

UNO CO VER

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Inclusive
Leisure

English version

Foreword

A personal perspective

Stories about access, participation, exclusion and possibilities. A themed issue on inclusion and leisure had been high on the priority list for some time. The urgency to do so was accelerated last year as a physical condition forced me to rethink my daily routines and desires.

Suddenly, after 40 years of daily training, I found myself being taken out of the swimming pool and into the ambulance, and it crossed my mind that the sticker quoting 'water polo – a way of life' had now probably best be scraped off my car bumper. From one moment to the next, pop concert venues, restaurants, cultural cities and surf coasts were no longer the pleasant places where I enjoyed spending time. I had lost my ways of relaxation, and also a part of my identity. Numerous things (in the work, private and leisure realms) needed to be adapted. Well-intended advice to lower my expectations, let go of things and just accept that, led to frustration. Because after all, was I not more than my limitation?

As it happens, when I was working on this Uncover on Inclusive Leisure, I saw opportunities for deepening, and above all, using and expanding my network. Intensifying contacts from my Disability Studies, among other things, I ended up at LFB, an advocacy organisation for and by people with intellectual disabilities. That is where I saw the opportunity to breathe new life into a long-held ambition.

As early as in 1998 I tried to set up a rehabilitation firm in the recreation sector for people with disabilities. More than 10 years later, when Organon left Oss, I made another attempt by filing a concept for a Leisure Lab with, for and by groups with disabilities. Both times, the idea was judged to be unconvincing - the economic perspective prevailing over social impact - and the plan disappeared in the drawer. But as they say, 'third time lucky'. I shared my ideas with LFB and from there a collaboration focusing on using experiential expertise in the leisure domain was born. Together we want to move towards a place for empowerment called STERKplaats 2.0 at BUAs, focusing on education, inclusive research, and inclusive experience design.

From another personal motive, too, this themed issue was a must.

As a father of two children from Africa, I have frequently experienced situations revealing that there is a world to be won in terms of inclusion, tolerance and equality. Proudly, I see how both are finding their way in society. Examples abound as to how rocky this road has been. Here is a seemingly harmless 'positive' one.

In the schoolyard, a group of parents recite 'fact' after 'fact' to support their disapproval of immigrant children. My question as to whether they might overlook the fact that my children also have that colour, is countered disconcertingly. 'Well no, that's different. They get our standards through you.' All the more painful, because if they are accepted at all, it is obviously not because of their own unique and pleasant qualities.

In this respect, I agree with Rick Brink to invest in the inclusive playground as an opening to a better world. Beyond the parents, because children still have an open mind, unaware of any differences in their peers. So when the National Coordinator for Discrimination and Racism was appointed in the Netherlands, it became a personal quest to include him in this magazine.

It took quite a few emails and phone calls inside and outside various ministries before we got him on the line for an interview. Hopefully, his town hall sessions and the programme subsequently developed will move the Netherlands to action, and hopefully, this magazine will also be a modest contribution to this.

For me at least, Inclusive Leisure has given me direction towards the future. I enjoyed meeting all these wonderful people, organisations, projects and activities and putting them in the spotlight. Moreover, it gives me a great feeling to experience that within BUAs, so many students and colleagues are working or want to work on Inclusive Leisure.

Where does the road lead? We will see. In any case, we are on our way.

Peter Horsten

Introduction

Inclusive Leisure



Peter Horsten and Simon de Wijs are the final editors of *Uncover*.

We live in a tolerant country where we can say what we want. Where we promote both physical and mental accessibility. Where we invite others to participate and welcome others from the principle of hospitality so familiar to us. Where we see diversity as a source of creativity and inspiration. Where the Gay Parade is an experience. Where we are ready to receive Ukrainian refugees en masse. Where we look beyond limitations to talents. We are a country of colourful variety. Where we perceive 'being different' as mutant forces who possess superpowers like true comic book heroes. We live in a country where differences are a fact of life. And we are proud of that.

This is certainly true. And we are making strides. Several projects and organisations in this edition of *Uncover* are also testament to that. But it is not always the case, not everywhere, and not for everyone to the same degree. And it definitely does not happen automatically.

The government acknowledges institutional racism demonstrated by our tax authorities. 'Roze Kameraden' (a group of Feyenoord football supporters who identify as LGBTI+s) do not feel accepted. Lesbian, bisexual and gay youth are more frequently bullied and make suicide attempts. Non-Western refugees are treated with suspicion. People who attend special education have much poorer career prospects than their mainstream education counterparts. Immigrant students are more often rejected for internships. There is hardly any understanding for non-visible disabilities.

Nothing justifies exclusion. Inequality of opportunity is unacceptable. We are equal even as we develop in diversity. We are diverse, or put differently, 'unique'. And we should relate to

others in a society with that premise uppermost in our minds. Seeing, listening to and feeling differences is okay. In doing so, we have prejudices whether we want to or not. Multiple interpretations and meanings must be recognised, but also accommodated and sometimes respectfully countered or questioned. Preferably resulting in mutual understanding. Only then will we move forward together with regard to each other, society, programming, audiences, partners and staff.

Leisure plays a key role

Inclusion does justice to diversity. Not by denying differences, polarisation, discrimination or segregation, but by creating opportunities for meet-ups, discussion, connection and participation. Leisure plays an important role in this. Leisure organisations in particular design activities that build bridges. It is precisely in the leisure domain that places emerge where we can meet and get to know others. Culture and sport create opportunities to 'empower'. Theatres, pop venues, restaurants and media provide platforms to give everyone a voice. Leisure activities offer inspiration, relaxation, connection, development or happiness to varying degrees according to different preferences. And that should be possible for everyone. Inclusive leisure!

This magazine contains plenty of examples where leisure has impact and where work is being done to create a better world. Examples that support the opportunities of freedom in action and fun, coupled with a toolkit of play and storytelling, in the leisure domain. Leisure does not only have economic and social value, but also has the capacity to connect the systems world – through SDGs and grand ambitions – to people's lifeworlds.

Beyond all that positivism, we should not overlook the fact that recognising diversity also means that we have to make room for discomfort and friction, for opposing positions, or choices that do not appeal to everyone. That

we should regularly make an effort to get others to participate. Striving for a more inclusive world also means grappling with these issues rather than approaching leisure purely from the sunny side.

Involving experiential experts

On several pages in this magazine, you will see a plea for the involvement of experiential experts. In the BUAs+ strategy that does explicitly focus on connecting to industry, we should also clearly articulate this aspect. Not *about* but *together with*. Not *for* but *by*. Invite the other person to the table. Move away from the usual patterns. Step over physical and mental thresholds. Analyse what it says about ourselves how we look at the other person and try to judge preferences on the basis of empathy. Celebrate each other's parties. Let others sing and dance at your party. Give special groups a place at the table in addition to the leisure experience to join in equality in both the research and design process. Remove barriers between us and them. Work co-creatively. Exercise patience in the process. Trust each other and trust the process and the open results. Put further work into an inclusive set of tools. Inclusive leisure, from concept development to design via consumption to evaluation. We believe that the various stories in this magazine provide ample starting points to further develop such a course of action. Have a good and inspiring read!

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It is not always the case, not everywhere, and not for everyone to the same degree.

Compliments for accessibility. Good examples are often followed

Inclusive leisure for all people with disabilities

Peter Horsten
&
Simon de Wijs



Peter Horsten and Simon de Wijs are lecturers and researchers in the domain of Leisure & Events at Breda University of Applied Sciences.

An interview with Rick Brink, the first Minister of Disability Affairs, about inclusiveness, accessibility and being welcome. At the moment, Rick is advocacy director at Stichting SWOM (Foundation for Individualised Study and Work), ambassador of Stichting Het Gehandicapte Kind (Foundation for Handicapped Children), and advisor and speaker on inclusion.

Minister of Disability Affairs is an appealing job in which you can make a difference. How did you become a minister, and with what ambition did you step onto this path?

It actually started out as a joke. At the time I was party chairman on behalf of the CDA political party in Hardenberg and was tipped off by a few healthcare executives that the KRO-NCRV broadcasting company was going to launch a television programme to appoint a Minister of Disability Affairs. They thought the combination of media and politics would suit me. Fortunately, I – just a 'boy from the province', as they say in the Netherlands – was invited to Hilversum, the media mecca of the Netherlands. My answer to the first question of 'How would you give shape to the ministership?' was that I understood that KRO-NCRV is a media company where impact plays a big role

and that there are different ways to achieve this. You need people who want to go to demonstrations, but that is not my cup of tea. I see myself as more powerful in dialogue. For me, the link to politics had to be made clear. And goals had to be set that were achievable and visible within a year (as this is the duration of the appointment). With these political considerations in mind, I wanted to be a minister for all people with disabilities: physical, intellectual and all generations.

What were the most important items on your agenda? Did you succeed in your mission to make an impact?

We got involved a lot in current affairs, pro-actively and re-actively. However, six months into our journey, we asked ourselves whether we were also getting things done. After that, we started working less on mission and more substantively around several key objectives.

The first key objective was to focus on children. We have translated the commitment to an inclusive city into going to school together and playing together. Children learn most easily in the playground what limitations and differences are when not everyone looks the same as themselves. With a nod to the Pension Agreement, we drafted a 'Samen Speelakkoord' (Playing Together Agreement), which included

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I wanted to be a minister for all people with disabilities: physical, intellectual and all generations.

organisations that committed themselves with concrete promises. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) facilitated a 'Samen Spelen Netwerk' (Playing Together Network) for municipalities to promote knowledge sharing and to make the playgrounds a reality. The initiative was joined by Het Gehandicapte Kind, Jantje Beton (a charity organisation committed to promoting children's right to play), Utrecht Universities of Applied Sciences, Stichting Jongeren op Gezond Gewicht (Young People at a Healthy Weight Foundation), KRO-NCRV, and many others. Together, we managed to get this on the VWS ministry's agenda. Moreover, more of these playgrounds have sprung up around the country. These places were shown to MPs to

make it clear to them that if they really want to be an inclusive society in five years' time, these are the very places where they should start.

Around the second key objective, called 'students with a disability', we developed an internship desk together with the Stichting Studeren en Werken op Maat, subsidised by the Ministry of the Interior. In one year, you are obviously not going to reform the entire labour market, but if you manage to make it easier for this target group to find an internship at the front end of the employment process, you will draw long-term benefits.

With regard to the third key objective concerning loneliness, we had periodic consultations with VWS and Minister Hugo de Jonge. And even though you sometimes challenge and correct each other, for instance on the whole discussion around aids and equipment, you try above all to find areas where you can help each other. The discussion around loneliness, for instance, was narrowed down considerably at first to focus on the elderly, with amusing commercials featuring grandma going on holiday with the grandchildren. Narrowing things down is useful to get quick results. Fortunately, however, we were able to broaden the focus to all kinds of groups with disabilities for whom holiday-making is not that easy.

The good thing about what started out as a joke, is that over time, people started seeing me as a real minister. We built a huge network, became interlocutors with the government, and actually got things done. I would have loved to shake the new minister's hand at the end of the year to showcase the achievements from the first period, to encourage follow-through.

Unfortunately, no new Minister of Disability Affairs has been installed (as yet). But suppose this does happen, what would deserve attention and what new stakeholders should step in?

The fact that appropriate and inclusive education is hardly getting off the ground, is a thorn in the side of

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The crux lies in involving experiential expertise in policy development.

Het Gehandicapte Kind. This is partly due to the barrier between the ministries of OCW (Education, Culture and Science) and VWS. Most importantly, thinking beyond frameworks and budgets (of, for example, education and care) is required. Thinking more holistically from the personal circumstances of individuals and what is needed in that respect. For inclusive education to succeed, the whole system has to change. The innovative projects currently taking place are only thanks to school administrators who have the guts to circumvent the rules. In March (2021), we presented a petition to the House of Representatives to emphasise that more work is needed to break down that barrier. Increasing the number of 'Samen Naar School' (To School Together) classes from 40 to 60 would also be a feasible goal.

In addition, people have learned from Covid that hybrid working and learning can work quite well for them. However, you should not go overboard with this, because then you get an exclusive labour market and exclusive education in which everyone with a disability is sitting at home. The right balance does partly eliminate a mobility-deficient situation. For instance, I hear from people with autism that a better balance in days at home and at the office makes them experience their autism less severely. The Sociaal Economische Raad (Social and Economic Council) also recognises these opportunities. Now would be the time for the new minister to convince companies and educational institutions of this too.

Finally, it is important to involve experiential experts in the process of policy design. Despite increasing investments, this does not usually lead to any increase in participation. A great deal of thought is put into ambitious plans, but when you ask what the target groups themselves stand to gain from them, too often the question remains unanswered. The crux lies in involving experiential experts in policy development. There is still a gap to be bridged between the systems world of institutions that devise programmes and people's lifeworlds. Municipalities and ministries need to take this step. Indeed, when a plan is designed with and by the experiential experts themselves, who would the municipal council or House of Representatives be to go against it? In other words, less focus on just the involvement of institutions, companies and organisations in policy development, and much more focus on the individuals concerned themselves.

Do you see any groups that we still overlook too much?

It is often the silent majority that you do not hear, and as a result, that does not get the recognition they deserve. There is a large group of people with invisible disabilities. Just think

of people with autism, people who get overstimulated, people with mild intellectual disabilities, people with language development disorders. These are all disabilities you do not see but they are there. If I enter a room in a big wheelchair, attention is paid to it whether I want it or not. But if your disability is not visible and you have to explain yourself every time, you feel little recognition. For example, I spoke to a girl with a language impairment, who when she is addressed by a boy in the pub knows what she wants to say, but just cannot get the words out. Everyone then thinks she is stupendously drunk when she is absolutely not. We need to pay more attention to these invisible disabilities.

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Most importantly, thinking beyond frameworks and budgets is required.



Rick Brink



In 2018 Hardenberg was designated as the most accessible town in the Netherlands. Recently, Stein was designated the winner. What characterises these cities?

Hardenberg has a municipal government that lives and breathes the principle that all people should participate and that we should help each other. 'Be so welcoming that everyone can really participate fully in all areas of life' is the guiding principle. A very broad agenda has been drawn up, covering not only accessibility for people with disabilities, but also, for example, language skills and low literacy. The municipal executive has really immersed itself to experience what it is like to not being able to see, for example. That goes beyond physical accessibility and, above all, it is about treating people equally. That broad approach is what made them win the award.

An illustrative example of what can go wrong, for instance, is at the opening of a theatre where we got into a discussion about the theatre's accessibility to wheelchair users. What people often do not realise is that when you come in there and all the corridors are hastily cleared for you, you are immediately handed three drinks, and your coat is just barely whisked away from you, this does not feel quite right either.

This social aspect is what Stein understands very well. Stein starts with children in the neighbourhood and at school. There are a lot of projects that are aimed at inclusive education, integration of mainstream and special education. People with disabilities visit primary schools where they explain in an open, common-sense way that they are missing a leg. The school children get to move around in a wheelchair to take away the scariness of it. Direct contact like this is so important. I am enthusiastic about what happens when we connect young people with each other. By going through the experience together, they

learn about each other's lives, meet each other and undergo each other's situations. Doing gym exercises together can be unnerving at first, but after a while you see these heartfelt contacts and connections develop. These are inspiring collateral benefits.

Unfortunately, you see many municipalities being too non-committal about the principle that everyone with disabilities should have the same rights and be able to participate without restriction. All municipalities should work on a Local Inclusion Agenda. If they do not, however, nobody will notice. No budget cuts, often no question about target achievement at all. Every beginning is difficult. But we cannot avoid applying more pressure five years after the UN convention was established. More money is not the solution, unfortunately, because many municipalities are facing short-falls in WMO funding (funding under the Social Support Act) and cutbacks in youth care. Any extra money they receive would go straight into these themes. In other words, it is crucial to earmark the money properly.

Erasmus University Rotterdam won 'De Bart' in 2021 as the most inclusive employer of the Netherlands. What is the value of such an award and what criteria are used?

I work at the Stichting Studeren en Werken Op Maat, which guides higher educated people with disabilities into employment. A target group that the government thinks can fend for itself, but that is not always the case. We place about 270 young people a year with a drop-out rate below 10%. In doing so, we aim for sustainable placements. We always make a facilitation and needs assessment plan, describing what the candidate needs in order to perform well, and what you as a manager or colleague can do to help. The target group we are talking about here is often already disappointed in life and we want to avoid that this disappointment is extended to the work sphere.

Our founder and chair is called - and this is not a joke - Bart de Bart. Something is often only newsworthy once it escalates, fails or if there are any wrongdoings. We, on the other hand, award 'De Bart' to get our target group in the news in a 'positive manner'. Erasmus University Rotterdam won the award because they realised the most placements and managed to connect many stakeholders with each other. You may regard them as our best ambassador. As a result of the media coverage, we received lots of calls from numerous organisations who also wanted to participate. This positive vibe is what you want to achieve with such an award. Both Stein and Hardenberg, for example, give compliments to highly accessible businesses in their respective cities. Here by the river Vecht, for instance, we have a restaurant entrepreneur

who had a beautiful rooftop terrace installed. He himself invested in a stairlift ensuring that people who have difficulty walking or are in a wheelchair have no trouble going upstairs. These initiatives should be showcased, because good examples are often followed.

If we were to present an award in the leisure sector, which organisations would you nominate?

During my time as a minister we went on a summer tour, visiting numerous festivals and events, to see what they were doing about accessibility. Theaterfestival Boulevard (Boulevard Theatre Festival) is very passionate and committed to making their shows accessible to people who are blind or deaf. I have seen wonderful performances with audio description, which explained - in an engaging manner - what was happening on stage. And there is, of course, the Zwarte Cross (a festival that combines motocross, music, theatre and stunts), which has set up a MIVA Las Vegas tent as a hotel for the disabled (MIVA is a pun on the famous Elvis song, abbreviating the Dutch word 'mindervaliden'). After all, you cannot have a complete experience at a festival, until you are also able to stay overnight. Genuine inclusion can also be seen at Sneekweek (Europe's largest inshore sailing regatta) with its race for all categories. There is a special boat available, allowing people with disabilities to sail with others in equality.

As for culture, the Rijksmuseum comes to my mind. They have a diverse programme for all groups with disabilities to enable art experiences. With 3D-printed replicas of sculptures, audio support, quiet rooms on demand, preparatory information for people with autism, and legion adaptations to the physical space for wheelchair users.

I am also enthusiastic about sport clubs that dare to think outside the box. In Hardenberg there was a boy who really wanted to play sitting volleyball. In this small town there was not enough capacity to set up a whole team of disabled people. Within the volleyball club, however, a group of people



Covid has taught us that hybrid working and learning offers opportunities.

volunteered to play sitting volleyball with the boy for an hour a week following their regular training. In football clubs you see the rise of walking football, which is suitable not only for the elderly but also for people who are easily over-stimulated. The fact that clubs are particularly creative at making adjustments so that everyone can continue to participate, is to be applauded.

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Investing in accessibility has a double economic effect.

Within the holiday accommodation sector, Avavieren is an excellent example. This is a holiday park that offers adapted bungalows with muted furnishings to prevent over-stimulation. Everything you need to enjoy your holiday is there for everyone. Entertainment for families with children with and without disabilities, so parents can also enjoy a moment together. I would like all parks in the Netherlands to adopt this broad scope. The same applies to the approach of municipalities to playgrounds. Rather than just investing in a swing or seesaw for children in wheelchairs, they should also consider elements that stimulate several senses. So that children can feel things, smell things, hear things. Laying smooth or textured paving slabs does not make a huge difference financially. Yet it can mean a world of difference.

How do you lift this kind of success to include an entire sector?

By connecting and expanding communities, for example. I am ambassador of the Community

Toegankelijke Recreatie (Community for Accessible Recreational Facilities) which consists of all major recreation businesses of the Netherlands. This community was created during Covid because during the first wave many organisations were wondering how they could organise fun outings for disabled people within the social distancing society. Within the community, experiences are shared, cross-pollination occurs and solutions are sought together. This community still exists and its importance is twofold. First of all, everyone needs leisure and recreation. Unfortunately, being able to take part is not always that straightforward for everyone, which is why it is so important to make extra efforts and to share knowledge. In addition, this is also lucrative from the entrepreneur's perspective, because when you are accessible to all customers, you tap into a huge new potential, often accompanied by carers, partners or friends. Conversely, if a restaurant is not wheelchair-friendly, I will not eat there. But neither will my family and friends at that time. So, as it turns out, investing in accessibility has a double economic effect. Recron (Recreation Business Association Netherlands), Hiswa (industry trade group for the Dutch water sports business), amusement parks, zoos and holiday parks are becoming increasingly aware of the need for this.

Do you see any promising initiatives when you shift your perspective from the supply side to the demand side, the side of participants and consumers?

Many people with disabilities have websites of their own where they keep records of activities and attractions that are worth visiting, based on their own experiences. Social media has many communities where information is shared around certain disabilities and also around attractive leisure activities. What you see is parents with disabled children using these kinds of platforms in search of fun outings. This gives them a broader and more tailored description of how accessible a particular theme park is than when they have just the organisation's own information to

base their decision on. People should not be disappointed. Telling an honest story, what can and cannot be done, is therefore a *must*.

In conclusion, are there any developments that offer new opportunities or pose threats?

Numerous innovations are emerging that allow people at work to reach the finish line towards retirement in a healthy way. This also offers opportunities for people with disabilities. Just look at the developments around the exoskeleton, 3D printing or VR glasses. This is where the opportunities are manifold. Even so, the government is usually quick to point out that it is 'a matter of customisation, so too expensive'. I prefer to emphasise the yields to be achieved. Suppose you have to invest in facilities for a wheelchair-bound employee, you might have to pay more money at the front end, but you should also realise that this person can make the move from benefits to work as a result. Now see how that will fill the state's coffers. Technology offers so many new opportunities. My plea is not 'just throw in a bottomless budget'; I would rather make an appeal to not be so quick to shy away from applying customisation. Look for the edges and new opportunities will come.

Photography

- John Lewis Marshall (page 4)
- Stijn Ghijsen (page 5)
- Frank van der Burg (bottom of page 7)

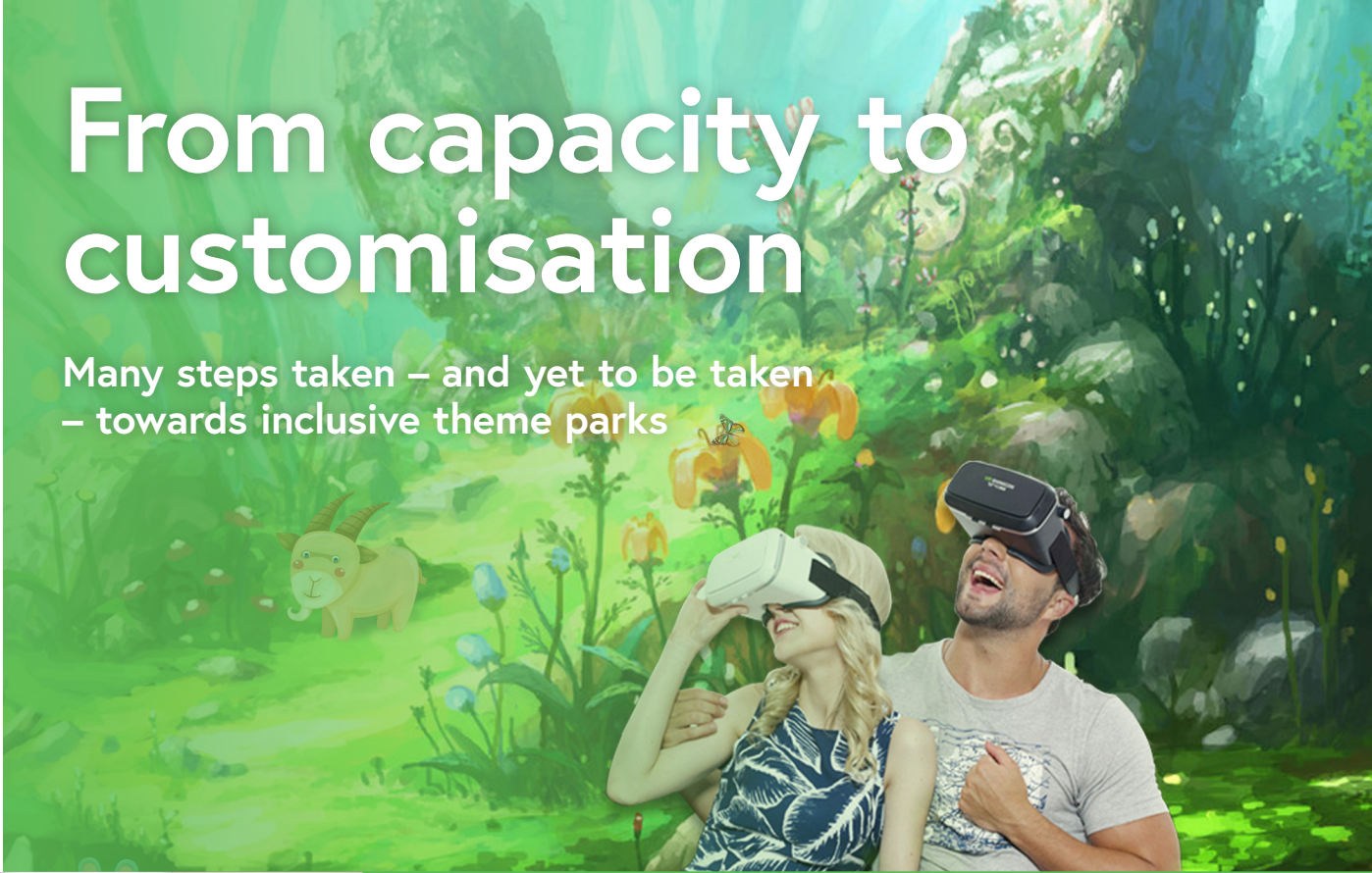


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There is a gap to be bridged between the systems world of institutions that devise programmes and the lifeworld of experiential experts.

From capacity to customisation

Many steps taken – and yet to be taken
– towards inclusive theme parks



Joni Latour graduated from BUAs in 2021 in the specialisation of Attractions & Theme Parks Management. Bart Stadhouders is coordinator of the BUAs-wide track Attractions & Theme Parks Management and lecturer at Leisure and Events. Goof Lukken is senior lecturer in Attractions & Theme Parks Management, Tourism and Leisure at BUAs.

It is clear that inclusion and accessibility are receiving more and more attention in the themed entertainment industry. Disney worked for many years with the same basic values called the Four Keys (safety, courtesy, show and efficiency) and recently introduced a new key: inclusion. Why? There was increasing pressure from within and outside the organisation on the often stereotypical image in all media content (many white, blond, straight princes and blue-eyed princesses), but also on its own personnel policy (the 'Disney Look' was a requirement for all cast members: natural hair colours, no visible piercings and tattoos). This is because Disney wants to put on a magical show. Everyone is part of this show (which is why they call staff cast members) and so staff should not stand out or look out of place. Everything should be geared towards visitors being completely immersed in this Disney show.

Accessibility in themed entertainment

The perfect picture that Disney tried to portray in the past, however, is far from a realistic reflection of society. This is evident when looking at some of the figures of The World Bank (2022). Today, one billion people (15% of the world's

population) have some kind of disability. More and more organisations in the themed entertainment sector are becoming aware of the fact that this previously neglected target group can no longer be excluded and that this target group may even significantly boost theme park revenues.

Current examples to improve inclusion step by step include the creation of low-stimuli spaces in theme parks for visitors with autism spectrum disorders and making attractions virtually available for wheelchair-bound visitors, such as the virtual 'Droomvlucht' attraction in de Efteling. What's more, new fully accessible attractions are also being developed (the 'Nest!' play forest in de Efteling) and new disabled characters are introduced especially for people with disabilities (Sesame Place, Philadelphia). In San Antonio (USA) there is even a theme park that has been designed especially with the needs of disabled people in mind, called Morgan's Wonderland. But the issue has been on the agenda for quite some time. Dollywood park (indeed owned by country singer Dolly Parton), also in the USA, for instance, was an early innovator five years ago when it launched its ride accessibility center. A place where people with disabilities can get advice on their optimal visit to the park.

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The 'Disney Look' was a requirement for all cast members, no one was allowed to stand out or look out of place.

Inclusion versus capacity

It remains a never-ending discussion between capacity and budget on the one hand and inclusiveness and accessibility on the other. Many parks are primarily focused on the capacity of their attractions to fill them with as many people as possible, as efficiently as possible, whereas, by contrast, there is an increasing call to create space and time for groups that need extra attention, such as low-stimuli spaces for people with autism.

People with physical disabilities also run into problems when visiting theme parks. Safety has the highest priority in the industry and the standard rule is that people should be able to get out of an attraction independently. In

practice, this has turned out to be more difficult. How to deal with people with prosthetic devices who want to go on a roller coaster? What if a prosthesis flies off during the ride? How big can the prosthesis be? And how should it be attached? Many suppliers are struggling with these kinds of questions and especially in the American market, where lawsuits are the order of the day, everything has to be covered to the smallest detail and has to be absolutely safe. And so weighty legal books are written, and the easy way out for many parks is to say that their attractions are not open to certain groups of visitors.

Suppliers are taking substantial steps

Vendors and suppliers are paying more and more attention to accessibility and inclusion. The downside of banning guests with disabilities from entering an attraction for fear of legal repercussions is that discrimination charges may very well be filed in such cases. Laws introduced to improve accessibility, for example the 'Americans with Disabilities Act', are used as an opportunity to accuse organisations of exclusion. So how can both unsafe situations and discrimination be countered? By banishing the prevailing ignorance through knowledge and experience. Although their number is steadily increasing these days, few studies have been conducted so far on what restrictions are permissible in which types of attractions. If these studies were conducted at all, it was often by individual organisations, not umbrella bodies. In addition, a wealth of knowledge has long remained untapped: the experiences of people living with such impairments.

Several suppliers have already tried to take substantial steps towards inclusiveness based on their own knowledge and collaborations with experiential experts. Vekoma, for example, has developed a number of adapted features, including a built-in door in the side of a trolley that allows people to move more easily from their wheelchairs. Moreover, roller coaster manufacturer B&M has developed a harness, making their rides extra secure for people with prosthetic devices or missing limbs.

With the development of such solutions by manufacturers and the goodwill of many parks, progress has certainly already been made.

One of the absolute best practices is Universal Orlando. They have established clear policies around inclusiveness. But perhaps even better is the development of their latest VelociCoaster in the theme of Jurassic Park. In cooperation with roller coaster builder Intamin, they developed a roller coaster train that is easily accessible while simplifying the operations of getting someone with a disability on the train. Instead of patenting this system, they made it an open-source technology. This means that other parks can also easily integrate the system.

Inclusiveness in the sector

It may be clear that inclusiveness is an important theme in the themed entertainment sector. Sector organisation IAAPA is currently devoting a lot of attention to it, but the parks themselves are also proactively mapping their current situations and looking for areas for improvement. Together with students of the BUAs specialisation Attractions & Theme Parks Management, studies on accessibility and inclusiveness have now been or are being carried out at, among others, de Efteling, Toverland, Plopsa Groep, Bobbejaanland and Europa-Park. Collaborations have also been set up on the supplier side.

More often than not, many quick wins can be achieved with good communication before and during the visit and with a few simple adaptations. Moreover, when making new investments, it would be desirable to always consider this topic together with end users so that they can clearly indicate what is needed. This should not be a one-off initiative, but a permanent change in both supplier and theme park strategies. The industry is not there yet, but good steps are being taken towards a more inclusive themed entertainment industry.

Photography

- Efteling (page 9)



How can both unsafe situations and discrimination be countered?



The standard rule is that people should be able to get out of an attraction independently.



Designing Cities For All

How can we create cities where everyone feels like they belong?

Jonathan Tjien Fooh is a Cultural Anthropologist, Storyteller, and Programme Maker at Pakhuis de Zwijger, where he creates programmes related to designing inclusive, just and equitable cities.

Design. What is the first word or image that comes into your mind? A flyer with flashy colours? Fashion? Or perhaps a futuristic building? What does it mean to design? Writer John Heskett mentions 'Design, stripped to its essence, can be defined as the human nature to shape and make our environment in ways without precedent in nature, to service our needs and give meaning to our lives.' Whether you are thinking about a product or a space, the core of design is about giving meaning to our lives and fulfilling the needs of living beings. However, too often design does quite the opposite; due to lack of diversity in teams, unconscious bias, historical systems of oppression like colonisation, and institutional racism, many designers often remain unaware of the exclusionary repercussions of what they design and the way they design.

In *Designing Cities For All* (DCFA), Pakhuis de Zwijger's two-year research and activity programme funded by the Creative Industries Fund NL, we take a critical look at the design field, redefine what it means to design, and question the role of designers in creating cities of belonging - cities of, for, and by everyone.

