

DENKKRACHT UTRECHT



**Denkkracht Utrecht
Young SiT**

**Report of DenkkrachtCentrale 5
September 1, 2018**

Denkkracht Utrecht

Denkkracht Utrecht (DKU) is a network of 25 young professionals from Utrecht, The Netherlands. They all care about public problems and have the ambition to 'crack' social, strategic and organizational issues. Denkkracht Utrecht mobilizes and activates think- and do-power of young professionals to contribute to solving public issues. Participants of Denkkracht are committed to Denkkracht Utrecht on a voluntary basis.



The network of young academics organizes so-called 'DenkkrachtCentrales' (DKCs): days on which they work on a social issue for one or more external parties. During these DKCs, Denkkracht Utrecht tries to stimulate innovation and new perspectives using creative work forms, and to come up with new answers by asking new questions. In doing so, it utilizes the multidisciplinary character of the network and the various workplaces of the participants as much as possible: a lawyer not only sees things differently than a public administrator or a philosopher; he/she really looks at the addressed issues in a different way. The same applies to someone who works at the provincial government, compared to a person who works at the trade union, a large consultancy firm or at the University. Denkkracht Utrecht makes the different perspectives explicit and uses these as a strength when looking for new solutions.

Science in Transition and Young SiT

Science in Transition is a movement that originated in the UMC Utrecht and represents a reform of the scientific system. Professor Miedema and his co-initiators address various problems, including the different interests present in science, the idealized image of the independent truth seeker, the publication culture and associated perverse incentives, fraud and deception as products of the current system, the lack of social relevance of scientific research and the distribution of the money available for it. The movement stands for a democratic scientific system, in which the quality and impact of research is judged in a different way, and society becomes aware of how science works.

Young SiT is a young branch of the movement, formed by a group of young researchers at UMC Utrecht. It consists of MD's (in residency), PhD students, postdocs and assistant professors. Their goal is to define problems and formulate solutions of Science in Transition from the perspective and within the sphere of influence of early-career researchers. Currently, the future think-tank Young SiT is still in a start-up phase: an introductory meeting was held on 13 June 2018, but the official kick-off is planned on 26 September 2018. During the initial lunch meeting, the group has already formulated a number of themes within which the problems and solutions will be further explored, namely:

- *Open access and open data;*
- *Reward system and research funding;*
- *Career path and (MD) residency;*
- *Public engagement and communication.*

Join hands – Denkkracht Utrecht and Young SiT

However, the form and the exact purpose of the think-tank, how to achieve a valuable solution that can bring about change and how the eventually formed message can be communicated to the rest of the world, still remained unanswered questions. As an experienced think-tank with participants from different backgrounds, only a few of them as connected to the scientific world and its problems as Young SiT's member, Denkkracht Utrecht was considered a valuable contributor to help Young SiT realize their mission.

On 1 September 2018, before the official kick-off, participants of Young SiT and Denkkraft Utrecht jointly thought about the following question: **'How can Young SiT make an impact on academic practice in the UMC Utrecht?'** The question was divided into a number of sub-questions, namely:

1. How does Young SiT, using the four themes that they have formulated, reach a coherent, solution-oriented message?
2. How does Young SiT present her message at the end of the academic year?
3. How does Young SiT reach the right people with this message?

In this context, the substantive problems that Young SiT encounters were left out of consideration, in order to allow the ideas on this matter to be discussed in their own meetings.

Report of DenkkraftCentrale Young SiT – September 1, 2018

The present advisory document is the report of this DenkkraftCentrale. From Young SiT, Anne-Floor Schölvink and Inge Stegeman were involved in the organization of the day. From Science in Transition, input was provided by Rinze Benedictus and Frank Miedema. From Denkkraft Utrecht, the day was organized and supervised by Christel Selhorst, Tria Tahsin, Alise van Heerwaarde and Remco Smulders.

Morning program – An introduction to the theme

On 1 September 2018, members of Young SiT and Denkkracht Utrecht came together to spend a day on the concerned topic and to brainstorm on answers to the formulated main question and sub-questions. For the Denkkracht participants, the program started at 9:30 a.m. with a warm walk-in with coffee and tea, after which the organizing committee of the DenkkrachtCentrale welcomed the attendees. Professor Frank Miedema, one of the initiators of the Science in Transition movement, continued the day with an enthusiastic introduction to the theme. Denkkracht members were sucked into the world of sciences and its abuses, and their urge to think along with the young researchers was even more fueled.

