



Information booklet 2020-2021

VSPA Board

**Information booklet
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Useful information about a board year at the VSPA

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Preface

For the upcoming academic year, the VSPA is again looking for six enthusiastic members who want to support the association by fulfilling a position within the board of the VSPA. In this booklet you will find all the information about being a VSPA board member, hopefully this can help you make an informed choice. This booklet describes what the specific board functions include, what it means to be a board member and what the consequences are with regards to your study. You can also find the contact details of the members of the Application Guidance Committee (AGC) on the last pages. You can contact them to find out more about a board year at the VSPA or to make an appointment for an (informative) conversation.

The VSPA

VSPA stands for Vereniging van Studenten in de Psychologie te Amsterdam (Association of Psychology Students in Amsterdam). Since 1941, she has been committed to psychology students at the UvA. Previously, it was mainly in the cultural and political field. Nowadays, the focus is more on social and study-related areas. This is done, among other things, by the cheap provision of study books and the organization of social and study-related activities for our members.

The VSPA has about 1600 members. Some of these students are only members for the discount on the books and the activities, while another part of the members actively supports the association. They organize the activities and are responsible in the committees, who for example organize the first-year weekend, lectures, excursions, parties, borrels, prom, the ski trip, the road-trip, the conference and the study trip.

All this is made possible because the board of the VSPA is committed to the association for a whole year. The board has the overarching responsibility for every activity and all the other business that is part of running a study association. In theory, a board consists of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 7 people. There are three functions that must be occupied at all times are Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. However, a board as complete as possible is preferred. More information about the different board positions can be found further on in this booklet.

Why join the board of the VSPA?

A board year at VSPA is a great addition to your study psychology and has something to offer for everyone.

In a board year you learn a lot of new things, both socially, individually, and professionally. Among other things, you learn to work together, arrange meetings, organize and manage. You also learn a lot of function-specific matters. An example of this is that as a Treasurer you learn a lot about the financial management of an association.

As a board member you are responsible for all matters within the association, including the smooth running of the policy, the discussion and approval of budgets, the sales of books and the successful completion of activities. You also have a lot of contact with the active members. Together with these members, all kinds of fun activities are organized and besides that it is always very *'gezellig'* with them and your board in the VSPA room.

In the Netherlands many students follow the Bachelor Psychology course. If you want to increase your chances on the job market, it is good to stand out from the crowd.

A board year at the VSPA is the perfect opportunity for this. It is instructive, is good on your resumé but is also very much fun to do. You work intensively for a year with an enthusiastic group of fellow board members. These board members often become best friends and still come together for a drink years later.

What does a board year look like?

During a board year at the VSPA, you are busy planning, organizing and guiding for a full-time year. You are responsible for all kinds of things and you take part in everything.

In the overall planning, the new board will be known at the end of April, after which you will be trained by your predecessor at the end of the academic year on the tasks that specifically belong to your job. This means that if you have become the chair, you will be trained by the current chair. In addition, you will also be informed about the general course of affairs within the VSPA during your transmission. This is often done by a fun transmission weekend from the current board to the new board. In this weekend you learn all about the association, its history, the committees and the finances.

In the period that follows, you will write the policy plan with your board, in which your vision on the association and the policy will be mapped out. This includes matters that you want to introduce or improve as a board. All your (creative) plans are explained in this and you discuss how you expect to execute them. The annual budget is also included here, which is a financial reflection of the policy during your board year. During writing, each board member is already focusing more on his or her position. This way the treasurer feels more responsible for the financial aspects and the committee affairs officers generally have more to say on the committee policy.

You then present the policy plan at the beginning of the new academic year during a General Members Assembly (GMA). Here, members can ask questions and comment on your policy plan and if necessary final adjustments can be made before the policy plan is approved.

During your board year you carry out the plans that you have devised with your board and described in your policy plan.

