

## Research into Talent Development

### What job opportunities exist in the creative sector?

From the teacher-training programme in Fine Art & Design, the project KEOZ (Art & Education in the South) was launched in November 2022 to map collaboration between art-education organisations, higher arts education, and schools.

Senior lecturer and researcher Paul Pos investigated the networks of art education and talent development in Fine Art & Design in Rotterdam South. This research led, among other things, to the *Stepping Stone* programme for super-diverse talents and an exploration of an Associate Degree for Arts-Education Professionals. (KEOZ handout, June 2023). The project formed the basis for an awarded NKO Comenius Senior Fellow grant for 2024-2026. The NKO does this by coordinating and funding educational research, and by making the results of this research accessible and usable for educational practice and policy.

#### **NKO-project description: Stepping Stone for Super-Diverse Talents**

Role models play an important part in young people's study choices and academic success, particularly for those with a migrant background. This is also the case in arts education, where these super-diverse talents are currently underrepresented. They often do not apply because programmes do not sufficiently connect with their artistic abilities.

The Teacher of Fine Art & Design programme (DBKV/WdKA) and local partners in both formal and non-formal arts-education practices in Rotterdam are working together to improve representation. Learning with and from one another through a Community-Engaged Learning project can contribute to study choice and academic success for talented young people and for students training to become art teachers and role models.

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## Comenius Project

### “Stepping Stone for Super-Diverse Talents”

NKO/NWO supports the design-based research project titled *Stepping Stone for Super-Diverse Talents* with a Senior Fellow Comenius grant for the years 2024–2026. This research is carried out in collaboration with the Bachelor programme Teacher of Fine Art & Design (DBKV) at the Willem de Kooning Academy / Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences and nine partner organisations in the city. These partners are organisations connected to out-of-school arts education.

The design research builds on the exploratory phase of the KEOZ (Art & Education in the South) project. It focuses on collaboration with arts-education organisations to co-create, according to the principles of Community-Engaged Learning, a talent-development programme for aspiring art teachers—specifically aimed at target groups currently under-represented in the Fine Art & Design teacher-training programme. Together with the partners, the research explores “what the success factors are in collaboration for a programme that can contribute to study choice and academic success for these groups within the DBKV programme.”

[1] Boijmans Zuid, MESH, Cult North, Tailors & Wearers, Com in Beeld, Hiphop in je Smoel, CMNITY, NULTEENART, Makers op Zuid.

## Rotterdams Art Posse Project

From August 2024 until the end of 2026, investment will be made in developing this programme, supported by an NKO Comenius Fellow research grant for *Stepping Stone for Super-Diverse Talents*. The DBKV programme will take the lead in developing the initiative together with Zuid.Boijmans van Beuningen, Nul Teen Art, Hiphop in je Smoel, Mesh Print, Com in Beeld, Cult North, Tailors & Wearers, and CMNITY.

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## Partner Organisations

**Com in Beeld Foundation** researches, develops, and organises programmes for young people with and without disabilities, drawing on the power of digital visual literacy. How can audiovisual communication skills, methods, and techniques enable young people to express themselves more communicatively and creatively—image as a new language? With the *Cam on Wheels Academy*, Com in Beeld runs a continuous educational programme in which secondary-school students with and without disabilities learn and collaborate with MBO students from the Graphic Lyceum's audiovisual department.



*Rob van de Graaf, Zeger Reijers, Beau van Nieuwkerke, Jelle van Kleef en twee stadsbeheerders. Foto door Mascha Lege*

**Cult North** is an emerging initiative focusing on arts education and passion development among young self-taught makers from Rotterdam. We aim to introduce this target group to a wide range of creative expressions, fostering well-being and meaning while also creating an infrastructure for professionalisation. We work from the needs of our audience and co-create programmes that respond to current interests. In this way we strive for an accessible arts and culture sector—culture is not a tool for us, but an ecosystem in which various domains such as welfare, care, and education are also represented.



*Foto door Nomzamo Roseval*

**Tailors & Wearers** collects knowledge and information about Afro-Surinamese dress and makes this accessible to others through projects and workshops. In doing so, it preserves and revitalises Afro-Surinamese dress as a form of cultural design.



*Rob van de Graaf, Zeger Reijers, Beau van Nieuwkerke, Jelle van Kleef en twee stadsbeheerders. Foto door Mascha Legel*

**Mesh Print Club** is a screen-printing workspace for professional artists and amateurs that is open 24/7. Members apply screen-printing in various ways: as a starting point or as a foundation for the art forms they use in their professional practice. Mesh Print Club also offers creative, graphic workshops in schools and during leisure time.



*Ivan van Beek en Laura Aranda*

**Hiphop in je Smoel (HIJS)** has been a hip-hop platform since 1999. For several years now, HIJS has offered educational programmes—primarily centred on graffiti and street art—in secondary education. Increasingly, MBO and HBO institutions are making use of HIJS's tours and programmes. All HIJS instructors are practising artists driven by their passion for hip-hop and their own disciplines, including both self-taught and formally trained makers.

