

# Communication on Engagement

## Municipality of Leeuwarden

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

2019-2021



**Gemeente**  **leeuwarden**

## Statement of Continued Support

His Excellency Antonio Guterres  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
760 United Nations Plaza  
New York NY 10071 USA

25 november 2021

Dear Secretary-General, Mr. Guterres,

The City of Leeuwarden is proud to announce its continuing support for the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Agenda. We recognize the importance of involving the private sector to create a sustainable community and economy. By becoming a member of the UN Global Compact, we stepped into a network that gave us the chance to gain new and exciting partnerships with people, businesses and other municipalities that help us realize this goal. We continue to appreciate this very much.

It is crucial to get the business community involved in achieving the SDG's, and we believe the best way to do so is to create an environment where businesses can create sustainable solutions with education and government. That is why, in Leeuwarden, we established the Water-, Energy- and Dairy campuses, which are prominently featured in this Communication on Engagement. The municipality of Leeuwarden is a proud partner of these campuses.

Furthermore, we are proud partners of business-led initiatives such as the so-called Circular Quarter and Sustainable De Zwette, for example. These are both initiatives for creating a circular economy and are a big step in making Leeuwarden a more sustainable city.

We are eager to continue our effort in the UN Global Compact with successful projects like mentioned before and to engage our community in the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This document will be a clear overview of what actions Leeuwarden has carried out in light of the UN Global Compact Program. We would like to share our knowledge and expertise in various fields with the members of the UN Global Compact. We are very much looking forward to exploring the opportunities for renewing our continued collaboration.

Sincerely yours,



Mr. S. van Haersma Buma  
Mayor of Leeuwarden

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## The Ten Principles and the Sustainable Development Goals in Municipality Leeuwarden

Leeuwarden, as a signatory to the UN Global Compact since 2010 and Innovating City in the Cities Program from 2015 until 2018 and the only Dutch member of the UNGC, promotes and stimulates corporate sustainability that starts with a principles-based way of doing business, and therefore also a supporter of the SDGs and the principles of the UN Global Compact. The UN Global Compact has been highly valuable for the city due to the many fruitful collaborations that have been established.

During our stint as Cultural Capital of Europe, we used culture and art as a driver for societal change, also directed at sustainability. The Legacy program of Cultural Capital: LF2028 also takes this approach. This 100-day-long triannual event with blockbusters and smaller exquisite cultural programs is aimed at positioning Leeuwarden and Fryslân as a region where culture and art act as drivers for social, economic, landscape and sustainable processes. Guided by the central question: ‘how can we be good ancestors and leave a futureproof heritage?’. Both literally and in triannual programming, we will focus on different themes regarding how we leave the earth, our society and our city and region behind for the next generations.

Leeuwarden has been actively promoting a responsible way of doing business in the continuation of ongoing sustainable projects together with the development of new initiatives. This way Leeuwarden is on its way to becoming a sustainable Municipality. What has the city realized to meet the SDGs and the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact? Our approach to involve the business community into the realization of the SDGs is based on three pillars:

1. Setting up a favorable environment for sustainable innovation
2. Acting as a funder and procurer of sustainable products and services
3. Working together with international partners

### 1. Setting up an environment for sustainable innovation

The City of Leeuwarden applies what we call the ‘Campus Concept’. The City of Leeuwarden does not have a university, which would be a natural partner for collaboration partner for collaboration in sustainable development. Therefore, the city had to come up with another model: the Campus Model. We focus on the city as a campus and the region as its testing ground, a so-called Living Lab. The campus model is a place where government, education and business meet and work together on the Sustainable Development Goals. In Leeuwarden, this means that the municipal buildings of Leeuwarden can be used as a testing ground and the Municipality can provide financial support. Research is done on the campuses and businesses provide new innovative ideas.