In addition to implementing the policy, there are also a number of activities that you organize as a board. For example, you organize the VSPA acquaintance together; a welcome day during the Intreeweek for the new first-year students. Other activities that are often organized by the board are the first party, the first borrel and the Weekend GetAway; a festive weekend for the active members as a thank you for their dedication. You are also closely involved in the First Year Weekend.

Finally, you contribute to all the activities organized by the various committees during the year.

At the end of your board year, you write an annual report with your board. This is an evaluation of the implementation of your policy plan. The board also writes an overview of the financial situation of the board year and how the various committees have performed. This is all presented during the first GMA of the next board. After approval of the GMA you will be discharged and the board year will end.

A board year: the practical matters

Timing / presence

With regards to attendance, you are expected to be a full-time board member for an academic year. Once a week you meet with the entire board about board affairs, policy implementation and everything that happens within the association. In addition, you are expected to attend activities organized by the association.

Having a side job is possible, but consult this with your other board members as well. In principle, a week as a VSPA board member is as busy as a full-time job. However, some periods in the year are busier than others.

Study

During a board year it is possible to follow courses. However, this should also go in consultation with your fellow board members. The guideline is to follow no more than one course per semester, because more is simply not doable. However, in this case board affairs will go before your studies. In addition, it is possible to do a board year as an Honors student. However, a condition of the educational institute is that you do not follow courses during your board year or only elective courses.

Binding Study Advice

In order to do a board year at the VSPA, you must be enrolled as a Psychology student at the UvA. This means you need to get at least 48 EC points in your first year (after the retakes during the summer break).

Hobbies and sports

Of course it is possible to continue practicing your hobby or sport. However, it is desirable to discuss this with your fellow board members as well, because activities can coincide with your hobbies/sports. But this hasn't lead to any problems in the past!

Board scholarship

In the current situation, a board member of the VSPA is registered as a full-time student of Psychology at the UvA. You will therefore also have to pay tuition fees. A board function at the VSPA is (in principle) a full-time position. This takes time and will therefore lead to an increase in study delay. In order to compensate for this, each board member will receive a board scholarship, provided that conditions are met to compensate for the delay. A hard requirement to qualify for a board scholarship is that a student must have earned an average of 40 EC per academic year. The level of the board scholarship depends on what the UvA pays out to the association. In previous years, the level of the board scholarship was about the level of the non-resident basic grant. For the coming academic year, the amount of the scholarship is not entirely clear yet, but feel free to ask especially during your meeting with one of the SBC members or mail your interest / questions about this to boardwanted@vspa.nl.

The current board functions

As a board member, you first of all occupy the position of General Board Member. This means that every board member has some general tasks to carry out. These are tasks such as writing and implementing the policy plan, assessing the budget plans and schedules of all committees, meeting weekly on general association affairs and full-time attendance at the VSPA. In addition, you also have a specific board function. On the following pages, the current functions are explained per page in the indicated order, based on a piece written by each current member of the board about his or her board position:

- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Social Committee Affairs Officer
- Study Committee Affair Officer
- Officer of Sales & Acquisition



Chair

As a chair, you have a number of fixed tasks that you perform on a weekly basis. For example, two workdays before the board meetings you always draw up the agenda for the meeting and send it around. With this, you determine as chair, albeit in consultation with the others, what will be discussed at the meeting. Another fixed task is to chair the weekly board meetings. In addition, the chair is very busy with external contacts. This means that once every two weeks you meet with the other chairs or delegates of the study associations of the Faculty of Society and Behavior to exchange ideas or plan a joint event. In addition, there is also a meeting of all psychology study associations in the Netherlands once every month. You are also the representative of your board within the UvA. This means that if a certain authority within the UvA wants something from the VSPA, he/she often ends up with contacting the chair first.

