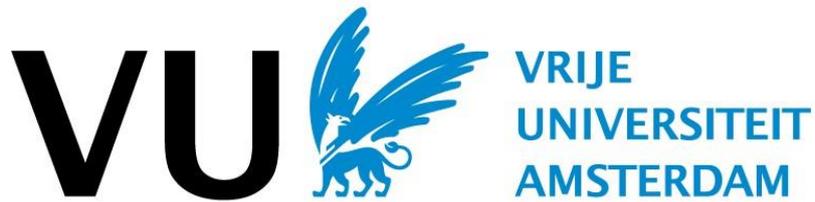


Criteria VU Education Awards 2024-2025



VERSION ADAPTED FOR PROCEDURE AND TIMEFRAME BETA

CONTENT

1.	MASTER'S THESIS AWARD	3
1.1.	BACKGROUND	3
1.2.	CONDITIONS.....	3
1.3.	CRITERIA.....	4
1.4.	PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME - BETA-SPECIFIC.....	4
1.5.	FURTHER PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME.....	5
1.6.	FORMAT NOMINATION MASTER'S THESIS AWARD 2024-2025.....	6
2.	STUDENT TALENT AWARD	7
2.1.	BACKGROUND	7
2.2.	CONDITIONS.....	7
2.3.	CRITERIA.....	8
2.4.	PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME – BETA-SPECIFIC.....	8
2.5.	PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME.....	8
2.6.	FORMAT NOMINATION STUDENT TALENT AWARD 2024-2025.....	10
3.	EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AWARD.....	13
3.1.	BACKGROUND	13
3.2.	CONDITIONS.....	13
3.3.	CRITERIA.....	13
3.4.	PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME - BETA-SPECIFIC.....	14
3.5.	FURTHER PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME.....	14
3.6.	FORMAT PROPOSAL EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AWARD 2024-2025	16

1. MASTER'S THESIS AWARD

1.1. BACKGROUND

- Every year, theses from different faculties compete for the Master's Thesis Award. All theses that are submitted are of high quality and cover a wide variety of topics.
- The Master's Thesis Award is awarded to the master student who can best argue the (potential) societal impact of their thesis research.

1.2. CONDITIONS

- Eligible final papers are those concluding a (research) master's programme at VU Amsterdam University.
- The final papers are nominated by the faculty board; students cannot nominate their own final papers. How they select this thesis is left to the faculty board's own discretion, for example, based on the grading of the thesis.
- The submitted thesis should be accompanied by a societal impact summary written by the student in Dutch or English. The elements to be included in this summary are described in the 'Format' chapter.
- A thesis written by several students is also eligible for prize award. The prize money will be distributed among the students. It is advantageous if the group of students is diverse.
- Coproductions by students and staff are not eligible.
- Only final works from the academic year 2023-2024 are eligible.
- **The grade with which the master's thesis was assessed does not constitute a criterion.**
- For this year, the maximum nominations per faculty are as follows:

Faculty	Number of students Master	Number of students Bachelor
ACTA	1	N/A
AUC	N/A	1*
FGB	1	N/A
SBE	2	N/A
FGW	1	N/A
FRT	1	N/A
RCH	1	N/A
FSW	1	N/A
GNK	1	N/A
BETA	2	N/A

***Note: The Bachelor's Thesis Award was abolished in 2023-2024. Only the Master's Thesis Award will be retained. The jury realises that Amsterdam University college does not offer any master's programmes, and that abolishing the Bachelor Thesis Award would mean that AUC can no longer compete for any Thesis Award. AUC may therefore submit a bachelor's thesis for the Master's Thesis Award as an exception.**

1.3. CRITERIA

The Academic Committee judges submissions based on the social impact summary. This summary motivates the student to tell a lay audience why the thesis contributes to society.

- The societal impact summary can be divided into the following sub-criteria:
 - > What makes the thesis relevant to the field and society?
 - > How does the thesis contribute to the VU values of 'open, personal and accountable'?
 - > What recommendations would you give to society based on your thesis?
 - > How did the thesis contribute to your own learning curve?

