Internship Report;

Circulair Procurement Collaboration Possibilities in Friesland; The Netherlands

Duco Sven Pietjou

Gemeente Leeuwarden

Circulair Economy in Friesland

Thor Ruiter, Niels Faber

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Student: <u>Duco Sven Pietjou</u>

Student no.: \$3624609

Address: De Dobbe 14, 9062 HG, Oentsjerk

Telephone: +316 36009544

Email: d.s.pietjou@student.rug.nl

Programme: BSc Global Responsibility & Leadership

Location: Wirdumerdijk 34, 8911 CE Leeuwarden

Supervisor: Niels Faber

Function: Assistant Professor Circular Entrepreneurship

Email: n.r.faber@rug.nl

Organization: Gemeente Leeuwarden (Municipality of Leeuwarden)

Location: Oldehoofsterkerkhof 2, 8911 DH Leeuwarden

Supervisor: Thor Ruiter

Function: Policy advisor Circular Economy and Waste Reduction

Email: thor.ruiter@leeuwarden.nl

Preface and acknowledgments

Approximately one year ago in 2021 I engaged in a conversation with a – now graduated – peer student of Global Responsibility and Leadership who had just fulfilled an internship at the municipality of Leeuwarden. As this enthusiastic conversation was progressing I got brought into contact with an employee of the municipality who was the external supervisor during the internship of my peer student. After a short mail exchange it got established that I would do an internship at the municipality that upcoming academic year. Before the end of spring I had a brief meeting with my external- and current supervisor, Thor Ruiter.

Following this meeting we determined that my internship would focus on mapping out opportunities for collaboration between the Frisian governments to enhance circular procurement. This subject was derived from the recently published Frisian cooperation agenda of "Fryslân Koopt Circulair" which set out local circular procurement ambitions. It was during this whole process that after a fleeting conversation Niels Faber was established as my supervisor at the university. With Niels I had several small preparatory contact moments to effectively start the internship after the summer.

Doing an internship always had my preference due to the engaging aspects with the – potential future – work field. Based off this experience I wanted to make informed decisions regarding further steps in my academic and personal development. This internship sufficed for 20 ECTS and took place from September 2021 till February 2022.

¹ Wij kopen circulair.frl. 2021. "Samenwerkingsagenda ' Fryslân Koopt Circulair .""

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I would like to utilize this opportunity to thank Thor Ruiter and Niels Faber for their

expertise and supervision during my research. Furthermore I would like to thank the numerous

employees of several Frisian governments for their input in my research both in the interviews

and other interesting conversations.

I sincerely hope you enjoy reading about my fruitful internship.

Duco Pietjou

Leeuwarden, 14 February '22

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Introduction

This internship was provided by the municipality of Leeuwarden and falls under the sector "Sustainable Environmental Quality" within the Physical domain. My external supervisor – Thor Ruiter – is also situated in this sector. Within the BSc programme I am currently in my third and final year of the programme. I am following this internship from within the third and final year of the BSc Global Responsibly and leadership.

Firstly, this report will describe the municipality of Leeuwarden and its organisational structure. Secondly, the report will discuss the internship in terms of learning outcomes and results. Eventually this report closes off with an evaluation considering learning outcomes, contribution to the internship provider, attribution of the study programme and future career options.

Internship organisation

The municipality of Leeuwarden is a centre situated municipality in Friesland with an inhabitant count of 124.481 (July 2021)². These and other statistics deem it the largest municipality in the region with an important governmental, economical and cultural position and responsibility. Furthermore, the municipality holds responsibility for a diversity of tasks which serve favourable living and working ends for citizens and affiliated businesses. Political decision making lies at the basis of governing such responsibilities. The "College van burgermeesters en wethouders" carries out the governing task in the municipality in accordance with municipal law.

² Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS). "Aantal Inwoners per Jaar Leeuwarden." https://allecijfers.nl/gemeente/leeuwarden/ (February 15, 2022).



Figure 1: Highlighted in green: Area of the municipality of Leeuwarden

The municipality stretches from the "Waddendijk" in the north till "Nationaal Park de Alde Feanen" in the south and houses the Frisian capital of Leeuwarden – "Liwadden" in city-Frisian and "Ljouwert" in Frisian – in the centre of it. The city of

Leeuwarden wore the prestigious title of Capital of Culture of Europe in 2018. An important role in acquiring this title was the Frisian characteristic of "mienskip" which relates to a community centred mentality.