Apart from these concrete tasks, the work of a chair is variable and depending on the circumstances. As a chair, it is important to keep an overview of everything that has to be done and what is being done by the other board members. You also keep an eye on the functioning and well-being of the other board members and plan a conversation with them every so often to see how things are going. The better everyone performs their duties and the better everything runs, the less you have to do as a chair in principle. Of course, there are always general management tasks that you can take on when you are at peace, so you can help other board mates with their duties or for example on the acquisition. In addition, as a chair you are ultimately responsible for the policy plan and the annual overview. It is therefore important that you start all plans on time and that is your responsibility as the chair. The work of a chair is therefore difficult to divide into a weekly schedule, but it is very varied.

General tasks of the current Chair

- Coordinate and keep an overview and supervise the general policy
- Planning, drawing up an agenda and chairing board meetings
- Being a contact point for members and external parties
- Chief editors of the annual regulations and the annual report
- Monitor the functioning of fellow board members
- Mediate in possible conflicts
- Spokesperson of the board
- Attend meetings at national and regional level

Vice Chair

The vice chair does not have a fixed task within the board, but has more the function of the flying keep. He or she can support the chair during his duties. The vice-president also replaces the chair when he/she is absent, for example during a board meeting. Further tasks of the vice president can vary within each board. A board member often has this function extra alongside his or her other job.

General tasks of the current Vice Chair

- Replacer of the chair if absent
- Second point of contact for members within the association

Secretary

As a secretary you have a very broad range of tasks. This year's tasks include technical matters such as member administration and the website, but also social affairs: for example, the Secretary is the contact person for people at the UvA and leads several facility committees. These committees are often filled with experienced members. In addition, the Secretary ensures that the promotion of activities on digital media is on time, to contribute to ensuring that the activities are well attended. He/She also edits all the pictures for example, before they go online.

All in all, as a secretary you are busy with a lot of different things, so one day you have a lot of different things to do, which makes the position rarely boring. In addition, you fulfill a task package that is very important for the association and you have a lot of contact with both members and UvA contact persons!

You can also choose as secretary to coordinate the newsletter or opt for other fun projects.

- Taking minutes of board meetings
- Internal communication within the UvA, such as the Education Institute and building management
- Keep the member administration
- Responsible for placement and editing photos events
- Booking classrooms/rooms through the UvA
- Responsible for incoming and outgoing mail
- Keep the archive
- Responsible for the website
- Responsible for the info mail

Treasurer

A treasurer also has a very varied package of duties that depend on the issues that are currently being played. When a party is coming, the treasurer has a lot to do with ticket sales during that

week and paying invoices around the party. This year it is so that the treasurer has direct contact with the treasurer of the committees. If a trip such as the study trip is coming up, the treasurer has a lot of contact with the treasurer of the committee to arrange all the money matters before and during the trip. If there is an activity of the Activity committee planned, then the treasurer often gets the question if he or she could check how many people have already bought a ticket. And there are plenty of examples like these to come up with.

All in all, of course, these are the committee related tasks. There are, however, also the general treasurer tasks that have to be met. Invoices that arrive by mail / email must be paid on time, the invoices must be monitored and handled, the treasurer maintains contact with ABN AMRO (the bank) on various matters, he or she receives and processes feedback from the Cash Audit Committee (CAC) and so on. The most important thing a treasurer does is to spend money (logically). However, this also results in the general management tasks and meetings. You are the one who can answer 'is there money for it or not?' Or 'is that financially feasible or not?'. The most important thing that applies to the treasurer is overview.

How do you get this overview do you think? A large part of your administration will help you with this. As a treasurer you have around 5 or 6 folders at your disposal that seem to fill more and more. All receipts/invoices/declarations/vault count/vault transactions etc. are kept and/or stored in this. Almost all the administration is digital. Then this has to be processed. This is done on the basis of an accounting program on the computer. You enter all financial transactions in here. In this way, everything is transparent for the CAC, but also for the treasurer himself. This is also part of the package of duties. Not something that you are necessarily working on every week (the processing in the accounting system), but something you definitely need to keep in mind.

