

ROOTS



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YOUR MISSION



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This magazine is a special edition of U-Today, the independent news medium of the University of Twente and was created in collaboration with the regional business community, the Province of Overijssel and Twente Board.



EDITORIAL STAFF

Maaike Platvoet (editor-in-chief of U-Today), Ditta op den Dries, Rense Kuipers, Sandra Pool and Stan Waning (team U-Today), Elke Agten (freelance)

ACQUISITION

Prince Town Media

PHOTOGRAPHY

Rikkert Harink and Klaas-Jelmer Sixma

CO-ORDINATION

Sandra Pool

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Jeremiah Wetzel | DesignSpark

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Closer than you think

Before you lies ROOTS, the new career magazine by U-Today.

We have created ROOTS with passion, because by publishing this magazine, we can bring together regional companies and our UT students. In addition to informing the UT community and critically following the developments within the academic world, our role in connecting people is a core value of our editorial team. In this special edition about the labour market, we hope to give students a look behind the scenes of the working life that awaits them in the future, so they can warm up to the idea of having a job – if possible in this region. Businesses are offered a platform to tell their story and introduce themselves to future employees.

Other than publishing these company profiles, we provide journalist interviews, background stories, and stories about people's experience in pursuing their careers. Read, for example, the story of UT alumna Annemiek Fokkens, who moved from The Hague to Borne, 'because Twente feels like home.' While working, she discovered what kind of organisation suited her well and how she actually is as a professional. Or take a look at the interview with Linda Grafen, who, to her credit, has already had many jobs as a young professional. She encourages others to keep looking for that one, cool position where you can give full play to your professional abilities. Because the right job is out there. And often closer than you think. So, get to know the regional companies in this magazine and be inspired by your predecessors.

Enjoy reading!

On behalf of team U-Today,

Sandra Pool





‘The social network is rock-solid’



UT alumnus Job Bijvank (31) is chairman of the Young Twente Board. In this position, he represents the voice of young people from Twente at the decision-making table. How important is this role? And how does he view the opportunities and challenges for the region?

YOU HAVE BEEN PART OF THE YOUNG TWENTE BOARD FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS, THE LAST YEAR AS CHAIRMAN. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THAT POSITION?

‘I grew up in Enschede, and Twente was always my home base until the last part of my studies. I wanted to leave the nest and chose a cool graduation assignment at Albert Heijn in Amsterdam. I was able to work in eCommerce and that was top notch in terms of work. But on a social level, I missed the conviviality and space of Twente, I couldn’t quite settle in Amsterdam. When I took the train to Twente, I had the feeling of going home. The outward journey felt like a return journey, rather than the other way around. Colleagues from Brabant and Limburg recognised that feeling.

I decided to return to Twente and wanted to get to know the region in a different way. That

choice also came from a place of pride and ambition. I sensed that people around me thought: ‘What are you doing in Twente?’ I felt the urge to show how cool Twente is and how many opportunities there are. A role within Young Twente Board (YTB) seemed like the perfect opportunity to get to know the region better, but also to put Twente on the map.’

PUTTING TWENTE ON THE MAP. HOW?

‘Sometimes we have to figure out how we can make our voices heard. Our main message is that young people must be included in decision-making, because that happens far too little. In the region, politics and business: everywhere people don’t



JOB BIJVANK (31)
CHAIRMAN YOUNG TWENTE BOARD
UT ALUMNUS INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION (2012 – 2018) SENIOR
MANAGER ECOMMERCE ALBERT HEIJN,
AHOLD DELHAIZE

consider generational differences. Long-term decisions often cover a period of ten or twenty years. But decisions are made by the generation of the decision-makers. Therefore, you have to include several generations in that.

As Young Twente Board, we try to give direction: which direction do we want to Twente to go? What kind of business climate, what kind of living climate and via which educational climate? I am proud that the YTB had a lot of influence last year. We made it clear that young people are no longer looking for an expensive car in front of their door, but are worried about the future. Will I be able to buy a house? Is there enough happening in the field of climate? Will there be a world to live in in the

‘I felt the urge to show how cool Twente is’

future? Young people are looking for meaning and want to contribute to a better world, to be part of something. This is a challenge for many companies in Twente. If you want to be an attractive employer, you have to take extra steps in sustainability. For many young people, just growing is not enough.’

HOW DO YOU TRY TO BRING THAT ABOUT?

‘By acting as a youth sounding board for the region. We enter into dialogue with institutions and fulfil a driving function, for example when it comes to culture. We are working with cultural institutions on this. We want to make large investments and that requires subsidies. Take Douwe Egberts in the centre of Enschede. This is a place where many international students come together to meet, a kind of home base. That’s positive, but it’s actually born out of necessity. The more we create such places, to promote encounters, the better. That’s what we’re fighting for in the city council. The municipality needs to continue to invest in order to remain attractive and thus retain talent. Whereas in recent years the YTB have mainly been in an advisory role, we increasingly want to have a say at the administrative level and influence investments.’

LET’S ZOOM IN ON EDUCATION: TWENTE IS LIVING IN INTERESTING TIMES. INTERNATIONALISATION, THE

WORKING LANGUAGE, HUGE CUTBACKS. HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THIS AS A YOUNG TWENTE BOARD?

‘I look at that with great concern. As a student, I was able to experience how enriching it is to carry out a project with students from all over the world. It is impossible to tackle the challenges this region faces without international students, it will not work. The Netherlands wants to remain the market leader in semiconductors, an important growth driver. With our application for Project Beethoven (national investment in the microchip sector, ed.), we as Twente Board have shown what we want and can do for the Netherlands. But, it has to be facilitated. It is a missed opportunity by the government that a disproportionate decision has already been taken, without input from the regions.

What makes me positive, is that we as Twente were able to unite in such a short time and really created a counter-message for the first time. We are making our presence felt more than before. The chairs of boards, such as those of our educational institutions, are also more visible on the national battlefield. That’s good to see, but it’s also necessary to become future-proof .

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CONCERN?

