

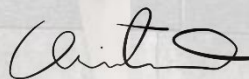


Icarus Policy Plan 2021-2022

Preface:

Dear lovely Icaris,

The board of this year (2021 – '21) is proud to present you our plans of this academic year! Our society has moved on from strict lockdown to a more flexible relation to the pandemic. This means that we'll switch from our previous strategy of **maintaining** community to **rebuilding**. We've got multiple big goals ahead of us this year. These goals include: (a) creating and enforcing an official code of conduct to keep our members protected and have legal reprimands against unwanted behavior (b) standardize collaborations with Synkratos, Kliché and Merlijn as such that we organize at least three big conjoined activities each year (c) branch out our activities with the committees. Our most important focus this year is **making Icarus a safe space** where people will spontaneously meet, interact, make friends and grow. We're really grateful of our wonderful members, committees, previous boards and volunteers and we're really looking forward to work on making Icarus the best version of itself!



With Love,

The board of 2021 – '22

Marlies, Jasmine,
Mya and Quinten

Table of contents:

Our policy plan is structured in seven interlocking themes. In every one of these sections, we explain our vision on the subject, the challenges we faces regarding it, and the solutions we provide. Under each section you will find *in cursive* every concrete policy summarized.

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1. Icarus as a safe space

We, as Icarus, have always prided ourselves for our inclusivity, our welcoming atmosphere and the capacity of our association to make people feel like they can be the most free, truthful and eccentric version of themselves. We are proud to host a wide array of members from different backgrounds, genders, ethnicities, religions and philosophical outlooks. To maintain this culture where people can feel at home, one word is paramount: **safety**. Previous boards have relied on the unspoken agreement of civility and understanding, which usually dictate interactions between students of philosophy, to achieve this goal. This worked to an extent, but left Icarus without any real power or clear procedures when actual breaches in acceptable behavior had been made. However much one might not want to believe it, whenever there exists a group of people, there exists interpersonal friction and potentially interpersonal harm. We need to be mindful of this when heading into the future and realize that it is our responsibility of protecting members from harm to each other and themselves. We've been working with the CoSie (*the Code of Conduct committee*) on making an official and legal Code of Conduct which we'll present in the next ALV in December 2021. The CoSie took much effort in making the document concise enough to serve Icarus for many years to come. The Code of Conduct also establishes the position of a Safe Person, which will function as a safe and trusted intermediary between members and the board regarding breaches in unacceptable behavior by anyone reasonably associated to Icarus or the study.

- 1.a) *We'll establish an official Code of Conduct.*
- 1.b) *Every member needs to be aware of the Code of Conduct and adhere to it. We'll achieve this publicity by – for example - linking the Code of Conduct under every mail, keeping physical copies in the SR and reminding students during our events.*
- 1.c) *The Code of Conduct will broadly outline what Icarus considers to be unacceptable behavior and the values we hold regarding it, appropriate punishment and its procedures when a breach in the Code of Conduct has taken place, the functioning and powers of the Safe Persons and the Board in enacting the Code of Conduct.*
- 1.d) *We'll establish the position of Safe Persons.*

- 1.e) We'll always have **two** Safe Persons, as to avoid the case that somebody would be unable to come forward with their complaints since their problems are directed at the Safe Person, preferably from two different genders.*
- 1.f) Safe Persons function as the overseers of the Code of Conduct: when a breach has taken place students are recommended to come forward to a Safe Person, they will keep an eye out during events and social gatherings, they will advise the board regarding reprimands and punishments (although they do not have the power to authorize suspension and expulsion by themselves) and know how to contact higher / more appropriate sources at the VU or elsewhere if need be. The specific powers and procedures of the Safe Persons are outlined in the Code of Conduct.*
- 1.g) Every member should be aware of who the Safe Persons are and how they can be contacted. We'll promote this in a variety of ways.*
- 1.h) If need be, the CoSie (Code of Conduct-committee) will revise the Code of Conduct.*
- 1.i) We'll make sure Icarus passes every checkmark of Rutgers 'are-you-ok' checklist against sexual unwanted behavior.*



2. Planning ahead with our committees

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Icarus and its committees to experiment and quickly adapt from providing for a physical community to a -mainly- digital community. In doing so we've had struggles but also some serious successes. One of our accomplishments have been the creation of the SoCo: the committee that creates our fabulous bi-monthly magazine **Hubris**. Another accomplishment was the creation of the GecCo, which helped communication between Icarus, Merlijn and Kliché and organized the Halloween party. In this section we want to outline what you can expect from each committee this year, as well as give the reader some sense of oversight of what is happening inside Icarus and who is working on it.