The Master's Thesis Award Reading Committee evaluates submissions based on the following criteria:

- Scientific quality and originality, with sub-criteria:
 - > Internal logic of the text
 - > Originality
 - > Readability
- Societal relevance;
- Relevance to the field of expertise;
- Alignment with VU values: open, personal and accountable.

1.4. PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME - BETA-SPECIFIC

In order to streamline nominations within BETA, the procedure and timeline below has been established. The mentioned deadlines thus differ for courses from what may be disseminated by central level (e.g. via newsletters or VUweb).

Nomination by programmes to BETA faculty board (hereafter BETA FB)

Theses eligible for the VU thesis award can be nominated to the BETA FB through the BETA Education Policy Team (onderwijsbeleid.beta@vu.nl). Each programme can nominate a maximum of 1 thesis. The nomination can be made by the programme director (OD), programme coordinator (OC) or the thesis supervisor. However, the nomination should always be coordinated with the programme director, and the OD should be put in the CC of the e-mail message if the OC or supervisor makes the nomination.

The nomination should be accompanied at least by:

1. A brief substantive letter of recommendation, showing why the nominated thesis is a likely thesis for the VU thesis award (prepared by OD, OC or supervisor);
2. A complete thesis;
3. A completed nomination form (see: 1.6 Thesis Award Nomination Format).

Deadline for nominations is 14 October 2024, 12:00 CET (via onderwijsbeleid.beta@vu.nl). Late or incomplete nominations unfortunately cannot be considered for selection.

Selection and determination of nomination BETA

If there are more nominations than the maximum BETA can submit (2 master's theses), the most likely theses will be selected by an internal committee headed by the education director. The VU thesis award criteria as described above are leading in this process. The selection will be submitted to the BETA FB to determine which theses BETA will submit to VU central.

1.5. FURTHER PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME

Faculty boards can digitally nominate a final paper to the secretary of the jury committee: Kristel Struiksma (k.struiksma@vu.nl) **until no later than Friday 1 November 2024 23:59**.

The nomination should be accompanied at least by:

- (1) A brief substantive letter of recommendation from the faculty board, showing why the nominated thesis was chosen based on final assessment and (potential) societal impact;
- (2) A complete thesis;
- (3) A nomination form completed by the student with societal impact summary (see: 1.6. Master's Thesis Award Nomination Format);

Late nominations or nominations with incomplete documents will not be considered. Jury members will refrain from judging nominations from their own faculty.

Upon receipt, the secretary sends an acknowledgement of receipt to the faculties. Subsequently, the Academic Committee, under the guidance of the jury chair, compiles a shortlist of three master's theses. The secretary informs the students and faculty boards of the interim results through a letter. Afterwards, the Master's Thesis Award Reading Committee thoroughly reads the three master's theses and elects a winner.

The finalists, the winner and their respective faculties are informed of the results as soon as possible after the final decision of the jury, and may also share the results with those around them.

The finalists and winner will be honoured and presented to the public at the VU Education Awards ceremony during the **VU Education Day on 6 March 2025**. The winner of the Master's Thesis Award will receive €2,000 and will be paired by Alumni Relations with a VU alumnus of interest to him or her.

BETA education awards

Since 2021, the Faculty of Science Education Awards' have existed within BETA. With these faculty awards, the FB gives open appreciation to people who excel in various aspects in education. The candidates nominated by BETA for VU-wide education awards all receive a faculty education award (the faculty thesis/ StudenTalent/ innovation award/ Van der Duijn Schouten education award). The winners of the faculty thesis award each receive a book token worth €100.

