



APNet

*a national network and lobbying organisation to
empower Assistant Professors in the Netherlands.*



APNET YEARLY REPORT

2025



Content:

1. Preface from the president
2. Reflection on ambition and strategy 2025
3. Governance
4. Financial Overview
5. Activities 2025
6. Strategy 2026

1. Preface from the president

The 2024-2025 academic year was a year of growth for APNet. We started with ambitious plans to be put in practice by our board. Hence, Stephan Hacker, Martin Skrodzki, Verena Seibel, Apostolos Liakopoulos, Tessa Sinnige, Anouk Beniest and myself embarked on a new journey to fulfill our ambitious plans. In March 2025, Despoina Georgiou also joined the APNet board. In July 2025, Ivana Drienovska, Alex Rushforth and Keerthivasan Rajamani joined the board as substitute members until the upcoming General Assembly. We focused on three main points: (i) growth, (ii) visibility and lobby, and (iii) external representation and policy.

In our pursuit of growth, we set the goals to increase the number of members to 750. To achieve this, we initiated an internal data mining campaign of assistant professor contact details across all universities in the Netherlands. In this way, we mined >5000 e-mail addresses to contact. Furthermore, we increased our relevant contacts on LinkedIn to >2000. This combined initiative doubled our yearly membership to about 300 members at the end of 2024 and contributed to our increased visibility and recognition. We are aiming to set up a membership system with auto-renewal to hopefully increase the retention of members in the future.

We started 2025 with a series of online ‘Lunch coffee meetings’ to be closer to our members and listen to their concerns. Through discussions on topics like Recognition and Rewards, the NWO Talent program and budget cuts, we strengthened the national voice of Assistant Professors. This enabled us to critically assess the evaluation procedures for the talent schemes and have a seat at the table in the ongoing discussions regarding future calls. This year, we are organizing the first in-person event for our members, focused on *Strategic Leadership in Academia*.

On the representation and policy side, we are officially recognized as the representing and lobbying organization for Assistant Professors in the Netherlands. We maintained our strong connections with the local and national Young Academies, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the Dutch Scientific Organization (NWO), the overarching organization for Universities (UNL), the Education union (AoB) and most universities. Our active participation in national decision-making processes on issues such as budget cuts, social safety, recognition and rewards, talent scheme evaluation etc. stands as evidence of our growing influence.

We were successful in obtaining a KIEM grant at Leiden University to build and strengthen a local, interdisciplinary network of Assistant Professors. This grant will run from November 2025 to October 2026 and is aimed to culminate in a national APNet in-person event in October 2026 in Leiden.

Looking ahead to 2026, our aim is to strengthen the network's impact and sustainability. We aim to expand our membership base to 500 members through stronger outreach and engagement efforts, while maintaining the organization of in-person workshops to foster active participation and collaboration. We will professionalize our membership management system to alleviate the workload caused by the current systems and to hopefully increase membership retention through an auto-renewal option. We will continue to position ourselves as a regular and trusted partner for policy-making institutions in the Netherlands, increasing our visibility among key stakeholders. At the same time, we will prioritize professionalization by ensuring financial stability, advocating for recognition and rewards and establishing a more stable organizational framework. Overall, our strategic focus for the year will center on recognition, rewards and reinforcing our role as a valued voice of Assistant Professors within the Dutch academic and policy landscape.

We hope that APNet will foster interdisciplinary projects between institutes and organizations in the Netherlands and that our members find in APNet the space and energy to develop and share their opinions about subjects that matter to them. We hope to provide a platform where people can inform themselves about the Dutch academic landscape, and where they can provide input to these changes in policy and feel heard and valued.

Our ambitions with APNet are high and we are looking forward to seeing our organization develop and mature in the years to come.

