

Undefined  
Unsolicited  
Unsettling

Institutional  
Plan  
2020–2025

Gerrit  
Rietveld  
Academie

Rietveld  
Academie

Sandberg  
Instituut



Gerrit  
Rietveld  
Academie

Rietveld Academie

Sandberg Instituut

Core tasks

4

36

52

62

Introduction  
Mission, vision  
and core values  
Trends  
Reflection on the future  
Priorities

Mission, vision  
and core values  
Priorities

Mission, vision  
and core values  
Priorities

Education  
Research  
Manifestation in  
the public domain

Content	3
<b>Gerrit Rietveld Academie</b>	<b>4</b>
0 Introduction	6
1 Mission, vision and core values	10
2 Trends	14
3 Reflection on the future	20
4 Priorities	25
<b>Rietveld Academie</b>	<b>36</b>
Bachelor's programme Fine Art and Design	
Mission, vision and core values	
Priorities	
<b>Sandberg Instituut</b>	<b>52</b>
Master's programme Fine Art and Design	
Master's programme Interior Architecture	
Mission, vision and core values	
Priorities	
<b>Core tasks</b>	<b>62</b>
Education	
Research	
Manifestation in the public domain	
<b>Method and input</b>	<b>78</b>



Basicyear during Open Day 2019

Image: Franzl Mueller Schmidt

# Gerrit Rietveld Academie

## 0. Introduction

### 1. Mission, vision and core values

### 2. Trends

### 3. Reflection on the future

### 4. Priorities

## 0. Introduction

This is the Institutional Plan 2020–2015 of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. It is the result of a work process in which many people from the academy were involved and to which many individuals contributed with their thoughts and writings. They include students, teachers, workshop managers and assistants, heads of departments, staff members and the Executive Board. The plan describes what we are as an academy, and what we stand for. It reaches toward the future and defines our plans for the coming years. The new mission and vision we are introducing here replaces the one instituted in 2000, which similarly resulted from a widely supported process. After twenty years it was time to thoroughly reflect on our foundations on the basis of new trends and situations.

We are a small university. We offer a Bachelor's degree programme in fine arts and design and two Master's programmes, provided by our Sandberg Instituut. In the run-up to this plan, it became clear that many in the organisation consider it of great importance to identify distinctive roles within the university and handle them as such in context of the plan. That is why we speak here not only of the university as a whole but also—mainly, in fact—about its constitutive components. We distinguish between the 'Gerrit Rietveld Academie' as the university, the 'Rietveld' as the academy providing the Bachelor's programme, and the 'Sandberg' as the institute providing the Master's programme. The Rietveld and the Sandberg form our outward appearance. Our work on the institutional plan started from these two entities: first we defined the mission and vision and the priorities of the Rietveld and the Sandberg, and, from there, we went on to describe the identity and perspective of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie as a whole.

The plan covers the period of six years from 2020 to 2025. It is our intention that the mission and vision established here, and the description of our core tasks, can be continued for another period of six years thereafter. This does not apply to the priorities, which will have to be reformulated by that time. The twenty years that lie behind us have shown us that an art academy is a changeable environment in a continuous state of becoming—an elusive process that in daily practice mostly goes unnoticed. By setting priorities, we give direction to that process, but changes in society appear to be happening at a much faster speed and with more impact than before. For that reason, in the years to come we will regularly, if not continuously, reflect on the principles presented here, on our environment and on the results of the policy.

The core of this institutional plan is to develop the Gerrit Rietveld Academie into an open and fluid think tank of beginning and established artists, designers and theorists who, in education and research and through their presence in the public domain, form views of the world and show, individually or collaboratively, how the world can function and be understood from the perspective of the arts. In order to achieve that we need a strong foundation. We need to be diverse, inclusive, social and solidary, we need to reflect with each other and engage in debate, further develop working methods, pose new questions and formulate tasks. We do that from the basis of experiment, investigating the *undefined* and the *unsolicited*, without letting other parties set the agenda. We always operate from the perspectives of art and design, and in doing so we will shake up and *unsettle* assumptions, views and ways of working and living, not in the least for ourselves. In 2018 we started the *Unsettling* Rietveld/Sandberg project to reinforce diversity and inclusivity at the academy, aiming to make it a broader reflection of the diversity that society is.

The future of art is art in the world, the future of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie is the academy in the world.  
Hansje van Ooijen, head of Rietveld Basicyear

'We' is all of us, the entire institution, everyone involved in the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, studying or working. Language is flexible: so 'we' are sometimes the Rietveld, sometimes the Sandberg, but we are always the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. Collaboration is important to us. At the end of this document is a list of names of everyone involved in drawing up this plan. The final version was instituted by the Executive Board after many conversations and discussions within the organisation and deliberations with the soundboard groups. A large proportion of the content was produced by two soundboard groups, one for the Rietveld and one for the Sandberg, whose members drafted the texts together under the guidance of the author. This entire process serves as an example of how we want to work together and with others in the coming years.

## This is the Gerrit Rietveld Academie

In 2020, the Gerrit Rietveld Academie consists of 14 Bachelor's departments at the Rietveld (including the Basicyear and the part-time DOGtime department), 9 Master's departments at the Sandberg (4 of which are temporary), the Lectoraat Art and Public Space and 23 workshops, including the library as a 'workshop for the mind'.<sup>1</sup>

1. The Dutch term *lectoraat* refers to a professorship including a related research group at Dutch universities of applied sciences, including universities of the arts. We will use both the Dutch term and its English equivalent 'lectorate' throughout this document.

<b>Rietveld Academie</b>	Basicyear
	Architectural Design
	designLAB
	Fashion
	Graphic Design
	Jewellery – Linking Bodies
	TXT (Textile)
	Ceramics
	Fine Arts
	The Large Glass
	Image and Language
	Photography
	VAV – moving image
	DOGtime Foundation Years, Expanded Painting, Unstable Media
	<b>Sandberg Instituut</b>
Design	
Dirty Art Department	
Critical Studies	
Studio for Immediate Spaces	
Challenging Jewellery (2018–2020)	
The Commoners' Society (2018–2020)	
Approaching Language (2019–2021)	
Resolution (2019–2021)	
<b>LAPS</b>	Lectoraat Art and Public Space
<b>Workshops</b>	Screen Printing
	CadCam
	Metal
	Editing
	Ceramics
	Jewellery
	Photography
	Glass
	Fashion
	Textile
	Weaving
	Audiovisual Services
	Letterpress
	Sound Studio
	Wood
	Book Bindery
	Computer
	Printmaking
	Library
	Film Studio
	X-LAB
	Large Print
	Analogue and Digital Film

## 1. Mission, vision and core values

This is the first time that we as a university have formulated an overarching mission and vision for the organisation as a whole. Since 2000 we have worked with the mission and vision composed in that year for the initial programme, which in 2002 became the Bachelor's degree programme. That situation has changed now that we have defined the principles for the two degree levels. In our discussions for this plan regarding the fundamental structure of the university we considered no longer using Gerrit Rietveld Academie as our name and switching to Rietveld Academie & Sandberg Instituut, so as to emphasise the two entities that comprise the university. Ultimately, we committed to keeping our original name in the mission statement. The Gerrit Rietveld Academie is what we all are together, and that is more than just the Bachelor's and the Master's programmes together.

### Mission

The Gerrit Rietveld Academie is a small-scale, independent, internationally oriented university of visual arts and design. We are committed to the development, realisation, positioning and strengthening of investigative and experimental art education. With a focus on practice and a critical engagement with society, we encourage exploring, questioning and imagining the world, and contribute to alternative discourses, processes and forms of making.

### Core values

In our policy and daily actions we stand for:

- Art and design as intrinsic value and social strength
- Independence and self-direction as a source of development
- Small scale as a necessity for art education
- Responsibility as a basic attitude towards individuals, communities and the world

There are lots of similarities between Sandberg and Rietveld. We both provide space for bottom up initiatives, and we all believe that we learn through doing. Tom Vandeputte, head of Sandberg Critical Studies

## Vision

### 1. Perspective

We look at the world primarily from the perspective of the practices and discourses of the visual arts and design: topical and contemporary while taking account of the past, global, cross-cultural and including exchanges with other domains, such as science and philosophy.

### 2. Art and design

We regard the visual arts and design as multiform and mobile fields of experimentation, and as disciplines in which thinking and making actively relate to one another.

### 3. Art education

We stand for investigative and experimental art education that guarantees the freedom to make one's own choices and to explore unconventional ways of working and thinking. Our teachers and students approach their work with an autonomous, inquisitive and critical attitude; they question the premises of their profession and relate consciously to the world.

What sets the Gerrit Rietveld Academie apart is that its teachers have so much autonomy. That, for sure, should never be lost.

Hansje van Ooijen, head of Rietveld Basicyear

### 4. Learning

We believe in the intellectual equality of teacher and student.<sup>2</sup> They are participants in a joint learning process, which is also a group process in which everyone has an influence on each other. For us, learning is a contagious activity that extends from small groups to all communities within the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and their connections to the world beyond.

### 5. Responsibility

We are primarily responsible for the development of our students, and thus for the education of future generations of artists and designers who can continue and deepen artistic practice. We share responsibility for their position in society. As an educational institute, as an employer and as an institution that presents itself in the cultural field, we are responsible for the profession and for its practitioners. More than ever, we feel responsible for an open culture in which all students, instructors and staff can feel at home. We take responsibility for our part in creating a humane and liveable world by striving for a conscious relationship with each other and with material. In everything, we are responsible for being a place of art.

2. This position refers to the views of Jacques Rancière in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (2007): by basing education on the intellectual equality of teacher and student, and by demonstrating that equality time and again, education can fulfil its goal of emancipation.

### 6. Art and the world

Visual artists and designers interrogate the world from the imagination, and help interpret and understand it better. They create other worlds and shape alternatives. Without pretending to solve problems, they develop new visions and make connections that offer different perspectives on the world and allow for unexpected approaches to issues at play.

### 7. Outside world

As the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, we articulate the value of the kind of art practice we advocate, and we help our graduates acquire a position in society. This means that as well as preparing our students for the world, we prepare the world for art. We exhibit the work of our graduates, support them and bring them to the attention of new audiences. We make ourselves heard in the public debate, where we emphasise the importance of investigative, experimental practices. Showing the world how artists and designers question and imagine the world, and how they create new ones, provides an opportunity for the world to relate to art, and for art and design to have an effect on society.

### 8. Status and scale

Our small-scale and independence are essential to our approach to education. They ensure that we can respond directly to developments and engage actively with art and design practices at all levels. Small scale allows short lines of communication and decentralised decision-making processes in which different parts of the organisation are in dialogue with each other. It is also a prerequisite for close communities, where everyone can learn from each other through intensive contact. Independence offers the best conditions for having a board that allows art and design practices to lead the way on working methods and decisions.

A sense of community and belonging is an inherent value that is fundamental to the small scale of our programmes—our size allows for close ties and a sense of community, but we are still big enough to be diverse and inclusive.

Annelys de Vet, head of Sandberg Design

### 9. Collaboration

Artists and designers choose forms of collectivity to create a stronger position for themselves in our complex, changing world. Our students do the same: they take responsibility for their part in the education and develop

joint initiatives inside and outside our walls. As an institution, we consider the sharing of responsibilities and the active engagement in collaboration to be the ultimate way of making use of the multitude of visions and expertise present in the academy, and as a precondition for a decentralised decision-making process based on many voices. For us as a small institution, participation in networks and partnerships is a way to broaden the possibilities of our education, to share insights and opinions and to create a stronger position from which we can better fulfil our mission and priorities.

### 10. A learning organisation

We, as the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, are reflective and aim to constantly develop ourselves. We are a self-learning institution and a learning environment for everyone involved.