Cities of Belonging

The idea of Cities of Belonging is inspired by writer OluTimehin Kukoyi's TEDx talk *Who Belongs in a City?* In this TEDx talk, Kukoyi amplifies that 'The only cities worth building, indeed the only futures worth dreaming of, are those that include all of us, no matter who we are or how we make homes for ourselves.' While belonging can mean different things to different

people, sociologist Yuval-Davis (2006) defines 'belonging' as a feeling of 'emotional attachment, feeling at home and feeling safe'. What does it mean to feel at home in a city when the infrastructure of the city does not recognise your existence?

Going slightly back in time, the highway to the Jones Beach State Park in New York designed by architect Robert Moses is a tangible example of belonging being disrupted. The viaducts, which were built from 1920 to 1970, which are only 2.70 metres high made it impossible for buses to get to the park. Buses which are mainly used by people who cannot afford a car. Unfortunately, this applies to a majority of the Black population. This is an example of exclusionary design, which in this case is caused by oppressive systems like the Jim Crow laws and racial segregation. However, these waves of exclusion of the past flow into the present. The highways and viaducts still exist and cause social inequality, even today.

Designing for 'the other'

The opposite of belonging is 'othering'. To understand how to create cities of belonging, it is important to understand in which ways people feel excluded or alienated from society. The design of the Beach State Park in New York might feel far away, back in time. However, this white superiority thinking is also reflected in more contemporary examples.

A while ago a video went viral about a so-called 'racist' soap dispenser. Of course, the dispenser itself is not racist, and probably neither is the

technology team behind it. Still, the dispenser's design excludes a large part of the population. It uses an optical sensor, which responds when you slide your hand under it. Lots of sensors, however, mainly the slightly cheaper ones, have trouble registering dark skin, so when a Black person uses it, no soap comes out.

Soap dispensers might feel like a micro example of exclusion, but the same goes for sensors in fitness trackers and heart rate monitors, where exclusion can have much greater (health) consequences. This also painfully illustrates the lack of diversity in the tech industry and product design: if there had been a Black designer or engineer on the team, this may not have happened. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg, showing that the dominant narrative of design and design thinking is often rooted in systems of exclusion. Most designers, governments, or companies design for the middle, and not for the margins. When we as a society start designing for the people who are actually living with the failures of designed products, spaces, and systems, we might create and build stronger structures for everyone.

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Many designers often remain unaware of the exclusionary repercussions of what they design and the way they design.



18 Perspectives on Designing Cities for All

Fuelled by this sense of urgency for change, DCFA's activities and research explore the flaws within design, by organising livecasts, workshops, expert meetings, book clubs, and exhibitions. Throughout these activities, we involve design experts, students, activists, artists and community leaders, and delve into the (re)design of cities of belonging, intending to ensure that everyone (including future generations) regardless of capacities, ethnicity, gender (identity), age, and cultural background has equitable access. After one year of DCFA we organised 32 programmes, four book clubs, and published the essay book *18 Perspectives on Designing Cities for All*. This publication contains the main findings of 2021 and insights about inclusive design from contributors and DCFA advocates, which span the field of architecture, fashion design, artificial intelligence, transition design, education, UX design and social design, but also activists, community leaders, and researchers.

The book also lists six design principles for inclusive design, fuelled by the programmes of the past year:

1. Design is everywhere
2. Design shapes our sense of belonging in this world
3. There are flaws in these designs
4. For every injustice in this world, there is an architecture built to sustain and perpetuate it
5. Inclusion happens by design or not at all
6. Everyone is a redesigner

Essay 'The City of Archtivists'

Many of these design principles are reflected in the essay 'The City of Archtivists' by Nyasha Harper-Michon. Nyasha was also a speaker during one of the first DCFA programmes 'Breaking it Down: Designing!'. In her essay, Nyasha emphasises that many of the inequalities and

global challenges we face today are actually built into the way we design cities. In the concept of Archtivism, Nyasha envisions a city for all, tying together concepts like sustainability, inclusivity and equity for all, including non-human beings. She coined the term 'Archtivism' to blend architecture and activism.

"Archtivism is about breaking down. Breaking down the status quo. Breaking down the industry's walls and barriers. Breaking down the existing systems that govern the architecture profession and its stakeholders in order to build back better - towards a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future."

Archtivism is also about creating a movement of a wide variety of perspectives and approaches within the field of architecture. In her essay, Nyasha identifies four types of Archtivists to rebuild the city of tomorrow: Social Archtivism, Environmental Archtivism, Economic Archtivism, and Technological Archtivism.

While each form contains important and unique qualities to redesign the city of tomorrow, Nyasha emphasises that the key to Cities for All lies in combining all these different types. 'The global challenges and injustices we face today are not isolated problems, they require us to think interdisciplinarily, bringing together citizens, policymakers, developers and designers who harness the spirit of Archtivism.'

While the design principles we explored in 2021 provide guidelines to think more inclusively about design and can be applied in any field, it is important to remember that inclusive design is a process, not an outcome. There is not just one method to practise designing cities for all. The DCFA programme will officially end in December 2022, however we perceive the entire programme as a living document, a continuous process of learning and unlearning - while searching for better design practices and vocabulary.



The dominant narrative of design and design thinking is often rooted in systems of exclusion.

More information

Do you have questions or are you interested in the essay book? Contact us at dcfa@dezwijger.nl or check dezwijger.nl/dcfa

Sources

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Yuval-Davis defines 'belonging' as a feeling of 'emotional attachment, feeling at home and feeling safe'.



We must go on a journey



Sofie Sergeant is senior lecturer in Citizenship & Inclusion at Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, associated with the PABO, the Seminarium for Orthopedagogics, and the Youth Lectorate.

The Dutch translation of the dissertation 'Working Together, Learning Together' (Sergeant, 2021) was also the name of the national inclusive research project carried out by Henriëtte Sandvoort and Sofie Sergeant from 2016 to 2020. This project studied the collaboration between academics, professionals and people with disabilities or chronic illnesses within ten different research projects of the programme called 'Gewoon Bijzonder' (Simply Special) of ZonMW (Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development). Inclusive research is the term used to describe research in which people with disabilities or chronic illnesses are not considered objects of study but participate as advisers, as researchers, and authors in the research that concerns them and their lives (Walmsley & Johnson, 2003). The objective of Sandvoort and Sergeant's research project was twofold (Sergeant, 2021):

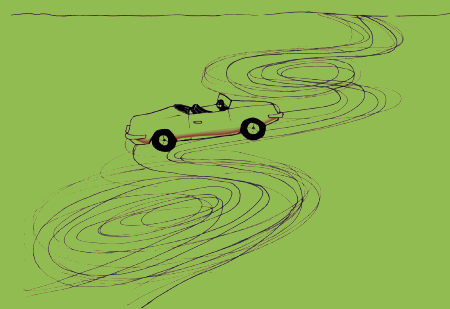
1. Gaining an insight into the conditions and necessary ingredients for inclusive cooperation;
2. Developing a training / coaching programme to support inclusive teams in creating these conditions.

Thus, the research itself also had an inclusive research design, in which the research duo (Sofie Sergeant together with several experiential experts and colleague Henriëtte Sandvoort) visited the project teams of the various projects involved, had talks, and delivered training sessions. In four iterative cycles, the duo developed training sessions with and for these inclusive research teams, referred to as the 'Cabrio' (Convertible) training programme. They did so in close cooperation with partners, artists, people with experiential knowledge... who were dubbed the 'Cabrio gang' at some point in the process.

Learning from an inclusive research project, working together towards inclusive education

'Working Together, Learning Together' was carried out by Stichting Disability Studies in Nederland (Foundation for Disability Studies in the Netherlands), the Academische Werkplaats Leven met een verstandelijke beperking (an organisation aimed at contributing to the quality of life and care of people with intellectual disabilities and their loved ones), Tranzo (Scientific Centre for Care and Welfare) and the LFB (national advocacy organisation by and for people with intellectual disabilities) and was made possible by ZonMW.

This article focuses on the question of what we can learn from the dissertation in terms of the organisation of inclusive education. We will explore this question using ten metaphors, illustrated by Sanneke Duijf.



Cabrio training programme

The training programme developed is a coaching and training programme for 'transdisciplinary' teams (Groot & Kloosterman, 2009): a varied group of people consisting of researchers with an academic background, professionals from various disciplines, and research team members with experience in living with a disability. The Cabrio training programme is aimed at optimising collaboration within these teams. Rather than training the experiential experts alone, the programme focuses on the entire team. In this way, the training programme supports cooperation between different people who are

'on the road' together. More information about the Cabrio programme and associated theoretical frameworks can be found at <https://cabrio-training.online>.

Understandable publication

The dissertation was written in the English language and interconnects five scientific publications. Efforts were made in four ways to make the research process and results more accessible. Firstly, the research process was made understandable to wide audiences through blogs and vlogs shared on the site www.gehandicaptensector.nl. Secondly, in the design of the thesis, much attention was paid to the font and page layout used, the use of colour and illustrations, a foreword in braille and QR codes with links to videos and other supporting material. Thirdly, based on the dissertation, a widely accessible podcast was created with the support of ZonMW, available on Spotify: 'Samen Werken, Samen Leren'. Fourthly, a 'hot-air balloon film' was made by Pluryn Multimediateam. The film (available on YouTube) takes us on a hot-air balloon ride, lasts about ten minutes, and provides access to the content of the dissertation in an approachable way. This film can be used as an icebreaker in discussion and dialogue on transdisciplinary cooperation.



Level Zero is about room for reflection on how we work together and what everyone needs to contribute and thrive.

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Universal Design for Learning (UDL) argues that students experience barriers to learning, not because of their own abilities, but because of barriers created by the curriculum and schools.

What can we learn from this study? What do we take with us on the road towards Inclusive Education?

The 'hot-air balloon film' makes the content of the dissertation more accessible to a wider audience. The film is built on ten metaphors. Each of these metaphors is briefly explained below. Colleague Henriëtte Sandvoort wrote the following in her logbook during the research project: *'I am not happy with the education I received. I wish I had gone to an inclusive school. I never had the chance to do the studies I wanted to do. Now I am happy with the opportunity to learn at work and contribute to research'* (Sergeant et al., 2022, p. 7). This quote inspired us to try and find out, with our research in mind: what do the ten metaphors teach us about inclusive education, addressing all educational needs and every request for educational assistance in a region, with respect and consideration, regardless of gender, beliefs, social background, and individual abilities of students (Fransen & Frederix, 2000).

The ten metaphors

1. *The Convertible (Cabrio in Dutch)*

The research duo loves to travel. Together, they looked for a metaphor that suited them: Two researchers, by the far deep water. In a convertible. In touch with the world. Not knowing what they were getting into, not knowing where they would end up. Along the way, the duo learned: collaboration between academics, professionals and people with disabilities does not emerge naturally. Team members grew up in parallel societies and usually did not meet.

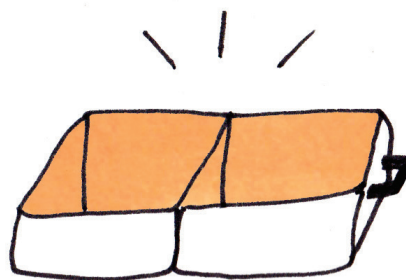
This brings us to the importance of inclusive education. When children, young people, students encounter each other early in life,

when they learn about and appreciate human diversity from an early age, it not only affects their friendships in their own neighbourhood, but they learn that there is difference, and that that is okay. To create good education for all requires not only scientific and professional knowledge, but also experiential knowledge: the voice of the child, the young person, the student.

2. *The Hyphen '-'*

The duo worked closely together (shoulder to shoulder) for four years. In our society, we often narrow our focus to target groups: at-risk pupils, clients. We often talk about people with disabilities and without, putting a line between them and us in our society. The duo worked hard to study this dividing line, looking for connection instead: who are you, what do you know that I don't, how can we work together?

Language is the harbinger of action (Merkel, 2020). So how we speak about children announces our way of acting. An impairment arises in the relationship between individual and context (Kool & Sergeant, 2020). This is also known as the social model: if there is a problem or impairment, you should not look at the individual as the owner of the problem, but at the interaction between individual and context. Talking about 'at-risk pupils' and 'target groups' gets in the way of inclusive education. The challenge is to recognise and acknowledge each other's differences while continuing to connect, working together from person to person on a transformation towards a more welcoming context.



3. *The Suitcase*

The duo is travelling, taking a suitcase with them. A suitcase of knowledge, experience and methodologies to work with in training and coaching. Henriëtte Sandvoort's experience as a trainer at the LFB and Sofie Sergeant's experience as a trainer at Handicum, Konekt and as a teacher and education coordinator at Disability Studies in Nederland, now senior lecturer at HU, come in handy. The pair discovered that the suitcase should be big enough to take into account the diversity in the teams.

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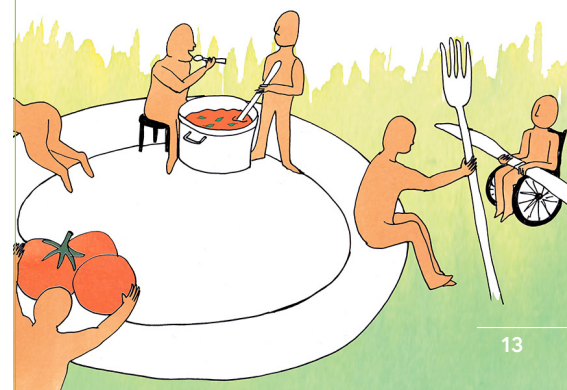
We didn't know what we were getting into, nor did we know where we would end up.

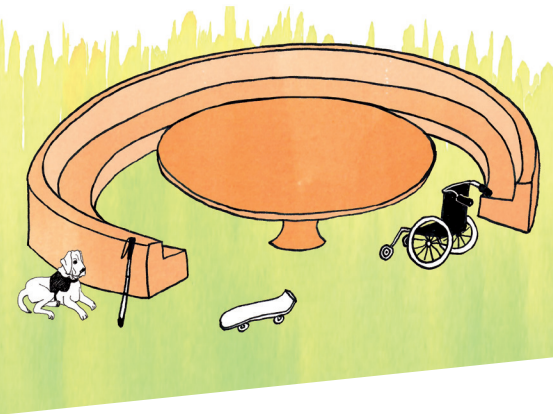
This also applies to education and the way we organise education: we need different ways of meeting, communicating, teaching, and researching. This means stepping outside our comfort zone so that everyone can participate and all pupils, students and teachers can thrive in our education. Inclusion is not about 'involving' people in one's 'own normal'. Nor is inclusive education about 'engaging' pupils and students in existing schools. Inclusive education requires a transformation of our education. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) argues that pupils and students experience barriers to learning, not because of their own abilities, but because of barriers created by the curriculum and schools. The UDL approach focuses on creating 'education for all', where teachers and schools remove barriers by proactively designing education (Murawski & Scott, 2019).

4. *The Research Kitchen*

The duo undertook a tour of ten research projects. During these visits, they were given a peek into the 'research kitchens' and an opportunity to reflect on how collaboration takes place: 'Who decides on the menu; how are the tasks distributed across the team, who gets in and out, who cannot be missed in the kitchen, are we allowed to make mistakes and what happens when we do?' Reflection is essential to inclusive research, but thus also in all forms of collaboration.

In our education, too, we need space for reflection, and time - time to tinker, to dabble, to talk





things through, to be allowed to make mistakes – and not to be judged for this but to learn from it. Is our education ready for this, for deep reflection in and about our internal 'kitchen'?

5. At the Table

Not only will there be cooking in the research kitchen, we will also go to the table. We go to the table in colourful company so we need a table that fits into a prepared environment. In the research project, we initially talked about 'researchers with an academic background' and 'researchers with experiential knowledge'. We now prefer to talk about transdisciplinary research: research conducted by people from different academic disciplines, people from the field of practice and people with experiential knowledge. People often combine different forms of knowledge: separating this from each other does not make sense. Simply put, a diverse team, together at the table.

There is massive labelling in our education system: children are increasingly labelled ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, etc... Getting such a label should not be an end point but the beginning of an investigation: children learning who they are and what they can do better thanks to the label, how they can use this in their lives, and what they need in context. Our research shows the importance of

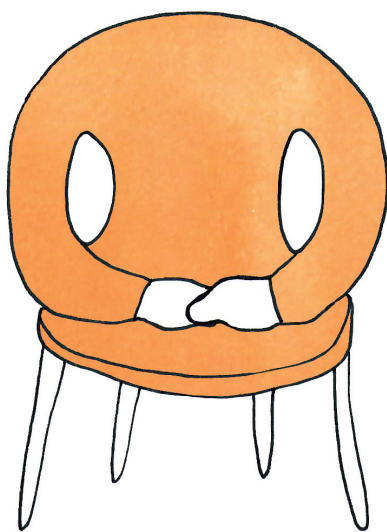


In our society, there is often a line between us and them. In our project, we were actually looking for connection: who are you, what do you know that I do not; how can we work together?

connecting with each other. At the table, person to person, but also to connect with yourself and what you carry with you.

6. Sitting on Your Hands

Agreement at the table. Then what? Cooperation starts with knowing that you do not know something. You realise that you need the other person, and so you also have to make space for them to be able and dare to speak. This means that you will regularly have to sit on your hands yourself. It sometimes takes a while for the other person to come up with something. Just wait a while, doing nothing.



Inclusive education requires transdisciplinary collaboration: collaboration between professionals from various disciplines, and with the children, young people, students, with the parents, the municipality, with all colleagues, the management, the janitor, and so on. Giving space to all voices, including the voice of the child, student and parents: the knowledge of experience. And that means that, as professionals, we will have to sit on our hands regularly, if we really want to listen.



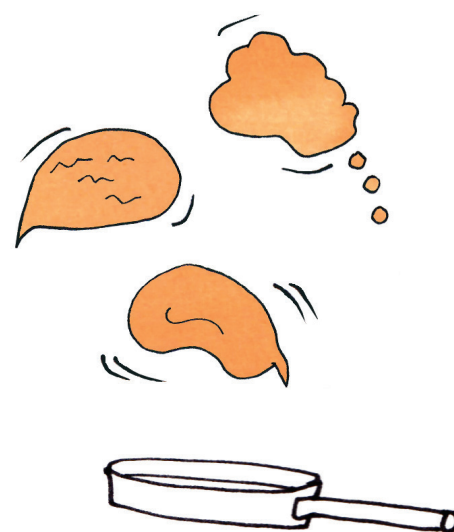
7. The Ladder

In the research kitchen there is a ladder, the participation ladder. At the bottom, you have little to decide: you are informed. At the top, you have everything to say: you have full control. We have noticed that many people in the research kitchen are eager to show the best of themselves. And this sometimes leads to struggles. Inner struggles and struggles between people. Our research taught us: flatten that ladder. More participation is not always better and sometimes leads to 'fake participation'. So rather than attaching milestones to participation and inclusion, we should take the journey together. In this way, we will avoid 'fake inclusion' and keep the dialogue open and sincere.

Tobias Buchner's European research teaches us about the risk of organising exclusion under what are termed 'inclusive roofs' (Buchner et al., 2020). Instead, we should speak honestly with each other, be transparent in our search, and learn from each other. We are searching, and thanks to wonderful examples we are little by little getting to know the colourfulness of inclusive education.

8. Throwing up the Pancake

When you throw up a pancake, it is important to also catch it properly, to land it on a plate. Experiential experts working in research kitchens are often asked to throw up their story. This takes a lot of energy. Who takes care of landing the story? Is it given the space it deserves? Is it served with care? Who is the owner of the story?



Take care of landing and embedding the story of experience in education: when children, young people, students and parents are talking: take this seriously. This requires time, attention, coordination and making good agreements with each other.



9. Flying in the Dark

Looking back on their collaboration, the duo found that they were often 'flying in the dark': how they were going to work together was something they had to work out and give shape to themselves. Grant providers asked them to describe this in advance. What research methods? How much time needed for each research phase? Project leaders reported that they had often written their research projects without the involvement of experiential experts and that they also did not know at the time which methods would be appropriate.

In working towards inclusive education, space is needed for 'flying in the dark': for the search for how to work together. You cannot know in advance what that HOW will look like.

10. The Hot-Air Balloon

In a hot-air balloon, you are vulnerable and visible. As for vulnerability, it takes trust to dare to take off, trust in each other, in the experience of the pilot and the team. And you are also visible. In our research, we met many people who were labelled at some point in their lives: 'intellectual disability', 'autism' or 'non-congenital brain injury'. These are labels that are associated with prejudice and discrimination in our society (Van Hove et al., 2012). They give rise to thinking in dichotomies: people with disabilities and without. Often, in our society, people with disabilities are not seen as partners, colleagues. Their new role of peer researchers highlights another side of their identity. They assume the role of 'knowing' rather than the role of care-receiving client. This sets not only them in motion, but also their colleagues, family, bystanders, society. Taking a seat in the hot-air balloon also symbolises the new socially valued position people feel and get: the chance you get to show up and contribute.

Attending a school in your own region has great significance for people and their lives. We must therefore treat this matter with great care. Nobody is waiting for a new experience of failure or exclusion. But we cannot - together - exclude a little risk (Biesta, 2015).

In conclusion

The capacity of a school is determined by the capacity of the team (Polat, 2011). So it is not only the child, the young person, the student who should be at the centre of inclusive education: besides them, one should also include the relatives, the teachers, the management and the other education professionals and colleagues working in the school. It is by taking this complexity into account that inclusive education has opportunities. The teacher of today and tomorrow should not be able to do everything, the teacher is not an expert acting in isolation from others. Let us train and support our teachers to be able to work together in a connecting way: train them to be a collective that takes complexity as a starting principle.

We must go on a journey. Together. To encounter all the things that we did not expect.

Illustrations

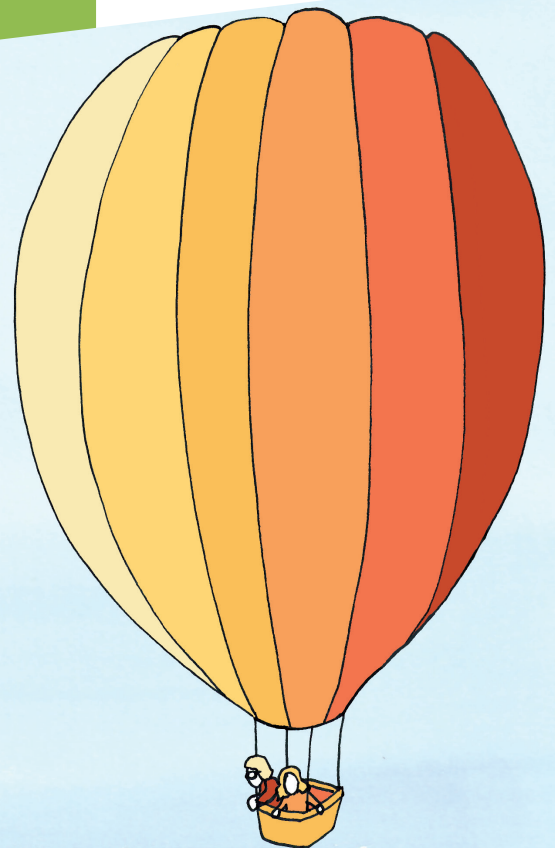
- Illustrations created by Sanneke Duijf

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- Full bibliography available at <https://cabrio-training.online/publicaties/artikel-nl>



This is how we avoid 'fake inclusion' and keep the dialogue open and sincere.



Tiuri & Compagnie 21

Turn inclusion into a verb



Linda Schrik is production leader at Theaterwerkplaats Tiuri & Compagnie 21. Linda graduated from Academy for Leisure & Events in 2011 in the field of Management in Creative Industries.

It is a unique organisation. Theaterwerkplaats Tiuri – with locations in Breda and Roosendaal – is committed to supporting the talent development of performers with intellectual and physical disabilities. And they go about this quite seriously: with theatre classes, practical work placements and eventually their own travelling theatre company. Their latest dance production called No Bodies is booked in theatres from Leeuwarden to Middelburg.

About Tiuri

'Theaterwerkplaats Tiuri was founded eighteen years ago,' says artistic director Bas Roijen. 'Our founder Theo Frentrop named the organisation after the protagonist of a knight's tale by Tonke Dragt. In this story, Tiuri goes on a journey to eventually become a knight. It symbolises the journey that our performers make'. These performers are people with intellectual and sometimes also physical disabilities. There are performers with Down syndrome, with autism, but also players in a wheelchair. 'They come to us mostly via special education. Our goal is to develop their talent. Although these people may be impaired in cognitive environments, they are often ahead of others in creative and impulsive settings. Where we are inhibited by our minds, they are often very open. They cannot keep up with our everyday pace, but are much more attentive to the here and now. That leads to wonderful results.'

Whereas in most organisations management

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Do they actually have something to offer the world? We are convinced they do.

lays down the law in terms of strategy and targets, at Tiuri it is the other way around and it is the performers who run the show. Bas Roijen explains: 'Our organisation follows the performers, we put the talent of our performers at the centre, hoping to create a situation where they themselves have a voice: a creative voice, a physical voice, an expressive voice and where they themselves stand for their position as human beings in Dutch society.' A good example of this is the shift to dance and movement that has taken place partly as a result of a collaboration with dance company De Stilte in Breda. Here, we saw that in this form of working, the talents of the performers became more apparent and their limitations actually faded into the background.

Godot's Eye

Ten performers from Tiuri got together with ten dancers from De Stilte. At first, it seemed that they could not be more different. Hardly any dancers spoke Dutch and our performers spoke no English. The dancers all had 'perfect bodies' whereas our players mostly represented 'imperfection'. But on stage, they understood each other perfectly. An organic exchange took place in the language of movement and imagination that touched everyone. The performers were challenged by the level and range of movement of the dancers. Conversely, the



dancers were moved by the performers' sincere perception and expression that brought them back to why they themselves had once started dancing. A new language emerged during this encounter, which then became visible to the audience in a joint performance (Godot's Eye).

Inclusion & innovation

In 2021 an important step was taken in the development of Tiuri. The 'talent development model' that was described in the artistic multi-year plan served as a backbone in this process. The central point of departure is that Tiuri's modus operandi will have a focus on three demarcated environments. These environments have emerged from the exchanges that Tiuri's performers have gone through so far. They are an answer to the question that has become visible through them. Together they form 'the performer's journey'.

Environment 1: Tiuri

The first environment are the workshops (in Breda and Roosendaal) where the (new) performers discover and develop their talent for theatre and dance in exchange with the artistic team. In this primary step, an important

foundation with the performers is laid in their work at Tiuri. From this exchange, it naturally becomes clear which direction the performers want to take their talents into.

Environment 2: Piak

In the second environment they can engage in an exchange at an industry partner that is a fit with the performer. This 'practice lab' was named after Piak who helps young Tiuri cross the mountains into the new world in Tonke Dragt's story. In Theaterwerkplaats Tiuri, Piak's Lab is also aimed at facilitating performers in their encounters with the world. Associated with this environment are a number of regular partners who help develop and shape the learning environment. These range from art schools to theatre and dance companies and research partners. Within the meetings, experimentation and (reciprocal) exchange are central. If you regarded Tiuri as an educational institute, these would be the work placements, so to speak. From the Piak phase, they work on products (e.g. a performance) or on (artistic) research. Here, the performers grow in terms of artistic quality and expressiveness. Autonomy increases and this has a visible positive effect on the need for care. In this process, the 'appeal' of the resulting products also increases. The performances automatically enter a wider network via the partner concerned.

Environment 3: Compagnie 21

Theatre director Jan Hein Sloessen of De Kring argued: 'At the moment, many of these performances are unknown and therefore unloved, but I am sure that when they become visible, there will be an audience for them.' The performers want to share the development they went through. They want to show the world what they are capable of. And in doing so they want to perform the

shows that they have developed before a wide audience. As a result, a new exercise in the performer's work becomes visible. The exercise of using their talent in the service of a (professional) touring production. This is, as it were, the ultimate test for the performer. To facilitate this step, Compagnie 21 was launched. In this third environment, performers get the opportunity to work together with professional cultural performers on productions for a wide audience. These alliances focus on theatres and festivals in the cultural field on the one hand, but collaboration is also sought with schools in special and mainstream education (at the performers' request). While playing the productions, a transference takes place. The performers have developed a quality that has something to say in the world. Through Compagnie 21, performers are literally given a stage, and consequently, a chance to make their voices heard in the social movement that is happening right now. Regular partners in this process are the performing artists, theatres, festivals, schools, centres for the arts, and also an impresario.

Future

Meanwhile, Tiuri is receiving national attention. The question is how the concept of inclusion is currently being interpreted. Does it just mean that people with disabilities are 'also allowed to participate' because it is the right thing to do and it is sad if they cannot? Or do they actually have something to offer the world as well? Tiuri is convinced of the latter.

At the moment, evidence is gathered through the work of Tiuri and Compagnie 21. The Educational Theory programme of Fontys University of Applied Sciences has started a four-year study into what the modus operandi means to the development of the performers. Meanwhile the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has come on board to see if

policies can be changed in such a way that performers can be paid in the future, just like other theatre producers. This is not possible at the moment. In the UK and Sweden, they are much further along with this. 'I hope that in five years' time we are a regular part of the cultural field, with paid performers,' says Bas Roijen.

Across the country

The Tiuri-trained performers, together with Compagnie 21, are now travelling across the country with their No Bodies performance. 'We are pioneers and so play at theatres that also want to pioneer. It is an exciting step, but partly because of the support from the various funds, we can keep prices lower and buyouts are easier. By the way, we also use the fund money to cover regular costs, such as clothing, lighting, transport and necessary adjustments to the building.' The No Bodies performance also featured at the Holland Dance Festival in February. 'As you can imagine, our people often encounter prejudice in society. Here, they participate, and more importantly, make a contribution. The other day, after a performance, one of the performers said: this is my dream. I even have fans.'

More information

- *Documentary on No Bodies:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9bMHTOIYEA>

Photography

- *Right:* Hans Gerritsen

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When do we get to go to Carré?

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This is my dream. I even have fans.



Dilemmas in doing diversity

Inequality is required for equal treatment

Mark van Ostaijen is an Assistant Professor affiliated to the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam and is Managing Director at the Leiden Delft Erasmus Centre Governance of Migration and Diversity (LDE GMD).

Working in a diverse context is everyday reality to many practitioners in metropolitan districts and neighbourhoods, because present-day cities are increasingly being made up of citizens with various ethnic, religious, cultural and sexual backgrounds. The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) also observes that the 'transience' and multiplicity of our 'migration society' have sharply risen (Bovens, Engbersen, Bokhorst, and Jennissen, 2020). As such, cities are the crossroads of superdiversity, of a 'growing diversity within diversities' (Vertovec, 2007). Diversity can be considered a variety within and among groups on the basis (or a combination) of education, income, work, household composition, living situation, ethnicity, political bias, sexual orientation or class.

Looking at crossroads of inequalities

As a result, the current demographic reality replaces our former ideas of diversity. In some cities, this demographic composition even causes us to not consider them 'majority cities' anymore (Crul, 2016). In other words, every citizen is to some extent part of a minority. In addition, it is practical to address diversity from an intersectional perspective, and look at the several crossroads of inequalities at the same time, because marginality or inequality is often connected with several of these diversity markers. That claim also holds for the reverse. For example, being highly skilled, heterosexual, and male are important conditions for having a successful position in this society; for some of us better known as the 'seven check marks' of Joris Luyendijk (2022).

So, privilege and disadvantage are not accidental. And from that perspective, various public institutions are confronted with issues of inclusion, exclusion and discrimination. Cultural

venues such as theatres, for example struggle with the question of how to reach marginalised communities, sport organisations face the challenge of how they can develop inclusive teams, whereas secondary schools improvise ways in which they can address discriminatory practices of their pupils and parents. So, organisations are faced with diversity issues in various sectors, because "We don't know how we should address diversity. We improvise every day," according to a head of department of a secondary school in the Charlois district of Rotterdam South. From these words, it appears that diversity is one of the most complex, yet interesting social challenges of today.

A lot has been said and written about integration, diversity, and multiculturalism, and mainly so in a judgemental form. There is never a shortage of political attention to themes of (migration-related) diversity since they are the focus of socio-political attention almost continuously. And not always to the benefit of their implementation. Because with harsh politicising and judgements we do not do justice to the importance to better understand this new everyday reality. A reality that is no longer reserved to the bigger cities in the Randstad area, but is typical of many municipalities and cities in the Netherlands (Bovens, Engbersen, Bokhorst, and Jennissen, 2020). Moreover, a 'diversity of diversities' is not only a Randstad phenomenon, but a national theme. Therefore, it is essential we should better understand how diversity is addressed in practical implementation. Because those who design the policy in practice, practitioners, are often confronted with numerous challenges when implementing things. The cardinal dilemma here is that in order to be able to treat all citizens equally, they should be treated unequally. This leads to urgent diversity dilemmas, and sometimes even to explicit frictions. Varying needs and

the necessity to take decisions on how to tackle diversity often makes it hard for practitioners to know what approach to follow. Although swimming hours specifically aimed at Islamic women may have been organised with the best of intentions, it might cause friction among groups who feel they are discriminated against. Furthermore, it draws attention to them being deprived, and it confirms their underprivileged position even more.

