

Cultures of Conviviality *The Art of Living Together*



Multi-year policy plan
2025-2028

Stroom
Den Haag

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Short overview

This is the significance of art: connecting people, bringing them together, sparking conversations, and opening eyes and hearts. For over thirty years, Stroom in The Hague has been an indispensable driver of the visual arts. The city of The Hague is our working ground; it is where our foundation lies. Art, the city, and society are inextricably linked—that is our starting point. What makes The Hague unique is that it serves as the national center of power, is internationally synonymous with peace and justice, and thus reflects current societal changes vividly. Climate change, conflict situations, migration, economic inequality, growing distrust in democracy, and increasing polarization define the new normal. Rising alienation calls for a new imagination of ‘us’ and trust to dare to dream of a shared future. Dreaming together and living together requires collective imagination, and this is precisely where artists and culture are essential. Stroom contributes to this by continuing to champion a culture of trust in the new policy period 2025-2028 and by placing trust in the artist.

We translate this into action through this policy plan, *Cultures of Conviviality – The Art of Living Together*, by adopting an integrated approach of deepening, stimulating, and connecting. With several substantive focus areas, Stroom addresses the art of living together and related themes and stories about resilience, empowerment, listening, uncertainty, conflict culture, and adaptability. We make room for societal developments that are also directly felt within the visual arts itself. This includes other and new substantive themes, such as previously underrepresented stories from groups seeking different forms of visibility and representation. The growing interdisciplinarity and the professional demands placed on the visual arts sector (such as fair practice and sustainability) also have a direct impact, as do housing shortages and their influence on studio space policies and the urban climate for artists. These elements are directly reflected in our ongoing activities, program and research lines, and services, which we shape together with artists, partners, and residents. These are the building blocks of our rich activity program, featuring meetings, events, exchanges, grants, encounters, research, performances, presentations, and screenings, with ample space for experimentation and connection.

“Art is something you experience together; you plan to go, you meet other people, share your experiences, and exchange memories, ideas, or emotions...”

“Even more importantly, art connects all social and societal layers in society - ‘art’ in all its forms is a vast, rich, and complex fabric that functions best when everyone can find something of interest in it, something they need at that moment. Art consumption is never exclusive... Young and old, experimental and affirming, innovative and traditional...”

→ Hans den Hartog Jager, *NRC Handelsblad* (18.01.2024)

Who we are



To stimulate, deepen and connect

After a period of reflection, Stroom has extended a welcoming hand through its renewed activity program, warmly welcomed by artists, residents, and visitors. This confirms that Stroom is not an isolated entity but is deeply intertwined with the city and the art field. In the recent period, we have also focused on creating a solid foundation for our ambitions. We continue to build on our core strengths of stimulating, deepening, and connecting. These are active verbs rooted in meeting, dialogue, and movement, all in the service of artistic practice and society. Stroom itself is a verb in Dutch. We flow through the city, engage, advance, and seek new paths.

As a development institution and network organization, establishing connections and movement is central to our operations. This forms the core of our activities and adds value to our mission. We do this with all our activities, involving a large number of partners and thus reaching a wide variety of audience groups, for and with whom we program. Whether it's conversations with residents of Spui-plein about the Monument commemorating The Hague's Trans-Atlantic slavery past, our new artworks in schools, or bike routes along sculptures in Mariahoeve, workshops on open calls with Platform BK, or the Ouborg Award in collaboration with the Kunstmuseum, inspiring exhibitions featuring new work by The Hague artists like *Positions: Elsewheres*, or our international research program within SpaceX, our approach fosters new cross-pollinations, inspiration, knowledge, and interconnections.



Vital role Urban systematics

With Stroom's commitment to the artist community, The Hague has established a unique status and organization in the visual arts. Through a cohesive set of activities, Stroom provides support and connection at all levels of artistic practice within the city. The expertise and engagement of Stroom add value and amplify the impact of these efforts. This is precisely why the municipality assigns this stimulating role to Stroom, independent of political and administrative influences, but focused on the value of art and artists in the city. By anchoring Stroom as a system institution within the multi-year subsidy structure, the municipality recognizes the vital roles of not only Stroom Den Haag but also of Popradar and Cultuurschakel. Starting in 2025, these institutions will be funded by a budget subsidy, guaranteed for the minimum period of the Arts Plan 2025-2028. The evaluation system is based on 'substantive advice with focal points' according to the specific frameworks for system institutions. From our unique position as a meeting place, catalyst, mediator, and knowledge sharer in The Hague, we strive for better anchoring and security for the city. This shift from the municipality aligns with the development that grants Stroom the freedom, responsibility, and trust to shape our policies based on our expertise, with appropriate authorization for our financial arrangements. During this policy period, the three parties and the municipality will work to further develop and secure the role of system institution, each with a specific development function, both within the system and organizationally and financially.