## 2. Trends

### Different situations

Comparing the Gerrit Rietveld Academie as it is now with how it was in 2000, we see that fundamental changes have taken place. The Bologna Declaration of 1999 was adopted to harmonise the structure of higher education throughout European Union and promote student exchange. At the time our university still consisted of an untitled initial programme for visual artists and designers, and three small advanced programmes at the Sandberg Instituut, where a total of sixty students were enrolled. Now, twenty years later, the Rietveld Academie runs a Bachelor's programme and the Sandberg runs two Master's programmes across ten departments, four of which are temporary. The Sandberg student body has grown to 173 students, while the Bachelor's programme had to shrink. Whereas in 2000 the Sandberg was still located in a remote annex, since 2019 it has been visibly present on the grounds of the Rietveld Academy and shares its facilities.

The situation of the students is also different. The former scholarship system has been replaced by a loan system, which burdens students with debts. The government's study requirements are stricter, leaving less room for students to study at their own pace. It has become more expensive to take a second course of study and the limitations placed on the number of years of study places continual pressure on the students to perform. In Amsterdam, living space is so scarce and expensive that first-year students from both the Rietveld and the Sandberg have difficulty finding a room; many students are poorly housed or not housed at all. More students than before, especially those from abroad, are in need of extra support because of this situation or because of personal circumstances and the lack of a social safety net. At 66 per cent, the intake of foreign students in the Rietveld's Basicyear is more than 20 percentage points higher than 20 years ago (44 per cent).

### Different contexts

These changes are not taking place in isolation. They are symptoms of developments in society that have, or can have, a direct impact on education. One of these developments since the 1990s is that the economic model has become increasingly dominant in the Netherlands and Europe, and is now also applied in other domains. The Bologna Declaration, which was intended to give a boost to the European knowledge-based society through the standardisation of diplomas and student exchanges, gradually came to focus on making Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world. Educational institutions have come to train students for 'markets' and operate

as if they were companies; regulations push students to choose their studies on the basis of 'market opportunities'. With the rise of populist sentiments in politics and society, the same period has seen a decrease in the appreciation of (and, in part, the availability of publicly available resources for) complex approaches in arts, education and science whose social profits are not immediately measurable. In the wake of efficiency thinking, neoliberalism and populism, a hardening of attitudes in the social and the public domain has taken place. Government facilities have been scaled down across the board, and state funders now set additional conditions—relating to audience reach, for example—for the granting of subsidies. Like many others in society, artists and designers, including the starters, are being left to fend for themselves.

**In a well-functioning democracy, the interests of the minority are protected by the majority. Organising contradiction is a very important social function of an art academy. Democracy and therefore the art academy are under pressure and I am worried about their future.**

Frank Mandersloot, teacher at Rietveld Fine Arts

We believe that the education of artists and designers requires a free, conscious and critical environment. That environment should offer room for students to experiment and explore, and should not be restricted by preconceived demands from outside. The tendency towards market-oriented reasoning or, by extension, to demand instant solutions to problems, is contrary to our approach to education, art and design. Something has changed in that regard over the past twenty years, however. The uniquely personal still occupies an important place in our educational vision, but compared to the past this is less about personal fulfilment and more about explicitly relating to a context. This is first and foremost about the context of collective processes that prioritise learning from each other and working together in creative and research processes. It is also about awareness of the broader context of a globalised world and what that entails in terms of social, political and artistic issues. The uniquely personal, subjective point of view takes shape in interaction with the environment and the world. This interaction ultimately resonates in the work, and currently identify it in more social, conscious and emphatic terms.

The shifts in our views are in many ways related to developments in the fields. In the visual arts more attention is paid to the performative, the physical and the discursive. Designers focus more on alternatives for products in the commodity economy; we see more and more often that the (unique) product is used as a meaning-generating object and a catalyst of awareness. The social engagement that began to increasingly determine the image and character of the visual arts and design around 2000 has translated into activist practices, forms of collective organisation and interdisciplinary collaboration. There is more attention now for the position of artists and designers in the globalised world, and more exchange between artists and designers worldwide. While the critical paradigm in the arts underwent broad development, there was a simultaneous increase in attention for the art market, especially outside the Netherlands, and we have witnessed a still ongoing resurgence of interest in materiality and craftsmanship in various paradigms and approaches.

It is often the students who emphasise the importance of new forms of collaboration and who draw attention to social issues, which are also at play within the walls of our university. They come up with initiatives and ask questions related to issues such as social and economic inequality, the handling of different cultural perspectives and decolonisation—there is an obvious correlation between this phenomenon and globalisation and the associated further internationalisation of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. The number of foreign students has grown, and so too has the number of countries of origin. In 1999 there were students from 32 countries at the Rietveld Academie; in 2018 that number had risen to 49, with 22 being non-European countries—there has been a particularly striking increase in the number of students from Asia and Latin America.

The results of the Academy Assembly held in November 2018 typify the mentality at the university. One of the results was that we should prioritise the promotion of diversity and inclusivity. Earlier that year, the academy community had already asked for broader representation among students, teachers and staff of the full spectrum of colour, gender, social and cultural origin, religion, age, functional disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. To meet this goal, the Executive Board initiated the Unsettling Rietveld/Sandberg project, which helped establish an Asian, a Latin American and a Queer Student Union to complement the existing Black Student Union. These were followed by the founding of a Student Council. These developments show that it is possible to tackle issues from

all sorts of positions within the institution, and to set up, in consultation with the board, organisational forms in which everyone can be involved.

When the academy drew up its ambition plan in 1998, one of the objectives was to make information technology an integral part of the educational programme. Students were to get better access to digital equipment, and media theory was in need of more attention as a subject. New workshops were set up and existing ones were supplied with digital equipment—analogue technologies were not discarded, however. Twenty years later, the digitalisation, technologisation and mediatisation of society present us with complex questions. Today's digital worlds are worlds of algorithms, artificial intelligence and virtuality. Technology is an even broader domain. We ask ourselves what part of that domain we can cover, but especially how we want to deal with technology. We are critical of the monopoly, the power and the practices of the large tech companies, but we are aware of the need to keep up, as an academy, with the rapid developments. Students need to be aware of the possibilities and questions surrounding technology; artists and designers need to be able to take part in the development of technology. A technological society without art, artistic experiment and critical reflection will not only be less layered and therefore less interesting, but probably also less humane. Applications that are explored here, at both Rietveld and Sandberg, are fundamentally different from applications developed in other spheres, outside art, because of their investigative, playful, critical and layered approach.

It is essential for the academy to present itself by defending art and propagating its understanding in the social debate and in the world. I see how art is being restricted on all sides, you can see it in the use of language, in terms such as 'applicability' and 'creative industry'. Above all, we must stand up for the arts!  
Bert Taken, theory teacher at Rietveld  
(various departments)

Questions also arise that concern the complex commercial spheres often connected to technology. Art and design and art education are frequently associated with what in neo-liberal terminology is referred to as 'the creative industry', and with notions such as 'innovation', 'economic growth',

‘top talent’ and ‘entrepreneurship’. We believe it is important that artists and designers are able to make their own voices heard in these times when the uniquely personal runs the risk of being capitalised and exploited as a commercial instrument. We want to reclaim creativity and speculative thinking, and show how worlds conceived by artists and designers function. We do not want to prevent students from committing to commerce—it is up to them how they want to relate to the world—but we do want this to happen from a conscious standpoint.

A great deal of knowledge has been gained since 2000 about global warming and the effects of our way of life on the environment. As an institution, we have become more aware of our responsibility in this respect. However, the shift towards a different way of working poses difficult questions. What can we, as a small-scale institution, do in terms of education and within the Gerrit Rietveld Academie as a material environment and facilitating institution? How does responsibility towards society relate to our responsibility towards our students, who need free space to develop as artists or designers? Further on in this plan, we outline the impetus for a policy for the Gerrit Rietveld Academie to use fewer raw materials and further reduce the emission of harmful substances. But many questions will remain, which will make us even more aware, and will force us to weigh up the consequences of possible measures.

Isn't it time to mention the word *capitalism*? If you think about sustainability, ecology, inclusiveness, all these subjects are bound up with capitalism and colonisation. We can talk about the dangers of the market and the economy and business, but it's about a larger structure implemented in society through business.

Riet Wijnen, teacher at Rietveld Graphic Design

**The Gerrit Rietveld Academie: Rietveld and Sandberg**

In drawing up this institutional plan we discussed our identity at length. Formally, the Gerrit Rietveld Academie is a university of applied sciences with a Bachelor's programme and two Master's programmes. In the perception of students, teachers and staff, however, there are two distinct institutes—the Rietveld Academie and the Sandberg Instituut—which belong together but do not form a single entity. We discovered it was difficult to talk in terms of a single university community. Whoever was asked, there seemed to be two communities if not more. The Rietveld Academie

soundboard expressed the desire to not only think in terms of smaller communities, but also to invest in the larger community that includes everyone, and ‘in which it is possible to profoundly disagree with one another’. The general opinion was that time has come to make visions and opinions explicit and to bring them up for discussion.

Many of those involved want the Rietveld and the Sandberg to retain their individual identities and to see specific mention in this plan of what distinguishes them: the formal differences with respect to their students' developmental phase, but also their distinctive educational approaches and relationships with practice. A key and substantive distinction between the two organisations is that the Rietveld prioritises the intrinsic value of art in relation to the world, while the Sandberg sees art as an instrument for social transition. Working together on this plan, it gradually became clear that there was great interest on both sides to get to know each other better, and to give students and teachers the opportunity to develop initiatives from which more could emerge ‘between’ the Rietveld and the Sandberg. The Sandberg staff advocated the optimisation of cooperation in education, workshop activities and the organisation of the university, with both parties retaining their own identity. This plan clarifies how we envision this taking shape in the future.

### 3. Reflection on the future

In preparing this institutional plan we gave extensive consideration to how we should pay attention to the future. Some of us cast doubts on the desirability of any vision of the future at all. We want to remain open to change, after all, and that dynamic is not well-served by blueprints or fixed scenarios. We acknowledge, however, that everything we say is suffused with ideas about the future. An academy works for the future, and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie has always faced forward. It is the function of this institutional plan to give direction, while also stimulating reflection. We have distilled the ideas in our discussions about possible developments into seven topics, which we have furnished with a speculative conclusion.

#### Think tank

The complexity of the world and the speed with which our social and cultural contexts are changing demand continuous reflection. If current developments continue, in the years to come the visual arts and design will connect to the world in an even more explicit, direct and conscious manner, and with an ever-increasing awareness of their responsibility. With our students, we will have to think about what that means for them and for their future practices. One question, for example, is how ideas about a changing position of artists and designers lead to new approaches in education. How do we create opportunities to work more intensively with other disciplines? How do we create space for self-organisation and collective forms of working? We will have to take steps to revisit the prevailing canons with more non-western, female and queer artists and thinkers. It is important to reflect on how climate responsibility can play a role in education and, more generally, how we respond to the political issues of our time. How do we envision the academy as a place where courageous visions and ideas are produced? We want to develop ourselves consciously, and that is why we have to become an active think tank of makers, that critically questions subjects like these and puts them into practice through methods, projects and work. With our study programmes, working methods, the Studium Generale and the increased focus on research, the qualities required for this are amply present.

**The vanguard knows where it's going, but we don't. Who knows, maybe we're going backwards?**

Bert Taken, theory teacher at Rietveld  
(various departments)

#### Together

Today's world is so complex that we need each other more than ever. We feel in need of exchange and coordination, and a joint approach. The Gerrit Rietveld Academie is already moving in that direction: as an institution it increasingly runs on interaction, equality and collectivity. This trend will undoubtedly continue of itself, but the university will also deliberately take it on board and support it. Students are being given more opportunities to work together and to graduate as part of collectives. We explore the possibilities of collective working methods on the level of decision-making and in the further development of the institution. The aim is to better utilise and mobilise the potential of the variety of voices and knowledge held by the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. Together we can better translate the diversity of art and design practices into policy. Given that we are a small institution, partnerships are essential if we are to increase our scope. Collaboration will often take place at department level, but it is possible that we and other parties will establish temporary satellites in Amsterdam or elsewhere in the world—external departments where our spirit is invigorated by interaction.

