

Annual Report Spectrum Student Platform and Chaplaincy Wageningen;
Year 2021 / 2022



Contents

Introduction	2	1
Activities 2021/2022	3	
Promotional and Connective Activities	3	
In Support of Spiritual and Personal Growth	5	
The Philosophy Group	9	
Trips and Excursions	9	
Creative and Cultural	11	
Personal support	12	
Connecting with other groups & Supporting Various Initiatives	13	
Plans for Activities 2022/2023	14	

Introduction

Goal and Mission

The aim of the SP&C Foundation is to support philosophical, ethical, and spiritual development among students and young professionals of Dutch and foreign origin at university and higher education in Wageningen. The foundation encourages dialogue between cultural, philosophical, and religious constituencies on the basis of pluralism and celebrating diversity. In an atmosphere of openness, we seek to contribute to the well-being of students - individually but also in group-settings, with the additional aim to provide opportunities for community building.

From the Board

One of the tasks of the Board of SP&C is to manage the subsidies granted by the Wageningen University and other donors to SP&C. This guardianship was established in consultation with representatives of the WUR and the *Stichting tot Steun*.

The team of chaplains and life-coaches of SP&C consists of 3 chaplains: 1,15 Fte.

Olaf van Kooten, Voorzitter Stichting SP&C

Composition of the Board

Olaf van Kooten – Chair (Buddhist section), Josine van der Horst (chaplains team representative), Alfred Arulandhu – Treasurer (Student Church sectie), Marieke van Keeken – Secretary, Rob Witte – member.

2

Team of Chaplains and Life-coach

Our team consisted of Jorn den Hertog (PKN)- 0,5 Fte, Josine van der Horst (PKN)- 0,5 Fte, life-coach Marloes Harkema (Zen- Buddhism), Jeannette den Ouden (Arboretumkerk) – 0,1 Fte.

Team of students 2020/2021

Aravind Thanikai Arasu - Coordination, Geena Charmansyah - PR, succeeded by Ania Ektate – PR, Firewot Tadesse – Bookkeeping, Stellamaris Aju – Externus, Andrea Gutierrez Arce – Activity Manager, Selma Moerland – Office Manager.



Developments in 2021/2022

This academic year started with life on campus gradually opening up and we immediately started organizing our regular events as well as exploring the possibilities for new events and ways to work with other organizations again. Our student team welcomed new members and

enthusiastically launched new ideas. The interaction with the chaplains and life-coach went smoothly with regular face-to face -and online meetings. We also experienced challenges. Dealing with the 1.5 meters distance rule forced us to keep participation numbers low. Evening events were not allowed for several months and our office in the Clockhouse could not be used for group meetings or even small gatherings. At the beginning of the academic year we still could not make use of any space in Orion for our weekly meditation and we continued outdoors and generally looked for ways to have outdoor events regularly. Unfortunately one of the chaplains, Josine van der Horst, developed long-covid and was unable to fully do the job for months during the second semester. (This is also the reason this report was produced later than usual.) Halfway the second semester the position of chaplain Jorn den Hertog became vacant again. Our new chaplain started in September 2022. In the meantime we were able to rely on the remaining chaplain and life-coach and the student team proactively took up what it considered an increased responsibility and did so brilliantly.



Activities 2021 – 2022

Promotional and Connective Activities

During the AID – A Silent Room and Religious Day

In preparation of the two AID programs that were organized in 2021, Spectrum teamed up with representatives of the Muslim -, Buddhists – and Christian students to explore ways of welcoming the new students together during a ‘religious day’ on the Sunday between the two AIDs. As one of the outcomes of our discussions Spectrum asked the AID committee for a silent room that would be accessible during the AID to allow participants to meditate or pray during the days of the AID program. This would allow Muslim students to remain on campus during their prayer times. Also, students who might feel overwhelmed by all the interaction after having spent a lot of time in lock down – would have a place to withdraw. This request was granted by the AID-committee with a room in Forum which we arranged as a silent room and regularly hosted. The room was used mostly by Muslim students during their prayer time.

