

Update: installation of the Dutch Physics Council & Dutch Chemistry Council

About half a year ago, Bert Meijer, with the support of the science deans, took the initiative to set up a Dutch Physics Council and a Dutch Chemistry Council. The Dutch Physics and Chemistry Councils aim to represent the interests of their disciplines, both in the field of scientific research and education. The Councils' primary focus is on the academic sector; meaning the university physics and chemistry departments and the relevant physics and chemistry institutes. Active links with complementary bodies such as the NNV, KNVC, NWO's Physics and Chemistry Round Tables are 'designed into' the Dutch Physics and Chemistry Councils from the outset, as is an open and constructive relationship with the science deans.

Like the ICT Research Platform Netherlands (IPN) and the Platform Mathematics Netherlands (PWN), these new Councils for physics and chemistry will function as independent national bodies. In this manner, they will be able to both initiate activities important to the interests of the discipline, as well as respond effectively to urgent issues at national level.

In order to arrive at the Dutch Physics/Chemistry Councils, two implementation teams were set up to think about the structure of both Councils, resulting in the determination of the mission and design of the Councils, as explained in the appended .pdf document. With the establishment of the new Dutch Physics Council and Dutch Chemistry Council, the former *Raad voor Natuur- en Scheikunde* (RNS) ceased to exist as of 27 November 2019, the timepoint of the last meeting of the RNS, at which the batons were passed over to the new Councils.

Governance Council

All academic institutions (universities and institutes) with substantial physics/chemistry activities are represented in the Physics and/or Chemistry Council, in principle at the level of one representative per institution per relevant discipline. The deans and institute directors, in consultation of the heads of the relevant physics and/or chemistry departments, were invited to propose names for the Councils (deadline 2 December 2019). The final composition of the Council - which is a good reflection of the diversity of the Dutch academic physics and chemistry community - has been arrived at by selection from the names the community itself brought forward. This step has been carried out by the members of the Executive Board of the Councils.

A smaller, decisive Executive Board (*kernteam*) for each Council ensures the effectiveness of both bodies, engaging with the key partners and stakeholders of each discipline. For physics, the relevant implementation team has put together a founding Executive Board of the Dutch Physics Council consisting of: Kobus Kuipers (chair), Carlo Beenakker, Britta Redlich, Hans Hilgenkamp, Frank Schuurmans, Patrick Decowski and Petra Rudolf. The Dutch Physics Council will present itself, and its first outline of plans for actions able to make a real difference for Dutch academic physics at the Physics@Veldhoven conference on 20-22 January, 2020.

The Executive Board members of the Dutch Chemistry Council are: Wilhelm Huck (chair), Bert Poolman, Marcel Wubbolts, Kitty Nijmeijer and Célia Fonseca Guerra. The Dutch Chemistry Council has presented itself at the CHAINS conference in December 2019.

Both Councils are delighted that Robbert Dijkgraaf (for physics) and Ben Feringa (for chemistry) have agreed to act as ambassadors for the new Councils, lending their weight to the further strengthening of these disciplines, both of which undoubtedly have key roles to play in Dutch science and society, now and in the future.

More information can be found in the attached document *Current status: Dutch Physics Council and Dutch Chemistry Council*.

Current status

Dutch Physics Council and Dutch Chemistry Council

Background

In the course of 2019, a variety of parties including the universities in the form of the Science Deans, the Dutch Physics Platform (PAN), NWO and the physics-based research NWO-institutes as well as the Dutch Physical Society (NNV) and the Royal Netherlands Chemistry Society (KNCV) saw the need for the installation of an independent, disciplinary body able to represent, coordinate and promote the interests of academic research and teaching at a national, disciplinary level. Given analogous thinking within the Dutch academic chemistry community, about half a year ago, Bert Meijer - with broad support in both disciplines and from all stakeholders – was asked to initiate a process leading to the installation of a Dutch Physics Council and a Dutch Chemistry Council. To this end, Bert Meijer found two implementation teams¹ that were willing to help seek solutions for the design of the envisaged platforms. These teams developed the action plan in two working sessions. This memorandum includes their outcome.

Naming

The implementation teams agreed to switch from the term ‘platform’ and to build upon the word ‘Council’, as used in the then current Council for Physics and Chemistry (RNS in Dutch). The RNS will be replaced by two new Councils, one for chemistry and one for physics. The Councils will work with small, effective Executive Boards (*kernteams* in Dutch). The envisaged Councils will work together if and when the objective and context warrant this. The Councils will be in regular contact with each other.