#### Rietveld and Sandberg

With the return of the Sandberg Instituut to the Fred Roeskestraat, the Bachelor's and Master's programmes are in closer physical proximity than previously. While both have their own identity, and value their differences, there is ample opportunity for students, teachers and departments to discover cross-overs and work together, and all manner of interactions and reciprocal involvements are set to arise in the coming years. We expect we will always think in terms of two institutes, but we can already observe that students and departments are starting to develop on the potential offered by this large collection of departments and workshops at one location. We foresee increasing exploitation of this heterogeneity in the future. This will be in the interests of not only the students, but also the Rietveld and the Sandberg themselves: as well as individually offering sound education, the two organisations will be in a position to jointly champion the importance of investigative and experimental art education, and benefit from each other's impulses in their further development.

#### Social, solidary and ambitious

In a hardening society which increasingly forces people to stand up for themselves and art to stand alone, it is of utmost importance that the Gerrit Rietveld Academie pursues a social and solidary policy, and creates opportunities. In a few years' time our efforts to stimulate diversity will already have changed the image and character of the Rietveld and the Sandberg. Different lifestyles, backgrounds, genders and cultures will be more widely represented. The commu-

nities will better reflect the population in terms of colour, gender, origin, religion, gender identity, and other personal characteristics. Notwithstanding our selection procedure, we will be an institution that is diverse and inclusive, supporting a variety of perspectives and practices, as long as they are democratic and solidary. By also pursuing a proper and ambitious personnel policy in which quality is decisive, we will ensure that the department teams will be carefully composed of teachers whose perspectives and qualities complement each other. We will support students more in their search for housing and come up with trajectories to give them extra support in case of personal problems. The purpose of all this is to allow students to concentrate better on their studies. The university will be a place where, in the pursuit of quality, high demands are placed on people, and where their situations, as a students, artists or designers, are taken into account.

**We are less diverse and inclusive than we would like to be. There are great programmes being organised around this subject, but it's still the future.**

Ea Polman, manager Textile Workshop

#### Education and research

Research has been carried out at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie for almost two decades now. In the coming years, this will be further facilitated at all levels. For research to become part of the culture of the Rietveld and the Sandberg, its structure must be kept simple and organised in such a way that it can relate and contribute to the rest of the education. One effect will be that education and research become more intertwined. Reflection and insight into theoretical and social contexts will become even more important. While the emphasis in the Bachelor's programme will continue to be on artistic development, and the act of making will still be paramount, the Master's programmes can develop into research programmes in which the production of work goes hand in hand with research that plays an independent role in the discourse. This emphasis on research will expand the university's potential, and add a new layer to the approaches that we already provide, from art as craft to scientific and technological explorations, and from intuitive to theory-based practices. Moreover, research will provide access to a range of topics and issues faced by these disciplines and society at large.

#### Surroundings

Whether we like it or not, in the coming decades our environment—in both social and ecological senses—will become more important to us. This demands of us a vision of

society and the world we live in, and a curiosity about what is happening outside our walls. We have to ask ourselves where the experimental practices of the future are located. If we are looking for them on the borderline between art and technology, it will be essential for us to cooperate with institutions such as De Waag and with other universities. In the social arena, we would be well-served by strengthening our ties with NGOs and activists. Our approaches and ways of thinking can complement knowledge available elsewhere. If we are to maintain and strengthen our position, we have to think about how we can ally with partners anyway. Our exceptional position as an independent art academy makes it not only possible but also necessary to seek out kindred spirits in the social domain—allies who want to collaborate with us or contribute to our programmes and research with ideas and tangible support, including financial support. Another question is to what extent ecological responsibility could influence education and the use of resources and facilities. How can we become a sustainable organisation that puts as little burden on the environment as possible? What consequences might that have? Are we going to start working with directive themes in education and research?

**Education is not just self-actualisation, it goes far beyond that. For us, education is social involvement and ultimately about transforming the world.**

Tom Vandeputte, head of Sandberg Critical Studies

#### Presence

If we are to propagate enthusiasm and be influential; if we are to maximise our students' opportunities for further development of their practices after graduation, we need to be visible and actively interact with our environment. As we have always done, we will continue to present the work of students and alumni so that it can be picked up, provoke reactions and play a role in the discourse and in the world. We need to more actively seek out interaction with communities and the public. The Gerrit Rietveld Academie needs to be present in the public debate, to contribute to real-world social situations and to make our voice heard when it comes to art and design or other issues to which we can contribute our perspective and expertise. We have to show in what way the work of our students, which is often still germinating in the fertile but impenetrable soil of our culture, contributes to the world, and what the importance is of an approach to art and design which upholds as its prerequisites research and experimentation and speculative thinking from unoccupied space.

### Speculative overall picture

The Gerrit Rietveld Academie of the future will be more diverse and inclusive, multilayered and multifaceted than today. It will be a more socially conscious, active, critical university than is currently the case—a university that encourages students to reflect and research, while also improving itself through reflection, research and discussion. Students will take an active and responsible attitude and participate in the organisation of education. The Gerrit Rietveld Academie will be a university that reaps the benefits of collectivity, a place where visions are conceived and where there is more powerful debate and discourse than at present. There will be constant interaction with and care for the surroundings. We will be an institution that steps confidently forward with a readiness to bring other ideas and ways of thinking into the public debate, especially when it comes to our own *raison d'être* and the interests of students and graduates. But just as it is now and has been in the past, the central focus of the university will be on being an institution where students can prepare themselves—in a concentrated and well-guided manner—for their future practices in the visual arts, design and beyond.

## 4. Priorities

Over the next six years, we will prioritise eight issues. We took a democratic and critical approach to making our selection, starting with the consultation of the academy community during the Academy Assembly in November 2018. The subjects originated from the work floor and are widely supported; they have a direct relevance for education and have been discussed extensively by the soundboards.

In this section we describe the priorities in general terms. In the sections on the Rietveld and the Sandberg we describe them in more specific terms. The priorities will be further developed in policy plans, in most cases on a subject-by-subject basis. The only separate policy plans for the Rietveld and the Sandberg will concern their educational priorities and their vision and positioning. The Executive Board is in charge of the further development. It strives for intensive interaction with and among the various components of the organisation in a way that properly reflects the process through which this institutional plan was developed.

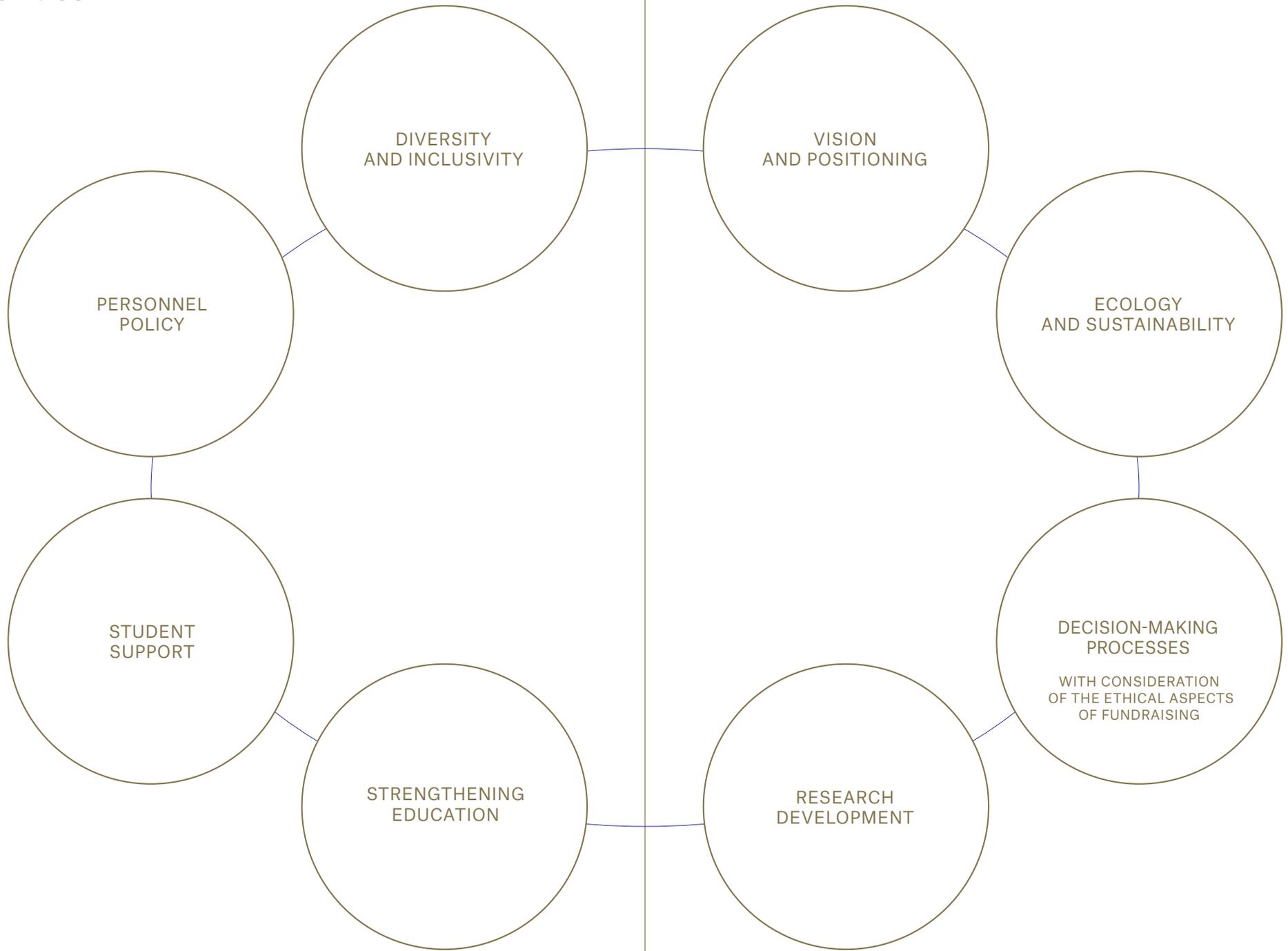
The priorities are varied in nature. Some are *intentions* to improve in the future what we are already doing. Others are *ambitions* to realise new and often more encompassing aims and there is still ample opportunity to let our imaginations loose on them. The soundboard groups would like to see the further development of existing policy take precedence over the realisation of new, more far-reaching ambitions.

We tried to place the priorities in order of precedence, but even after extensive discussion in the soundboard groups and the editorial team, this proved impossible. We have therefore decided to present the priorities in a circle arrangement.

What I realised recently is that the academy's goal, its vision, its strive is for the future, but somehow maybe it is time to slow down a bit and focus on the *now* because the future which was going on and on for all these year has already come in the form a new wave of people and ideas.

Gleb Maiboroda, student at Rietveld TXT, 2015–2019

# Priorities



### Diversity and inclusivity

We want the Gerrit Rietveld Academie to be an educational environment where diversity is the norm. Everyone who wants to and can study or work with us should feel at home here. To make this possible, we will foster broader representation in the university of different backgrounds, lifestyles, genders, cultures and schools of thought. Our goal is broader representation of the full spectrum of colour, gender, social and cultural origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. Wherever through natural turnover of staff permits, we will adjust the composition of teacher teams, staff and management. We will review the recruitment, pre-programmes, selection and assessment procedures, and actively question and enrich the content of the educational programmes with the teachers. We will pay extra attention to the personal support and guidance of candidates for admission and of students from groups that are poorly represented in art education.

### Personnel policy

We are going to work towards a more active, conscious, progressive, sustainable and friendly personnel policy for all teachers, heads, workshop managers and assistants, and staff. The same applies to the policy we pursue with respect to all who carry out their tasks on a self-employed basis. Our departure point is a single overall appointment policy that on certain points makes a distinction between the Rietveld and the Sandberg. We will take into account the uncertain position of artists, designers and theorists in the cultural field in the terms of employment and by supporting staff in their ambitions for further development. Through our appointment policy we will continue to make all necessary efforts to keep the Rietveld and the Sandberg open to change, and to enable students to study in a versatile and contemporary environment. Searching for a responsible balance between that objective and the interests of the staff occupies an important place in the personnel policy.

