

RAAD VOOR CULTUUR

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ESCENA INTERNACIONAL BCN
MAY 2007



Generalitat de Catalunya
**Departament de Cultura
i Mitjans de Comunicació**

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1. General description of the model

As a general rule it may be said that the Dutch government never takes a decision regarding the arts and culture without first consulting independent expert committees. These committees are structured into two types of organizations: the consultative body "Raad voor Cultuur" (www.cultuur.nl) or "Arts Council"¹ and the executive "Cultural Funds".

The government justifies this practice on the basis of two basic principles that it has adopted:

- The government must be responsible for the overall principles of general policy.
- The government must abstain from making value judgements in the areas of culture and the arts.

For this reason, in 1995 it established the current Raad voor Cultuur, charged with the role of advising the government on all matters regarding cultural policies and the allocation of resources to the country's cultural organizations. This council was the result of amalgamation of the former Arts Council (created in 1947), the Heritage Council, the Communication Council ("Mediaraad") and the Libraries and Information Services Advisory Council.

To understand the relationship between the public administration and cultural organizations, a third principle must be added to the two mentioned above:

- The priority objective was established in the area of government cultural policies of maintaining cultural policy at 'arm's length', from its implementation

It is therefore not difficult to understand that there are some 450 artistic and cultural organizations in the Netherlands evaluated by the Raad voor Cultuur and receiving subsidies regulated by four-year agreements. These independent non-profit organizations are responsible for implementing public culture programmes in the Netherlands.

¹ In all documents produced in English, "Raad voor Cultuur" is translated as "Arts Council". This is because they adopt the name of the international model, despite the fact that "Raad voor Cultuur" means "Council for Culture" and that it also has responsibility over the areas of heritage, museums, libraries and so on.

In addition to multi-year financial support to cultural organizations, a very high number of specific grants to individual projects and artists are awarded by funds managed by independent foundations in which there is no direct government intervention with respect to the decisions taken in the area of financial aid.

The Dutch model is thus characterised by operating in a two-fold manner. The federal government, advised by the Raad voor Cultuur, assigns funds directly to cultural projects under the four-year agreement system. Also there are 13 semi-public independent foundations which are responsible for awarding funds to artistic and cultural projects, as well as to individual artists

Thus the Dutch model could be considered a halfway point between the Anglo-Saxon system of financing culture based on the 'arm's length' principle and the model in which governments both decide and implement the policy of providing funds to artistic and cultural organizations.

It should be mentioned that this system is currently undergoing change and is expected to exclude the country's larger cultural structures from the Raad's four-year evaluation system and, at the same time, transfer evaluations in smaller cultural organizations to the Cultural Funds (see final chapter).

2. The Dutch government's four-year plan for culture

The Dutch government is obliged to present a four-year plan for culture to its Parliament, in a process known as "Cultuurnota" (www.cultuurnota.nl). The Cultuurnota reviews government cultural policy every four years and revises and awards financial support to cultural organizations for that period.

The process of drawing up the Cultuurnota is as follows:

1. The Council for Culture issues a preliminary pre-advice report of general recommendations for cultural policy during the four-year period. This report is delivered to the Ministry of Culture.²
2. On the basis of these recommendations, the Ministry draws up the Cultural Policy document, which it delivers to Parliament for presentation and debate.
3. Once the document has been debated in Parliament, the government opens the call period for subsidy applications from cultural organizations on the basis of these general lines of cultural policy. This call is answered by all Dutch cultural organizations from all sectors and areas of activity: artistic companies, cultural funds, support organizations, etc.
4. The Ministry collects all the applications and after having subjected them to a preliminary selection process based on legal and technical factors, it delivers the documentation to the Raad voor Cultuur for its evaluation of the organizations and recommendations for a new financial support framework.
5. Once the Council for Culture has made its recommendations, it sends them to the Ministry, which has the last word and can make any modifications it deems fit. The documents are then delivered to Parliament for discussion which can lead to amendments being added. On their return to the Ministry the four-year funding period may be considered to have begun.

