

# Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design (M21D)

POLICY PLAN 2021  
ACTIVITY REPORT 2020  
April 2021  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Stichting Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design  
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# **Part I – Policy Plan**

## **1. Forward**

Below please find the Policy Plan for Stichting Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design (M21D). The Stichting was founded on March 26 2021 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

A foundation is obliged to have its statutes drawn up by a civil-law notary. After these statutes have been drawn up, in which, for example, the directors of the foundation are mentioned, registration with the Chamber of Commerce and registration with the tax authorities follows. Writing a policy plan is strongly advised. A policy plan is also necessary in order to obtain the status of General Benefit Institution (Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling).

In drawing up this policy plan, the requirements of the Cultural ANBI have been taken into account. An ANBI status has the advantage that organizations and individuals can deduct their donations from the tax and the foundation is safeguarded from paying tax on gifts and donations. This policy plan provides insight into:

- Mission, vision, ambition of the foundation
- Objective of the foundation
- Finances
- The way the foundation raises money
- The management and use of the foundation's assets
- The goals to which the foundation is committed

On behalf of the Stichting Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design,  
William Myers

## **2. Introduction**

The Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design (M21D) is an organization dedicated to engaging a broad public in conversation about how design impacts the environment and society. At M21D, we believe that museums play a key role in public education and influencing professional practice, and therefore are well suited to help illuminate the environmental and social impacts of design while also encouraging designers to think about their work in a more holistic manner. M21D follows a new approach to serving the public as a museum. It is not a consistent physical space, but a compilation of temporary exhibitions in different locations, public programming, publications, and an online collection. Our core motivation is highlighting how design can make positive contributions to addressing major priorities of the 21st Century: achieving greater social and environmental justice. The museum strives to

make content as accessible and compelling as possible, inviting public participation. The museum meets audiences where they are and will sometimes surprise them. In brief, M21D is focused on the future, rather than the past, and on conversation, rather than conservation, as a tool for education and community building.

In order to achieve its goals, M21D requires a full-time staff, volunteers, partnerships, and funding to create exhibitions, stage programming, conduct research, and create publications. The following plan outlines activities for 2021 and includes a description of the board and staff. Financial planning is included in accompanying documents.

### **3. Contact Information**

Stichting Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design was incorporated through Notaris Scot-van Loon on March 26 2021 as a geode doel stichting. Below please find the relevant information about the incorporation and legal status of the stichting. For further information or inquiries, please contact [museum.21.design@gmail.com](mailto:museum.21.design@gmail.com).

Legal Name: Stichting Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design

Address: Zoutkeetsgracht 298  
1013 LC Amsterdam

Email address: [museum.21.design@gmail.com](mailto:museum.21.design@gmail.com)

Website: [www.m21d.org](http://www.m21d.org)

Fiscal Number (RSIN): 862428531

KvK-number: 82347948

Bank: Intergiro

BIC: FTCSSESS

IBAN: SE25 9770 0000 0100 0248 5794

### **4. Mission Statement and Aim**

*Mission Statement: To enhance public understanding and appreciation of 21<sup>st</sup> Century design that has positive social or environmental impacts.*

The mission will be pursued through exhibitions, publications, educational activity, and the building of an online collection. The museum defines design as translating intention to function in a wide range of mediums. Traditional types of design such as architectural plans and industrial objects will be collected, as well as web interfaces, strategies for social activism, or design as a form of critical thinking or speculation about possible futures.

The focus of all programming, collecting, and exhibiting will address the priorities, conflicts, tastes, and technologies of our time. The museum will examine design's consequences and highlight our shared responsibility to achieve greater social and environmental justice.

## **5. Background Stichting Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Design (M21D)**

M21D is organized by William Myers, a curator, writer, and museum professional with more than 20 years of experience in the cultural sector. He identified the need for a new kind of museum that prioritizes engagement and would be dedicated to illuminating the impacts of design on the environment and social sphere.

Over the course of working for a variety of institutions as an employee and as a freelance guest curator, William came to understand the emerging priorities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century were not being reflected in the exhibitions and collecting activity of museums of design. This is a missed opportunity, as design can have such an important impact on the environment and society. This led William to create a new type of institution that goes beyond traditional museum conventions. M21D moves away from presenting precious objects under glass to be admired in silence, instead speaking up and touching exhibition installations will be encouraged.

