The organizational structures of grant procurement processes in Dutch universities:

A case study on three Dutch universities.



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UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

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Summary

We notice a shift in the funding of research at the Dutch universities. An increase in the share of the second and third flow of funds compared to the first flow of funds is visible. In addition, the possibilities (opportunity to receive a form of funding) in the second and third flows of funds are increasing. Expected for the future is that more grants will be part of these flows of funds, which leads to the assumption that the importance of the second and third flows of funds will even grow further in the future. Besides the importance of these funding flows, we also note an increase of competitive funds in the second and third flow of funds. This implies that more effort and more costs of the university and its researchers are required to acquire a grant. A balance of the costs and benefits during the grant procurement processes is therefore desirable, and an efficient approach to grant procurement is important.

The main research question in this thesis is as followed: *How can universities organize their grant procurement process in such a way that there is an adequate balance between the time spent by academics and support staff on grant procurement and the expertise accumulated by those engaged in the process?* We are able to answer this main question by answering four sub-questions. We started this research by distinguishing different types of research grants and stressed their importance. Second is described what grant procurement implies and what the general way of organizing grant procurement is. Next the factors which have an impact on the university's costs (mostly in terms of time) resulting from the grant procurement processes are discussed. As it appears, the significant affecting factors are the uncertainty, the frequency, and the human capital. Finally, we examined what the grant procurement processes look like in three Dutch universities and what can be said about the origin and effects of occurring differences.

This thesis will show that the differences in the organization of grant procurement processes in the three studied Dutch universities are small. These universities take into account similar factors which influence the grant procurement processes.

The experienced researchers interviewed in this study have acquired the knowledge and experience of grant procurement by trial and error. When researchers are trying to figure out how to complete a grant application successfully this creates high opportunity costs. These costs will be lower when a researcher applies for a grant application frequently, because the researcher knows what is expected and how this should be performed. Researchers could also be supported during the grant procurement processes. For example, a support department could offer courses on grant procurement to its (junior) researchers. Senior researchers could mentor and involve (junior) researchers in their applications. A special support department could also inform researchers of upcoming grant opportunities and take care of the financial administration of projects.

Researchers are dependent on different types of funds, grants are an example. Thus, one should anticipate on possible changes. It therefore seems useful when supporting staff tracks and reacts proactively on changes in grant opportunities and/or schemes. When such a supporting service is set up at a centralized level, it can simultaneously reduce the uncertainty of future grant opportunities for the university through lobbying and agenda setting in Brussels.

Much knowledge of grant procurement is present in the human capital. This knowledge is of importance to formulate a project proposal of one's research in a proper way, which improves the odds of completing a grant application successfully. If present, this could also reduce the uncertainty of receiving funding. When present, a university has to retain this knowledge. Otherwise, it has to obtain this knowledge from someone else. Experienced researchers can pass this knowledge on to (junior) researchers. This knowledge could also be present at personnel of various supporting departments in a university, which can store the knowledge of grant procurement processes in grant protocols, grant scripts, etc to avoid a drain of knowledge.

Finally, we conclude that it is important to stress the significance of procuring grants to (junior) researchers, share knowledge of grant procurement within the university, and support researchers during grant procurement to decrease their opportunity costs.

Preface

This thesis is the result of a protracted study on grant procurement processes in three Dutch universities, performed at PNO Consultants. It is the final assignment for my graduation of Public Administration at University of Twente, in Enschede.

During my graduation I encountered the usual ups and downs. However, I can look back on a pleasant period in which I have learned a lot, met many new people, had the opportunity to see two other, as well as my own university from a different perspective, and worked on a challenging assignment which required a lot of reading, writing, proofreading and rewriting.

I am grateful to the people whose time and enthusiasm I could use to interview them. Thanks to their cooperation, I was able to complete this thesis. I would also like to thank my supervisors at University of Twente, dr. B.W.A. Jongbloed and dr. H.F. de Boer. Mr Jongbloed for supporting me during the entire graduation and mr De Boer for aiding at a later stadium as second supervisor.

I am very pleased in the way I was welcomed at PNO Consultants, I have enjoyed the working environment, and was pleased with the freedom I had whilst conducting my research and writing my thesis. Therefore, I would like to thank everybody who has contributed to my pleasant stay at PNO Consultants, especially my supervisor Erik Prins.

At last I would like to thank all other people who supported me during the past period, especially my parents where I could regularly spend the night, saving me a lot of traveling back and forth between Arnhem and Enschede.

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List of Abbreviations

Awb	Algemene wet bestuursrecht, General Administrative Law Act				
Bsik	Besluit subsidies investeringen kennisinfrastructuur, Scheme to invest in				
	knowledge infrastructure				
EC	European Commission				
ERC	European Research Council				
FTE	Full-time equivalent				
FPs	Framework Programs				
FP7	Seventh Framework Program				
IOP	Innovatiegerichte onderzoeksprogramma's, Innovation-driven research programmes				
KNAW	Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Royal Netherlands				
	Academy of Arts and Sciences				
KUOZ	Kerngetallen Universitair OnderZoek, Base figures University Research				
Ministry of LNV	Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit, Ministry of Agriculture,				
	Nature and Food Quality.				
Ministry of OCW Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschappen, Ministry of E					
	Culture and Science				
NWO	Nederlandse organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, Dutch Organization				
	for Scientific Research				
OTP	Open technologie programma, Open Technology Programme				
STW	Technologiestichting STW, Technology Foundation STW				
VSNU	Vereniging van universiteiten, Association of Universities in the Netherlands				
UM	Universiteit Maastricht, University of Maastricht				
UT	Universiteit Twente, University of Twente				
WUR	Wageningen Universiteit en Researchcentrum, Wageningen University and				
	Research Centre				
ZBO	Zelfstandig bestuursorgaan, Autonomous Administrative Authority				

1. Introduction

In the Netherlands, universities are particularly known as a place to obtain a (university) degree. Universities are more than just a learning and teaching environment. Besides teaching, Dutch universities conduct scientific research and are engaged in the valorization of knowledge. Valorization of knowledge means that academic knowledge is effectively transformed in economic activities that are applied in products and/or services. Performing all these activities requires funding. Dutch universities receive financing for teaching (tuition fees government grants), for conducting research (grants, contracts), and for providing of services (such as sales of lecture notes, revenues of sport centers, rental of lecture halls to third parties, etc.) (Association of Universities in the Netherlands, [VSNU], n.d. a).

In the Netherlands, scientific research at universities is funded through three flows of funds, the first, second, and third. Dutch universities receive their first flow of funds directly from the Dutch government (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, [Ministry of OCW]) as a lump sum. Except for Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR), that receives its first flow of funds from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (Ministry of LNV) (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 57). The central management of a university decides about the internal allocation of these funds. The second flow of funds consists of public funds provided by an autonomous administrative authority (ZBO) (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 58). Dutch universities receive their second flow of funds from organizations such as Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) (Versleijen, et al., 2007, p. 11). These funds directly benefit the researchers, research projects, and research programs. The third flow of funds consists of everything that does not belong to the first and second flow of funds (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 55). For example, contract funding and European funding. Contract funding is all research or teaching that is financed and ordered by clients.

The share of second and third flows of funds for academic research has changed over the years. Figures of the Ministry of OCW and NWO show a relative increase (in the period 1983-2005) in the share of second and third flow of funds in comparison to the first flow of funds (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 131). The data of Base figures University Research (KUOZ) shows that in the period 1997-2007 more scientific staff is financed through the second and third flow of funds (VSNU, n.d. b). This is mainly due to the introduction of trainee research assistants, which decreased the labor costs and therefore made it possible to increase the absolute quantity of research staff (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 137). However, the increase of the second and third flow of funds is visible in Figure 1. In addition, an increase in the competition for project funding is visible in thematic competition, consortia competition, and European funding.

Also European funding has rapidly grown, since the beginning of the Framework Programs (FPs) in 1984, from about three billion Euros in FP1, about twenty billion Euros in FP6, to about 51 billion Euros in FP7(European Commission CORDIS, n.d.; European Commission CORDIS, 2007). The available European funding is meant for many organizations in all European member states and associated countries (European Commission CORDIS, 2009). Thus, these available funds are not solely for Dutch organizations. FP7 places an emphasis on the competition element instead of the pre-competitive nature of the first four frameworks, which fitted into the needs of the industry. The funding was meant to promote innovation in the European industries, in other words as a response to the innovation in

Japanese and America's industries. Later frameworks were of a different nature. FP7 has a competitive nature, it is all about excellence. The increase in the total amount of funding available through FP7 increases the likelihood that a researcher is interested in applying for a European grant. At the same time, it increases the significance of competitive funding.

Figure 1 shows an increase in competitive funding over a period of 30 years. International, contract research, European funding, thematic competition, consortia competition and open competition (shown in Figure 1) are all competitive funding forms, which belong to the second¹ and third flow of funds.



Figure 1: Departmental research expensives to funding form, in % of total, 1975-2005 (Versleijen, et al., 2007, p. 37).

1.1 Problem definition

There is a visible shift in the funding of research at the Dutch universities: a relative increase in the share of the second and third flows of funds compared to the first flow of funds. In addition, the possibilities (opportunity to receive a form of funding) in the second and third flows of funds are increasing. The expectation is that in the future more grants will be part of these flows of funds, which leads to the assumption that the importance of the second and third flows of funds will grow in the future. Within the third flow of funds, a distinction between grants and contracts can be made. In this research we will focus on grants. Researchers than have the privilege to conduct research on a topic they choose (as long as it is approved by the grantor body) and they do not perform an order commissioned by a principal. We will return to this issue in Chapter 2 when an elaborated distinction between grants and contracts is made and we will define our definition of a grant that is used during the rest of this thesis.

Research of PNO Consultants (see Appendix A: Explanation of calculations PNO) has shown that about 10% (see Table 1) of the total revenues of the Dutch universities consist of grants (the opportunities

¹ Only thematic competition, open competition, and consortia competition can be attributed to the second and third flow of funds. Only when the grantor body is a ZBO, the funding form belongs to the second flow of funds, as mentioned in the introduction.

	International grants	National grants	NWO/ KNAW	Total grants
University of Groningen	1,7 %	2,0 %	4,6 %	8,3 %
Eindhoven University of Technology	0,6 %	0,6 %	7,3 %	8,5 %
Leiden University	2,0 %	1,3 %	7,0 %	10,2 %
Maastricht University	2,2 %	1,9 %	3,6 %	7,7 %
University of Twente	2,8 %	2,6 %	7,2 %	12,7 %
Utrecht University	1,5 %	2,3 %	5,9 %	9,7 %
University of Amsterdam	2,5 %	1,6 %	3,7 %	7,8 %
Tilburg University	1,5 %	3,0 %	5,1 %	9,5 %
Wageningen University and Research Centre	4,7 %	5,2 %	5,2 %	15,1 %
Total	2,1 %	2,1 %	5,4 %	9,5 %

given in the second and third flow of funds). Thus, grants are an important part of the university budget from which research is funded.

Table 1: Grant benefits of Dutch universities as ratio of its total university revenues (estimated on annual reports 2006).

Dutch universities each have a different share of grants (as shown in Table 1). The increase of competitive funds (in the second and third flow of funds) implies more effort and more costs of the university are needed to acquire a grant. Therefore, a balance between costs and benefits during the grant procurement process is desirable and an efficient approach to grant procurement is important. A well-written application and proper supporting facilities for researchers that apply for grants seems necessary. Given the fact that receiving sufficient funding for research is important, one could state that research is solely based on the available grant opportunities. That would result in the fact that the conduct of research would be purely aimed at what results in the most revenues and not on, for example, the field of the academics' interest or fundamental research. Research has contested this view, Garcia & Sanz-Menendez (as cited in Leišytė, 2007, p. 45) draw the attention to the importance of recognition and credit within the academic community. Sufficient funding is a condition for research activities, but does not seem to be the main reason for certain research activities. Research of Latour & Woolgar (as cited in Leišyte, 2007, p. 45) showed that the reputation within the academic community a researcher gains with his research, is significant for the behaviour of researchers and research institutes. Thus, researchers are more interested in achieving these points than finding as many grant opportunities as possible. Latour & Woolgar (as cited in Leišytė, 2007, p. 45) conceptualized the strategies and activities of researchers in terms of 'a credibility cycle' (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: The credibility cycle as developed by Latour & Woolgar (as cited in Leišytė, 2007, p. 46).

A researcher will first look with which research he can achieve more recognition and credit. This will happen under the influence of the factors shown in Figure 2. Researchers use equipment, data, and knowledge in their research process. The application of these primary inputs, results in research outputs, such as articles, books, or reports (Leišytė, 2007, p. 45). The research results can be read and cited by other scientists and if so, may lead to an increase in recognition and/or credibility of the researcher, and to money and other resources (such as grants or tenures) (Leišytė, 2007, p. 45). The obtained resources can then be used to start new research (beginning with data collection).

In the context of this research, this means the following: the question for the researcher is with what type of research is he/she able to increase the speed of the credibility cycle and/or improve his/her recognition and credit. For example, this can be the prestige of the research itself or the chances of gaining a European grant in FP7. The characteristic of the credibility cycle is that the factors in it reinforce each other. For example, when a researcher has a better reputation or more credit, it will be easier to attract funding, because of trust and reliability (Grantor bodies know the researcher will deliver results) to invest in the researcher. Another example is finding research groups to form a consortium that applies for FP7 funding. When the reputation of a researcher is high, it is probably easier to find research groups (of equal quality or better), who wish to collaborate in a consortium, increasing your chances of success in receiving a grant in FP7.

Universities in the Netherlands benefit from grants. Therefore, it is important to support the grant procurement process efficiently. In this thesis, the grant procurement process is defined from a project idea, developed into a grant application up until the final payment and/or settlement after the grant

assessment. Universities make different choices in the organization of their grant procurement processes. Some universities have procedures, including guidelines on how to apply for a grant. We observed universities where support of researchers is organized at a decentralized level. There are also universities with organizational support structures organized at a centralized level. A clear insight into the best practice for the grant procurement process is absent. Is it sensible when a researcher him/herself is in charge of the grant procurement process all by him/herself or is it more efficient when a researcher has supporting staff at his/her disposal? Could outsourcing of certain activities be a serious option? Examples of the costs of the grant procurement processes are: the costs of maintaining a centralized and/or a decentralized supporting staff department; the costs of hiring an external organization; or the opportunity costs (time researchers cannot spend on other activities) of employees, who contribute to the grant procurement process. To be economically efficient, all costs (although part of the costs can be covered by co-financing through the first flow of funds) made for acquiring a grant, should at least outweigh the benefits of the grant itself.

The question arises, why does one university make use of one specific approach while another university uses a different one?

1.2 Research questions

From the background and problem definition follows that universities, in order to secure their financial position and realize their ambitions, wish to generate competitive research grants. This lead to the following main research question for this thesis:

How can universities organize their grant procurement process in such a way that there is an adequate balance between the time spent by academics and support staff on grant procurement and the expertise accumulated by those engaged in the process?

The goal of this thesis is to give an explorative view of the organization of the grant procurement processes in the Dutch universities and to explore which approach of the grant procurement process is best to complete procurement successfully. This main question will be elaborated with the following sub-questions:

- 1. Which types of research grants can be distinguished and what is their importance?
- 2. What is grant procurement and how is it organized in general?
- 3. What factors have an impact on the university's costs (mostly in terms of time) resulting from the grant procurement processes?
- 4. How is the grant procurement process shaped in three Dutch universities? Where do we see differences, and what can be said about the time spent by academics and support staff on the various stages in the process?

Sub-questions one and two are explorative research questions. The goal of these sub-questions in the first place is to clarify what we define as a grant in this thesis. Secondly, we will show which type of grants are available and show their significance for the university and its researchers. Finally, an insight into the different stages during grant procurement is given. In addition, a general way of organizing these processes is described. These sub-questions will be answered using desk research. After answering these sub-questions, we use sub-question three to draw up a model for the empirical research. The goal

of this sub-question is to gain insight in the factors that influence the grant procurement processes, such as actors involved, motivation and/or drivers, protocols, etc. This is performed through desk research. Sub-question four is an empirical question. The data will be collected through interviews in different Dutch universities and will be guided using the answers to sub-questions one to three. This is a necessary step to make the comparison between theory and practice. In this fourth sub-question we also compare the differences between the three universities and generally discuss the time spent by academics and support staff during various stages of grant procurement. Which type of organizational support of the grant procurement process would be preferable? For example, a university can arrange the support of their researchers on a central level, in a decentralized way or use a mixed structure of central and decentralized support. What are the advantages and disadvantages of these different methods?

For example, we speak of a centralized way of organizing when the support services for the grant procurement processes are organized at a central department within the university, and the researchers are obliged to use such a support unit. We speak of a decentralized organization, when research groups have the autonomy to determine which grant applications they submit, the support services are organized at the faculty level and/or even at the level of the research groups, and the researchers have the autonomy to decide whether to use this support department or not.

1.3 Scientific and social relevance

The scientifically relevance follows from the insight into how the grant process in the universities in The Netherlands is organized. Until now, the organization of grant procurement in universities has not been investigated. There is a limited understanding of the processes. Therefore, this thesis provides a qualitative analysis of the organization of the grant procurement. The purpose of this research is to contribute to an understanding of the factors that contribute to an effective and efficient organization of the acquisition of grants.

The social relevance of this thesis can be found in the analysis of the opportunities of grant procurement for the universities in The Netherlands. Before the start of this research, there has been consultation (with staff concerned with grant procurement) about procurement at the VSNU. The suspicion is that Dutch universities may be not fully aware of the costs of grant procurement. This research aims to get a better view of the support costs related to grant procurement in Dutch universities. A better awareness contributes to a more effective and more efficient way of grant procurement, which is significant, because the universities have to spend many resources to acquire grants. An efficient and effective organization of the grant procurement process can contribute to a reduction in resources spent in the procurement process. It is intended that the insights gathered in this research support a conscious choice by the university directors and researchers of the Dutch universities about the way of organizing the grant procurement processes.

1.4 Outline of this thesis

The outline of this thesis is as follows. In chapter 2 we distinguish different types of research grants and stress their importance. We conclude this chapter with describing the generic organization of grant procurement processes. In chapter 3 we discuss the factors that effect the associated costs of grant

procurement. The research strategy of this thesis is discussed in chapter 4. We explain the research design and the method of data collection. The theory and empirical data are linked in chapter 5. The results of chapter 5 are the basis on which the conclusion is shaped in chapter 6.