Organisational structure

The muncipality of Leeuwarden is divided into six departments which are segmented in their own subdivisions with several smaller departments. Within figure 2³ the 6 departments are represented by different layers of a circle, with the second ring from the outside representing three departments – Social domain, Securitydomain and Physical domain –. The department of the internship is scaled under the blue physical domain.

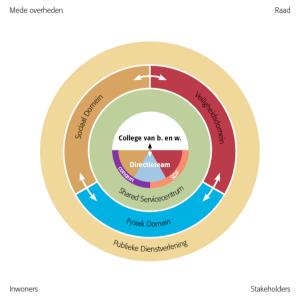


Figure 2: Organigram of municipality of Leeuwarden.

³ Gemeente Leeuwarden. "Gebiedsgericht Werken.": 1–28.

Whereas this figure reflects a division in departments, a constant form of interaction within the whole organisaion takes place. Actions and decisions within one department can heavily influence another. The shared servicecentre (SSC) even fullfills this task actively by offering services which are put into use for all its surrounding domains. For an instance, the laptop and mobile device of the muncipality which I used at home were provided by collegues from the SSC.

Circular ambitions

The municipality of Leeuwarden has set out numerous ambitions in order to become a climate neutral and -resilient region in programme 'Volhoudbaar' in 2018⁴. This programme focusses on three main themes 1) Energy transition 2) Climate adaptation and 3) Circulair economy. Within this the municipality aspires to contribute towards respective national goals in these three categories. For circular economy it want to stimulate reusing and recycling within waste flows from households and the internal organisation. Furthermore, it wants to stimulate this circularity by supporting its strong knowledge campuses and living labs. Present day practises confirm enactment upon these ambitions through the existence of this internship and further entanglement with Campus Fryslân, such as the living labs.

In 2019, the Frisian governments set their circular ambitions into stone by signing the 'Ambitiedocument Voor Circulaire Economie'⁵, mobilised by Vereniging Circulair Friesland. This concerned a document which set out the ambition to put Friesland on the map as the most circular region in Europe in 2025. In addition, the document contains further ambitions and tools which support this aspiration. This document formed the basis for the collaboration

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⁴Niehof, Diderick. "Leeuwarden Wil in 2035 Klimaatadaptief Zijn." https://klimaatadaptatienederland.nl/@249677/leeuwarden-strategie/ (February 15, 2022).

⁵ "Ambitiedocument Voor Circulaire Economie - Vereniging Circulair Friesland." https://circulairfriesland.frl/case/ambitiedocument-circulaire-economie/ (January 22, 2022).

agenda 'Fryslân Koopt Circulair'⁶ as established by 'Wij Kopen Circulair.frl' in 2021. All Frisian governments are involved in these plans. Whereas, the 2019 document mostly concerned the circular economy as a whole, the 2021 agenda addressed circular procurement in particular as an important link in the transition to the circular economy. The first upcoming hard deadline is to procure 25% of all procurement of the Frisian governments in a circular manner in 2025. Additionally, annually a Frisian icon project for circular procurement should be developed.

Practical examples of circular projects in Leeuwarden are found in the '10 inspiring circular projects'⁷. These projects focus on three crucial points 1) Enhance material and/or energy-use 2) Arrangements surrounding preventive and corrective maintenance of products or materials have been made 3) Financial incentives to handle circularly. Examples of current projects where circularity is developing are street furniture, sewage and street construction in Bilgaard & waste separation. There is still ground to be gained however, organisational challenges still have to be tackled. Implementing organisation wide support and motivation for circular ambitions still provides a challenge, examples are found in introducing material passports, reusing shrubs and crops for bio-based products, and using modular elements for infrastructure⁸.

Intergovernmental collaboration

Close collaboration with regional partners is required in order to realise set out ambitions. Whereas across governments small deviations in ambitions are in place, the baseline is found in striving to become fully circular, belong to one of the top development regions for

⁶ "Wij Kopen Circulair - Wij Kopen Circulair." https://www.wijkopencirculair.frl/ (January 22, 2022).

⁷ De Vries, Henk et al. 2021. "Circulaire Inspiratie in de Praktijk."