General tasks of the current Treasurer

- Drawing up the annual budget (together with the rest of the board)
- Drawing up the (half) year result (together with the rest of the board)
- Keeping up with the financial administration of the association
- Pay incoming invoices and declarations
- Create invoices
- Explaining their tasks to the committee treasurers and guiding them in this
- Manage the vault of the association
- Manage the debit and credit card

Social Committee Affairs Officer (Social CAO)

As Social CAO you are ultimately responsible and the guardian angel for all social committees. The CAO has many committees to guide, advise and support. That gives you the first advantage of having the most social function (surprise!). Secondly, the committees (this year: Activity Committee, Borrel Committee, Party Committee, Prom/Dinner Committee, Hitchhiking Committee, Culture Committee, Music Committee, International Committee, Sports

Committee, Ski Trip Committee, City Trip Committee) therefore decide for at least half of the time what you, as Social CAO, really do in a week.

The week is filled up pretty fast with approximately 10 committee meetings, activities and just informal contact with the committee members. This is because they need your help, but sometimes just for fun. Also digitally, you have a lot of contact with the committees via the Facebook groups, the mail, the phone (WhatsApp/call) and possibly other ways.

The rest of the week is filled with different tasks. First of all, you are the contact person for the rest of the board: you keep them informed of the developments within committees and together with the other board members you form a board opinion, which you then communicate to the committees.

Finally, as a Social CAO it is of course always important to look at general improvements in the committees, in collaboration with the Study CAO.

Study Committee Affairs Officer (Study CAO)

As Study CAO you have the ultimate responsibility of all study-related committees (Career Committee, Conference Committee, Excursion Committee, A-Day-in-the-Life Committee, Lecture Committee, Workshop Committee & Study Trip Committee) and the activities they organize.

At the beginning of the year, you are mainly engaged in recruiting committee members. You try to enthuse members to organize super fun and interesting study related activities, next to their psychology studies. Furthermore, you go to the meetings of the committees, help and advise the committee members when necessary and make sure that everything goes smoothly. You have contact with the committee members over WhatsApp, Google Drive and of course during the meetings. Moreover, you are the link between the board and the committees. You keep the rest of the board updated with what happens within the committees. In addition, you try to ensure that extra attention is paid to the active members. For example, by sitting down with someone who doesn't feel comfortable or has some problems within his committee, or by talking to, going out for dinner or having a drink with your committee members.

However, as a Study CAO you do not only have contact with (active) members, but also with various teachers within psychology. For example, you have to request colloquium points for the study-related events at the Examination Board or, together with the director of the Education Institute, discuss grants for the study related activities.

General tasks of a Committee Affairs Officer

- Coordinator of the social and / or study-related committees
- Responsible for the committees
- Recruit and enthuse new members

- Point of contact for active members and the rest of the board
- Attend meetings of committees and support and advise when necessary within the committee
- Keeping in direct contact with all chairs & heads of promotion of the committees
- Responsible for the promotion and ticket sales of events
- Responsible for uploading events on Facebook and Website

Officer of Sales & Acquisition

In the current job distribution, there's also a function of Officer of Sales & Acquisition. This is a combined function of Officer of Sales and Officer of Acquisition. The Sales Officer is mainly responsible for managing the sales of books and other educational resources, such as summaries and exam trainings. Since '15/'16, book sales have been changed to an online web store, whereas they were previously sold from a book counter hosted by the VSPA. Now the sale is in the hands of an external book supplier, StudyStore. As a result of this change, the Officer of Sales function has been expanded with the Acquisition part.

The tasks that the Officer of Sales mainly deals with are: making prognoses and book lists for the book supplier, maintaining contact with the teachers of all courses for the right information regarding literature, promotion and monitoring online book sales. We negotiate with book suppliers for a new contract every other year, so this will also be done by the Officer of Sales. Next to that, the Officer of Sales is also responsible for the summary sales and exam trainings. The tasks related to the managing of these so called 'educational resources' are: the collection and communication of course information (required for students to know on their exams) towards the corresponding partner, the promotion towards members and ongoing quality insurance and improvement.