Amsterdam, 12.09.2025

Dr. Ioana M. Ilie

2. Reflection ambition 2025

The board of APNet consisted of Ioana Ilie (President), Stephan Hacker (Secretary), Anouk Beniest (Treasurer), Martin Skrodzki (IT-Lead), Apostolos Liakopoulos (Membership Management Lead), Tessa Sinnige (Community Lead), Verena Seibel (Policy Lead) and Despoina Georgiou (External Relations Lead). In July 2025 Ivana Drienovska, Alex Rushforth, Keerthivasan Rajamani joined the board as substitute members until the upcoming General Assembly. APNet's ambitions were high in 2025. The aim was to increase our membership to 750 members. To achieve this goal, we developed an internal contact mining campaign to enable contact to most of the Assistant Professors in the Netherlands. This enabled us access to over 70% of our colleagues nation-wide. Despite not reaching the 750 member goal, our membership doubled over the past year, which is evidence of a growing organization. Additionally, we built up our social media activities with over 20 000 connections on LinkedIn, 88,000 impressions of our posts and over 19,000 members reached in the last year.

Another goal was to organize the first in person APNet Symposium. With external support from the Amsterdam Young Academy, Delft Young Academy and Maastricht Young Academy, the Symposium will take place on the 28th of October 2025. Apart from the General Assembly, the participating members will also be able to participate in a *Strategic Leadership* workshop powered by Stralia. This further strengthens our community, increases our visibility, national position and expands our national involvement. For the coming year, we will remain dedicated to our members and will seek to invest in serving our membership and increasing public visibility. We have already taken the necessary steps to ensure this by teaming up with Leiden University to set up a local chapter via a successful KIEM grant application and organize a joint event. Similarly, we teamed up with Delft Young Academy to pursue similar joint efforts.

We are set to remain a trusted partner of policy makers and actively engage in matters concerning Assistant Professors in the Netherlands. For this, we provided advice regarding the budget cuts that marked a considerable stain in this year's policies. Furthermore, we shaped together with COARA colleagues the evaluation criteria of Early Career Researchers at national and European levels. We critically analyzed the evaluation procedure of the VIDI talent scheme, which resulted in a white paper and provided hard evidence to the Dutch Research council that an adamant change is necessary. We remain concerned about the increased budget cuts in research and education, which significantly affect the research quality, teaching standards and the well-being of Assistant Professors.

The engagement of APNet's members is richer, though remains a challenge, partly because our members are spread throughout the country. Four coffee meetings with varying themes (budget cuts, NWO Talent Program, Recognition and Rewards and a Mini General Assembly) were organized with an average of 15 people per session. During the 'NWO Talent Program' meeting, a survey was carried out, which helped in shaping the vision and providing advice to NWO for the upcoming years. Additionally, this resulted in invitations to be part of the *klankgroep* focussed on reforms of the talent scheme. The coffee meetings have been quite successful and led to the publication of two position papers and unsolicited advice to the government, NWO and UNL on the [proposed budget cuts](#) and the '[NWO VIDI programme](#)'. A third position paper focused on the impact of the budget cuts on Dutch academic excellence is in progress.

We have also liaised closer with the Young Academies, the individual universities and AoB. In particular, we joined forces with the Young Faculty Network at LUMC with whom we are currently working together

to organize a joint workshop in the upcoming year. Furthermore, we discussed with the Delft Young Academy to organize a similar joint event. As of this year, we have a permanent APNet board member as part of the AoB steering committee to advise on the issues related to early career PIs.

3. Governance

3.1. Mission

The mission of APNet is to represent and empower Assistant Professors in the Netherlands by advocating for their professional interests, enhancing their visibility and recognition, and providing a supportive community that fosters collaboration and policy engagement. APNet aims to strengthen the voice of Assistant Professors at the national level, address challenges related to research, education, and career development, and work towards a fair and sustainable academic environment that values and supports its members.

