

Museum Resilience

Diversifying income streams to increase financial
resilience

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Colophon

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Summary

This thesis is a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the pandemic, it became abundantly clear that the museum sector as a whole needs to work on its financial resilience in order to be better prepared and responsive to future setbacks. While many examples can be found on large museums diversifying their income streams as a means of increasing this resilience, the same cannot be said for smaller museums. The objective of this thesis therefore is to find out whether these museums, with often limited resources, can successfully implement similar strategies.

This process involved two different research phases, followed by a design phase. The first research phase formed an explorative study of the landscape in which small art museums operate using interviews, desk research and visitations to five different museums. The second research phase describes further research into one of these five museums, Design Museum Dedel, which forms the case study for this thesis. In this phase the problems that are specific to this museum are laid out. The design phase finally describes the process in which museum volunteers ideated based on the problem directions introduced by the second research phase, and how these ideas led to a final concept.

The ideas that were eventually opted were:

- Ways in which the museum can use the collection hidden away in the depot
- Tours through the depot
- Setting up a friends of the museum program

Based on a number of selection criteria, eventually, the first idea led to the concept of poster packages, for which several alternatives were considered. These included using original posters vs reproductions and curating posters beforehand or on demand. After discussing both the benefits and drawbacks of each of these options, this led to the final concept of Posters on Demand, which uses reproductions in a hybrid curation form.

Due to remaining gaps, further development is needed before this design can fully shine. It does however show that small museums are more than capable of using their resources in creative ways to improve their financial resilience.

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Index

Colophon	2
Summary	4
Acknowledgments	6
Index	8
Introduction	10
Resilience	12
Project Approach	14
Museum Selection	16
Museum Insights	19
Museum Comparison	22
Design Museum Dedel	29
Visitor Insights	32
Design Direction	35
Collaborative Ideation	39
Idea Exploration	43
Concepts	46
Posters on Demand	49
Discussion	55

Reflection	56
References	57
Appendix	61
<i>Aa: Museum Analysis</i>	61
<i>Ab: Handouts</i>	76
<i>Ac: Session Overview</i>	78

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, which lasted from 2020 to 2023 (HealthBeat, 2025) left a significant financial mark on the cultural sector. Not only was it a major cause for the record high inflation of 10% in 2022 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2023), but many cultural institutions, including museums, were temporarily closed during a part of this period.

On average, over half of museum's income came from governmental and municipal subsidies in 2023 (Museumvereniging, 2024). This makes them financially reliant on both governmental and local support. The Dutch government proposed raising the VAT for the cultural sector from 9% to 21% in 2024,, project to have decreased visitor numbers by 9% to 12% (Klein, 2024). While this increase was eventually never implemented, it does highlight the significant influence the government has over the sector.

Given their heavy reliance on government and local support, it is essential for museums to strengthen their financial resilience. One way to do this is by developing new income streams, a lack of which became especially clear during the COVID-19 pandemic, when their main sources of income were disrupted.

Impact of COVID

During the height of the COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021, when museums had to either close entirely or had to follow severe restrictions regarding their opening times, they saw their visitor numbers plummet by more than 50%. It took all the way to 2023 for visitor numbers to return to pre-pandemic levels. To put things into perspective, in 2020 and 2021 not a single Dutch museum was open throughout the entire year, and only 16% was in 2022. This number used to be 66% or higher, before 2020 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2024).

When looking at all museums, visitor income was almost halved from €56 million in 2019 to €29 million in 2020, all the while personnel costs stayed the same. Especially small museums, museums with revenues up to €400.000 each year, saw their income plummet in this period. On average, their income decreased by 56% (Museumvereniging, 2021).

To soften the financial impact of the COVID pandemic on the cultural sector, the

Dutch government rolled out several support schemes that cultural institutions could apply for. Among these were event warranties and specific loans (Rijksoverheid, 2025). To help museums with private collections specifically, the government introduced a compensation arrangement of 22,3% of the average income over 2018 and 2019 combined, with a maximum of €1 million euros. While many museums were able to get this one-time financial support, not every museum was eligible and it only covered partial costs.

In 2023, visitor numbers had returned to normal. Overall, the number of registered museums saw little change (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2024). However, this does not provide insight into the current financial health of these museums and, had they not gotten additional support from the government when they needed it, this number might have looked different altogether. Museumvereniging (2023) reports that many museums had to rely on their financial reserves and remain in a financially unstable situation.

Impact of inflation

Average adult entry fees rose from €13,69 in 2019 to €15,85 in 2023, a rise of 15,7% (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2024). However, overall inflation from 2020 to 2023 was 18,8% (Raisin, 2025). This means that ticket prices did not keep pace with inflation and museums are earning less per ticket sold. Between 2021 and 2022, while inflation was 10%, governmental subsidies increased by only 1%. As a result of these factors, 49% of museum reported a negative operating income in 2022 (Museumvereniging, 2023)

Impact of lowered subsidies

Despite the sector's slow recovery, new financial challenges emerged with the budget cuts that were announced by the government that was installed as of the 2nd of July 2024 (Rijksoverheid, 2024). Among their goals were major financial reductions across various sectors. Part of these cuts will find their way in reduced subsidies for the cultural sector, as these have been reduced by €360 million (NOS Nieuws, 2024). Additionally, the government had proposed raising the VAT for cultural activities from 9% to 21% (Kunstenbond, 2024), although this measure was eventually abandoned (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, 2024).

Becoming financially resilient

In order to survive and become financially independent, museums have to be innovative. Raising entry fees to cover lower subsidies or to combat financial losses will cause a decline in visitor numbers, and absorbing all additional costs themselves will prove a huge financial burden for museums (Goudriaan, 2024).

After having just climbed out of times of hardship, it is uncertain whether museums are ready for more setbacks coming their way. Now is the time for the sector to enhance its financial resilience, not only to be able to survive the coming years, but also to be better prepared and more responsive in the future.

Resilience

Merriam-Webster defines “resilience” as “an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Regarding the issues introduced previously, we can identify two types of resilience. The first of which is disaster resilience, or the ability to recover from or adjust to a specific crisis, in this case the COVID pandemic. A second is financial resilience, which concerns the ability to deal with economic pressures like rising inflation or a dependency on subsidies. In reality, these forms of resilience, just like any other, often overlap and influence one another and do not exist as separate concepts.

Types of resilience

Integrating disaster resilience thinking into daily operations is vital to increasing a museum’s responsiveness. While safeguarding collections is a crucial part of disaster planning, financial resilience also plays its role within disaster resilience in order to ensure business continuity and minimize revenue loss during crises (Wegener, 2025). Since business continuity supports both financial and disaster resilience, it will serve as a central focus. However, it will be approached primarily from a standpoint of financial resilience, as this also addresses the issue of reliance on external financial support and inflation.

To become financially resilient, museums need to think of ways to not only diversify their portfolio, but also make sure that any new additions can help form new revenue streams. Evidence suggests that non-profit organizations with multiple revenue sources are likely to have a stronger financial position than those with fewer sources of income. Chang & Tuckman (1994) note that although it has become important to diversify income and look at new ways of raising funds, there is not a lot of written material on how to go about it.

Income diversification

Some examples of diversification in offerings can be seen in museums’ response to the COVID pandemic. In order to stay relevant when physical visits were not possible, many Dutch museums came up with alternatives to physical museum visits. Among these initiatives were virtual tours of the museum, workshops or activities to do at home, and videos and virtual exhibitions (LKCA, 2021). While it helped keep museums relevant during a period where nobody was able to visit them, many of these initiatives were provided to the public for free, meaning museums had to cover the expenses themselves.

In order to combat financial losses, either from decreasing public funds, donations or growing expenses, museums need to come up with new initiatives to add to their portfolio that are also lucrative. Keeping in mind the impact the COVID crisis had on the museum sector, these new additions should preferably be ones that are not necessarily tied to the physical museum space.

Some examples of additional revenue streams implemented within museums can be found among larger museums. The di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art in Napa, California, for example, started a process to transform two of the buildings on its property into event spaces they can rent out. They hope this new form of income will help them rely less on other sources of income, like funding or individual donations (Bravo, 2025). The Tiverton Museum Of Mid Devon Life in Tiverton, UK, intended to reduce their dependence on local funding by diversifying their income streams. In order to do this they initiated a project to explore the market and develop celebration events at the museum and appraise options for potential workspaces on their premises. Eventually this led to two themed parties for children, two themed parties for adults, and a clearer idea of how workspace letting would work (Association of Independent Museums, 2020). While these larger museums, along with other larger institutions have experimented with alternative revenue streams, less is known how smaller museums with limited resources, can take similar strategies.

Research goals

Building on these international examples, this thesis will explore how small Dutch museums can implement similar strategies to diversify their portfolio. It will try to answer the question how small Dutch museums can enhance their financial resilience by diversifying income streams beyond subsidies and ticket sales. It uses Design Museum Dedel in The Hague as a case study to show that smaller museums can also strengthen their longer-term financial resilience by using their organizational strengths to their advantage. The findings aim to inform and inspire other small museums facing similar challenges.

Project Approach

This project was conducted using a triple diamond process as can be seen in **Figure 1**. In my case, these diamonds can be described as Explore, Problem, and Solution, all with diverging and converging stages. Compared to the widely implemented double diamond process, consisting of just a Problem and Solution phase, this adapted version introduces a third Exploration phase, implemented at the start of the process. Instead of starting from a specific problem, I first explored the museum landscape as a whole. It was during this initial phase that I was able to identify an issue that needed solving that would eventually form the basis for the Problem and Solution phase.

Explore: Discover

Chapters X-X describe the first phase. During the initial discovery phase, I looked into the broader meaning of resilience and what it means for museums. Coming out of the COVID-pandemic, I wanted to gain a good understanding of the current state of the museum landscape in the Netherlands and any potential lessons that museums may have taken away from this period. To limit my scope, the decision was made to focus this initial research on five smaller art museums in The Hague. Besides making personal visits to each of these museums, extensive interviews were conducted with two of these museums, helping me gain additional insight into the problems they encounter on a daily basis.

Explore: Define

Chapters X-X describe the second phase. After getting a better understanding of the museums, one particular museum, Design Museum Dedel, stood out, as it was by far the smallest museum and is completely operated by volunteers. It is also the newest museum, having just opened in 2019. The relative newness of the museum, along with the fact that it was the smallest I investigated, made it an especially suitable case study for this project. The fact that it is completely operated by volunteers further emphasizes the limited resources it has. The definition of resilience was defined to suit the needs of this museum and was reformulated as “becoming more resilient by diversifying income streams”, much in line with the definition on financial resilience given previously. This decision was made based on the fact that both ticket and shop sales, which form the basis of the museum’s income, are both tied to the physical museum space. If the building were to close for any reason, these sales would immediately dissipate.

Problem: Discover

Chapters X-X describe the third phase and the start of the second diamond. After having defined a specific problem, additional research was needed to find out what potential design directions could be to solve this problem. In order to gain a better understanding of what visitors thought of the museum, I interviewed several after their visit. During these short interviews I asked them about both the highlights of their visit, as well as whether there were things they would like to change. Where my earlier museum analysis was mostly about comparing different amenities the museums had to offer, it is during this phase that additional research was done to gain an even better understanding of the way this particular museum operates, and how that potentially differs from others.

Problem: Define

Chapters X-X describe the fourth phase. Based on the insights gained from the visitor interviews and from previously conducted research, two potential routes to explore were identified. These routes were based on the fact that the museum is both a poster museum and a historic building, but does not always seem to know which is more important to communicate and the fact that most of the poster collection is permanently in storage, as the museum has limited space to exhibit their collection.

Solution: Develop

Chapters X-X describe the fifth phase and the start of the final diamond. During this phase, the identified routes were presented to a number of volunteers during a collaborative ideation session in the form of two questions. The routes were reformulated as “How does the museum want to present itself?” and “How can the museum’s collection be used outside of its current exhibitions?”. In this session, the volunteers came up with ideas that would help solve these questions and they were encouraged to write down any thoughts they had about the subject. In the end a selection was made of ideas that could both be beneficial financially, and that the volunteers could get behind.

Solution: Deliver

Chapters X-X describes the sixth and final phase. In this phase the different concepts were evaluated based on a number of preset criteria and a final version was developed for the most promising concept. Following the presented concept, some final recommendations were made regarding this concept. Potential implications of the design process for the financial resilience of small museums were finally discussed in a discussion.

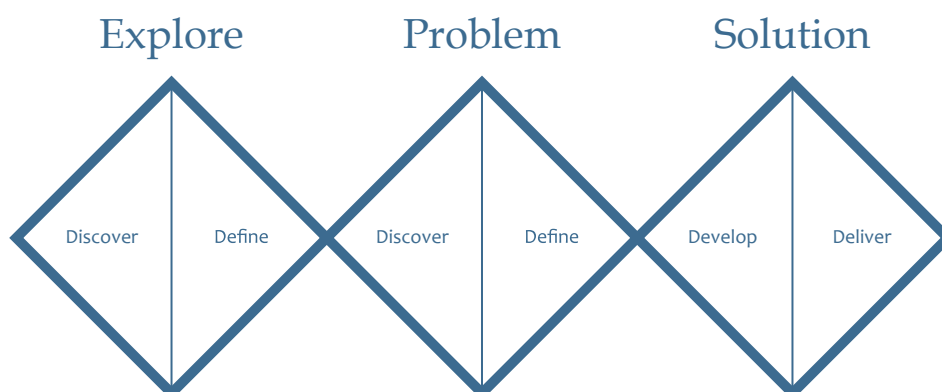


Figure 1
Triple Diamond Process

Museum Selection

In order to learn more about the difficulties museums are facing and to get a better idea of the types of museum and what they have to offer, I researched several museums in The Hague, starting with desk research into their financial situation. To ensure a somewhat homogenous selection, I limited my scope to art museums, using the “art museum” filter on TripAdvisor (Art Museum in The Hague, n.d.). A selection within these museums was made based on their yearly financial reports of 2019 and what the Dutch Museum Association, (Dutch: Museumvereniging), deems a small sized museum. These are all museums with a maximal annual revenue of €400.000 (Museumvereniging, 2024). **Table 1** gives an overview of the data with on which this selection was based. The year 2019 was chosen, as in the following years, COVID will have an impact on the revenues of all these museums, and 2019 is the latest year for which all of these museums have publicly available financial reports. Eventually this led to a selection of 5 different museums: Haags Historisch Museum, Museum Bredius, Design Museum Dedel, De Mesdag Collectie, and Museum West.