### Student support

We want to offer students more personal support. Students run the risk of stagnation and drop-out as a result of factors such as high study costs, scarce and expensive housing, and the level of commitment required for our study programmes, due to their demands and character. We will investigate how our educational policy can further limit the risks of drop-outs and delays to study, and how we can take a hard line, politically and administratively, on the protection of student interests. We need to attend to their well-being. In consultation with students we will develop more opportunities for personal support. Following consultations on the ethical limits on fundraising we will commit to raising the financial funds required to support students in need. In cooperation with partners, we want to make more affordable housing

### Strengthening education

available to students. We want to devise new strategies, to come up with new methods and solutions that also offer new perspectives on our functioning as an educational institution.

Our programmes are constantly evolving, and in the coming years we will develop them in a more structured way. At the institutional level, but rooted in the educational vision of the various departments, we will focus on devising a policy for workshops and finding alternative ways of using the available physical space effectively. For both subjects, there will be close coordination with and between the Rietveld and the Sandberg, each of which will formulate its own vision of the role of the workshops and the importance of physical space for their educational processes. The Rietveld is going to investigate how it can further develop its educational programmes throughout the academy in a more focalised manner. It plans to reflect on the way education is organised and on how the departments are structured. In addition, it wants to investigate how the awareness of new technologies in the academy can be promoted and how the in-between space of the departments can best be utilized. The Sandberg will work on the development of education by stimulating joint reflection within the teaching teams on the implementation of the courses, and by exploring with the departments how they can contribute to one another and to the institute as a whole.

**A vision for the use of physical space**  
The availability of physical space is an essential condition for the visual arts and design that goes far beyond the status of a facility. Creating and presenting work depends on space. For the implementation of our programmes it is fundamental that students can create their work and present their plans, with each other, in the building and on the terrain of our university, close to the workshops. We want to examine how best to use the available space, so that the building and the terrain can function as physical research and presentation space.

**A vision for the workshops**  
Over the years, the Gerrit Rietveld Academie has built up a remarkable array of workshops. The choice for those workshops has never been supported by a vision, other than that it is important for students to experience working with materials. Today, there is a need for an explicit, comprehensive vision. In art and design there is a revival of interest in making processes and material-oriented research. Artists and designers explore new positions and experiment with materials. At our university the interest in materiality and media is also increasing, which goes hand in

hand with an increasing use of the workshops (both the general and the department-specific ones). As a result the workshops are under pressure, especially now that students from the Sandberg are now also using them. Developing a vision involves describing the position and role of the workshops in the context of educational processes at the Rietveld and the Sandberg, and requires reflection on making, on workshop courses and instruction, and on the acquisition of skills and the use of workshops by students—account should be taken of the fact that DOGtime students rely on evening hours. We will examine how students develop their making processes, how they deal with conceptual and material aspects of their work, and what is specific to our teaching. In order to arrive at a fundamental vision it will be necessary to involve research policy and the lectorates (two of which are currently in development); workshops can also be places for research. Finally, attention needs to be paid to the roles and tasks of the workshop staff and their position in the organisation.

#### Research development

In this plan we are presenting ourselves for the first time as an institution that regards research as one of its core tasks. This is a natural consequence of the many research activities we have undertaken in recent decades throughout the university. Our programmes stimulate interest in research. Teachers make use of the available opportunities to start research projects and participate in *kenniskringen* (knowledge circles) and research symposiums. International academies support our model for the third cycle in art education. The next six years will see the development of a more structured and varied research policy in which all these activities will have a place. We have five primary objectives in this regard:

1. We will implement a clear and effective research structure and a stimulating research culture in the university. Within this structure, the lecturers, who answer directly to the Executive Board, occupy a central position: they lead the lectorates and coordinate research activities.
2. When setting up and publishing projects, we will always specify both the relationship between the research and education, and the involvement of researchers in educational activities.
3. We will conduct research with a focus on the three broad research areas described above, and also facilitate research beyond these areas.
4. We will make public the research and ensure a fruitful interaction with the educational context.
5. We will enable students, teachers and staff to develop a research attitude and research skills, so that they are able to take part in the discourse from a research perspective.

In developing this research structure, we will take fully into account the research that is already being carried out in the departments while also making room for new initiatives. The research structure will be developed at different levels. There is an overall policy for the university, and a Sandberg policy whereby the departments have a high degree of individual responsibility. The Rietveld focuses on research in the context of education. The research policy contributes to the development of the vision for the workshops, especially with regard to the relationship between research and the possibilities offered by the workshops.

There is a presumption that ecology and sustainability have more to do with operational management than content, but it doesn't have to be that way. In the Basicyear we now have a recycling corner—the idea is not to carelessly throw things away, as happened before, but to disassemble and reuse them. Ultimately this can also work through into education and change it. In this way the concepts can also become related to content.

Hansje van Ooijen, head of Rietveld Basicyear

#### Ecology and sustainability

We are going to live up to our responsibility for a liveable world more effectively and in a broader sense. We will proceed from the policy aimed at sustainability and protection of the environment that we have been pursuing for many years and that has led to many substantial changes in buildings and working methods. In the first two years of the present plan, we will analyse measures that have already been passed and environmental objectives that have been achieved, and we will formulate a new policy. We are setting up a sustainability team with expertise from different parts of the organisation, input from students and outside expertise. The team will be asked to make proposals to promote the responsible use of energy, labour and materials in the daily practice of the institution, in management and education. Awareness of the importance of sustainable action by everyone in the institution is an important objective. The departments will start thinking about ways in which they can relate the content and implementation of their educational programmes to issues of ecology and sustainability. To support decision making we are investigating how our buildings can function in a more environmentally friendly way, which aspects of sustain-

### Decision-making processes, with consideration of the ethical aspects of fundraising

ability are relevant to our institution, and where benefits can be gained from using ecological products and reusing materials. A feasible integrated policy will be ready within two years. The sustainability team will monitor the policy and prepare follow-up recommendations.

We want to furnish our philosophy of decentralised management with a clear structure and transparent decision-making procedures. A need has been articulated for more exchange and coordination within the organisation than is determined by legal and formal frameworks. We will consider in what ways different sections and positions in the organisation are involved in decision-making and how consultation plays a role in this. The primary issue in this regard is the widely shared desire to consider at crucial moments the voices of all parties and individuals involved at all levels—institutional, departmental and teacher level. We think that establishing a strong, independent position for the Participatory Council, which has developed strongly in recent years, is a fundamental requirement for this process. We will formulate specific ethical guidelines for decision-making around fundraising. This reflective process should result in a clear, widely supported decision-making structure, which clearly shows where responsibilities lie and how decisions are made.

### Vision and positioning

We will express our vision of art and art education better and more actively and develop that vision further on the basis of reflection and debate, both within our own organisation and with the artistic, social and political field. The Rietveld Academie and the Sandberg Instituut position themselves independently. Our focus is on education and our educational vision, and on the work and projects of students and alumni. The Executive Board sees the development of the institution's vision as an ongoing task and positions the institution in political and administrative spheres. Contributions are made from all positions within the institution to the discourse on art and design and to the public debate on the importance of art in society.

The Rietveld was nowhere to be heard in the discussion on the arts cuts, while it was precisely we who should have been defending art.

Ea Polman, manager Textile Workshop

Studium Generale Anniversary Show 2018  
Image: Franz Müller-Schmidt







Uncut 2018, Stedelijk Museum

Image: Marta Capilla

# Rietveld Academie

Bachelor's programme  
Fine Art and Design

Mission, vision and core values

Priorities

## Mission, vision and core values

The search for a new mission and vision for the Rietveld began with a critical analysis of the existing formulations from 2000. In the soundboard group it soon became clear that shifts in the social and the artistic context were reflected in education and in the culture within the academy—and in the perception thereof. Whereas 20 years ago the mission focused on sustainable independent artistic practice and artistic leadership, now we want to emphasise diversity and the multiplicity of perspectives, and that graduates contribute to the world both individually and collectively.

The existing core values gave the impression that the programme mainly revolved around the fulfilment of the individual. The soundboard now emphasises the embeddedness of the individual in a context by pointing out the value of a committed, open attitude and by stating explicitly that such an attitude relates to others and to society. In this way, the new core values echo the shift of values in education at the academy: there is now more attention for group processes, for example in the form of collaborations between students, and we are oriented toward a world in transition.

The academy as a refuge is a place where very specific things can happen which can no longer happen in many other kinds of place. You have to take on a role in which you sometimes work against yourself, and let go of things you grasp onto. There's a kind of contradiction involved—a risk. And that's exactly what we're talking about: we can only move forward if we act radically.

Hansje van Ooijen, head of Rietveld Basicyear

The most far-reaching discussions were the ones about the new vision. One of these discussions dealt with the social environment of art education and resulted in an analysis of the dominance of the economic framework. The soundboard insisted on defending the values of art and the position of the students so that they can develop unburdened by outside pressure. This was a reference to both the commodification of education since 'Bologna' and the neoliberal mindset reflected in government reports calling for artists to be trained to become entrepreneurs. When asked what position the Rietveld should take as an art academy, the answer was that the Rietveld is needed for

a different kind of education than is customary in this day and age. Initially this position was described as a refuge: a place where things can happen for which there is no room elsewhere. The academy should be a place of dissensus, where you look for contradiction, something that is no longer possible in a society dictated by consensus thinking. 'We should set up the academy as a heterotopia of dissensus,' said one contributor, 'a kind of 'island' where we train and practice something that has been increasingly abandoned in society'. In this the soundboard aligned itself with Clementine Deliss, who idealised the academy as a *shelter* in her opening lecture at the Academy Assembly.<sup>3</sup>

3. Clémentine Deliss, *Recalibrating the art academy towards an ecology of remediation, subjectivity, and autonomy*. Academy Assembly, Gerrit Rietveld Academie, 22 November 2018.

This position was not sustained for long, because the Rietveld wants to open up to the world. The important thing is being able to make one's own choices, not isolate oneself. The academy needs to be a worldly place, a place where everything happens that happens in the world. From time to time the academy will shield education from outside interference to allow students to work in peace. It will defend art and art education against forces that aim to restrict it, but all in all the academy wants to be an *open environment*, where interaction with society is not only palpable, but also consciously faced, and where artistic freedom is shared with others. In order to fulfil this dual role, the academy must be an environment of great critical consciousness.

In relation to the preceding, there was an extensive exchange of ideas about how the Rietveld Academie can be characterised as an environment. The word *open* was chosen because it applies to the academy in many ways. The Rietveld is open in the sense that it is approachable, accessible, receptive, open-minded and open-ended; it offers radical space for diversity and inclusivity, it is sincere and unfulfilled, it is an experimental space where doubt is embraced, and it has connections to the outside. The boundaries between inside and outside are thin. Influences can be felt, anything can be made, anything can be questioned—it is a space of indecision, of becoming, of the *not yet*.

Other topics also led to collective explorations. There was a fierce discussion about the moment when the student connects with the world. In one perception, students first have to relate to a discipline and a medium before they relate to the world outside. Before students can make a statement, it is necessary for them to be engaged with their medium in an associative way: 'The first context is that of the medium and the discourse and history that go with it. Only then can you connect with other things.' This stance was opposed

by pointing out that the way one looks at the medium and talks about it has cultural limitations. There are meanings attached to it and these are increasingly being questioned, including by the students themselves. A broad orientation on the world is needed for students to critically express themselves with their medium. In one of their meetings the heads of departments added that development in a medium or discipline at the Rietveld has always been linked to the development of a personal vision and mentality as an artist. These are parallel processes. Moreover, the student is encouraged to explore the boundaries of the discipline and to experiment with any medium across these boundaries.

Should we talk about *the* visual arts and design? That is not clearly defined. Is there only one practice? It's like you know what it is. Our mission must acknowledge that there are multiple worlds and multiple practices.

Riet Wijnen, teacher at Rietveld Graphic Design

The extensive discussions led to a vision statement that incorporates eleven points and considers how our education is organised, such as with respect to the argument for a basic year and the division of the higher years into departments. The statement does not answer all the questions that came up ('What is visual art at the moment?' is one question that remains unaddressed) and it will not remain valid for all time. The academy realises that it is developing, and that opinions may differ on many issues.

