



Spotlight

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Delta Lab

In a city like Delft with so many foreign students, you might think that there would be many international students' societies. But reality is that there are just a handful of them, and even those are hard to find.

The Delft International Students' Society, Diss, sounds like a natural place to start the hunt for international societies. Up until a few years ago, Diss consisted of around seven separate societies: Ansa Delft for Norwegians, Academia for Turkish students, MSVD for those of Moroccan descent, PPI for Indonesians, Isan for Iranian students and scientists, a Chinese society and the International Club for students of all nationalities. Today, however, Diss consists only of PPI and Isan, which share accommodation at Cornelis Drebbelweg 32a. Of the two, PPI (Perhimpunan Pelajar Indonesia Delft) is most like a proper student society. Both societies receive financial support from TU Delft, including refunds on rent. For student organizations to qualify for funding from the TU's 'Facilities Regulation for Student Organizations', they must offer more to students than just opportunities for socializing: organizations must also look after the interests of Delft students and provide activities that supplement the educational program. Aegee, for instance, also receives this type of funding. PPI is aimed at Indonesian students living in Delft, offering them social activities, excursions and information evenings. "We try to bring Indonesian students in Delft together," says Andi Sugeng, manager of the society's building. "Not just so they can socialize, but also to provide information on things like applying for visas, TU applications or life

in Delft." Activities range from Indonesian martial arts courses to parties and sporting events, like the annual PPI sports tournament, which all Dutch PPI branches participate in. Isan, the Iranian Scientific Association in the Netherlands, isn't strictly a student society: it's open to all Iranian students, alumni and scientists living in the Netherlands. "This year we want to organize regular discussion evenings, where our members can talk about issues like Iranian or Dutch politics, the EU or study problems," says secretary Ali Barazandeh, an aerospace engineering student. ISAN also organizes lectures and excursions and distributes information to Iranians who are thinking of studying in the Netherlands or encounter problems while here. "We have about one hundred and twenty members," Barazandeh says. "The majority of them have already graduated from various universities, but about twenty of our members are TU students." **Network** Isan and PPI however aren't the only foreign societies open to TU students of specific nationalities. After a long search, Delta found the Association of Iranian students in the Netherlands, and two Chinese societies: Delchi and ACSSNL. The former is aimed at all Chinese living in Delft and was officially founded one year ago. Yanmin Tao, president of Delchi: "Each Thursday evening we get together at activity center Donja on the Koornmarkt, and every Saturday we do Tai Chi together and we take part in most of the multicultural events that Delft city council organizes." Delchi also organizes special theme nights to keep its members informed of various issues, for instance mental health care. "Quite a few Chinese students take part in our activities," Tao says. "Students need a lot of help." For this reason, Delchi plans to increasingly work together with the Delft branch of the Association of Chinese Students and Scholars in the Netherlands (ACSSNL). ACSSNL Delft has existed for over fifteen years and is one of the largest local branches, but it's a network of Chinese students rather than a proper society. "We have more than 400 members," says Min Wei Li, president of ACSSNL Delft. "About half of those are PhD's and their families." All members are on the society's mailing list and receive news of upcoming events. "A group of eight volunteers gets together every now and then during lunchtime to discuss plans and to organize events," Li says. "As most of the board members are PhD's we

organize events," Li says. "As most of the board members are PhD's, we don't actually organize much, because we lack the time to do so." Annual events ACSSNL Delft organizes include a Spring Excursion, a celebration of China's National Day and a Spring Party.www.ppidelftonline.tkwww.isan.nlwww.studentfile.org**General organizations**Other organizations that organize social activities for international students: Aegee. Excursions, parties, movie nights and weekly get together at Cafe de Ruif. Office: Mijnbouwplein 11. Ifes. Christian organization with monthly intercultural evening and regular excursions. Oude Delft 9. The International Neighbour Group (ING). Language courses, cooking class, excursions and meetings. Also open to family members. Zusterlaan 114. The International Student Chaplaincy. Religious discussion groups, church services, workshops and monthly Global Meeting Point. Voorstraat 60. To join the ACSSNL mailing list, email: hetianzhan@yahoo.com.cnwww.aegee-delft.nlwww.ladog.nl/ifesdelfthomewanadoo.nl/ispdelft

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