

observant

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The never-ending battle with

CYBER CRIMINALS



Cyber-criminals keep getting smarter and craftier. A new training programme and a “mystery guest” walking around university buildings to spot “undesirable situations” have to raise awareness of the risks. “Entire UM web pages are being replicated, almost indistinguishable from the originals”

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Silencing

THE BEEP

Will people suffering from tinnitus ever get rid of the constant ringing in their ears? By developing new treatments, Maastricht researchers are increasingly successful at reducing symptoms

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Illustration: Simone Golob



Professor challenges dismissal in court: “Returning to university is an illusion”

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Rivals join forces: competition for building Einstein Telescope intensifies

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editorial

Snacking

“Do you have stairs at the office? Then just walk up and down them ten times.” My exercise coach suggests that we should move a lot more at the office. Take a break every day and do some small exercises. “Set a good example.” Yes, we are all well aware that sitting is very bad for you, but actually doing something about it? “Just set a timer and get up off your chair,” he says. I nod, he’s right. But at the same time, I think he’s mad. Can you imagine me gasping for breath on the stairs at two o’clock on a Tuesday afternoon? When I relay the tips from the coach to colleagues, I feel bolstered in my opinion, because honestly, nobody wants to run up and down the stairs.

Many years ago, we used to have weekly office visits from Health & Fitness. For a quarter of an hour, some UM Sport employee would play music and produce some equipment, all the while five or six of us would stand in row with our shoes off (coincidentally, one of our number was always mysteriously unavailable – he’d have an interview scheduled at that exact time, or ‘just’ be out for a quick walk). There would be wall sits and jumping jacks, balancing on one leg for a minute, and elastic exercise bands galore.

It’s called exercise snacking, I read in *de Volkskrant* last week. ‘Snacking’, well, that sounds more fun than it is. Spending time over the course of the day doing exercises to get your heart rate up, a few minutes at a time. According to the article, these short, intense ‘snacks’ are said to improve your metabolism and overall fitness.

Almost all the employees at *Observant* exercise in their free time, ranging from one to seven times a week: swimming, yoga, football, cardio, strength training. But let’s be honest, we do sit an awful lot. Someone once suggested walking during interviews. It certainly sounds attractive, but when you have to tote around a notebook, too, it’s not an option. Riki Janssen recently went to the Student Services Centre, where one employee always attends their online meetings at a standing desk. Excellent. I was reminded of the electrically adjustable desk that *Observant* once purchased and which only really gets used on Monday mornings by our finance guy (seated, just to be clear). I plan to drag it to my office – a good way to stimulate the circulation in my legs. Maybe we should all take turns afterwards. ‘I hope it’ll be here by Christmas’, I type, as I take a bite of my muesli bar and stretch my big toes. The start of some ‘snaxercising’.

Wendy Degens

The editor-in-chief gives a look behind the scenes at the editorial office.



series the times they are (not) a changin’

Maffius was not a run-of-the-mill school publication



Cover of *Maffius*, December 1978

‘75-’ 80:

Maffius: it sounds more like a name you’d give to a secondary school newspaper, written by class clowns trying to amuse their friends with daft jokes about their teachers and the headmaster. But *Observant*’s predecessor was actually a far more serious affair. Launched on 1 January 1975, less than six months after the unofficial founding of Maastricht’s medical faculty, *Maffius* immediately established itself as a critical voice, unafraid to take on any real or perceived slight. Written mostly by staff rather than students, it wasn’t like a secondary school newspaper at all.

But why that name, *Maffius*? Its founders had come up with a story to go with it. Maastricht’s university-to-be began its conquest of historic city buildings at Tongersestraat 53, the former Jesuit monastery. The building came complete with a library of 250,000 volumes, a gardener, a handyman and – according to the *Maffius* editors – a small creature representing the “bad conscience” or “critical spirit” of the Jesuits: *Maffius*. This chubby little monk with a halo around his bald head was now free to play tricks on the emerging university community as its mischievous mascot.

That was the story behind the name. Its true origin was more straightforward. The new institution was a medical faculty, MF for short. Say it aloud and you’re halfway to “*Maffius*”.