Then for the Officer of Acquisition part, which is mainly concerned with acquisition in the form of sponsor recruitment. These are their tasks: keeping track of the committee's acquisition document, maintaining contacts with companies, entering into new collaborations with companies, drafting contracts and actively seeking sponsors.

General tasks of the current Officer of Sales & Acquisition

- Responsible for exam trainings, book & summary sales
- Keeping records of exam trainings, book & summary sales
- Promotion for exam trainings, book & summary sales
- Negotiate with exam trainers, book and summary suppliers for new contracts
- Maintaining contact with and establish new contacts with companies
- Active search for sponsors and drawing up contracts
- Support the committees in acquisition
- Keep track of the sponsors on all of the communicational channels (website, app, newsletter, Facebook, Instagram etc.)

Interviews with the current board members

In this chapter you will find a short interview with the current board members and their experiences as a board member of the VSPA.

Interview with Merel - *Chair*

What do you like most about being a board member?

Firstly, I love working with my fellow board members. Together you learn a lot. Learning about what it is like to run an organization, learning from their qualities and pitfalls. In this learning process you will become very close!

Secondly, I like working for the VSPA. The VSPA is a lovely organization, where you will meet a lot of interesting and nice people. There is a lot of freedom and a lot of appreciation for your work.

Our year is of course very different due to Covid-19. But two of the things that also make a board year a lot of fun are the parties and trips!

What do you like the most about your function?

What I like about being a chair is keeping an eye out on my fellow board members. Being someone they can always confide in or ask for help is a very fun job. Secondly, I love looking at the bigger picture. This entails asking myself questions like: is our planning working out, are we too busy. And sending reminders and asking people how they are doing. These things are very fun and I love that it is my job to do this.

I also like that I am very free to decide what I spent my time on. There are of course some tasks that you *have* to do but you can plan in *when* you do them yourself. On top of that you can pick up projects or committees that *you* like and find interesting/meaningful.

What are you spending the most time on during the week?

I spend the most time on planning ahead and on projects. With planning ahead I mean that I am looking at the next day/week/month. So I am making agenda's for meetings, preparing meetings, asking if people need help with certain tasks so deadlines are met. Secondly, I am mostly busy with the projects that I picked up, these are things like making the website privacy safe with the secretary, looking for a new First Years Weekend location or designing a VSPA gadget.

What is the most important thing you have learned (so far) this year?

The most important thing I have learned so far is how to sufficiently plan (haha this is a theme in my answers) and how to give and receive feedback well.

Why would you recommend someone to join the board for a year?

I would highly recommend it because you learn things that you would otherwise never learn at our age. You are running a business with five other students that will probably become friends for life. You meet a lot of interesting people, do things you have never done before (from origami to snowboarding to negotiation over contracts) and learn a lot about yourself.

Interview with Jikke - *Secretary*

What do you like most about being a board member?

First of all, you are in charge of the entire association, which I think is very cool. The fact that you do this with other people makes it even more fun for me. I like working together with my other board members, and coming up with new projects. Being on the board means that you truly have free reign to do things in ways that you find important or interesting. The social aspect is also a great part of it. This year there unfortunately was not much of that, but as a board member, you have 5 other people in your board, and hopefully you develop not only a working relationship with them but also friendships. As a board member you can also take up a committee, this is not only for the social or study CAOs! Being the CAO of a committee is also a lot of fun and definitely adds to the social aspect.

What do you like the most about your function?

Being the contact point for members, and being able to make the website looking as good as possible. Next to that I have a lot of other tasks, including answering emails, taking minutes, and uploading photos. Because you have so many different tasks, and these tasks are also dependent on you other board members, it can get overwhelming, but for me I liked being able to decide my own schedule. I like the technical aspect as well, I was always very interested in stuff like photoshop, but had no experience, and never got around to it. I like that as a secretary you quickly learn a lot about how a website works, how to use Adobe, and the best way to use your inbox.

What are you spending the most time on during the week?

