

& MAES SURVEY

THE CURATOR OF THE FUTURE

On behalf of CODART
Amsterdam, September 2023

“The curator is the last 19th-century profession that’s left in the museum world. Everything else has changed.”

- A MUSEUM DIRECTOR DURING A DIALOGUE SESSION”



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In 1975, there were 22,000 museums worldwide. This number has grown to 104,000 museums by 2021. Museum attendance also increased significantly.

INTRODUCTION

As the international network for museum curators of Dutch and Flemish Art before 1800, CODART attaches great importance to the development of the curator's profession. Many have noted changes in the museum sector, especially in recent years, which greatly affect the curator's day-to-day work. These observations from the museum sector prompted CODART to launch a research project. In addition, 2023 was deemed an appropriate time – the year of CODART's twenty-fifth anniversary – to reflect on how the profession of curator of Old Masters has changed over the past twenty-five years and to look at the challenges for the future. Where will the profession be in twenty-five years' time?

The report resulting from this research describes the range of tasks that today's curators of Old Masters are expected to fulfill and maps out the opportunities and prerequisites for them to continue to function well in the future. Curators play a key and often decisive role in ensuring their museums' success: they are familiar with the collections, research them, and tell stories about them to the public in partnership with their colleagues. These are the core activities of every art museum.

CODART members reported, based on their own experience, that social trends over the past quarter-century have required museums to adjust their policy priorities. The growth of CODART was more or less contemporaneous with the rise of the internet – Google too is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year – a development that has made the world smaller, making it easier to communicate and to access information. Digitization has also significantly changed the nature of research and the management of art collections. There are more opportunities to communicate with the public nowadays, not only through websites and social media but also by making collections accessible online. The professionalization of communication and marketing to attract visitors as well as fundraising to increase revenue have become permanent features of every museum's activities. While the foundations of the curatorial profession are essentially unchanged, the modus operandi expected of a curator has been transformed. In recent years, curators' responsibilities have expanded to include a focus on sustainability, in connection with climate change, and devising good diversity and inclusiveness policies, especially since the global reaction to the murder of George Floyd in 2020. Artificial Intelligence will undoubtedly become an increasingly influential factor in the near future. The sheer number and range of all these challenges make working in a museum more interesting than ever, but also more complex. How is the curator of Old Masters – sometimes described as a “nineteenth-century profession” – responding to these changes?

Based on quantitative and qualitative research, we analyze changes in the world of art museums and curators. From the data, dialogues, interviews, and scholarly publications that made up this research, we distill several conclusions about museums and the curator's profession. The focus here is on developments in the Netherlands and Flanders. Where possible, the analysis includes developments in the Anglosphere.

We used this analysis to highlight several issues and points for CODART to consider. These could serve as a basis for further research or for follow-up discussions with the membership or the profession as a whole. We conclude the report by drawing on our research and the diverse conversations we held to identify opportunities that the changes we have described may present to curators of the future and the museum sector in general.

SUMMARY: TRENDS AND CORE TASKS

The findings revealed several trends that have an ongoing impact on museums and the role of the curator. Based on these findings, we give a picture of today's curator and the core tasks he or she is expected to fulfil. The following paragraphs summarize these trends in broad outline.

▣ TREND 1

Museums have a public function and therefore have a certain responsibility to society

The social role of museums has changed dramatically. Museums are now expected – far more than in the past – to address social issues and matters of public debate and to connect the collection to topical themes. This has transformed the curator's job description, adding a wide range of tasks. The sector's finances have also changed in recent years: subsidies have been cut back and museums must generate more income themselves. In subsidy applications, museums often have to prove that their project is of benefit to society. Curators of Old Master art therefore need to find creative ways of fulfilling this requirement. They have to approach every such application with an agile mind and take the necessary time to devise relevant new questions with which to explore their collections.

▣ TREND 2

The role of the public has greatly increased

Museums seek to appeal to as wide a section of the public as possible: indeed, it is expected of them. To fulfil their social role, they pay far more attention nowadays to the needs of different types of visitors, who expect communications tailored to their particular positions in society. This often involves two-way conversations with the public rather than a one-way "message" transmitted through an exhibition. Such interactions and partnerships in designing exhibitions and decision-making on the collection have acquired greater importance. Key to this is the increased input of specialisms such as museum education and communication. As a result, budgets may shift, potentially diminishing the availability of permanent staff capacity for curators of Old Masters. Instead, we see more temporary appointments for specific exhibitions or projects. This has changed working methods. Collaboration has become far more important – not only with existing or new departments within the museum such as Education and Development, but also with external partners. To ensure the museum has as wide an appeal as possible, new external perspectives are not just welcome, but necessary. Today's curator has the task of shaping these new modes of cooperation, both inside the museum and in the wider world.

▣ TREND 3

Museums generate income from a variety of sources, which impose vastly different substantive demands on them

Since 2012, the financial position of museums (in the Netherlands, in any case) has changed significantly. In addition to government subsidies, revenue in the form of incidental donations from funds, private donations and bequests, admission fees, and commercial activities have become increasingly important to meet budget goals. Content-related reasons and personal

relationships often play a key role in this fundraising. The deployment of the knowledge and expertise of the curator of Old Masters is virtually indispensable here. The question thus arises of what curators need in order to fulfil this role well.

▣ TREND 4

The curator's job description is constantly changing

The title of “curator” is not protected in law and the profession does not have a fixed job description. It changes with time, along with the museums and other institutions in which the curators of Old Master art are employed. It is up to these institutions to decide what knowledge and skills are needed. These decisions are reflected in the definitions, job descriptions, and descriptions of the training courses for curators of Old Master art – all of which have constantly expanded over the decades. Besides specialist knowledge, research skills, and experience with collection management, the descriptions have focused increasingly on being a good communicator – on having the ability to tell stories about the collections to different audiences and through different media. There is a need to consider how curators can acquire such skills, which are unrelated to matters of content, in their studies. The museum too could play a role, so that professional courses could be provided in these areas.

▣ TREND 5

Museums have grown into more complex organizations

Museums organize more and more activities and communicate more and more with their audiences, in all of which the curator's input on substantive issues plays a key role. Nowadays, the customary way of shaping this communication is in a cooperative procedure within teams. This might be expected to leave curators with more time for research and collection management. That does not seem to be the case, however, since the input has become more fragmented. This jeopardizes the structural focus on core activities, and it has even driven some curators to leave the profession. How can museums ensure that sufficient time remains available in the long term for curators to stay abreast of their subject and to develop fresh inspiration? It is becoming essential to set priorities in the job description of the position of curator of Old Masters. What would good employment practice for this group of professionals look like? From the perspective of continuity, the question arises of how museums can ensure that specialist knowledge about the collections and their history, and about the institution itself, is safeguarded for the long term.

▣ TREND 6

Students are interested in the curator's profession, but career development is poor and there is too little room for the transfer of knowledge

Judging by the number of students, interest in the subject of art history and the profession of curator remains strong. However, the lack of opportunities for career advancement sometimes presents an obstacle. Junior curators are now frequently given temporary and/or part-time jobs, but it often proves hard to advance beyond that stage.

In addition, it is important for junior curators to be properly supervised by senior colleagues to gain sufficient experience. A good transfer of knowledge requires a long shadowing period, but most museums have insufficient staffing capacity for this, making it impossible to achieve a full transfer of knowledge. This is exacerbated by the ageing of the population, as a result of which

many senior curators leave the profession and some of their knowledge is lost. It is vital to find ways of safeguarding the available experience more robustly, to minimize gaps in knowledge about the collection and its history within museums.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Several overlapping points for discussion can be distilled from the analysis regarding the development of the curator's profession. They will prompt discussion not only among CODART members, but also more widely, among stakeholders and within the museum sector as a whole. Such joint deliberations can help to ensure that the sector takes full advantage of the curator's added value.

▣ **Safeguard core tasks**

At present, while curators are free to perform their role as they see fit, they have a wide range of responsibilities. Curators, museum directors, and external stakeholders such as universities each have their own expectations of curators and impose different demands. Indeed, a curator is expected to take on so many responsibilities that content is suffering as a result. It is therefore important to safeguard the core tasks attached to the curator's profession, both now and for the future. The curator of the future will need to meet with colleagues and the employer and jointly establish his or her core tasks. If necessary, his or her role and the associated expectations can be adjusted.

▣ **Curators need to be aware of the diverse contexts within which they work**

The place of work is the major factor determining how the curator will need to fulfill his or her role. It is important to consider the context in which the curator operates, both within the museum and in society. It is this museum and social context that has changed – and that will continue to change. Art curators must be aware of this. They possess considerable specialist knowledge, and at the same time they serve as the bridge connecting their institution to society. They therefore play a pivotal role in any museum. Curators can take the initiative in setting up new networks and exploring fresh contexts. There are many potential contexts beside the curator's own institution: the local population and wider society, institutions such as universities and other museums, the digital world, and the international community.