Diversity dilemmas

From the literature, the idea of 'ethnic freezing' is well known (Kruglanski and Freund, 1983) sketching the situation of minority organisations that are only granted subsidies if they meet strict 'ethnic conditions'. This often leads to confirming stereotyping and folklore practices. By facing diversity dilemmas, it could very well be that practitioners have to deal with a comparable process, which could be understood as 'diversity freezing'. In other words, by organising these special swimming hours, all sorts of stereotyping of discrimination (migration background, homosexuality or being female) are emphasised more strongly, and even confirmed. It could very well be that what has been organised with the best of intentions will lead to unintended and undesired effects paradoxically enough, that is, to further confirming and legitimising categories of discrimination that should

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Privilege and disadvantage are not accidental.



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'Dilemmas of diversity' looks critically at 'doing diversity' in present, past and future.

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It could very well be that what has been designed with the best of intentions could lead to unintended and undesired effects paradoxically enough.

be reduced through diversity policy. A painful diversity dilemma.

Consequently, the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Centre Governance of Migration and Diversity research centre has risen to the challenge to start exploring these very themes. Major practical challenges have been taken up with finance offered by the National Science Agenda, and a large range of knowledge institutes are collaborated with. This research project, *Dilemmas of Doing Diversity* explores how these diversity dilemmas occur in the welfare and care sectors, sport and recreation sectors, and housing sector in, among other things, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Zwolle, Antwerp, and Hamburg. A new approach is central - different from previous diversity research - in which it is being explored how these crossroads of several categories of identity and power, such as class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, age, health and (dis)ability extend to, for example leisure domains, such as the cultural and sports sectors. There is a focus on places to meet up, such as to what degree the several target groups are taken into account when designing public parks, organising special

swimming hours or offering culture as a local theatre, and what dilemmas this evokes.

This research project focuses on the diversity that bites, that is, by conducting research into diversity dilemmas which sometimes have political overtones, but, empirically speaking, have not yet been properly studied as to how they are dealt with and what their consequences are. And as we know there are hardly any really good answers to a clear dilemma. It is the tragical condition so typical of diversity practices, and in which many questions are still unanswered.

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We don't know how we should address diversity. We improvise every day.

'Dilemmas of diversity': diversity policy and diversity practice in Dutch cities in past, present, and future

Politicians, policymakers, journalists, scientists, and others emphasise the importance of an inclusive society, which is open to diversity in numerous ways as regards policy and its implementation (e.g. ethnicity, religion, gender, class, and sexuality). But how do you create and promote a society with coherence and space for differences, in which everybody is heard on top of that? To give everybody equal opportunities, everybody should not be treated equally for one person needs more support and help than another person. How are choices made and accounted for? 'Dilemmas of diversity' critically looks at 'doing diversity' in past, present, and future.

Lead organisation on behalf of the consortium: Prof. Dr. Marlou Schrover – Leiden University

Consortium: Leiden University, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Delft University of Technology, Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing, Nederlands Interdisciplinair Demografisch Instituut (Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute), Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatie Centrum (Research and Documentation Centre), Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, Kenniscentrum Sport en Bewegen (Knowledge Centre for Sport and Physical Activity), Ministry of Justice and Security, the municipality of Rotterdam, SOR Stichting Ouderenhuisvesting Rotterdam, Landelijk Samenwerkingsverband Actieve bewoners (LSA), Aktiegroep het Oude Westen Rotterdam, Platform ZorgSaamWonen, Amstelring Dagbesteding, the municipality of Amsterdam, MOB, IDEM Radar, Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (Netherlands Institute for Social Research), Samen Wonen Samen Leven, Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Centre Governance of Migration and Diversity (GMD), Buurtzorg, Nieuw Wij, COC Nederland, Stichting Disability Studies Netherlands, University of Antwerp, University of Hamburg.

Inclusion is not occasional band-aid patching

Studio Stoofpot is working towards an equal world

Lisa Jansen is trainer, writer, podcast creator and co-founder of Studio Stoofpot. (www.studiostooftop.nl)



Inclusion agency Studio Stoofpot is the business of Randy van Boxtel (he/him), alumnus of Breda University of Applied Sciences. He studied Leisure Management and spent his first working years in the music industry – at pop concert venue Dynamo in Eindhoven – and as an independent event organiser. And while the social justice aspect was already somewhat central to that work, he believed that much more could and should be done in this area. That is why he is now running Studio Stoofpot together with his partner Lisa Jansen (she/her). The agency includes a speakers service with a diverse range of speakers and trainers.



Kaylee Rosalina (she/her): 'Inclusion means taking action again and again. After all, there is no end point, but always a new beginning.'

Training and advice

'Studio Stoofpot is there for organisations that genuinely want to be more inclusive. We help them work out what their exact needs are and then provide tools to achieve greater inclusion, accessibility and equality within the organisation,' says Randy. To this end, Studio Stoofpot offers lectures, workshops and training courses, but also advisory programmes. 'You can see these short-term collaborations as a good way to plant seeds and raise awareness within the organisation. But if you really want to do it thoroughly, it is best to embark on a comprehensive programme. Inclusion really is a verb. You do not achieve it with the occasional band-aid patching, unfortunately. But such a one-off event can be the strategic starting signal for a more in-depth programme.'



Eveline Druncks (she/her): 'Assumptions are human, but please also learn to look beyond (negative) assumptions through respectful dialogue.'

Inclusive organisation

Randy and Lisa have deliberately chosen to work with a diverse group of speakers and trainers. 'The two of us simply do not want, nor are we able to, provide all the perspectives and knowledge needed to overcome all the different forms of injustice and marginalisation. That is why we work with people who support lived experience with theoretical knowledge,' he points out. 'In this way, we do not fill in for people what their needs are, but make sure they themselves have their say. For example, we do not want the people we work with to make money by talking about forms of exclusion that do not directly affect them. We think it is very important that our organisation itself is inclusive too. This is one of the ways we do so.'



Jeanette Chedda (she/her): 'The position of disabled people is deteriorating every year, but action remains undelivered. What we need besides the government taking its responsibility, is collective pressure from society to improve the position of people with disabilities. So that we no longer have to settle for the crumbs society throws our way. We cannot do this alone, which is why I call people to action: do something, please.'

Positive change

The positive impact that Studio Stoofpot has on its clients' working and learning environments

usually unfolds over a somewhat longer period of time. 'We often come across organisations where many seeds have yet to be planted. We then, as it were, turn on the "inclusion feelers" in everyone. The organisation can subsequently set to work with the information gained, with or without our guidance. This involves, for example, introducing new guidelines to make meetings more inclusive, improving communication around accessibility, and renewing policies to boost inclusion.'

Liza Sloodman (they/their): 'Questioning the existing standards and contrived structures makes the world a freer, safer and more equal place for everyone. I find the thought "that is just the way it is" the worst platitude and hope to always keep learning about how things can be different myself. So that we always keep taking steps towards a new, inclusive world where there is space for everyone to be who he, she is or they are.'



Photography

Photo Kaylee: Diewke van den Heuvel
Photo Eveline: Rosalie
Photo Jeanette: Linda Bouritius
Photo Liza: Aline Bouma



We do not fill in for people what their needs are, but make sure they themselves have their say.



An exciting challenge

Towards a Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) plan at Breda University of Applied Sciences



Sander van Breugel is Human Resource Advisor at Breda University of Applied Sciences, and he is involved in the development of the D&I strategy.

There would be something pretentious in saying that BUAs is already a fully diverse and inclusive community. It would be opportunistic even, if we were claiming that BUAs was 'one hundred percent D&I certified'. I do not mean this as a cynical remark: search LinkedIn and you will find courses certifying you as 'D&I proof'. Although I support all initiatives advancing what D&I entails in practice, or increasing awareness thereof, I am wary about D&I being marketed or instrumentalised. So, when I say that D&I is at the core of BUAs, I do not mean that we are diverse and inclusive in terms of being certified.

I do mean that BUAs indeed has a diverse community and embraced the importance of cross-cultural understanding, co-creation and social innovation a long time ago. Although these themes do not fully cover what D&I encompasses, they do originate from the very tradition that today's societal debate on diversity and inclusion originates from: how can we improve society? We do not claim to have all the answers. And no, we do not believe we are perfect ourselves. Instead, we recognise the issues, and we take them seriously. But yes: we do believe that a diverse and inclusive community is prerequisite to using each other's strengths, combining them, and experimenting together, to help solve the challenges of our society. Social equity is at the heart of this. In addition, we believe it is vital to meeting the changing needs of the industries we serve. This is how D&I is at the core of BUAs. And how it has informed our strategy.

D&I plan

This is not a 'paper tiger': in February 2022 our Executive Board formalised the BUAs D&I plan,

committing itself to achieving specific goals and allocating resources for this purpose. In this process, a structural framework was achieved to address D&I in an integrated manner, covering all relevant areas (education, research and internal organisation) and stakeholders (students, staff and the local community). This means our D&I team is an active collaboration of our colleagues concerned with Human Resource, Sustainable Development Goals, internationalisation, student well-being, ethics and community building: sharing goals, knowledge and contacts and aligning activities to contribute to BUAs' strategic mission: 'to empower young professionals on their journey to shape a better world'.

The concrete commitments in our D&I plan, besides allocating resources to achieve them, are to develop a comprehensive D&I policy and connect, share and enrich internal policies and initiatives; to develop a D&I monitor and internal audits, review our staff recruitment processes, initiate further research into our state of affairs, and to integrate D&I training for management, staff and students. But our ambitions reach beyond that. We are currently developing a BUAs-wide educational curriculum on ethics and D&I, we want to integrate D&I comprehensively in our research teams, portfolios and partnerships as well as strengthen our research itself by integrating the ethical perspective that D&I requires of us. Most generally put: we have a structure in place to promote and enhance D&I as a matter of social safety and inclusion.

Agenda

So, we have the will, the plan, the structure and the means, but what are we going to do? One thing that is high on our agenda is

to regularly organise dialogue sessions on specific topics with students and colleagues, sometimes with guest experts. Last March, for example, Assistant Professor Dr Catherine Robb was interviewed, in a College Tour setting, by students and staff on how to deal with bias. Such dialogues help raise awareness and critical understanding of different viewpoints. We are also supporting a research project into the experienced inclusion within BUAs, looking to learn from its results and integrate these in a more elaborate self-scan. We will develop workshops and training courses for both students and staff and seek to improve our processes and procedures. It is an exciting challenge: it is a complex topic and there are lots of areas to address. But we are ready for it and anxious to start the work, together with our students and staff.

Photography

- Paul van Rijckevorsel



A structural framework was achieved to address D&I in an integrated manner, covering all relevant areas and stakeholders.

We are all guests in each other's lives

Ethics, inclusion and the hospitality principle in research and education

Marco van Leeuwen



Marco van Leeuwen, lecturer and researcher in philosophy and ethics at Breda University of Applied Sciences.

In recent years, the topic of 'inclusion' has assumed increasing prominence in politics and policy, in the media and in societal discussions. The trend from 'Gen X to Millennials to Gen Z' seems to be one of increasingly questioning one's own position. Who am I, who should I be, and what do I want? The consequence of asking such questions of conscience is, on the one hand, an increasingly branched classification system of identities (ways people see themselves and each other), but at the same time the realisation that space needs to be found or made for these differences. Hence the desire to provide space for everyone to participate in society with dignity and value, regardless of origin, cultural background, philosophy of life or expression of personality or identity. So: to 'include' everyone who wants to participate.

Leisure and ethics: hospitality

Finding or designing that space (in a process sense in companies and organisations, in a social sense in forms of interaction and communication, and in a physical sense in buildings, infrastructure and outdoor space) is a process trying to find its way through fits and starts. Sometimes, with the best will in the world, it may happen that a solution – however painstakingly forged - unintentionally overlooks certain types of people. See, for example, the article *Not about and for us, but with and by us!* elsewhere in this magazine, on the search for ways to make leisure activities accessible to people with mild intellectual disabilities.

The challenges to be inclusive in the leisure sector have a special, and often complex and contradictory character. On the one hand, leisure is that part of our lives where we choose activities, interactions and challenges, in relative freedom, that make us happy, give us energy, and increase our well-being (of ourselves and others). This suggests that those activities are tailored as closely as possible to our personal, unique desires, needs and abilities. This is only possible if distinctions are made: some activities are suitable for one group but not for another.

And that is precisely what we see in the leisure sector. Many leisure activities are targeted at subgroups, or niches. Music festivals featuring hardstyle, heavy metal or rap are not suitable for everyone, for example. We now know from experience that a classically designed museum exhibition of old masters will attract comparatively few young people, or people from migrant backgrounds. An urban dance party or an alternative festival with avant-garde theatre in a squat appeals to yet a different mix of target groups. Not everyone wants to participate in everything, and of course that is not at all necessary, but it does imply that many leisure activities are to some extent *exclusive*. And to a certain extent, this is fine: the beauty of leisure, as mentioned, is that people can freely choose the activities they derive value from, based on their personality, preferences, desires and needs.

The other side of the coin is that inclusiveness fits well with one of the core ideas of leisure activities and facilities, namely the idea of *hospitality*. That idea is that anyone who *wants* to participate, who is interested in the genre of the show, or the character of the event, *can* join, regardless of their background. An important way for event organisers and leisure

facility managers to be inclusive is to firmly embed the idea of hospitality in everything they do. From the leisure concept to operational principles, and everything in between. The reason for this is not just that 'inclusion' is a socially important issue, but that the leisure sector actually has an obligation to strive for inclusion, precisely because of its role in facilitating everyone's quest for fun, meaningful experiences and well-being. In this sense, hospitality is an important way to give form, direction and substance to *ethics* within the leisure sector.

The central role of hospitality as a structuring and guiding ethical principle in leisure can be extended to (nearly) all domains in which Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAs) specialises: not just leisure and events, but also tourism, hotel and facility, and games and media. Even logistics and built environment can be understood as a domain working on the conditions – either process-based or physical-spatial ones – that enable hospitality optimisation in the other domains mentioned.

After all, all these domains are about activities, experiences and interactions that promote quality of life, from individuals to broader social contexts to society at large: attending an event, travelling to a tourist destination, staying in a hotel or participating

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Many leisure activities are targeted at subgroups or niches and are not suitable for everyone.

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This does imply that many leisure activities are to some extent exclusive.

in a conference, playing a computer game or immersing yourself in social media, or optimising flows of goods and people. Each of these processes requires focusing on the quality of the experience, the interaction with the host or hostess, the touchpoints in the process of using the building, the content of the available on-site excursions, and so on. An important factor in this 'quality of experience' is the extent to which that experience is inclusive for the people who want to participate.

Inclusion criteria

To give shape to inclusion in the 'BUAs domains' in practice, and thus not to forget any people, is a complex and challenging process. This complexity has to do with the wide variety of ways in which people differ, and so, with the fact that there are different causes or characteristics on the basis of which people can be either 'included' or 'excluded'. The challenge then is to retrieve reliable data and find solutions that are actually effective. In addition, data retrieval and solution design processes work best when they are themselves inclusive and are thus carried out as a joint effort with the groups concerned.

As a first step towards a breakdown of types of characteristics or causes of inclusiveness (or lack thereof), we can identify the following clusters.



First and foremost: people with different cultural backgrounds (origin, language, customs), lifestyles and self-identification (e.g. LGBT). This is the cluster of people and groups (a cluster which is in itself very diverse, and therefore hard to capture under one label) usually thought of when talking about 'inclusion'. A dominant focus for being inclusive in this case is managing prejudice and exclusion, by paying attention to the character and quality of social interaction. In other words, managing for *hospitality in behaviour*.

Secondly: people with disabilities. This includes people with a physical disability (for example, a physical handicap), for whom the physical accessibility of buildings and facilities is especially important. This involves the absence of thresholds and other obstacles, and the presence of lifts, automatic doors and other mobility-assistance devices. Another subcategory involves people with a *mental* or *sensory* impairment. This too is a very diverse group, ranging from people who process information less easily (intellectual disability) or differently (partially sighted or blind, hard of hearing or deaf), to people who are sensitive to stimuli (an excess of sound or light, a lack of clarity, or clutter of spaces or processes). In this case, the primary focus is *hospitality in design*, just think of the physical design of spaces and routes, structuring and transparency of processes, and muting or filtering an abundance of stimuli.

In addition, there is a more complex, 'forgotten' category. The report *De Atlas van Afgehaakt Nederland* (www.kennisopenbaarbestuur.nl), published in December 2021, maps out how factors such as level of education, socio-economic status and health affect actual or perceived inclusion in Dutch society. People who do not feel understood or involved, who get disappointed in politics, media and society, will 'back out': they no longer vote, or seek refuge with parties at the extreme ends of the political spectrum. This also has consequences for leisure participation: having backed out means that these groups develop their own leisure activities, or are forced to withdraw (e.g. due to lack of money, or ill health) from public spaces. The exchange of ideas, the opportunity

to meet different kinds of people and the development of mutual understanding through those encounters (which, as it happens, is a particular strength of leisure) are adversely affected as a result. To be inclusive in these cases too, *hospitality in budget* (affordability) and *hospitality in beliefs* (respect/room for political and ideological differences) are of crucial importance.

Inclusiveness within BUAs

With the above in mind, we may expect that Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAs) is actively responding to the challenge of embedding inclusiveness, both as a theme in research – to fathom challenges and design improvements in the aforementioned domains – and as a focus in the design and implementation of education. This will allow students, lecturers, researchers and industry partners to work together towards a better society. This also entails thinking through together what it means to actually make 'society' a better place. Where, when and for whom? And based on what considerations, through what means and interventions, and with what consequences? And who are the winners or losers?

In the remainder of this article, we will take a tour of the 'BUAs fields', in particular in terms of research and student policy, to show the variety of initiatives undertaken to give shape to hospitality and inclusiveness.

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Hospitality is an important way to give shape, direction and substance to ethics within the leisure sector.





Education

Let us start with the design of inclusive education at BUAs. With regard to student policy and *student well-being* in particular, Covid is still an influential theme. The effects of the pandemic are still being felt. The possibility to interact on campus, in real life, with students and lecturers, and as such to pick up enthusiasm for the field, was severely curtailed because of lockdowns. For students who started their studies during the pandemic, especially international students with a small or absent social network, the inability to explore the social side of studying (meeting new people, going to parties, joining clubs and other aspects of student life) was also of great negative impact.

Now that society has reopened, the challenges – in addition to the benefits of enjoyable social interaction during one's studies – are all the more evident. The BUAs student population is characterised by a fairly wide variety of backgrounds, personalities, psychological wishes and needs, which leads to an equally wide variety of desires for the design of education and activities on campus. In addition to intercultural diversity (different customs and expectations with regard to organisation and interaction) and students with different personality traits or forms of identity expression (for example, LGBT), there are students who otherwise experience a mismatch between their own wants and needs on the one hand, and how the environment, their study programme and campus activities are organised on the other.

A group which is given particular attention is the group of *neurodivergent* students. Neurodivergence encompasses a multitude of causes (including ADHD, hypersensitivity, as well as autism spectrum disorders or variants thereof) and symptoms. When asked, the students concerned mention that the biggest challenges are overstimulation (light and noise, busy behaviour of others), the too loose

structure of classes and assignments (poorly defined goals and assessment criteria), and incomplete or unclear information (e.g. in the event of timetable changes). If education contains too many of these types of ingredients, some students may lose their motivation or may actually be unable to successfully attend class activities. Education that is designed without reasonably considering these aspects, will not be inclusive for this group.

For this group, but obviously also for all other student groups, BUAs has developed a *Plan on Student Well-Being*. This plan interestingly emphasises that 'inclusiveness' is not regarded as a separate priority precisely because it underlies *all* efforts to promote student well-being: this theme is reflected in everything. In that sense, this intention ties in seamlessly with the point previously made that all BUAs domains give expression to the hospitality principle in their own way.

On the basis of a policy scan carried out by ECIO (Expertise Centre on Inclusive Education) in 2020, talks with students and staff and its own quick-win analysis, the student well-being project team has defined several key objectives. The most prominent of these are:

- Student well-being is understood as a responsibility of the entire BUAs community.
- Special attention for transitions, so study career coaching in the transitions from secondary school or MBO (senior vocational education) to BUAs, in the choice of specialisation, placement, graduation topic, and the final pathway to the world of work.
- Facilitation of student clubs that may offer support. These clubs can be organised around certain personality traits (neurodivergence, identity or lifestyle) but also voluntary interests (books, films, etc.).
- Attention for prevention by creating a healthy ('inclusive') learning environment, and detection and support through coaching and student counsellors.

It is remarkable - from a leisure perspective - that by means of various interventions, the role of 'leisure ingredients' is acknowledged: there are clubs and social activities based on shared interests, events that strengthen the BUAs community, and there is special attention for monitoring a healthy work-care-leisure balance in the transition between different phases in the degree programmes.

Research

In the research conducted by BUAs researchers (and BUAs students!) the attention for inclusion is also clearly visible.

Students choose topics (sometimes guided by the programme staff, but often also based on their own interests and enthusiasm) that have the potential to contribute to the inclusiveness of companies, events, tourism destinations, facilities, and society at large.

Three inspiring examples of graduation theses from academic year 2021-2022:

- Emma Hendriks (Tourism Management) – 'Met een elektrische rolstoel het vliegtuig in' (Taking an electric wheelchair onto a plane);
- Idun Salamonsen (International Spatial Development) - 'Heat Stress in Cities: An In-Depth Study of how Heat Stress Management can be Conducted Equitably across Socio-Economic Groups';
- Emmelie Westerhoff (International Hotel Management) – 'Raise the bar! Block by block. How can blockchain technology help to decrease monetary poverty among cocoa farmers in Ghana and Ivory Coast?'

Each of these graduate studies expresses fine underlying ideals, but is distinguished by a concrete, thoroughly researched and pragmatic approach. Containing more than just fancy words and utopian but otherwise insufficiently researched vistas, each of these cases takes a careful look at how to make real and targeted improvements. Moreover, these themes represent an accurate cross-section of societally important topics: Hendriks asks us to support the thriving of the most vulnerable in society (by making holidays literally accessible and the entire transport chain welcoming to people in electric wheelchairs), Salamonsen comes up with plans to sort out policies and interventions in our own

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We can manage for hospitality in behaviour and in design, or for hospitality in budget and beliefs.

environment in a very targeted and data-driven way (by investing in combatting heat stress, especially in over-paved, often poor urban neighbourhoods that are hit hardest by it), and Westerhoff adds that we have to make sure that the entire production chain (of chocolate, in this case) becomes fairer and more sustainable, especially for the weakest links at the beginning, namely the farmers in developing countries.

'Inclusiveness' (and related ethically important themes such as sustainability and corporate responsibility) is a widespread topic in the research carried out by BUAs researchers. On the public research website of BUAs (www.buas.nl/en/research) many examples can be found. Here are a few notable ones:

Dignity

A European project about the digital accessibility of mobility solutions, in particular for vulnerable groups in society. The contribution of the province of Brabant consisted of the 'Nextbike' project, a shared-bike plan in Tilburg with a special focus on the elderly, low-income earners, the disabled and immigrants.

Metamorphosis

A different, child-centred approach to urban planning. Making neighbourhoods more child friendly, by embracing less car-oriented design practices, instead making more room for walkability, liveability, active lifestyles and inclusiveness, and the corresponding behavioural change of users.

Being There

The development of a Virtual Reality Museum for immigrant women in Monterey, allowing this group to share the experiences of temporarily living and staying somewhere,

so that architects and designers can learn from them.

Gaming Horizons

Gaming is an enormously popular leisure activity, a worldwide dominant form of entertainment, and an important carrier of cultural values. That is why it is crucial that games are not only developed from a market-driven perspective, but also with consideration of their impact on users and with attention for inclusiveness and ethical standards.

Crossroads

Making World War II stories visible and shareable, in order to (re)connect young people in particular with the life-changing decisions that can take place in a war, and the life lessons contained therein.

The above overview is necessarily limited and in that sense not optimally 'inclusive'. What does become clear is that although inclusiveness comes in many shapes and forms, students, lecturers, support staff and researchers within BUAs are working together to find the best ways to engage as many people as possible. For example, the hospitality principle described earlier is expressed in various ways, implicitly and explicitly, by making people feel welcome, comfortable, valued and in their place.

Dignity and *Metamorphosis* do this for existing or new residents; *Being There* for immigrants, women in particular; *Gaming Horizons* asks the question of how games and gaming communities can be more inclusive. *Crossroads* tries to actively invite young people into the past.

The opportunities to explore these topics further are almost endless. The need to keep explaining and rediscovering the hospitality principle is clear. This is where our mission lies, to continue to work together for a more beautiful university and a more beautiful world for all.

Sources

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Photography

- Paul van Rijckevorsel (page 23 and 24)

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Within BUAs we are working together to find the best ways to engage as many people as possible.

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This plan emphasises that 'inclusiveness' underlies all efforts to promote student well-being.



Unlimited Partying, exclusively for everybody

How HandicapNL ensures with the help of students and partners that people with a limitation can visit music festivals

Marcia van Beek
& Dionne Dijkman



Within HandicapNL, Marcia van Beek is in charge of the 'Buddies' and 'Unlimited Partying' programmes. Dionne Dijkman is project manager of Unlimited Partying.

Hardly any other country in the world hosts as many festivals as the Netherlands. But no matter how many we have, almost all of them are inaccessible for people with a disability. Of the 20 million festival tickets sold in 2019, only 50 were sold to people with a disability. Yet, we all have a right to party, don't we?

Enjoying music, dancing, chatting to friends, while having a drink and some good food. Festivals are great fun. But, unfortunately, this is not for everybody. How often do you see a person with a disability on festival grounds? Exactly! It is the exception, rather than the rule. No less than 1 million people with a limitation do want to go to a festival, but they cannot. That is why HandicapNL launched the Unlimited Partying programme in 2019. Unlimited Partying aims to make all festivals in the Netherlands fully accessible to people with a disability.

Test bed

Festivals and events are a sort of mini-societies in many ways. Complete cities are built up and broken down again in only a few days' time. And just like in cities, this brings along challenges in the field of sustainability and social inclusion. Events can serve as test beds because of their temporary nature. They can help us reconsider our current way of life, and transform it into a more sustainable and more social alternative.

Taking steps together

Waste separation, vegan food, green power, and

smart water use are things that most festivals already score reasonably well on, but inclusiveness - full participation for everyone - has not often been considered yet. It is understandable that organisers of a festival cannot see the wood for the trees as far as inclusion is concerned. That's because there are so many things to take into account. Therefore, HandicapNL start from the approach which takes festival organisers by the hand. The right steps are taken together to make the festival accessible to, for example wheelchair users, the blind, the deaf or people with non-congenital brain damage.

More than a toilet for the disabled

An accessible festival requires adaptations. Just providing a toilet for the disabled and some ramps is not enough. What is required are rest areas, nursing staff who can help with medical treatments, sufficient sanitary facilities, and good overnight accommodation. And accessible information is also essential. HandicapNL provide a full-service solution to festival organisers from A to Z, and arrange all facilities.

Furthermore, the organisers lobby for pointing out the importance of inclusion to the sector as well as the big part they can play in it. To that purpose, HandicapNL started to collaborate with, among other things, Green Events, the knowledge platform for a sustainable and social events industry. As a result, many festival organisers were reached in one go. HandicapNL also drew up a manifesto. That was offered to the

then Minister of Medical Care and Sport, Tamara van Ark, in early 2020, after which Parliamentary questions were asked immediately.

From Zwarte Cross to Concert at Sea

HandicapNL were able to make the Zwarte Cross festival accessible in 2019 thanks to their donors. This pilot scheme caused quite some excitement in the festival world. Therefore, the concept was further rolled out in 2021 when the Dutch Grand Prix was made accessible. Its festival organisers built a pop-up care hotel for some 100 people per night in Zandvoort, and they made the festival grounds accessible. In total, almost 600 disabled racing fans were welcomed. This year, HandicapNL have joined forces again with the Dutch Grand Prix to take the next steps. What's more, many new festivals want to join the mission, such as Concert at Sea and the Amsterdam-based Straf_Werk. Together with

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Events serve as a test bed, and help us reconsider the current way of life and transform it into a more sustainable and more social alternative.



The PowerChief is the key figure of their own club consisting of ten members maximum.



The Buddies programme creates sustainable, equal friendships among youngsters with and without a limitation.

these festivals, HandicapNL take care of the right facilities and accommodation, so everybody can enjoy these festivals.

Buddies create friendships

Volunteers are very important for making the mission of Unlimited Partying a success. They play an important part in helping disabled guests. Volunteers of the Buddies programme of HandicapNL also offer their help at festivals. Buddies and Unlimited Partying have a lot in common. Both programmes can connect two groups of people, with and without a limitation. And that works, because the more visible people with a disability become, and the more often people without a limitation get in touch with them, the smaller the distance becomes. Buddies has been initiated to combat loneliness. This programme aims at a world in which everybody is equal, where no one is excluded, and where it is quite normal to be friends with somebody who is just a little different. Within the programme, HandicapNL create sustainable, equal friendships between youngsters with and without a limitation. These are carefully matched as a result of their interests and personalities being examined closely.

Organising events together

Buddies, in concert with partners, also offer projects, in which youngsters with a limitation can contribute to a more inclusive and more beautiful world. They do so by organising small events, for example a football tournament, by youngsters with and youngsters without a limitation. It could be a unique experience for students to work on these events. They get in touch with companies, and learn to make a big impact with a small budget. Buddies offer hundreds of new friendships throughout the country every year. They have both a programme for youngsters with a physical limitation and a programme for youngsters who have a mild intellectual disability.

Buddies for students

Buddies work with students a lot. By doing a work placement as a peer buddy, students are linked for at least one academic year to a peer who has a mild intellectual disability, with the aim of ensuring that a sincere friendship is created. In this way, students make an important social and societal contribution by doing a work placement. Furthermore, students with organisational talents can become a Club Manager of Buddies. In that case, they take care of the day-to-day affairs of a club consisting of fifteen pairs, and are assigned tasks, such as conducting intake interviews, forming and guiding pairs, and guiding peer and group meetings. A wonderful challenge to further develop their management skills.

The PowerClub

In addition to the friendship programme, Buddies recently set up a digital community centre: The PowerClub. Students can put their skills into practice as trainees here as well, i.e. as PowerChief, the key figure in their own club consisting of ten members maximum. These chiefs organise an activity on the basis of their passion, on average, once every two weeks. These activities take place via Teams, simply

from their own living room. The PowerChiefs make sure that everybody feels at home within the club, and they support club members in participating online. Moreover, the chiefs devise an interesting programme and prepare for it. The PowerClub have high ambitions, and intend to expand enormously in the time to come.

Continue until everybody can participate

To date, it has not been self-evident that disabled people can fully participate in society. Having a good job, doing sports, going out with friends or finding love is not easy. One of the barriers they run into is accessibility of public areas and events. HandicapNL think this should be solved, and strive for accessibility in the Netherlands. Accessible festivals are an important part of this. HandicapNL will not stop until all disabled people in the Netherlands can lead a normal daily life.

Interested?

Students who are interested in doing a work placement as a PowerChief and/or have inspiring ideas for a new Club can send an email to powerclub@handicap.nl. Students who have questions and/or want to apply for the Buddies friendship programme or for doing a work placement at a festival can apply via Buddies@handicap.nl.



Getting rid of paternalism in cultural policy

Give space to new policymakers



Koen van Eijck is professor of Cultural Lifestyles and is affiliated to the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication of Erasmus University Rotterdam.



The opportunities people are given to entertain or develop themselves in their spare time are not limitless. Due to concerns about public morality or maintaining order, authorities have always been engaged in the way in which people spend this time. This was not only about prohibiting undesired behaviour (noise nuisance, drug use, environmental pollution), but also promoting activities that were considered beneficial. This ranged from designing allotment areas to recover contact between urban residents and nature to subsidising museums or music and theatre companies to be able to deliver a qualitatively high-grade cultural offering at a reasonable price. At first, such a policy was mainly aimed at the low-skilled, who could benefit from these attempts to achieve edification with the aim, in the words of Steinmetz, founder of the Volksuniversiteit, of being raised to become a 'civilised man and true citizen'. Nevertheless, women were also welcome, and promoting artistic or creative education was a goal that was widely supported by the government.

The ideal of edification through the arts had seemed a bit paternalistic to many since the 1960s. Moreover, the success of this sort of initiatives was very limited, and due to the extended compulsory education for everybody, it seemed less and less relevant. In the 1960s and 1970s, edification was emphasised to a lesser degree, and promotion of everybody's welfare through policy on arts was emphasised to a higher degree, whereby amateur artists should be taken seriously, and more scope was given to and recognition was given for widely varying cultural preferences (Oosterbaan Martinius, 1990). In the late 1990s, when state

secretary Van der Ploeg also pleaded for broadening the target groups of cultural policy, it did not primarily concern just workers, but also the low-skilled, youngsters and ethnic minorities. To that purpose, however, policymakers and the art world had to be tempted to step out of their comfort zone by ceasing to consider overly elitist criteria for subsidies (innovative, groundbreaking, urgent) sanctifying (Blokland, 1996). Supply and demand in the arts sector had diverged considerably, and both sides should try to fill that gap through policy, with more and more attention being paid to the rapidly growing group of ethnic minorities.