Placemaking, innovating & stimulating

As quartermaster for art in the city, Stroom focuses on creating connections between art, the city and society. We achieve this through three main areas: placemaking, innovating & stimulating, and connecting with society. These fields are applied integrally to reinforce each other. Our approach has led to frequent requests and inquiries about the '*Stroom Method*' from other municipalities and organizations, both domestically and internationally.

Additionally, we receive a significant number of requests for advice and expertise, professional collaborations, and support through our stimulating policies. In recent years, due to limited capacity (in terms of personnel and finances), we have been unable to meet all these requests, resulting in missed opportunities such as collaborations in studio policies and programs. There is a clear demand for Stroom from artists and the city, and we recognize the value we can offer as a partner. We are exploring ways to embed this into our work and activities to generate lasting value for art and society. Substantive policy and business developments are necessary to build a solid foundation for this

Plans and activities 2025-2028

Stroom Den Haag believes in the indispensable role of artists for a livable city and a resilient society. In all our activities, we strive to connect art, artists, and the city. We contribute to the substantive development of artistic practices and address socially relevant themes. As a translocal network organization, we, along with partners, residents, and visitors, embody our core values: to stimulate, deepen and connect.

→ *Mission of Stroom Den Haag*

The city of The Hague has many faces. It is the visible center of government with a stage for international and royal representation, and it is also one of the most segregated cities in the Netherlands (CBS, 2023), with less visible economic and social inequalities among its residents, historically between different neighborhoods and between sand and peat areas. At the same time, the city hosts a unique, quirky underground scene of music and visual arts. This makes The Hague a particularly dynamic socio-cultural ecosystem and ensures that larger societal developments resonate, becoming visible, and tangible. The challenges of municipal policy, as formulated in the Cultural Vision 2023 *'De kunst van betekenis'*, are clearly intertwined with bridging these differences and perceived distances. This is the common thread in the four focus areas: education & cultural participation, an attractive city, diversity & inclusion, and innovation & creativity. The overall goal is to increase accessibility, provide space for the great diversity of nationalities and cultures, and continue investing in a livable and attractive city. Stroom aligns its policy with these goals and contributes by translating them into action. We do this concretely by translating our mission in this policy plan, *Cultures of Conviviality – The Art of Living Together*, into an integrated approach to deepen, stimulate, and connect, as well as into thematic focal points. The city of The Hague deserves a lively, diverse, and distinctive art climate, where a great variety does not form extremes but rather a broad palette that strengthens and enriches each other.

What we do

In all our areas of work, we strive to create accessibility by providing space to a wide diversity of underrepresented artistic practices, substantive positions, and perspectives. Our goals are to enhance artistic and societal resilience and to invest in a future-proof visual arts practice, with a focus on substantive innovation, professional adaptability, and engagement with society. We shape our mission through three approaches, in which we integrally apply our core tasks as a system institution – to stimulate, deepen and connect. These methodologies form the foundation of all our activities.

Placemaking

Since its founding, Stroom has employed placemaking as a method, focusing on stimulating artistic development, facilitating the creative process, and creating a 'social pedestal' for art in the city and society in collaboration with partners and the public. We create space and facilitate a context-oriented artistic practice. These practices are often site-specific, socially engaged, research-driven, co-created, and encompass various working and expressive forms, especially in public spaces. Each project is unique and requires a tailored approach to achieve a meaningful artwork. Our expertise is a toolbox offering a mix of physical and business conditions (space, financial resources, organization, etc.), facilitating a socio-cultural context (through connection, relationship building, creating involvement, research), and making projects visible or public.

In practice, this means we are in continuous dialogue with both artists and the city. Stroom Den Haag believes in the indispensable role of artists for a livable city and resilient society. In all our activities, we strive to connect art, artists, and the city. We contribute to the substantive development of artistic practices and address socially relevant themes. As a translocal network organization, we, along with partners, residents, and visitors, embody our core values: stimulating, deepening, and connecting.

