

STATE OF

STRONG

DESIGN

DIGITAL EXHIBITION / ENGLISH RESUME





ENGLISH RESUME

STATE OF STRONG DESIGN

The 1991 policy paper *Space for Architecture* marked the start of a national architecture policy. After this paper, the Dutch national government has issued a new policy document on architecture and spatial design every four years since 1996. There were a total of seven policy documents. Institutions such as the Creative Industries Fund NL, the Board of Government Advisors, the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Europan, Architectuur Lokaal and the Architects Registration Bureau are jointly responsible for the implementation.

At the end of 2016, the release of the *Spatial Design Action Agenda 2017-2020 - Working together on strong design* prompted Chief Government Architect Floris Alkemade to look at the results of 25 years of promoting architecture and spatial design in the Netherlands.

The exposition STATE OF STRONG DESIGN shows the colourful harvest of the last few decades. Compiled by the Office of the Chief Government Architect, the exhibition brings together a large number of projects that came about through the incentive policies and commissioning of the State. The exhibition also devotes ample attention to young talent, internationalisation, and developments in architectural education.

Four areas that have determined policy since *Space for Architecture* are building, stimulation, education and internationalisation. These subjects recur in every four-year period and are abiding themes throughout the exhibition.

The exhibition was an initiative of Chief Government Architect Floris Alkemade in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment.

FROM SPACE FOR ARCHI- TECTURE TO WORKING TOGETHER ON STRONG DESIGN

1991: THE FIRST NATIONAL POLICY PAPER FOR ARCHITECTURE IS RELEASED

The first architecture paper *Space for Architecture* has the goal of “creating favourable conditions for the development of architectonic quality” and is a product of the partnership between the ministries of Welfare, Public Health and Culture (WVC) and Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM). The two ministries join their forces and resources. Construction is no longer only seen as crucial for the economy: the understanding that the way of building determines the quality of the everyday environment gets through to The Hague. Building comes to be seen as a cultural act.* With *Space for Architecture*, the state aims to reinforce the developments already in progress. The ministers Elco Brinkman (WVC) and Ed Nijpels (VROM) prepare the policy paper, but due to the fall of the Lubbers II cabinet, the policy paper is presented in 1991 by the ministers Hedy d’Ancona (WVC) and Hans Alders (VROM).

2017: THE ACTION AGENDA WORKING TOGETHER ON STRONG DESIGN TAKES EFFECT

In this agenda, the seventh document describing the state policy for architecture and spatial design, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment (IenM) focus on the use of the spatial design to help address urgent social issues. This approach is in line with the cultural policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science which promotes artistic quality, talent development, experimentation, innovation and internationalisation. In the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment commitment, as since 1991, is linked to the policy and the responsibility for the physical living environment. This programme is implemented by various partners such as the Board of Government Advisors, the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam, Architectuur Lokaal, the Creative Industries Fund NL, Het Nieuwe Instituut, the O-team, the Academies of Architecture and the Technical Universities.

* According to Ton Idsinga, one of the authors of *Space for Architecture*, this interest in the cultural dimension of building is the result of mutually reinforcing factors: a young, active generation of architects, the presence of several high-profile culturally inspired councillors and their officials, many publishing architecture historians and journalists, manifestations such as ‘What a Wonderful World’ and the contemporary city gates in Groningen, and the stimulating work of Stichting Wonen, the Netherlands Architecture Documentation Centre, the architecture section of the Rotterdam Art Foundation (AIR) and later ARCAM in Amsterdam and ABC in Haarlem. (Ton Idsinga, ‘Tien jaar architectuurbeleid’, in *Architectuur Lokaal*, April 2002.)