William recognized this need through experience of many years working within and then as a guest curator for several museums that display and collect design. Among the most influential of these experiences was to work for MoMA and as well as for two different Science Galleries (Dublin and Rotterdam) which take such radically different approaches to finding and presenting content. In short, M21D will adopt the best from these old and new models to make a new institution for design fit for our time.

## **6. Objective and Activities**

M21D's objective is to spotlight the best of design that achieves positive environmental or social impact that is created between 2000 and 2100. As the institution collects such design and communicates the stories of its making, distribution, and effects, we endeavor to create a resource of references for designers and students as well as business leaders and policy-makers. We hope that, over time, these resources and our study of the people and practices that

produce such type of good design will point towards best practices and approaches. In turn, such resources can help in the reformation of design education and professional practice. This is in addition to the more general aim of engaging a broad public on the impacts of design and highlighting its power to address some of the most urgent crises of our time.

M21D's current activities can be categorized in the areas of community building, exhibitions, publications, and long-term capacity building. In brief:

Community Building: The museum will stage a variety of engagements to identify design examples to study and discuss how to understand and communicate in exhibitions format the design's social or environmental impact. In the first year, these will take the form of monthly **Social Sculpture** prototypes. These will be a mix of in-person and digital meetups, interviews, meals, and panel discussions. These salon-like gatherings will be by invitation and include designers, museum professionals, a variety of experts, and members of the communities that the kind of designs being examined are intended for.

Exhibitions: Temporary exhibitions will be nomadic and prioritize formats that have the highest potential for educating the public and facilitating discourse. Objects and special installations will be included when financially feasible, but a deliberate effort will be made toward relying on graphics, video, and other inexpensive forms of representation that have the lowest cost, labor requirements, and carbon footprint. Exhibition mediators (guides) will encourage visitors to talk and to touch exhibitions, flipping the conventional behavior in museum or gallery spaces where touching and talking is forbidden. Exhibition space will be rented by or donated to the museum as needed and as is financially feasible. Conferences, courses, and panel discussions will accompany exhibitions whenever possible. All exhibitions will be thoroughly documented with photography and video and archived online for study and public comment. Admission to all exhibitions will be free of charge.

Publications: As the study collection is built, exhibitions are organized, and knowledge is accumulated about best practices for evaluating design's impacts, what is learned will be published in digital and print formats. Updates of at least twice per year will be made online documenting exhibitions, content from Social Sculpture prototypes, and works in the study and permanent collections. When financially feasible, year-end reports and retrospective or educational materials will be printed.

Long-term Capacity Building: Fundraising and organization-building will be priorities in the first several years of the museum's operation. This is to allow for permanent staff and office spaces as well as resources for exhibition production and all of the museum's research and publication activities. However, the museum will pursue keeping operating costs and the number of required staff to a minimum. It is **not** the goal of the museum to have hundreds of employees, a large facility, or significant capital assets. Instead, the museum will, by design, remain

lean and adaptable and will continually focus on providing low cost, high-quality exhibitions and educational programming.

## **7. Deliverables for 2021**

Over the course of the first year, the major goals of M21D are:

1. Formalize M21D as a Cultural ANBI with a public notary with a named Management Board
2. Build a community of advisors, volunteers, and collaborators for the first exhibition
3. Establish a Fundraising Plan and budgets for 2022 - 2024
4. Forge a partnership with a Host Organization for material support to achieve the following:
  - a. Create two design templates for temporary exhibitions
  - b. Stage one exhibition on the theme of Carbon Negative Design, with a Guest Curator
  - c. Develop an M21D graphic identity
  - d. Develop and launch V1 of the M21D website
  - e. In collaboration with participants in Social Sculpture meetups, add at least 24 works of design into the Study Collection

## **8. Target Audience**

M21D seeks to reach audiences that may not typically frequent design museums, including people under the age of 30 and those who may not follow news or trends in design, fashion, architecture, or other applied arts. The museum will endeavor to re-align the audience's expectation of museums as well as design, to demonstrate to them that their voice is important and valid, as design affects us all. We will reach the audience in whatever ways that are necessary, coming to them where they are, whether that means visiting a school, setting up an exhibition in a park, taking over a building façade with a projector, or utilizing a traditional white cube space. Special efforts will be made to reach educators and young designers entering their fields.