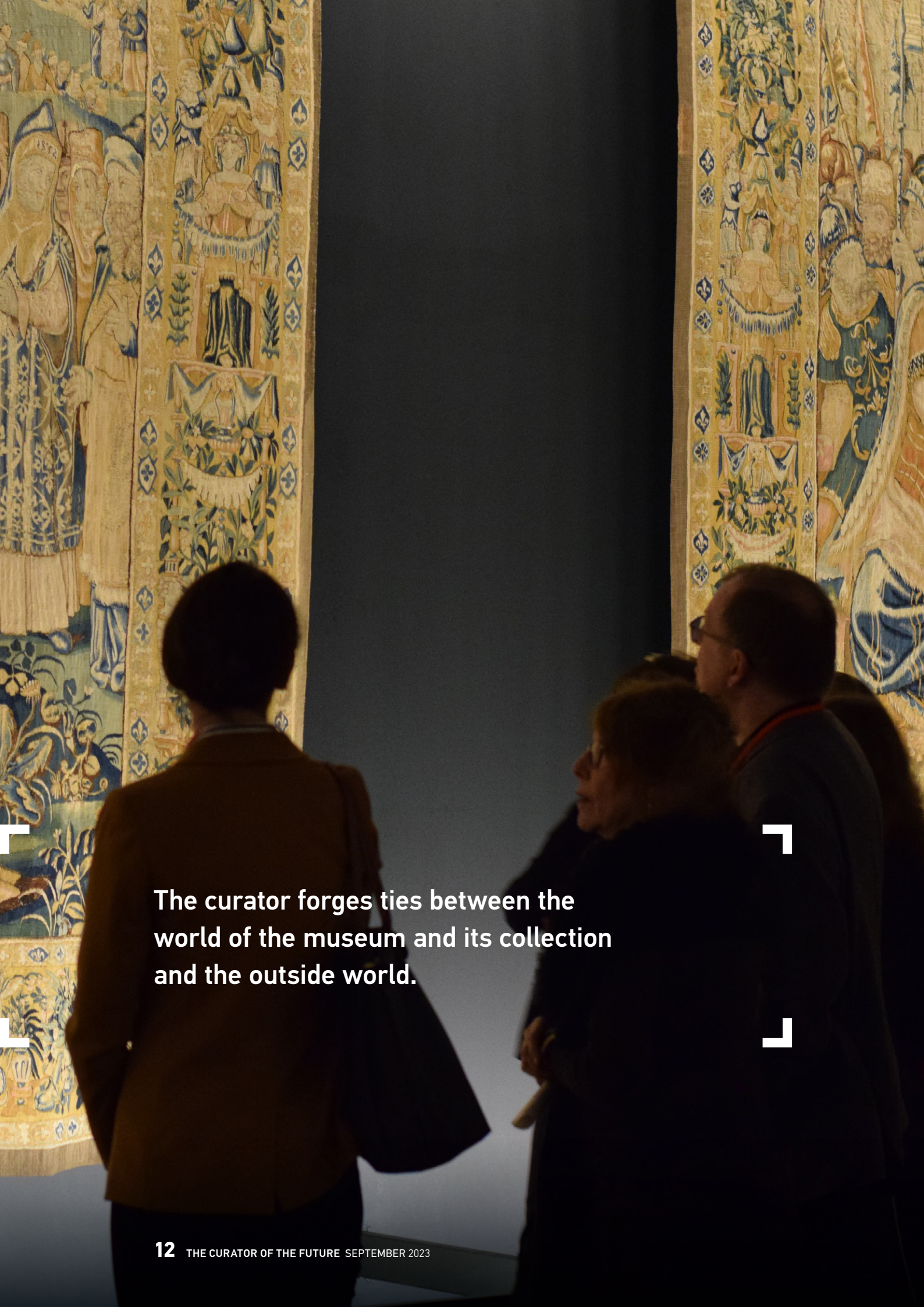
▣ **Align training to the actual work; pay due attention to transfer of knowledge in staff changes; maintain the requisite number of curatorial positions**

For the long term, it is important to focus meticulously on the care for, and art historical knowledge of, the collections. This means that the curator's specialist knowledge of that collection and the transfer of knowledge to subsequent generations of curators and other colleagues is of paramount importance. Curators at the beginning of their career must be given the space and opportunities to develop, not just in the form of temporary contracts or in the first few years after graduation. There is plenty of enthusiasm for the work. However, the number of vacancies for those with art historical expertise is not keeping pace with the ever-expanding activities of museums worldwide.

▣ **Create sufficient time and space for specialization**

The curator's role has expanded in the past few decades. The opportunities that are now available – through new partnerships, technologies, and innovation – mean that it should be possible for curators to prioritize their specialist role. It is important to give curators the necessary space to build and maintain this specialization. It is therefore essential to ensure that

curators' training emphasizes the crucial value of specialist knowledge. It may also be interesting for an organization to aim for a mix of specialist and more generic curators, providing it is large enough to accommodate it.



The curator forges ties between the world of the museum and its collection and the outside world.

BACKGROUND AND WORKING METHOD

The research on the art curator of the future is part of a plan of action that CODART adopted several years ago. In 2019, CODART organized a members' survey¹ and held *diners pensant*² to reflect on the development of the field and the profession of art curator. An additional brainstorming session was organized with the CODART program committee in 2022. These activities led to the conclusion, in short, that today's art curator needs to possess a more diverse range of professional skills than in the past. We also concluded that the relationship with the public plays a more prominent role in museum policy nowadays, and that we are witnessing a trend towards greater collaboration with other disciplines and organizations, all of which heavily influences (perceptions of) the curator's role.

In conversation and consultation with its members, CODART has noted a number of developments that have changed the work of the curator³:

- **Connecting with social issues and new audiences.** Over the past decade, museums have been very successful at hosting public activities and therefore have increasingly more contact with society and stakeholders. It is estimated that this is due to an increase in people working in communication, marketing and education. The focus of curatorial work has thus shifted from conducting research to applying and translating knowledge to other functions in the museum, such as designing educational materials;
- **Transfer and delegation of specialized tasks.** Another notable development is that certain tasks have actually been transferred. This mainly involves administrative and day-to-day management tasks;
- **Acquisition.** The curator is expected to ensure an (ever-growing) contribution to raising additional funds;
- **The attitude of the public and society toward knowledge, research and authority has changed.** The formal position of the curator must increasingly merge with the value of multivocality. The curator is responsible for the input of various perspectives and must guarantee the quality of this input;
- **There seems to be a brain drain.** Knowledge seems to be decaying because there are fewer curators. The number of curators seems to be decreasing due to aging and a heavy workload.

The idea that emerges from this is that curators are an indispensable and stable factor for a museum, whilst they occupy an increasingly restricted position and have lost the obvious authority. CODART intends to elaborate on the aforementioned outcomes through quantitative and qualitative research. Our research question is twofold:

- 1 Paint a realistic picture and provide a factual overview of the current developments / current situation of the art curator. Can these developments be supported by numbers?
- 2 Reflect on what the role and value of the art curator will be in the future. What is necessary to continue carrying out the core task? And what are opportunities to do this differently?

1 CODART member survey, 2019

2 Diner pensant CODART 2019

3 Brainstorming session CODART, November 2022 - included in the research question, dated January 17, 2023

This report combines existing ideas about the curator as described by (junior) curators, museum directors, *critical friends* and so-called *fresh eyes* with available data regarding the museum world, job descriptions and study courses. The focus of this survey is the art curator of Dutch and Flemish art before 1800, the membership group of CODART. This means we zoomed in on art museums that house this type of art and students who have chosen the specialization ancient art and/or have graduated as a curator. Despite this focus, outcomes in this survey may of course apply to curators with other specializations or be of value to a wider field.

Working method

To answer our research questions, qualitative and quantitative research was conducted. Our research is international in scope as much as possible, but has a main focus on the Netherlands, the United States, the United Kingdom and Belgium. The main reasons for this are that CODART members and collections are mostly located in these countries, and the accessibility and availability of information is greatest in these countries.

Quantitative data

For the quantitative side of the research, existing data was combined with new data selected for this survey. For a factual overview of developments and the current state of affairs, we researched:

- The number of students and (new) curators;
- Job listings for art curators;
- The number of exhibitions and activities;
- The workforce of Dutch museums;
- International examples.

The sources for the factual data and quantitative data for this study were compiled in advance in consultation with CODART and are included in Annex I. Illustrative figures have been incorporated in a number of frames throughout the text.

Qualitative data

The qualitative side of our research consists of dialogue sessions, a number of additional individual interviews with various stakeholders of CODART and literary reviews. For the dialogue sessions and additional individual interviews, respondents were first consulted with CODART and then invited. During successive sessions, we tested ideas from the earlier conversations. With the dialogue sessions, we are building on insights from the members' survey, the *diners pensant* and the brainstorming session with CODART's program committee. Survey results, reports from all dialogue sessions and CODART meetings were used as sources for this study. Collectively, this forms the basis for the analysis on the various aspects relevant to a curator of ancient art both today and in the future.

For the dialogue sessions, junior curators, museum directors, *critical friends* and *fresh eyes* were invited. As their starting point, the sessions had the questions: what is at the core of art curation? And what are development opportunities in order to add value? The list of respondents can be found in Annex II.

Justification of available data and information

One of the main prompts for the survey was the need for a quantitative idea to test the experiences of CODART members on developments regarding the formation, function, duties and required skills of a curator. We tried to distinguish between museums and art museums, curators and art curators as much as possible. However, specific data for the target group of art curators (especially art curators of ancient Dutch and Flemish art) is difficult to ascertain. For example, the data proved to be unavailable, too general in nature or not easily comparable. Numbers and figures from colleges and museums are not always available at the level of detail needed to gain proper insights. Public course grades, for example, have only been tracked by study course with no information on the disciplines or focus areas in which students graduate.

Numbers and figures on students of ancient Dutch and Flemish art in the Art History and Curatorial programs are limited, both by study course and in general. In addition, most of the data is of a fairly recent nature, mostly from the past five years. During this time, the COVID-19 pandemic took place meaning data on visitor numbers and museum activities will be different compared to other years.

We must therefore conclude that finding comparable public quantitative data was difficult. We requested data from several institutions, but this did not lead to more numbers and figures. The reason, we were often told, was that such data is not kept or that institutions do not pass on such information. An overview of the institutions from which information was requested can be found in Annex I. Nevertheless, we were able to paint a picture based on general figures, insights and estimates on inquiries, numerical material from scientific studies, and our own analysis of job listings, among other things.

Dialogue sessions and individual interviews were conducted with CODART members and stakeholders. The dialogue session with curators focused on junior curators. This is because of the survey's emphasis on "curator of the future," and because this target group was less prominently featured in the previously organized members' survey, *diners pensant* and brainstorming session.



“You have to make room for the unpredictable. The sense of space and resonance is gone from museums because of daily practice. Museums can take up a role again to create those spaces.” – RESPONDENT DURING THE DIALOGUE SESSION FRESH EYES

RESULTS

What is at the heart of the curatorial profession and where lie the challenges? Answers come from dialogue sessions, individual interviews, data research and (scientific) literature. What is the general idea and what are the facts? CODART curators are affiliated with a museum and therefore developments in the museum world are a determining factor in the development around the role of a curator. Accordingly, this chapter begins by analyzing some key trends in the museum world over roughly the last 25 years (depending on the available data) that have impacted the role of the curator. This is followed by an analysis on the changes in that role.

