Project: Liquid-phase TEM and cryo-TEM of fundamentals of catalyst assembly

"In this project melt infiltration and deposition precipitation of metals or metal precursors will be investigated at the fundamental level for the assembly of solid catalysts for a wide range of conversions."

Petra Keijzer (UU)

Can you do a short presentation about you?

I'm Petra Keijzer, 25 years old and I was born in the Noordoostpolder, a part of the Netherlands that was first part of the Zuiderzee. After I finished secondary school, I moved to Utrecht, to study chemistry.

Would you advice a friend to come to the Netherlands?

Definitely!

How/why did you finish in Utrecht?

I started my studies here, and quite liked the city and the university. During my master I did a research project at Inorganic Chemistry and Catalysis, and liked it so much that I extended my stay in Utrecht for at least four more years.

How did you become interested in science?

During secondary school, I had really fun chemistry teachers. They organized fun experiments and knew how to make the classes interesting.

Did you know right away that you wanted to be a research scientist?

Actually, no. During the first years of my studies I never thought about becoming a PhD candidate. But then I really enjoyed doing my bachelor and master research, so I wanted to continue.

What do you enjoy the most about your research?

Working together with people who are intelligent and enthusiastic about their research, and of course playing around on state-of-the-art equipment (like electron microscopes).

What is your biggest motivation?

To do research on (or outside) the border of what is known and therefore, to work on something new and meaningful.

How do you see yourself fitting in the MCEC project?

MCEC is about learning about catalysis on all length scales. In my project, I am looking at the smallest scale, namely the nanoscale. My project is synthesis based and currently I'm researching the synthesis of nanostructured silver materials.

Which scientific term/phenomena you think is the most misused by media?

Chemicals, since this term is mainly negatively used.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I'm a big fan of board and card games. Next to that, I like to play volleyball and to travel around.

Is science the answer to everything?

Most of the times, it certainly helps.

What do you want to do after finishing your PhD?

At the moment, I think a job in the R&D department of a chemical company sounds good. However, I might change my mind in the coming years.