We also requested for the possibilities to organize a Religious Day in Orion on the Sunday in between the two AID's. Initially this was granted but later denied for safety and or logistic reasons. As an alternative to our original plans the Muslim students then decided to organize a biking tour with a special welcome in the mosque in Wageningen. The Buddhist group cancelled its program and the Christian group relocated its annual AID welcome service to the *Grote Kerk* on the Market in the center of Wageningen. One of the students together with a chaplain led the service, which was prepared in several (outdoor-) meetings in the months prior to the AID. Representatives of eleven Christian Associations - and church-groups plus WSKOV joined in the preparations. The theme of the morning was "Opening up to each other and seeing the beauty of our diversity as a campus community". Several students shared their experiences with unexpected cross-cultural friendships. At the end the meeting a Meet & Greet took place outside the church.



*Number of participants: 65,
(Dutch and international)*

Info Market AID 2020

Spectrum student team took part in the two information markets in the Arboretum welcoming the batches of new students, explaining our activities and generate name awareness. This was



an effective way of meeting and presenting ourselves. We talked to many new students and invited them to all the different activities in our program. We also referred them to other organizations and groups that might be interesting for them specifically and also received new students sent to us by other organizations.

Winter AID February 2021

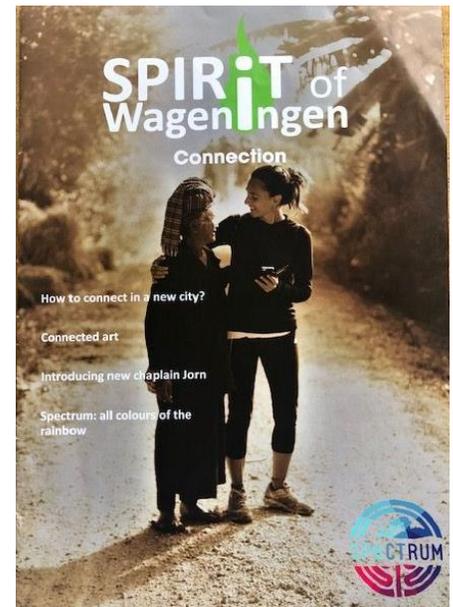
Spectrum participated in the winter AID welcoming new students and informing them of the Spectrum activities. Our promotional gift (an inspirational kitchen tool) was much appreciated.

Social Media and Monthly Newsletter

Each start of the month we issue an electronic Newsletter with the upcoming events and a link for registration. Other means of communication are via Spectrum's Facebook page (Spectrum Wageningen), a renewed website (www.spectrum-wageningen.com) Instagram (@spectrumspc), e-mail and LinkedIn. The student team is actively providing information via these platforms. The student team and chaplains used mostly *Telegram* to communicate on a daily basis and Zoom for weekly meetings.

Spectrum's Magazine 'Spirit of Wageningen'.

This academic year we once again issued an edition of the magazine, 'Spirit of Wageningen', a fifteen paged glossy. The aim of our magazine is to put the focus on the aspect of inspiration and the diversity of worldviews, religion, and philosophies of life on the WUR campus. The theme of this year's edition was *Connection*. With contributions of our student team members and featuring among others a former student team member (now a member of our Board) and the new chaplain. With inspirational poems and articles and interviews. The magazine was completed with the help of a professional editor. Issues of Spirit are sent to all students houses and can be found in Forum, the Leeuwenborch, Clockhouse and other buildings of the WUR.



5

In Support of Spiritual - and Personal Growth

Weekly Mindfulness Meditation

Description by a member of the student team: *“Every Tuesday during the lunchbreak Spectrum organizes a mindfulness meditation session with a guided meditation for students. The topics can range from mindful breathing, to body scan, or they can be more focused on certain themes such as grounding. The meditations take place in Orion, every Tuesday. (The picture inserted is from this year, where we see an increase in the number of participants).”*

Once a month on Thursdays Spectrum led a meditation session hosted by the Forum Library. This session is also open for staff-members. *Participants: 5 – 12 students (Dutch and Internationals). Led by one of the chaplains, life-coach or one experienced student.*



Monthly Taizé Prayer

As soon as the restrictions were lifted a Taizé prayer was held again on every second Monday evening of the month in the Arboretum church. In March and the following months we specifically prayed for peace and gave attention to the war in Ukraine. Students of many nationalities including Russian and Latvian participated.