GENERAL TRENDS IN THE MUSEUM WORLD

In 1975, there were 22,000 museums worldwide. This number has grown to 104,000 museums by 2021. Museum attendance has increased substantially. We have analyzed a number of trends that mean today's museums face different demands and expectations as they pursue different policies than a museum did twenty-five years ago:

- 1 Museums have a public function and therefore have a certain responsibility to society;
- 2 The role of the public has greatly increased;
- 3 Museums generate income from a variety of sources, which impose vastly different substantive demands on them.

1 Museums have a public function and therefore have a certain responsibility to society

The Boekman Foundation has analyzed that the function of a museum has shifted from a building to a function about external (social) aspects, values and accessibility. In addition, education and the public have become a central focus point. Study and research have faded into the background.¹ This analysis by the Boekman Foundation is reflected in the ICOM's current museum definition. Much of this definition relates to interaction with the public and the values on which a museum bases its policies and actions. Since 2022, the definition of a museum is: *"A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing."*²

Respondents during the dialogue sessions confirmed the perception that the social function of museums has grown over the years. According to some respondents, the museum is a sanctuary for new ideas. Others see it as a (potential) meeting place for visitors who otherwise would not meet. A third category sees museums as custodians of cultural heritage. One participant describes a museum as a substitute for churches: they provide meaning and are a physical

1 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.4

2 <https://icom.nl/nl/activiteiten/museumdefinitie>

meeting place. While the aforementioned descriptions sound positive, such social tasks of museums also demand a lot from their staff. Museum directors in particular have indicated that societal expectations of museums are very, if not too, high. Finally, a fourth group indicated that museums should play a greater role in public debates. It was mainly the *critical friends* and *fresh eyes* who indicated that museums should be more outspoken. According to them, museums should reflect critically on society and they can serve as a mirror to society.

A museum is part of society and it is not surprising that it responds to social issues. This commitment to social issues is reflected in the reports, covenants and tools for museum professionals by the industry associations. For example, the British *Museums Association* outlines a number of *museum essentials* for museum professionals, where, in addition to a number of skills (such as working with collections), a number of skills in relation to social issues are also outlined. These include social themes such as: climate justice, decolonization, anti-racism and working with *community partners*.

In the *Professional Practices Guide for Art Curators in Nonprofits* by the American Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC), themes of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility play an important role, as do provenance of art and colonialism.³

It is not only the Anglo-Saxon associations that include social issues in their guidelines. This is also reflected in Dutch cultural guidelines, which include museums. In the Netherlands, guidelines such as the Diversity and Inclusion Code, the Culture Governance Code and the Fair Practice Code are increasingly being incorporated into museum policies and by organizations such as the Museum Association.⁴

In Germany, the Deutscher Museums Bund writes about a rapidly changing field and the arrival of new professions such as community or volunteer manager, diversity or change manager or outreach curator, who - according to the piece - identify future developments. In doing so, Bund writes that these activities may not yet be widespread enough to be included in the job listings, but the tasks associated with them should be part of the professional work at the museum and corresponding projects should become permanent in the future.⁵

2 The role of the public has greatly increased

During all the dialogue sessions and additional conversations, it was agreed that the public has been given a more prominent role in the museum. This is reflected in the organization of (more) exhibitions and activities, but also in the fact that museums are more accessible, put more energy into education and invest in social media. Most museums focus on engaging physical audiences in this regard; attracting online audiences often seems to be an afterthought.

CODART has been told more often in recent years that curators are expected to think about and collaborate on increasing interaction with the public. This fits within the context of the changing nature of museums, as already demonstrated by ICOM's recent definition and the emphasis on social themes in professional guidelines. The public is taking up a more central role in museums,

3 <https://www.museumsassociation.org/careers/museum-essentials/> and <https://www.artcurators.org/page/ProfPractices>

4 <https://www.museumvereniging.nl/cultural-governance> and <https://www.museumvereniging.nl/code-diversiteit-inclusie>

5 Deutscher Museumsbund Leitfaden Professionell Arbeiten, 2019, p. 7

and appealing to different groups is a major focus of many a policy document. Especially during our conversations with the *fresh eyes*, it emerged that museums attract (too) many of the same type of visitors. Although many museums have a focus on inclusion and diversity, it often remains something written in policy plans. For example, there are few solid goals or agreements. The sessions with curators and museum directors revealed that diversity and inclusion is indeed an important issue for museums.

Museum directors indicated that they take care to have a diverse workforce, and curators expressed a desire to attract new and diverse audiences. So the desire certainly exists, but the *fresh eyes* see little results. According to them, museums still have too high thresholds for potential visitors and do not convert desires into solid policies.

Currently, museums are using various methods to increase audience interaction, such as increasing education offerings, putting more effort into the presentation of the collection and increasing digital interaction. A number of recent international scholarly publications has examined the emphasis on education. According to these studies, education has become an increasingly important aspect for a museum and is now part of the curator's job.⁶ In the Netherlands, this development is reflected in a number of sources:

- In recent years, there has been a slight increase in the number of educational programs in the Netherlands. In 2018, 82 percent of museums offered one or more educational programs. Of Dutch museum staff, eight percent performed educational duties. By 2021, 83 percent of museums offered one or more educational programs. Of the museum staff, nine percent performed educational duties. There was an upward trend in school visits until 2019: a 24 percent increase between 2014 and 2019.⁷
- The Raad voor Cultuur (Council for Culture) notes that under the influence of societal pressure, museum policy focuses too much on the presentation of the collection. Cuts have been particularly diverted to collection management and preservation.⁸
- Digitization is a new dimension that offers more opportunities for public engagement, communication and presentation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, museums experimented with new digital ways to connect with the public. Digital capabilities such as digital access, online exhibitions and games were already part of the development of museums, but have taken on an even greater role as a result.⁹

The importance of (attracting) the public is also reflected in the focus on exhibitions. There is an increased emphasis on exhibitions within museums (see frame). The increase in exhibitions has several implications:

- Designing exhibitions demands a lot from museum staff and this comes at the expense of developing and managing the permanent collection. Curators and *critical friends* perceive this as undermining the core mission of a museum;
- Respondents acknowledge that organizing exhibitions ensures the attraction of visitors, but this, they say, is not sanctified. According to the *critical friends* and *fresh eyes*, the exhibitions

6 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.3.; Brainstorming, survey and diner pensant CODART.

7 Museum figures 2019. P.21

8 Raad voor Cultuur: in wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea (2018). P. 34

9 Raad voor Cultuur: in wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea (2018). P. 35

attract a regular public and hardly any new visitors. One of them argued that this regular public can barely keep up with the number of exhibitions and is “tired”;

- Curators are experiencing a shift from research exhibitions to visitor-driven exhibitions. They are reluctant and moderately excited about this. The added value of the curator is to tell the story of the collection from a social perspective. You don't achieve this with a visitor-driven exhibition because you are only guided by the wishes of the audience. A curator should also be given space to display ideas, research findings and objects that are of social or scientific interest. In addition, visitor-driven exhibitions entail the risk that museums do not show a new angle because they do not know whether it will attract an audience. There are ideas and examples in the field about how to carefully approach a visitor-driven exhibition and do justice to both the transfer of knowledge, the value of the art and social perspectives. The advantage of this type of exhibition is that it is a great opportunity to learn more and especially gain a different type of knowledge about the collection.

EXHIBITIONS DEMAND A LOT OF ATTENTION

The Boekman Foundation notes that (more) blockbuster exhibitions are being produced in the Netherlands as a result of economic crises and government cutbacks. Such exhibitions attract large numbers of visitors and can provide additional funding.¹⁰ For the Dutch museum sector, the Raad voor Cultuur (Council for Culture) also notes that there is great social pressure to organize many

exhibitions. This, according to the Council, weighs heavily on the budget because of staffing and maintenance costs.¹¹ Almost all respondents recognize this phenomenon for the Netherlands, Belgium and the United States and indicate that museums pay too much attention to setting up exhibitions. From the available Dutch figures, the following overview emerges for museums in general:

ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE BUDGET EXHIBITIONS IN MUSEUMS IN THE NETHERLANDS

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total budget exhibitions	91 million	94 million	96 million	107 million	77 million	80 million
% budget	9%	9%	9%	10%	8%	8%

Museum figures 2016 – 2021

The share of exhibition costs in the Netherlands fluctuated between eight and ten percent of the total budget between 2016 and 2021, but did not increase dramatically.¹² The Museum Association's figures tracked and published in figures from

2016 onwards show an increase in temporary exhibitions between 2016 and 2019. This trend was broken in 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, a 37 percent decrease in temporary exhibitions occurred.¹³

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS PER YEAR

	2014	2015	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of temporary exhibitions	1,968	1,736	1,845	1,857	2,256	1,605	1,413

Museana data 2014-2021. There is no data available for 2016.

The Dutch museum data available through Museana shows a slight increase in the total number of exhibitions. This applies to all

museums (not specifically museums of ancient art). Thus, the limited availability of data makes it difficult to draw a clear conclusion here.

It seems difficult to reverse the 'exhibition drive' in the short term. For example, according to one curator, it is common for much of the museum organization to be set up to produce exhibitions. Conducted interviews indicate that this internal organizational structure is difficult to adapt in the

10 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.3.; Brainstorming, survey and diner pensant CODART. P.5
 11 Raad voor Cultuur: In wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea (2018). P. 65
 12 Museana data 2016 – 2021, Museum figures 2016-2021 via the Museum Association
 13 Museum Association: museum figures 2021 via https://museumvereniging.nl/media/museumcijfers_2021/220911_museumcijfers_2021.pdf

short term and may come at the expense of attention to other components, such as collection management. The available figures cannot confirm or deny this.

In addition, museums receive grants and funds precisely for organizing exhibitions. These revenues are often essential for a healthy business operation, but contribute limited knowledge development regarding the collection in the long term.

Effects on the workforce

The question is whether the changing role of museums and a greater focus on presentation and the public translates to museum staffing levels.

CODART members perceive that in recent decades, there has been an increase in staff in other departments, but that the curatorial department, or knowledge and science or collections management, has not experienced such growth. CODART wondered if any figures could be found to confirm this experience.