² In our report we have decided to use the term "Ministry of Culture", though in fact the full title is the "Ministry of Education, Culture and Science".

The next four-year period will be from 2009 to 2012, the Cultuurnota preparation process will take place in 2007 and 2008 in accordance with the following provisional calendar:

- April 2007: Delivery of the pre-advice general policy document to the Minister for Culture
- July 2007: Delivery and debate of the government's general policy document in Parliament
- September 2007: Publication of the criteria and opening of call period for requests for four-year grants
- February 2007: Closure of the call period for applications
- May 2008: Recommendations from the Raad to the government regarding the grants
- September 2008: Delivery to Parliament of the government's decisions on subsidies
- January 2009: Beginning of the four-year period

According to the declarations of most of the people interviewed, the Ministry almost never rejects positive recommendations made by the Raad. Moreover, it often approves applications that have received negative recommendations (from companies and organizations situated in a medium quality segment, never in the case of bad quality companies). The government justifies this by mentioning the need to fulfil objectives that are not purely artistic but rather more instrumental, such as cultural diversity, social cohesion, and so on. It should be said that recommendations made by the Council for Culture are based solely on criteria of quality and artistic diversity.

Any organization dissatisfied with the results of the process can file a claim in court. Judges can revoke the Ministry's decisions if it can be shown that the process was carried out without guarantees of transparency or equality of opportunity, or if adequate reasons have not been given for a decision. During the last four-year period one hundred such actions were taken against the government.

The Cultural Funds also take part in this process of subsidy application presentation, project evaluation and recommendation by the Raad, and the subsequent award of funds by the Ministry. They also undergo the same

four-year process as all other cultural organizations to obtain the resources they need to operate and award grants. The paradox is thus produced in which the funds are evaluated by an advisory council which is at the same time independent and executive when it comes to awarding its financial support (but this situation is changing, as will be shown in a later section).

3. The Dutch Council for Culture – Raad voor Cultuur

The Raad voor Cultuur is the advisory body to the Dutch government in the area of cultural policy and multi-year funding by the Ministry of Culture. In addition to providing compulsory advice to the government every four years, it also continuously monitors the fulfilment level of the government funded projects run by organizations.

The Arts Council is one of 14 advisory organizations used by the government to design its policies. The Dutch government has advisory councils in such different areas of public action as healthcare, education, foreign policy, the environment and transport, among others. They are regulated by law and considered the ‘think tanks’ of the different areas of public action. The Council for Culture has a special role of evaluating and making recommendations about subsidies to be awarded to organizations, a function not shared by the remaining councils.

3.1. Structure of the Council for Culture

3.1.1. The Council and the councillors

Final responsibility for the decisions of the Raad voor Cultuur falls upon the councillors who make up the Council proper. The Council is currently formed of 9 people, though the Statutes provide for a maximum number of 15 councillors.

The number of members on the Council has fallen progressively since it was founded.

Year	Council Members of the Raad voor Cultuur
1995 (founding)	25 members
2002	19 members
2005 (Statute reform)	15 members (maxim number)
Currently	9 members

According to the people interviewed this reduction is due to the ever increasing desire to avoid the influence that sectorial representation could have on the composition of the Council. Thus, when the Raad was founded in 1995 as a consequence of amalgamating the Arts Council with those of the Communications Media, Heritage and Libraries, it was decided that all these areas of culture need to be represented. The first Council was therefore comprised of 25 members in order to provide places for all.

Over the years, the practical need to reduce the number of council members has been evident, which helps to reinforce the independent and non-representative role of the councillors. This has led to the situation today of a 9-member Council.

In general the councillors are people known in the world of culture, but with no direct link to artistic and cultural organizations that receive subsidies from the Ministry. Councillors are not required to be experts in any artistic discipline (in contrast to the advisory committees), though a certain diversity is sought among members, resulting in the presence of experts in law and finance, critics, ex-politicians, humanists and so on. The Council of the Raad is currently made up of a lawyer (Chair), two artists (a writer and a film director), an ex-politician, two university professors and a journalist/critic. There are two vacancies to be filled.

