

Erasmus University Rotterdam launches new energy transition education programmes for future leaders

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Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) aims to educate the future leaders of the energy transition with a new range of holistic and multidisciplinary educational programmes, which will be hosted by the business school of EUR, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University (RSM). This fall, the first executive programme will start and the first courses, electives and specializations around energy transition will be introduced in the undergraduate and graduate phases.

Energy transition is a complex issue that - to be successful - requires a holistic approach. Technical innovations are a crucial part of the solution but knowledge about legislation, finance, geopolitics, economic models, capital markets, behaviour and social innovations are also essential. RSM intends for students to gain knowledge about the energy transition during their education and plans to give the topic a place in its undergraduate and graduate studies, as well as develop programmes for executives currently in leadership roles.

Much attention in the programmes will also be paid to the required development of leadership skills such as complexity and systems thinking, leading transitions, stakeholder management and communication and storytelling. To ensure that this knowledge and these skills are given a broad foundation, RSM is working with convergence partner TU Delft and the other faculties of Erasmus University Rotterdam to ensure that all aspects that play a role in the transition are covered.

The demand to come up with additional educational offerings comes from Rotterdam alumni who are now themselves in leadership positions in the field. "We met for the first time a year ago under the leadership of the Erasmus Trustfonds, because we see in practice that the challenge of the energy transition is large and complex. We unanimously agreed that it is important for students to experience and participate early on in learning how they can make the energy transition a success now, and in the future", said Eelco Hoekstra (member of the Executive Board at SHV Holding, previously CEO Vopak and former RSM Advisory Board member) who is one of the initiators.

Prof. dr. Derk Loorbach, Professor of Socio-Economic Transitions at EUR, agrees. "With this new, promising initiative, we can speed up the process of connecting our knowledge to the practice of the energy transition. We need to work smartly together on a just and sustainable energy future for everyone."

The Erasmus Trustfonds, the university's support fund (ANBI) has raised €1.5 million in donations together with 15 founding partners for the Energy Transition Fund as seed money to set up the new education programme and manages these funds. The partners will share learnings from practice for the programme development, but EUR is responsible for the design and management of the programmes. In addition to setting up the education program, there is the intention to set up a research institute.

"There is a lot of interest in the topic of energy transition. I am incredibly happy with the collaboration with TU Delft and other partners that will enable us to put together a broad initiative. It is important that the current generation of students can break new ground and be prepared for one of the

greatest challenges of our time. Our mission is to be a force for positive change – and educating future leaders that help to make this change happen is a core task of our academic institution", says prof. dr. Ansgar Richter, dean at RSM.

"The current industry leaders themselves can share their knowledge and experience for a few more years, but then they really pass the baton for this complex challenge to the next generation. We want to feed the young generation with knowledge and perspectives from science, government and business as soon as possible and they will feed us vice versa", Hoekstra said. "I am therefore more than thrilled that RSM has enthusiastically embraced the initiative, sharing with us the urgency that it will take more than just technological knowledge to manage the necessary transition."

About Erasmus Trustfonds

The Erasmus Trustfonds (ANBI) supports Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) so that the university can excel and have a positive impact on Rotterdam society and beyond. The Erasmus Trustfonds does this by awarding grants to educational and research projects, paying out scholarships and financially supporting various other activities of students or employees of the EUR. The projects eligible for support cannot be financed from the regular income stream of the EUR. The Erasmus Trustfonds is a public benefit institution with more than a century of history. The forerunner of the university came into being when Rotterdam merchants joined forces to finance the establishment of the Nederlandsche Handels-Hogeschool. www.trustfonds.nl

Founding partners

The following parties (in alphabetical order) contribute to the Energy Transition Fund: ABN Amro, BlackRock, Construct Invest BV, EDGE, Eneco, FinCo Fuel Group, Port of Rotterdam, ING, SVH Holding, Marsh McLennan Nederland, Rabobank, Schiphol, Shell, SHV, Stichting Elise Mathilde Fonds, Van Oord and Vopak.

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For more information, contact Kate Mowbray at BlueSky PR on Kate@bluesky-pr.com or call +44 710022871