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Netherlands Plan for International Cultural Policy 2017-2020



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The Minister of Education, Culture and Science and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have announced their [plan for the Netherlands' international cultural policy 2017-2020](#). The policy plan follows upon an investigation of the international cultural policy for the 2009-2014 period by the Policy and Evaluations Operation Department (IOB) and advice from the Council for Culture.

Key points of the international cultural policy for the 2017-2020 period are: greater appreciation for the **intrinsic and social significance of culture**, greater emphasis on the **importance of exchange, networks and reciprocity**, a cohesive and integral approach to other countries, emphasis on the **connecting role of culture** and support for **cultural diplomacy** worldwide.

International practice

Under the influence of globalisation and digitalisation, the work terrain of a good many artists, designers and cultural institutes now extends throughout the world. International cultural practice is changing because of the growing need for exchange of knowledge and information, political developments, the expanded ambitions of cities, and the growing significance of social issues such as sustainability, human rights and aging of the population.

Broader approach

International cultural cooperation serves many interests. Along with the Council for Culture and the IOB, the Ministries have ascertained that too much emphasis was placed on the economic value of culture and cultural exports over the last several years. This narrow approach does not do enough justice to the breadth and significance of international cultural practice.

The 2017-2020 policy plan gives more attention to culture's intrinsic and social value –without, however, entirely losing sight of its economic value. The Ministries have also responded to an appeal from the cultural field and elsewhere to clarify the positions of the various parties and to introduce more coherence and direction

more coherence and direction.

Objectives for 2017-2020

1. A strong cultural sector, the quality of which will increase through international exchange and sustained cooperation, and is seen and valued abroad

Using various means, the idea is to stimulate the international exchange of supply, makers, knowledge and expertise, while enlarging the work terrain and increasing visibility. A greater coherency in government support, a case-by-case response to initiatives from the cultural field and a clearer position taken by DutchCulture will strengthen the clout of the Netherlands' international cultural policy.

A combined, several-year focus is being developed for eight countries: **Belgium/Flanders, China, Germany, France, Indonesia**, Turkey, the United States and the **United Kingdom**. There is also room for initiatives that can be bundled, if necessary, for countries like Brazil, **Italy, Japan, South Korea**, Suriname and South Africa.

For the realization of these objectives, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are annually making available €5.2 million and €5.6 million respectively, to be distributed through diplomatic posts, foundations and supporting institutes, among others.

2. More room for a cultural contribution to a safe, just and sustainable world

In a world full of tensions, culture and creativity can contribute to greater social cohesion and a more open society that has more room for cultural differences. Through cultural connections, the Netherlands wants to strengthen mutual understanding and trust with seven countries around Europe: Egypt, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Turkey and **Russia**. This objective is also relevant for the activities of the Prince Claus Fund, although the fund continues to operate in countries outside this group.

For the realisation of this objective, an annual amount of €4.2 million is available through the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, €1.2 million of which is for a joint Official Development Assistance (ODA)/non-ODA fund and for a contribution to the Prince Claus Fund. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is budgeting €2.85 million, of which €1.5 million is for the collective fund and €0.70 million for a programme under the Creative Industries Fund NL (Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie).

3. Put culture to effective use in modern diplomacy

Culture shows who we are and can open doors that otherwise would remain shut. All Dutch embassies and consulates use the possibilities that culture offers them on occasion. In 2017-2020, however, access to information, knowledge and the cultural network in the Netherlands will be improved, so that the diplomatic posts can add context to their cultural diplomacy in a modern and professional manner.

For this objective, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is deploying €0.5 million through the diplomatic posts.

Shared Cultural Heritage and the Creative Industry

Shared Cultural Heritage remains an important area of interest in Dutch international cultural policy. Countries in this category will be treated on a case-by-case basis, and if they also are a focus country, shared cultural heritage will be part of an integrated several-year strategy.

For the Creative Industry, the new international cultural policy has room for initiatives from the sector in focus countries and elsewhere, and an invitation to contribute through the social value of the Creative Industry to a safe, just and sustainable world.

More information

You can find the 2017- 2020 international cultural policy plan and accompanying documents at rijksoverheid.nl (in Dutch).

Image: Workshop tijdens één van de Disrupts van het programma Mideast Creatives, georganiseerd door Hivos en DutchCulture

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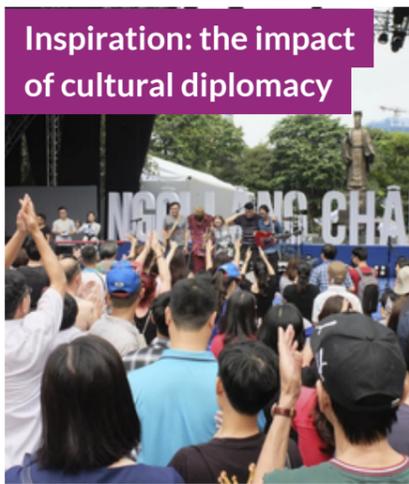
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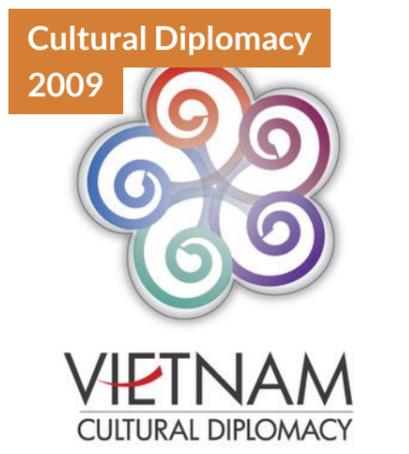
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