3.2. Vision

The vision of APNet is to create an inclusive and influential academic environment in the Netherlands where Assistant Professors are recognized, valued, and actively involved in shaping the future of academia. APNet envisions a landscape where Assistant Professors have a strong voice in decision-making processes, fair working conditions, ample opportunities for professional growth, interdisciplinary collaboration, and meaningful impact on research and education policy. The organization aspires to be the leading platform for connecting, empowering, and advocating for Assistant Professors, fostering a sustainable and supportive academic community.

3.3. Board positions and members:

3.3.1. President - Ioana M. Ilie

- External representation/general PR & outreach
- Meetings with rectors/societies
- Actively reach out to official parties
- Strategy & vision
- Write yearly report

3.3.2. Vice-President - open position

- External representation/general PR & outreach
- Meetings with rectors/societies
- Support for policy writer - provide input & feedback on papers
- Strategy & vision

3.3.3. Secretary - Stephan Hacker

- Minutes & agenda - board meeting
- Organization of emails and meetings
- Backup for external representation (no travel)

- Newsletter and announcements via MailChimp
- Minutes - community meetings (when present - alternatively any other board member is backup)

3.3.4. Treasurer - Anouk Beniest

- Actively request funding (e.g. send emails, inform, meet, proposals)
- Management of (additional) funding (e.g. via UNL)
- Financial report
- Backup for external representation (2nd backup)

3.3.5. IT lead - Martin Skrodzki

- Website maintenance (Installing Updates in a timely manner, fix occurring problems)
- Sending out the newsletter (once we have that set up) and mirroring it in the “News” section
- Update website content (News, Position Papers, Board Members, ...)
- Keep the membership registration and payment pipeline intact
- Install new modules/plugins/... to support further activities

3.3.6. Internal communication lead - open position

- Collect/prepare information for news items from the board (send to IT to update website)
- Write newsletter (send to Secretary/IT Lead to send out) - coordinate with External Communication Lead

3.3.7. External communication lead - open position / partially filled by Stephan Hacker

- Promotion material/branding
- Representation at external events
- Actively sharing of the newsletter (coordinate with Internal Communication Lead)
- Social media (Twitter/LinkedIn) (writing, posting, engaging, spamming)

3.3.8. Membership management lead - Apostolos Liakopoulos

- Active attraction of new members (e.g. look on Uni websites and add them to a mailing list)
- Update list with member contact details - coordinate with IT Lead, Secretary & Treasurer
- Diversity and inclusion aspects (internal to the organization—code of conduct, etc.)

3.3.9. Community lead - Tessa Sinnige

- Organization of community meetings (Zoom link - Utrecht does not support, email, reminders, chair)
- Survey set-up (from template) (with input from the person in charge of the event)
- Overview of theme discussions/topics and input
- Support for policy writer - provide input & feedback on papers
- Backup for external representation (2nd backup)

3.3.10. Union relations Lead - Despoina Georgiou

- Liaison between the board, the Labor Unions, and other partners
- Cooperation and negotiations involving unions and labor relations

3.3.11. Policy writing lead - Verena Seibel

- Survey design and preparation (for APnet community) on current policy issues affecting assistant professors
- Analysis of survey data
- White paper drafts (3-4x/year) (coordinate with VP/Community Lead and everyone for feedback)

3.3.12. Substitute member 1 - Ivana Drienovska, Alex Rushforth, Keerthivasan Rajamani

- Trial period - 3-6 months: joins the board meetings but is not an official board member
- Support for general tasks
- Extra activities support

4. Financial Overview

In this yearly report, the final financial balance for 2024 and the financial balance for 2025 until 6th of September 2025 will be presented. The year 2024 ended with a positive balance of € 4,141.40.

The membership fee remained € 20.00 per calendar year in 2025. The sponsorship of the Delft Young Academy, Maastricht Young Academy and Amsterdam Young Academy was a total of € 750.00. In return, Young Academy members of those three Young Academies received the option to become a member of APNet for free in the first year.