#### Mission

The Rietveld Academie is an open environment for education in visual arts and design, where students prepare themselves with great independence and self-organisation, from different perspectives and histories, and in dialogue with the world, for individual and collective practices. Rietveld graduates can contribute critically and experimentally to communities, contexts and situations, or create them themselves.

#### Core values

We stand for:

- The intrinsic value of art
- An open and socially engaged attitude towards the other as well as society
- Research, experiment and critical questioning
- Pluriformity and the oppositions resulting from that
- The freedom to develop a personal approach and make one's own choices.

At the Bauhaus people constantly disagreed with one another, and that was tolerated. There was no consensus, but there was consensus on the acceptance of contradiction. That's all about generosity and generosity can be a core value. Give room to other voices and if there is contradiction there, give room to that as well.

Frank Mandersloot, teacher at Rietveld Fine Arts

#### Vision

##### 1. Position

We see our academy as a free and critical environment where the undefined and unsolicited can be brought about. In this environment, we consciously and actively seek different forms of engagement with the world from the point of view of art and design.

##### 2. Engaged autonomy

We opt for an approach to visual art and design from an autonomous position in engagement with the world.<sup>4</sup>

##### 3. Education as dialogue

For us, art education is first and foremost a continuous critical dialogue between students and teachers in which they question the student's work, work process and choices.

##### 4. Subjectivity as a starting point

We see the students' personal interests, qualities and backgrounds as the starting point for our education. On this basis, we encourage students to develop their own work process, both independently and in collaboration with others, and to take responsibility for it. This enables a development that is based on a singular and unique standpoint in the world, which is something everybody has but which the artist chooses as a starting point and which can be accompanied by an active openness to what is happening in the world.

##### 5. Making and thinking

Becoming an artist or designer is a formative process in which practical action and reflection continually interact and in which a personal vision, mentality and approach are developed while experimenting. In that process the students commit themselves to a medium, discipline or field of interest and engage with the world.

4. The term *engaged autonomy* was coined by Charles Esche and refers to an artistic position in which there is an antagonistic tension between ideology and active participation in the social debate (*How to Grow Possibility: The Potential Roles of Academies*, 2007).

### 6. Critical curiosity

In order for the development process to run smoothly, we encourage students throughout the entire programme to form an attitude whereby they approach the world openly, critically and inquisitively.

### 7. Basicyear

Our general formative first year is a binding factor in the study programme. The joint exploration of fine art and design stimulates the investigative attitude of the students and helps them to make a well-considered choice between departments by the end of the year. This collective kick-off forms a basis for exchange and collaboration across departments in the higher years.

### 8. Departments

For the higher years we proceed from a structure with departments, which arise from different disciplines and areas of work, with their own working methods and their own discourses. As between the disciplines in practice, there are interfaces and affinities between our departments and these are investigated and exploited.

### 9. Across boundaries

Our departments encourage students to take as their starting point their own interests and motives, which relate to the world in many ways, to probe their medium, discipline or specialism in depth, and to explore its boundaries and cross them. We use the interspace between the departments to give students the opportunity to relate to other contexts, to collaborate, to organise their own education and to do research.

### 10. Responsibility

We take responsibility for creating a humane, liveable world. We educate artists and designers in an open culture, where diversity, inclusivity, solidarity and social awareness are givens, and where care for the natural environment is clearly present in everyday practices.

### 11. Cherishing differences

The most fertile incubator for a self-determined artistic practice is an environment characterised by a multitude and diversity of points of view and approaches, and the need to make personally-driven choices and follow one's own paths.

If you say that experimentation is a core value, then you consistently make room for the things you cannot name directly, for the search for the unknown, without anything attached to it, and you arm yourself against neoliberalism and thinking in terms of profitability.

Hansje van Ooijen, head of Rietveld Basicyear

Fashionshow 2019  
Image: Peter Stigter



## Priorities

### 1. Vision and positioning

We want to communicate our vision on art and art education in a better and more active way, and to continuously develop that vision on the basis of reflection and debate, in our own organisation and in dialogue with the artistic, social and political field.

As an art academy we have an approach and a vision to convey. This vision is fed by input from the work floor, it is rooted in active practices and puts the intrinsic value of art first. It is a vision that we strengthen and develop through joint reflection—by exchanging experiences and opinions. In propagating our vision we defend our practice against populist ideas about, for example, creativity and the value of art, and against the negative aspects of demand-oriented market trends. To us, making work in an unoccupied space implies critically questioning assumptions about the function of art in society. The Rietveld Academie distinguishes itself with an approach that takes account of its surroundings and wants to influence them, but it does not let others determine its frameworks and it is not demand-oriented.

### 2. Diversity and inclusivity

We have the responsibility to ensure that our diverse society is more widely represented and included in the academy.

As an open space, the academy must be a place with which people identify and where they feel at home. The academy selects on the basis of quality, but the quality criteria must be continuously critically appraised; we must make practical and substantive changes to our policy and curriculum aimed at broader representation of backgrounds, lifestyles, genders and cultures in the organisation and the makeup of the student population. We aim to achieve a broader representation of the full spectrum of colour, gender, social and cultural origin, religion, age, functional disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. That means we need to think about the process of selecting students, teachers, employees, management and staff, and about other routes to broader representation.

### 3. Sustainability and ecology

We want to make a shift to a sustainable and ecologically responsible policy.

As an institution that stands for a conscious approach to production processes, the Rietveld Academie can be expected to pursue an outspoken policy on ecology and

sustainability. We want to set the example, and to do so we must clearly take measures to work in an environmentally friendly manner in a world that is heading for ecological catastrophes. First and foremost, we must ensure that all students, teachers and staff make a shift to more conscious ecological behaviour in everyday practice, but we also need to investigate how the institution as a whole can function in the most environmentally friendly way possible and how our facilities—from canteen to workshops—can contribute to a circular economy.

### 4. Strengthening education

As an academy, we want to investigate how we can further improve our education, while reflecting on the organisation and the content of the departmental structure. The results of our investigations and careful coordination with the departments will together form the basis for directing the further development of our educational programmes.

At the Rietveld Academie we annually adjust programmes and introduce new working methods on a departmental basis. However, we seldom, if ever, reflect on a joint inter-departmental basis on what we are doing overall. We are all well aware of the abundance of resources of offered by the many departments and workshops, but also of scarcity, for example of space or time. Is this scarcity a conscious choice or are we stuck because we are not making making choices? In this time of change, it is necessary not only to recalibrate our mission and principles, but also to look at how we want to live up to them. We have to think about new opportunities and needs, such as more collaboration between students and more self-organised education. We need to open ourselves up to difficult questions, such as whether the way in which we organise education best suits our time and objectives. We can start the re-evaluation of our education by examining the ambitions expressed at the Academy Assembly. This re-evaluation may result in finding the impetus necessary to organise education differently, but it may also result in us deciding to continue working as we do, and consciously accepting the inherent drawbacks.

### 5. Student support

We need to improve support for students in both the educational and personal domain, with a greater focus and consideration on their living conditions, their precarious social positions and the risks they run.

Temporality is very important for us. We have a small permanent team and ask people with a very specific practice to bring that practice into the programme as guest teachers. The great thing about it is that graduates from different years also develop different profiles.

Jeroen Kramer, head of Rietveld designLAB

For students, life has become more complex and expensive in recent years. Scholarships are limited and living space is scarce and costly. Studying at the Rietveld requires a great deal of independence and an enterprising attitude. The student panel pointed out that some students get lost in the range of possibilities the academy offers. The factors that affect studying can also influence and reinforce each other. It is evident that students need more support. But there are also questions, for example about where exactly action is needed and what is possible; what the academy's responsibility is and what role it can play; what it can handle; what can be expected of it. Students should be actively involved in finding answers to these questions. Additionally, the academy must stand up for the interests of students and alumni when educational or cultural policies turn against them.

#### 6. Personnel policy

We need a personnel policy that is more generally active, aware, progressive and friendly with regard to support-staff and teachers, whether they are on permanent or temporary contracts or they are self-employed.

Personnel policy is key to strengthening the education we offer and the organisation as a whole, and to adequately responding to social issues and demands. The academy needs a vision on increasing the diversity of employees within the organisation, and a vision on the composition and development of the teams of teachers with respect to backgrounds, specialisms and orientations, and the nature of the appointments. A proper balance between permanent and temporary appointments is important for educational continuity. Transparent application procedures are required for all positions—this will equip management and the departments to enter into proper consultation and make their selection. The academy must actively attract people who adopt an independent and critical position in the field of the arts. The uncertainty that temporary contracts create for the teachers and heads of departments, as for the students

and for education as such, must be reduced by using more appropriate constructions.

#### 7. New technologies

As an academy, we want to relate actively, consciously and in tangible ways to new technologies and enable students to do the same. This requires practical facilities and an educational programme.

*Program or be programmed* refers to the formative principle of digital programs. Artists and designers have no desire to be programmed, so how should we deal with new technologies? First of all we need to develop a critical awareness of technology and its possibilities, for example by offering media theory. We need to know which technologies and applications we want to cover. Are we talking exclusively about the Internet and simple forms of artificial intelligence, or robotics and bio- and neurotechnology too? How can we help the students to question technology and make use of their possible applications? The most important question is how we want to engage with technology in the academy. Searching for answers to this kind of questions presupposes theoretical and practical opportunities. We need to initiate thought processes and research, to dare to experiment in the making process and create a critical, conscious media ecology.

You can either accept or consciously reject the awareness of what technology is and how it affects your life and your environment. We are concerned not only with the knowledge of technology, but also with the fact that there is power inherent to it, and that it can be misused. You cannot avoid engaging with it, so even if you don't want to have anything to do with it you still need to develop the awareness that the world is partly dominated by technology.

Frank Mandersloot, teacher at Rietveld Fine Arts

One of the things we can investigate is whether the establishment of a technology lab would support this ambition. It could take the form of a network distributed across various existing positions in the academy and offering additional technological facilities for existing workshops. It should be connected to departments, and to technological places in and outside of Amsterdam. A laboratory

would make it possible to set up a small-scale technology-oriented educational programme in which students from different departments can take part. Students would be able to work with technology in a physical project space. The laboratory would team up with experimental projects aimed at contributing to new technological applications from the perspective of art. A suitable location for a laboratory and technological educational projects is probably the space between the departments and between the Rietveld and the Sandberg.

**Technology is also a material, a fabric that permeates our daily lives and therefore must be addressed.**

Jorinde Seijdel, head of Studium Generale, theory teacher at Rietveld DOGtime

#### 8. Programming the interspace

The Rietveld Academie expresses the need for a cross-departmental educational programme that brings together the departments and makes connections with the world outside the academy. In addition, we need activities in the field of research. To meet both of these needs, we are expanding the programming in the interspace between the departments with projects that focus on collaboration, self-organisation, research and the discovery of new working methods.

The Rietveld's often unused interspace is located between the boundaries of the departments' programmes. These programmatic in-betweens have a physical counterpart: the actual square metres that do not belong to the departments, but where education does take place. Among the activities that are already being carried out in the interspace are workshop activities, the Studium Generale, Rietveld Uncut, Unsettling Rietveld/Sandberg, and joint projects initiated by departments.

Among students there is a need for collaborations across the boundaries of their disciplines. There is also a demand for more practical experiments, more skills and more guidance in making processes. There are ideas for a *practicum generale* and cross-departmental projects with alternating teachers. Research expresses the need for a place where it can be at the service of education. These diverse demands have a cross-departmental perspective in common, and they can be met by better using and programming the interspace between departments. The proposal is to start programming from the bottom up, clearly communicating

the programme and gradually expanding and improving it. However, there must always be empty and undefined gaps, providing room for students and teachers to take initiatives. Research at Bachelor's level will be located in the interspace. Teachers' research projects will be continued in the interspace, or will be realised there in student projects.



