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Scientific director	Mark van den Brand (TU/e)
Programme manager	Margje Mommers (TU/e)
Board	Marc Geilen (TU/e), Alan Hanjalic/ Kofi Makinwa/ Justin Dauwels (TU Delft), Suzan Bayhan/ André Kokkeler (UT), Bedir Tekinerdogan (WUR)

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The aim of 4TU's Netherlands Institute on Research on ICT (4TU.NIRICT) is to bring together, position and prioritise all aspects of ICT research. In the very broad field of ICT, 4TU.NIRICT focuses on the interface between electrical engineering and computer science. This is why the centre encourages and facilitates interaction and collaboration in these areas, as well as in other disciplines. NIRICT aims to unite the ICT community and recognises and values the role of young scientists in the institutions. This all takes place by means of community building activities such as the annual *community day* and various *calls*.

### Community and DEI funding

In 2021 a large number of ICT researchers met to find a way of reinforcing the community. One of the ways 4TU.NIRICT did this was via the call for 'Community funding'. In addition to this call 4TU.NIRICT has also set up the 'DEI fund' (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) to create more diversity, equality and inclusion within the community. Both calls relate to small-scale funding up to a maximum of €k10 per project. In 2021 10 projects were financed and this made it possible to organise a large number of workshops, meetings and round table discussions. These initiatives also resulted in, for example, Master's theses, papers, videos and joint proposals.

### Research Impulse and 4TU.NIRICT call 2021

Due to the ongoing pandemic many activities were cancelled and 4TU.NIRICT therefore decided to put out a further two calls halfway through 2021. In the 'Research Impulse call' (€k190) two projects were granted, namely 'FLOW: Measures of breastfeeding and infant sucking behaviour and Robots for pain management in children'. In the 4TU.NIRICT call 2021 ((€k44) five projects were granted, namely *Smart bikes, Human-centered sustainable IoT, Using Food Recommender Systems to Promote Healthy Choices, Dutch Touch and Deep continual learning*.

The aim of both calls was to support activities which help to reinforce the 4TU.NIRICT community. Detailed reports of all the [projects](#) are available on the website.

### ICT.OPEN and facilitating Next Generation

Just as in previous years 4TU.NIRICT was a partner of ICT.OPEN, the biggest conference for the ICT research community in the Netherlands, which took place online this year. 4TU.NIRICT aims to help the young generation and, for that reason, ICT Next Generation (ICTng) used financial support from 4TU.NIRICT to participate in the panel discussion which was part of the main programme. Work was started on a summary of the results of the survey entitled 'Perceptions of Academic Leadership among the Dutch academic ICT-community' which was distributed in the summer of 2020 in cooperation with ICTng. In order to involve the young generation of ICT researchers in 4TU.NIRICT the MT was expanded to include two new members to represent them, namely Suzan Bayhan and Justin Dauwels.

### Looking ahead

In 2022 4TU.NIRICT wants to focus more on strengthening the connection between Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and on implementing the more ambitious mission and vision. The call for Community and DEI funding is to be adjusted. The aim is to fund a number of large projects, rather than numerous small ones. In 2022 a new initiative is to be started by inviting ICT researchers to give a pitch about their research during the 4TU.NIRICT board meetings in order to gain a better overview of all the research being carried out within the faculties.