2. Grant procurement

As described in chapter 1, this research focuses on the organization of grant procurement processes in Dutch universities. This chapter presents the grant procurement processes in more detail by answering the first two sub-questions. Before answering these sub-questions, we first introduce our definition of a grant, followed by the answer on the first sub-question. To answer this sub-question we distinguish different types of research grants and stress their importance for the universities and its researchers. We conclude this chapter by answering sub-question two in which we describe grant procurement and the generic organization of grant procurement processes.

2.1 Grant

In this thesis, a grant is a central concept. Therefore, is it important to have a clear definition of a grant. According to the Dutch law, article 4.21 General Administrative Law Act (Awb), a grant is defined as follows:

Onder subsidie wordt verstaan: (1) de aanspraak op financiële middelen, (2) door een bestuursorgaan verstrekt (3) met het oog op bepaalde activiteiten van de aanvrager, (4) anders dan als betaling voor aan het bestuursorgaan geleverde goederen of diensten.

Translated into English: we speak of a grant according to the Dutch General Administrative Law Act, if the following holds (1) claiming financial resources, (2) which are supplied by an administrative authority. (3) These resources aim at specific activities on behalf of the grantor, (4) different from a payment to an administrative authority for delivered goods or services. When all four criteria are met, we can consider the money flow to be a grant (Den Ouden, Jacobs, & Verheij, 2004, pp. 11-17).

In the case of a European grant, the European law is in effect and in some cases also the Dutch law in the shape of the Awb (Den Ouden, Jacobs, & Verheij, 2004, p. 213). However, the criteria for a grant remain the same when we speak of a European grant.

In short, when financial resources are gained, but the criteria are not met, we do not consider these resources to be a grant.

As mentioned previously, there are many financiers within the third (and second) flows of funds of the Dutch universities. In 2006, approximately 2.3 billion euro (according to the CBS) was available for the universities to conduct research (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 125). The major part (65%) consisted of the first flow of funds, the lump sum funding of universities. This is the recurrent income for universities, and is seen as funding and does not comply with the definition of a grant (Den Ouden, Jacobs, & Verheij, 2004, p. 22). The revenues from the second flow of funds comply completely with the definition as stated in the General Administrative Law Act, and are therefore regarded as grants. Everything that does not belong to the first and second flow of funds is denoted as the third flow of funds. Not all revenues from this flow of funds meet the definition of a grant. Only funding from a national and/or European administrative authority meets the criteria, as long as it is not a payment for delivered goods or services.

In the third flow of funds, a distinction can be made between grants and contracts. We use this distinction in this study, because there is a difference in the procurement processes. In case of a grant,

strict rules, regulations, and criteria are formulated for which a proposal can be submitted. An application must meet these requirements to be eligible for receiving funding. The grantor body does not define in advance what exactly needs to be done and what the results should be. Therefore, we usually speak of an obligation to perform to the best of one's ability. Thus, the grant applicant has to submit a proposal, in which he/she describes what he/she wants to achieve and how he/she wants to accomplish this. When the application meets the grantor's criteria, the grant is approved, and in the end, it will be settled on the submitted proposal.

In case of a contract, an agreement is made, in which one or more parties have made a commitment to each other to deliver goods and/or services to an administrative authority. The acquisition process differs from grant procurement, because an organization contacts the researcher directly or through a tender procedure and commissions a researcher to conduct a specific type of research. In contrast to a grant it is exactly specified what needs to be done, and results are clearly stipulated, whereas a grant implies that a researcher decides (in a limited degree, because the grantor body has to approve a proposal) what research he/she is conducting. We stress the difference between a grant and an agreement, because an agreement is obviously not a grant as defined in this thesis and the process of grant procurement is distinct from an agreement.

2.2 Grantscape

Policy-makers wish to accomplish their goals. To reach these goals, different types of policy-instruments can be used. One of these instruments is using grants to stimulate a certain behaviour or activities (the goal of the grant program) to achieve the stated goal. In contrast to the policy-makers, the organization has its own goals. The organization formulates a policy or strategy to reach a project goal. This goal needs to be aligned with the goal of the grant program, to qualify for the grant (grant procurement). This process is sketched Figure 3.



Figure 3: Goal alignment

There are many different regulations in the case of academic research grants. In this paragraph, we give an illustration of the different types of research grants available.

Within the second and third flow of funds there are many grant opportunities for funding (with different types of funding forms as mentioned in Chapter 1), from different organizations. In case of the second flow of funds, grants are distributed through the authorities KNAW and NWO (Kwikkers, et al., 2009, p. 85). At the moment KNAW offers 29 different grant regulations (KNAW, 2009). NWO funds scientific

research at Dutch universities and institutes through nearly 120 different grants and research programs (NWO, 2009). Some schemes are open for application at a specific moment and other are continuously open for applications. These are offered through ten divisions/foundations which are divided into various disciplines. Thus per research area (NWO distinguishes eight area's) the grant opportunities are shown. This makes it relatively easy for researchers to know which grant opportunities are available in their research area. Examples of grants in the third flow of funds are: OTP and Valorization grant of STW; IOP of SenterNovem; Bsik, open competition and The Research Incentives Scheme of NWO; FP7 and ERC grant as European grants. SenterNovem offers 196 grants and regulations, of which 37 regulations are specifically mentioned in relation to knowledge institutes (Versleijen, et al., 2007, p. 80). Universities and researchers can also apply for European grants (for example the framework programs or the European Research Council). The opportunities in Europe are enormous due to the large amount of funds (50 billion euro in P7). The total amount of available (and different) regulations and the huge open competition (various research areas can apply for a specific call) result in the fact that it is difficult to find a call applicable for your research and ultimately gain this grant at the expense of other participants.

The following distinction between types of grant forms can be made: open competition, thematic competition, consortia competition and European funding. In open competition a financer places funds at the disposal of researchers who are free to choose the theme of their research or are free to create their own research projects (for example the OTP of STW). Open competition often has a generic purpose such as the promotion of excellence and/or the stimulation of innovation (Versleijen, et al., 2007, p. 39). In case of thematic competition financial resources are available for research in a particular research area or on a particular theme. Such programs often have a specific purpose, such as building research capacity in a particular research area, stimulating innovation (IOP), etc. In consortia competition a financer provides funds for a limited number of consortia with the aim of the concentration of resources and strong coordination in the concerning field and by bringing together knowledge institutes and industries (Versleijen, et al., 2007, p. 40), examples are Bsik and Smart Mix. European funding can be characterized as thematic competition. European funding also focuses on stimulating research and innovation in certain areas (there are five specific programs). One should notice that the regulations are more complex and the opportunities are larger (the research areas as the amount of available funding) resulting in more competition. Researchers on a European level are encouraged to cooperate with each other in research projects. In general one can state that only consortia existing of researchers from different countries are eligible for European funding (Versleijen, et al., 2007, p. 39).

In addition, one should know that some grants can only be achieved on a personal title, like the Veni Vidi Vici of the open competition at NWO or the European variant at ERC (starting and advanced grant) and Marie Curie in FP7.

2.3 Grant procurement process

This paragraph describes the grant procurement processes from a legal perspective, because it reflects the steps² for completing the grant procurement process³. In Figure 4, the different stages in the grant procurement process are shown. First of all, there has to be a legal regulation, which regulates the opportunities and conditions for an administrative authority to confer a grant that follows from article 4:23, paragraph 1 Awb. If there is a regulation, the grantor body can grant funding for a project for which an organization can apply.



Figure 4: Grant procurement process by the Dutch law

When the grantor body receives an application for a grant, an order considering the grant has to be made. There are two possibilities: an order when the activities of the grant have been completed, or an order before the activities start (Den Ouden, Jacobs, & Verheij, 2004, p. 40). An order after the activities are completed implies a risk for the applier of a grant, in case the grant is not granted for some reason. The possibility arises that the applier cannot or will not start with the activities before the activities are completed implies a risk for the administrative authority, because the administrative authority wants to be able to verify whether the activities are completed and done as agreed. This is only possible at the end of the process. Therefore, there are usually two order moments in the grant procurement process. The *granting of a grant* in advance and the *grant assessment* afterwards. The granting of a grant gives provisional financial resources, which will be granted when the defined activities are completed and if

² During the different stages of grant procurement, compliance of grant specific demands is also required.

³ The grant procurement process follows from the Dutch General Administrative Law Act. In case of European grants, the Dutch law plays a minor role alongside the European regulation. The steps taken are similar when applying for a European grant.

the obligations associated with the grant have been fulfilled. After the order of the grant by the grantor body, the applying organization can start its activities. During this phase obligations have to be fulfilled and in some cases financial resources are provided in advance. When the activities are completed the total amount of the grant is determined and the enactment order will follow. Finally, the payment will take place. This is a settlement between the total amount of a grant earned (based on the results of the project) and the provisional advance payment, if applicable (Den Ouden, Jacobs, & Verheij, 2004, pp. 40-41).

2.3.1 European grant

In case of a European grant, the grant procurement process is a little bit different. Only the differences will be discussed. The difference between the European process and the Dutch process is the signing of a contract between the grantor body and an applicant of a grant, instead of a one-sided decision by the grantor body. Another significant point of the European grant procurement is the fact that the application for a grant is usually done by a consortium. Thus, a university has to contact other universities or organizations (such as research institutes and industries) to join in the process. The consortium makes a proposal and submits it to the European Commission or the grantor body. After submission, contract negotiations begin. When all parties agree, a contract is signed and *the compliance* phase begins. This process is the same as for a Dutch grant. At the end of the grant process, a settlement is made, based on the results of the project and the agreements specified in the contract.

2.4 The three stages in grant procurement

The previous paragraph described the grant procurement process from a legal perspective. The different legal stages were briefly discussed. This perspective forms the basis for the arrangement of the grant procurement process, because compliance with the legal regulations is a necessary requirement for a successful completion of grant procurement. However, this is not sufficient to go through the procurement process successfully. Compliance with the grant specific regulations is also necessary. Other significant points to complete grant procurement successfully are selecting the necessary information for the proposal, an elaboration of the project plan, writing and submitting



acquisition model

the proposal, forming a consortium (dependent on the type of grant), arranging support of the researcher during the period of the project, etc. In the remaining of this paragraph, we will focus on the general way of organizing grant procurement. This is done by splitting the process into three phases: initiate, apply and comply. During these three phases, adequate support is required for an effective and efficient execution of the grant procurement process. This is schematically shown in Figure 5. The grant procurement process starts with the initiation phase. The most important step in this phase is making a match between the (project) goals of a researcher and/or research group and the goals of the grantor body (as shown in Figure 3). This requires knowledge of available grants.

The difficulty of finishing this phase successfully depends on the experience and knowledge (the acquaintance of existing, renewed and/or new opportunities) of the researchers and supporting staff. Researchers who are already familiar with grant regulations, because they already completed a submission successfully, can probably complete this phase independently. Grant consultants (internal or external) or intermediary bodies like SenterNovem can recommend and draw attention to new regulations and/or recommend new opportunities when researchers start a new project and/or research in a new direction. This first phase is completed when the 'go / no go' decision is taken by the project leader of the applicant.

In case of a 'no go decision' the process starts all over again. When a 'go decision' is made at the end of the first phase, the kick-off of the second phase starts, which consists of the preparation of the actual grant submission and writing a comprehensive application. From a simplistic point of view, there are two parts in writing a proposal. The scientific contents, being the project plan (a scientific description of the goals of the research, how the research will be conducted, what the expected results are, the researchers involved, etc.) and other activities to complete this phase successfully.

These other activities could be:

- monitoring the calls (requests for submitting proposals for grant opportunities from organizations such as NWO) and deadlines;
- check whether the project matches the criteria of the regulation;
- preparing a budget within the grant criteria;
- enter into an agreement about who is responsible for the management of the project;
- get authorization (autographs and mandate from the required superiors);
- potential contract negotiations;
- and submitting the actual proposal in time.

A researcher can outsource all these activities (in a limited degree) to a support department (internal or external), except for the scientific content. The specific expertise of the researcher is always required to complete the scientific part of the grant procurement process successfully. However, the researcher can be relieved (in a limited degree) during the grant procurement process when certain activities are outsourced to supporting staff or external actors. This means he/she has more time available for conducting the core tasks: teaching and research. However, hiring external actors implies additional costs. Figure 6 shows the effect of distribution between the effort of the researcher does everything by him/herself during grant procurement, his/her effort will be 100%. We expect that specialization has occurred, resulting in a researcher focused on the scientific contents and the supporting staff engaged in administrative, financial, and legal affairs.

When the grantor body approves the submitted grant, the recipient of the grant has to meet the conditions of the grant commitment. As in the previous phase, a distinction between the scientific content and the non-scientific responsibilities can be made. The part considering the scientific content consists of the researcher conducting the research and assuring that deliverables (project justification) are sent to the grantor body.



Figure 6: Required effort of researcher for the grant procurement process, from 100% effort of the researcher and 0% effort of the supporting staff to little effort of the researcher and much effort of the supporting staff.

The affairs not related to the scientific content can be left once again to the supporting unit. In short, this consists mainly of the administration (administrative and financial) of the whole project and fulfilling all obligations arising from the grant commitment (for example, registering the hours spent in the project, submission before deadlines, monitoring progression, report to the grantor body, etc.). From an organizational point of view, a division of tasks (as shown in Figure 6) could be desirable, because it allows researchers to work on their core activities, instead of spending time on activities outside their primary process. For example, others can perform the administrative, financial, and legal affairs.

Regarding the process management it is important to note that someone usually is responsible and accountable for overseeing the planning and steering of the overall process of the grant procurement, because otherwise the possibility exist that nothing happens on time or in the correct order. However, the choice of a particular person or organization, will affect the costs for the project.

All these phases in the grant procurement consume time. When beginning the grant procurement process, it is not certain in advance that the process will be completed successfully. For example, the first time it is executed (which is assumed in the previous description) or the second time, etc. In every phase one can – instead of going to the next phase – decide to cancel the procurement process, which means time (and money) is wasted. This is not entirely true, because one always learns from completing a phase. In case of a researcher, this would mean loss of (precious) time for research, for knowledge valorization, and teaching. Relieving the researcher during the grant procurement process could be a sensible idea. For example in the initiation phase, when a researcher has to see which grant fits his research plan, this will require time. While a member of the supporting staff already knows the majority of these regulations, which results in a quicker determination of whether a research project matches the grant regulations. Relieving the researcher by outsourcing activities of the grant procurement process is done by universities, given the fact that many commercial organizations specialized in grant procurement exist.

2.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, we defined what we consider a grant, namely all opportunities in the second flow of funds and all opportunities in the third flow of funds that originate from an administrative authority and are no contract research and are no payments for delivered goods and/or services. Then we showed, that within these funding flows there are many different opportunities to obtain a grant. Thus, a

researcher of a university needs to know which grants are of significance to him/her and know where to apply for a grant. When a researcher does not know which opportunities are available, he/she has to discover this in any other way. For example, via other personnel within (or through external grant consultants) the organization (such as supporting staff, colleagues, commercial directors, etc.). Subsequently we discussed the necessary processes to complete grant procurement successfully. This is a process from an eligible project idea, developed into a grant application up until the final payment and/or settlement (the justification of the activities and associated obligations) after the grant assessment. We have shown that the complete execution of this process is time consuming and labour intensive. We established that the researcher is always involved during an application, because while writing an application, knowledge of the scientific contents is essential. Researchers can be supported during the other necessary activities of grant procurement by people from within the university or by external parties or take care of the activities by themselves.

3. Organizational structures and associated costs

In Chapter 2 the stages in grant procurement have been presented. We have focused on several issues that need to be arranged. Both from the perspective of the researcher and the university it may be attractive to relieve the researcher from certain activities during grant procurement processes. We have also shown that universities try to increase its resources, just as researchers try to increase their resources and reputation. Grants are distributed in an increasing extent in competition form and the acquisition of competitive grants brings the reputation of a researcher to a higher level. Universities and its researchers will therefore try to reduce dependency on one resource and realize their ambitions by acquiring new resources, such as grants.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, we will describe in general terms some particular characteristics of a university as an organisation. These particular structural features may affect the (feasibility of the) grant procurement process. For this description we will refer to Minztberg's work. Then we will discuss how the dependency of the universities and researchers can be reduced. Next we will focus on transaction cost theory, as this theory elaborates on specific costs of specific arrangements. It provides a theoretical argument why (a particular kind of) grant procurement should be organized in a particular way (through centralized hierarchy, through decentralized units (professions) or through the market (outsourcing). This chapter will be concluded with a summary.

3.1 The organizational structure

As shown in Figure 7, according to Mintzberg (1983, pp. 9-19), (nearly) every organization exists of five basic parts. For each of these parts we will give an example form a university.

 The strategic apex: Those who are charged with ensuring that the organization serves its mission in an effective way, and also that it serve the needs of those who control or otherwise have power over the organization. In universities this refers to a supervisory board, a senate, and executive office (e.g. rectorate).



- The middle line: Persons or units at the organization (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 11).
 middle level that form a chain from the strategic apex to the operating core trough delegated formal authority and vice versa a linking pin between the top and shop floor level of the organization. In universities this typically refers to deans.
- 3. The technostructure: Control analysts serve to effect certain forms of standardization in the organization. This refers to the (central) administration of the university (e.g. personnel and financial offices).
- 4. The support staff: Specialized units provide support to the organization outside its operating work flow. Support units in universities are libraries, catering, or computer supporting units.
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5. The operating core: Those who perform the "basic work" related directly to the production of products and services. In universities this typically refers to academic departments, research units and chairs.

3.1.1 Professional bureaucracy

Division of labour in a university makes specialization possible, because people will then have different characteristics, competences, and knowledge. Division of labour ensures that the university as a whole can achieve a higher performance compared to a situation where no learning ability is available. Specialization means decomposing a large task into smaller ones. It normally leads to a loss of power, because a replacement for a specific task can be found with ease (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 35).



(Mintzberg, 1983, p. 194)

The professional bureaucracy (as shown in Figure 8) relies on the standardization of skills, knowledge, training, and indoctrination (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 190). The tasks of researchers are usually variegated (conducting research, the valorization of knowledge, etc.). Researchers are experts on their field of study. The consequence of the specialization of researchers is that fewer people are familiar with a given set of activities or role (within a university) (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 37). Researchers (as the operating core of a university) have control and influence in their organization, because of their uniqueness and/or skills (knowledge) (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 37). Therefore, researchers can effect the successful completion of the grant procurement process, because their specific (scientific) expertise is a necessity⁴ in the procurement process. Secondly, the expertise of researchers creates an opportunity to operate independently to a large degree. When their expertise is insufficient, researchers are able to acquire the necessary knowledge. Thus, researchers are relatively independent and therefore they are able to complete the entire grant procurement processes autonomously. The question arises whether this is desirable from the perspective of the organization.

