



Reframing positions:

Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp

a discourse between architecture and politics

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Tutor Jean-Paul Baeten

Student Lisanne Fung Fen Chung

Student number 4684125

Introduction

The discipline of architecture and urban planning underwent significant transformations during the 1970s through 1990s, largely shaped by developments in the Dutch sociopolitical landscape. Initially, there existed a centralised and idealistic perspective in the 1970s, which believed in the power of design to influence the welfare of the Netherlands. However, by the 1980s, a shift towards a more realistic approach occurred, marked by a free-market orientation that elevated a more deregulated role of architecture and urban planning, away from governmental control. Urban planning and architecture became an instrument for city marketing which municipalities utilised, in the growing competition between cities.

Structural plans for the Netherlands found their passage in the late 1960s with the start of the Spatial Planning Policy (Dutch: Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening). The Second Spatial Planning Memorandum (Dutch: Tweede Nota van Ruimtelijke Ordening) is one of the best known among planners, and appeared shortly after the first memorandum because the population prognosis of the year 2000 had to be drastically revised. With the expected vastly growing population, the government needed to make plans for housing and labour clusters for the entire Netherlands.¹

The appeal of cities had largely declined due to a lack of financial prospects. Prior to the 1980s, cities largely focused on expanding outside of the historical city centres. The expansions had a similar, standardised appearance, which was not favoured by municipalities competing to attract more residents or companies to their city. There was a lot of critique on the architectural quality in the built environment. In light of this, local governmental bodies shifted to deregulating lots of urban planning and architectural projects to private capital and collaborations with private developers and investors.² 'Urban renewal' and 'city marketing' became important to attract new residents and investors for projects. Consequently, a strong visually enticing plan presentation became more important, serving two objectives: as both a force against the loss of urban identity and a tool to strengthen a city's position in the competition between cities.³

Dutch municipalities began to utilise urban planning and architecture as a crucial resource in presenting their city image.⁴ At the same time, urban planners took notice of a lack of future visions. The focus on large structural plans, as was characteristic at the launch of the Second Memorandum on Urban Planning, had diminished. Architects and urban planners found themselves at an impasse for large-scale developments during the mid-1970s.⁵ They were no longer commissioned to draw up long term visions and plans for cities in the Netherlands. In effect, the Union of Dutch Urban Planners (Dutch: Bond van Nederlandse Stedebouwkundigen) published a declaration expressing a wish for more assignments to come up with future, long term visions. However, this had very little effect.⁶

¹ Hemel, Z. (2014). *Nederland als ontwerp*. Liber Amicorum Manfred Bock, 27–31.

<https://zefhemel.nl/artikelenpapers/nederland-als-ontwerp/>

² Bosma, K., & Berens, H. (1990). *Verleidelijk stadsbeeld : ontwerpen voor stedelijke vernieuwing*. Nederlands Architectuurinstituut. 9.

³ Ibid., 36.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Hemel, Z. (2014).

⁶ Van der Cammen, H. (1987). *Nieuw Nederland : onderwerp van ontwerp (2e dr, Vol. Boek 1. achtergronden)*. Staatsuitgeverij. 6.

In the beginning of the 1980s, a small group of initiators from the Stichting Architectuur Museum (SAM) published a note for a possible foundation, that would focus on bringing forward a future-driven exhibition that would comment on the changing social and cultural patterns of the city. This foundation would become Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp. The project envisioned, would be an impulse, as well as a collective viewpoint for the future. The project became quite ambitious and large through funding, and attracted large groups of designers, architects, landscapers, urban planners to work together on four scenarios for the future of the Netherlands in 2050, of which three scenarios embody a different significant political movement of the time.⁷ The final manifestation, held in the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam, would become the most expensive exhibition of that time.⁸

The more free-market oriented architecture and urban planning resulted in a focus on users as consumers instead. This resulted in a proliferation of architectural manifestations and appealing city images in the late 1980s, searching for the different design visions that could potentially serve the various housing consumers. It shows a strong correlation between the role of city marketing and how political bodies reframed their position from a main actor and stimulator for urban planning and architecture towards a more facilitating and stimulating position. Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp is one of the most notable manifestations, setting the stage for the withdrawal of the national government and the growing influence of the free market on architecture and urban planning in the late 1980s. The exploration of four different scenarios is crucial in understanding the manifestation, scenario-based design images as a significant tool for modern architecture and urban planning.

This thesis aims to delve deeper into the factors that gave rise to this manifestation, the rationale behind its establishment, and the sociopolitical influences that contributed to it. Overall, it explores the significance in the trend of organised manifestations and exhibitions for both the fields of architecture and urban planning, and the political domain. The thesis examines how manifestations can be understood as both an instrument for economic growth and a communication tool between designers and politicians. More specifically,

“How did changing political tendencies regarding deregulation of urban planning and architecture, as well as the repositioning of the free market between the 1970s and 1990s in the Netherlands, contribute to the organisation of final manifestation of 'Nieuw Nederland' by the foundation Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, and how is the manifestation as an instrument, reflective of or responsive to the historical context of that period?”

Comprehending the government's position in urban planning and architecture over the ages has been looked into through the lens of city marketing. Bosma identifies city marketing and the city image as an important tool for collaboration between governments and private investors in his book *Verleidelijk Stadsbeeld*. He describes how cities contend with spatial scarcity, as a result of economic expansions in the decades preceding the 1990s. Essentially he describes how ‘voids’ in the city become potential sites for future activities and serve as canvases for projection of urban plans. Realising these plans requires complex collaboration forms between governments and private capital. Considering competition among cities, city marketing and ambitious plan presentation was deemed to take on a serious role.⁹

⁷ Ibid., 7.

⁸ Moscoviter, H. (1987).

⁹ Bosma, K. (1990) 7.

Further dissertations look into the practice of urban planning and architecture and the role of the government. The dissertation *Architectuur als culturele daad* gives a comprehensive overview of the rise and fall of architectural policies in the Netherlands. The author argues that in the beginning of the 1980s, the national government aimed to improve the architectural quality, through stimulating policies.¹⁰ In the article *Naar een cultuur van regionaal ontwerpen: Verkenning van een praktijk in ontwikkeling*, the authors argue that there is a correlation within the discussion about “the condition of the present-day urban landscape coincides with shifts in thinking about the role of government in spatial production processes and the abandonment of regulatory blueprint planning in favour of a facilitative model with decentralised authority’. Through the deregulated regional design, there is a strong focus on the role of design as a research instrument.¹¹ However, the article does not delve into how the final exhibition of Nieuw Nederland, which was purposed to showcase an extensive research project into the Netherlands of 2050, can be understood in line with the culture of regional and urban design of that specific historic period.

This history thesis primarily bases its research around the extensive archive collection from Het Nieuwe Instituut, related to the final manifestation of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp. The archived documents encompass a variety of types, including texts, questionnaires, video tapes, and a game show associated with the final manifestation. Moreover, the archive includes documentation on the establishment of the foundation and its predetermined framework for elaboration. For the establishment of the foundation, the archives of Stichting Architectuur Museum have also been consulted, from which reports provide a valuable insight in the activities leading up to the final exhibition. Additionally, newspaper articles written around the time of the exhibition provide valuable insights from a more detached perspective.

