



ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



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What is VeSte?

VeSte ('Verenigde Studenten', or in English 'United Students') is a Student Council party founded in 1997 by members of the Contractus student associations in order to represent these associations and their members in the Student Council of Wageningen University. Over the years, it became apparent that the VeSte vision fits with more associations and organisations. Therefore, VeSte started cooperating with various kinds of organisations, both within Wageningen and on a national and international level. VeSte represents active students, which is at the heart of VeSte's identity. VeSte represents those students as a central participatory body of Wageningen University. All VeSte board members dedicate a year working full-time to represent students in the decision making of Wageningen University and Research (WUR).

Mission

As a Student Council party, VeSte represents and supports active students of WUR. Active students are students who are motivated to develop themselves outside their studies, both inside and outside the classroom. These students develop themselves by engaging in extracurricular activities in various organisations and associations, and/or by engaging in activities concerning with talent, knowledge and skills development. These students create an atmosphere in which academic and social development can flourish.

Vision

The VeSte vision consists of three pillars: *Future-Proof Education*, *Personal Development* and *Active Student Life*. By improving the internal and external environment of WUR with a focus on these pillars VeSte aim to support all active students. Hereunder it is explained what each pillar entails:

- I. VeSte should strive for the availability of *Future-Proof Education* for every student of WUR. Therefore, VeSte actively contributes to maintaining and improving the education at WUR, which is often seen as one of the foremost excellent institutions within its domain worldwide. This is not only visible in rankings, but also in the experiences of both current students and alumni. According to VeSte, the highest level of education consists of small-scale interactive education, close supervision of courses and theses, an international classroom and atmosphere, flexibility within and between programmes and multidisciplinary education. VeSte will always strive for educational excellence of WUR by engaging with students and staff.
- II. Another essential aspect of being a student at WUR is the opportunity for all students to achieve *Broad Academic Development*. This concept entails participating in the activities that stimulate personal and professional development. Both must be stimulated in courses where skills and knowledge are combined in the classroom. However, much progress is achieved outside the classroom as well, where students take part in training programmes, (international) student exchanges, board tenures, and other activities. It is essential to stimulate students in partaking in these activities since learning takes place both in- and outside the classroom.
- III. In the external environment of WUR, VeSte sees the need to support a *Vibrant Student Life*. WUR should play an active role in facilitating this as well. In this student life, a variety of organisations are embedded, connecting and supporting students, and making Wageningen their home. Student organisations contribute to the *Vibrant Student Life* of Wageningen and create a truly global society within a small Dutch city. As VeSte, we support these organisations in their activities and we value these communities strongly. This is why we contribute to the *vibrant student life* of Wageningen.

VeSte utilizes these three pillars as the basis of their discussions within WUR. Hence, initiatives of the VeSte and decisions made by the Executive Board involving the Student Council should have these pillars at their foundation. The Student Council has various rights to help implement their vision into policies. These rights are the *right of approval*, the *right of advice*, the *right of information* and the *right of initiative*.



When external actors are involved, such as the municipality, the faction will be in close contact with them as well, which is especially relevant for the *Vibrant Student Life* in Wageningen.

Focus in 2021-2022

The focus of the VeSte faction 2021-2022 was distributed over several major dossiers and initiatives, as well as the internal structure of the party. Moreover, in 2022, on the occasion of VeStes 5th lustrum, several additional events were organized.

As part of the Student Council, VeSte worked the whole year on dossiers such as the EER WU and joint degrees, the WU budget 2022, the Resits Policy 2022-2023 and onwards, and the Pricing Policy 2022-2023. The VeSte faction always strived to applying its vision in the decisions that the Student Council made. Next to the dossiers, several VeSte initiatives were continued or started, especially in the second half of the academic year. The Sustainability Fund, which was accepted by the Executive Board in 2020-2021, was initiated in January 2022, in which study associations could apply for funding for a sustainable activity or gadget. Moreover, the Student Civil Worker and the Uni-Life app were some existing initiatives that the VeSte faction continued working on. At the end of the year, a new VeSte initiative, Studying Without Limitations, was accepted by the Executive Board.

Next to the dossiers and initiatives, topics as student wellbeing and social safety were very important this year, due to the pandemic and newly emerged information on social safety. Furthermore, in March 2022, the Dutch municipality elections took place. VeSte organized a series of debates in collaboration with the debate organization of the municipality. All inhabitants of Wageningen, students and non-students, were welcome at the event.