Stimulation

The national government supports high-quality institutions of national and international significance. The group of institutions that are directly subsidised by the state is called the cultural Base Infrastructure (BIS). The Rijksmuseum, the Royal Concertgebouw and the Dutch National Ballet are famous examples of institutions from the BIS, but film festivals and theatre companies are also supported. The subsidy period applies for four years each time and takes effect at the recommendation to the Council for Culture, the government's legal adviser in the area of the arts, culture and media. In the 2017-2020 period, a total of 88 institutions and 6 cultural funds will form part of the BIS. Of these, the Creative Industries Fund NL and Het Nieuwe Instituut are the most important institutions for the design disciplines. These institutions have the task of identifying and stimulating national and international developments in the fields of architecture, urban planning, design, fashion and digital culture. They focus on developing talent, facilitating experiments and (design) research, national and international promotion, and heritage preservation and management. Het Nieuwe Instituut and the Creative Industries Fund NL also perform tasks from the *Spatial Design Action Agenda 2017-2020*. For instance, the Fund has programmes focused on healthcare and school construction and urban development. Another institution that works on spatial issues from the agenda is Architectuur Lokaal.

Building

The policy on commissioning can be divided into the commissioning of the national government itself (setting an example) and commissioning in the field (inspiring private parties, municipalities and provinces). The way the state sets an example is, among other things, given form by the Chief Government Architect. The Chief Government Architect is both an advisor to the national government in building projects and also in broader social discussions about urban design, monuments, architecture, infrastructure and the visual arts. Since 2005, the institute of the Chief Government Architect was expanded with Government Advisors for the contiguous disciplines. Together, they form the Board of Government Advisors. To underline the role of clients, among other things a Government prize for inspiring commissioning was introduced in 1989. Local and regional clients such as municipalities, water authorities, provinces, project developers, social organisations and (collectives of) private individuals can be considered for this prize. In 1991, the commissioning prize was given a place in *Space for Architecture* and in the year 2017, the Gouden Piramide is still an important instrument in the *Spatial Design Action Agenda 2017-2020*.

Internationalisation

Supported by design courses and institutions such as the Creative Industries Fund NL and Het Nieuwe Instituut, the Netherlands manifests itself internationally as a place for experiments to exchange knowledge and to develop new design skills. Aside from supporting Dutch contributions to the architecture biennales of São Paulo, Shenzhen and Venice, Het Nieuwe Instituut compiles a visitor programme every year to introduce foreign designers (spatial planning, design, fashion and e-culture) to the Dutch (multidisciplinary) design world. The presentations by the Netherlands at the various expos and biennales abroad are joined by an international biennale at home in 2003: the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR), organised by the foundation of the same name. The Creative Industries Fund NL focuses on promoting the international position of the Dutch design sector. The creative industry is one of the nine top sectors that will represent high economic and social value for the future of the Netherlands. The design sectors are part of the creative industry.

Education

Education has its own place in architecture policy. Education not only focuses on preparation for professional practice, but also on the personal development of future generations of designers and on the development of the profession itself. Furthermore, university education can be a preparation for scholarly work. Aside from individual state subsidies - as of 1988 administered by the Fonds voor Beeldende Kunsten, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst and as of 2013 by the Creative Industries Fund NL - a number of initiatives arose in the 1980s for young designers such as the Archiprix (presentation of best graduation projects from Dutch courses in architecture, urban design and landscape architecture) and Europan (an international competition with actual construction projects). The Berlage Institute, established as a cultural workshop in 1990, offered graduates the opportunity for further development and going into more depth. The Architects Registration Bureau is important for the professional practice. The Architects Registration Bureau helps to give Dutch designers easy access to work in other EU countries. The Architect Title Act (WAT) protects the titles of architect, urban designer, landscape architect and interior architect. Since 1 January 2015, architects, urban designers, interior architects and landscape architects have been required to undergo a two-year professional experience period after completing their master's degree. In 2018, the Architects Registration Bureau has grown to 13,800 people, of which 10,450 as building architects.



SEVEN TIMES

STATE POLICY

1991-1996 Space for Architecture

Architecture as a cultural act

1997-2000 The Architecture of Space

From building to space

2001-2004 Shaping the Netherlands

Practice what you preach

2005-2008 Action Plan for Space and Culture - Architecture and Belvedere Policy

Preservation through development

2009-2012 A culture of design - Vision of architecture and spatial policy

Design first

2013-2016 Action Agenda Architecture and Spatial Design - Working on strong design

Spatial design

2017-2020 Spatial Design Action Agenda- Working together on strong design

Strong design

*including a response from
Chief Government Architect
Floris Alkemade (F.A.)*

*F.A. "The fact that a national
government is taking responsibility
for stimulating the quality of
architecture is quite unique. This
makes architecture not only dependent
on market forces. Architects and
clients feel supported in their drive for
quality."*



1991-1996 SPACE FOR ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURE AS A CULTURAL ACT

The architecture policy paper *Space for Architecture* dates back to 1991. This integrated vision of the national government on the meaning of architecture - the first national architecture policy in the world - was formed from the idea that the built environment requires constant effort. Architecture is seen as a "cultural act". The first policy paper is the product of close cooperation between the culture and building ministries; between the Minister of Welfare, Public Health and Culture (WVC) and the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM).