1.6. FORMAT NOMINATION MASTER'S THESIS AWARD 2024-2025

<p>Thesis title:</p> <p>Faculty:</p> <p>Programme name:</p>
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<p>Initials/Surname/First name student:</p> <p>VU email student:</p> <p>Personal email student: (important to add so the secretary can contact the student even after graduation!)</p> <p>Student address details:</p> <p>Names of thesis reviewers:</p> <p>Mail addresses of reviewers:</p>
--

Write a societal impact summary of the thesis in a maximum of a 1,000 words. The challenge for this summary is to write it in such a way that a layperson can understand what your thesis is about. You may supply your own Word file for this purpose. In your summary, use at least the following elements:

- > What makes the thesis relevant to the field and society?
- > How does the thesis contribute to the VU values of 'open, personal and accountable'?
- > What recommendations would you give to society based on your thesis?
- > How did the thesis contribute to your own learning curve?

2. STUDENT TALENT AWARD

2.1. BACKGROUND

- The Student Talent Award was established to appreciate students who have made a big impact within society and/or on the VU campus. These students are role models for other students, showing that you can contribute to society with both small and big things. In doing so, they take on the role of bridge builder and show connection to the VU community. When they receive the award, they are connected to VU as student ambassador for one year.

2.2. CONDITIONS

To be eligible for the Student Talent Award, the nominated student must at least meet the following conditions:

- Final-year undergraduate or graduate student;
- Enrolled as a full-time VU student;
- No older than 30 years;

Clarification: The Student Talent Award is primarily intended to encourage young and promising students who are in the beginning or early stage of their professional career, who make exceptional achievements during their studies and who can serve as a figure head for the student population at large.

VU Amsterdam uses an age limit of 30 years for the Student Talent Award because older students usually tend to have more life experience and a larger professional and social network than younger students. Given the requirements for this particular award, this could give older students an unfair advantage over younger students during the jury assessment, while younger students make up the vast majority of the student population at VU.

At the same time, the jury and wants to be mindful of the fact that there are students who start studying at a later point in life who also contribute greatly to society and/or VU. Therefore, the jury introduces an addendum to this condition.

If a faculty thinks a student over the age of 30 deserves to be nominated for the Student Talent Award, they are requested to first consult with the Education Awards secretary before submitting the nomination. If the faculty can provide the secretary and the jury with convincing arguments, the jury will make an exception and accept the nomination.

- No more than one year of study delay;
- **Note: A student's grade point average does not constitute a criterion!**

Each faculty is allowed to submit one candidate. The Faculty of Science is an exception to this rule - this faculty is allowed to submit 2 candidates.

2.3. CRITERIA

To be considered for the Student Talent Award, the nominated student will be assessed on the basis of the following conditions:

- The student makes a special societal or cultural contribution;
- The student has organisational talent, managerial talent, creative talent and/or sports talent;
- The student pushes boundaries, is entrepreneurial, intrinsically motivated, resilient and wants to use these talents;
- The student possesses traits that allow them to act as role models for (VU) students;
- The student is a bridge builder and committed to VU.

2.4. PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME – BETA-SPECIFIC

In order to streamline nominations within BETA, the procedure and timeline below has been established. The mentioned deadlines thus differ for courses from what may be disseminated by central level (e.g. via newsletters or VUweb).

Nomination by programmes to BETA faculty board (hereafter BETA FB)

Students eligible for the VU Student Talent Award can be nominated to the BETA FB through the BETA Education Policy Team (onderwijsbeleid.beta@vu.nl). Each programme can nominate a maximum of 1 student. The nomination can be made by the programme director (OD) or programme coordinator (OC). However, the nomination should always be coordinated with the programme director, and the OD should be put in the CC of the e-mail message if the OC makes the nomination.

The nomination should be accompanied at least by:

1. A completed nomination form (see: 2.6 StudentTalent Award Nomination Format);
2. A short nomination letter on behalf of the programme;
3. The CV of the nominated student.

Deadline for nominations is 14 October 2024, 12:00 CET (via onderwijsbeleid.beta@vu.nl). Late or incomplete nominations unfortunately cannot be considered for selection.