3.2 Limiting resource dependency

Organizations want to control their dependency on their environment to ensure their survival in the environment in which they operate. To succeed, universities have to diversify their funding base to reduce their dependency. An option to control their dependency of funds is to utilize the whole range of grants opportunities, which is available. Organizations have to be aware of the three factors that influence the resource dependency. Organizations can try to control their dependency in a number of ways:

- 1. Adapt the organization to external demands
- 2. (try to) Influence the external demands.
- 3. Adapt the organization's dependency of the resource (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, pp. 97-140).

⁴ However, this scientific expertise in itself is not sufficient because, the administrative responsibilities during grant procurement are as important as the scientific content of a proposal (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Ad 1) Adapting the organization to external demands can be a clever way to reduce the dependency of the organization. For a researcher this means adapting his/her research in such a way that it fits in the direction in which the funding possibilities shift. A disadvantage of this strategy is the possibility of creating a continuous need for adaptation to the environment, which increases the dependency of an organization, because the environment dictates the activities of the organization. It is necessary to deal with this in a sensible way. Thus, do not adapt in case of small changes, but only if it is clear that for the time being there will not be any investments in your research area and that the chance of an improvement in the future is small. For example, after a disaster with a nuclear facility, chances will be very small that there will be funding available for nuclear research. Another disadvantage is that adapting an organization simply costs money.

Ad 2) A university can try to influence the awareness of the environment by convincing the environment of the importance of a certain research subject. For example, keep emphasizing on what the university sees as a social problem, which in turn could lead to a change in demands of the environment. With the use of grants or own resources, research could be financed to find a solution for this problem. Thus, resulting in new grant opportunities achieved through lobbying and agenda setting. In this way, a university creates its own grant opportunities, to which it can apply.

Ad 3) The theory of Pfeffer & Salancik focuses mainly on absorbing certain resources within the organization to overcome dependency on external resources. Something that is hardly or not possible in the cases of financers. However, a university can focus more on alternative types of funding to become less dependent. For example, universities try to diversify their funding base to the second and third flow of funds, due to a decrease in state funding. Universities can adapt their organization by absorbing knowledge of the grant procurement processes. In the case a university employs personnel (make decision) with knowledge of the procurement processes, the organization is not dependable on others (buy decision) for this knowledge. At the same time, researchers experienced with grant procurement should be encouraged to stay on. In that case, the university is no longer dependent on the knowledge of others to complete the grant procurement process successfully.

Funding is an important resource for which universities are dependent on its environment. Universities are not solely dependent on funding through grants, let alone one specific grant regulation, because there are many grant opportunities. In addition to grant opportunities, universities and its researchers can claim other funding, like contract research. Due to this, a university is not dependent solely on one financer. However, it is possible that in some research areas there are more alternative regulations and other funding possibilities available than in other areas.

Thus, by using more than one funding resource, a researcher can ensure that he/she is less dependent on one source of funds. However, a researcher is still dependent on the demands of a financer. For example, you have to fulfil the grant requirements of a NWO or FP7 grant, otherwise your submission will not be granted.

3.3 Transaction costs

Researchers are specialists on their field of study and are therefore always involved during the grant procurement processes (as already discussed in chapter 2 and in paragraph 3.1.1). Researchers can be relieved (in a limited degree) during the grant procurement process when certain activities are

outsourced to supporting staff or external actors. In this paragraph we will discuss the factors which influence the costs of organizing the grant procurement processes using transaction cost theory.

Universities have to ask themselves the questions whether it pays to bring an extra exchange transaction under the organizing authority or to keep that transaction a market transaction (Coase, 1937, p. 404). Should we arrange the grant procurement process internally, should we outsource this process to the market or should we compromise? A make or buy decision has to be made. Support services within an organization are part of overhead costs. These costs will be charged indirectly to the performers of the primary processes of an organization, in this case the research groups. Thus, the internal support of researchers during grant procurement creates costs for the research groups. However, the usage of such support services appears to be free for the individual researcher, because the support unit is already in the organization. Indirectly the research groups are saddled with the costs of the supporting staff whether a research group makes use of them or not. Thus the only direct costs researchers face are involving, consulting, and working with an internal support unit.

A university has to determine an optimum between the time spent by academics and the costs of support staff, so the organization knows to what extent researchers could autonomously complete the grant procurement processes. It could be advantageous when a researcher spent less time on all facets of grant procurement, because it might be possible to outsource some parts of the grant procurement processes at lower (opportunity) costs.

According to Williamson (1998) there are three significant dimensions in the study of commercial transactions: the frequency with which the transactions recur, the uncertainty (disturbances) to which they are subject, and the condition of asset specificity (p. 36). These three dimensions affect the transaction costs.

3.3.1 Frequency

The frequency of the transactions taking place is important in relation to the costs. When certain transactions occur often, a long-term contract ensures that transaction-specific negotiations do not have to take place every time (Van Genugten, 2008, p. 25). If a transaction only occurs once, it is not logical to use safeguards (because of the costs), but it is logical to use an ordinary market transaction instead. The negotiations with the grantor body, a market party and/or the organizational unit within a university create costs. If many grant requests are made, it may be wise to create a contract with your (default) negotiation parties, because this reduces the negotiation costs (negotiating is not necessary until the end of the contract). The duration and thus the reoccurrence of a grant differ for each grant regulation.

Besides the transaction specific negotiations, the frequency also influences other transaction costs: the time between the submission of different proposals and the quantity of submitted proposals. Submitting a first proposal, or if one does not submit a proposal frequently, requires more effort to complete the grant procurement process successfully, because the regulations, requirements, procedures, etc. must be learned and understood. When one has already experience with submitting proposals or submits proposals frequently, one has the knowledge to quickly carry out the grant procurement process. This will have a positive effect on the transaction costs (i.e. transaction costs will

be lower). This applies only if the gained experience concerns the same type of regulations. If a researcher has experience with (for example, submitting proposals for) a specific NWO grant, this does not necessarily mean that he/she has all the necessary experience to complete a FP7 grant successfully. Although there is a certain degree of convergence in grant schemes.

3.3.2 Uncertainty

According to Van Genugten (2008, p. 25), uncertainty consists of environmental uncertainty and behavioural uncertainty. Environmental uncertainty refers to unanticipated changes in circumstances regarding a particular transaction. This may be due to the unpredictability of the external environment or the complexity of the environment (Van Genugten, 2008, p. 25). Universities are uncertain whether (some) regulations of grant requests will change in the future, for example when it concerns annual grant opportunities from Dutch organizations. For the grants, from FP7, is known that FP8 can ensure change. Besides changes, which occurs in the regulations for a specific grant, the policy regulations can also be subject of change when the goals of the policy-makers change.

Grant schemes have a success rate of less than 100%, resulting in the fact that a researcher is not certain whether he/she receives a grant when a grant application is submitted. The chances of success depend on the quality of the complete proposal, which means the quality of the scientific contents, the impact, and the implementation of the project (for example the quality of the written proposal, the reputation of the submitting researcher(s), and the consortium formed, if necessary). In case a researcher receives support during the writing of the impact and the implementation of a project, it is possible to increase the quality of the entire proposal. This could result in a better success rate and therefore reduce the uncertainty of acquiring a grant. From the perspective of the university it is important that researchers increase their success rate.

Behavioural uncertainty concerns the ex post state of the transaction. For example, opportunistic behaviour and the lack of information on future developments (bounded rationality). When the assets are more specific for a certain transaction and the degree of uncertainty increases, safeguards are more frequently imposed (Van Genugten, 2008, p. 25). The behavioural uncertainty will mainly occur when arrangements with third parties are made to handle the processes or when the grantor body does not want to pay. The latter seems at first sight not very likely, because the institution wants that a particular activity is done.

3.3.3 Asset specificity

Williamson describes six types of asset specificity (Van Genugten, 2008):

- *Site specificity:* which arises when successive stages are located in close proximity to one another; once sited, the assets in place are highly immobile.
- *Physical asset specificity:* which is attributable to physical specialized features or equipment to serve some particular exchange relationship.
- *Human asset specificity:* investments in specialized explicit and implicit knowledge and procedures requiring know-how and learning-by-doing.
- *Dedicated assets:* high-capacity equipment which capacity is intended to be dedicated to a particular customer.

- *Brand name capital:* brand names which imply a particular measure of quality or other product characteristics.
- *Temporal specificity:* timing of delivery and its effect on product value. (p. 25)

The first two points of asset specificity are low in the case a university applies for a grant, because the work (experience gained) that has been done for preparing a proposal can be reused for another application. Personnel needed for non-scientific affairs is also useful for other projects. The third point is dependable on the organizational structure of the university. Where is the knowledge stored in the organization? It could be stored in a central organized department of the university, in a research department or in the individual researcher. Finally, a university can decide to buy knowledge externally. The fourth asset specificity seems less applicable for this study. Brand name capital could be significant for getting a grant, for example in the case when a relatively-unknown researcher and a well-known researcher (with much more expertise) apply for a specific research area. The well-known researcher will benefit of his/her reputation. Also in case of a grant in the FP7, your 'brand name' can be crucial by forming a consortium. A consortium with well-known researchers has a better chance of receiving a grant. The last asset specificity is temporal specificity. This means the timing of delivery is crucial, for example, when a deadline for submission of a proposal has to be met. Supporting staff of a university may give priority to the proposal with the deadline first instead of other activities.

3.4 Implications of transaction costs for grant procurement

The costs of grant procurement increase when a university leaves all the activities during the grant procurement processes up to its researchers. Such an increase is caused by the transaction costs involved and the fact that researchers are not able to reduce all dependence on resources by themselves. If researchers do not frequently apply for an application and do not receive support during the application, then it seems likely that transaction costs will be high. Not only has the researcher to be able to complete all the activities by him/herself, he/she must also posses and/or acquires the necessary knowledge to complete the application successfully. High opportunity costs will arise during the writing and submitting of the application, because the researcher has to familiarize himself/herself with all the aspects of the grant scheme. The success rate of a project proposal depends on the knowledge of all the aspects of the project, scientific and non-scientific. The researcher has to be aware of all developments in his/her important grant schemes.

A support department is able to support a researcher during grant procurement (which would imply less reinventing the wheel), resulting in lower opportunity costs. An example is keeping track of all changes in the various grant schemes. For a researcher this takes much of his/her time, which he/she could spend on other activities. The support department could also assist the researchers in finding the necessary knowledge of grant procurement by creating grant protocols and grant scripts. The human capital is of the asset specificity mainly responsible for creating transaction costs. Thus, when an organization chooses to 'store' the knowledge of grant procurement in its personnel, it risks losing this knowledge when researchers (and supporting staff) leave the organization. Therefore it would be wise to 'store' the knowledge of grant procurement in several places within the organization. For example in grant protocols, grant scripts, researchers, and supporting staff. This ensures that researchers can obtain

the necessary knowledge of grant procurement processes, without 'keeping reinventing the wheel'. In addition, the support department could help reducing the uncertainty of the success rate of applications by aiding the researcher with the impact and implementation part of an entire project. These two aspects of project have almost the same requirements in the grant schemes, which means it can be standardized in formats. When the frequency of the number of applications of a researcher is high, he/she will need less support during the first two phases of the grant procurement processes. When the frequency of the number of applications of a researcher is low, it is better that the researcher is provided with support, for instance monitoring the various grant opportunities (this is important due to the increased competition in grant funding forms as shown in Chapter 1).

To reduce environmental uncertainty, centralized support staff could lobby by grantor bodies as being a representative of the whole university.

Universities and its researchers could outsource grant procurement activities instead of arranging those activities internal. Outsourcing support for only writing one proposal and one submission creates many transaction costs, since for every single proposal costs have to be made (finding a suitable partner, negotiate, drafting a contract, etc). Creating a long term agreement (in the form of a contract) ensures lower transaction costs (only a single negotiation is needed during the contract period). In this way an external party can be used as the (default) support unit of a university or a faculty (the possibility of opportunistic behaviour should be taken into account).

A university or a researcher might have an objection to outsourcing, because of the fact that costs arise before it is known whether this generates positive results or not (approval of the grant submission). An opportunity to solve this problem is using a no-cure no-pay construction. However, in that case the risk of not succeeding lies by the external party and it will therefore use safeguards. This will result in higher costs for the university when an application is successful.

Therefore we expect that researchers will not be eager to use external support, especially when researchers have the opportunity to use internal support and the costs of internal support is already charged indirectly to the research groups, whether the researchers make use of it or not

The above brings us to the following hypothesis:

For a university it is worthwhile to specialize and set up departments that detects, inquires grant opportunities, and supports its researchers during the applications of grants.

3.5 Conclusions

In this chapter we used the theory of Mintzberg to indentify the expected structure of a university. This showed that a university could be described as a professional bureaucracy, because the researchers of a university are the ones who perform the basic work related directly to the production of products and services. As mentioned in paragraph 3.1.1, the researchers are necessary to complete the grant procurement processes, the researchers are able to operate autonomously to a large degree because of their expertise, and the performances of universities with respect to their main functions are a result from the activities of their academic staff.

Researchers of a university are dependent on resources (funding) to conduct research. However, a university and its researchers can reduce this dependency by several strategies. A university can achieve this by setting a general (strategic) direction where it wants to be in the future. Therefore we expect some support at a centralized level. Researchers have a relatively great amount of autonomy to conduct research (type of research) and determine in which directions (type of grant applications) their research is going (as long as it is in line with goals of the entire organization). As a result, we expect a certain degree of decentralization in the organization.

Transaction costs can be reduced by several strategies as well. Support staff could reduce opportunity costs of researchers in case the researchers do not apply frequently for a grant scheme, by delivering required information of grant procurement processes. Uncertainty about the success rate of a proposal can be reduced by increasing the quality of the project proposal by aiding the researchers during the grant procurement processes. For example, supporting staff could aid the researchers during the writing of the impact and implementation parts of a project proposal. In addition support departments could store knowledge in the organization by creating standardized grant scripts on how to complete an application. From the previous follows that researchers should receive support during the grant procurements processes. Therefore we expect the presence of a supporting staff for the researchers at a centralized and decentralized level in the university.

4. Research strategy

The goal of this thesis is to gain insight in the organization of grant procurement at the universities in The Netherlands. To reach this goal, the sub-questions have to be answered first. To answer these sub-questions, information needs to be collected. The methodological considerations and the research design of this study will be explained in this chapter.

4.1 Units of observation

In this thesis, the organizational structures and procedures for the grant procurement processes at the universities in the Netherlands are of interest, particularly the organizational support of the researchers during grant procurement. We selected three universities for our case study. From each of these three Dutch universities selected for this research one faculty will be analyzed, because of the fact that a view of the entire university is too broad. Specific attention will be paid to the organizational grant support of the researcher at the universities, professors of a research group, and the researchers of the universities itself.

4.2 Key variables

The key variables for this research are obtained from the desk research and a few orientating interviews. We have shown in chapter 3 that different ways of organizing the grant procurement processes in a university influences the costs associated with grant procurement: the frequency, the uncertainty, and the human capital. The opportunity costs of a grant application can decrease when a researcher frequently applies for a grant or he/she receives support during the grant application. There is uncertainty about future grant schemes, thus a researcher and/or a support department should be keeping track of changes in various grant schemes in order to adapt to the changes. The knowledge of grant procurement processes has influence on successful completion of a grant application. Thus, having and maintaining this knowledge is important for an organization. The availability of supporting staff during the grant procurement processes has influences on the mentioned transaction costs.

The questionnaire was made operational based on chapter 3 and the deriving key variables (as shown in Appendix C). The questions address the various stages of grant procurement and its associated activities. The goal of the questionnaire was to figure out who performs which activities of grant procurement, whether a researcher could receive support (and for which activities), and whether he/she would use these supporting opportunities.

4.3 Data collection

Two main research methods will be used in this thesis. These are desk research and data collection through structured interviews. The information needed for answering sub-questions one to three will be gathered mostly by desk research. However, data collection through desk research will not be enough to answer the main research question. Sub-question four will be answered based on the results of the interviews.

The data of desk research are mainly obtained from literature about the grant procurement processes, and reports about the different types of grants and the development of these grants in the past. Besides

these literature, information from the VSNU, the NWO and other similar organizations is used as background information.

In this research, qualitative surveys are chosen over quantitative surveys. The choice for qualitative survey is based on the fact that we need information on qualitative aspects, such as underlying thoughts, opinions, necessities and wishes. A disadvantage of using a qualitative approach is the fact that the results cannot be statistically representative when the sample size is too small. However, a quantitative research provides less insight in the rationale of the organization of the organizational support in Dutch universities.

The chosen approach of the qualitative interviews as a source of information results in studying a few cases, otherwise the research transforms into a large-scale investigation, for which is no time in the current time schedule. Therefore, it is important to select cases, which are distinct from each other. There are many possibilities for selection criteria, such as no support whatsoever, decentralized support, centralized support, a mixture of both centralized and decentralized support, and outsourced support (interview 2, 3 and 4).

Before the universities were selected and approached, a few orientating interviews with persons who have experience in the grant sector were held for a better understanding of the subject matter. This resulted in the selection of three universities: University of Maastricht, University of Twente, and Wageningen University and Research Centre. These universities are relatively comparable in size and age, but are distinct from each other regarding the organization of support in grant procurement. One university has a more centralized support structure (UM), where the other has a more decentralized (UT), and the other has a mixture of both (WUR).

After the selection of the universities, contact with different persons at the universities was made to assure that the necessary profound interviews could be held at every university.

In each university, staff in different positions was interviewed. However, only one faculty of each university is part of this study to keep the research feasible in the time available for a master thesis. As a result, it is possible that differences in the grant procurement processes are present between faculties of the same university.

Insight in the way the support is arranged (for the researchers), is gained by interviewing various staff at different levels in the university (as shown in Figure 9). This means that someone was interviewed at a central level in the university in a support department or a liaison officer. At a decentralized level we chose to interview a director or liaison officer. Within the faculty, professors were interviewed from two different research groups to gain insight in the way the grant procurement processes is handled.

