Enabling the workforce of tomorrow with the latest data technology skills

How SURF, the Association of Universities in The Netherlands (VSNU), The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) are accelerating the use of data science throughout Dutch higher education institutions with DataCamp.
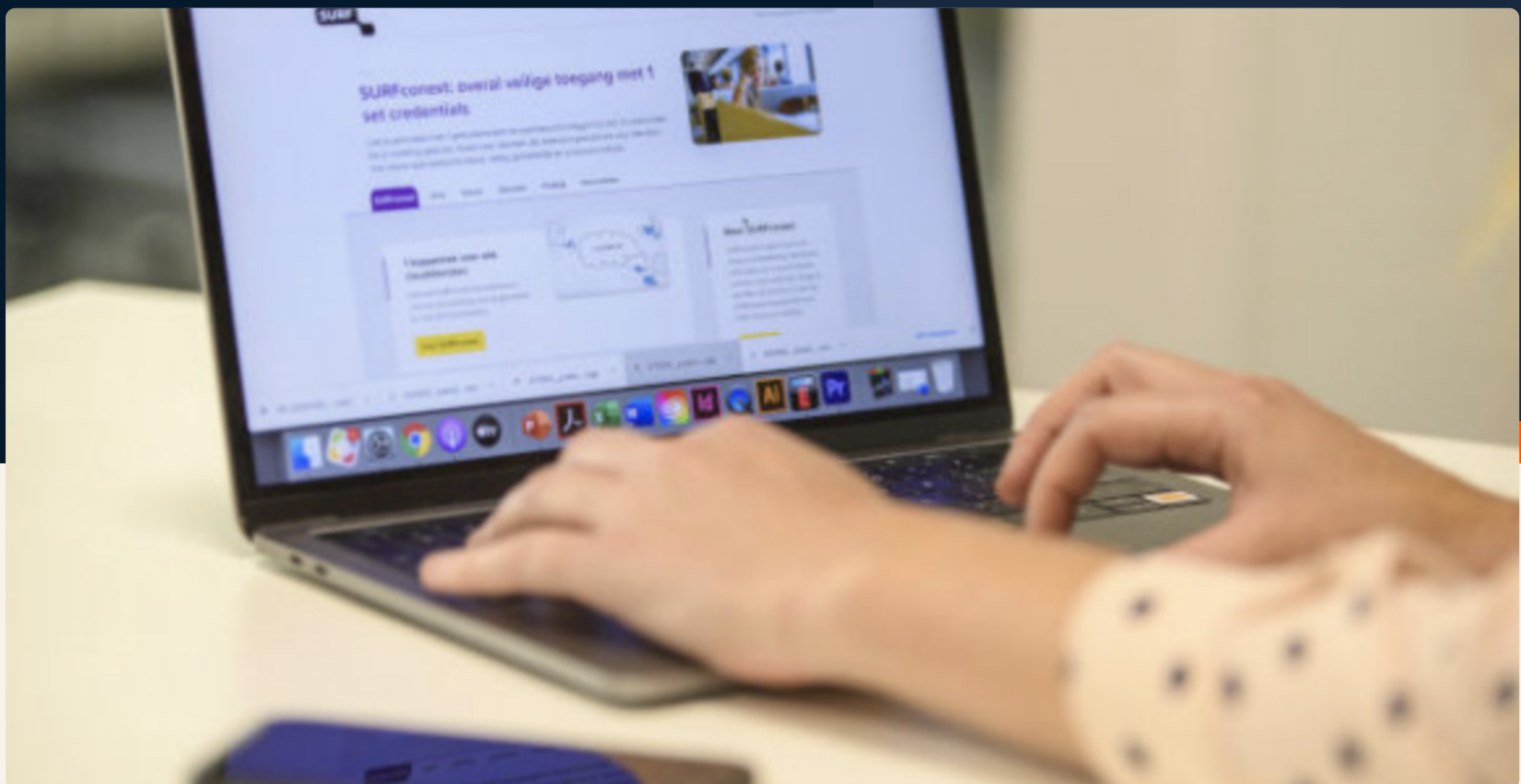
"DataCamp has allowed us to accelerate the uptake of data science training throughout the Dutch higher education. It's a robust and accessible platform to educate yourself. Regardless of your skill level, everyone can learn data science at their own pace, interactively, and with no installation required."