To be fair, the faculty was characterised by a rebellious spirit in those early days. Teaching had started before the national government had even given official approval. In other words, the first staff and students were pioneers, not easily intimidated by authority and willing to challenge it if necessary. But how? At the very least, you need your own communication platform, a medium of your own. Every self-respecting university had its own paper, and staff decided that Maastricht couldn’t lag behind, even if the university was still in its early stages. Sjeng Tans – the university’s founding president and somewhat

of an authoritarian – wasn’t pleased, but he didn’t interfere either. “And he never did, even later”, says Gerard Majoor, one of *Maffius*’s founding staff members. “There was no censorship.”

That said, Joep Offermans – the newly appointed university information officer and a former priest – was added to the editorial team as an “advisor” in the first year. But his presence didn’t have many consequences; he was kind rather than commanding. Besides, says Majoor, the editors probably wouldn’t have listened to any commands anyway, even if just because “we badly needed an outlet. We didn’t even have anything like a faculty council back then – Tans saw it as a vote of no confidence.”

There were plenty of sacred cows back then, and amusingly, most of them needed defending against attacks from within. After all, the faculty’s experimental setup attracted a lot of progressive idealists with its brand-new teaching method, its emphasis on primary health care rather than being a full-blown academic hospital, and its

The first staff and students were pioneers, not easily intimidated by authority

flat organisational structure designed to prevent departments (let alone faculties) from turning into their own little fiefdoms. And what happened? Just look around Randwyck today, where what Majoor calls “megalomaniac ideas” have since been set in stone, despite the “rather scathing pieces” he levelled against them in *Maffius* at the time.

In 1980, *Maffius* ceased to be. The university was growing, the school-newspaper days were over, and the satirical attitude had had its time. The State University of Limburg deserved a higher-quality, more professional journalistic outlet. And that’s the publication you’re reading today.

Wammes Bos

Maastricht University was founded fifty years ago. In this anniversary series, we delve into our own archives to rediscover memorable, funny, relevant and curious news stories from the past

Professor not allowed to return to UM, even on appeal

Last year, a professor from the Maastricht department for Nutrition and Movement Sciences was dismissed. The judge ruled he had acted culpably by accusing a colleague of sexual misconduct. That argument was dismissed on appeal. However, he will not get his job back, as the working relationship has been irreparably damaged.

The professor (referred to here as X), who specialised in diabetes research, was dismissed per 1 July 2024 after a court case in Maastricht. X disagreed with the dismissal and lodged an appeal. He wanted his job back, and if that proved impossible, then he demanded a fair compensation of at least a million euros.

The dismissal case is related to the long-standing difficult relations between two departments at Maastricht University (Nutrition and Movement Sciences and Human Biology), and their escalation. It was caused by the plans for a new chair, and an emotional email in which X laid a number of accusations at the feet of a fellow professor at Human Biology. The email, addressed to Rianne Letschert, President of the Executive Board, said: "Do I have to be the one to tell him not to intimidate people at work? That you should keep your dick in your pants? Is that my job, or are you supposed to see the signs and listen to people?" Unlike the Limburg judge, the court of appeals does not share the conviction that X's statements referred to alleged sexual misconduct. However, the words and tone used were "far below the standard that can be expected of a professor".

Law firm

Because X also complained in his email about a feeling of social insecurity and his feeling that the FHML dean had, on multiple occasions, taken decisions to the detriment of his department, Letschert decided to commission an independent investigation into the situation. This was followed by a personal investigation (focused on X) by a law firm. Although UM has promised that this investigation would be done independently, the court found that this was not the case. The university had previously used the law firm for other matters involving labour law. Furthermore, the 'investigating lawyer' had admitted they were not independent. The court reprimanded UM, stating that this created the "appearance of bias".

Illusion

Both the professor and the university have made serious accusations against each other; the court ruled that the working relationship has been disrupted and called a "promising



Illustration: Simone Golob

return" to the workplace "an illusion". According to the court, a list of complaints shows that X has "a basic feeling of not being heard and of insecurity". In addition, X accuses various managers, some of whom are still employed by the faculty and research institute NUTRIM (which oversees the aforementioned departments), of failing to address the situation. At the same time, the court recognises that there is no confidence at UM that X can be reinstated, given the "seriously damaged" relationship with the dean, for example.

The professor will not get his job back, nor has the fair compensation he requested been awarded. However, as was decided by the court last year, he will be entitled to a transition payment of nearly 136,000 euros.

Wendy Degens

Observant has not publicised the names of the professors involved as it is not in the public interest to do so

Rivals Saxony and Sardinia join forces Competition to host Einstein Telescope heats up

Where will the Einstein Telescope be built? More than a year before a final decision is expected, competition is intensifying – especially now that two of South Limburg's main rivals have decided to join forces. The position of the German federal government could prove decisive.