The independent and non-representative nature of members is highly valued. As the Director of Raad voor Cultuur commented, councillors decide on the basis of their principles and not on that of their representational commitments.³

Therefore Council membership is not possible for.

- Board members of organizations that receive support from the government (this is now changing allowing for greater permissiveness)
- Directors or salaried personnel of organizations that receive support from the Raad
- Serving politicians
- State employees

³ Attention is drawn to the value of Protestant individualism which pervades the representational possibilities of people in the Anglo-Saxon cultural area and is the basis of the way the boards of non-profit cultural organizations operate.

They are firm when they state that any person who could bring about a conflict of interests may not be a Council member.

Council members are appointed by the Crown and the appointments are ratified by the Council of Ministers. The selection process for new Council members is as follows:

1. The Ministry of Culture publishes the call in the press for applications to fill the vacant Council posts
2. A Selection Committee is formed of 4-5 independent members designated by the Ministry who review the applications which have been made within the deadline
3. If the Selection Committee fails to find the suitable person among applicants responding to the public call, it may directly ask specific people to present their candidacy
4. The Selection Committee proposes a candidate to the Ministry, which makes the appointment

According to the people interviewed, the most usual result is that none of the candidates coming from the public call are chosen. Normally the selection comes from a candidate presented and approved by the Committee.

Council members are given an allowance of:

Councillors	€1,200/month	Equivalent to 3 days' work a month
Chair	€8,000/month	Equivalent to 3 days' work a week

Council members meet between 10 and 11 times a year. It is considered that when they are not in meetings they are carrying out tasks of documentation, information and representation.

3.1.2. Executive structure and committees

The executive and advisory structure of the Raad voor Cultuur is made up of the Secretariat and the committees. The former is the personnel structure of the organization itself and the latter the structure for the decision-making process on grants and cultural policy recommendations.

Some 35 people work in the Raad, of which 24 are specialists and 11 administrative staff. All personnel are state employees assigned to the Ministry of Culture. The person in charge of management is the General Secretary. The 24 specialists also act as secretaries to the different committees.

The Raad's Director is appointed by the Council and must be approved by the Ministry.

The committees are responsible for carrying out analysis and evaluation of cultural organizations and cultural policies. The committees work under the principle of peer evaluation.

Peer evaluation refers to the assessment or revision of a professional's work or project by other professionals who are experts in the same sector (peers). This principle, widely used in the evaluation of scientific work, is considered the main system for judging subsidy applications in cultural organizations that operate by the 'arm's length' principle.

The Raad is organized in committees that correspond to the different cultural and artistic fields of competence, but there are others of a horizontal nature. The following are the current committees:

Visual arts and design	Theatre
Dance	Music
Cinema	Literature
Architecture and monuments	Amateur art and education
Museums	Archives
Archaeology	Communications media
Libraries	International cultural policies
Intercultural policies	E-culture

The committees are formed of 4-5 members; people who are experts in the aforementioned disciplines. Unlike the councillors, these people may form part of artistic and cultural organizations.

Therefore, there is no restriction on the participation of professionals in the arts and culture. However, if a member of a committee has a conflict of interest in evaluating an organization, that person abstains from participating in the evaluation by leaving the room while stated topic is being discussed. On accepting their appointment, members of the committees are obliged to declare which organizations they maintain any form of relationship with.

Recommendations of the committees and the names of their members are made public and freely accessible to all, being published on paper as well as on the Internet. To avoid the professional careers of these committee members being harmed by an organization that receives a negative evaluation, committee members may choose not to participate in certain evaluations, a fact which is noted in the organization's evaluation document.

The total number of people currently participating on Raad committees is 65.

The selection of committee members is carried out by the Ministry on the proposal of the Council of the Raad voor Cultuur.

Committee members are paid an allowance of €200 from the Ministry of Culture, and the Committee Chair €260 per meeting.

3.2. Responsibilities over sectors and organizations

A quick look at the list of committees shows that the Raad voor Cultuur has responsibility over almost all areas of cultural action.

