Teachers in the Netherlands carry very high workloads, and in the sciences, in particular, there is an extreme shortage of qualified teachers. Now, a technology tool called SOWISO (from the Dutch phrase for “software for science education”) has been developed to relieve teachers of some of their tasks.

Marc Habbema and Max Cohen, two economists, are the founders of SOWISO. They develop educational mathematics software for use at the middle and high school levels. “The software is suited for use as a stand-alone method,” explains Habbema. “It does contain some theory, but its true strength lies in the fact that it’s interactive and can be personalized, such as providing feedback.”

Development of the software started at TU/e, and SOWISO is now working on adapting it for commercial use. Both of the founders’ fathers are professors of mathematics. That’s one of the reasons they have such an affinity for the subject matter. But they are also driven by a more ideological motivation. “We truly believe that mathematics education in the Netherlands can improve and that this software is part of the solution. We want to contribute to improving quality and to the knowledge economy as a whole,” professes Habbema.

**Five years from now:**
“Our company will be synonymous with reliable e-learning and e-examination solutions, not just for high schools but much more generally.”