Democratisation of culture

Attempts to bring supply and demand closer together could, simply speaking, be made 'top-down' or 'bottom-up'. The first approach is described as *democratisation of culture*, and the second as *cultural democracy* (Hadley, 2021). *Democratisation of culture* refers to attempts to make the subsidised cultural offerings of established venues more accessible to everybody. That would be beneficial to those who cannot be counted in as visitors yet, and at the same time legitimise the right to exist of those venues. The paternalism referred to in the title can still be seen here: let the government and the industry decide what the right 'high' culture is, and make it available through, among other things, education, by subsidising companies or institutions, and geographical spreading of facilities.

It is increasingly difficult in a multicultural or even super diverse society to sustain such an approach, for what is the right culture? Who decides that, and why would that culture be

beneficial to all those that come into contact with it? Whoever wants to take diversity into account seriously understands that the programme offerings should be brought about differently, and that audiences should be given a bigger voice in what forms of culture should be represented in it.

Cultural democracy

This brings us to *cultural democracy*, where the starting point is that citizens should be able to participate in, and express themselves in, the cultural forms that are valuable to them. People should be able to develop cultural initiatives themselves that are in line with their tastes and lifeworlds, without the possibility of taking one dominant culture for granted. The choices that are made are respected and wherever possible, supported, as a result of which people become more active participants and less passive culture consumers. This is probably a

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Edification in order to be raised to be a 'civilised man and true citizen'



Who determines what the right culture is, and why would this culture be beneficial to everybody who comes into contact with it?

more successful route to a more diverse audience because to date, inequality in participation has still been high, with the low-skilled and people with a non-western background as categories we hardly observe in the participation figures (Wennekers, Van den Broek and Van der Torre, 2019). We cannot rule out for that matter that this underrepresentation is partly caused by many studies focusing on western forms of formal culture (see, for example Van den Broek & Keuzenkamp, 2008).

The distinction between *democratisation of culture* and *cultural democracy* is not black and white, and both approaches could occur in combination. Neither of them is very easy. Existing institutions which want to appeal to a more diverse audience could choose, for instance, to diversify their programmes or appeal to a different audience through additional activities. To give an example, the Van Abbe Museum had projects about identity which were staged inside and outside the museum; their 'Picasso in Palestina' project was aimed at cooperating with Ramallah and asylum seekers; and gender diversity is strived for through Van Abbe's 'Queering the Collection'. Other venues combine hip hop with ballet (in conjunction with Het Nationale Ballet) or make stage shows with racism and discrimination as central topics (Het Nationale Toneel). Here we

see how some established venues use the diversity theme by putting certain themes or shows on the agenda or engage in forms of crossovers.

This approach is certainly not a miracle. To many in the intended target group, existing visitor thresholds, such as unfamiliarity with the theatre companies or halls and the fear of not feeling at home there will remain high. Established venues, such as theatres, are often prepared to adjust their prices and marketing in addition to their programme to serve a more diverse audience, but they remain places that are consistently out of view to a great part of the potential audience. That is not so strange: I, in my turn, do not have any clue as to the events that are announced in places such as www.turksagenda.nl, www.vechtsportautoriteit.nl/kalender or the AFAS Circustheater. I am also happy that no one forces me to have a look at them or tries to attract me to AFAS with a crossover of Christmas songs by Django Wagner and some performer I do like, in the hope that I start appreciating Django all of a sudden. Most visitor thresholds can ultimately be reduced to a similar sort of lack of interest and/or fear of not feeling at home among an audience in cultural venues with an overly high-brow image (Van Eijck & Bisschop Boele, 2018).

Promotion: bottom-up or from within

The bottom-up route, i.e. *cultural democracy*, seems more promising if it concerns attracting a more diverse audience. To that purpose, more scope should be created for new makers, preferably coming from the groups for whom the offerings are still hardly relevant. They are often keen, but regularly choose to undertake things on their own instead of turning to the demanding subsidy providers. That is one of the reasons why the Fonds Podiumkunsten (2021: 6) applauds that 'more and more producing institutes, venues and festivals see a role for themselves in guiding new makers'. Furthermore, it would help if some of these initiatives, at any rate in the first instance, are given their own spot where the new audience feels at home. Theater Zuidplein in Rotterdam is such a place where multicultural supply and demand can be

aligned extremely well, and where tomorrow's makers are supported via Lab-Z to develop professionally.

In my opinion, that is *the way* to promote inclusivity bottom-up or from within; less talking about how the western-oriented big venues can attract a multicultural audience, but giving a voice to the audience and the makers coming from these groups.

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Cultural democracy seems more promising if it is about attracting a more diverse audience.



Using cultural practices for raising awareness of prejudices, stereotyping and taboos

BO Diversity is seeking the limelight



Wolke van Zundert is a student of Creative Business at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, and works as a project team member at BO.

BO stands for 'Be Open-minded' and was founded as a school project by BUAs alumni Jip Kuipers, Bente Spooren, and Eline Kouwenberg. Today, BO Diversity is a not-for-profit organisation that creates awareness about prejudices, stereotyping and taboos. BO focuses, among other things, on reducing LGBTI+ phobia, racism and gender discrimination. They work from an intersectional perspective, which means that you are aware of the fact that people could deviate from the standard in several areas, and that these could strengthen one another.

We need to talk

It would be useful to first know the difference between diversity, inclusion and equality. Diversity, for example is about mutual differences we have as human beings; inclusion is about how we deal with differences; and equality is about the fact that there should be no power inequalities between those differences. For many years, BO has committed itself to inclusiveness by informing people about the current state of affairs in society. Talking about society, we should, unfortunately, disappoint all those who think that the Netherlands is a tolerant country. In the last few years, the



Netherlands has left the Top 10 of most LGBTI+-friendly countries, and it is even in the Top 3 of countries with the highest rate of femicide (murder of women).

Hiding behind the tolerant reputation of the Netherlands is not enough. It should be talked about. About where it hurts and why. About why some things are so difficult for people to accept. Take, for example the discussion about *Zwarte Piet* (the Black Pete character, a helper for St Nicholas, an equivalent of Santa Claus), which took ten years until the majority was for abolition, or that the word 'gender-neutral' was labelled the most irritating word of 2017. If we do not start talking about it, how can we understand each other's standpoints? The result of these talks might not be directly noticeable, but it plants a seed for the future.

Breaking standards and making a connection

BO hopes to see those planted seeds flourish in the form of new standards. The current

standards are outdated and need to be broken since they do not work to everyone's benefit. To that purpose, however, you first need visibility,

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The focus is, among other things, on reducing LGBTI+ phobia, racism and gender discrimination.

and that can be achieved by sharing stories. We can see our own story in somebody else's story. A story connects, and that is essential if we want to grow towards a more inclusive, diverse and equal society.

Two cultural practices which BO wants to use to fuel this connection between people are Normbrekers and Mengelmoes. Normbrekers is a talk show about diversity, in which the audience can join in the discussion, listen, and learn. One or more themes are chosen on the basis of the pillars of BO: gender, sexual orientation, sex, ethnicity, life phase, religion, limitation and physical characteristics. We hope to give people new insights, create a more open mindset, and break the taboo of 'not daring to talk about it'. Mengelmoes is a network event aiming to create awareness of inclusion, diversity and intersectionality. Both events are free of charge, making them more low-threshold and accessible. The result is wonderful to see, since it is not only the (new) knowledge that BO transfers that sticks to your mind. It is also the discussions that people have, awareness of privileges, the new contacts, and learning from each other. And concrete, directly applicable tips, such as including pronouns in your emails or drafting consciously inclusive vacancy texts. These are all gains that continue to disseminate through further contacts with others and in the industry. And, in this way, spread like wildfire ensuring more awareness in society.

Inequality within dominant positions

Telling stories is one thing, but listening is another thing altogether. And what is mostly important here is who are the listeners, and what is done with it. People with dominant positions are a good example. Power is not equally divided now, and that is diametrically opposed to inclusivity. Power relationships will always remain; yet, there is scope for improvement. In politics, for example it is important to vote for coloured women since they are under-represented. It is important that there should be a good reflection of our society at large in politics, and in other areas as well.

This will eventually lead

to more equality and less discrimination. To break the current standards, it is also important that policy should be considered. To give an example, the political parties of Breda signed the diversity agreement in March 2022 on the initiative of BO. This agreement states, among other things, that an action plan should be in place to combat racism in the sports and care sectors, in the housing market, and in the hotel and catering industry. Also, funds are made available on a permanent basis to deal with street intimidation. These are all causes BO strives for, and for which they play a role of importance.

Do not intimidate me

BO founded the platform intimideermijniet.nl in conjunction with the municipality of Breda. This is an information line for street intimidation in Breda. This information line ensures that better insight is gained into actual figures, and, as a result, that the city becomes safer little by little. There was a sharp rise in intimidation that was reported during Carnival, and that provided a great deal of insight into the problem, which does not only occur in the street, but also within the hospitality industry, both among guests and staff. BO delivers training courses to catering establishments to bring up the matter, and offers tools (such as codes of conduct) for effectively dealing with this issue.

Awareness, information and action

In the field of the leisure sector, many benefits can be gained in the fields of diversity and inclusiveness. And this evidently concerns things like making events accessible, actions, and certainly the focus on awareness and information. BO has developed a new concept in 2022: WHIP. An interactive sex museum on wheels showcasing sexuality, intimacy, and gender. Sex education in schools is bad. There is too little focus on gender diversity, varying forms of relationships, and 'queerness', and too much focus on the biology and anatomy of the topic. WHIP can mainly be seen at festivals, which are the ideal location because the target group can be reached in a pleasant and informal way.

Change and resistance

A lot is possible in the field of inclusiveness, but changes can go hand in hand with resistance. Just think of the rainbow park

bench being defaced in Breda. To express an opposing view, BO kept guard at this park bench as a peaceful protest throughout the night. Including a twelve-hour radio programme. Of course, vandalism is annoying, but it also shows the problem, and that is something you can deal with. Visibility offers new possibilities to raise the subject. It is important to put your energy in places where you can create movement. Remaining negative all the time may be tiresome, sometimes even painful or traumatic, for yourself and others.

The most effective way to make sustainable changes can be effected by listening. We should try to not consider human beings themselves as bad, but shift our focus to the system which taught us to regard marginalised groups as negative. Individuals are responsible, of course, but there is a system that might cause this behaviour. That system is today's society, in which some people are neglected, and standards are not beneficial to everybody. It is the privileges that people have, or do not have, and what influence they have. You are not given privileges, you *have* them. This makes it all the more important to be aware of your privileges, and what position they offer you in society.

Being human

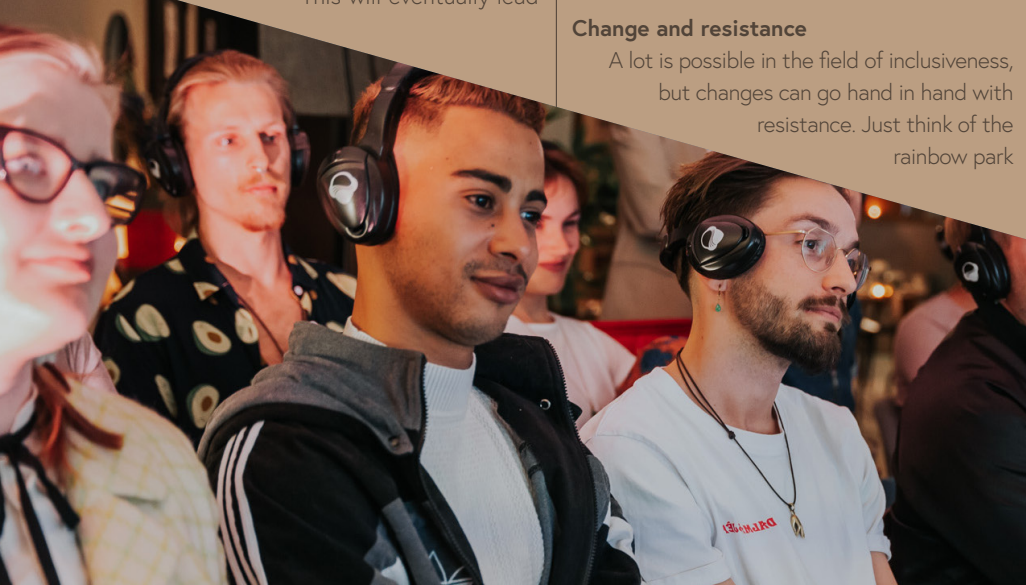
In essence, it is about creating awareness. Realising we are all human beings, and one person is more fortunate than the other one. Although it is an unconscious process, it need not remain unnoticed. Everything BO does relates to striving for universal values of mankind. It is about discovering what is outside your reference framework. The main thing is to realise that we all live on this planet as human beings. So let's live this life full of love, and with respect for each other. That is what BO wants. That all of us can be ourselves in freedom.

Photography

- Rosa Meininger (page 30, head)
- Eva van Nispen (page 30 and 31)

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We can see our own story in somebody else's story.



Leisure for a Better World

WLO takes us around the world for different perspectives on inclusive leisure



Authors left to right: Lisa Mische Lawson, Gloria Jia Ran, Jane Lijun Zhou, Marc-André Lavigne, Ricardo Uvinha and Marta Wilhelm.

Introduction

Lisa Mische Lawson, PhD, CTRS, FDRT

Leisure has long been recognized as a human right; however, many populations are still excluded from leisure programs, facilities, and services. World Leisure Organization (WLO) is celebrating 70 years of supporting professionals and organizations to make leisure inclusive. In 2020, WLO introduced the third edition of its Charter for Leisure emphasizing responsibility to 'ensure that all members of the community, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, ability or income, have access to beneficial leisure facilities and services.'

The WLO's Diversity, Access, and Inclusion Special interest Group (DAI SIG) was established to share information and best practices related to diversity, access, and inclusion in

leisure. Inclusive leisure requires removal of attitudinal, administrative, architectural, and systemic barriers. The DAI SIG serves as a forum to discuss ideas and provide support as members advance inclusion in leisure with diverse populations around the world. A recent survey showed our members are using their expertise in disability, poverty, indigenous populations, and gender studies to conduct collaborative research, hold leadership positions in WLO, and share knowledge at World Leisure Congress.

Leisure can be a powerful vehicle for social change, so it is imperative all individuals have access to leisure opportunities. The 2025 World Leisure Congress theme, 'Leisure for a Better Society', exemplifies this. This issue of Uncover Magazine offers a 'sneak peek' at the exceptional efforts of WLO toward inclusive leisure by showcasing World Leisure Centers of Excellence (WLCE) in China, Hungary, Brazil,



Inclusive leisure requires removal of attitudinal, administrative, architectural, and systemic barriers.

and Canada. For example, in 2021 the WLCE network and partners launched the first World Leisure Day (WL Day). WL Day aims to reinforce leisure as a social right and its importance in daily life, while reflecting on the barriers that still exist for many people around the world. The WLCE examples show the power of leisure for creating a better world.

Inclusive leisure in Hungary

Dr. Márta Wilhelm, Faculty of Sciences, University of Pécs, Hungary.

At the Faculty of Sciences University of Pécs (Hungary) in a multidisciplinary, multilingual diverse environment, the Institute of Sport Sciences and Physical Education is strongly motivated in teaching and creating leisure activities for all. It is crucial in Hungary since the expected lifetime at birth is lagging behind the European average. According to statistical data the most important factor determining short lifespans is physical inactivity, the lack

of leisure in the young and adult population. Health surveys, clinical data prove the need for good practices, involving the general public in all age groups and in many environmental possibilities.

The city of Pécs is not too big to find active, motivated, cooperating organizations and individuals for different projects. The special natural wonders of the neighborhood give a rich background to organize very interactive, joyful teaching and research programs at each level of higher education.

Since UP is very successful even in the 'Reach out Programs' (Researcher's Night), several inspirational summer projects were organized for local citizens also. In these inclusive programs students work in teams with professionals to entertain and teaching different lifestyle habits also, involving people even from the disabled population. The Dancing University of UP is a unique initiative in Hungarian higher education. It was founded in 2000 and its main aim is to create extraordinary leisure-time activities of high quality. It is *exercise and entertainment* at the same time.



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Creating leisure time activities for all, giving pleasure and science at the same time, is the most inclusive program a WLCE can give.

Courses are accessible for students as sport classes for credits and it also serves as a contact point for students and staff of *different faculties and individuals of the city on a weekly basis*. It is an inclusive program even for elderly and disabled people of the society, like dance groups for people suffering from Parkinson's disease, and other ailments causing health problems. Hundreds of people meeting each other through these programs create different Clubs according to their special interests. At the UP some special dance and yoga

courses also serve students and the public. Students are learning about meditations, chakra-color meditation, breathing techniques, relaxation techniques, how to experience flow and most importantly, how to reduce stress in our daily lives. As a member of the WLO family, we have organized online Dancing programs for everyone as a special activity on the WL Day.

Conducting sport and recreation research, our students regularly are outstanding in student scientific competitions. Besides theory, they are regularly invited to organize leisure and

recreational programs in *Kindergartens* and Schools, organize 'Health Days' (health promotion programs in schools and companies), or help to organize recreation and sport programs for the public in any age groups (running competitions, fundraising events, jamborees), or national elite sport competitions. These events are very important and motivating for our students. Equipped with outstandingly high standard instruments, the Szentágothai Research Center, and other Faculties of UP are available for both researchers and students. Creating leisure time activities for all, giving pleasure and science at the same time, is the most inclusive program a WLCE can give.

Inclusive leisure in China

Dr. Jane Lijun Zhou Deputy Dean of College of Education & Ms. Gloria Jia Ran Zhejiang University, China.

As past research and practices have proven leisure's importance to the quality of life, it is not surprising to see that leisure is now increasingly pursued by people around the world, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity or ability. The same trend happens in China as well. The principal contradiction facing Chinese society has turned into the contradiction between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life, as China's president Xi Jinping declared.

This turning point indicates to us that leisure, as a helpful way for people to own a better life, has huge potential to get a significant place in China. Statistics issued by China Economic Life Survey (2021) show that back in 2017, Chinese people had an average leisure time of 2.27 hours per day, whilst in 2021 this number reached 2.82. At this fast-growing stage of leisure time, it is much more vital to promise that quality leisure experience can be shared by all groups of people. Here we would like to briefly show you China's effort on inclusive leisure in recent years.

Make policies to guide inclusive leisure to diverse groups

It is noticed that diverse requirements are always emphasized in series of leisure-related policies. For instance, China's Outline of National Tourism and Leisure (2009) sets out the necessity to develop tourism and leisure products suitable for diverse groups of people like the elderly, women, children, and the disabled. Also, China's National Fitness Plan (2013), points out in particular to promote fitness activities among key groups, especially preschoolers, teens and senior citizens. The blueprint of Healthy China 2030 (2016) proposes to formulate and implement health intervention plans by leisure and fitness sports for all, especially for groups such as adolescents, women, the elderly, occupational groups and the disabled. Besides, several policies are now under revision to better address inclusion issues in leisure.

Offer facilities to ensure the right to leisure for more participants

Following the policies mentioned above, a range of measures are being taken. One prominent manifestation is the sports and leisure facilities that have been and are being built around China. By the end of 2021, there were 3.971 million sports venues nationwide, with a sports

venue area of 3.41 billion square meters and a per capita sports venue area of 2.41 square meters. In the next few years by 2025, China plans to build or rebuild 2,000 more sports parks and other fitness facilities across the country (General Administration of Sport of China, 2022). Among them, it is worthwhile to note that building facilities targeted at the disabled is put on the agenda and well-trained instructors will be involved in guiding the disabled to participate in sports and leisure. It is true that China is paying more attention to the quality and access of the leisure services, especially the facilities. However, in general, the current leisure services in sports, cultural, recreational and tourist are still limited to satisfy all needs in a well-coordinated way.

All in all, with the advancement of leisure as a way to improve life in China, more inclusive, diverse leisure projects are being launched. In the meantime, it is noted that there is still a gap between the level of China's inclusive leisure and the level of other developed countries. Now that the gap means ample space to make progress, we have reasons to expect a better society in China where everyone enjoys leisure and utilizes it to get a better life in the next few years.



Inclusive leisure in Brazil

Prof. Dr Ricardo Ricci Uvinha, PhD., Full Professor, Dean – School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

In consonance with the 2018 Sao Paulo Declaration 'Leisure Beyond Constraints', we defend that all sectors of society, especially governments by listening to their communities, should develop policies and programs that guarantee leisure as a right, and should make and enforce laws that ensure ownership, social mobilization and full participation of citizens. The Brazilian Constitution declared leisure as a social right, a situation also assured in all state laws and municipal bodies of Brazil, being an important document to promote leisure for inclusion in the contemporary society.

At WLCE/Brazil several projects have been developed with an emphasis on inclusive leisure. The WLCE in Brazil is linked to the University of Sao Paulo (USP). This is the major institution of higher learning and research in South America and caters for almost 100,000 students with no tuition fees (including international students). We envision our Center of Excellence fostering new opportunities for our students to travel abroad and connect internationally, as well as to receive international students in Sao Paulo.

A good example on inclusive leisure is the WL Day 2021, coordinated by the WLCE/Brazil together with Serviço Social do Comércio (Sesc) and the Laboratory of Management of Leisure Experiences (LAGEL). It was celebrated on 16 April 2021, with the main theme 'Leisure for a Better Life!'. Participants were encouraged to foster initiatives that value their local culture through activities that enable the exchange of experiences and also prompt reflections on the

socio-economic, cultural, and physical barriers for leisure in the current context and future perspectives. There were hundreds of leisure-themed activities held worldwide, including classes, debates, book launches, workshops, congresses, and seminars.

As highlighted, from the Brazilian Constitution leisure came to be understood as a social right. The project entitled Field School perfectly aligns with that right bringing the importance of inclusive leisure to the communities. In 2018, members of the WLCE/Brazil participated in the organization of the WL Field School in Sao Paulo. This project, through its diversity of participants, enabled an extraordinary learning experience and transformation for most participants. Meeting students from all over the world and visiting the peripheral community of Perus with its historically Black roots, as well as indigenous communities, strongly encouraged learners to re-evaluate their world view, and see through different lenses.

Also related to inclusive leisure, we highlight our responsibility at the WLCE/Brazil to offer a course entitled 'Leisure, Culture and Society'. This course aims at the approach of aspects related to the development of leisure, emphasizing the expansion of the sector and understanding the importance of this for cultural, social and economic development in a globalized context. Upon completion of the course, students are able to understand and explain the various theoretical/social sciences perspectives on leisure as well as to place leisure in a social, cultural and historical context.

Finally, regarding the specific challenges concerning inclusive leisure in Brazil, it is worth

to mention that a feeling that leisure is something superfluous before other needs persists in Brazilian society. Examples of this restricted form of understanding are strongly rooted not only in everyday life where leisure is often associated with vagrancy, but even in the public sector, where this kind of thinking prevails in cities across the country. Instead of being understood as a social right, leisure is usually seen as an excuse or attention grabber to perform actions merely to provide assistance to remedy the social problems that some regions suffer. This context leads to the need to understand governmental programs in general, as well as the different public policies linked to inclusive leisure and social areas, where it is vital to promote the concept that leisure brings the opportunity to improve and expand the freedom of choices in the daily decisions of Brazilians. Thus, inclusive leisure is a powerful vehicle that has the potential to influence individuals in their journeys through life.



From the Brazilian Constitution leisure came to be understood as a social right.

Inclusive leisure in Canada

Marc-André Lavigne, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Canada.

The recreation sector has adopted a strong normative framework that is shared by many countries: leisure is a right, meaningful leisure experiences should be accessible to all, and recreation opportunities should be adapted to the users' preferences and aspirations, especially for the most vulnerable members of our society. After all, the benefits of significant leisure experiences are well documented. Recreation opportunities contribute to stronger communities, reducing inequalities and preventing antisocial behaviors. In other words, the outcomes of leisure participation go further than the simple benefits of one's participation, and there is a consensus that access to quality leisure experiences for all is desired, that public investments should help create infrastructure to facilitate participation, and that we should promote inclusion and social participation regardless of a citizen's age, gender, ethnic background and socio-economic status. Whether or not we have truly embraced this vision is open for debate as recreation providers and public services tend to forget (or are unable to reach) more marginalized citizens and groups, who are often both recreation services non-users and those who might benefit the most from what recreation experiences do provide.

Redefining the responsibility of 'dis-ability' for recreation services non-users

There is a policy shift in defining what a disability is, which has been promoted by advocacy associations for persons with disabilities that could inspire how to foster a more inclusive approach to leisure experiences at large. More information on the approach of the International Network on the Disability Creation Process, their models and tools can be found online (www.ripqh.qc.ca/en/).

The premise is that a predefined medical condition does not explain why a person is not able to act (or 'dis-able'). Social participation is instead determined mostly by an individual's environment and the ability to overcome environmental obstacles. In other words, a person is not handicapped, but disabled by the inequalities created by their environment. Defining a disability, or by extension defining a person's inability to participate, as the result of the interaction between a person and their environment rather than the immutable characteristic of a person forces recreation providers and policymakers to reexamine their role in ensuring leisure inclusion for all. The responsibility for a person's or group's inaction to socially participate is not on an individual, but now on the community as a whole.

Ensuring inclusive leisure experiences is a rather complex endeavor for policymakers and recreation providers alike and the principles behind this model provide a new approach and a new narrative to recreation policies and leisure exclusion. Even though focusing on leisure constraints is far from new in leisure theory, formulating and implementing policies to adapt the environmental factors to non-users, and acknowledging that leisure inclusion requires constant adaptations and monitoring initiated by community leaders, is often a shift from current practices. Instead of identifying and positively discriminating specific members of a community, while risking forgetting others, the focus is now on addressing the structural barriers to inclusive leisure experiences.

This model has been integrated into universal design projects, recreation master plans, and accessibility laws adopted in recent years, often to ensure access to all in recreation infrastructures. Such initiatives also lead to help understand and alleviate complex constraints such as financial limitations, time poverty, and cultural misconceptions, by adapting urban design, changing opening hours, working with new partners, implementing equipment loan programs or better promoting recreation services.

Conclusion

After this brief illustration of four regions where the WLCEs operate about their understanding of inclusive leisure, we might claim how powerful leisure is to promote diversity, access, and inclusion. Following their projects and geographical trends, it has been easier to comprehend its importance for the full enjoyment of everyone's lives regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, ability, or income.

Although in many societies leisure is recognized as a universal and a vital component to experiencing life at its fullest, as stated in the *Charter for Leisure*, for many others this is still not a reality but a mere aspiration. It is therefore the main pillar of our organization's mission and daily work to provide a platform to promote this right for everyone and to advocate worldwide for regions to implement positive changes in their policies towards its consecution.

Nor should we leave the youth generations behind during this process, since, as emerging leaders and leisure professionals, we must ensure that they are aware of the importance of reducing these barriers and inequalities embedded in our environmental, social, economic, and cultural contexts, and leave a more inclusive society for them.



A person is not handicapped, but disabled by the inequalities created by their environment.

Using the DigiTwin for citizen engagement

Engaging citizens in urban policymaking

Ger Pepels is initiator at Samenwerkplaats Hoge Vucht and lecturer in Transformative Social Innovation at Breda University of Applied Sciences. Nina Nesterova is Smart and Sustainable Mobility team lead at Breda University of Applied Sciences and project manager of DVECE.

Ger Pepels
& Nina Nesterova



The Urban Living Lab Breda has joined forces with the EIT Urban Mobility project (DVECE) on DigiTwins to explore how 3D visualisations of citizen's lifeworld experiences can be translated to urban policymaking. In communities with people in vulnerable living conditions, it is especially hard to engage the voice of citizens actively in governance processes. The use of the DigiTwin requires careful intermediation of interactions with citizens.

Igniting engagement in neighbourhoods

Urban Living Lab Breda (ULLB) is a multistakeholder collaboration of active citizens, companies, societal organisations and the municipality in Breda. Its aim is to support citizens in developing their voice in the governance of their living environment. ULLB organises itself in theme-based communities (e.g. Inclusive Society) and in Samenwerkplaatsen (SWPs), place-based spaces for collaboration.

SWP Hoge Vucht focuses on a neighbourhood of 15,000 inhabitants in the northeast part of the city. It is a diverse neighbourhood, but typically characterised by social housing, people with low incomes, low levels of education, and limited life expectancy. The neighbourhood also functions as a landing place for many newcomers with non-western backgrounds. At the institutional level, the neighbourhood is assessed as being vulnerable.

For two years now, SWP has been engaging citizens around neighbourhood issues. The citizens value their neighbourhood, though they also see substantial room for improvements. Inspired by the bottom-up 'Asset and Strength Based Community Development approach' of SWP, the inhabitants identified four priorities:



Can the DigiTwin act as a 'boundary object', enabling interactions between multiple stakeholders?

mobility (safety), public space, housing, and attractive community spaces.

Dynamic visualisations to enhance citizens' engagement (DVECE)

The DVECE project tests the application of dynamic visualisations to enhance citizens' engagement in the mobility context. Through ideation, co-creation, and validation and evaluation workshops within three living labs (Breda, Thessaloniki and Helsinki), DVECE collects, prioritises and matches mobility needs, set by different groups of vulnerable users in a neighbourhood, with policy plans and real-time data. BUAs is leading a task dedicated to DigiTwin data collection, match-making with citizen-driven information and generating dynamic visualisations for citizens' engagement.

DigiTwins are institutional tools for policy development. They can be used as neighbourhood-focused multi-layered presentations of available data on socio-economic positions, gender, ethnicity, religion, crime, housing and so forth. It is also possible to visualise citizen experiences, worries and ideas dynamically by



translating these into 3D representations using pictures and other dynamic GPS location data. Can the DigiTwin help to enhance engagement of citizens in the mobility context and broader urban policy development? Can the DigiTwin act as a 'boundary object', enabling interactions between multiple stakeholders? Such interactions become necessary to negotiate themes of overlap that "exist at the intersection of two (or more) disparate social worlds ... " (Von Wirth, Frantzeskaki, Loorbach, 2020).

The DVECE project is supported by EIT Urban Mobility, an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union (eiturbanmobility.eu).

Play, create, and tell stories to explore what gives life

In the DVECE project, SWP organises workshops with inhabitants with diverse backgrounds. The ambition is to involve people from vulnerable groups in the design,

development, and governance of their lifeworlds. Though many people are struggling to survive; they do not have time and energy to participate in workshop-like gatherings. On top of that, their trust in local government and in institutional efforts is rather limited after experiencing decreased attention for a long time.

Building on SWP's experiences with the ABCD approach, the workshops require significant investments in the pre-, direct- and post-event phases to bridge the gap between the lifeworlds of the inhabitants and the use of the DigiTwin's digital visualisation potentials. Students and experts from Transformative Social Innovation of Breda University of Applied Sciences stepped in for the design and facilitation of the workshops. Their approach promises to address the multiplicity of voices, anticipating the risks of divisive contributions and the possible decrease of involvement during the workshop. They work from their expertise on play, creativity and storytelling and their focus on making workshops an experience for the participants. To this end, the focus needs to shift from mere content such as mobility safety issues, to engaging participants in a playful gathering on their shared lifeworlds, while acknowledging their differences. The focus needs to move from merely cognitive approaches to engaging multiple senses and to building relationships bottom up. In terms of the transformative social innovation approach, being triggered by the desire for transformative change (breaking the sky) it was needed to open up time (interrupting the linear time perspective) and to explore 'what gives life' in the neighbourhood to start building new relationships.

Notable experiences of the first workshop

The first workshop took place on 13 April 2022 at the neighbourhood-based social enterprise Buurthuis ONS. The dialogues were centred around the redevelopment of a vacant plot at Bernard de Wildestraat, in the middle of the neighbourhood. This concrete context helped

to collect insights into broader subjective experiences and mobility user needs as well as to strengthen the inhabitants' involvement in this process.

Although we made a lot of efforts to attract a diverse group of inhabitants, still much to our surprise, half of the almost thirty participants that enrolled in the first workshop were youth. They rarely join gatherings on neighbourhood topics. It was the DigiTwin that attracted their interest. This immediately created a challenge for the design of the workshop. For other participants, youth (and especially some from specific non-western backgrounds) are part of the problem, while people also acknowledge that the neighbourhood is totally lacking opportunities for them. The introduction and use of the DigiTwin would not address this challenge. Extra attention needed to go to establishing the right atmosphere to build new relationships. First, all participants were challenged to get to know one another in a playful way. In three steps they were challenged to physically move around, mingle, and share stories with unfamiliar others. This completely changed the atmosphere, creating an open and inviting environment for the participants to join in respectful conversations.

Then, before breaking into smaller groups, a DVECE project member explained the approach of DigiTwins. He presented examples of integration of data into a digital environment, such as data on speeding in the neighbourhood from TomTom (not available in municipal datasets) that provide support for the experiences of inhabitants. A Built Environment student showed inspiration to trigger the imagination of the participants. After these more traditional contributions, a few participants took the chance to explicitly point out their frustrations of not being heard in workshops organised by either the municipality or societal organisations.