- On the one hand, all of the creative disciplines are included: visual arts, performing arts, music and opera, literature, design, architecture, cinema and "amateur arts " (popular and traditional)
- On the other, it also decides on the financial support to be given to organizations in the sectors of communication, heritage conservation, museums, archives, libraries and "arts and education" (not education in the arts)

This wide range of responsibilities over cultural sectors should be explained in more detail. While the Ministry of Culture is responsible and has the last

word for the general policies of culture, regarding finance it is only responsible for one third of total public expenditure on culture.

The town and city halls along with provincial authorities spend around two thirds of national expenditure on culture (the Councils: 62%). These bodies have responsibility for the presentation and exhibition of culture. Thus the large majority of cultural installations such as theatres, museums, libraries, archives and monuments depend financially on the municipalities and not the central government. In short, municipalities take charge of the "container" and central government of the "content". In general, with regards to museums, libraries, monuments and theatres, central government only assigns small amounts to specific projects for development purposes.

Thus the central government is responsible for:

- Support for artistic creation. Including: companies, orchestras, creation and production centres, artistic research centres, festivals, etc.
- Support and development of organizations in the cultural and artistic sectors. These organizations include the funds for financing artistic and cultural projects, sector associations, development organizations, training centres, information and research centres, international projection, support to distribution, and so on.
- It is also responsible for huge spaces of strategic centrality such as the National Library, the National Archaeology Service, the most significant museums and almost all centres of higher education, such as the conservatories.

3.3. Activities and project monitoring

In the last period (2004-2008), the Raad voor Cultuur provided advice on 850 subsidy applications of which it positively evaluated some 450.

In addition to the compulsory recommendations on cultural policy for the Cultuurnota, the evaluation of organizations and award of financial support, the Raad voor Cultuur also carries out studies in specific areas of culture and cultural policies, with a view to guiding the government in new elements of cultural policy. These studies are delivered to the Ministry and disseminated publicly.

On the initiative of the Arts Council, in recent years studies have been carried out into such diverse subjects as art and education, the future of the press, built heritage from the Second World War, the future of museums, and e-culture, as well as many others.

The evaluation of cultural organizations does not end on the delivery of the report to the Ministry of Culture every four years. The Raad also monitors project activity throughout the entire period.

In the performing arts sector, the Raad has 24 people not directly employed by the entity who are its "eyes and ears". Specialists in the different disciplines, these people attend events and concerts offered by the groups being monitored, and then draw up a track record report which is included in the group's file.

Furthermore, every third and fourth year of the period the subsidised organization holds a meeting with the committee responsible for evaluating it in which a review is made of the work carried out and whether it is in line with the aims set out in the application.

In contrast to the Cultural Funds, the Raad does not carry out international projection actions. The Council is responsible for evaluating the support organizations that have that task, but does not itself undertake such action.

3.4. Budget and financing

In 2005, the Raad voor Cultuur made recommendations about subsidies to cultural organizations for a total value of €764M, of which €81M is distributed to individual projects and artists through the Cultural Funds.

Amount of funds to culture recommended by the Raad	€764M
Amount of funds distributed by the Cultural Funds (including the previous item)	€81M
Raad structure budget	€3.4M

The Raad does not manage funds other than those of the Ministry of Culture and has an operating budget of €3.4M.

3.5. Location and territorial structure

The Raad head office is situated in The Hague and has no regional or other type of office outside its headquarters.

Similarly, the Cultural Funds have just one central office in The Hague, Amsterdam or Rotterdam, with no branch office in any other city or province in the Netherlands.

3.6. Relationships with representative organizations of other culture sectors

Though in the past a closer link existed with representative organizations of cultural sectors, currently there is no kind of institutionalised relationship or participation on commissions or committees.

Statements from the Raad voor Cultuur indicate that the system has gradually evolved into a reduced presence of people representing sectors and a greater presence of people acting in their own right (experts on the committees and Council members) not representing any artistic, social or political group.

However, they do organize theme-based meetings to which they invite representative organizations from the sectors, though these are sporadic and not in any way made obligatory by the Statutes.

