Feeding the world
Solutions for a wicked problem
JOIN US...

for a drink at an event near you.

The MBA Admissions team travels the world to meet candidates and we invite you to come and share your experience.

RSM.NL/JOIN
Hunger: fighting a wicked problem
While significant advances have been made in combatting hunger and malnutrition globally since the turn of the century, the scale of the problem is such that hundreds of millions of people are still undernourished. What can be done to resolve what is a wicked problem?

Towards sustainable agriculture
Two members of the RSM community, both of whom are responsible for initiatives that promote sustainable agriculture and sustainable business practices, talk about how food security can be achieved for all through effective ecosystem management.

Finding solutions through innovation
Innovative companies in the world’s food production and distribution sector are changing their operations to meet the goals set out in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and RSM alumni and corporate partners are leading the way.
As a member of the RSM community, you’re a part of our mission to be a force for positive change in the world. More than 10,000 alumni, students, faculty members and staff have expressed how they plan to achieve their goals in I WILL statements. What’s yours? Find and share your I WILL. And discover 10,000+ inspiring goals at WWW.RSM.NL/IWILLEVERYONE

I WILL DELIVER
A POSITIVE IMPACT TO THE WORLD

Find out about the life and career paths taken by alumni Bart Cornelissen, senior finance manager with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Derek Roos, co-founder and CEO of low-code software platform, Mendix.

Building benefits for alumni
Sue Martin, RSM’s new director of corporate and alumni relations, has plans to ensure the 36,000-strong alumni community get lifelong value from their relationship with the School.

Inspiring alumni
Find out about the life and career paths taken by alumni Bart Cornelissen, senior finance manager with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Derek Roos, co-founder and CEO of low-code software platform, Mendix.

Mentoring in the spotlight
How alumni can have a positive impact by providing students with expert advice, guidance and career connections at every stage of their education and working lives.

Letter from the dean
Prof. Steef van de Velde outlines the positive achievements happening at RSM right now, and how new developments will benefit the wider RSM community as a result.

News from RSM
A round-up of news and activities from the world of RSM.

Movers and shakers
Keep up-to-date with the career moves of fellow alumni.

Start-ups with heavyweight ideas
This year’s RSM I WILL Get in the Ring Award was won by two social enterprise start-ups – Boxrs4ALL and Juvoo.

Celebrating 40 years
RSM’s study association STAR celebrates 40 years of bringing students together through social activities.

Staying connected
RSM Local Chapters are a great way of connecting with like-minded alumni and ensuring a strong bond with the School.

Education agenda
Continue your lifelong learning with one of RSM’s Executive Education programmes.

Events round-up
A preview of forthcoming events.
As a member of the RSM community, you're a part of our mission to be a force for positive change in the world. More than 10,000 alumni, students, faculty members and staff have expressed how they plan to achieve their goals in I WILL statements. What’s yours?

Find and share your I WILL. And discover 10,000+ inspiring goals at WWW.RSM.NL/IWILLEVERYONE
First, I am pleased to introduce Sue Martin, our new director of corporate and alumni relations. She comes to us from the University of Reading where she was head of campaign and supporter engagement. You can read about her plans for developing a stronger and more effective global RSM community for alumni on p16. In addition to her experience in the academic sector, Sue spent many years in government administration, and has significant expertise in international marketing and communications, stakeholder engagement, relationship management, strategic planning, alumni relations and volunteer management. She brings an impressive and very welcome amount of talent and experience to RSM.

Here on campus, we’re pushing home our mission to be a force for positive change in the world to students and potential students at every level. The goal-setting programme devised by Prof. Michaëla Schippers is being rolled out as from September into four high schools. It’s not a big programme yet, but shows how we can help other schools to improve. We’re reshaping the bachelor curriculum so it better equips students to drive sustainable change in a complex world. To do this we’ll add a focus on responsible leadership with five specialisation tracks.

And a new campaign to recruit students to our MBA programmes addresses the “What if...?” question that many candidates have. It emphasises...
the importance of business – and personal values – for solving many of the world’s biggest challenges; even NGOs use business skills to solve challenges. Taking our education out into the business world, we have launched a range of new, short digital leadership programmes for professionals from RSM Executive Education. As we go to press, we are also in the midst of planning our first Digital Economy Summit on 20 June.

RSM faculty and our alumni network are also demonstrating their force for positive change. They have already given serious thought to UN Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) – the wicked problem of food sustainability and ending hunger. We cover that in this issue’s special feature. You can read what those working and researching in that field have to say from p24. Prof. Gabriele Jacob’s inaugural address in April demonstrated the relevance of her research to the grand societal challenges in public safety – which comes under SDG 16: peace, justice and strong institutions. Peaceful and inclusive societies allow for the sustainable development of all kinds of organisations.

Internationally, RSM is recognised for its positive forces at work: a teaching case by our Case Development Centre won the Entrepreneurship category in The Case Centre Awards 2018. This best-selling case shows how business can be a force for good, and how the ad-hoc decisions taken during the “messy” early stages of a crowd-funded entrepreneurial start-up can be exactly what are needed.

Individuals at RSM have been recognised too: Prof. Henk Volberda won the first Flexibility Excellence Award 2017 for his research on flexible systems management. Prof. Stefano Puntoni is among the 34 top marketing academics selected by the Marketing Science Institute and will help to network with marketing researchers and executives to help bring research into business practice. And Assistant Professor Stefano Tasselli was named one of the world’s 40 most inspiring business school professors under 40 by Poets & Quants, a website devoted to coverage of business schools.

Student initiatives have also made me proud recently. The live final of the I WILL Award in March presented six great finalists who demonstrate our mission. For the first time in the Award’s history, we had two winners. You can read about how they impressed the judges on p18.

It’s a quiet season for rankings, but we still look good in the Financial Times ranking for our full-time MBA at 37 globally and 11 in Europe; our customised executive education programmes are number one in the Netherlands in the Financial Times ranking; and we’re classed as topopleiding (top rated) in the Keuzegids for our MSc in International Management/CEMS. We will keep up the good work.

We never stop being inspired by RSM alumni. Don’t miss the career journeys of fellow inspiring and entrepreneurial alumni in corporations and NGOs, and those who founded start-ups in their quest to make a positive impact on society [p30-35].

Enjoy this food-sustainability-themed issue of RSM Outlook, and we hope to see you at the RSM Leadership Summit in October.

Have a great summer.

Steef van de Velde
Dean & Professor
Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University
Alumnus Konstantinos Kalampokis (MSc Business Information Management 2015) led Terracom Informatics Ltd in Greece to a top 30 place in the CISO 30 Awards 2018 for security. Business development manager Konstantinos received the award in Dubai for a QR-Patrol project for companies active in physical security or employing lone workers.

Alumna Shirley Elands (MSc Strategic Entrepreneurship 2015) was nominated as FUTUR’s Jonge Ambtenaar van het Jaar 2018 (Young Official of the Year). She uses her business skills to run hackathons to combine open datasets to answer social issues with new insights and technologies, for example using block chain, the Internet of Things and linked data.

Graduate Tatjana Morisnicenko (MSc Supply Chain Management 2017) won this year’s €1,000 KPMG-RSM Sustainability Master Thesis Award for E-grocery: the effectiveness of content sharing on social media in promoting green slot choice behavior. She received the award at the RSM Sustainability Forum on 13 April. The runner-up was alumnus Thomas Behrendt (MSc International Management/CEMS 2016) for his thesis about episodic volunteering in the light of the gig economy. He won €500.

The RSM CEMS Class of 2018 representing 15 nationalities has joined the alumni network. More than 50 RSM MSc International Management/CEMS graduates graduated in April with impressive average final grades of 8.3 for their master theses, and 67 per cent graduated cum laude. Graduate Luka Baumhauer achieved summa cum laude. Christian Chao was chosen by his cohort to give the student address at the ceremony.

Welcome to 96 graduates from RSM’s International Full-time MBA Class of 2018 and 124 graduates from the Executive MBA Class of 2017! They joined the RSM alumni network with a graduation ceremony at the World Trade Center Rotterdam on 23 March 2018. Keynote speaker Jackie Cuthbert spoke about being open to reflection.

TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE SOCIAL IMPACT

Alumna Shirley Elands (MSc Strategic Entrepreneurship 2015) was nominated as FUTUR’s Jonge Ambtenaar van het Jaar 2018 (Young Official of the Year). She uses her business skills to run hackathons to combine open datasets to answer social issues with new insights and technologies, for example using block chain, the Internet of Things and linked data.

WEB https://futur.nl
RSM ENTREPRENEURS GIVE GUEST LECTURES

Alumni Niels van Deuren (MSc International Management/CEMS 2012) from HousingAnywhere, Maarten van Bergen (Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde 2018) from 3M and founder Joost de Kluijver from Closing the Loop shared their experiences of entrepreneurship with around 175 BSc Bedrijfskunde students in February. The lectures were moderated by Joshua Alagbe (BSc Bedrijfskunde 2016), founder of Joshua Alagbe Media.

WHAT HAPPIOLOGISTS KNOW

A series of short blog posts about public safety – from the view of a “happiologist” about what organisations can learn from complaints – is now on the home pages of RSM’s Centre of Excellence in Public Safety Management (CESAM). They show how the Centre’s work to promote and foster the professional development and management of public safety organisations affects everyone. 

WEB www.rsm.nl/cesam/blog

PART-TIME PHD PROGRAMME IN MANAGEMENT

New knowledge from research is always needed in business. Sometimes, the best person to carry out that research is you.

Highlights:

- Thorough training in research methods and skills
- Supervision and coaching by RSM’s top research faculty
- Access to RSM’s excellent research facilities

Are you interested in further developing your academic skills while working? Submit your application before before 15 March 2019 to start in September 2019.

More information: WWW.RSM.NL/RESEARCH/PART-TIME-PHD
ADVANCED FINANCE CAREER TRACKS
Alumni connected with highly talented finance students for a career panel specifically for the MSc Finance & Investments Advanced programme in November 2017. Tim Nieuwendijk (Philips), Aleksandar Kushev (NN Investment Partners), Martin Karschkes (HPE Growth Capital), Gianluca Valentini (finance entrepreneur and consultant) and Rudolf Oosthuizen (Optiver) discussed career tracks and opportunities post-graduation.
WEB www.rsm.nl/fia-partnership

RANKINGS, RANKINGS, RANKINGS!
In the overall ranking for Europe, RSM is now ninth in the Financial Times European Business School ranking. RSM maintains its place in the first tier of MBA programmes. The International Full-time MBA at RSM is 37th worldwide, and 11th in Europe in the Financial Times 2018 ranking. The programme is 12th internationally for student career progress. The Academic Ranking of World Universities (the “Shanghai ranking”) puts RSM third worldwide for Business Administration, while the US World & News Report ranking puts RSM 14th for Economics and Business – up one place from last year. This ranking is based on teaching, research, and reputation with recruiters.
WEB www.rsm.nl/rankings

STUDENT TRIUMPH IN HONG KONG
A business plan to consolidate an outstanding debt and pursue virtual-reality-enabled e-commerce proved a winner for students from the RSM STAR Case Society in the prestigious IIBD International Case Competition in Hong Kong in late November. The bachelor students worked on a real-life business case for a Chinese e-commerce start-up and won a cash prize of US$1,000.