‘That the outline agreement is in contrary to the plans in Project Beethoven. The ambition in chip technology is enormous. Supporting ASML is the tip of the iceberg. Too little consideration is given to the layers below.

And I am shocked by the policy that is currently being discussed by the government, with a strong emphasis on migration and the Dutch language. I do not think we understand the consequences of this for the economy and sustainable growth. As the Netherlands, but also as Twente, we facilitate a lot of innovation and this supply channel is now being cut. That’s going to cause enormous pain in the future.’

DO YOU NOTICE THAT THIS CONCERN IS ALSO ALIVE AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE?

‘I often see an imbalance between micro and macro. What do the consequences of a decision mean for me and what do they mean for a country or region? Many young people often think mainly of the former. Making decision-making concrete for young people is not easy. That only happens when something becomes very visible, or starts to hurt. For example, when my parents’ care is under pressure, because there are not enough hands at the bedside or the technology is not yet advanced enough.



But I think that many young people don't have such a strong opinion about the Dutch language at a university. Such themes are difficult to draw attention to.'

WHAT MAKES TWENTE A GREAT PLACE TO SETTLE AS A YOUNG PERSON?

'It is a region that is doing well on the axis of prosperity. That may not sound very appealing, but Twente has a lot to offer. There are many opportunities for self-development, for living pleasure, beautiful cities with good facilities, and if you like peace and greenery, there are many housing options for affordable prices. And underexposed: if you have the ambition to do business, Twente is the perfect region to achieve that. We have a huge SME sector with more than 15,000 companies and

we wish each other success. Networking and sponsorship organisations are happy to help young entrepreneurs move forward. The social network is rock-solid.'

WHAT CAN THE REGION DO BETTER TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE?

'Proclaim. As a region, we are too modest. We do great things, but we act like it's the most normal thing in the world. Twente can also be more accessible to international people. We are sometimes too anxious and reluctant to do so. Offer someone a job, combine it with a Dutch course so that they can at least understand the language, let them talk back in English and see how it works. We think in terms of problems instead of opportunities. The job market is so tight, just give it a try!' ●

Short News

GrensInfoPunten

The GrensInfoPunten (GIPs) along the Dutch-German-Belgian border offer personalized advice when it comes to living, working, or studying in a neighboring country. Our consultations are independent, objective, and tailored to individual needs, and our services are provided free of charge. You can find GIPs in various locations along the border.

One of these centers, GIP EUREGIO, is located on the German-Dutch border between Enschede and Gronau. Each year, it handles thousands of inquiries from employees, employers, job seekers, retirees, interns, and students. These questions are answered by phone, email, or during a visit to the GIP, and consultations are available in German, Dutch, or English. You can arrange an appointment through a special contact form on the website www.gipeuregio.eu. Furthermore, GIPs offer special consultation hours for cross-border commuters, where experts from various institutions are present. These consultations take place at different locations within the EUREGIO area.

The staff at GrensInfoPunten work closely together, but the GIPs operate independently and are financed through various sources. GIP EUREGIO, for example, is funded by the Dutch national government, the provinces of Overijssel and Gelderland, the German federal states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony, as well as several regional authorities.



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UTwente Jong Alumni Network

Young alumni face different challenges than someone whose career is further along. Therefore, young alumni under the age of 35 can join the UT Young Alumni Network (YAN). The network organises readings, workshops, networking drinks and other activities. These activities are focused on personal and professional development, networking, company visits and, of course, having fun.

The UT Young Alumni Network: for and by young alumni.
utwente.nl/yan or e-mail: alumni@utwente.nl



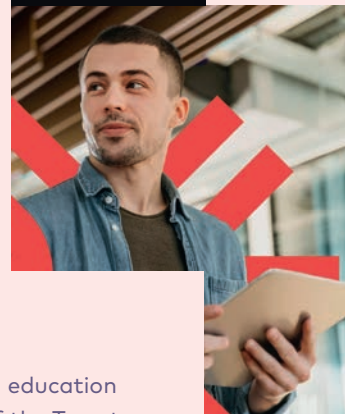
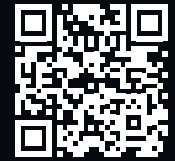
Service Onboarding@Münsterland

New to Münsterland? The Onboarding@Münsterland service supports skilled workers in Münsterland and employers in the region in finding of trained staff. The Onboarding@Münsterland service is a regional initiative of employers and economic actors in the Münsterland region and is implemented by Münsterland e.V. with the support of numerous institutions in the region. The service wants to make the strengths of the region visible and bring them to life through joint initiatives.



*‘Be part of the solution.
You can take a useless minor
or do something good and
help make a big social
problem a little smaller’*

JULIAN VAN SANTEN (23) IS A MASTER'S STUDENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND EDUCATION IN SCIENCE. ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS HE TEACHES THE COMPUTER SCIENCE CLASS AT STARING COLLEGE IN LOCHEM. THE QUOTE IS A RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF UNIVERSITIES 'DO SOMETHING THAT MATTERS' TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THEIR TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES. IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF ABOUT 13.5 THOUSAND TEACHERS.



Join forces

The Twente Board is a partnership of government, education and entrepreneurs, focused on the development of the Twente region. Representatives from these sectors come together to support projects that contribute to the economic and social progress of Twente.

One of those projects is the Talent Center Twente. This initiative was founded by VONK Enschede, the Kennispark area organisation, entrepreneurs at Kennispark and WIMM. The Talent Center Twente is a non-profit organization that actively brings talent and companies together in the region. Scan the QR-Code for your options.

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CAREER PLATFORM JOBTEASER

WHETHER YOU ARE A STUDENT OR A GRADUATE, CAREER SERVICES AT UT IS HERE TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH YOUR JOB SEARCH AND APPLICATION PROCESS. JOBTEASER SIMPLIFIES THE PROCESS OF DISCOVERING A WIDE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING JOBS, INTERNSHIPS, AND CAREER EVENTS.