Selection and determination of nomination BETA

If several nominations are made, the most likely student will be selected by an internal committee headed by the education director. The criteria for the VU StudentTalent Award as described above are leading in this process. The selection is submitted to the BETA FB for determination of the student whom BETA will nominate to VU central.

2.5. PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME

Faculty boards can nominate a candidate digitally **until no later than Friday 1 November 2024 23:59** to the secretary of the judging committee: Kristel Struiksma (k.struiksma@vu.nl).

The nomination should be accompanied at least by:

- (1) A completed nomination form (see: 2.6 Student Talent Award Nomination Format);
- (2) A short nomination letter on behalf of the faculty board;
- (3) The CV of the nominated student;

Late nominations or nominations with incomplete documents will not be considered. Jury members will refrain from judging nominations from their own faculty.

After the nominations are submitted, the secretary sends an acknowledgement of receipt to the faculties.

Nominations for the Student Talent Award are assessed in two stages. In the first stage, the Academic Committee, under the guidance of the jury president, compiles a shortlist of three candidates. The secretary informs the students and faculty boards of the interim results through a letter.

The second stage involves a pitch and interview round. The secretary asks shortlisted candidates if they would like to record a short video pitch of up to 2 minutes prior to their interview. The secretary collects these video pitches and shares them with the members of the Academic Committee well in advance of the interview round. After the interviews take place, the Academic Committee will deliberate to identify a winner. The finalists, the winner and their respective faculties will be informed of the final result as soon as possible after the interview round, and may also share it with those around them.

The finalists and winner of the 2024-2025 Student Talent Award will be honoured and presented to the public **during the Education Awards ceremony on Education Day on 6 March 2025**. The winner of the Student Talent Award will win €2,000 and will be paired by Alumni Relations with a VU alumnus of interest to him or her.

BETA education awards

Since 2021, the Faculty of Science Education Awards' have existed within BETA. With these faculty awards, the FB gives open appreciation to people who excel in various aspects in education. The candidates nominated by BETA for VU-wide education awards all receive a faculty education award (the faculty thesis/ StudentTalent/ innovation award/ Van der Duijn Schouten education award). The winner of the faculty StudentTalent Award receives a book token worth €100.

2.6. FORMAT NOMINATION STUDENT TALENT AWARD 2024-2025

<p>Initials/Surname/First name student:</p> <p>Programme:</p> <p>Faculty:</p> <p>VU-mail student:</p> <p>Personal email student: (important to add so the secretary can contact the student even after graduation!)</p> <p>Student address details:</p> <p>Faculty contact:</p> <p>VU-mail faculty contact:</p>	
Criteria	Comments from the faculty
<p>The student makes a special societal or cultural contribution such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising activities that promote dialogue and understanding; - Volunteering; - Setting up specific activities with high social impact; - Practising top-level sport or (performing) arts at a high level and using this to encourage others to get more out of themselves. 	

<p>The student is innovative in social and/or scientific fields.</p>	
<p>The student has proven to have a special talent in organisation, management, innovation, creativity, music or sports.</p>	
<p>The student is entrepreneurial, intrinsically motivated, resilient and knows how to use all his or her talents.</p>	
<p>The student is a role model for fellow students.</p>	

<p>Student is a bridge builder and involved in VU; for example, she or he has served on a student council, programme committee or contributed something substantial to the university.</p>	
<p>Other comments</p>	

3. EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AWARD

3.1. BACKGROUND

- The Educational Innovation Award is intended for (interdisciplinary or trans-faculty) teaching teams that develop an innovative project that focuses on improving teaching practice at VU. Projects that focus on giving innovative substance to the VU educational vision also have a chance of winning the Educational Innovation Award. The context in which the collaboration between lecturers takes place is relatively flexible. Thus, lecturers can also involve support staff, students and social actors in their project.
- Only innovative projects that have already proved successful and can be sustainably implemented and scaled up (both within and outside of the faculty) are eligible for the Educational Innovation Award.
- The Educational Innovation Jury will select **two winning teams**.

