



university of  
 groningen

## Strategic Partnership Framework

Meet our SPF  
Academic  
Ambassadors



[rug.nl/spf](http://rug.nl/spf)



## About the Strategic Partnership Framework (SPF) and our Ambassadors

The University of Groningen has introduced a three-year pilot project (2021-2023) to focus on nine of our non-European partner universities around the world.

The SPF is a positive strategic choice that aims to provide additional opportunities to research & education at faculties, and thereby UG as a whole. Its explicit purpose is also to increase internal collaborations and share best practice. Hence, it aims for the better allocation of funding, the development of new schemes for cooperation, and increasing efficient and qualitative mobility.

This does not only represent broader opportunities for international students, but it also means greater and more meaningful collaboration between our academic communities. To demonstrate that, Academic Ambassadors were selected among researchers from all academic fields to both connect, promote, and enhance cooperation between our faculty members and the ones they are in contact with from our partners.

## Our SPF Partners

The University of Groningen (UG) is proud to announce our focused collaboration with nine global universities. With the support of the SPF, we aim to benefit as diverse a range of academic disciplines as possible. The SPF Partners are the following well-established universities outside Europe:

- > Oceania: Macquarie University, Australia
- > Latin America: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) in México;  
Universidad de Antioquia in Colombia;  
Universidade de São Paulo in Brazil;  
Universidad de Chile in Chile
- > Southeast Asia: Nanyang Technological University, Singapore  
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia
- > Japan: Osaka University
- > Sub-Saharan Africa: Stellenbosch University, South Africa

## About the Ambassadorship

The Ambassadors are UG academics who have experience and proposals for the development, implementation, and evaluation of internationalization strategies to have a broader added value to UG research & education.

**The Ambassadors can be of great help for faculty members, as they will:**

- > Participate in the identification of opportunities for collaboration;
- > Act as a facilitator for other UG academic colleagues/internal stakeholders;
- > Provide the ISR with feedback and evaluation, and
- > May occasionally be asked for advice by other regional coordinators.

**And they will also be aiming to create awareness amongst students of:**

- > Opportunities in the University of Groningen;
- > The role of professors in the UG programs, and
- > May also, sometimes, provide advice for matchmaking in academic projects.

## SPF Oceania

Our partner university in Oceania:

> Macquarie University in Sydney Australia

Meet our SPF Ambassador:



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Over the past years, academics from Macquarie and the University of Groningen (UG) have collaborated in undergraduate student exchange, postgraduate supervision, joint degrees and researcher mobility. It is great to see this collaboration consolidate in the Strategic Partner Framework. As a key actor in research and teaching innovation in Australia and globally, Macquarie embodies a future-oriented vision that aligns with many of the UG's priorities.

How can we educate a new generation of researchers in an inclusive and future-proof academic environment? How do we make global research locally relevant? How can we broaden our respective horizons through travel, both virtual and physical? I look forward to representing the intensifying constructive conversation with Macquarie at the UG. If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to reach out.

**Dr. Konstantin Mierau** | [k.mierau@rug.nl](mailto:k.mierau@rug.nl)  
Academic Ambassador for Macquarie University



For more information about Oceania please contact:

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Our partnership with **Macquarie University** has grown much stronger over the last couple of years and involves an increasing number of research areas across the University. I'm very excited about working with our colleagues at Macquarie and developing new collaborative initiatives.”

John Falvey | [j.c.falvey@rug.nl](mailto:j.c.falvey@rug.nl)  
ISR Coordinator for Oceania