Over more than thirty years, Stroom has developed unique expertise and continually deploys its artistic and substantive knowledge to create the best possible conditions for realizing artworks and projects in the city. We also apply this approach in our studio policies and various (multi-year) public art commissions. Part of this is the *Kunst op Scholen* portfolio, stemming from the percentage regulation of the municipality of The Hague, with an average of ten active commissions annually.

Innovating & stimulating

Stroom highlights substantive and societal issues through thematic research, maintaining a focus on artistic practice. Our activities provide context for facilitating new projects, offering a significant impulse for artistic practice. Our program regularly serves as a testing ground for artists, viewers, and creators, offering space for experimentation and the development of new work. We focus on interdisciplinary research and knowledge development through our thematic program, which includes temporary residencies and collaborations with international partners such as art academies, artists, and research institutions.

Facilitating artistic practice is also central to our extensive stimulating program for the substantive deepening and professional development of The Hague's artists. This includes our successful visitor and network program, which emphasizes (international) exchange and deepening. Our online database, *haagse-kunstenaars.nl*, provides visibility for The Hague's artists, making them more findable for invitations to participate in exhibitions, projects, publications, or teaching opportunities. The database proves to be a crucial tool for research by intermediaries, curators, and commissioners.

Additionally, we offer talent development programs such as *Invest Week*, the *Stroom Young Talent Award* in collaboration with Royal Academy, and the *Ouborg Award*, the city's visual arts award for proven talent, in collaboration with Kunstmuseum Den Haag. We provide financial support to artists and initiatives aimed at substantive deepening and the development of professional practice. In collaboration with partners, we regularly address new developments in the field, such as our recent work with Platform BK, and develop temporary arrangements for artists.

Connecting with society

Visual art comes to life through connections with others by sharing, asking questions, and engaging in dialogue. Each artwork thus creates its own public space. We provide depth and context for projects and utilize various, suitable formats such as presentations, artist talks, guided tours, studio visits, lectures, information sessions, seminars, and educational programs. Expertise development and research to support our policy, including knowledge sharing, are also integrated into this connecting program and supported by our esteemed library. In all of this, we relate to the city and reflect substantively on society.

As a cultural institution and network organization, establishing connections is central to our organization; it forms the core of our activities and adds value to our mission. We do this with all our activities, involving numerous stakeholders and reaching a diverse range of audience groups, for whom and with whom we program. We regularly collaborate with third parties and provide space for thematic program lines such as *See You In The Hague*, focusing on art that reflects on war and justice and relates to The Hague as the city of peace and justice, or the *Positions* program, as a platform for visibility of The Hague artists. In line with our mission, we provide space for experimentation, research, and innovation.

Cultures of Conviviality

The Art of Living Together

As a government city and diplomatic hub, The Hague is closely intertwined with both national and global current events. It is home to the United Nations International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, and hosts numerous embassies, NGOs, and advocacy groups. The city is a battleground for protest movements such as the farmers' protests on the Malieveld, Extinction Rebellion protests on the A12, and demonstrations at embassies or the House of Representatives in response to wars and (international) conflicts. The city of The Hague is Stroom's workspace, forming the societal force field and context we engage in dialogue with and continuously relate to. Recent protests and demonstrations are public expressions of the many complex systemic changes we are experiencing, all interconnected: from advancing climate change and increasing migration to questioning capitalist, colonial, and often patriarchal power structures, and growing distrust in democracy.

But if everyone must stand up for their own interests and rights and does not feel seen and known, what is the story that connects us? If we no longer recognize ourselves in shared cultural values, what are the new stories of living together that do connect us? Major changes put society on edge, resulting in polarization, conflict, and segregation. This leads to alienation of others and creates space for an increasingly edgy culture of fear. A culture of fear calls for a counterbalance and the antidote to fear is trust. Trust is indispensable in processing the changes we are undergoing, reflecting on them, and daring to dream of a collective, multi-voiced future.

