



Job profile



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Supervisory Board
member
Finance





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The company

Wageningen University & Research

'To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life'. That is Wageningen University & Research's mission. Over 7,000 employees (in fte), 12,000 students (Academic Year 2025/2026), 2,400 PhD and EngD candidates and over 150,000 Lifelong Learning participants from more than 100 countries contribute to this mission. Our drive is to maximise the potential of WUR as a force to accelerate the transitions required to achieve a more sustainable world for all life on Earth.

The strength of Wageningen University & Research lies in the strong domain-oriented focus of our work and our ability to join the forces of eight research institutes and the university, enabling us to work from curiosity-driven to applied research. It also lies in the combination of a technical university with social and natural sciences, enabling us to work in mono-, multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary ways. WUR collaborates with partners from government, society, industry and research, from very local to international partners. This is our 'Wageningen approach'.

Research, education and impact are integral to the six key themes of our work: sustainable food systems, biodiversity and resilient ecosystems, global health, climate-proof futures, biobased and circular society, sustainable water and land use.

WUR is recognised as a pillar of scientific research in its domain, a reputation that is built on excellent and independent research. We strive for high quality in everything we do and consider the quality of our work more important than the quantity. Our research is either scientifically innovative, societally innovative or both.



The ability to combine monodisciplinary strength in multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary approaches and to cover the range from discovery science to application-oriented research in our domain, enables us to provide different insights and offer alternative pathways. WURs research can be conceptual, agenda-setting or applicable in the real world (field labs), on a local, regional and global scale.

Since its foundation in 1918, Wageningen University has been an internationally oriented university which educates students from around the world to address challenges at a local, national and global level. Our 'Vision for Education' embodies a shared vision for the future, grounded in our values and principles. This vision outlines three directions for the future: stimulating ownership for personal development, cultivating an inspiring learning community, and developing a world-oriented curriculum. Our education is highly valued by our students for many years. We continue to build on the strengths of our education such as high-quality scientific knowledge, our interdisciplinary approach, a rich and small-scale learning environment, flexibility in our learning arrangements, and a diverse academic community.

Organisational structure

Wageningen University & Research (WUR) consists of Wageningen University and Wageningen Research Foundation. Combined they have an annual turnover of around €963 million (all figures and numbers mentioned in this profile refer to 2024, unless stated otherwise; numbers of employees are in fte).

Wageningen University and Wageningen Research Foundation are separate legal entities, yet their respective departments and research institutes cooperate across various scientific domains in five science groups:

- Agrotechnology and Food Sciences Group
- Animal Sciences Group
- Environmental Sciences Group
- Plant Sciences Group
- Social Sciences Group.

Each science group consists of a department of Wageningen University and one or more of the eight research institutes of Wageningen Research Foundation and is managed by a Managing Director, supported by a Director of Operations. As an exception to this, given their statutory research tasks, Wageningen Food Safety Research is led by a Director and is not linked to a WU department. The Managing Directors of the science groups report to the Executive Board. The Managing Directors of the science groups and Director of Wageningen Food Safety Research, together with the Executive Board, form the WUR Management Board.

The Facilities Department and the Corporate Staff support the primary process of teaching, research and value creation.

Central employee and student participation is an important partner in policy-making for the Executive Board.



The Student Council, Student Staff Council and Central Works Council comprise the central employee and student participation structure of WUR. The Central Works Council and Student Staff Council meet together as the WUR Council. The Executive Board consults with the WUR Council. The employees in the Central Works Council serve for a period of three years.

Wageningen University

Wageningen University is the only university in the Netherlands that focuses specifically on the 'healthy food and living environment' domain.

Wageningen University has over 12,000 students enrolled in 20 undergraduate programmes and 32 master's programmes (Academic Year 2025/2026). Of these students 3,376 are international. In addition, Wageningen University has over 2,400 PhD candidates who contribute substantially to our research. Wageningen University consists of one faculty with five departments comprised of over 95 chair groups. Spread across these departments and chair groups are 3,588 employees including 229 professors.