Leeuwarden has a vibrant water technology sector. Other vibrant sectors in the regions are the agricultural and energy sector. These sectors are highly developed in Fryslân, which is reflected in the campuses located all around the city: the WaterCampus, the DairyCampus and the EnergyCampus. These campuses are based on the innovative campus concept.

#### 1.1 WaterCampus

Leeuwarden is a city with a long cultural and geographic relationship with water. The city is also called the European Capital of Water Technology thanks to the city’s knowledge

regarding water technology combined with experienced institutes of vocational training and applied sciences which offer ample space for experiments. Leeuwarden, with its growing expertise on water technology, has been able to contribute extensively to addressing European challenges on themes such as water scarcity, water quality, sustainable agriculture, sustainable energy production and healthcare. However, stagnation means decline, so you have to keep aiming for progress. The city is actively stimulating, supporting and guiding the development of business, start-ups and research institutes in its territory in pursuit of their maximum potential. Leeuwarden is known for its expertise in water technology.

The city decided to combine the city's water technology sector with the earlier mentioned institutes, forming the WaterCampus. This campus is a place which brings forth countless sustainable innovations in the field of water technology because it is a place that to bring together innovative minds, knowledge and high-quality facilities. The WaterCampus includes more than one-hundred businesses, two universities of applied sciences, two institutes of vocational education and an academic research institute. Furthermore, the campus is equipped with an application center and a laboratory which focuses primarily on scientific research. As a result, the WaterCampus has had the honor of receiving the highest score (excellent) on quality, relevance and viability of the scientific quality Wetsus program.

The WaterCampus is managed by three separate partners: Wetsus, Centre of Expertise Water Technology and the Water Alliance. These three partners represent scientific research, applied research and business development. This means WaterCampus start-ups and SMEs have certain advantages, notably access to (1) talented people and knowledge, (2) to state-of-the-art facilities, (3) to capital, by issuing loans and funds to start-ups, (4) to the market (the core business of managing partner Water Alliance). The concept of the WaterCampus is to actively support innovative start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises. Between 2004 and 2020, 38 businesses were created from the WaterCampus project. This shows that the WaterCampus concept offers an excellent environment for businesses to produce sustainably.

The Municipality of Leeuwarden is, alongside the province of Fryslân and the regional Water Authority, a governmental partner and funder of this campus. The city not only supports this campus with a financial contribution, it also provides several instruments to stimulate innovation on the WaterCampus. Leeuwarden regularly participates pilot projects so entrepreneurs can test their innovative product or service, ensuring both the campus and the city benefit.

The campus uses the so-called WaterCampus Business Challenge as an instrument wherein start-ups and SMEs are guided towards the market. The Challenge is an annual five-day event where (future) entrepreneurs learn how to turn their innovations or services into a successful (inter)national businesses. The final activity is pitching their business plans in front of a jury of experts in water technology, business development and finance. The program is very successful: over 125 entrepreneurs and PhD's from fifteen nations have participated in the program. Some examples of successful businesses launched during the Business Challenge are Metal Membranes, Magpie Polymers and Susphos.

## 1.2 DairyCampus and EnergyCampus

In addition the WaterCampus, the city has welcomed two other campuses: the DairyCampus and the EnergyCampus. On the DairyCampus, the focus lies on activities regarding milk production in the dairy chain. This campus carries out innovative projects and activities to develop new information and knowledge to stimulate innovation in the field of dairy. This

newly gained knowledge is a way towards a sustainable in which is produced sufficiently, healthy and safely. The DairyCampus cooperates with universities of applied sciences in and outside of Leeuwarden, governments, businesses, farmers organizations and the city's other campuses. The EnergyCampus focuses on testing and experimenting with energy innovations, providing a testbed for innovative solutions in the field of sustainable energy production.