Based on the - very limited - available data, some shift in formation can be seen, but unfortunately the data is difficult to compare due to the variety of categories. It is also not always easy to make out in which category the (duties of) curators fall. In addition, there is no distinction between disciplines, so it only provides insight into the formation distribution of museums in general and not specifically for (ancient) art. There are several barriers that make interpretation difficult. However, based on what information is available, we will still try to paint a picture below.

In a study of the job distribution in British museums, researcher Edwards (2007) finds, based on an analysis of the vacancy database of *The Museums Journal* that between 1990 and 2005, the demand for positions involving education, special projects and management increased. The proportion of people employed in the *curatorial category*, which includes curators and exhibition staff, decreased slightly. The proportion of *conservators (restorers)* fell from 16 percent in 1990 to 4 percent in 2015. This shows that such specialized knowledge is increasingly being hired.¹⁴

Edwards concludes from these figures that museums are making object collecting and collection management a less central focus point. There is more focus on functions such as management, marketing, education, operations, communication, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency. This is reflected in the distribution of functions.¹⁵

¹⁴ Edwards, *The future of curators* (2007). P. 103

¹⁵ Edwards, *The future of curators* (2007). P. 103 -104

PERCENTAGE OF JOBS BY YEAR BY JOB CATEGORY, UK 1990 - 2005

↓ CATEGORY	↓ % JOBS PER YEAR			
	1990	1995	2000	2005
Curatorial	39	34.5	31.5	34
Education/research	7	9	13	19
Museum management/marketing	11	17.5	20	12
Exhibition/technicians	9	4	2.5	3
Documentation	6	4	8	7
Special projects	2	5.5	5	8
Visitor services	1	2	5	2
Directors	4	9	6	3
Curators	16	8	1	4
Lecturers	2	2	1	-
Registrars	1	3	3	2
Policy and information/Librarians	1	-	2	1
ICT/Digitization	-	0.5	1	1
Other	1	1	1	4
Number of jobs	213	183	234	258

Such figures and research are not available for the Dutch context. However, there are staff figures on Dutch museums in general. For Dutch museums, the Museum Association notes that between 2015 and 2021, the total staffing of Dutch museums was nearly constant. Within this period of time, there are some differences between the years. Between 2015 and 2019, the total number of FTEs increased after which the number of FTEs decreased again until 2021. These figures distinguish between:

- ▣ Audience and presentation
- ▣ Business management
- ▣ Collection
- ▣ Science
- ▣ Commercial activities
- ▣ Education

The Museum Association does not specify these categories, so it is difficult to identify which one a curator falls under and how museums provide these figures. In the job manual, the Museum Association categorizes the position of curator under “Collection.”¹⁶

There has been no major percentage increase or decrease in FTEs when it comes to FTEs for research, education, public information, operations and commercial parties. The distribution of staff across positions shifts only slightly over the period 2013- 2021, with a decrease in science

16 Functiehandboek Museumvereniging (please note: the job manual is currently under review)

and an increase in commercial activities. The only possible exception is 2021. That year, there was an increase in collection management FTEs.¹⁷

EVOLUTION OF FTES BY FUNCTION

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Audience and presentation	34	33	33	33	33	34	34	34	32
Business operations	24	25	26	27	27	26	25	25	24
Collection	18	18	17	16	16	16	17	17	20
Science	6	6	5	5	5	4	5	5	5
Commercial activities	9	9	10	11	11	11	11	10	11
Education	9	9	9	9	8	8	9	8	9

Museum figures 2016 - 2021¹⁸

The impression from the interviews is that museums are shifting their focus to FTEs around education and public engagement. The curator is part of the public interaction branch, but at the same time also the one who deals with collection management and research. There are generally no fewer FTEs available for the latter two tasks. Nevertheless, the Boekman Foundation¹⁹ does note that educational tasks are causing shifts in museums to educational departments and in a curator’s job responsibilities, and the workload is increasing.

In any case, the aforementioned paints the picture that the increase in a museum’s number of activities does not coincide with an increase in staff. This has remained more or less the same. Requested study course information and further inquiries reveal that the art history program and Master’s programs in curatorship are trying to respond to changes in museums. Although object research and the collection are still the main focus, study courses are paying more attention to social skills and the other functions of a museum.²⁰ Further data on study courses is included in the next chapter and Annex II.

3 Museums generate income from a variety of sources, which impose vastly different substantive demands on them

Globally, museums rely heavily on external funding. Caring for heritage, developing educational materials, boosting tourism; the work of museums is not easily converted into monetary gain.²¹ In Western Europe, the cultural sector has traditionally been supported by the government. In Eastern European countries and the United States, on the other hand, financial support by the government is a lot less obvious.²² In the last decade, some Western European countries (such

17 Museum Association: museum figures 2021 via https://museumvereniging.nl/media/museumcijfers_2021/220911_museumcijfers_2021.pdf

18 Museum Association: museum figures 2021 via https://museumvereniging.nl/media/museumcijfers_2021/220911_museumcijfers_2021.pdf

19 Boekman (2021) https://www.boekman.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/BmXtra_36_DEF.pdf, p.4

20 <https://www.uva.nl/shared-content/programmas/en/dual-masters/curating-art-and-cultures-heritage-studies/curating-art-and-cultures-heritage-studies.html>, <https://www.rug.nl/masters/curatorial-studies/>

21 Towse, R. (2011). Introduction. In R. Towse (Ed.), *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*. Edward Elgar.

22 Jurčišinová, K., Wilders, M.L. & Visser, J. (2021). The Future of Blockbuster Exhibitions After the Covid-19 Crisis: The Case of the Dutch Museum Sector, *Museum International*, 73(3-4), 20-31. 10.1080/13500775.2021.2016279

as the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom) are moving toward the American model: liberal governments want to encourage the cultural sector, and thus museums, to become more independent and flexible. In the Netherlands, State Secretary for Culture Halbe Zijlstra (under the Rutte I administration) pushed for “cultural entrepreneurship”; museums had to generate a larger portion of their income themselves and a total of 200 million euros was cut from the cultural sector. The budget for the subsidy structure of which museums are part (the Basic Infrastructure, or BIS) was scaled down greatly - from 530 million euros in the 2009-2012 period to 327 million euros in the 2013-2016 period.²³ Since 2017, the grant budget has expanded again to 412 million euros for the period 2021-2024.

In the Netherlands, there are various requirements for government funding. Since 2012, at least 17.5% of the budget must be generated from own income to qualify for funding. Since 2021, museums are required to comply with a number of codes on good policy conduct (the Fair Practice Code, the Governance Code for Culture and the Cultural Diversity Code) and the distribution of funds is subject to rules on geographical distribution.²⁴ Also, the subsidy period (four years) affects the cultural sector’s freedom of movement; making plans for the longer term is more difficult, the industry regularly echoes.²⁵ In the United Kingdom, the museum sector has also faced a sharp decline in government grants, making museums much more dependent on other forms of income.²⁶

Thus, in addition to government subsidies, museums are increasingly dependent on raising their own income, such as from ticket sales and merchandise. Friendships and associations are also becoming more common, with art lovers being offered exclusive access to an exhibition or lecture, for example. These trends reinforce the need to attract large audiences,²⁷ as discussed above. Attracting other sources of income, such as fundraising, sponsorships and donations, also involves different interests. Cultural funds often have specific requirements when providing a contribution, and sponsors usually expect a quid pro quo for their support (either financial or in-kind).²⁸ For example, education can be a key focus, and municipal policy makers often require that something is done with or for the region.

23 Boekman (2021) - https://www.boekman.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/BmXtra_25.pdf (p. 5-6)

24 Boekman (2021): https://www.boekman.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/BmXtra_25.pdf (p. 6-7)

25 Volkskrant (2020) - <https://www.volkskrant.nl/cultuur-media/waarom-duitsers-kunst-en-cultuur-wel-serieus-nemen~b961f-cd9/#:~:text=Sinds%20de%20coronapandemie%20lijkt%20Duitsland,teken%20in%20de%20culturele%20sector.> Van Meerkerk, E. & Van den Hoogen, Q. (2021). Knellend keurslijf: de beperkingen van een steeds bureaucratischer cultuurbestel, *Boekman #126*. <https://www.boekman.nl/tijdschrift/boekman-126-cultuurbestel/>

26 Aroles, J., Hassard, J., & Hyde, P. (2022). 'Culture for Sale': The Effects of Corporate Colonization on the UK Museum Sector. *Organization Studies*, 43(3), 347-368. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840621989001>

27 Fernández-Blanco, V. & Prieto-Rodríguez, J. (2011). Museums. In R. Towse (Ed.), *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*. Edward Elgar.

28 <https://www.cultuur-ondernemen.nl/culturele-financieringswijzer/dossier/cultuurfondsen-in-nederland> and <https://www.cultuur-ondernemen.nl/culturele-financieringswijzer/dossier/sponsoring>

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROLE OF CURATOR

This report begins with the quote: *“The curator is the last 19th-century profession that’s left in the museum world. Everything else has changed.”*. This is a quote from one of the dialogue sessions. This observation does not take away from the fact that the profession continues to evolve. The described changes in the museum world have affected the role of the curator.

For curators, we see three major developments:

- The curator’s job description is constantly changing;
- It is essential to set priorities in the job description of the position of curator of Old Masters;
- Students are interested in the curator’s profession, but career development is poor and there is too little room for the transfer of knowledge.

These developments are logically strongly linked; if there is no fixed definition of a curator, you can adapt the job description to any desired situation. As the situation within museums changes, so does the curator’s role. For further exploration, we have examined what respondents believe are the core tasks of a curator. The answers to this question can be clustered into the core tasks and attributes below.

1 The curator’s job description is constantly changing

The profession of curator does not have a protected title and is not included in the Regulated Professions database.²⁹ So curators, museums and other organizations where curators work can decide for themselves what knowledge and skills they think fit a curator. This is reflected in definitions, job descriptions, study course descriptions, study guides and opinion articles. In addition, a distinction can be made between the Dutch “conservator” and the English *curator*. The latter is even more broadly interpretable (i.e., for festivals, websites, music platforms, etc.). We also observe a decline in the use of the Dutch word “conservator” in general. In Flanders, “curator” is also increasingly used instead of “conservator”. In Germany, “Kurator” or “Kuratorin” is much more common today than the term “Konservator” or “Konservatorin”.