Next, after listening and carefully re-establishing the space for respectful engagement, the interactive dialogue took place where the residents mapped out their subjective experiences in groups.

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Youth rarely joins in gatherings on neighbourhood topics, but the DigiTwin attracted their interest.

Data was collected on mobility and safety, the quality for intergenerational use of and tidiness of public space, housing, and meeting places. For example, related to mobility, we were able to identify - in co-creation - a high-risk roundabout (signs, lights), more experiences on speeding (multiple places in the neighbourhood, sometimes caused by youth from outside the neighbourhood).

This data will be used as input for follow-up steps and will be added to the DigiTwin and used in an upcoming meeting to check our interpretations with the participants. From there, the visualisation will be used to stimulate the participants' imaginations. We will try to deepen the information as well as to explore directions for short- and long-term interventions on these different topics, challenging participants to take on a role. For this next step, we will move even closer to the lifeworlds of the participants and develop meetings in their living environment.

Conclusion

The DigiTwin has the potential to attract and engage participants. However, the first workshop also made clear that the introduction of this tool requires full attention for the interactions and relationships between the participants and their environment. By paying attention here, the right environment was created to look at the content together, to explore neighbourhood challenges and to collect data for the use of the DigiTwin as a boundary object in participatory urban policy processes.

More information

- www.dvece-project.eu
- www.urbanlivinglabbreda.nl

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In communities with people in vulnerable living conditions, it is especially hard to engage the voice of citizens actively in governance processes.



Having one good friend can make a difference

Leisure as a tool to make impact

Anne van den Broek is a lecturer at Breda University of Applied Sciences with a focus on making impact with Leisure as an instrument. Jeffrey van Houwelingen is a graduate of the Social Innovation track at Breda University of Applied Sciences.

Leisure time is an amazing time. It is the time to enjoy and that makes you feel alive. However, Leisure is more. Leisure can be used to make an impact. But how? In this article we dive into how Buddy to Buddy and theatre performance 'Hoe ik talent voor het leven kreeg' ('How I got talent for life') make impact.

Marginalisation of forced immigrants

The University of Bournemouth did research into ways how leisure and forms of physical activity can have an important role in the lives of refugees and forced migrants.

To quote Dr Nicola De Martini Ugolotti; 'Forced migrants are often marginalised and considered to be a problem that needs to be solved or managed, or to be objects of charitable interventions at best,' he says. 'They can be viewed as a threat to the UK or as traumatised victims. One of the implications of this which has been highlighted by my research is that to be a refugee means to be stuck in this label where you are just a victim or a "bogus" refugee, and it's very hard to escape from those labels.'

The research is aimed at exploring how seemingly mundane activities matter in the life of someone who is seeking asylum, and to see the relevance of these practices in helping to displace or change the narratives about forced migration. Sports, culture, art, and many other facets of leisure bring added meaning to the lives of many. 'This is not any different for forced immigrants. Leisure brings joy, leisure brings connections and leisure is a human right' (United Nations, 1948).

One friend can be the portal

Buddy to Buddy is an amazing example of low-key mundane activities that have an impact on the lives of many of these forced migrants. Buddy to Buddy is working in no fewer than 12 municipalities in the Netherlands to connect newcomers to fellow citizens. Newcomers and fellow citizens are paired up one on one to enter into a four-month Buddyship. The most important spearheads are equality, linking based on the same interests and the desire for sustainable and accessible contact. The Buddyship is not only about opening up your world and learning about new cultures. It is also about making new friendships and breaking through the social isolation among status holders and integrated refugees. They meet each other, from having a cup of coffee together to meeting each other's family and friends at Christmas or the Sugar Fest. Buddy to Buddy shows that an empathic and compassionate approach is wished-for in impactful leisure activities. It brings the individual needs into collective surroundings without forcing anything on anyone.

Theatre performance

In the grand performance 'Hoe ik talent voor het leven kreeg' (based on the book by Rodaan Al Galidi) theatre, music and dance come together. An interesting mix of actors, musicians and dozens of newcomers work together to tell the poignant and humorous story of a young man who applies for asylum in the Netherlands. They take you along into the bizarre lives of the people who live and work in the asylum seekers' centre and who sometimes get hopelessly entangled in the system. The audience of this performance gets to experience what it is like to deal with things that they, as Dutch citizens, have nothing to do with on a daily

basis. It makes them look at the system differently.

There is also a connected Expedition, which is a melting pot of worlds and perspectives. People from the AZC (Dutch abbreviation of asylum seekers' centre), newcomers, policymakers, theatre lovers, artists, visitors, and anyone else who wants to join in come together to broaden their horizons, meet each other and discuss the question: how do we accommodate people in a humane way? And why is the encounter between 'old' and 'new' Dutch people still sometimes difficult? (www.talentvoorhetleven.nl)

Leisure for impact

The word Leisure is derived either from the Latin word 'licere' meaning 'to be free' or the Old French 'leisir' with the meaning 'to enjoy oneself'. These two combined makes that leisure is about individual personal experiences - leisure time is different for every individual. Contradictory, leisure time is also about connecting, about meeting the other, meeting the unknown and meeting an experience. About shared experiences.





One person can be the link to our society and is therefore very valuable in the exploration of a new existence.

The meaning of leisure might be different to everyone. As described in the American Journal of Social Science Research, not a single description of leisure has entirely captured the social, psychological, physical, mental, physiological, and cultural contents that leisure carries (Adesoyee & Ajibua, 2015). While long explanations of concepts of leisure can be explained, like the leisure concept model (Compton & Hanson, 1980), it is far more important to understand how individuals perceive leisure.

With a multitude of meanings regarding leisure, we can say with some certainty that leisure time is different for every individual and that this is an essential factor for the leisure sector. The key towards creating impact with leisure is to find out together what the meaning of leisure is. Are you and your target group talking about the same meaning of leisure? Examples such as Buddy to Buddy impacted lives by seeing that leisure time is different for every individual. They do not fill in for others what should happen with their leisure time. They facilitate a platform in which people can undertake different leisure activities without it being determined for them what these activities are precisely.



The key towards creating impact with leisure is to find out together what the meaning of leisure is.

Co-creation is key

Co-creation is the magic word in organising activities. We often see that leisure activities are organised for a specific target group without actually consulting the target group. We want to ask the leisure industry politely to no longer see the target group as an abstract entity, but as the people who create the leisure activity with you. It takes two to tango, the process of leisure creation is something to do collaboratively. By doing so, new opportunities arise and overlapping frames of perspective will be discovered. Emerging friendships and interconnections are the tools to form impactful leisure time.

When you organise, it is mostly from your own frame of reference. It is hard to reach outside this reference until you get inspired or have had a chat with someone with another frame of reference. Due to the individualist society we live in, we no longer learn to have a look outside our own frame of reference. Collective thinking is a key to break down the walls of the frames.

Becoming reactive

To summarise; making impactful leisure is more about creating possibilities for others to act than it is about acting yourself. In today's rapidly changing society, we must recognise the power of the leisure industry. We can make a difference in many people's lives. To organise impactful leisure time, we may need to move away from one of our core principles, which is to be proactive. Sometimes it might be better to be reactive. Talk with each other and listen compassionately. Discover deeper needs, co-create and act collaboratively towards an impactful future.

More information

Check www.buddytobuddy.nl if you want to know more about Buddy to Buddy.

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Photography

- Emma Pierre Buddy to Buddy



It takes two to tango.



Towards regions without borders

Research with the Rebel Team to make destinations more accessible

Karin Stikma is a leisure strategist and owner of Joint Projects.

Tourism has no borders, and this also holds for visitors with a limitation. This implies that an integrated and coherent approach is required at all scale levels, so these visitors can visit a region effortlessly. This is what the research project Toegankelijke Bestemmingen (Accessible Destinations) is about; a project that is being carried out in co-creation with the Rebel Team of Joint Projects. We will highlight some interesting points in this article.

Aims and objectives

The research has a cross-disciplinary approach to enable everybody to take part in recreational activities. Scientific, professional and experiential knowledge come together in the project.

The first phase of this research project has two aims:

1. Examining the demand side of visitors with a limitation and their family during all phases of the customer journey (before-during-after) to a destination;
2. Setting out clearly how this issue can be solved sustainably, so that a destination is easily accessible for anyone, and it is self-evident that anyone can visit it.

The research consists of both participatory action-oriented research (Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and Joint Projects) and desk research (CELTH, Breda University of Applied Sciences and NHL Stenden), which is being carried out in the regions Achterhoek, Rijk van Nijmegen and Vechtdal). The province of Gelderland is the biggest financier.

The qualitative research consisted of a focus group with the Rebel Team, three round table meetings during the kick-off, participatory

observation during a regional visit, and a questionnaire that was set up and sent to various stakeholders in these three regions. A thematic analysis was made of this qualitative data. This analysis is described in this article using quotes taken from the research data.

Taboos

Two taboos are prominently brought to the fore. Firstly, the fact that we find positivity important. We do not like to hear the word 'discrimination' since no one wants to consciously discriminate. To give an example, a participant said during the kick-off: *'It is annoying that you speak of exclusion and a parallel society as so many wonderful things are done.'* An experiential expert reacted to these words: *'You do not like to talk about things that are bothering me. Because of your privileged position you do not even see that I am effectively discriminated against every day.'* A second taboo is that it seems as if we fear inclusion since we are confronted with 'otherness' which we are afraid of.

Insight into demand

Who are the guests visiting accessible destinations? From the questionnaire it appears that, in the case of accessible recreational venues, respondents mostly think of wheelchair users (18%), a physical limitation (19%), followed by a visual impairment (12%), an intellectual disability (11%), and a hearing impairment (10%). The elderly are mentioned by 10% of the respondents. It appears that regional organisations hardly have any insight into visitor flows of people with a limitation. That makes it difficult for them to create an appropriate range of tourism and recreation facilities.

We asked the Rebels what they required

during the entire customer journey to and in a region to be able to visit the destination effortlessly. That is what we will detail out below.

Information and communication

Experiential experts have a great need for specific, detailed information that is honest and factual, so they can prepare for their visit properly. Information is often scattered across web pages: 'In various submenus' as a Rebel said. This also appeared in the preparatory phase of and during the site visit. The Berkelzomp, for example had a lift for people with limited mobility at its dinghy, which was not stated on the website. Also, Hotel Avenarius provided vague information about accessibility. Ruurlo Castle only gave information about accessibility for wheelchair users.

Survey results (on the basis of the survey held among stakeholders) show that only seven respondents say their organisations have a marketing and communication strategy aiming at people with a

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We are scared of being confronted with 'otherness' which we are afraid of.



Experiential experts have a great need for specific, detailed information which is honest and factual.

limitation. They use websites (37%), leaflets (24%), social media, and storytelling via vloggers. Moreover, they often refer to other organisations, a separate project or a working group. All this is not an integrated part of communication and information about what they offer on a regular basis.

The way of giving information is not always accessible either. As a respondent put it: *'This does not hold for all cases. It is hard to do right by all target groups.'* Some organisations say they do not know. And others say: *'Our information is digitally accessible in accordance with the regulations.'*

Treatment

As far as the site visit is concerned, the Rebels indicated that the accessibility felt is mostly important; the way in which you are treated, and that you feel welcome. Rebels experience roughly two reactions: *On the one hand: 'Oh panic, a disabled person. Now everything needs to be adapted, and changed. And Oh help, they are certainly very strict.'* *On the other hand: 'Hooray, a disabled person. We should spoil them as much as we can.' I call this the Disabled Bonus.'* It is also about a certain degree of taking for granted that one can join in. It is important that people should think of you when you are in need of support,

and that you can ask for it without losing face. As a rebel put it: 'I often feel I am a tough customer.'

From the questionnaire it appeared that one third of staff had been trained in treating people with a limitation. This corresponds with the experience felt by the Rebels during their site visit to the Achterhoek. At one location, staff were helpful, but too present and busy at the same time. They started to help without being asked. At other locations, guests were given standard treatment, and staff were not very involved. What's more, companions were talked to, and not the disabled persons themselves.

Lack of policy and cooperation at a strategic level

Almost 70% of respondents of the questionnaire do not have any experience with living with a disability. Over 51% of them work for a municipality, which implies that people without a disability think up and carry out projects for people with a disability. This is risky because there might be mismatches.

Respondents also indicated that they are engaged in realising accessible regional recreation and tourism supply in the following way. Some 23% are running a project. Almost 27% promote accessibility, and 36% do so by facilitating cooperation between parties.

Organisations mainly work together with the municipality (almost 32%), followed by entrepreneurs (almost 29%), experiential experts (almost 16%), and the province (13%). The DMO and VVV (Tourist Information Centres) are mentioned the least often, once and twice, respectively.

Furthermore, it appears that accessible recreation & tourism facilities are not a standard component of the Lokale Inclusie Agenda yet. Not even 12% have a strategy either. The lack of policy was confirmed during the kick-off. In the future, organisations want to continue the activities as before by mostly being committed to encouraging and driving other parties. The following organisations should play a part in this: municipalities (24%), entrepreneurs (20%), the province (17%),

and experiential experts (12%). More cooperation is expected with DMO and VVV; these organisations are mentioned seven and six times, respectively.

The way in which an organisation is involved in making recreation and tourism accessible in its region is given, on average, a meagre 7. It is appreciated that there is awareness now; that it is being discussed widely, and that there is good collaboration with authorities and businesses. Over 33% give an insufficient score because of speed and project form. As a respondent put it: *'The "legacy" is still lacking. That makes it vulnerable.'* A policy officer in Leisure Economy remarked: *'I notice that I am not engaged, or have not been engaged, in things like that, and I would not know if other staff in other departments are.'*

Finally: from supply-driven to demand-oriented

The survey reveals that a lot of work will need to be done within the ecosystem of a destination to make it accessible. Guests with special needs, for example are in need of good information. This would require a communication and information strategy specifically designed for that purpose. Another point of attention is the way guests are treated. Training will be required. Cooperation within a region will need to be stepped up. From an encouraging, facilitating role towards a more strategic and executive role. The commitment of experiential experts will be indispensable.

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Photography

- Daniel Oosterom/Joint Projects



I often feel I am a tough customer.



Quiet500: looking out for each other

Inclusiveness as babble speak

Peter van der Aalst is programme manager and lecturer at Leisure and Events at Breda University of Applied Sciences.



I am talking with social entrepreneur Ralf Embrechts, director/neighbour of the Maatschappelijke Ontwikkelings Maatschappij (MOM; Social Development Society) in Tilburg. He and Tilburg writer A.H.J. Dautzenberg pooled their networks in 2021 and initiated the poverty glossy Quiet500. The richest people in the country, those listed in the Quote500, were appealed to for their talents. The appeal to the successful millionaires was to put that very entrepreneurship talent to use, to make something out of nothing, for the purpose of supporting people at the bottom of society.

In the Quiet500 people living in poverty are portrayed as the powerful personalities they often are. Powerful people, who ran into bad luck at some point in their lives and ended up in a poverty situation as a result. The initiative caught on, since then three Quiet500 editions have been published and 11 Quiet Communities are now active within various cities. Communities for and by the participants, in which people from all walks of life support, help and empower each other in various ways.

Can you tell me a bit about your motivations for working on Quiet with such passion?

Quiet Quiet is a life's work to me, alongside my job. I notice in my work that a lot of people are approached with distrust by default, the 'toeslagenaffaire' (allowance affair concerning serious failings in the childcare benefit system) being one example. Underneath it all lies the 'you've made your bed, now you must lie in it' idea. But what if we started from trust, from offering a helping hand? To help people back on the road back to society. We have three priorities: telling, mitigating and empowering. We give poverty in the Netherlands a face, we



Ralf Embrechts

make sure that people living in poverty are seen and that they feel that there is solidarity with them. That there is understanding for their situation. And ultimately this strengthens their self-esteem, people become stronger again, despite the financially difficult situation they find themselves in.

Is starting from trust a requirement, in your opinion, for truly achieving an inclusive society?

Inclusiveness is babble speak, I think. When you talk about the inclusive society, by definition you also imply that something is exclusive, something that is not included. Being inclusive just means looking out for each other. That you keep an eye on your neighbour during corona time, for example. The restrictions were felt less here in the neighbourhood; if you live in poverty, you cannot go to festivals or the Efteling anyway. But here bowls of soup were handed out door to door. To me, inclusiveness means being a good neighbour to someone. A good neighbour to everyone. The moment you want to house drug addicts or refugees somewhere, the very residents of the richest neighbourhoods are the first to send letters of protest. Within the Quiet community, we all have talents, learn from each other and help

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Within the Quiet community we all have talents, learn from each other and help each other.

each other. That is actually the core of an inclusive society.

Would you dare call your outreach diverse and inclusive, do you know how to reach and activate people from all kinds of cultural backgrounds within the community?

You do have to master the Dutch language to some extent to understand the Quiet system, so you know how the app works and how you can make use of our range of what we call 'Moments of Happiness'. We ask everyone who applies as a member of the community what their talents and interests are. Based on that, we offer, for instance, concert tickets, but also free visits to the hairdresser or a restaurant. We are a pretty accurate reflection of the neighbourhood. The wonderful thing is that people within the community help each other, they also help – on their own initiative – newcomers to learn the language.

You are active in a few cities now; how do these communities actually come about?

It started with people coming to collect tickets

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When you talk about the inclusive society, by definition you also imply that something is exclusive.

in Tilburg, but we did not want a queue outside. We let people in and soon a baker came around to bring cake. And so it grew further. Word got around, other people came to bring things or they started organising events to help each other. In the new cities these days, they start right away with a walk-in, and collecting the tickets is then an afterthought. Actually, it is about old-fashioned solidarity in a new guise, about looking out for each other. And it is also just fun to do things together.

Looking out for each other is your synonym for inclusiveness. Does the way we have designed society still lend itself to looking out for each other?

The neo-liberal view is all about market forces and customers, but how can you be a customer of the municipal social services? Is there really anything to choose then? My definition of poverty is that it is a lack of money and participation. A fatal combination. So this participating, being able to go to a concert every once in a while, being able to join a

sports club, is crucial. You should also bear in mind that people will not send their children to a sports club or swimming lessons if they cannot afford good underwear, for instance, this is how poverty seeps down into other areas of life.

It is sad to note that children cannot participate even in their free time because they live in poverty and may be isolated as a result.

Yes, and the problem of exclusion goes deeper. Mothers in the neighbourhood sacrifice their own needs so their children can go to a sports club. Children report sick after their birthdays, so they do not have to tell the class that they could not celebrate. Teachers have the best intentions, but this actually has an excluding effect. So children growing up in poverty are falling behind on several fronts. The heroes of this neighbourhood are very often the mothers. At Quiet, we therefore also give precisely these kinds of mothers the opportunity to go out to dinner, to a performance or just to get a haircut.

Leisure activities are often important to people in terms of fulfilment and identity formation. Do you recognise this within the Quiet Community?

I do recognise that. People who are doing well also donate their talents to the community. Meaning something to others gives meaning to your life. Sometimes it is also about awareness, like that restaurant owner who offers a free dinner, and gets to know people and their situation as a result, something that would normally not cross his path so easily. Also, just being here with others, not sitting at home alone, gives meaning to your life. A few years ago, a group of members, including a sports teacher, trained together for the Tilburg Ten Miles. They were allowed to participate with 25 people for free, were dressed in new clothes by the local running shop, and all received the same medal afterwards. One little boy proudly sighed that that

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Poverty is a fatal combination of lack of money and participation.

was the first medal of his life; when you hear that, you cannot help but feel a lump in your throat. And the next day, of course, he got to proudly tell about it at school.

Are leisure organisations also active within the communities or is it mainly about providing free tickets?

Definitely, people living in poverty need help cashing in on their Moments of Happiness. It is not just about providing free tickets, but also about transport, food, drinks, sometimes accompaniment on the day itself. And organisations also help us to expand their network and involve other entrepreneurs in the community.

Do you think that Quiet will ever be unnecessary?

Some say that poverty will always exist, but I am a dreamer. It should be possible to solve poverty by ensuring that people learn to share and give. Even as a child, at school. We need to create a world of solidarity. A world of trust. That requires systemic change; surely we should have learned something from the 'toeslagenaffaire'. Within the neo-liberal system, that is not going to happen. It would be very nice if we can retain the good, solidarity feeling created by the crisis in Ukraine.

More information

Want to know more about the Quiet movement or order the latest edition of Quiet500, go to www.quiet.nl

Photography

• *Raldo Neven (page 42 middle)*

LICHT
OP
STILLE
ARMOEDE

**EXTREEM ARM VOOR JE VEERTIGSTE
FLINKE STIJGERS OP DE ARMOEDELIJST
ONTDEK HOE ARM JE BUURMAN IS**

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Basically, it is about old-fashioned solidarity in a new guise.

We are the Netherlands, that is my dream

Interview with the National Coordinator against Discrimination and Racism

Peter Horsten
&
Simon de Wijs



Peter Horsten and Simon de Wijs are the editors of Uncover.

The editors of Uncover talked with Rabin Baldewsingh who was appointed in October 2021 as National Coordinator against Discrimination and Racism (NCDR).

What was the reason for installing an NCDR just now?

The appointment was made by the Cabinet at the request of the House of Representatives. The reason lies in a number of facts and events that are very relevant. We in the Netherlands have long said that things are well organised here and that there is no discrimination. Article 1 of our constitution is actually even the principle of equality: everyone is equal. But discrimination does exist in the Netherlands. From 2016, the Black Lives Matter movement emerged in the Netherlands. In demonstrations in 2020, following the death of George Floyd, up to 60,000 people took to the streets, which was unprecedented in the Netherlands. Then in our collective memory came the *'toeslagenaffaire'* (allowance affair) where you saw systemic and institutional exclusion of people based on their socio-economic situation and on ethnicity. These events together created a crucial tipping point which led to support in both politics and society and a sense of urgency to strengthen the approach.

What precisely is the assignment as NCDR?

A longer-term national programme to combat discrimination and racism needs to be developed, with clear shorter-term actions. For this, it is important to start a co-creation process in the approach. There is fragmentation and compartmentalisation when talking about the issue: it affects at least five different ministries.

We need to overcome that. We are now in the middle of a process to create support: in politics, public administration and society. To achieve this, we organised 22 townhall sessions. These are round table discussions with stakeholders and parties involved around all kinds of important topics. Seven themes emerged that could be priorities in the national programme: black racism, anti-Muslim discrimination, institutional racism and ethnic profiling, LGBTIQ+, housing market discrimination, healthcare discrimination, and labour market discrimination.

We take an intersectional approach to the programme: someone may experience discrimination on different grounds. Just think, for example, of a lesbian woman of colour. It is important then that there is policy coherence. We have attached three reference points to the reinforcements in the programme: recognising and preventing the presence of discrimination and racism in the Netherlands, recognising and reporting actual discrimination and racism, and assisting and protecting victims of discrimination and racism.

What specific role do you have as NCDR and is there also a legal force behind the position?

I am not the National Ombudsman nor the Dutch Data Protection Authority. It was agreed with me that the realms of policy and spending resources will remain within the departments. I will certainly suggest measures that could have an enforcing effect but imposition of enforcement remains with the authorities that deal with it. I will be much more involved with content and discourse. The role I have assigned myself as NCDR is threefold. I want to be the *connector*. For instance, between the five ministries, with society, towards politics. I also want to be a *catalyst* for discussions and topics that

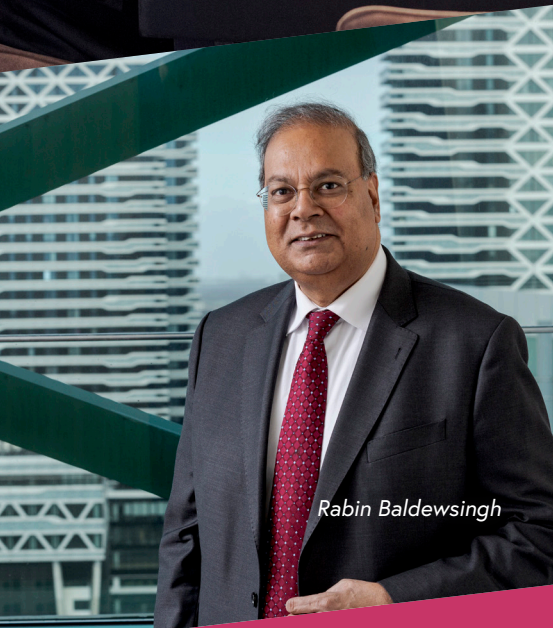
we would rather not raise and which I notice. For example, via a letter to the editor in *Trouw* about the way we receive people from Ukraine (rightly, by the way). You then see that white Ukrainians are treated differently from black Ukrainians. And the last role is that of *watchdog*. I am going to make sure that the measures in the programme are realised. I am going to ensure that we uphold the principle of equality. And where I find that things are not done properly, I will be 'shaming'. And where 'faming' can contribute to proper behaviour, of course I will do so.

Are there perhaps any concrete faming and shaming examples you believe should be famed and showcased?

Definitely, for example in the area of work and labour market. Some companies put together job application committees with a mandatory woman and mandatory someone from a migration background on them. To achieve inclusiveness in the workplace, this is really necessary. Or organisations that use the 'Rooney rule' in recruitment and selection. This rule ensures that for every vacant position, you call at least one person from a migration background to an interview. And there is a restaurant chain in Vlissingen that has started working with 'open hiring'. They do not need to see diplomas, anyone who wants to work can

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Discrimination does exist in the Netherlands.



Rabin Baldewsingh

apply and come to the bottom of the pile. Then, when it's the candidate's turn, the restaurant checks out what they are willing and able to do. Finally, the police. If you look at how they approach diversity policy in the organisation and try to embed it. Recognising and acknowledging discrimination is an important step, especially if this is converted into actions and deeds. But they too still have a long way to go.

Shaming is also something we will do, when necessary. Something that explicitly affects your target group as a university of applied sciences is that knowledge institutions are insufficiently inclusive. The student population is changing but if you look at the teaching staff, there is still a world to be won. Or take a look at policies relating to work placements. Students with a migration background have to apply four times more often than students without a migration background. It is very painful when one faces exclusionary mechanisms at the very beginning of one's career. That is not a good point of departure for a society that is actually supposed to be a 'safe haven'. It is therefore my appeal to knowledge institutions not only to consider it important (because we all do) but to actually embed inclusiveness in the corporate culture.

Let us move on to leisure. Apart from economic aspects, we also see leisure as an area where people are free to choose, seek their happiness, where there are development opportunities. In what way does leisure as a domain play a role in thinking about an upcoming programme?

Leisure mostly takes place in the public space and that, in the Netherlands, especially in the big cities, is the living room of the city. So it has to be inclusive. There is a bit of a short-coming there, however. We have made ourselves the standard (adults, men, Dutch, who can walk, etc.), but someone who is disabled, for example, is regularly confronted with the fact that that public space is not so inclusive. I live by a square where the benches were taken away because young people sat on them! That was actually something that bothered people. You see the same with the layout of beaches and boulevards. We chased many young people off the Scheveningen boulevard because they were hanging out there, drinking and playing music. Major strides need to be made so that the public space becomes that inclusive living room that actually serves as an accessible meeting place, promoting encounters.

You also talk about the multiculturalism and diversity of our society which is precisely a huge potential strength – a strength we do not make the most of.

Yes, exactly, and leisure can play an important role in this respect. Both societally and economically. When you are on a KLM airplane you get to see these sleek 'Welcome to the Netherlands' promotion films, featuring wooden shoes, tulips, Amsterdam canals, and Delft blue. While there are all sorts of other things you could refer to: the Netherlands is an open society; come, experience and enjoy. One example is the summer Carnival event. Why is that not used in the overall branding of our country like Rio? Manchester, Birmingham, Los Angeles, New York or Toronto are all cities that do dare to market their multiculturalism, to make it attractive, to showcase it, to brighten and enliven the city centre with it.



The current visa policy excludes people from coming to the Netherlands.

Christmas and *Sinterklaas* are important moments, from a social point of view, but also in terms of economic vibrancy in the city. Why not do the same for all sorts of other events that could be interesting to boost the economy and attract tourism. Just think of the Sugar Feast, Diwali or Chinese New Year. Surely it is peculiar that only a few hundreds of thousands of Chinese, out of the 1.4 billion there are, come to the Netherlands. And when they do, they come for the tulips and Amsterdam, while several major cities have Chinatowns. Bustling hotspots of economic (Chinese) activity, with shops, restaurants, but also all kinds of events such as dragon dances and Chinese New Year celebrations. We apparently fail to bring that across.

And as it happens, there is also a world to be won by the national government with regard to its visa policy. The fact that few Chinese come here also has to do with the available number of visas. For Indians, that is also a limited number, while 1.3 billion people live there, about 500 million of whom are in the middle class, so they have something to spend. Their spending now mainly goes to Asia, the Middle East, Canada and America. It would be nice if liberalisation were to take place when it comes to visa policy. At the moment, we are excluding people from coming to the Netherlands and spending their money here.



We are still too much stuck in the frame that multiculturalism would be bad... when in fact it makes the Netherlands stronger.

We are insufficiently aware that the standard we apply needs to be stretched. We still think too much of white as the standard. But the cities and the country have changed so we need to use everyone in attracting vibrancy, businesses and tourists. There is a potential that is not being exploited because people do not recognise it. We are still too much stuck in the frame that multiculturalism would be bad, the story that multiculturalism is a weakness, that it brings the Netherlands down, when in fact it makes the Netherlands stronger.

This touches heavily on tourism. Leisure is also about other subsectors such as hospitality, sports and culture. Are there any places where you see sore points?

The hospitality industry should be a place where everyone is welcomed, but the admissions policy in which job applicants are refused on the basis of ethnicity is not in line with that. As far as I am concerned, 'shaming' and stepping up enforcement would be appropriate here. Fortunately, it is on the agenda of major municipalities. But laws and regulations must allow for enforcement, and for now, they do not. The public prosecution service will also have to make improvements. They only want to enforce if there is 'conclusive' evidence, but that is often difficult. Perhaps when in doubt, they should take action more often so that at least they take a stronger lead in setting the standard. Of course, it is not just about guiding people and noting complaints, but also about prevention together with the hospitality industry. Anti-discrimination facilities should be strengthened for this purpose so that they can better fulfil their role.

Within football, and sports in a broader sense, there are definitely also exclusionary mechanisms, which means

that there is a task to be undertaken here too. Football is a very important sector in our society and there you see jungle noises, bananas, songs like 'whoever doesn't stand up is a...!', while there are also campaigns like 'one love' and 'say no to racism'. Then I think: they are not all racists, but we should make them aware that they are following mechanisms, shouting things that are racist in nature. That this means that people are explicitly excluded and people do not feel happy. It is a social problem, but there is also a responsibility of clubs and organisations to impose limits. Or at least make things open to discussion.

The culture sector was, however, one of the first to embrace and sign the diversity code. Yet there are also major challenges to making the cultural sector truly inclusive across the board. You have to deal with a series of Ps: programme, personnel, public (audience), partners. You see, for instance, that cultural institutions do not include enough diversity in their programmes. Bach and Beethoven are great and I enjoy them but it is also nice to programme a Turkish or Indian composer once in a while. You have to want to do something about your programming and focus on a more diverse audience. To achieve this, you will also have to do something about (the diversity of) your personnel. If they do not, organisations, even renowned ones, will gradually lose their right to exist. A disproportionate amount of public money goes to them, while their programming now focuses on too small a segment. The same applies to other cultural institutions. For example, look at museums that do not sufficiently recognise the potential to exhibit African art, for instance. There is work to be done, which is why

I challenged the cultural sector to come up with a townhall session as well.

We also use the term leisure as a test bed. To indicate that they are environments where you could try things out. Do you see opportunities to use leisure as a tool to realise the programme?

This is of eminent importance. In the Quran, let me quote, it is written that God, Allah, made us as different peoples so that we can get to know each other better. That's an interesting one: get to know each other, that strengthens a society and community. You can use leisure for that. If leisure is your living room then you should use it to connect people. Bonding and bridging are interesting and valuable thoughts but you need tools to achieve that. I would like us to use certain forces that already exist in society to work on bonding and bridging.

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If leisure is your 'living room', you have to use it to connect people.



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It is very painful when one faces exclusionary mechanisms at the very beginning of one's career.



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I hope we can shake the tree called 'standards' and that we can change the course of the debate on standards and values.

In leisure, there are opportunities in festivals or culinary happenings. Getting a taste – literally or figuratively - of each other's culture together. But we have to be open to that.

I am pinning my hopes on the younger generation, on students. That population is quite diverse and if we manage to engage them to use leisure as a tool, we do achieve inclusiveness.

You earlier cited the 'say no to racism' campaign. Where do we actually stand at the moment?