While Denkkracht listened to the professor's monologue, the members of Young SiT arrived. In a separate room, they were given an introduction to Denkkracht Utrecht, while the program for Denkkracht continued with a presentation about their future collaborators of Young SiT. Once provided with sufficient knowledge about each other, a first joint activity could be undertaken. As a warm-up of the brainstorming cascade, the so-called 'crazy brainstorming game' was played: in mixed groups, solutions for fictitious problems were invented in rapid speed, using three random objects. For example: 'how do you proclaim to the world, using an umbrella, a cactus and a lighter, that you have discovered extraterrestrial life?' The creativity of young thinkers was put to the test, and with success!

When everyone was back to reality, the organizational committee continued the day with an introduction of the remaining program and the questions to be answered. Inspired by the four themes, was the subsequent 'empathize assignment'. In order for Denkkracht Utrecht to actually get aware of the daily dilemmas that the young researchers are facing, the group was redistributed into new subgroups for discussion with Young SiT members about a number of pre-defined dilemmas. Each dilemma was related to one of the four themes. The researchers were turned inside out with questions. The 'empathize assignment' offered sufficient food for thought and discussion during the following lunch break.

Afternoon program – Brainstorms and pitches

With full stomachs, the group came together again to listen to an explanation of the first brainstorm. This focused on the first sub-question about letting Young SiT form a coherent message. In remixed groups of members of both Denkkraacht Utrecht and Young SiT, a number of stimulating questions, flip-overs, post-its and writing material challenged the participants to create new ways of thinking and solutions for the problem. After less than 45 minutes of brainstorming, it was time for a first pitch round. The ideas on sub-question one were presented in a few minutes, after which there was time for questions, compliments and critical notes from the audience. Fiery discussions had to be interrupted frequently, taking into account the tight time schedule, but underlined the enthusiastic and solution-oriented atmosphere. An overview of the contents of the different pitches can be found in the next section of this document.

In order to neutralize brain activity, half an hour of energizers was inserted between all brainstorming sessions. Participants devoted themselves to blindfolded Pictionary, making constructions of plastic cups and doing a chairs dance variant with living fruit pieces. The attached photographs give an impression of the fanaticism it was accompanied by.



Last but not least, was the most important brainstorming session of the day: in a similar way to the previous brainstorming round, attempts were made to find solutions for sub-questions two and three, about the form of presentation of the message to be formulated and how to reach the right audience for it. Time was also given to prepare an excellent pitch, in which the conceived ideas could be explained. White flip-overs were transformed into artful posters and newly invented plans were extensively proclaimed in sharp pitches, in which several groups tried to persuade the initiators of Young SiT to invite more thinkers from outside the UMC Utrecht to think about their mission. The next section reports on the ideas of the different groups.



After more fruitful discussions and mutual gratitude, the day ended in style with a drink in the café next door. It was a very successful day for both parties and a future collaboration is not ruled out!



Overview of the ideas – Pitch round 1 and 2

Pitch round 1:

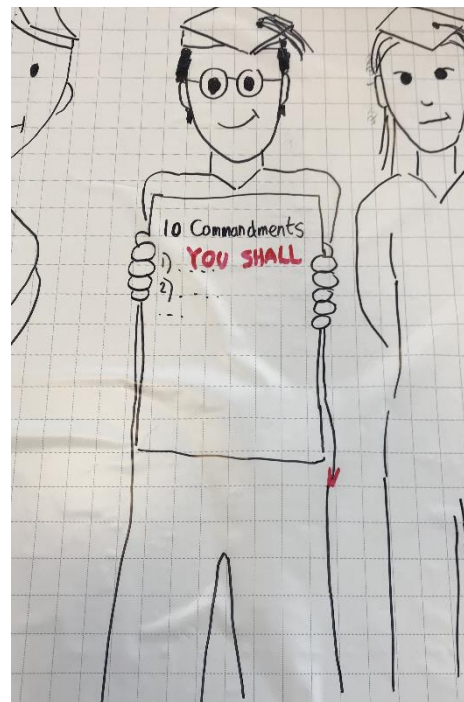
How does Young SiT, using the four themes that they have formulated, reach a coherent, solution-oriented message?

