

**Multi-year Strategy for Culture 2017-2020  
South Korea**

Version February 2017

## Background

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The Netherlands Embassy in South Korea used to be a mission that mainly focused on trade and investment relations. For this reason, culture was not on its priority list. However, the South Korean market for art and culture and its need for cooperation with other countries have been consistently growing.

In the last few years, there have been quite a lot of activities by Dutch artists and cultural institutions in South Korea, including the Dutch Design Showcase at the Seoul Design Festival and the Mondriaan Fund Fellowship Programme at the Korean National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA). In 2016, the Rijksakademie and Arts Council Korea celebrated ten years of cooperation. The Rijksakademie also piloted an exchange residency programme together with the Asia Culture Centre in Gwangju. Not only is Van Gogh well known across South Korea; on another level, Miffy and the Rubber Duck have also established themselves firmly as Dutch icons.

In the 1960s, South Korea was one of the poorest countries on the planet. Nowadays it has the world's 11th biggest economy. This spectacular growth has brought about wealth, and along with it, rapidly growing interest in culture, design, lifestyle, etc. Furthermore, cultural products (for example, K-pop music) have become significant in South Korea's export economy.

All of the above indicates opportunities for Dutch cultural sectors in South Korea and a growing interest in the Netherlands.

Last but not least, during Prime Minister Mark Rutte's visit to South Korea in September 2015, he and President Park Geun-hye signed a collaborative treaty between the Netherlands and South Korea that included the cultural sector and the creative industry. It was the launch of cultural cooperation between the two countries.

## Context

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The Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang (February 2018) will be an important event in South Korea both locally and globally. It marks a great opportunity to showcase the Netherlands and to reach out to both a Korean and an international public. In the same year, the construction of the new Dutch Embassy, designed along the concept of 'embassy of the future', will be completed. Around these two activities, we expect to raise the visibility of the Netherlands in South Korea and build up a strong image of Dutch culture. As a strategy, we will not only target the high-end market group, but also focus on the general public, particularly the young generation of South Koreans.

Given such a context, we would like to divide the coming four-year period into two blocks: 2017-2018 (Olympic period) and 2019-2020 (post-Olympic period). This report focuses on the Olympic period.

## Focus Area

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The focus areas for the coming years are:

1. Visual Arts  
We aim to promote both classic and modern/contemporary art, as well as museum-to-museum cooperation between the two countries. We will start by building up relations with relevant stakeholders in this field in South Korea.
2. Performing Arts  
We will promote Dutch music and dance. In 2017, the Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra will visit Seoul. Both occasions provide an excellent platform for further promotion of the Netherlands and Dutch culture in general.
3. Creative Industries: (Urban) Design and Architecture

'Creative Industries' was one of the focus areas during Prime Minister Rutte's visit in 2016 and the economic mission to South Korea in September 2016. European design is becoming increasingly popular in South Korea. There have been quite a lot of Dutch urban design and architectural projects already. We will build on stronger relations with Korean partners, such as the Seoul Metropolitan Government.

## **Objectives**

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Launching cultural diplomacy in South Korea means we have work to do in order to create a stronger base for the years to come. For this we will very much focus on communicating with relevant parties and target groups in society.

Culture will be an integral part of the Embassy's projects for the PyeongChang Winter Olympics.

We see cultural diplomacy not as a stand-alone activity but as an important element of the diplomatic programme of the Dutch Embassy in Korea. Hence we have chosen an integral approach.

We also believe that cooperation with the embassies in Tokyo and Beijing (and NBTC) would be beneficial. Although each country has its own characteristics and dynamics, we very much believe that as a network in NE Asia we can be stronger together than operating individually.

### Visual Arts & Performing Arts

#### Objectives:

- Korean public and target groups better informed and acquainted with Dutch visual arts and performing arts.
- Target groups in the Netherlands informed about the Korean market.
- Dutch artists presenting themselves in Korea (e.g. art fairs, festivals, biennales, exhibitions). Exchange with Korean artists will be actively supported.
- Successful contribution to Concertgebouw Orchestra and Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; use both events for broader cultural diplomacy.

#### Activities:

- Build up a network with the Korean art field: museums, galleries, funds and artistic/cultural organisations. Create an awareness of the Netherlands amongst Korean art field players (as well as the general public) by providing information on Dutch art and culture; e.g., Embassy blog on Dutch art/culture, lecture at schools/universities, posting on Embassy social media channels.
- Update relevant Dutch players about the Korean art scene and local development by sending information on a regular basis; e.g., E-booklet.
- Stimulate participation and presentation of Dutch artists in museum and gallery exhibitions, residency programs, artistic performances and festivals.
- Create an opportunity for a cultural programme during or around the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic Games.
- Organise a side event (in cooperation with Public Diplomacy) for Concertgebouw Orchestra and Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra performances in 2017.