Let me ask you a question in return, revealing the answer at the same time. 'Has Martin Luther King's dream been realised?' I do not think so, not in America, not worldwide. It is a process. Although we are further now than when the 'I have a dream' speech was first delivered. There has even been a black president in the US. There is a clear upward trend, but discrimination and racism are societal phenomena which are inherent in humans discriminating, interpreting differences and

wanting to live by them. Yet the hope remains that there will be generations for whom it is just natural to live together as diverse people with complete equality. A funny example perhaps, but when I came to the Netherlands people smoked everywhere, on trains, in meeting rooms, in schools. Teachers even smoked in class. We gradually started working on that too and now those things are 'not done'. We are moving and on the move, the path is deeply paved. That is a big, big win.

That is indeed a very good thing which we can draw strength from. At the same time, we are also hearing about more polarisation. People arguing that 'the Netherlands is no longer the Netherlands they knew'.

Surely the Netherlands is not the Netherlands of 30, 50 or 70 years ago either. Nor was the 1960s' Netherlands the Netherlands of 1728 or 1833. The nostalgia we harbour for the past is fine, but times past are exactly that, and we have to accept that. That does not mean that the times of today are bad times. We have to look beyond our own shadow to realise that the dynamics in society are inherent in society itself. In 50 years' time, the Netherlands will be yet a different Netherlands.

That said, some people may see other people as a threat. You just have to talk about that. Bonding and bridging may have become even more relevant in that context. Polarisation in itself is good for pointing out and discussing things with each other. It is healthy and important for democracy. But when polarisation is approached in a populist or even demagogic way, things go awry. We are now in that populist process.

Finally, looking ahead now, what do you see in the inclusive society as a dream image? Where should we be in five years' time?

We are often unaware that many people have

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Polarisation in itself is good for pointing out and discussing things with each other, but when it is approached in a populist or even demagogic way it goes awry.

a longer history 'here in the Netherlands' than elsewhere. Many were even born here. Most importantly, we need to realise that 'all of us' over 17.5 million together are the Netherlands. This means that everyone on Dutch soil should be able to feel ownership of the Netherlands, and that they actually *get* that ownership as well as the space to be able to *take* ownership. We are the Netherlands; it is my dream that we try to establish that. That can only be done by letting go of the standard we have now. We should not push away the discussion on standards, but rather have it. Is the standard to be male, white, grey and so on, in other words, everyone who can tick the seven check marks of Joris Luyendijk (who wrote a book claiming that the privilege of white men can be summarised with seven check marks)? Or is the standard everyone? Female, male, limited, not limited, gay, straight, young, old, black, white... I hope we can shake the tree called 'standards' and that we can change the course of the debate on standards and values. And that we also learn to act on it, that we do not accept inequality being created.

So inclusiveness goes beyond diversity. Let me use an apt English quote to make that clear: the Netherlands of tomorrow is a country where you do not just say to each other: 'you are invited to the party', but: 'you are invited to the party, *and* you are also invited to dance at the party, to bring your music to the party and to bring your food to the party'. That is diversity *imbued* with inclusiveness. That is the dream.

Photography

• Bureau NCDR

Time for a transformative experience

The foundation of muZIEum stands

Elise Jacobs is marketing and communication specialist at muZIEum.

The muZIEum has been the experience museum in the Netherlands for ten years, in which you can experience, for a while, what it feels like to be blind or visually impaired. An enthusiastic team spreads the message of the muZIEum very passionately every day: what you can still do when you see nothing or hardly anything!

The muZIEum opens eyes

Personal encounters in the dark are central, as a result of which assumptions and prejudices disappear, and inclusion and accessibility are no longer abstract concepts. Visitors trust their guide, an experiential expert, blindly, and realise what *is* possible after all. So paying a visit literally opens one's eyes by closing them for a while. The experiences felt in the muZIEum play a major part here. Visitors gain an experience of being in the dark, where they literally step into the pitch dark, and discover how it is like to be unable to see anything. Or visitors put themselves in the shoes of the visually impaired for a while by means of virtual reality.

A long-cherished dream

The foundation of the muZIEum is rock solid, which is what the museum is proud of, but now it is time for the next phase. A phase in which the museum wants to grow into being a household name in the Netherlands with a visible impact on society. The muZIEum has a unique position in the Netherlands. A position that emphatically offers opportunities for further growth. Do not just think of a rise in the number of visitors every year, but also think of making a long-term impact, reinforcing its reputation, and entering into relevant partnerships and collaborative arrangements.

The outside of the muZIEum cannot exist without the inside of the muZIEum. To make a long-term and sustainable impact as a museum, growth and development in the field of employment cannot lag behind. In 2021, the museum started developing the next phase: a transformative experience that makes sense to both visitors and employees from the beginning until the end. A long-cherished dream come true!

A transformative experience

A new concept is evidently not developed overnight. In late 2021, the muZIEum started with scrutinising the current customer journey, detailing the dreamed customer journey, clarifying its positioning, renewing the house style, and a lot more.

The goal of the total experience is to show visitors even more, and, most of all, have them experience what *is* possible. A visit to the muZIEum will shortly give the even more inspiring, energetic feeling that everybody can mean and contribute something to improve the lives of people with a (visual) impairment. In other words, visitors have a transformative experience, which makes them realise that you can lead a good and autonomous life in spite of your (visual) impairment.

The starting points of the new concept are: accessible, realistic, personal, and activating. These four words describe exactly who constitute the muZIEum, and what the muZIEum does. And have been translated into the concept 'How do you see the world?'. As from 2022, the concept will be worked out and implemented step by step. It is the foundation for strengthening the brand. A visit to the muZIEum will become a state-of-the-art and personal interactive experience to visitors; an experience they will never forget.

The City Lab: science for everybody

The museum does not do this alone. The muZIEum will be working on this plan with various partners in the coming years. One of these partners is the Donders Instituut for Brain, Cognition and Behaviour (Radboud University and Radboudumc). In cooperation, the Donders Instituut and muZIEum opened the Citylab in March 2022.

Having started out with three experiments, in which you learn more about the working of your brain and your behaviour by playing games, the programme will be expanded in the coming years. The Citylab will be a unique place where society and science meet one another in research, interactive lectures, workshops, and exhibitions. In this way, scientific knowledge will be made accessible and understandable to a broad audience in various ways. A textbook example of 'citizen science': science for everybody.

Personal encounters

At muZIEum, visitors and employees, particularly the blind and visually impaired guides,

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We have learned from experience! It is so well put together, and the guide was extremely helpful. A must-SEE!

(Google Review)



are inextricably bound to one another because personal encounters are always central. The muZIEum cannot exist without any personal encounters between visitors and guides. By putting personal encounters centre stage, in whatever way, the muZIEum creates employment for the blind and the visually impaired. A major part of its mission.

Only 30% of the blind and the visually impaired have a job. The muZIEum wants to expand employment and increase the chance of a job for the blind and the visually impaired. Thanks to the existence of this museum, not only the blind and visually impaired can be educated, but also potential employers are inspired, by the blind and the visually impaired, to hire the blind and visually impaired.

Growth and talent development

In 2021, the muZIEum did not only examine its positioning as a day trip destination; it also examined its position as an employer. Its goal: In 2023, the muZIEum will be known for its professional commercial work environment for the blind and the visually impaired. It will be *the* place to discover your talents, and develop your professional skills. 'At the muZIEum, my visual impairment is not an obstacle, but my strength!' guide Melly explains. That provides every team member with a solid basis for the future, and improves their chances on the job market.

To realise their ambition, *muZIEum a household name in the Netherlands*, it is important for them to continue strengthening and expanding the team. At muZIEum, all employees can develop in order to become the best version of themselves. Talent development will not only be important to achieving the shared goal, but for individual employees as well. The muZIEum will develop a training policy, in which colleagues will work on a personal development plan with course programmes under professional guidance. To that purpose, a professional back office, connecting accessible systems, and appropriate facility support are important

prerequisites. For this project, the muZIEum is closely cooperating with the organisations working for the blind and the visually impaired, so these organisations know who constitute the muZIEum, and what the muZIEum does. They will ensure an important flow of potential colleagues.

What does working at muZIEum mean?

The team of the muZIEum currently consists of 70 staff ranging from colleagues in salaried employment to volunteers, and from colleagues on secondment to trainees. Night and day, this enthusiastic team is ready to spread the message of the muZIEum as far as possible. 'We show that the blind and the visually impaired are fully active and are absolutely not pitiful. I think it is wonderful to spread that message', says visitor assistant Margit.

MuZIEum would like to engage young people in new developments and day-to-day business. The muZIEum hosts several BUAs placement students every year. The museum finds it important that youngsters should be provided with a look behind the scenes and discover what the blind and the visually impaired are able to do. That they see how autonomous, innovative, and talented everyone is. Moreover, muZIEum considers this group fully fledged colleagues, who are offered challenges both at an operational, theoretical, and strategic level on the basis of their preferences and desired development. Anke Lin, a BUAs student on placement, confirms this: 'From day one, I was asked what I wanted to learn and do. And during my entire placement track, it was possible for me to keep indicating my needs and wants at the weekly meetings. My growth mostly followed from stepping outside my comfort zone. I thought it was quite exciting because at first, I did not know how to deal with the blind and the visually impaired. At muZIEum, I was given the time and scope to sort things out and try myself. And the same holds for everyone. Shortly before my work placement had finished, for example, a visually impaired guide was hired as day coordinator; that was wonderful to see.'



At muZIEum, my visual impairment is not an obstacle, but my strength!
(muZIEum guide)

Looking forward to the future

All in all, fine projects, with wonderful challenges, which the organisers repeat on an annual basis. In short, these will no longer be separate projects soon, but integrated parts of the muZIEum. The muZIEum is looking forward to the future, and hopes to attract an even bigger group of visitors, volunteers, students on work placement, and partners for an unforgettable experience!



How do you see the world?
(New concept)

Bonding and bridging in third places

The importance of meeting like-minded and others

Olaf Ernst
&
Marisa de Brito



Olaf Ernst is coordinator of the Urban Life & Placemaking specialisation at Academy for Leisure & Events, Breda University of Applied Sciences. Marisa de Brito is a senior researcher in Placemaking and Events at the Academy for Leisure & Events, Breda University of Applied Sciences.

You find yourself in your favourite hangout: an environment you are comfortable with, surrounded by people you might not know, but give you a feeling of being welcome. You order a cup of coffee, look around, read a magazine, and hear the murmur of your co-visitors. Yes, this place really feels fine.

The importance of 'third places'

The significance of such meeting places, where people can gather in an informal setting, has been popularised by Ray Oldenburg (1989). He is an urban sociologist, who argues that places such as cafés or parks are essential for communities and the quality of their neighbourhoods. These third places exist in addition to home ('first place') and workplace/school ('second place'). According to Oldenburg, third places have characteristics, such as being obligation-free places with the potential to level social status as people engage in carefree conversations with a playful mood, and where people can be themselves. Socialising and sense of belonging, also in these kinds of locations, is a basic human need, of which we were painfully reminded during the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, with many third places closed due to (partial)

lockdowns, people longed to be outside of their homes, using more than ever the public space. The pandemic underlined the importance of human contact, and thereby the importance of meeting places. As we pick up life where we left it, it is appropriate to revisit the significance of third places. Additionally, we can ask ourselves: what is actually the meaning of third places for a neighbourhood and its communities?

Coolhaveneiland: diversity in people and places

To find this out we chose Coolhaveneiland in Rotterdam as an example. It is, as the Dutch name says, an island, and for a long time this was also the reputation it had in the city: an inward-looking neighbourhood, where non-residents did not have any reason to go to. This has changed in the past few years, side by side with major developments going on in Rotterdam: Coolhaveneiland opened up and shows signals of upgrading, without being yet completely gentrified. The area still has a mix of housing types and residents, ranging from native Dutch and ethnic inhabitants to students and young international professionals.

With such a diverse population and changes going on, it is no surprise that the offer of third places is equally diverse. One can find a typical

Dutch pub ('brown café'), a neighbourhood garden, a thrift shop which functions as a meeting place for residents and a more established community centre. The question is: what is the meaning of all these places according to their managers or owners?

For everybody or just for a specific group?

To find out, we visited several places and held conversations with those responsible. They all saw their places as an important spot in the neighbourhood: either because 'it is one of the few green areas in the area', 'a place where people from Coolhaveneiland can get support' or simply 'because this is the only pub in the wide environment where they play this kind of Dutch music'.

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The pandemic underlined the importance of human contact, and thereby the importance of meeting places.

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Visitors seem, at first, to stick to their own bubbles.

This last example is striking as it is a place which caters for a clientele that is not linked to the neighbourhood, but attracts people from further away. Most of the other third places are focused on the immediate surroundings and say they are open for everybody. However, when digging a bit deeper, this leads to other insights. Yes, there are specific groups that visit those places, and yes they can be described quite clearly. This is even the case for the communal garden, where there is an 'overrepresentation of white, highly-educated people'. So, it looks like these third places offer something for specific groups and, essentially, they are separate entities, meaning the offer in this neighbourhood reflects the diversity of its inhabitants. However, the visitors seem, at first, to stick to their own bubbles. But is that really the case?

Being open to the unknown

What is clear is that a shared interest always helps interaction. This is a driving force in the pub especially, and really connects people, who come to drink beer, exchange the latest gossip, or in our example enjoy the kind of music that is being played. When we look at the thrift shop or the community centre this is less the case, but you certainly meet others, sometimes with a bit of help of the people working there. As the representative of the community centre says: 'oh yes, I often bring people into contact with each other. Just by offering them a cup of coffee at the same time, start a conversation and walk away, so they can continue talking'. This is what Putnam (2000) calls bonding and bridging, where the first is about establishing a link with someone based on shared interests, the latter stands for bringing different groups together, and let them establish a link.

Bridging also has to do with being open to newcomers, which is also one of the elements Oldenburg includes in his definition of third places. That is sometimes complicated, as the Coolhaveneiland case shows. In the case of the local pub the owner has a camera system built in behind his bar which gives him the opportunity to keep the door closed for unwanted, potential visitors, who he can profile based on appearance. As a result, he claims the pub

'is a safe place where nothing bad happens'. More subtle interventions are undertaken by the owner of a creative hub who takes clients, 'not having the right vibe', outside and starts a friendly conversation. In contrast, there are places that attempt to be open to all, but this does not always work in practice. For instance, Muslim women seem to not enter the community centre if a male is working there, which makes it difficult for the organisers, as they want to be open to all.

At the same time, there are initiatives where groups are willing to help 'the other person'. The same pub owner who profiles visitors, did set up an action for Ukrainian refugees staying near the neighbourhood by collecting clothes and food and by mobilising other parties, such as the clothing bank, which is housed in the same street. This also shows the 'village-like' character of the neighbourhood and the solidarity these places represent.

The role of the neighborhood

In general, in the conversations we had in the meeting places one can see a mixture of 'can do' mentality, pride of the neighbourhood and with that, also involvement. But there is also a sentiment of an area in transition after a long period of being neglected and on its own. And with this, the meeting places on the island also need to find their footing (again).

Third places can have a vital role in being open to the residents or newcomers of an area where they are located, even if - as the above shows - it may not always be that straightforward. In addition, this hugely depends on both the willingness and capacities of the owners and the developments in the neighbourhood as a whole and the effect this has on the specific meeting place. Therefore, it is paramount that stakeholders keep bridging the dialogue on how to develop an inclusive neighbourhood.

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Bonding is about establishing a link with someone based on shared interests, while bridging stands for bringing different groups together.

Is public space intended for everybody?

Barriers to sport and exercise in public spaces

Mark Noordzij
& Laura van der Meijde



Laura van der Meijde and Mark Noordzij are researchers at the Mulier Instituut. Mark is a social geographer and specialises in the relation between living environment, physical activity, and health. Laura is a sociologist and engages in explaining social inequality in sport and physical activity.

In the last few years, public space has played an increasingly important part as a place to engage in sport and physical activity. Boosted by the corona pandemic, we took a walk during our lunch break with the Ommeetje (Walk around the Block) app in our hands, and we did bootcamp in the park after work. However, this development is not new. Whereas participation in sports at sports clubs remains relatively steady, we see a sharp rise in individual physical exercise in public space. Running, cycling, and walking rank highest as the most popular.

Social trends, such as informalisation, informatisation and individualisation underlie this change. Sport in public space is often less formal, and is not organised, or organised differently, is mainly done alone or in small groups, and all sorts of apps and smart appliances are used.

When talking about public space, we mean outside space that is freely accessible. Everybody should be able to use it to engage in physical activity. This starting point aligns with the ambition of 'Inclusief sporten en bewegen' ('Inclusive sport and exercise'), a major pillar of the Dutch National Sports Agreement (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2018), because public space is there for all of us. From a recent survey it appeared that seven in

ten Dutch residents use public space at least once a month for sport or exercise (Prins & Van Lindert, 2021). However, this is not equally divided over the several target groups by a long way. Disabled people, women, and people on low incomes and/or the low-skilled do so (far) less frequently.

How can we lay out outside space in such a way that it will become more attractive to these target groups? We will address this question on the basis of two examples. We will zoom in on the potential benefits of urban sports to activate young people from low-income households and girls.

Urban sports offers opportunities for youngsters

Urban sports are seeing a huge popularity boost and are conquering their place in the public arena more and more. The many sporty activities in this category can be recognised by their strongly cultural, boundary-stretching and free character, and are pre-eminently suitable for carrying them out in the street. Just think of skateboarding, street dance, free running, and street football. These sports are particularly popular among youngsters. They seem to be attracted by the possibility to be able to sport wherever, whenever and with whom they want, and use the city as their playing field.

Metropolitan municipalities, in particular, consider facilitating urban sports as a suitable means to increase sport participation among youngsters. By building accessible amenities such as skateparks, calisthenics facilities and urban playgrounds, they try to activate, in particular, 'hard to reach youth for sports' and keep them in motion. By this, we mean youngsters who do not want to commit themselves to a club (anymore), and lag behind in sport participation figures. From research it appears

that youngsters from families on low incomes play and engage in physical activity to a lesser extent: they sport, on average, 2.6 hours less per week than children from families on high incomes (Van Stam et al., 2021). Therefore, some municipalities target their urban sports policy specifically at deprived neighbourhoods, where relatively many families on low incomes live.

But policymakers consider urban sports more than just a promising solution to fight sport dropout rates. They hope these sports – through trial and error, discovering your own boundaries, using the body creatively, and being connected with the urban community – can positively contribute to personal self-determination, talent development and entrepreneurship. Things that could contribute to all this are, among other things, the discipline, perseverance, and the focus required to get the hang of tricks, as the sportspeople themselves experience it (Bruggeling & Van Batenburg-Eddes, 2020).

However, in order to achieve this, more is required than just building, as initiators from the urban sports community plead. Just by listening to the needs of the youth,

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Policymakers consider urban sports more than just a promising solution to fight sport dropout rates.

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Seven in ten Dutch residents use public space at least once a month for sport or exercise.

taking their plans seriously, and giving them responsibility, they see in urban sports the potential to promote physical activity and social development among youngsters (Selling & Blom, 2021).

This does require out-of-the-box thinking though. An example hereof is the municipality of Tilburg, where young creatives from the urban scene are given the opportunity to bring their idea for a project to life with an 'Urban Voucher'. Fuelled by the influence of corona on the well-being of youngsters, these vouchers grant subsidy to start initiatives aiming to combat loneliness, gloom, and fear among the youth via urban sports. Also, young people are coached in setting up their initiative. To that purpose, they can turn to an *Urban Ambtenaar* (Urban Public Servant), who is the connecting link between the urban community and the city.

The Urban Dance Ground: a safe playground for girls

For young people, public space is mostly a social meeting place. They want to see each other, be seen, and meet up. Sport and play facilities within sight of houses or places where many

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The first step is to create a place where girls feel socially safe.



people gather are therefore their favourite ones. However, the way young people use outside space differs enormously between girls and boys. For girls, for example, the feeling of having control of social interactions plays an important role.

They become less active, for example in the presence of boys (Reimers et al., 2018). At the same time, girls' participation in sports decreases rapidly during their teens (Prins & Van Lindert, 2-21). Therefore, it is extra important that we lay out outdoor space in such a way that it remains attractive for girls to make use of.

But how do you do that? The first step is to create a place where girls feel socially safe, and which meets their needs and wants. A good example is the Urban Dance Grounds in Utrecht and Amsterdam. This dance floor in public space has a DJ station, which you can play music with if you swing a wheel. This wheel generates energy, and if you put your phone on the station, you can play music. In this way, breakdance moves or dances can be trained at the Dance Ground, which can then be shared via TikTok or Instagram. The Urban Dance Ground specifically targets girls in their teens, and that is unique in Dutch public space.

Step two is to organise an offering for this target group in various places as well. From a survey into a Krajicek Playground in the city of Ede it appears that girls, when a specific offering of activities is organised for them, also make more use of the playground in the days following these activities (Reitsma & Prins, 2020). Activities such as dance lessons are also organised at Urban Dance Grounds to encourage girls to come to this place.

Conclusion

Public spaces are intended for all of us. Yet, we see that some groups, among others, girls and

youngsters from low-income families, engage in outdoor sport and exercise far less. If we want to head for inclusive public spaces, more attention should be paid to these target groups. This requires more places that match their needs and wants, a sufficient number of suitable offers for them, and involving them in this whole process.

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PopMonument creates space for Band of Trust

Cooperation between a rapper and participants in language practice groups

Joep Gudde is in charge of funds and marketing at PopMonument.

Since 2014, one or more festivals has/have been organised annually under the heading of PopMonument. PopMonument means special artists at special locations in cities full of heritage which functions as a stage. From an intimate performance in an ancient monument to an emerging band that blows the audience away in the basement of a palace. PopMonument combines well-known names with local talents and cultural hotspots with undiscovered places. The first few years only in Bergen op Zoom, but very recently in more and more cities, among other things, Breda, Middelburg, Veere, and Willemstad. It is not so much about the sum of music and heritage, but the subtle interplay that can be created.

Year full of own productions

In 2021, the following step was taken in that interplay via a collaboration between a musician, an artist and a location. Blandzun did a gig in the Grote Kerk Veere, a colossal church with a large variety of stories and functions due to its history. Artist Mirjam

Debets projected images on the back wall of the church during this performance, and integrated the various story lines of that church, resulting in a unique performance. And later that year, this line was followed in an even bigger own production entitled *Kommunikate*. Techno musician Jeroen Search was linked to choreographer Judith Clijsters in consultation with Dans Brabant, and the engagement of Roger Vermolen as a VJ ensured a complete picture. Their assignment: a multidisciplinary music and dance performance including an hour's lightshow in theatre De Maagd in Bergen op Zoom.

Kenny Anders

Because of the search for special combinations, covering the full width of both programming, locations, and target groups, and via the function of leisure as an instrument for a better world, PopMonument offers a chance to include and drive social and inclusive projects as part of its programming. In 2021, PopMonument happened to coincide with the Week of Reading & Writing, and since Bibliotheek West-Brabant has been a partner and location of the festival for ages, the idea arose to set up a unique project. Kenny Anders, a psychologist and coach of youth with autism, and also a rapper and word artist, started a special collaboration with participants in language practice groups of the library. The language virtuoso and the functional illiterates discussed things extensively, got to know each other better, and as a result, they composed a song together.

Vertrouwensband (Band of Trust)

From the lyrics, which were appropriately given the title *Vertrouwensband* with multiple layers of meaning, it becomes clear what you experience if you have difficulty mastering the Dutch language. Just think of problems with simple

everyday things like reading messages on your phone, information in public transport, menu cards or text statements in public space. Of course, there was a performance in the *Verhalenkamer* (Story Room) of the library (not entirely coincidentally for that matter) during PopMonument during which the song was played. But Kenny also went into the studio of pop venue *Gebouw-T* together with participants in language practice groups to record a video clip which also tells the story of the project as an aftermovie, and keeps propagating it in this way as well. Furthermore, a temporary additional exposition was set up in the *Verhalenkamer*. A fantastic production for PopMonument, a wonderful stage for Kenny, a good project for the library, and unforgettable experiences for participants in language practice groups. However, what it yields is far broader. *Vertrouwensband* has also resulted in an enormous feeling of pride and trust among all those involved, which is certainly of great value to participants in language practice groups. A translated fragment from the lyrics that illustrates this well: 'Because insecurity is flying over more often, I have come to trust myself more'. Moreover, the project helps to provide information about delays in language acquisition by drawing attention to functional illiteracy in a contemporary form, because listeners put themselves in the position of the target group more easily through the song.

To be continued

In 2022, the project with Kenny Anders will be continued in all PopMonument editions. PopMonument will seek to collaborate with libraries again with the aim to share more broadly and express the art of and love for language.

More information

Watch and listen to *Vertrouwensband*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWZgINbVUE4>



Problems with simple daily things like reading messages on your phone, information in public transport or menu cards.

Why social inclusion is important to address

Leisure and tourism experiences as catalysts

Marcel Bastiaansen

Marcel Bastiaansen is Professor of Leisure and Tourism Experience at Tilburg University.

I have recently been appointed as a full Professor of Leisure and Tourism Experience at Tilburg University. In my inaugural lecture, on 10 June 2022, I addressed the research programme I want to pursue in my professorship. Social inclusion is one of the focus points of this research programme. In this article I briefly outline how and why social inclusion is an important point to address in the scientific study of leisure and tourism.

Historically, the academic study of leisure branched off from sociology. After World War II, the study of leisure developed into encompassing, among other things, leisure stratification – the notion that differences in social class, ethnicity and gender strongly determine the types of leisure activities people engage in. Obviously, such stratification results in the fact that leisure participation increases rather than decreases the boundaries between different social classes, promoting social exclusion rather than inclusion. Around the turn of the millennium, the field of Leisure Studies reorganised itself around new areas of interest (reviewed in Bouwer & van Leeuwen, 2013). A common unifying theme was to study the (individual, social and cultural) *meaning* of leisure, and to attribute a central role to the lived experience (Blackshaw, 2010) of individuals. Nowadays, the notions of meaning and *experience* are still very much alive in the scientific debate on the role of leisure in society (see e.g. Duerden et al., 2018), and together they provide a useful framework for understanding how leisure, and more specifically meaningful leisure experiences, may

serve as catalysts to promote social inclusion. Leisure and tourism, being activity oriented, have a tremendous potential to bring different social groups together at the same time, at the same place, and with shared content. This creates ideal platforms for different social groups to interact (Collins, 2004). These interactions can serve as a catalyst for enhancing mutual understanding and promoting social inclusion.

In a recent study (van Bendegom et al., 2021) we took an initial step towards establishing a research approach for this issue. We measured the experience of attending a theatre show in young adults that very frequently attend the theatre and in young adults that never, or very rarely attended the theatre. Results showed that, although both groups differed in terms of perceived leisure constraints and pre-existing cultural socialisation, the experience of both groups of the theatre show was quite similar in terms of emotional engagement. These results are informative for policymakers, for designers of cultural experiences (such as art directors and museum curators) and for marketers of cultural institutions, as they indicate that attempts to broaden cultural consumption amongst young people should be directed at improving accessibility of cultural activities rather than of adapting the contents of the cultural offerings to the needs of these infrequent visitors.

Next steps in this line of research should explicitly address whether the experience of joint attendance is (equally) meaningful for different groups of participants, and whether it promotes intergroup contact and mutual understanding across different social groups. Note that instead of focusing on frequent versus infrequent attendants of theatre shows, different groups can be defined, such as tourists versus local

residents. In that context, joint experiences and intergroup contact should be aimed at improving mutual understanding between residents and tourists, and as a result optimise the social impacts of tourism. More broadly, the approach of creating common platforms for different social groups by designing leisure and tourism activities, and of evaluating the meaningfulness of the experiences of the different groups, will likely provide relevant knowledge on how to use leisure and tourism experiences as catalysts for broadening societal participation, and for promoting social inclusion.

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Joint experiences and intergroup contact should be aimed at improving mutual understanding.

Movement with impact

Through the power of design and communication to meaningful work

Simone Kramer (owner of C-mone, cultuur & communicatie) and Petra Janssen (owner of design studio Boot) are initiators of stichting Social Label. Together with Edwin Vollebergh (Studio Boot) they have also developed stichting Werkwarenhuis (a creative social community) at Tramkade in Den Bosch.

Imagine, if people who cannot keep up so well in mainstream education learn to weld by means of a 'design broom' with a handle made of old bicycle frames welded together; if people who have a different 'rhythm of life' can weave new textile clothing products on old looms at their own pace; if people who need a time-out can recharge in an inspiring place to find their passions again and reconnect with society; if people who cannot find regular jobs due to physical limitations can engage in meaningful work to the best of their ability.

A society like this is one where the human dimension rules, with time and attention for each other. Where working and learning are not ends in themselves, but ways to develop as human beings. Where lifelong learning and meaningful living are central to serving our neighbours. It is about corporate social responsibility. This is the philosophy of Social Label, a growing movement striving for an inclusive economy through the power of design and communication. Scaling up this philosophy will create more impact.

Meaningful design

Stichting Social Label involves people with fewer opportunities in the world of culture and design. In 2018 Social Label received the Dutch Design Award for best commissioning practice. This is because the designers are briefed differently in order to have design play a new role in the lives of people with fewer opportunities. Every year, a product update or partnership is added. This radiates out, like ripples on water, connecting various people and organisations that contribute to a social and creative economy. Meanwhile, Social Label – in cooperation with designers and several workshops at (care) institutions in the Netherlands – has built a socially sustainable design collection in the Netherlands. The timeless design products, including the broom by designer Dick van Hoff,

have been designed to allow people to grow, learn craftsmanship and (re)connect with society – for wonderful work and appreciation for everyone. Meaningful design.

Democratisation of beauty

Ever since our inception in 2011, we have been propagating this philosophy and building a national and international movement towards a social economy. Apart from Social Label products at various workshops, we are also developing a 'maak-programma' (creation programme) in the Social Label Lab. This design lab for social innovation, opened by Queen Máxima in 2018, accommodates five 'maak-ateliers' in addition to the Social Label shop. Here, we spread our sustainable impact philosophy and awareness of it. Inclusive communities are created here, new cultural behaviours advocated and well-being promoted. Inclusiveness is a prerequisite for better community cohesion. New groups of creatives emerge through creating and presenting together. A group consists of professionals, people with fewer opportunities, people with disabilities and people who want to create meaning and work in a professional environment of the applied arts. Through the exchange of thoughts and experiences, and the co-creation of products, better tailor-made designs can be made for people. For a better living environment and interaction with each other. Well-being and being seen is important for everyone. Creators, designers and the public (visitors and buyers) challenge each other and learn from each other. Beauty becomes visible for everyone.

'Maak-ateliers'

In the five 'maak-ateliers' (open, story, craft, assembly and move) we draw up weekly programme in the Social Label Lab. Here we inspire creators and apprentice trainers to create and present Social Label products and

activities together. A collaboration that is based on mutual respect and consideration for the quality that everyone possesses. We regard communication as the basis of our society, and design can add purpose, means, function, poetry or well-being.

The *open workshop* is about multidisciplinary thinking and acting outside the box. Design doing, so to speak, complete with agenda setting for system change and awareness for a better inclusive future. The initiators of Social Label, Petra Janssen (Studio Boot) and Simone Kramer (C-mone) translate the notion of inclusion for the purpose of collaboration with applied artists and people 'on the sidelines' into a sensitive language of their own, bringing together products or presentations; of people with and without disabilities, with and without mental illness, and of various ages.

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Where new things can arise spontaneously (while eating, creating, dancing or meeting) and develop naturally.



This concerns the design of a place where people and ideas come together.

Following the what is called 'narrative crockery' and the impact it has, we work together on the stories of people with disabilities or mental health problems. Edwin Vollebergh (Studio Boot) has designed this crockery and is workshop manager of the *story workshop*. Here, we use language, poetry and images that make people feel better or allow them to express themselves.

In the *craft workshop*, in cooperation with workshop manager Brigit Vermeulen, it is all about textile work techniques. In this workshop, products are created for the Social Label collection. Another important aspect here is language learning and exchange between participants from various cultures.

The guiding principles in the *assembly workshop* are composing, gathering and looking for solutions. With 3D technology, parts are manufactured and/or supplied that can be put together to form a total product under the apprenticeship of the Den Bosch-based design duo Jos Kranen and Johannes Gille.

In addition to creating products, participants in the *move workshop* learn to open up, feel and express themselves through dance and movement workshops. It is about stimulating people's emotional development and ability to express themselves, as can be seen in the

dancing duet 'Zullen we samen' in cooperation with dance makers Jana Sleger and Kelly Vanneste.

Design lab for social innovation

The Social Label Lab with the design shop and 'maak-ateliers' are located in the Werkwarenhuis, a creative social community at the Tramkade in Den Bosch. The 'maak-ateliers' have an open passageway so that the creation process is visible and flows into the encounters in café-restaurant Van Aken in the Werkwarenhuis. A melting pot of functions par excellence, an inclusive ideal world where beautiful things are invented and made. This is where diverse groups of people find each other. It is a versatile meeting place between creators, the public and applied artists (designers, dancers, performers), who learn a lot from each other and set up initiatives such as workshops, exhibitions, art installations and performances. Through activities, we encourage a creative and inclusive environment where the public learns to interact with diverse behaviours. Everyone is welcome and allowed to be who they are. In 2019 the Social Label Lab and the Werkwarenhuis received an honourable nomination in the Habitat category of the Dutch Design Awards. This concerns the design of a place where people and ideas come together.

