

Academia and entrepreneurs join forces to invest 1 billion in research & development

Academia and entrepreneurs have joined forces in an ambitious plan to boost research and innovation in The Netherlands by an annual amount of 1 billion euro. This initiative, launched just before government traditionally presents its annual budget on the 3rd Tuesday in September by the so called *Knowledge Coalition*, aims to mobilize scientific forces to better face societal challenges and create economic opportunities. This Agenda, presented last November, is the foundation of this inspiring *Investment Agenda for Research & Innovation*([link](#)).

We are facing complex and urgent challenges. New problems ask for new solutions, from the integration of refugees, to climate change. Pancras Hogendoorn, dean of the Leiden University Medical Center and on behalf of the Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centers member of the *Knowledge Coalition*: “There are also chances; personalized and regenerative medicine, new devices, the big data revolution. We need to invest in both the research system and in innovative R & D to strengthen our knowledge economy. We see this manifesto as a wakeup call for politicians.” To remain in the forefront of innovation does not come for free. We need to look ahead and dare to invest, now we have so many serious challenges and opportunities facing us. In recent years public investment in R & D in the Netherlands has gone down dramatically. We used the profits from natural gas to boost innovation and now these profits have dropped, necessary investments have decreased to an alarming level. In the strategic NFU-research agenda, *National plan academic medicine, biomedical science and healthcare research, Sustainable Health* ([link](#)) inspiring and promising issues are bundled. Pancras Hoogendoorn: “The revolution in for example genomics and imaging give us more insight in the variation between individuals and their diseases, thereby opening the route to targeted therapy and personalized medicine. Our researchers - in the premier league, and young aspiring PhD's and postdocs- have huge ambitions. A health care system that is both affordable and top-notch. ”

The knowledge coalition, consisting of all Dutch organizations investing in R & D, has drafted the Investment Agenda on top of the Dutch National Research Agenda. Citaat Boegbeeld? Many distinguished scientists from both academia and the private sector, active in the fields of life sciences & health, have been involved in drafting 25 routes. These routes with game changing propositions, are bundled in *The Portfolio for Research & Innovation* ([link](#)), which accompanies the manifesto. From regenerative and personalized medicine to NeuroLabNL and prevention, groundbreaking research is foreseen.

Nico van Meeteren; “Both entrepreneurs and the scientific community cannot wait to start. We are all geared up. We hope the politicians will share our ambition and have the courage to strengthen the pillars of our economy by making this long term investment possible. Not only the economy will be boosted but an outreach to solving societal challenges facing us now and in the coming years, is most necessary. In the topsector LSH we have experienced that we Dutch are great in sharing and co-operating. From blue skies to applied research, from data-science to ethics and system biology, there is a shared vision that cooperation is key to finding optimal solutions. The health foundations, active in many of our consortia, are also keen to join and participate. I look forward to new solutions and products, all beneficiary for patients and an affordable budget. ”