



Leiden

# European City of Science

**Leiden is the European City of Science in 2022. The perfect opportunity for the university city to show its diversity and organisational qualities nationally and internationally.**

“An excellent opportunity for our Leiden Convention Bureau,” says Yvonne Kret enthusiastically. The manager of Leiden Convention Bureau is already expectantly looking forward to 2022. Then, the city may call itself the ‘European City of Science.’

Leiden received this honour from the ESOF Supervisory Board of EuroScience that last year also awarded the city with the organisation of the prestigious Euroscience Open Forum Conference in 2022.

## Science and culture

The proposal for this was presented in Strasbourg on 29 June 2017 by a partnership between Leiden University, the Municipality of Leiden and Leiden Marketing.

The ESOF Supervisory Board was portrayed by Leiden as an ancient European scientific and cultural city, with its university which is highly regarded internationally in the scientific fields of mathematics, nature and health sciences and social sciences. With the Leiden BioScience Park, the city is a perfect example of the connection between science and its application.

## Local heroes

The Leiden candidacy was supported by two ‘local heroes’ from Leiden University, Prof. Corinne Hofman and Prof. Ferry Breedveld. Both are very proud of the result. “Winning this conference emphasises our scientific position as a knowledge city. Europe’s largest multidisciplinary scientific conference brings a delegation of more than 4,500 scientists and technological leaders to Leiden in 2022. The theme ‘Science, the inexhaustible source of discoveries’ fits seamlessly with the city motto ‘Leiden, City of Discoveries’.”

## Mayor Lenferink

“The qualification fits very well with the character of the city and can, therefore, be used very well in promoting the city,” says Henri Lenferink, Mayor of Leiden. “Leiden is a city of knowledge and culture (history), and I tried to convey that in the presentation in Strasbourg. The quality of the university and the knowledge institutes are internationally indisputable. However, it is also about the setting, the connection

between the knowledge workers and the local population. It is important for scientists to also deal with social issues.”

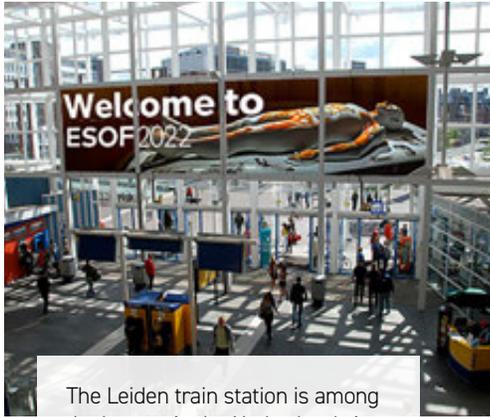
## One large conference venue

The mayor is not worried about whether his city can handle such a large conference and accompanying side events. “With Leiden, you should not think about individual conference facilities. We may not have a very large convention centre, but our city centre is actually one big conference venue. We have a wide variety of great locations, and you can walk from one to the other. The public space is also part of the conference venue. In addition, we have another five large and eight small museums that are all worth a visit. In this case, we are actually going to create an ESOF Village in the Leiden city centre.”

“Another advantage is that the inhabitants of the city are accustomed to non-native speakers. The participants find themselves in a historic setting with all the advantages of a modern city.”

## Fast growth

Lenferink has a logistical lesson for us. Did you know that the Leiden train station occupies the sixth position in the Netherlands in terms of passenger flow? And it has definitely not finished growing. There are big



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plans to further develop the station and the surrounding area over the next ten years to meet the rapid population growth in the knowledge city. "All prognoses have been achieved so far," the mayor says.

The same ambition applies to Bioscience Park: "A continuous development of activities take place here. The park will continue to grow for the time being."

### Preparation

The red carpet may not have been rolled out yet – after all, the conference will only take place in four years – but the European City of Science 2022 remains in the mayor's calendar. The biennial Euroscience Open Forum conference will take place in Toulouse

this summer, and he will make an appearance. "I want to learn what it does for the city and what choices they make. This also applies to Trieste which will be the European City of Science in 2020."

### More than a conference

After all, this is about more than an international conference. To borrow a little from Toulouse: the European City of Science includes the ESOF congress with 150 meetings, workshops and scientific sessions, attended by more than 4,000 participants from more than 80 countries and at least 400 journalists and scientific publishers, and more than 200 events for the general public expected to attract over 35,000 visitors.

### Great importance

For Leiden, the future science week is therefore of great importance, even though it will receive the necessary other major international congresses in the intervening period – such as the International Science and Technology Indicators Conference and the Space Studies Summer Program in 2018, and the Equadiff Mathematics Congress and the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) in 2019.

Director of Leiden Marketing Martijn Bulthuis emphasises the impact of the Euroscience Open Forum 2022: "In addition to brand recognition as an international knowledge city, we can expect a major economic spin-off in 2022, as experience in other cities has shown."