A decision on the location of the underground gravitational wave observatory is due in late 2026 or 2027. The Netherlands, Belgium and the German state of North Rhine-

Westphalia are preparing a joint "bid book" for the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion, where the three countries meet. Italy, which has proposed hosting the detector on Sardinia, has long been regarded as their main rival. The eastern German state of Saxony had previously hinted at an interest in hosting the project, which could provide an economic boost to the former mining area. Its candidacy was officially confirmed last week. What makes this development particularly noteworthy is Saxony's plan to collaborate

with Sardinia. This was confirmed last weekend by Günther Hasinger, the spearhead of the Saxon bid, in Belgian newspaper Het Belang van Limburg. Their joint proposal involves two detectors in an alternative configuration. While the observatory's originally proposed design is triangular, Italy has long advocated for a cheaper L-shaped alternative. To achieve the same measurements as the triangle design, an L-shaped detector would

To be continued on page 8



Lost in translation

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Last month, I gave a talk called 'Digital Intersectional Feminism' at a summer school for PhDs, at the Technical University in Vienna. The group had a good gender and disciplinary balance, and many participants from the Global South. During the discussion, an older, white, male professor of computer science insisted on jumping in, even though a young woman had patiently been waiting her turn. He wanted me – personally – to stop the English-speaking world from using the term 'intersectionality' because in German it sounds like 'sex with dead people'.

I didn't see this coming even though I've given many talks and lectures, over many years of teaching and attending academic conferences and workshops. Student questions always have to be taken seriously, and the adage 'no such thing as a stupid question' applies. This is not always true of one's peers. Some don't really ask questions as such, but use the opportunity to tell the audience about their own brilliant work, implicitly or explicitly reproaching the speaker for not referring to it. Dutch people have clearly been trained to begin with something positive, which often sounds formulaic. In the case of the English, the more positive they are with their opening words, the more devastating their question will be. There are also disciplinary differences. Philosophers will cheerfully explain why your assumptions are completely wrong, and equally cheerfully buy you a drink after the session.

Sometimes it's hard to read an audience, especially in an international and multidisciplinary context. Concepts and jargon don't always travel easily between academic disciplines or spoken languages. But intersectionality is really not difficult. Instead of focusing on a single feature, we need to look at everything that makes up who we are, including gender, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, dis/ability, education and more. These operate in combination to form different experiences of oppression or privilege.

After my talk in Vienna, other German speakers told me that intersectionality really doesn't sound like what this older man suggested. It's a long word, seven syllables, but German has lots of long words. Given Vienna is the birthplace of Freud and psychoanalysis, maybe I should look for some other explanation.

”

Sally Wyatt,
professor of Digital Cultures

series sing, fight, cry, pray, laugh, work and admire



Michaella Vanore
(1986, Colorado, US)

\ Researcher and lecturer
at the Maastricht Graduate
School of Governance

\ UNU-MERIT;
programme director of
Global Studies

\ Relationship status:
living with partner

\ Lives in:
Herten

Photo: Joey Roberts

“

You and your partner might say the same thing but mean something completely different

”

My childhood bedroom window looked out on... high mountains. I grew up in a small town in Colorado. Our house was perched on the edge of a hill, so it felt like it was on stilts. My room looked out over the valley, the forest and our neighbours' scary house. It was scary because the porch light and their flag cast strange shadows that made my imagination run wild. Was it a nice place to grow up? I adore the landscape – it will always be part of my soul. But the community was insular and deeply religious. When my brother and I dressed as Egyptian gods one Halloween, the parent committee got involved. Apparently, we were worshipping the devil.

The best and worst parts of working in academia. The best part is meeting people from all sorts of backgrounds, especially here in Maastricht. The worst part is having to deal with big egos and a system that rewards narcissism. Whether you're trying to get a PhD position or a grant, it pays to be good at self-promotion.

What news makes you angry? Oh, there are so many contenders. Anything involving animal cruelty. Humanity is on a quest for power and has become clever in its cruelty. I've always had a soft spot for animals; I wanted to be a pri-

matologist when I was younger. Now I have two cats, adopted from Spain during the pandemic. We picked them up from an abandoned airport because people weren't allowed to fly.