As 2022 marked the 25th anniversary of VeSte, this year was an ideal moment to revise the internal structure of the party. As VeSte strives to continuously represent the interests of active students, VeSte needs to adapt to any changes in these interests. This year, the pillars, and therefore the core identity of VeSte, were evaluated. This way, VeSte can continue to represent active students in the best possible way. The lustrum was also celebrated by a series of events, ranging from informative events such as masterclasses on lobbying, to a gala for all VeSte alumni.

A further elaboration on how the faction implemented our vision, policies and philosophy into our achievements this year is briefly summarised in this yearly report.



Main achievements

Quality Agreements

The Quality Agreements (QA) sounding group monitored the progress of the Quality Agreements money. The sounding group had regular meetings with the Quality Agreements steering group, which consisted of the Dean of Education and a policy maker from the university. In these meetings, the impact analysis and quarterly dashboards were discussed. On top of the dashboards, a dossier with the 'Results per project per year 2022-2024' was received, about which questions were asked and an approval letter was written. For the annual report on the Quality Agreements, a reflection was written from the SSC viewpoint. In short, the SSC concluded that they were involved and updated regularly and questions were answered to their satisfaction. The WUR and SSC received compliments from the NVAO about the quality of the report.

VeSte was actively involved in the QA sounding group and strived for good allocation of the QA money. The goal of VeSte in the QA was to represent the active students of Wageningen by asking critical questions about the implementation and realisation of this funding and thinking along when budget has to be allocated differently.

Resits

The resits policy at WUR has a long history of debate. While students like the resit opportunities they have at the university, many teachers experience a high workload. Therefore, the university has been working on an improvement of the resits policy for several years now. This year the Executive Board presented two preliminary decisions: i) move the summer resit period from August to July and ii) limit the number of resits for which students can register to three per resit period. The preliminary decision was submitted to the Student Staff Council for approval. Next to the discussion on the content of the dossier, there were different opinions between the EB and the SSC and SC on the council to which this dossier was supposed to be sent. The Executive Board established it belonged to the SSC, but both the SSC and SC suggested it was supposed to be at the SC, based on the legal rights both councils have. After legal consultation and dialogue between the lawyers and representatives of the EB, the SSC and SC, the SC and SSC decided that the SSC would handle this dossier. This was on the condition that a working group with members of the three institutional bodies, a legal advisor and the EB would be formed. The supervisory board would also be involved in the process. The goal of the working group is to avoid future misunderstandings on where and when the rights of each participatory council (SSC and SC) reside.

After a long series of meetings and debates, The Student Staff Council agreed with the Executive Board to move the resits to July from the academic year '22 - '23 onwards starting on the first Wednesday after period 6, and disagreed with limiting the number of resits per resit period to three. The SSC mainly disagreed with the limitation of the number of resits, because the restriction will almost not lower the work pressure of teachers while it does limit the opportunities for students. VeSte played an important role in these discussions, as one VeSte member was part of the resits working group of the university. Moreover, in the ad hoc resits committee of the SC, several VeSte members played a significant role. The SSC expects an updated proposal of the EB in the fall of '22, where VeSte again will safeguard the needs and values of active students.

Smoking Policy

WUR is a smoke-free campus, which means that it is not allowed to smoke anywhere on campus. This policy has been in place for a while, but the implementation of it was still insufficient. Many students and employees were still smoking, and there was a lack of monitoring. Therefore, VeSte made the university and the rector aware of this problem, and more monitoring took place, as well as more visible signs that the campus is smoke-free.

Framework Letter

The draft framework letter was presented in June 2022. Members of VeSte have contributed to the topics in the position paper, which ultimately resulted in major topics being added to the framework letter. Among



these topics were wellbeing of students, branding of the university, high quality education and blended education. During the Covid-19 pandemic, students' wellbeing has drastically declined and VeSte believes that increasing the budget on this topic will help improving the wellbeing of students. In recent years, competition with other universities, stagnating student numbers and increased pressure on the job market has increased the request for a strong brand of Wageningen University & Research. In the position paper, VeSte requested more money to be put aside to create a more attractive study-, and working environment at WUR. After the COVID-19 pandemic, VeSte still advocates for high quality and blended education. VeSte does not want to decrease the amount of physical education, but wants education to be given off- and online. This way students have more tools to finish their courses and pass their exams.