Table 1
Visitor data and financial data of different art museums in The Hague

	Museum collective visitors	Museum visitors	Percentage of total visitors	Museum collective revenue	Museum revenue	Museum size
De Mesdag Collectie* (2019)	2.134.778	13.339	0.62%	57.482.617	359.175	S
Design Museum Dedel (2019)	-	-	-	-	1.219	S
Haags Historisch Museum* (2019)	102.870	45.702	44,43%	817.447	363,167	S
Museum Bredius (2019)	-	-	-	-	55.178	S
Museum West (2019)	-	42.000	-	-	230.746	S

Note. In this table, S means small. Museums marked with an asterisk are part of a museum collective. The data for De Mesdag Collectie are from Jaarverslag 2019 (Stichting Van Gogh Museum, 2020). Adapted from (<https://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/assets/616cf1a8-328d-4096-a38c-95c1d1c98950/Jaarverslag-2019-Van-Gogh-Museum?c=388f04ea1722coe20d7f57f40cebd4ab13dffa07ebaada55e8ace-133b7e5e3565>). Copyright 2024 by Stichting Van Gogh Museum. The data for Design Museum Dedel are from Jaarrekening over de periode 1 januari 2019 t/m 31 december 2019 (Stichting Design Museum Dedel, 2020). Adapted from (<https://designmuseumdedel.nl/online/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/design-museum-dedel-jaarverslag-2019.pdf>). Copyright 2020 by Stichting Design Museum Dedel. The data for Haags Historisch Museum are from Jaarstukken 2019 (Stichting Haags Historisch Museum en Rijksmuseum de Gevangenpoort, 2020). Adapted from (https://catalogus.boekman.nl/pub/HHM/2019_financieel.pdf). Copyright 2020 by Stichting Haags Historisch Museum en de Gevangenpoort. The data for Museum Bredius are from Staat van baten en lasten Stichting Museum Bredius 2019 (Stichting Museum Bredius, 2020). Adapted from (<https://museumbredius.nl/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Staat-van-baten-en-lasten-2019-St.-Museum-Bredius.pdf>). Copyright 2024 by Stichting Museum Bredius. The visitor data for Museum West are from Jaarverslag 2019 (Stichting West, 2020a). Adapted from (https://www.westdenhaag.nl/information/ANBI/Jaarverslag2019_West.pdf). Copyright 2020 by Stichting West. The financial data for Museum West are from Financieel jaarverslag 2019 van Stichting West (Stichting West, 2020b). Adapted from (https://www.westdenhaag.nl/information/ANBI/Jaarrekening_West_2022.pdf). Copyright 2020 by Stichting West. The data for museum size are based on Museumcijfers 2023 (Museumvereniging, 2024). Adapted from (<https://museumvereniging.nl/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Museumcijfers2023.pdf>). Copyright 2024 by Museumvereniging.

Some of the selected museums are part of a museum collective, meaning that multiple museums fall under the same foundation. Mesdag falls under one umbrella with the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam (Stichting Van Gogh Museum, 2020), and Haags Historisch Museum with Rijksmuseum De Gevangenpoort (Stichting Haags Historisch Museum en Rijksmuseum de Gevangenpoort, 2024). For these museums, only the total revenue for the entire collective was reported. However, in both cases, the annual statements presented separate visitor numbers for each individual museum. So, for both De Mesdag Collectie and Haags Historisch Museum, an estimation of the revenue was made. This was done by looking at the percentage of visitors that went to that specific museum and taking that same percentage of the total revenue. While this will not give a completely accurate presentation of the situation at hand, it does give a clear indication.

Table 2
Amenities of different art museums in The Hague

	Permanent Collection	Temporary Exhibitions	Room Rental	Education	Interactive Elements	Guided Tours	Audio Tours	Online Activities	Online Collection	Café	Shop	Lockers
De Mesdag Collectie	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+
Design Museum Dedel		+	/			+	/		+		+	
Haags Historisch Museum	+	+	+	+	+	+		+		+	+	+
Museum Bredius	+	+	+	+		+	+		+		/	
Museum West		+		+			+		+	/	+	+

Note. In this table, + means the amenities were present, / means they were present to a certain extent, amenities were not present if kept blank. The next chapter describes these amenities in further detail per museum.

After initial desk research, I made a visit to each of these museums to get a personal feel for them and to see what they had on offer. I was able to conduct extensive interviews with two of these museums, one of which will form the subject of the case study later on.

In order to better compare the museums, one of the things I looked at during my visits were all the different amenities each museum has on offer. These include things like whether they have temporary exhibitions, museum shops, cafes and the like. **Table 2** shows an overview of the most basic amenities on offer in the different museums I visited. Notable is that where these museums differ in theme, they also differ in their offerings. No museum is truly alike.

Also notable is that the smallest museums in terms of collection, Design Museum Dedel, is also the museum with the smallest number of amenities. This is not entirely surprising, as Design Museum Dedel is the museum with the lowest yearly revenue, meaning they likely do not have the funds and manpower to organize more. It is also

the museum that opened its doors most recently. During my visits, I was hoping to gather information on the types of people walking around in these museums, but at the time of my visits the museums were all very quiet, possibly because I visited on a weekday.

Based on several sources, I can however argue what the general museum audience looks like. Insights from the interview with Design Museum Dedel, who could not give an exact age range, show they have a broad audience of both Dutch and international visitors. An interview respondent from another museum noted that their audience mostly consists of people between the ages of 35 and 75, including both Dutch and international visitors. Museum West, which shows their audience is generally between 25-75 years old (Stichting West, 2020a). The 2023 annual report of the Dutch Museum Association also shows that 73% of Museum Card, (Dutch: Museumkaart), holders is 35 or older and international visitors make up for 24% of all museum visits (Museumvereniging, 2024). This indicates museum visitors generally form a broad audience.

One thing that particularly stood out to me is the distinct ways each museum showcases its collection. Mesdag and Bredius both try to show the collection in a setting that reflect the time period they come from, while Haags Historisch shows pieces in a more conventional museum setting. Museum West fully embraces the modern identity of its building, and Design Museum Dedel stands out by having a collection that contrasts the architectural style of the building, as they stem from entirely different eras.

Appendix Aa delves deeper into the specific museums that were analyzed by going through them one by one.

Interview Insights

As part of my research, I was able to hold extensive interviews with representatives of two of the selected museums, one of which will be kept anonymous. Although I was already able to learn a lot from my desk research, insights from these interviews either confirmed these findings or were a good addition to them.

Since I was planning on visiting these museums anyway, I approached all five museums with some general information about my research and whether they would be willing to take part in an interview. Two of them agreed to sit with me for an hour during my visit. Since these interviews all took place rather spontaneously, the needed informed consent materials were not present at the time these interviews took place. Both parties were asked to provide a signed form after the fact through e-mail, but unfortunately one of the museums never replied. It is therefore that any information about this museum has been completely anonymized. Physical informed consent forms were stored in a locked desk drawer, with digital copies being stored on the a password protected laptop, as well as an additional physical storage device as a means of back-up.

Before the interviews took place, interview topics were selected to cover a broad range of subjects, as these interviews took place in the explorative phase of my research. Questions I asked were mainly about financial strategies, visitor engagement, digitization, COVID-19, and resilience.

During the interview process, audio recordings were made on a phone where they were temporarily stored, before transferring to the researcher's password protected personal computer. After transcribing the interviews in ATLAS.io, the recordings were deleted and a generalized analysis was made, based on these transcripts. All written materials were once again stored on the same password protected laptop, as well as a second physical storage device for back-up purposes.

Findings

For each of the interview topics, the most important findings are shown below:

Financial Strategies

In line with earlier findings, small museums rely heavily on financial support from municipalities or foundations. However, it can be difficult to access these subsidies,

especially for newer institutions that do not meet typical funding criteria. In order to reduce costs, both energy usage and building maintenance are often kept to a minimum.

By limiting paid staff to a minimum, these museums manage to reduce costs, however, it limits their ability to plan for financial resilience or seek out funding opportunities more actively.

Diversification of income remains limited and tends to occur only sporadically, often in the form of private rentals for events.

Visitor Engagement

Current engagement strategies include the participation in local events, like Open Monument Day. While some have experimented with promotional partnerships, these have had limited success. Smaller museums have expressed the want to engage with their visitors by means of an informal chat during their visit.

Both museums mentioned a core audience of visitors aged 35-75, with repeat local visitors and an increasing number of international visitors, many of whom own a museum card.

Digitization

Museums are constantly working on their digital presence, both by making sure their website is up-to-date and by offering (part of) their collection in a digital archive.

While digital tools are considered as a way to enhance the visitor experience, for example by offering guided tours, companion applications, or interactive elements, there exist concerns that fully digital museum experiences might reduce physical museum visits.

COVID-19

Structural challenges that came to light during this period, especially during times of lockdown, were staff retention, safe visitor flow and financial uncertainty due to the lack of ticket sales. However, these lockdown periods did form opportunities to catch up with maintenance on both the collections and the buildings.

During the times the museums were allowed to open, standard safety protocols, like having visitor limits, masking, and keeping distance, were all in place. Hybrid work practices and obligatory reservations were also introduced, although some of these systems have now been phased out.

Collection

Sometimes collections can be municipally owned, which comes with its own set of legal and logistical restrictions, like limitations on lending or requirements to keep a certain percentage on display.

When it comes to exhibitions, these can be thematically organized around internal collections. They can also be based on notable developments within those collections.

Finally, pieces can be acquired for a collection without immediate plans for display. Instead, they can form the basis for a later exhibition or serve as a research resource.

Resilience

One way museums are approaching personnel costs, is by reducing the number of paid workers. They are, for example, looking into sharing personnel, like art conservators, with other museums, instead of employing them fulltime. Museums that rely on volunteers have a benefit of reduced costs, but face challenges when it comes to staff continuity and expertise.

In general, museums with limited staff have mentioned the ability to make quick decisions, due to the team itself being small. This lack of staff, however, does make long-term planning difficult.

Challenges

Across all topics, museums express a need for practical tools that can help them become more resilient. This includes finding ways in which they can deploy their often limited resources for new forms of revenue, as the current reliance on only a small number of funding sources makes them especially vulnerable.

By not being part of the museum card program, the museum misses out on a lot of potential income.

A final challenge is the fact they are solely working with volunteers. While the museum has a couple of stable volunteers, most of them only stay for a short period of time and its never easy to find new ones.

The museum is constantly challenged to make do with the resources they have, meaning they need to act creatively all the time. They have set an evaluation period of 10 years for themselves, to evaluate their position as a museum.

Museum Comparison

In order to find out which museum would form the best case study for this project, I decided to compare the different museums based on their size and the amenities they had on offer.

Based on both collection size and the time I spent inside each museum, I would argue that Design Museum Dedel, Museum Bredius, and Museum West are the smallest, with all three being comparable in size. Slightly larger is De Mesdag Collectie and finally, Haags Historisch Museum was by far the largest museum I visited. Coincidentally, this is also in line with the revenue of these museums, although Haags Historisch only reported a revenue that was slightly higher than Mesdag. Going forward, I will refer to these museums as **category 1**, **category 2**, and category 3 museums, respectively, as can be seen in **Table 3**.

Table 3
Museum categories

Category 1 (small)	Category 2 (larger)	Category 3 (largest)
Design Museum Dedel	De Mesdag Collectie	Haags Historisch Museum
Museum Bredius	-	-
West	102.870	45.702

Opening Hours

At first glance, all museums seem to have similar opening hours throughout the week, generally opening between 10 and 11 a.m. and closing between 5 and 6 p.m. The only real exception is museum West, which typically opens at 12 p.m. throughout the week, and is opened until 9 p.m. on Thursdays. All museums are closed on Mondays, with half also closed on Tuesdays. Since weekends are when most people

Table 4
Museum categories

	Dedel	Bredius	West	Mesdag	Haags Historisch
Monday					
Tuesday		11:00-17:00			10:00-17:00
Wednesday	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00	12:00-18:00	10:00-17:00*	10:00-17:00
Thursday	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00	12:00-21:00	10:00-17:00*	10:00-17:00
Friday	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00	12:00-18:00	10:00-17:00	10:00-17:00
Saturday	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00	12:00-18:00	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00
Sunday	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00	12:00-18:00	10:00-17:00	11:00-17:00

Note. *Museum Mesdag only opens on Wednesdays and Thursdays for four months of the year.

At first glance, all museums seem to have similar opening hours throughout the week, generally opening between 10 and 11 a.m. and closing between 5 and 6 p.m. (**Table 4**). The only real exception is museum West, which typically opens at 12 p.m. throughout the week, and is opened until 9 p.m. on Thursdays . All museums are closed on Mondays, with many also closed on Tuesdays. Since weekends are when most people are free to visit, it makes sense for museums to remain open, allowing staff to have time off during the start of the week instead.

One unusual aspect is that De Mesdag Collectie is only open from Friday to Sunday for about eight months of the year, even though major school holidays, when families are more likely to visit, all fall within this period. One possible explanation could be staffing shortages during these holidays, or perhaps that staff are temporarily reassigned to the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, which shares the same organization (Stichting Van Gogh Museum, 2020).

In terms of resilience, I think it's a smart move from Museum West to have longer opening times, even if it is just on Thursdays. It opens up the museum for a new category of visitors, who might not be able to visit the museum during the day and are often otherwise occupied during the weekend, like students.

Pricing

Table 5
Entry fees of the different museums

	Adults	Students	Museum Card
(1) Design Museum Dedel	€12	€10	€10
(1) West	€12,50	€3	Free
(1) Museum Bredius	€8,50	€4,50	Free
(2) De Mesdag Collectie	€13	€10	Free
(3) Haags Historisch Museum	€15	€7,50	Free

Table 5 shows the different entry fees for the 5 museums for adult tickets, student tickets and entry with a museum card. More prices can be found per museum in **Appendix Aa**.