The main goal is to create favourable conditions to achieve architectonic quality. The policy paper about architectonic quality by Chief Government Architect Tjeerd Dijkstra (1985) and the quality concept from the Fourth Policy Paper on Spatial Planning (1988) were used to interpret this concept. Utility value and future value are linked to

the cultural value. Architectonic quality = the cultural value, the utility value and the future value, concepts that go back to the three pillars of architecture of Vitruvius: *utilitas*, *venustas*, *firmitas* (functionality, beauty and durability). The development of the physical living environment is no longer only based on economic considerations. Architecture becomes a collaborative process between clients, designers and users. The policy paper separates a direct commissioning role of the state (the government wants to set a good example) and a stimulating role, in which the national government is not directly involved in the construction process. The Chief Government Architect is given a central role. *Space for Architecture* lays the basis for the state architecture policy consisting of the establishment of various architecture institutions and creating more cohesion in state policy.

1997-2000 THE ARCHITECTURE OF SPACE

FROM BUILDING TO SPACE

The architecture policy is expanded from the level of the building to higher scale levels: urban design, landscape architecture and infrastructure. The policy paper aims to contribute to the cultural ambitions of the society out of the idea that buildings, cities, landscapes and infrastructure reflect these ambitions. The goal is to further reinforce the cooperation between the ministries that build and to broaden the incentive policy. Important pillar: motivating market parties to invest in architectonic quality. New accents: more attention for young talent and European procurement. The ministers of Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries (LNV) and of Public Works and Water Management (VenW) join in.

F.A. "An essential step was taken with the second policy paper: architecture is more than a building. All spatial interventions are important."

2001-2004 SHAPING THE NETHERLANDS

PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

The architecture policy for the 2001-2004 period aims to contribute to the image of the Netherlands by creating more space for the vital contribution of the design disciplines. Because policy often gets stuck in fine objectives, four ministers (Education, Culture and Science (OCW), Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries (LNV) and Public Works and Water Management (VenW)) adopt nine Major Projects in this time of economic boom. The nine actual design projects are the Delta metropolis (Randstad; a ring of major cities around a central green area in the west of the Netherlands), the Zuiderzee line (a rapid rail link connecting Amsterdam and Groningen), the A12 (a comprehensive design for an existing motorway), the New Dutch Waterline (a 85-kilometre-long defensive line of canals, sluices, fortifications and bunkers built in the 19th century to ward off potential invaders), the redevelopment of sandy-soil areas in western and southern regions of the country), individual initiative (the plan is for

a third of new housing projects to be private commissions by 2005-2010), public space, the new Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and a new building in Amersfoort to house both the Netherlands Department for Conservation and the National Archaeological Field Survey Commission.

The policy paper has two objectives: to bring in designers at an early stage (using integrative and creative power better) and 'architecture is everyone's business' (to achieve broader social integration). There is also attention for the changing role of municipalities in building aesthetics policy. The Minister of Economic Affairs (EZ) joins in after the policy paper is discussed in the Dutch House of Representatives and adopts a tenth Major Project: business parks. With support of the Chief Government Architect, the ministers receive direct responsibility for realising the Major Projects, which were compared to the French *Grand Projects*.

F.A "The policy is increasingly focused on visible effects. In 'Shaping the Netherlands', the government very explicitly focuses on concrete results that serve as an example."