Career coaching for alumni

Did you know that Career Services at University of Twente offers individual coaching sessions for alumni? These sessions are intended to help you deal with all difficult choices that are associated with starting your career. During the session you will learn more about yourself and get a better understanding of how you can match your specific qualities and interest to job requirements. We also help you prepare for a job interview, you can get your CV checked or learn more about your salary negotiation skills. These sessions are free of charge for students but also for UT alumni, up to a year after graduation.



High-tech company HoSt Group specialises in developing and building sustainable energy systems. With projects located anywhere from Friesland to New Zealand, the company operates all over the world. The Enschede-based enterprise was founded by Herman Klein Teeselink, who passed it on to his son Jelle four years ago. Both are University of Twente alumni.

HOST GROUP: YOUNG AND DYNAMIC

‘Simply start and learn lessons from practice’

‘Sometimes I walk past one of our plants,’ says Jelle Klein Teeselink. ‘And I suddenly realise: this machine was merely a drawing two years ago and now look at it go. That’s pure magic every single time.’ It also typifies the HoSt Group. Instead of countless pilots and years of research, their main motto is: let’s just get started. ‘And then learn lessons from practice,’ Jelle explains. He studied Industrial Engineering and Management at UT and took over the company from his father four years ago. The latter started a consultancy firm in 1991, under the flag of the companies Holec and Stork. Eight years later he continued on his own, choosing HoSt Group as the new name for the family business.

MAJOR PLAYER

‘Fast forward to 2024 and there’s a fast-growing, solid and innovative company that can continue for many years to come,’ father and son say. Europe, the US, New Zealand, Brazil, India, Japan, Morocco: these are just some of the places where HoSt Group operates. With a total of five hundred employees, most of them technicians, the same number of plants, offices in seven countries and its own product location and laboratories, this Twente-based company has every right to call itself a major player in the area of high-tech energy technology. ‘And we’re the only company offering all technologies, including service and maintenance, this way,’ says Jelle.



IN 2023, HOST GROUP WON THE BESTE ONDERNEMING VAN TWENTE (BEST ENTERPRISE IN TWENTE) AWARD, WHICH WAS PRESENTED AT AN OFFICIAL CEREMONY AT THE HERACLES FOOTBALL STADIUM IN ALMELO. THE JURY WAS ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED BY THE WORLDWIDE PRAISE THE HOST GROUP RECEIVES FOR ITS PROPRIETARY TECHNOLOGY AND ASSEMBLY IN THE AREA OF RENEWABLE ENERGY. ACCORDING TO JURY CHAIR MARC WOESTHUIS, HOST GROUP IS A PROMISE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME. HOST HAS ALSO BEEN ONE OF THE FD GAZELLEN FOR THREE YEARS RUNNING, ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARDS FOR FAST-GROWING COMPANIES, ORGANIZED BY THE FINANCIEEL DAGBLAD. HOST GROUP HEADQUARTERS ARE LOCATED A STONE'S THROW AWAY FROM UT.

Even though Herman built the company from the ground up, it was never a sure thing that one of his children would one day take over from him. They were always given the freedom to choose their own paths. 'Seven years ago, I wanted to sell the whole thing because of health problems,' says Herman, a Chemical Engineering and Industrial Engineering & Management alumnus. 'My wife and I invited the kids to dinner to share the news with them, thinking this would be the end of our family business.' But that's not what happened. 'It was at that dinner that I told them I wanted to take over,' Jelle continues. 'My parents were a bit shocked; I think they had kind of given up hope already. Afterwards, my mother emailed me like three times to ask if I was really sure.' But he was. In 2020, Jelle became the CEO.

Although Herman is gradually cutting back his activities, he's still involved in research and development three days per week. Two generations within one company, isn't that asking for trouble? Both gentlemen agree it isn't. 'That's also thanks to the company's DNA,' Jelle explains. 'We're in a market that changes every minute of every day. Adapting to new situations comes naturally to us. Also, seventy percent of

.....

'Seventy percent of our people are below forty'

JELLE KLEIN TEESELINK

our people are below forty. The dynamics of constant change are therefore very present.' Herman agrees. 'I actually love working with so many young people and seeing what gets them excited. And if you look at how few people leave the company, I think we're doing a very good job.'

SILICON VALLEY

'My father built up the company with values similar to those you see in the startup culture of Silicon Valley in the US,' Jelle explains. 'Big companies like Netflix, Amazon and Apple have several things in common: they have an open culture where everyone can give their opinion, contributing ideas is stimulated and it's a place where you're quick to see results. These principles are also woven into the fabric of our company.'

WIDE RANGE OF POSITIONS

Herman adds: 'First of all, we offer a wide range of interesting positions. It's not a bureaucratic organisation where it takes five years before you can start something. No, you can think of something today and make it happen within two years. Our strength lies in our capacity to implement ideas very quickly. I give our employees lots of responsibility and want them to work independently. This means they'll also be more versatile going forward.' Proper supervision is obviously crucial in this respect, Herman thinks. 'You do need two to three years to train someone, who can then start supervising young people

..... ***'There's still a huge amount of potential in this market'***

HERMAN KLEIN TEESELINK

in turn. It's a kind of cycle that also works well for the company's continuity.'

So much potential in this market.

Speaking of continuity, how does the duo see the future? 'In any case, we want to keep up our current growth and expand our operations in America and Asia,' says Herman. 'A number of new technologies, relating to capturing CO₂ from flue gas and hydrogen, are in their early stages.' Jelle: 'One of our plants captures one tonne of CO₂ per hour. A car emits about double that each year. In other words, every two hours we take a combustion engine car off the road. That never gets old.' Herman: 'I'm an idealist. There's still a huge amount of potential in this market and there are so many opportunities to work on a sustainable society together. It's really great to keep making a contribution in this respect.' ●



From surgeons to adolescents

I couldn't take it anymore. That endless story when someone asked, "What are you actually going to be?" After four years of technical medicine, I had a streamlined answer, full of examples and ambitions. But man, how wonderful it is to just say: 'I'm going to be a physics teacher.' Done. Everyone understands. Everyone knows that physics teachers are a bit special and almost everyone has an anecdote about the best – or worst – (physics) teacher they have ever had.