Among the category 1 museums, there is a notable variation in pricing strategies. Design Museum Dedel has the highest overall prices, with a general adult entry fee of €12, and a reduced fee of €10 for students and museum card holders. West appears

most focused on attracting younger audiences, offering student entry for just €3 and offering free admission on Thursday evenings. In comparison, their standard entry for adults is €12,50. In contrast, Museum Bredius aims to be broadly accessible with a modest adult entry fee of €8,50, free admission for holders of various discount cards, and a reduced student rate of €4,50.

The **category 2** museum, De Mesdag Collectie, follows a similar pricing strategy, with adult admission set at €13. It offers free entry for visitors under 18 and for holders of various discount cards. Students are welcomed for €10 at De Mesdag Collectie. Haags Historisch Museum, the only category 3 museum, has the highest adult entry fee of all museums at €15. With a student entry fee of €7,50, it falls right in the middle when it comes to entry fees for students.

Generally, **category 1** museums have the lowest adult entry fees, followed by **category 2** museums, with **category 3** museums having the highest fees. It seems that, when a museum has a larger collection, it is directly represented in the ticket price. There is no clear pattern in student pricing within these categories, as student fees vary significantly even within each category, although category 1 museums West and Museum Bredius are both on the cheaper side.

What does stand out, however, is that Design Museum Dedel is the only museum that charges a significant amount for holders of a Museum Card, as well as sharing the highest price for student admission with Mesdag at €10. From one of the museum interviews I learned that for every museum card holder that visits the museum, they receive 50% of what a normal ticket would have cost. In the case of Design Museum Dedel, this would be €6. Even though they are not officially a part of the Museum Card program, they might want to consider lowering this specific ticket rate and charging a similar rate for students.

Table 6
Annual revenues of the different museums

	Dedel	Bredius	West	Mesdag	Haags Historisch
Annual Revenue (2019)	€1.1219	€230.746	€55.178	€359.175	€363.167

When examining annual revenue (**Table 6**), there are notable differences across categories and among individual museums within them. For instance, Design Museum Dedel's annual revenue is extremely low at €1.219, especially when compared to the museum with the second-lowest revenue, Museum Bredius, at €55.178. It's important to note that Design Museum Dedel only opened its doors in July 2019, which may explain its lower earnings in the initial years. Although Haags Historisch Museum is larger in terms of collection, its annual revenue is comparable to that of De Mesdag Collectie. As described before, one important sidenote is that these revenues have been calculated based on visitor percentages, as they are part of a wider organization.

In terms of revenue, **category 1** museums are struggling the most. Where West is doing relatively well, the annual revenue of especially Design Museum Dedel is particularly low. While it is a completely volunteer led organization, an annual revenue this low won't be sustainable long term.

Exhibitions

Most of the museums primarily focus on temporary exhibitions, making sure there's always something new on display for repeat visitors. While the Haags Historisch Museum has its own permanent collection, it lays an important emphasis on its temporary exhibitions. The two notable exceptions are De Mesdag Collectie and Museum Bredius. Since these museums stem from the private collections of the Mesdag couple and Dr. Abraham Bredius, which are displayed within the museums, this focus is understandable. In terms of resilience, however, it makes it less likely visitors to visit the museum a second time, as the collection does not change over time. For the other museums, the emphasis on temporary exhibitions can be attributed to their ability to attract repeat visitors and the targeted appeal of these exhibitions, which often reflect current developments or trends (Disegma, Brida, & Scuderi, 2014).

Guides

Museum Bredius is the only museum that does not offer an official guided tour, possibly because it already offers an audio tour. However, the guided tours of Museum West and Design Museum Dedel are both solely focused on the building itself rather than the exhibitions on display. As the Haags Historisch Museum has recently closed for renovations, it currently only offers city walks throughout The Hague.

Ultimately, Museum West and Design Museum Dedel are the only museums that do not provide any guided information on its exhibitions.

For both Museum West and Design Museum Dedel, offering paid-for audio tours for the building as well as the collection could add to their product portfolio, adding additional revenue streams.

The city tours by Haags Historisch Museum are a good example of staying relevant during a time where the museum itself is closed. When used as an additional revenue stream, instead of a replacement for one that is currently inaccessible, it could add to the financial resilience of the museum.

Education

Table 7
Educational materials of the different museums

(1) Design Museum Dedel	Lessons for primary and secondary education.
(1) West	Educational program for primary, and secondary education.
(1) Museum Bredius	Educational program for primary education.
(2) De Mesdag Collectie	Educational programs for primary, secondary, and higher education.
(3) Haags Historisch Museum	€15

Educational materials can form an additional income stream for museums. Out of the investigated museums, Design Museum Dedel is the only one to not offer any premade education materials for schools or students.

An overview of the types of educational materials on offer at the different museums is presented in **Table 7**.

Where the other museums mostly offers a limited selection educational materials in the form of assignments taking place within their museum, Haags Historisch Museum offers extensive programs for primary, secondary, and higher education.

Interactive Elements

Table 8
Interactive elements in the different museums

(1) Design Museum Dedel	
(1) West	Interactive art
(1) Museum Bredius	Video screen
(2) De Mesdag Collectie	Drawing set-up, piano
(3) Haags Historisch Museum	Drawing set-ups, video screens, projectors, interactive models.

Table 8 gives an overview of various elements present in the different museums. In general, **category 1** and **2** museums both presented limited interactive elements. At the time of visitation, Design Museum Dedel had no interactive elements, though signs of videos having been used in the past were present. Haags Historisch Museum featured interactive elements throughout the entire museum, offering a more immersive experience across various exhibits.

While these elements will likely not help a museum become more resilient in terms of them adding additional ways to generate revenue, they do help with the overall attractiveness of the museum, which can be a reason for repeat visits or visitor recommendations.

Other Onsite Amenities

Table 9
Several onsite amenities in the museums

	Café	Shop	Lockers
(1) Design Museum Dedel		+	
(1) Museum West	/	+	+
(1) Museum Bredius		/	
(2) De Mesdag Collectie	+	+	+
(3) Haags Historisch Museum	+	+	+

As shown in **Table 9**, among the museums, Museum Bredius is the only one without a dedicated shop, although it does sell books displayed throughout the museum at the cash register. In the **category 1** museums, only Museum West has a café, although it is located in a separate part of the building not allocated to the museum itself. Additionally, none of the **category 1** museums have a wardrobe or lockers. By contrast, all **category 2** and **category 3** museums provide a wardrobe with lockers, a museum shop, and a café, offering visitors a larger range of facilities. In terms of financial resilience, both a café and a dedicated shop can form additional revenue streams for a museum. While space might be limited and it might be an investment, realizing some form of café on the premises might be worth exploration.

Online

While the different museums offer a wild variety of online activities, ranging from scans of their collection to videos, blogs, and more, none of these activities are currently monetized. If museums can leverage this online space and find opportunities for monetized content, like memberships or materials to use at home, these could help diversify income.

Design Museum Dedel

Reflecting on my research question, how small Dutch museums can enhance their financial resilience by diversifying income, it is most logical to focus on a **category 1** museum, as they operate with the fewest resources. If they can successfully develop new forms of income under those constraints, larger museums are likely to adapt similar strategies with greater ease. The newest museum, Design Museum Dedel, relies entirely on volunteers, bringing additional challenges. However, given their openness to collaboration and alignment with the **category 1** profile, they make a good case study for this thesis.

Design Museum Dedel

In order to find out what challenges should be tackled in order to strengthen the financial resilience of this museum, I've done a little more research into Design Museum Dedel specifically. I will also go into further detail on the findings for this museum specifically, as described in Appendix Aa.

The museum opened its doors on July 1st 2019 and can be seen as the successor to the Poster Museum (Dutch: Affichemuseum) in Hoorn, which closed its doors in the summer of 2016 (NRC, 2017).

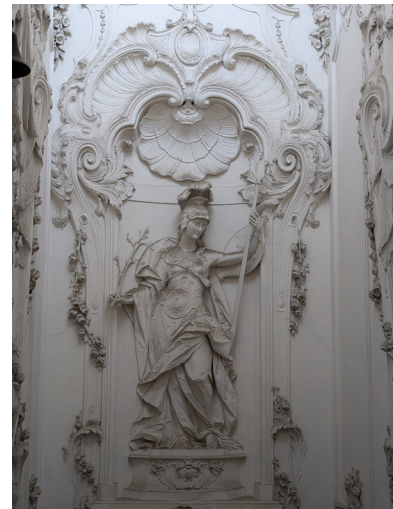
Figure 2

Posters in Design Museum Dedel



Figure 3

Plaster wall sculpture in Dedel



The museum is located in a 17th century building on the Prinsegracht in The Hague. Because of its historic value, the building serves both as a poster museum (**Figure 2**), as well as a peek into what life in the 17th century looked like. One of the highlights of the building, left over from this period, is the plaster wall sculpture in the stairwell, as can be seen in **Figure 3**.

The building does, however, currently exist in a state of disrepair, with damaged walls and loose wallpaper in many places. This was also one of the first things I

noticed myself during my visit. I expect museum objects to hold a certain value, and to not see that same value in the building in which those objects are presented, does not sit entirely right with me. For me, it was a contributing factor for the €10 student admission being on the high end. Had it not been for this thesis, I would likely not have paid it, even though I understand that entry fees for independent museums are potentially higher.

The museum spans a couple of rooms over 2 floors of the building, so I was able to see the entire collection rather quickly, again reinforcing my personal feelings of the entry fee being too high. With a lower entrance fee, of say €6-8, and the building itself being in a better state, I think a visit would be more warranted.

Another thing I ran into, both during my visit and during further research, is that the presented information, both inside the museum, as well as on their website is rather barebones. When it comes to the collection on display, the museum does not add information in the form of museum cards, for example. While posters from the same exhibition are displayed together, the room in which it is displayed only features some QR codes to information about the exhibition as a whole.

The website itself also lacks crucial information when it comes to lending the pieces, however. **Figure 4** shows all the information the museum gives on the lending of their collection (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-h). This pales in comparison to the information given out by other museums, like the Boijmans van Beuningen (**Figure 5**: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, n.d.), which describes the entire lending procedure including all the expected costs. Collectors or museums looking for works to display will likely want to take the easier route and find a partner where these processes are already described in detail.

What makes this particular issue even more challenging, is that there is no clear overview of what the entire collection entails, nor is there an easy way to browse through it. While a large part of the collection has been scanned and uploaded to the International Advertising & Design Database, this database holds a lot more than just the collection of Museum Dedel alone (IADBB, n.d.). Because of this, it is unclear which posters exactly belong to the museum and which do not. The database does also allow for keywords to be added, but only specific posters are categorized and other posters are not categorized in the way you would expect.

This database does, however, make it clear that the collection you see inside the museum is just a fraction of what can be seen inside the museum. There are over 13.000 entries from the previous Affiche Museum, and almost 20.000 entries for Stichting Reclame Arsenaal, from which the museum permanently lends its collection. If it can find ways to leverage the collection that is currently in storage, it can start creating new revenue streams based on them.

Figure 4
Lending information Design Museum Dedel

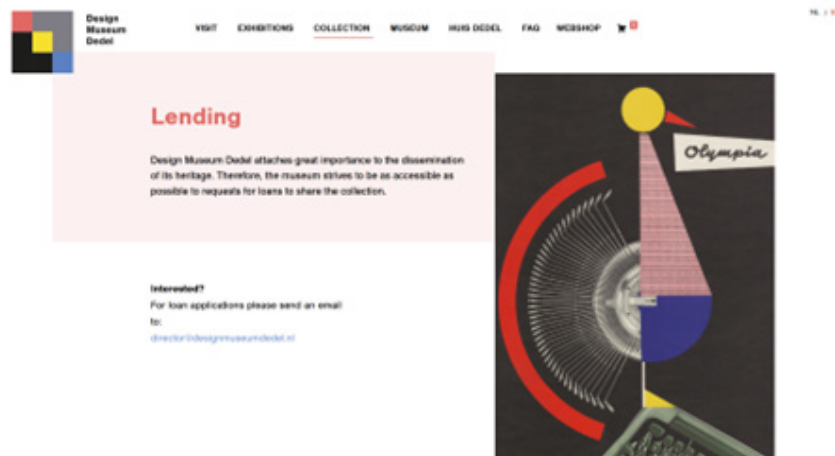
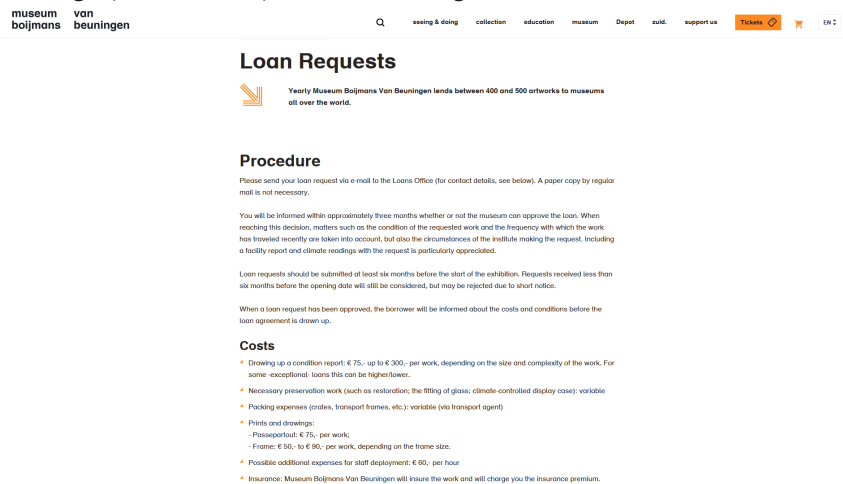


Figure 5
Lending information Boijmans van Beuningen



Something else that poses a challenge is the two faceted nature of the museum. On one hand, it is a poster museum, but on the other hand it is a 17th century building. The museum describes its mission as “masterful graphic design in a monumental setting”, but when communicating this message to the outside world it sometimes struggles to find a balance, focusing on either one. For example, on pages like Facebook the museum often posts about its different exhibitions (Design Museum Dedel, 2024), while on other pages, the building itself is able to get more of a spotlight (designmuseumdedel, 2024). This disbalance also finds its way in the name of the museum, where it is clear that Design Museum stands for the posters on display (although an unknowing visitor might have a different type of design in mind), but Dedel does not immediately relate to the building, without knowing its history.