Dreaming together requires collective imagination, and for this, artists and culture are indispensable. Democratic and peaceful coexistence demands engagement in conversation with others, patience to listen, conflict competence, empathy, and above all, trust. This is the basis for bridging gaps, being inspired, and jointly building a shared story. However, a shared living environment like the city, physical *'living together,'* does not automatically

result in a sense of solidarity, often the opposite. The lack of connection and culture leads to growing loneliness and retreating into one's own bubble of like-minded people. It results in a hardening of the public domain, a lack of empathy, and simply no willingness to make room for others. But how do you live together and experience solidarity?

In *Cultures of Conviviality – The Art of Living Together*, Stroom addresses the art of living together and related themes and stories about resilience, empowerment, learning to listen, conflict culture, and adaptability of society. We do this by advocating for a culture of trust and providing counterbalance by placing our trust in the artist. Artists are at the heart of society and uniquely embrace and constructively use uncertainty and change for experimentation, new insights, and different perspectives to stimulate our shared imagination.

Together with partners, the public, and stakeholders, we shape this multi-year policy plan. Our extensive activities program rests on three pillars: ongoing activities (Continuity), various research projects, and program lines. Where possible, we strive for synergy and an integrated programming approach. Continuity includes various ongoing structural activities and focuses on part of the stimulating programs, advisory services, and information provision. The research projects are interdisciplinary, international collaborations with partners and highlight social issues from an artistically substantive perspective. The program lines serve as thematic platforms for art in the city.

Program lines

Positions

Positions provides visibility to The Hague's artists. Since 2022, it has served as a platform for newly developed work and experimentation, featuring screenings, artist talks, performances, and lectures. *Positions* offers space for Hague artists to experiment with audience formats. We create visibility for the wide variety of artists and creators in the city and connect these artists with the public. Artists in The Hague do not just live here; they are deeply embedded in society. The past two years have shown a significant need for such a platform, with many Hague artists focusing on socially urgent issues and reflecting on the society they are part of. This is also evident in our ongoing *Afterlives* program, commemorating the national remembrance year of Colonial and Slavery History. Each year, a guest curator is invited to create a thematic focus program for *Positions*, including a group exhibition and associated public program. *Positions* also participates in *Museum Night The Hague* with a thematic film program for students and alumni of the Royal Academy of Art through an open call.

See You in The Hague

The *See You in The Hague* program focuses on art addressing war, peace, and justice. As the city of peace and justice, The Hague is a geopolitical hotspot for international jurisprudence, dealing with related war and conflict situations. With a heavily secured international zone and over 160 organizations focused on peace and justice, the city offers a unique work environment for artists. From 2025, this long-term program line will be organized as an international residency, providing artists with the opportunity to deepen their research and practice specifically in The Hague and to contribute to the public debate on peace and justice through their work. The program will particularly focus on artists from war and conflict zones who otherwise have limited opportunities to conduct research in The Hague. The residency lasts up to one year, and in consultation with the artist, the program will include tailored activities such as workshops or lectures, involving relevant partners. The residency concludes with a public presentation coordinated with the artist. Structural collaborations will be sought with Artist-at-Risk, the International Criminal Court, the United Nations, and the Peace Palace. Additionally, there will be cooperation with the Royal Academy of Art for a complementary educational program and guest lecturing.





Networks of Embodiment

The multi-year program *Networks of Embodiment* addresses themes and questions surrounding social and ecological (in)equality. The conceptual starting point is the metaphor of the city as a body and the embodied experience of the individual with all the possibilities and limitations this entails. In 2025 and 2026, presentations and public programs will be organized with artists and partners to share these explorations with the public. This will be done along two main thematic lines. The first line, titled *No Word For Nature*, focuses on a radically relational ecological perspective. Together with artists, new or alternative forms of knowledge and approaches to the city as a body and as a living organism will be explored and presented. Artists, for instance, investigate how we can coexist with non-human organisms in the city and what we can learn from this for our human society. The second program line, *Entangled Codes*, concentrates on relational views with technology, the body, and inclusion in the public domain. In this program, we explore with creators the interactions of technologies with our physical environment. For this multi-year program, we utilize additional funding sources.