GRADUATION PROCEEDS FOR MOBILE LAB
Generous graduands and their families and friends have donated €9,295 to the Stichting Vrienden van het Sophia (Friends of Sophia Foundation) during the most recent post-graduation reception. More than 800 bachelor graduates and their families celebrated the end of three years of studies at the New Luxor Theatre in Rotterdam in late 2017. The funds will be put towards a mobile research laboratory.

FINTECH AND AI IN LONDON
London-based finance alumni shared their perspectives on fintech and Artificial Intelligence in lectures and company tours with 47 top finance students from RSM’s MSc Finance & Investments Advanced programme in January. They helped the students to discover how technology has revolutionised the financial industry.
WEB www.rsm.nl/fi-a
SAN FRANCISCO NETWORKING
A San Francisco networking reception for 20 alumni and around 40 students from the BSc IBA Honours class took place at the local Dutch Consulate on 30 March. It was part of the students’ study trip to Silicon Valley to learn about its tech and start-up scene at organisations such as Google, NASA Ames, Stanford University and Tesla. To see what’s happening in your area, visit www.rsm.nl/alumni/events

NEW PROFESSORS
We have more new professors who are expanding RSM research into new areas. Those who have recently given (or will soon give) their inaugural addresses include Prof. Gabriele Jacobs, investigating organisational behaviour and culture for public safety management; Prof. Steven Sweldens – conscious and unconscious processes in consumer research; Prof. Gui Liberali, investigating the balancing acts of machine learning and individuals in the digital society; and Prof. Ting Li on digital traces with regard to personalisation and privacy.

SECONDARY EDUCATION GOAL-SETTING
A letter of intent to develop an ‘evidence-based intervention’ for secondary education was signed by RSM and secondary schools in February. IJsselcollege, Fioretti College Lisse, Fioretti College Hillegom, and Segbroek College joined the RSM goal-setting project to couple academic research and knowledge sharing. It aims to promote equal opportunities in secondary education and is financed by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

ALUMNUS WRITES WAR NOVEL
Alumnus Darrell Duthie (MBA 1993), a finance and investments professional since graduation, has written and published a novel, Malcolm MacPhail’s Great War. Set in World War I, it tells the tale of a war-weary young officer who joins the intelligence staff as the battle for the Western Front nears a critical juncture. www.darrellduthie.com

READY FOR AN ALPINE QUEST?
David Aubert (Executive MBA 2010) will join thousands of cyclists in the Alpe d’Huzes event in France in June. By cycling up this notoriously steep climb, participants raise money and awareness for cancer research. All proceeds will go to KWF Kankerbestrijding. David was diagnosed with cancer in August 2017, had surgery in September, and finished his treatments in December. He says ‘I’m now “clean” and feel it is time for me to give back.’ Good luck, David!

ERASMUS CHARITY RUN
More than 500 alumni, students and staff from Erasmus University joined the NN Marathon Rotterdam on 8 April 2018. They raised €13,855 for Erasmus Trustfonds scholarships for disadvantaged, young talents by running half and full marathons. The fund was embellished by EUR’s Executive Board donation of €15,000 bringing the total to €28,855, which is equivalent to full scholarships for two students. There were 164 runners from RSM, of which there were 32 alumni, 90 staff members and 338 students. Great running! www.eur.nl/erasmus-charity-run
SUSTAINABILITY MODELS

Two keynote speakers and ten highly interactive workshops explored the options for businesses thinking about making the shift to a sustainable model at this year’s RSM Sustainability Forum in April. Dr Jessica Thomas, director of business sustainability collaborative, an academic initiative that connects students, faculty and the business community, spoke about B corporations – companies that want to add benefit to society. Gianni Lorenzato, senior financial advisor to the World Bank Group, explained how to steer financial markets towards sustainable solutions, particularly to the benefit of disadvantaged populations.

WEB www.rsm.nl/sustainability-forum

ELECTRIC MOBILITY CHALLENGE

Areas for further research and collaboration were identified at the Electric Mobility Challenge, a forum event powered by the Erasmus Centre for Future Energy Business and the German Institute of Energy Economics at the University of Cologne in April. Fifty-two enthusiastic industry professionals, policy makers and researchers attended a day of thematic workshops to tackle the challenges facing the energy transition towards smart, electrical mobility.

WEB www.rsm.nl/ecfeb

SUSTAINABILITY CAREER PANEL

Career paths and best practices in social or environmental sustainability were on show from RSM alumni Rafael Comenge (MBA 2002), Katie Hans (MBA 2016), Aditya Mohan (MBA 2015), Emma Verhagen (MSc Business Information Management 2012), and Ednah Zvinavashe (MBA 2016) at the Careers Driving Sustainable Development panel event on 9 May. Keen to help students in this way too? Contact RSM sustainability co-ordinator Joey Johannsen via EMAIL jjohannsen@rsm.nl

WEB www.rsm.nl/sustainability-forum

HOW ARE THEY DOING?

The latest RSM graduate employment report has just been published. It describes MSc alumni graduating in September 2017; a total of 617 of whom shared details about their first jobs, employment details, industries and salary. Curious to see what your new fellow alumni are up to? Read it all at www.rsm.nl/mscemploymentreport

NEW CEMS PARTNER

Logistics and supply chain consultancy C.H. Robinson is a new corporate partner for RSM’s MSc International Management/CEMS programme. Growing future international leaders is one of the most important mutual goals for RSM and C.H. Robinson, which has its European headquarters in Amsterdam. The partnership promises to benefit the company as well as students through real-life business cases, recruitment opportunities and knowledge sharing.

WEB www.rsm.nl/cems-partnership
MBA ALUMNI REUNION


WWW.RSM.NL/MBAREUNION for tickets & info

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS 2018

Who stands out by being a force for positive change in business or society? And who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the RSM community?

You can nominate outstanding alumni for a Distinguished Alumni Award at WWW.RSM.NL/DAA
Keep up to date with the professional advancements of fellow alumni as they develop their careers and move not only to new positions and companies, but also to different countries.

Making a career move? If so, contact us at EMAIL alumni@rsm.nl

**Movers AND Shakers**

**Mirjam van Aarle**
Executive MBA 2017
The former Royal Netherlands Army innovation officer is now M&A consultant, Marktlink Fusies & Overnames B.V. (’s-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands).
Effective: January 2018

**Geert Beckers**
Executive MBA 2014
Previously senior inspector: strategic communications & antitrust detection, Autoriteit Consument & Markt. Now senior supervisor integrity risk, De Nederlandsche Bank (the Netherlands).
Effective: November 2017

**Inna Chaneva**
MScBA Strategic Management 2011
The one-time commercial enterprise strategy manager with Vodafone Germany is now manager market excellence Europe at E.ON SE ( Essen, Germany).
Effective: April 2018

**Martijn van Hal**
MSc Strategic Management 2011 and BSc Business Administration 2010
Moves from position as manager innovation growth services, Monitor Deloitte. Is now regional co-lead proposition & customer experience labs, A.T. Kearney (the Netherlands).
Effective: May 2018

**Varun Agarwal**
Full-time MBA 2013
Moves from role as global indirect (S&G) sourcing PMO with Danone to become group indirects category manager (strategic sourcing & projects) at Asahi Beverages (the Netherlands).
Effective: February 2018

**Christian Certa**
Full-time MBA 2006
Previously corporate aircraft sales director, GE Capital EMEA. Now vice president, aviation & yacht finance for emerging Europe, Credit Suisse (Switzerland).
Effective: September 2017

**Guus Dekkers**
Full-time MBA 1990
Leaves role as CIO Airbus & corporate CIO with Airbus Group to become chief technology officer at Tesco (Welwyn Garden City, UK).
Effective: April 2018

**Marco Henrique**
Executive MBA 2010
The former head of cyber, HDI Global SE, moves to a new role as regional manager professional lines western Europe, ArgoGlobal (Germany).
Effective: November 2017

**Izabela Perseng**
MSc Strategic Management 2011 and BSc International Business Administration 2010
Moves from position as senior project manager, rise group ME (Dubai, UAE), to become business development manager and new projects, OMA (Rotterdam, the Netherlands).
Effective: January 2018

**Juan Carlos Romero**
Full-time MBA 2017
Steps up from role as lead data scientist with Friesland Campina to become data science leader B2B with the same company (the Netherlands).
Effective: January 2018
Recruit young professionals and bring top talent to your company through the RSM Job Board. Grab this opportunity to:

- post your job or internship vacancy on our online job board
- reach thousands of international and Dutch students and alumni from RSM’s bachelor, master and MBA programmes – and browse the online CV database.

Contact us to find out how your organisation can prepare for the future with our students’ new and valuable ideas.

More information at jobboard.rsm.nl, or contact us via careercentre@rsm.nl or +31 10 4082010.

RSM JOB BOARD
BUILDING BENEFITS FOR ALUMNI

The benefits of an RSM education should last long after the first career step – and alumni are critically important to the School. This is the passionate belief of RSM’s new director of corporate and alumni relations, Sue Martin. What can RSM alumni expect now that Sue is on the case?

Sue Martin joined RSM in January 2018. Her career has been remarkable and diverse; from being the national lead for community relations for the UK’s immigration enforcement and removals during 25 years with the UK’s Home Office with postings in Nigeria and Cyprus to alumni director at a UK Russell Group university. The skills she developed in posts all over the world – and what she discovered about building communities – will inform her plans for making sure RSM’s 36,000-strong alumni community get lifelong value from their relationship with the School.

Sue joined the University of Southampton in 2008 and took a variety of roles: student recruitment, faculty management and a major change project there. Then she was appointed associate director of alumni
relations, looking after 200,000 graduates. ‘I have seen the enormous value that alumni networks add to an institution, and it makes incredibly good business sense to build meaningful relationships,’ she says.

In 2015, Sue took up new challenges with the University of Reading as it entered a campaign to gather 60,000 volunteer hours and to raise £150 million. The resulting “Imagine” campaign presented the idea of fundraising projects to a global alumni audience as the university celebrated its 90th anniversary. Her experience there has inspired Sue’s preparations for RSM’s own 50th anniversary in 2020.

‘RSM’s alumni network is almost 50 years old; it comprises people at every stage of life. A good alumni programme will understand that alumni will want different things from their alma mater,’ she says. ‘We should cater for those who want executive education or a network to help them in their career as well as those who want reunions and family-friendly events.’