⁸ De Graaff, S., Van der Lee, S., Van der Leer, J., & Robberegt, I. (2019). Gemeente Leeuwarden - Op weg naar een circulaire economie.

circularity in Europe in 2025 and be waste-free in 2050⁹. The municipality has established partnerships with other regional governmental bodies in line with the triple helix model of innovation. Correspondingly, this model refers to 1) the academic world – e.g. Watercampus, Dairy Campus, Energiecampus, NHL Stenden and RUG Campus Fryslân –, 2) industries – business sector including companies and entrepreneurs – and 3) government – provincie Fryslân, Wetterskip Fryslân, Veiligheidsregio Fryslân and other municipalities – to stimulate innovation and change. In addition, the municipality is a member VCF, which authorises access to a substantial network of – future – circular leaders in several fields¹⁰.

The internship

Assignment

Within my assignment I had a lot of creative freedom and responsibility. The central premise of my assignment was to find out what actions can be undertaken in order to promote circular procurement for Frisian governments on a collaborative basis. This in relation to suitable products or product groups – such as clothing, tech or furniture – and how a potential collaboration could look like. In broad lines this meant a literature search on past success and extract applicable elements. These applicable elements concern collaboration methods and success factors of past circular procurement project. Subsequently, I had to test these theories in practice in order to find out which elements could have potential in the Frisian context.

February 21, 2021, from https://circulairfriesland.frl/over-ons/netwerk/

⁹ De Vries, Henk et al. 2020. "Uitvoeringsagenda 2021-2022 Circulaire Economie: Innovatief naar Afvalvrij."

¹⁰ Circulair Friesland. (2020, December 16). Ons netwerk. Vereniging Circulair Friesland. Retrieved

Tasks

I have carried out a diversity of tasks in order to contribute to fulfilling my assignment. Firstly, the one which occurred with the most regularity was the weekly meeting with my external supervisor Thor Ruiter. In these meetings we kept track of the developments in my research and discussed these in a ten till thirty minute period. Occasionally I would meet to discuss an ongoing project of the "roadmap towards circularity" with Thor, Henk de Vries — circular procurer at the municipality — and Copper8 advisors Hendrik de Vries & Eline van Terwisga. Furthermore, I carried the responsibility to construct and carry out a plan for completing my assignment, the outline of my initial planning can be found in appendix III. The literature research was an important enabling factor and took up continuous time from start till end. Based off the first batch of literature review I conducted qualitative interviews with people with relevant positions — sustainability advisor, circular procurers etc. — within a Frisian governmental organisation. I carried the responsibility of finding- and contacting people for the interviews after which I had to schedule and prepare the qualitative interviews. Additionally, I attended numerous workshops and info sessions to gather information for my research.

In accordance with the proposal of Niels, I decided to organise a symposium on the 28th of January in which I presented my advisory alongside two guest speakers. As a result I had to set up and arrange this event. This preparation was mostly found in promotion of the event and arranging guest speakers. In addition, I had to convert the advisory report into a presentation for the attending audience of the symposium. The slides presented in the symposium alongside an online promotional flyer – which has been shared in combination with a LinkedIn event post – can be found in appendix I and II.

Output

The following points cover the main points of output of the internship:

- I. Advisory report on collaboration opportunities for circular procurement for
 Frisian governments
 - a. Qualitative interviews
 - b. In-depth literature analysis
- II. Symposium circular procurement
- III. Enlarged personal network within the circular economy in Friesland
- IV. Personal experience with working for a governmental organisation
- V. This internship report

Results

The most important results from the advisory report are summed up in the following image, the points have been translated from Dutch:

THE ADVICE: AN OVERVIEW



Figure 3: An overview of the advice as presentation in the advisory report, translated from Dutch.

The advisory report discussed six suitable product groups for circular procurement: 1) Construction 2) Civil Engineering 3) Office furniture 4) Work- and safety clothing 5) IT and 6) Catering.

For each of these product groups I created a dedicated Impact-profile to get a summarized overview of the strengths and weaknesses per product group, figure 5 reflects such an impact profile. Such an impact profile addresses complexity, life expectancy, current status of market, the role of the government and successful examples. Furthermore I conducted a SWOT analyses – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats – to explore the field of circular procurement in Friesland, which has been translated and is shown in figure 4.

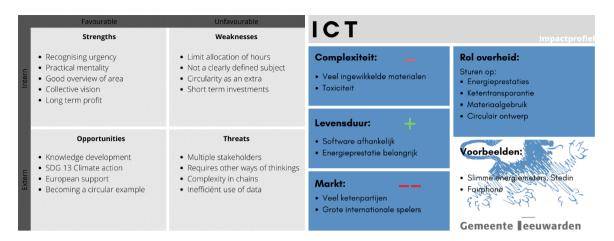


Figure 4: SWOT-analyses of Frisian circular procurement.