Description by a participant:

"In the Taizé Prayer, we start with songs. We then read inspirational verses of the Bible on the theme we want to meditate upon. Other songs follow, and a chapter of the Bible connected to the theme is read by different students in their native language. A long, meditative silence comes after. Prayers for intercessions are read by another student, other gentle, reiterative songs are sung, and we close with a

prayer, herbal tea, biscuits/desserts, and the sharings of our experiences."

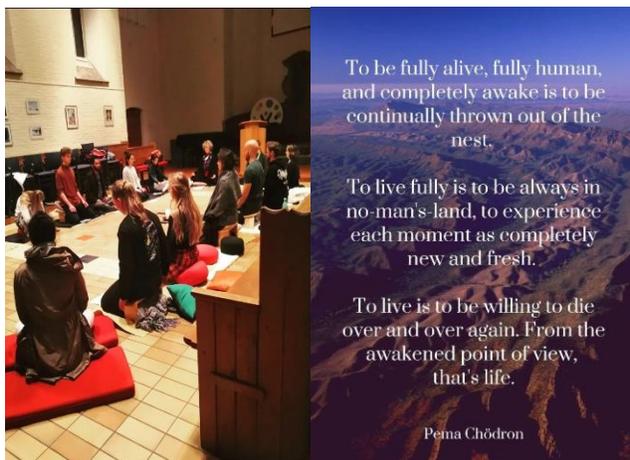
Participants: 18 to 23 (mixed group of Dutch and Internationals), one chaplain

Monthly Retreat & Recharge Evenings

Unlike a normal study class, we use an ancient Christian technique to 'digest' an inspiring text and try to listen with all our body and being. The technique is called 'Lectio Divina' and is a very old Christian monastic technique in which you read a small part of an inspiring piece of text, slowly and in silence. We first read the words together slowly, and then are in silence with the words by means of meditation and contemplation. It allows to chew it, ruminate and digest the wisdom it brings. Afterwards, there is a possibility to share together what the text does for the students at this moment in their life.

We have organized in total **9 Retreat & Recharge Evenings over 2021-22**. We notice that students appreciate the diversity of the different texts. For the last years we have used quotes from Tao Te Ching, Thich Nhat Hanh, Desmond Tutu, Rumi, Julian of Norwich, Pema Chodron, Ety Hillesum and Tara Brach. But more importantly, they share how valuable it is for them to pause in their busy lives, connect to how they are doing physically and mentally, and find inspiration to deal better with what they are facing.

About the facilitators: Jeannette den Ouden is theologian and pastor of the Arboretum Church and student chaplain for Spectrum. She has worked over 15 years with Lectio Divina and uses it



To be fully alive, fully human,
and completely awake is to be
continually thrown out of the
nest.

To live fully is to be always in
no-man's-land, to experience
each moment as completely
new and fresh.

To live is to be willing to die
over and over again. From the
awakened point of view,
that's life.

Pema Chödrön

for her daily inspiration. Marloes Harkema works for Spectrum as coordinator for Buddhist activities and life coach for the WUR.

Number of participants: 8 – 20 students (Dutch and International)

Monthly Grief & Writing Workshops

With these workshops we aim to create a safe space to write and share personal stories and give voice to feelings of grief. By using small creative writing exercises students express stories



of grief, give voice to their sadness or pen down warm memories of loved ones. This can be healing on its own. They can then share experiences and advice with others as well as learn from the group. As everyone deals with grief differently, this can lead to new ideas.

Number of participants: 4 – 9 (both Dutch and International); organized by the life-coach, Marloes Harkema

Lost A Parent - Support Group

Spectrum also facilitates a Grief Support Group that is organized by students who have lost a parent. They come together twice a month and find support for their loss, and recognition in their experiences.