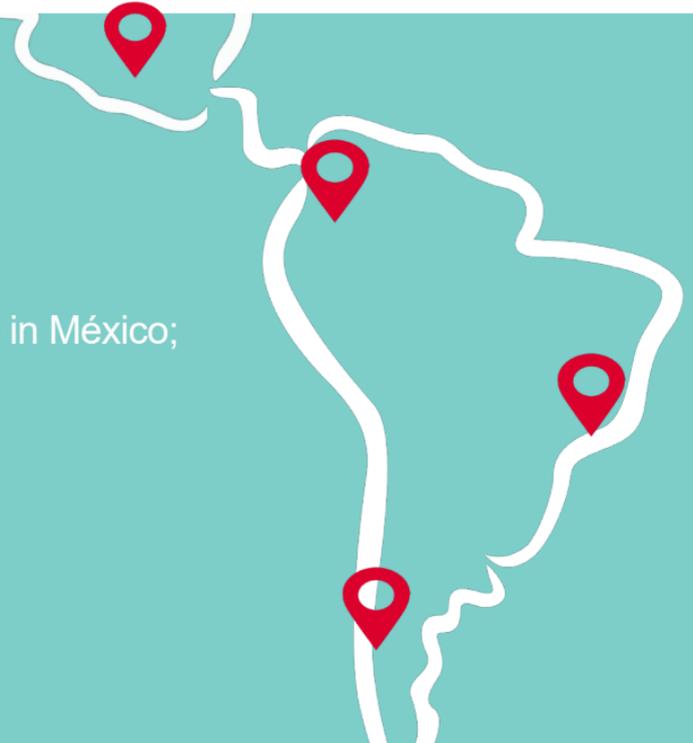


## SPF Latin America

Our partner universities in Latin America:

- > Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) in México;
- > Universidad de Antioquia in Colombia;
- > Universidade de São Paulo in Brazil;
- > Universidad de Chile in Chile

Meet our SPF Ambassadors:



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Cecília Salgado Guimarães da Silva is an Associate Professor at the Department of Mathematics of the Faculty of Science & Engineering, working in the interplay of algebraic geometry and number theory. Before arriving to Groningen, she worked for ten years at UFRJ in Brazil. She has a vast network of international collaborations, in particular also in Latin America:

“Cooperation among people from different backgrounds contributes to our university in so many ways: it creates a more welcoming atmosphere; expands the horizons of all involved; acts as a catalyst for groundbreaking research - just to mention a few. I'm very excited to work with our Latin American partners in promoting bi- and multilateral initiatives.”

Prof.dr. Cecília Salgado Guimarães da Silva | [c.salgado@rug.nl](mailto:c.salgado@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Sciences & Technology





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As an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Behavioural & Social Sciences, Mónica López López works on issues of child and family welfare in a very international research group:

“International collaborations & working with students from diverse backgrounds and experiences is very positive and beneficial for our community. It helps us to create a more diverse and creative academic environment. I want to help create that environment.”

Dr. Mónica López López | [m.lopez.lopez@rug.nl](mailto:m.lopez.lopez@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Social Sciences

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As a professor at the Faculty of Theology & Religious Studies I greatly enjoy working with peers in Latin America. Our Strategic Partners in the region are top-ranking universities. Scholars and students are outstanding academics who have a comprehensive and flexible approach to their field of expertise.

Collaboration with Latin America almost always results in fruitful cross-fertilization, multidisciplinary projects and original and interesting plans. I am eager to contribute to the further development of our cooperation in the Humanities.

Prof.dr. Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta | [f.l.roig.lanzillotta@rug.nl](mailto:f.l.roig.lanzillotta@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Humanities





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As a full professor of Experimental Gastroenterology and Hepatology and coordinator international relations at the Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Han Moshage has many first-hand experiences of working with the Latin American partners in the SPF:

“They absolutely are top universities and I am proud that Groningen has now formally affiliated itself with these institutions through the SPF. I look very much forward to expanding the many positive experiences we have at the UMCG to the benefit of the University of Groningen as a whole.”

Prof.dr. Han Moshage | [a.j.moshage@umcg.nl](mailto:a.j.moshage@umcg.nl)  
Ambassador for Life Sciences & Health

For more information about SPF Latin America please contact:

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I am convinced that the SPF may take internationalization strategies to a next level at UG. We have already had so many great experiences working with these Latin American partners at the UMCG, and built so many friendships. It feels completely natural that we now embark on this mission and I look forward to being part of that.

Joyce Fongers | [j.e.fongers@rug.nl](mailto:j.e.fongers@rug.nl)  
ISR Coordinator for Latin America



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Working for the University of Groningen at my alma mater UNAM has been an amazing experience. During my studies I had an opportunity to benefit from an international exchange. It makes me happy to now be able to return the favor and bring together all these bright minds from different cultures, as well as witness the concrete added value this has to education and research.