4. The Cultural Funds

The second pillar of the Dutch model for awarding financial support to culture is the Cultural Funds. These comprise a series of semi-public foundations that are responsible for granting finance to artistic creation and cultural projects as well as to individual artists.

The Cultural Funds operate independently of the Ministry and the Arts Council. In contrast to the Arts Council, these funds are based on the 'arm's length' principle, by which they have executive capacity in the granting of financial aid to projects and artists. Their relationship with the Ministry is as follows:

- The Arts Council makes recommendations with respect to its assigned budget in the same way as it does with the other cultural organizations in four-year agreements
- It receives the annual budget allocation agreed upon for a four-year period
- Members of the foundation councils are appointed by the Ministry
- The Ministry decides the general criteria for funding policy (for example, it is currently imposing quotas that, over a period of five years, will result in a compulsory 50% of aid to individual artists being allocated to artists that proceed from non-Dutch cultures or who are immigrants)

The Cultural Funds made their first appearance in the late eighties. The funds' legal structure is that of non-profit private organizations and they are subject to common law.

The funds award grants to individual artists to carry out creative or research work, as well as to specific projects initiated by cultural organizations. The recipient and amount to be granted depend exclusively on the fund management and Council, which seek the advice of experts from the sector to assess applications on the basis of peer evaluation principles.

The Netherlands currently operates the following Cultural Funds:

- Dutch Foundation for Literature (*Fonds voor de Letteren*) (1969) (<http://www.fondsvoordeletteren.nl>)
- Fund for Creative Music (*Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst*) (1982) (www.fondsscheppendetoonkunst.nl)
- Foundation for the Visual Arts, Design and Architecture (BKVB Foundation) (*Fonds voor Beeldende Kunsten, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst*) (1987) (www.fondsbkvb.nl)
- Foundation for the Production and Translation of Dutch Literature (*Nederlands Literair Productie- en Vertalingen Fonds: NLPVF*) (1991) (www.nlpvf.nl)
- Mondriaan Foundation for the Presentation of Visual Arts, Design and Architecture (*Mondriaan Stichting*) (1993) (www.mondriaanfoundation.nl)
- The Netherlands Architecture Fund (*Stimuleringsfonds voor Architectuur*) (1993) (www.archfonds.nl)
- Netherlands Film Fund (*Nederlands Fonds voor de Film: NFF*) (1993) (www.filmfund.nl)
- Libraries for the Blind Foundation (*Fonds voor het Bibliotheekwerk voor Blinden en Slechtzienden*) (1995)
- Foundation for the Programming of Performing Arts and Marketing (*Fonds voor Podiumprogrammering en Marketing: FPPM*) (2002) (www.fppm.nl)
- Fund for Amateur Art and Performing Arts (*Fonds voor Amateurkunst en Podiumkunsten*) (2002) (www.fapk.nl)

Operation of the following three funds is regulated by a different law from that of the Cultural Funds:

- The Press Fund (*Bedrijfsfonds voor de Pers*) (1974) (www.bedrijfsfondspers.nl)

- Dutch Cultural Broadcasting Fund (*Stimuleringsfonds Nederlandse Culturele Omroepproducties*) (1988) (www.stimuleringsfonds.nl)
- Special Journalistic Project Fund (*Stichting Fonds Bijzondere Journalistieke Projecten*) (1990) (www.fondsbjp.nl)

The operation of most funds is highly similar, so we will make a brief introduction to three with which we have held interviews

5. Fund for Amateur Art⁴ and Performing Arts

This Fund is undergoing a process of transformation (see the end of this report). It was founded in 1992 by the Ministry of Culture, which transferred its responsibilities in the area of providing support to performing arts projects by, some would say, "privatising them".

The structure is very similar to that of the Raad. A Council made up of 7 members has the last word on Fund decisions.

In contrast to the Arts Council and the other funds, this fund has an Advisory Committee formed by the Chairs of the committees, together with other people. The Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the Fund Council on matters of policy in general.