Research lines

Spatial Practices in Art and Architecture for Empathetic Exchange (SpaceX-Rise)

2025 marks the final year of the multi-year research project SpaceX. This large-scale European cooperation initiative is supported by the Creative Europe program of the EU. Since 2022, the research program has connected scientific institutions and cultural organizations for practice-oriented and interdisciplinary research. Stroom is one of the collaborative partners. The goal is to achieve cross-sectoral and Europe-wide knowledge exchange, where researchers – academics, writers, artists, architects, curators, and observers – map out how spatial art practices contribute to public debate, opinion formation, and mutual empathy. Stroom hosts various international researchers and participates with four policy makers in research periods in Cyprus, Ireland, the Czech Republic, and the United Kingdom. Participation in the research program not only enriches our knowledge and expertise but also expands and strengthens our international professional network. This way, participation in the research program supports our mission and adds value to our activities. It specifically focuses on the social impact of artistic practices and reflects on the power of connection through artistic practices. The research outcomes are expected at the end of 2025.



Islands of Kinship

The project *Islands of Kinship* is considered a *best practice* in the field of 'Conviviality.' Stroom collaborates with six medium-sized visual art institutions in various urban regions across Europe (Prague, Bratislava, Bitola/Skopje, Cologne, Riga, The Hague). The two-year project is an innovative partnership that addresses issues such as inclusivity, kinship and togetherness, democratic exchange and ethics, emotions, and practical solutions for environmentally friendly practices. The starting points are thematic programs such as sustainability, inequality, and inclusivity, which require their own institutional approach. The collaboration encompasses a public knowledge platform and thematic program lines. Following a pilot in 2022-2024, a follow-up project has been applied for at the European Union with results expected in mid-2024. Participation in this project allows Stroom (financially) to hire a project leader for 'sustainability & inclusion' for two years focusing on integrating these themes into our content program and contributing to the development of our institutional practices. This aligns with developing suitable working methods that correspond with the themes of *Cultures of Conviviality*.

What We Leave Behind

Climate change is a reality that increasingly shapes our immediate future. It necessitates scenarios and new imaginations to grasp its scope and impact, despite many unpredictable factors. In light of possible future scenarios, we question what this means for the present and the development of art in public spaces. With *What We Leave Behind*, we start from a radical scenario where The Hague becomes uninhabitable due to climate disasters. This scenario raises several critical questions: What does this mean for art in public space and the city's collection of sculptures? What do we take with us, and what do we leave behind? Does this future scenario call for different art forms? Is it still meaningful to create monuments if we might end up underwater? Should public art become immaterial, such as performances or rituals? How would this affect the management and preservation of the current collection? Should our advisory approach change? These questions, among others, will be explored in this research. We will seek various collaborative partners for this project, including municipal institutions and national organizations such as the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, the Chief Government Architect, and cultural initiatives like Sonsbeek in Arnhem.

Continuity

Starting in 2025, in the area of placemaking, Stroom will develop new participation forms for public art commissions, leveraging experiences from recent projects such as The Hague's slavery memorial, various school commissions, and research into new participation and collaboration forms. This expertise will be consolidated and deepened to provide artists and citizens with tools to actively engage in art commissions. Our goal is to share this knowledge, creating a toolkit for public art commissions accessible to others. Our advisory function will be professionalized based on a benchmark study conducted in 2024. Potential models include a city board of governors or advisory committee with a pool of advisors to ensure quality and accommodate diverse perspectives and expertise. Additionally, we will continue to evolve our studio policy based on a 2022 study.

Within our stimulating program, we focus on impulse projects and temporary programs that contribute to a diversity of voices. Based on field research, we are recalibrating our program structure, including financial arrangements for professional artists. In addition to regular ongoing arrangements, we will pilot temporary arrangements addressing specific needs for diverse cultural practices. Collaborations with organizations like the Prince Claus Fund or Dutch Culture will be explored. We are committed to sustainable mobility and artist exchange to enhance their professional networks and deepen their practice through vouchers, ad-hoc arrangements, and residencies, in partnership with organizations like Creative Europe/Goethe Institute and the European Cultural Foundation. Our evaluation criteria and database functionalities will be updated to be more transparent and accessible to a diverse range of art disciplines and artists. Financial support will focus on individual artists and artistic practices, aligning with our mission.

A diversity of voices and the collaboration with our audience groups will be a focal point in our new policy period, especially in terms of connecting, as well as our communication infrastructure and strategy. We will enhance Stroom's setup with a new, accessible website, a strengthened communication team, and the appointment of a Networks & Outreach coordinator. This will enable us to deepen and expand Stroom's network, serve it better, and foster interconnections and collaborations. For the digital collection of public art (bkdh.nl), we have piloted initiatives such as QR codes linking to detailed information. Based on these trials, we will further develop the accessibility of the public art collection. This initiative aims to ensure that our communication efforts effectively reach and engage diverse audiences, fostering a sense of community and shared cultural experience.