- 2.a) **ReisCie (travel committee):** *The travel committee will organize our yearly trip to a big city in Europe. The ReisCie will also experiment with putting together some a couple of day trips to explore some part of nature or city in the Netherlands. If the day trips are positively evaluated, organizing them can be incorporated as standard duties of the ReisCie.*
- 2.b) **BaCo (bar committee):** *The bar committee organizes the bi-weekly borrels on Thursday as well as provide for a healthy amount of beer and snacks at the SR. This year the BaCo will also focus on organizing borrels together with others associations like Amfibi, and will create some themed borrels.*
- 2.c) **AcCie (activity committee):** *The activity committee organizes all Icarus events that fall outside of the domain of the ReisCie and BaCo. The AcCie will focus this year on trying out diverse events and try to see what sticks and what kind of events can become stable traditions of Icarus. We'll focus more on: Philosophy, Music, Art and Debate. We'll investigate if two reoccurring events could be organized by a single committee, the FicSie (fiction committee) namely: 'a bi-weekly movie night with potential guest lectures' and 'a book club.'*
- 2.c) * **FicSie (fiction committee):** *We'll investigate some form or way that we can hold people responsible for organizing the movie nights and book clubs. This can be done by either having a separate committee, or by assigning FicSie roles to members of the AcCie. At the end of the year we'll evaluate this attempt.*

2.d) **SoCo (social-media committee):** The social-media committee facilitates our – you guessed it – social media and online presence as well as creating our bi-monthly magazine *Hubris*. We'll also hand out physical copies of *Hubris* this year.

The remaining committees don't gather weekly like the ones previously mentioned but either meet sporadically or have specialized goals. They are nonetheless integral.

2.e) **GecCo (humanities committee):** The humanities committee (stemming from nl. *Geesteswetenschappen*) exists out of members from Icarus, *Kliché* and *Merlijn*. Their goal is to facilitate a couple of big events in the year, like the Halloween party, a gala in January, a beerpong tournament in spring and a pubquiz-battle.

2.f) **KasCo: (bank committee):** The KasCo has been used to sort out some bookkeeping issues in previous years. We don't expect their services to be needed this year.

2.g) **CoSie: (Code of Conduct committee):** The CoSie was responsible for creating the Code of Conduct and can – in some iteration of itself - be brought back to investigate potential changes when the need for it arises.

2.h) **A.R.O.B.: (Advisory nl. Raad/en. organ Old Boards):** The A.R.O.B. is the advisory organ constituted by a couple of previous board members. Board-members should wait one year before applying to become A.R.O.B. members. The A.R.O.B. will always get an agenda point during an A.L.V.

2.i) **Safe Persons:** the Safe Persons work on making Icarus a comfortable safe environment, notice alarming behavior and advice the board about decision regarding breaches in the Code of Conduct.



3. Traditions; the art of standardization

Traditions give character to whatever community that upholds them. Although Icarus has made some great steps in making our brand more recognizable (through the stickers, merch, sweaters and other fashions-outlet we've created last year), we've still got some way to go regarding the things we organize. As it stands we have three *traditions* activity-wise: **1.** The first-years week **2.** The Icarus trip **3.** The bi-weekly borrel. Other traditions have faded out of the picture when the pandemic hit and some collective knowledge had been lost due to academic cycle. We want to greatly expand on these *traditions* and formalize the ones we already got. This way new boards don't have to reinvent the wheel every year and can rely on the knowledge of previous board.

- 3.a) The first-years weekend will be rebranded as to avoid confusion from other years who are not yet familiar with the fact that older students also tend to join. We'll investigate branding possibilities but will refer to it for now as **The Introweekend**.*
- 3.b) Organizing The Introweekend will be a collaboration between the old and the new board. This way the new board will learn how to organize the next years weekend and the knowledge will pass on. The Introweekend should ideally be held in the third weekend of the academic year (broadly around the 22th of September). The Board shall know the exact date of arrival before the middle of August so that they're able to advertise it during the Introduction week. Ideally **Kampeerboerderij de Fleuren** will be used for the location. Members should be pushed to pay at least a week in advance as to avoid unwanted late cancelations.*
- 3.c) We'll investigate the possibility of setting the Icarus city trip in the same time frame each year, while also giving it a more concise name.*
- 3.d) We'll plan out the bi-weekly borrel some time in advance so members are aware on when they will take place somewhat ahead of time. We'll also look at locations as to determine what café fits best as our regular borrel-spot.*
- 3.e) **Big events:** we'll make sure that every year at least these three events are organized together with Icarus, Merlijn and Kliché: **A Halloween party** right after or just before Halloween, **A Gala** somewhere in January and **A beerpong tournament** sometime in the spring.*

- 3.f) We'll *experiment* with the following events and will evaluate if they've got evaluated positively enough to be included as *traditions*. Furthermore, we'll then determine in what capacity and how often they should at least be held: A. **movie nights**, B. **book clubs** C. **open mic / music nights** D. **day trips** E. **debate nights** and F. **faculty pub quizzes**.
- 3.g) We'll try to provide a monthly schedule some time in advance so students will be aware of what kind of activities are happening ahead of time.