### 1.3 The Circular Quarter and Sustainable de Zwette

Two other projects that showcase how Leeuwarden tries to set up an ecosystem where businesses participate in realizing the SDGs, are the Circular Quarter and Sustainable de Zwette. The Circular Quarter is an inner city district where retailers, students and the Municipality of Leeuwarden are cooperating to make the district the most circular retail area of the Netherlands. Three pillars are central to this: CO2 reduction, waste reduction and socially inclusive entrepreneurship. Concrete plans are worked out in the context of these pillars.

Another project is Sustainable de Zwette. De Zwette is a business park in Leeuwarden with the ambition to be completely energy neutral and circular by 2035. Within this project, the Municipality of Leeuwarden works together with the Zwette business association and a working group of active entrepreneurs. These partners work together on themes like greening the environment (biodiversity), and sustainable energy generation and conservation.

## 2. Acting as a funder and procurer of sustainable goods and services

### 2.1 Launching customership

Leeuwarden wants to stimulate the sustainable solutions developed by innovative entrepreneurs, and therefore often acts as a launching customer for sustainable innovations. In doing so, entrepreneurs can test and experiment with their new product in practice. By supporting these innovative businesses, Leeuwarden can offer a helping hand to get them one step further in their development. An example of this is Fryslân Fungies. Fryslân Fungies is a company that aims to make the circular economy tangible and edible. This developed a method to reuse coffee grounds by growing your own mushrooms on it. The Municipality of Leeuwarden supported this product, and became a launching customer. The fungus are now being used in the Municipality's cafeteria. This way, the city is fighting unnecessary food waste, while supporting local innovative and sustainable entrepreneurs.

Another example of how Leeuwarden uses launching customership to stimulate sustainable entrepreneurs is by participating in the Start-up in Residence program. This is a program in which public institutes that are faced with a challenge are connected to innovative entrepreneurs in a start-up project. In this program, the Municipality and the entrepreneur are both guided through the entire process of product development. This program might result in actual procurement by the Municipality. Leeuwarden became the first pilot project for Zuen&Co. This is a company that helped us with making our buildings more water neutral. This is important to the Municipality since water technology is one of the city's top sectors. The Municipality of Leeuwarden opened up as an organization and wants this company to further develop their innovation by giving the company a chance to make the Municipality's buildings more water neutral, in order to stop unnecessary waste of water. This Dutch company got a chance to test their new product (water neutral taps) in our buildings. With these new taps installed in the Municipality's buildings, up to 85% of tap water can be saved.



## 2.2 Providing financial support to sustainable innovators

Apart from procuring sustainable products and services, the Municipality of Leeuwarden also tries to support entrepreneurs with funding in the development phase with its Innovation Fund. With the Innovation Fund, Leeuwarden aims to stimulate innovation and create employment opportunities in the Municipality. The funding can take the form of a subsidy, loan or guarantee and helps companies, but also knowledge institutions, to develop promising innovative and sustainable products, processes or services. Every year, Leeuwarden supports around ten entrepreneurs with a budget of €25.000 per project. In doing so, the Municipality also tries to stimulate the creation of local employment opportunities.

The two past years, Leeuwarden has supported several projects. For instance, in 2020, Municipality Leeuwarden financially supported Oderli, a project that created a dynamic menu that aims to reduce food waste. By connecting the system with the inventory system, the menu can move dishes that have the most ingredients up. Furthermore, the menu can recommend certain dishes or give discounts to reduce food waste. Another project is the LIVIT Housing project. This is a 2021 project aiming to develop a way to save as much energy as possible, store it and distribute it the best way possible.

## 3. Working together with European partners

The third pillar through which the Municipality of Leeuwarden is involving businesses in realizing the SDGs is by cooperating in several European networks and projects. In this reporting period, the international projects SAVE and CircLocal stand out.

### 3.1 Project SAVE

Project SAVE is an international cooperation between Dutch and German business associations, municipalities and knowledge institutes that aims to increase societal support for innovations in the energy transition. Societal support amongst citizens and businesses is crucial for the large scale production and use of sustainable energy.