**Nul Teen Art (NTA)** is a platform for young people interested in the world of Art & Design. NTA organises various projects to connect young people with each other and with the art world. Next year, NTA will host a city-wide exhibition featuring teenagers' work and will develop a programme for young people aged 18+.

**Zuid.Boijmans van Beuningen** hosts conversations about what can be learned from the South and shares knowledge with local residents. It is a meeting place where residents, students, and talented makers come together to organise or participate in activities. The organisation works with artists, social partners, and key community figures from the neighbourhood.



**Makers op Zuid** connects media makers from both artistic and journalistic disciplines by developing projects in collaboration with various partners—such as filmmakers, (art) screenings, an art lab, workshops, and everything in between

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## Introduction

This blog describes the activities of the KEOZ/Comenius project. The Comenius project *Stepping Stone for Super-Diverse Talents* focuses on collaboration with external partners through joint workshops, but is embedded within a comprehensive third-year Practicum programme. Here, future art teachers are involved in the key stages of talent development and study choice: talent recognition and development (workshops and networking evenings), study choice (open days), and selection (admissions).

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## (Un)Seen Talent – Art Zone Guest Lecture at Fontys and NAEA



Spin-off activities from the *Stepping Stone for Super-Diverse Talents* project are gaining momentum. Not only through publications and activities, but also through the approach and insights developed, we are receiving invitations to share our knowledge and experiences. These include a guest lecture with colleagues from the Teacher of Fine Art & Design programme (DT) at Fontys, a presentation during LKCA round-table discussions on DBKV students with roots in the Caribbean region, a podcast about what is considered “beautiful” in Rotterdam South, and an invitation to present at the NAEA Conference (National Art Education Association) on March 5, 2026 in Chicago.

Listen to the podcast via this link.

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## Networking Evening – November 2025



The first Networking Evening and Open Day were once again organised and carried out with the new group of

third-year part-time students. The evening focused on and around VMBO education, with speakers and presentations showing both how inspiring and how challenging it can be to teach through art at the various VMBO levels and types found across Rotterdam. After Christmas, students will also start working with partners in workshops and during admissions. Their experiences will be collected through short reflective videos as evidence of learning.

### Pre-Screening – 14 October 2025



Com in Beeld presented a first 25-minute version of a mini-documentary about the artistic-educational practices of the partners and their networks. The audience consisted of third-year part-time students and invited guests involved in the production. Afterwards, a networking reception was held to gather feedback to improve the documentary. The documentary is being produced in part thanks to a support grant from the Municipality of Rotterdam and the dedication of the Com in Beeld team.

### Start of Cycle II (Academic Year 2025–2026): Practical Assignment in Collaboration with Partners – 23 September 2025



**Streetmasters**  
subculturen, kunstvormen en lifestyle-elementen binnen street culture

Het programma is flexibel en op maat samen te stellen:

- Workshops
- Masterclasses
- Talks
- Performances en demo's
- Street art tours
- Eindpresentatie(s)
- Festival

Kan aansluiten thema's, burgerschap of anders vakken



Following an evaluation and the addition of three new partners (Nul Teen Art, Hiphop in je Smoel, IMC Weekend School), the third-year part-time cohort held presentations and selected which students would collaborate with which partners. Based on the evaluation, a tighter format with clearer planning and division of roles was developed. Notably, partners who are not formally part of the Comenius project also joined.

## Edu-Badges and Micro-Credentials



Through the EU-supported *New European Bauhaus* project *Culture & Campus Putsebocht* and the KEOZ-Comenius project, three elective courses were developed via Makers op Zuid together with local partners. By co-creating education and opening it up to non-students, opportunities for super-diverse talents in Rotterdam to develop within higher arts education are expanded.

For example, Fina and Surayni learned how to develop a podcast under the guidance of Hansje Hofland (WdKA) and Vrouwen met Saus (Makers op Zuid). Their podcast is connected to their faith community and aimed at people struggling with issues such as addiction, depression, loneliness, or anxiety.

Edu-badges are recognitions of achieved skill or knowledge levels. They are validated, awarded, and registered by Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences. A next step could be that participation in parts of the educational programme yields micro-credentials if HBO (higher-education) level learning is demonstrably achieved. Such recognition would then also carry European Credits—study points similar to those awarded to enrolled students.

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## Makers Week and the WdKA – 16 June 2025



From the KEOZ-Comenius and *Culture & Campus* projects, a collaboration with Makers op Zuid emerged, resulting in a Makers Week at the Willem de Kooning Academy location. Nine workshops were offered during the week of 10–17 June to both students and non-students.

Two electives that form part of the HBO bachelor's programme were opened to external participants—Rotterdam talents—allowing fifteen external participants to earn an edu-badge. On Thursday 12 June, the central hall and the Willem canteen buzzed with games and activities. Young people reflecting Rotterdam's super-diverse society and WdKA students met over giant board games, card games, and other activities. WdKA student work was offered for sale and stories were shared.

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## Networking Evening: Specialised Education – 15 April 2025



Specialised education provides a rich context for arts education. Visual expression is accessible to almost everyone, regardless of learning challenges, and contributes to student well-being. During this evening, over fifty professionals gathered to exchange knowledge and experiences. Valuable connections were made between students, internship placements, and organisations.

