



**esprit**  
SCHOLEN

Inspiring  
Innovative  
International

## Annual report summary 2023

### Charting a clear course

During 2023, Esprit Schools reviewed its education manifesto. When drawing up our policy for 2023-2027, we chose to focus on five areas:

- 1 We work to offer all students a sense of hope and possibility.
- 2 We give students space to develop and be who they are.
- 3 We attract employees by standing out, showcasing our unique identity.
- 4 We work towards the sustainable development goals with our own Sustainability Plan.
- 5 We operate in the digital world.

In the future, we will continue to create opportunities for all students, while providing valuable jobs and working closely with our surroundings.

### Nurturing global citizens

Esprit sees every student as a global citizen. Esprit schools are a reflection of the city of Amsterdam in all its diversity, with each school taking its own approach to the theme of internationalisation. For example, the Berlage Lyceum is developing a new programme to strengthen the link between bilingual education, internationalisation and UNESCO. Esprit believes that it is important for newcomers

to be able to obtain their diploma as a means of building their future. We provide the First Admission for Non-native Speakers programme (Eerste Opvang Anderstaligen, EOA) and organise the transfer of students to mainstream education at Mundus College and DENISE. In 2023, we put a lot of effort into expanding our facilities for newcomers, and a second building will become available in 2024.

### Being sustainable

Sustainability plays a major role in our education, organisation and buildings. And our efforts have not gone unnoticed: in 2023, Esprit won the SustainaBul VO, making us – alongside Yuverta – the most sustainable group of schools in the Netherlands. As a means of further embedding sustainability in the curriculum, we have created the Sustainability Teacher Network (Duurzaamheid Docentennetwerk), which aims to explore sustainability topics in depth. During 2023, the network focused on SustainaBul, outdoor learning, and school buildings, operations and facilities.

### Pursuing high-quality education

To effectively monitor the quality of our education, Esprit has identified 14 quality areas. Each area comes with indicators that are either qualitative (focusing on policy, implementation

and evaluation) or quantitative (educational outcomes, finance and absenteeism) in nature. School leaders report on the qualitative indicators several times a year and discuss the results with the board. This new style of reporting has been hailed by the board and council alike. The schools also work together to improve the quality of education through the Appreciative Peer Quality Surveys (Collegiaal Waarderende Kwaliteitsonderzoeken). In this process, schools decide on an issue that they want to investigate and evaluate with peers from other Esprit schools. Since December 2023, all managing staff at Esprit have received training in 'appreciative inquiry', with the aim of building a culture prioritising quality and quality awareness.

### Providing care and support

Esprit believes it is important for students to receive appropriate support. Because no two schools or students are the same, our schools have a wide variety of care and support programmes available to ensure that no student ever has to feel alone.

### Training teachers

Esprit's teacher training school prepares trainee teachers for their education career (in Amsterdam), and helps to combat the teacher shortage. In 2022-2023, we trained 170 trainee teachers to become entry-level and urban competent teachers, including 35 in primary education and 135 in secondary education. We also trained 32 lateral transfer teachers, including 15 in primary education and 17 in secondary education. At the start of the 2023-2024 school year, we had 183 trainee teachers, 31 of whom were in primary education.

### Life-long learning

In January 2023, Esprit's online learning platform went live, giving employees full access

to the Esprit Academy. The courses on the platform help them gain new insights and enhance their skills. For example, teachers could take training courses on topics such as 'workplace supervision', 'citizenship education', 'Montessori induction' and 'formative assessment'. We also offered training in 'feedback and development interviews'. Through an in-company programme organised by DENISE and VU Amsterdam, 11 colleagues obtained their diplomas as teachers of Dutch as a second language.

### Innovative education

Over the next few years, Esprit will invest €6.6 million in educational initiatives in schools, such as TASC – a secondary vocational school that prepares students for careers in engineering and technology. We will also be improving and updating early foreign language teaching (French, Spanish and English) at the Europa School.

### Pleasant learning and working

Once again, Esprit worked hard in 2023 to provide students and staff with a pleasant learning and working environment. This included extensive renovations to improve the sustainability of the Copernicusstraat WSV annex, and the installation of a new ventilation system. We also transformed the towers of the Zandkasteel (former ING offices) into a sustainable education site for AICS. In addition, TASC temporarily moved into the AICS building on Darlingstraat, which was substantially remodelled and expanded. Finally, students and staff of De Verwondering moved into a beautiful new, energy-neutral building, built entirely from wood as part of our aspirations towards circularity.