The first chapter of this thesis *Timelines of deregulation and decentralisation in urban planning and architecture* dives into the sociopolitical context prior to the final exhibition Nieuw Nederland in the Beurs van Berlage and the establishment of the foundation Nederland, Nu als Ontwerp. It explores the first three Memoranda on Urban Planning and the shift from governmental control towards a more facilitation and stimulation for architectural quality towards the 1980s.

The second chapter *Rise of the manifestation* places the establishment of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp in the timeline of stimulation for architecture and urban planning and discusses its relation to prior manifestations. It contains an extensive description of the activities leading up to the final exhibition in the Beurs van Berlage in 1987, of its coming to be through funding.

The third chapter *After Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp: the manifestation as an instrument* delves into the impact of the exhibition and its effect on both other architectural manifestations during between the 1980s and the 1990s and its precedential influence on the government policy on architecture from 1991.

¹⁰ Schipper, K. (2023). *Architectuur als culturele daad: een architectuurhistorisch onderzoek naar het architectuurbeleid van de rijksoverheid*. 13.

¹¹ Meijsmans, N., & De Zwart, B. (2009). *Naar een cultuur van regionaal ontwerpen: Verkenning van een praktijk in ontwikkeling*. OASE, 80.

<https://oasejournal.nl/en/Downloads/52836345c79eb3b5f5000882/OASE%2080%20-%20108%20Naar%20een%20cultuur%20van%20regionaal%20ontwerpen.pdf>

1 Timelines of deregulation and decentralisation in urban planning and architecture

1.1 The rise of the first three Memoranda on Spatial Planning

To obtain an understanding of the foundational principles of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, one must first delve into the contextual significance of architecture and spatial planning during the 1970s and their evolution into the 1980s.

After the Second World War, the housing shortage was large and lots of infrastructure and the built environment got destroyed. Large-scale visions and reconstruction plans for housing and labour structures were needed. The first Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (hereafter referred to as VROM) was established in 1947 to organise this reconstruction. First, the Ministry was named for Reconstruction and Public Housing, and became the Ministry of Public Housing and Construction Industry in 1958. In 1965, it was renamed to Public Housing and Spatial Planning. From this moment on, spatial planning took on a more important role in the public eye and political discussions. The population growth of the 1960s was expected to be central in defining further shaping of the Netherlands. The political discussion refocused on the question of where expansions of housing would be built. Undeterred by the establishment of the Ministry, urbanisation proved to be difficult to manage so far. The historical city centres of Amsterdam, Utrecht, Leiden, the Hague and Rotterdam outlined areas for urban expansion around an open, green area. The report about the development of western Netherlands (Dutch: *De ontwikkeling van het Westen des Lands*) from 1958, first introduced the terms *Randstad* and *Groene Hart*, which characterised the development of urban sprawl of connecting cities around a green heart. This report formed one of the first pleas for more control of urbanisation.¹²

The first Memorandum on Spatial Planning was published in 1960 and continued on notions from the aforementioned report, without much avail. The urbanisation continued to take place outside of these historical city centres, which became more attractive for residence due to its character of lower density than the historical city centres and close proximity to necessary facilities. In effect, forensic travel by car was stimulated. Paradoxically, the promotion of residence within these suburban neighbourhoods, resulted in a threat of congesting the 'green heart'.¹³

In effect, the Second Memorandum on Spatial Planning, published in 1966, focused more on promoting a settlement pattern of 'bundled deconcentration' and adjusted its vision to a further population growth that was unforeseen in the First Memorandum. It attempted to seek a balance between full decentralisation and full concentration of urbanisation through selecting cores of growth. With the *Urban Growth Plan* (Dutch: *Groeikernenbeleid*), the government aimed to manage urbanisation. However, policy did not prove to be effective as urban sprawl festered. In effect, the open landscape disappeared and the old historical cities had to cope with loss of quality, dilapidation of neighbourhoods. The urban sprawl appeared very monotone, and an allround critique on architectural quality increased.¹⁴

¹² Schipper, K. (2023) 73.

¹³ Ibid., 76.

¹⁴ Ibid., 77.

The Third Memorandum on Spatial Planning in 1974 did not receive as much public attention as its previous one. The public realised that there is an end to the growth, and the famous report by the Club of Rome on the Limits of Growth predicated a more conscious urbanisation. In effect, urban renewal took on a more important role, to preserve, restore and improve more systematically, on urban, social, economic and cultural levels. From 1971 onwards, the Ministry of VROM became responsible for urban renewal and the restoration of the urban slums. In contrast to the approach of the 1960s, which often saw historical neighbourhoods addressed through demolition, the emphasis shifted towards restoration and improvement of existing housing. Policies for urban renewal decentralised towards the provincial and municipal governments, presumably due to an increased priority towards local interests of the neighbourhoods.¹⁵ In 1977, a national grant was made available to improve historical, decayed neighbourhoods. The slogan “Build for the Neighbourhood” (Dutch: *Bouwen voor de Buurt*), originating from the Partial Nota Urban Renewal in Rotterdam from 1975, marks the wish for more participation and small-scale quality in the neighbourhood.¹⁶

1.2 A matter of architectural quality

As already indicated, the critique on architectural quality started to grow after the onset of the reconstruction of the Netherlands in the 1960s. The monotony of the built environment became the centre of criticism. However, it remained unclear how this affected policies. For that reason, minister Brinkman of the Ministry of Welfare, Healthcare and Culture (hereafter referred to as WVC) commissioned the Council of the Arts to construct a framework for a policy on architecture. In 1984, the Council released the report Architectural Policy Note (Dutch: *Nota Beleid Bouwkunst*) with recommendations for the policy and for the use of about 2.5 million guilders in available funds for promoting architectural quality. About a fifth of the funds would go to promotion of architectural manifestations. The Council argued that the status of the architectural profession should be improved and the government is responsible for stimulating more creativity and repositioning the public role of architecture. The Ministry agreed and argued that steps need to be undertaken. “Architecture and design suffer from a lag in the recognition of their cultural importance, while these are cultural expressions that every audience, solicited and unsolicited, has to deal with,” Brinkman wrote in his letter to the House of Representatives in 1987. The Ministry of WVC provided the funds of 2.5 million guilders, with which manifestations, publications and young architects became financially supported.¹⁷ Deregulation and decentralisation of tasks became an important element of national policies in the beginning of 1980, with the underlying idea being that simplifying and decreasing the amount of regulations would be conducive for the recovery of the country’s economic position.¹⁸ Consequently, the role of the government becomes more facilitative and stimulative of nature.

¹⁵ Ibid., 89.

¹⁶ Ibid., 90.

¹⁷ Ibid., 111.

¹⁸ Van Dijk, H. (Ed.). (1988). *Architectuur in Nederland Jaarboek 87/88*. Van Loghum Slaterus. 40.