*"Thank you very much for the session and being open and vulnerable with us!
It was really touching and helped me to clear my mind a lot."*

"I really appreciated the workshop. It was such a unique safe and open space to process my emotions. I felt much less lonely in my grieving process, connecting with people going through similar emotions. The writing helped to organize my thoughts and see my situations more clearly. It's also something that I can continue to do on my own to process the feelings further. "

Surf your Stress Week November 2021

In cooperation with the Organizers of the *Surf Your Stress* week and the Forum Library staff Spectrum led 4 meditation sessions, each morning from Tuesday to Friday in Forum. The sessions included a training in mindful awareness and ways to relax, followed by a discussion with feedback and Q & A's.

Each session 10 to 15 students participated (Dutch and international).

Climate Hope – 4 sessions

Description by a student-team member: *"Climate Hope was a series of events that focused on inspiring active hope within students to tackle the climate crisis. In our events we addressed climate anxiety and depression, serious mental health conditions being experienced by people all around the world. This was one of our biggest collaborations, with the associations WEP (Wageningen Environment Platform), OtherWise, and VeSte (student council). What resulted was the following recurring events: meditation on climate anxiety, a lunch lecture by Lian Kasper, Climate-grief journaling session by our grief coach Marloes Harkema, and an art night to vent out our emotions in a*



*healthy way. Through the events we raised awareness on these mental health issues, but also provided a safe space for people to connect.” Dates: 19th April, 20th May, 9th June, 21st June
Participants: from 5 to 15 (Dutch and international)*

Pause Talk

In March the team organized a small gathering in Spectrum’s Office in the Clockhouse.

Description by a member of the student team: *“We started the session by watching a podcast “PAUSE Talk” by Wim Hof with a warm tea. Wim Hof, also known as the Iceman, is a Dutch motivational speaker and athlete noted for his ability to withstand freezing temperature. He was explaining about his method, including breathing techniques, yoga, meditation and cold exposure, to reduce stress and improve mental health in humans. In the end, we had a discussion on how we can use this technique in our routine life?”*

Participants: 3 live, 3 online (Dutch and internationals), one chaplain.

W.S.R. Argo - Career Days

In March Argos asked Spectrum to provide a meditation session during their career days. One of our chaplains led a meditation followed by a Q & A session and a led a discussion on the topic of stress-management in the workplace.

Participants: 40 students (Dutch), one chaplain.

Dance inside my chest - An inspirational summer evening in Forum.

Description by a member of the student team: *“We started the session with some stretching exercises led by a team member. This was followed by reading a quote by poet and Sufi Rumi – Dance Inside my Chest. After that, Jeannette led a meditation to interpret the quote and the participants were given a chance to sketch out or draw / paint whatever came to their mind. In the end, the participants shared their thoughts on the quote and the painting they did”.*

Total number of participants: 7 (Dutch and internationals), led by a chaplain

Summer Chill Night in July

Description by a member of the student team: *“Spectrum, Sustainability and Integration (S&I), and the United Community of African Students (UCAS) organized a summer chill night for students during the vacation period. The idea behind this activity was to help students ease the built-up stress of the previously concluded academic year but also to learn about other nationality’s cultures. The night started with some indoor games and sharing at 6 pm. Next, dinner was provided at 7 pm. Afterwards, a very entertaining African (Igbo in Nigeria) movie titled “Lion Heart” was shown to the students.”*

Participants: Approx. 60 students (Dutch and internationals)

The Philosophy Group

When our office space was accessible again we organized 3 philosophy sessions. The first about Jean Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche and Hannah Arendt, the second about Ubuntu and Buddhism and the third about Iris Murdoch. These evenings were led by a chaplain together with a PhD-student, Alessio Gerola, from the Philosophy department.

The number of participants ranged from 10 to 22 (Dutch and International)

Trips and excursions

Apple Trees Harvest

This outdoor event took place twice on two Saturdays in October. As always, we harvested Spectrum's own apple trees in the organic orchard the Lingenhof across the river. We took the ferry and cycled to the orchard where we harvested an abundance of apples. On the first trip one of the students who joined was an expert in apples and educated us with new facts about apples. On our ride back to Wageningen we stopped at the Kasteeltuin in Hemmen where pictures were taken of the variety of plants.