EER

The Education and Examination Regulations included a few changes in 2022. The biggest changes were the definition of the word resit and the changes regarding the resit weeks. There was no focus on digital failures in the EER since this was taken up by the Executive Board separately as a long term action point. VeSte is proud to announce that the definition of resit and test will be adapted to fit all forms of examination instead of only written tests. There will be a change in the resit weeks from August to July and VeSte is in favour of this change. The change allows students to be done with studying earlier in the summer, resulting in a longer uninterrupted holiday. The EER experienced some delay due to the resit discussion that was also sent to the SSC but VeSte is glad with the results. VeSte worked hard on continuing the COVID addendum in a more generalised form, fit for other natural disasters as well. Also, the bachelors-before-masters rule was extended for another year, which is beneficial for students that experienced delay due to COVID but already want to continue to their master.

Pillars

In 2022, VeSte celebrates her 5th lustrum, which means that VeSte was founded 25 years ago. As VeSte stands for the interests of active students, the faction members keep these interests in mind in everything they do to improve WUR. The core identity of VeSte therefore is the interests of active students, which are characterized by three pillars: *World Class Education*, *Broad Academic Development* and *Vibrant Student Life*. Yet, since the original formulation of these pillars in 2017, student life has changed drastically, and with it the interests of students. As VeSte strives to continuously represent the interests of active students, VeSte wanted to adapt to any changes in these interests. Therefore, this year, the VeSte pillars were evaluated and adapted. This was done in collaboration with the constituency, the advisory board, and an Ad Hoc Pillars committee, consisting of six old VeSte members. After careful consideration, the pillars are now *Future-proof education*, *Personal Development* and *Active Student Life*. Not only the names, but also the definition of the pillars have been changed, in order to keep representing active students.

Financial compensation SC

The financial compensation that is now offered to SC members, who work for 40 hours a week, is not nearly enough to financially support students. We think that joining the SC should not mean that the study debt increases with several thousands of euros. While it becomes increasingly more difficult to find students to join the SC, it becomes clear that the financial compensation is often a reason not to join the SC. Being part of the SC is voluntarily, and perhaps financial incentives should not be a motivation to become an SC member, however the financial compensation should definitely not be a reason not to be able to join the SC. VeSte shared this problem not only with the WUR-C, but also the EB and the SB. As a result, several actions were taken, including the promise of the rector to revise the SC's financial compensation in the academic year '22-'23. VeSte has good hopes that the financial compensation will increase, as a motion regarding this topic also was accepted by the Dutch Parliament.

Flexible studying

Following a proposal for studying and paying per course of the National Union of Students (LSVb), the Parliament (Tweede Kamer) passed a motion to set up a so-called "self-directed experiment in study point funding". The Minister of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) agreed to this motion at the end of 2015. The experiment has been running at a number of universities and universities for applied sciences since



2017 and will end in 2023. The Parliament did not want to wait for the results of the pilot and passed another motion in June 2020 stating that by September 2023 all students must be able to pay tuition fees per credit point. WUR does not want to participate in the pilot because it lacks clear advantages for most target groups in regard to the current possibilities of WUR and because the pilot of OCW is not inclusive. The WUR is waiting on changes in the law before succeeding with implementing the policy to pay per credit.

Besides the pilot for flexible studying, VeSte also worked on the pricing policy on the institutional tuition fee and the possibilities to make this more flexible for certain target groups.

As part of the Education & Research committee of the WUR-council, VeSte worked on the approval of the new Bachelor Marine Sciences. In this dossier, VeSte paid special attention to possibilities for flexible education, resulting in advice to improve the curriculum, whereby more room would be available for personal interests. Moreover, VeSte highly appreciated the personal development learning line which is intertwined with the bachelor courses. VeSte sees it as a great improvement for education, that students can work on their own ambitions and skills while learning in-depth knowledge. Next year, VeSte hopes to continue improving existing programmes making them more flexible, interdisciplinary and career-oriented.

Covid-19 transition

The second half of the year, the campus slowly opened up after another lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. VeSte made sure that the interests of students were guaranteed, for example by making sure the graduation ceremonies for both BSc and MSc students could be organized physically again. The faction also focused on proper communication of WUR to students on any changes in the measurements on campus.