2 Rise of the manifestation

2.1 An increasing interest in architecture and urban planning

The public interest in architecture and urban planning can both be regarded as a direct result of and cause for the start of architectural policies. It is invoked by the start of the political recognition of architecture and urban planning as an instrument for economic growth. In effect, politics shift in focus towards stimulating 'architectural quality', a term that formally is introduced in the Fourth Memoranda on Spatial Planning, on which is mentioned more later. The stimulation policies and the increase in interest in architecture resulted in an upheaval of architectural manifestations and exhibitions in the late 1980s. One of the first architectural manifestations took place in 1982 in Rotterdam and was organised by the Rotterdamse Kunststichting (RKS). Various design concepts for the Kop van Zuid in Rotterdam were published under the name Architecture International Rotterdam (AIR) and many foreign architects like Aldo Rossi, Oswald Ungers and Derek Walker contributed with drawings and models.¹⁹ The manifestation became a large success and marked the beginning of Rotterdam as a progressive architectural city, and indirectly also inspired following manifestations. The RKS aimed to stimulate development in the architectural field and broaden the public interest. Due to its great success, the manifestation as an instrument for city marketing started to be utilised by many cities.²⁰ The RKS organised a series of manifestations in the following decade, in which foreign architects and theorists were involved, such as the Air-Alexander.²¹ Most of the manifestations follow in the 1990s and can be regarded in relation to the measures following the first architectural policy 'Ruimte voor Architectuur' in 1992, on which more later.

2.2 The establishment of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp

Besides a sentiment regarding the lack of architectural quality, there was a feeling of significant stagnation in the spatial and economic developments of the Netherlands. According to the initiator of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, Dirk Frieling, the investment climate of the Netherlands was utterly poor: the economic growth rate in the Netherlands in 1986 was the lowest in the entire of Europe, second only to Greece.²² The unemployment rates were becoming a large problem for the Netherlands. At the annual meeting of the Construction Industry Labour Research Foundation (Dutch: *Stichting Arbeidskundig Onderzoek Bouwnijverheid* SOAB) in 1988, Frieling spoke about the importance of spatial planning for the economy. "During the drafting of the First Memorandum on Spatial Planning, the Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (Dutch: *Centraal Planbureau*) was led by Tinbergen," Frieling mentions.²³ Jan Tinbergen was a Dutch economist and Nobel laureate.²⁴ "Tinbergen personally interfered in the First Memorandum because he knew that investment in the country's spatial planning is, in the most literal sense of the word, the foundation of a country's economy. Subsequent generations of economists gradually lost interest in investment and hence spatial planning." "Asked about the general situation in 1987, Frieling replied: "No money, no future vision; no understanding of the relationship between spatial

¹⁹ Bosma, K. (1990), 42.

²⁰ Schipper, K. (2023) 107.

²¹ Ibid., 108.

²² NNAO183.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Nobel Prize laureate Jan Tinbergen. (n.d.). <https://tinbergen.nl/professor-jan-tinbergen>

planning and the economy. No initiative can be expected from a government under these circumstances".²⁵ The initiative of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp would be an attempt at breaking through the stagnation in economic growth and create new ground rules that force the economy, politics and culture to adopt new attitudes towards each other.²⁶ In November 1983, Stichting Architectuur Museum drafted the proposal 'Ground Rules on Growth' for a foundation that would merely be in existence for a duration of five years, to create an exhibition in 1987. The exhibition, to be called *Nieuw Nederland*, aimed at "breaking through the prevailing notions of stagnation with an active and constructive response to previous changes".²⁷ In the note, the initiators state that structural insecurity about the future should be regarded as a challenge, not as a threat. Through design, the insecurity would be partly removed. The initiators argue that an exhibition, with at the heart, scenario designs for the future, would only be effective if it was to be plausible, inspiring and tangible.²⁸ Initiators argued that for making effective design scenarios, designers from different disciplines and specifically young designers should take part in the project. This is in line with the previously mentioned trend from the 1980s, to stimulate the role of young architects more within large-scale projects. Lastly, the initiators underline the importance for the exhibition to attract a large number of visitors and to stimulate the discussion on the future of the Netherlands through the lens of spatial planning.²⁹

In January 1984, a small delegation from the Stichting Architectuur Museum and the Union of Dutch Urban Planners visited the chairman of the Scientific Council for Government Policy (Dutch: *Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid*, hereafter referred to as WRR) and the national director-general Witsen of Spatial Planning. Their purpose was to request support for their proposal.³⁰ The support was granted from various domains. A board of advisors was brought into existence by Ivor Samkalden, former chairman from the Council of Advice for Spatial Planning and former mayor of Amsterdam.³¹ The board of advisors included prominent figures such as the chief executive officer of the Royal Dutch Petroleum Company, Wagner, professor Kreukers on behalf of the WRR, and the national director-general Witsen.³² The total exhibition cost four million guilders, making it the most expensive exhibition of that time.³³ Public funding of one million guilders came from various ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture, and the Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning and Environmental Management. Furthermore, the initiative was granted the support of 850,000 guilders from the Education and Development Fund for Construction (Dutch: *Opleidings- en Ontwikkelingsfonds voor bouwnijverheid*). The rest of the financial support came from private construction companies and universities.³⁴ The project would be one of massive collaboration between public and private organisations, supported through knowledge, time and finances from universities, governmental bodies and advisors.³⁵

²⁵ NNAO183.

²⁶ NNAO192.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ NNAO190.

³¹ Ibid.

³² NNAO183.

³³ Moscoviter, H. (1987).

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

2.3 Kicking off operations

In 1984, the foundation started its operations. The central organisation was already of quite a remarkable size; with a board, a board of advisors and a separate board of advisors. The general objective of the exhibition would be “to give a forward-looking and innovative impetus to the spatial design of the Netherlands as part of Western-Europe.” The exhibition would aim to reach a large audience: “to all those who want to experience the future as a challenge and above all devote themselves to the beauty of our country. To them, the exhibition offers: information, in the form of future scenarios, about changes in society that give rise to changes in the use of space; inspiration, in the form of future designs of changes in the layout of urban and rural areas as well as water areas in our country; participation, in the form of a dialogue with the initiators and with each other about the scenarios and the designs using the latest information techniques”.³⁶ In an application for a funds at the Ministry of WVC, the initiators write specifically about its relevance for the different domains: to break through the trend of “pappen en nathouden”³⁷ in urban planning, to re-establish the role of the visual shaping of design as an autonomous and creative action as an indispensable part of the design process, and lastly to experiment with forms of participation procedures.³⁸

The four scenarios can be divided into four themes: the dynamic, careful, critical and relaxed scenario. The first three scenarios employed were written by the WRR, based on the three main political ideologies: liberalism, socialism and Christian-Democratism. Together they form a representation of the principles of “liberty, equality and fraternity”, originating from the French Revolution. Moreover, these are inspired by the cultural superstructure of the Netherlands, which reflects the cultural aspects of the Netherlands alongside economic and political structures, representing diversity, creativity and heritage, as described in the annex of a quarterly report sent to collaborators.³⁹ The fourth scenario is inspired by the natural substructure of the Netherlands, basing the possibilities of the Dutch landscape.⁴⁰ It is authored by the initiators themselves, focused on a strong emphasis towards technology. Together, the four future visions can also be categorised as: careful handling of the past, dynamic use of the present, critical work on the future and relaxed playing with the possibilities.⁴¹ The four scenarios are depicted through three scales. On a national scale, they illustrate water, land and air structures, the boundaries between land and sea, drinking water facilities, food and energy provisions, transportation and communication infrastructures and the urban-rural balance.⁴² At the regional level, four specific regions are chosen in alignment with the scenarios.⁴³ At this scale, the scenarios depict the interaction between the region’s unique characteristics and societal changes that are subject to the scenarios, showcasing how population concentration and distribution impact cities. The local scale offers detailed fragments, giving visitors a vivid and direct image of the potential designs for buildings, public spaces, and landscapes.⁴⁴

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ A Dutch saying meant to say something about half-heartedly carrying on without much change, while actually requiring drastic change.

