



Dear Board of the University,

We are sending you this letter with the request for a statement supporting study associations seeking new board members. The current situation at the University of Groningen is dire, and COVID-19 is dealing hit after hit to the entire university. These do not only affect the staff and students, but imaginably also on you as the Board. It is your job to keep the University and everything around it operating, and we acknowledge that this job is a difficult one given the current crisis. However, it is also a necessary one, since this university caters to the needs of more than 36.000 students, and provides them with the necessary tools to become educated and experienced within society. Unfortunately, the Corona crisis is dealing its blows to all aspects of the university. Not only education and career, which are central to any university, but also the social and sport aspects, which contribute to the great character of our University and provide students with indispensable wellbeing support..

In order to fight the impact of the Corona crisis on this University, all levels of the university need to be able to come back from the initial blows it has dealt. The University as a whole, but also all local organisations and associations which have the same goal: the wellbeing and support of students at the University of Groningen. The associations and organisations improve the study time of students in many ways. They focus on improving education and career opportunities, but maybe most importantly at the moment, they create a platform for students to socialise with one another. As the CvB said at the beginning of the year, student organisations take on the responsibility of enabling social cohesion among students. However, the associations and organisations are facing one large universal problem at the moment: finding new board members to keep the associations alive. Associations have been struggling with this in the past already and for some the crisis threatens to deliver the final nail in the coffin, forcing them to freeze or even disband their association.

Because of this, we send this letter to you, with the request for a statement. As the Board of the University, we believe a statement released by you in which you endorse doing a board year would greatly help associations find new board members. As the board of our University, we believe you do not just see the value of doing a board year in the sense of personal experience, but also the benefits it has for the entire organisation. There has already been a message mentioning the benefits of a board year, but this was a statement made by Lijst Calimero which was distributed via Nestor. We are grateful that this was possible, but we are also sure that a message or press release from the board would be many times stronger and would reach more people.

We ask you to endorse doing a board year, so that the associations of which this university partially consists have a fighting chance against the effects of the pandemic. This way, we believe the University and its students will come out of this pandemic with strong social cohesion and wellbeing. Not only in the sense that the students will be more enthusiastic about the university, but it would also contribute in achieving the interdisciplinarity and employability goals set out in the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.

We are sending you this letter with the request for a statement. If you endorse students doing a board year, we believe you do not just help the University, but also all of its students.

Sincerely,

The 16th faction of Lijst Calimero,

Rozemarijn Gierkink,

Freddy Cawthorne-Nugent,

Eoin Raftery,

Lisa van der Panne,

Naila Loudini,

Nirva Portugal,

Arne Hefting,

Dion Theodoridis.