Luis Andrés González | [l.a.gonzalez.gutierrez@rug.nl](mailto:l.a.gonzalez.gutierrez@rug.nl)  
Representative for the UG in Mexico

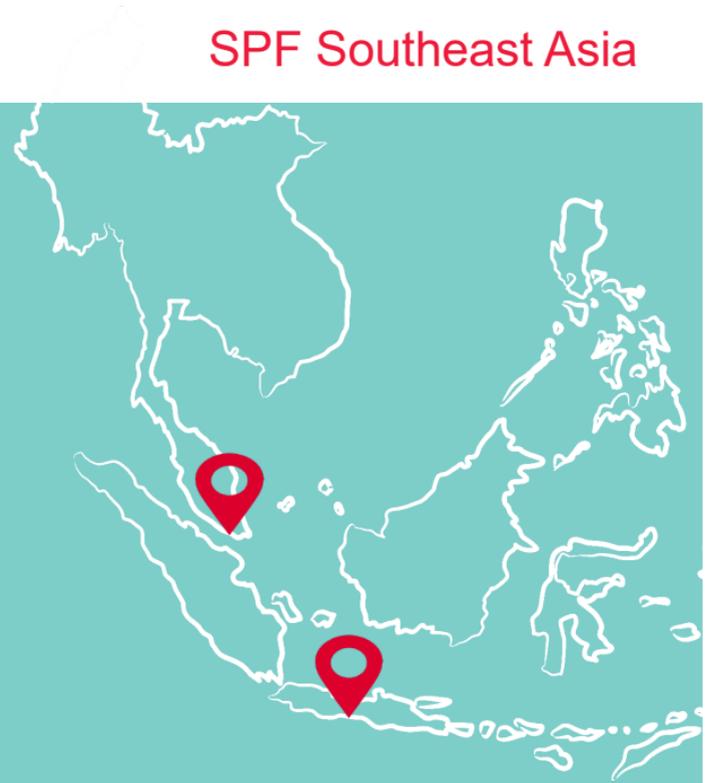


## SPF Southeast Asia

Our partner universities in Southeast Asia:

- > Nanyang Technological University
- > Universitas Gadjah Mada in Indonesia

Meet our SPF Ambassadors:



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Ronald L. Holzacker is a professor (Comparative Multilevel Governance and Regional Structure) in UG's Faculty of Spatial Sciences, and holds an additional position in the UG's Faculty of Arts (International Relations and International Organization). He is founding Director of the Groningen Research Centre for Southeast Asia and ASEAN (SEA ASEAN), where he leads an interdisciplinary team of scholars and >20 PhD researchers engaged in theoretically driven comparative research focused on governance, societal impact, and sustainable society in Southeast Asia.

“Southeast Asia is a growth region, certainly also academically. Substantial regional scholarship programs have enabled UG's SEA ASEAN Centre, and its predecessor SINGA, to grow. UGM and NTU offer excellent opportunities for interdisciplinary research, and genuinely contribute to impact on the great societal issues of the day.”

Prof. Ronald L. Holzacker | [r.l.holzacker@rug.nl](mailto:r.l.holzacker@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Humanities & Social Sciences





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Bayu Jayawardhana is a full professor (Mechatronics and Control of Non-Linear Systems) at UG's Faculty of Science & Engineering. An Indonesian by birth he is an alumnus from both Bandung Institute of Technology and Nanyang Technological University. He is a scientific advisor to Ocean Grazer, a start-up company on offshore renewable energy production and storage systems, and a scientific advisor to Sencilia BV, a start-up company on biomedical sensor devices.

“I have long been engaged in building connections in education and research between Groningen and Southeast Asia. There is a lot of mutual interest, in particular, on science and technology exchanges to fuel innovation-driven economic growth. The opportunities are there for everyone who wishes to engage with Southeast Asia, not least in the realm of science and technology. Double Doctorates and other shared programs are a promising option, especially with the support of local scholarships and the Groningen Top-Up for overseas scholarship PhD researchers.”

**Prof. Bayu Jayawardhana** | [b.jayawardhana@rug.nl](mailto:b.jayawardhana@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Science and Engineering

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Maarten Postma is a full professor (Global Health Economics) at the UMCG and in UG's Faculty of Economics & Business. He is scientific director of the SHARE institute for applied research in Health Sciences, and holds honorary positions in Airlangga University and in Padjadjaran University, both in Indonesia. Other scientific connections in Southeast Asia include Vietnam and Thailand.