The observation that the title curator is not protected does not mean that no attempts have been made to delineate the profession. The Boekman Foundation cites a paper by researcher and curator Jonathan Haas (2003) for the job description of curator. He notes that a curator has three core duties:

- Conduct and publish research;
- Curate the collection;
- Create exhibitions and public educational programs.

Researchers Elizaveta Vitaliyevna Rubantseba and Loup Hoffmann, in their 2020 study of the history of the curator in the art world and the museum, note that descriptions of the curator have continued to change since the profession’s inception and currently see a broad range of duties. Ever since the 18th century, increasingly more tasks have been added. From collecting and managing collections to heritage conservation and selection of new acquisitions, scientific research, educational activities and thereby organizing exhibitions. According to the researchers,

29 EU Regulated Professions Database, via <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/professions/bycountry> (July 2023).

education is the most defining task of a curator today.³⁰ With the emergence of the role of education in museums, part of a curator's time and budget goes to performing those tasks, as we also noted in the evolution of museums.³¹

Most art curators of ancient Dutch and Flemish art are what Rubantseba and Hoffmann call museum curators. This is defined as: professional specialization, often related to specific collections. As such, the museum curator is responsible for maintenance, research, collection management and development, and exhibition development. Research underlies all of these skills. The museum curator (as opposed to independent, freelance curators) is more focused on the past in which attention is paid to representation, reflection and providing context to the existing collections."³²

The creation of networks and professional associations such as CODART in 1998 and AAMC in 2011 shows that the sector is uniting around professional development. These organizations guide the development of the profession. In addition, in the 1990s conferences, mutual discussions, ideation and literature on the curator profession were booming.³³

2 Museums have grown into more complex organizations

We can cautiously observe, even if the figures are not fully available, that due to an increased amount of attention being paid to the public operation of museums, there is more formation in the field of education, marketing and communication, and no increase in the formation of the collection and science department, even though it is very clear that the activities of museums have increased greatly over recent decades. The profession is evolving and the duties of a curator of ancient art are expanding. What does this look like in practice and are there any bottlenecks? The figures presented by the Dutch Museum Association in both 2018 and 2019 talk about an increasing workload; in fact, this is explicitly stated as a concern. For 'collection and science' and 'education', the increase in workload is the highest. The same publications describe that the workload of curators and researchers is compromising the collection task of museums. They write that because of an increase in the number of school visits, a growing size of the collection and loan traffic, tasks have increased and now exceed staff capacity.³⁴

30 Rubantseva E. V. & Hoffmann, L. (2020). The curator in the art world and in the museum. History, theories and current issues. The Issues of Museology, 11(2), 168-182. P.173.

31 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.3, Haas, 2003. P.237-242.

32 Rubantseva E. V. & Hoffmann L. (2020). The curator in the art world and in the museum. History, theories and current issues. The Issues of Museology, 11(2), 168-182. P. 174-5.

33 Haas, J. (2003) 'The changing role of the curator'. In: Fieldiana: Anthropology No. 36, 237242. P. 172

34 28 Museumcijfers 2018, p.4, p.6, p.25-26, Museumcijfers 2019. P. 25

RISE IN WORKLOAD IN DUTCH MUSEUMS

	2018*	2019**
Audience and presentation	116	106
Business management	112	108
Collection and science	134	113
Commercial activities	99	101
Education	125	115
Total	117	109

Museum Association * Indexes with 2013 = 100, ** Indexes with 2014 = 100

Expansion and changes to the job description

CODART members define the core duties of an art curator, in no particular order, as follows: networking, collection management and research, giving tours, managing, creating exhibitions, publishing, making acquisitions and assisting with conservation treatment processes. In recent years, this has expanded to include tasks related to multivocality, a role in an increasing number of departments within museums, the use of social media, fundraising, arranging loans and lecturing.³⁵

The Boekman Foundation also describes the rise of educational departments as one of the reasons why the job of curator has become so much more intense. Museums require curators to assist in the development of educational programs, this has even become a core task of a curator.³⁶

The German Museum Association writes in the industry's job guidelines: "Many of the activity profiles are united in a few people in most museums; work areas and profiles can overlap or be combined. For example, curators are often also responsible for the collection from which they develop exhibitions; similarly, in many institutions, inventory is a task of all colleagues working with the collection."³⁷

The observation that the job description is expanding has been made before. The aforementioned study by Edwards (2007) shows that between 1990 and 2005 there was a decline in the demand for specialist knowledge in general. However, a *postgraduate degree* was more often required of curators. During this time frame, the demand for curators with "good or excellent" communication skills, ICT knowledge and documentation skills increased. The demand for skills in organization, administration and management skills remained the same.³⁸ The most in-demand skill during this period was collection management. What is striking is that there is little explicit demand for research and publishing skills. The article by Rubantseba and Hoffmann (2020) also notes a change in the role of a curator: selection of new objects, scientific research, education and

35 Brainstorming session CODART, November 2022

36 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.3, Haas, 2003. P.237-242

37 Footnote Deutscher Museumsbund Leitfadenn Professionell Arbeiten, 2019, p. 8

38 Edwards. The future of curators, 2007. P. 106-108

exhibitions take on a greater role.³⁹ In the developments around museums, we already described the increased focus on digital developments. The digital skills needed for this are reflected in the job requirements of curators. Digital skills, as in almost all professions, have become an essential component in the museum world and thus of museum staff and curators.⁴⁰

CURRENT JOB LISTINGS CONFIRM THE IMAGE OF A JACK OF ALL TRADES

Analysis of the job listings on the CODART website indicates that the job descriptions for art curators of Dutch and Flemish ancient art have become more comprehensive. Especially after 2016, almost all job listings contained more than 10 task descriptions, while this used to be 5 to 7. In contrast to Edwards' results, most of the job postings on the CODART website do contain a task description that indicates conducting research.

Collection management, consistent with Edwards' results, also appears to be a frequently mentioned task. Almost all job listings require candidates who have completed at least a university degree, with the number of applications toward PhDs increasing. In the Netherlands, a doctorate degree is often not a requirement for curatorial positions; in countries such as Germany and the U.S., it is more common. In addition, it is notable that a large majority of job listings now have language requirements; for example, candidates for the position of curator of ancient Dutch and Flemish art must

speak several modern languages or be proficient in Dutch. The latter also often applies to job listings abroad.⁴¹

As part of collection management, curators are (partly) responsible for cataloging and archiving objects online. They also make some of these online collections available to the public. CODART's job board shows that about ten percent of job listings have job descriptions that refer to digital knowledge or skills.⁴²

In addition, vacancies show that curators are increasingly expected to work with other departments or other external partners. For example, there are job descriptions such as "consults with outside experts as necessary," "Interdisciplinary work across these areas" or "You find it important to look beyond your own specialty." Especially after 2020, such descriptions seem to increase.⁴³

3 Students are interested in the curator's profession, but career development is poor and there is too little room for the transfer of knowledge

We see some developments that affect the time and ability of today's curators to secure and share their knowledge to advance the management, preservation and development of museum collections:

- A combination of an aging population and few entry-level positions hinders the transfer of knowledge. The Boekman Foundation notes that there are (too) few junior positions

39 Rubantseva E. V. & Hoffmann, L. (2020). The curator in the art world and in the museum. History, theories and current issues. *The Issues of Museology*, 11(2), 168-182.

40 Toekomst van werken in musea, 2018. P.32

41 Bureau & MAES research job board CODART, 2023

42 Bureau & MAES research job board CODART, 2023

43 Bureau & MAES research job board CODART, 2023

available due to a lack of funding.⁴⁴ The limited number of job listings offered for starters seems to confirm this idea (see frame).⁴⁵ Half of the workforce falls under the 55-65 age group and about a quarter under the 45-55 age group. The Council for Culture notes that this results in insufficient transfer of knowledge about the collections, which can have negative consequences for the safeguarding of the museum collection.⁴⁶

- Like many other industries, the (international) museum world has struggled to fill positions over recent years, and curatorial job listings are quite high on lists of hard-to-fill positions. By looking at the Netherlands, specialist substantive positions such as curator and taxonomist are difficult to fill.⁴⁷ This problem is not unique to the Netherlands. In the U.S., this group ranks fourth on the list of hard-to-find staff. 29 percent of museums report having difficulties finding curators. In 2021-2022, this was 14 percent of museums.⁴⁸ It seems that the limited ability to invest in the necessary long-term training of a new generation of curators is now creating a growing problem.
- The influx and flow of students graduating in the Netherlands is not a given. The Boekman Foundation, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund⁴⁹, the Council for Culture⁵⁰ and members of CODART note that the connection between education and the field is not optimal. It was also mentioned in the dialogue sessions that the knowledge new curators gain during their study time is rapidly becoming outdated. Based on study course information, we can tentatively conclude that the outflow of students to temporary entry-level positions is partially successful, but that after one or two junior/starter positions, taking the next step is difficult. This is evident from the experiences of CODART members, insights from the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund and training coordinators confirm this view.⁵¹
- Mentoring requires time and diligence. It emerged during the dialogue sessions - mentioned by both curators and museum directors - that it takes about ten years for a curator to know a collection well. This is where long-term mentoring fits in, but there is not always the financial space for that.⁵² In addition, the dialogue session revealed the perception of a generational gap. Young curators view the social role of a curator differently (more activist). This can clash with older curators and therefore does not do the bond between curators any good. Of course, this is not true for all cases, and it can also be inspiring and empowering.

The available data and reports on student outflow and museum staff development do not break down the position of art curator of ancient art and its turnover levels, so we cannot conclude whether there are more or fewer curators entering the business overall.

44 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.3

45 Research job board CODART.

46 Raad voor Cultuur: in wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea (2018). P. 24-25, p.66

47 Toekomst van werken in musea (2018) P.40. This list is without prioritization or numbers.

48 National snapshot of United States Museums, 2023, p.6 https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/SnapshotReport_v3.pdf

49 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.3

50 Raad voor Cultuur: In wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea. P.25

51 CODART brainstorming session and diner pensant, respondents Prince Bernhard Culture Fund and dialogue sessions

52 Raad voor Cultuur: In wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea. P.25

FEW JUNIOR/ASSOCIATE POSITIONS

CODART's job board shows that there are several types of positions for entry-level curators. The two most common positions for entry-level curators are junior curator and assistant. Between 2005 and 2022, these positions both occurred nine times. In addition, there was a third category: the associates. They were mentioned five times. There were two instances of the job description listing an 'Associate/assistant'. Thus, of the 61 vacancies available, 23 were positions for beginning curators.