But what drew Sue to RSM? ‘I really like business graduates; they understand networks, they’re international, and often successfully entrepreneurial. The idea of working with an accessible and global community was appealing.

‘I read about RSM’s mission to be a force for positive change before I visited Rotterdam. Then I saw the “I WILL” statements on the walls when I got here; they were incredibly compelling. These two initiatives made RSM stand out, and I have seen that alumni respond; they recognise themselves and they are proud of RSM.’

Staying connected
RSM’s 36,000 alumni are spread all over the world but already have one thing in common. ‘I immediately noticed the warm relationships and how much pride alumni have for RSM,’ she observed. ‘Our international graduates have made a great personal and financial commitment, and could be considered to have the strongest affinity.’

The way that alumni experience the relationship with RSM can be improved, Sue thinks. She proposes creating relationships that are akin to partnerships so alumni feel valued and supported. ‘I want alumni to feel they can approach us for advice or help with making or re-establishing RSM connections wherever they are.’

“ I want alumni to feel they can approach us for advice or help with making or re-establishing RSM connections wherever they are.”

Sue Martin, director of corporate and alumni relations

Current students may be first to experience the new approach. Sue plans to focus part of the RSM alumni team to work on engaging current students and recent graduates, perhaps helping them to join a Local Chapter straight after graduation.

‘Some alumni are already very engaged in what we do; in mentoring current students, in bringing their experience into the classroom with guest lectures, and in raising scholarship funds. We are also proud to have a strong network of active Local Chapters and want to take it to the next level.’

Alumni can look forward to a refreshed approach to Local Chapters. ‘I want to consolidate the existing networks, give them support that works where they are, and build connections with alumni in other locations. I also think we need to build a stronger community on our doorstep with a Benelux Chapter.’

Engagement matters
Sue describes the “virtuous circle of alumni engagement” in which students choose to go to a particular university when they are inspired by its graduates. Students see an alumnus give a guest lecture or company presentation during their studies that motivates them to seek a job with that company after graduation, or they are mentored by an alumnus or get an internship through this network. The cycle repeats with the new alumnus mentoring or giving advice about their industry sector.

‘This happens again and again, particularly in this school,’ she says. ‘There are companies employing significant numbers of our graduates who in turn look back to RSM for the next generation of RSM talent.’ Sue believes the alumni team can facilitate this succession of proud alumni. ‘We want alumni to tell their success stories as part of RSM’s story through better communications.’

Sue recognises these steps will take time. ‘Good engagement is for the longer term; it takes a while to build it up and I am delighted that RSM has recognised this,’ she says, and plans to launch a package of services to support reunions and other events.

Sue intends to further professionalise RSM’s approach to these important relationships, and welcomes feedback and ideas; she understands that building relationships is the most important first step, but knows that many alumni find it rewarding to play a part in developing a stronger, more useful and engaging community; one in which RSM alumni – no matter where they might be in the world – are proud to belong.

If you have ideas to help encourage the RSM alumni community or would like to connect with alumni near you, get in touch and get involved.

EMAIL: alumni@rsm.nl
Small start-ups with HEAVYWEIGHT IDEAS

The biennial I WILL Get in the Ring competition, held by RSM, awards a €15,000 prize to the year’s best social enterprise start-up. The 2018 competition had two winners for the first time ever: Boxr4ALL, a clothing company that donates a pair of locally made underwear in Tanzania for every pair sold in the Netherlands, and Juvoo, a platform that uses smart technology to give back 105 hours of caring time each year to nurses drowning in administration.

STORY BY IMOGEN MOORE

A friendly football game during a humanitarian school trip to Tanzania gave first-year BSc IBA student Thom Uildriks an insight into a small problem with big consequences. ‘I went to get the football equipment. There was a Tanzanian boy showering using a bucket and when he got dressed he didn’t use any underwear. Later we asked why that was and the answer was pretty simple – he can’t afford it. If you have the money for two shirts or one shirt and some underwear, you buy the two shirts. It’s all about status.’

When Thom returned home to the Netherlands he began researching. ‘Worldwide, a hundred million people want underwear but they simply can’t afford it. It sounds like a small thing but not having underwear can lead to infection, sexual dysfunction, and for women means they can’t go to school or to work when they have their period.’

Spijk Geene was also on the trip to Tanzania and is now Thom’s business partner. A phone call between the two (‘Why don’t we try to do something about this?’) was the beginning of Boxr4ALL. Over a beer at a café in Eindhoven the idea was mapped out and eventually pitched to the European Commission. ‘We won that pitch and that’s when the idea really started rolling. But we were always behind. First we had media attention but no website; then we had a website but no boxers; then we had boxers but just one simple design.’

Another couple of pitches and a crowdfunding campaign saw the first batch of boxer shorts go on sale in the Netherlands. Every pair of boxer shorts sold in the Netherlands means a pair of boxer shorts donated in Tanzania. ‘This is crucial to Boxr4ALL. Every pair of boxers donated in Tanzania is also made in Tanzania. There is no big factory making them: we work with
a foundation in Tanzania that works with an orphanage. One of the orphans’ grandmothers is the person who makes each pair of boxer shorts that we donate. We get the order, she gets the order, she makes the underwear and it is distributed. So we’re not only helping with hygiene and health but also stimulating the local economy; that was always really important for us.’

Boxrs4ALL has gained a lot of media attention, notably from 3FM, BNR, Elsevier and Quote. ‘The CEO of supermarket chain Jumbo is now an investor and mentor,’ Thom enthuses. ‘We’ve presented so many times that I won “Best Pitcher In the Netherlands” – March was crazy for us!’ Winning the I WILL Get in the Ring competition is the icing on the cake, especially as Thom, just 19 years old, was the only first-year student in a competition full of MBAs.

The strategy seems to have worked, and Boxrs4All are expanding to manufacturing women’s underwear, something that Thom considers an important move in the business’s growth. ‘Women buy a lot more underwear than men; they even buy more mens underwear to give as gifts.’ The next phase in growth involves retailers and moving away from only selling online. ‘The retailers we work with have to believe in our project. They have to acknowledge that there is an impact that they’re paying for. We’ve walked away from some that are only in it for the profit.

‘Our vision is to have a full line of 4All clothing and accessories so that when someone buys one of our toothbrushes or a pair of socks they know that someone else is being gifted the same item. We could stop what we’re doing right now and have plenty of money, at least for students. But that’s not what we want; we would like to make this our full-time job after our studies.’

Thom Uildriks, BSc IBA student

““ So we’re not only helping with hygiene and health but also stimulating the local economy; that was always really important for us.”

Thom (left) and Spijk (right) of Boxrs4all receive their prize money.

WEB www.boxrs4all.nl
Juvoo

Based on Juvo, the Latin word for “giving aid”, Juvoo is the brainchild of recent graduates Roopesh Santokhi, António Faria (both EMBA17) and two experienced healthcare professionals: Mark Venekamp and William Gomes. António started by studying medicine (but swapped to business studies) and Roopesh had previously developed a community app designed to give ordinary people easy ways to help the elderly in their neighbourhood. This background naturally led to finding solutions for issues within eldercare.

There is so much precious time lost to non-caring activities that could be spent in taking care of our elderly! Protocols are important of course but a carer’s time should be spent caring, not writing down what time a bed was made. We have sensors for that,’ Roopesh and António explain.

Juvoo is a platform that uses smart technology to track activities that would otherwise be manually recorded by a caregiver. ‘For example, after a meeting with a client a caregiver has to run back

António Faria (left) and Roopesh Santokhi (right) believe healthcare needs to be more efficient.
to a desktop computer to write up the meeting notes then run back to be with another client. It breaks the flow of the relationship between patient and carer, and it's inefficient. Speech-to-text technology can be used through Juvoo to take the meeting notes and automatically update the patient file,' they say.

The platform aims to deal with some significant secondary issues as well. 'Dutch healthcare is understaffed by around 100,000 people. The staff we do have take higher-than-average amounts of sick leave. A lot of this is due to stress from being overworked and having to spend so much time on the administrative tasks that take away from the core role. Using Juvoo, we can foresee less stress for nurses, which means less sick leave. We want to bring the joy back to the job.'

Juvoo is currently being trialled in the Stichting Humanitas Rotterdam. 'The proof of the pudding is, as they say, in the eating. This trial is an excellent opportunity for us to see how Juvoo works in the real world, with real users who will give us feedback on what is already in place in healthcare. ‘A nurse will normally use multiple systems, each handling a different set of tasks. This means they have to log in to one, log out, move to another, input information there, move to yet another, all via a desktop computer. We want a carer to be able to manage their administration from an iPad.’

Roopesh’s presentation of Juvoo during the on-stage I WILL Get in the Ring final round of the competition won the audience prize of €2,000 and saw them taking home the grand prize of €15,000 (the first time in the competition’s history that both prizes have been awarded to a single start-up). ‘We want to use the prize money to make the platform even better. We have so many ideas – we have a call every morning at 08:00 to discuss them! – so we need to prioritise. To be honest, we have the whole thing mapped out; we just need the investment to make it happen,’ they enthuse.

Both Roopesh and António have their eyes fixed very much on the longer term: ‘The whole world needs a more efficient healthcare system, especially for eldercare. We will have to go through this ourselves one day; do we want to get there and realise this is still the same system we saw 20 years ago? We shouldn’t have nurses and doctors becoming demotivated by working in an old, slow and unmoving business. It can really be so much fun, just as exciting as working for Uber or Google. For us, enabling positive change is the best prize we can get.’

“Using Juvoo, we can foresee less stress for nurses, which means less sick leave. We want to bring the joy back to the job.”
Roopesh Santokhi, EMBA17
CREATING A POSITIVE CULTURE

RSM Outlook talks with alumna Marcella Bremer, author of Developing a positive culture where people and performance thrive, and to Dirk van Dierendonck, professor of human resource management at RSM, about what it takes to encourage a culture of positivity in the workplace, and why a sense of organisational and individual purpose is integral to success.

STORY BY TIM SKELTON

Creating a positive cultural change within an organisation can have enormous benefits. It is not only good for performance and profits, but employees also feel valued. ‘It enhances people’s intrinsic motivation. If you want them to do their best and be innovative, you cannot tell them what to do,’ Prof. Van Dierendonck explains. ‘You depend on their willingness and commitment. If people resonate with the mission and values of an organisation, they will find ways to contribute.’

This trend towards positivity is relatively recent. ‘When I graduated in 1990 we still used the problem-focused management paradigm: analysing problems and fixing them to go back to normal. It was only later that new theories and tools such as Positive Psychology and Appreciative Inquiry developed,’ Marcella Bremer, (MScBA Management of Change 1990), says.

If managers focus on the negative, she continues, employees feel cautious and risk getting into a negative spiral. They close off and won’t ask questions, which is when mistakes get repeated. ‘Positive leadership means taking a “glass half full” approach: looking for positive potential within a team, and at what is working well. Instead of going back to normal by simply fixing problems, it means thinking about how to develop the potential to achieve positive deviance,’ she says.

