



LONG-TERM PLAN 2026-2029

PREFACE

Dear reader,

This is the Long-Term Plan for 2026-2029 of the Vereniging voor Studenten Psychologie en Pedagogiek aan de Vrije Universiteit (VSPVU). With this Long-Term Plan a guideline is drawn up for the upcoming three years. This ensures an association that keeps developing. In addition, this Long-Term Plan provides guidance and stability in the Policy Plans of the upcoming Boards.

This plan has been implemented through evaluations of the previous Long-Term Plan and by ideas that have emerged from at least one delegate from the 77th Board and the 79th Board. Feedback of the 80th Candidate Board has also been received and implemented when finalizing this plan. This Long-Term Plan will outline a profile of the association and objectives for the upcoming years. In addition, ideas will be put forward so that these key points can be realized.

With kind regards,

THE 79TH BOARD OF THE VSPVU

Chairman	Mat Goris
Secretary	Seliina Grath
Treasurer	India Bartelings
Commissioner Marketing and Communication	Stephanie Hennekens
Commissioner External Affairs	Maeve Hermers

INTRODUCTION

The VSPVU was founded in 1947 and is a continuation of the Vereniging Studenten Psychologie aan de Vrije Universiteit and the Vereniging voor Pedagogische Wetenschappen, called 'Hilaritas'. This merger was mainly from a practical point of view, because the two associations were located under one faculty. The association started as a study-oriented association, but now it also organizes a variety of other activities.

Through this fifth Long-Term Plan we strive for steady progress within the association. This Long-Term Plan should be used as a guideline for the upcoming years and will give the upcoming Boards more guidance for their Policy Plan. The attachment to this Long-Term Plan contains specific ideas that might make it possible to achieve the goals for the upcoming years.

This Long-Term Plan, together with the Policy Plan, will be evaluated at the end of every academic year during the General Meeting.

LONG-TERM PLAN

Below you can find the goals of which the Long-Term Plan has been established.

Membership

Unfortunately, the decline in membership signup has not improved since the previous Long-Term Plan. The membership benefits have continued to decrease, especially with the loss of working with Athena, while the membership contribution has stayed the same. People see diminishing value in becoming a member. Because of that, it is important to find and give students an incentive to join the association.

Faculty

Due to lack of Board members and changing contact persons within the faculty, the relationship between the VSPVU and our faculty has not been the best. It is thought to be possible to improve the relationship with faculty and an improved relationship can lead to better collaborations, more support, and more advertisement of the VSPVU from a faculty approved perspective.

Committees

The past few years, a decline in active membership and active member engagement has been experienced. The association is being held alive by active members, as they host the majority of the events. Thus, active membership and active member engagement is of great importance. Therefore, increasing the focus of getting active members as well as keeping active members engaged should be a focus point the following years.

Board Functioning

The Board can be seen as the base of the association and if there are internal issues or conflicts, that base becomes unsteady, which can lead to an overall unsteady functioning of the association. Therefore, Board well-being should be a priority. If the Board is not functioning, it gives a poor image to members and especially active members who might be potential new Board members. It makes a Board position less attractive and Board members are crucial for the continuation of the association. A Board year is a tough year and there will be friction and conflicts, but they should be resolved as quickly as possible to ensure that the functioning of the association runs smoothly.

EPILOGUE

Through this Long-Term Plan, our intention is to offer direction to the upcoming Boards. The objectives outlined in this plan are set to be accomplished within a span of three years. It holds significance that every Board keeps the Long-Term Plan in mind while formulating a Policy Plan and executing their policies. Our anticipation with this Long-Term Plan is to uphold the VSPVU's identity as a sociable, professional, and forward-thinking association.

ATTACHMENT

In this attachment you will find concrete ideas for achieving the goals per aspect.

Membership

With the decreasing membership signups as well as -benefits, it is thought that a signup fee of 35 euros is too much. The new students do not see the value of the membership, and the VSPVU is currently one of the most expensive study associations at the VU to become a member of. Therefore, one suggestion is to lower the sign-up fee. Additionally, to not lose out on too much money an idea is to also increase the yearly contribution fee by a few euros. If it is not possible to decrease the signup fee, it could be an idea to explore a payment plan such that new members get a “trial” period to figure out if they want to be a member where they only pay part of the original sign-up fee. It can also be that people find 35 euros to be too expensive to pay at once, and therefore members don’t sign up.

More member benefits need to be found overall. That could be more discounts on events by either making member tickets even cheaper or non-member tickets more expensive. With the reduction of book sales and the loss of Athena, it is important to try to showcase other benefits of becoming a member, such as the social aspect of being part of the VSPVU.

Faculty

To further strengthen the relationship with the faculty, it is important that the Board, regardless of whether it is a full Board or not, keep the focus on faculty. This could be through trying to have monthly meetings with the faculty, inviting them to the VSPVU’s educational events, or possibly even hosting an event for the faculty members.

The ties could be further strengthened by working together with the FGB FSR. In previous years, the VSPVU and the FGB FSR have not been much in touch. Improving the ties with the FGB FSR can help increase student representation and make more of a difference within the faculty. An idea is to make a collaboration between the VSPVU and the FSR, for example in the format of hosting an event.

Committees

To combat the decline in active member engagement, one idea is to have coffee talks more frequently; both the contact person with the chair and the chair with the committee members. Coffee talks have become a talk to have when things are not going well instead of the maintenance talk that they were originally intended to be.

With the chance of becoming a part-time association due to the decline of members and the already present decline in active membership, a suggestion is to have fewer committees. The active members are stretched thin, and it is getting difficult to sustain the committees when no committees are filled and some only have one or two members excluding the chair. This makes the active members that the association has run faster, which could lead to a decline in engagement.

Board Functioning

It is a well-known fact how quietly conflict can arise within the Board. While a Board should remain committed to their function and its requirements, the line between personal and professional life has grown too thin. This distinction between personal and professional life can be improved through more frequent contact with VU confidants, creation of office hours where members and external contacts can expect replies, or setting up weekly designated coffee talks to discuss any issue before it evolves into something greater. RvA (the advisory Board) can also be contacted, and it can be an idea to have a look at the social safety plan. Overall boundaries should be better implemented and respected. Additionally, future Boards can encourage committee members to be more independent. While everything must be approved by the Board contact person of the committee, active members should feel like it is still their committee and they are responsible for both the positives and negatives. If members are reassured that they belong and that they are smart enough to fix problems, then they will internalize this and become more independent from the Board. This would allow the Board to not be relied on as much by active members and thus reduce stress both on a personal and professional level. Another suggestion is to keep track of and notice what are energy takers and energy givers within Board life.