



Research School for  
Socio-Economic and  
Natural Sciences of  
the Environment

## **SENSE HONOURS PROGRAMME 2015 / 2016**

**Plan your own research career  
&  
elaborate your own PhD proposal**

- ✓ Are you an excellent MSc student who is dreaming of an academic research career starting at a worldwide renowned SENSE research group?
- ✓ Do you want to elaborate your own original PhD research proposal in the field of “Sustainability Sciences”?
- ✓ Do you want to participate in a group of highly motivated MSc students?
- ✓ Would you like to choose your own PhD supervisor at one of our participating SENSE groups?

**Then read this brochure!**

## SENSE HONOURS PROGRAMME

The SENSE Research School offers 12 to 15 excellent MSc students of SENSE related MSc programmes the opportunity to participate in the 'SENSE Honours Programme'. This programme prepares MSc students for an academic research career by writing a full PhD research proposal on a self-selected subject within the field of 'Environmental and Sustainability Sciences'. At the end of the Honours Programme the MSc students are encouraged to continue their research as PhD candidate at one of the participating SENSE research groups. The SENSE research groups will help the MSc students to find external funding for their PhD proposal or to find a position as PhD candidate at one of the research groups.

Although, we cannot guarantee a PhD position, we can **greatly increase your chances of obtaining a PhD!**

The SENSE Research School is a joint venture of environmental research groups of ten Dutch universities and institutes; see: <http://www.sense.nl/honours>. The participating MSc programmes of the SENSE partner universities are:

University	Participating MSc programmes *
WU	Environmental Sciences (MES)
WU	Climate Studies (MCL)
WU	Forest and Nature Conservation (MFN)
WU	Earth and Environment (MEE)
WU	Urban Environmental Management (MUE)
UT	Civil Engineering and Management, specialisation Water Engineering and Management (WEM)
RUG	Energy and Environmental Sciences (EES)
LU - TUD	Industrial Ecology (IE)
LU	Biology, specialisation Evolution, Biodiversity and Conservation (EBC)
UU	Energy Science (ES)
UU	Sustainable Development (SD)
VU	Environment and Resource Management (ERM) **
VU	Political Science; specialisation Global Environmental Governance (GEG) **
VU	Ecology – Ecology and Evolution (EE)
VU	Ecology – Environmental Chemistry and Toxicology (ECT)
...	OTHER SENSE related MSc programmes **

\* MSc students who start in February 2015, can join in their second year of their MSc programme and finish the MSc Honours Programme in May 2017. If your MSc programme is not mentioned here, but part of one of the SENSE institutes, then check with your study advisor if the SENSE MSc honours programme can be combined with your MSc programme. Students from all MSc programmes within SENSE can apply for the SENSE Honours Programme.

\*\* MSc students who follow a one-year MSc course and who have been selected for the SENSE Honours Programme based on their individual qualities, will continue their MSc study by joining the second year of the MSc programme Environmental Sciences (MES-WU). Please note that you should fulfil the exam requirements of the MSc MES-WU, which means that you should complete an MSc thesis at one of the selected WU groups. In most cases, however, it will be possible to do a combined thesis at a WU group and your preferred research group at another university. In order to be able to join the second year of the MSc programme Environmental Sciences, you need to enrol in this MSc programme before finishing your one-year MSc course Environment and Resource Management (VU) or Political Science - specialisation GEG (VU). Please check in time whether you can participate in the SENSE Honours Programme as part of the second year of your regular MSc programme.

## Target Group

The SENSE Honours Programme is intended for top class MSc students, who are highly motivated to start a scientific career. The selection of the MSc students will be based on the following criteria:

- (i) the exam results (distinguishing the top 5 - 10%)
- (ii) Letter of recommendation from the MSc programme coordinator / director or MSc thesis supervisor, also confirming that the MSc student can follow the SENSE Honours Programme as part of the second year of the regular MSc programme
- (iii) Letter of motivation for a research career and participation in the SENSE Honours Programme, written by the MSc student
- (iv) CV of MSc student
- (v) An oral presentation of personal motivation to the SENSE Honours Programme Committee

## Courses of the SENSE Honours Programme

The SENSE Honours Programme is embedded in the second<sup>1</sup> year of your MSc programme and consists of the following three course elements:

1. SENSE research on Environmental and Sustainability Sciences: introduction and orientation by visiting various research groups (called orientation and rotation) (June - August 2015; part time; 4 ECTS)
2. Master Class "Grasping Sustainability" (7-11 March 2016; full time; 2 ECTS)
3. SENSE Research Master Cluster (YEI-60312; 12 ECTS), focused on writing a grant PhD research proposal (WU period 5; full time: 14 March 2016 - 6 May 2016).

In the other months you follow the regular courses of your MSc programme, including your major MSc thesis, and you can, for instance, do an internship abroad. Please note, that you should have successfully completed your (major) MSc thesis before you can start with the SENSE Research Master Cluster in March.

Non-Wageningen University students need to register as student, known as "bijvakstudent" at Wageningen University in order to follow the three courses of the SENSE Honours Programme. There are no extra costs for registering as "bijvakstudent". Please note that non- EU/EFTA students are required to pay tuition fee for registering as "bijvakstudent".

See the SENSE website for more information and the course schedule: <http://www.sense.nl/honours>

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<sup>1</sup> Selected excellent MSc students who study one of the mentioned one-year MSc programmes may continue their MSc by following the SENSE Honours Programme in the second year of the MSc Environmental Sciences (MES) at Wageningen University.

## **Nomination of excellent MSc students**

The coordinator or director of the participating MSc programmes can nominate MSc students for the 'SENSE Honours Programme'.

The nomination of an excellent MSc student is done by sending the documents (i-iv on page 3) to the coordinator of the SENSE Honours Programme, Dr. Monique Gulickx ([monique.gulickx@sense.nl](mailto:monique.gulickx@sense.nl)).

MSc students who believe they are realising excellent results and who are highly motivated to join the SENSE Honours Programme, should inform the coordinator or director of their MSc programme about their intention to apply. Are you such a student? Then please send your motivation letter to the coordinator or director before 15 June 2015. As only coordinators or directors can nominate candidates, it is important to respect this deadline.

**The deadline for submitting nominations is 16 June 2015.**

## **Selection of MSc students**

The SENSE Honours Programme Committee will select a maximum of 15 MSc students on 17 June 2015, who will be invited to give an oral presentation at the end of June 2015. A maximum of 10 best MSc students will be admitted to the SENSE Honours Programme in the academic year 2015/2016.

## **Contact**

For more information please contact the coordinator of the SENSE Honours Programme Monique Gulickx: [monique.gulickx@sense.nl](mailto:monique.gulickx@sense.nl)