



### **What is it like to be the Green Office Campus Coordinator?**

I started working for the Green Office in January 2017, and in July I took up the position of Campus coordinator. When I began I had no idea about the structure of the VU and the kind of staff working here besides professors and lecturers. That's why in the beginning I got kind of surprised and confused by all the terms, faculties and facilities that I was confronted with and never had heard of before. But I learned fast, especially by becoming campus coordinator and as soon as I knew 'the system' of the VU the rest followed. I worked on several projects with the aim to make the VU-campus more sustainable; such as VU PET-free, the Foodhub, or Move Out Clean Out. To accomplish our set goals on campus my main task was having a lot of meetings with people from within the VU such as the staff of the procurement-department, the waste-department or the energy department, but also with organisations and companies from outside the VU such as DUWO, Dopper or the Green Business Club. Because of this I often hopped from one meeting into another, so this is something you have to embrace and being flexible is really important when having this job.

### **What did I learned during my period as a Green Office Campus coordinator?**

During this year I worked for the Green Office I learned a lot about 1) sustainability, and 2) how to get things done in a big bureaucratic organisation.

I never felt more at home and inspired in a working-environment as I did in the Green Office. Working together with likeminded people made me realise even more how important it is to get politics, companies and organisations to act way more sustainable than they do now. Via the working-aspects of the job, but also in a non-formal way via my colleagues I learned that sustainability is about so much more than the big themes: energy, waste and water. I learned insights about a circular economy, sustainable buildings, the food system and even about green mail-companies and sustainable office supplies. I also got insights in 'green' companies and learned to distinguish companies that really act sustainable from the ones that just want to brand themselves as a green company.

Wanting to make changes in a big university as the VU is a complete different task than wanting to make change in your own household. This totally makes sense, but is something I only really got to realise during my working period for the Green Office. I learned about the huge amount of rules a university has to deal with, setting up campaigns and lobby for sustainability within a big organisations, and I learned about terms as 'tender-team', 'aanbestedingen', 'Contract Manager' or 'Asset manager. By having a lot of meetings with VU-staff from several departments I naturally created a network with people that could help us with our projects and realise our goals within the university. Because of this I learned really quick about how to do meetings, consult about sustainability, lobby for the good case, and gain knowledge on a specific topic in a short amount of time. This is something I really enjoyed and will come in handy in my further career.