Treating staff as people and developing their strengths creates positivity. ‘When employees feel acknowledged they feel confident, and they are more creative, relaxed and energetic. They are also more open to learning new skills and giving feedback,’ Bremer continues.

‘This means moving away from a fear-based culture,’ Prof. Van Dierendonck adds. ‘When people are unhappy they resort to just-in-time actions, and the organisation slows down. You need people who are willing to put in more effort than you ask for.’

In traditional thinking, a manager giving employees a sense of empowerment was a top-down action. ‘Leaders are important, and our brains are wired to look up to people in positions of power,’ Bremer explains. ‘But a CEO can’t order people to change their culture. Leaders must instead use their influence and interact and engage people. Staff can also initiate change, like a social movement. It doesn’t need to be top-down.’

‘It depends on the person in front of you. You need to be flexible,’ Prof. Van Dierendonck confirms. ‘On one hand
you want to give employees enough autonomy to do their own thing, but at the same time you need to give guidance when they ask for help. It’s a balancing act, giving freedom but also keeping everyone going in the same direction.

**Change circles**
Bremer believes positive culture is best implemented through “change circles”: teams of around eight to 10 direct colleagues. ‘Organisations are not the neat pyramids that exist on paper. They are networks. People talk to one another. And together they can decide what is important,’ she explains. ‘By sitting together you can see how culture change works within your team. It translates from abstract values into specific behaviours that fit your workload. The circle is a safe space where everyone gets a say. You can look colleagues in the eye and see if they agree, or whether adjustments need to be made.’

With networks, change can begin anywhere, regardless of someone’s position. At first it may only make a small difference within a team, but it can ripple throughout an organisation. ‘People must realise that they can and do make a difference,’ Bremer explains. Nevertheless, she adds, you have to be patient: ‘Many clients I work with are in a hurry. They want to skip the change circles, or save money by having circles containing too many people. But that doesn’t work. In larger groups it’s easier to hide, and to go back to normal as soon as the meeting is over.’

And, as Prof. Van Dierendonck points out, there are other benefits to building a value-based organisation. ‘If people feel they are in the right place, they are willing to stay longer and you get less staff turnover,’ he says. ‘With the economy improving and the labour market becoming tighter, it is harder to find talented people, so staff retention is vital.’

Moreover, he adds, the element of stewardship is becoming more important in the wider context. ‘You take care of what is given to you as a responsibility, and you look at it from the long-term perspective. You see not only the impact of what you are doing in the short term, but also on the world you might leave your children.’

And Bremer also sees value in the wider benefits. ‘We spend so much time at work, it would be great if you can come home and feel positive there as well,’ she says. ‘Then you spread that positivity.’

“Staff can also initiate change, like a social movement. It doesn’t need to be top-down.”

Prof. Dirk van Dierendonck

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*Developing a positive culture where people and performance thrive by Marcella Bremer is published by Motivational Press. ISBN: 978-1628654400.*

*WEB* www.positive-culture.com/the-book/

*Find out more...*

about how to harness the power of purpose to benefit an organisation’s achievements at this year’s RSM Leadership Summit in Rotterdam on Friday 12 October.

*WEB* www.rsm.nl/summit
The number of undernourished people in the world fell from 15 per cent in the period 2000-2002 to 11 per cent in 2014-16. In percentage terms the decline is significant. In real terms, however, this still means that around 793 million people are undernourished globally. To give you a sense of the enormity of the problem, that number is close to the populations of the USA, Indonesia and Brazil combined.

Of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the aim of Goal 2 is to ‘end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.’ But how is that to happen?

Rob van Tulder, professor of international business-society management at RSM and academic director of the school’s Partnerships Resources Centre, believes we tend to consider food security and sustainability as being largely technical problems. ‘In looking for solutions, the focus can be too narrow,’ he says.

‘Ending hunger, ensuring food security and encouraging sustainable agriculture is much more complex than that.’ Instead, it is, he says, a “wicked problem” – a term first formally defined by academics Horst W.J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber in a 1973 management article, and used to describe problems that have multiple and complex causes for which traditional approaches to solutions do not work.

‘It is a wicked problem because in addition to the technology aspects, societal groups are involved, and politics plays a part. Hunger isn’t only related to a lack of food: complex systems underpin the production and distribution of what the world eats,’ Prof. Van Tulder explains. ‘It’s a nexus of issues: it’s systemic. Hunger and food security are connected to poverty, agriculture and food production, land ownership, supply chains, politics, peace, environmental and climate concerns, and much more. This means hunger and food security are inextricably interlinked with all of the UN SDGs.’

Considering the incredibly complicated factors involved, Prof. Van Tulder states that hunger and food sustainability must be considered and tackled as societal problems. ‘Given the structural complexity of all wicked problems, there is no one solution: instead, particular approaches need to be taken and stimulated. This is where governments, civil society organisations and companies must act together – form smart partnerships – to define, develop and deliver common solutions,’ he says.

For businesses, Prof. Van Tulder explains, international value chains represent a means through which sustain-
ability can be driven: ‘For this to work in commodity value chains where consumers are the end recipients, companies – whether it’s a supermarket like Albert Heijn or a food processing company like Unilever – must be willing and able to take the lead in developing sustainable supply chains. Companies dealing with smallholders must not only consider whether they are paying a fair price – a price enabling individual suppliers and their communities to live sustainably – but also whether they support their suppliers to develop sustainable business models themselves. The ability to diversify thereby proves particularly crucial for suppliers: diversify to different customers, commodity chains, and markets – local as well as global. Diversification strengthens the communities involved, encourages their longer term survival, and in turn creates a more resilient value chain.’

Flawed system
Adding to the complexity of ensuring food sustainability and security for all, Prof. Van Tulder observes that the food system of the world is basically broken. ‘Fortunately, multinationals like Nestlé and Unilever have already acknowledged that fundamental failures exist in the system,’ he says. ‘We have a strange system actually capable of supplying enough food to everyone, yet around one billion people on this planet are still hungry, undernourished and lack sufficient nutrients in their diet.’

Prof. Van Tulder also points to the perverse fact that at the same time as so many people on the planet have insufficient food, around 1.4 billion people are obese. ‘And in the value chain that exists between producers, processors, distributors, retailers and consumers, around 40 per cent of all food is wasted: first during distribution and secondly during the consumption stage,’ he says.

While understanding the system is broken, companies, even when they are the most important players in value chains, increasingly admit they cannot fix things on their own. They see partnerships as the way forward. Thus they look to ally with governments, with initiatives such as the UN’s World Food Programme, and with non-governmental organisations – like Oxfam – that seek to secure the best interests of smallholder growers and producers.

This approach is in line with SDG 17, in which partnering and co-operation is seen as driving the goals forward. This approach highlights the five basic principles underpinning all SDGs, which are people, planet, peace, partnerships and prosperity.

This, Prof. Van Tulder says, is a step beyond the Triple-P model of people, planet and profit. ‘In the 5-P model, profit is replaced by prosperity, which is better; otherwise the emphasis is on profit maximisation, which has never been the real aim of companies. Profit is a means – not a goal in itself,’ Prof. Van Tulder explains. ‘I consider partnering to be the facilitator for the other four Ps. Taken together, the 5-Ps create the dynamics by which all the SDGs can be addressed,’ he says.

Shareholder value
But there is much work to be done on the road to 2030. ‘Unfortunately, we’re still in a time where not enough companies are seeing the bigger picture because they’re too focused on the short term or on just one part of the value chain. However, that is slowly changing as more lead companies wake up to the fact that they have a societal responsibility to strategize for long-term sustainability,’ he says.

‘And shareholders are also seeing it this way to some degree. BlackRock, the largest asset management corporation in the world, assesses its portfolio on the basis of the sustainability efforts of the companies it invests in. That’s significant when you know they only invest in Fortune 500 companies,’ he observes. Closer to home, Stichting Pensioenfonds ABP is also trying to take a sustainable approach to investing (see RSM Outlook Winter 2017 for an interview with ABP chair, Corien Wortmann-Kool).

In summary, Prof. Van Tulder believes that in spite of the need for more progress, he’s happy with SDG 2: ‘The aims are much more ambitious than the earlier Millennium Development Goal, which only aimed to halve extreme poverty and hunger. SDG 2 goes much farther in that it seeks not just to alleviate hunger, but also addresses food systems and therefore food security. And that is absolutely essential if we really do want to make a difference.’

Prof. Van Tulder is currently working on The sustainable development goals: a framework for effective corporate involvement, which will be published as part of the RSM Series on Positive Change. Copies will be available for download during the summer at

WEB www.rsm.nl/positivechange

The Partnerships Resources Centre
WEB www.rsm.nl/prc
Agriculture is focused on short-term profits, regulated by governments more focused on more immediate priorities, and driven by the demands of consumers who are also not focused on the bigger picture. This collective sleepwalking is having a profound impact on the supply of food – half of which in the Netherlands never reaches the table – and the world’s ecosystems that farmland depends upon.

In an address to the Dutch Parliament last year, Willem Ferwerda, executive fellow business & ecosystems at RSM, and CEO and founder of Commonland Group, an organisation dedicated to large-scale land-ecosystem reclamation, noted that a recent G8 study found that the present structure of the agriculture industry is the number one cause of landscape degradation.

Thinking local
‘We could already have had a much greener world than we have today,’ says Meiny Prins, CEO of Priva, a company that develops hardware, software and services for climate and process control in horticulture and in buildings, and founder of the Sustainable Urban Delta think tank. An RSM graduate (Part-time Bedrijfskunde 2000), Prins argues that our collective decision to subsidise fossil fuels and agriculture is holding back the shift to a more sustainable life and a more secure food supply.

Her organisation’s website showcases dozens of initiatives underway in the Netherlands, all focused on improving the country’s ecological sustainability. Agriculture-related projects highlighted include:

• NoFoodWasted, a group that hopes to reduce food waste by 50 per cent over five years through a discounting app that advises shoppers when products are near their sell-by date and priced for a quick sale.
• A 1,000-square metre roof farm in Rotterdam that grows vegetables for local restaurants and consumers.
• A one-hectare experimental farm on Texel, where researchers are finding salt-tolerant crops that could be grown on the one billion hectares of saline soil now left uncultivated.

Thinking global
Meanwhile, Ferwerda’s organisation Commonland is trying to restore landscapes on a massive scale at various places around the world.

Ecosystem restoration is not easy, but some committed governments have shown that it can be done, according to Ferwerda. For example, the Chinese government’s restoration of the Loess Plateau (3.5 million hectares – an area roughly the size of Belgium) has resulted in more jobs, higher incomes and higher levels of education, greater social wellbeing, and an expanded economy, according to the World Bank.