Goedemorgen Gerrit 2018  
Image: Anna Lenartowksa



Rietveld Academie

Rietveld Academie

Studium Generale campaign during Graduation Show 2019 Image: Roosje Verschoor



Lucie de Brechard, *Stumming at the Rodeo Gardens*, Design, Graduation Show 2019, Studio Spijkerkade.  
Image: Sander van Westum

# Sandberg Instituut

Master's programme  
Fine Art and Design

Master's programme  
Interior Architecture

Mission, vision and core values

Priorities

## Mission, vision and core values

Over the course of nearly thirty years the Sandberg has expressed its *raison d'être* in many different ways. There were inflammatory declamations and courageous manifestations such as the Kunstvlaai and The One Minutes. As a protest against the government's educational policy, students, teachers and sympathisers once dumped a huge pile of sand on the Rokin. The institute has never before had a mission statement or a written vision. In developing its new mission, the Sandberg soundboard group carefully weighed up the alternatives. For example, the domain of the study programme was designated as 'the arts' instead of 'visual art and design', which strictly speaking would not cover interior architecture with its separate position. The present mission and vision show that for the Sandberg art's most important role is a social one, and it expects itself and the university as a whole to pursue a critical and social policy.

### The Sandberg is a red-hot catalyst that allows for individual and collective practices.

Jerszy Seymour, head of Sandberg Dirty Art Department

The Sandberg perceives art education as a unique domain where the imagination, experimentation and critical reflection can be explored to their full potential. This is not done 'for art's sake', but with the aim of producing practitioners able to cause radical changes in the world. In the Sandberg's opinion it is necessary to add another stage to Maslow's pyramid: in our time, it is not self-actualisation that is the highest stage, but the transformation of the world, which needs to be sustainable and liveable. Another proposition refers to an essay by Boris Groys on the artistic, theoretical and social 'infections' to which art students are exposed. In that proposition, a minor passage from the essay about the mutual influence of students is taken up as a working method. The very nature of the Sandberg Instituut is reinforced in the statement about the 'learning institute' it wants to be: everybody comes here to learn, not only the students, and together they all make the Sandberg an institute that itself learns and develops. The Sandberg creates new forms of education through new forms of working; it generates new forms of research and of study. The self-learning principle of the Sandberg Instituut is the driving force behind its development.

We are a porous institution. Our education takes place in the now. We're not trying to create utopias; we respond to what takes place in the social and political realms.

Annelys de Vet, head of Sandberg Design

#### Mission

The Sandberg Instituut is a school for postgraduate study in the arts. It provides an independent environment where education and research take shape in response to the social, political and artistic exigencies of the present moment. Challenging boundaries and disciplines, the Sandberg Instituut is a catalyst for pioneering practices in the cultural field.

#### Core values

We believe in:

- Art as a transformative tool for society
- The art school as a free, open and inclusive space
- Education that allows for vulnerability, dangerous attempts and courageous failures
- Solidarity, trust and generosity as a fundament for learning

#### Vision

1. Education as a space of possibility  
We see education as a space with unique possibilities for critical reflection, imagination and experimentation. In a context dominated by market logic, neo-liberal demands and other forces aimed at instant results, we proclaim education as a place of unrestricted possibility.

2. Self-actualisation and world-transformation  
The aim of education is traditionally conceived in terms of self-actualisation—the realisation of one's full potential as an individual. We believe it does not stop here: ultimately education must aim at a radical transformation of the world.

3. Learning as collective, infectious practice  
Teaching for us means to support a process of learning together and to challenge our students to be active, brave and self-critical. Education can never be merely an individual matter; we promote learning as an infectious practice, which is at once an individual and communal endeavour.

4. Questioning and proposing  
Learning and teaching do not exist in isolation from the world. To us, the school is a space both for critically interrogating existing social realities and for proposing new ways of inhabiting the planet.

### 5. Challenging disciplinary boundaries

In order to engage effectively with the world, we believe it is necessary to challenge disciplinary boundaries. We see disciplines as resources—of methodologies, skills, tools, attitude, perspectives.

### 6. Redefining practices

We prepare students to move beyond existing professions; we educate practitioners who will redefine their field, challenge existing working conditions and create new economies.

### 7. New forms of working and living

We see the art school as a heterogeneous space, in our case an archipelago of departments with a high degree of autonomy. It acts as a fertile environment for the creation of new communities and experimentation with alternative forms of working and living.

### 8. A learning institute

Education is a practice that must always reflect on itself and generate new forms of study and inquiry. Our school is a learning institute for itself and for everyone involved—a space to experiment, test, fail and succeed.

### 9. Education as public good

We believe that education is a public good that should be open and accessible to all.

Specificity is key. In the different departments we all work in our own territories, but there is a mutual understanding. We refer to our organisational structure as an archipelago, which is better than forcing things to melt into each other.

Maxine Kopsa, head of Sandberg Fine Art

## Priorities

### 1. Diversity and inclusivity

To make the institute a more inclusive environment which critically examines how it reproduces disparities of race, gender and class. This would involve transforming the composition of faculty, staff and management, rethinking the content of the curriculum and student admission policies, as well as establishing support structures for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds.

The school is a place where communities can take shape. At the Sandberg, we expressly support the emergence of independent communities.

Annelys de Vet, head of Sandberg Design

### 2. Sustainability and ecology

To work towards an ecological and environmentally friendly policy. As a critical and conscious institute we should set an example: we need to work in a manner that is as environmentally friendly as possible, use ecological products, reuse materials and find ways to reduce our carbon footprint. In order to realise this we need to start a conversation in which we reflect on our current ecological footprint and to develop concrete proposals for changes that can be implemented in the short and longer term.

### 3. Personnel policy

To develop a more active, aware, progressive and friendly staff policy, including thorough reconsideration of its nearly complete reliance on temporary appointments. The academy should take responsibility for the working conditions it offers in an increasingly precarious cultural field. We need a policy that finds a balance between keeping the school open to change and providing adequate support and security to its staff.

### 4. Student support

To start the conversation and take a position on two issues that are currently crucial for students. Students face mounting pressure due to rising tuition fees and increasing debts; in Amsterdam, like many other major cities, they also face towering living costs and a shortage of affordable housing. We need to take these issues seriously and, rather than treating them as an obstacle to education, regard them as a challenge to rethink ourselves as an institution in a changed environment.

### 5. External funding

To articulate how we as an institute are committed to keeping education a public good. We need a critical policy on external incomes and funding, specifying a way in which we can benefit from external resources while maintaining independence and autonomy. As part of this process we also need clear critical and ethical guidelines for partnerships and collaborations.

### 6. Decision making processes

To rethink the way in which the different parties within the institute participate in decision making processes. We need to ensure that at all levels the voices of concerned parties are heard and taken into consideration at important stages of these processes. This means defining hierarchies and responsibilities across the institution in a transparent way.

### 7. Research policy

To develop a policy and organisational model for research at the Sandberg Instituut. This means both finding a way to gather existing research initiatives and practices within departments and developing new platforms for research within and beyond MA level.

We should see education as a virus, and think about how it can become a collective infectious act.

Jerszy Seymour, head of Sandberg  
Dirty Art Department



Annamaria Merkel, *We are not the only kind of we*, Master Design of Experiences, Graduation Show 2019, De Marktkantine. Image: Sander van Wietum

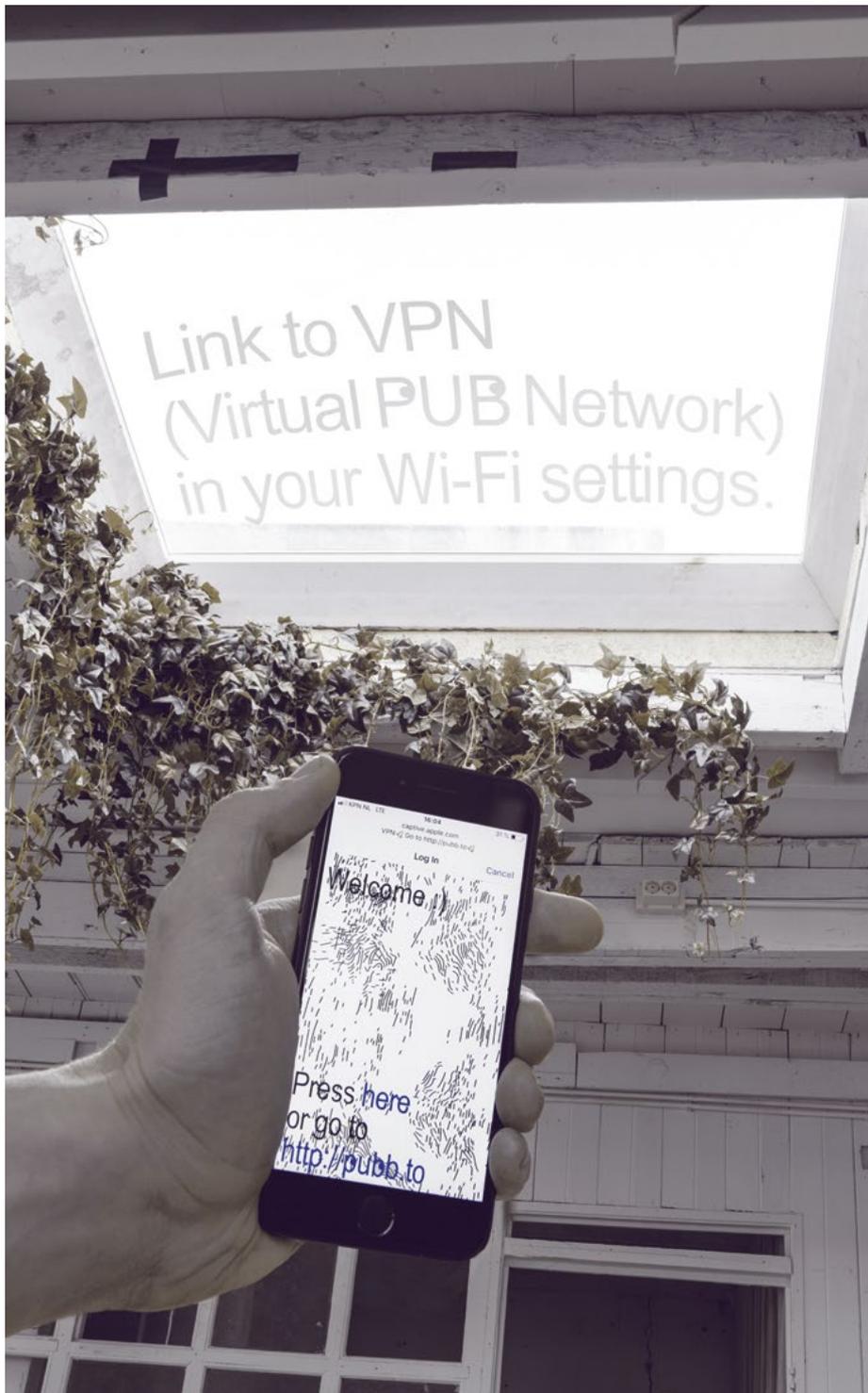


Adam Blechly, *Whole Earth Trilogy: Radical Cut-Up*, Graduation Show 2019, Looiersgracht 60. Image: Tom Janssen



Juan Arturo García González, *The Inner Life of Exterior Plants*, Shadow Channel, Graduation Show 2019, MACA.

Image: Tom Janssen



Miguel Hervás Gómez, Sascha Krischock, Agustina Woodgate, VPN (Virtual Pub Network), Design, Graduation Show 2019, Studio Spijkerkade.  
Image: Sander van Westum

# Core tasks

Education

Research

Manifestation in the public domain

The Gerrit Rietveld Academie has three core tasks, education being the main one. We also conduct research and manifest ourselves in the public domain—these two tasks serve and enhance our educational activities.

We provide education for 850 students: the target size of the student body for the Bachelor's programme is 700; the figure for the Master's programme is 150. Approximately 75 of our Bachelor's students study part-time at the DOGtime department. The third cycle is still under construction; we started a pilot with the first researcher on this track in 2017. There are additional 150 or so participants in the preparatory courses. The percentage of foreign students in 2018 was 67.8 (Bachelor's 64.3 per cent; Master's 83.1). The Bachelor's students come from 49 countries, the Master's students from 33 countries (figures from 2018). Together they represent a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. How do we fulfil our educational task at the different levels and what are these activities aimed at?