³⁸ SAMU172.

³⁹ SAMU163.

⁴⁰ NNAO183.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² SAMU163.

⁴³ NNAO183.

⁴⁴ SAMU163.

2.4 The four scenarios

The dynamic scenario finds its inspiration in classical liberalism and the free market economy. The role of the government is limited solely to facilitating the right conditions for a strong economic position of the country⁴⁵. Specifically, it entails national regulation to enhance the international competitive position of the Randstad, and deregulation at regional and local levels to ensure individual freedom.⁴⁶ Spatially, it involves a decrease of population to 12 million and a cultural and economic focus on the Anglo-Saxon world. It depicts images of the Randstad with its harbours and other infrastructures, and for the region, the area of Noordzeekanaal is chosen.⁴⁷

The critical scenario is based on the socialist ideology. Society is shaped by a diversity of individuals and groups that are fundamentally equal in power. It involves a stabilisation of the population growth and a political focus on the economically weaker areas of the Netherlands, such as the chosen region of East-Groningen.⁴⁸ There is a focus on national deregulation to achieve a fair division between housing and employment structures, regional concentration of governmental tasks for public transport and local concentration to ensure the position of minorities in the city.⁴⁹

The careful scenario revolves around confessional Christian-Democratism. Spatially it is defined by an affinity with European history and a tempered population growth of 18 million. The scenario depicts the eastern region of Brabant.⁵⁰ Generally, it unveils a national deregulation due to preservation of historical continuity of characteristics of provinces, and regional and local concentration of tasks to pursue a caring society in which the family household holds a central position.⁵¹

The relaxed scenario has a technological and experimental nature. It showcases the development of transportation at sea, for which the sea strip between Katwijk and Domburg is selected.⁵² National concentration forms the basis for enabling new functional possibilities for nature, regional and local concentration provides the best conditions under which cultural vitality is ensured and urban congestion becomes solvable.⁵³

Consequently, these four scenarios were then translated into design briefs by the Social Geographical Department of the University of Amsterdam. The four programmes formed the basis for the four designs that would facilitate dialogue and interaction with the visitors of the final exhibition,⁵⁴ initially planned to take place in either 1986 or 1987.⁵⁵

⁴⁵ Van der Cammen, H. (1987) 47.

⁴⁶ NNAO163.

⁴⁷ NNAO183.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ NNAO163.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ SAMU163.

⁵⁵ SAMU172.

2.5 Stakeholders, outcomes and a location for Nieuw Nederland

Throughout the entire project, over approximately 300 collaborators from fifty different design and research firms contributed, representing a wide variety of organisations.⁵⁶ These included construction companies, engineers, scientists, designers, the Queen's Commissioner, universities and independent research companies, Rijkswaterstaat, municipalities, construction companies, well-known companies like Philips or the PTT, financial institutions such as pension funds and cultural institutions like the Prins Bernhard Fonds or the Wereld Natuur Fonds.⁵⁷ Moreover, famous architects like Carel Weeber, who designed Eropolis, an offshore hotel with 700,000 rooms, and renowned firms like OMA, who designed agricultural structures, housing and recreation in proximity to the Schiphol airport, were also involved.⁵⁸

The resulting products of the project varied greatly in medium: from models, drawings, audiovisuals to computer simulations.⁵⁹ The initiators aimed to stimulate societal discourse on what the future can look like and instil a sense of trust in the malleability of possible futures through design. To achieve this, as the initiators described themselves, "it is essential that an experimental element of the exhibition offers visitors the opportunity to change the scenarios and their associated designs, in order to enable contributions by the visitors themselves to the design of the Netherlands. In this way, the dialogue between visitors and initiators, but primarily among visitors, can be encouraged and specified. As this continues, the societal utility of the project will increase. Systematic polling at the exhibition and organisation of secondary activities like study days, educational and media programs will enhance this effect even further".⁶⁰

Initially, the location for the exhibition was not yet decided. Three types of locations were considered, each potentially influencing the type and size of audience that would visit the final exhibition. As historical cities in the Randstad, Amsterdam and Rotterdam were considered, if the exhibition were to be an indoor exhibition, and primarily attract an audience that is affiliated with urban planning in the Netherlands. Newer, reclaimed areas of the Netherlands such as the Delta and the IJsselmeerpolders were also deliberated for a partially outdoor exhibition, potentially attracting a new audience without prior affinity with urban planning. In a later report from April 1985, the remaining optional locations were specified: the Beurs van Berlage and the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, Bouwcentrum Rotterdam and the artificial island Neeltje Jans.⁶¹ The definite choice for location became the Beurs van Berlage.⁶² The fact that Amsterdam was chosen delighted the foundation's board, especially since Amsterdam had been selected as the European Capital of Culture in 1987.⁶³

⁵⁶ NNAO183.

⁵⁷ Van der Cammen, H. (1987), 162-165.

⁵⁸ Heuvel, D. v. d., Martens, J., & Muñoz Sanz, V. (2020). *Habitat : ecology thinking in architecture*. Nai010 Publishers. 143.

⁵⁹ NNAO183.

⁶⁰ SAMU163.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² SAMU167.

⁶³ NNAO183.

2.6 Leading up to the final exhibition

The five-year anniversary of the foundation Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp took place on December 14, 1987. It would form the final piece of the project 'Nieuw Nederland' that had been worked on through the previous five years, as the founder Dirk Frieling described in a document shared with all collaborators prior to the festive opening of the final manifestation in the Beurs van Berlage.⁶⁴

According to Frieling, a summary of the activities by the foundation would be appropriate. "A summary of five years of ideas, efforts and collaboration of many hundreds of people. A summary in the spirit of the foundation: relaxed and forward-looking", Frieling wrote.⁶⁵ For this summary, Frieling asked all collaborators to fill out a questionnaire prior to the final exhibition, so it would be integrated into the *In memoriam NNAO* on the 14th of December, as the foundation would cease to be on the day of this event. On the day itself, individual pictures of all collaborators would be assembled on a map of the Netherlands with a summary of their experience within the foundation in fifteen words.⁶⁶

The members of the board found it crucial to evaluate if the various aspects of the project were usable in practice, as can be found in the questionnaire that was sent alongside the invitation.⁶⁷

- Do you consider societal scenarios to be a useful instrument in Dutch government practices for spatial planning?
- Do you consider the spatial designs to be a useful instrument in Dutch government practices for spatial planning?
- Do you consider the public-private investment strategies to be a useful instrument in Dutch government practices to financially checking well-considered spatial planning?
- Do you consider the geographical information systems to be a useful instrument in Dutch government practices to socially checking well-considered spatial planning?

