



Data Archiving and Networked Services



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Job description/profile: Director of DANS | KNAW

The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) is seeking an inspiring and enterprising Director for Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS), with a compelling vision on data use and archiving in research, familiarity with the national and international research data landscape, and excellent leadership and managerial qualities.

DANS is the national centre of expertise and repository for research data and plays a central role in the Dutch and European open science landscape. With over 355,000 datasets (with a focus on the social sciences and humanities), sixty staff members and a broad network of partners, DANS supports researchers and institutions in the sustainable management, sharing and reuse of data. By making data available for reuse, DANS contributes to new research and to the verifiability and reproducibility of scientific results. In doing so, we combine digital infrastructure and (data) services with specialist expertise and an active training programme for researchers and data professionals.

The demand for reliable and future-proof data infrastructures is growing rapidly. DANS plays a key role in this: as a provider of data services, as a knowledge partner in the field of FAIR and open data, and as an organisation that develops and transfers knowledge through training and practical support. In doing so, DANS acts as a link between research, policy and infrastructure.

The further strengthening of the national data infrastructure, alignment with international initiatives and the continued development of services, expertise and training require clear strategic choices and unifying leadership.

DANS is an institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).





THE ORGANISATION

The KNAW is responsible for twelve national institutes and serves as an advisory body to the Dutch government. The KNAW is forum, the voice and the conscience of science in the Netherlands. Approximately 1,500 people work at its institutes. Through their research and collections, the institutes rank among the national and international top. The KNAW also includes the Society of Arts and The Young Academy. Underpinning all of its activities is the conviction that knowledge and creativity are the most important ingredients for well-being and prosperity.

The Academy's three duties are defined by law. Briefly, they are:

- To promote the exchange of ideas and information amongst its members and between its members and others engaged in scientific endeavour and scientific organisations.
- To advise the minister, either on request or at its own initiative, on matters in the field of scientific endeavour.
- Promote scientific endeavour by carrying out activities in that field, or causing such activities to be carried out.

Mission

As an independent organisation, the Academy promotes the exchange of ideas among scientists and between science and society, advises the government on scientific and social issues and supports the pursuit of science and scholarship by conducting and encouraging research.

Vision

By carrying out its mission, the Academy contributes to an open, honest and resilient academic community that encourages curiosity, courage, and collaboration. We do this across the entire spectrum of science and scholarship. We champion the arts and science and scholarship as forces for public good that embrace diversity across viewpoints and disciplines, interact continuously with society, and guide its progress over the long term.

Governance

The Academy Board consists of the president, two vice-presidents (one of whom is also the general secretary) and four board members acting as domain chairpersons. They are appointed by the members. The consensus-based Board of Management is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Academy organisation and acts as the executive body for the organisation of national research institutes. It is assisted by the Academy Bureau. The Board of Management consists of a Director of General Affairs, a Director of Research Policy and a Director of Operational Management. Please refer to the [KNAW organizational chart](#).

DANS is a medium-sized institute (approximately 60 employees) within the KNAW, focused on data infrastructure. It is one of the 12 leading KNAW institutes and is dedicated to the sustainable accessibility of scientific data. With more than 360,000 datasets, DANS is one of the leading repositories in Europe. Please refer to the [DANS organizational chart](#).

JOB DESCRIPTION

- You will ensure that DANS remains a leading international institute in the future, where talent can flourish. You will identify key developments in the research data landscape, both at home and abroad, and respond to them effectively. You will build on the recently developed DANS 2026–2028 strategy, <https://dans.knaw.nl/en/about/strategy/>. The challenges identified in this strategy include digital sovereignty, the quality of data in the context of artificial intelligence, knowledge sharing from European projects, and alignment with the data infrastructure being developed within the framework of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC).
- Within the framework of the KNAW, you will have final responsibility for the (scientific) direction of DANS and its day-to-day management, including DANS's operational management, financial position and results. DANS is developing joint operational management with three other KNAW institutes in The Hague and Leiden under the leadership of a Director of Operations.
- You will play a key role within national and international networks and partnerships in the institute's field of activity and foster collaboration with universities, research institutes and other data services. In addition, you will position the institute with national and international research funders, knowledge institutions and service providers, and translate this into new partnerships.
- You will be committed to promoting open science and FAIR research data. You will be a figurehead for DANS. With your knowledge, vision and managerial qualities, you will leave your mark on the development of the national and international research data landscape.
- You will be a member of the KNAW Board of Directors and engage in constructive dialogue there on issues that transcend individual institutes.



PROFILE

The following criteria will be taken into account during the selection process:

- You provide inspiring leadership to a team of professionals. You are attuned to what is happening within the organisation, are people-oriented, empathetic and approachable, whilst also being decisive and results-oriented. You possess demonstrable leadership qualities.
- You embody our vision of [appreciative leadership](#), with the core values of connection, development and clarity.
- You have a compelling and authoritative vision of the broad field of research data and data archiving, including (future) technical developments, and can therefore provide direction for the future of DANS.
- You have an affinity with the social sciences and humanities or a related discipline. In addition, you have a relevant network, preferably also international, and you are demonstrably capable of utilising this to establish strategic alliances and secure funding.
- Together with the management team, you will translate the goals and strategy into an effective, future-proof organisation.
- You have an affinity with and experience in the fields of finance and staff development, which enable you to bear full responsibility for the institute in these areas.
- You have strong communication skills, both internally and externally. You have a coaching, inclusive management style and a keen eye for inclusion, equality and well-being in the workplace.
- You are well versed in the Dutch strategic landscape and speak and write both Dutch and English proficiently.



TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

You will be employed by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). The KNAW is responsible for twelve national institutes and acts as an advisory body to the government. The KNAW is the forum of and for outstanding scientists. The employment contract with the KNAW is for an indefinite period. The appointment as institute director is for a term of five years, commencing on 1 September 2026 or as soon as possible, with the intention of reappointment for a second and final term of five years. This is a position for 0.8–1.0 FTE.

The position is remunerated at scale 16 (Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities/KNAW). This is excluding 8% holiday pay, 8.3% end-of-year bonus, travel allowance for commuting, internet and homeworking allowance, and pension accrual with the ABP. The total gross annual salary can therefore amount to approximately €145k.

The KNAW offers its staff an excellent package of fringe benefits. A package that caters to the various needs staff may have depending on their stage of life, lifestyle or career ambitions.

For a full overview of the terms and conditions of employment, please refer to the webpage: [working at the KNAW](#).

The KNAW considers a working environment in which everyone feels welcome and valued to be of great importance. A working environment in which attention is paid to individual qualities and where opportunities for development are paramount.

Together, we strive for an inclusive culture in which we embrace differences. We therefore welcome applications from candidates who, through their background and experience, wish to contribute to this. Where candidates are equally suitable, preference will be given to the candidate who in this way enhances diversity within the KNAW.

PLANNING

The KNAW aims for its new Director of DANS to start as soon as possible, with the goal of making the appointment by early July 2026. To this end, the following timeline will be followed:

- Applications (a position-focused motivation letter and CV) should be submitted as soon as possible via KNAW@interexcellent.nl.
- Selected candidates will be invited for an exploratory interview with InterExcellent during weeks 22–25 (2026).
- The most suitable candidates will subsequently be presented to the KNAW (on 22 June 2026), which will decide whom to invite for selection interviews.
- The selection round within the KNAW will take place on 29 June 2026.
- An employment terms meeting will follow shortly thereafter (no later than week 27).
- A Certificate of Conduct (VOG) forms part of the procedure.
- Reference checks are part of the process, and an assessment may also be included.