Often, Ferwerda says, the ecological functions of landscapes, and the sustainable productivity of soils can be improved substantially within 20 years. Wageningen University and Commonland are currently working on a study to show that the value of the soil will more than triple if the right measures are taken. ‘Within a landscape area of less than 500,000 hectares, we foresee the development of many new business activities, like regenerative agroforestry using perennial species of...’

A fifth of the Earth’s land surface is showing signs of declining productivity, which is a direct threat to the livelihood and lives of more than one billion people and has serious implications for food security. Why is this happening? Mainly because of our own bad habits, say two members of the RSM community who lead initiatives that promote sustainable agriculture and sustainable business practices.

STORY BY BENNETT VOYLES
trees and shrubs (timber, fruits, nuts, oils, etc.) with annual crops (cereals, beans) and rotational grazing (meat, milk, manure); composting, fencing, water and infrastructural works, leisure, circular forms of high tech/low input efficient agriculture (greenhouses, shade houses) and aquaculture,’ Ferwerda recently wrote.

Based on the “4 returns, 3 zones, 20 years” framework on landscapes, and in conjunction with local partners, Ferwerda’s Commonland foundation is developing several massive reclamation initiatives with local partners in Australia, South Africa, Spain, and the Netherlands. At a cost of roughly one euro a hectare per year in stakeholder orchestration (and backed by public-private partnerships that include government credit guarantees and private investment), Ferwerda believes that Commonland can achieve even bigger results than these successful government programmes.

As Ferwerda told the Dutch Parliament last year: ‘We need to restore our earth – our life support system – and as entrepreneurs, corporations, journalists, scientists, politicians and citizens, we have the task of telling this big story to the world. We must hear those who are living in the rural areas’ concerns: farmers, fishermen, local and rural businesses. They often have answers, but were mostly not heard. Over time they have seen their roles reduced to producer, at the expense of fulfilling their tasks as stewards. Here I remember the words of a French farmer, who said that a good product is a complete chain of respect.’

Willem Ferwerda is the author of 4 returns, 3 zones, 20 years: A holistic framework for ecological restoration by people and business for next generations, published as part of the RSM Series on Positive Change. Copies are available for download at www.rsm.nl/positivechange

WEB www.commonland.com
WEB sustainableurbandelta.com
More than in any other economic sector, these goals sometimes overlap and conflict. Corporations must continue food production to meet global needs and reduce their environmental footprint at the same time. They must improve nutritional content and adhere to fairer practices, yet remain profitable. Meeting these demands requires all-new ways of thinking about business.

Importer and distributor of organic fruit and vegetables EOSTA topped the Dutch Sustainability Monitor rankings in 2017, and it stands out for several reasons. One is its commitment to a new form of accounting. True Cost Accounting calculates the true cost of food production – including its environmental, social and health impacts.

Founder and CEO of EOSTA, Volkert Engelsman, has been widely lauded for being the first to publicise a True Cost Accounting report on his company’s products, and for bringing this information directly to the store shelves and into the hands of consumers. At the heart of his vision is the “Nature and More” Sustainability Flower, an assessment and transparency model Engelsman helped pioneer.

‘It starts with transparency,’ says Engelsman, who gives considerable time and effort to supporting RSM across a variety of events and platforms. ‘With commodification comes anonymity and with this comes potential exploitation. We put the face of the grower or supplier on every product we distribute to highlight their unique story and how they deal with people and planet. We have a moral and economic obligation to not leave the burden of sustainability with the growers but to assist them in capitalising on their values, and reward them financially for their contribution to society.’

Good for business

Unilever has pioneered responsible capitalism for decades. The company’s Sustainable Living Plan, a new way of doing business that is aligned with the UN SDGs, has both drastically reduced its environmental footprint and is accelerating growth for the organisation.

‘We want to transform the global food system to meet the UN vision of zero hunger,’ says executive vice president and RSM alumna Conny Braams (MBA 1990). ‘For me, as general manager for Unilever Benelux, that means applying an SDG lens to every aspect of the Unilever Benelux strategy: appointing the right leaders, innovating to create sustainable solutions, and marketing products and services that inspire consumers to make sustainable choices.’

Partnering is a key strategy within this. ‘Food brand Knorr has a partnership with the World Food Programme to provide more than 200 billion servings containing at least one of the five key micronutrients by 2022,’ says Braams. ‘We are committed to doubling the proportion of our portfolio that meets the highest nutritional standards from 30 per cent to 60 per cent, halving food waste by 2025, and switching to a standardized system of food expiry dates by 2020. These are just a few examples of how we are transforming the way we operate.’

Innovative companies in the world’s food production and distribution sector are changing their operations to meet the goals set out in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and RSM alumni and corporate partners are leading the way.
Business innovations
RSM alumnus Feike Sijbesma (Postkandidaatsopleiding Bedrijfskunde 1987), CEO at Royal DSM, has helped turn the biggest ingredients company in the world into a vanguard of sustainable business practice. Early in his tenure as CEO, Sijbesma, who was recently named as one of “The world’s 50 greatest leaders” by Fortune magazine, decided that DSM products should deliver greater nutritional value. He took his idea to the UN, and encouraged 400 other companies to work towards improving nutrition worldwide by using food produced and processed locally to the markets served.

The company is committed to meeting a number of the SDGs: ‘DSM is a sound company with clear values and wants to have an impact on the world. Food and sustainability is our core business,’ Sijbesma declared at the RSM Leadership Summit 2017. Increasing sustainability for the long term through business innovations is essential, he believes, as is the support of shareholders who take a longer-term view of the investment horizon.

Financing greener food
Rabobank has institutionalised sustainability into its business model. The bank’s vision for future global food security, “Banking for Food”, includes a food sustainability programme designed to help a global transition to a sustainable food supply. Recently it participated for the second year in one of RSM’s Living Management Projects.

In a recent business case scenario, students from RSM’s MSc Finance and Investments Advanced programme pitched solutions to analysts and the global strategist of the animal protein team of Rabobank’s food and agribusiness research division, who acted as the executive board of a diversified animal protein company.

‘Improving the sustainability of their operations is a highly relevant area for animal protein companies. Finding ways for these companies to generate additional returns from sustainable animal protein when customers are reluctant to pay a premium price was at the centre of the business case,’ explains associate analyst Beyhan de Jong.

The solutions presented showcased outside-of-the-box thinking backed by really solid analyses, comments Justin Sherrard, global strategist animal protein – ideas that animal protein companies could potentially benefit from. ‘We want to hear new perspectives from young and bright minds,’ he says. ‘At the same time we want to broaden their perspective on the future of food, and help them to see how intrinsically motivated Rabobank is by sustainability goals.’

The challenges to achieving food sustainability and security on the road to 2030 are many. As these examples show, it is only through the development and implementation of innovative strategies aligned with a deep-rooted commitment to making the world a better place – by being a force for positive change – that genuine progress will be made in the years ahead.
Looking back, Bart acknowledges that his time at RSM helped to shape his world view. ‘The work done at RSM was perfect preparation,’ he says. ‘The School encourages a sense of curiosity. As a result, I never hesitate to ask questions and that is one of the most important aspects of my role today.’

Bart joined RSM after completing high school in 1996 and graduated with an MSc in Business Administration. His studies included a semester exchange at the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland, which in turn led to an extended period working in that country, Germany and Austria.

What exactly does he do at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation? ‘I lead the financial management support team for malaria, and what we refer to as neglected tropical diseases, in the Foundation’s global health division,’ he replies. ‘My job is to apply financial and management discipline to a portfolio of possible new drugs and vaccines, just as traditional asset managers would apply to their investments in bonds, equities and other asset classes,’ he continues.

Active involvement
The Foundation, which has a work force of around 1,500 people, does not just passively award research funding. Instead, it sees the beneficiaries of the money as partners. It is famous around the world for this approach, which helps it to maximise the benefit from each dollar committed. In total, the Foundation invests about US$5bn a year.

‘We vet each potential partner and proposal thoroughly before deciding to invest and then afterwards manage the investment actively,’ he says. ‘Very actively,’ he adds, for emphasis.

‘We rely on our partners to deliver the clinical tools that are needed to tackle the diseases that we target,’ he says. ‘For instance, we are currently trying to develop a new anti-malaria drug. But we bring far more to the table than just money. We bring discipline, experience, expertise and a determination to achieve a positive outcome.’

Repeatable strategy
The process is relatively simple, repeatable and above all effective, he explains. ‘First, we develop a strategy, to tackle
sleeping sickness, for example. Second, we identify potential applicants for investment and ask them to submit a pre-proposal. We call this concept development. Third, they set out what they mean in detail, and what they need.’

‘The next phase is development, and this is the first time that I engage personally with a proposal. We set out a rough estimate of the finance needed and might do an assessment of the organisation’s capacity for carrying out the work. Do they have the right team and the right governance in place? At the same time, the would-be recipient carries out more work to assess the eventual impact of the funding; in short, to show us the return that we can expect.’

Making big bets
‘Then we assess the budget and we define how we will structure payments,’ he says. ‘This process can take months, especially when there are tens of millions of dollars involved. We do make big bets.’

Explaining further, he says that: ‘We sign an agreement but we are still not done. We set out a programme detailing how the investment will be managed over, say, a five-year timetable, with one or two meetings a year to chart progress.’ The process is rigorous, involved and time-consuming.

Helping others
Bart grew up in the small town of Leerdam in the Netherlands, around a 15-minute drive from Utrecht. Inspired by the example set by his family, he acquired a taste for helping others in early life. In particular, a trip to India as a volunteer worker made a lasting impression.

‘The experience of realising how privileged we are in the western world hit home, hard,’ he says. ‘You set foot in India and you see people who share our ambitions to go to school, and beyond, but simply cannot. We all ought to think about helping to solve such inequality.’
In his last term at RSM back in 2005, Derek Roos (MBA 2003) had a side job working for a software development start-up that built applications for companies. They followed a traditional development process, and as delivery manager, he found it very frustrating. It was slow, expensive, and the customer never got what he wanted in the end—which wasn’t really surprising because he often hadn’t known what he wanted from the start.

But the job did give Roos and his RSM alumnus co-worker, Derckjan Kruit (MScBA 2005), a big idea: what if software development could be simplified to the point that customers could snap together the applications they needed by themselves?

Cooler heads usually advise working for someone else before starting off on your own, but Roos says he doesn’t regret what he did next: he took out a €30,000 loan his bank was offering to recent graduates who could show a diploma and a job contract, then he quit his job the next day to start a company with Kruit. In retrospect, Roos even considers their ignorance an advantage. ‘I think our naiveté in those days really helped us. I don’t think I would have started, had I known how hard it is,’ recalls Roos, now 38.

Ten years of seven-day working weeks later, his vision has grown into a 400-employee company with thousands of customers in 50 countries. Now based in Boston, USA, the firm he and Kruit built, Mendix, is a leading low-code development platform, a paradigm of emerging software manufacturing, which Forrester, the IT research firm, believes could be a US$15.5 billion industry by 2020.