Between the 5th of September 2024 and the 6th of September 2025, 215 members registered or renewed their membership via Mollie with a total income of € 4,246.34. Outgoing costs in 2025 included costs for the bank account, website and the monthly MailChimp fee, with a total of € 370.46, excluding the costs for the General Assembly, which still need to be confirmed but are estimated at € 2,500.00. This leaves a positive balance on September 6th 2025 of € 6.355,91.

YEAR 2024									
Type of liquid assets	Description		1-Jan-24	31-Dec-24					
Bankaccount	Triodos		498.27	4142.4					
total income 2024				3644.13					
Account balance TRIODOS (31 December 2024)	€ 4,142.40		Difference		€ -0.00				
Outgoing	Date paid	Amount	Incoming		Date	Amount	19.64	per 1 member	
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-10-2023 t/m 31-12-2023	1/1/2024	39.3	Members (via Mollie)		January	196.41	10		
Reimbursement 011 Ioana Ilie travel cost YA meeting	2/15/2024	13.42	Members (via Mollie)		Febr	196.5	10		
Reimbursement 012 Ioana Ilie travel cost Yif meeting (Utrecht)	3/1/2024	18.62	Members (via Mollie)		March	117.92	6		
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-01-2024 t/m 31-03-2024	4/1/2024	40.4	Members (via Mollie)		April	98.25	5		
Reimbursement 013 Athina Vidaki travel cost	4/22/2024	20.78	Members (via Mollie)		May	471.41	24		
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-04-2024 t/m 30-06-2024	1/7/2024	40.45	Members (via Mollie)		June	216.25	11		
Reimbursement 014 Ioana Ilie travel costs meeting OCW 27-5-2024	5/9/2024	19.08	Members (via Mollie)		July	196.41	10		
Reimbursement 015 Tessa Sinnige travel costs OCW + Maastricht	5/9/2024	66	Members (via Mollie)		Aug	117.48	6		
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-07-2024 t/m 30-09-2024	1/10/2024	40.85	Members (via Mollie)		Sept	254.94	13		
Reimbursement 016 Anouk Beniest MailChimp costs 1x	7/12/2024	30.16	Members (via Mollie)		Oct	1745.33	89		
Mailchimp December 2024	16/12/2024	29.81	Members (via Mollie)		Nov	274.79	14		
Pasbijdrage Triodos Betaalpas	26/12/2024	20	Members (via Mollie)		Dec	137.31	7		
			Members direct payment			0	0		
total		378.87	total			4023	205	paying members	

YEAR 2025									
Type of liquid assets	Description		1-Jan-25	31-Dec-25					
Bankaccount	Triodos		4142.4	6355.91					
total				2213.51					
Account balance TRIODOS (31 December 2024)	€ 6,355.91		Difference		€ 0.00				
Outgoing	Date paid	Amount	Incoming		Date	Amount	19.64	per 1 member	
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-10-2024 t/m 31-12-2024	1/1/2025	42.37	Members (via Mollie)		January	274.56	14		
Mailchimp January 2025	14/1/2025	31.56	Members (via Mollie)		Febr	353.02	18		
Mailchimp February 2025	14/2/2025	31.25	Members (via Mollie)		March	666.8	34		
Mailchimp March 2025	14/3/2025	29.64	Members (via Mollie)		April	196.18	10		
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-01-2025 t/m 31-03-2025	1/4/2024	42.66	Members (via Mollie)		May	19.64	1		
Klantonderzoek maart 2025	2/4/2025	3	Members (via Mollie)		June	14.61	1		
Mailchimp April 2025	15/4/2025	28.8	Members (via Mollie)		July	58.83	3		
Mailchimp May 2025	14/5/2025	29.13	Members (via Mollie)		Aug	230.33	12		
Mailchimp June 2025	16/6/2025	28.26	Members (via Mollie)		Sept	0	0		
Triodos Bankaccount costs 01-04-2025 t/m 30-06-2025	7/12/2024	48.36	Members (via Mollie)		Oct	0	0		
Mailchimp July 2025	15/7/2025	27.64	Members (via Mollie)		Nov	0	0		
Mailchimp August 2025	14/8/2025	27.79	Members (via Mollie)		Dec	0	0		
			Members direct payment			20	1		
			2025-01 Delft YA support		3/6/2025	250			
			2025-03 Maastricht YA		27/8/2025	200			
			2025-02 Amsterdam YA		04/09/2025	300			
total		370.46	total			2584	93	paying members	