Culture as a driver of area development

Since 2015 Social Label has been a driver of creative area development in the Tramkade neighbourhood in Den Bosch. We transformed an old feed factory into the Werkwarenhuis based on the principle of 'making something out of nothing'. A versatile place where interaction with the public and the area comes first and foremost. A place where people feel at home. Where new things can arise spontaneously (while eating, creating, dancing or meeting) and develop naturally. We allow people to experience what design, art and culture can mean; high-quality cultural offerings in a barrier-free

attractive place with room for creativity and experimentation. After five years of pioneering, the pillars of this *gesamtkunstwerk* are given a follow-up. The pillars of culture, inclusion, young at heart, and the development function have been incorporated in the new area perspective called Bossche Stadsdelta (2020). The former filled-in harbour around the Werkwarenhuis has been designated on the municipal structure map of 's-Hertogenbosch as a creative harbour area, and this puts Social Label Lab right in the centre of the new neighbourhood to be developed. The building transforms along with us, allowing temporary social sustainability.

We believe that the pursuit of beauty and communication will make our society stronger again. A society needs symbols and examples to express its ambitions and self-confidence. The greatest power of art and culture lies in living out new possibilities, creating new perspectives. It is about a change in mentality, different way of working and interacting in today's society. The mentality of 'getting the job done' started on a small scale and has set something in motion that is becoming a bigger and bigger movement, a story with meaning, to which more and more people want to add a chapter.

More information

- www.sociallabel.nl
- www.werkwarenhuis.nl
- *Book Social Label Works:* www.sociallabelshop.nl/product/social-label-works/

Photography

- www.renevanderhulst.nl & Art-direction Petra Janssen / Studio Boot



In 2018 Social Label received the Dutch Design Award for best commissioning practice.



Not about and for us, but by and with us!

Towards a STERKplaats 2.0 focusing on
the domain of leisure and tourism

This article was co-produced by LFB (an interest group for and by people with (intellectual) disabilities) and Breda University of Applied Sciences. Ellis Jongerius is director and experiential expert, and H el ene Hoofst is project and fundraising coordinator at LFB. Peter Horsten and Marco van Leeuwen are lecturers and researchers at the Academy for Leisure & Events of Breda University of Applied Sciences.



Leisure is a source of joy and happiness, and in that sense a human right. But easy accessibility of recreation, sports, attractions, museums and theatres is not self-evident for all people. Stairs, excessive walking distances, awkwardly placed fences and thresholds can create physical barriers for people with physical disabilities; poorly legible texts, unfindable wayfinding signs and a cluttered environment can cause problems for people with visual impairments; confusing and overly complexly worded information (such as online booking systems or attraction park maps) can be discouraging for people with (mild) intellectual disabilities; crowds can be over-stimulating and exhausting for several of these and other groups. It is possible to design solutions to many of these problems, but the designers, managers and employees of these leisure facilities need to be aware of the nature and extent of the problems. The best way to find out is to work together directly with the people concerned.

Starting point for cooperation

Many policies aimed at people with disabilities try to address issues around living, working and care, but attention to and budgets focused on leisure activities remain underexposed. However, within our leisure time, we work on social participation, identity formation, social bonding, happiness and personal development - essential aspects of a full life. Based on this insight, Peter Horsten and Marco van Leeuwen (Academy for Leisure & Events) felt a personal and substantive motivation to contribute to a more accessible and inclusive leisure sector. One of the pillars of innovation in the leisure sector is the education of a new generation of leisure professionals. How can we design educational activities to connect groups with disabilities to BUAs, working with existing BUAs students to create truly accessible leisure experiences? There is a need in the leisure sector for these

kinds of solutions, which can emerge in the collaboration between experiential experts (the people with disabilities for whom the solutions are needed) and the upcoming generation of leisure professionals.

Several inspiring studies, projects and work placements had already taken place within the Academy for Leisure & Events, generating valuable solutions and experiences for target groups with disabilities. However, despite all these great initiatives, the target group itself was rarely involved in such projects. Inclusion of people for whom participating in leisure activities is not self-evident is certainly dealt with in education, but incidentally and in isolation, rather than integrally interwoven as a point of attention across the full breadth of the programme.

For inclusive research and education to be truly inclusive, the bridge to equal participation of the intended target groups in the research and design process must be crossed. The sustained input of the intended groups is required to have a real impact and find appropriate solutions. Here lies an excellent opportunity for Breda University of Applied Sciences to take a leading role in making accessible the domains it specialises in, such as leisure, public space, tourism, gaming, and hospitality. This leading role fits perfectly with BUAs' new strategy for the 2022-2025 period. A key excerpt from that strategy reads:

'We are a diverse and inclusive community with various strengths on a single campus. By using each other's strengths, combining them, involving our industry partners, and experimenting together, we can give substance to the "+". Diversity and inclusion, therefore, are core to the strategic direction of Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAs) for the 2022-2025

period. In 2030, we want to be an internationally leading knowledge institute that is recognised for helping solve the challenges of our society and meet the changing needs of the industries we serve.' (BUAs+ More than a University of Applied Sciences).

The time is ripe to mirror this ambition in education and research with developments within the sectors themselves, where topics such as accessibility, diversity and inclusiveness are becoming increasingly important. Following the UN Convention on Disability in 2016 (www.rijksoverheid.nl), the leisure sector too realises that working on these topics is no longer optional. Numerous initiatives and instruments, such as the Diversity &

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The points raised are very valuable and interesting to hear. It is admirable that you have looked at them with such keen eyes. We are definitely going to be able to benefit from this.

*(Participation and Repositioning
Project Leader at Museum
Markiezenhof)*

Inclusion Code in the cultural sector (www.codedi.nl), the Sports Agreement (www.sportakkoord.nl), and the Community for Accessible Recreation (www.toegankelijkerecreatie.nl) show that the sector also means business. Besides a moral and social responsibility, there is also an economic argument for BUAs and the leisure sector to work on improving accessibility: the group of people with disabilities is large. Not being hospitable or accessible to these groups means closing yourself off to a huge market. After all, this concerns not only the people with disabilities themselves, but often also their companions, family and friends. If, as a leisure professional, you want to offer everyone a memorable, meaningful experience, including those who need extra or different attention, it forces you to look outside the box for innovative solutions.

To give shape to all this, a proposal was put forward to establish a physical body (workplace, student training company, network organisation) on the BUAs campus, enabling people with disabilities to work with students, colleagues and industry professionals on the topic of leisure time. Such places already exist within several educational institutions: the 'STERKplaatsen' (literally translated in STRONG places or places of STRENGTH: Places to empower) of Vereniging LFB.

Vereniging LFB

Vereniging LFB (www.lfb.nu) is an interest organisation by and for people with intellectual disabilities. LFB advocates the interests of people with intellectual disabilities and exerts influence on organisations and politics to enable people with disabilities to play



an important role in society as much as others. LFB trains people with (intellectual) disabilities to become experiential experts, and in this process, has an eye for everyone's talents. The organisation has a national office in Utrecht.

In addition, there are nine STERKplaatsen spread throughout the Netherlands where people with intellectual disabilities learn and work according to the 'by and for' principle: all LFB activities are organised by people with intellectual disabilities themselves.

STERKplaatsen

These STERKplaatsen can be found in universities of applied sciences (hbo) or secondary vocational educational institutes (mbo). Within a STERKplaats, STERK students (with intellectual disabilities) are trained to become experiential experts. This training programme lasts three years, on average, and is delivered by Vereniging LFB. People with intellectual disabilities learn to share their experiences of living with a disability with others in order to support and empower other people. Students with and without disabilities, lecturers and researchers thereby learn equally from and with each other. Students and trainees of the educational institution are invited to visit the STERKplaats and work together with the STERK students, and vice versa, STERK students give guest lessons or skills workshops to students of the educational institution. By working together with STERK students, regular students from the educational institution learn how best to interact with people with intellectual disabilities. In turn, STERK students learn in this cooperation to recognise their own talents and pitfalls, to stand up for themselves and to give and receive feedback. STERK students are also involved in applied research, as advisors or co-researchers.

This cooperation contributes to the growth and development of both STERK students and regular students, and what's more, added value is created for education and the sector itself. So far, all parties appear to experience great added value in working at or with a STERKplaats and its STERK students (LFB and Buro Opaal, 2022).

Experiential expertise

STERK students thus develop into experiential experts in about three years. The brochure about STERKplaatsen of LFB (LFB and Buro Opaal, 2022) explains what that means to this group:

- Experiences = what you have experienced yourself living with a disability.
- Experiential knowledge = how you yourself feel about your experiences and the experiences of others.



So great that the experiential experts delivered the workshop. They immediately put accessibility and feeling welcome in a different perspective. This fresh outlook led to valuable discussions regarding an inclusive leisure sector. *(BUAs lecturer)*

- Experiential expertise = learning how you can use your experience in, for instance, research or education.

The added value of people's own experiences, expertise and insights is not only important for STERK students, but is also recognised within mainstream mbo and hbo education. In the co-creative design of solutions, as already applied in educational projects within BUAs (e.g. in the master's programme Imagineering), participants in the process can assume different roles:

- (1) Researcher: taking a broader, objective perspective, analysing the data and providing insights from science;
- (2) Advisor: providing an external, fresh perspective, offering angles and ideas based on practical expertise;
- (3) Catalyst: participating in the process, inspiring change processes from within and building support;
- (4) Experiential expertise: based on lived experience and knowledge, knowing exactly what works and what does not.

In terms of content, these roles complement each other, providing different pieces of the puzzle to be solved in a particular project. Working together in itself makes everyone feel heard, and involved in the project's success.

Good, motivated students who are not themselves affected by disabilities can do a lot of good and provide interesting solutions in projects on accessibility (e.g. of attractions), especially in roles (1), (2) and (3). However, involving real experiential experts in role (4)

provides the most detailed and relevant information, especially by making things that are obvious, that non-experiential experts regularly overlook, visible to people in the other roles.

From care to leisure, added value of STERKplaats 2.0

At the moment, there are nine STERKplaatsen, mainly situated within educational institutions offering study programmes in social work, well-being and care. The project, supported by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, runs until the end of 2022. Within the project, there is scope for developing another four STERKplaatsen. The strength of the project lies in the fact that in addition to their own development path, STERK students are given responsibility in developing the care and care

personnel of the future. Since its founding, Vereniging LFB has mainly been active within the framework of the social domain, working with parties such as care providers, municipalities and ministries.

The importance of working with experiential experts is increasingly seen and recognised within the social domain. This 'lobby' has yet to take off outside that sector. Working together with BUAs can be a good first step in this respect, precisely because leisure time is of particular importance for quality of life, also for people with disabilities, and because parties in the leisure sector themselves also indicate they are looking for ways to become more inclusive.

A STERKplaats on the BUAs campus (what we will provisionally call a 'STERKplaats 2.0') would aim to make experiential experts co-responsible for the design of an inclusive leisure sector. For regular students of the existing BUAs programmes in the field of leisure, as well as tourism, hotels and hospitality, and gaming, it offers great added value to work with people with disabilities during their course of study. Because the target group itself is involved in analysis and development processes from the very beginning, it contributes to a more realistic picture of the wishes, needs and potential of this target group. For the leisure sector, it is a value add that the (future) professional learns how to work inclusively in the designs and how the offers can actually be inclusive. It prevents surprises and challenges that have to be solved afterwards. People with disabilities are still often a 'forgotten' target group. Through co-creative projects of STERK students, regular BUAs students and leisure companies, the leisure sector can work concretely on the challenge of becoming more inclusive.

Initial exploration: three meetings

In the first half of 2022 LFB and BUAs had several talks to give substance to the above-mentioned ideas. In addition, three meetings were organised in which experiential experts from LFB and students and lecturers from the Academy for Leisure & Events worked together on leisure topics.

In the first meeting within the framework of Dutch Happiness Week the experiential experts took the students and lecturers through the challenges they face in being able to participate in leisure activities. This involves, for example, prejudices towards this group, a limited budget, dealing with cumbersome systems (from online ticketing to park maps), getting overexcited quickly, physical accessibility, feeling welcome, and the lack of a network to hang out with.

A second meeting took place at Museum Markiezenhof in Bergen op Zoom where experiential experts and leisure students researched the customer journey. The expectations and the provision of information through the website and social media were discussed in advance. During the visit to the museum, a questionnaire and already available apps, such as Ongehinderd (www.ongehinderd.nl), were completed to assess accessibility. The participants were asked to visit the exhibition 'Hoge Luchten' (High Skies), an exhibition featuring paintings from the Rijksmuseum. Examples that came to light: the accompanying audio tour contained several choices, in which it was noticed that the experiential experts had actually not been anticipated. Many texts accompanying the paintings and displayed on the walls were



It is great to work together with your students in these meetings. Thinking together about our leisure time. Very important! Because this is about activities that I enjoy and that make me happy. Time where I really get to choose!

(LFB experiential expert)



too complex and did not sufficiently connect to the experiential world. It was also noticed that the role of attendants in the museum was alienating and that the more interactive exhibitions were unclear in terms of navigation and also quickly overstimulating. But still, the many buttons did have to be pressed. When the findings were shared with the museum, it was clear that they contained useful feedback.

Finally, there was a meeting organised by students from Performatory, in which a co-creative design session was prepared and carried out with experiential experts. The challenge was to design the upcoming 'Hete Vuren' (Hot Fires) exhibition of the Markiezenhof (again in cooperation with the Rijksmuseum) to better suit people with intellectual disabilities. Together they came up with several prototypes. Some groups gave attention to clear routing and marking, places of silence, appealing additions via objects, display stands, speakers or multimedia to a limited selection of paintings, as well as interactive workshops to promote understanding about the context, or painting in general. In contrast, other groups emphasised hospitality and information provision as well as the importance of choices therein, preferably enhancing the experience for everyone, people with and without disabilities.

The three meetings were perceived positively by all. The opportunities offered by the collaboration for all parties are recognised by all involved. The task now is to take the next step from this exploration into inclusive research and education (with equal participation of students, experiential experts, lecturers and the professional field) to ensure a lasting impact.

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I have become more aware of gaps in our sector. It is particularly instructive to work with people with intellectual disabilities and step into their experience.

(BUAs student)

Challenges

The intended collaboration between LFB, BUAs and the leisure sector should contribute to making leisure activities and facilities better accessible to people with disabilities. This process requires commitment from all involved. LFB has years of experience with engaging experiential expertise and using the talents of people with intellectual disabilities. BUAs is an experienced player in the leisure field. In other words, BUAs and LFB are logical partners to work towards a more inclusive society together with the leisure sector, which is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of inclusiveness.

Within the learning process, which it undoubtedly will be, we can name some points of interest:

- Topics such as leisure, recreation or attractions are new to the STERKplaatsen. The STERKplaatsen concept is new to BUAs (but is similar to its existing work experience concepts). In that interaction, it will be necessary to find out which interesting learning aspects deserve attention. In addition to the personal development of the experiential experts from the existing STERKplaatsen educational concept, elements from BUAs education (such as basic principles of experience design, concept development, hospitality, management) can be made accessible to this target group. In addition, workshops and presentations by experiential experts will have to be incorporated into a more integrated line on inclusion in mainstream education. In this respect, the connections with placement groups, graduate students and minors will also be considered. New learning effects and competence development opportunities will arise for BUAs students in the cooperation with experiential experts.

- The STERKplaatsen will have to be an inclusive place in which a broad group of people without and with diverse disabilities will eventually be represented. Starting with the specific needs of LFB's constituency (i.e. people with intellectual disabilities), the concept can be expanded to consider diversity as a whole. This could include topics such as mental health complaints in students (since corona), autism or over-stimulation disorders. The STERKplaatsen could also develop a programme on this within BUAs.

- Because LFB is an association with members, advocacy activities at local, regional and national levels are also carried out from the STERKplaatsen to engage everyone. This fits perfectly with BUAs, an institute that wants to have an impact on its environment. The STERKplaatsen can then serve as a student training company with a rich programme aimed at people with disabilities in the region, engaged in making the leisure sector more inclusive, and promoting inclusive research and education can represent great added value.

- The above can be realised if the STERKplaatsen takes up a role as a networking organisation around inclusiveness and leisure, which students, sectors, lecturers, researchers and people with various disabilities from the region can join, co-organised by experiential experts and regular BUAs students.

- Work is currently underway on industry recognition of the experiential expert training programme. Our joint ambition is to eventually offer experiential experts recognised educational elements in areas such as customer journey research or inclusive experience design through the system of micro credentials or open batches, fed from the existing BUAs educational offerings. For regular BUAs students, LFB can offer education elements on, for example, co-creative work with people with disabilities.

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When limitations serve as a source of inspiration

Revelland as jumping board to the next level



Ronald Ligtenberg is founder and CEO of Possibilize.

Ronald Ligtenberg is the founder of Possibilize. This organisation believes that limitations always serve as a source of inspiration to make things possible. It all started with the organisation of Sencity in 2013. This is a music event for deaf (and hearing) people where visitors are treated to aroma jockeys, taste sensations, light shows, a vibrating dancefloor and sign dancers. Meanwhile more than 70 Sencity events were organised all around the world. Uncover asked Ronald some questions on what he learned over the past 20 years and what new developments are going on.

What issues do you encounter in the music industry and cultural sector when it comes to inclusion and accessibility?

Everywhere we came around the world, I noticed people acting weird when it came to an inclusive event. Accessibility is often considered to be a burden. It costs money, takes time, requires effort and nobody really knows how to do it. And if it is being considered a burden, not much

is going to happen, even when there is more and more pressure from stakeholders such as funders or governmental bodies. As long as cultural organisations struggle with this issue, politicians tend to be cautious about imposing extra demands regarding this topic, not realising they are excluding a huge group of people.

The corona pandemic provided another reason to be easy on them as for many venues it was more a matter of staying alive than improving their services. The real issue here is that they still approach accessibility and inclusivity as a problem. Fully understandable, but now that the world is opening up again, there is a great opportunity to be inclusive straight from the start. However, we miss a systemic approach where people look at the benefits. Once we realise how accessibility can lead to artistic enrichment, when people see the beauty of a diverse audience and a diverse reflection on stage, solutions will arise much more quickly.

Governance in the cultural sector operates even more from an ivory tower than many corporate companies do. They think they are protecting their artistic values while actually they are limiting themselves. Nobody will say: 'No, we do not want inclusion.' But when it comes to investing time and money into this, people come up with the weirdest excuses, mostly based on ignorance about the topic.

Additionally, many solutions for inclusion lead to a new form of segregation: think of a wheelchair platform where the wheelchair user gets separated from their group of friends. Leisure activities are a very good way to reduce the isolation many people with a disability are dealing with. So why separate these groups again?

Recently Possibilize launched an international platform to promote accessibility called Revelland. Can you shed some light on the first milestones?

We realised that our events were not a long-term solution either. We put a lot of money into our festivals and the one-off shows are not sustainable for bands who are touring on a weekly basis. We decided to do research on 'cheap brilliant solutions' to add multisensory effects to live music. Thanks to huge support from the EU, we connected a panel of European top sense experts with three ambitious bands from Ireland, Belgium and the Netherlands. Together they started to design immersive and inclusive shows. Unfortunately, doing a project around live music in time of corona pandemic is bound to fail but we managed to develop a series of tutorials based on the learnings from the bands (KRANKK, KNARS and Perhaps Contraption) on how to create in new (other) ways. One of the bands did manage to get their show on stage and ten folded their gig fee, just because their artistic values increased massively.

You saw a need to introduce a new term: Creative Accessibility. Can you explain what it means and elaborate on its necessity?

We define Creative Accessibility as accessibility in such a way that multiple groups can benefit. By looking at solutions for one group, you create value for another group as well. The Belgium band KRANKK added dancers with Down syndrome to their show. Not out of pity or generosity but simply because they could muster an unlimited bunch of energy that was hard to match by the other professional dancers. That energy got transmitted to the audience, right up to the last rows in the back. The same goes for adding sense stimulating elements. Hearing people like to smell and taste the music as well and in this way, deaf and hearing people together enjoy the music



By looking at solutions for one group, you create value for another group as well.



experience brought on stage. We do not look at accessibility as a burden but explore the benefits by pushing ourselves to come up with solutions that benefit multiple groups. This leads to an approach that is much more likely to be implemented on a broader scale than expensive solutions that serve only a few people.

In the Netherlands especially, but also worldwide, decisions are often based on an economic model. Dutch people are obsessed with efficiency, our highest value. This has led to the situation where we lag behind surrounding countries when it comes to accessibility and inclusion in the cultural sector. We were one of the last European countries to ratify the UN Convention on equal rights for people with a disability. Our neighbours in the United Kingdom are leading in Europe so it would be wise to seek inspiration there and follow their lead.

Through Revelland you consulted the Eurovision Song Contest among other big players. What problems do they present and what changes did they make through your vision?

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When it comes to investing time and money, people come up with the weirdest excuses, mostly based on ignorance.

The Eurovision Song Contest 2020/2021 was very ambitious when it came to inclusion, on various levels. Like many other players in the field, they did not realise that inclusion is something to be considered from the very beginning. By the time they got in touch with us, they had finished the entire layout of all the technical equipment and there was little space for screens for sign dancers for example. However, because of their ambition they got in touch with us being very open to our suggestions. We had a big session with the entire team: from CEO to communication department and facility manager. With a holistic approach we managed to go further than any Eurovision Song Contest had ever gone before. It became the most accessible large event ever in the Netherlands. I have a huge amount of respect for how far they went: having disabled artists on stage during the opening, giving clear information on the website and facilitate accessibility in the venue. It helped that the venue, Ahoy, is also very keen on providing accessibility.

To what extent are inclusivity and accessibility on the agendas of politicians and policymakers?

Everybody is saying it, only very few people are delivering on it. Everybody feels they must because of external factors like funding or government legislation, very few have an intrinsic motivation that is big enough to overcome financial objections. The same politicians who impose the necessary legislation are at the same time hesitant to enforce measures for non-compliance. For example, they insist that cultural organisations come up with a plan for inclusion when they apply for funding, but they do not check to what level that plan is applied. Cultural organisations have many challenges to overcome – especially after the corona pandemic – and emancipation of disabled people is not on top of the list. It is likely to be skipped or reduced and government institutions accept that very easily. Which I even

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We lag behind surrounding countries when it comes to accessibility and inclusion in the cultural sector.

understand, but the main problem here is the starting point: it is seen as a burden.

Like I said before: inclusion is not something like tax or fire security. It can be a jumping board to improve your services and to bring your artistic quality to the next level. It should be a non-issue, you should not even have to think about whether you want to exclude one group or the other. It is time we appreciate the bliss of an inclusive society and get out of our bubbles. The arts world has benefitted for years by exploring unexpected territories, why would you stay in your safe world now?

Photography

- Jessie Kamp
- byWM (page 63 below)



What happens to communities when Carnival disappears?

Carnival as a tool for social inclusion

Lénia Marques
& Greg Richards



Greg Richards is Professor of Placemaking and Events at Breda University of Applied Sciences. Lénia Marques is Assistant Professor of Cultural Organizations and Management at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Carnival is not just one of the biggest parties in the world, but also an important tool for social inclusion. Celebrating Carnival together allows communities to define their identities, to reaffirm their connection to place and to each other.

Absence of Carnival

During Covid, celebrating Carnival became a major challenge. In 2020, Carnival was revealed as a major source of Covid infections in the Netherlands, and Dutch Carnival celebrations were cancelled or curtailed in 2021. The absence of Carnival was a major blow for many places – not just culturally, but also economically. It was a relief to see restrictions eased in early 2022, allowing public Carnival celebrations to return, albeit in a modified form. BUAs and partners in other countries have been conducting research on Carnival (Richards, 2020), comparing the experience of Carnival in different places, and analysing the meaning of Carnival in contemporary society. Covid-19 provided a new research question: what happens to communities when Carnival disappears?

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Many tried to recreate the Carnival atmosphere at home.

Survey outcomes

Surveys between 2020 and 2022 clearly show Covid-19 impacts. Most notably, the restrictions in 2021 forced Dutch Carnival off the streets. Almost 42% of respondents did not celebrate Carnival in 2021, compared with only 7% in 2020. For those celebrating in 2021, this was mainly online (42%) or at home (39%). In March 2022, with restrictions eased in the Netherlands, Carnival returned to the public realm. Around 65% of participants celebrated in the street or in the café, compared with only 8% in 2021.

Clearly, the sweeping changes made in the organisation of Carnival during Covid had a profound effect on the experience of the event. Particularly in 2021, participants missed celebrating together. In 2021 over 19% said they missed other people, followed by the atmosphere created by the crowds (18%), and the general Carnival feeling (16%).

Creative solutions

How did people cope with the absence of Carnival? Particularly in 2021 the celebrations moved indoors. Many tried to recreate the Carnival atmosphere at home, for example by putting up Carnival decorations, playing Carnival music or putting on a costume. There were also creative solutions to the absence of public events in 2021. For example, the TV channel Omroep Tilburg broadcast 't opstoetje: a miniature Carnival procession recreated using playmobile figures. This recreated the 'Opstoet' Carnival procession, including the transfer of the city keys to the Carnival Prince. The different Carnival Associations created their own miniature Carnival floats, some of which reflected the theme of Covid.

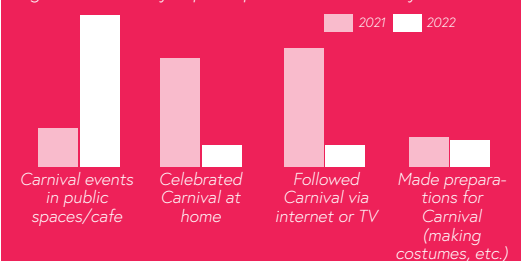
Celebrate together

Despite the creativity that was evident in 2021, people still missed the 'real' Carnival, and being together, as one respondent described: 'Carnival is not celebrated alone, at home, behind a screen. Carnival you celebrate together, in busy places, meeting new people, finding old friends.' 2022 saw a partial return to normality, as cafés opened their doors and public events were held. Many felt 2022 was extra enjoyable, 'because we can celebrate again'. In some places it was even busier than usual, because people were especially keen to be together after two years of Covid restrictions. Our research indicates that Carnival continues to be important for people, and that when the event disappeared from the streets in 2021, communities missed an important opportunity for social interaction. What people missed most was not the opportunity to party, but the feeling of being together and re-asserting community.

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Figure 1: How did you participate in Carnival this year?



Snow White and the seven...?

Making adjustments to fairytales is of all time

Moniek Hover is professor of Storytelling at Breda University of Applied Sciences.

A while ago I was called by Radio 1 asking me whether I wanted to come and talk about Disney's remake of 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' in their programme 'Nieuwsweekend'. The reason for doing so was the criticism made by actor Peter Dinklage about the announcement that this remake would feature actors instead of animation figures. Dinklage thought it was absurd that Disney was still going to tell that 'utterly old-fashioned story about seven dwarfs'. Disney's reaction was that they were holding consultations with the people from the 'dwarf community'.

The question raised by Radio 1 brought me back to my earliest memory. I was three years old, and we went to the circus as a family. Marvellous, until a 'dwarf' was catapulted as a living cannonball. He had a soft landing on a bale of hay and laughed and waved to us. But in spite of it all, I was terribly upset. Apparently, I realised that it concerned a real human being, and not a fictional character from a fairytale. Since my early childhood, I had loved fairytales, and got to know them through de Efteling, Disney, books, albums, and films. I used to play 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' with my sisters. My sister Margriet played Snow White in mum's wedding dress.

We, the little ones, were the dwarfs with pillows underneath our pyjamas as fat bellies, and vests hanging from our ears as beards. I never made the connection between the dwarf and the cannonball. So why make a fuss about a film made by Disney, master at telling fictitious stories? And where will it end? Should these dwarfs not be replaced? Is Snow White still allowed to clean the house for seven little men? Is the prince's kiss-without-permission actually still allowed these days? Should this cartoon film from 1937 not be forbidden altogether? And shall we ensure Grimm's fairytales are thrown on the stake just as well?

However, I first put myself in Peter Dinklage's position. He has achondroplasia or dwarfism. Dinklage is mostly known as Tyrion Lannister from Game of Thrones. A brilliant actor who plays the most multilayered character in the series. Dinklage plays several of this type of character roles. Moreover, he is committed to the emancipation of people with dwarfism.

Opportunities to change prejudices

In my exploratory study, I consequently came across Will Perry. This British paralympic swimmer with dwarfism describes in a distressing 90-second film how he is stared at, photographed and even filmed every day. Perry appeals to us all to shout 'no' when we see a person with dwarfism being laughed at. Perry also gave his opinion on 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs'. He thinks that the film should not be cancelled, because it is a wonderful and very much-loved story. The dwarfs are wonderful characters with feelings and opinions. Yet, Perry is happy that Disney are holding consultations with the 'dwarf community'. On several occasions, Disney have shown that they do not shy away from sensitive topics. The remake offers opportunities to change prejudices felt by people today.

And this ties exactly in with what I found in my doctoral research into 'De Efteling als 'Verteller' van Sprookjes' (De Efteling as a Narrator of Fairytales) (2013). Makers of stories are always conditioned by the time and culture in which they live. So even when they get to work on 'old' existing stories, they will still – consciously or unconsciously – bring along their modern reference framework and values to the creative process.

There are numerous versions of fairytales. In earlier versions of Snow White, she is being dragged out of the coffin by the hair. That was considered too harsh by the brothers Grimm in

early 1800. They thought up that the apparently-dead Snow White was shaken awake because the chunk of poisoned apple shot out of her throat when the coffin was being moved. In 1937, Disney changed this into Snow White being kissed awake by the prince. An endearing, romantic kiss, because at the start of the cartoon film Snow White and the prince had already met and they were head over heels in love. Would the makers of the remake keep it like that? I bet that they think this is too old-fashioned. We will see.

Disney nowadays places disclaimers in classical films, such as Snow White. I personally think this is not necessary. I trust most people's common sense. Children can distinguish fiction from reality. It is precisely through fictional stories that they can explore conflicts and dilemmas and in doing so, they can learn something about the world, other people, and themselves. I hope they will take a great liking to the seven characters from the new Snow White film just like I took a great liking to the characters in the old version. And I also hope that they shout 'no' when they see a person with dwarfism being laughed at in the street.

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I hope they shout 'no' when they see that a person with dwarfism is being laughed at in the street.

Radar for the City Feeling

Managing for social impacts



Jeroen Nawijn is senior lecturer at Breda University of Applied Sciences in the Tourism domain. He is project leader of RAAK Publiek's Radar voor het Stadsgevoel (Radar for the City Feeling) research project. He participates in the Tourism Impacts for Society research group. Esther Peperkamp is a lecturer and researcher at Breda University of Applied Sciences in the Leisure domain. She participates in the Placemaking & Events research group.

Paying attention to diversity and inclusiveness is not necessarily new, but the scale on which this is currently happening and the scope of the concept of inclusiveness is new. Young people in particular are getting more and more aware of inequality in society, and are calling for attention to this issue. This grassroots of bottom-up approach to striving for a more inclusive society has been responded to in the world of museums.

City museums

This article specifically addresses the way in which city museums in the Netherlands deal with inclusiveness. A starting point here is the RAAK-Publiek 2019 Radar voor het Stadsgevoel (Radar for the City Feeling) research project, which was carried out by Breda University of Applied Sciences in cooperation with Hoebink Onderzoek & Advies, Museum Gouda, Musea Zutphen, and Stedelijk Museum Breda. The project aims to arrive at useable quality criteria for social impacts of city museums and to set up a practical toolkit to that purpose by means of which city museums and other institutions within the cultural sector are better able to show and validate their qualities. Although the scope reached beyond inclusiveness alone, it appeared that being and remaining inclusive are important components of the identity of city museums, and are necessary to connect a broad public to the city.

City museums are pre-eminently the place to get to know and experience a city, and after visiting them, have a fresh look at the city. Since every city is different, city museums do not have a uniform character. The driving force behind the success of a city museum is the residents. Therefore it is so important for city museums to be inclusive to be able to reach everybody in the city. This is easier said than



done. A museum is not a place which every resident is familiar with. The threshold for a visit can be literally and figuratively high.

Inclusiveness examined more closely

Since the 1990s, leisure science has paid attention to inclusiveness within leisure contexts. The prevailing view is that there are three barriers to arriving at an inclusive society. These are physical, social-societal, and psychological by nature. Concrete causes and solutions should be sought in a (lack of) dialogue, (slight degree of) familiarity, the (distorted or unfamiliar) historical context and/or (a lack of) understanding of other people. So, inclusiveness is a broad concept and open to more than one interpretation.

