



"At Inholland, we are working hard on our cloud strategy. We already know the basis for it: we're following SURF's 'Cloud, unless...' philosophy. We're sure that the cloud will be the best solution, because as a management organisation you simply can't keep up with developments in any other way. Because we focus on the end-user, we want to offer cloud services not as separate solutions but as an integrated whole. Here too, we think that SURF is on the right track. We already work with a lot of other uni-

versities of applied sciences on ICT, but a meeting about cloud computing – like that on 10 December – is still extremely valuable. You talk to other people and you get new ideas. I went home with a number of useful new leads, for example about the future of the digital learning and working environment (DLWE)."

Jelgar de Wilde

Applications manager at Inholland University of Applied Sciences and acting chairman of COMIT

Cloud computing meeting for CIOs and ICT directors

ON 10 DECEMBER, CVDUR, COMIT, THE CIO CONSULTATION GROUP, AND SURF'S CLOUD TASKFORCE ORGANISED A SECOND CLOUD COMPUTING MEETING FOR CIOs AND ICT DIRECTORS. THE MEETING WAS A LOGICAL FOLLOW-UP TO THE CONSULTATION MEETING THAT TOOK PLACE ON 14 NOVEMBER AND SERVED TO SOLIDIFY THE OVERALL RESULTS OF THAT MEETING.

The lively evening at Utrecht's Jaarbeurs exhibition and convention centre – with 33 people attending from 26 higher education institutions, as well as a delegation from all the various SURF divisions – started with an update by Jan Bogerd (a member of the board of Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and of SURF's Corporate Services Platform Board). Mr Bogerd discussed cloud activities over the past eighteen months and looked forward to 2013. It became clear during the discussion that followed that those present agreed that SURF was on the right track. "But," said one of them, "not every institution is dealing with the same things at the same time. There are front-runners and followers. The key is to prevent front-runners who don't have followers from becoming soloists." Another speaker said that SURF should not restrict itself to the technology and organisation of cloud computing but should concern itself with the best way to use such services in education and research. "It's not a question of taking over from the educators and researchers," added Richard Oerlemans (CIO at VU University in Amsterdam). "SURF's task should be simply to provide the basis."

Extended DLWE

Frans van Kalmthout (vice-chairman of the Executive Board at Avans University of Applied Sciences and a member of SURF's Education Platform Board) then surveyed the development of the DLWE in higher education. He did so on the basis of a [recent publication](#) about that topic, and argued for an "extended DLWE" that allows content to be shared inside and outside the institution. Mr Van Kalmthout noted that the classic ELE was unsuitable for open educational resources. Amongst other comments, that remark led to the following reaction from Jelgar de Wilde (Applications manager at Inholland University of Applied Sciences): "With that kind of extended DLWE,

you need to think hard about what you want to share and what you want to protect. To do that, you need data classification." Peter van Schaik (SSC ICT director at Delft University of Technology) shared his dream: "In about five years time, students and instructors will be able to go to a portal where they can select their own applications, with the consequences and the costs being made clear. The ICT department will assist them – it won't make the choices for them."

"The I Strategy affects the essence of the responsibilities of all directors."

I Strategy

The third theme for the evening was the Coordination in the Cloud project that started last July. Its aim is to develop a shared information strategy that embodies the cloud-related ambitions of the Dutch higher education sector. In recent months, the main political, economic, social, and technological trends have been determined on the basis of interviews and workshops with CIOs, administrators, and architects. SURF's Wouter de Haan had this to say: "Based on that material, we have drawn up 21 basic principles, as components of our shared I Strategy. We have also derived specific objectives that will need to be achieved within a time-frame of five years." The participants identified with those components and found them sufficiently challenging. They pressed for the draft strategy not only to be presented to the administrators with ICT in their portfolio but to be discussed with all administrators. "We're at a unique point in time," said one of those present. "ICT is increasingly being seen as an enabler for education and research. The I Strategy affects the essence of the responsibilities of all directors."

[Click here for the video report of the Consultation Meeting.](#)



Major increase in use of SURFconex

A large number of cloud services became available via SURF in 2012, including Google Apps, Cisco WebEx, Microsoft Office 365, and EDUgroepen. By working together in the context of SURF, Dutch higher education institutions can agree with the providers on good user conditions, not only as regards licence fees but also matters such as privacy and security. The cloud services have been linked to the SURFconex infrastructure and institutions have also made services available via SURFconex. The number of [connected cloud services](#) increased considerably in 2012, and there was also a spectacular growth in the use of SURFconex. In January, there were 3800 unique sign-ons but by November that figure had already risen to more than 31,000. A number of institutions implemented [projects](#) during the year to improve online collaboration. For example, the teacher training programmes at the Utrecht, Windesheim, Inholland, and Amsterdam universities of applied sciences experimented with a shared education portal that provides access – thanks to SURFconex – to their learning environments. VU University and the University of Amsterdam set up a shared learning environment for their Bachelor's degree programmes in chemistry; this can be used by students at both universities. Eleven educational institutions collaborated via SURF – assisted by Google engineers – to implement Google Apps. These are all excellent examples of how valuable collaboration is.