2005-2008 ACTION PLAN FOR SPACE AND CULTURE - ARCHITECTURE AND BELVEDERE POLICY

PRESERVATION THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

The policy paper becomes an action plan, the focus is widened to national heritage. The Rijksmuseum, the New Dutch Waterline, motorway design and business parks are given the status of model projects. Other model projects include the embassy buildings, the defence sites that are being divested, the Afsluitdijk, the Limes, the Groene Hart, the post-war city, the water issue and World Heritage. The Chief Government Architect has been supported since 2005 by the Board of Government Advisors functioning as an independent advisory board for national and government projects. Design research, including on the function and design of schoolbuildings, becomes important. The action plan receives broad political support. Seven ministers sign the policy paper. Aside from Education, Culture and Science (OCW), Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries (LNV) and Public Works and Water Management (VenW): Economic Affairs (EZ), Defence and Foreign Affairs.

F.A. "National heritage is no longer considered only from the point of view of conservation and design research is broadly interpreted."



2009-2012 A CULTURE OF DESIGN - VISION OF ARCHITECTURE AND SPATIAL POLICY

DESIGN FIRST

Not an action plan, but a vision: "Every spatial intervention is a cultural act." The main purpose of the policy is improving the position and the image of design. A culture of design sounds the alarm about the weak position of design at municipalities and other clients. It has been found that there have been heavy cuts on the urban design services, as a result of which expertise has been lost. Furthermore, according to the vision the profession is less valued. In the meantime, there are increasingly complex projects in which urban designers and landscape architects can play a particularly important role as a connecting factor. Strengthening urban design becomes an important goal. Repurposing and redevelopment also become spearheads. School construction remains a subject in the policy. Strengthening of the expertise of the architect is a central reason for the amendment of the Architect Title Act. The vision is signed by five ministers: Education, Culture and Science (OCW), Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries (LNV), Public Works and Water Management (VenW), and Integration and Housing.

F.A. "The vision observes that design has disappeared into the background and states the importance, the essence, of the design: it is not a luxury, not an extra addition but an essential part of building. A sign that the power of design is no longer important to everyone."



2013-2016 ACTION AGENDA ARCHITECTURE AND SPATIAL DESIGN - WORKING ON STRONG DESIGN

SPATIAL DESIGN

The policy emphasises bringing designers into internal projects at an early stage, from the formulation of the project, and placing the strength of designers more broadly in urgent local and regional design projects ('The State strengthens'). Among other things, striving for excellent projects is given form in the design dialogue 'Making Projects'. Three innovative design tasks are identified: healthcare and school construction, city and region (e.g. connecting infrastructure and spatial development, water issues and growth/contraction) and urban transformations (e.g. densification and repurposing). The concept of creative industry feeds through in the incorporation of the Netherlands Architecture

Institute (NAi) in Het Nieuwe Instituut and in the incorporation of the Netherlands Architecture Fund in the Creative Industries Fund NL: a compact base infrastructure to support and stimulate the design disciplines architecture, industrial design and e-culture. The design courses and the chair 'Design as Politics' are to strengthen the connection of education, research and government. Professional experience is introduced as a registration requirement for the Register of Architects. The form of an action agenda is back. The agenda is signed by the Minister of Infrastructure and the Environment (IenM) and the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science (OCW).

F.A. "The state must set an example by inviting input from designers at the earliest possible stage, not only on the answer, but also on the question itself. What questions need to be asked?"



2017-2020 SPATIAL DESIGN ACTION AGENDA - WORKING TOGETHER ON STRONG DESIGN

STRONG DESIGN

According to the action agenda, the Netherlands is at the beginning of a new chapter in the spatial design tradition, closer to society with a greater role for citizens, businesses and social organisations. Designers can show what is yet to be and think through the physical consequences of this: a society with self-driving cars, smart grids, or education without schools. The power of design especially comes into its own in conjunction with good commissioning: the client must give room for exploration, participation and new angles of approach. The agenda aims to strengthen the power of design. New initiatives in this include: the O-team, which supports municipalities, water authorities and provinces in assuring

spatial quality and the Design and Practice programmes (intended for designers in training to gain practical experience) and Commissioning and Design, intended to strengthen public commissioning. Atelier Making Projects (the application of design research at the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment) is continued under the name Atelier X.

A website is launched at the same time as the action agenda to share experiences: www.samenwerkenaanontwerpkracht.nl. The action agenda is signed by the ministers of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and Infrastructure and the Environment (IenM).

F.A. "The social questions have become so complex that it is very important that architects associate themselves and connect with other disciplines, such as climate experts and social geographers."