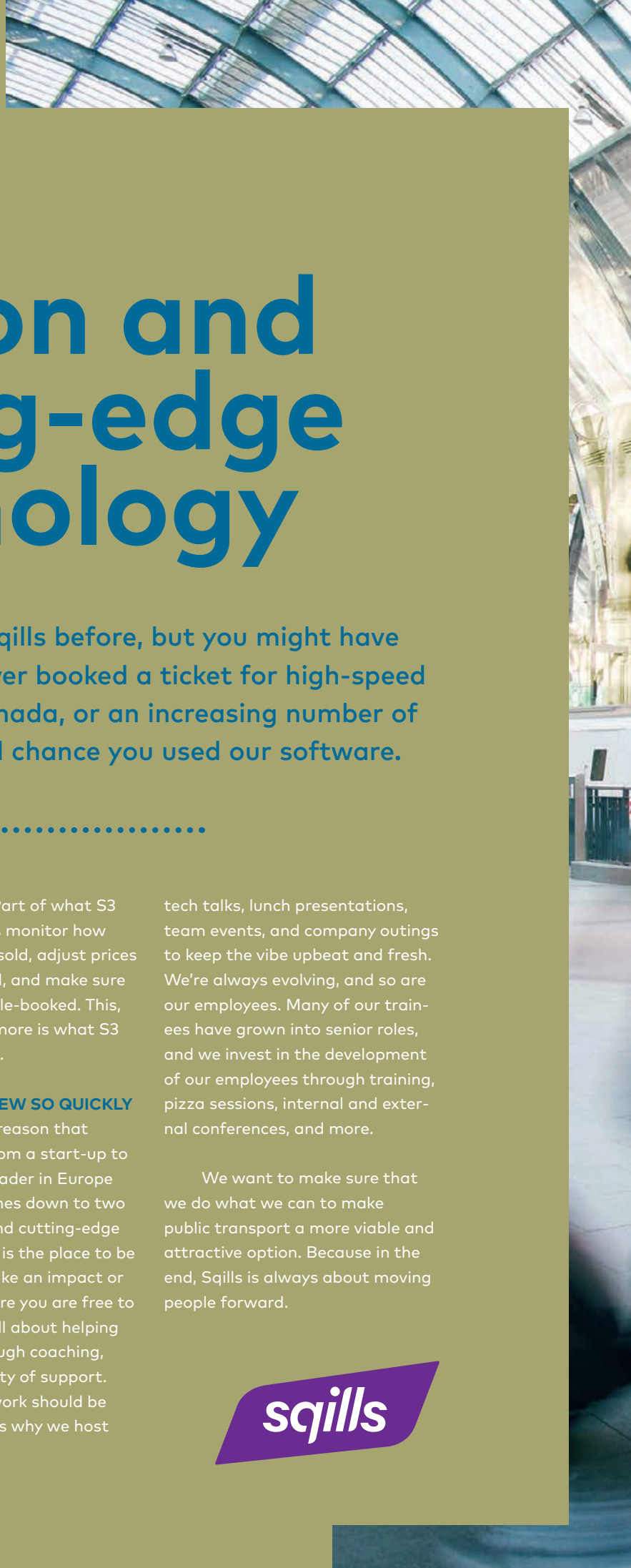
Don't get me wrong, I'm not the kind of person who sees being a teacher as my calling. I certainly don't regret the 18-year-old me's choice of study. There is even a piece online in which I talk about how much I enjoyed the study. It is a bit rosier than the reality. Because yes, what I wasn't allowed to say at the time was how my classmates in the Randstad asked in disbelief why I went to study in that hole (Enschede). Or how the university, with all those full lecture halls, sometimes feels like a learning factory. Fortunately, you can still become a columnist for U-Today with those kinds of statements.

Why did it never work out between me and technical medicine? The hospital internships. The hierarchy, the unwritten rules, the endless protocols – I'm just too stubborn for it. I'd rather fall on my face than follow the rules every day.

So, when I started at a secondary school in Oldenzaal, I seriously needed two weeks to recover from the culture shock. What do you mean by an introductory meeting of an hour and a half? At the hospital, I was just dropped into the operating room complex on my own. Why does my internship supervisor motivate me to 'be myself'? And why does he let me flounder in front of a noisy grade three HAVO class, so that I can learn from it? The only thing I recognised were the countless self-evaluation models, which, apparently, the technical medicine course has stolen from the regular education.

As clear as the answer to 'what will you be?' is now, my new internship environment is suddenly as simple as that. Perhaps that simplicity and clarity are linked. Or it's time for medical education to adopt more than just the educational self-evaluation models – especially if they want to retain stubborn types like me in the hospital.

●●●●●●●●
● **JENNA ZAAGSMA** (22), MASTER'S STUDENT IN EDUCATION
● IN SCIENCE AND BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING. COLUMNIST
● AT U-TODAY, TWO DAYS A WEEK SHE TEACHES PHYSICS,
● IN HER SPARE TIME SHE CAN BE FOUND AT STUDENT
● SCOUTING RADIX AND MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION
● ARASHI.



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WHAT PRODUCT DO WE WORK ON?

S3 Passenger is a complete software solution that simplifies inventory management and enables passengers to easily manage bookings and services. Inventory means keeping track of available seats on buses or trains and managing how they're sold. For example, imagine a train company knows they have 200 seats on

a specific route. Part of what S3 Passenger does is monitor how many tickets are sold, adjust prices based on demand, and make sure seats aren't double-booked. This, and so, so much more is what S3 Passenger can do.

HOW SQILLS GREW SO QUICKLY

What is the reason that Sqills has gone from a start-up to being a market leader in Europe in 15 years? It comes down to two things: passion and cutting-edge technology. Sqills is the place to be if you want to make an impact or want a place where you are free to innovate. We're all about helping people grow through coaching, training, and plenty of support.