The description "junior curator" is mainly used in the Netherlands. What is striking here is that more than half of these junior vacancies were offered by the Rijksmuseum and that most of these positions were often temporary (for two years, for example) and not full-time.⁵³ Inquiries confirm this idea: students do still move on to one or two temporary positions after their internships, which are often not full-time, but the step after that is less easy, causing a portion to drop out.

There are initiatives to promote advancement

There are several initiatives in the Netherlands to promote the offering of junior positions. These include the Curators' Stipend from the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund. From this financial construct, museums and junior curators receive a grant so that a senior curator can do research for a short period of time while a junior curator takes over much of the curatorial duties, learning the trade. This initiative has existed since 2013 and it ensures that, every year, two to seven institutions and junior curators are paired.⁵⁴ The Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, the Groninger Museum (Curator in Training) and the Mauritshuis offer fellowships and talent development projects.⁵⁵ From NWO, research projects are funded for universities and curators, creating space for temporary (junior) positions and the transfer of knowledge.

The number of students is increasing

There appears to be no shortage in students interested in art history and curatorial studies. According to the study database Erudera, there are 411 art history (undergraduate) programs worldwide, offered at 205 educational institutions.⁵⁶ The 296 master's programs are offered at a total of 173 institutions. Of these master's programs, sixteen are traceable to art curatorial programs, sometimes specifically mentioning contemporary art, but we can make little inference about the different disciplines.

The general trend in the Netherlands is that the number of university graduates is increasing. This also applies to Art History studies.⁵⁷ The number of Art History students has increased over the past five years from 811 students in 2018 to 1009 students in 2022. This increase occurred in all five studies.⁵⁸ Whether this has led to more curatorial graduates is not specifically discernible from these figures. The number of graduates in Art History increased from 91 students in 2022 to

53 Research job board CODART. For this study, we have included only junior positions in which the term "curator" was explicitly mentioned in the title description. We have not included vacancies for fellows.

54 <https://www.cultuurfonds.nl/conservatoren-stipendium>

55 Raad voor Cultuur: in wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea (2018). P. 17

56 <https://erudera.com/study-programs/art-history/bachelor-degree/>

57 www.ocwincijfers.nl

58 DUO, WO students, update March 2023 via https://duo.nl/open_onderwijsdata/hoger-onderwijs/aantal-studenten/#

123 students in 2023. The graduation rate thus increased 1 point from 11 to 12 percent. The figures through DUO and CBS of these Art History programs cannot be further specified by discipline or graduated curators. Available figures from the various study courses leading to curatorial positions show the same trend: a growth in the number of students over the past five to ten years.⁵⁹ A more specific overview is included in the frame.

STUDY COURSE DATA

Art History is available at five universities in the Netherlands, and there are three specific master's programs for curators. The University of Groningen, the Free University of Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam offer these master's programs that may or may not involve a combined program. In Belgium, curator studies can be followed at the University of Antwerp (bachelor's degree), the Free University of Brussels and the University of Ghent.

THE NETHERLANDS

Only general information on student numbers in the Netherlands is available through DUO and CBS. We had to find out specific information on the breakdown within the discipline of Art History and thus on CODART's target audience for each course separately. The outcomes vary by study course. The data is therefore difficult to compare and paints a different picture for each study course based on the information available.

RUG: MASTER'S TRACK ART HISTORY

The master's track Art History at the University of Groningen (RUG) has three specializations:

- Modern and Contemporary Art
- Ancient Art (Early Modern European Art)
- Curatorial & Museum Studies.

The major in Curatorial studies is a six-month specialization with a practical internship at a museum or institution. This specialization was chosen by 12 students in 2023 (a total of 133 students chose the full Art History track)⁶⁰ Inquiries with the university provided the following, more specific overview: since 2015, the number of students who chose

Curatorial studies has steadily increased from five students in 2015 to 40 students in 2022-2023. This increase was partly due to the internationalization of the program allowing students to take the course in English. Of this group of students, 25-33 percent are in training as curators of ancient art. This currently comes down to approximately ten students per year. Of these students, many go on to work in their own field, often as (junior) curators, but also holding other positions within museums (education, collection management and research)⁶¹ Of those who studied Art History in Groningen, 16 percent of graduates found the course a good basis for starting in the job market, 26 percent of those employed found a level job and 60 percent found a job within the field. The idea is that students from the curatorial track are able to move on to entry-level jobs, but these are often temporary and/or part-time.

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM/VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT (VU): MASTER CURATING ART AND CULTURES

The number of students studying at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) with bachelor's degrees in Art History has increased slightly since 2017-2018. The master's is a joint UvA and VU curatorial program. This dual master includes a two-year program in collaboration with museums and institutions in the Netherlands. The program accepts a maximum of 18 students per year. In practice, this means 14 to 18 students. All but a few of these students graduate, though not always exactly in 2 years (some after 3 or 4 years). In 2023, there was an intake of 14 students. No specific figures are known for the master's degree Ancient Art.⁶²

59 Figures are included in the annex.

60 <https://universitairmasters.nl/universiteiten/Rijksuniversiteit-Groningen/master/Conservatoren-opleiding-Kunstgeschiedenis/>

61 Via RUG Faculty of Arts, art history

62 Via Universitairmasters.nl

ART HISTORY RADBOUD UNIVERSITY NIJMEGEN

In Nijmegen, there are currently 77 Art History students with an intake of 22 new students in 2023.⁶³ Since 2015, 102 undergraduate theses have been written, of which 34 were theses on art before 1750 AD. This amounts to 33 percent of the total number of theses being about ancient art with 21 theses examining Dutch or Flemish art. Among the theses on ancient art, there are also some that explore the relationship between ancient art and modern art theory and thus are not purely about ancient art.⁶⁴ Since 2015, 54 master's theses have been written within this program. Of these, 30 theses were about ancient art, representing 55 percent of the total. Of those 30 theses on ancient art, 20 were

on Dutch or Flemish art - representing 66 percent of the total theses on ancient art and 3 percent of the total theses written during this period.⁶⁵

BELGIUM

In Belgium, national figures are kept in a number of main categories, including art sciences. For Archaeology and Art Sciences, the number of students increased and the Art Sciences master's programs also show an increase of over 300 undergraduate students and over 30 master's students in five years.⁶⁶ In Belgium, curator studies can be followed at the Free University of Brussels and the University of Ghent. There is no further specification by discipline within Art Sciences.⁶⁷

NUMBER OF STUDENTS FLANDERS

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of students	1,020	1,108	1,191	1,276	1,338
Master's students	121	124	138	144	154

Flanders, Higher Education in Figures 2019-2023

63 <https://studiegids.nl/wo/opleidingen/kunstgeschiedenis-bachelor-radboud-universiteit-nijmegen/>

64 <https://www.ru.nl/opleidingen/bachelors/kunstgeschiedenis/feiten-cijfers>

65 Based on internal research CODART.

66 <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/hoger-onderwijs-in-cijfers>

67 <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/hoger-onderwijs-in-cijfers>

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CORE TASKS

CODART members perceive that the expansion of duties comes at the expense of knowledge development through research and management of art collections. It is precisely the knowledge of a curator that is needed to create exhibitions, educational programs and public activities.⁶⁸ The Boekman Foundation agrees to this observation, and the Council for Culture also notes that there have been cutbacks in a curator's management and substantive duties, leaving fewer resources to keep up with substantive knowledge.^{69;70}

If we look at the changing definition and job description of an art curator, we can see that the following four tasks are at the core of the art curator in 2023:

- The curator's key concern is researching the collection;
- The curator shares responsibility for managing the collection;
- The curator places objects in appropriate social and other contexts;
- The curator plays a bridging role between the objects, the museum, and the public.

For many curators, the institution they work for is leading when it comes to determining the precise performance of their duties. For example, curators in small institutions often have to divide their attention among more tasks than a curator in a large museum. The aforementioned tasks constitute the core tasks because they apply to almost all curators. In addition, there are a number of skills and challenges that are strongly related to the core tasks. This is further elaborated below.

1 The curator's key concern is researching the collection

Without knowledge of the collection, an art curator cannot take on the other requested tasks. All respondents to the dialogue sessions and individual interviews indicated that the core task of the curator is therefore to gather and share knowledge about the collection. In all interviews, respondents indicated that it is important for a curator to conduct research so that their knowledge is maintained and expanded. A curator can do this by conducting their own (scientific) research into the provenance, stakes and characteristics of objects and the collection as a whole. It can also be done by taking in external knowledge from guest curators or external scientists, for example.

The *critical friends* as well as curators and museum directors indicate that there is often too little time for curators to do their own research. This space often exists only in preparation for an exhibition or when a book is published. Research often has to be organized in a different way, but this makes gathering knowledge of the collections precarious. The curator needs this knowledge primarily to perform other (core) tasks, but also to provide depth of content for the other departments in the museum.

It is also apparent from the publications of the American Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC) that the core task of conducting research has taken on a different position in a curator's

68 Brainstorming session CODART, November 2022

69 Raad voor Cultuur: In wankel evenwicht. Sectoradvies musea. P.25

70 Boekman Extra 36: Het Conservatoren Stipendium Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen. P.4

job description compared to, for example, education, interaction with the public, diversity and digitization. The *professional practices guide*⁷¹ states that a curator's work should be especially accessible to a wide audience and this requires more of the curator as a networker. After all, to make a room arrangement understandable, a curator must know what is going on in society and engage in conversation with visitors. In this, the visitors are leading in comparison to the objects on display.⁷²

2 The curator shares responsibility for managing the collection

The curators as well as *critical friends* and *fresh eyes* have described collection management or care of the collection as a core task of the curator. This involves unlocking objects and collections in the depots, nominating acquisitions and caring for the objects by contributing to restoration work through quality assurance and signaling. According to the *critical friends* and curators, the latter task is relatively new. Other colleagues used to be responsible for restorations (such as in-house conservators), but they have often been made redundant. Only in some larger museums can you still find these people. As a result, curators are often responsible for spotting the need for maintenance and overseeing the restoration process. In addition, all stakeholders indicate that good collection management requires active networking in both national and international working contexts. The 2018 Dutch Museum Association's figures confirm this. This report shows that the collection task in museums has come to be under pressure because of a rising workload, especially among curators and researchers. The pressure leads to unwanted outflow and less loan traffic. This is no longer explicitly stated in their 2019 to 2021 museum figures, which is well explained by the intervention of the COVID-19 crisis.⁷³

3 The curator places objects in appropriate social and other contexts;

A curator not only has knowledge of the objects, they are also the intellectual custodian of the collection. A curator can place objects in the bigger picture. For example, within the collection, but also within historical and current societal frameworks. Think of, for instance, what a world map in a painting says about the makers' worldview? And how do we think about this now? One of the respondents described this with the term "environmental sensitivity". Exhibition preparation can be an elaboration of this core task. By placing objects in a (social) framework, the curator and the museum are allowed to participate in the social debate.