The persons which are approached for this research are selected for an interview based on their experiences with grant procurement and their positions they occupy within the university. Figure 9 shows an overview of the different organizational parts of the university and the function of the interviewed staff. The list of respondents is included in Appendix A.
University	Faculty		Central level in	Decentralized
	Research Chair A	Research Chair B	the university	level in the
				university
Maastricht	Faculty of Psycholog	y and Neuroscience	Advisor Research	Dean
University	Professor Clinical	Chair	& Innovation	
	Psychological	Neuropsychology &	Policy at Centre	
		Psychopharmacology	for Contract	
			Research	
Twente	The Faculty of Science	ce and Technology	Liaison officer	Commercial
University	Chair Optical	Chair Biophysical		Director MESA+
	Sciences	Engineering		
Wageningen	Social Sciences group	0	Head	Liaison officer
University and	Head Rural	Head Environmental	International	
Research Centre	Sociology Group	Policy Group	Helpdesk	

Figure 9: Overview of organizational parts of the university and function of interviewed staff

The questionnaire is used as a guideline during the interviews with the personnel who are involved in the grant procurement processes at different levels in the university. The questionnaire was first tested to make sure the accurate information was obtained during an interview and whether the interview would not exceed the limit of one hour (to ensure the respondents' willingness to cooperate would not be too low). This test was done in interview 5. This showed that the prepared questionnaire led to the desired results.

The results of the interviews are processed for each phases of the grant procurement and its related activities. The answers of the four respondents per university are interpreted in order to determine who takes care of which activities in the grant procurement and on which level in the organization. Thus, the results of the interviews as shown in chapter 5 are an interpretation of the interviews and do not indicate how many respondents of a university gave the same answers to the questions.

5. Three Dutch universities

In this chapter we present and analyze the interview data derived from the cases studies of three Dutch universities (as described in chapter 4): Maastricht University, Twente University, and Wageningen University. The required information is collected through semi-structured interviews with selected personnel involved in the grant procurement processes of the three universities. We will use the Initiate, Apply, and Comply model (see Figure 5 in paragraph 2.4) to compare and indicate the differences between the universities and we discuss the costs associated with the different ways of organizing the grant procurement processes at the universities. The aim of this chapter is to answer the question: *How is the grant procurement process shaped in three Dutch universities? Where do we see differences, and what can be said about the time spent by academics and support staff on the various stages in the process?*

5.1 Cases

Before the differences in the organization of the grant procurement processes and the associated costs in the three Dutch universities are compared, we briefly describe the universities and the faculties which are part of this research.

5.1.1 University of Maastricht and the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience

The education and research of Maastricht University is primarily arranged on the basis of faculties and schools (Maastricht University, 2009). The university consists of six faculties. A faculty's research is organized in research institutes which are part of the faculty.

The faculties of Maastricht University are divided into various groups. The Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (FPN), which is the faculty we selected for our case study, consists of four of these groups: Clinical Psychology Science, Work & Social Psychology, Neuropsychology & Psychopharmacology, and Cognitive Neurosciences.

At the faculty level a Finance and Control Office is in place to support the researchers of FPN in matters concerning the financial aspects of grant procurement. At the central level in the university, The Centre for Contract Research of Maastricht University is in place. It is engaged in supporting grant procurement throughout the university. Academics can contact the Centre for Contract Research whenever they have questions about grant procurement.

5.1.2 University of Twente, MESA+ Institute for Nanotechnology, and Faculty of Science and Technology

The University of Twente (UT) provides education and research in the technical, social and behavioral sciences. The UT consists of five faculties and six research institutes (see Table 2). The research of the faculties is located in the six research institutes. Members of a faculty participate in one (or more) institutes (as shown in Table 2). Every institute has its own research focus, for example MESA+ focuses on nanotechnology.

	Faculties:					
Institutes:	TNW	EWI	CTW	GW	MB	
MESA	+	+		+	+	
IMPACT	+	+	+			
MIRA	+	+	+	+	+	
CTIT		+	+	+	+	
IBR			+	+		
IGS			+		+	

Due to the fact that researchers of the University of L

Table 2: Matrix structure of the Institutes and Faculties

Twente are involved with both a faculty and an institute, we have selected to study the Faculty of Science and Technology (abbreviated as TNW in Table 2) in combination with the MESA+ Institute for Nanotechnology (MESA+). This choice is based on the fact that MESA+ is very successful (both in acquiring grants and in producing high quality research). The institute consists of twenty-five research groups. At the faculty, level a Finance and Control Office supports the researchers of the MESA+ institute when it comes to the financial aspects of grant procurement. At the level of the university, a Liaison Officer is (recently) appointed to support (junior) researchers that work on international research grant applications.

5.1.3 Wageningen University and the Social Sciences Group

Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR) consists of Wageningen University, Specialized Research Institutes (former institutes from the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture), and Van Hall Larenstein School of Higher Professional Education (which we will exclude from this research). WUR focuses on the life sciences in the field of nutrition, health, nature, and the living environment. The university consists of only one faculty that is divided into five departments⁵. Each department consists of chair groups and collaborates with one or two WUR Research Institutes. These Research Institutes are engaged in applied research and the valorization of knowledge.

Of these five departments the Social Sciences Group is selected for further study. This choice is based on the fact that this department⁶ has made many arrangements for supporting the researchers of the Social Sciences Group in the acquisition of research projects. The Social Sciences Group consists of eleven chair groups, which hold twenty-two chairs.

The department Social Sciences has a support staff (a Liaison Office and a Financial & Control Office) which supports the researchers during the different phases of grant procurement. At the centralized level of the university, support is available through the International Helpdesk. Its focus is on European grant applications and supporting the support staff at the lower levels in the organization.

5.2 Initiate phase

The various steps of the initiate phase and the differences between the three universities will be discussed in this paragraph. Table 3 shows a schematic view of the involvement of the different organization parts of the universities in the various steps.

5.2.1 Inquiring grant opportunities

The importance of this phase (for the researcher) is finding an opportunity to obtain funding for research. Therefore, researchers have to be aware of the grant opportunities available. The experienced researchers expressed that they are aware of the current (most common) opportunities that exist in their research area. The researchers benefit from their network, which makes them aware of (new) grant opportunities. In addition, they also search through their network for (new) opportunities. We have indentified differences between the universities with regard to the sources they look at when they seek funding. At the UM, we noticed that researchers are mainly engaged in finding opportunities in the

⁵ A department at Wageningen University is similar to a faculty at the other two universities in this research and will therefore be treated as being a faculty.

⁶ It is important to mention that every department of WUR has been able to make its own choices about the arrangements concerning supporting staff. Consequently the supporting arrangements and staff for grant procurement differs at every department.

second flow of funds. This is partly due to the co-financing requirements of European applications and the more complicated regulations. Within the second flow of funds, the researchers seek for as many as possible alternative funding opportunities. The researchers are supported from a centralized level in the university, namely the Centre for Contract Research. This Centre keeps track of all available and upcoming calls, and grant regulations and informs (by sending information and bilateral conversations) the researchers about the opportunities these calls and regulations offer (current, new, and future opportunities). The Centre is focused on a strategy selected by the university (this will be discussed in more detail in case of a co-financing obligation), which is more curiosity driven.

At the UT, the MESA+ management encourages researchers to write their research proposals themselves. A researcher has to be an expert in his field of study and able to write high quality proposals. These competences are important in obtaining grants and are seen as essential for a researcher. For this reason, researchers of MESA+ do not receive support (at least barely) in the initiation phase (and the following phases) from the institute. The 'standard' arrangements, openings, and grant regulations are considered as known to the researchers. The scientific advisory board of MESA+ (consisting of external academics) assists the management of the institute in matters concerning the research conducted at MESA+ and gives feedback on the scientific results of the institute (MESA+, 2007). In addition, concept programs are discussed to inform the professors of MESA+ institute about calls of FP7. At a central level in the university is a Liaison Officer that communicates European and other international funding opportunities to the researchers (by summarizing the relevant information of a grant scheme for a researcher) through e-mail. The aim is to ensure that it is easier for researchers to see whether a regulation is interesting for them or not, resulting in a less time consuming process for the researcher. This is primarily meant for (junior) researchers who do not have their own European network.

The Researchers at the WUR seek grant opportunities in the second and third flows of funds by themselves. At the level of the faculty, the researchers are supported by the Liaison Office in inquiring grant opportunities. The Liaison Office informs the researchers of possible calls and grant regulations that could be of interests to the researchers and notifies when these calls are due. In addition, at a central level the International Helpdesk provides the same service university-wide. However, their focus is on European applications and regulations. The researchers are informed by means of an internal website and e-mails.

5.2.2 Matching

Being aware of grant opportunities is not enough for a researcher. He/she should be able to match a grant regulation (with available funding) with his/her research interests, resulting in the possibility to write a competitive research proposal. The experienced researchers of the three universities indicated during the interviews that they are able to make such a match by themselves.

At the UM the research proposals need to be in line with the focus areas selected by the university. In consultation with the faculties, a strategy has been drawn in terms of the research focus. Within this strategy, the Centre for Contract Research searches for grant opportunities. Thus, the support staff available at the UM focuses primarily on supporting opportunities fitting the strategy of the university. At the faculty level a Research Council verifies whether a proposal fits. Thus, researchers have the autonomy to find a regulation which fits and matches their research goals. However, the researchers are

bound by the agreements made in the central research strategy. At the UT and WUR the researchers have the autonomy to complete this process by themselves.

At the WUR, researchers receive support in matching research ideas with grant regulations from the centralized and decentralized level in the university. However, their focus is limited. At the UT the researchers do not receive support in matching research ideas with grant regulations. The researchers are more autonomous.

		Level at the u	niversity		
Activity			Central level	Decentralized	Researcher's
				level	level
Initiate	e phase:		·	·	
•	Inquiring grant opportunities (current,	UM			
	new, future)	UT			
		WUR			
•	Matching (ambitions of researcher,	UM			
	ambitions of university, grantor body,	UT			
	regulations)	WUR			
•	Lobbying	UM			
		UT			
		WUR			
•	Identifying suitable partners and/or	UM			
	forming a consortium	UT			
		WUR			
•	'Go / no go' decision	UM			
		UT			
		WUR			

Table 3: Overview of the locations within the universities where the different activities of the initiate phase are performed. The color intensity stresses the significance of the activities performed at that level (Dark means a higher degree of implementation at that level).

5.2.3 Lobbying

The central level of the universities is involved in lobbying for grants. Personnel located at the central level of the universities are trying to set important things for their university on the agenda of Brussels or NWO. In that way the universities try to reduce the uncertainty for their university in the future. The Centre for Contract Research at the UM tries (if they are involved in grant projects) to explore new opportunities for future sequel projects, when a current project is already granted and running. Besides the central lobbying work of the liaison officer at the UT, MESA+ (being a leading nanotechnology institute in the Netherlands) gains reputation by initiating institute wide project applications. This may result in the opportunity to (initiate) set new project applications, to reduce their environmental uncertainty (see paragraph 5.5.2).

In addition, researchers have the opportunity to influence the available grant opportunities by lobbying. Researchers respond accordingly by writing own proposals for funding schemes. This creates at least two advantages when such a proposal becomes a grant regulation. First, one is aware of the opportunity of the grant scheme. Secondly, since the researcher has written the scheme, it is likely that he/she is the best person to conduct the actually research.

Another lobby opportunity for researchers is attending or taking part in committees of NWO or KNAW which increases the researchers reputation, resulting in an increase of his/her network and chances of being asked for conducting other research.

5.2.4 Identifying of suitable partners and/or consortium

Often a regulation requires a researcher to construct a consortium consisting of co-applicants from other institutes, often from abroad. The experienced researchers, we interviewed in this study, noted that this is not a problem. Researchers use their network to find partners for a project. Thus, the researchers depend on the quality (wide variety of partners) of their network for finding required partners. Sometimes the experienced researchers are asked by other researchers to collaborate in a proposal, because of their reputation in the scientific field. Suitable partners for a European consortium can be found through contacts of the staff at the centralized level in the university.

5.2.5 'Go / no go' decision

At the three universities a researcher has to estimate whether an application is scientifically feasible. In principal he/she does not require permission to start writing an application and submit it to the grantor body when the initiate phase is finished. However, the researchers do need permission in case the regulation requires co-financing of the university. In the case of the WUR this means approval has to be requested by the directorate through the Liaison Office before completing the apply phase. Therefore, it is expected to notify the Liaison Office in time about plans for writing and submitting a proposal. At the UT a researcher should notify the Finance and Control Office about his/her intensions before continuing with the apply phase. In the case of a co-financing obligation he/she needs permission of the dean before he/she starts writing a proposal. The dean of the faculty may authorize a proposal of which the contribution of the UT does not exceed € 450.000. Also at the UM researchers need approval of the dean when there is a co-financing obligation. The decentralized level at the UM has a say (as shown in Table 3) in the initiate phase. Mainly because the researcher must always obtain permission from the Research Council before an application can be submitted (Does the proposal fit within the central research strategy of the university? This will be explained in more detail in the apply phase.) to the grantor body. The Council checks whether a proposal is ethically justified (within the research strategy of the university). Therefore, it is wise to consult with the Research Council before starting the apply phase. When an application is ethically and financially feasible, it will (in principle) always be approved, because a researcher has to be free to determine his/her research direction. The central level of the UM also has a say in this phase, because the Centre for Contract Research monitors, while searching for grant opportunities, whether a proposal fits in the strategy of the university.

In case the centralized level at the UM is involved, it verifies whether a project is eligible. The notion is that every project has to be at least eligible when submitted to a grantor body. The same applies for the WUR, where the verification is done in the Liaison Office.

5.3 Apply phase

In this phase the actual proposals for an application have to be written and need to be sent to the grantor body. The phase consists of the steps as shown in Table 4.

5.3.1 Planning

In some cases a researcher has to request permission before starting to write an application (as mentioned in paragraph 5.2.5). During the apply phase there is a distinction between the tasks of the main applicants and co-applicants. A co-applicant is only responsible for writing his/her part of the scientific part of the application. At the universities, the main applicant is responsible for all parts (scientific, impact, and implementation) of the application. The main applicant for example, has to check whether the proposal complies with the rules and criteria of the regulation, preparing a budget within the grant criteria, enter into an agreement about who is responsible for the project management, get authorization (autographs and mandate from the required superiors), make appointments about reporting obligations, and negotiate with the grantor body about the exact conditions of the project. All these tasks have to be carefully organized by the main applicant. This is why we call this the Planning phase. At the WUR the Liaison Office can offer support to the researcher during this step. This is also the case for the Centre for Contract Research at the UM. However, at the UT this is the responsibility of the researcher.

5.3.2 Writing of scientific part

The researchers at the UT write their proposals themselves. Depending on the application this is done in collaboration with other researchers. Dependent on who is the main application, this requires more or less work, as already explained in the beginning of this section. During the writing of an application researchers consult with colleagues about the content and give each other feedback on the proposal. In a few cases (for example receiving feedback for a Veni, Vidi, Vici application) one may use support that is centrally organized. However, in such cases one has to hand in the proposal relatively far in advance (about six weeks before the deadline of the application). The researchers indicated that they lack the time to finish a proposal far in advance of a deadline. Thus, the researchers hardly make use of this opportunity, but ask for feedback from colleagues instead. The researchers at the other two universities operate in the same way. At the WUR, the researchers state that they only coordinate a project if it fits well in their own research agenda. The researchers use no external support, although one professor has thought about it. The reason was his lack of time and the confidence and trust in the person who could manage writing the application, because he was a former colleague researcher.

5.3.3 Writing of non-scientific part

During the writing of the non-scientific part, the researchers of the UM let a Finance and Control department at a decentralized level prepare and/or check the budget. This department also takes care of the accounting and reporting.

At the UT the department Finance and Control checks the budget. In case of 'large' projects, the department also prepares the budget and executes the financial reports. Before sending an application to the grantor body, a copy of the proposal is sent to the Finance and Control department.

The researchers of the WUR, can receive the following support of the Liaison Office: preparing the budget, prepare contract forms, contract negotiations, preparation of consortia agreements, answering

and/or helping researchers with questions, monitoring whether the application is submitted (Liaison Office reports this to the International Helpdesk), remind researchers of the deadlines for submission, etc. The International Helpdesk is mainly involved in the support of European projects. It can deliver the same support as the Liaison Office (depending on the structure of the department), but can also support in finding partners for a consortia, be present at (and support the researcher in) the negotiations during consortia meetings, assist in writing the impact and implementation part of an FP7 proposal, etc.

scripts and default procedures to prevent the need for a researcher to reinvent 'the wheel'. This is done in the UM. The researchers of the UT have to write the impact and implementation part of a project themselves.

		Level at the u	Level at the university			
Activity		Central level	Decentralized	Researcher's		
			level	level		
Apply phase:		-				
Planning	UM					
	UT					
	WUR					
Writing of scientific part (scientific	UM					
description of project goals, explain how	UT					
research will be conducted, expected	WUR					
results, researchers involved, discuss						
proposal internal)						
Writing of non-scientific part (preparing	UM					
of budget within grant criteria, enter in	UT					
agreement who is responsible, check and	WUR					
control deadlines, submission of						
proposal, project impact and						
implementation)						
Securing accountability (Obtain approval	UM					
autographs/mandate of superiors)	UT					
	WUR					

Table 4: Overview of the locations within the universities where the different activities of the apply phase are performed. The color intensity stresses the significance of the activities performed at that level (Dark means a higher degree of implementation at that level).

5.3.4 Securing accountability

The researchers at the three universities have been given the autonomy to submit their proposals according to the conditions already mentioned in the approval step of the initiate phase. It is therefore their own responsibility to successfully complete this final step of the apply phase by being authorized (when necessary) to submit their proposal to the grantor body. The same organizational parts of the

universities as in the 'go / no go' decision step of the initiate phase have a say in this final step for a successful completion of the apply phase.

5.4 Comply phase

All three universities basically have the same approach for the organization of the support of their researchers in this phase of the grant procurement process, showing little to no differences in the various activities that are part of this phase (as shown in Table 5).

5.4.1 Scientific deliverables and/or milestones

On the actual implementation of the research we can be brief. This is the responsibility of the researchers. Depending on the type of the project this involves one or more researchers. There will always be a main applicant in application. He/she can work together with other researchers (the co-applicants). The researchers are therefore responsible for the conduct of the project, resulting in the scientific and/or milestones. This step of the comply phase is logically the same at all the universities.

5.4.2 Writing scientific and financial reports

At all universities, the main applicant writes the reports concerning the scientific part of the grant. A possible co-applicant has to report his/her contribution to the scientific content and deliver it to the main applicant in time. The researchers themselves have to keep track how many hours they spend on the research.