Within the Comenius project, we work closely with Com in Beeld, which creates opportunities for young people who have been at home long-term and for pupils with physical and/or mental challenges.

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## DBKV Admissions – February to June 2025



Across five sessions, teams of third-year students and DBKV lecturers welcomed full-time and part-time applicants to the programme. In training sessions prior to selection, assessors were introduced to a different vision of admissions: no longer focused primarily on ability (portfolio work), but also on motivation and background—what we now call “matching.”

As with open days, the question is no longer whether a candidate “fits the programme,” but whether the programme can be adapted to support the development of their talent. Through workshops, conversations, portfolios, structured questionnaires, and take-home assignments, both applicants and students (future art teachers) experienced a new way of looking at talent.

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## Networking Evening: (Un)Seen Talent – 14 January 2025

**KEOZ UITNODIGING**  
Dinsdag 14 Januari van 18:00 tot 21:00 uur  
Locatie: Magbon – Mathenesseendijk 293 Rotterdam

**(On)gezien Talent**  
Herken, erken en ontwikkel talent in Rotterdam.  
Met panelgesprek o.l.v. Giorgio Costa, speeddate, film en meer.

**KEOZ PROGRAMMA (On)gezien Talent**

18:00	Inloop en ruimte voor hoorlijk Barbaaraas bami
18:30	Welkom door Giorgio Costa en Gordon Sana
18:35	PANELESPREK (On)gezien talent met: Barbara Luns (GRO) Mitchel Samson (Cult North) Gordon Sana (Magbon) Wouter Muste (Albouds Musik)
19:15	PAUZE
19:45	Speeddate (2 rondes)
20:30	Speeddate met o.m. Filmpje De meester & geest door Com in Beeld
20:30	Film korte introductie van het Rotterdamse Art Posee Project
20:30	Ritmoere beëindigt
21:00	Einde

Magbon (CMNITY) was packed for the second networking evening, where seventy participants discussed often hidden talent in Rotterdam. Moderated by Giorgio Costa, panel members Wouter Muste, Gordon Sana, Barbara Luns, Anne-Rieke Hendriks, Damini Bhugwansing, and Mitchel Samson shared their insights.

### Key conclusions:

- Greater collaboration between large and small players in formal and informal education.
- Recognition of new artistic practices to allow Rotterdam talent to flourish further.

During a speed-dating segment, participants get familiar to one another's "unseen" talents. Com in Beeld presented the first mini-documentary about self-taught artists—a possible foundation for the final outcome of the Comenius project.

## Networking Evening: MBO Education – 19 November 2024



Third-year students organised the three networking evenings under the guidance of lecturers Linda Ammerlaan, Franciska Wierenga, and Evita de Roode. This evening highlighted different perspectives on MBO education, students, and opportunities for arts education. Students from the Teacher of Fine Art & Design programme (DBKV) met professionals from the field.

### Key insights:

- MBO is a crucial stepping stone to higher arts education, supported by schools such as the Wood and Furniture College (HMC) and the Graphic Lyceum Rotterdam (GLR).
- Ivar Hennep (GLR), Pamela Berithoe (Techniecollege), Kasper Tinus (GLR), and Roy de Regt (HMC) shared experiences as teachers and students.
- Daan Emmen (SKVR) highlighted the connection between formal and informal MBO education.

- With a regional role in training competent and qualified MBO teachers, DBKV contributes to educational quality.

### Open Day – 10 November 2024



Together with programme colleagues, students were given responsibility for the first of four open days. The aim was to present the programme as a place where everyone is welcome who has the ambition to further develop in arts education. Where the slogan “who are we looking for?” once appeared in presentations, it has now been replaced by “who are you?”, signalling that the candidate’s background and identity are central—rather than whether they fit the programme.

### Guest Lectures by Partners, Academic Year 2024–2025 – 8 October 2024



#### Workshop Tailors & Wearers

The four partners providing talent workshops this year introduced themselves to third-year part-time students. It was an inspiring evening in which students encountered informal organisations and new perspectives on art, education, and talent. Tailors & Wearers, Mesh, Com in Beeld, and Cult North gave short presentations about what they do, their goals, their target groups, and who they are. Based on these presentations, students could choose one of the partners or one of three other options: participating in admissions, open days, or organising networking evenings.

In this way, a large part of the process of talent development, study choice, and admissions success becomes part of the curriculum for the next generation of art teachers.



**Workshop MESH**



**Workshop Com in Beeld**

### **Agreements with Partners (Community-Engaged Learning) – 24 September 2024**

The first consultation with four partners focused on the set-up, planning, and framework of the project. We also discussed the impact of national and local budget cuts on arts and cultural education. Ultimately, practical agreements were made about when the workshops would take place, the guiding principles, and—no less importantly—how partners would be compensated for their contributions.

#### **Partners:**

- Tailors & Wearers
- Mesh (formerly Spots & Colors)
- Com in Beeld
- Cult North (workshops)
- Makers op Zuid & CMNITY (hosting activities)