We are not about being a free space—that would be too non-committal. We have applied parameters to sustainably limit freedom. Teaching methods teach students how to deal with that. An intelligent form of limitation has been created. That is the Rietveld's golden egg. Freedom is something you learn, something you acquire, not something you get.

Yvonne Dröge Wendel, head of Rietveld Fine Arts

Rietveld  
Academie

In the Bachelor's programme, we guide students in their search for their own language of expression, their own language of thought and their own position as makers. The students develop a personal way of working and a vision of their discipline, its discourse and the worlds to which they relate. Awareness of the construct of one's own gaze is a part of that, but also the question of how one's own search and perspective relate to those of others. Working together and sharing processes are fundamental. The aim of our education is that by the end of the programme students relate to the world as critical, investigative makers with their own voice and from their own perspectives, individually or together with others.

Teachers have great freedom in putting together their programme. The practical teacher primarily fulfils the role

of critical questioner, who tries to increase the student's insight into the work process and its results by means of a dialogue in which the student's work is central. This form of guidance encourages the student's independence. Theory education offers a multitude of perspectives. It is aimed at stimulating theoretical reflection, making available references and conceptual frameworks and familiarising students with approaches, ways of thinking and discourses. The production processes of the students are also supervised by the workshops.

At the Rietveld, it is also about the freedom for teachers, not just for students.

Vincent Zedelius, head of Rietveld Photography

Our Bachelor's programme is a complete study to become a visual artist or designer. This means that graduates are able to set up their own practice individually or with others. A typical characteristic of the Rietveld is that education does not fit in seamlessly with the assumed existing professional practice. We do not prepare students for positions, but encourage them to explore, question and develop a personal perspective on the many possibilities, on the basis of their own motives. The idea behind this is that a highly developed intrinsic motivation and an investigative mind are decisive for graduates for finding an interesting place in the world.

What we are trying to do here is to form independent thinkers who change the world of fashion from the inside out.

Niels Klavers, head of Rietveld Fashion

Sandberg  
Instituut

The education at the Sandberg proceeds from the fact that the students already have a practice, and therefore professional baggage and an idea of their position in the world and their discipline. The education aims at bringing that position into focus: they gain more insight into their practice, they expand and redefine it, and deepen their vision. Ultimately, the aim is for the students to develop into a radicalised version of themselves as artists or designers. This presupposes a specialised way of acting and a radical stance, which form the basis of an independent practice. The collective plays an important role in the process. The students learn with and from each other; for example, they share the knowledge they already had before the start of their studies.

Learning is not just an individual endeavour; as a school, we promote learning as a collective act.

Tom Vandeputte, head of Sandberg Critical Studies

Over the last decade, the Sandberg has shifted its orientation from the disciplines towards society. It expects students to contribute to the world from an independent position. They do research for this and show how the world functions or could function from their perspective as artists or designers. The programme helps them to further develop their investigative, reflective and analytical abilities, as well as a critical and independent attitude. The students themselves steer these processes and work with others eagerly. They are involved in what is going on in society and politics, and express a deeply felt curiosity about it in their work.

At the Sandberg it is possible to study without understanding your own position in the world, and include doubt from the start.

Annelys de Vet, head of Sandberg Design

#### Two perspectives on education

The Bachelor's and Master's programmes at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie represent different perspectives. While education at the Rietveld is a form of *learning by doing*, in the Master's it is about a more wilful kind of *learning by acting*. Master's students proceed from knowledge of their discipline and ideas about their position, and from an awareness of their actions and artistic freedom, which they apply and restrict by themselves. The Bachelor's programme is freer and more open, and more focused on awareness development. The usually slightly older Master's students have a more independent, critical attitude and are already working on a subject when they enter the programme. Whereas the Bachelor's students practise working with their personal interests and seek their own positions as makers, the Master's students further develop an already marked position. The aim is to deepen, strengthen, expand and radicalise their own practice and, by extension, the discipline and the profession.

Bachelor's and Master's students relate to the world in different ways. Bachelor's students are still exploring their own preferences and possibilities regarding media, disciplines and subject matter. Explicit social engagement does occur, but is not expected from the students. At the Sandberg, students function in real-life situations and are

expected to immerse themselves in society, and to use their work and qualities as instruments. These differences between Bachelor's and Master's students are not absolute, and there are exceptions in both groups.

We teach the students to make deliberate decisions. It's only when they leave school that they discover how they're going to work.

David Bennewith, head of Rietveld Graphic Design

#### Third cycle

Within the third cycle teaching primarily entails supervising research by PhD students and candidates for our own, as yet unofficial, title of Creator Doctus. There is also a peer learning group called Making Things Public in which these students reflect jointly on their work and research processes. The supervision and the learning group will be developed into a full-fledged educational programme for the third cycle. It is expected that the opportunities for research will increase as a result of additional funding and research grants, and that art education, like other sectors of higher professional education, will in time become entitled to award PhDs in the form of a *professional doctorate degree*.

More even than our MA programmes, the third cycle presupposes an independent, critical attitude and a specific interest in a subject and the world. The researcher is expected to have a highly developed ability to persevere, to bring methodical order to the research process in his or her own way, and to be able to substantiate this. The researcher should be communicative and willing to share and discuss outcomes and anything else that may be relevant to the research with tutors, the wider research community and external partners or a wider audience and develop them further through reflection.

The Gerrit Rietveld Academie has long been associated with research because of its focus on critical questioning and reflection. When, around the turn of the millennium, the Bologna Declaration introduced the Bachelor's-Master's structure, we responded by being the first Dutch educational institution to announce PhD programmes for artists and designers. At the same time, under the leadership of our lectorate, we started to work on enhancing the theoretical level of the education and research climate at the university. Teachers were given the opportunity to do research and we started PhD projects. In recent years, the lectorate has taken on the development of our own research trajectory for artists and designers, which should result in the award of the (still unofficial) degree of Creator Doctus (CrD). The pilot for this trajectory, which started in 2017, is a research project by Yael Davids, with the Van Abbemuseum as the social partner.

Seven teachers have obtained a PhD, five are currently working on a PhD thesis, research is being conducted across several small-scale posts, and preparations for two new lectorates are underway. A total of forty people are involved in research, on a 4.2 FTEs basis. Our ambition is to ensure that the research activities that are financed from our own budget benefit our education in various ways. This may be through direct contact with students, contribution to the development of programmes and working methods, or the introduction of new points of view and insights within the departments. The research we do on commission mainly contributes to our expertise and our research profile. As the priorities in section 4 make clear, in the coming years we will focus on strengthening, expanding and better communicating what we do in the field of research. In collaboration with our social partners, we also want raise our profile through with our research.

As a university we apply two reciprocal notions of research: 'broad' and 'specific'. Research in the broad sense encompasses all the research (in art, through art and of art) carried out in the university that is designated as such. In the case of students, this usually entails a combination of investigating, studying, practising, testing, making and reflecting. This is a set of activities aimed at the production of work and the development of a practice, which has always been a part of art practices. The specific notion of research pertains to a process that is also *communicated* as research and that as such is part of the *discourse between researchers*. The set-up and im-

### Research and discourse

plementation of this type of research, and the reflection, considerations and choices that play a role in it, are made explicit and are introduced into the discussion of the subject. The exact requirements for research in the arts that functions in this way are the subject of international debate, to which we as an institution contribute by means of publications and conferences.

### Focus areas

We divide our research into three broad areas. Without setting hard boundaries, they nonetheless ensure that focus is maintained in the research activities.

- The research area *De Stad* (The City) is closely linked to the Lectoraat Art & Public Space and focuses on the public domain as a key element in the functioning of democratic urban environments. The research focuses on the role of art and design in the city and takes any of a variety of different forms, such as interventions in planning, development, housing, coexistence and welfare practices. These interventions offer opportunities to re-define the roles of art and design in cities and show how they can transform dynamic ecologies of people, buildings and nature.
- AI is an area of research that has yet to be unlocked by the arts. Starting from the notion that this area should also be covered by non-technologists as well as technologists, we enable interdisciplinary research in which visual artists and designers collaborate with scientific researchers, with artists introducing new perspectives to the research and making visible new possibilities where new technologies are related to social issues. Our aim is to use research in art and design to contribute to the development of AI and the thinking around it.
- Research in *Materials* builds on the tradition within the Gerrit Rietveld Academie of working with physical materials. This research is closely linked to the workshops, where work can be made and materials constructed, deconstructed and explored to their full potential. The emphasis is on craft, experimentation and material exploration. *Materials* has connections to a range of activities inside and outside the university. Students, alumni and teachers from the Rietveld departments TXT, designLAB, The Large Glass, Ceramics and Jewellery – Linking Bodies already constitute a field of interest in materials, as do their counterparts from the temporary Master's programmes Material Utopias (2013–2015), Materialisation in Art and Design (2015–2017) and Radical Cut-up (2017–2019). Outside the institution, besides artists and designers, industrial

companies, laboratories and research institutions specialised in research, development and application of new and existing materials are also involved. We link up the research area with academies abroad that have educational and research programmes in the field of materiality.

We are an institute of enquiry. In our teaching of theory we immediately engage with the students' own world—their identity. We want to create a situation in which everything that comes up for discussion can be interrogated and nothing is predetermined.

Bert Taken, theory teacher at Rietveld  
(various departments)

#### Rietveld Academie

The Bachelor's programme pays attention to research in many ways, many of them non-explicit. As early as during the selection process, there is attention for qualities such as curiosity, the ability to reflect and the potential role for in-depth exploration. At the Basicyear we encourage students to develop an inquisitive mentality; we stimulate them to investigate their own views and environment, to step outside familiar frameworks and to experiment a lot in their creative processes. In the higher years, we expect them to critically question their choices and review their preliminary results, test alternatives and thoroughly investigate things. They explore the possibilities of materials or media and delve into the backgrounds of subjects or issues. This starts with the selection of material, in a physical or written sense, and ends with a report of the investigations. As part of their making processes, students practice critical reading, concise writing and relating their ideas and work to insights from their immediate surroundings and the world beyond. All these activities are productive for art practice in general and provide students with fundamental experience on which they can build when they embark on advanced research. This applies more particularly to research activities in extra-curricular programmes, such as the Art and Research honours programme.

#### Sandberg Instituut

The Sandberg positions itself as an institute for investigative artists and designers. The selection of our students takes place partly on the basis of their inquisitive mentality and skills. During the programme, the students develop their own way of doing research and incorporate research in their practice. An intuitive understanding of research, with research activities aimed at finding out what research involves in practice, is a characteristic of the Sandberg stu-

dent—they find out for themselves how to use research in their own work. And it is through their activities that the institute gains a better understanding of what research in the visual arts and design can be: it gains a better insight into research activities, the relationship between research and practice, and the possibilities for communicating research.

The students do not use research exclusively for the making of work; it also helps them to form a better idea of their own position as an artist or designer and to deepen their understanding of their practice. To equip them for writing their thesis, they follow theory classes, learn to work with sources and to analyse and reflect in a methodical way. The thesis is seen as an exercise in doing research and communicating results. Some students make work that they present emphatically as research, with a research process being represented or the viewer being placed in the position of researcher. As much as these activities focus on research, they are primarily a preparation for a reflective and critical art or design practice.

The overarching aim of most of the research at the Sandberg is to develop visions of the increasingly complex world and to find new ways of dealing with the world (literally: to grasp the world) from the position of art and design. This means that research at the Sandberg, however autonomous it may be, always has an applied aspect to it. It is our ambition that each department should work on the implementation of an investigative educational programme whose constituent parts and combined whole generate new insights and ways of seeing and working. The development of visions on education itself and on new ways of working is part of this ambition.

We should continuously challenge the concepts of research and knowledge in the institute, and question the language in which this is formulated.