In all universities a department Finance and Control can carry out the financial administration and do the financial reports. In the case of the UM, the Financial department always performs the financial reporting. In the case of the UT, the researchers let the Financial department perform the financial reports in case of 'major' projects, which are labour-intensive (with many financial reports and other obligations). In the case of 'small' projects the researchers will do the financial reports themselves. At the WUR, the Finance and Control Office of the department takes care of the financial reports, unless a researcher has chosen to do the financial reports by him/herself.

5.4.3 Project management

The main applicant is in principle the one who manages a project, unless otherwise agreed. This means that this is the responsibility of a researcher, often this is the project leader. He/she has to monitor the progression of the project, report to the grant body, etc. The project leader has to indicate when reports are due and have to be submitted. For example, when a financial report has to be submitted, when a specific percentage of the scientific deliverables is completed. In such a case the Financial department does not know when to report to the grantor body, because the department cannot know when a researcher has reached such a deliverable. However, the Financial department often will be aware when installments are due.

At the UM the Centre for Contract Research can help researchers to manage projects and give legal assistance, and steer the processes (Notifying researchers of opportunities and deadlines, and explain how to administrate and report to grantor bodies.). The researchers of the three universities do not use external parties for the project management. Although more than half of the researchers indicate that it would be a helpful assistance during European projects. In that type of projects someone is needed primarily for the project (management). At least if a researcher is the project leader. The researchers of

the UT do not make use of external support. One reason is the fact that checking the work of an external party still consumes time. However, the use of such support could be helpful, because less time is spent by the researcher on applying for a grant. This time can be used for conducting research. At the WUR there is no fixed way in how the researchers have to organize the coordination of a project. One group distributes the coordinating tasks within the research group, while the other group appoints one person to this job. When the Liaison Office is actively involved in an application, it sends the deadlines for reports and the like to the department Finance and Control, when the project is granted. The Finance and Control department is then aware of the deadlines and can then handle the financial reports for the researchers In case of conflict situations the Liaison Office takes care of the legal work. At the other two universities there is legal staff available at the central level of the university.

Activity		Level at the	Level at the university			
		Central	Decentralized	Researcher's		
		level	level	level		
Comply phase:						
 (Scientific) deliverables and/or 	· UM					
milestones	UT					
	WUR					
Writing scientific reports (for e	example UM					
project progress)	UT					
	WUR					
Financial administration repor	ts UM					
(budget, registering hours spe	nt, etc) UT					
	WUR					
Project management (monitor	ing UM					
progression, report to grantor	body, UT					
submission before deadlines, e	etc) WUR					
Final responsibility	UM					
	UT					
	WUR					

Table 5: Overview of the locations within the universities where the different activities of the comply phase are performed. The color intensity stresses the significance of the activities performed at that level (Dark means a higher degree of implementation at that level).

5.4.4 Final responsibility

The main applicant is accountable for the successful completion of this phase (Formally, the manager of the researcher is responsible: the dean of the faculty. However, the researchers have been given their own responsibilities and autonomy to do their work.) This applies to all required activities in this phase. This implies that the project leader is responsible both for the scientific part of the project as well as for the non-scientific part. When other researchers are involved in a project as co-applicants, the leading researcher is responsible to collect all the scientific deliverables before the deadlines of the grant

regulation, so the project leader can report in time to the grantor body. When a researcher is coapplicant, his/her only responsibility is to deliver the scientific deliverables in time to the main applicant. Besides the scientific content, the main applicant is also responsible for the non-scientific aspects of the project. He/she has to ensure that financial reports arrive in time (before the deadlines) to the grantor body. The preparation (and the processing) of the financial reports is in general not performed by the researcher but by the financial departments present at the faculty level.

5.5 **Consequences of organizational differences**

In the preceding paragraphs we discussed the differences in the organization of the grant procurement processes in the three Dutch universities. This showed that the differences between the universities are small. The question that remains is whether and what the implications of these differences are on the costs associated with the organization of the grant procurement processes. We discuss the consequences of these differences using the three key concepts derived from the transaction cost theory (supplemented with the resource dependency theory): frequency, uncertainty, and asset specificity, as discussed in Chapter 3.

First, we noted that all three universities do not directly charge the research groups for the use of the various support services present in the organizations. The support services are funded through overhead costs, regardless of research groups use these services or not. In this manner both centralized and decentralized support services of the researchers are financed indirectly, resulting in low costs awareness in the Dutch universities.

5.5.1 Frequency

At the UT (in the case of MESA+) the researchers have to be able to complete the grant procurement processes by themselves. Researchers have to be an expert in their field of study, being able to write high quality proposals, and be aware of the different grant opportunities. The researchers of the UT do receive some form of support, but to a lesser extent than the researchers of the other universities (at the WUR the researchers are supported at a centralized and decentralized level, where at the UM the researchers are supported at the centralized level). This results in higher opportunity costs (more time required for inquiring grant opportunities, writing of the proposals, etc.) for the researchers of the UT in comparison with the other two universities. This can result in a threshold to start a project in the first place. After all a researcher has to sort out more by himself/herself. This is especially the case when a researcher applies for a grant application for the first time (and is not very experienced) or when one applies for a European grant instead of a national grant.

When applications of a researcher are granted more often, his/her track record increases. This is also significant for the individual researcher. For an experienced researcher it will be easier to complete the grant procurement processes (and therefore the opportunity costs will be lower for an experienced researcher), because he/she knows what can/might be expected and knows to what aspects attention has to be paid. Furthermore, in case a researcher has many publications on a subject or acquires many projects, he/she would be preferred more easily to join a consortium.

5.5.2 Uncertainty

As already mentioned in Chapter 3, there are two types of uncertainty: environmental and behavioural. In that chapter we already indicated that behavioural uncertainty is less important in this study than environmental. Environmental uncertainty relates to a number of facets. For example, it is uncertain for universities and its researchers whether sufficient resources from grants can be gained in the future and/or current grant opportunities will not change or disappear in the future. When the environment changes, it is necessary to react and respond to those changes in time. This applies to all grant schemes. An example is when FP6 was followed by FP7. This new framework program introduced many changes compared to its predecessor. In the case of such massive changes it is important to anticipate in time so that the researchers have time to adjust to these changes in the environment. All three universities have personnel at centralized level that keeps track of the developments in Brussels, inform their researchers about these developments, and inform when upcoming calls are due. When researchers receive (ahead of their competitors) prior knowledge of upcoming grant schemes, it is possible for them to have a headstart on the competition. The research of the professors is mainly guided by their field of study. However, sometimes the researchers are encouraged to conduct research in the direction of which grant opportunities are available. Thus, the university and its researchers adapt to the changing environment. That is for instance why the UM created a central strategy that is directed to excel in certain research areas. Therefore the UM can profile itself on certain research areas, which should enhance their chances of success

In addition, the centralized support staff tries to influence the external demands of the environment to their benefits (stress the importance of certain themes, which in turn could lead to funding opportunities) through lobbying and agenda setting in Brussels. Lobbying at the level of the researcher seems to have no use, because this creates high opportunity costs.

Researchers have to expand their network which enables them to form a consortium easier, require a reputation (past perfection) by grantor bodies to increase their chances of success, and write proposals for funding schemes to create opportunities by themselves. For example, in order for a researcher to apply for an individual grant at ERC or a Marie Curie in FP7, the researcher should already have been rewarded with a grant from a national scheme.

At the WUR and UM, the researchers are supported in writing the impact and implementation of a project, which could increase the quality of their entire proposal, which in turn leads to a better success rate.

5.5.3 Asset specificity

Chapter 3 showed that the three of the six types of asset specificity play an important role in this study (we will discuss these types in order of significance, first being the most important), namely human asset specificity, brand name capital, and temporal specificity.

5.5.3.1 Human asset specificity

Investments in specialized explicit and implicit knowledge and procedures requiring know-how and learning by doing is the human asset specificity. All universities have done large investments in their human capital: their researchers, but also all other personnel that is involved during the grant procurement processes. These actors were addressed in the description of the three phases of the grant procurement. One important difference concerning the human capital has to be stressed. At the UT, the human capital is mainly invested in the researchers. The MESA+ researchers require sufficient competences to complete the grant procurement processes by themselves. Researchers possess most

knowledge concerning grant procurement. If a researcher leaves the university, the knowledge of the researcher is lost by the organization as a whole. In addition, the organization loses also the network of the researcher. Although this is the case for all universities, since a network is bound to a researcher. The UT has recently appointed a Liaison Officer at a centralized level to support (junior) researchers with international applications, which could help to overcome potential problems by information loss (when a researcher leaves the organization). Thus, the researchers can contact the Liaison Officer or their colleague researchers (as long as they are still within the organization) for knowledge about grant procurement of international applications. Regarding the potential loss of knowledge the WUR and the UM are ahead of the UT, because these two universities have already more staff employed who support researchers during grant procurement (both on the international and national level) and this staff is longer in service. In the case a researcher leaves the university there are still enough people in the organization who have sufficient knowledge of the grant procurement processes. A small difference between the WUR and the UM is the support what is offered at the centralized level. At the UM the centralized staff is willing to offer support during the entire process, where the support of the centralized staff at the WUR is more limited to the first two phases of the procurement process. The support during the final phase of the procurement is left to the local controllers at the WUR. Additionally, the UM has a grant script which explains the steps one should take during grant procurement. Finally, all grant applications of the UM are stored in a central database. In the specific case studied at the WUR the knowledge of grant procurement is also present at the decentralized level in the Liaison Office. Staff who have knowledge of (and support the researchers during) the grant procurement processes is thus available at the centralized and decentralized levels in the organization. This results in some degree of duplication of services.

The three universities provide its (junior) researchers with opportunities to participate in various courses about grant procurement to keep the human capital intact. In addition, courses on grant procurement are offered to post-docs and these post-docs are involved in applications of other (senior) researchers, because being involved in applications of other researchers is a better way to learn about the procurement of grants instead of just following courses on grant procurement in general.

5.5.3.2 Brand name capital

The (scientific) quality of a proposal is one of the most important aspects during the application of a grant. However, the reputation of the applicant (and/or co-applications) is also significant. The chances of success can be increased when the applicants have a good reputation in their research area. The research of a university's researchers may be known for delivering a certain quality, however it is expected that this has little influence on whether an individual researcher can use this reputation for his/her benefits. It might be possible that researchers of the UT benefit from the reputation of the MESA+ institute as being part of this leading and successful institute for nanotechnology. The researchers of the WUR cannot use the reputation of a research institute, because at the WUR there is an explicit distinction between the departments and research institutes (when collaborating in a consortium it is possible to use the reputation of such an institute).

5.5.3.3 Temporal specificity

The timing of delivery is crucial in the case of temporal specificity, because it has effect on the product value (for instance a grant will not be granted if the deadline is passed before the application is submitted). This is especially important for the leading researcher, because he/she has the final responsibility and has to ensure that deadlines are met (for instance the forming of a consortium, the writing of a proposal, the writing of financial reports, etc.). Although at all universities the involved personnel are responsible for the execution of their contribution of a project it is the leading researcher who has the final responsibility. He/She has to verify whether all parts of a project are completed on time. Supporting departments of the universities decide which projects (and which activities) are given priority over others (usually the project of which the deadline is due first). However, the leading researcher has to consider the fact that he/she cannot request support at the last minute in order to get priority over other projects.

5.6 **Conclusions**

As noted briefly in the previous section, the differences in the organization of the grant procurement processes in the three Dutch universities are small. We will now summarize the most striking results. At the three universities, the researchers perform the necessary activities of the grant procurement processes. When it is not feasible to perform the activities at the level of the individual, it is performed at a decentralized level or centralized level in the university. For example the lobbying processes in Brussels during the initiating phase. The most significant difference between the universities, because researchers at the UM need approval of the Research Council before submitting an application to a grantor body. However, this ensures that the UM can focus on its selected strategy during the lobbying process (what possibly simplifies this process). The other significant difference is that the supporting opportunities at the WUR at the decentralized level are far more developed than at the other two universities. Therefore, the researchers of the WUR can receive more support at a decentralized level in the first and (but also in the) second phase of grant procurement than researchers of the other universities.

The research groups of the three universities are not directly charged for the use of the various support services available at the universities. The supporting staff is financed (indirectly) through overhead costs. Combined with the fact that researchers do not track exactly how much time is spent on obtaining grants means that the cost awareness of grant procurement is low in the universities. Yet the majority of the grant procurement processes are done by the researcher (resulting in higher opportunity costs). Thus, the researcher requires much knowledge of the grant procurement processes to complete an application successfully or he/she just has to attempt to write an application (by 'trial and error' if necessary). Lowering opportunity costs seems therefore preferable or necessary. Training the researchers in grant procurement will likely result in lower opportunity costs. A significant aspect is the fact that experienced (senior) researchers have completed an application more often than junior researchers have. Consequently, these experienced researchers have the knowledge on how to complete an application successfully. It therefore seems smart to train (junior) researchers not only through general training on grant procurement, but also involve them in applications of experienced researchers. This is practice at all three universities.

At the UM and the WUR there is more (various types of) supporting staff available than at the UT, resulting in the storage of knowledge of grant procurement at more locations (whether or not this is stored in human capital). This can ensure that researchers have to sort out less in the case their knowledge of a grant application is deficit. Moreover, this ensures that the universities are less dependent on the human capital of its researchers, since the grant procurement knowledge is present in various locations at the university. A disadvantage is that this may provide duplication of services (especially in the case of the WUR), because the same kinds of activities are performed at various levels within the organization. However, when a researcher does not often apply for a grant application, there is sufficient supporting staff within the organization that has sufficient knowledge to support the researcher with an application, what could reduce the threshold of applying for a grant (which is significant because funding research by grants is increasing in importance). An advantage of the UT over the other two universities is that there is probably less overhead for matters which researchers should be able to do by themselves.

6. Conclusion

We will use the previous chapters to answer the main research question in this chapter. In brief we discuss the answers to the sub-questions of this research in the first paragraph. Then we answer the main question of this research. We conclude this chapter with a reflection on this study.

6.1 Sub-questions

In this section we discuss the answers to the various sub-questions. We have been able to answer the main question in paragraph 6.2 using the answers to the sub-questions.

1. Which types of research grants can be distinguished and what is their importance?

There are many grant opportunities for funding in the second and third flow of funds (with different types of funding forms), from different organizations. The grants in the second flow of funds are distributed through the authorities KNAW and NWO. Universities and researchers can also apply for grant in the third flow of funds, for example European grants. A distinction between types of grant forms can be made. In open competition a financer places funds at the disposal of researchers who are free to choose the theme of their research or are free to create their own research projects. In the case of thematic competition financial resources are available for research in a particular research area or on a particular theme. In consortia competition a financer provides funds for a limited number of consortia. The European funding can be compared with thematic competition, although consortia have to be formed.

The importance of grants to universities and its researchers results from the fact that universities primarily use grants to finance its research. The increase of competitive funds in the second and third flow of funds implies more that effort and more costs of the university are needed to acquire grants in the future.

2. What is grant procurement and how is it organized in general?

Grant procurement is the process from a project idea, developed into a grant application up until the final payment and/or settlement, the justification of the activities and associated obligations. after the grant assessment. In the process three stages can be distinguished: initiate, apply, and comply. The most important step in the initiate phase is making a match between the (project) goals of a researcher and the goals of the grantor body. This requires knowledge of the various grant opportunities. Researchers can become aware of grant opportunities by means of their own initiatives, their network, supporting staff, or external organizations. The apply phase consists of the preparation of the actual grant submission, the writing of a comprehensive application, and the submission of the application to the grantor body. The scientific contents cover a project plan consisting of a scientific description of the goals of the research, how the research will be conducted, what the expected results are, the researchers involved, etc. The non-scientific contents cover activities such as preparing the budget within the grant criteria, check whether the project matches the criteria of the regulation, get authorization, potential contract negotiations, etc. In general the researchers take care of the scientific

part of the application. The leading researcher usually receives support of a support department during the non-scientific part of the apply phase. The final stage of grant procurement starts when the grantor body approves the submitted application. Then the recipient of the grant has to meet the conditions of the grant commitment. Thus, actually conducting the research and reporting the scientific and financial deliverables. The latter can once again be taken care of by a supporting department. During the stages of grant procurement there usually is a leading researcher who is responsible for a successful completion. The complete execution of grant procurement is time consuming and labor intensive. Although some activities can be done by supporting staff, the researcher always has to be involved during an application, because the knowledge of the scientific contents is essential while writing an application.

3. What factors have an impact on the university's costs (mostly in terms of time) resulting from the grant procurement processes?

The transaction costs play a significant role in the costs and benefits of the grant procurement processes. For starters the factor uncertainty, which can be reduced if the university can reduce its dependency on grants. The individual research is hardly able to reduce this uncertainty. The university has as an organization limited impact on the reduction of uncertainty by lobbying for research areas that are important to the university. In this manner a university can reduce the environmental uncertainty. Reducing the uncertainty is also possible by keeping track of (upcoming) changes and communicating the impact of these changes on the grant procurement processes to the researchers. These activities are only possible when the university employs supporting personnel for these activities. Researchers can utilize such services in the instance that they do not regularly apply for an application. The factor frequency in which a researcher applies for a grant influences the opportunity costs. The lower the frequency the more difficult it is for a researcher to complete the entire grant procurement processes successfully. A support department is able to support a researcher in such events, resulting in lower opportunity costs and less time of the researcher is required during grant procurement. Supporting researchers during the writing of the impact and implementation parts of a project, could help increase the quality of the total project, and help increase the success rate of submitted proposals. An Increase in the quality of the grant procurement process results in less uncertainty of receiving a grant. Of the third factor asset specificity, it is the factor human capital that has much influence on the transaction costs. Thus 'storing' knowledge in several places (researchers, supporting staff, grant scripts, etc.) in the university is important, this way it is easily accessible for researchers and a drain of knowledge can be prevented, which will have a positive effect on the transactions costs.

4. How is the grant procurement process shaped in three Dutch universities? Where do we see differences, and what can be said about the time spent by academics and support staff on the various stages in the process?