1. A SMART Start-up

At this point there is a lack of knowledge when it comes to profiling Young SiT as an organisation that can inspire other scientists. In order to achieve a transition in science Young SiT needs the knowledge of experts who can support it as an organisation. Experts that will help Young SiT build a start-up. Examples of these experts are Utrecht centre of Entrepreneurship or Utrecht INC. These experts will help Young SiT to profile itself on the market. Experts as Utrecht INC provide Young SiT the space to focus on the content and give advice at the same time on how to set yourself as a product on the market. The advantage of these experts is that they will give Young SiT a foundation to broaden its network and even make Young SiT more visible as an organisation. Personalise your ideas and give more exposure to develop into a more professional organisation and eventually be more successful.

2. The ten commandments

This pitch started with the question; What is the goal of Young SiT? Answer; Assist young researchers in changing science and change the system more in general. In order to make these goals more visible, the advice is to formulate ten commandments that each individual scientist will promise to keep. For example; 'I shall publish all the data in open access'. All the attendees of Young SiT should make a pledge. Furthermore, Young SiT should invite other researchers outside Young SiT to do the same. In this way, you will make your goals more concrete and transform it into a statement. Currently Young SiT discusses about a lot of problems, but when you make your goals concrete, Young SiT will be more accessible for other scientists. After setting up the ten commandments and lobby enough for it, the grand funders will also set it as a precondition for getting funds that researchers are committed to the commandments of Young SiT. The advice is to make a statement of these commandments by getting support from many other young scientists, not only in medical science, to make a pledge.



3. Develop a Think-thank

Young SiT should develop a think-thank that focusses on the two goals:

I. Inspire young researches and empower them;

II. Improve trust in science in two ways;

Improving the trust is important for Young SiT to involve others in the process. There are two ways in which Young SiT can reach this goal.

a. Internal

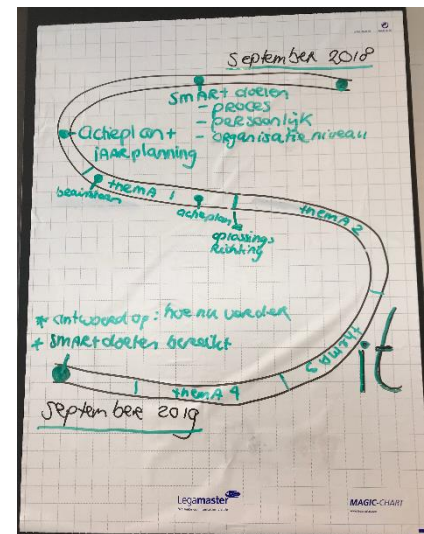
Young SiT consists of 13 ambitious scientists. The idea is to divide Young SiT in 4 teams and make them responsible for the four themes. This will give the members ownership and the drive to contribute to the goals of young SiT. The groups will organise various brainstorm sessions and think about formulating a solution-oriented message.

b. External

Once you discussed the themes, you may get stuck in your own thinking or convinced about your own thinking. In this case you can invite other PhD's or experts in your brainstorm sessions. Get their response on how you can make a change.

4. Inspired by the method of Denkkracht Utrecht.

When looking at the end product in September 2019, first of all it's important so set SMART goals focused on the process, on a personal and organisational level. Use these SMART goals to make an annual plan. Furthermore, divide Young SiT in teams and make them responsible for one of the four important themes. These themes will be playing a role in activities throughout the year. The activities consist of brainstorm, lectures or guest speakers. These activities will inspire you to formulate a coherent message. Also invite colleagues to visit the activities, so they can give their opinion on the four themes. In the end of the year, evaluate the SMART goals. Discuss and look back at what you have reached and how you can make a change for the future.



5. Getting the attention

When starting up Young SiT, the goal should not be to solve any problem in science. Young SiT is a small motivated group, that is clear about the problem and that's your strength. Use these qualities to make other people aware and motivated. We would encourage Young SiT to be an activist group, to be very visible. Don't keep the sessions internal, but work with a medium that's very open. Use other forms than a white paper to expose yourself. It will distinguish the group as the younger group of SiT. Examples of how to make Young SiT more visible:

- Connect to other faculties and spread posters to invite everyone to come to your meetings.
- Talk to your colleagues and make them aware. They will recognise the problems, but often they did not have thought about it that way.
- Organise a musical; show how fun science is currently, make it satirical so other people recognize in their field in work.
- Write a book anonymously; interview senior colleagues about some unethical stuff that they did. Publish it and call it *Science Confessions*.

These are examples of ways that will reach a broader audience. It's important to trigger this audience in an extraordinary way. Let them see the problem from another perspective by making them realise how silly the system can be and what they can do to solve it. You can have a clear message about making a change, but it will only work when there are a lot of circles of influence that you activate. This is the way in which you can start the process that will really make the transition in science.