A final challenge rests in the fact that the museum is fully run by volunteers. This means that, although volunteers are scheduled to work on specific days to keep the museum running, any additional tasks will likely also fall unto them. It is therefore important to make sure that the museum has the capacity in volunteers, and that the volunteers have the knowledge needed to execute any plans that may come forth.

Visitor Insights

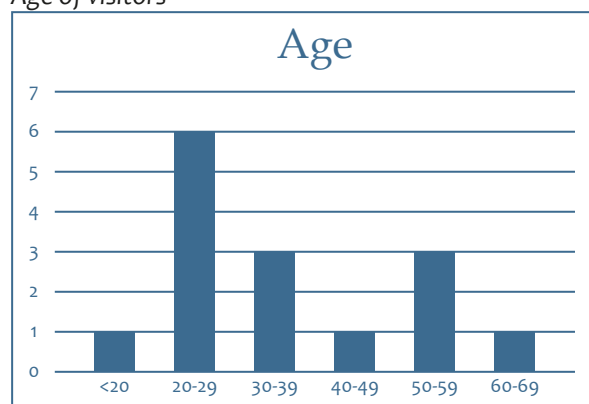
As part of further research into Design Museum Dedel, I also spoke with several museum visitors immediately after their visit. Since I couldn't keep them for long, I conducted a quick and simple questionnaire with the following questions:

- Age
- Have you visited this museum before?
- Why have you decided to visit this particular museum?
- What did you like best?
- Is there anything you would change about the museum?
- Are you willing to participate in any potential follow-up research?

I prepared these questions in a spreadsheet on a tablet, so I could quickly take notes. Participants were provided with an informed consent form before the interview, stipulating the general outline of the research and what is being investigated.

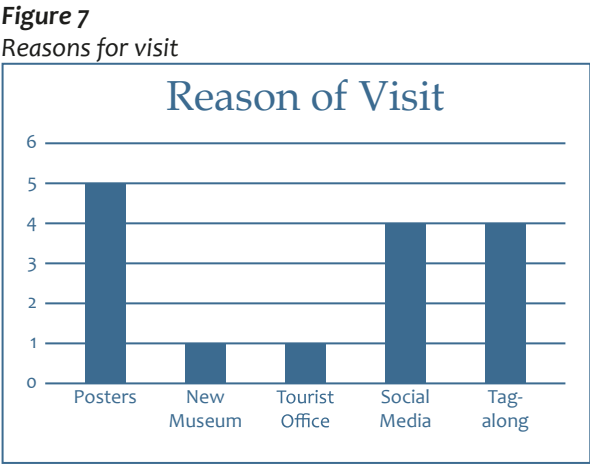
Questions were asked and answered orally and after each interview, notes were worked out into coherent sentences in Word. Data was further analyzed in Excel. Written materials were all stored on a password protected laptop, as well as an additional physical storage device as a means of back-up. Notes were deleted once they had been processed. E-mail addresses were temporarily kept for participants willing to participate in potential future research, but were eventually also thrown away when this research did not take place. Physical informed consent forms were stored in a locked desk drawer, with digital copies being stored on the previously mentioned laptop and storage device.

Figure 6
Age of visitors



In total, I managed to speak with 15 different individuals. The youngest visitor I interviewed was 19 years old, and the oldest was 63, showing that the museum appeals to a wide variety of ages. Just one of these visitors had visited the museum before. The large majority of visitors I spoke to were under the age of 35. The full range of visitor ages can be seen in **Figure 6**.

Visitors mentioned a variety of reasons for their visit. Several visitors shared the museum piqued their interest, when they first learned about the existence of the museum, before their visit. Touchpoints they mentioned included walking past the building and seeing the posters, hearing about the museum through social media (TikTok), or learning about it from the tourist office. Others said they had simply tagged along with the friends or family they were visiting with that day. Several visitors also mentioned a personal interest in design. The main reasons for visits can be found in **Figure 7**. Especially the younger generations mentioned social media as a main reason for visit, with 3 out of the 4 being between 20 and 29.

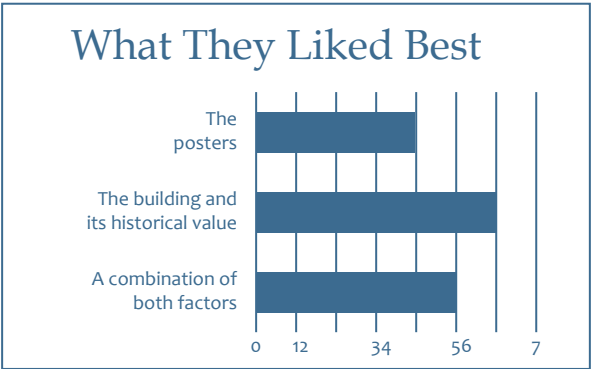


When asked about what they liked best, more than half of the visitors mentioned the building itself and how its history is reflected in the wallpapers and stucco art. Another point visitors appreciated was the great variety of posters on display and how they are able to capture “the voice of the people.” The full outline of what visitors liked best can be found in **Figure 8**. Interesting to note is that, while nobody particularly mentioned the building itself as a main reason of their visit, for 11 out of 15 it was one of the things they liked best about the museum.

Multiple visitors agreed that the entrance is one of the aspects that should change, as the current facade is more reminiscent of a shop than a museum. The museum itself, including the building, is hidden away. In order to reach the actual museum, visitors need to walk through the kitchen where the volunteers are stationed. However, one visitor noted that this added to the “homey” feel of the museum.

Aside from the entrance, visitors expressed their concern about the state and safety of the building. They suggested applying for funding and investing in renovations as soon as possible, or at least making it abundantly clear that the museum is safe to visit in its current condition.

Figure 8
What visitors liked best



One visitor mentioned seeing potential in more interactive displays, as “that’s what all the larger museums are doing.” Two others noted that addressing the glare caused by the plastic sheets in which the posters are displayed would enhance the experience, as it can currently be difficult to view them or take pictures. In conclusion, Design Museum Dedel appeals to a broad audience, attracting visitors across a wide age range, many of whom are discovering it for the first time. Visitors appreciated the building’s historical charm and the variety of posters on display, which many felt captured “the voice of the people.” However, recurring concerns about the building’s state and safety, as well as critiques of the entrance design, suggest areas for improvement. Addressing issues like poster glare and the implementation of interactive elements could further enhance the appeal of the museum itself. Going forward, it is important to know that visitors appreciate both the building and the posters on display, both in a combined form as well as separately.

Design Direction

With more information on the museum itself, both from additional desk research and from museum visitors, I was able to identify two directions that I would like to explore together with the museum, that could both have a positive influence on its financial resilience.

Based on feedback from visitors, that often decided to visit the museum for its posters, but left with an appreciation for the building itself, there seems to be a discrepancy in communication in whether the museum most values its collection, the building, or whether these are of equal value. A discussion on the museum's identity needs to be held to see how it can strengthen its position and if it can potentially leverage its identity for additional revenue streams.

Furthermore, one of the key findings from the desk research is that most of the museum's collection is not accessible to the public. While much of the collection has been scanned and is available online, the systems with which it can be accessed is far from accessible. A potential opportunity could be to leverage this "hidden" collection by either using original copies from the museum depot or by displaying (digital) reproductions of these works in some way.

Identity

Based on visitor input, both the building and the posters were among the highlights of the museum. While some mentioned either one of them, many also mentioned the combination of the two being a strongpoint. The name "Design Museum Dedel" would, however, suggest the building comes second place, as it is not immediately clear that "Dedel" is more than just a name of the museum, but refers to the name of the historic building (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-a).

While design has a whole series of subgenres, the type of design primarily on display in the museum, namely graphic design mostly in the form of posters, is not represented in the name of the museum. The name of the now defunct poster museum (Dutch: AfficheMuseum) in Hoorn, from which the museum has taken over most of its collection (Design Museum Dedel, 2019), addressed this specific type of design directly.

The focus on design can also be found in the way the museum presents itself to the outside world. **Figure 9** shows the museum's online presence. While the museum's website (top) does provide information on the historic relevancy of the building, the first thing a visitor is presented with is two slides on current poster exhibitions in the museum. Only after staying stationary on the landing page for over 15 seconds, or by manually clicking through, is the visitor presented with a first impression of the building itself (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-i).

The museum's Facebook page (right) gives a better impression of the building itself, with plenty of photos and videos of the monumental staircase and different rooms. Although, while context is provided on the different exhibitions held in the museum, this context is often missing for posts about the building itself that often don't go much further than "come see our staircase" (Design Museum Dedel, 2024b).

The museum's TikTok page (left) provides a bit more insight in the building, with closeups of several architectural elements. It however, once again lacks necessary context, also when it comes to the exhibitions, with descriptions like "come see our new exhibition". It seems this channel has been a recent development, with posts just picking back up again in March of this year (2025), after a long hiatus from November (design.museum.ded, 2024).

On Instagram (bottom right), the museum seems to be more aware of the value of their building with several posts specifically mentioning the baroque architecture and even explaining what several rooms were used for in the past (designmuseumdedel, 2024).

All in all, the museum is making steps in highlighting both the exhibitions and the building itself, but seems to be doing so inconsistently. A rigid strategy included with a clear focus could help the museum set itself apart.

Use of Collection

The majority of the museum's collection is permanently in storage. From an earlier interview with the museum I have learned that, while the museum is open to hosting events inside of the building, this is only something they do sporadically. If they find a way to offer these services more sustainably, while implementing their collection, this could be a potential form of income.

As described earlier, the way the museum tackles the lending process compared to other museums, makes it unattractive. The museum only offers limited information on their collection and lending processes, which all contribute to lending not being a sustainable source of income at the moment. What makes this even more difficult is the fact that the current database of the collection is cluttered.

Figure 9
Online presence of Design Museum Dedel



Finally, where the museum has experience curating thematic exhibitions, the full potential of this remains unutilized. One of the museum's first exhibitions, KLM: The First Century, which is now considered a semi-permanent collection, was created especially for the 100th Anniversary of the The Hague-founded KLM. However, it was all done on initiative of the museum itself, and they never actually got paid by KLM to curate this exhibition. While the museum tried to include KLM in a later stage, this attempt ultimately fell flat. In the future, similar exhibitions could generate revenue if integrated into external events or collaborations.

Collaborative Ideation

Now that two potential directions have been identified that could be used to generate concepts beneficial for the financial resilience of the museum, it was time to sit with the volunteers who would eventually have to put these ideas into action. During a collaborative ideation sessions, I asked 4 volunteers to come up with ideas within these directions.

Consent and Data Protection

Before the start of the session, volunteers were asked to sign a consent form, outlining the goal of the research. The session itself took place using sticky notes and large sheets of paper. Participants were asked to write down any ideas they had regarding the two design directions after which they could stick them on the larger sheet of paper. At the end of the session all paper materials, including the consent forms, were collected and safely stored away in a locked desk drawer. Digital copies of both the consent forms and the ideation materials were kept on a password protected laptop and an additional physical storage device as a back-up.

Session Set-up

In order to give them a starting point, without steering them too much, I provided them with a handout that introduced them to the two different directions:

- How can the museum make better use of its collection?
- How does the museum want to present itself?

For both of these directions, some additional information was provided and they were able to ask questions to make sure the presented information was clear. The handouts that were used in this session can be found in Appendix Ab.

Participants were given the task to write down any thoughts or ideas that came up, preferably on the introduced subjects, for about 5 minutes.

When these 5 minutes were over, every participant explained their ideas in about 10 minutes time, while the other participants helped build upon them and categorize them on a big sheet of paper (**Figure 10**).

At the end of the session, the categories were finalized and the volunteers selected the ideas with the most potential that, according to them, still retained a clear connection to the original prompt. **Figure 11** gives an overview of the full session set-up.

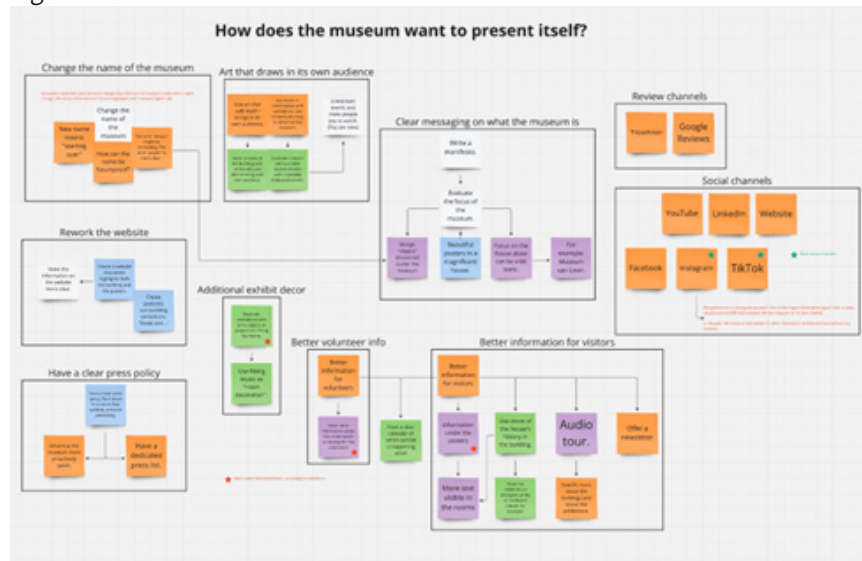
[illegible]

The diagram illustrates the structure of a 140-minute session, divided into two main phases: Identity and Collection. The timeline is marked with time intervals from 0:00 to 1:40. The session is structured as follows:

Phase	Activity	Start Time	End Time
Identity	Discussion 1	0:00	0:05
	Discussion 2	0:15	0:20
	Discussion 3	0:30	0:35
	Discussion 4	0:40	0:45
Collection	Discussion 1	0:50	0:55
	Discussion 2	1:00	1:05
	Discussion 3	1:10	1:15
	Discussion 4	1:20	1:25
Collection	Selection	1:30	1:40

By the end of the session, the participants had identified several ideas that they deemed to have the highest potential to implement in some way. **Figure 13** shows what the session looked like.

Figure 12
Digitized materials



How does the museum want to present itself?