Well-organized

Importance for The Hague

The city of The Hague is our territory, encompassing its entire breadth and all its residents. The city, its residents, and art are inextricably linked. This is our foundation. The municipal policy, as articulated in the 2033 cultural vision *'De kunst van betekenis'*, emphasizes bridging extremes and perceived distances within four focal areas: education & cultural participation, attractive city, diversity & inclusion, and innovation & creativity. Stroom has been an indispensable player in this context for over thirty years.

Through a mix of stimulating and connecting activities, Stroom adds value to its role and actively contributes to a livable, attractive, and resilient city across all municipally defined focal areas. Stroom operates in all neighborhoods and veins of the city, having a direct impact on residents (sculpture routes, public art, school art projects, knowledge sharing, encounters, livability), city development (studio and breeding ground policies, artist initiatives, cross-pollination of various disciplines and urban themes), field development (financial support, organizational support, networking, awards, scholarships), and the artists' practice itself (content development, professional career development, financial support, studio mediation, commissions, talent development, meetings, advisory services, knowledge sharing, networking, visibility).

Our advisory role also pertains to urban development and the role of studio and breeding ground policies within it. The general trend is that due to housing policies, housing shortages, and high property and land prices, there is increasingly less space for artistic hubs, which are being pushed to the periphery or even out of cities, away from people. Stroom is in dialogue with the municipality, real estate, and urban development, as well as partners such as the various Cultuurankers and the library, to strengthen art and artists throughout the city and enhance their connections.

As stated in the BlueYard research *Contouren Cultuurvisie 2033*: "Cross-pollination between creators, residents, existing institutions, and an inspiring environment strengthens the chain." This also applies to public art projects, including art projects in The Hague schools. Stroom plays an important role here as well: from advisory to process guidance, from initiating to facilitat-

ing. This art, found in the streets, in neighborhoods, and in schools, serves as an anchor point to foster connections through art. The knowledge and experience Stroom has accumulated over the past thirty years is invaluable. This knowledge is continuously developed and translated into professional tools to be used for the vital public art collection in The Hague, for the city, and for art.

The Hague has a densely developed, rich, and active arts scene. While the municipality and the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science are responsible for structural policy and sector organization, Stroom is responsible for its stimulating policy, providing space for new ideas and relevant developments, and allowing room for trial and error. Together with our partners, we are working on recalibrating the quality criteria we aim for, aligned with contemporary demands. Our advisory role is policy-forming and must therefore be coherent and transparent.

Stroom is also an active partner of the many different organizations, parties, and initiatives that the city boasts. Not only cultural institutions, stages, and nightlife, but also NGOs, media, embassies, businesses, project developers, housing corporations, schools, and educational institutions, and collaborations like Spreek, Museum Night, HOOGTIJ, and The Hague & Partners. In this proactive role within cross-pollination, Stroom contributes to strengthening the chain. The content-related role that Stroom continues to play and will expand in the coming period has already been outlined in the review and the program lines. One of the new key points is that Stroom is working on an approach for regular evaluation and impact measurement of its own activities.

Through this mix of activities, Stroom has a diverse reach and network of partners and relationships. This includes direct interactions with artists (financial support, studio mediation, meetings, research, networking, presentation), artist initiatives and institutions (financial support, organizational support, networking), urban development and project developers (studio and breeding ground policies), and, of course, residents and schools (sculpture routes, Art in Public Space, knowledge sharing). We operate from the belief that translocalism strengthens our role and our relationship with the city and the artist field, translating into social and economic value.

Human element

Stimulate, connect, deepen, inspire. Everything that Stroom does and brings is human effort, and we remain attentive to the human element, even within our own organization. Every cog in the team is crucial for fulfilling our role as a system institution with a collectively felt and shared responsibility. Since 2022, efforts have been focused on making the organization more future-proof. This process will be completed in 2024, equipping Stroom to enter the new policy period fully prepared, perfectly aligned with our role as a system institution and a translocal network organization. This means that every Stroom employee maintains a connection with the network and thus remains engaged in stimulating and enhancing the arts in the city. Key values in this regard are integrity, safety, and good governance.