Playing in key
Mendix may be big now, but Roos says his approach to business hasn’t really changed. An amateur guitarist, Roos says he thinks of business as being a lot like playing in a band. ‘You need to really be a team, right? You need to feel each other, without talking. And then, especially in jazz, because it’s mostly improvisation, you need to be extremely agile and responsive to inputs from others and play in harmony at the same time. You need to pick a key to start with, but then you don’t know where you’re going to go,’ he explains.

‘I’m very conscious of the fact that I don’t have all the answers. I try to surround myself with people who have either very different ideas or different experiences, and together, I think we come to the right outcome. Everybody has opinions, but nobody’s necessarily right. It’s in the team and the collaboration that I think the real magic happens. And that is true if you’re with five people or 500 people,’ Roos says.

His own part keeps changing too. ‘I’m constantly learning and reinventing myself. In the early days you go from being the founder to being the sales guy to becoming a manager of people and taking on more of a CEO role,’ he says.

If he could do any part of his education over again, he says he wished he
had studied more about operational management. ‘I left school with a pretty good foundation in strategy and problem-solving methodologies, but I could have used more management skills – how do you build a team, how do you create a great culture, how do you manage people, how do you run a cadence on a daily, weekly, monthly basis? These really important skills I had to learn myself and that would have been super-valuable.’

Looking ahead
Roos is confident that his and Kruit’s 2008 vision to democratise application development remains correct. ‘People are increasingly tech savvy,’ he explains. ‘They’re used to self-service. They don’t want to talk to support people. They don’t want to talk to salespeople. They want to be completely self-sufficient and independent. I think that’s a megatrend that’s going to change how companies work with technology and how people are going to work for the next few decades.’

But other factors are changing, he says, particularly voice-operated computing, the accelerating speed of business, and artificial intelligence. Of the three, AI he sees as the one with the greatest possibility of being disruptive. ‘It’s going to create a whole new set of rules that are hard to predict, including how to compete and what’s going to work going forward.’

Paradoxically, Roos argues, all these advances mean that technology will become a commodity, and no longer a source of competitive advantage for most companies. ‘The real differentiation will be how you take your data and domain knowledge and transform that into something of real business value,’ he says.

“ In the early days you go from being the founder to being the sales guy to becoming a manager of people and taking on more of a CEO role.”
Alumni Emma Verhagen, who set up FlinderFly, and the co-founders of Airpaq, Michael Widmann and Adrian Goossens, outline how they came to make their business ideas a reality and the motivations that drive them.

**FlinderFly**

As Emma Verhagen pondered a name for her company she likened its goal to the butterfly effect – a term coined by American meteorologist and mathematician Edward Norton Lorenz as an expression for chaos theory, in which small changes in one place can lead to large differences elsewhere in the system. And Emma’s goal to have 10 per cent of Dutch people do 10 per cent of their shopping through her company FlinderFly is already having an impact.

‘Flinder is an old English word that means butterfly, and flinder also sounds the same as the Dutch word vlinder, which also means butterfly. As the Netherlands is my first market, this seemed very fitting,’ she said.

Customers at shops supporting FlinderFly can donate to a charity of their choice. After every purchase they receive Flinder coins, used to grow butterflies or Flinders – each one representing an amount of money. Once the Flinder is fully grown the total amount goes to charity.

‘The greatest value I got from my RSM education was a business mindset and a “can do” mentality.’ Emma Verhagen, FlinderFly

The greatest value I got from my RSM education was a business mindset and a “can do” mentality.

The greatest value I got from my RSM education was a business mindset and a “can do” mentality.

FlinderFly is having a win for the charities because they get more donations.

There is nothing chaotic about Emma’s accelerating career since arriving at RSM from Romania nine years ago and graduating with an MSc in Business Information Management in 2012. Her employer, Unilever, where she is a digital R&D manager, encouraged her idea to start FlinderFly in July 2017. Soon afterwards she was judged one of Memory Group’s top five Best Young Professionals under 33.

A Unilever workshop, Discover your Purpose, motivated Emma’s founding of FlinderFly. ‘I realised that I had two purposes. I wanted to wake up in the morning with the feeling that not only do I strive for excellence, but also for a higher purpose,’ she said.

Emma’s biggest challenge as an entrepreneur is needing more time. ‘Perseverance helps me to keep going. Refusal and delay is difficult for me to accept. For instance, when we get a refusal from a shop, I remind myself that FlinderFly already has 40 different online shops that are part of my business, 30 of which are very well-known.’

Her husband Chris learned to program the FlinderFly app with her. ‘He would always encourage me to choose the highest quality and not just quick results when I started out,’ Emma said.

WEB  www.flinderfly.nl
Airpaq

How do you design upcycled backpacks that are durable enough to withstand extreme situations like car crashes? By foraging through the safety compartments of wrecked vehicles for seat belts, buckles and airbags, and learning to sew from YouTube tutorials.

The result is the company Airpaq, co-founded by Michael Widmann (pictured top left) and Adrian Goossens (pictured top right) in January 2017, some 16 months after the idea formed during the first course of their MSc in Strategic Entrepreneurship at RSM. They created the company webshop with no experience of web design or coding, and its promotional content with the help of former school colleagues. Money was raised through a crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter. ‘Being an entrepreneur in this initial stage meant looking at what we have – knowledge, background, network, financial resources – and making the best out of it,’ they said.

Their master programme was flexible enough for them to continue developing Airpaq during several core and elective courses – the most important being Opportunity Creation, Entrepreneurial Bootstrapping, and the Entrepreneurial Lab. ‘We were able to apply Airpaq to several group projects throughout the year and to gather feedback from faculty members and fellow students. We contacted already successful entrepreneurs such as Philip Hess.’ Hess is the entrepreneur and co-founder of Senz, the company that sells stormproof umbrellas.

After failing in dozens of negotiations with scrapyard owners who saw Airpaq’s proposal only as a student project, the two men now partner with a few bigger companies that they are convinced have long-term worth to Airpaq. Along with their own belief that sustainable actions such as upcycling and recycling are ‘essential for our life on this planet’, they are fascinated by what they describe as the charm and singularity exhibited by upcycled products. ‘Our goal for Airpaq is to combine these motives with products that convince customers both ecologically and aesthetically.’

They manufacture at Michael’s father’s sewing factory in Romania, which has been operating for 22 years. ‘Romania represents the perfect production place for Airpaq, with its fair working conditions, high quality standards and sustainable production,’ Michael said. As the two 27-year-olds spend three weeks a month in Romania, it is more of a home base than their respective native countries – Michael in Italy and Adrian in Germany.

They plan to change their webshop from accepting only pre-orders to providing regular, next-day shipment. They also plan to design and develop new products such as wallets, caps and sports bags using the same sturdy materials they use in the backpacks.

“ Our goal for Airpaq is to combine these motives with products that convince customers both ecologically and aesthetically.”

Michael Widmann and Adrian Goossens, Airpaq
40 YEARS OF STUDENTS WORKING FOR STUDENTS

As RSM’s STAR association celebrates its 40th anniversary of providing social, corporate and alumni-oriented activities to current students from all programmes, RSM Outlook spoke to one of the organisation’s very first board members and two current flag-bearers.

STORY BY KEVIN TITMAN

When an organisation run by students in the interests of students can count 6,500 members (of whom 300 are currently active working representatives), comprises 29 committees dedicated to a range of social events, and also includes 13 Master Study Clubs built around a series of management-related themes, then it is something worth writing home about. Born from the 2005 merger of the SviiB and BActive organisations already in place at RSM, STAR has celebrated its 40th year of bringing together bachelor, IBA, master and MBA students under a wide-reaching portfolio of initiatives designed to create new personal development opportunities for all involved.

Plans on paper

Discussions about the structure, status and strategic priorities of the association began in November 1976, as treasurer of the first-ever board Alexander Maas (Doctoraal Postkandidaats Bedrijfskunde 1976) explains: ‘We started small but we were already thinking big. Whilst a one-off event like a football tournament to create bonds would have been a good enough start, we had all kinds of other ambitions in mind as well – from establishing and maintaining connections with industry, governments and other student associations and running more corporate events, through to managing a book fund campaign, facilitating student exchanges, and providing day-to-day support on issues such as accommodation, sports activities, and embarking on trips abroad. All the way through, the focus was always on the student experience and still is.’

...our aim remains clear – to bring all RSM students together via social activities that will enrich the fun side of university life but also provide support that will serve them later in life.”

Marc Gijsbers, STAR chair

The present day

From these humble but fruitful beginnings, STAR has grown to become the largest business administration student-run association of its kind, not only in the Netherlands but also in Europe.

Activities have become more extensive and more internationally-oriented, plus there is a clear intention coming loud and clear from the chair of the current board, Marc Gijsbers (BSc IBA 2017), for the organisation to be as all-inclusive as possible: ‘Since taking on the role in August 2017, this has been an eye-opening experience. I am ultimately running a mini-business comprising eight full-time board members, interfacing not only with students but also
alumni and companies, and also learning on the job. Regardless of the set-up, our aim remains clear – to bring all RSM students together via social activities that will enrich the fun side of university life but also provide support that will serve them later in life.’

**Bridging the gap**

One of the many beauties of the run-by-students-for-students ethic behind STAR is the opportunity it provides for its representatives to contribute a vital element to academic life that blends the social and the more serious, all from the perspective of fellow students. For Brasil Wouters (current BSc Business Administration/Bedrijfskunde student, chair of the STAR Activity Team, and chair and treasurer of the STAR Eurekaweek Committee) this has proved to be a defining element in her participation in the Association since she began her involvement: ‘Getting involved in STAR has enabled me to learn so much about myself, about project management, about teamwork, whilst above all delivering the main service to which all STAR members are committed – providing that vital connection between the studies which we all seek to complete, enjoying ourselves along the way, looking to develop on a personal level, and preparing for life after graduation.’

**On the agenda**

Never wanting to rest on its laurels, but with all due respect for its history, STAR has set in place a number of priorities for the near future, as well as celebrating its 40th anniversary. Marc Gijsbers has stated the need for the organisation to persist in its drive for continued professionalism and to ensure that all students (newbies and more experienced alike) feel served by the activities and opportunities that STAR presents.

In recognition of the past, a series of lustrum events took place in May that provided a perfect encapsulation of STAR’s remit: a beer cantus (beer drinking and singing) at Hal4 aan de Maas, followed by a “Chic Day” that included watching horse racing at Renbaan Duinzigt in Wassenaar, and an auction. The proceeds are being donated to the Dutch cancer charity, KWF.

Celebrations concluded with a Closing Night at the World Trade Center in Rotterdam and a “Force for Positive Change” event, during which a panel of industry speakers debated topics relating to corporate social responsibility and sustainability. In short, another STAR-run success. By students. For students.