For this subject, the ideas were:

- Decorate exhibitions with extra objects or projections, fitting the theme.
- Have more information about the actual works on display for the volunteers.
- Information under the posters.

The ideas provided all relate less directly to finding new revenue streams, but indicate the wish for the museum to provide both the visitors and the volunteers with more information. Relating back to its own identity, the museum wants to be more knowledgeable about the works on display.

The name of the museum, and especially the “design museum” part also came to discussion. While the participants agreed it could be misleading, they all saw it as a battle they don’t want to fight, as according to them, the name of the museum is “non-negotiable” with museum leadership.

Key take-aways are that the museum should find ways to monetize the use of their collection for events for external parties. It should also find ways to become more knowledgeable on its own collection and implement this within the museum.

How can the museum make better use of its collection?

For the first subject, these ideas were:

- Organize events with posters for recurring events.
- Thematically decorate the museum, using its own collection and rent it out for special occasions.
- Organize tours through the depot.
- Organize series of lectures in combination with posters.
- Set-up a “Friends of the Museum” program.
- Maintain a closer connection with the local community.

Where “Friends of the Museum” indicates the need of a donation strategy and “Maintain a closer connection with the local community” indicates a less direct way of increasing revenue by getting the community to visit the museum, the other ideas all indicate the wish to use the collection in combination with events, in many cases curating special exhibitions for these events.

Figure 13

Set-up of co-creation session



With relation to this project

When looking at the proposed ideas in relation to this project, not all of them align equally well. New revenue streams should be independent of existing ones. For example, ideas focused on enhancing the museum experience, like additional decorations and exhibit information, do not generate new sources of income. Instead, they build on the experience of the museum visitor, potentially attracting more visitors and increasing revenue from existing streams, like ticket sales or sales

Idea Exploration

Before doing anything with the results from the ideation session, it is important to once again take a step back and list a few requirements to make sure that any developed concepts actually hold merit. Based on the previous chapters a few of these requirements can already be listed. In order of importance these are:

- Concepts need to be able to generate revenue in one way or another that does not directly build on existing revenue streams.
- Any developed concepts need to be able to be executed by volunteers and any knowledge gaps need to be crossable.
- Execution of any concept should not get in the way of daily operations of the museum itself.
- Concepts should fit with at least one of the core aspects of the museum, namely the historic building or the poster designs on display.



The end of the previous chapter described showing off the collection, currently in the depot, and setting up a friends program. The following paragraphs will go over these directions and discuss how they could be further developed into concepts.

Bringing the Collection Outside

The unused potential of the unseen collection, stored away in the depot, can form the basis for a set of concepts. Some of the ideas that came forward during the collaborative ideation session suit this direction well, as thematic collections can be directly implemented. For example, themed events or lectures can directly benefit from these additionally curated collections. Besides the ideas that came up in the session, additional routes can be explored that leverage the collection in similar ways. However, in any case, curating collections will take some effort and expertise.

Depot Tours

Another way to get the pieces in the depot seen is by organizing tours through the depot, led by someone who knows the collection well. This does however bring forward a couple of problems, as the depot is likely not built for visitations, and volunteers will not have the knowledge required to lead these tours.

Building Community

Another way to increase revenue would be by introducing a friends program with periodic donations. However, setting up a program like this will take tremendous effort and take a while to get going. The museum would need to organize special events for this group, while keeping things lucrative. A task which is difficult, but not impossible, when the right people are reached.

Deciding Which Way to Go

In order to decide which way to go, an initial criteria test was done to determine the direction with the most potential, visualized using a Harris Profile (**Figure 14**). While all three directions have their benefits, I foresee major problems with mainly the depot tours and the friends program.

Revenue

When it comes to revenue, I can see all three directions being potentially beneficial for the museum. Especially a friends program, once its attracted the right people, can be the basis for a stable, periodic form of income. Depot visits and thematic collection usage can find their way into new revenue streams as well, although these would likely be more occasional.

Executability

When it comes to executability, leveraging the collection in new ways is by far the easiest to implement. Although collections need to be curated, this can be done in many ways and the museum has knowledge on curating collections. In many cases, curation can be done in advance, which leaves volunteers with simpler organizational tasks. When it comes to depot visits, volunteers likely will not have enough knowledge to give tours. Finally, friends programs will take enormous resources that the museum currently does not have.

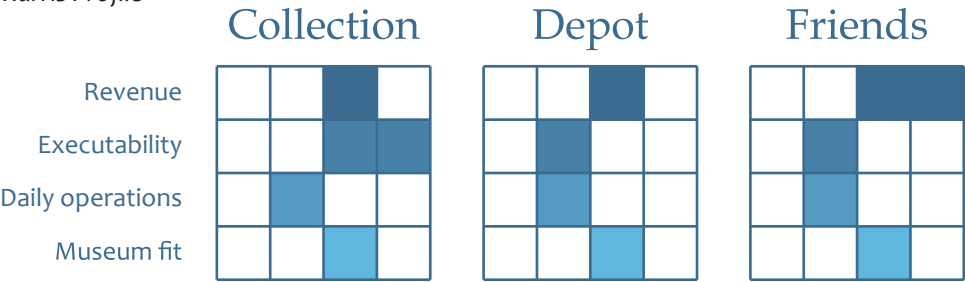
Daily operations

As all of these directions will amount to some form of extra work for the volunteers, it is likely that daily operations will be affected in some way or another. To minimize this, it is important to consider the potential workload during concept development.

Museum fit

Finally, all of these directions are directly linked to either the collection itself or the museum as an institute. They would all fit within the context of this museum.

Figure 14
Harris Profile



Since executability by volunteers is crucial, the decision was made to move forward with concepts exploring novel ways of presenting curated selections from the museum’s collection. After all, all three of these directions have the potential to positively impact the museum’s revenue.

Concepts

The museum can decide to go about curating and leveraging poster selections in different ways. For one, poster packages can either be selected beforehand for more general purposes like holidays, or be specifically curated for special events, like corporate events. Another aspect to consider is whether to display the original posters, or to display high quality reproductions. This chapter will explore these different options.

Poster Curation

There are two major ways in which the museum can approach poster curation. They could either decide to curate selections beforehand, or to curate selections on demand. Both approaches have their own benefits and drawbacks.

Pro-active Curation

By pro-actively curating poster sets, the museum and its volunteers will be able to focus on organizational and logistical tasks surrounding the usage of these sets. However, these sets may have limited appeal as they must remain versatile enough for broad use. Additionally, major upfront labor will be needed in order to initially curate these sets.

Figure 15
Example of an animal poster set (IADDB, n.d)



One example of such a set could focus on animals, making it suitable for birthday parties or other events for animal enthusiasts. **Figure 15** shows what a set of 10 posters could potentially look like with this theme. Other sets could potentially revolve around anniversaries, weddings, or holidays, although additional research might be needed to identify marketable subjects.

Bespoke Curation

By implementing a more bespoke way of curation, the museum will be able to work together with clients in creating a collection that suits their needs. Some clients might even be able to provide additional information or even posters from their own archives. However, this does mean that a curator needs to be available to aid in this process, as it is a task that volunteers can currently not take on. Upfront labor however, will be significantly decreased when compared to pro-active curation. The KLM exhibition on display in the museum is a perfect example of what one of these collections could look like (**Figure 16**). Of course, this method of bespoke curation would be suitable for any corporate or themed event.

Figure 16

Part of the KLM exhibition (Rosenberg, 2019)



Poster Authenticity

While the museum has a large number of original posters stored in its depot, it also has high quality scans of many of these posters, making it possible to utilize reproductions instead.

Original Posters

Like any original piece of art, the original posters that Design Museum Dedel has in storage, hold a certain authenticity. However, just like any form of art

transport, every move introduces a risk of damaging the art. Frequent short-term transportation of posters could, over time, negatively affect their condition. In addition, event locations might not be suitable for original posters either, as the environment itself could pose a risk to their preservation. For example, a kitchen or dining area could have lasting, damaging effects on the integrity of the pieces.

Reproductions

While reproductions might lack the unique appeal of original posters, they are much easier to manage, as no additional preservation efforts need to be taken. Therefore, costs involved in preparation of these pieces are likely to be significantly lower. Moreover, after an event has ended, these posters can be gifted to the client using the service, eliminating the need to return them to storage.

Best Practices

When it comes to the different approaches to poster curation, I would suggest a hybrid model. While I see significant advantages in bespoke curation services, experience has shown that relying on a curator with limited availability does not support the success of this approach. By combining limited bespoke services, dependent on the curator's availability, with pre-curated selections for large life events like weddings and anniversaries, I believe the museum can strike a balance between logistic feasibility and financial sustainability.

When it comes to the authenticity of these posters, I propose to use reproductions rather than originals. Not only are there fewer risks involved, costs can be kept lower and the posters themselves can be gifted as part of the service provided. The following chapter will explore potential use cases in greater detail and provide an overview of the final service proposition.

Posters on Demand

In a hybrid situation two distinct scenarios can be described. The first of which describes a poster on demand service that uses pre-curated posters. The second describes a scenario with a custom curated selection.

In both scenarios, however, materials are needed for the museum to be able to provide this service, including poster stands, poster frames and the actual prints. For this scenario, prices will be based on a selection of 10 posters, although this can always be expanded if necessary.

Costs

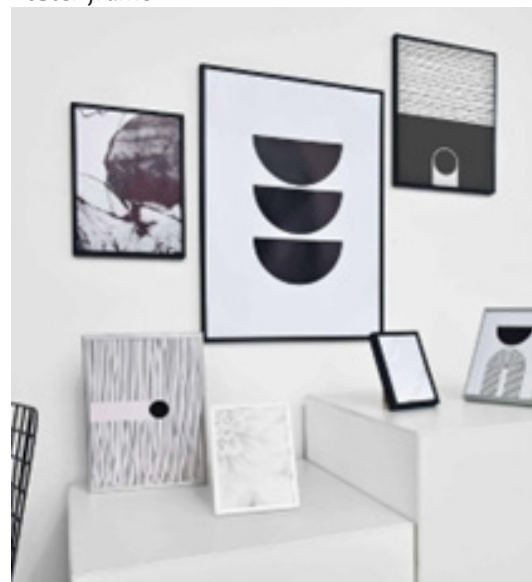
Some costs will have to be made upfront and can only be recouped over time. These costs mainly include the purchase of poster stands and frames. But could include paid curation services.

There is a wide range of stands available for standard A1 posters, all varying in price and design. After some research, I landed on the poster stands in **Figure 17**. These presentation easels are lightweight and portable, they support several sizes of poster, and because of its shape it gives a subtle nod to art galleries. At €72,99 for 2 stands, 10 stands come down to €364,95 (amazon.nl, n.d.-a).

Figure 17
Poster stand



Figure 18
Poster frame



Besides stands, every poster needs a poster frame. The price of A1 poster frames can vary based on several factors, like the thickness of the bezel, but in general they cost anywhere between €30 and €80 (amazon.nl, n.d.-b). I selected a frame with a thin bezel, so the posters can be optimally on display, as can be seen on **Figure 18**, which retails for €62,95 (amazon.nl, n.d.-c). Ten of these would amount to €629,50.

A summary of the total upfront costs needed for one set of A1 posters can be found in **Table 10**. Including VAT, these costs are €994,45.

Table 10
Upfront costs

Stands (10x)	€364,95
Frames (10x)	€629,50
Total	€994,45

When it comes to the posters themselves, different shops offer to print A1 posters for different prices. However, a local print shop in The Hague offers these services as well for €14,- per poster (CopyShop Den Haag, n.d.). This makes it easy to pick up the prints and saves on shipping costs, as the museum is also located in The Hague. One set of 10 posters would cost €140,- including VAT, while a market-based rate of selling them could be around €25,- including VAT (printerpro.nl, 2025).

Revenue Model

When it comes to recouping the costs of the poster stands and frames, I looked at the rental prices of similar products. I found rentals of simple wooden easels for €13,50 per day (Brisked, 2025) and poster boards for €35,- per day (De Posterborden-gigant, n.d.). Based on these prices, I believe a rental fee of €20,- for both a stand and a frame combined is a fair rental price per day. However, since the client is allowed to keep the posters, nothing would stop them from renting the posters for the minimum number of days and simply hanging them on the walls. Therefore, based on 10 posters, I propose to set a standard flat rental fee for the rental of stands and frames for up to 3 days of €500, with any consecutive days costing €200 each.

Although curation services are currently provided on a voluntary basis and do not require immediate funding, the expertise involved has value and should be reflected in the service fee. For bespoke curation services, this will be a higher price than for pre-curated collections.

Based on an event that takes place over the weekend, a rental situation, so far with-

out additional curation fees, could look like **Table 11**. Note that expenses like travel costs have not been taken into account. In practice, however, these would likely be added to the final price and would not be the responsibility of Design Museum Dedel.

Table 11
Potential revenue

Stands and frames (10x) (flat rate)	€500
Posters (price)	€250
Posters (cost)	-€140
Total	€610

Curation Process

In order to make the curation process easier, especially when collecting posters based around specific themes, it is important to have a way to easily search through the collection. While much of the collection has been uploaded to the international advertising & design database, many of them are not provided with keywords. I believe this database would benefit from image recognition tools that can automatically add these keywords to the uploaded designs. It would not only make the work easier for a curator, but it could be a way for possible clients to easily join the curation process. It is unlikely however, that this is a step that can be implemented short-term.

When it comes to the curation process, a lot of work needs to be done initially when it comes to the pre-curated collections. Therefore, I would suggest starting with collections around life events that most people experience one way or another, like weddings, anniversaries, or birthdays (**Figure 19/20**).

Figure 19
Poster set based on birthdays / parties



Figure 20
 Poster set based on birthdays / parties



Collaboration Partners

While I believe the museum is able to take up the role of event manager to such an extent that it can curate, print and deliver the collections and needed materials, I believe its strength lies in the curation of the collection itself and the use of this collection. Therefore, by partnering with wedding planners or event managers, the museum could simplify the process by providing these curated collections to them upon request, without needing to handle the setup or retrieval of materials itself. In theory, volunteers would only have to send the selected works to the print shop, from which the event manager could take over. In exchange, event managers can upsell the service with a 20% - 30% margin, as is traditionally done with other services they provide (Eventplanner, 2025).