#### Performance Indicators:

- Increase of Dutch interest / participation in art fairs, biennales, exhibitions, festivals, etc. in South Korea
- Presentation of Dutch artists realised during or around the PyeongChang Olympics
- Articles about the Dutch art sector published in Korean media

- Embassy blog on Dutch art/culture realised, art related postings on Embassy social media channels uploaded, lectures at relevant organisations realised
- Side event with regard to Concertgebouw Orchestra and Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra realised
- A survey can be conducted about the development of awareness of the Netherlands

Partners:

- NL: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, DutchCulture, Mondriaan Fund, various museums, Netherlands Fund for the Performing Arts, Dutch Embassy in Tokyo

*DutchCulture and the Mondriaan Fund could advise and help the Embassy in finding contemporary Dutch artists and encouraging them to consider South Korea for future activities. We can consult the Netherlands Fund for the Performing Arts on curation of musical and choreographic artists that would most efficiently work out in South Korea.*

*With the Dutch Embassy in Tokyo we could devise a plan for bringing major Dutch artworks to South Korea (for Winter Olympics 2018) and subsequently Japan (for Summer Olympics 2020) in discussion with various Dutch museums.*

- KR: various museums and galleries (e.g. MMCA), organisations related to art and culture (e.g. Korea Foundation, Arko – Art Council Korea), Biennales, CID-UNESCO in Korea, diverse dance/music festivals, theatres, PyeongChang Olympic Committee, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST)

Creative Industries - (Urban) Design and Architecture

Objectives:

- Work together with Seoul Metropolitan Government to increase the number of Dutch architects, designers, city planning authorities, etc. that are actively involved in the further development of Seoul.
- Dutch Creative Industry sector presented around the period of the Olympic Games.

Activities:

- Keep pro-active and good relationship with the Seoul Metropolitan Government and further build up a good network with other players in South Korea to encourage and facilitate exchanges between Dutch and South Korean creative industries sectors. Update Dutch partners on the Korean creative industry scene, e.g. urban design project competition, open call for biennales, etc.
- Encourage presentation of Dutch creative industries.
- (Urban) Design: connect Dutch designers and relevant agencies with major local fairs such as Seoul Design Festival, Design Korea Fair, Cheongju International Craft Biennale, etc.
- Architecture: promote renovation of the Seoul Station Overpass by MVRDV, which will be finished in April 2017 (in cooperation with the Seoul Metropolitan Government as well as Public Diplomacy), and new Embassy building ('embassy of the future' concept), etc. Encourage participation in the first Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism in September 2017.
- Team up with Economic Affairs colleagues for more effective activities.
- Create an opportunity for presentation of the Dutch Creative Industries Sector during or around the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic Games.

Performance Indicators:

- Showcase of Dutch Creative Industries realised during or around PyeongChang Olympics
- Event to promote the renovation of Seoul Station Overpass by MVRDV
- Participation of Dutch creative industries in relevant fairs and festivals realised

Partners:

- NL: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, DutchCulture, Creative Industries Fund NL, Het Nieuw Instituut, Craft Council NL, Topteam Creative Industry  
*Consult DutchCulture, Creative Industries Fund NL and Het Nieuw Instituut for influential partners in the field of creative industries.*
- KR: Seoul Metropolitan Government, Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA), Korea Institute of Design Promotion (KIDP), Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST), various modern museums and galleries

**Calendar 2017-2018**

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The Embassy will further develop as a base for cultural diplomacy and the cultural sector of the Netherlands. Its programme will focus on and promote the Netherlands in the run-up to and during the PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games 2018.

Examples of major events expected in Korea for the coming years:

2017

- World Championship Speed Skating in February (PyeongChang Test Event)
- *The Fountain Head*, Toneelgroep Amsterdam in March/April
- World Baseball Classic - Visit by the Royal Dutch Baseball and Softball League (KNBSB) in March
- Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra in June
- Concertgebouw Orchestra in November
- First edition of Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism from September to November

2018

- PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games (expected visit of the Dutch King and Queen)
- Completion of new Embassy building ('embassy of the future')

The following are some of the events to remember which take place on a regular basis:

- Korea International Art Fair (KIAF)
- Seoul Design Festivals, Design Korea (Design Fair)
- Art Biennales: Gwangju Biennale, Media City Biennale, Busan Biennale
- SiDance Festival (Seoul International Dance Festival)