We believe work should be enjoyable, which is why we host

tech talks, lunch presentations, team events, and company outings to keep the vibe upbeat and fresh. We're always evolving, and so are our employees. Many of our trainees have grown into senior roles, and we invest in the development of our employees through training, pizza sessions, internal and external conferences, and more.

We want to make sure that we do what we can to make public transport a more viable and attractive option. Because in the end, Sqills is always about moving people forward.

sqills





From study to stay

ENSCHEDA IS WORKING ON A VITAL CITY CENTRE

Enschede is a breeding ground for talent, given the fact that thousands of students graduate from various educational institutions in the city every year. But what are the chances that young professionals will stay in the region and what is the municipality of Enschede doing to promote this? 'In almost all municipal plans, we include students and recent graduates as a target group,' says Wouter van der Zouw, spokesperson for the municipality of Enschede.

For those entering the labour market, two aspects are important for settling somewhere in addition to green surroundings and an interesting job: cultural events and an attractive environment to live in. This is one of the conclusions in the report *De Koers van Enschede*, that was published in 2020 by Atlas Research on behalf of the same municipality.

The report shows that culture is a crucial element in a city's competitiveness. Cities that offer a wide range of cultural events are considered desirable places to live in. They typically attract highly educated and creative people. If these people also have access to attractive living arrangements and neighbourhoods, a city will have met the conditions for retaining talent. According to Van der Zouw, the municipality also bases its insights on studies conducted by, among others, other cities and housing corporations in Twente. 'We think it is important to keep young people within our

city's boundaries. The municipality endeavours to grow towards having 170,000 inhabitants. It is important that to keep all talent, both theoretically and practically trained, in our city.'

RETAINING TALENT

But how does Enschede score on retaining talent? Which policy is in place to this aim? According to the *Compendium for the Living Environment* (facts and figures about living environment within the Netherlands), both the number of tertiary educated people and the percentage of highly-paid jobs in Enschede are relatively low in comparison with other university cities in border regions.

If we look at retaining international graduates in the Netherlands, Enschede performs poorly, according to Nuffic, the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education. Of all internationals who are still working



in the Netherlands five years after graduating (from all universities), fewer than two percent are located in Enschede. By comparison, 35 percent live and work in the Amsterdam area.

In 2018, the municipality of Enschede, together with UT's University Innovation Fellows and Novel-T, conducted a survey among more than 450 students in order to map how students experience 'sticking around' in Enschede. The outcome showed that many respondents find the Twente region pleasant and accessible, but that the city of Enschede lacks a dynamic, international vibe.

Nightlife in Enschede was rated particularly low by the respondents, despite the substantial number of social activities that the city has to offer. Initiatives such as the Tankstation, a non-profit, artistic, cultural organisation, were welcomed because of the sense of community-building it provides and its international character. In general, the respondents felt that cultural events on

offer in Enschede are limited and insufficiently connected to the international student community.

POLICY ON CULTURE AND EVENTS

'This is the reason for the municipality of Enschede to set out a policy on retaining students and graduates actively,' says Van der Zouw. 'As a municipality, we recently adopted a new culture and events policy. This is aimed to boost events organised in Enschede. In the new policy, we specifically pay attention to the new kids on the block in the cultural landscape and young artists. Organisations for young talent can apply for subsidies.'

In addition, we are working on providing a vital city centre through, for example, the Inner City Action Programme. Enschede is a student city, and the centre is a meeting place for students. The city needs to be a safe place for them, with a (more) diverse and distinctive range of shops and restaurants. Another suggestion is

to create better and more accessible study places in the city centre, e.g. in the library or in other (public) buildings. A vibrant nightlife will help provide ample diversion and entertainment.'

The Action Programme advises students and youth organisations to draw up an agenda together with the city's 'Night Mayor' to boost Enschede's nightlife. Also, it recommends that more permits for nightly activities should be issued. Van der Zouw: 'In addition, in September the city council chose to set up a so-called Night Council that is to advise the municipality, both solicited and unsolicited, on issues relating to the city's nightlife.'

MULTILINGUAL COMMUNICATION

In order to advance Enschede as an international city, the Action Programme states that multilingual communication is imperative in public spaces, but also in businesses and institutions in the city centre. Facilities should be attractive and accessible to international visitors: for example, this may include payment facilities for (international) credit cards, multilingual city maps and signs.

'We are working very hard to realise hundreds of new homes for young people and recent graduates in a highly urban environment, in the area around the station, within projects such as Centrumkwadraat and the Hengelo-Enschede railway zone,' says Van der Zouw. 'This entire area is transformed into a modern urban living and working area, with residential tower blocks that

are explicitly intended for young professionals.'

For the construction of these homes, however, two cultural locations linked to the city's nightlife had to make way. Disco 't Bölke ceased business after the Covid-19 crisis as it is, but the Underground Spacebar, part of Warp Technopolis, will also have to make way for a residential tower block. This seems to be at odds with fortifying Enschede's nightlife. But according to Van der Zouw, most organisations that were in the demolished buildings have found new premises with the support of the municipality.

It is noteworthy that the prestigious 'Kop Boulevard' construction plan (that stretches from the MST hospital to the city centre) came to a standstill in 2022. This plan, that featured a budget of 150 million Euros, was aimed to surpass the Zuidas district of Amsterdam in quality. However, the plan did not get off the ground due to increased construction costs and stalled negotiations with the project developer. The only thing completed is a skate park, although the municipality is still making plans to develop this location further.

With a new policy on culture and events, housing intended for young people, and an action programme for the city centre, the municipality of Enschede is committed to retaining talent and young people within the city. 'We also keep an eye on offering good economics and a diverse range of work, housing and recreational options,' says Van der Zouw. 'These topics are spearhead issues of the municipality. The input of students and recent graduates is of vital importance and therefore always included.' ●



‘It is okay to change jobs after two years’



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With the help of a career coach, Linda Grafen (30) discovered that her work could focus more on people. This year she has taken on the role of full-time project coordinator at TMC Noordoost. She is involved in a range of activities from employee development, training and education to marketing and new projects. ‘I like new initiatives, because I get bored easily.’