Figure 5: Impact profile of product group IT.

Following the advisory report came the symposium in which I presented the piece alongside two other inspiring speakers. Kees Noordmans was one of the guest speakers and talked about circular procurement from a entrepreneurial perspective, Kees is manager at the company OPNIEUW!¹¹ which specialises in circulating office furniture. The second speaker was Roel van Klaveren – a peer student which I consider a good friend – who talked about his Capstone topic of Blockchain in the circular economy. With my own work and that of the speakers I aimed to provide new information for people already involved in the circular economy.

The turnout of the symposium consisted of 13 people with a diversity of functions spread out over several organisations, the represented organisations are shown in figure 6. During the 2 hour lasting symposium the attendees interacted actively and interesting discussion were held.

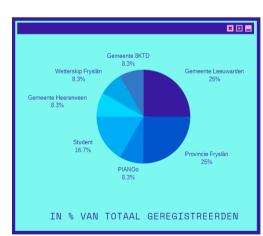


Figure 6: Organisational representation of the symposium.

¹¹ OPNIEUW! 2021. "OPNIEUW! Circulaire Gids - OPNIEUW!" https://www.opnieuw.nl/circulaire-gids/ (February 15, 2022).

Figure 7 shows the statistics of the LinkedIn event. In total 1538 have seen the post and 9 people shared it in their own online circles. Furthermore, the post caught the attention of the educational sector through views by The University of Groningen and NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences. In addition, people with a function related to selling accounted for the mostly represented function. The most views were observed in the Great Groningen Area, yet the conurbation of Western Holland (Randstad) was represented fairly well.

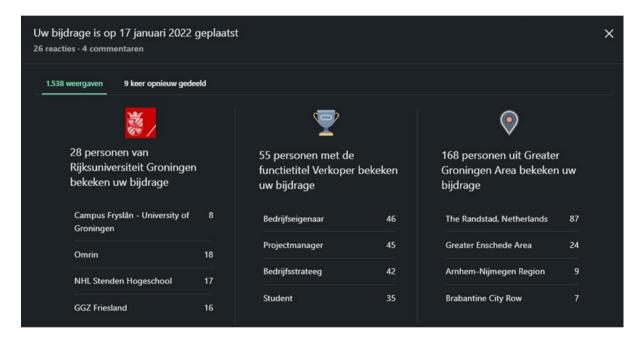


Figure 7:Statistics of the LinkedIn event, 1538 views, shared 9 times.

Evaluation

Prior to the start of my internship I had set out the learning goals in the internship agreement, these goals are shown in the next section. The overarching aim was to gain experience in a (circular) economic project and to be able to implement and develop my academic skills within this context. This internship added upon my major by combining the sustainable themes of GRL with the economic track of my Major of "Responsible Governance". Furthermore, this internship is a good example of the GRL motto of "Global challenges, local solutions" and vice versa.

Learning goals

1) Development of professional communication in direct communication and in (advisory) documentation.

Throughout my internship I had plenty of professional communication with several parties, especially for arranging this interviews this was the case. I quickly found out however that it often concerns a brief moment before formality leaves room for small informalities. I am referring to have a quick laugh together and occasionally just communicate about the latest football results. I personally enjoyed the informality in the broader formal scheme, it kept it human and relatable for me. Naturally, I recognised situations which required my full formal attention and acted accordingly. I am all in favour of combining seriousness with a smile, which is also reflected subtle in my advisement report. It for an instance mentions that a change of mind and action within an organisation could also mean a lack of 'kroketten' (Dutch deepfrying food) in the canteen on Fridays. Nevertheless, the baseline for all conversation within my internship was of a formal extent.

Construction of the advisory report gave me a good sense of how a professional document for a real life scenario looks like. Whereas, during my study I construction plenty of professional documents, they have not been assembled to the degree of this real life scenario. This brought along a different mindset for me, I regarded this report as a personal business card and not merely a pass to a good grade.

With confidence I can state that this learning goal has been satisfied and it provides a excellent resource for writing my capstone the upcoming period.

2) Promote research abilities which concern practical- and literature research.

Within my research I conducted both practical- and literature research. The practical research found in setting up and conducting the interviews. The literature research was a

healthy combination of professional documents from international resources to local infographics. This wide arrangement of resources required quite some creativity to find and link all the information. In addition, I received interesting papers from my supervisor and other colleagues which made finding a good direction substantially more achievable. In the spirit of practise makes perfect, this researches enhanced my research abilities.