Answering emails is what most days start with. I answer and forward emails to the proper board member. I also have to read back and clean up the minutes of the board meeting every week. Because the tasks as a secretary are very different each day, it's hard to describe a 'normal' week. I think I'm mostly busy with the different projects that you do as a general board member

What is the most important thing you have learned (so far) this year?

One thing that I learned is professional contact. As a board member, and as secretary, you send a lot of emails, and call a lot of people. At the start I really didn't know what to say and what to email, and I like that I now know exactly what to say and write to look professional and respectful. Another thing I learned is that not everything that you want to do or change is

gonna work out as expected. Certain ideas or projects are just not gonna work out how you think they are, no matter how much time you spend on it. A lot of them are of course, but you have to be ready to sometimes deal with disappointment.

Why would you recommend someone to join the board for a year?

It helps you develop yourself and a good way to get professional experience, which can be very valuable and is not something you learn while studying. You also meet some great people during events, and the bond you build with your fellow board members is very special. It also looks great on your resume, and will show future employers that you have the experience and work ethic to have responsibility and have experience with working 40 hours a week.

Interview with Julia - *Treasurer and Vice-Chair*

What do you like most about being a board member?

I like sooooo many different things, this is going to be hard hahah. One thing I really like is that I'm doing something entirely different from studying for a year. After high school I went straight to university, so up until now I basically spent my whole life just studying textbooks. This year is very different, of course I'm still learning (a lotttt), but it's not at all from textbooks. I like that I'm learning stuff that I know is useful and valuable for the rest of my life! I also like that everything we do as a board, every decision we maken, has an influence on the association, sometimes it's directly visible and sometimes it's more on the background. But of course, what I like most, are my lovely fellow board members <3 Getting to know them as colleagues but also as friends has been absolutely amazing! The way I know them, and they know me, is unique in a way where one minute we can work together professionally and have discussions and get shit done, and the next minute we can laugh our asses off about something completely unrelated.

What do you like the most about your function?

Something I really like about my function is that I work in a very detailed and accurate way and the responsibility that comes with it. By being in charge of the money, I basically get to keep an overview of everything that happens within the association. I also like taking a critical look at our expenses and the distribution of the money. As a treasurer, I have a few fixed tasks that make up the foundation of my board year, but I also have a lot of room to plan my own weeks and take on a lot of projects with my fellow board members. Finally, I really like that everything within my function is something that you can learn pretty easily. Starting my year as treasurer, I had 0 experience with administration and bookkeeping, but everything became clear to me very quickly and there is always a lotttt of people who can help if I don't know something!

What are you spending the most time on during the week?

During the week, I would say that I spend approximately 25% of my time on my fixed tasks and about 75% of my time on different projects. My fixed tasks mostly include the financial administration of the association, this usually doesn't take up a lot of my time. There are a lot of different projects I'm working on. Some are a bit more on the background, like looking for a

new English bookkeeping system, going through all VSPA documents of the last years and moving them from our server to OneDrive and looking for a new set-up for our alumni-association. And some projects are a bit more visible, like VSPAssistance, being the CAO the Design Committee, Inclusivity Committee and the LCC, organizing this year's committee evening and being part of the conference committee! Besides all these, I also spend approximately 6 hours a week in board meetings and I go to all our wonderful events <3

What is the most important thing you have learned (so far) this year?

Oof, hard questionnnn! I think I learned a lot about how to critically and analytically look at certain issues and how to solve them. But also, with everything we do and every decision we make, we need to keep in mind what's in the best interest of our members, and how we can help them the most, definitely now with corona. I learned more about planning my time and the importance of not working sometimes, definitely now that we all work from home. So far, I also already learned a lot about giving and receiving feedback, keeping a clear overview and a lot of stuff about myself personally as well!

Why would you recommend someone to join the board for a year?