The experienced and/or senior researchers of the three Dutch universities indicated that they have sufficient knowledge and experience to complete the grant procurement processes successfully. The researchers have acquired this knowledge and experience by simply applying for grants. During the

grant procurement processes these researchers make use of a finance and control department for the administrative and/or financial activities only. When researchers are trying to figure out how to complete a grant application successfully this creates high opportunity costs. At all universities there is at a centralized level staff employed that focuses on these aspects by directing (junior) researchers during (especially) the initiate phase. In addition, opportunities are made available for the training of researchers. Such training can reduce these opportunity costs, just like enough support during the grant procurement. Apart from offering training opportunities, the staff at a centralized level also lobbies for the university as a whole in Brussels to reduce uncertainty. The support at decentralized level focuses mainly on administrative and financial activities. The most striking differences between the Dutch universities are the fact that researchers of the UM have less autonomy to decide to submit a proposal to a grantor body where at the WUR different types of supporting services are available for its researchers. At the UM the Research Council verifies whether an application fits within the strategy of the university before a researcher can submit a proposal. The researchers of the WUR receive more support (for example in inquiring grant opportunities) at a decentralized level than researchers of the other universities do. None of the universities keeps track of the costs of the support. These costs are charged to the research groups by overhead. Therefore the cost awareness of grant procurement is low at the Dutch universities. Researchers of the WUR and UM receive support in writing the impact and implementation part of a project proposal.

6.2 Main research question

In this paragraph we will answer the main question of our study:

How can universities organize their grant procurement process in such a way that there is an adequate balance between the time spent by academics and support staff on grant procurement and the expertise accumulated by those engaged in the process?

The majority of the grant procurement processes is done by the researcher which results in higher opportunity costs. In addition, the support services are funded though overhead costs. Both centralized and decentralized support services of the researchers are financed indirectly. This results in low costs awareness in the Dutch universities. Nevertheless, the experienced and/or senior researchers of the three Dutch universities indicated during the interviews, that they are all able to find, apply for, and receive grants. This study shows that there are minor differences in the organizational structures of the universities which are used during grant procurement. Also, we notice that the universities (as discussed in sub-question 4) take into account similar factors (as discussed in sub-question 3) which influence the grant procurement processes. We will use this information to stress the important aspects in the organizational structure of the grant procurement processes.

We have shown that it is important that researchers are involved during the grant procurement processes, because the researchers are at least required during the writing and performance of the scientific parts of a grant. We distinguish senior (and/or experienced) researchers and (junior) researchers, because different supporting services are required. The senior researchers receive sufficient support when administrative and financial support is received during the last two stages of grant procurement. Senior researchers have sufficient knowledge on how to complete the first stages of

grant procurement of well-known grant opportunities, because frequent applications have be done and are completed successfully. During those early processes the researchers do not necessarily require supporting services.

The total demand of administrative and financial support of researchers in the university will be high. Therefore it is suitable to organize this support at a decentralized level in the university, for instance at the faculty level.

Senior researchers have indicated that the easy way of learning to write successful grant applications is a matter of trial and error. Reading approved proposals assists this learning process, attending an evaluating commission for proposals of other researchers is even more helpful in understanding what is important in a proposal. It is therefore wise to assist junior researchers during grant procurement and to involve them in research proposals of senior researchers. Besides of being involved in grant procurement of experienced researchers, (junior) researchers should have the opportunity to follow specific courses on grant procurement. Centralized staff in the university could organize these courses. Coaching and training ensures that (junior) researchers have to sort out less by themselves, resulting in less opportunity costs. In the case that a researcher is already experienced at the national level, but not on the European level, the same steps can be applied as for the junior researchers.

The 'coaching' of (junior) researchers ensures that the human capital (the knowledge of grant procurement) is passed on. The organization is thus less dependent on the senior researchers when one of them decides to leave the university. Furthermore, the staff at a centralized level ensures that knowledge of the first stages is available and that researchers can be supported. From this level in the organization arrangements can be made for the development of default procedures, grant scripts, etc. This results in the 'storage' of knowledge of the grant procurement (as done in UM).

When researchers have not applied frequently for a grant application, this means that it will be difficult to find an opportunity (in the list of many available grant opportunities) which applies to his/her research area. It is important to know how to find opportunities, because of the increase of competition for project funding. Employing personnel who is able to provide support during these activities by inquiring, monitoring, and communicating the opportunities to its researchers seems a sensible idea. This staff can also lobby in Brussels to reduce uncertainties about future grant opportunities. To avoid duplication of services organizing these activities at a centralized location seems better instead of organizing these activities at several decentralized places in the university. Experienced researchers are already aware of the opportunities offered or are kept informed through their network. This kind of support seems therefore less necessary for experienced researchers which emphasize the fact that this can be arranged at a centralized support department. Finally, experienced researchers can also share and pass on their knowledge of finding grant opportunities to (junior) researchers.

In short, a recommend structure for a university's grant procurement process would be like the following. Researchers should always be involved during the grant procurement processes, because of their scientific knowledge. The opportunity costs of a grant application should be lowered. This could be achieved by training (junior) researchers on grant procurement processes and by and 'mentoring' them during an application. Secondly, grant scripts and default procedures can be created at a centralized

department to prevent the need for researchers to keep reinventing the wheel. For example, default drafts on how to write an impact and implementation part of a project proposal. Supporting researchers in those aspects of a proposal could help increase the success rate and therefore lower the uncertainty of acquiring a grant. In addition, uncertainty of grant opportunities in the future could be reduced by lobbying at Brussels or NWO. Finally, such a centralized department should inquire, monitor, and communicate upcoming grant opportunities to its researchers. Resulting in the fact that researchers could be more easily aware of opportunities and the opportunity costs would be lower. At a decentralized level, in a faculty, it would be recommend to organize support for administrative and financial tasks, to reduce the workload of researchers.

6.3 Reflection

We need to make some remarks on this study. The first one is the fact that we studied researchers of different research fields. It is possible that in different research areas more and/or diverse funding opportunities are available (or more competition), making it easier for researchers of one research area to obtain funding than others researchers in their area. However, the same grant procurement processes and activities have to be completed and be organized.

The second one is the fact that we studied only one faculty per university. It might be possible that the way of organizing grant procurement differs in the faculties of a university. This is the case at the WUR. We studied the faculty where the support at a decentralized level was most developed. At the other two universities we gained the impression that the organizational support of the grant procurement was the same at different faculties. This could be examined in a follow-up study just as the consequences of these possible differences.

Finally, in the beginning of this thesis we stated several times that researchers could also be supported by external parties. So far, we have not discussed this possibility in this study, because the selected researchers of the various universities did not use external support. For a follow-up study it would be interesting to examine this in more detail. Then, it is important to selected universities and especially researchers who actually make use of external support.

There are however aspects of the grant procurement processes that can be outsourced. In short, we will discuss the expected effects and applications of outsourcing in this reflection. The use of external parties will depend in a smaller degree on the factors which are discussed in the internal support options, but will depend more on the availability and/or presence of internal support options. We expect that an external party is used when it offers supporting services which are not offered internally and/or these services are of added value. In addition, to be able to hire such external party at all, a research group requires sufficient funds.

The costs awareness at the universities is low, because none of the studied universities keeps track of the supporting costs. Thus, as long as the costs of the supporting staff are indirectly charged to the research groups, the costs of using an external party will seem higher, resulting in a low to none propensity to use external parties. Identifying the costs of required support could potentially lead to efficient use of internal support and (more use of) external support. When the universities and its researchers are familiar with the costs of grant procurement processes, one could make a consideration whether to outsource parts of the grant procurement processes.

As reported before, the uncertainty affects the costs of the grant procurement processes. The expectation is that it will be more difficult to obtain grants in the future. Mainly due to the increase in competitive funding forms as already listed in chapter 1. Therefore, it will be important to increase the success rate and be able to inquire less obvious grant possibilities to reduce competition.

From the foregoing we conclude that in the future more attentions has to be and will be paid to the grant procurement processes in the universities and to the support of its researchers.

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Appendix A: Explanation of calculations PNO

In Chapter 1 is stated that about 10% of the total benefits of the Dutch universities is a result from grants. This appendix explains how these figures are calculated. PNO used the published annual figures of the Dutch universities of the year 2006. Nine out of a total of fourteen (all Dutch universities) universities gave complete insight in the origin of their revenues. The universities that did not publish all figures are excluded from this research. This involves the following universities: Eramus Uninversity Rotterdam, Open Universiteit Nederland, Radboud University Nijmegen, Delft University of Technology, and VU University Amsterdam. The revenues of the other universities are divided in five categories: International, national, NWO/KNAW, NON-profit, and companies (See Table 6).

Amounts in 1 * 10 ⁶ €	International	National	NWO/	NON-	Companies	Total	Total
			KNAW	profit		revenue	benefits
University of Groningen	9,7	11,7	23,7	21,4	8,2	74,7	520,0
Eindhoven University of							
Technology	1,7	1,8	19,2	3,9	38,0	64,6	264,7
Leiden University	8,9	5,7	28,2	2,8	2,7	48,3	404,7
Maastricht University	7,6	6,5	11,0	13,9	7,5	46,5	305,9
University of Twente	8,4	7,9	19,3	5,6	7,6	48,8	268,3
Utrecht University	11,8	17,6	41,2	31,7	16,3	118,6	695,1
University of Amsterdam	15,7	10,1	21,2	5,7	4,8	57,5	568,4
Tilburg University	2,5	5,0	7,6	0,6	0,8	16,5	149,8
Wageningen University							
and Research Centre	11,6	13,0	11,7	10,8	7,5	54,7	224,3
Total	77,9	79,3	183,1	96,4	93,3	530,1	3401,2

Table 6: Total revenues and benefits of Dutch universities in 2006 (annual reports of 2006).

PNO's objective was to determine the revenues of the Dutch universities from grants as a ratio to their total benefits. Therefore, the revenues from the non-profit and those received from companies are excluded in their research, because these revenues do not comply with the definition of a grant. The category NWO/KNAW is the only one, which can be determined for 100% as a grant. The two other categories are not solely a grant. PNO, as a hands-on expert, estimated that 90% of the international and national revues are a result from grants. This percentage is used to determine the total quantity of grants in case of the categories international en national. This results in the figures shown in Table 7.

Amounts in 1 * 10 ⁶ €	International	National	NWO/	Total	Total
	grants	grants	KNAW	grants	benefits
University of Groningen	8,7	10,5	23,7	43,0	520,0
Eindhoven University of Technology	1,5	1,6	19,2	22,4	264,7
Leiden University	8,0	5,1	28,2	41,3	404,7
Maastricht University	6,8	5,9	11,0	23,7	305,9
University of Twente	7,6	7,1	19,3	34,0	268,3
Utrecht University	10,7	15,8	41,2	67,7	695,1
University of Amsterdam	14,1	9,1	21,2	44,4	568,4
Tilburg University	2,2	4,5	7,6	14,3	149,8
Wageningen University and Research Centre	10,5	11,7	11,7	33,9	224,3
Total	113,1	115,1	285,4	324,6	3401,2

Table 7: Total benefits from grants of Dutch universities in 2006 (estimated on annual reports of 2006).

Based on these data, the amount of grants is determined as a ratio of the total university benefits. This means that these nine universities averaged 9,5% of their total income from grants (as shown in Table 8).

	International grants	National grants	NWO/ KNAW	Total grants
University of Groningen	1,7 %	2,0 %	4,6 %	8,3 %
Eindhoven University of Technology	0,6 %	0,6 %	7,3 %	8,5 %
Leiden University	2,0 %	1,3 %	7,0 %	10,2 %
Maastricht University	2,2 %	1,9 %	3,6 %	7,7 %
University of Twente	2,8 %	2,6 %	7,2 %	12,7 %
Utrecht University	1,5 %	2,3 %	5,9 %	9,7 %
University of Amsterdam	2,5 %	1,6 %	3,7 %	7,8 %
Tilburg University	1,5 %	3,0 %	5,1 %	9,5 %
Wageningen University and Research Centre	4,7 %	5,2 %	5,2 %	15,1 %
Total	2,1 %	2,1 %	5,4 %	9,5 %

Table 8: Grant benefits of Dutch universities as a ratio of its total university benefits (estimated on annual reports of 2006).

Appendix B: List of respondents

In the table below an overview of the respondents for this research is given. The order of the respondents is by interview date.

Interview	Organization	Person	Date
1.	PNO Consultants	Mr. Bieleman	12-08-2008
2.	PNO Consultants	Mr. Kalf	12-08-2008
3.	Wageningen University and Research Centre	Mr. Wolters	12-18-2008
4.	PNO Consultants	Mr. Hankel	01-05-2009
5.	University of Twente	Mr. File	04-07-2009
6.	Yellow Research	Ms. Jaspers	04-23-2009
7.	University of Maastricht	Mr. Daniels	04-28-2009
8.	Wageningen University and Research Centre	Ms. Van Driel	05-14-2009
9.	Wageningen University and Research Centre	Mr. Wolters	05-14-2009
10.	Wageningen University and Research Centre	Mr. Wiskerke	05-18-2009
11.	University of Twente	Ms. Herek	05-19-2009
12.	University of Twente	Ms. Luizink	05-29-2009
13.	Wageningen University and Research Centre	Mr. Mol	06-09-2009
14.	University of Maastricht	Ms. Jansma	06-16-2009
15.	University of Maastricht	Mr. Ramaekers	06-16-2009
16.	University of Twente	Mr. Subramaniam	06-17-2009
17.	University of Maastricht	Mr. Arntz	06-26-2009
18.	University of Twente	Mr. Vermeij	06-30-2009

Appendix C: Questionnaires

The questionnaires which are used as a guideline for the interviews (in Dutch) are included in this appendix.

Interview protocol voor hoogleraar of universitair hoofddocent

Introductie:

In het kader van mijn afstudeerscriptie voor mijn master Public Administration (MEL) aan de Universiteit Twente heb ik contact met u opgenomen. Ik ben namelijk bezig met een onderzoek naar de organisatie van de subsidieprocessen bij de verschillende universiteiten in Nederland. Ik wil ondermeer trachten om een antwoord te geven op de vraag of het loont om op centraal niveau een subsidie ondersteuningsafdeling in te richten en operationeel te houden. Wegen de voordelen van een dergelijke ondersteuningsafdeling op tegen te kosten (zowel op financieel gebied als bijvoorbeeld qua interne bureaucratie)?

Ik heb begrepen dat uw onderzoeksgroep betrokken is bij Zou u in het kort kunnen vertellen waar uw onderzoek over gaat?

Introductievragen:

Ter introductie zou ik graag eerst wat feitelijke vragen aan u willen stellen om een goed beeld te krijgen van uw onderzoeksgroep.

- 1. Hoeveel tijd besteedt u aan de volgende activiteiten?
 - Onderzoek
 - Onderwijs
 - Verwerving van projecten
 - Administratieve activiteiten, bijvoorbeeld van de financieringsverplichtingen (intern, extern, subsidies, contractonderzoek, etc.)
 - Juridische zaken
 - Overig
 - a. Heeft u de indruk dat deze tijdsbesteding hetzelfde is als die van uw directe collega's?
 - i. Waar zit dit verschil dan in?
- 2. Wat voor ondersteuning kunt u en overige medewerkers van uw vakgroep krijgen bij het uitvoeren van activiteiten die met subsidieaanvragen te maken hebben? En van wie?
 - a. Waar bestaat deze ondersteuning uit?
- 3. Hoe wordt het onderzoek van uw onderzoeksgroep gefinancierd? [ANTWOORD OMCIRCLEN]
 - a. Basis financiering (eerste geldstroom)?
 - b. Subsidieregelingen (Bijvoorbeeld: NWO, KP7, ERC, IOP, Smart Mix, Valorization grant, OTP, Bsik)?
 - c. Contractonderzoek?
 - d. Anders?
- 4. Hoeveel onderzoeksprojecten lopen er in uw onderzoekgroep?
 - a. Worden hiervoor standaard bepaalde subsidieregelingen voor aangesproken?
 - b. Wat is de looptijd van deze subsidieregelingen?
 - c. Treden er binnen deze regelingen vaak veranderingen op?

i. Zijn dit ingrijpende veranderingen die zorgen voor meer complicaties bij de aanvraag ten opzicht van de vorige?

Binnen het subsidieproces, zoals ik dat in mijn onderzoek omschrijf, zie ik drie fases. De initiatiefase, de aanvraagfase en de realisatiefase. Van **PERSOON** heb ik vernomen dat u zich onder andere bezighoudt met enkele subsidieregelingen **X,Y,Z**. Ik zou graag aan de hand van een recent afgelopen of nog lopend subsidieproces van een van deze **subsidieregelingen** deze fases doorlopen.

Hoe ging deze aanvraag in zijn werk?

Initiatie:

- 5. Wie kwam met het onderzoeksidee en met de match met een subsidiemogelijkheid?
 - a. Doet u dat vaker zelf? Of doet u vaker mee met iemand anders?
 - b. Wie zijn er nog meer bij betrokken? In het begin al?
 - c. Wie hield de opening van deze subsidie aanvraag in de gaten? (U of de hoofdaanvrager?).
 - i. Is dat gebruikelijk (standaardprocedure)? Eventueel waarom nu niet?
 - ii. Of is er iemand die voor uw onderzoeksgroep de 'calls' van verschillende regelingen bijhoudt?
 - iii. Wie? Wat doet deze persoon nog meer?
 - d. Kijkt u; de hoofdaanvrager of persoon onder vraag c ook naar nieuwe subsidiemogelijkheden?
 - e. Hoe blijft u op de hoogte van procedures (en eventuele veranderingen) van specifieke regelingen?
- 6. Hoeveel ervaring heeft u met de (mede)aanvraag van deze regeling ANTWOORD omcirkelen?
 - a. Hoeveel ervaring heeft u met subsidie aanvragen (in het algemeen)?
 - i. Aantal jaar (schatting geven)
 - ii. Aantal aanvragen (per jaar, schatting geven)
 - iii. Wat is in het algemeen uw rol bij deze aanvragen?
 - b. Hoe komt u aan deze ervaring?
 - i. U heeft vaker een aanvraag voor deze (of soortgelijke) regeling ingediend
 - ii. U bent (vaker) betrokken geweest als medeaanvrager bij deze regeling
 - iii. U heeft een training gehad
 - iv. U heeft voldoende ervaring opgedaan met andere aanvraag trajecten
 - v. Anders
 - c. Is voorgaande keren de aanvraag altijd succesvol geweest?
 - i. Waarom niet?
 - ii. Wat voor invloed heeft dit op een nieuwe aanvraag?
- 7. Wat voor gevolgen heeft het dat u zelf / dat u niet de initiatiefnemer van een project bent?
 - a. Verschil tussen wel en niet inschakelen van de ondersteuningsmogelijkheden die reeds genoemd zijn bij vraag 2?
 - b. Wat doet u zelf liever? Waarom?
 - c. Is er een standaardprocedure voor de te nemen stappen?
 - d. Is er een taakverdeling?
 - e. Gaat dat altijd zo? Eventueel waarom nu niet?