Study Anytime Anyplace (BYOD)

As of September 2021, the policy of Study Anytime Anyplace (formerly known as Bring Your Own Device), was implemented at WUR. As VeSte believes students should be able to study anytime, anyplace, in an advantageous way, VeSte was involved in monitoring advancements. As part of an informal sounding group on BYOD/SAA policy, VeSte brought to light complaints and worries from students surrounding changes and contributed to achieving several agreements. These agreements include guaranteed repair-service and loan laptops to bridge repair-time for laptops purchased through the university, as well as 'A-brand' laptops. Also, the university was pressured to seek out a supplier to provide loan laptops for everyone.

Digital examination

Through members of VeSte being part of an advisory committee on Digital examination, VeSte organized several student panels around the topic, together with the product owner Digital Assessment. VeSte received many complaints about lagging systems, lack of supervisors present in classrooms to guide students with questions and disturbances in exam rooms. Due to this contribution of VeSte, many student voices were heard and incorporated in adjustments made.

Physical and mental wellbeing

In order to promote both physical and mental wellbeing, several events were organized. The RSI/CANS information event and the Thymos Ball Tournament for example. They will be further elaborated on in this report.

Inclusive environment at WUR

In the beginning of the academic year, a student of the master Nutrition and Health approached VeSte. He indicated that studying and getting good guidance for studying can be more difficult for Dutch students with a migration background than for Dutch students without a migration background. Being a Dutch student with a migration background himself, he experienced some difficulties with the guidance during his educational life and also during making a study choice. He explained this is due to the lack of mastering the Dutch language and the inexperience in the Dutch educational system of his parents. He also mentioned that students with an immigration background in the West of The Netherlands often don't know the existence



of WUR. VeSte thinks that inclusiveness (at WUR) is important, and chances should be equal for everybody. VeSte involved the student that approached VeSte in the process to indicate this problem to WUR. Several concrete actions were taken on this topic. Two VeSte members had several conversations with employees to talk about promotion of WUR in Dutch cities and more secondary schools to reach more students in The Netherlands, especially in areas with a large density of students with a migration background. Moreover, the new chair of WUR also mentioned in her introduction speech that she wants to focus on Dutch students with a migration background. Lastly, from next academic year, a VeSte member will be involved in a working group regarding integration and inclusion at WUR.

Connection of WUR and the municipality

This year, a member of VeSte contributed to an advisory group on how to improve the general ambiance of the city centre of Wageningen. To strengthen connections after a long period in which Corona hindered building them, this was an enjoyable way to connect ourselves to the municipality and civil servants. In this way, we built a bridge between the university and the municipality, as ideas and information were brought to light in both directions. Consequently, the municipality proceeds to ask our input on several topics.

Additionally, the Commissioner of Internal Relations was included in a group called 'Students and Partners,' together with a large array of student organizations of Wageningen and representatives of WUR and the municipality, to talk about general subjects such as the effects of Corona and permits. This also contributed to underlying connections in general.

W.K.v.V.

This year, VeSte kept up relations with the recently formed W.K.v.V. (Wageningse Kamer van Verenigen) and observed its gradual professionalization. As the W.K.v.V. keeps relations with a large part of our constituency, VeSte finds this to be essential. The W.K.v.V. was approached to set up meetings and provide information, and in turn the W.K.v.V. approached VeSte with questions regarding the university. The W.K.v.V. is an asset, however it is essential to additionally keep direct contact with the constituency they represent and provide information directly, to keep up all relations as VeSte has done this year.

ISO

VeSte was very active at the ISO (Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg) meetings this year. Through the ISO, VeSte could give their opinion on national issues that have (in)direct impact on the study environment in Wageningen. Big topics that were discussed were mental wellbeing, social safety, internationalisation and the effects of Covid on education. On top of workgroup evenings and general members assemblies, there were also extra input sessions on Covid and digital education. VeSte is proud to be this actively involved in the national policy making.



Initiatives

Uni-Life

VeSte cares a lot about the active student life and wants events to be available for everyone. Therefore, VeSte initiated the idea of an event-planner app at WUR. In the app Uni-Life events can be shared by all sorts of organisations and students can see what fun events are happening. Especially after Covid, students are less aware of events that are taking place and have less social activity because they don't know where to find it. The app is already in use at multiple universities in the Netherlands. The Rector Magnificus was excited about the app and stated that we should further investigate what the possibilities for such an app are. The university is simultaneously looking into another app, from the company Ready Education, which is the developer of myWURtoday as well. The next faction can continue with this project and make sure that students get a nice overview of all the events in Wageningen.