The decision-making process in regards to awarding grants is carried out by the committees. There are currently 11 committees, each corresponding to the different area in which they work. These committees are made up of a Chair and 5 members, all experts in the different sub-sectors under consideration. The committees advise the Council on decision making, though the latter delegates the final decision to the Fund director. The assessment principle used is that of peer evaluation.

5.1. Responsibilities and activities

In matters relating to amateur creation:

Dance	Music and Music-Theatre (opera, etc.)
Theatre	Literature
Audiovisual	Visual arts and new communications media

In performing arts:

Dance	Theatre	Music and Music-Theatre (opera, etc.)
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⁴ In The Netherlands, the term "amateur" includes what is considered "popular and traditional" in Catalonia and what is called "community arts" in the United Kingdom.

5.2. Profile of councillors

As in the case of the Raad, Council members must be people who do not hold any position in any organization that may be subsidised. They are appointed by the Ministry on the proposal of the Council.

The Fund director is appointed by the Fund Council and must be approved by the Ministry.

Members of the committees are working professionals, experts in a specific area of the performing arts. Should any conflict of interest occur, the member concerned may not participate in deliberation on the project relating to the conflict.

Members of the Advisory Committee are appointed by the Fund director, by delegation from the Council.

Council members receive an allowance of €200 per meeting.

5.3. Budget

- The annual budget of the Fund is €16M
- The Fund awards grants amounting to €14M per year

The origin of the resources is the Ministry of Culture, with the exception of €0.8M for international projects awarded by the Foreign Ministry.

5.4. Lines of aid

The grants that are awarded go solely to projects of creation in the field of the professional performing arts (theatre, music and dance) and the amateur arts (theatre, music, dance, visual arts and audiovisual).

There is another Fund complementary to this one and dedicated to distribution and the creation of audiences (Foundation for the Programming of Performing Arts and Marketing). These two Funds will be amalgamated in November this year.

Four grant programmes have been established:

Amateur art: intended to help cover costs incurred in relation to artistic activities undertaken by artists, groups and amateur clubs.

Production and research: aimed at individual professional artists, cultural institutions and producers to cover production and research costs.

Grants and stipends: aimed at young artists who have achieved the highest qualification in art academies and at professionals working in the performing arts. This programme is for specialisation courses or residences abroad. Stipends are also awarded to established professionals for periods of reflection, exploration and reorientation of their careers.

International Programme: aimed at artists who wish to develop international exhibitions or production projects. The International Programme is divided into four sub-sections: amateur art, international tours by professional artists or groups, international collaboration projects and international festivals in the Netherlands.

6. Foundation for the Visual Arts, Design and Architecture – BKVB FOUNDATION

This Foundation was established in 1988 on a proposal from the Ministry of Culture.

Its operation and structure is very similar to that of the Fund for Performing Arts, with a few small differences.

6.1. Responsibilities and activities

The Foundation awards grants to individual artists for artistic creation, research and study in the visual arts, design and architecture.

In addition to the different grant programmes, the Foundation carries out activities or pilot projects to develop a specific area of artistic creation. These pilot projects can be specific commissions to artists to produce a work, establish a dissemination platform (as in the case of the fashion platform), or carry out studies and publications.

6.2. Grant programmes

The BKVB Foundation offers a wide range of grants for artists. They are divided into two general groups: basic grants and incentive grants. The aim of the former is to enable artists to maintain a basic level of professional practice, while the latter are intended to encourage contemporary creation.

The basic grants are the following:

- **Basic stipends:** contribution to maintain a basic standard of living for the artist and cover professional expenses
- **Production grants:** contribution towards the basic costs of production (studio rental, professional travel, promotion material, etc.)

In terms of incentives, the following lines are offered:

- **Start-up stipends:** contributions to help begin or develop the professional career
- **Grants to projects:** to carry out an artistic creation or research project
- **Work grants:** for professionals with experience who wish to concentrate on reflection, research or career reorientation for a certain period of time (maximum one year)
- **Grants for investments**
- **Grants to publications**
- **Grants for practice:** contribution to the professional expenses of designers and architects

There are also two further lines of support, one aimed at critics, theorists and scholars for research, publication or symposiums, among other activities. The second line is directed at artists to carry out residences abroad.