2.7 Closing manifestation in 1987

Directly prior to the festive closing exhibition, the members of the board of the foundation gave the collaborators the opportunity to exchange thoughts on the topics covered throughout the project, for one last time, as the board wrote in their invitation to what they called the 'enthusiasts - practitioners and amateurs - of the foundation Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp'. Four different discussion groups would take place, divided by discussions on the scenarios and the function of design, the specific designs made through every scenario, the investment strategy for the 1990s and the computer game *Momentum*. The purpose of these discussions was to examine the practical applicability of the project, identify areas requiring change or improvement, and determine who should be responsible for developing the aspects under discussion in the future.⁶⁸

After the discussion groups, the event kicked off in the late afternoon as the remaining invited guests arrived at the Wang Hall in the Beurs van Berlage. The exhibition was opened by the Dutch prime

⁶⁴ NNAO143.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

minister Ruud Lubbers.⁶⁹ Dirk Frieling, initiator of NNAO, commenced the proceedings by opening the exhibition and introducing Momentum, the computer game developed during the project.

Onstage, four politicians took centre stage, each tasked with directing the gameplay according to the four scenarios outlined in the project. These scenarios, rooted in diverse political ideologies, served as the foundation for the game's dynamics. The setup featured four screens, each corresponding to a different scenario.⁷⁰

Among the politicians, Andrée van Es, a representative of the PSP socialist party, embodied the critical scenario. Frans Tielrooij, from the VVD, liberal party, assumed the role of navigating the dynamic scenario. Helmer Koetje, representing the CDA, Christian-democratic party, guided the gameplay reflecting the careful scenario. Lastly, Adri Duijvesteijn, a member of the PvdA, labour party and the first director of the Netherlands Architecture Institute, steered the relaxed scenario. The Minister of Education and Science was additionally extended an invitation, given the ministry's funding of the computer game, since it was made for secondary school students. To conclude the plenary session, Frieling recited an In Memoriam text accompanied by a choir and music.⁷¹

⁶⁹ NNAO163

⁷⁰ NNAO143.

⁷¹ Ibid.

3 After Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp: the manifestation as an instrument

3.1 Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp and the scenario method

In 1991, the former board decided on allocating some budget for a final publication on the five year long project. The final publication would be realised in both a Dutch and international version. As written in the introduction by Taeke de Jong, the book *Deblokkerende Toekomstbeelden* would display less of the project Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, and “would definitely not be an afterthought”, yet more of a consideration of the scenario-method, prior to and after the project.⁷² The introduction describes that the “methodological character of the publication makes it highly appropriate for educational purposes for socio-geographers, planners and urban planners”. Besides that, it describes how the book is appealing for the initiators, in order to spread the thoughts behind the project of Nederland, Nu als Ontwerp in the long term.⁷³ The manuscript from 1992, found in the archive, was never published. However, it does entail interesting reflections on the scenario design as an instrument by the board themselves. The author argues that the objective of the book was to stimulate the methodological debate and show an elaboration of the method as a form of research by design that integrates forecasting, design and policy making.⁷⁴

According to De Jong, the scenario method enables the capability to forecast the future. The book explores the different languages and domains designers, researchers and policy makers use to. De Jong argues that design explores a wide range of possible futures, despite a predetermined wish for these possibilities. Researchers explore probable futures and policy makers explore collectively desirable futures. The author argues that there is a difference in language between those who want to create something (designers), those who want to know something (researchers) and those who want to reach agreements (policy makers).⁷⁵ The author raises a question that is central to the objective of the project and this book’s reflection: “How can we know what we want when we do know what is possible? This is a crucial question because it places the priority of the objectives in perspective. The desirable sometimes follows the newfound possibilities. The resources sometimes inspire new objectives. An invention (the steam engine, the chip) opens ways to unforeseen possibilities and sometimes creates new perspectives”.⁷⁶

The scenario method is an instrument that explores “possibilities from probable futures, but then connects them to an area not (yet) perceived as collectively desirable, thereby opening eyes to possibilities not yet considered”.⁷⁷ It is a method to bridge the gap between design, research and policy. The manuscript states that design and research results must be integrated in favour of governance and policy in terms of the planning cycle of spatial planning. It further elaborates on the repellent effect between designers and researchers in the Memoranda on Spatial Planning. In the First Memorandum,

⁷² NNAO163.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

research is prominent, whereas in the Second Memorandum the visual design takes on a central role, in the Third Memorandum text and in the Fourth Memorandum again, the visual design. This continuation of repelling one another becomes visible in provincial and municipal spatial planning as well as in universities, the author states. However, the scenario method can be applied to bring design and research together, relevant for public and private collaborations.⁷⁸

The instrument is applied during the project of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp and in the preliminary phases of the Third and Fourth Spatial Planning Memorandum.⁷⁹ The publication further comments on the barriers of each domain and how the scenario method can remove these barriers. The design domain deals with what De Jong frames as ‘the blocking paradigm of causality’. Designers can enable possible futures with design, but cannot force these futures, despite the specifically requested future scenarios by clients. Design, unlike research, is not always comparable and generalisable. However, comparability can be achieved through fictional changes in research by design. These fictional changes can be regarded as different possible scenarios. This is how, the author suggests, the scenario method can bridge between researchers and designers.⁸⁰

The method is key to the project Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp with the final exhibition of Nieuw Nederland, as a summary and overview of results of the project. It is representative of an increasing interest in improving private-public collaborations in the field of architecture and urban planning. The author argues here that scenario thinking is used, by assessing the probable futures to the desirable in perspective of which is not probable, but possible. It uses extreme variables, by using only one political ideology for each scenario, and the formulation of these outcomes to the maximal extremity of one polar political ideology would raise awareness about the limits of the imposed, implicit barriers, and expose the range of variation in choices for the future.⁸¹ In particular, the computer game Momentum, which had about 40,000 possible outcomes, would remove the largest barrier in thinking about the future: it breaks with the thought that the possible outcomes for the future are finite.⁸²

3.2 Nederland Nu Als Ontwerp and the Fourth Memorandum on Spatial Planning

To further promote the importance of the architectural and urban planner’s profession, a renewed public interest needed to be stimulated. The establishment of the foundation of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, is one of the exponents of bridging the gap between the public and thinking about architecture and urban planning. The final manifestation, with its enticing audiovisual graphics and models would make the architectural profession not only more approachable, but attempt to invoke further interest in the built environment. Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp can be viewed as an alternative response to the policies, as Schipper argues in her thesis.⁸³ Parallel to the five year long project of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, the government worked on the Fourth Memorandum on Spatial Planning, with more attention to the role of designers than in the previous policies. In this Memorandum, published in 1988 (one year after the final manifestation of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp) the term quality takes a central stage. It indicates that

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Schippers, K. (2023), 125.

architectural quality should be stimulated from an economical perspective, and helps to stimulate economic growth in cities.⁸⁴ The Fourth Memorandum predicts a more prominent role for the free market in architecture and urban planning and less control from the government.