Stroom places great importance on being a good employer and client. This means that Stroom has its own job structure, with appropriate profiles, clear and equitable employment conditions, and fair pay agreements for assignments. Attention is given to safety and trust in all aspects, both internally and within our network role, with our own code of conduct. These guidelines are evaluated annually with the employee representative body and adjusted as necessary. An external confidant has been appointed. This process also includes ensuring the artistic and business leadership through an equal two-headed executive board, balancing content and organization to strengthen each other in policy formation and the organization of Stroom. The future appointment of two new coordinators to oversee different organizational lines will ensure a clear organizational structure. In 2024, the process will be reviewed by the Supervisory Board.

At Stroom, we believe that all roles are crucial, but also that each team member is given space for their own ambitions and development. Our mission to stimulate, deepen, and connect is also reflected in our company culture and management. We invest in our team, which means attention is given to the development and growth of team members through training, guidance, and access to the network. This also means that when team members move on from Stroom, we need to ensure the transfer of knowledge and networks. This requires a suitable organizational culture with corresponding work processes and digital setup. With flexible internal collaboration, a sense of shared responsibility, shared knowledge (where tasks can always be covered), and a flexible pool of freelancers to

rely on, Stroom can continue to thrive. Continuous attention is given to this through team sessions, training, and courses.

Adhering to standards

Stroom adheres to the Governance Code Culture, the Code of Diversity and Inclusion, and the Fair Practice Code. Starting from 2025, Stroom will operate with a Supervisory Board and two equal managing directors. The transition to this model will be completed in 2024. Proper implementation and assessment of the Governance Code will be further integrated into our work processes. All codes will be developed to ensure transparency and accountability by 2025. The board will consist of at least three members with a maximum term of two four-year periods. We collaborate with Binoq Atana in the selection of board members, seeking individuals who meet the highest standards of the Governance Code and are passionate advocates for Stroom's mission, capable of promoting it through valuable networks and deep expertise.

Annually, the Supervisory Board will meet with the directors at least four times and will hold separate progress discussions between directors and board members twice a year. Governance will be guided by a board and director regulations framework. Reporting, documentation, self-assessment, and (audit) controls will be aligned with the Governance Code and conducted transparently. Within the organization, processes, protocols, and procedures will be assessed for integrity, diligence, and transparency every two years, with adjustments made as necessary.

After 30 years of organic growth, Stroom is currently working on a revised personnel policy that focuses on Fair Practice and a transparent, sustainable business operation. The organization aims to create a safe working environment with well-aligned responsibilities and manageable workloads guided by clear agreements. This process involves consultation and advice from organizations such as De Zaak Nu. Stroom, as an independent non-profit foundation within the visual arts sector, does not have a uniform applicable collective labor agreement (CAO). For the development of our personnel policy, we are utilizing the *Richtlijn functie- en loonbouw presentatie-instellingen voor beeldende kunst* from De Zaak Nu, various sector-specific collective agreements, and employment conditions from similar organizations. The new policy will be implemented in 2024 and includes a detailed job structure with corresponding salary tables,

uniform primary and secondary employment conditions, contracts and agreements, and review cycles and training and development policies. Stroom also follows the Public Cultural Funds' guidelines for fees paid to artists, designers, and other creators.

With the new setup, there will be opportunities to mentor interns and students gaining work experience and nurturing new passionate colleagues for the sector with attention to the principles outlined in the *Code of Diversity and Inclusion*. This approach ensures that all employees, whether full-time, contracted, or volunteers, can fully commit to the arts and artists in The Hague.

Stroom is acutely aware of climate change and the need for sustainability. We are committed to reducing our environmental footprint both organizationally and programmatically. We have been minimizing our footprint for years through the use of reusable tableware, waste separation, ecological products, as much paperless work as possible, and transitioning to LED lighting. We are also focusing on eliminating standby power, responsibly sourcing products, and offering vegetarian catering. The courtyard has been transformed into a green space, and Stroom has service bikes for transportation within The Hague. The landlord is making improvements to wall and roof insulation and installing an energy-efficient boiler with a programmable timer, helping to mitigate rising utility costs. We still need to find a suitable solution for controlling cold through the monumental glass facade.