I think doing a board year is suuuuper valuable for anyone, in all ways imaginable. It's such a wonderful opportunity to get to know yourself better, learn and develop a shit ton (can I say that?) of new skills, meet soooo many wonderful people and prepare yourself for the future. I think it's amazing how you, together with 5 other students, are put in charge of a whole organisation for a year, and you can (basically) run it however you like. It's truly a once in a lifetime opportunity :))

Interview with Levi - Social Committee Affairs Officer

What do you like most about being a board member?

Hmm that's a difficult question, because I love almost everything. I really like that you learn something new everyday and that you can develop your skills in such a unique way. There's a perfect balance between working in a professional organisation and then the social aspect. With five fellow students you run a whole study association, how cool is that?! You'll get a sneak peak of what working life is like. Besides that you become one with the rest of your board and learn how to feedback each other in a professional way. BUTT most of all the amazing events and trips you'll never ever forget about!

What do you like the most about your function?

What I like most about being the Social CAO is that I meet so many Psychology students due to all the committees. I'm in charge of all the social committees, which I love. Every committee is very different and that makes it challenging and fun at the same time. I love it that I learn a lot about other people and how they work together in a team. Besides that I'm learning a lot about organizing events, planning, and how to keep an overview.

What are you spending the most time on during the week?

Most of my time is spent on meetings! I run from meeting to meeting and that's a lot of fun, because I enjoy being a busy bee. Besides that there are tasks I need to do for the committee. Next to that I'm also a general board member, which means I have board meetings and board duties every week.

What is the most important thing you have learned (so far) this year?

I don't think there is one thing that is the most important, because you learn soooooo muchhhh! I learned a bunch of stuff about myself personally. How I work in a team and how I work personally. Next to that I learned a lot about working in a team and how to run an organization. I also developed my professional and social skills.

Why would you recommend someone to join the board for a year?

I applied for a board year, because I fell in love with the VSPA during my first year as a Psychology student. The VSPA offers students a safe place and a place where you can grow as a person. I wanted to do something extra next to my studies, something that would make my resume extra special. I don't think there is a similar opportunity at this age where you can run such a big organization with fellow students. So, I would definitely recommend you the best year of your (student) life. It's such a valuable and amazing experience.

Interview with Tim - *Study Committee Affairs Officer*

What do you like most about being a board member?

The thing I like most about being a board member is that I get to work together with a small group of wonderful people for a year and in that time I get to know them better than almost anyone else. Watching them grow throughout the year and sharing the laughs and tears with them is the number one reason that I love this year so much. It's hard not to make friends for life when doing a board year.

What do you like the most about your function?

The thing I like most about my function is that I have so many amazing committees under my wings, which means I get to meet and work with a lot of different (groups of) people and see them develop over the year as a team and individually. Facilitating that by organising events with them is very rewarding and makes me proud. Being a Committee Affairs Officer is one of the best ways to meet a lot of interesting people and hear all their creative ideas.

What are you spending the most time on during the week?

Most of my time is spent on having meetings with my committees and the rest of the board but also on communication outside of those meetings with the committees and the board. So I'd

say most of my time is spent on communicating. Of course I also spend a lot of time at all the events that we organise.

What is the most important thing you have learned (so far) this year?

The most important thing that I've learned this year is that honesty and openness make life a lot easier not just for yourself, but also for all the other people in your life. I also learned that I need to get better at dealing with/noticing stress, but that I still a work in progress. Oh, and I also learned that people are endlessly fascinating (I already knew that, it's one of the reasons I started studying Psychology, but this year confirmed it even more).

Why would you recommend someone to join the board for a year?

I would recommend you to do a board year because you'll more than likely make friends for life and you'll learn more about yourself than you ever will in a normal year of studying at university. I've been studying for more than five years so I can know ;) Of course you'll also have a lot of fun and unforgettable experiences with the other board members and your fellow students along the way which makes it even better.

Interview with Elin - *Officer of Sales & Acquisition*

What do you like most about being a board member?

