology domain and other parties that contribute to solving societal challenges.

REPRESENTING

We represent the Dutch university technology domain nationally and internationally at various levels (institutions, faculties, themes, disciplines) and we act as a single point of contact for the outside world.

STRENGTHENING

By working together and joining forces, we achieve critical mass and support each other, which is how we optimise (the requirements for) education and research and can make a bigger impact when it comes to solving societal challenges.

Ambitions

Given the current context (a geopolitical situation that calls for greater strategic autonomy and resilience, a significant labour shortage in engineering, and fewer resources for education/research), 4TU has the following ambitions:

- Increasing the impact of research and education at the technical universities by **connecting** scientists and professionals from the four technical universities in networks, and thereby **representing** important themes and disciplines at the technical universities.

In addition, we increase the impact of research and education through connecting networks of facilities or target groups, such as **4TU. Research Data**. 4TU. Research Data is the network that offers and manages a digital repository for the secure and FAIR (*Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable*) management of research data and software and supports researchers in doing this correctly. The importance of this is growing in the current geopolitical context and strengthens our digital sovereignty.

We want to strengthen several urgent themes in the coming strategic period to further increase their scientific and societal impact. For the coming strategic period, we have chosen multidisciplinary themes that are particularly important for strategic autonomy and resilience, namely: **4TU.Energy**, **4TU. High Tech Materials** and **4TU.Resilience Engineering**. In addition, we are creating strategic space to focus on new developments.

- Strengthening technical talent by increasing the number of graduate engineers, designers and technical-scientific researchers with the desired competencies tailored to the demands of society (e.g. via **4TU.Schools**, **4TU.Centre for Engineering Education** and **4TU.Stan Ackermans Institute/Graduate Schools**).

It is our ambition to work together, and in conjunction with primary and secondary education, to get more schoolchildren interested in technology, and to connect universities of technology with each other and with others in order to jointly develop excellent engineering education. We are also committed to retaining graduate engineers for the Dutch technology sector (e.g. through **4TU.Alumni**).

- Strengthening **value creation** and **knowledge transfer** in (technical) scientific education and research at technical universities by connecting relevant parties and joining forces to develop programmes that create impact. In this way, we as four technical universities can better meet the needs of society.

Approach

Joining forces and engine

4TU aims to increase the impact of the technical universities by joining forces and acting as an engine. We mainly join forces when we want to achieve critical mass, jointly align with others' initiatives, or act as a single point of contact for the outside world. We act as an engine in areas where we are recognised and acknowledged for our knowledge and expertise (where we are or want to become thought leaders), which we will focus on during the coming strategy period and where we, as technical universities, will therefore take the lead and motivate each other and others to take action.

We use the metaphor of the car engine for good reason here; it is essential to get moving, but the input of partners is also required to actually move forward as a vehicle: other disciplines and other stakeholders, from government to industry and from politics to citizens.

We can focus on combining forces or the role of the engine with substantive themes, but also, for example, by jointly promoting the interests of technical-scientific education, research, and impact within the Netherlands or in Europe. This could include sufficient capacity and facilities for quality engineering education, robust physical and digital infrastructure for technical scientific research, or facilities, procedures, and processes that ensure scientific results are optimally used and applied, creating as much value as possible for society.

Collaboration with partners and stakeholders

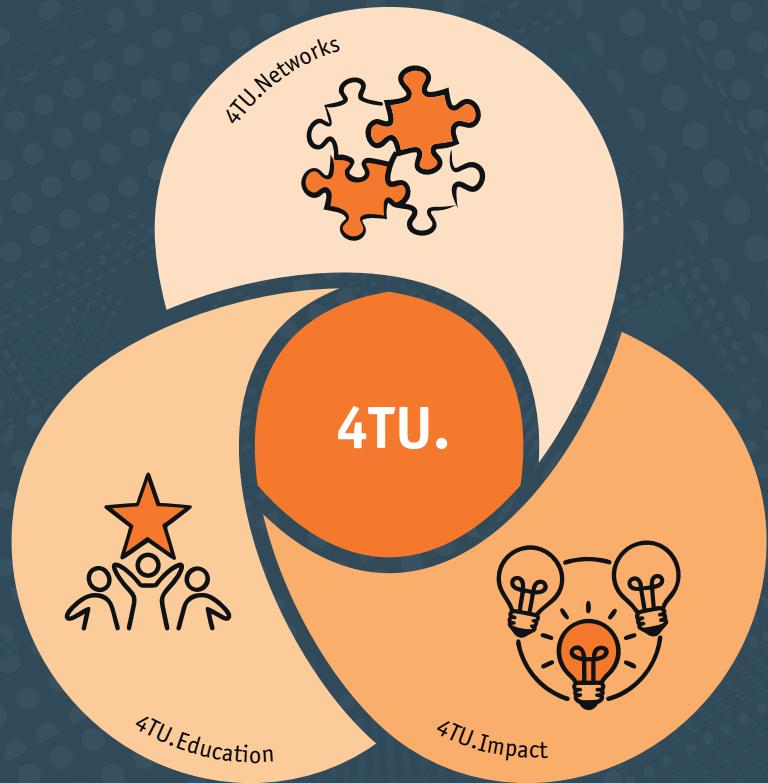
To increase the impact of the four technical universities, we need to work with others. For each topic, we select the most important stakeholders to collaborate with. In some situations, we enter into structural collaboration within the 4TU+ framework. We are already collaborating with the University of Groningen (RUG) on several themes.

We will also explore the possibilities for entering into additional partnerships, such as getting school pupils interested in science and technology and/or strengthening engineering education, which will require collaboration with the science faculties of universities and/or universities of applied sciences in the field of Engineering.

Finally, we are looking to connect with parties that can strengthen our mission, both within and outside the technology domain, such as the Netherlands Academy of Engineering (NAE), FME (employers' organisation for the technology industry.), Royal Institute of Engineers (KIVI), Platform Talent for Technology (PTvT), representatives of other domains (science, medical sciences and social sciences and humanities), ministries (Education, Culture and Science and Economic Affairs, but also subject-specific ministries), and organisations such as RVO (Netherlands Enterprise Agency), NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research), TechLeap, TNO or other applied research institutions (T02 institutions).

Structure

We divide our activities into three main pillars:



Colophon

4TU.Strategy 2030: 4TU4Society

4TU.Federation - The collaboration of the four technical universities in the Netherlands:
Delft University of Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University & Research

Editors

4TU.WENS (Task Force New Strategy)
and 4TU.Bureau
With contributions from 4TU.Networks,
4TU.Education, 4TU.Impact, partners of 4TU.

Design/Layout

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Photos/Visuals

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Mooijontwerp

Publication

January 2026

4TU.nl

Special thanks to the members of 4TU.WENS:
Chris Rouwenhorst, Claire Hoencamp, Eva van
Kooten, Lilian Halsema, Marike Poldervaart,
Marjolein Dohmen-Janssen, Pieter Munster,
Rianne Pas, Roelyn van der Hoek, Sandra
Nienhuis, Zischa Bijron