Studying without Limitations (Student Onbeperkt)

In 2021, VeSte started working on the initiative "Student Onbeperkt", also known as Studying without Limitations. This initiative was worked on in collaboration with the student deans, who got the idea from TU Delft, where a similar platform is already running. VeSte contacted ORAS (Student Council party of the Technical University of Delft) about the platform and its structure in Delft. After follow up meetings with the student deans, the structure of the platform was decided and an proposal was written. During a consultation meeting with the Rector Magnificus, the proposal was approved. The next step is to look at the implementation together with Door van der Sloot and the student deans, which will be taken up by the next faction.

Sustainability Fund

In 2021, the Sustainability Fund was picked up again and approved by the Rector Magnificus during the consultation meeting. In 2022, VeSte started the first round through the SC committee Finance with Green Office. In the first round, there were 10 applications from 8 study associations. The ideas ranged from a Sustainability week to sustainable cutlery or travelling by train. The ideas were submitted with a form where the sustainable aspects and the budget could be explained. After evaluating the submitted ideas, 5 study associations were granted the fund. The amount of €10,000 was not fully used, this gave the idea to start a second round. This can help study association with new ideas of what is possible with the fund and gives a chance to make sustainability more known. At the moment, multiple study associations are enthusiastic for the new round, just like student organisations who cannot use it yet.

Social Safety

During the first period of the academic year, an ongoing discussion was started, centred around the Amnesty report about sexually transgressive behaviour and the rate at which this occurs among students in higher education. VeSte put emphasis on the subject through starting a working group and talking to student organizations directly on how VeSte can help them reach individual goals. Also, a member of VeSte was included into a university-wide sounding group on an action plan regarding social safety in general. VeSte also proceeded to stay connected with student deans and working groups of student organizations on how VeSte and the university could be able to support initiatives and to keep an eye on the general structure of social safety within our university. As of the end of the year, VeSte is in direct contact with WUR employees on how the university can support student organizations in reaching goals of social safety and countering sexually transgressive behaviour.

Course Evaluations

At the start of this academic year, VeSte heard many complaints on the topic of Course Evaluations through several Program Committees. VeSte formulated a proposal with the aim to increase response rates and subsequent representativeness of outcomes within this form of evaluation. Talks with the product owner on Digital Assessment resulted in an initiative to place course evaluations directly after digital exams within



the newly introduced form of examination. The initiative has yet to be incorporated, but a start has been made by VeSte to tackle a difficult and much-discussed issue.

Vegetarian Fridays

VeSte noticed in 2022 that the Forum cafeteria was still serving meat during the national meatless week. It felt weird that the WUR, one of the most sustainable universities of the Netherlands did not serve many vegetarian or vegan options that are affordable for students. To raise more awareness for this, VeSte started the initiative Vegetarian Fridays. It was inspired by the fact that a faculty at the TU Delft has a completely vegetarian cafeteria. At WUR however, the catering on campus differs per educational building, and some catering companies serve more vegetarian options than the other. Next to that, the price is quite high and perceived by students as expensive. VeSte believes that food should be affordable and accessible for all students. Therefore, in the academic year '22-'23, VeSte can work further on this initiative.

Statistical Helpdesk

This year, VeSte started working on the statistical helpdesk initiative. Over the last few years, an increasing number of students has reportedly experienced statistics at WUR as a hurdle, in courses and otherwise. It seems like a broader need for support in engaging with statistics seems to be growing at WUR. Three elements in specific can be seen as most challenging for students writing their thesis: 1) Appropriate research design (in line with the right statistical model); 2) Appropriate data analysis method and use of analysis tool; 3) Appropriate interpretation of results. Having identified these three elements as the main challenges during a student's thesis, a simple and effective solution could be found in providing (thesis-specific) statistical support. The format for such support could be in the shape of a so-called 'helpdesk'.

VeSte has been in contact with Programme Committees, staff of Biometris and students. The initiative was received positively by them and additionally by the Rector Magnificus. The coming VeSte faction has the task to formalize this initiative and make an airtight proposal.

RSI/CANS

In 2019, VeSte started an initiative to present RSI/CANS for students. VeSte noticed that many students experience complaints and unnecessary pains. In '20-'21, an SC proposal for RSI/CANS prevention was discussed with the Rector Magnificus, but this proposal had to be improved. This year, VeSte wanted to work on it again, but due to limited time a new proposal could not be made. VeSte wants to close the year by writing a new proposal to give as a take-over to the new faction.