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*For more about STAR, visit [web](https://rsmstar.nl)*
STAYING CONNECTED
to the RSM community

When the close-knit RSM student community graduates each year and quite literally goes global, the challenge is on to retain and nourish ties between alumni forging a career path around the world and their alma mater in Rotterdam. The initiative shown by the more than 40 RSM alumni Local Chapters is key to maintaining a bond that continues to serve the School and alumni alike.

STORY BY KEVIN TITMAN

Markus Lodensträter, an alumnus of the International Full-time MBA Class of 2013 and an active member of the School’s Germany and Switzerland Local Chapters who secured his last two jobs via RSM alumni, says that: ‘Via the range of events we set up, our aim is to get fellow alumni off the sofa on a Friday evening after a week at work and get them involved.’

Getting busy professionals to give up some of their spare time to maintain ties with their former school can represent quite a challenge. Making the benefits of membership of an ever-more global alumni community is key, especially when the community in question now totals over 36,000 and is spread over 120 countries. The Local Chapters are crucial in achieving this objective, Markus believes: ‘We don’t necessarily have the time or the opportunity to keep travelling back to Rotterdam. Hooking up with like-minded alumni keeps us connected with RSM, plus the personal and professional perks are too good to pass up.’

Business and pleasure
It is precisely the work-and-play side to Local Chapter events that draw numbers to such initiatives, be it a simple BBQ-type happening, a skiing weekend or a more high-brow conference, breakfast meeting with a CEO or multi-school event such as those run by the Spain Chapter under the umbrella of the country’s Ryder Club, an organisation encompassing alumni clubs from a host of prestigious international universities and business schools.

As José Enrique Viniegra Escanero (Full-time MBA 2012) of the Spain Chapter underlines, a strong end-to-end offer is of great importance: ‘We want people to have a good time on a personal level but also grow their professional network. Our mission is to set up interesting events with strong speakers that will get alumni mingling socially and developing professionally. When the School gets involved in an official capacity, the event and the brand are boosted even further still.’

Graduation isn’t goodbye
Every good alumni community can call upon a team of dedicated professionals to develop and apply an overarching strategy and squeeze palms at alumni events. Sue Martin, director of corporate and alumni relations at RSM, and
Hooking up with like-minded alumni keeps us connected with RSM, plus the personal and professional perks are too good to pass up.”

Markus Lodensträter, alumnus

her team are tasked with pushing the existing vibrant network forward, a drive that includes such targets as raising the bar in terms of alumni communications, bringing Local Chapter leaders into closer contact with one another, promoting the RSM brand internationally via alumni in their ambassadorial role, and re-connecting with alumni from the early years with whom links have been partially lost.

As Sue notes, ‘Graduation isn’t goodbye, but rather the start of another journey. One of the reasons we ensure that current students benefit from direct contact with alumni is for them to see the advantages of such a connection and to create the desire for them to support the school and the next generation of students in advance of the day they complete their studies.’

These objectives will come into even sharper focus as the community looks to expand, duly supported by the School’s highly professional team. While the alumni network is already well represented by the establishment and frequent activities of Local Chapters globally, there are ambitions to strengthen and expand the network more locally. Benelux is one area very much in the plans of the RSM alumni team. Providing a greater level of support to existing chapters and helping them to grow their membership also figures high on the priority list.

Caring and sharing

Another success story comes in the form of the London-based UK Local Chapter, currently headed by Petar Kolev, an alumnus of the International Full-time MBA Class of 2017. Local Chapter leader for the past year and fresh from a recent event in the capital attended by around 100 alumni and RSM representatives, Petar saw for himself the short and longer-term advantages of active alumni community membership and participation. ‘When I was looking to relocate to the UK after my studies, I was able to get in touch with established alumni and receive help from people who cared about the School.

‘The co-operative nature of RSM and the open-mindedness and curiosity of its alumni add up to a supportive community that can contribute to RSM’s continued success in rankings. Anything we can do to carry the brand forward whilst gaining personally and professionally and we are available.’

For more information about RSM Local Alumni Chapters and events, visit WEB www.rsm.nl/network
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AT ROTTERDAM SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, ERASMUS UNIVERSITY

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13-15 November

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11-13 December

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ROTTERDAM SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
ERASMUS UNIVERSITY
RSM - a force for positive change
Alumni mentoring is coming into sharper focus at RSM, and with good reason. It provides a positive way for alumni to make an impact, a sustainable way for students to get expert advice, career connections, and acts as a professional sounding board at every stage of their education and into their working life.

STORY BY LESA SAWAHATA

With upwards of 36,000 graduates of its degree programmes active worldwide, RSM has a vast but dispersed – and sometimes under-engaged – alumni community. This situation has been complicated by the fact that RSM, an international business school, exists in the context of the Dutch university system.

Unlike the UK or US model of alumni engagement in business schools, in which direct fundraising plays an important part in supporting scholarships and other initiatives, giving money has (in the highly-taxed Netherlands, in which universities have traditionally been largely state-funded) not always been seen as a priority.

But money is, after all, just one form of energy. And mentoring – now thrown into sharper focus with RSM’s new externally-focused mission statement – “A force for positive change in the world” – is being recognised as a priceless resource to achieve that mission, one that not only benefits students but boosts alumni connection with the school. Mentoring is also a sustainable system of value.
The ultimate aim is to forge what has been called a “virtuous circle” fashioned of alumni engagement and student satisfaction, and to drive a culture of continuous mentoring at RSM. ‘We recognise that our alumni are as precious as gold, and mentoring has always been important to us,’ says Vildana Gačić (MSc Economics and Entrepreneurship 2011), career development manager at RSM, who, in addition to her responsibilities for career development, shouldered the responsibility for mentoring activities over the past few years.

‘Now we are devoting more resources, including new staff, to lifting the profile of mentoring at RSM and really highlighting the importance it has,’ she says. With the hiring of a dedicated new alumni relations manager, Juan Maldonado Alcázar (MBA 2017) in August 2017, mentoring at RSM has an official owner; further, there is now a clear structure of programme-focused accountability.

Easily accessible
New life was blown into RSM’s mentoring scheme with the introduction of RSM MentorMe in January 2016 [see RSM Outlook Summer 2016]. The digital platform makes RSM’s participating alumni mentors (750 at current count), who represent a wide variety of sectors and seniority levels, easily accessible to RSM students.

‘You can meet people from any industry there, and I found it particularly helpful when I was looking for professional consultants to help me with mock interviews,’ says Mara Egger-Büssing, a current student in the MSc Finance and Investment Advanced, who was able to speak with several consultants from Accenture through the platform.

‘It was super-easy because MentorMe has a scheduling feature, so you can just pick from the mentors’ available times; everyone got back to me quickly, and there isn’t that awkwardness of reaching out to someone you don’t know on LinkedIn,’ she says, adding ‘It’s like online shopping for specific advice.’

In contrast to bachelor and master students, who need guidance in finding their career path and getting their first internship or job, participants in RSM MBA programmes already have significant work experience. Often they are seeking to lift their careers by making a switch in sector, function or country. MentorMe allows them to reach out to as many mentors as they need for in-
Industry insights and cultural expertise, per country or company.

For alumnus Guru Jeyachandran (MBA 2017), MentorMe functioned as one arm of his own ambitious strategy for finding his best career fit, which included cold-calling and reaching out to RSM alumni in leading technology functions via LinkedIn. 'MentorMe was a good platform; everyone is already on LinkedIn, but you know if they are also on MentorMe they are much more interested in helping guide fellow RSM students and alumni,' he says.

Ultimately Guru’s proactive networking with other RSM alumni at several alumni events, and his subsequent reaching out via LinkedIn, resulted in a short leap-frog to his current “dream job” as manager financial services accelerator at PwC within months.

Mandatory mentoring

Despite the apparent, self-directed ease of use of the RSM MentorMe platform – or perhaps because of it – initially RSM students weren’t making the most of the platform, and alumni were uncertain about their impact after a single interaction with a student.

The main issue for students is generational. ‘Unlike MBAs, bachelor and master students do not pick up the phone. They do everything via text, so asking them to talk to someone they have never met is really challenging,’ says Vildana.

To overcome the challenge of activating students to use MentorMe, a pilot was introduced in 2017: mentoring became a mandatory component of four MSc programmes, part of either the skills or career development courses. The students’ course evaluations were overwhelmingly positive: mentoring got a score of 4.5 out of 5.

The success of the mandatory MentorMe strategy has led to another five MSc programmes, making a total of nine, set to implement mentoring in their curricula for academic year 2018-2019. That’s about 1,000 students who will learn about the power of mentoring through MentorMe over the school year. Vildana: ‘What we are hearing from our MSc students is “unless you had made me, I wouldn’t have done it – but I’m really glad I did.”’

In addition, initiatives to increase the all-important engagement and satisfaction of, and between, alumni and students are being rolled out. ‘Feedback indicates that what alumni mentors really want to see is the impact of their interactions with students; if they don’t have repeated meetings or follow-ups, they never see the result of the hours they have volunteered,’ says Juan.

He is preparing a pilot programme based on continuous, multiple mentoring sessions – a minimum of three with the same mentor – for the incoming cohort of MBAs, starting in 2019. ‘Additionally we are working on providing KPIs and capacity training...’
for mentors and mentees, including an online module for students where they learn about what they can get out of mentoring, what meets their needs and how to choose a mentor.

The future is focused on further expansion and recognition of mentoring. This includes a variety of activities, starting with some adjustments to the RSM MentorMe platform that improve the user experience. Juan and Vildana are also planning to focus more on mentoring for PhDs, and alumni-alumni mentoring. And as the number of students using MentorMe increases, it is important to boost the number of alumni mentors on the platform, particularly those working in such popular fields as consultancy, and in under-represented fields such as entrepreneurship, HR and tech. The aim is to increase the number of mentors by 10 per cent each year.

**Reciprocal rewards**

It’s obvious that RSM students benefit in a variety of ways from the school’s growing emphasis on mentoring. But what makes RSM’s busy alumni make time to mentor? For two of RSM’s stellar alumni mentors, Annemieke Gelder (MSc Supply Chain Management 2000) and Sjoerd Ramsay de Koning (MSc Finance and Investments 2010), it enables them to create positive change while sharing their strengths, experience and insight. It also offers the opportunity for an ongoing relationship with RSM.

‘I’m excited about this renewed connectivity with RSM,’ says Annemieke, who lives, blogs and works in Singapore and who was one of the earliest alumni to join the MentorMe platform. To date she has mentored around 20 students. ‘When the programme was launched I got an email from alumni relations and thought I’d like to be part of that,’ she remembers. ‘I have worked with a lot of students in the MBA programmes of the National University of Singapore and thought, if there’s something I can do with my own school that would be even better. It’s nice to give back.’