Favourite film? I love trashy monster movies, especially stop-motion horror, but I also enjoy films like *Godzilla*. I remember my mother once walking out of the cinema during a war film – her first husband had served in Vietnam. At the time, I thought she was being overly sensitive, but now that I'm older I understand. I encounter so much suffering in my work [research on migration], I don't want drama for entertainment.

I call my mother... often. She's very funny and shares these awful nuggets of wisdom. She might sarcastically say that it's better to look good than feel good, even though neither is true for her at the moment because of health issues. She likes to make light of things. My father – my parents are divorced – is very different. He's incredibly compassionate and a great listener, but he's also somewhat distant. It's hard to connect with him. He's built for solitude, in a way. Sometimes he disappears into the wilderness – for two weeks last summer. No one knows where he is; he leaves his phone at home. He doesn't understand that we worry. He was just fishing!

A country I'd like to live in. Honestly, I'm very happy in the Netherlands. And I'm not sure I'd have the oomph to emigrate again. It takes so much effort at first – learning a new language and culture, making new friends. Even moving back to the US would be hard. I've been away so long, everything has changed. I'd have to get to know the country, the culture and even the language again. The other day, I tried explaining to my mother that we need a new central heating boiler, but I didn't know the English word. I came here at 22; I was never a home-owning adult in the US.

What's the hardest part of love? Realising that you and your partner might say the same thing but mean something completely different. I'm used to clearly naming my emotions – maybe that's an American thing, or maybe it's just how I was raised. My Dutch partner expresses his emotions without words; I have to read between the lines.

This is a must-read book. Two books by the same author, primatologist Frans de Waal. *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* is about how humans perceive animal intelligence and how these views have evolved over time. It shows how scientists strive to discover the truth. The second book, *Different*, is a very nuanced exploration of gender from all kinds of perspectives, illustrating how scientists approach complex topics.

I spend too much time on my phone. Yes, I do. I can completely lose myself searching for recipes. I'm the cook at home; my partner can do many things, but he can't cook. Early in our relationship, we had several arguments about the value of boiled potatoes. We've now reached a compromise – lots of gravy. Do I miss American food? I used to, and my mother would send me packages of ingredients so I could cook it myself. But these days, supermarkets here stock everything I want.

My partner's best quality is that... he's incredibly empathetic. It's easy to miss – his confidence sometimes makes people assume he has already made up his mind – but he constantly gauges how others feel about each decision he makes. It makes him an excellent leader.

Cleo Freriks

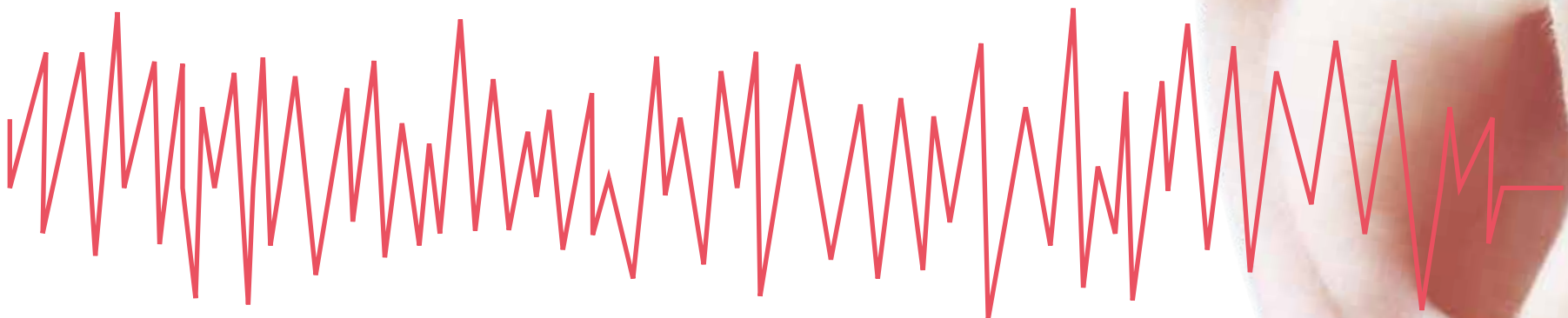
Weekly personal interview with a student or employee

Tackling tinnitus through deep brain stimulation

Muting the ear-splitting noise

A constant ringing in your ears. 'Get used to it' – for a long time, that was the advice given to people suffering from tinnitus. However, new treatments are increasingly successful at reducing symptoms. Deep brain stimulation is a new chapter that might even be able to reveal the exact cause of the noise.