6.3. Fund structure

Like all the Culture Funds, the BKVB Foundation is managed by a Council, made up of 6 people appointed by the Ministry of Culture on the proposal of the Foundation. In theory, the Ministry may reject a proposed member of the Foundation Council but according to the people interviewed this has never happened. The Council holds four meetings a year in which it approves the accounts and the overall lines of general policy.

The Foundation director is appointed by the Ministry on the proposal of the Foundation Council.

The BKVB employs 19 people, most of them part time.

The system for evaluation and giving of grant is made up of 23 committees, called "working groups", which operate under the principle of peer evaluation. Each group is made up of five professionals, each an expert in the different areas in which the group has been assigned responsibility.

The BKVB Foundation structure of specialist advisors consists in a total of 100 professionals.

The Foundation director decides on the award of grants by delegation from the Council on the basis of recommendations from the committees. Specific grant awards do not have to be approved by the Ministry.

The profile of working-group members is one of professionals from the sector: artists, critics, curators, and so on, with general knowledge of the sector and specialised in one particular branch. In selecting members, the Foundation seeks to cover the widest possible diversity of professional profiles from the sector.

Working-group members may not apply for grants while they are connected with the Foundation. Membership is for a period of two years, which may be renewed three times.

The fee paid to working-group members is €250 per meeting.

6.4. Budget

The Foundation budget amounts to €20M a year, of which €1.6M is dedicated to maintaining the structure and the rest to grants and activities.

The budget is approved and assigned by the Ministry of Culture for a period of four years after having been evaluated by the Raad voor Cultuur.

6.5. Relationships with associations in the sector

At the moment there are no institutional relationships with associations in the sector. According to the people interviewed, the associations are losing strength, and while ten years ago there was a representative Council on which sector associations participated, that model no longer operates. Neither have any regular contacts been established.

7. Mondriaan Foundation

The main aim of the Mondriaan Foundation is to broaden interest in and demand for the visual arts, design and Dutch artistic heritage both in the Netherlands and abroad. The Mondriaan Foundation encompasses similar artistic disciplines to the BKVB Foundation, but different activities. While the latter operates in the field of support to creation in visual arts, design and architecture, the Mondriaan is responsible for the presentation, distribution and acquisition of artistic work.

7.1. Responsibilities and activities

Founded in 1994 by the Ministry of Culture, the Mondriaan Foundation awards grants to cultural organizations to present exhibitions and artworks, develop initiatives aimed at international projection, purchase works of art, organise events, publications and so on.

In addition to granting subsidies, the Foundation also carries out activities on its own initiative, such as those connected with the international projection of Dutch art and coordination of the Dutch presence at the Venice Biennial.

It receives some 1,500 grant applications a year, of which it approves around 60.

In contrast to other funds the Mondriaan awards two or three year grants for projects.

7.2. Budget

The Mondriaan Foundation is assigned a budget from the Ministry of Culture of €20M a year, of which €1.4M is allocated to structural expenses.

7.3. Structure

As in the case of the other funds, the Mondriaan has a Council of six people not directly linked to the cultural sectors and who are appointed by the Ministry on the proposal of the Council.

The Council appoints the Foundation director, who has absolute responsibility delegated by the Council for decisions taken by the Foundation.

There is also a number of expert committees that advise management on the basis of the peer evaluation principle. Expert committee members are appointed for a period of one year, renewable twice.

8. Current debates to improve the model

Most of the people interviewed consider the Dutch model to be a good one. They value highly the mixed system of decision making with regard to the award of grants to culture. Though general opinion holds that politics should be separated from culture management, there are those who defend the Dutch model. They believe that use of the 'arm's length' principle runs the risk that politicians will become disconnected from culture and will consequently fail to support its financing. The fact that politics is responsible for the larger elements of cultural infrastructure is regarded as a lesser evil to be assumed in return for maintaining a political class not disassociated from cultural policy.