APNet is still looking for two voluntary APNet members to form a Cash Committee ('Kas Commissie') who will check the balance and budget once a year prior to approval during the general assembly.

5. Activities 2025

Throughout the 2025 term, APNet participated in official meetings with external parties and attended events to increase the visibility of APNet. We also organized two hybrid strategy meetings to work on our vision and identify reachable goals. A complete list of all activities, including who represented APNet and the date of the activity is provided below.

Official meetings with external parties & participations

September

- 02.09 - Alternative Opening of the Academic Year- *Luisa Cortesi and Verena Seibel*
- 05.09 - Recognition and Rewards meeting in Utrecht, *Stephan Hacker*
- 06.09 - Meeting with AOb - *Luisa Cortesi*
- 17.09. - APNet General Assembly in Amsterdam
- 23.09 - Meeting with the Young Faculty Network of LUMC - *Stephan Hacker*

October

- 10.10 - Ministry OCW - *Ioana Ilie, Anouk Beniest, Stephan Hacker*
- 10.10 - NWO Talent Scheme - *Ioana Ilie, Martin Skodski*
- 10.10 - Delft Rector DYA - *Martin Skodski, Ioana Ilie*
- 10.10 - Meeting with the CoARA group - *Stephan Hacker*
- 15.10 - Meeting with YA Leiden - *Stephan Hacker*
- 15.10 - DYA - *Ioana Ilie*
- 16.10 - Ministry OCW - *Ioana Ilie*

December

- 02.12 - Representation of APNet at NWO CHAINS - *Ioana Ilie and Stephan Hacker*
- 11.12 - Ministry OCW - *Ioana Ilie, Anouk Beniest, Stephan Hacker*

January

- 16.01. - APNet Lunch Meeting on Recognition and Rewards in Teaching with Ruth Graham

February

- 12.02 - Ministry OCW - *Ioana Ilie, Anouk Beniest, Stephan Hacker*
- 24.02 - AoB w Arnoud Lagendijk: *Despoina Georgiou, Ioana Ilie*

March

- 05.03 - UNL - *Ioana Ilie, Anouk Beniest*
- 28.03 - Recognition and Rewards meeting in Utrecht - Workshop - *Tessa Sinnige and Despoina Georgiou*

April

- 01.04 - Ministry OCW - *Ioana Ilie, Stephan Hacker*
- 24.04 - COARA WG Meeting - *Tessa Sinnige*
- 30.04 - Amsterdam Young Academy - *Ioana Ilie*

- 14.04 - AoB & ApNet Discussion - *Despoina Georgiou*

May

- 14.05. - Meeting with YA Leiden - *Stephan Hacker*

June

- 03.06 - Maastricht Young Academy meeting - *Ioana Ilie*
- 09.06 - AoB Sector Meeting - *Despoina Georgiou*
- 19./20.06. - Representation of APNet at NextGenChem@NL - *Ioana Ilie, Stephan Hacker*
- 23.06 - Ministry OCW - *Ioana Ilie, Anouk Beniest, Stephan Hacker*
- 30.06 - AoB Sector Meeting - *Despoina Georgiou*

July

- 04.07 - DJA Symposium - *Ioana Ilie*

September

- 04.09 - KIEM meeting Leiden - *Stephan Hacker*
- 15.09. - UNL meeting - *Ioana Ilie and Stephan Hacker*