Text: Dennis Vaendel Photo: Shutterstock



She still receives several emails a week, says Jana Devos, PhD researcher at the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML) and psychologist at the MUMC+ audiology centre. Emails from people who want to sign up to be test subjects for a potential treatment for tinnitus using an electrode deep in the brain. The fact that the call was launched back in 2020 and the website explicitly states that participation is no longer possible doesn't seem to deter them.

It shows how many people there are desperately searching for a cure for the incessant ringing, buzzing or hissing noise in their head, says Devos. According to research done at Maastricht in 2022, about 14 per cent of people around the world suffer from tinnitus, which accounts for millions of people in the Netherlands alone. Prolonged exposure to loud noise – when going out, at work, or listening to music on headphones – is a known cause, but other causes include infection, head trauma, or age-related hearing loss. Plenty of people are not badly affected by tinnitus. "Many don't even go to a doctor, or providing information about tinnitus is enough to help them," says Mark Janssen, associate professor at FHML and neurologist and clinical neurophysiologist at the MUMC+. But for a small percentage of adults – hundreds of thousands of people in the Netherlands – it is worse and "can even lead to sleep disorders, anxiety, depression". This group usually ends up going to hospital. In some cases, a hearing aid solves the problem, while for a large number, cognitive behavioural therapy offers some relief. One treatment developed by researchers at Maastricht has been a standard course of treatment for a few years now, says Devos. "You teach people how to cope with tinnitus, but you don't reduce the noise they're hearing." The latter is possible through a cochlear implant. "But that is only an option for tinnitus patients who suffer from extreme hearing loss," says Janssen.

Unfortunately, this means there is a group left over for whom nothing helps, he says. "In absolute terms, you're talking about a significant number of people." They are the ones who will desperately seek out treatments that have either been insufficiently proven to work, or proven not to work, from noise to cover the

tinnitus to stimulation of the tongue. "Some people travel all around the world in search of a cure, spending vast sums of money."

But there may yet be hope. The research project at Maastricht using an electrode in the brain, for which Devos sent out a call for test subjects in 2020, and which Janssen is also involved in, is nearly finished and the results so far are optimistic.

Overactive brain

It is focused on a method called deep brain stimulation (DBS). An electrode is placed in the brain via a small hole in the skull and is aimed at a specific area. A subdermal battery sends electric pulses towards the electrode, which influences the brain activity in that area. This has been successfully used on people with Parkinson's disease. "When you turn it on, tremors in the patients stop almost immediately," says Janssen. There has long been a theory that this could also be used to mute the noise experienced in tinnitus. Although the underlying mechanism is not yet completely understood, it is clear that a part of the brain is overactive, says Janssen. "The thought is that there is always some hearing loss involved, which means the part of the brain that processes sound receives less information via the cochlear nerve." The brain then tries to compensate for this lack of information by 'making it up', which causes the tinnitus. "You might be able to suppress that activity by stimulating a specific area of the brain. We are the first and only research team in the world researching this approach." After earlier studies in Maastricht using rats showed positive results, five years ago, the project was ready to move on to people. "It is always an exciting step," says Janssen. "We know that DBS is safe, but it is a different part of the brain than for, say, Parkinson's, with potentially different side effects. Stimulation might increase hearing loss or produce new sounds."