Wageningen University is governed by a number of bodies, including the Academic Board (responsible for granting PhD degrees), the Wageningen Graduate Schools with six research schools (quality control PhD trajectories and training PhD candidates), the Board of Education (responsible for content and quality of Bachelor and Master programmes), the programme committees (ensure quality of the programme) and four Examination Committees (overseeing the examination of Bachelor and Master programmes and providing students binding study advice).

The university has a budget of over €527 million, of which €332 million comes from government funding, €158 million from indirect government funding, subsidies and private funding, and the remainder from tuition fees.

Wageningen Research

The eight specialised research institutes (see the attached overview), united in the Wageningen Research Foundation, employ 3,456 staff contributing to project-based applied research that is commissioned by international organisations, governments, commercial businesses and non-profit organisations. These research projects often involve collaboration between various research institutes of Wageningen Research, as well as with Wageningen University and/or national or international partners. The research institutes have close ties with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature. In addition, various statutory research tasks are carried out by our research institutes on behalf of the Dutch government.

The annual turnover of the Wageningen Research Foundation amounts to €436 million, of which 43% comes from Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature for by way of Core and Programme funding and 24% from the top sectors, co-funding and subsidies. Around 21% is funded by industry through contract research.

**Governance**

The members of the Executive Board of Wageningen University & Research form the Executive Board of Wageningen University and the Executive Board of the Wageningen Research Foundation through a personal union. The Executive Board is responsible for the management and administration of the entire organisation.

The board consists of three members: dr.ir. Sjoukje Heimovaara (President), prof. dr. Carolien Kroeze (Vice-President and Rector Magnificus) and drs. Peter Ploegsma MBA (Board Member). The President and Vice-President of the Executive Board were appointed for a four-year term in 2022 and 2024 respectively.

The Executive Board is accountable to the Supervisory Board. The Supervisory Board of Wageningen University and the Supervisory Board of the Wageningen Research Foundation oversee the management, administration and general affairs of Wageningen University & Research, also in a personal union. They also advise the Executive Board. The members of the Supervisory Board are appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature and the Minister of Education, Culture and Science jointly.



Position

Composition of the Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board has six members, who serve for a term of four years and retire according to a schedule set by the board. After the four-year term, members may be nominated for reappointment to the minister for a second term, with the rule being that a member will not serve for more than eight consecutive years. The Supervisory Board has three committees: the audit committee, the education and research committee and the appointments committee.

The current supervisory board is formed by the following members:

- Prof. dr. E. (Elbert) Dijkgraaf (chairman)
- Prof. dr. F.P.T. (Frank) Baaijens
- Drs. D.P.C. (David) Fousert
- Drs. S.K. (Sigrid) Hoekstra
- Drs. T. (Tjarda) Klimp
- Dr. K. (Kirsten) Schuijt

Profile of the Supervisory Board

Each member of the Supervisory Board must be capable of assessing the main aspects of Wageningen University & Research's overall policy.

Supervisory Board members each have the specific expertise necessary to fulfil their duties within their role within the framework of the Board's profile.

The members of the Supervisory Board meet the requirements set out in Article 5 of the University Governance Code as applied to Wageningen University & Research.



The members of the Supervisory Board should collectively have a balanced distribution of background and expertise across the following fields:

- Scientific education and research
- Affinity with the domain of Wageningen University & Research
- Business
- Societal
- Public Administration
- Finance
- International

In the context of the selection process, the Supervisory Board observes the following principles:

- Diversity in the Supervisory Board, including gender balance.
- The selection process for Supervisory Board member is independent of candidates' political views.
- At least one of the members particularly enjoys the confidence of the Central Participation Councils.



Candidate profile

Job requirements

The Supervisory Board is looking for a new member, with a strong financial profile who will also fulfil the role of Chair of the Supervisory Board's Audit Committee.

The new member of the Supervisory Board is a team player who thinks constructively and critically, acts with integrity, builds bridges and has analytical (judgment) skills. In addition, the member demonstrates strong interpersonal skills, characterised by an empathetic leadership style, emotional intelligence, and clear and respectful communication. The new member of the Supervisory Board will challenge the board in discussions on strategic issues, hold up a mirror and help find solutions. The Supervisory Board strives for a diverse composition, with a balanced gender representation in the allocation of seats, also in relation to the international character of Wageningen University & Research.