- 8. Wie neemt de uiteindelijk 'go / no-go' beslissing (de beslissing om een aanvraag daadwerkelijk in te gaan dienen)?
 - a. Heeft u als hoofdaanvrager/medeaanvrager goedkeuring nodig van bovenaf?
 i. Van wie?
 - b. Worden er subsidiecoördinatoren op centraal en/of decentraal niveau op de hoogte gehouden met welke subsidieaanvragen u zich bezighoudt?
 - i. Moet u bijvoorbeeld bij elk onderzoeksproject dat u start hen op de hoogte brengen van dit project of u nu subsidie gaat aanvragen of niet?
 - ii. Hebben deze coördinatoren een andere manier van waarborging geregeld?
- 9. Wordt er in deze beginfase bijgehouden hoeveel tijd u kwijt bent aan de voorbereiding van een projectaanvraag?
 - a. Of hoeveel tijd mensen voor u kwijt zijn aan de voorbereiding van dit project?
 - b. Worden de kosten voor deze mensen voor deze voorbereiding, direct aan u doorberekend?
 - c. Of betaalt u een vast percentage van de opbrengsten van uw subsidieaanvraag aan een ondersteuningsafdeling?
 - d. Wat gebeurt er met de gemaakte kosten indien het projectidee niet verder komt dan deze fase?
 - i. Is dat bij elke fase het geval?

Nadat de initiatie fase is afgehandeld moet de daadwerkelijke aanvraag worden gerealiseerd in de aanvraagfase.

Het schrijven van een subsidievoorstel bestaat uit meerdere delen, zo is er een inhoudelijk deel (het project), maar moeten er bijvoorbeeld ook administratieve zaken geregeld worden, moet er een begroting worden opgesteld etc. De volgende vragen hebben betrekking op het schrijven van deze verschillende onderdelen.

Hoe gaat het schrijven van de aanvraag in zijn werk?

Het inhoudelijke gedeelte en het deel van administratie, begroting en rapportagesysteem Kortom inleidend stukje vertellen en dan geïnterviewde laten vertellen.

10. Worden er onderdelen uitbesteed aan interne partijen?

- a. Welke onderdelen dan? (administratie, juridische regels, procedures, het attenderen op deadlines, contractonderhandelingen etc.) Zijn er standaard regels voor wat wel en niet kan en/of mag?
 - i. Worden voor deze onderdelen kosten in rekening gebracht?
 - 1. Zijn hier standaard regels voor?
 - 2. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?
 - 3. Vast tarief per aanvraag?
- b. Gebeurt dit vaak?
- c. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren?
 - i. Hoe zag dit er eerst uit dan?
 - ii. Hoe zit dit er nu uit?
 - iii. Waarom is dit gewijzigd?
- d. Wat is er veranderd aan de ondersteuningsmogelijkheden die u ter beschikking heeft?
 - i. Hoe zag die er eerst uit dan?
 - ii. Hoe ziet die er nu uit?

- iii. Waarom is die gewijzigd?
- iv. Op welk niveau wordt er ondersteuning aangeboden?
 - 1. Op decentraal of op centraal niveau?
 - a. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren? Hoe?
 - 2. Waar bestaat deze ondersteuning uit (van decentrale of centrale opgeslagen informatie, cursussen, accountantsondersteuning, juridische ondersteuning, etc.)?
 - 3. Hoe gaat die precies in zijn werk?
 - 4. Maakt u er gebruik van? (waarom wel/niet?)
 - 5. In welke mate?
- v. Welke afspraken zijn gemaakt over wie verantwoordelijk zijn?
- vi. Hoe worden de diensten van interne ondersteuning gefinancierd?
 - 1. Zijn hier standaardregels voor?
 - 2. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?
 - 3. Vast tarief per aanvraag?
- vii. Is er een verschil in soort van ondersteuning en de daarbij horende financiering?
 - 1. Wat is dit verschil?

11. Besteedt u ook onderdelen uit aan externe partijen?

- a. Welke onderdelen dan? (administratie, juridische regels, procedures, het attenderen op deadlines, contractonderhandelingen etc.) Zijn er standaard regels voor wat wel en niet kan en/of mag?
- b. Gebeurt dit vaak?
- c. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren?
 - i. Hoe zag dit er eerst uit dan?
 - ii. Hoe ziet dit er nu uit?
 - iii. Waarom is dit gewijzigd?
- d. Waar bestaat de ondersteuning precies uit?
 - i. Wat doet iemand bij een externe uitbesteding?
 - ii. Waar kunt u gebruik van maken (van decentrale of centrale opgeslagen informatie, cursussen, accountants, juristen, etc.)
 - iii. Hoe gaat dit precies in zijn werk?
 - iv. Maakt u er gebruik van? (waarom wel/niet?)
 - v. In welke mate?
- e. Welke afspraken zijn gemaakt over wie verantwoordelijk zijn?
- f. Hoe worden deze partijen gefinancierd?
 - i. Zijn hier standaard regels voor?
 - ii. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?
 - iii. Vast tarief per aanvraag?

12. Wat zijn de criteria om te beslissen of er bepaalde procedures worden uitbesteed (intern)?

- a. Zijn deze hetzelfde in het geval van externe uitbesteding?
- 13. Wie is uiteindelijk verantwoordelijk voor een succesvolle aanvraag?
 - i. Hoe ziet u de verhoudingen tussen: hoofdaanvrager, medeaanvrager, ondersteunend personeel, externe partijen, etc.
 - ii. Wat voor verantwoordelijkheidsmechanismen worden gebruikt?
 - 1. Interne regels (interne beslissingen) versus contractrecht (wetgeving)

- 14. Geldt dit ook voor de rapportage in de realisatiefase?
- 15. Wie voert de rapportage daadwerkelijk uit?
 - i. Inhoudelijk
 - ii. Financiën
 - iii. Administratie
 - iv. Etc.
 - a. Is dit de standaard procedure?
 - i. Waarom is daar eventueel van afgeweken?
 - ii. Zijn er standaard afspraken en/of procedures die de bekostiging regelen (van bijvoorbeeld het monitoren van de financiën)?
 - b. Hoe worden belangrijke zaken, zoals deadlines gemonitoord (gekeken of ze wel op tijd gehaald worden)?

We hebben het nu over uw betrokkenheid bij het subsidieproces gehad. Ik zou het nu graag **even kort** over de **aio's** en **postdocs** in uw onderzoeksgroep hebben.

16. Hoe zijn de financiën voor het onderzoek van de aio's en postdocs geregeld?

- a. Hebben ze dit zelf moeten regelen?
- b. Worden ze al betrokken bij huidige subsidieaanvragen van uw onderzoeksgroep?
- c. Worden ze getraind in het aanvragen en/of schrijven van voorstellen voor een subsidieaanvraag?
 - i. Wie traint ze hierin? (Wie draait voor deze kosten op?)
 - 1. Intern
 - 2. Extern
- d. Is er op centaal en/of decentraal niveau een kennisinstituut dat kennis over subsidiemogelijkheden deelt en/of onderzoekers daarin traint?
- e. Wordt er voorlichting gegeven over subsidiemogelijkheden?
 - ii. Wie doet dit? (Wie draait voor deze kosten op?)
 - 1. Intern
 - 2. Extern
- f. Heeft u in verloop van tijd hier veranderingen in gezien?

Tot slot heb ik nog een aantal korte vragen.

- 17. Heeft u in de laatste jaren veranderingen gezien binnen de faculteit en/of universiteit met betrekking tot de aanpak van het subsidieverwervingsproces?
 - a. Juristen bijgekomen
 - b. Commerciële directeuren bijgekomen
 - c. Zijn er trainers voor voorlichting, training en opleiding bijgekomen
 - d. Coördinatoren bijgekomen
 - e. Ondersteuners bijgekomen

- 18. Is er bij dit project een verschil opgetreden tussen het subsidiebedrag vastgesteld in de verleningbeschikking en de vaststellingsbeschikking?
 - a. Wel bij andere projecten?
 - b. Wat is de gemiddelde realisatiegraad van projecten?

- c. Wat is de verklaring voor dit verschil?
 - i. Niet uitgevoerde activiteiten?
 - ii. Niet kunnen verantwoorden van activiteiten?
 - iii. Kosten zijn afgekeurd (omdat deze niet conform regelgeving kunnen worden verantwoord?)
- d. Wat is uw ervaring met accountantscontroles?
 - i. Worden kosten afgekeurd? Komt dit vaak voor?
 - ii. Wanneer heeft u de accountant bij het project betrokken?
 - iii. Heeft u in het begin van het project met de accountant overlegd (onderbouwing en verantwoording)?
- e. Wat is uw ervaring met controles van de subsidieverstrekker?
 - i. Hoe is de samenwerking en afstemming gedurende de uitvoering van het project met de subsidieverstrekkers?
- 19. Is het voor de ontwikkeling van uw onderzoeksprogramma van belang welke financieringsmogelijkheden er zijn?
- 20. Is er sprake van een kwantitatief optimale aanvraag? Daarmee wordt bedoeld: Wordt er subsidie aangevraagd voor alle kosten die volgens de regeling subsidiabel zijn? Of worden bepaalde kosten niet meegenomen in de subsidieaanvraag. Voorbeelden daarvan zijn:
 - het niet begroten van accountants kosten (terwijl een accountantsverklaring verplicht is)
 - het niet of te kort begroten van management/ overheadkosten
 - het niet begroten van kosten voor externe dienstverleners die later wel worden ingeschakeld.
- 21. Heeft zich ooit ex post (nadat de subsidieregeling is goed gekeurd) onenigheid voorgedaan over gemaakte afspraken?
 - a. Hoe is dit afgelopen?
 - b. Wat voor maatregelen zijn ex ante genomen om dit te voorkomen?
 - iii. Zijn dit standaard maatregelen?
 - iv. Worden die per subsidieaanvraag specifiek opgesteld?

Bij de volgende vragen, hoop ik dat u een schatting kunt geven.

- 22. Wat is de hoeveelheid aanvragen voor subsidies die uw onderzoeksgroep per jaar indient?
 - a. Hoeveel aanvragen worden goedgekeurd (gehonoreerd)? Slagingspercentage?
 - b. Wat is het totale bedrag aan subsidies dat wordt binnengehaald in een jaar?
 - i. Wat vraagt u aan en wat komt daarvan daadwerkelijk binnen?
 - c. Hoeveel FTE's kunnen hiervoor worden ingevuld?

De volgende vraag kan eventueel worden overgeslagen of er kan gevraagd worden wat ik op internet gevonden heb, klopt.

23. Hoeveel publicaties heeft u op uw naam staan in artikelen, boeken, rapporten?

- a. Wat is de frequentie van publicatie?
- b. Hoeveel van uw werk en/of onderzoek is collegiaal getoetst (of in hoeveel gevallen is er in uw werk / onderzoek sprake van peer review)?
- c. Hoeveel keer is uw werk en/of onderzoek geciteerd door andere onderzoekers?

We zijn aan het **einde** van dit interview gekomen. Ik dank u hartelijk voor uw medewerking. Als u nog vragen heeft over mijn onderzoek of over deze vragenlijst, dan beantwoord ik deze nu graag. Als u wilt kan ik u mijn afstudeerscriptie doen toekomen, nadat mijn colloquium heeft plaats gevonden.

Interviewprotocol voor ondersteunend personeel

Introductie onderzoek:

In het kader van mijn afstudeerscriptie voor mijn master Public Administration (MEL) aan de Universiteit Twente heb ik contact met u opgenomen. Ik ben namelijk bezig met een onderzoek naar de organisatie van de subsidieprocessen bij de verschillende universiteiten in Nederland. Ik wil ondermeer trachten om een antwoord te geven op de vraag of het loont om op centraal niveau een subsidie ondersteuningsafdeling in te richten en operationeel te houden. Wegen de voordelen van een dergelijke ondersteuningsafdeling op tegen te kosten (zowel op financieel gebied als bijvoorbeeld qua interne bureaucratie)?

Introductievragen:

Ter introductie zou ik graag eerst wat feitelijke vragen aan u willen stellen om een goed beeld te krijgen van uw ondersteuningsafdeling.

- 1. Wat is de samenstelling van uw ondersteuningsafdeling?
 - a. Kunt u aangeven hoeveel personeel in dienst is (in FTE) voor de ondersteuning van onderzoekers bij aanvragen?
 - b. Is dit veranderd in de loop der jaren?
 - i. Juristen bijgekomen
 - ii. Commerciële directeuren bijgekomen
 - iii. Zijn er trainers voor voorlichting, training en opleiding bijgekomen
 - iv. Coördinatoren bijgekomen
 - v. Ondersteuners bijgekomen
 - c. Hoe wordt dit gefinancierd?
- 2. Biedt u ondersteuning aan één specifieke onderzoeksgroep of kan een ieder bij u terecht?
- 3. Wat voor ondersteuning biedt u aan onderzoekers en/of onderzoeksgroepen?
 - Verwerving van projecten
 - Administratieve activiteiten, bijvoorbeeld van de financieringsverplichtingen (intern, extern, subsidies, contractonderzoek, etc.)
 - Juridische zaken
 - Voorlichting geven over subsidiemogelijkheden
 - Trainingen (voor het schrijven van aanvragen)
 - Bijhouden van calls
 - Attenderen op mogelijke interessante regelingen
 - Overig
- 4. Wat voor ondersteuning geeft u bij deze activiteiten?
 - a. Waar bestaat deze ondersteuning uit?
 - b. Hoeveel tijd besteedt u aan deze activiteiten?
 - c. Worden er per activiteit kosten in rekening gebracht?
- 5. Zijn de regelingen waarvoor u ondersteuning geeft vaak onderhevig aan veranderingen?
 - a. Zijn dit ingrijpende veranderingen die zorgen voor een bemoeilijking in de aanvraag ten opzicht van de vorige?
 - b. Hoe past u zich hierop aan?

Binnen het subsidieproces, zoals ik dat in mijn onderzoek omschrijf, zie ik drie fases. De initiatiefase, de aanvraagfase en de realisatiefase. Van **PERSOON** heb ik vernomen dat u zich onder andere bezighoudt met enkele subsidieregelingen X,Y,Z. Ik zou graag aan de hand van een recent afgelopen of nog lopend subsidieproces van een van deze **subsidieregelingen** een aantal vragen doorlopen.

Hoe ging deze aanvraag in zijn werk?

- 6. Bent u vanaf het begintraject bij deze subsidieaanvraag betrokken?
 - a. Heeft u de onderzoeker geattendeerd op deze regeling?
 - i. Bent u daar actief mee bezig? (op zoek naar mogelijkheden)
 - b. Houdt u 'calls' in de gaten voor onderzoekers van de universiteit?ii. Welke, voor iedereen?
 - c. Wie neemt de beslissing om uiteindelijk en/of een specifieke regeling de aanvraag in te dienen?
 - d. Wat is uw taak in dit begintraject?
- 7. Is dit de eerste keer dat u bij deze subsidieregeling betrokken bent?
 - a. Indien nee, is dit voorgaande keren altijd een succesvolle aanvraag geweest?
 - i. Waarom niet?
 - b. Wordt u in totaal vaak betrokken bij het aanvragen van subsidies in het begintraject?
 - i. Wat is in het algemeen uw rol bij deze aanvragen?
 - c. Hoe komt u aan uw ervaring met deze subsidieregeling?
 - i. U heeft vaker een aanvraag voor deze (of soortgelijke) regeling ingediend
 - ii. U bent (vaker) betrokken geweest als ondersteuner bij deze regeling
 - iii. U heeft een training gehad
 - iv. U heeft voldoende ervaring opgedaan met andere aanvraag trajecten
 - v. Anders
- 8. Wordt er in deze beginfase bijgehouden hoeveel tijd u kwijt bent aan de ondersteuning van de voorbereiding van een project aanvraag?
 - a. Worden de door u gemaakte kosten doorberekend aan de persoon die ondersteuning ontvangt?
 - b. Zijn hier afgesproken procedures voor? (zo ja wat voor afspraken?)
 - c. Wat gebeurt er met de gemaakte kosten indien het projectidee niet verder komt dan deze fase?
 - i. Is dat bij elke fase het geval?
- 9. Wie maakt de uiteindelijk 'go / no-go' beslissing?

Na de initiatie fase is afgehandeld moet de daadwerkelijke aanvraag worden gerealiseerd in de aanvraagfase.

- 10. Wordt u op de hoogte gehouden met welke subsidieaanvragen onderzoekers zich bezighouden?
 - a. Moeten zij bijvoorbeeld bij elk onderzoeksproject dat zij starten iemand van u afdeling op de hoogte brengen van hun project of ze nu subsidie gaan aanvragen of niet?
 - b. Is er een andere manier waarborging geregeld (zodat u op de hoogte blijft van wat er speelt)?

Het schrijven van een subsidievoorstel bestaat uit meerdere delen, zo is er een inhoudelijk deel (het project), maar moet er bijvoorbeeld ook administratieve zaken geregeld worden, moet er een begroting worden opgesteld etc. De volgende vragen hebben betrekking op het schrijven van deze verschillende onderdelen.

11. Wie is in de regel verantwoordelijk voor welke delen van een aanvraag?

- a. Hoe wordt dit bepaald / besloten?
- b. Is dit vastgelegd in standaard procedures of wordt dat per aanvraag bepaald?
- c. Welke onderdelen neemt u (of uw afdeling) in hoofdzaak voor uw rekening? (administratie, juridische regels, procedures, het attenderen op deadlines, het opzetten van een rapportagesysteem, opstellen begroting, etc.)
 - i. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren?
 - 1. Hoe zag dit er eerst uit dan?
 - 2. Hoe zit dit er nu uit?
 - 3. Waarom is dit gewijzigd?
 - ii. Worden voor deze onderdelen kosten in rekening gebracht?
 - 1. Zijn hier standaard regels voor?
 - 2. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?
 - 3. Vast tarief per aanvraag?
- 12. Nu wil ik iets dieper ingaan op de vorige vragen, vooral met betrekking tot de ondersteuning die u geeft.
 - a. Op welk niveau is de ondersteuning van subsidieaanvragen geregeld?
 - i. Is deze decentraal binnen de universiteit en/of binnen de faculteit geregeld?
 - ii. Is deze centraal binnen de universiteit geregeld?
 - iii. Is deze extern uitbesteed?
 - iv. Waarom is gekozen voor deze manier van het organiseren van de ondersteuning van de onderzoeker?
 - v. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren? Hoe?
 - vi. Is er een ontwikkeling zichtbaar die aangeeft dat ondersteuning binnen de universiteit in een bepaalde richting (zoals bij i-iii genoemd) verschuift?
 - 1. Welke is deze ontwikkeling dan?
 - 2. Waar bestaat deze uit?
 - b. Waar bestaat de ondersteuning uit (van centrale of decentrale opgeslagen informatie, cursussen, accountantsondersteuning, juridische ondersteuning, etc.)?
 - i. Wat is er veranderd aan de ondersteuningsmogelijkheden van onderzoekers in de afgelopen jaren?
 - 1. Hoe zag die er eerst uit dan?
 - 2. Hoe zit die er nu uit?
 - 3. Waarom is die gewijzigd?
 - ii. Hoe gaat deze ondersteuning precies in zijn werk?
 - 1. In welke mate wordt er van u diensten gebruik gemaakt?
 - 2. Zijn er in de loop der jaren verandering opgetreden?
 - a. Welke?
 - iii. Welke afspraken zijn gemaakt over wie verantwoordelijk zijn?
 - iv. Is er een verschil in soort van ondersteuning en de daarbij horende financiering?
 - 1. Wat is dit verschil?
13. Worden er door uw ondersteuningsafdeling bepaalde zaken uitbesteed aan externe partijen?