Menstrual Poverty

In 2021, VeSte initiated the proposal to have free menstrual products around campus, called Menstrual Poverty. Several other universities in the Netherlands already offer free menstrual products. In 2022, it was attempted to turn this initiative into a project for the course Academic Consultancy Training (ACT). However, as this topic was too small for an ACT project, WUR employees suggested to incorporate it in a course as a project. Unfortunately, there were not enough students that signed up for the course and the project got dropped. It is recommended that the new VeSte faction takes up contact again and plans physical meetings with the course coordinators to further work on this initiative.

Green Travel Allowance

In 2021, the Sustainable Travel project was picked up after it was started in 2019. In 2022, the committee SC Finance took it up together with Green Office and its name was changed into Green Travel Allowance. The proposal is to modify the travel allowance policy to make sustainable travelling for students more attractive. This could be achieved by adding €50 euros extra to the Erasmus+ green bonus. The amount provided by the WUR can be allocated from the current budget, by rearranging the amounts. The proposal was introduced to the Rector Magnificus and is being looked into by ESA.



Student Civil Worker

One of the goals of this year was to improve connections between the students, university and municipality in Wageningen. During this corona year, it became more apparent to the VeSte faction that the ties between the university, student community and the municipality were sometimes lacking or very weak. For example, when a student initiative arose, e.g., with the goal to improve student's mental health during Covid-19, we noticed that the communication between the university, the municipality and these students came about very slow and that getting support for the initiative was very difficult. VeSte would like to see that the support for these active students, with an entrepreneurial mentality, came about easier. To reach this goal, we believe that the relations of trust between these actors in the Wageningen community should be strengthened. With the help of people from the Netwerk Kennisstedes Nederland (NKN), VeSte initiated the idea to install a student civil servant in the municipality.

A student civil servant is a student who works for the municipality for 8 hours a week. During work, they focus on reaching out to students and being a first contact person for within the municipality. They try to actively ask what students need and try to implement this within the municipality by means of policy and meetings. The municipal council of Wageningen visited the WUR and were enthusiastic with the idea. One of the parties proposed to install the student civil servant already in a municipal council meeting but it didn't get through yet. Simultaneously, VeSte was in contact with an employee of the municipality and is working on a proposal to send to the mayor. The initiative was also shortly explained to the Rector Magnificus and he also thought it was a good idea. The next SC can continue working on this proposal to make sure it will happen.

Study Free Week

In March 2022, the Lustrum committee of W.S.V. Ceres contacted VeSte, who proposed an idea of having a study week free to go on ski holiday with their association. The VeSte faction was enthusiastic, and saw an opportunity to make this a more broad idea. VeSte would like to see a study free week in the academic calendar in which students can choose what they want to do for themselves. The week could be used for example to go on an association skiing trip, but also to do extracurricular activities, travel or take some rest. VeSte therefore started looking into the possibilities to make this idea more concrete. For this, other student organisations and the W.K.v.V. can be involved, as well as other Dutch Universities, since many other universities have a different academic calendar from WUR.



Events

Board Market

This year, on the 20th of January, the annual board market took place. VeSte was again able to organize the event offline. Due to Corona, the date and whether the event would take place online or offline, was unclear for a long time. The boards were kept informed on changes as much as VeSte was able to, which was essential and appreciated. The date of the board market was pushed forward, in consultation with the attending boards, to be able to organize the event offline after restrictions were lifted. Even though VeSte considers the event a success, the changing restrictions affected the attendance, since VeSte and the boards were only able to promote the event in a late stadium. Due to some restrictions which were still present, the market was organized in classrooms, instead of the podium in Forum, which again affected the attendance in a negative way due to less visibility. However, together with AIESEC, Starthub, Integrand, W.K.v.V., Enactus, Veluweloop, Balance Buddy, ESN, DKC, Studenten voor Morgen, UniPartners, SAW, LSVb, Thymos and the AID board, VeSte was able to organize an interactive event in which boards were able to promote themselves and get to know each other. The board members attending were also positive in their evaluations and understanding towards the points which affected the attendance also mentioned above. VeSte believes participating in extracurricular activities such as a (part-time) board year contribute to a students' development and an Active Student Life. By organising this event we were able to offer the student population an easy and accessible way to look at opportunities for board years.