There can also be reciprocal rewards for mentors willing to share their unique insights – for example, when very talented students want to speak with Annemieke to understand what it takes to work in Asia. ‘Companies are always looking for good people, and who knows – maybe one day this student will work with me. So on the one hand mentoring is giving back, but there is the opportunity to meet talent in this network.’

For Sjoerd de Koning, a hedge fund analyst at UK-based Landsdowne Partners who has mentored more than 35 students, there is a philosophical aspect to being a mentor. ‘To move to the corporate world there are certain things you need to know – for example, in consultancies there are often very specific types of interviews, and unless students have access to that knowledge, they won’t succeed,’ he says. ‘I think that’s not meritocratic: students with the right ingredients don’t always have the right access. So on a philosophical level mentoring levels the playing field, and gives everyone the same chance.’

And the economies of mentoring deliver a lot of shared value. ‘A mentoring programme is a very high-efficiency way to give back,’ says Sjoerd. ‘If I have the right match with a student on the phone, in an hour I can sometimes give them insights they haven’t heard before that could be of great value in their interview preparation – and for me it’s an interesting chat with an enthusiastic RSM student during my lunch break.’

Would you like to be part of RSM MentorMe? Find out more at WEB www.rsm.nl/mentorme
## EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

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**WEB** [www.rsm.nl/open](http://www.rsm.nl/open)

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All of RSM’s short programmes run multiple times per year. For a complete overview of all RSM open programmes, visit [www.rsm.nl/OPEN](http://www.rsm.nl/OPEN)

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My Executive MBA is a base and executive education fine-tunes and refreshes it. There is always something to learn and new stuff to discover – in the world and inside myself. Lifelong learning is important to stay up to date, and remain relevant – now and in the future. I trust RSM, so it’s my first choice. Being back on campus is like coming home: familiar and full of nice and happy memories.

Tatjana Trifunovic (Executive MBA 2010) participated in The Power of Presence. She works as a manager programme management for finance at NN Group.
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FROM JUNE
Communications masterclasses
Don’t miss this autumn’s executive masterclasses in corporate communication: Digital Communication (26-28 June), Persuasive Communication (25-27 September), Corporate Branding (15-17 October), Crisis Communication (13-15 November), and Essentials of Financial Markets and Communication (11-13 December). They’re electives of the Executive MSc in Corporate Communication, but can be followed as separate open programmes.
WEB www.rsm.nl/corpcomm

12-14 JUNE
Improving business
A new three-day business education programme in June focuses on improving business results as technology and markets constantly change. It is aimed at managers striving to keep the link between strategic planning and daily operations planning, and offers updated skills for sales and operations planning (S&OP) and integrated business planning (IBP). It runs from 12-14 June at RSM.
WEB www.rsm.nl/s&op

20 JUNE
Digital Economy Summit
Join our first Digital Economy Summit to learn new perspectives that can help your organisation prepare for new digital trends. Industry executives and world-class researchers explore digital business, digital strategy, business analytics, artificial intelligence, digital experimentation and privacy on campus on Wednesday 20 June. Seating is limited, so sign up quickly.
WEB www.rsm.nl/des

30 JUNE
Share your MBA experience
Did you do an MBA at RSM? Share your story with prospective students during our open day on Saturday 30 June. We’ll present our MBA programmes in mini masterclasses; you can be part of an MBA alumni panel and speak to business professionals during a networking lunch. Tell your colleagues about it too! To get involved, contact Chantal Dammann via EMAIL cdammann@rsm.nl or visit WEB www.rsm.nl/mbaopenday

JUNE – JULY
Research summer school
Start summer by improving your research skills in data analysis, fintech competences, qualitative research, financial intermediation, data econometrics, or purchasing and supply chain research! Seven short advanced courses at ERIM Summer School are led by top research experts. Sessions on campus are in June and July. Discover more at WEB www.erim.eur.nl/summerschool

18-22 JUNE
Summer communication course
Do you work in corporate communication, PR, branding or reputation management? Join our Executive Summer Course in Corporate Communication from 18-22 June at the Golden Tulip Jagershorst Hotel near Eindhoven to discover the latest developments and best practices in corporate communication, and to boost your career. For more details, contact Susanna Marco via EMAIL ccc@rsm.nl or visit WEB www.rsm.nl/escccc
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JUNE – AUGUST
Ask your Dutch colleagues
Would any of your Dutch colleagues benefit from a business degree? Send them along to one of our Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde information evenings. They can study to improve careers and organisations while working at the same time. Information sessions are in June, July and August. Visit the website for dates. The programme’s start date is 6 September 2018.

WEB www.rsm.nl/pmb

JULY – SEPTEMBER
Calling senior managers!
A new partnership with NOVA School of Business and Economics in Lisbon means you can learn the latest management insights and methods to enhance and discover your personal authentic leadership style with three days in Rotterdam and three days in Lisbon. The International Leadership Programme is led by world-class academics from the Netherlands and Portugal, and runs between 2 July and 12 September.

WEB www.rsm.nl/ILP

30 AUGUST – 2 SEPTEMBER
RSM Regatta in Porto
Our international sailing event for MBA students and alumni of the world’s top business schools is in Portugal from 30 August – 2 September. Join this unique opportunity to come together on yachts, share unforgettable moments and enjoy the competition. Find more details and sign up at

WEB www.rsmsailing.com

SEPTEMBER
Better financial decision-making
Are you a senior finance manager? Keep up with the game in higher management, and boost your skills in partnering and collaborating with other parts of your organisation. Drive better decision-making, and create value with the eight-day Executive Financial Decision-making programme delivered at RSM (four days) and Bocconi University in Milan (four days). It starts in September.

WEB www.rsm.nl/EFDM

17-18 SEPTEMBER
Engineering and construction contracts
Contracting for engineering and construction projects is a complex process. Learn how to divide the scope of work into contract packages in a structured, practical and research-driven way, and discover what happens after the strategy has been developed. Our new, two-day executive programme, Strategic Contracting for CapEx Projects, is on 17-18 September in Rotterdam.

WEB www.rsm.nl/capex

4-11 AUGUST
Greek summer rhythms
Are you ready for the RSM MBA Armada? MBA students, alumni and professionals will create unforgettable memories on sailing boats, swim in the Ionian Sea and enjoy a great holiday across Greek islands. During the one-week cruise you’ll visit four islands, mix with locals, enjoy the Mediterranean cuisine, visit divine isolated beaches, and live in the rhythms of the unique Greek summer.

WEB www.rsmsailing.com

Find more events at www.rsm.nl/events
SEPTEMBER
Successful people management
How are you dealing with your daily leadership challenges? Learn how to achieve consistent and effective people management in common challenging situations by implementing your personal leadership plan through our new three-day Successful People Management programme in September, led by Dr Hannes Leroy and Dr Rebecca Hewett. WEB www.rsm.nl/spm

SEPTEMBER
International recruitment on ICE
Register before 15 September to meet talented students striving for an international career at the International Career Event (ICE-Fair) on campus on Monday 5 November 2018. Last year’s fair attracted 17 company presentations and there were more than 80 speed interviews with students. Will you find future employees here too? Contact the RSM Career Centre before 15 September to join. EMAIL careercentre@rsm.nl

20 SEPTEMBER
Women in leadership
A workshop and masterclass to address the challenges faced by women as they progress to higher-level leadership positions will focus on leadership skills, gender bias and networking. It’s presented by Prof. Dianne Bevelander, Executive Director of the Erasmus Centre for Women and Organisations at RSM on 20 September. The goal is to network, share experiences and debate issues around gender-balanced leadership. For more details, contact Chantal Dammann. EMAIL cdammann@rsm.nl

21 SEPTEMBER
Get a boost from MBAs
Connect to the diverse pool of full-time MBA students to help boost your organisation. Meet them at the MBA Career Fair on campus on Friday 21 September. You could organise corporate games, a company stand or speed interviews. Find out rates and register your company before 30 June. For details, contact corporate development manager Hakan Abali. EMAIL habali@rsm.nl

1 OCTOBER
Headhunting how-to
How to hire the best people and the best way to bring them on board. Join our four-hour workshop with Prof. Bart Dietz on Monday 1 October, and explore how you can attract top talent using the latest management research and insights. For more information and to sign-up, visit WEB www.rsm.nl/att
NEWS / EVENTS ROUND-UP

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

12-13 OCTOBER
MBA alumni reunion
If you graduated in 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008 or 2013 then it’s your turn for the MBA Alumni Reunion! Start on Friday 12 October with high-profile corporate speakers, leading academics and the latest business insights at the RSM Leadership Summit and continue through the weekend with social activities in Rotterdam. You’ll have plenty of time to catch up with classmates, reflect on old times and create new memories. Contact the Alumni Relations Office via EMAIL alumni@rsm.nl or visit WEB www.rsm.nl/mbareunion

12 OCTOBER
RSM Leadership Summit
A lively platform and a dynamic experience is promised for this year’s RSM Leadership Summit at the Van Nelle Fabriek in Rotterdam on Friday 12 October. Leading business practitioners join RSM’s top academics in front of alumni, students and the wider business community for a day of high-level networking. Presentations, breakout and round table sessions boost knowledge sharing. Expand your network, grow your knowledge and share your thoughts. For more details, visit WEB www.rsm.nl/summit

3 NOVEMBER
20 years on...
Save the date! MSc Public Management, MSc Business-Society Management and MSc Global Business & Sustainability programmes are celebrating 20 years and you’re invited. It’s on Saturday 3 November 2018 and we look forward to celebrating with you. We’ll keep you posted if you send your contact details to EMAIL alumni@rsm.nl

Discover more events at www.rsm.nl/events

RSM  a force for positive change
Ontdek de volgende stap in je carrière en start in september met de Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde opleiding.

**PARTTIME MASTER BEDRIJFSKUNDE**
- Tweejarige deeltijd masteropleiding in het Nederlands
- Universitaire kennis waarmee je direct aan de slag kunt
- Flexibel studeren met online componenten
- Internationaal project in Shanghai, Kaapstad of São Paulo

**Meer informatie en data informatieavonden:** [WWW.RSM.NL/PMB](http://WWW.RSM.NL/PMB)
Taught by world-class academics from two top business schools, these executive programmes for senior managers will broaden your competences, extend your network of peers and give you exclusive access to the alumni network of Nova School of Business and Economics or SDA Bocconi School of Management.

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Reflect on your leadership in unexpected and new ways. As an experienced senior manager, you will be inspired to think about your own leadership. What makes you tick as a leader? How effective are you? Discover your personal authentic leadership style.

RSM.NL/ILP

- 6 Days
- 2 Modules
- Lisbon & Rotterdam
- Start 2 July

EXECUTIVE FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKING

Learning the competences for partnering with other parts of your organisation ultimately drives better decision-making and creates value. This programme will support your ambitions to take on a corporate executive and leadership role within the function of finance.

RSM.NL/EFDM

- 8 Days
- 2 Modules
- Milan & Rotterdam
- Start 24 September

Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University