- a. Welke onderdelen dan? (administratie, juridische regels, procedures, het attenderen op deadlines, contractonderhandelingen etc.) Zijn er standaard regels voor wat wel en niet kan en/of mag?
- b. Gebeurt dit vaak?
- c. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren?
 - i. Hoe zag dit er eerst uit dan?
 - ii. Hoe ziet dit er nu uit?
 - iii. Waarom is dit gewijzigd?
- d. Waar bestaat de ondersteuning precies uit?
 - a. Wat doet iemand bij een externe uitbesteding?
 - b. Waar kunt u gebruik van maken (van decentrale of centrale opgeslagen informatie, cursussen, accountants, juristen, etc.)
 - c. Hoe gaat dit precies in zijn werk?
 - d. Maakt u er gebruik van? (waarom wel/niet?)
 - e. In welke mate?
- e. Welke afspraken zijn gemaakt over wie verantwoordelijk zijn?
- f. Hoe worden deze partijen gefinancierd?
 - i. Zijn hier standaard regels voor?
 - ii. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?
 - iii. Vast tarief per aanvraag?

14. Wat zijn de criteria om te beslissen of er bepaalde procedures worden uitbesteed (extern)?

- 15. Hoe wordt prioriteit gegeven aan de ondersteuning die u geeft aan de verschillende onderzoeksgroepen?
 - a. Op basis van deadlines?
 - b. Haalbaarheid van subsidieaanvraag?
 - c. Richting die universiteit en/of faculteit op wil?
 - d. Basis van rangorde van onderzoeksgroepen?
 - e. Anders?
- 16. Wie is uiteindelijk verantwoordelijk voor een succesvolle aanvraag?
 - a. Hoe ziet u de verhoudingen tussen: hoofdaanvrager, medeaanvrager, ondersteunend personeel, externe partijen, etc.
 - b. Wat voor verantwoordelijkheidmechanismen worden gebruikt?
 - i. Interne regels (interne beslissingen) versus contractrecht (wetgeving)
- 17. Geldt dit ook voor de rapportage in de realisatiefase?
- 18. Wie voert de rapportage daadwerkelijk uit?
 - i. Inhoudelijk
 - ii. Financiën
 - iii. Administratie
 - iv. Etc.
 - b. Is dit de standaard procedure?
 - i. Waarom is daar eventueel van afgeweken?

- ii. Zijn er standaard afspraken en/of procedures die de bekostiging regelen (van bijvoorbeeld het monitoren van de financiën)?
- c. Hoe worden belangrijke zaken, zoals deadlines gemonitoord (gekeken of ze wel op tijd gehaald worden)?
- 19. Is er bij dit project een verschil opgetreden tussen het subsidiebedrag vastgesteld in de verleningbeschikking en de vaststellingsbeschikking?
 - a. Wel bij andere projecten?
 - b. Wat is de gemiddelde realisatiegraad van projecten?
 - c. Wat is de verklaring voor dit verschil?
 - i. Niet uitgevoerde activiteiten?
 - ii. Niet kunnen verantwoorden van activiteiten?
 - iii. Kosten zijn afgekeurd (omdat deze niet conform regelgeving kunnen worden verantwoord?)
 - d. Wat is uw ervaring met accountantscontroles?
 - i. Worden kosten afgekeurd? Komt dit vaak voor?
 - ii. Wanneer heeft u de accountant bij het project betrokken?
 - iii. Heeft u in het begin van het project met de accountant overlegd (onderbouwing en verantwoording)?
 - e. Wat is uw ervaring met controles van de subsidieverstrekker?
 - i. Hoe is de samenwerking en afstemming gedurende de uitvoering van het project met de subsidieverstrekkers?
- 20. Is er sprake van een kwantitatief optimale aanvraag? Daarmee wordt bedoeld: Wordt er subsidie aangevraagd voor alle kosten die volgens de regeling subsidiabel zijn? Of worden bepaalde kosten niet meegenomen in de subsidieaanvraag. Voorbeelden daarvan zijn:
 - het niet begroten van accountants kosten (terwijl een accountantsverklaring verplicht is)
 - het niet of te kort begroten van management/ overheadkosten
 - het niet begroten van kosten voor externe dienstverleners die later wel worden ingeschakeld.
- 21. Heeft zich ooit ex post (nadat de subsidieregeling is goed gekeurd) onenigheid voorgedaan over gemaakte afspraken?
 - a. Hoe is dit afgelopen?
 - b. Wat voor maatregelen zijn ex ante genomen om dit te voorkomen?
 - i. Zijn dit standaard maatregelen?
 - ii. Worden die per subsidieaanvraag specifiek opgesteld?

Tot slot heb ik nog een aantal korte vragen.

- 22. Welke subsidiemogelijkheden worden nu overwogen als potentieel interessant voor uw universiteit?
 - a. Bent u actief op zoek naar nieuwe subsidiemogelijkheden naast de reeds bestaande mogelijkheden die gebruikt worden binnen de universiteit?
 - b. Met welke regelingen heeft u ervaring? En uw afdeling?
- 23. Ziet u een verschil in moeilijkheidsgraad tussen onderzoeksgebieden met betrekking tot het verkrijgen van financiering?

a. Heeft dit invloed, naar uw inschatting, op de onderzoeksrichtingen van onderzoeksgroepen?

Bij de volgende vragen, hoop ik dat u een schatting kunt geven.

- 24. Aan hoeveel subsidieprojecten geeft u ondersteuning per jaar?
 - a. Hoeveel van deze aanvragen worden goedgekeurd?
 - b. Wat is de gemiddelde looptijd van deze subsidieregelingen?
 - c. Worden veel dezelfde subsidieregelingen gebruikt?
 - d. Hoeveel tijd bent u kwijt met het bijhouden van de verschillende subsidiemogelijkheden?
- 25. Is er bekend wat het gemiddelde slagingspercentage van door uw afdeling begeleide aanvragen is?
 - a. En van de gehele universiteit?
- 26. Hoeveel FTE's zijn er ingevuld voor het verlenen van ondersteuning voor het subsidieproces
 - a. Voor de gehele universiteit?
 - b. Voor de faculteit?
 - c. Per onderzoeker of onderzoeksgroep?

We zijn aan het **einde** van dit interview gekomen. Ik dank u hartelijk voor uw medewerking. Als u nog vragen heeft over mijn onderzoek of over deze vragenlijst, dan beantwoord ik deze nu graag. Als u wilt kan ik u mijn afstudeerscriptie doen toekomen, nadat mijn colloquium heeft plaats gevonden.

Interview protocol voor faculteitsbestuur

Introductie onderzoek:

In het kader van mijn afstudeerscriptie voor mijn master Public Administration (MEL) aan de Universiteit Twente heb ik contact met u opgenomen. Ik ben namelijk bezig met een onderzoek naar de organisatie van de subsidieprocessen bij de verschillende universiteiten in Nederland. Ik wil ondermeer trachten om een antwoord te geven op de vraag of het loont om op centraal niveau een subsidie ondersteuningsafdeling in te richten en operationeel te houden. Wegen de voordelen van een dergelijke ondersteuningsafdeling op tegen te kosten (zowel op financieel gebied als bijvoorbeeld qua interne bureaucratie)?

Introductievragen:

Ter introductie zou ik graag eerst wat feitelijke vragen aan u willen stellen om een goed beeld te krijgen van uw faculteit.

- 1. Wat is de rol van de faculteit in de het subsidieproces?
 - a. Wordt er vanuit de faculteit ondersteuning geregeld voor onderzoekers en/of onderzoeksgroepen?
 - b. Hoeveel personeel, uitgedrukt in FTE, heeft u hiervoor in dienst?
 - c. dit verandert in de loop der jaren?
 - i. Juristen bijgekomen
 - ii. Commerciële directeuren bijgekomen
 - iii. Zijn er trainers voor voorlichting, training en opleiding bijgekomen
 - iv. Coördinatoren bijgekomen
 - v. Ondersteuners bijgekomen
 - d. Hoe wordt dit gefinancierd?
- 2. Wat voor ondersteuning biedt u dan aan?
 - Verwerving van projecten
 - Administratieve activiteiten, bijvoorbeeld van de financieringsverplichtingen (intern, subsidies, contractonderzoek, etc.)
 - Juridische zaken
 - Voorlichting geven over subsidiemogelijkheden
 - Trainingen (voor het schrijven van aanvragen)
 - Bijhouden van calls
 - Attenderen op mogelijke interessante regelingen
 - Overig

3. Wat voor ondersteuning geeft u en/of de faculteit bij deze activiteiten?

- a. Waar bestaat deze ondersteuning uit?
- b. Worden er per activiteit kosten in rekening gebracht?
 - i. Is er een vast percentage van de opbrengsten van de subsidieaanvraag die aan de ondersteuningsafdeling moet worden betaald?
 - ii. Wat gebeurt er in dat geval met de kosten als niet het gehele traject succesvol doorlopen wordt?
 - iii. Geldt dat voor elke fase van het subsidietraject?

- iv. Waarom is gekozen voor deze manier van het organiseren van de ondersteuning van de onderzoeker?
- c. Kan een ieder gebruik maken van deze ondersteuning?
- d. Wordt er bijvoorbeeld op centraal niveau naamsbekendheid gecreëerd (ter vergroting van aanvraagkansen)?
- e. Wordt er toezicht gehouden op het verloop van subsidieprocessen?
 - i. Welke instrumenten worden hiervoor gebruikt?
- 4. Nu wil ik iets dieper ingaan op de vorige vragen, vooral met betrekking tot de ondersteuning die u geeft, de faculteit, en of universiteit ter beschikking stelt.
 - a. Hoe is de ondersteuning van subsidieaanvragen geregeld?
 - i. Is deze decentraal binnen de universiteit en/of binnen de faculteit geregeld?
 - ii. Is deze centraal binnen de universiteit geregeld?
 - iii. Is deze extern uitbesteed?
 - iv. Is er een ontwikkeling zichtbaar die aangeeft dat ondersteuning binnen de universiteit in een paalde richting (zoals bij i-iii genoemd) verschuift?
 - 1. Welke is deze ontwikkeling dan?
 - 2. Waar bestaat deze uit?
 - b. Waar bestaat de ondersteuning uit (van centrale of decentrale opgeslagen informatie, cursussen, accountantsondersteuning, juridische ondersteuning, etc.)?
 - i. Wat is er veranderd aan de ondersteuningsmogelijkheden van onderzoekers in de afgelopen jaren?
 - 1. Hoe zag die er eerst uit dan?
 - 2. Hoe zit die er nu uit?
 - 3. Waarom is die gewijzigd?
 - ii. Hoe gaat deze ondersteuning precies in zijn werk?
 - 1. In welke mate wordt gebruik gemaakt van de ondersteuning die aangeboden wordt?
 - 2. Zijn er in de loop der jaren verandering opgetreden?
 - a. Welke?
 - iii. Welke afspraken zijn gemaakt over wie verantwoordelijk zijn?
 - iv. Is er een verschil in soort van ondersteuning en de daarbij horende financiering?
 - 2. Zijn hier standaardregels voor?
 - 3. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?
 - 4. Vast tarief per aanvraag?

5. Worden er bepaalde zaken uitbesteed aan externe partijen?

- a. Gebeurt dit vaak?
- b. Wat voor zaken betreft dit dan?
- c. Is dit veranderd in de afgelopen jaren?
 - i. Hoe zag dit er eerst uit dan?
 - ii. Hoe zit dit er nu uit?
 - iii. Waarom is dit gewijzigd?
- d. Welke criteria worden gebruikt om te beslissen of er wel of niet bepaalde procedures worden uitbesteed?
- e. Hoe worden deze partijen gefinancierd?
 - i. Zijn hier standaard regels voor?
 - ii. Worden er specifieke regels opgesteld per aanvraag?

- iii. Vast tarief per aanvraag?
- f. Welke afspraken zijn gemaakt over wie verantwoordelijk zijn?
- g. Hoe ziet u de verhoudingen tussen: faculteit, ondersteuningsafdeling, hoofdaanvrager, medeaanvrager, externe partijen, etc.
 - i. Welke instrumenten worden gebruikt om toezicht te houden op een goed verloop van de subsidieprocessen?
 - ii. Wat voor verantwoordelijkheidmechanismen worden gebruikt?
 - 1. Interne regels (interne beslissingen) versus contractrecht (wetgeving)

Binnen het subsidieproces, zoals ik dat in mijn onderzoek omschrijf, zie ik drie fases. De initiatie fase, de aanvraag fase en de realisatie fase.

- 6. In welke mate bent u en/of is de faculteit betrokken bij een subsidieaanvraag?
 - a. Bent u vanaf het begin bij een subsidieaanvraag betrokken?
 - b. Of pas in een later stadium (aanvraag of realisatie fase)
 - i. Verschilt dat per onderzoek?
 - ii. Per soort regeling?
 - c. Ter goedkeuring?
 - d. Uiteenzetting van onderzoeksrichting?
- 7. Wie maakt de uiteindelijk 'go / no-go' beslissingen in de verschillende fases?
- 8. Is er bekend welke aanvragen onderhanden zijn in uw faculteit?
 - a. Wat de stand van zaken is bij deze aanvragen
 - b. Welke aanpak gevolgd wordt door de verschillende onderzoeksgroepen?
 - c. Wordt hiervan op de hoogte gehouden door de onderzoekers en/of onderzoeksgroepen?
 - i. Moeten zij bijvoorbeeld bij elk onderzoeksproject dat zij starten iemand van u afdeling op de hoogte brengen van hun project of ze nu subsidie gaan aanvragen of niet?
 - ii. Is er een andere manier waarborging geregeld (zodat u op de hoogte blijft van wat er speelt)?
- 9. Hoe wordt prioriteit gegeven aan de ondersteuning die ondersteuners verlenen aan de verschillende onderzoeksgroepen?
 - a. Op basis van deadlines?
 - b. Haalbaarheid van subsidieaanvraag?
 - c. Richting die universiteit en/of faculteit op wil?
 - d. Basis van rangorde van onderzoeksgroepen?
 - e. Anders?
- 10. Wordt er bij projecten gekeken of er een verschil optreedt (onderrealisatie) tussen het bedrag vastgesteld in de verleningbeschikking en de vaststellingsbeschikking?
 - a. Wat is de gemiddelde realisatiegraad van projecten?
 - b. Wat zijn veelkomende verklaringen voor verschillen?
 - i. Niet uitgevoerde activiteiten?
 - ii. Niet kunnen verantwoorden van activiteiten?
 - iii. Kosten zijn afgekeurd (omdat deze niet conform regelgeving kunnen worden verantwoord?)

- c. Wat is uw ervaring met accountantscontroles?
 - i. Worden kosten afgekeurd? Komt dit vaak voor?
 - ii. Wanneer heeft u de accountant bij het project betrokken?
 - iii. Heeft u in het begin van het project met de accountant overlegt (onderbouwing en verantwoording)?
- d. Wat is uw ervaring met controles van de subsidieverstrekker?
 - i. Hoe is de samenwerking en afstemming gedurende de uitvoering van het project met de subsidieverstrekkers?
- 11. Is er sprake van een kwantitatief optimale aanvraag? Daarmee wordt bedoeld: Wordt er subsidie aangevraagd voor alle kosten die volgens de regeling subsidiabel zijn? Of worden bepaalde kosten niet meegenomen in de subsidieaanvraag. Voorbeelden daarvan zijn:
 - het niet begroten van accountants kosten (terwijl een accountantsverklaring verplicht is)
 - het niet of te kort begroten van management/ overheadkosten
 - het niet begroten van kosten voor externe dienstverleners die later wel worden ingeschakeld.
- 12. Welke subsidiemogelijkheden worden nu overwogen als potentieel interessant voor uw faculteit?
 - a. Wordt er vanuit de faculteit actief gezocht naar / gestuurd op bestaande subsidiemogelijkheden die gebruikt worden binnen de faculteit (universiteit)?
 - b. Wordt er vanuit de faculteit actief gezocht naar / gestuurd op nieuwe subsidiemogelijkheden?
- 13. Is het lastig om financiering te kunnen krijgen voor de onderzoeksgebieden van uw faculteit?
 - a. Hoe wordt het onderzoek hoofdzakelijk gefinancierd binnen uw faculteit? (geldstromen)
 - b. Heeft dit denkt u invloed op de onderzoeksrichtingen van de onderzoeksgroepen binnen uw faculteit?

Bij de volgende vragen, hoop ik dat u een schatting kunt geven.

- 14. Hoeveel FTE's aan academisch personeel zijn er ingevuld in uw faculteit? (onderzoek, onderwijs)a. Hoe zijn deze in de regel zijn gefinancierd?
- 15. Hoeveel FTE's zijn er ingevuld voor het verlenen van ondersteuning voor het subsidieproces
 - a. Voor de gehele universiteit?
 - b. Voor de faculteit?
 - c. Per onderzoeker of onderzoeksgroep?
- 16. Is er bekend wat het gemiddelde slagingspercentage van de aanvragen van deze faculteit is?
 - a. En van de gehele universiteit?

We zijn aan het **einde** van dit interview gekomen. Ik dank u hartelijk voor uw medewerking. Als u nog vragen heeft over mijn onderzoek of over deze vragenlijst, dan beantwoord ik deze nu graag. Als u wilt kan ik u mijn afstudeerscriptie doen toekomen, nadat mijn colloquium heeft plaats gevonden.