While I am unable to give an exact timeline on these occurrences, **Figures 21-24** show the sequence of the different steps in the process, both for preselected and bespoke curations.

Figure 21
 Bespoke curation

Client		Curation	Curation					
	Request							
Curator		Curation	Curation					
Volunteers				Printing				
					Preparation			
						Transport		
							Display	
								Transport

Figure 22

Bespoke curation with event manager

Client		Curation	Curation					
	Request							
Curator		Curation	Curation					
Volunteers				Printing				
Event Manager					Preparation			
						Transport		
							Display	
								Transport

Figure 23

Pro-active curation

Client			Request					
Curator		Curation	Curation					
Volunteers				Printing				
					Preparation			
						Transport		
							Display	
								Transport

Figure 24

Pro-active curation with event manager

Client			Request					
Curator		Curation	Curation					
Volunteers				Printing				
Event Manager					Preparation			
						Transport		
							Display	
								Transport

Recommendations

In order to further develop the concept as described in the previous chapter, it is essential to work out a number of questions that were still left unanswered or under-developed.

First of all, even though initial efforts have been made to give an indication of how much the presented service would cost, one important factor, namely, what the efforts of a voluntary curator are worth, are not calculated within this price. While the current setup of the concept does not involve many financial risks, as the only costs that need to be made are either expected to be recouped quickly or are already covered within the price of the service, it would be good to have a better idea of the exact financial impact this service can have on the museum, besides the income as projected in the example in **Table 11**.

One major risk that directly relates to pre-curated selections is that the selections themselves are not a fit with the market. Since curating several packages is extremely time sensitive, it is therefore important to consider what subject matters would be the most beneficial long-term. While I proposed basing them around major life events that many of us come in contact with naturally, there might be better solutions to tackle this problem.

A final challenge is about the curation process itself. Currently, the database in which the collection is catalogued is not organized well with multiple entries missing key words, or entries having keywords that you would not necessarily expect. One proposal is to overhaul this database completely and implement a system that automatically adds these keywords, hopefully resulting in a database that is easier to navigate. This is, however, a massive undertaking, so different alternatives might need to be explored first.

Other Recommendations

Another recommendation I would like to give the museum in general is to look back on some of the ideas generated during the collaborative ideation session. While I believe that while many of them might not have been the best fit for this particular case study, many of them are worth exploring in its own right. A friends of the museum program, for example, while resource heavy, could immensely impact the financial stability of the museum when attracting the right audience and by offering them the right incentives.

Finally, I would like to ask the museum to consider experimenting with similar forms of ideation. During the ideation session I got much more than I bargained for with the specific subjects I selected, as volunteers seemed happy to share any ideas they had relating to the museum. To me this showed an inexhaustible source of creativity within the organization, that I believe can be even further utilized.

Discussion

Initially, this thesis set out to find an answer to how small museums could implement diversification strategies previously utilized by larger museums in order to become more financially resilient. In order to answer this question, a case study was done on one of these small museums, Design Museum Dedel, with the aim to inform and inspire other small museums facing similar challenges. The question is whether this goal has been realized.

The final designed service could use some additional levels of polish, as described in my recommendations, but I do believe it is a good example of turning a major weak point, namely a large part of the collection being locked away in a depot, to a foundation to build new ideas upon. And, while not all kinks have been worked out yet, it shows strong signs of being financially sustainable. Additionally, the resourcefulness of the organization itself, especially during the collaborative ideation session, shows extreme promise that even a nonprofit organizations with limited resources, in this case ran entirely by volunteers, can come up with a plethora of ways to diversify income when put together.

Whether this particular case study can inform and inspire other museums remains up for debate. While the ideas and concepts presented are likely too specific for other museums to directly implement, the processes that brought along these ideas and concepts are ones that can be almost identically replicated, albeit with different parameters. It is in this latter argument that I think other museums can find ways to improve their own financial resilience.

Reflection

I tried to go into my graduation project with an open mind. However, previous projects that did not work out the way I had planned or foreseen left quite some mental scars, causing me to constantly doubt myself and my efforts during the process. While it has been a project of highs, it has also been a project of many lows and I often found myself struggling to find motivation when things did not go according to plan.

Before initiating this project, I had just come from a period in which I worked 3 days in the week on a regular schedule. Not having this schedule all of a sudden and being left to my own devices proved insanely difficult for me. I know that I work best whenever I am on a strict schedule in which people expect me to be places and do certain things and since the majority of this project was about following your own route and planning your own ways of doing things, I could not help but feel lost at times.

However, this project has also shown me the tremendous energy I can get from working with people face-to-face. One of the highlights of this project was definitely the collaborative ideation session. The energy I got back just by sending them off in a specific direction was something that had a huge impact on the remainder of my project. A similar thing can be said about the interviews I conducted at the very start of my exploration phase.

Unfortunately, not all of the personal ambitions I brought into this project were able to come to full fruition. While I believe to have increased my interview skills by both conducting and transcribing extensive museum interviews, the ambition to follow a rigid schedule and adhere to it, fell flat. In a similar matter, dealing with setbacks in a way that is mentally healthy is not my strongpoint. While I never expected these ambitions to fully shine during this projects, as they stem from other underlying problems, I had hoped to be able to cope with them better.

To end on a positive note, I have realized that when it really comes down to it, I am able to move mountains. If I could learn to take some of the pressure off during these periods and spread out the workload over something that is slightly more reminiscent of a proper schedule, I might just be fine.

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Aa: Museum Analysis

De Mesdag Collectie

De Mesdag Collectie is a collection of paintings, drawings, arts and crafts collected by the Mesdags. The collection has been on display in their museum since 1887 and has been a part of the Van Gogh Museum Foundation since 1990. Their former residence, next to the museum, is now being used for temporary exhibitions. Hendrik Willem Mesdag and his wife Sientje Mesdag-van Houten were both artists and the collection includes some of their works. Their acquisitions mainly focused on studies and sketchy paintings, where the hand of the creator was distinctly felt. Besides paintings and drawings (Figure 3) they were collectors of Japanese decorative art (Figure 4) and ceramics by Theodoor Colenbrander (Figure 5) (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-a).

Figure 1
Paintings in De Mesdag Collectie



Figure 2
Japanese art and pottery

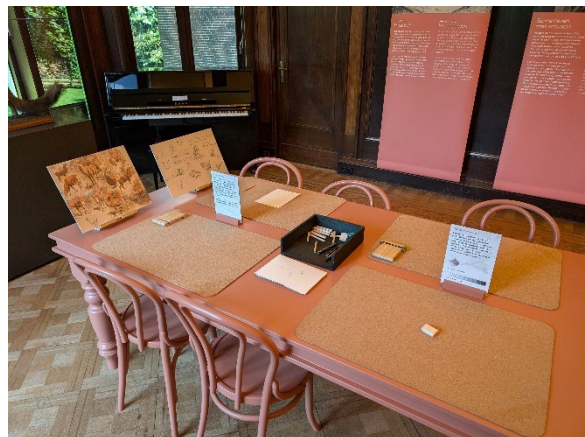


Figure 3
Tulip garniture by Theodoor Colenbrander



Note. By Colenbrander, T. (1888). Tulip garniture. [Earthenware]. De Mesdag Collectie, The Hague, The Netherlands

Figure 4
Drawing set-up in the temporary exhibition



Personal experience

I felt the museum had a welcome and open feel to it, although I personally felt the entry fee of €10,- for students was a bit high. Upon entering I was asked to put my bag in one of the storage lockers by staff. I was happy to, since that meant I would not have to bring my coat along either.

With a collection spanning 3 floors, I spent around an hour inside. Most of the art on display was nature inspired, either being sketches or paintings of landscapes or animals, both of which interest me more than portraits. Besides paintings and sketches there was a wide assortment of Japanese art and pottery, and a collection of earthenware from Dutch artist Theo Colenbrander. Overall I appreciated the diversity of art within the museum, and having a personal interest in Japanese culture, the Japanese art and pottery was a nice addition.

When it comes to interactive experiences, I was surprised to find a piano inside. I wondered if anyone ever played it, however. The temporary exhibition had a little drawing set-up where visitors could sit down to draw animals, as the exhibition was focusses on animal drawings by one particular artist. I thought this was a neat idea, but was not immediately enticed to sit down and draw something myself, maybe it skewed mostly to somewhat younger audiences or families.

Something I had not seen before was that this particular museum had a little resting area, where you could sit and read a book. When I was there, there was only a handful of people, possibly due to the fact I visited on a Thursday. When visiting the toilet before leaving, I noticed the restrooms were well-taken care off and clean. The café seemed to be closed at the time.

General information

The following section will go into more general information on the museum. To start off, the opening hours and entry fees of the museum can be found in Table 3 and Table 4 respectively.

Opening hours

Table 1
Opening hours of De Mesdag Collectie

	January 2 – March 3 April 29 – September 1 November 4 – December 31	March 4 – April 28 September 2 – November 3
Monday	Closed	Closed
Tuesday	Closed	Closed
Wednesday	Closed	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday	Closed	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Note. All data are for 2024. Additionally, the museum is closed on King's Day (April 27), Christmas Day (December 25) and New Year's Day (January 1). Adapted from Opening hours, by De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-g (<https://www.demesdagcollectie.nl/en/plan-your-visit/opening-hours>). Copyright 2024 by De Mesdag Collectie.

Price

With a calculated 2019 revenue of €359.175, De Mesdag Collectie is considered a small museum.

Table 2
Entry fees of De Mesdag Collectie

Adults	€13,-
Visitors <18	Free
Student Card	€10,-
Museum Card, VriendenLoterij VIP-Card, ICOM Card, Rembrandt Card, Rotterdam Card, Stork Card	Free
Friends of Mesdag	Free
Companion	Free

Note. All data are for 2024. Adapted from Online tickets, by De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-b (<https://tickets.demesdagcollectie.nl/en/tickets>). Copyright 2024 by De Mesdag Collectie.

Exhibitions

The museum houses both temporary exhibitions and a permanent collection. At the time of visitation, one temporary exhibition took place on the French artist Rosa Bonheur, featuring some of her many paintings of animals. The permanent collection makes up for the largest part of the museum, spanning 3 floors of the main building.

Guides

The museum offers one-hour guided tours for groups up to 15 people in both Dutch and English for €85,- excluding entry fees (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-c). The museum also offers individual tours through their current temporary exhibitions (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-e). De Mesdag Collectie does not offer audio tours.

Education

With regards to education, Mesdag offers the opportunity for school visits, where the children are presented with several hands-on assignments (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-h).

Interactive elements

The interactive elements within the museum are limited, but they are present. The museum has a piano that is free to play and it has a drawing table in the current temporary exhibition where people can try to sketch animals for themselves (Figure 6).

Other onsite amenities

The museum includes both a shop and a café near the entrance, as well as a wardrobe with lockers.

Mesdag organizes lectures and workshops, based on their current exhibitions. It is also possible to book a picnic in their garden (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-e).

Online

The museum offers several online amenities. The museum has most of their collection in an online database, which is constantly being updated (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-d). They also host several stories about their collection and the museum on their website (De Mesdag Collectie, n.d.-f).

Design Museum Dedel

Design Museum Dedel is a museum focused on designs associated with advertising. Their collection consists of over 150 years of advertising and design (Figure 7, Figure 8, Figure 9) and is located in a 17th-century building at the Prinsegracht, The Hague. (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-a). The museum has recently started collecting wallpaper samples as well, to be put on display at a later date. The building itself has not seen much renovation since it was built, so it is in bit of a state of disrepair. The building, being as old as it is, does however house a magnificent plaster wall sculpture from when it was originally built (Figure 10). Because the museum is located in a monumental building with many staircases, it is not accessible for people with a disability. This is also the main reason the museum can currently not apply for being a part of the Museum Card program, as accessibility is a necessity.

Figure 5
Posters in Design Museum Dedel

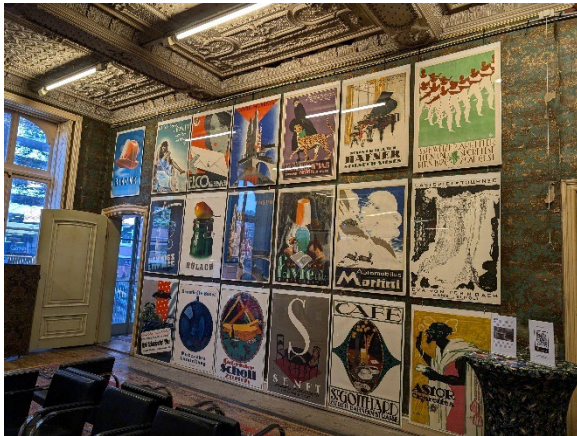


Figure 6
Flyers in Design Museum Dedel



Figure 7
Posters in Design Museum Dedel

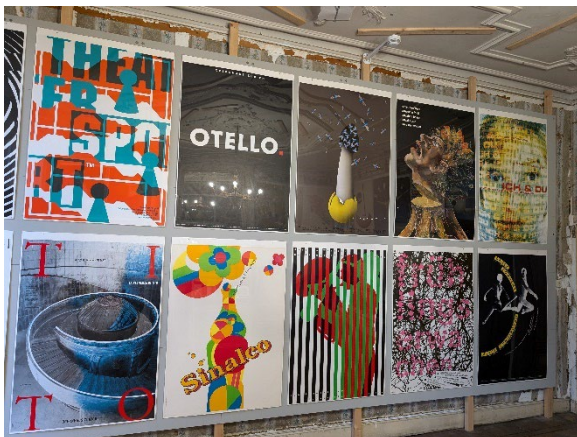


Figure 8
Plaster wall sculpture in Design Museum Dedel



Personal experience

This museum definitely showed signs of being in its early stages of operation. The building itself is in very bad shape, meaning major renovations have yet to take place. As a visitor this felt odd. I expect objects in a museum to hold a certain value, and to not see that value represented in the building in which those objects are presented, felt off. For that reason, I felt like the student entry fee of €10,- is too high for me, although I do understand that their prices are potentially higher as an independent museum.

Having a personal connection with marketing, having worked a social media job and having worked at a marketing firm for a while, I did enjoy the collection, however. As information on the separate pieces was only available by scanning QR codes through the museum, I was not immediately motivated to grab my phone and scan a code, in order to read up on more information on the different pieces.

