

The University of Amsterdam (abbreviated as UvA, Dutch: Universiteit van Amsterdam) is a public research university located in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Established in 1632 by municipal authorities, it is the fourth-oldest academic institution in the Netherlands still in operation.[5]

The UvA is one of two large, publicly funded research universities in the city, the other being the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU). It is also part of the largest research universities in Europe with 31,186 students, 4,794 staff, 1,340 PhD students[1] and an annual budget of €600 million.[6][7] It is the largest university in the Netherlands by enrollment. The main campus is located in central Amsterdam, with a few faculties located in adjacent boroughs. The university is organised into seven faculties: Humanities, Social and Behavioural Sciences, Economics and Business, Science, Law, Medicine, Dentistry.

Close ties are harbored with other institutions internationally through its membership in the League of European Research Universities (LERU), the Institutional Network of the Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA), European University Association (EUA) and Universitas 21. The University of Amsterdam has produced six Nobel Laureates and five prime ministers of the Netherlands.[8]

Athenaeum Illustre (1632–1877)

In January 1632, the Athenaeum Illustre of Amsterdam (Latin: Illustrious School of Amsterdam) was founded by the municipal authorities in Amsterdam.[5] It was mainly devoted to medical teaching.[5] The first two professors were Gerardus Vossius and Caspar Barlaeus. The Athenaeum Illustre provided education comparable to other higher education institutions, although it could not

confer doctoral degrees. After training at the Athenaeum, students could complete their education at a university in another town.

At the time, Amsterdam also housed several other institutions of higher education, including the Collegium Chirugicum, which trained surgeons, and other institutions that provided theological courses for the Remonstrant and the Mennonite communities. Amsterdam's large degree of religious freedom allowed for the establishment of these institutions. Students of the Colegium Chirugicum and the theological institutions regularly attended classes at the Athenaeum Illustre.

The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp by Rembrandt shows an anatomy lesson taking place in Amsterdam in 1632, the year the university was founded. Nicolaes Tulp is considered one of the forefathers of the Faculty of Medicine.[9]

In 1815 it was given the statutory obligation “to disseminate taste, civilisation and learning” and “to replace, at least in part, the institutes of higher education and an academic education for those young men whose circumstances unable them to fully spend the time necessary for an academic career at an institute of higher education.” The Athenaeum began offering classes for students attending non-academic professional training in pharmacy and surgery in 1800. The Athenaeum Illustre largely worked together with Amsterdam's theological institutions such as the Evangelisch-Luthers Seminarium (evangelical-Lutheran) and the Klinische School (medical school), the successor to the Collegium Chirurgicum.

The Athenaeum remained a small institution until the 19th century, with no more than 250 students and eight professors. Alumni of the Athenaeum include Cornelis Petrus Tiele.[10][11]