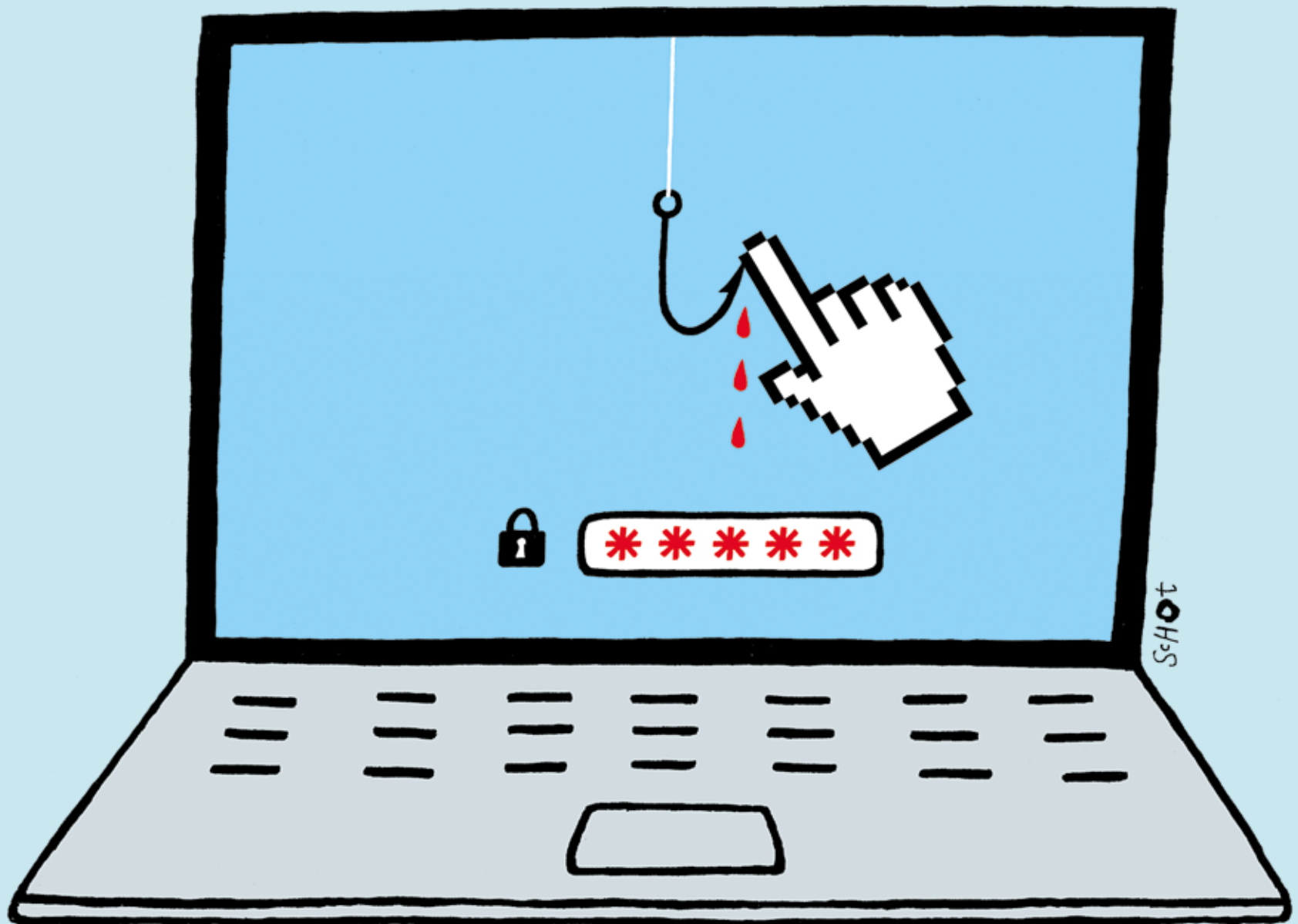
Significant decrease

The results of research on four test subjects, which Devos successfully defended in her PhD thesis last Tuesday, will likely soon be published in a "leading academic journal", says Janssen. Until that time, he is

hesitant to provide too many details – the work is still being peer reviewed – although he does hint that the side effects may not be too bad, and that as hoped, some of the subjects reported a significant decrease in symptoms. "Don't think of it as an immediate improvement like with the tremors in people with Parkinson's disease, it's more like months of gradually retraining the neural network." What Janssen does want to say, is that the research "has above all shown that the procedure is safe and feasible. Further research involving a greater number of test subjects will be needed to determine whether it is actually effective, starting with a trial of sixteen people. We are currently looking for funding for that project." An unexpected result of the research may be a better understanding of what exactly causes tinnitus. "The good thing is that you are *in* the brain, those measurements are valuable. It could lead to ideas for other, less invasive procedures." However, all that is for another day. First will be the publication of the most recent research. Janssen expects the inbox will be flooded with hundreds of emails again. "The same thing happened three years ago, too, when we published the results after a trial with one subject – lots of media attention, and the NOS even considered reporting on the item on the evening news." It is also a question of tempering expectations, he says. Even if DBS is used to treat tinnitus, it will only be an option for the severest cases. "It's very intensive and it does involve inserting a foreign object into the brain. There is always a chance of bleeding or infection, and those risks have to be weighed against the symptoms." According to Devos, the most important message remains as ever: "Prevention is better than cure."