General profile for the new Supervisory Board member:

- Is someone who connects well while providing clear guidance, motivating those around them, and being sharp and decisive in their actions and communications;
- Is used to acting at management/board level;
- Is committed to the field and mission of Wageningen University & Research and recognizes its significant societal impact;
- Is able to assess the performance of the Executive Board members as objectively, independently and impartially as possible, taking into account the interests of Wageningen University & Research and the persons and organizations involved;
- Strong in forward thinking and open to new ideas, effective at problem solving.



The profile applicable to the new member of the Supervisory Board:

- Has a strong financial background, demonstrated through experience acquired as an executive / board member with ultimate (of joint) responsibility for the financial function of a complex organization and relevant qualifications (such as RC). The new member should be capable of acting as Chair of the Supervisory Board's Audit Committee;
- Is or has been employed in the business sector in a knowledge-intensive company and preferably has strong ties to the primary sector;
- Has an international outlook and network (through international work experience or otherwise), preferably in the domain of Wageningen University & Research;
- Demonstrates the ability to balance strategic ambitions with financial and political realities, while maintaining a flexible and forward-looking outlook;
- Is a robust discussion partner and demonstrates the ability to probe issues through reflective and rigorous, analytical questioning;
- Experience as a Supervisory Board member (or similar role) is desirable but not essential.

Competences

Vision

Can distance oneself from daily practice and concentrates on the main lines and long-term policy. Recognizes the main lines of a problem/discussion.

Leadership

Possesses natural and proven leadership and is therefore seen as a respected leader.

Collaboration and Connection

Prioritises collective success and places the common interest above personal gain.

Critical thinking

Puts issues up for discussion to arrive at possible new insights or solutions; is able to mirror, question and take a critical look at the organization.

Integrity

Maintains generally accepted social and ethical standards in activities related to the position. Carefully balances interests and different views and respects everyone's dignity.

Organisational sensitivity

Takes other people's circumstances into account and oversees the interests of all stakeholders, being aware of the field of force.

Interpersonal skills

Communication and empathy

Demonstrates strong interpersonal skills, including active listening, the ability to empathise with diverse perspectives, and proactive, clear and respectful communication, fostering trust and constructive dialogue within and beyond the Supervisory Board.



Procedure

Maes & Lunau Executive Search supports Wageningen University & Research during the selection procedure for a Supervisory Board member.

- Approach and interview of candidates by M&L
- Presentation of shortlist to the Selection Committee
- Selection committee conducts interviews with candidates (in Vianen on Tuesday April 14, 14.00 – 16.30 and Wednesday April 15, 9.00 – 12.30)
- Selection committee nominates two candidates for decision-making to the Supervisory Board and for information to the Executive Board (Location tbd, Wednesday May 6, 10.00 – 13.00)
- Checking references
- Selection of final candidate
- The Minister of OCW and the Minister of LNVN appoint the member of the Supervisory Board

Contact details

This search is performed by Irene Wolfs, partner at Maes & Lunau. For more information about this position, please contact Kiki van Dam, research consultant via kiki.vandam@maeslunau.com or +31 06-11809918.



Maes & Lunau: Beyond the obvious

We always go that little bit further in everything we do – go beyond the obvious. And why? Because every organisation needs an inspiring leader with unifying qualities and a clear vision. As an executive search firm, our aim is to play an important role in this by helping organisations to improve. This begins by understanding where the organisation wants to go, as well as getting a good sense of the culture, the people and the organisation itself. We will then work on creating a very clear profile which will form the basis for evaluating candidates. We are there for the candidate and the client when the ideal candidate starts in their appointment and continue to keep in touch long afterwards.

Insights in search

Our process is transparent. We say what we do, do what we say and never give up. During the process we hear and see many things and share this information with our clients and candidates. We provide insights in search. Sometimes, when we think a different choice of candidates can be more successful, we will endeavour to make our point by of course talking it through with the client and explain our reasoning.

Your success is what motivates us

Over the past 47 years we have felt responsible for the success of our clients and our candidates. This can only be done with professional and passionate people who are experienced, have the right skills and are genuinely committed. This is how we get results for the organisations and candidates we work for. We believe that success comes from the talent and drive people have. It goes without saying that there's nothing better than combining the success of our clients and candidates.