“My research teams have long included PhD researchers from Southeast Asia, and we have built connections to partners in the region that will benefit us for a long time into the future. Global issues require global connections, and Southeast Asia and Groningen have a mutually beneficial scientific relationship. The opportunities for co-funding with regional scholarship programs continue to offer good perspectives for expansion.”

Prof. Maarten Postma | [m.j.postma@rug.nl](mailto:m.j.postma@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Health



## SPF Japan

Our partner university in Japan:

> Osaka University

Meet our SPF Ambassadors:



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I am really looking forward to represent the University of Groningen in the field of Education as academic ambassador to Osaka University. Personal contacts are important. As Director of Japan Studies of the University of Groningen, I have been in the lucky circumstance to visit and also teach in Osaka regularly. Fortunately, many connections in education already exist on bachelor and Master level between the two strategic partners.

Over the last years many students have studied in Osaka and vice versa, as exchange student, as part of the Erasmus Mundus Master Euroculture, and also as part of a double Master's degree. These students all attest how very important this experience is for their personal life and future academic or professional career. It will be my pleasure and honour to be working with different undergraduate and graduate Schools at Osaka university and Faculties in Groningen to further strengthen and build on cooperation in the field of education.

Prof. Janny de Jong | [janny.de.jong@rug.nl](mailto:janny.de.jong@rug.nl)  
Academic Ambassador for Education





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It is an honour to represent the University of Groningen in the field of research as academic ambassador to Osaka University. The history that connects Osaka University and the University of Groningen is long and rich. Groningen University strongly believes that together we can continue this history into the future and enrich it by adding new partnerships to solve complex societal problems.

The University of Groningen is eager to further strengthen research cooperation in all fields. In my capacity as academic ambassador, I am looking forward to working with Osaka University to achieve this goal for the benefit of all our researchers.

Prof. Andrej Zwitter | [a.zwitter@rug.nl](mailto:a.zwitter@rug.nl)  
Academic Ambassador for Research

For more information about SPF Southeast Asia and Japan please contact:

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As regional manager for the University of Groningen, Tim Zwaagstra has been a familiar face for academic partners in Southeast Asia since 2003. In addition to relations management and policy advice, he specializes in early-stage PhD recruitment in the region.

“The University of Groningen and the UMCG have built a strong brand name in Southeast Asia, even before the regional scholarship opportunities began taking off. Strong relationships to academic counterparts, and especially our Groningen alumni now working in key positions in academia and in society as a whole, underpin our chances of success. The SPF can only add to that.

The partnership between Groningen and Osaka University is built on the strong foundation of strategic collaboration over the span of two decades. I'm looking forward to working with our colleagues at OU and at UG to strengthen our relationship to the benefit of both institutions.”

Tim Zwaagstra | [t.n.zwaagstra@rug.nl](mailto:t.n.zwaagstra@rug.nl)  
ISR Coordinator for Southeast Asia and Japan



## SPF sub-Saharan Africa

Our partner university in sub-Saharan Africa:

> Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Meet our SPF Ambassador:



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The University of Groningen and Stellenbosch University have cooperated for decades. Personally, I have been working with SU colleagues since 2016. We have conducted an annual joint summer/winter school on development economics. We recently finished a second book, and we co-supervise PhD students.

I hope that, in my capacity of Professor Extraordinary at Stellenbosch University and as academic ambassador for this strategic partnership, I will be able to promote and support new initiatives across our two institutions, and boost the number of staff and students involved on both sides.

Prof. Robert Lensink | [b.w.lensink@rug.nl](mailto:b.w.lensink@rug.nl)  
Ambassador for Economics and Business



For more information about SPF sub-Saharan Africa please contact:

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Internationalisation is about connecting people and ensuring that together they not only achieve their own potential, but also contribute to solving the many challenges that society is facing today. Our connection with Stellenbosch University allows us to increase that contribution even more, as it offers a gateway into the sub-continent.

Anita Veltmaat | [j.a.m.veltmaat@rug.nl](mailto:j.a.m.veltmaat@rug.nl)  
ISR Coordinator for sub-Saharan Africa







University of Groningen

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