The following names were approved:

- Dutch Physics Council (NL: Raad voor de Natuurkunde) and an
 - o Executive Board (NL: kernteam)
- Dutch Chemistry Council (NL: Raad voor de Scheikunde) and an
 - o Executive Board (NL: kernteam)

Mission

Agreed upon text:

The Council has an initiating, monitoring and advisory role in promoting the interests of the discipline in the field of academic research and education. The Council will also communicate the importance of the discipline for our present and future society, and it will do so with a long-term vision in mind and in consultation with other disciplines.

Design

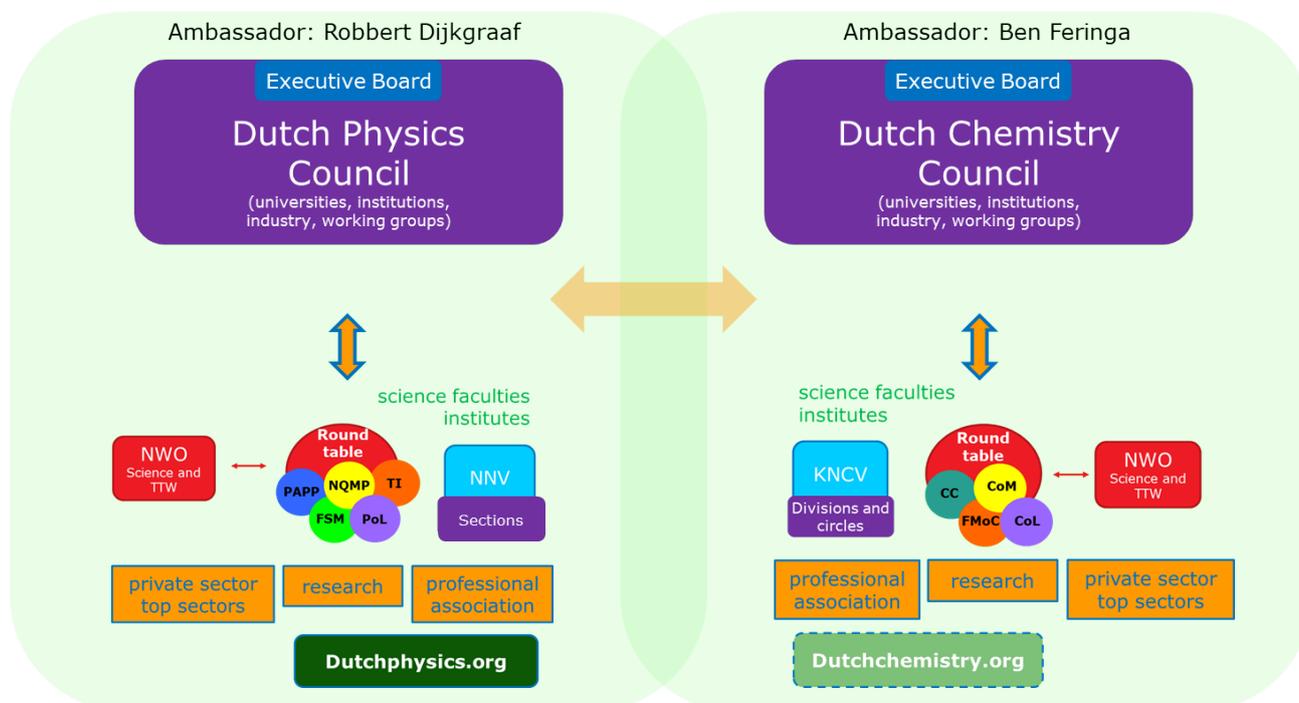
- The current Council for Physics and Chemistry ceased to exist as of 27 November 2019 (the last meeting of the RNS).
- A Dutch Physics Council and Dutch Chemistry Council will be established.
- All institutions (universities and institutes) will be represented in the Councils.
- A compact Executive Board (*kernteam*), preferably with a representative from industry, will ensure the effectiveness of the Council.

¹ Implementation team for Physics: Gijssje Koenderink (round table Physics, RNS member, TUD), Hans Hilgenkamp (DB NNV, UT), Petra Rudolf (PAN, RUG), Mark Golden (PAN, AB NNV, UvA). Implementation team for Chemistry: Bert Poolman (RNS member, RUG), Wilhelm Huck (RU), Andries Meijerink (UU), Patricia Dankers (round table Chemistry, TU/e). The names for the implementation teams have been suggested by the NWO round table for Chemistry and for Physics, and by the professional associations (NNV for physics and KNCV for chemistry).