3) Getting more acquainted with local renowned organisations/possible future employers.

I have been in touch with several renowned organisations and/or possible future employers. However, due to situational conditions imposed by corona not to the fullest degree as what I had beforehand hoped. The town hall was mostly only filled with a fraction of the normal occupation, as a result I did most of my work sitting in an office by myself. Nonetheless I still enjoyed all the online – and the small percentage of offline – interactions I had the opportunity to experience. Furthermore, I learned a lot about the general field of circular economy in Friesland from a multi-stakeholder perspective. More information about future employers can be found under the "future career and cooperation" heading.

Contribution to Municipality of Leeuwarden

With my work provided through this internship I contributed to the overall field of circular economy and its defined ambitions within the region of Friesland, including the Municipality of Leeuwarden. Since this assignment has been published from within the Municipality of Leeuwarden it will contribute as a noteworthy effort to its circular procurement ambitions. In addition, I provided a possibility to bridge ambitions to actions for the municipality. Furthermore, I hope to inspire many of circular development in the future, either in- or outside the municipality. The exact results can only be established as time will pass by, especially since the report has officially been published only earlier these week.

Attribution of GRL UCF

University Campus Fryslân its broad approach alongside sustainability is properly applicable towards the field of circular economy and -procurement. The circular economy concerns multiple fields, perspectives and stakeholders. In addition, practises such as policy discussion, policy brief writing, analysis policy plans, the living lab experience and acting like a professional in general contributed towards this accumulation of results and output found in this internship. Furthermore, the leadership lab was interesting to fall back upon to get into the right mindset to undertake action to bring about change. Along with it came the realisation that personal leadership and devotion is required in a field that currently consist of a modest amount of people. I am convinced that this internship was an effective method to learn about implementing valuable leadership skills, even at an elevated step in comparison with the living labs.

Future career and cooperation

The local circular economy truly obtained my attention, particularly because there are definitely opportunities to grow. I am intrigued to work within the field of the circular economy and I am open to aid Friesland becoming an exemplary circular region. This mostly is related towards the group of motivated people with which I have been in contact with. Nevertheless, I will remain open to opportunities which present themselves. Moreover, I will firstly focus on how I will experience my capstone, and decide further from there on.

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Appendix I: Symposium slides

Click here to view the slides online

Appendix II: Symposium Invite



Appendix III: Weekly planning



WEEK	TAKEN & OPDRACHTEN	VOLTOOID
36	VERKENNEN- EN STRUCTUUR OPSTELLEN VAN ONDERZOEK	▼
37	LITERATUURONDERZOEK M.B.T. SUCCESVOLLE SAMENWERKINGEN	V
38	LITERATUURONDERZOEK M.B.T. SUCCESVOLLE SAMENWERKINGEN	V
39	OPSTELLEN SHORTLIST	V
40	EVALUEREN/FINALISEREN SHORTLIST EN OPZET V.D. PRESENTATIE	M
41	MEETINGS INPLANNEN MET EXTERNE ACTOREN + UITWERKEN PRESENTATIE	V
42	FINALISEREN PRESENTATIE	M
43	FINALISEREN PRESENTATIEMETHODE	V

duco.pietjou@leeuwarden.nl

WEEK	TAKEN & OPDRACHTEN	VOLTOOID
44	PSHORTLIJST EN CONTACTEN LIJST BIJWERKEN	₩
45	MEETINGS INPLANNEN + PERSONALISEREN INTERVIEWS	√
46	MEETING NIELS + PLANNEN	M
47	MEETINGS HENK + VERWERKING FEEDBACK/BIJWERKEN RAPPORT	√
48	VORMGEVING VAN DE HYPOTHETISCHE SAMENWERKING	 ✓
49	COMMUNICATIEONDERDEEL BINNEN DE SAMENWERKING UITWERKEN + MEETINGS	 ✓
50	FORMALISEREN VAN OPZET RAPPORT	V
51	PROEFVERSIE RAPPORT	M
52	(FORMEEL GEZIEN) VAKANTIE	□
01	(FORMEEL GEZIEN) VAKANTIE	 ✓
02	UITWERKEN ADVIESRAPPORT	✓
03	UITWERKEN ADVIESRAPPORT + INPLANNEN EVALUATIE	
04	FINALISEREN ADVIESRAPPORT	√

duco.pietjou@leeuwarden.nl

Appendix IV: Advisory report

Click here to view the Advisory Report online