Although her career has only just begun, Linda Grafen already has extensive experience under her belt. During her mechanical engineering studies, she worked twenty hours a week. ‘My fellow students thought I was crazy, but I don’t have any student debt now,’ she says, before quickly adding: ‘And I can buy a house.’ No part-time job in the supermarket for her, but a job as a technical draughtsman. ‘However, I didn’t really like the classic engineering work,’ she says, ‘and after graduating I opted for a job that involved more research.’

‘IT CLASHED’

She started working as a research engineer at a research centre focused on thermoplastic composites for the aerospace and automotive industries. ‘I was involved in the development of new sustainable repair methods. Although repairing materials has a high level of sustainability, it clashed with my own social conscience. It’s still the aviation industry. I struggled with that. In addition, I experienced research as lonely, since you are not working in a team.’

She describes herself as someone who is not scared of change and appreciates a challenge, so she decided to keep looking. Through a friend, she came into contact with TMC, a (high) tech consultancy organisation where employees work for many different clients on a project basis. TMC sent Grafen to work for a company in Deventer as Lead Developer Engineer in the heat pump systems department. That organisation wasn’t a match

TMC WAS FOUNDED 24 YEARS AGO IN EINDHOVEN. FOR THE PAST 5 YEARS, THE NORTHEAST NETHERLANDS BRANCH HAS HAD OFFICES IN BOTH HENGELO AND GRONINGEN. A TOTAL OF 180 PEOPLE WORK ON PROJECTS AND 26 PEOPLE IN THE OFFICES.

TMC OFFERS EMPLOYEES THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMBINE A PERMANENT CONTRACT WITH ENTREPRENEURSHIP. ‘THERE IS SUPPORT TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS,’ GRAFEN EXPLAINS. ‘THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY REMAINS WITH THE PERSON. TMC HAS NO STAKE. WE STAND FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS IS HOW WE CREATE OUR OWN CUSTOMERS. NOT THAT IT’S OBLIGATORY TO TAKE PEOPLE AWAY FROM US, BUT THE NETWORK IS THERE.’

for her either. 'It was a relatively large company, not that it was impersonal, but in my current work I know what everyone is doing and where my colleagues are.'

MORE 'PEOPLE' NEEDED

'As a TMC employee, you are entitled to a budget for personal development and a coach. I took advantage of that. While sparring, I realised that I needed more 'people' in my work environment. Technical engineering is very interesting, but so is the people side.' That is why she started teaching Professional Skills at the University of Twente for three days a week while continuing to work on improvement and innovation projects within TMC for two days. 'But two jobs with a lot of responsibilities and working fifty hours a week: that wasn't right either.'

PENGUIN

In her current job as a project coordinator, she is more at home and always has many irons in the fire. 'At a smaller company, you can work outside the box. For example, I'm taking on the marketing, because I think it's fun and that's possible.' In addition, she supports employees who want to start their own business, sets up traineeship programmes and is no longer a hardcore engineer. 'And I don't really miss it at all. I felt like a

'Travel time, colleagues, your moral ambition; it all counts'

penguin at times. They swim very well, but hardly make any progress on land. I finally left the land and took the jump into the sea."

But no one tells you about that search, says Grafen. 'During your study, it's mainly about the technical content. Of course that is good, but there's so much more to it when you enter the job market. Colleagues you spend forty hours a week with. Travel time counts. Your moral ambition. And you may think you've found the perfect job on paper, but in practice it's disappointing.' Around her, she sees that people settle at that point. 'They conclude: working life is not fun. Full stop. Such a shame. Above all, keep going, keep looking. It's okay to switch jobs after two years. You will very quickly be absorbed by everyday life with its obligations. Even when renting a house, a contract is required. And at the end of the day, you do want that house. Therefore, make sure the job you have is right for you. That's what I like about TMC, you get the opportunity to try different things but with a permanent contract including career coaching.' ●



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Linda Grafen | linda.grafen@tmc.nl | +31(6)25560064

ANNEMIEK FOKKENS IS A RESEARCHER AT KENNISPUNT TWENTE

‘In this job, policy and research come together nicely’



'I think it is great to have residents' experiences in writing, so that both they and the municipality in which they live will gain better understanding of each other.' These are the words of UT alum Annemiek Fokkens (28). She is a researcher at Kennispunt Twente, a research agency for the fourteen municipalities in Twente.

'My field of work is very wide,' says Fokkens. 'Research focus can range from cemeteries to the night culture in Enschede. It is our goal to show the residents' perspective. We do this by surveying regular panels per email, organising focus groups, holding round table discussions, and conducting interviews or polls. I am talking in particular about the department where I work. Within Kennispunt Twente, we manage various data concerning the region of Twente and conduct research in the social domain and regarding the economy and living environment as well.'

OFFERING A WELL-FOUNDED PICTURE OF RESIDENTS' EXPERIENCES

Subsequently, the information and data gathered from the studies are processed. 'We do this ourselves and present the results to the municipality, which is our client. We often also make a fact sheet to give the residents clear feedback. Our research creates a well-founded picture of what residents think; a municipality can benefit from that. A good example is Hengelo and its city centre, which colleagues of mine are researching. A few years ago, in a survey on residents' opinions on the topic, the city centre did not score

particularly high. A number of adjustments have been made since and we noticed in a subsequent survey that the city centre ranked much better than before.'

In 2020, Fokkens received her Master's degree in Psychology of Conflict, Risk & Safety at the Faculty of BMS. 'In 2018, I did an internship at the Ministry of Justice and Security in The Hague. I was able to stay there while finishing my studies. A first job is very different from studying: you get to know the working life and you discover how you are as a professional.' In The Hague, she worked as a policy advisor. 'It was truly a political arena, with a formal working atmosphere. One dressed correctly for the office and experienced colleagues who kept a professional distance. Was this the right environment for me? I had only been working there for a year and then the Covid-19 pandemic struck. I was there on my own, working from home.'

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

For the alum, one and one still was two. Although she found it complicated, she moved back to Enschede, and after a while also changed jobs and discovered what was important to her in working life.