3.2. CONDITIONS

To be eligible for the Educational Innovation Award, the project must meet at least the following conditions:

- The prize money must be fully used to realise the project, including dissemination. Upon completion of the project, an account of the implementation of the project will be delivered for approval by the rector.
- Winning teams commit to make at least three presentations to a wide audience (e.g. VU Education Day and other education-related events such as KnowVU meetings, Educational Leadership Learning Course (LOL), Senior Qualification Education (SKO) or faculty teaching days).
- The winning teams commit to publish the project's progress and findings on a public website (with a minimum of 10 blog posts over the course of the project).
- The winning teams undertake to organise a public workshop once halfway through the project and no more than two years after its start, and to deliver a final report (in Dutch or in English) in which the developed innovation and results are made accessible to a broad public. It is recommended that a publication for an educational journal such as the Journal of Higher Education (*Tijdschrift voor Hoger Onderwijs* in Dutch) is realised as well.

3.3. CRITERIA

To be considered for the Innovation Award, participating teams will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The extent to which the rationale for the project plan is compelling and reinforces VU's educational vision.
- The extent to which the innovation is original/innovative.

Clarification: this refers to the extent to which the teaching team steps outside of the usual way of working in its own domain with the innovation.

- The extent to which the innovation has proved successful, and can be sustainably introduced and scaled up, both within and outside the faculty.
- The degree of diversity within the team of teachers.

Clarification: in this context, diversity refers primarily to interdisciplinary diversity. It is considered an asset if the team of the educational initiative seeks or establishes cooperation between different programmes, departments or faculties, or between academic staff, support staff and management staff, or with students and social actors. In addition, other forms of diversity within the team, such as cultural diversity, are also appreciated.

3.4. PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME - BETA-SPECIFIC

In order to streamline nominations within BETA, the procedure and timeline below has been established. The mentioned deadlines thus deviate from what may be disseminated by central level (e.g. via newsletters or VUweb).

Nomination by programmes to BETA faculty board (hereafter BETA FB)

Teacher teams wishing to submit a project proposal for the Education Innovation Award can be nominated to the BETA FB through the BETA Education Policy Team (onderwijsbeleid.beta@vu.nl).

From the nominated BETA teacher teams, one team will then be selected and nominated by the Faculty Board.

The nomination includes at least:

- a. A fully completed proposal (Format for submitting a proposal for the 2023-2024 Education Innovation Award, see section 3.6).
- b. A letter of nomination from a programme director.

Deadline for nominations is 14 October 2024, 12:00 CET (via onderwijsbeleid.beta@vu.nl). Late or incomplete nominations unfortunately cannot be considered for selection.

Selection and determination of nomination BETA

If several nominations are submitted, the most likely project will be selected by an internal committee headed by the education director. The criteria for the VU Education Innovation Award as described above are leading in this process. The selection will be submitted to the BETA FB for determination of the project that BETA will nominate to VU central.

3.5. FURTHER PROCEDURE & TIMEFRAME

Faculty boards can digitally nominate a teaching team to the secretary of the jury committee: Kristel Struiksma (k.struiksma@vu.nl) **until no later than Friday 1 November 2024 23:59**.

- Each faculty has the right to nominate one team. The Faculty of Science is an exception to this rule and may nominate two teams.
- The nomination is made by the faculty board.
- The nomination shall include at least:

- a. A fully completed proposal (Format for submitting a proposal for the Educational Innovation Award 2024-2025 , see section 3.6). b. A nomination letter from an FB member.

Only complete nominations can be considered. Late nominations or nominations with incomplete documents will not be considered. Jury members will refrain from assessing nominations from their own faculty.

After nominations are submitted, the secretary sends an acknowledgement of receipt to the faculties.

Faculty nominations will be assessed by the Educational Innovation Jury in a two-stage process. During the first round, members of the Educational Innovation Jury will compile a shortlist of four nominated projects in a joint meeting.