October

- 6.10 - NWO Talent Scheme *klankbordgroep* - *Ioana Ilie*
- 9.10 – NWO Talent scheme discussion – *Ioana Ilie, Stephan Hacker*

Lunch meetings

- 23.10 - APNet Coffee Meeting on Budget Cuts
- 16.01 - Lunch meeting with Ruth Graham on Recognition and Rewards
- 26.03 - VIDI brainstorm and input & mini GA
- 11.06 - Lunch Meeting on Recognition and Reward survey

Strategy meetings

- 11.12.2024 - APNet strategy meeting
- 03.04.2025 - APNet strategy and working meeting Utrecht

6. Strategy for 2026

Ambition

APNet has ambitions on several fronts:

- Membership: strengthen the outreach to our members, increase the membership to 500 members
- Engaging members: maintaining in-person workshop organization
- Recognition: remain a regular partner at the different policy-making institutions in the Netherlands and increase our visibility with relevant stakeholders
- Professionalization: maintain financial stability, receive recognition and reward for the work board-members do, establish governmental stability, set up a new membership system with auto-renewal option
- Focus on the topic of recognition and rewards

To achieve our goals, we will develop several strategies.

1. **Membership:** Strengthen outreach and increase to 500 members
 - Launch a targeted membership campaign through universities, research institutes, and professional networks.
 - Potentially introduce referral incentives for existing members to bring in new colleagues.
 - Enhance online visibility through regular LinkedIn and newsletter updates showcasing member benefits.
 - Develop collaborations with related organizations to cross-promote membership.
2. **Member engagement:** Maintain and enhance in-person event organization
 - Continue organizing annual in-person workshops with relevant, high-impact topics.
 - Partner with local institutions to host regional networking events.
 - Incorporate interactive formats (e.g., roundtables, skill-building sessions) to boost engagement.
 - Create a feedback system after events to guide future programming.
3. **Recognition:** Increase visibility and remain a partner in policy-making
 - Maintain an active presence in national policy discussions and working groups.
 - Publish position papers or policy briefs highlighting key community perspectives.
 - Strengthen relationships with stakeholders through regular meetings and representation at national events.
 - Establish a recognition program (e.g., annual award or spotlight) for members contributing to policy impact.
4. **Professionalization:**
 -
 - Speak with the Rectoren College about the efforts that APNet does and the role it plays within the Academic landscape and how this work can be recognized.
 - Set up a new membership management system to alleviate workload and increase membership retention through an auto-renewal option.

5. Focus on Recognition and Rewards

- Advocate nationally for fair recognition and reward structures within academia.
- Organize a dedicated symposium or policy roundtable on recognition and rewards.
- Collect and share best practices from institutions implementing progressive reward models.
- Strengthen collaboration with national funding agencies and university networks to influence policy.

Budget scenarios for 2026:

Budget scenarios APNet for 2026								
BASIC membership fee - no event			BASIC membership + 1 yearly event			Future budget		
	out	in		out	in		out	in
300 member (20 euros)		6000	300 member (20 euros)		6000	500 paying members (20 euros)		10000
(215 paying members in 2025)			(215 paying members in 2025)			External funding		2500
Left from 2025		4000	Left from 2025		4000	Left from 2025		4000
Bankcosts	200		Bankcosts	200		Bankcosts	200	
Webhosting	100		Webhosting	100		Webhosting	100	
Travelcost board	250		Travelcost board	250		Board expenses	500	
			Event cost	2500		Events/networking 4X	10000	
						Online promotion	2500	
						Other/reserves (10%)	3000	
Total	550	10000	Total	3050	10000	Total	16300	16500
Difference	9450		Difference	6950		Difference	200	

The three scenarios show financial scenarios in the case of receiving income only via a basic membership or a basic membership and external funding (which can be incidental or structural). With more members and external funding, we would be able to host more networking events, do online promotion and build up some reserves. The focus for 2026 should be on increasing the membership to 500 members and finding a structural subsidy or external funding.