Thymos ball tournament

On the 29th of March, the VeSte-Thymos Ball tournament was organized. In co-operation with SWU Thymos, VeSte emphasizes sports and sports associations through this non-informative event. During the event, 10 teams played different ball sports and competed against each other. Sports were included through boards also interested in promoting themselves. The sports included were quidditch, hockey, soccer, 'unihockey,' Lacrosse and volleyball. The event is a wonderful opportunity to put the importance of sport in the spotlight in a fun way, and is ideally organized annually.

OWW activity: Pub-crawl

During the One World Week VeSte received funding and a spotlight to organize an event for a different target audience. The events of One World Week are promoted by the university and through university platforms. This provides an opportunity to reach a more international audience and offer them a fun activity, while also bringing them into contact with 'Dutch' parts of student culture. As VeSte supports integration and wants to represent all active students, despite nationality and any other differences, organizing a VeSte-event in the week is recommended. This year, on the 22nd of March, the traditional Pub-crawl was organized again. VeSte can also choose to organize an alternative event, but as the event was successful in reaching the abovementioned objective, a pub-crawl is recommended if found realizable with the student associations as a location. This year, the pub-crawl started in The Spot and visited the Global Lounge (ISOW), Unitas and SSR-W. This is recommended to be expanded, also with the abovementioned objective in mind. The event is a chance to offer the associations a platform to promote themselves and promote a more active student life.

Board Congress

For the first time since 2019, the annual Board Congress will be organized this year. During this congress, board members of student organizations come together to follow workshops and get to know each other. The workshops are focused on developing skills that are useful when doing a board year at a student organization, as they focus on Networking & Lobbying, Policy, Budget, Public Relations, Time Management, and LinkedIn. The workshops are given both by VeSte members and by (former) WUR employees who are experts on the topics. After the workshops, the students have the chance to get to know the board members they are going to collaborate with in their board year during informal drinks. Previous years, the Board Congress was organized at the end of the academic year, so that board members could get to know each other before the summer. However, this year, the Board Congress will take place in September of



the next academic year. This gives the new VeSte faction the chance to connect with their constituency early in the year. The faction '21-'22 fully prepares and organizes the event, in collaboration with the Commissioner Events of faction '22-'23 as part of their onboarding procedure. The faction '22-'23 will host the event.

Grand Meeting

Every year, VeSte (Student Council party) and the student members from the Board of Education (BoE) organize the Grand Meeting. This year the event was hosted on the 7th of April. In previous years this meeting was targeted at Programme Committee (PC) student members. The Grand Meeting for 2022 was open to all students who were interested in the topics which were discussed. The evening was opened by Arnold Bregt the Dean of Education. Afterward, students could choose between three different topics:

Programme Committees' best practices

Speakers: Menno Kastelijn (former Student Member Board of Education) and Isabelle Alten (Student-chair of PC)

Quality Agreements

Speaker: Renee Rooijackers (former Student Council member and student assistant)

Skill-Based Learning

Speaker: Perry den Brok

An additional session on the topic of internationalization of education was organised, but unfortunately, this session was cancelled due to personal circumstances. Nonetheless, VeSte thinks that the evening was a success. By organising this event, VeSte informed students about topics that are currently relevant in the educational domain and involved students with educational policy decision-making on key topics.

Crash Courses

This year, VeSte organized two crash courses with NPE budget. This budget was funded by the government to help students organize events after COVID-19. The first crash course was organized on the 17th of February and was focused on the question: 'what is public administration and how does it work in practice?'. The second crash course was organized on the 22nd of February and focused on negotiation and lobbying skills. Both crash courses were given by professionals in the field. All students from WUR were able to attend the courses for free. The crash courses are a good addition to the field in which VeSte operates.

Promotion stunt

In the years before corona, VeSte organized a promotion stunt. In 2022, this was taken up again. The promotion and design committee designed to make the promotion stunt participatory game where students could guess the amount of pens in a large vase. The price of the contest was a Chromecast. As the promotion stunt was scheduled during the lunch breaks of the self-study week, the timing was not ideal, which showed in the turnout. However, it is a good opportunity to make VeSte more visible at the university.