Total number of participants: 13 students (Dutch and International)



Trip to Taizé in France

We have made this very popular trip every summer for many years with 9 to 14 students each time. After not being able to go for more than a year we were happy to organize it again at the request of some students in October 2021. Due to corona and unexpected study assignments only three of the six students who had registered were able to join. To avoid disappointment for the students who had not been able to travel at all, we decided to make the journey anyway. We visited Bouillon (Belgium) and Reims (France) and stayed in the community of Taizé where hundreds of young internationals gathered for discussion groups, liturgical meetings, singing and contemplation.

Total number of participants 6: 3 internationals, 2 chaplains, 1 extra volunteer driver



Daytrip to Hambach & Aachen in Germany

On a Saturday in November we made a daytrip to Germany to see the lignite mining by the RWE and visit the activists living in treehouses in Hambach forest. One of the activists gave us a tour and talked about their motivations to live there, and the history behind the lignite mine and the deforestation. We brought supplies and shared food. After spending time with the activists we drove to nearby Aachen to visit the archeological excavations in the center of the city and the Dom.

Total participants: 6 students (international), one chaplain, one volunteer driver.



Zen River 5 day Buddhist Seminar

In 2021-22 both a weekend-outing and a 5 day seminar was organized to Zen River Temple, an international Buddhist monastery in Uithuizen, Groningen. This weekend and seminar was especially designed for students to experience a Buddhist monastic life for a couple of days. The program included training in zazen (zen meditation), Buddhist ritual,



scriptural study, cooking, garden work, and a calligraphy and drumming workshop. In the summer seminar we had every day an outdoor painting class by the abbot Tenkei Roshi. This has been the fourth time Wageningen students join this annual Buddhist Young Minds Activities.

Number of participants Weekend April 2022: 20

Number of Participants July 2022: 7 (both Dutch and International)

Organized by lifecoach, Marloes Harkema

10

Two Summer Excursions to The Hague Historic city and the Beach

In July we made two excursions to The Hague, one together with students from Enschede and one in collaboration with the diversity officer, Lisa Nguyen, as part of the summer activities of



the university. The activities included a tour around the historic city center of Den Haag; a visit to the Mauritshuis museum; a luncheon in the palace garden; and some quiet time and sunshine at the Scheveningen beach. The first tour included dinner at the chaplain's home.

Total number of participants 1st time: 9 students

(internationals), led by one chaplain; Total number of Participants 2nd time: 16 students (Mixed group of Dutch and Internationals)

Summer Excursion: Legends of the Forest

In collaboration with the university, Spectrum organized an one day excursion to sustainable forests of *Heimenberg* in Rhenen and *het Solse Gat* in Putten in the Netherlands as part of the summer activities. This activity aimed at helping interested students to learn about some sustainable forests in the Netherlands. We visited both forests and learned about their stories, while also sightseeing. Other activities included games, a picnic, and thoughts sharing with fellow students. *Participants: 30 students (Mixed group of Dutch and Internationals), one expert in forestry and local legends*



Creative and cultural

Cooking and Culture workshop



With the apples we harvested early in October we (later that month) learned to bake traditionally Dutch – and vegan apple pie. This Cooking and Culture workshop was held in het *Inloophuis*, Markt 17, which has a professional kitchen.

Total number of participants: 8 students (International), one Dutch instructor.

Decorate Your Christmas

Description by one of the organizing team members: *“In collaboration with the university, Spectrum organized winter activities for students who stayed back in Wageningen during the holidays. Specifically, Spectrum organized a Christmas salt dough ornaments baking activity. This was an indoor activity as it involved baking and using an oven. Materials were provided, and students baked different characters of their choice as well as painted them afterwards. Instructions were provided to all. This was an activity performed by students organized in groups.*

Date and time: 23 December 2021; Open time - Students decide in groups.

