

Project Team

- Jan van Erp – Professor at Human Media Interaction group, University of Twente (jan.vanerp@utwente.nl)
- Dasha Kolesnyk – Currently Assistant Professor, University of Amsterdam (4TU alumnus)
- Judith Weda – Currently at Utrecht University of Applied Sciences (4TU alumnus)
- Gijs Huisman – Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Industrial Engineering, TU Delft
- Antal Haans – Associate Professor at Human Technology Interaction group, Eindhoven University of Technology
- Merel Jung – Assistant Professor at the department of Cognitive Science & Artificial Intelligence, Tilburg University; 4TU alumnus
- Anouk Keizer – Assistant Professor at the department of Experimental Psychology, (Utrecht University)
- Sima Ipakchian Askari – Vilans, 4TU alumnus
- Marie-Laure Snijders – PhD student University of Twente.



Dutch Touch Team at Lowlands Science 2025.

Short Introduction to the project

The Society for the Study of Social and Affective Touch in the Netherlands, also known as “Dutch Touch” includes researchers from Dutch universities who study touch, representatives of companies specializing in

haptics (e.g., Elitac, Vilans), artists, and other practitioners working with touch. The goal for the last year of funding under this funding scheme is to bring the Dutch Touch Society under the attention of the general public.

Activities

The project team decided to submit a proposal for LowLands Science (<https://lowlands.nl/ll-science/>), which is a highly competitive scientific and dissemination opportunity. This proposal was awarded and the 4TU budget as well as budgets made available by involved institutions allowed the team to design and execute a scientific experiment into the stress-reducing effects of human and machine social touch as explained here: <https://lowlands.nl/ll-science/ll25-science-hold-tight-een-ervaring-die-je-niet-loslaat/> and here <https://www.newscientist.nl/blogs/bang-voor-enge-films-misschien-kan-een-hand-vasthouden-daartegen-helpen/>, and here <https://youtu.be/BF1H1D3WuCs?si=T74XCz9DgtzVHlcw>.

Achieved Results

The team was able to successfully run the experiment which drew a lot of attention and many participants. The goal to inform the general public about social touch has definitely been achieved. In addition to on-site visitors and attention on serious and social media about the experiment, the team applied for the Klokhuis wetenschapsprijs 2026 and was selected among more than 100 submissions. See: <https://hetklokhuis.nl/dossier/153/klokhuis-wetenschapsprijs/888/wetenschapsprijs-2026>. This means that there will be a Klokhuis Special on Social Touch in 2026.



Dutch Touch Team won the Klokhuis Wetenschapsprijs 2026.