



Winner Mensa Fonds Impact Award 2023:

prof.dr.ir. David Lentink

Prof.dr.ir. David Lentink (1975) has an impressive track record. Now a professor in Groningen after having had his own lab at the prestigious Stanford University in California for several years. Perhaps even more impressive is the road he has travelled and his perseverance.

As a boy, David was fascinated by flying. He built model airplanes, creating his own designs. After the LBO, MAVO and HAVO he enrolled at the Aeronautical polytechnical school in Haarlem for one year after which he switched to Aerospace Engineering at the Technical University of Delft. After completing his master's thesis on insect flight, he pursued a PhD in Experimental Zoology at Wageningen University, to study the biophysics of animal flight and develop robots inspired by insects and birds with his students in Delft.

He then won the Dutch Academic Year Prize 2010 for his acclaimed citizens-science project *Vliegekunstenaars*, in which enthusiastic citizens could borrow a BBC-documentary quality color high-speed camera to make slow-motion videos of flying animals themselves, the numerous videos which inspired new groundbreaking scientific research, which David pursued at Stanford University, where he set up the BIRD (Bio-Inspired Research & Design) Lab. David has recently returned to the Netherlands, he co-founded the new Biomimetics Group at the University of Groningen to continue his Bio-inspired Design research.

What David knows from personal experience is how meandering a gifted person's path through the education system can be. How we also meet gifted people who are on the



road at the LBO, in the MBO and at the MAVO. And how much perseverance is required of these travelers. He can be a role model for many.

The jury of the Mensa Fund appreciates his role and is happy to award him the Impact Award 2023.