Municipality debate

In the spring of 2022, the municipality elections took place in The Netherlands. A perfect opportunity for VeSte to inform and involve the students of Wageningen in local politics. VeSte worked together with bblthk (city library) and 'Woensdag debatdag', a debate group who organise several debates in a year about different types of topics. For the Municipality debate VeSte joined the 'Woensdag debatdag' to involve the student point of view in the debate. 3 debates at 3 evenings were organized, the debates were about: Social domain (is everybody involved in Wageningen?), spatial domain (What to do with the space in Wageningen?) and the list pushers debate. In all the 3 debates, VeSte got a good influence to put some students related issues on the agenda. For example: student housing and social right for students in Wageningen. Furthermore, two VeSte members led one of the 3 debates. This symbolised the relative large group of students who live in Wageningen and also have to be represented by the city council.



Committees

Acquisition

The start of the VeSte association was also a new start of VeSte Acquisition committee. In cooperation with the VeSte association, the faction wanted to expand the cooperation with companies (not WUR related) to provide more financial and material possibilities, for example for promotion purposes. At the beginning of this academic year, the committee made a solid plan for acquisition to make a guideline how to find and select companies. This year we focused, like other years, on the elections for acquisition. However, more companies than usual were involved: SLOK, PROOST, Cicuto and Kruimig. In the coming years, VeSte aims to make this committee more professional in involving companies. Next academic year, the VeSte treasurer will be renamed to VeSte Treasurer and Acquisition, to make acquisition a more important topic.

Promotion and Design

This year, the committee Promotion & Design has focused on online and offline promotion. For online promotion, the focus was mainly on Instagram, on which at least once per week a post and multiple times per week a story were placed. The committee noticed that posts with VeSte members worked the best for the algorithm and gave the most visibility. During the elections, the posting schedule was increased to every day to show our visibility, next to being on campus all day. Reels of list pushers and candidates were also used, and the reels showed to be a great way of becoming more visible. Three main ways of offline promotion were used. First, after the corona measurements were lifted, flyers could be handed out in the education buildings again. Second, students could vote on a statement in the Forum building. This was a great way to receive input from the students regarding topics VeSte was working on. Thirdly, the suggestion box was placed in different educational buildings throughout the year, to receive ideas from the students. The committee is very pleased with the visibility through online and offline promotion.

Elections

The elections of 2022-2023 were more challenging and more exciting compared to the last years as the elections in 2020 and 2021 were mostly online due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Since the restrictions were lifted in 2022, the elections could be completely on campus this year. Because of the inexperience in physical campaigning of the last two factions, the faction met the VeSte faction 2018-2019 several times, to get more insight in physical campaigning traditions. Bringing the blue castle back to Forum, promotion at every education building (since this year also including Aurora), flyering at students house and also promotion during evening activities of student and study associations are some examples what VeSte did during the elections. However, some online promotion methods that were used during the pandemic, were used again this year. The great commitment of the candidates, the faction and old factions resulted in the election turnout to be a great success, leading to eight seats for the faction '22-'23.

Trainings

VeSte offers trainings to boards and/or committees of student organisations. In December, all student boards were contacted to give information about the trainings, since around this time the boards have been settled in, and have gotten to know each other. The associations were enthusiastic about the trainings that we had to offer. In total, three trainings were given on physical locations to the student organizations, resulting in €105 income. The layout of the training presentations, as well as the content, has changed to make it more appealing and relevant for the student organisations.

Lustrum

In 2022, VeSte existed 25 years, which had to be celebrated. The lustrum committee was established with two current faction members and two older faction members. Five activities were organized by the committee to celebrate the lustrum. During the Colour Your Student Life market outside of Forum, multiple associations were promoting their association. During the pub crawl of the OWW, VeSte expanded her constituency by targeting a different group of students. The third activity was the Stick Ball Tournament, organised together with SWU Thymos, which promoted sports and sports



associations. The fourth event was the Grand Meeting in collaboration with the Board of Education, which kept students involved in educational topics. The fifth activity was a gala for old VeSte faction members. The fifth lustrum was a big success. The Lustrum committee will be disbanded after the academic year 2022-2023.

VeSte Association

The previous faction started a working group for the VeSte Association. In this year, the VeSte Association started with three motivated board members, including a faction member (Commissioner VeSte Association). During the year, the board members wrote the internal regulations and the statutes for the Association. Next to that, the structure for the Association was thought through. An events and an acquisition committee will be started, next to working groups where education topics can be discussed. The VeSte Association currently has 10 members and will promote themselves further during the AID. In the new academic year, there will be the first General Members Meeting and the first official activities will take place as well.

