

Summary multi-annual strategic plan for culture in Russia 2017-2020

Culture is the bridge that should be blown up last (Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director State Hermitage Museum). Trust the cultural actors to address the relevant agenda (Astrid Wege, Head of Goethe Institute Moscow).

Background

The cultural cooperation between Russia and the Netherlands has a long history and a good track record. After the bilateral year in 2013, consolidation of cooperation and a focus on museums, architecture and urban planning have proven to be fruitful.

Within the Dutch-Russian bilateral relationship, cultural cooperation is highlighted as an important tool of bilateral cooperation. Culture, science, innovation and education are the inspiring sources of people-to-people engagement in a relationship that is often complicated in other spheres.

One of the aims of the International Cultural Policy of the Dutch government is to offer more room for cultural contribution to a safe, just and sustainable world. In a world full of tensions, culture and creativity can contribute to greater social cohesion, mutual trust and more space for cultural differences within society. This objective focusses on the connecting role culture can play on a local, national and international level. Russia is a priority country within this objective of the International Cultural Policy.

Multiannual Strategic Plan for culture in Russia 2017-2020

The Embassy of the Netherlands in Moscow and the Consulate-General of the Netherlands in St Petersburg have translated the cultural policy guidelines into the following program outlines:

1.) Museums as meeting places

Russian museums are manifold and of various size and quality. In Moscow, there are over 400, and in St Petersburg over 300 museums. The country boasts over 2700 museums, employing 73.000 museum professionals. Modernization has started at the top venues that recognized the need for a modern curatorial approach, education- and outreach programs, presentation and modern conservation methods. These needs are partly met in current collaborations between Russian and Dutch museums, among which the Sustainable Dialogues program, collaboration between the Reinwardt Academy and Polytechnical Museum and the Creative Twinning project of the State Hermitage Museum, Hermitage Amsterdam and the Outsider Art Museum. Regional museums are invited to join in and strengthen their role as local meeting place. Horizontal programs with several museums on specific themes, f.i. inclusiveness, have been developed.

2.) My city – My space

Impressed by the Dutch urban infrastructure, Peter the Great used the Dutch pattern of streets and canals as a model for his Northern capital. Since those years, the Dutch have constantly been involved in Russian urban issues. The complementarity of the Russian and the Dutch approach to tackling urban challenges offers lively debate. It pays off to share examples, methods, participate in discussions and share knowledge on the education of students in the field of urban planning and architecture.

3.) Modern life for heritage

The International Cultural Policy goal of transferring knowledge on adaptive reuse of industrial heritage is a spot on theme for Russia, with its enormous volumes of redundant industrial heritage in cities such as Yekaterinburg, Krasnoyarsk and Chelyabinsk, as well as in Moscow and St Petersburg. In this field the Russian scale is a challenge for Dutch experts, and the Dutch experience is very welcome. Adaptive reuse can boost modernization and play a role in sustainable city development. The theme of modern life for heritage also encompasses the shared heritage program, about which you can read more [here](#) .

4.) Mind the Millennials

The Embassy and Consulate-General explore the best ways to reach the independently thinking youth. In this respect, fashion and electronic music might prove to be useful mediums. Film festivals like Beat Film, Doker, Inversia festival Murmansk, Message to Man among others also qualify. A focus on educational initiatives in various cultural disciplines offers a good chance to reach youth.

While encouraging long-term multi-annual and multidisciplinary initiatives, the Embassy and Consulate-General aim to remain flexible in the size and duration of cooperation and leave room for new initiatives