BRAM ENNING, LEADER OF THE STUDY DATA ZONE,
ACCELERATION PLAN FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION WITH ICT

SURF is a cooperative association of Dutch educational and research institutions that has truly embraced innovation in technology. SURF recently partnered with the Netherlands Association of Universities (VSNU) and the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) to present the **[Acceleration Plan for Educational Innovation with ICT](#)**.

The goal of the Acceleration Plan is to help Dutch higher education institutions to take substantial steps in digitization, and to achieve these three shared goals:

1 **Better connection to the job market**

2 **Making education more flexible**

3 **Learn smarter and better by using technology**

Overcoming the technology and data skills challenge

Many of the researchers who are enrolled in The Acceleration Plan were still using legacy systems like SPSS Statistics and Matlab to perform their research. Bram and the team responsible for the **[secure and reliable use of education data](#)** knew that there was an opportunity for these educational institutions to leverage open-source technologies, including Python and R as a more affordable, flexible, and innovative solution to perform data science. But not everyone within the Dutch higher education system had the necessary data skills to promote these tools—that's when they turned to DataCamp.

The goal: Empowering future research with data science

The goal of the learning program was to help Dutch educational Institutions and their employees become more data literate. Through access to online training, the Acceleration Plan also aimed to upskill employees so that they can to confidently leverage the most popular open-source data science tools and packages—to do everything from data visualization and manipulation, to machine learning.

A lot of innovation is happening with the use of modern data technologies like R and Python, which is why employees in higher education need to learn these skills so they can promote the use of modern data science in higher education and research. Just like learning any new language, mastering a new technology can be challenging, but DataCamp made it easy to learn R and Python.

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The solution: Upskilling higher education employees

To achieve this, the Acceleration Plan team responsible for data upskilling, embarked upon a self-paced learning program to complete short courses within DataCamp and track their personal development using Signal Skill Assessments and the Advanced Enterprise Reporting features. Bram chose DataCamp after having previously used the platform as an individual learner.

As with 90% of other businesses who have made the transition to online learning (**KPMG**), the Acceleration Plan team valued the flexibility of having on-demand training—especially while their teams were working remotely due to COVID.

Why SURF and the Acceleration Plan team chose to learn on DataCamp
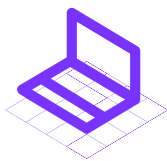
Ease of access

With no installation required, employees could learn from the comfort of their browser
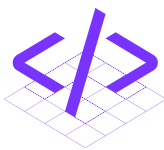
Interactive learning

Employees learned by doing—with short video tutorials and hands-on coding exercises

Self-paced

Employees are allowed to choose when they wanted to learn—ideal for dispersed teams as it can be accessed anytime, anywhere

Ease of access and hands-on access to training for all skill levels and roles was behind the Acceleration Plan team's decision to choose to upskill using DataCamp.

Data fluency for everyone

In addition to learning Python and R, the Acceleration Plan team invited their less-technical employees to complete DataCamp's coding free training—including the **Data Literacy Fundamentals** skill track and **Data Science for Everyone**—ensuring that everyone working in higher education was fully equipped with the skills to speak the language of data.

Accelerating the use of data science in higher education and research

To date, 39 higher education institutions have taken part in this four-year program.

The Acceleration Plan now provides higher education and research institutions with a range of data resources, including DataCamp, that they can use to successfully transition to open source software—driving the future of data science in Holland.

datacamp

Join 1,600+ companies and 80% of the Fortune 1000 who use DataCamp to upskill their teams.

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