"A curator turns difficult images into simple words that create a story. A curator must be a storyteller, both in the catalogue as well as in images." - A MUSEUM DIRECTOR

71 AAMC professional practices guide via <https://www.artcurators.org/page/ProfPractices>

72 AAMC professional practices guide via <https://www.artcurators.org/page/ProfPractices>

73 Museum figures 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, Dutch Museum Association

“A specialist as a curator leads to rigidity. That curator should become a scientific researcher. You have to be aware of your public role and you have to actively keep working on it.” - RESPONDENT DURING THE DIALOGUE SESSION FRESH EYES

4 The curator plays a bridging role between the objects, the museum, and the public.

During all the interviews, the curator is referred to as a storyteller who, like no other in the museum, makes the connection between the object and the visitor. In doing so, it is important for the curator to appeal to different types of audiences. A curator and one of the *fresh eyes* added to this that a curator also preserves and communicates the story of the museum itself to the visitor.

A curator must therefore look both outward and at the objects inside. This trend is also evident in CODART's job board. Around 2020, it is evident that the job description more often indicates that a curator must connect with society and the audience. For example, there are descriptions such as “possesses an antenna for social developments and knows how to integrate them into daily practice” or “[You can] make a substantive contribution to the discussion of various social issues.”⁷⁴

Core characteristics of an art curator

The aforementioned tasks can be performed in different ways and are often mentioned in combination with different traits or preferences. For example, they also discussed being able to apply for (scientific) grants, possess social media skills and travel for research, networking and acquisition. Two points considered more extensively are:

■ The curator must have strong communication skills

To perform the core duties, a curator must have strong communication skills. Such communication skills include being able to write well, give performances/lectures, representing the museum and creating the museum's online image. The growing emphasis on good or excellent

“The curator is the link between the art and the audience. This person has to know both sides, about the art itself and about how it can be transferred.” - FRESH EYES

⁷⁴ Bureau & MAES research job board CODART 2023

“Asking the big questions is the curator’s job, but others must be able to answer them. As a curator, you are more of a moderator. You can decide for each project exactly what your role is, you must be flexible.” - A CURATOR

communication skills Edwards (2000) discovered in job listings since 1990 confirms this.⁷⁵ And even in job listings from 2005 to 2022, communication is an indispensable skill.⁷⁶

L The curator is a team player and a networker

According to many of the respondents, it is impossible for a curator to be playing solo. You always work as part of a team. This may include leading a team within the museum (museum directors list this as an important task), as well as maintaining an (international) network in the art world, with art institutions and the local community. One curator indicated that many museums find their raison d’être in connecting objects from the collection with the local community. Then, as a curator, as a bridge between object and public, you must also involve the local community in the museum.

75 Edwards. The future of curators, 2007. P. 106-108

76 Bureau & MAES research job bank CODART, 2023

“While other departments have grown in size, the number of curators seems to have stayed the same or even decreased.”

Godfried Schalken
(1643 - 1706) Dutch
A Boy Blowing on Charcoal about
1692 - 98
Oil on canvas
Schalken specialized in night scenes like this. The exact meaning of the boy with a charcoal is not known today. The most common theory is painting for the future artist Willem van de Venne who was also influenced by Schalken, who depicted it in the Allegory of the artist. Schalken's painting was probably bought from the artist, who spent his years in Berlin. Dr. Robert S. Taft, 1911, *Art and Architecture in History*.
Reproduced with the permission of The Trustees of the British Museum, London, UK. © 2023

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CURATOR OF THE FUTURE

F The second main question explored in this survey was: Looking ahead at the value of the art curator of the future, what are the necessary conditions that will enable curators to continue to perform their core tasks well? And what opportunities exist that would enable them to do so differently? What are the enabling conditions for curators to continue to function well in the future?

As with the first main question, respondents supplied many different answers. Based on these results, we have formulated certain opportunities that would benefit curators, but that require collective action. Museum managements could take the initiative here and involve other departments as well. After this section we summarize a few disparate ideas and suggestions that emerged from the dialogue sessions.

The survey sketched a picture of the curator of Old Masters as a jack of all trades, who forges ties between the world of the museum and its collection and the outside world. These ties are forged through education, marketing, and communication, by involving the public, and by conducting research on the collection.

Core tasks of curators

Art curators have a number of core tasks that distinguish them from others working in the museum. These are:

- F** The curator's key concern is researching the collection;
- F** The curator shares responsibility for managing the collection;
- F** The curator places objects in appropriate social and other contexts;
- L** The curator plays a bridging role between the objects, the museum, and the public.

Opportunities for curators

A number of opportunities have been identified for the curator of the future, which cannot however be exploited independently but collectively, by a network, museum sector, and stakeholders.

- 1** Outsource more activities or revise the division of labor;
- 2** Widen your horizon and work as a team;
- 3** Create time and opportunity to learn from each other's specialisms;
- 4** Pay attention to digital and technological developments;
- 5** Explore your own collection.

1 Outsource more activities or revise the division of labor

Raise the subject within the museum and discuss it. What is the best way to structure collaboration both inside the museum and with external partners? Who should do what? Reserve and protect your own time and space for the core tasks you agree with each other. That also means letting some things go and leaving them to colleagues.

One museum director stated that the ideal curator is a jack-of-all-trades. Meanwhile, respondents said that curators have a lot on their plates. Some respondents felt that curators should be able to specialize again. In line with this, several respondents said that curators should

outsource certain activities so as to be able to focus on their core tasks. As for the activities that a curator might be able to outsource, the following were mentioned:

- Research (can be outsourced to external experts / academics / universities);
- Collection management (together with collection managers, registrars, and curators);
- Making exhibitions.

Although the above tasks would still fall under the curator's responsibility, elements could be outsourced to relieve the curator's workload. It is also possible to carve out specialisms within the profession – not so much in an art historical sense, but for instance by distinguishing between roles such as: research curator, exhibition curator, public communications curator, collection curator. This would be based primarily on specific competencies – each curator's greatest strengths, given his or her art historical background.

“It is the curator’s job to map out a line, but sometimes you’re more of a facilitator than an author, since you have to remain open to other people’s ideas.” – A CURATOR

2 Widen your horizon and work as a team

A curator may have blind spots, for instance in certain areas of knowledge, in engaging new audiences, objects in the collection, or the story of the museum. The curator's job is to maintain oversight of the whole, not to be able to perform every individual task (see previous section). Today's curator is no longer the soloist, as might have been the case in the past. Most respondents agreed that curators should collaborate more often with others. They also noted that diversity and inclusion is and will continue to be an important development – it is integral to the working method, not just a box that can be ticked for each individual project. This poses a challenge for curators, who must engage with colleagues from other departments to devise ways of making the collection more accessible and interesting for a wider public. Curators can also request external help to achieve this. Such collaboration costs time and makes extra work, but the curator does not have to take it on alone: colleagues from departments such as education can play an important role.

Respondents mentioned the following potential partners for collaboration:

- **Knowledge institutions such as universities.** Several respondents suggested that museums could collaborate more closely with knowledge institutions. Besides providing opportunities to exchange knowledge, for instance, such partnerships also have potential financial advantages. One person noted that considerable sums in research grants are available to universities, which are therefore ideal partners in collaborative ventures. For instance, a museum could enter into a multi-year partnership with a PhD candidate. One reservation here is that the

university courses are often poorly aligned with the curator's actual work. This is a stumbling block, and explains why, although collaboration is often proposed and tried, it may not work well in practice. In addition, universities have their own research programs and students have to complete particular sections of their course within a specified time. CODART members have been saying for some time that museums and universities can and should cooperate more. Universities can support museums in their research and can raise external funds to do so. It is key to create a better alignment between training and the curator's work in practice. How can the sector improve this? Do countries each have organizations that could take on this task and structure it?

- ▣ **Local or new communities.** In all the dialogues and conversations, respondents stated that these collaborations really need to be given greater depth, for instance by opening up a museum's collection or organizing an activity together with a local group. It was also noted that involving the local community has increasingly become a requirement in grant applications. *Citizen science* could be placed under this heading. One person mentioned the *Limes* Project in Utrecht as an example. Another respondent said involving the local community helps to strengthen the local infrastructure – by which means museums demonstrate their added value. However, this is something to be tackled by the museum as a whole, not just by the curator, who most respondents felt should be primarily concerned with matters of substance and the collection;
- ▣ **Public.** One person urged that museums should work together with the public far more when deciding on matters such as exhibition layout and selecting objects to display. This could lead to surprising new approaches;
- ▣ **The creative industry.** Many participants in the dialogue sessions cited other cultural sectors as examples of potential partners. For instance, festivals can provide examples of new ways of stimulating interaction, and museums could learn a great deal from the way TV programs engage and educate viewers about art. People working in the creative industries could perhaps act as co-curators.

“Although the educational material is often intended for children, its simplicity also appeals to adults. That could be made an integral part of each exhibition. Not wanting to explain what you have placed on display conveys a certain contempt for the public. It denies them a certain experience.” -RESPONDENT.

3 Create time and opportunity to learn from each other's specialisms

Several respondents had ideas about new ways of encouraging collaboration within the museum or of drawing on curators' expertise to educate other staff members. One person suggested involving the marketing department at an earlier stage of new exhibitions since it will often know more about what matters to the public. Another idea was to involve the education department to create more informative material for adults. One museum director said she encourages collaboration between departments to enable colleagues to learn from each other.