As a visitor of this museum, there was not a whole lot to “do”. While there was a video installation in one of the rooms, it was currently not in use, and the museum did not offer any interactive elements throughout the different exhibitions.

The museum only spanned a couple of rooms over 2 floors of the building, so I was able to see the entire collection rather quickly, again reinforcing my feelings of the entry fee being too high.

With a lower entrance fee, of say €6-8, and the building itself being in a better state, I think a visit would be more warranted. I think I spent around half an hour inside in total. At the moment of visiting, I was the only one in the museum.

General information

The following section will go into more general information on the museum. To start off, the opening hours and entry fees of the museum can be found in Table 5 and Table 6 respectively.

Opening hours

Table 3
Opening hours of Design Museum Dedel

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Note. All data are for 2024. Additionally, the museum is closed on Easter (March 31), Easter Monday (April 1), Pentecost (May 19), Pentecost Monday (May 20), King's Day (April 27), Christmas Day (December 25), and Boxing Day (December 26). Adapted from Visitor information by Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-b (<https://designmuseumdedel.nl/en/plan-your-visit/visitor-information/>). Copyright 2024 by Design Museum Dedel.

Price

With a 2019 revenue of just €1,219, Design Museum Dedel is considered a small museum. It is however important to note that the museum had only first opened its doors in July of that same year (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-g).

Table 4
Entry fees of Design Museum Dedel

Adults	€12,-
--------	-------

Visitors <17	Free
Student Card / CJP Card	€10,-
Visitors 67+	€10,-
Friends of Dedel	Free
Museum Card, ICOM Card, Rembrandt Card, Stork Card	€10,-

Note. All data are for 2024. Adapted from Visitor information by Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-b (<https://designmuseumdedel.nl/en/plan-your-visit/visitor-information/>). Copyright 2024 by Design Museum Dedel.

Exhibitions

The museum only hosts temporary exhibitions, composed of pieces from their own collection. They host around 2-3 different exhibitions a year. The collection spans a total of 2 floors of the monumental building.

Guides

The museum offers tours for groups of 8-25 people, that can be booked directly through their website (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-b). Museum Dedel does not offer an audio tour, but it is currently developing an app that can serve as a guide through the museum.

Education

Design Museum Dedel does not offer any specific educational resources.

Interactive elements

The museum does currently not offer any interactive elements.

Other onsite amenities

The museum includes a small shop at the entrance.

Online

The museum offers several online amenities. The museum has uploaded a large part of their collection to the International Advertising & Design Database (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-c). The museum has recently acquired a large scanner, to scan all of their materials, so they can too be uploaded to the database.

The website hosts several videos on the restoration of the building, as well as videos on exhibition (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-d). The museum used to have a blog (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-e) and a monthly newsletter (Design Museum Dedel, n.d.-f), but both seem to not have been updated in well over a year.

Haags Historisch Museum

Haags Historisch Museum is a museum in The Hague that teaches the history of The Hague through art (Figure 15) and objects (Figure 16). It strives to show a complete image of historic events, from the standpoint of all parties involved. As an example, they delve into the Dutch perspective of the Golden Age, but also the perspective of those who were repressed by the Dutch in that period. Their main goal is to encourage reflection and start discussions on these subjects, many of which are still relevant to this day, in an open and neutral way. Because the museum is mostly focused on telling stories through their exhibitions, the number of actual art pieces is limited. Due to a large scale renovation, the museum is temporarily closed as of September 29, 2024 (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-c).

Figure 9
Paintings in Haags Historisch Museum



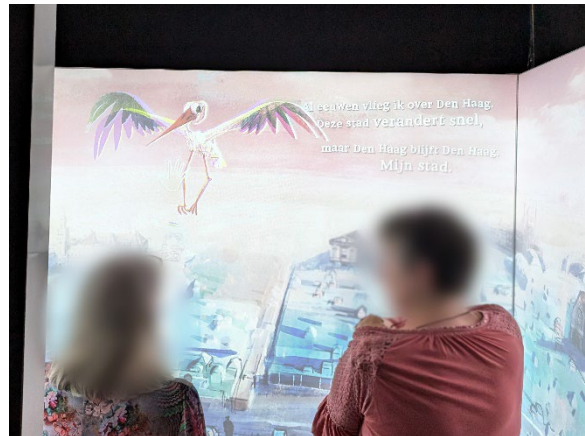
Figure 10
Part of the dollhouse exhibition



Figure 11
Sketching set-up in Haagse Harry exhibition



Figure 12
Immersive projector room in one of the exhibitions



Personal experience

I managed to visit this museum just before their temporary closure due to a big renovation. Out of all the museums I visited, this was by far the museum that was the most polished, having thought about every detail.

Having said that, however, nothing felt truly unique to this museum. I felt like I was going through the standard “well-funded museum” experience: exhibitions with clear distinct theming, walls that are all in one color, text on the wall that tells you what the exhibition is about, prerecorded videos on touchscreen displays, and some interactive installations. Because of it, the museum lacked a sense of personality.

I did appreciate the wide variety of subjects on display, all somehow linked with the history of The Hague. From a hall with portraits of previously important officials, to an exhibition on Binnenhof or modern pop culture, there was something for everyone to see and do.

Art and objects were all set out in a way to tell overarching stories, although because of this, I could not help but feel like the museum was trying to force certain opinions on you.

When I visited, a school class was doing assignments about the temporary exhibition on dollhouses, but besides that it was quiet. I spent about an hour in this museum, but could easily have spent more time if I had more actively engaged with the different installations.

General information

The following section will go into more general information on the museum. To start off, the opening hours and entry fees of the museum can be found in Table 9 and Table 10 respectively.

Opening hours

Table 5
Opening hours of Haags Historisch Museum

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Note. All data are for 2024. Additionally, the museum is closed on Prince's Day (September 17), Christmas Day (December 25), and New Year's Day (January 1). The museum is open from 12 a.m. – 17 p.m. on Easter (March 31), Easter Monday (April 1), Pentecost (May 19), and Pentecost Monday (May 20). Due to a large scale renovation, the museum is temporarily closed as of September 29, 2024. Adapted from Opening hours by Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-a (https://www.haagshistorischmuseum.nl/en/visit/practical-information/opening-hours?set_language=en). Copyright 2024 by Haags Historisch Museum.

Price

With a museum revenue of €363,167 in 2019, the museum is considered a small museum.

Table 6
Entry fees of Haags Historisch Museum

Adults	€15,-
Visitors <6	Free
Visitors 6-17	€5,-
Student Card / CJP Card	€7,50

Den Haag Card	€2,- discount
Museum Card, VriendenLoterij VIP-Card, ICOM Card, Rembrandt Card, Rotterdam Card, Stork Card	Free

Note. All data are for 2024. Adapted from Tickets by Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-b (<https://www.haagshistorischmuseum.nl/nl/plan-your-visit/praktische-informatie/tickets>). Copyright 2024 by Haags Historisch Museum.

Exhibitions

The museum offers 3-4 exhibitions next to their permanent collection. The exhibitions form the greater part of the museum's collection. The pieces are spread out over 10 rooms on 3 separate floors.

Guides

The museum offers 1-hour themed guided tours for groups up to 20 people for €80,- excluding museum entrance. Tours can be combined in 1.5-hour tours for €120,-. (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-d). The museum does currently not offer an audio tour. Although these tours are not possible at the moment, the museum organizes several city walks during the closure of the museum. Current city walks are walks about the city and slavery, a tour through Palace Kneuterdijk and a tour through the old city hall (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-e).

Education

The museum offers an extensive collection of educational activities for primary education, secondary education and higher education. For primary education, 4 programs exist, related to different exhibitions in the museum (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-g). For secondary education, the museum organizes a day through The Hague, and one program. The city walks can also be booked for secondary education classes (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-h). For higher education, the same day through The Hague and city walks can be booked. The museum also offers a workshop for students learning to be a teacher (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-i). The museum has also developed a series of education files for several past exhibitions, to be used in the higher levels of primary education or the early levels of secondary education (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-f).

Interactive elements

The museum has made a lot of efforts into making the whole museum experience more interactive. The current exhibitions included drawing set-ups (Figure 17), interactive screens with videos, immersive projector rooms (Figure 18), and an interactive model of the Binnenhof.

Other onsite amenities

The museum has a café, a shop and a wardrobe with lockers.

Online

Online, the museum hosts all kinds of different materials relating to their collection and exhibitions. These currently include 2 podcasts, a virtual tour through one of their exhibitions and a page dedicated to telling different stories about The Hague (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-j). The collection of the museum has also been catalogued and can be viewed online (Haags Historisch Museum, n.d.-k).

Museum Bredius

It has been over a century since the museum first opened in the former home of Abraham Bredius, until he moved to Monaco in 1922. He sold the house to the city, with the agreement that it would be open to visitors. He often loaned out pieces from his collection and after his death, loaned out pieces were gifted to the museums where they were currently on display. In 1990, the museum relocated to its current location (Museum Bredius, n.d-b).

Museum Bredius houses the private collection of Dr Abraham Bredius, who was an art scholar, archive researcher, publicist, collector and philanthropist. His collection of roughly 200 paintings and drawings, some of which can be seen in Figure 19 and Figure 20, include works by Rembrandt and Jan Steen (Museum Bredius, n.d-c). Because of a special bequest with the municipality, none of the works in the museum are allowed to leave the museum. Most exhibitions in the museums therefore, consist of rotating works from their downstairs depot. Tables and chairs in the museum are purely decorative, to give it a homey feel (Figure 21, Figure 22).

Figure 13
Paintings and mantelpiece in Museum Bredius



Figure 15
Overview of museum room



Figure 14
Paintings and cabinet in Museum Bredius



Figure 16
Museum room with table and chairs



Personal experience

This is one of the smaller museums I visited, with a welcome and homey feel to it. The building consists of very small rooms, almost making it feel like the art is embracing you.

The museum did not have a wardrobe, which was not a huge problem, as it was rather small anyway. I think I spent about half an hour in the museum, which, for the price of €4,50 as a student seemed decent enough.

On the top floor there was a video installation, but it was located above one of the stairwells, making it uninviting to actually sit down and watch a video.

The museum itself has quite some big names, like Rembrandt and Steen. As the rooms were so small, it gave the feeling you could get really close to the masters, as if they were on display within your living room.

Before leaving, I visited the restroom, which in this case, was nothing more than a space with a toilet and a wash basin. There was no café to visit and I was the only person in the museum at the time.

General information

The following section will go into more general information on the museum. To start off, the opening hours and entry fees of the museum can be found in Table 11 and Table 12 respectively.

Opening hours

Table 7
Opening hours of Museum Bredius

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Wednesday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Friday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Note. All data are for 2024. Additionally, the museum is closed on Easter Monday (April 1), King's Day (April 27), Pentecost Monday (May 20), Prince's Day (September 17), Christmas Day (December 25), New Year's Eve (December 31), and New Year's Day (January 1). The museum is open from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Remembrance Day (May 4), Saint Nicholas Eve (December 5), and Christmas Eve (December 24) (Museum Bredius, 2024). Adapted from Visit by Museum Bredius, n.d.-a (<https://museumbredius.nl/en/visit/>).

Price

The latest revenue data from 2019 showed an annual revenue of €55.178, categorizing it as a small museum.

Table 8
Entry fees of Museum Bredius

Adults	€8,50
Visitors <19	Free
Student Card	€4,50,-
Museum Card, ICOM Card, Rembrandt Card	Free

Groups of 10 or more	€7,- each
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Note. All data are for 2024. Adapted from Visit by Museum Bredius, n.d.-a (<https://museumbredius.nl/en/visit/>).

Exhibitions

Due to the bequest with the municipality, it is difficult for the museum to host any exhibitions. Nevertheless, the museum aims to host 2 small exhibitions each year. In these exhibitions, the majority of the works is always property of the museum itself and only few pieces on loan, if any, are displayed. This also means that the collection can currently not be lent out. The collection itself spans 3 floors of the monumental building.

Guides

The museum has an audio tour on storytelling platform IZI Travel (IZI Travel, n.d.).

Education

Museum Bredius is part of a collaborative cultural project by several museums from The Hague aimed at youth aged 4-16 years old. In this project, students are introduced to three different genres of painting. In addition, they experience what it was like to live during the 18th century by walking through the various rooms and an 18th century kitchen (Museum Bredius, n.d.-e).

Interactive elements

The museum has one screen on which several videos can be played. Apart from that, the museum does not include interactive elements.

Other onsite amenities

The museum does not have a shop, but does sell several books that are displayed through the museum, like in Figure 21 and Figure 22, at the entrance. The museum does not have a café or wardrobe.

Online

The entire collection can also be visited online through their website (Museum Bredius, n.d.-f). Besides that, the website offers extensive information on all their past exhibitions, including the associated exhibition guides.

West

Museum West is located in the former American embassy in The Hague (Figure 23). The building itself is left in its original state, which gives the impression that you are visiting exhibitions hosted in an office building (Figure 24). The museum hosts contemporary art exhibitions.

Figure 17
Museum Entrance still shows the former embassy logo



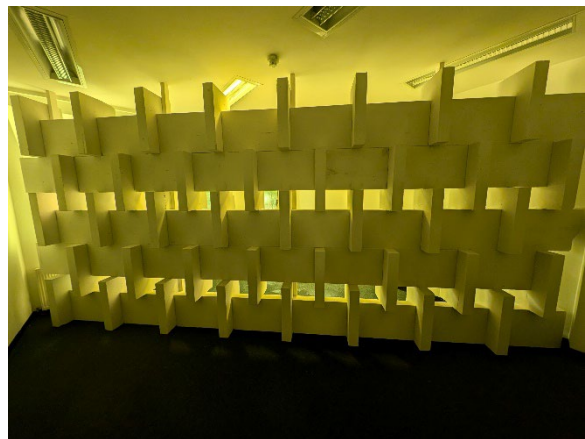
Figure 19
Video screens in one of the exhibitions



Figure 18
Part of an exhibition



Figure 20
One of the many walls in one of the museum exhibitions



Personal experience

I immensely enjoyed my time at this museum. The location, the previous American embassy, already made it special. Entry was only €3,- and was well worth it for the 45 or so minutes I spent inside. There were no lockers or wardrobe, but the space was large enough to not have to worry about accidentally bumping into anything.