Even though the Fourth Memorandum formally gave the free market a larger role in architecture and urban planning by 1988, by selecting a couple private-public partnership (PPP) projects to be provided with funds, these collaborations found their entrance at the beginning of the 1980s. The PPS arrangements originate from the United States of America by the 1950s, where competition and the free market gain more importance quicker than in the Netherlands. From 1981 onwards, a 'Forum for urban renewal' came together to discuss the revitalisation of historical cities.⁸⁵ The type of collaboration became more popular after the government selected the city centres that would be the concentrations of growth, which was formally introduced in 1966 but gained more importance after the renewed focus on historical city centres in the late 1970s. The selection of these cities, led to more competition between cities, and increased the tension and urgency. In effect, the PPP arrangements gained a solid position in the architectural and urban planning field, as it would enable cities to sustain more position in the economic market, than it would if it were merely driven from a public organisation.⁸⁶ In the 1980s, the government perceived public-private collaborations as a dual-purpose instrument: to reduce expenses on public housing and revitalise the economic market.⁸⁷

The competition had a strong effect on the role of urban planning. Due to the private influences, spatial planning and architecture became part of city marketing. The historical cities had to compete between each other by distinguishing their own character. In effect, it became more important to present plans in an ambitious and attractive manner in order to attract investors and display a good business climate. City images serve as a crucial and characteristic communication and collaboration tool between the public and private domain.⁸⁸

3.3 Direct exponents from the project towards the political domain

As predetermined in the reports, the foundation Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp planned to have their project land in three different domains to provide the desired impulse to spatial planning: the domain of construction and architecture, the domain of education and the financial domain. The final exhibition of Nieuw Nederland would serve as the exponent for the architectural domain, the computer game Momentum for the educational domain, and a financial analysis offering an investment strategy to the financial domain. The latter one was published after the exhibition in 1989.⁸⁹ "The Netherlands can profit from a national investment consult of public governance and institutional investors." It further describes how this strategy can serve as a guideline for policy on urban planning. The strategy was purposed

⁸⁴ Ibid., 125.

⁸⁵ Duijvestein, A. in Bosma, K. (1990), 11.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁸⁷ Schipper, K. (2023), 103.

⁸⁸ Bosma, K. (1990), 7.

⁸⁹ Van der Cammen, H. (1987), 7-8.

towards a proposal useful for the coalition agreements of 1990 and aimed to answer the question of how public and private investments can be aligned to improve the economic position of the Netherlands.⁹⁰

3.4 A permanent place for architectural exhibitions

Merely a couple months after the opening of the final exhibition of Nieuw Nederland, a majority of the House of Representatives voted in favour of the establishment of an architectural institute in December 1987. The political discussion about a potential Dutch architectural institute had been ongoing from the nineteenth century.⁹¹ In 1984, the Council of the Arts pleaded for an architectural institution in the aforementioned report *Nota Beleid Bouwkunst*, which could function as a gateway between manufacturers and consumers and as a deregulation instrument for governmental tasks by the Ministry of WVC.⁹² Its initial objective would be to “to bring together, preserve and make accessible collections in the field of Dutch - and if possible and important also foreign - architecture and urban planning, to promote knowledge of and interest in the cultural aspects of the built environment”.⁹³ The plea finds ground in a proposal in 1984, drafted by a group of representatives from the ministries of WVC and VROM, het *Nederlands Documentatiecentrum voor de Bouwkunst*, *Stichting Architectuur Museum* and *Stichting Wonen*, and contains a design for a Dutch institute for architecture and urban planning. In 1988, the Netherlands Architecture Institute (Dutch: *Nederlands Architectuurinstituut*) was founded. Three institutions, originally from Amsterdam, fuse into the new collective institute: het Nederlands Documentatiecentrum voor de Bouwkunst (NDB), de Stichting Wonen en de Stichting Architectuurmuseum (SAM).⁹⁴ The latter institution is one of the two initiators of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp. Due to the upcoming change of the cabinet in 1989, Minister Nijpels of VROM and Minister Brinkman of WVC reserved a budget for the construction of the Netherlands Architecture Institute, to ensure its arrival under the new cabinet, much to the anger of Minister of Finances Ruding.⁹⁵

A battle for the location of the new architectural institute emerged between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Minister Brinkman strongly favoured Rotterdam, but faced significant opposition in the House of Representatives, fueled by arguments from Amsterdam Mayor Ed van Thijn regarding housing the institution in the Beurs van Berlage. Initially, Ivor Samkalden, chairman of the board of advisors of Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, intended to link the opening of the final exhibition of Nieuw Nederland to the opening of the architectural institute, for which the Beurs van Berlage and het Bouwcentrum in Rotterdam were considered.⁹⁶ However, in 1986, this intention was abandoned.⁹⁷ The debate Chief government architect Dijkstra also strongly expressed a preference for Amsterdam. Minister Winsemius of VROM told Dijkstra to keep his opinion to himself and gave him a speech ban, without much impact, since Dijkstra expressed his preference for Amsterdam over Rotterdam in a public debate in 1985. Nonetheless, the three fused institutions had a strong desire for a new building, and the choice for

⁹⁰ Stichting Nederland Nu Als Ontwerp (Amsterdam). (1989). *Nieuw Nederland : proeve van een investeringsstrategie*. Stichting Nederland Nu Als Ontwerp.

⁹¹ Schipper, K. (2023), 124.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Van Dijk, H. (1988).

⁹⁵ Schipper, K. (2023), 126.

⁹⁶ SAMU162.

⁹⁷ SAMU166.

Rotterdam was unwaveringly set. The terrain of the institute would be an extension of the Museumpark, across the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen.⁹⁸

A grant of 22 million guilders was provided for building the new institute. The future expenses of the institute would be completely covered by the Ministry of VROM. Under Minister Brinkman, the support for arts and culture gained a focus through attracting more public interest for the cultural domain. In the beginning of 1988, he published a 'Plan for Art Policy 1988-1992', in which he created more financial budget for the cultural domain in the broad sense: film, theatre, graphic design, photography and architecture among others. Initially, Brinkman had intended to reserve the sum of ten million guilders in stimulating architecture through for example scholarships for young architects, and the public involvement in architecture. However, the broadening of the scope for his budget was supported through funding by the municipality of Rotterdam and the ministry of VROM. In 1988, the Netherlands Architecture Institute was established and in 1993, the institute opened its doors.⁹⁹

In reaction to the establishment of the Netherlands Architecture Institute, the *Stichting Architectuur Centrum Amsterdam* (ARCAM), was established in 1986. Head of the department Architecture at the *Amsterdamse Academie van Bouwkunst* (1981-1986) Maarten Kloos wanted the planned architectural institute to be opened in Amsterdam. Yet, as soon as Kloos understood that the plans were set on Rotterdam, he started advocating for an alternative architectural centre in Amsterdam. About a year later, ARCAM was established in 1986 and funded by the municipality of Amsterdam. From 1993 onwards, ARCAM was also financially supported by the national Stimulation Fund. In 1988, the institute organised a manifestation called "Boomtown Amsterdam", criticising the development of several train stations in Amsterdam.¹⁰⁰

Local architectural institutes were founded everywhere after the establishment of the Netherlands Architecture Institute. The *Centrum voor Architectuur en Stedenbouw* (CAS) in Groningen was established in 1990, and organised various manifestations in collaboration with the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Among others, they organised "What a Wonderful World" and "Stadsmarkeringen" in 1990 and "A Star is Born" in 1996 and "Blue Moon" in 2001.¹⁰¹ For "Stadsmarkeringen", Polish architect Daniel Libeskind coordinated a masterplan of city marks at the most important access roads of the city Groningen. These marks were commissioned to renowned architects.¹⁰² In the 1990s, Groningen served as an exemplary city in terms of architecture.¹⁰³

3.5 Ruimte voor Architectuur and the role of the manifestation

In the same year the Netherlands Architecture Institute opened its doors, Minister d'Ancona from the Ministry of WVC and Minister Alders of VROM published their proposal for the memorandum 'Space for Architecture' (Dutch: *Ruimte voor Architectuur*). The memorandum proposed a limited role of the national government, to merely create favourable conditions for architectural quality. In effect, the Netherlands

⁹⁸ Schipper, K. (2023), 127.