Nonetheless, it is clear that key elements of the Dutch model depend on decisions from the Ministry, though this is always advised by experts from the cultural sectors. On the other hand, it should be noted that the Dutch government does not directly manage any cultural organization but rather provides funds for their operation. It also dictates the general policy lines without participating in their management bodies which, without exception, are non-profit organizations.

Despite there being no direct relation between the structures of culture financing and the sector's representative organizations, it must be said that in the award decision-making process more professionals from the sector take part than in any other representative system. Roughly speaking, we can calculate that some 500 culture professionals participate in the grant award processes on the committees and Councils of the respective organizations.

The Dutch model is currently undergoing a process of reform. A few months ago, the Dutch parliament approved changes which at the time of writing this report, are in the design process, with a view to being implemented in 2008.

The reasons for this change may become apparent when considering the following perspective:

- The number of recommendations from the Raad voor Cultuur has grown heavily in recent periods (it currently evaluates more than 800 applications) and there is some concern over the quality of the reports and a work overload both at the Raad and the Ministry.

- There is no sense in the Raad making recommendations regarding the cultural infrastructure belonging to the State. The renewal of support should be automatic.
- Grants to a good deal of small and medium-size organizations should be eliminated from political discussion in Parliament, thus reducing the possibility of favouritism.

Based on this reasoning, reform in the following direction has been proposed:

- Some 50 of the biggest State cultural structures will no longer be obliged to present a four-yearly application for financial support from the Ministry and will thus not have to be evaluated by the Raad voor Cultuur. This evaluation will be replaced with a monitoring, or visiting committee made up of independent national and international experts
- Of the approximately 450 organizations that receive four-year grants from the Ministry, some 175 (mostly from the performing arts) will in future receive four-year grants from the Cultural Funds. This will mean that the Cultural Funds, principally the Fund for the Performing Arts, will begin to award grants for four years. The criteria of remaining in the orbit of the Ministry will be based on the size of the organization and its cultural relevance.
- A new Fund for the Performing Arts will be created, resulting from the amalgamation of three existing funds: the current Fund for Amateur Art and Performing Arts, the Foundation for the Programming of Performing Arts and Marketing, and the Fund for Composers. The result will be an independent fund that covers support to artistic creation and its dissemination through the theatre, music and dance, with the capacity to award grants to four-year projects and agreements. As those responsible for the current Fund for the Performing Arts have stated, this would create a true "Council for the Performing Arts" based on the 'arm's length' principle.

It is, in short, a change that sets out to reduce the load of the Raad by excluding the larger elements of infrastructure and transferring smaller organizations to the area of the Cultural Funds.

9. People interviewed and bibliography

In the process of drawing up this report, interviews were held with the following people and organizations:

- Mr Aad Hovervorst. Sub-director of Arts at the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The Hague (2 May 2007)
- Mr Michiel de Graef. Head of Theatre of the Fund for Amateur Art and Performing Arts. The Hague (2 May 2007)
- Ms Mayke Jongsma. Grants Coordinator of the "BKVB Foundation". Amsterdam (2 May 2007)
- Mr Kees Weeda. Secretary General of the Dutch Council for Culture (Raad voor Cultuur). The Hague (3 May 2007)
- Mr Rod Berrends. Sub-director and coordinator of Performing Arts of the Dutch Council for Culture. The Hague (3 May 2007)
- Mr Bram Bruijze. Head of International Relations of the Dutch Council for Culture. The Hague (3 May 2007)
- Ms Gitta Luiten. Director of the Mondriaan Foundation. Amsterdam (4 May 2007)

The following bibliographic documentation was employed:

- *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands*. Ministry of Education Culture and Science. Boekmanstudies. Amsterdam, 2006
- *Is the Dutch system about to die on the vine?* Aad Hogervorst. Lecture in the framework of the 3rd Symposium on Cultural Management of the Catalan Association of Culture Management Professionals. November 2005
- *Compendium: Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. Country Profiles: The Netherlands* (www.culturalpolicies.net)
- Websites and documents of the organizations studied (the links are in the text)