4. Icarus as a steppingstone

By being a place of philosophical debate and exchange of ideas, Icarus has always been a place for personal growth. Our new modes of communication should reflect that. It will be our goal to update the website, such that new students can find helpful information about many different aspects of studying and living as a student. One issue which is facing many students, is envisioning futures and paths to take in life with their philosophy degrees. Luckily, we have many alumni who have woven their own paths and whose examples can help to let student envision their own. We want Icarus to provide members with those visions, mainly by keeping contact with alumni and organizing career related events. Our new media channels will also promote the work of our alumni. We'll also investigate the possibility of creating an online platform for Icarus-alumni to maintain professional and social contact or to share their work. This project has been fittingly dubbed by the A.R.O.B. as 'Daedalus', canonically Icarus's father.

- 4.a) We'll design our website to provide relevant information for many aspects of studying philosophy, like: studying abroad, selection of courses, student experiences, links to counseling, student rights, VU policies, etc. .
- 4.b) We'll try to establish tighter connections with alumni, while also promoting more of their work. One possibility, that we'll investigate, to do this is 'Daedalus'.
- 4.c) Icarus will try to help members with envisioning their future careers and other paths.

5. Climate responsibility

Global warming is one of the – or maybe simply **the** – biggest challenges of the 21st century. Confined within the limited bounds of a study associations climate impact, Icarus still wants to make sure that we'll take our responsibility and do our bit.

- 5.a) *The Board and Committees will be mindful of their carbon impact and reasonably try to minimize them when performing their duties.*
- 5.b) *Single-use plastics will not be used in any event, unless absolutely necessary.*
- 5.c) *All food Icarus provides will (at least) be vegetarian and vegan options will be provided.*

6. Internationals and Accessibility

Icarus is made up by big community of international students and we feel much responsibility to make them feel completely at home in the Netherlands, the VU and at Icarus. We want to provide in every means we can to manifest our goal: this means providing them with information about programs for internationals that are offered by the VU and making it so that every member has equal access to information about- and participation in, Icarus.

- 6.a) *English will be maintained as Icarus's official language. All future social media-posts, e-mails, public messages and internal documents will be written in English.*
- 6.b) *We'll attempt to translate some remaining Dutch documents to English. The most important ones include our Bylaws (nl. de Statuten) and the Conduct of the Board (nl. Huishoudelijk Reglement).*
- 6.c) *Important documents like the Bylaws, Code of Conduct and Conduct of the Board will be made publicly accessible by providing physical copies in the SR as well as making them publicly available on the website.*
- 6.d) *We'll provide and promote relevant information about buddy-programs, language courses, and others ways of getting accustomed to living abroad.*

7. Philosophy and Collaboration

Besides our other activities, Icarus still remains an association for **philosophy**. We should strive to organize more philosophical activities during the year - like lectures or debate nights – and involve the faculty and teachers more with the things we are doing. Many organizations already exist that try to forge connections between their activities and philosophy. We want to reach out with those organizations, other philosophy associations, Kliché, Amfibi, Merlijn and the faculty of humanities.

- 7.a) *We aim to better the relationship with the faculty of the humanities by means of better communication and showing our benefits in terms of study-experience and philosophical development.*
- 7.b) *The AcCie will direct more attention to **philosophy** by organizing more events like lectures, debate nights, philosophical book readings or by involving teachers. They can also **collaborate** by involving the other associations or well established institutions of philosophy.*
- 7.c) *The ReisCie will direct more attention to **philosophy** by trying to involve a teacher into the big city trip – as is usual – and visiting philosophically important sites.*
- 7.d) *The SoCo will direct more attention to **philosophy** by recommending philosophy in all of its forms in **Hubris**: philosophical articles, museums, podcasts, movies, etc.*
- 7.e) *The BaCo will help us **collaborate** and establish new relations by organizing certain borrels together with other associations like Amfibi, Merlijn and Kliché.*
- 7.f) *If we succeed in the endeavor mentioned above, we can try to start conversations about getting the old Social Room back.*

**'If I had more time, I would have written a
shorter ~~letter.~~'**

Policy plan

– Mark Twain



Appendix: list of all policies and commitments

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