As part of this project, the city of Leeuwarden deploys energy coaches who visit local SMEs to help make their business more sustainable. From conversations with entrepreneurs, it is evident that these entrepreneurs want to get started with tackling energy-related topics like generating energy and reducing the use of fossil fuels. However, it was also clear there is a lack of independent knowledge and time and thus came the energy coach to being.

The support an energy coach can offer consists of examining the wishes of an entrepreneur and guiding an entrepreneur in implementing the measures. When required, the energy coach will resort to specialists for topics like saving advice, energy labels, electric transport, solar energy. Moreover, the coaches help the entrepreneurs to submit and assess quotations from suppliers. The entrepreneur is free to choose the installer(s) of his or her choice. During this process, the energy coach is the point of contact for the entrepreneur and guides the process. Furthermore, the energy coach also identifies collective opportunities with other entrepreneurs.

### 3.2. Project CircLocal

Together with local governments from Slovenia and Portugal, the Municipality of Leeuwarden is participating in the CircLocal project. This is a project where the abovementioned participants meet three times for international workshops to share experiences and advice on public circular procurements. This project is a way to make

government procurements as circular and sustainable as possible. In practice, it means that when governments make decisions on purchases, they opt for purchases that can be reused at the end of their lifetime or already are reused.

The Municipality of Leeuwarden can use the gained international knowledge and skills to create a procurement process that is as sustainable as possible. Other governments can learn from the experiences gained in Leeuwarden. As such, an international network around public circular procurements is being set up. The result of this project is that Leeuwarden stimulates a sustainable way of doing business.

#### 4. Measurements of outcomes and monitoring

The results, or Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) of Leeuwarden's most successful project the WaterCampus, are made clear annually in the WaterCampus Monitor. The latest report was released in 2020. In this year's report, the indicators in this monitor are clustered on the following themes: physical location, R&D and knowledge activities, open innovations, economic impact and internationalization. This year's monitor is influenced by the restrictive measures concerning the coronavirus. Nevertheless, the WaterCampus has seen considerable development and its impact is growing. WaterCampus organizes collaboration between all relevant (inter)national actors and has the ambition to fulfill this sector-binding role in Europe. Furthermore, the campus connects the six most important water technology hubs of the world: Singapore, South Korea, China, Israel and the United States (Global Water Tech Hub Alliance). Not all projects have measurable results. The overview down below is the available quantitative data.

Measurements of outcomes & monitoring		
<b><i>Setting up an environment for sustainable innovation</i></b>		Results
WaterCampus	Research projects:	132
	Scientific articles in 2020:	66
	Scientific articles in total:	769
	Promotions Wetsus:	120
	Budget in (millions):	€18,6
	Patents filed:	2
	Patents filed in total:	90
	Businesses in network:	262
	Knowledge institutes in network:	33
	Estimated jobs water sector in Fryslân:	2.150-2.450
	International projects/partners:	155
EnergyCampus		Evaluation is still ongoing, no results yet
DairyCampus	Number of Innovation Projects:	52
Circular Quarter	Number of businesses involved	10
Sustainable de Zwette		Evaluation is still ongoing, no results yet
<b><i>Acting as a funder and procurer of sustainable goods and services</i></b>		



Launching customership	Number of launching customer projects:	10
Innovation Fund	Subsidies paid in 2020 in €:	258.400 (10 projects)
	Resulting investments in 2020 in €:	1.200.193
	FTE expected direct (in total 2020):	30-40
	Subsidies paid in 2021 in €:	99.000 (4 projects)
	Resulting investments in 2021 in €:	285.856
	FTE expected direct (in total 2021):	7
Circular procurement	Number of circular procured goods	10
<b><i>Working together with European partners</i></b>		
SAVE	Number of businesses with help from an energy coach:	10
	Costs per business:	€2000
CircLocal		Evaluation is still ongoing, no results yet