Pitch -round 2:

How does Young SiT present her message at the end of the academic year?

How does Young SiT reach the right people with this message?

1. Open Science Fest

This pitch made us jump to the future, to the end of the academic year 2018-2019. Young SiT had organized a festival to celebrate what has already been achieved and set new goals that can be addressed in the next year. On this festival open science will be presented in several fun and serious ways. There is an Open Science Journal with inside stories from people who are working hard to change the way science had been practised and with suggestions on how you can make changes of your own. The Open Scientist of the Year will be chosen; someone who is an example for open science. During the year, monthly lunches had been organized on the last Friday of the month, to share

the experiences with open science. Also on this festival there will be a lot of opportunities to follow workshops, hear lectures, discuss with others and get inspired!

2. The explosion

At the start of the academic year of 2019-2020 there will be an explosion of attention for Young SiT, which will create momentum to initiate change. During the coming year all the preparations will be made by Young SiT: a website, a twitter account, a blog/vlog, a white paper. Then, at the start of the new academic year, the rector of Utrecht University will dedicate his speech to Young Science in Transition. After this start, the little bombs will go off: twitter messages, videos, white paper, viral hashtag (perhaps with a small scandal 😊) et cetera. In October there will be an event, for example a protest, a sit-in or a festival to further build on the momentum that has been created.



3. Rocket science

To create impact as Young SiT we propose a three step rocket:

1. Define where you stand for as Young SiT, for example by creating a list of things you can do as PhD, as postdoc, as professor. This can be in the form of the previous mentioned 10 commandments.
2. Create mass through awareness. Make everyone you know aware of Young SiT. This awareness should not only be a thing of the brain, but also of the heart. You can ask good artists to help you touch people in the heart and make them feel the problem of modern day science.
3. Create a toolkit on a website that is accessible for everyone who is aware of the problem and want to join in the change. This toolkit can be based on the first step.

4. Unsustainable plof-science vs Young SiT-science



A comparison has been made between 'plof'-chickens and 'beter leven'-chickens and two ways of practising science. Routinely we make conscious choices in the supermarket about the life of the chickens we eat, but does everyone make a conscious choice about the way he practises science? We would like to seduce people to transform the way they practise science - from a 'cheap' unsustainable science to Young SiT science. The main focus is to put the idea of sustainable science in the heads of people, maybe starting with the young scientists. This can be done in many ways, for example a TED talk, flash mobs at the university, posters at the toilets, organizing open debates about the topic. We advise to talk to other idealists like nature activists and to experts on human behaviour like behavioural scientists to use their knowledge on changing human behaviour. You are not the first people who want to change the world!

5. Lifestyle ambassadors

We are both inspired by the way the Catholic church uses missionaries to tell their story and convince people of certain ideas and by Apple that has managed to create a lifestyle of innovation around their products. We want to change the narrative of science and make it attractive to choose an alternative way of practising science. This will be a campaign in four steps, around the theme of academic integrity:

1. Make people enthusiastic about your mission. Hang up posters with critical questions like: 'would you fill in someone else's text form? - so why would you put your name on an article you didn't write?'. Set down a soap box in the canteen or another public space where someone can stand on to make a speech on how to change science. Make a cartoon with a ridiculous situation that a lot of you have encountered in real-life. Make a website with inspiring personal stories, like the ones we heard today.
2. Make a toolkit. There are already a lot of initiatives in place to increase your integrity as a scientist. Young SiT can collect these initiatives and direct people towards them.
3. When you have created mass: come together, share your experiences and commit to the same scientific lifestyle.
4. Send out these ambassadors into the world to spread your message!

Conclusion

The Denkkraachtcentrale has provided new ideas and directions for Young SiT. The priorities that were announced in the pitches mainly focused on how Young SiT can profile itself as an organization and what resources they need for this. There was quite some focus on collaborating with others and the use of creative methods. Furthermore, the program of the Denkkraachtcentrale (for example different brainstorming, energizers) can serve as an inspiration for Young SiT to organize their think-tank meetings.

Follow-up of the DKC

If you want to know more about the presented ideas or the day program, please contact Denkkraacht Utrecht (contact@denkkraachtutrecht.nl). Curious about the possibilities for your organization? Contact the Denkkraacht Utrecht foundation via contact@denkkraachtutrecht.nl or visit www.denkkraachtutrecht.nl.