One of the things I like most about being a board member is definitely the diversity in the tasks I have! No day is ever the same, due to a high variety in function related things I have to do on a daily basis, but also due to that fact that I have a lot of projects that come and go during the year. Next to the diversity I also really appreciate working together with my fellow board members, whom I can certainly call friends by now. We have multiple meetings together every week, and even though we don't always agree and the topics we discuss are sometimes quite though, the meetings are always a lot of fun.

What do you like the most about your function?

As the officer of Sales & Acquisition (S&A), I am a big part of the 'business side' of the association. I really like the professional contact I have with other companies and the discussions and negotiations I have with them. I think it's really nice to have a goal – serving our members in the best way possible – and then work hard to achieve that goal. Another part I really appreciate in my function is the freedom I have in scheduling my own week, and deciding what I want to do and when. The S&A also has enough time to be a general board member, and therefore take on a lot of fun projects.

What are you spending the most time on during the week?

Meeting with fellow board members to discuss important matters and to work together on projects probably takes up 2 days of my week. Then in busy weeks there are up to 3 activities (lecture, borrel, sports activity etc.) I have (and enjoy) to participate in as well. The rest of the week I basically try to make my never-ending to-do list somewhat smaller, mostly by working on specific S&A tasks, like promoting the sales and education resources, answering a ton of

emails and having meetings with others. But, because all weeks vary so much from each other, I've never experienced a boring week! In a normal year the Sales & Acquisition also spends quite some time in the board room, which Covid-19 made a little hard for me this year.

What is the most important thing you have learned (so far) this year?

I've always been a bit of a go-getter, but this year I've learned even more to try my hardest to get what I want. Being the S&A I really get to experience the business side of the association, something I had absolutely no experience in. Even though we are only halfway through the year at this point, I already feel like I got so much better in dealing with difficult contracts, negotiations, and professional contact. I've also gotten better at critical (and creative) thinking and giving and receiving feedback.

Why would you recommend someone to join the board for a year?

I'd highly recommend doing a board year, because I feel like I wouldn't get such huge responsibilities elsewhere at this age. A board year is a really great opportunity to learn plenty of things and growing as a person, while also having so much fun together with your other board members and in the association.

How do I become a board member?

In order to be elected as a board member of the VSPA, it is mandatory to apply formally for the position of board member. You do this by sending in a number of documents, including a letter of application and going through an application procedure.

Before you go into this process, it is advisable to contact the Application Guidance Committee (AGC). The members of this committee can give you more details about the procedure and the position as board member. In a personal meeting with the AGC, you can obtain information about everything you want to know about a board year and/or get an answer to other questions that you may still have.

The AGC is there to guide you through the entire application process. Finally, the AGC can help with the preparation of the interview for becoming a board member and the presentation at the General Members Assembly (GMA).

The official job interview is conducted by the Application Committee (AC) and theoretically consists of two rounds. In the first round, your general qualities as a board member are assessed. In the second round, the Application Committee will check how well you would fit the function in the board that you have indicated as your preference. It may happen that the AC asks before or during the job interviews to apply for another position, in order to score your competencies and to assess which persons with which function would make the best team.

After the candidates have completed all rounds, the AC will compile a candidate board from the candidates. The candidates will be approached, and they will be notified of the position they are assigned to. After the individual approval of the candidates, the candidate board composed by the AC will be presented to the members of the VSPA at the next GMA.

At the GMA each board member presents himself separately and there is an opportunity to ask questions to the candidates. The AC then presents its proposal again. The GMA will eventually decide by means of a vote whether the proposed candidate board will receive their approval, and the board candidates will then officially form the new board of the VSPA.

Contact details AGC

If you have become interested in doing a board year with the VSPA and you want to know more about a board position, you can contact the Application Guidance Committee (AGC). They are there to inform you and help you make an informed decision about a possible nomination!

The AGC

The Application Guidance Committee consists of four members.

Mail to: boardwanted@vspa.nl

Of course, you can also directly contact one of the five members of AGC, who you may have seen or spoken to before:



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20/21
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