One of the exhibitions was built specifically to be displayed in this building. In the exhibition, about immigration, several of the old offices along one corridor were all used to display different walls made out of big blocks of concrete. In some rooms I could walk around them, in some I was literally closed off from the other side, while being able to see the other side, leaving me with a rather unsettling feeling.

Another exhibition was about drug labs in Brabant, and artistic representations of all the different tools and devices in a drugs labs were presented, giving the visitor an idea of what visiting one of these labs could look like. Overall, I think the museum was good in making me feel like I was experiencing the exhibitions, not just watch them as a bystander.

As the café was in a separate part of the building, I did not immediately feel the need to check it out, even though my ticket came with a free drink. I was the only visitor at the time. Out of the 6 museums I visited, I am most likely to revisit this one, when they have new exhibitions on display.

General information

The following section will go into more general information on the museum. To start off, the opening hours and entry fees of the museum can be found in Table 13 and Table 14 respectively.

Opening hours

Table 9
Opening hours of West

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	12 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Thursday	12 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Friday	12 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Saturday	12 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Sunday	12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Note. All data are for 2024. The museum does not specify any holiday exceptions. Adapted from Info by West Den Haag, n.d.-a (<https://www.westdenhaag.nl/info>). Copyright 2024 by West Den Haag.

Price

With a revenue of €230.746 in 2019, this museum is considered a small museum.

Table 10
Entry fees of West

Adults	€12,50
Visitors <16	Free
Student Card	€3,-
Stork Card, CJP Card, Rotterdam Card	€5,-
Museum Card	Free

Thursday Evenings 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Free
Groups up to 10	€100,-

Note. All data are for 2024. Adapted from Info by West Den Haag, n.d.-a (<https://www.westdenhaag.nl/info>). Copyright 2024 by West Den Haag.

Exhibitions

The museum has no permanent collection and hosts 4 simultaneous exhibitions on 2 floors of the building.

Guides

The museum hosts tours every Sunday. Dutch tours start at 12:30 p.m. and 14:30 p.m.. English tours start at 4:30 p.m. (West Den Haag, n.d.-b). Tickets for the tour cost €12,50. The tours do not focus on the exhibitions, but instead show the history of the building (Eventbrite, n.d.).

Education

West has created several lessons for both primary and secondary education. These lessons are suited for groups of up to 30 students and last 60-75 minutes. Lessons cost €100,- per group. Due to extra materials, some lessons have additional costs (West Den Haag, n.d.-c).

Interactive elements

The museum does not offer any explicit interactive elements, except for video images used in their exhibitions (Figure 25). However, some of the exhibitions are set up in such a way that you walk through them, as if you are part of them. One of the exhibitions resembles a modern drugs lab, for example, where you walk through it, discovering all the different elements. Another exhibition symbolizes the way in which a (mental) border can keep us from reaching something (Figure 26).

Other onsite amenities

The museum has both a shop and a café. One free drink is included with your ticket. The museum does not have a wardrobe.

Online

Online, the museum hosts several videos, including lectures, podcasts, interviews and art projects (West Den Haag, n.d.-d) (West Den Haag, n.d.-e). Finally, the museum offers a broad selection of publications through their website (West Den Haag, n.d.-f).

Ab: Co-creation handouts

How does the museum want to present itself?

According to interviews with 15 visitors after their visit, both the building and the displayed works were highlights. **However, for many, the main reason for visiting was to see the posters.** Visitors who did not get a tour also mentioned a lack of information, either about the building itself or the works on display.



When visiting the website, visitors first see information about current events, such as exhibitions. Details about the building and its significance are only found by exploring further. **This makes it seem like the museum's main focus is (poster) design.** In contrast, the museum's social media channels does a better job in presenting both the posters on display and the history of the building.



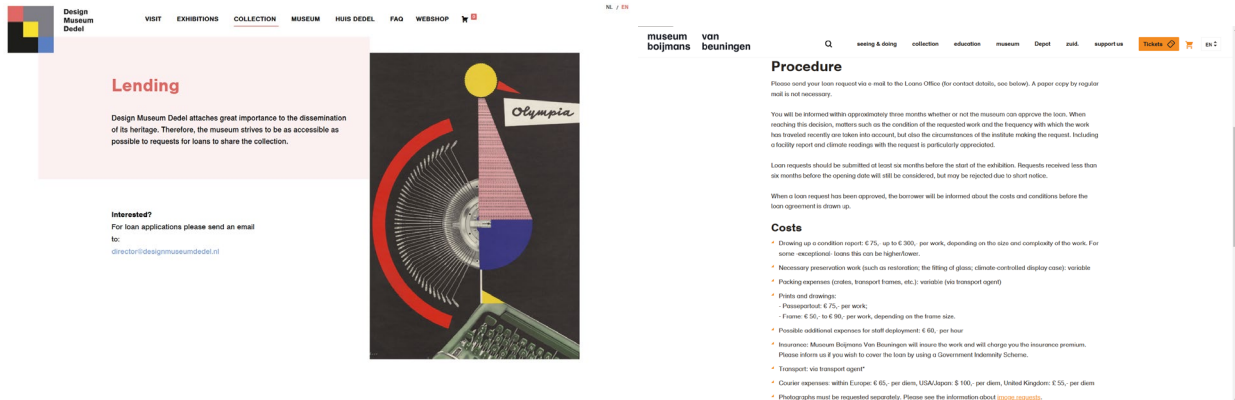
Since this is the only museum in the Netherlands mainly focused on posters, **the name "Design Museum" might be too generic.** Design museums around the world often include product design in their collection, so it could be helpful to make the name more specific. (Picture 1: Vitra Design Museum, Picture 2: Design Museum Den Bosch).

Task:

What is the museum's core focus, and how can it more effectively communicate this—both through branding and external communication?

How can the museum make better use of its collection?

The museum holds a large collection of posters, but because of limited exhibition space only a fraction can be displayed at a time. **As a result, most of the collection remains in storage.**



Although the museum provides loan applications on its website, **the limited information available makes the process less accessible when compared to other museums.** This may discourage potential lenders, as they may be unsure of what to expect.

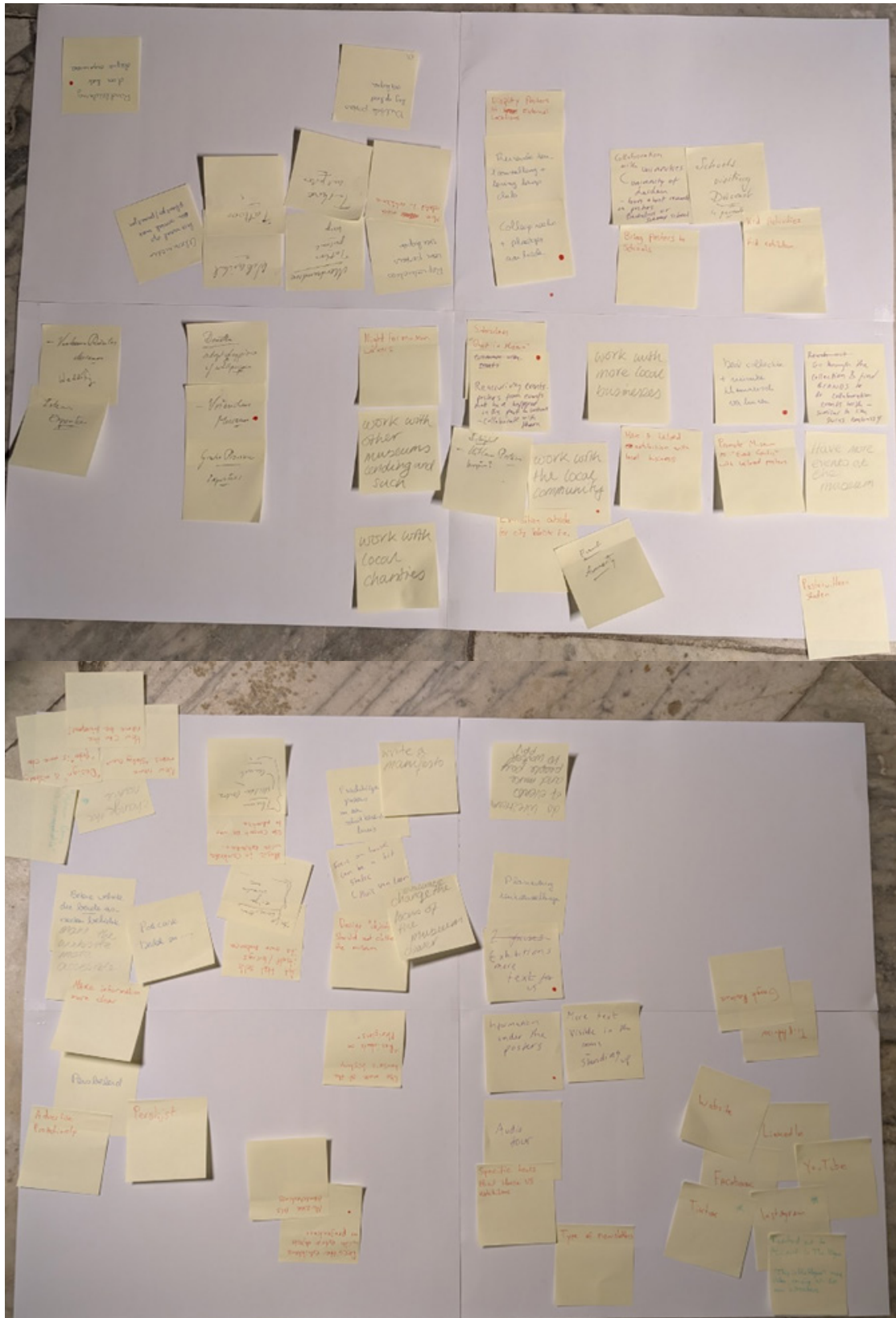


The museum has experience curating thematic exhibitions, but **its full potential remains underutilized.** For example, one of its first exhibitions, *KLM: The First Century*, highlighted the history of the The Hague-founded airline. Similar exhibitions could generate revenue if integrated into external events or collaborations.

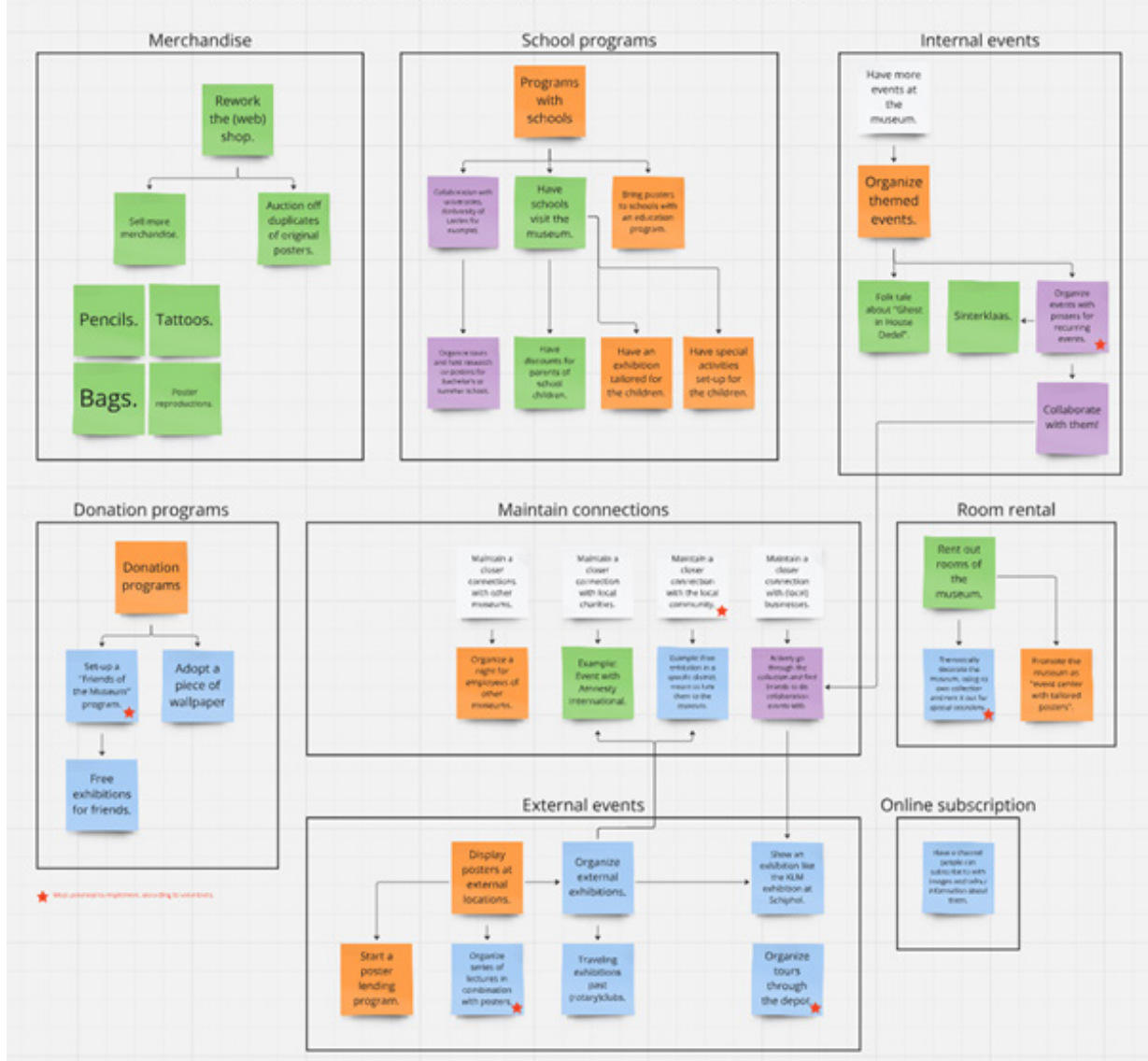
Task:

How can the museum use its collection to add value to external events, both within and outside the building, while taking a more proactive role in this process?

Ac: Co-creation notes



How can the museum make better use of its collection?



How does the museum want to present itself?