[QUOTE] "Although the educational material is often intended for children, its simplicity also appeals to adults. That could be made an integral part of each exhibition. Not wanting to explain what you have placed on display conveys a certain contempt for the public. It denies them a certain experience." -respondent.

4 Pay attention to digital and technological developments

Many people felt that curators should focus more on making online documentation available to the public. This is not just about physical objects, but also digital products that are specially designed for online visitors. One idea would be to place the stories of local residents online and link them to objects in the museum. Following on from this: it is important for museums to engage in two-way conversations rather than only "transmitting." However, this is perhaps a task more suited to the education department rather than the curator, who already has so much to do. Both curators and others said that it is important that curators themselves work with new techniques such as 3D printers and scanners. By working with these techniques, curators will start to view their objects themselves in a different light.

CONSIDER USING FACSIMILES

The different groups who took part in the survey disagreed on the use of facsimiles by curators. Some took a positive view, seeing it as a way of expanding collections, acquiring objects sustainably, and making it possible to tell new stories (such as how an object was made). Others –

curators and museum directors – were more critical regarding the use of facsimiles, saying that visitors place more value on seeing the real object. They do agree that facsimiles can be used to tell a story, for instance about looted art.

5 Explore your own collection.

Some curators felt they should be able to focus more on their own collection before acquiring new artworks. A few other respondents thought that museums should make fewer acquisitions, with a view to sustainability. These groups agreed in emphasizing that there are still many undiscovered treasures and that it is best to start by exploring the museum's own collection – there is plenty to be learned there. However, institutions must give curators the necessary time and opportunity to make these discoveries and find the treasures. Museum directors took a different approach: they were in favor of making new acquisitions, to enrich and expand the collection.

Enabling conditions

In relation to the core tasks and opportunities, a few enabling conditions can be formulated that would help to support the curator's core tasks and to take advantage of existing opportunities. We would like to suggest the following points to different target groups:

▣ **Museum directors / management**

The content of the collection and the in-house knowledge about it is the heart of every museum. Give the curator the necessary time and space to conduct research and to perform his or her core tasks within the set working hours. In addition, ensure that the curator is free to leave the museum to find new sources of inspiration. This will benefit the museum's policy in the long term. Make sure that your institution always has enough places for training and for junior or assistant curators.

▣ **Policy officers, public authorities, and interested parties in society at large:**

Value quality over quantity. Invest in good stewardship of collections and don't judge museums solely on the basis of visitor numbers or blockbuster exhibitions. Don't leave financial support to private donations or project grants. Ensure that the care of our cultural heritage – intellectual as well as physical care – is structurally safeguarded. Appreciate that this care consumes money and time, but that it ultimately serves society and its identity, leading to greater understanding of our past.

▣ **The museum sector**

Devote more attention to the professional development of curators and ensure formal recognition for the quality of the art curator. The research, data, and interviews revealed that the position of curator has undergone enormous professional development over the past few decades. It is important to clearly define the job description, together, and to give curators the opportunity to develop and maintain various skills throughout their career. The curator should have a sufficient say in the guidelines to their profession drawn up by museum associations.

In addition, provide a structured collection of data on art curators to support the development of the profession. The proper monitoring of the profession of curators of Old Masters calls for more specific statistics. General figures are available, but they give too narrow a picture of the development of museums with Old Masters and curators of Dutch and Flemish Old Masters. Structured data will enhance the further professionalization of the curator's position. To develop good policy and make wise choices, museums, governments, and educational institutions need detailed figures and analyses as a basis for these decisions.

“Exhibitions demand a lot of time and attention from the organization but are also essential for a healthy business operation.”



ANNEX I: SOURCES

Documents CODART

- ▣ CODART members' survey, 2019
- ▣ Reports Diners pensant, 2019
- ▣ Report Brainstorming session CODART, November 2022
- ▣ Members' survey 2023

Articles and publications

- ▣ *Museumcijfers/ Museum figures 2018 t/m 2021* via <https://museumvereniging.nl/museumcijfers>
- ▣ Boekman Extra #36: *Het conservatoren stipendium. Reddingsboei en buitenkans ineen* (2022) (in Dutch only)
- ▣ *Raad voor Cultuur: In wankel evenwicht.* Sectoradvies musea (2018) (in Dutch only)
- ▣ Rubantseva E. V., Hoffmann L. 2020. *The curator in the art world and in the museum: History, theories and current issues.* The Issues of Museology, 11 (2), 168–182
- ▣ Edwards, E.C., 2007. *The future for curators. Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 18(S1):98
- ▣ *Dutch Museum Association: Toekomst van werken in musea* (2018) (in Dutch only)
- ▣ Haas, J. (2003) 'The changing role of the curator'. In: *Fieldiana: Anthropology*, nr. 36
- ▣ *National snapshot of United States Museums, 2023*, p.6 https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/SnapshotReport_v3.pdf
- ▣ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. www.ocwincijfers.nl (in Dutch only)
- ▣ Hoger onderwijs in cijfers Vlaanderen. 2018 t/m 2023 via <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/hoger-onderwijs-in-cijfers> (in Dutch only)
- ▣ AAMC professional practices guide via <https://www.artcurators.org/page/ProfPractices>
- ▣ Museums Association Museum Essentials via <https://www.museumassociation.org/careers/museum-essentials/>
- ▣ *Deutscher Museumsbund Leitfadenn Professionell Arbeiten*, 2019 (in German only)
- ▣ Towse, R. (2011). Introduction. In R. Towse (Ed.), *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*. Edward Elgar.
- ▣ Jurčičinová, K., Wilders, M.L. & Visser, J. (2021). *The Future of Blockbuster Exhibitions After the Covid-19 Crisis: The Case of the Dutch Museum Sector*, *Museum International*, 73(3-4), 20-31. 10.1080/13500775.2021.2016279
- ▣ Boekman Extra 25 (2021): https://www.boekman.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/BmXtra_25.pdf

- ▣ Van Meerkerk, E. & Van den Hoogen, Q. (2021). *Knellend keurslijf: de beperkingen van een steeds bureaucratischer cultuurbestel*, *Boekman* #126. <https://www.boekman.nl/tijdschrift/boekman-126-cultuurbestel/>
- ▣ Aroles, J., Hassard, J., & Hyde, P. (2022). 'Culture for Sale': *The Effects of Corporate Colonization on the UK Museum Sector.* *Organization Studies*, 43(3), 347–368. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840621989001>
- ▣ Fernández-Blanco, V. & Prieto-Rodríguez, J. (2011). Museums. In R. Towse (Ed.), *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*. Edward Elgar.
- ▣ Cultuur + Ondernemen. www.cultuur-ondernemen.nl

Databases

- ▣ Museana
- ▣ Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO)
- ▣ Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS)
- ▣ Hogeronderwijsincijfers.be van het Agentschap voor Hoger Onderwijs
- ▣ Eurostat
- ▣ Erudera
- ▣ Bachelorportal.com
- ▣ Masterportal.com
- ▣ Studiegids.nl
- ▣ Universitairmasters.nl
- ▣ UvA Factbook
- ▣ CODART job board, www.codart.nl

The European database EGMUS provides (limited) insight into European figures including the number of museums, temporary exhibitions, staff and expenditures, but does not provide sufficiently comparable and/or detailed material for inclusion.

Other sources:

- ▣ The Museum Association (UK)
- ▣ The Association of Art Museum Curators (US)
- ▣ De Museumvereniging (NL)/ Dutch Museum Association

We made additional inquiries for data from the following (international) networks, but they did not provide data:

- ▣ International Council Of Museums
- ▣ Deutscher Museumbund
- ▣ Association of Art Museum Curators
- ▣ LCM Museumconsulenten

ANNEX II: RESPONDENTS DIALOGUE SESSIONS

Curators

For this dialogue session, mostly junior curators were invited because the senior curators were already involved in the brainstorming session and members' survey.

name	function	organisation
Sheila Reda	Junior Curator	Mauritshuis, Den Haag
Tamar van Riessen	Junior Curator of 17th-Century Dutch Painting	Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Jip van Reijen	Curator Old Masters	Bonnefanten, Maastricht
Jessie Park	Nina & Lee Griggs Assistant Curator of European Art	Yale University Art Gallery
Suzanne van de Meerendonk	Bader Curator of European Art	Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Friso Lammertse	Curator of 17th-Century Dutch Painting	Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Museumdirectors

name	function	organisation
Sasha Suda	Director	Philadelphia Museum of Art
Lidewij de Koekkoek	Director	Frans Hals Museum
Emilie Gordenker	Director	Van Gogh Museum
Anne van Oosterwijk	Director of Collections	Musea Brugge
Bert Watteeuw	Director	Rubenshuis
Marjan Scharloo	former Director	Teylers Museum

Critical friends

name	function	organisation
Sanne Frequin	Lecturer, art historian	University Utrecht
Paulien 't Hoen	Coordinator	Stichting Behoud Moderne Kunst
Trilce Navarette Hernandez	Specialist Digital Heritage and Museology	Erasmus University Rotterdam
Ingrid Vermeulen	Program coordinator MA Curating Art and Cultures	Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Fresh eyes

name	function
Meta Knol	art historian and former Director Leiden European City of Science 2022
Prof. Ann-Sophie Lehmann	Chair of art history and material culture, University of Groningen
Anouk Wittendorp	Content coordinator, Prins Bernard Cultuurfonds
Johan Idema	Cultural entrepreneur, advisor and author
Jorn Konijn	Director Van Eesteren Museum Amsterdam
Warda El-Kaddouri	Lecturer Cultural Sciences Open University, researcher and journalist

Brainstorming session program committee CODART

name	function	organisation
Quentin Buvelot	Senior Curator	Mauritshuis, Den Haag
Marjan Debaene	Head Curator Old Masters	M Leuven
Femke Diercks	Head of the Decorative Arts Department	Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
Joris Van Grieken	Curator of Prints and Drawings	Royal Library Brussels
Micha Leeflang	Curator of Medieval Art	Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht
Hanna Klarenbeek	Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings	Paleis Het Loo, Apeldoorn

Raise the subject within the museum and discuss it. What is the best way to structure collaboration both inside the museum and with external partners? Who should do what?