⁹⁹ Van Dijk, H. (1988).

¹⁰⁰ Schipper, K. (2023), 128.

¹⁰¹ Schipper, K. (2023), 109.

¹⁰² Tilman, H. in Bosma, K. (1990), 40.

¹⁰³ Schipper, K. (2023), 109.

became the first country in the world with specific policy on architecture in 1992.¹⁰⁴ The drafting of the memorandum for Ruimte voor Architectuur was led by chairman Wim Schut¹⁰⁵, who was also part of the board of advisors for Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp.¹⁰⁶ The emphasis on stimulating architectural quality as a governmental task, has important roots in previous policies such as the Fourth Memorandum on Spatial Planning from 1988, the Memorandum Coordinated Building Policy from 1987 (Dutch: *Nota Gecoördineerd Bouwbeleid*) and the Note on Cultural Policy from 1985 (Dutch: *Notitie Cultuurbeleid*).¹⁰⁷ The memorandum builds upon the growing interest in architecture and urban planning, that the Ministry recognizes from press publications and an increase in visitors to architectural exhibitions. The success of both private and public manifestations is described by the Ministries in the policy note. They ascribe the increased public interest as an important development, “since the knowledge on architecture and the ability to recognize architectural value can increase the demand for architectural quality”.¹⁰⁸ Similar to the aforementioned publications which describe city marketing, the national government also underlines the crucial role of architectural quality as a marketing tool for regions or cities.¹⁰⁹

3.6 Related manifestations and the architectural yearbook

Within the Memorandum Ruimte voor Architectuur, four different measure directions can be distinguished: a Stimulation Fund (Dutch: *Stimuleringsfonds*) for architecture, take measures in the field of information provision for the client and architect-client, promoting public engagement with architecture and the further development of existing institutions. The Stimulation Fund, of which five million guilders was made available in 1992, and 6.9 million guilders in 1993 and 1994, was among other types of initiatives, available for manifestations like Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp¹¹⁰. These measurements introduced reveal the increase in interest in architecture, marking the characteristic sociopolitical tendencies of the 1980s¹¹¹ and indicate less of a controlling position for the government.

Manifestations, among other instruments, could help to improve architectural quality. Among promoting public engagement, the Ministry described facilitating excursions and educational programs, publications, manifestations and exhibitions, in order to further contribute to participation in architecture by a large audience.

Through granting funds to local architectural institutes, the government aimed to stimulate the debate through exhibitions and manifestations the institutes could organise with the funds. The ABC in Haarlem organised a series of architectural lectures and the *Kunstvereniging Diepenheim* organised a manifestation with a future vision for using landscape as a framework for situating art¹¹². In 1994, the manifestation “Van ruimte tot rizoom” was organised by the *Stichting Nederlandse Architectuur Manifestatie*, and funded by the Ministry of WVC. It dealt with the dilemmas and societal expectation that

¹⁰⁴ Ministerie van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur, & Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer. (1991). Ruimte voor architectuur : nota architectuurbeleid. SDU. 173

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 7

¹⁰⁶ Van der Cammen, H. (1987), 162-165.

¹⁰⁷ Ministerie van WVC & Ministerie van VROM. (1991), 13.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 80.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 79.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 118-126.

¹¹¹ Van Dijk, H. (1988), 41.

¹¹² Schipper, K. (2023), 171.

architects encounter. It took place in the faculty of Architecture at the Delft University of Technology. Chief government architect Kees Rijnboutt and representatives of the Ministry of VROM and WVC were among others involved in creating the manifestation¹¹³.

Another instrument that proved very stimulating for public interest was the architectural yearbook, firstly published in 1987, the same year of the final manifestation of *Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp*. The book was sold in bookstores and reached a large audience, to which effect architects pursued a place in the book, as it showed that it increased the amount of assignments for architects mentioned in the yearbook.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the yearbooks also included manifestations and exhibitions, to put architectural quality in a spotlight. Here, the upheaval of manifestations and exhibitions becomes visible, such as exhibitions like the Biennale of young architects in 1987 and manifestations by AIR.

The policy note underlines the importance of continuing to develop existing institutions, and marks the Netherlands Architecture Institute as a crucial component to the stimulating and facilitating nature of the policy note and describes its main objective: “The aim is to promote a vibrant, meaningful practice of design and public engagement with architecture. This can be done by stimulating research and opinion formation, promoting international orientation and opening up history as a current source of inspiration for contemporary design tasks”.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Schipper, K. (2023), 108.

¹¹⁴ Stegmeijer, E., Kloosterman, R., Lupi, T., Nicis Institute, & Platform31. (2011). *Bouwen op een sterk fundament: Een tussenevaluatie van architectuurbeleid in opdracht van de ministeries van IENM en OCW*.
https://www.eumonitor.nl/9353000/1/j4nvgs5kjg27kof_j9vvik7m1c3gyxp/vj32crozbdy/f=/blg185130.pdf

¹¹⁵ Ministerie van WVC & Ministerie van VROM. (1991), 57.

Conclusion

The position of architecture and urban planning in the Netherlands largely shifted in the late 1980s, where architecture and urban planning became an important instrument for stimulating economic growth. In the context of the first four Memorandum on Spatial Planning, the national government shifted between the role of a director towards the role of a stimulator of architectural quality, effectively decentralising responsibilities to lower governmental bodies and deregulating public tasks to the free market.¹¹⁶ Stimulation of architectural quality became central in policy making, as there was a lot of critique on the monotone architecture and lack of control on the urban sprawl that gained onset after the Second World War. The tendency to involve private parties into public projects grew¹¹⁷, and was also perceived as an instrument to cut back on costs for the government.¹¹⁸ The Urban Growth Plan, originating from the Second Memorandum on Spatial Planning, caused competition between cities, for which municipalities sought instruments to strengthen their economic position by collaborating with private parties.¹¹⁹ City marketing became more important for urban planners and architects, which was achieved through appealing city images, which would set apart the position of the cities against each other.¹²⁰ The free market mindset gained interest for politicians.

In the 1980s, the economic growth of the Netherlands was at an all-time low. The foundation Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp was established in 1984, as a response to the stagnation in economic growth and an attempt to break through the prevalent inertia in the field of urban planning and architecture.¹²¹ This can be regarded in alignment with the zeitgeist of the 1980s, in which urban planning and architecture were starting to get recognized for its potential to gain investments into the economic market. The objective of the foundation was to create a future-driven exhibition that addresses the spatial planning of the Netherlands, and advocate for the possible malleability of the future through design by giving a forward-looking and innovative impetus to the spatial design of the Netherlands as part of Western-Europe. The aim was to reach a large audience that inspired, informed and stimulated participation in the dialogue about architecture and urban planning.¹²² The initiative resulted in a five-year long project with contributions from over approximately 300 designers, urban planners and scientists¹²³, and a final manifestation in 1987 with the results of research by design exhibited in the Beurs van Berlage. The project was based around four future scenarios for the Netherlands in 2050, of which three written by the WRR under the three main political ideologies (liberalism, socialism, and confessional Christian-Democratism) and one 'free' scenario written by the initiators themselves.¹²⁴ The initiative was the most expensive exhibition of that time, partly through public funding but largely supported with knowledge, time and funding from the private domain.¹²⁵ Therefore, it can be understood as an exponent of the propensity of a strong private influence in the architectural and urban planning domain, as well as an increase in public-private partnerships.