Going with the flow

Our policy goal for Diversity and Inclusion is elaborated through the four Ps. At the time of writing, we have submitted an application to the EU program 'Creative Europe'. This would allow us to strengthen our team for two years with an 'Inclusion & Diversity' staff member. This role is designed specifically to develop and implement policies, methodologies, and monitoring in this focus area. It will accelerate the implementation of the following initiatives. Should the application not be approved, the core of the plans will be embedded within the existing organization and supplemented where possible through partners and additional fundraising efforts.

Personnel

For the optimal execution of our mission (art and the city), a team is needed where various aspects of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) are naturally integrated. This requires a different approach to recruitment, utilizing appropriate networks, and an organizational structure and culture that allows for this integration. Through research and the development of methodologies and

monitoring systems, we will establish structures in the coming period to ensure D&I is maintained at various levels and in different parts of the organization. Due to natural turnover and the end of board terms, there is room to take immediate steps. Currently, Stroom is offering a position within the Binoq Atana training program and is recruiting a chairperson through their network. In the future, there will continue to be opportunities due to Stroom's focus on the development and ambitions of team members.

Program

Our program is based on a vision that aligns with Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) and also addresses it thematically. The creators we work with are diverse in terms of cultural and socioeconomic background, gender (orientation), and skills. However, this diversity is not yet systematically and verifiably implemented. Recent national research shows that artists with a migration background have an even harder time than those without. In 2023, through a field study, we reviewed our evaluation criteria to allow for the representation of groups that may currently be excluded by the existing criteria.

Public

Because art and society are inextricably linked, Stroom's public encompasses the entire breadth of that society. While we do not create a program for everyone, our public art touches everyone. Therefore, language use and design are points of attention. Earlier in 2022, Stroom collaborated with Stichting Oren and Ogen Tekort for people with visual impairments. The pilot was successful and it is time to implement this structurally. To gain better insight into our users, Stroom is also a partner with The Hague & Partners and participates in research within The Hague's '*Culturele Doelgroepenmodel*'. A key question in this research is how art can be used to break down social barriers.

Partners

Since its inception, Stroom has never worked solo but always in collaboration with partners. Given its social position and the increasing diversity in urban society, our partners have also become more diverse. We seek both local, national, and international alliances. The goal of each collaboration is to provide added value for each other, society, and particularly for the creators.

Finances

Appointed by the municipality as a system institution, Stroom will receive a basic budget of €2,585,962 over the next four years to implement our policy objectives. This amount is a combination of two components from the current policy period's allocation, with an amount of over €255,000 not being included, thus resulting in a total

budget cut of over 10%. To strengthen our mission, a broadening of our financial structure is necessary, leading to the development of revenue streams. This year, a plan for a financial mix is being developed, focusing on fundraising, sponsorship, sales, percentage schemes, commission work, co-creation, collaborations, and other forms of partnerships.

In conclusion *– a brief review*

Throughout the 2021-2024 policy period, Stroom has purposefully and resolutely committed to fulfilling its core tasks despite organizational changes, numerous societal upheavals, and a pandemic. Now that our doors are fully open again, we recognize the value of our efforts. Stroom remains an inspiring, expert, reliable, flexible, and approachable network organization, firmly rooted in The Hague and connected (along with the city's arts sector) on a regional, national, and global level. As an independent foundation with a strengthened financial mix and an extensive, broad (trans)local network, we will confidently continue to fulfill our mission in the future. Over the past thirty years, Stroom has carved out a unique role within the city. The 2021-2024 policy plan emphasized our role as a presentation institution and the associated financial and organizational growth. However, the municipality, following the committee's advice, did not endorse this part of the application or the requested budget increase, making it impossible to execute the submitted multi-year policy plan and its underlying budget exactly as proposed.

In 2021, the new management team took to heart the advice underlying the municipal decision and set a course change. The focus is now on strengthening Stroom's core qualities, ensuring their sustainability, and increasing their impact. This approach positions our relationship with the city, artists, the field, visitors, and partners as the foundation for Stroom's positioning and transitions us into a (trans) local network organization with a development function. Our integration with a broad network of diverse partners and stakeholders enables us to engage a mixed audience with our diverse array of roles, tasks, and activities. Studies commissioned by the municipality and in preparation for our development into a system institution (such as those by AEFX in 2021/22 and BlueYard in 2022/23) support this trajectory and confirm Stroom's added value and unique contribution to the city, as well as our distinctive capacity within The Hague's arts sector.



Colophon

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