## **9. The Board and Staff**

M21D is administered by a Management Board and daily operations are conducted by the Director and Head of Operations.

### **9.1. Management Board (MB)**

The Management Board is responsible for overseeing the Stitching, the direction, and ensuring that the Stichting fulfills its mission. Duties are outlined in the Statues. It is comprised of three members:

- A. Vera Vilardebo Sacchetti (president) / Anna Catharina Binnendijk (secretary) / Benjamin Cervený (treasurer)

## **9.2. The Advisory Board**

The Advisory Board is comprised of professionals from various backgrounds, who in addition to lending their name and network, also contribute their expert advice. The Advisory Board agrees to council the development of M21D and to be available to answer questions, provide feedback, make introductions, and to serve on committees, when invited to advise on fundraising, design acquisitions, publications, and other activity related to the mission of the museum.

[To Be Named]

## **9.3. Employees**

As of 2021, the staff of M21D is comprised of one full-time and one part-time employee: the Executive Director and the Head of Operations.

William Myers: Executive Director

The Executive Director (ED) is the daily manager of M21D and its programs. The main purpose of the ED is to ensure the fulfillment of the organization's mission, lead staff, and form and execute plans for all the museum's activities, from fundraising and community building to the formation of the design collection and the production of exhibitions. A key goal of the first ED is to ensure the long-term health of the organization, including a succession plan to prepare and train a new ED to begin in approximately 2031.

William Myers is a curator and author with more than 20 years of experience in the cultural sector. He is the author of two widely-acclaimed books: *Biodesign* (2018), published by MoMA, identifies the emerging practice of designers and architects integrating biological processes in their work and *Bioart* (2015), published by Thames & Hudson and launched at the Tate Modern, profiles art that responds to advances in the life sciences that alter our notions of identity, nature, and the definition of life. William's writing and more than 14 exhibitions he has organized have been profiled in the journal *Science*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Magazine*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *Volkskrant*, and *Folha de São Paulo*, among many others. William has delivered lectures at many educational institutions including Harvard University, RMIT, Universitário Belas Artes de São Paulo, International University of Catalunya, Oxford University, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Leiden University, Maastricht University, Rijksmuseum voor

Volkenkunde, and Royal College of Art. He has worked for MoMA, the Guggenheim Museum, the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt, RISD, Science Galleries in Dublin and Rotterdam, Vitra Design Museum, TU Delft, and Het Nieuwe Instituut. A full profile of activity can be accessed at: [www.william-myers.com](http://www.william-myers.com).

Georgina McDowall: Head of Operations

The Head of Operations works closely with the ED to oversee the day-to-day running of the organization as well as long-term planning, staffing, exhibition development, fundraising, and communications. This role is crucial in the early start-up phase of M21D and may include various self-directed projects to ensure the long-term sustainability of the museum. The Head of Operations is also, when necessary, the spokesperson for the museum and its representative at symposia, conferences, and other private and public events.

Georgina holds a Master's in Museum Studies from the University of Amsterdam, which is where she became aware of the role that museums can play in sustainable development. Since graduating she has worked as an independent researcher and project coordinator working at the intersection of culture and sustainability. This includes presenting on this topic at conferences in the Czech Republic and Norway. She has experience working for socially engaged museums and collections in the UK, such as the Museum of the Mind, and Foundling Museum. Georgina believes that the cultural sector is fundamental in the transition towards a more livable future.

## **10. Description of How to Raise Funds**

Economic sustainability is essential for the success of the organization, and while specific projects such as exhibitions or publications may be able to receive special grant support, the majority of fixed and variable costs will require fundraising. Applications are underway or submitted as of early 2021 to several sources. These include The Future Field Prize, Stimuleringsfonds, Epic MegaGrants, and outreach to several private donors and foundations. Expected outcomes can be found in the summary financial projections.

## **11. Description of Costs and Financial Projections**

Detailed in a separate document. All financial information will be disclosed on our website and will be made available annually, after review and approval by the MB.