Team support: on behalf of the professional associations: Noortje de Graaf (NNV), Jan-Willem Toering (KNCV), on behalf of the Dutch Research Council (NWO): Tanja Kulkens (head of Chemistry & Physics Science Domain), Mark Schmets (coordination), Arlette Werner (for Physics Council information), Remko Achten (for Chemistry Council information).

- The Councils may establish short-term working groups to carry out assigned tasks and/or further define subject matters. Members of these working groups will preferably have a background in the field to ensure affinity with the support base.
- To safeguard the link between physics and chemistry the Dutch Physics Council and Dutch Chemistry Council will coordinate their actions where required.

The structure of the new Councils is shown below:



Composition of Executive Boards

The implementation teams reached a decision on carefully balanced Executive Boards. A member from industry has also been put forward in both Executive Boards. The Executive Board of the Chemistry Council consists of the following people: Wilhelm Huck (chair), Bert Poolman, Marcel Wubbolts, Kitty Nijmeijer and Célia Fonseca Guerra. The Executive Board of the Dutch Physics Council consists of: Kobus Kuipers (chair), Carlo Beenakker, Britta Redlich, Frank Schuurmans, Patrick Decowski, Petra Rudolf and Hans Hilgenkamp. Ben Feringa and Robbert Dijkgraaf will act as ambassador of the Councils for Chemistry and Physics, respectively.



Picture: Joint meeting of the former Council for Physics and Chemistry and the new Councils under development (November 27, 2019).

Composition of the Council

- The Council will have one representative from each institution/institute.
- The Executive Boards have asked the institutions and institutes to nominate two or three members for the Council. The Executive Board then selects the members of the Council, taking into account the diversity criteria listed below.
- The Executive Board uses the following diversity criteria:
 - o Appropriate male/female ratio (at least 25% of each).
 - o Balance between different career stages.
 - o Participation of non-Dutch researchers.
 - o One member from trade and industry.
 - o Balanced representation of the discipline.
- The Executive Board is free to add a limited number of additional members to the Council in order to come to a well-balanced Council composition.

Basic principles of the statutes of the Councils

- The Executive Board advises and takes action after consultation with the Council.
- The Council gives the Executive Board the mandate to take decisions, to take action and, where necessary, to anticipate developments, which will facilitate effective and decisive action. This means that the Executive Board will occasionally justify their actions to the Council after the event.
- The Executive Board is an addition to the Council in the sense that members of the Executive Board are not acting as representatives of their home institutions in the Council.
- The chair of the Executive Board is the public figurehead of the Council and possesses the stature and support in the field to represent the discipline in question.
- In order to establish a link with the board of the relevant professional associations and the respective Round Tables at NWO, a personnel overlap is pursued in the composition of the Council.
- The relevant professional association and NWO provide official secretariat services and are guests at the Councils' meetings.
- Robbert Dijkgraaf and Ben Feringa are willing to act as ambassadors of the Councils and can be asked jointly or individually to advocate - together with the Executive Boards - for the disciplines at carefully selected times.
- The focus memoranda/future visions of the research communities set up by NWO serve as a basis for drawing up a scientific agenda for the future. These focus memoranda/future visions are among the ingredients used by the Councils to prepare an integrated scientific agenda for the future of the discipline, in consultation with the research field.
- The working language of the Councils is English, so as to optimally involve research and (academic) teaching staff not yet fluent in Dutch. In targeted communications, for instance with political and governmental stakeholders, the Executive Board will communicate in Dutch, with translations made available when broadcast within the Council and community is envisaged.

Budget

To be able to cover minimal operational costs (for example meetings, publications, website) the Executive Boards propose an annual NWO contribution per Council and in-kind support in the form of meeting rooms and the deployment of NWO employees in their nexus role. The possibility of a contribution per institution is also being explored.

Communication

The Councils present(ed) themselves to the field during CHAINS (on Monday evening 9 December 2019) and at Physics@Veldhoven (on Monday evening 20 January 2020).

Process and timeline

9 Dec. 2019 Presentation of the Dutch Chemistry Council at CHAINS
 20 Jan. 2020 Presentation of the Dutch Physics Council at Physics@Veldhoven

Jan. 2020 Presentation of the Councils at the general membership meetings (AGMs) of the professional associations

Mar./Apr. 2020 First, full meeting of Councils (Executive Board and all other Council members)