Tom Vandeputte, head of Sandberg Critical Studies

#### Third cycle

In our three-year third-cycle trajectory for visual artists and designers seeking to gain a Creator Doctus (CrD) degree, artistic research is aimed at the development of new work. It includes activities such as practical and theoretical study, critical reflection and experimentation as components of the artistic making process. The research is primarily communicated through the work itself. Our CrD trajectory is designed as an alternative to PhD programmes in which artists and designers combine artistic work and a written

dissertation. The CrD programme does not require such a classical written dissertation, and the texts that make the research process explicit may be written by someone other than the researcher on the basis of documentation of the steps taken. CrD projects take place in collaboration with a social partner and are supervised by a supervisor from that partner, a supervisor of ours and on some occasions a professor from a university. The title is awarded, in accordance with the regulations, after a public oral defence and a public presentation of the results of the work. We are working for international recognition of the CrD title and to this end we have formed a consortium with seven other European academies.

### Lectorate

Staff research takes place within the framework of a lectorate. Our Lectoraat Art and Public Space (LAPS) was founded in 2002. It focuses on the relationship between artists and society and is linked to the research area of *De Stad* (The City). Preparations are underway for the forming of two new lectorates that will coordinate and supervise research in the other two areas: *AI* and *Materials*. Each lectorate has a lector and senior researchers who conduct research. They lead *kenniskringen* (knowledge circles) and research programmes in which teachers share their research with each other and with external researchers. The *Making Things Public* programme in which academic PhD students and CrD candidates share their research is one of LAPS' activities.

The mission of the lectorates is to give artists and designers the opportunity to develop themselves through research and reflection. They use a variety of approaches and methodologies, but they have one thing in common: they present not only the results of the research, but also the research itself. Before each research project commences, a statement is made about what it aims to cover and what it is intended to lead to. Agreements are also made about what contribution it will make to education and how the insights gained will be further disseminated. The researchers participating in the knowledge circles and the research programmes come from a range of disciplines and their research activity varies widely in terms of problem definition and approach. Much of the research combines theoretical study and research through art or design. In such cases the research is conducted partly in accordance with a particular academic discipline and its methodologies, and partly by artistic means. Reflection on the research methodology forms the starting point for *Making Things Public*.

Uncut 2019, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam  
Image: Maarten Nauw



## Manifestation in the public domain

As the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, we fulfil roles that provide education with additional context and social value. The Rietveld Academie and the Sandberg Instituut maintain an active interaction with the environment. They are active in public space and let others participate in activities within our walls. We occupy a special place in the cultural landscape due to the large number of talented artists and designers present, and due to the fact that we receive regular state funding. We strengthen the field of museums and presentation institutions and participate in developments in the field.

Our task is to facilitate a continuous, dynamic and critical interaction between students, the education and society. We encourage students to be part of, and contribute to, social situations and contexts. At the same time, we support them and our graduates in making their work public, communicating their vision and engaging with anyone who may be relevant to their practice.

I really like Rietveld students going out of the academy to Science Park, to laboratories, to work with people from other fields et cetera, and that is slowly happening already! Is it not what artists should do in the end? Constantly going out and spreading themselves in society?

Gleb Maiboroda, Rietveld TXT student 2015–2019

The scope of our activities is unlimited. Our orientation is international. In daily practice, the focus is on Amsterdam. We are strongly connected to the city, both historically and mentally. We are part of the urban ecology of art and over the years we have maintained close ties with the Stedelijk Museum. The Rietveld and the Sandberg have proven to be an incubator for new initiatives and institutions, which originate from the programmes and from students who contribute to the city through their own initiatives and practices, within and beyond the field of art. Out of a strongly-felt commitment to the students—and a keen awareness of the precarity of their situation after graduation—the Sandberg is making plans for a follow-up phase intended to support new alumni in setting up their practice and stimulating them to work together.

Most of our outside activities, ranging from field studies to the presentation of work, are initiated by the departments.

At the institutional level of the Rietveld and the Sandberg, we stage graduation shows, open days and symposiums and present larger exhibitions, performances, Rietveld Radio, Rietveld TV, the Studium Generale, publications and other events. These activities are promoted by Public Rietveld and Public Sandberg. All of this takes place under the flag of the Rietveld or the Sandberg, and most stem from the effort of the departments.

As a student you can relate to the world on the basis of your interests and engage with it as an artist in all sorts of ways, if you wish. Some will do this explicitly, in pursuit of a better world, while others will make their contribution in less direct ways.

Hansje van Ooijen, head of Rietveld Basicyear



Open Day, 2019 Image: Marta Capilla

This Institutional Plan 2020–2025 was brought into being through extensive reflection and discussion drawing on a variety of sources. The outcomes of the Academy Assembly, which took place on 22 November 2018 in the Rietveld gym and to which all teachers and staff and about 50 students were invited to participate, contributed significantly to the process. Furthermore, we worked with the existing mission and vision texts, articles, discussion reports, introductions and an Initial Memorandum reporting on a preliminary investigation. The written content was developed by two soundboard groups and an editorial board. The Rietveld Academie soundboard comprised heads of department, teachers and staff; the Sandberg Instituut soundboard comprised the heads of the main departments and a staff member. The editorial team consisted of the members of the Executive Board and two policy advisors from the Rietveld and the Sandberg. The Rietveld soundboard met with the Sandberg soundboard on two occasions. The editorial team and the Rietveld soundboard met three times. Draft versions of this institutional plan were discussed in three meetings each with the Rietveld heads of departments, the Participatory Council and the Supervisory Board. Two meetings were held with a panel of fourth-year students from the Rietveld. Comments on draft texts were incorporated in subsequent versions following discussions in the soundboard groups and the editorial board.

**Editorial team**

Annelies van Eenennaam, Ben Zegers, Jurgen Bey, Jet Langman, Jaap Vinken, Erik Viskil

**Rietveld Academie soundboard**

Bert Taken, Ea Polman, Frank Mandersloot, Hansje van Ooijen, Jeroen Kramer, Jet Langman, Jorinde Seijdel, Henri Snel, Riet Wijnen.  
Guest members: David Bennewith, Giene Steenman, Jens Pfeiffer, Vincent Zedelius. Reporters: Jet Langman, Henri Snel, Willem Sjoerd van Vliet, Klaske Oenema

**Sandberg Instituut soundboard**

Annelies de Vet, Jerszy Seymour, Julian Schubert, Leopold Banchini, Marjo van Baar, Maxine Kopsa, Tom Vandeputte. Reporter: Helena Lambrechts

**Rietveld Academie heads of department meeting**

Arna Mackic, David Bennewith, Erna Anema, Eylem Aladogan, Giene Steenman, Gijs Muller, Hansje van Ooijen, Jasmijn van Weenen, Jens Pfeiffer, Jeroen Boomgaard, Jeroen Kramer, Jet Langman, Jorinde Seijdel, Jort van der Laan, Manel Esparbe i Gasca, Marieke Coppens, Margriet Kruijver, Mirjam Mazurel, Niels Klavers, Sonja Bäümel, Vincent Zedelius, Yvonne Dröge Wendel

**Panel discussions**

*Rietveld Academie students:* Leatitzia Campbell, Columba Williams, Anna Lenartowska, Tibo Maiboroda, Boyan Montero, Enrico Garzaro, Puck van Donselaar

*Teachers and former teachers:* André Klein, Karien Wielenga, Margriet Kruijver, Ton Zwerver

*Staff Gerrit Rietveld Academie:* Arnoud Kortebout, Judith Kroon, Karin Houkes, Marjo van Baar, Pascal Pater, Peter van Ruiten, Wilbert van Rossem

**Individual interviews**

Annelies van Eenennaam, Annelies de Vet, Ben Zegers, David Bennewith, Giene Steenman, Jasmijn van Weenen, Jens Pfeiffer, Jeroen Boomgaard, Jet Langman, Judith Kroon, Jurgen Bey, Manel Esparbe i Gasca, Margriet Kruijver, Sonja Bäümel, Yvonne Dröge Wendel, Jaap Vinken

**Academy Assembly participants 22 November 2018**

Marieke Coppens, Karien Wielenga, Carla Boomkens, Jet Langman, Boyan Montero, Tobias Karlsson, Juke Kleerebezem, Yvonne Droge Wendel, Paul Gangloff, Jasmijn van Weenen, Matthijs Hattink, Teun Grondman, Jaap Vinken, Eva Mahhov, Ben Zegers, Oskar Frere-Smith, Joram Kraaijeveld, Harry Heyink, Jorinde Seijdel, Camille Cornillon, Jeroen Kramer, Bieneke Bennekens, Mariken Overdijk, Liesbeth Pallesen, Nomin Zezegmaa, Sonja Bäümel, Mathilde Arens, Martine Neddham, Caroline Bach, Laura Olivia Schuerch, Margriet Kruijver, Jeroen Boomgaard, Suzanne van de Ven, Pieter Elbers, Stéphanie Baechler, Ank Verrips, Antoinette Vonder Muehl, Bram van den Berg, Ronald Boom, Yo van Ede, Gleb Maiboroda, Joost Post, Pascal Pater, Anke Zedelius, Henri Snel, Hansje van Ooijen, Nicky den Breejen, Marjo van Baar, Severine Amsing, Alena Alexandrova, Arnoud Kortebout, Marianne Theunissen, Jules van den Langenberg, Karin Houkes, Christie Bakker, Alexander Köppel, Eric van Straaten, Ea Polman, Eva Hoonhout, Christina Hallström, Judith Kroon, Andre Klein, Ineke Bakker, Bas Medik, Wjm Kok, Ryan Eykholt, Natalia Jordanova, Mónica de Miguel Rubio, Vincent Zedelius, Becket Flannery, Joris Landman, Emilio Moreno, Patricia Chaves, Shreya de Souza, Giene Steenman, Matilda Kenttä, Morta Jonynaite, Jens Pfeifer, Kees Aafjes, Michiel de Haan, Marja Kennis, Marilyn Volkman, Sarah Mesritz, Mislav Zugaj, Merijn Bolink, Adam Colton, Charlotte Rohde, Yvette Dashorst, Naigel Vermeulen, David Bennewith, Mirjam Mazurel, Pien Overing, Fernanda Barhumi, Wilbert van Rossum, Sjaron Minailo, Sjoerd ter Borg, Catherine Somzé, Robert Adolfsson, Alena Hudcovicova, Manel Esparbe i Gasca, Poppy Paulus-Nicolas, Elisabeth Klement, Hans Muller, Erna Anema, Ief van Meegeren, Helena Lambrechts,

Alex Harris, Clare Butcher, Lenneke Favier, Brenda Klick, Enrico Garzaro, Dora Lionstone, Joos Wiersinga, Simpson Tse, Gyalpo Batstra, Brig van den Acker, Sam Chua, Niels Klavers, Lilet Breddels, Jort Van der Laan, Nikolai Aarre, Henna Vihantavaara, Rini Hurkmans, Alex Murray, Kani Marouf, Petra Grooteman, Marjo van Baar, Juha van 't Zelfde, Uta Eisenreich, Nagaré Willemsen, Angela Jerardi, Marianne Flotron, Saša Karalić, Anton Reijnders, Christopher Leslie Lawrence, Eylem Aladogan, Geert Mul, Gijs Müller, Ilse van Rijn, Willem-Sjoerd Van Vliet, Carmen Garcia Ramos, Bert Taken, Erik Mattijssen, Hewald Jongenelis

**Contributors**

Bert Taken, Ea Polman, Frank Mandersloot, Hansje van Ooijen, Jeroen Kramer, Jet Langman, Jorinde Seijdel, Henri Snel, Riet Wijnen; Annelys de Vet, Jaap Vinken, Jerszy Seymour, Leopold Banchini, Maxine Kopsa, Tom Vandeputte

**Editorial advice,  
Dutch version**

Nico Groen

**English  
translation**

Jesse Ahlers

**Editorial advice,  
English version**

Steve Green

**Graphic Design**

Mateo Broillet

**Production  
supervision**

Jasmijn van Weenen

**Project  
supervision,  
moderation,  
research and  
texts**

Erik Viskil

Alexander Cromer, *Ice Don't Drown*, Master Design of Experiences, Graduation Show 2019, De Marktkantine.  
Image: Sander van Wettum





Graduation Opening 2019 Image: Chun-Han Chiang