'In the beginning, when I applied for jobs, I was mainly concerned with the question whether they thought I was suitable? I paid less attention to the working culture and the job's contents. But these are subjects about which you must really ask critical questions as an applicant, because a job interview works both ways.'

OPEN ATMOSPHERE

For Fokkens, the match came at Kennispunt Twente. 'In this job, policy and research come together nicely.' I learn about a variety of issues within our organisation and the municipalities of Twente. These are often practical topics that residents are dealing with, and that appeals to me, as well as conducting research across the board, for example for all fourteen municipalities in Twente. Our organisation consists of thirty people and we are celebrating our tenth anniversary this year. There is an open atmosphere and colleagues are truly involved, which makes it a very good place to work.'

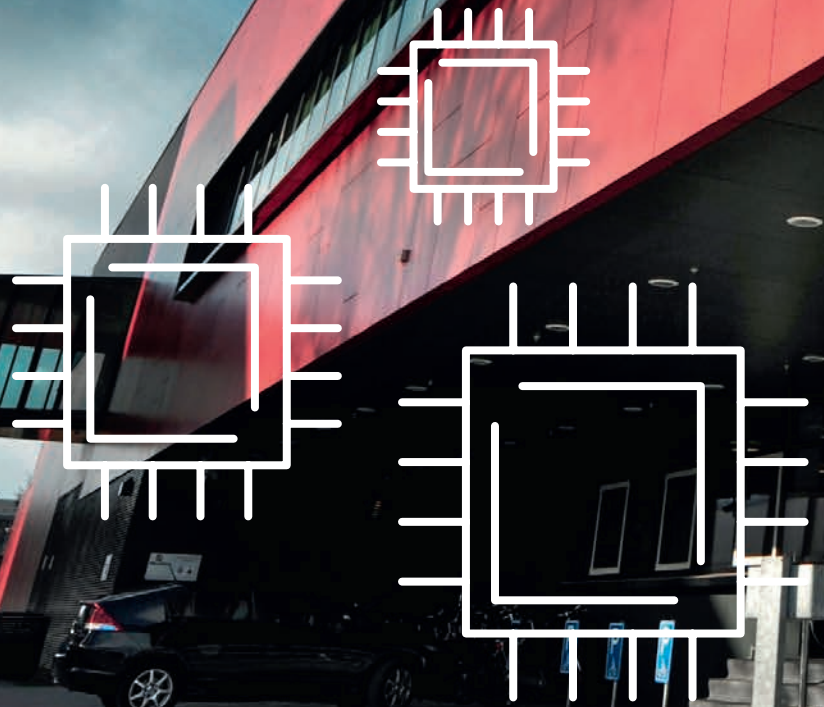
Fokkens has now moved from the centre of Enschede to Borne, where she lives with her partner. 'Life in Twente feels like home to me. I have friends here, family, I like the down-to-earth attitude and there is plenty to do. That is why they sometimes call me hunkertukker. ●

CHIPTECH TWENTE

Why ASML can't – and won't – do without Twente



Will you choose a career at a technology titan, or is a start-up more to your taste? Within the hyper-complex ecosystem of a giant like ASML, one does not have to exclude the other. Three stakeholders about the Twente offering and why ASML can't – and actually doesn't want to do without Twente.



GUUS
RIJNDERS



ASML. It is the chip machine giant of the Netherlands. The monopolist of state-of-the-art Extreme Ultraviolet Lithography machines for chip manufacturing. And therefore also the subject of geopolitical bickering, with razor-sharp stakes. What typifies the multi-billion-euro company from Veldhoven above all, as the leaders within ASML always indicate, is the ecosystem. 'You have to realize that we work in a global ecosystem of suppliers, customers and knowledge institutions,' former CEO, Peter Wennink, explained to business platform MT/Sprout in 2019. 'In this system, everyone has their own role. We depend on each other and we trust each other. That trust ensures a close collaboration.'

TWENTE ENGINEERING

The Twente region is inextricably linked to this global ecosystem. In fact, you could suggest that without the knowledge and skills from Twente, these almost intimidatingly advanced machines would not even exist. 'I wouldn't formulate it that adamantly', Marieke Stokkelaar, programme manager of cluster ChipTech Twente, hastens to say. 'If we don't do it, someone else will. The market will sort it out. But if we participate, you know it's of good quality. Based on Twente expertise, there are essential parts in these machines that are the size of a public bus. That expertise has been built up over decades.'

UT Professor of NanoElectronic Materials Guus Rijnders can attest to this. 'One of the things that forms the basis of EUV technology is fluid physics: droplets of tin are shot at with lasers. How these droplets form and deform is the work of the group of UT professor Detlef Lohse', Rijnders outlines. And he has other examples. 'The research of Fred Bijkerk, later succeeded by Marcelo Ackermann. The mirrors used in such a machine were developed jointly by the UT, ASML and Zeiss GMBH.'

Rijnders himself worked with his group and that of Ackermann on correcting lens errors of those mirrors and increasing the production capacity of the EUV machines. 'Examples like this show that a lot of Twente know-how and, above all, Twente engineering are an unmistakable part of such a machine.'

CHIPTECH TWENTE

But it is anything but Veldhoven where these machines are created, Rijnders and Stokkelaar know. From start-ups, scale-ups to larger players in the semiconductor industry such as Demcon, Benchmark and VDL; there are dozens of companies in Twente that are making their contribution to the high-tech chip industry one way or the other. Forces were joined two years ago in



ELLY
SCHIETSE



ChipTech Twente, with UT professor Bram Nauta and the MESA+ institute as the two initiators.

'In total, we now have about sixty connected organisations. All within the high-tech playing field as you would expect from an ASML. But in Twente', says Stokkelaar. According to her, each of the parties involved benefits from joining forces. 'Our ambition is to grow together. We have a relatively large number of small SMEs. When it comes to large national and international projects and developments, it helps that there is one voice that represents all these interests.'