After the first round, the secretary informs the nominated teams and faculty boards of the interim results through a letter.

The second selection round involves a pitch and interview round. The teams will be invited to provide a short pitch for the jury and the nominees will then be interviewed. After the pitch and interview round, the jury will designate two winning teaching teams.

The finalists and two winning teaching teams will be honoured and presented to the public **at the VU Education Awards ceremony during the VU Education Day on 6 March 2025**.

The two winning teaching teams will each receive €15,000. Following the presentation, an article will appear in the VU newsletter *Onderwijs op Koers*. The Centre for Teaching and Learning will provide free assistance to the two winning teams in scaling up their projects.

3.6. FORMAT PROPOSAL EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AWARD 2024-2025

Title of entry:

Faculty:

Name team leader(s):

VU e-mail addresses team leaders:

Names of team members:

VU e-mail addresses (or other e-mail addresses) team members:

1. Summary of the proposal

Notes:

At least mention in the summary:

- The problem for which the innovation is a solution.
- Experiences from a pilot, preliminary research or scientific sources.
- The innovation itself: processes, products, intended results.
- Measures to make the innovation sustainable and widely applicable.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]

2. Description of the problem to which the innovation provides a solution

Notes:

Describe the problem for which the innovation is a solution. Specify the framework in which the problem is situated. This includes issues such as the stage within which the problem is located (undergraduate, master, PhD), the nature of the educational facilities to which it belongs and the scale of the problem.

Make the description of the problem as concrete as possible. Where possible, provide quantitative indicators (such as low study yields, complaints, negative evaluations) that also serve as success criteria when describing the yield of the innovation. Also provide qualitative indicators (such as student dissatisfaction, points for improvement from visitations, comments from the buying field, limited social impact or limited connection to the labour market). Provide an analysis identifying possible causes of the problem.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]

3. Description of the innovation: processes, products, intended output

Notes:

Describe the innovation as concretely and fully as possible. The teaching and learning processes, carried out by students, teachers, education support staff. The products, realised by students, teachers, educational support staff. Deployment of facilities such as materials or digital support. Deployment of external partners. Intended yield, in terms of the quantitative and/or qualitative indicators previously used to describe the problem.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]

4. Underpinning innovation

Notes:

Following the problem description and analysis, provide a rationale on the quality and impact of the innovation/solution. Provide empirical and theoretical arguments, where available based on known research or own pilots. Also address practical circumstances that make the choice of the innovation plausible. Indicate to what extent the innovation is innovative. State how the innovation contributes to strengthening and supporting VU's core values and educational vision.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]

1414

5. Proposals for sustainable adoption of the innovation

Notes:

Argue how the innovation can be introduced and scaled up not just once but sustainably, within and outside the faculty (to what extent can the innovation endure once the prize money is consumed). Consider further investments needed to further develop a prototype into a stable application, training of users to continue using the innovation, development of protocols for the continued use of the innovation, further research into the operation and yield of the innovation with a view to sustainable deployment.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]

6. Plan of action: deployment of personnel and resources, qualitative and quantitative

Notes:

Description of activities with associated resources and staff deployment (teachers, support staff, external partners) in a qualitative sense (tasks, role and function) and in a quantitative sense (FTEs/days) for the development (consultation, design, fine-tuning, etc.), implementation (providing education, adjustment, etc.), evaluation (collecting data, processing and reporting), dissemination (see conditions) and sustainable introduction of the innovation. Attach a budget in MS Excel format in which it is made plausible what the grant will be spent on based on this description.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]

7. Connection to the diversity spearhead:

Notes:

In this context, diversity primarily means interdisciplinary diversity. It is considered an asset if the team of the educational initiative seeks or established cooperation between different programmes, departments or faculties, or between academic, support and management staff, or with students and social actors. In addition, other forms of diversity within the team, such as cultural diversity, are also appreciated.

[Delete this explanation upon submission]