That inclusiveness is important is not new to city museums. Many years ago, they started to make their museums literally and figuratively more accessible. For example, for the physically disabled, but also by offering time and space in permanent and temporary expositions to groups that had been underrepresented in museums for a long time. In 2016, for example, Amsterdam Museum had an exhibition called Zwart Amsterdam (Black Amsterdam) about black role models of Amsterdam residents. Museum Valkenburg currently has an exhibition until May 2022 featuring female artists in



A museum is not a place that every resident is familiar with.

Limburg from the post-war reconstruction period (1945 - 1965).

Observations from research

The results from the Radar voor het Stadsgevoel project help to give tangible substance to working on inclusiveness. That inclusiveness is thought to be important does not mean that it is easy to realise, let alone assess whether inclusiveness has been achieved with a project or exhibition. Assessing the degree of inclusiveness encompasses more than only counting visitor numbers of different target groups. A further step could be taken by looking more specifically at the functions fulfilled by the museum.

From interviews held in the context of the project six functions emerged which together form the social mission of city museums. Subsequently, we have termed the functions narrative, reflective, participative, collective, educational, and collaborative. The functions have been translated into a *functiewaaijer* (functions pie chart), which cultural venues can use to think about inclusiveness, and to further substantiate inclusiveness.

First of all, museums considered storytelling - and in particular 'the story of the city' - as an important task (narrative). Secondly, museums want to make people think (reflective). Furthermore, more and more museums talk about participation of visitors and residents (participative). Fourthly, museums attempt to connect people with each other by, for example, offering building blocks for a local, shared identity (collective). A fifth, more traditional function is the educational function, which, however, is broader than educational projects. This also concerns cultural education in a broad sense. Lastly, cooperation with partners in the city is thought to be important. The functions overlap each other: after all, museums can make people think (reflective) through stories (narrative). Participation of residents (participative) could be a way to collect stories (narrative). For evaluation purposes, however, it is useful to separate these functions.

The six functions and inclusiveness

Inclusiveness can play a part and be made visible within all six functional domains. From the narrative perspective, it is important, for example that museums tell stories that are representative of the diversity in a city, and which various target groups can identify with. It is not only about the story's content, but also its form. As a respondent indicated: 'Very many people have the idea, I think, that this is not for me. And if I am very honest, quite a lot of things we tell them and the way in which we tell them, is not for them. That is also something we do not do right.'

Furthermore, inclusiveness is also something to make people think, an example of which is the attention paid to the Dutch slavery past as mentioned above and expositions about the character *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete).

In the field of participation, inclusiveness is expressed in the form of various groups participating in thinking up and carrying out expositions and projects. This could

mean that projects or exhibitions are organised outside the museum, such as portraying living rooms in a neighbourhood in Gouda. Pictures of the various living rooms were exhibited in the community centre, as a result of which it became a project *of* instead of *about* residents. Consequently, this was also reflected by the public who visited the exhibition.

A shared identity allowing everybody to feel at home is a goal which is in line with the collective function of the museum. As a museum staff member said: 'You contribute to the pride of the city, the identity of the city, the appeal of the city. The connection between people, awareness of having a joint collective past and the presence of continuous migration. That newcomers can relate to the past and that existing stories will thus be enriched.'

From an educational perspective, inclusiveness could relate to transferring knowledge about inclusiveness or the lack of it. Furthermore, educational projects are a means to reach a diverse target group which cannot be reached by any other means. It is sometimes necessary to actively seek out the target group because thresholds are experienced for paying a visit to a museum. What's more, using various forms of learning is a suitable way of sharing knowledge more inclusively, and broadens the familiarisation process of what is shared in society at large.

Inclusiveness is mostly defined in relation to residents of the city and visitors. The city museum is both *of* the city and *for* the city. Evidently, inclusiveness could also play a part when collaboration partners are being sought. It is important to city museums in particular that municipalities have a more inclusive approach. Municipalities, for example, expect that city museums play an active part in the social domain, but city museums mostly do not receive any subsidies from the social domain.



The social mission of city museums has been translated into six functions: narrative, reflective, participative, collective, educational, and collaborative.

How to proceed?

The functions pie chart is part of the museum impact toolkit. This toolkit will be made available free of charge via the websites of the Museumvereniging, Breda University of Applied Sciences, and the Landelijk Contact Museumconsulenten (national contact point for museum consultants). With the aid of the toolkit, city museums and other cultural institutions can give social impacts and inclusiveness tangible substance.

Photography

- Anne Stolwijk

Functions pie chart



That inclusiveness is thought to be important does not mean that it is easy to realise, let alone assess whether it has been achieved.



The biggest barriers are in your mind

Dating and intimacy when you are disabled

Jacqueline Kool is a researcher, adviser and contact person in the field of Disability Studies. In 2022, she wrote the book *Vensters op het Mooie Leven. Levenskunst vanuit het Perspectief van Disability Studies (A Closer Look at the Wonderful Life. The Art of Living from the Perspective of Disability Studies)*.

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I do not give a damn anymore about what others think. Only during a sad scene in a quiet cinema I tend to think: Oh no, not a spasm right now!

(Frank)

Dating, having sex and relationships constitute a major part of our spare time for many of us, even if this is just spending hour after hour on Tinder and Grindr. But what if you do not fit in with the standard picture of the popular Tinder profile so readily because of a disability? When it is hard for you to go out, you cannot enter the club, or you find it hard to make contact, how do you meet potential dates or partners? This is what I asked people with widely varying disabilities and followed their stories on podcasts and websites.

Not self-evident

It is not self-evident that sexuality and disability can be readily combined. People with disabilities are not considered potential dates or loved ones or as sexual beings just like that. From research carried out by Rutgers and Agis (2007), it appears that only 13% of the people with a disability or chronic illness are satisfied with their sex life. The need for meeting people, intimacy, sex, and eroticism is not different for

people with disabilities than for people without disabilities. Yet, there are quite a lot of obstacles to be overcome. 'It is a pity,' says Ellen Laan, professor of sexology, in RTL Magazine online (24 May 2018) 'because good sex has many advantages to health: affection, feeling of happiness, being seen, cherished.'

'Why is it actually so hard to have a scintillating sex life when you have a disability?' Xandra Koster is wondering on One World in the article *Mensen met een Rolstoel Willen ook Seks (People in Wheelchairs also Want Sex)* (1 October 2021). It seems self-evident to mainly seek that cause in the disability itself. And of course that is part of the story. When you are affected by cerebral palsy, it is hard to masturbate, and sometimes it is exciting to make love. Pain or fatigue impact your sex life. When you depend on care, or live in a nursing home, privacy is scarce. And where do you find the courage to tell your care providers that you are longing for intimacy and need support?

This touches upon a second bottleneck. We do not talk about it; professionals also tend to let the subject rest. Jeannette and Tim tell in the podcast 'Sexual Healing #3 Daten en Seksualiteit' (16 May 2022) that the special education school they attended did not pay any attention to sex education. Then the message is indirectly: that is not for you. Moreover, we live in a visual culture, which mostly shows pictures of 'perfect' bodies. Hardly anyone meets these ideal pictures, but people with disabilities can suffer extra sensitivity. This also impacts your self-image.

If the topic is raised at all, it mainly addresses problems and rarely pleasure. Paying attention

to gender matters or LGBTI+ is entirely outside the range of vision. 'Because you already have a disability, you cannot be part of the LGBT target group on top of that, right?' says Koster with a sigh. People with a disability sometimes live in separate circles for the larger part: special education, nursing homes, rehabilitation centres, sheltered employment. As a result, people with and without a disability do not automatically meet up as fellow students, colleagues, teachers, or in the neighbourhood supermarket. This is a barrier to spontaneous 'crushes'.

Thresholds and rejections

A logical place when you are looking for contact are dating sites. 'Downright complicated,' says Evert. 'How and when should you address your handicap? Why not directly on your profile, as I have come to think; then it is over and done with right from the start. Those who will respond are genuinely interested.' Jeannette has stopped dating online: 'Too many rejections or men who consider my



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I found it complicated to flirt. I thought immediately: Stop it, I am making a fool of myself here.

(Edith)

disability a fetish. Dating sites are really very bad for your self-confidence. People should first get to know me. Parties are ideal, but then you would have to be invited to them.' Tim tried speed dating. That did not feel good either. 'Every time you think: 'I am the odd one out here ...' Online dating can be risky too, for example when you have a mild intellectual disability and it is hard for you to estimate other people's intentions. Literal thresholds can be found in pubs and clubs. Evert: 'Pubs and clubs are often totally inaccessible for wheelchair users or when you have walking difficulties. And it is hard to manoeuvre in these crowds. You can make eye contact, but you have to wait and see whether the other person is coming your way.' Ali is visually impaired. When she goes out with friends, in search of a date, the soft atmospheric lighting in pubs has an adverse effect. 'I miss the first eye contact: you are smiling, you are looking around. I have never been able to master this game of seducing someone. This does not help when I am flirting.' If a man at the bar offers her a drink, she has no clue whether it is a leering creep or the man of her dreams. Her friends have to offer her tips in such situations. Wies is a flirt. 'I am a seducer. Telling jokes, touching somebody for a sec, exchanging looks, kissing ... When I am having a date for the first time, people do not know anything about my chronic illness. When somebody suggests going for a walk, I think: Right then, but what if I have to give up after a few kilometres? And that is exactly what is happening then. I find it hard to show it, certainly if it is a very nice woman.'

Positive experiences: not giving a damn about what others think

Edith thought flirting was complicated. 'I thought at once: stop it, I am making a fool of myself.' She thinks this has to do with her disability. 'Thinking is what I am good at; I can handle anything with that. But I have ignored my body for a long time.' By now, she has come to enjoy flirting. 'I notice that it works, not flirting for the sake of flirting, but just having a chat. An open attitude. I do not care so much about what somebody else thinks, or that I am

chattering.' She also discovered 'ecstatic dance', a free form of dancing, which is mostly about making a connection with yourself and others. Edith: 'No alcoholic beverages are served, so there are no drunkards around who are hanging over you and ask whether you are actually able to have sex. The atmosphere is open and inclusive. It has really benefited me.' She is meanwhile in a fine relationship.

Frank's first kiss was in the television programme 'The Undateables'. He was in doubt about participating in the programme, but thought: 'Fuck it, I will just do it!' Frank was insecure. How would girls look at his disability? Can you kiss when you are having spasms? He was curious, but did not consider himself a 'sexual being'. 'The Undateables' brought him his first few dates, but, most of all, a self-assurance boost. 'It was the start of my sexual development. I received so many positive reactions, on Facebook, in the street. I saw myself as a sexual being all of a sudden. I apparently needed the acknowledgement that girls can look through the disability.' He continued dating, engaged in Tinder and got short-term relationships, sexual experiences and was in a long-term relationship. 'You experience life, you learn. I now feel more comfortable in more environments, I do not give a damn anymore about what others think.'

Sometimes the desire for intimacy and sex cannot be solved in one's own personal sphere. Some will then seek that experience through sex workers or erotic service providers. Others experiment with tantra or other body work. Evert: 'It has brought me a world of intimacy and self-confidence!'

Barriers in your mind

Here we touch upon an essential point: practical obstacles are hard, but the biggest barrier is in your own mind. Do you feel self-confident enough to flirt? Do you feel worth loving somebody? 'If you are often rejected because of your disability, a wall will be built between you and others', say Jeannette and Tim. In the search for sexual identity the biggest challenge is to feel freer, learn to express yourself, dare to make contact. Evert: 'If I am not comfortable with my disability, how should somebody else be?' What will help in this situation? The reactions to this question are unambiguous: that people with disabilities are far more visible, in the street, on TV, on social media, and at parties. Otherwise, 'abled' remains the norm and limitation the deviation. Yvette den Brok calls it "validism", for example in her book *Validisme en Gender* (Validism and Gender) (2005) following the English concept 'ableism': discriminating against, marginalising, and stigmatising people with a disability. Jeannette: 'As a result of the fact that we are so invisible,

people keep seeing us as a sort of aliens. How are they supposed to see us as sexual beings?! We should simply become part of "regular, mainstream people!"

NB: In so far as their stories have not been shared on social media yet, the names of the people who have their say have been anonymised.

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- ABCDate (www.abcdated.nl) voor veilige contactbemiddeling en hulp bij daten voor mensen met een verstandelijke beperking.

Photography

- Aaron Hockley (page 68 top)
- Carla Manten (page 68 author)
- Chona Kasinger (page 68 below)



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Especially if your appearance deviates from the norm, you will not be seen as sexy.

(Xandra Koster)

Dutch Happiness Week

Platform for giving meaning to society

Ger Pepels
&
Simon de Wijs



Ger Pepels and Simon de Wijs are engaged in organising DHW on behalf of Breda University of Applied Sciences.

If you ask people about their deeper motives, you will often get the same answer: 'I want a happier life for myself and my children, time for meeting family, friends, and neighbours.' We are wondering more and more often what makes us truly happy. Do we work to be able to buy that large house or that expensive car or do we want to make a meaningful contribution to a better society through our work and in our lives? However, happiness is not always estimated at its true value in our society. The topic, including aims and policy, can also be found in political decision-making to a limited and fragmented degree. Hard economic indicators are still leading in taking important decisions. Striving for economic growth (indicator: Gross Domestic Product) as a precondition still seems to precede the pursuit of a happy life.

However, we see a slight change setting in. More and more measuring instruments more broadly capture subjective valuation and concrete social performance in a comparable way, such as World Happiness Index, Global Happiness Index, and OECD Better Life Index. Countries such as New Zealand, Finland, and Iceland take the rates as a starting point for policymaking. In the Netherlands, the CBS (Statistics Netherlands) reports on *Brede Welvaart* (Broad Prosperity) and Sustainable Development Goals, but the Cabinet is hesitant to adopt these instruments.

Every year, Dutch Happiness Week (DHW) gives a platform to the entire spectrum of interpretations and initiatives around happiness ranging

from individuals to society at large. DHW is the platform to showcase how individual happiness can be worked on through body and mind. But it is pre-eminently a platform to showcase and experience how we make great efforts to jointly create new social values, such as the contribution to SDGs.

History of DHW

In 2016, thirteen Happiness Places of and for Eindhoven residents were brought together on the initiative of Parktheater Eindhoven and enthusiastic students of Fontys University of Applied Sciences. *The Geluksweek* (Happiness Week) was launched in 2017, after which its name changed into DHW in 2018 with three pillars: society, education, and work. As from then the link was made with the annual World Happiness Day (20 March). When Breda University of Applied Sciences started participating from 2021, the connection with the social domain and SDGs was given an extra boost. In spite of COVID-19 the 2021 and 2022 editions consisted of well over 100 activities. Where Eindhoven was the place of action in the first few years, this was gradually expanded via Tilburg to Breda and various surrounding villages. DHW operates from the vision that 'the pursuit of happiness is universal, and together we are responsible for a happy (happier) society.' The mission is to offer a platform where people can cooperate to pursue that vision.

Platform for giving meaning to society

In a world where linearity, efficiency and results are dominant in thinking and working, it is hard to develop new meanings. The dominant view of



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DHW operates from the vision that the pursuit of happiness is universal.



mankind and world is deeply embedded in our thinking, in our systems, and the related interests. The 'grassroots' character of DHW offers opportunities to tell new stories, explore new possibilities, create these together and provide them with meaning. On the basis of the building blocks of the musical work process

Rosmalen, 2020) we will have a look at the potential of DHW as a platform for exploring new meanings.

Storytelling

Storytelling, 'singing about everything of importance' in Van Rosmalen's words, forms the basis for developing shared meanings and connections. The narrator and the audience come together in the narrative. This results in scope being given to jointly think differently, make new connections, and let imagination take its course.

The combination of Happiness and SDGs offers an opportunity to tell and develop stories; stories that are still not paid attention to or are not paid attention to elsewhere or places that are hard to access for individuals or groups. DHW offers a platform for programming and invites people for joint interpretation and dialogue. Loiza Lamers tells about gender transition and the course she was taking when she indicated to her parents at the age of six that the body which she was born in did not fit her. And the easy accessibility of DHW enables residents' initiatives to make their contributions to SDGs 2030 in their spare time visible. An outstanding achievement if you consider that it is still a challenge to the UN to engage (central) government, business and social organisations.

Playing

Play is highly significant to evoke the 'flow experience'; an experience in which the sense of time is lost, and a deep experience of the strange and unusual becomes possible. The boundaries of play enable you to participate and experience the connection with the strange and the unknown. Participation enables the potentially transforming effect on those involved.

Huizinga states in *Homo Ludens* (1938) that play is the fundamental human condition and even precedes culture and cultural renewal. Although the SDGs challenge us

existentially, the umbrella concept of happiness offers scope to adopt an appreciative and playful approach of the broad range of social issues. With *Sucking for Happiness the Wild Farmer's Wife* works on sexual health (SDG 3) by enhancing receptiveness to intimacy and the space to discover/rediscover the mischievousness in ourselves and making sexuality discussable. In *SUP* and *RUN*, the organisers contribute to awareness about the environment in a pleasant, active and social manner. *Football Memories* enables the elderly (suffering from dementia) to get together to evoke football memories of the glorious past of their favourite club.

Creating

Also, we often treat most matters that are close to our hearts in an intellectual way. The emphasis on the head-heart connection fails to appreciate the value behind the interaction with (material) reality. In the confrontation with the resistance of materialism, scope is created to explore things. In making and using materials, items, and the environment (together), new meanings are created.

DHW takes place in the week around 20 March, World Happiness Day. That is the central moment for meeting visitors. The partners, however, meet up to talk about happiness and SDGs throughout the year. They set to work together, and this goes beyond a single meeting or activity. 'Stedelingen' (Urban Residents) is a textbook example, in which residents/clients (Lunetzorg), theatre makers (Carte Blanche) and producers (Parktheater Eindhoven) meet up in a six-month production process. It offers the basis for academic research in a unique collaboration with both the care sector and the culture sector.

Some more examples: In 'Dubbelbloed', Ali Zanad, dancer and performer, lets his audience experience what it feels like to leave your country of birth out of necessity, and have to flee from Iraq to the Netherlands. Stichting Ik Wil, BIS theatre company, Het Zuidelijk Toneel and Parktheater collaborate on the International Day against Racism (21 March) on racism and exclusion in the workshop *Brown Eyes – Blue Eyes* and the show 'Hier zijn we koningen' (Here We are Kings).

Sharing

The very high degree of accessibility of DHW offers an opportunity for playful contribution and active learning. In the performances, in the dialogue with people participating in activities, and in the joint reflection with the partners involved, key concepts such as happiness, SDGs and *Broad Prosperity* get new meanings. In performing and showcasing the large variety of activities and topics, the basis for further mutual connection is created which

slowly moves in a common direction, and thus increases the impact of DHW.

Future

DHW has built a reputation and can reach a growing group of parties interested who cannot tell their story in fully professionally organised, thematically elaborated and business-oriented platforms, such as Dutch Design Week and Dutch Technology Week. The deep, radical transition phase in which society finds itself asks for contributions from as many voices as possible. As Parktheater puts it: 'Everyone who wants to make a contribution to residents' happiness (...) should be able to do so in connection with others.' DHW can enthuse initiatives that tell a new story and want to make a difference in society. A unique opportunity for faculties offering (Leisure & Events) study programmes to underline their social relevance.

More information

- www.dutchhappinessweek.nl

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The Wilde Boerin (Wild Farmer's Wife) works on sexual health with *Lik naar Geluk* (Sucking for Happiness).

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The very high degree of accessibility of DHW offers an opportunity for playful contribution and active learning.



Sporting with a disability

The most normal thing to do as regards the municipal sports policy!?



Caroline van Lindert is a senior researcher at the Mulier Instituut. Maxine de Jonge is a junior researcher at the Mulier Instituut.



Disabling conditions are part of the human condition. Everybody is prone to dealing with physical or intellectual defects at any moment of their lives; a temporary defect because of an injury or a long-lasting or permanent one because of an illness or an accident (WHO, 2011; Schippers, 2021). Three in ten Dutch people feel they are hindered to do what people 'normally' do because of health issues, and one in ten because of pain. Roughly one in ten Dutch people have a (physical) mobility impairment, a hearing impairment or a visual impairment. About the same number of people feel they are psychologically unhealthy. One third have a long-term illness and one per cent of Dutch people have an intellectual disability (Van den Dool et al., 2022; Van Lindert, 2019).

Disabled people take part in sport less

Funnily enough, we as a society still take the sound mind and the healthy body as a starting point very often. We experience that whoever or whatever deviates from this as 'not normal' or 'different'. This view of humanity, called 'ableism' in English, causes disabled people, consciously or unconsciously, to be excluded from participating in social life and have less (easy) access to provisions that able-bodied people take for granted, among other things, sport and recreational physical activity. In addition to barriers in the environment, such as problems with transportation, sports offer, accommodation or guidance, disabled people also experience personal impediments when doing sport, such as pain or fatigue.

That's why they participate in sport less, and they are less likely members of a sports club than able-bodied people. Of all adults with a physical impairment, 28% do sport every week. Of all Dutch adults, well over half of them (54%) do sport every week. Whereas sport participation of the entire population has gone up, little

change is noticeable among disabled people (see Table 1). If we put together recreational sport, walking and cycling on a weekly basis, a slight growth among disabled people is noticeable. This is mainly caused by a rise in recreational walking (see Table 1: Van den Dool et al., 2022).

Aiming for inclusion

To change this situation, paying attention to encouraging sport and strengthening the sport and physical activity landscape for disabled people is (has been) part of sport policy of the Dutch government (Van Lindert & De Jonge, 2022). Attention is currently being paid to removing barriers to do sport for, among others, disabled people within the pillar 'Inclusive sport and physical activity' of the National Sports Agreement (NSA) (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport et al., 2018). Aiming for an inclusive sport and exercise environment is in line with the principles of the UN Convention on

Disability. By ratifying this treaty in 2016, the Dutch government including all municipalities are obliged to take measures facilitating disabled people to fully participate in society as well as in sport.

Central role for municipalities in policymaking

When we take a 'picture' of the 'policy and organisation landscape' of sport and physical activity for disabled people, we see a multi-coloured spectrum of organisations at a national, regional and local level. They all share more or less the same mission: making sport (more) accessible for people with a disability (Van Lindert & De Jonge, 2022).

At a national level, parties such as the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, Vereniging voor Sport & Gemeenten (Association for Sport & Municipalities), Kenniscentrum Sport & Beweging (Knowledge Centre for Sport and

Table 1. Weekly sport participation and weekly sport participation including walking and cycling in one's spare time, population aged 18-79, broken down into year and disability (in percentages)

NB: variable number per cell	2001 (n=5.279)	2007 (n=5.206)	2013 (n=5.713)	2019 (n=7.216)
<i>Weekly sport participation</i>				
Population, n > 5,200	48	50	52	53
Physical disability (1or more), n > 660	28	32	31	26
Motor impairment, n > 360	22	26	20	23
Hearing impairment, n > 125	28	31	43	27
Visual impairment, n > 170	32	32	36	26
<i>Weekly sport participation including walking and cycling in one's spare time</i>				
Population, n > 5,200	84	86	87	90
Physical disability (1or more), n > 660	69	75	74	76
Motor impairment, n > 360	64	70	65	72
Hearing impairment, n > 125	73	75	83	77
Visual impairment, n > 170	67	75	76	84

Source: CBS Health Survey (2001-2013), Health Survey/Lifestyle Monitor CBS in conjunction with RIVM (2014-2019), in: Van den Dool et al., 2022.



Almost all municipalities have or develop policy objectives in the field of inclusive sport and physical activity for disabled people.

Physical Activity), SportKracht 12, MEE NL, NOC*NSF (Dutch Olympic Committee*Dutch Sports Federation), sports associations, Gehandicaptensport Nederland (Disabled Sports Netherlands), Special Olympics Nederland, Stichting Special Heroes Nederland, and Fonds Gehandicaptensport (Disabled Sports Fund) operate in the field of developing and/or implementing national sport policy or activities. The parties operating in this field at a regional level are the provinces, provincial and regional sport service organisations and regional collaborative ventures for adjusted sports. Also, parties outside sports, such as rehabilitation centres, schools and care or nursing homes at a regional level are engaged in sport and physical activity for the disabled. At a local level, local councils, community sport coaches and numerous sports clubs and other sport providers operate in this field.

Despite the fact that there is no central 'flag bearer' ensuring direction in the landscape, organisations do work together in often loose network structures, and there is mutual dependency. Municipalities play a central part in the landscape. The local level is where citizens participate in sport. Municipalities can directly intervene in conjunction with local parties. They give substance to the NSA and

implementation of the UN Convention on Disability at a local level. Meanwhile, we see that nearly all municipalities have or develop policy objectives in the field of (inclusive) sport and physical activity for disabled people (96%). These objectives have been set in the local sport and physical activity policy memorandum (57%, see example in text box 1) and/or in the local sports agreement (66%). Municipalities conclude these agreements following the example set by the NSA in conjunction with local parties. These agreements often contain objectives to enhance accessibility to sport (see e.g. text box 1, Van Lindert & De Jonge, 2022).

Municipalities regard the hiring of community sport coaches and regional collaborative ventures as the main tasks and success factors for enhancing inclusion of disabled people. However, a central element from the UN Convention on Disability does not seem to work: expertise is hardly made use of. This is contrary to the complaints filed by municipalities and partners that they do not know the needs and wants of disabled people, and do not know how to reach them. When these parties aim for inclusion, it is crucial activities should be developed together with and in line with the needs and wants of those involved. A quarter of municipalities engage disabled people in developing goals. They hardly carry out surveys of requirements (Van Lindert & De Jonge, 2022).

To actually take steps to enhance inclusion of disabled people in sport, municipalities and their partners will have to engage disabled people. It is time to listen to the people themselves and adjust sport policy, so disabled people can do sport just like anyone else.

Photography

- Red Green Blue (page 72 authors)

Text box 1. Example of municipal policy for inclusive sport and physical activity

Sport Memorandum of Rotterdam:

Aim: In 2026, inclusive sport and physical activity is taken for granted by sportspeople and providers of sport and physical activity.

Measures (selection)

- Gaining more insight into the needs, encouragements, and barriers experienced by disabled people to be able to engage in sport and physical activity.
- Examining whether the current offer of sport and physical activity in the region meets the requirements of disabled people. Encouraging providers, wherever necessary, to adjust their offerings or launch new offerings.
- Removing barriers, making offerings visible, using intermediaries, and encouraging specific target groups to engage in sport and physical activity.
- Offering individual guidance via sport consultants of MEE Rijnmond to disabled people needing extra help to find a suitable sport.
- Supporting, wherever necessary, providers of sport and physical activity for disabled people with the extra costs they incur through the Adjusted Sport subsidy scheme.

Source: Municipality of Rotterdam (2021).

Sources

- *This article is based on research released by the Mulier Instituut in 2022 with a subsidy granted by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport:*
- *Deelname aan sport en bewegen door mensen met een beperking. Stand van zaken eind 2019. Van den Dool et al., 2022.*
- *Inclusief sporten en bewegen voor mensen met een beperking. Landschap en betekenissen. Van Lindert & De Jonge, 2022.*
- *Other references available on request from the authors: c.vanlindert@mulierinstituut.nl.*



Disabled people participate in sport less and are often less likely members of a sports club.



Learning from history

At the Anne Frank Foundation young people look at the future from the perspective of social issues



Sophie Hovens is a student of Cultural Venue Management at the Academy for Leisure & Events and did her work placement at the Anne Frank Foundation. There she has been in charge of organising the activities of the Youth Team.

The Anne Frank Foundation was founded in 1957 in cooperation with Otto Frank. Otto Frank thought it was very important that young people commit themselves to society and have a retroactive look at the future. Otto: 'Helping, working at peace, tolerance, and understanding. These are the main things we ought to do.' (Frank, 1960). With this in mind the Anne Frank Foundation launched its youth team. The youth team is a group of young people who are very much involved in today's society and want to set to work together to make the world a more beautiful place by learning about issues such as discrimination and prejudices and making them open to discussion.

The youth team

Every year the Anne Frank Foundation forms a new youth team that is going to be engaged in social issues. For a whole year the youngsters actively take part in several meetings at which – on the basis of the story of the Second World War and, more specifically, Anne Frank – discussions are held about topics such as identity, prejudices, and discrimination. A link is made between events past and present. What do we see from these issues in today's society, and what can we learn from them with a view to the future? The youth team sets to work on this question during sessions lasting several days.

During these gatherings, various activities are organised, such as a walk along war monuments, a visit to the Anne Frank House, and a conversation with a war survivor. Other central elements are debating with each other, learning from each other, and daring to be critical. What should be brought up for discussion in your view? On the basis of the answers given to this question all members set up a project in teams to bring the chosen topic to light to a wider audience. Last year, for example, one of

the participants produced an online magazine and disseminated it throughout the country by making stickers with QR codes.

At the end of a multiday gathering, participants are meant to deliver an action plan to subsequently come up with an end product. This is what they work on for the rest of the time. At the end of the year, the groups are given an opportunity to present their project. One of the participants fled from Syria to the Netherlands. He then felt very lonely for quite some time. He created his action plan on the basis of this feeling with the aim to connect people. He founded the 'DeStereotyped' platform to enable people all over the globe to share inspiring stories, thus bringing people into contact with each other. Later in 2022, he won a Young Amsterdam Award with this platform.

Future

The Anne Frank Foundation is currently engaged in taking a new approach to involving the youth team. In doing so, extra attention is being paid to connecting the youth team to the Youth Network, the international team of the Anne Frank Foundation. To enable this, it is very important they should collect as much feedback from alumni as possible. Instead of setting to work with a new youth team this year, they have opted for laying greater focus on strengthening the network. This will be done by organising four meetings, which all alumni of the youth team will be invited to. Various activities will be organised during these meetings, and brainstorming sessions will be held with the alumni about the future of the youth team. This should result in a better international network, in which helping people, working at peace, tolerance, and understanding will always be given a prominent role.

Sources

- Frank, O. (1960). Retrieved from <https://www.annefrank.org/nl/anne-frank/de-tijlijn/#39>

www.annefrank.org/jongerenteam

anne frank
stichting



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I have learnt to listen to and look at an issue in various ways. I have learnt to open up and not be afraid.

Participant, 18 years.



Column

Roland Kleve is director of the Academy for Leisure and Events, Breda University of Applied Sciences

Made For LIVF: Leisure and events as connectors and enablers for our society

This year's edition of Uncover is a big pile of interesting and valuable stories about diversity and inclusion. It shows how vital these topics are to us as an educational institute, but just as vital to our industry, the different communities we represent. And it shows how vital leisure and events are to our society. A couple of reflection points to all these passionate topics. We determined together the BUas+ strategy that we finetuned per academy into the academy+ roadmaps. For the Academy for Leisure & Events we focus on six elements. Just to make sure we stay alert. Not excluding all the already great things we are working on.

Creativity, as an ingredient of leisure, is one focus point that represents not only the content of our leisure and events activities but also the way we work with our students, lecturers and industry partners. Leisure is playful, fun, interactive, gives energy. All these elements are translated into our academy. Let us continue to practise what we preach and continue to be a role model of creativity.

State of the art education, focus on what we teach and how we teach. Let us be the new standard in how we work together and be a reference to colleague universities of applied sciences.

Connecting to the right partners. Let us make sure that our partners, organisations and communities align with the path we are walking. Let us make sure that societal impact and sustainable development goals are also embedded within their strategy and not just a coat of veneer for the outside world. Realising that we all have different cruise control modes and we apply different speeds of implementation, which is okay, as long as we move into the right direction together.

Wellbeing, happiness for students and lecturers. Let us make sure that we care for each other and take responsibility for each other's wellbeing and we all embrace the positive connotation of professional rebellion.

Impact, all community members are ambassadors of the fact that leisure and events create essential societal impact and act upon it.

And last but certainly not least, we embrace diversity and inclusion. In our communication, the way we develop and teach our programmes, our recruitment policy, the way we treat each other and others.

While reading through all the articles, one thing strikes me, it is all about doing things together and that is what connects us even more. It significantly increases the success rate.

We can have the most wonderful and beautiful ideas; let us make sure we focus on:

What we really want to accomplish. The world of leisure and events is all about LIVE experiences. Moments that stay with you and have a positive impact on our quality of LIFE. We conduct research and educate future responsible entrepreneurs or managers for the leisure industry. It is up to them to make sure that people have experiences that enrich their lives. They will create these experiences. They are Made for LIVF.

Who we are involving. Let us work with industry partners, societal organisations and communities that share our vision of the world.

The right timing. We should act TODAY. The timing has never been so great. We are living the post- corona effects, there is a war going on, we are getting more and more lonely, and society is getting more individualised. The time is perfect to focus on diversity and inclusion. It might even save our planet.

Never giving up. Do not give up if we run into challenges, unforeseen hurdles, if the going gets tough. Or even if we accomplished our goals. Diversity and inclusion are very complex and have many angles. It will not be an easy path, but if it can be done anywhere, it is within the leisure and events sector. Because that is where people from different walks of life meet, connect, have fun together and share experiences. Let us be that kind pitbull that never lets go, because we want to make impact, that is in our DNA.

We are Made For LIVF.



Diversity and inclusion should be our standard in every single learning community.





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