UM launches staff cyber-resilience campaign

No more sticky notes WITH PASSWORDS ON YOUR MONITOR





A message from the boss: "I'm in an important meeting and urgently need your help. I need ten €50 Apple Gift Cards this afternoon. Could you go get them for me? I'll reimburse you straight away." For many UM employees, alarm bells start ringing when they receive a message like this. But not everyone recognises examples of CEO fraud. On 3 November, Maastricht University is launching an awareness campaign to boost staff's cyber-resilience.

Text: Riki Janssen

Illustration: Bas van der Schot

Cyber-criminals impersonate UM managers several times per week, says Jules Silvertand, Corporate Information Security Officer (CISO). And their emails and WhatsApp messages are "far more sophisticated" than the "hi mum" text scam in which a fake son or daughter asks for money because they've lost their phone. "These people find out who the manager is via the website or LinkedIn. They also know how long someone has been employed. They mostly target new employees, who aren't yet familiar with the organisational culture." Still, most attempts fail: only about twice per year does a UM employee fall for a scam. "These are people who want to help, who act quickly and, in their rush, don't properly check who the sender is."

Phishing attempts occur every day, says Silvertand. Criminals pose as trusted organisations – the university, banks or government bodies – and try to steal sensitive information such as passwords, PIN codes or bank account details. Again, most attempts fail. "Even if they get your password, multi-factor authentication stops them in their tracks. You have to verify that it's you through your mobile phone."

Weakest link

This is one of several security measures that were introduced after the Christmas 2019 cyber-attack, when the entire university network was taken down and hackers successfully demanded a ransom. "Since then, we've implemented multiple safeguards in both technology and processes. We segmented the network so an attack in one area doesn't immediately spread throughout the entire

network. We also have 24/7 monitoring by an external team of cyber-experts, who alert us immediately if anything suspicious occurs."

So why the awareness campaign? "The user is the weakest link. The other day, someone installed software from the internet that turned their computer into part of a botnet – a network of infected machines, sometimes tens of thousands, used to attack other computer systems. All our laptops and desktops are under constant monitoring, so we spotted the suspicious activity and intervened immediately." Just to clarify, the monitoring system doesn't track exactly what you do on your computer; like a virus scanner, it flags potentially harmful actions, such as attempts to install malware.

Smarter and craftier

So even though the UM community is doing quite well, says Silvertand, we could do even better – not least because cyber-criminals keep getting smarter and craftier. "Sometimes even we struggle to tell a phishing email from a legitimate one. They replicate entire UM web pages, almost indistinguishable from the originals." That's why, in addition to existing cyber-resilience initiatives, a new training programme is in the works. While it is initially aimed at new staff, Silvertand hopes it will eventually become mandatory for all employees.

Here's a quick test: do you leave your laptop or tablet unlocked when getting coffee? Do you have a sticky note with passwords stuck to your monitor? Are there lists of personal information lying around on your desk? Are your filing cabinets locked? "Most UM buildings are accessible to anyone, including people with bad intentions", says Silvertand. Also in the training programme: How do you spot a cyber-security threat? What

should you do if something goes wrong? Are you allowed to work with UM data on your personal laptop or mobile phone? "Yes, up to a point, under the Acceptable Use Policy. Devices must meet various security requirements, though. Losing a phone that isn't password-protected counts as a data breach. Strangers could access addresses, your email inbox, UM data. We're currently looking at ways to make access to UM data on personal devices safer."

WhatsApp or Signal

And which is safer: WhatsApp or Signal? Silvertand has the answer ready: Signal. "Unlike WhatsApp's parent company Meta, Signal stores minimal user data. WhatsApp collects all sorts of metadata – what device you use, who you message and for how long – and shares it with other Meta companies, like Facebook, for advertising and other purposes."

In addition to a new e-learning platform, a different topic will be highlighted every two months: information security, data protection and knowledge security. A "mystery guest" cyber-security expert will also walk around university buildings to spot "undesirable situations", such as unattended offices or sticky notes with passwords. "Not to reprimand staff, but to raise awareness of the risks."

Ongoing effort

Silvertand issues one final warning: "New technologies continue to emerge, and criminals' methods keep evolving. Improving cyber-resilience is an ongoing effort, not a one-and-done project."



news

Support from Berlin crucial for German states

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need to be paired with a second L-shaped detector at a suitable distance. According to Hasinger, this option – with one detector at each site – has now become the “priority”, and Saxony and Sardinia will investigate it together.