It is a frequently heard observation: Twente has a fairly large pond in terms of business, but it is mainly filled with small fish. Can they swim with the big sharks like ASML, Intel, TSMC or NVIDIA, especially in terms of talent appeal? 'You don't immediately end up with such a gigantic multinational in this region, that's true,' says Stokkelaar. 'But every disadvantage has its advantage: you are not a number here, not one of many.' Rijders: 'And take a company like Demcon. There are about a thousand engineers not only working on systems for ASML, but they are much more broadly active in all kinds of sectors, from

healthcare to aerospace. That's also interesting for talent.'

LEARNING CURVE

It's a credo that Elly Schietse, Chief Marketing Officer at the Twente start-up Superlight Photonics, can confirm. 'In fact, I am convinced that everyone should have had a job at a technology start-up at least once during their career. Nowhere else do you learn so quickly and so much.' Schietse has been working with UT alumnus and Wi-Fi inventor Cees Links for many years. First at a start-up called GreenPeak Technologies, now together at Superlight Photonics. But she also has years of experience at larger companies. 'In principle, your work there is limited to your job description. As a result, there are many engineers who do their work for decades, without knowing what remains at the bottom line and what is happening around them. Actually, that's a shame.'

Schietse has a striking example of the learning curve at a start-up. 'Sony was one of GreenPeak Technologies' first customers. They had a strict requirement: every cooperation partner had to be ISO 9001 certified. The minutes of the meeting literally said: "Elly will Google what is needed". We had no idea, but within nine months we had the certification. Moreover, I built up a lot of knowledge in quality management, which in turn benefited me greatly later in my career.'

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

At Superlight Photonics, Schietse combines a marketing function and an HR function. The very young company started in October 2023 and now has fourteen employees. 'Maybe it's because we're the new kid on the block, but attracting talent is pretty easy.' Where the match between tech start-up and talent is sought? 'Selecting good people is more about personality than skills. You can learn skills, but you can't change someone's character. Of course, working at a start-up is a leap of faith, it's not for the faint of heart. But you have an immediate impact on the course of the company. That's what we also hear from the non-juniors who come to work for us: they

don't want to be a small cog in a big machine. Because with every milestone you reach as a company, you are directly involved.'

Moreover, Stokkelaar and Rijnders see that a strong ecosystem has developed in the region in recent decades. 'Bram (Nauta, ed.) said it earlier: previously only a local company called Bruco was active in chip design. You can now choose from more than ten,' says Rijnders. 'This applies to several branches within the Twente chip industry. What was not or hardly possible for ten to twenty years, is now possible: you can make a career in different places.'

ATTRACTION

Nevertheless, the regional business community needs to work on its attractiveness, says Rijnders. 'Visibility needs to improve. I'm not talking about visibility to people who are already in the business. They know, for example, when they drive along the highway near Almelo and see

'Selecting good people is more about personality than skills. You can learn skills, but you can't change someone's character'

ELLY SCHIETSE



MARIEKE
STOKKELAAR

the immense VDL hall, what is happening inside. It's about the people who are unfamiliar with this playing field. People assume that everyone understands it, but you have to explain it and show it. That doesn't happen enough, which is why it's not surprising that the number of technically educated people is decreasing.'

It is for good reason that Rijnders himself can be found at the Zwarte Cross festival every year for minilectures. 'It may look a bit trivial, with an audience with a beer in hand, but it is important. You have to plant a seed somewhere, tell what is happening and what our added value is. That there are jobs up for grabs, that it is a fantastic profession and that you can earn a more than fine living with it. If you tell that story to the parents of today and tomorrow, that story will also reach their children.'

AN ASML IN TWENTE?

Would an ASML counterpart in Twente be a dream? 'With the Chips Act, there is a European ambition to conquer a 20 percent market share worldwide. That's going to be a very tough challenge,' says Stokkelaar. 'But as the Netherlands within Europe and as Twente within the Netherlands, we have a strong knowledge position. Especially in the field of chip design, we are

at the top, with photonics and quantum technology we are preparing for a top position. The only question is: are we betting on the right technologies? In any case, by uniting all the smart minds, we increase that chance.'

According to Rijnders, it makes no sense for Twente to compete with tech giants. 'Last year, I was on the economic mission to the US in Arizona and California. If you look at the scale at which NVIDIA works with data centers and TSMC and Intel in terms of advanced CMOS chip manufacturing, that wouldn't fit here. It would be better to look for it in the lower and mid-volume markets and focus on them. There is a huge market for detectors, lidar, sensors, optical communication, and so on. We have to rely on our ecosystem. Now we have opportunities to build on that.'

Because the stronger the ecosystem, the stronger Twente's position in relation to the world. As Rijnders aptly concludes: 'Can ASML do without Twente? Probably, eventually. But they won't do it without Twente. That says a lot.' ●

'In total, we have about sixty connected organisations, all within the high-tech playing field as you would expect from an ASML. But in Twente'

MARIEKE STOKKELAAR



so what's so great about Demcon?

DOING SUCH A WIDE ARRAY OF TASKS!

Daan Treurniet (28) is a lead engineer at Demcon working on a project for ASML Wilton (near New York City). After completing his mechanical engineering studies in Delft in 2022, he chose to work in Twente. Together with his team, he develops systems that are used in lithography machine production, with automation playing a central role. These systems lead to increased production capacity, making it easier to meet the ever-increasing demand for these machines.

What appeals to Daan about working at Demcon are the technical challenges, the variety of projects, and the enjoyable working environment. Also, the great thing about Demcon is doing such a wide array of tasks. Here, you do not work as a specialist on just a very small part of a whole, but are involved in and responsible for a project for a year to a year and a half. Then another new project comes along, with fresh challenges.

Working at Demcon also means that you are supported. It's not limited to when you first start your job, such as being paired with an experienced colleague whom you can turn to with any questions. You also get a lot of development opportunities if you want to grow. Showing initiative is really appreciated. You are motivated to take the next step and carefully guided in your choices.

Living and working in Twente suits Daan well. As he puts it himself: "With a park landscape in the backyard, the excellent facilities of a city like Enschede, and technically complex challenges, I am right at home here!"

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