¹¹⁶ Van Dijk, H. (1988), 40.

¹¹⁷ Bosma, K. (1990), 9.

¹¹⁸ Schipper, K. (2023), 103.

¹¹⁹ Duijvestein, A. in Bosma, K. (1990), 12.

¹²⁰ Tilman, H. in Bosma, K. (1990), 36.

¹²¹ NNAO192.

¹²² NNAO183.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ SAMU163.

¹²⁵ NNAO183.

Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp can be regarded as a privately driven alternative to the Fourth Memorandum on Urban Planning from 1988¹²⁶ that was published one year after the final exhibition in the Beurs van Berlage. The memorandum formally introduces the stimulation of architectural quality through policy, embodying the facilitative and stimulative governmental role in architectural and urban planning projects.¹²⁷ Moreover, the stimulative character of national policies also gave rise to many architectural manifestations, publications, and exhibitions to invoke more public interest and private investments, with an overall objective to inspire more architectural quality. Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp employs the method of scenario design and can be seen as an instrument to bridge communication between science, architecture and politics and make public-private partnerships more feasible and attainable. Conclusively, the manifestation by Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, is both an effect and cause of an increase in interest in architecture and urban planning as an instrument for economic growth. Other similar manifestations in the 1980s and 1990s, such as the manifestations by CAS in Groningen¹²⁸ and AIR manifestations by RKS in Rotterdam¹²⁹, can also be regarded as a way to bring more international interest towards the Dutch architecture and urban planning world. In Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp, this can also be perceived through its final publication, meant to also be published in English.¹³⁰

The founding of the Netherlands Architecture Institute in 1988 can also be seen in conjunction with the final exhibition of Nieuw Nederland. Initially, the initiators of the manifestation wanted to link the opening of the final exhibition with an already intended opening for a permanent national architectural institute, also in the Beurs van Berlage.¹³¹ However, this was abandoned later on, as the political discussion around the location for this institute was still not concluded during the last stage of the project Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp. The foundation of the Netherlands Architecture Institute can similarly be seen as a milestone to stimulate architectural interest, but also showcase the already present political interest in spatial planning through manners of stimulation.¹³²

In line with the development for more political interest in stimulating architectural quality, as a means for economic stimulation, the national government launched the first memorandum 'Ruimte voor Architectuur' in 1991. Paradoxically, it does not indicate a step forward for the national government in urban planning and architectural practice: rather a withdrawal and more space for market stakeholders. The government foresees their own role in creating the right conditions for architectural quality. At the time, it was the first memorandum on architecture in the world. Effectively, it indicated the ending of the memoranda on Urban Planning and further dismantling of the planning practice that received so much praise internationally.¹³³ The contemporary absence of architecture and urban planning in national governance cannot be understood without the deregulation and decentralisation in the 1980s and 1990s, in alignment with what is stated in Meijsmans' article. Through deregulation, design becomes more

¹²⁶ Schipper, K. (2023), 125.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Schipper, K. (2023), 109.

¹²⁹ Tilman, H. in Bosma, K. (1990), 42.

¹³⁰ NNAO163.

¹³¹ SAMU166.

¹³² Schipper, K. (2023), 123.

¹³³ Schipper, K. (2023), 14.

important as a research and stimulative instrument.¹³⁴ The Netherlands Architecture Institute ceased to exist in 2013 and continued primarily as a museum, and moreover, the term architecture has completely disappeared from policy documents.¹³⁵ In 2023, the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (Dutch: Planbureau Leefomgeving) published four scenarios for the Netherlands in 2050, but these are primarily oriented towards policy makers and show a minimal role for architecture and urban planning.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Meijsmans, N., & De Zwart, B. (2009). *Naar een cultuur van regionaal ontwerpen: Verkenning van een praktijk in ontwikkeling*. OASE, 80.

<https://oasejournal.nl/en/Downloads/52836345c79eb3b5f5000882/OASE%2080%20-%20108%20Naar%20een%20cultuur%20van%20regionaal%20ontwerpen.pdf>

¹³⁵ Schipper, K. (2023).

¹³⁶ PBL. (2023). *Achtergrondrapport bij Vier scenario's voor de inrichting van Nederland in 2050 (Ruimtelijke verkenning)*. In Planbureau Voor De Leefomgeving. Uitgeverij PBL. Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://www.pbl.nl/uploads/default/downloads/pbl-2023-rv2023-achtergrondrapport-5178.pdf>

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The documents surrounding the closing manifestation reveal the final organisation of the exhibition. It will probably reveal what certain aspects were of importance during the exhibition.

Nederland Nu Als Ontwerp (1992). *Tekst van de slotpublicatie Deblokkerende Toekomstbeelden, concept N.B., niet uitgegeven* (NNAO163), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

The text of the final exhibition showcases what the organisers intended to convey to the public after the final exhibition in 1989.

Nederland Nu als Ontwerp. (1989). *Vragenlijsten met een kernachtige uitspraak over NNAO, ingevuld door de bezoekers van de slotbijeenkomst* (NNAO346), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

The completed questionnaires unveil a comprehensive impression of the closing exhibition, contributing to the understanding of the reception by the public.

Nederland Nu als Ontwerp. (1987). *Stukken betreffende de publiciteit en contacten met de pers* (NNAO158), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Reveals what the organisers wanted to be the core message of the exhibition.

Nederland Nu als Ontwerp. (1988). *Stukken betreffende een gesprek gehouden met de Raad van Advies voor de Ruimtelijke Ordening over de bijlage bij het jaarverslag van de Raad over 1987, waarin de relatie tussen NNAO en de Vierde nota voor de ruimtelijke ordening behandeld zal worden* (NNAO266), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Reveals the correlation between relevance of the manifestation and sociopolitical climate.

Nederland Nu als Ontwerp. (1986). *Stukken betreffende de publicatie van een interview met D.H. Frieling over ontstaan en opzet van NNAO in het personeelsblad van de Rijksplanologische Dienst, de Kakafoon* (NNAO190), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Reveals the intention of the NNAO and its relevance for governmental departments.

[Poster of objectives NNAO]. (1986). *Nederland Nu Als Ontwerp* (NNAO367), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Showcasing initial core objectives of the manifestation.

Nederland Nu Als Ontwerp (1984 – 1985). *Stukken betreffende de oprichting van de stichting "Nederland, nu als ontwerp"* (NNAO192), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

The documents about the creation of the foundation *Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp* entail details about the process of the then future exhibitions.

Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp (1987). *De Slag om de Randstad, spelprogramma over Nederland in 2050, uitgezonden 10-11-1987* (NNAO710), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

After the closing of the exhibition in the Beurs van Berlage, this was broadcasted on national television.

Nederland, Nu Als Ontwerp (unknown date). *Knipsels over de activiteiten van NNAO en de tentoonstelling in Amsterdam*, (NAO183), Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

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Figures

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