The position of the German federal government may prove crucial. Last summer, Germany endorsed the Einstein Telescope project by placing it on a priority list of major scientific projects, but without indicating a preferred site. For North Rhine-Westphalia, federal funding for the construction of the observatory in the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion bid is a prerequisite for the state to make a “substantial” contribution as well. Hasinger has said that if the German federal government backs the Euroregion bid, Saxony will withdraw from the project entirely, even from a potential joint bid with Sardinia.

Amid the growing competition, the Euroregion bid continues to evolve. In an attempt to secure more political support, there are

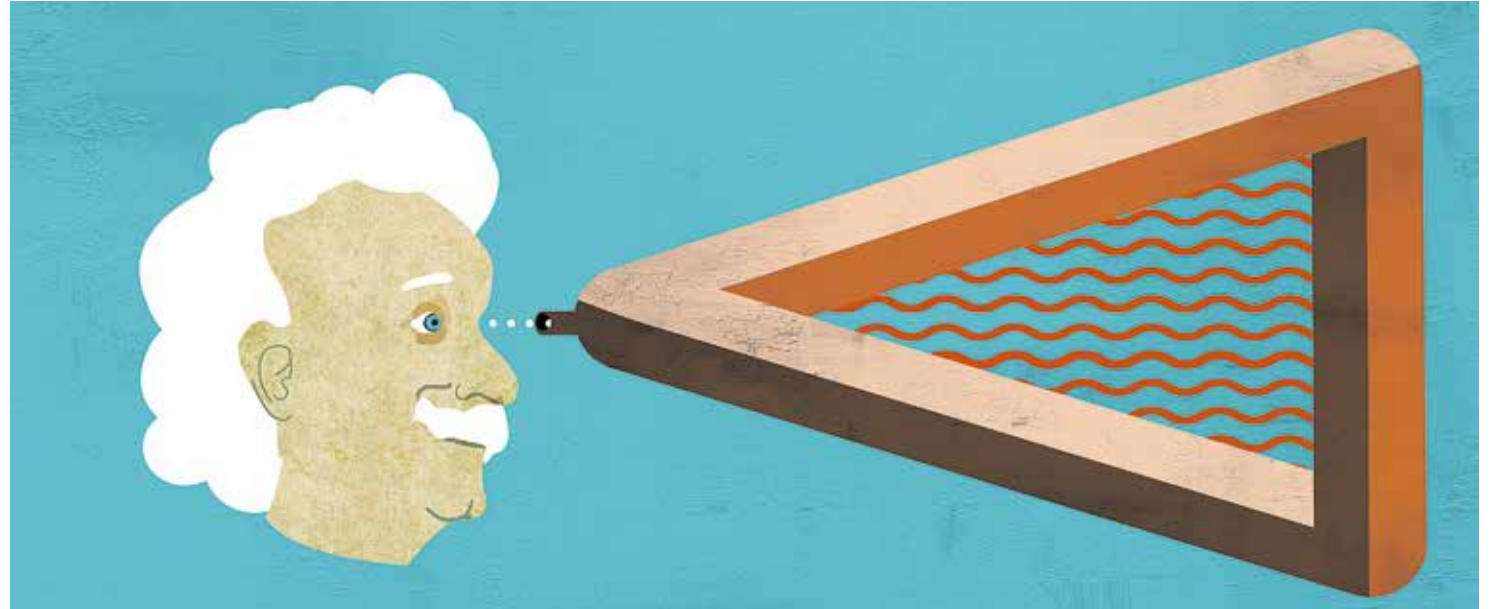


Illustration: Simone Golob

hopes that Luxembourg will join the candidacy, as Sjoerd Sjoerdsma – CEO of Einstein Telescope Netherlands – confirmed to BNR earlier this month. Talks are currently underway. Meanwhile, Flanders has increased its pledge from €200 million to €500 million. The Dutch gov-

ernment has already committed €870 million and Wallonia €200 million. Total construction costs are estimated at a minimum of €2 billion.

Dennis Vaendel

PODCAST
OBSERVANT

THE AUDIO SIDEKICK OF MAASTRICHT UNIVERSITY'S WEEKLY, in which we keep you up to date on interesting facts, special features, and news about the university and student life.

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Agenda academic ceremonies

Aula Minderbroedersberg 4-6

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