Venue: Global Lounge, Plantage 2, 6708 WJ Wageningen

Participants: participation by approximately 20 groups of students (Dutch and internationals)”.





Christmas Pumpkin Sharing activity

Like in previous years hampers were prepared to give away to students remaining in Wageningen during the holidays. With all the ingredients for pumpkin soup, they were encouraged to cook for friends and corridor mates and share a healthy meal together. This time 50 students received a hamper distributed by the students with the help of the student team and one chaplain.

See Yourself On Canvas

Spectrum participated in the **One World Week** with a creative event.

Description by a member of the organizing student team: *“In this canvas drawing activity students were invited to make a pictorial representation of their activity partner, informed by a dialogue based on defined questions. This exercise enabled individuals to see themselves through the lens of the other, displayed on the canvas. The item drawn was not the individual in question, but something “abstract” that the painter thinks fits the individual's personality given the discussion. Participants got to take home the canvas made for them.”*

Participants: Approx. 30 students (Mixed group of Dutch and internationals)

Fermentation Workshop

In the Spring the student team organized a workshop learning from an expert in fermentation the fermentation process and the advantages of fermenting food with regard to sustainability and health. The participants also learned how to ferment kimchi.

Participation: 6 students (Dutch and international), one fermentation expert

Personal support

Personal coaching and care

The chaplains gave support in the form of counselling sessions or confidential conversations with students. Sometimes the students requested only one such a session but more often a longer trajectory followed.

As a rule we encourage students who are troubled to seek help from the psychologists or deans or medical center, unless it is clear that no such intervention is needed.

Total number: 35 students (BSc, MSc, PhD) and 8 alumni (Dutch and international).

Financial and material needs

In some cases the students needed financial support which was applied for by the chaplains and provided for with the help of different charities and foundations. International students frequently ask for assistance for a variety of practical issues, from help with renewal of passports, translating and explaining documents, contact with concerned parents, providing transport when sick et c.

Memorial Service and follow up

In May students from Kenya reached out to the chaplain after the death of one of their colleagues. They requested the chaplain to speak and deliver a brief sermon at the special memorial that was organized by the chair-group of the deceased student.

Participants: 45 live – 30 on line

After the memorial, contact with those most affected by this unfortunate death continued and resulted in an ongoing effort to organize events for PhD candidates and look for ways to identify and address the specific difficulties especially sandwich PhD's are confronted with.

Connecting with Other Organizations & Supporting Various Initiatives

Ongoing Contacts

One of our main objectives is bringing students – and different student groups together. Therefore we meet many people and groups throughout the year and look for ways to collaborate. This year too we worked together with other campus related and university programs and organizations. To name a number of them, we have teamed up with the diversity officer, One World Week, Surf Your Stress, Forum Library, the Green Office, Otherwise, CSF, VeSte, S&I, WEP, ISOW, UCAS, PPI (Muslim students, now Avicenna), W.S.R. Argo, WCCF, ICF, AGP, ICC and more.... Our contact with these programs and organizations is ongoing.

Cargo Bike in Support of Nevalak Foundation

The Spectrum Cargo-bike is available for students to borrow for a donation of 5 euro per day in support of Nevalak foundation. Nevalak is a foundation started by the Ghanaian students in 2019. It seeks to support talented but needy students in Ghana. We have been able to raise more than two hundred euro for Nevalak this year as well as raise awareness for their cause.

Christmas Campaign for Refugees

Spectrum supported the Christmas Campaign for Refugees in and around Wageningen that was organized by V.O.D. (Vluchtelingen Onder Dak). We were asked to help provide hampers as a Christmas gift for refugees so we invited students to contribute and donate food. A box was placed in Forum with the approval of the reception. We were able to prepare 25 hampers.

Plans for Activities in 2022 / 2023

We are committed to a continued implementation of our Policy plan for the coming years and to continue with the development of meaningful activities with the students (Dutch and international), by students – and for students - based on our five pillars:

Spirituality, Philosophy, Creativity, Personal Growth and Community building.

Our aim remains to make a meaningful contribution to our student community's flourishing in diversity.