

# ArtEZ University of the Arts

## **Who are we?**

With locations in Arnhem, Enschede and Zwolle, ArtEZ is one of the major art institutes in the Netherlands. For more than 3.000 students, ArtEZ offers Bachelor's and Master's degree programs in visual art, architecture, fashion, design, music, theatre, creative writing, dance and art education.

As a university of the arts, ArtEZ looks for those places where interesting developments are to be seen, where change is tangible and where this change is provoking a reaction. ArtEZ hosts robust education, invests in research and connects the local, regional, national and international position of the academies in Arnhem, Enschede and Zwolle.

ArtEZ is a learning community of the arts with our students in the heart of our university. They are from different cultures, both nationally and internationally. About 20% of the students are international. This calls for multiple contexts in our education and it designs and opens up new learning spaces facilitating learning communities beyond classrooms.

## **What are our ambitions?**

The goals below are a representation of the goals from our Institutional Plan, 'ArtEZ: Here as the centre of the world', our education vision 'Art changes education changes art', and our Quality Agreements<sup>23</sup>. In ArtEZ' foundation, internationalization - looking beyond boundaries - is a key element. Art, by nature, is an international language. It can be understood without words, and therefore rise above boundaries.

ArtEZ' main ambition is to improve the quality of education and research. Internationalization secures an important contribution here, on multiple levels; at student level, at course level and within the broader European Education Area. These are our goals:

**1. ArtEZ invests in its education to respond to the changing demands from society, aiming for more flexibility., globalization and the influence of other cultures on our western. The development of, increasingly, diverse and international curricula and exchange opportunities is part of this goal.**

ArtEZ trains students to be artists and to fulfil a wide range of professional roles in culture, society and the economy. This educational approach ties in seamlessly with developments in society. From care centers to innovative start-ups and NGOs, more and more organizations are looking for the innovative drive and power of artists to change. In the coming years, ArtEZ will invest in its education to respond to the changing demands from society, aiming for more flexibility. The courses generate innovative uses in science, technology and society.

ArtEZ strives to contribute to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDG), in order to care for our planet and for each other. Our rapidly changing, globalizing world demands alternative answers to future questions. Education develops students who manifest their responsibilities that respond to and shape these global developments. ArtEZ recognizes artists to be drivers of change. Art provides space for a critical framework enabling sustainable change. Therefore, ArtEZ wants to pay a leading role in the discussion about sustainability.

ArtEZ connects diverse disciplines, and equips their students to be (come) professionals, to develop their own voice and to be resilient in a changing world. Our student communities have various identities, with access to global platforms for expression, exposure and knowledge. They aim for impact beyond standard curricula and knowledge.

**2. Our courses invest in individual growth. Our students are central to our education, owner of their (learning) journey, participants in our governance, co-creators. Our education challenges students to engage and interact with those that are not engaged.**

Our courses offer students ample opportunity to develop specialist expertise and a critical mind. We encourage our students to think and ask questions at a higher, contextualized level. Their work is trend-setting, opinion-forming and sometimes even activist. ArtEZ believes that students grow best when they explore and push boundaries. Our art education is therefore flexible and offers professional learning opportunities at school, abroad and online, full-time and part-time. ArtEZ therefore opts for larger curricular units, which allows adaptation and updating of the content without having to modify the entire programme.

**3. We aim to increase the cultural diversity within the organization, by building inclusive and connected higher education systems<sup>4</sup>.**

ArtEZ is an attractive institute with a diverse student population and diverse education. Our students come from different cultures, both nationally and internationally. This diversity is also of great importance to ArtEZ. More differences in background, environment and culture broaden the dialogue at the institute, within courses and during classes. This enriches education at ArtEZ and makes it more interesting. In the context of the arts, diversity is always productive and generates creativity.

Within the ArtEZ community the discourse on diversity has resulted in an increased awareness towards creating equal opportunities for all. ArtEZ commits to break down barriers for all students and prospective students, as to offer students with different backgrounds and profiles the space to develop their unique talent.

**4. ArtEZ aims to improve the international reputation, operating in its own region, in the Netherlands, in Europe, but also beyond.**

ArtEZ is reinforcing its ties with the community. ArtEZ is a university of the arts with academies in Arnhem, Enschede and Zwolle. It is aware of its role and position in the region and beyond. In order to facilitate and support the differences that matter, it's ArtEZ strategy to develop and implement the internationalization policy at academy level. At all locations, ArtEZ likes to

collaborate with the various municipalities, provinces, the region and partners in the city. ArtEZ also feels co-responsible for the cultural climate in its own region, where the institute provides good preparatory courses and supports production companies and cultural workshops.

ArtEZ is well anchored in national and international networks, also at board level. We are active member of the HIB (Hogescholeloverleg Internationale Betrekkigen) – the international relations forum for universities of applied sciences and the KIB (Kunstonderwijsoverleg Internationale Betrekkigen) – the international relations forum for art universities.

As a university of the arts ArtEZ is also part of the sector of art universities in the Netherlands (KUO/kunstonderwijs). Together with the art universities we are working on internationalization topics, quality agreements and language policy. ArtEZ has partnerships with many international universities and research institutions, and is a member of the European higher education network. In that setting we work on joint goals as inclusion and European citizenship.

## **The contribution of internationalization and Erasmus to the ArtEZ strategy**

As mentioned above ArtEZ' main objective is to continuously improve the quality of education and research. For the coming years ArtEZ has formulated a large framework of innovation plans that aim to boost the overall quality of our courses, facilities, teaching and learning experiences in which internationalization has an important role. We see the following important contribution of internationalization and Erasmus to our innovation plans and strategic goals:

### ***1. Responding to the changing demands from society, globalization and the influence of other cultures.***

In order to contribute to global changes it is important to have knowledge from this world and its global challenges. Erasmus enables our students to gain knowledge elsewhere that is not available at ArtEZ and take that knowledge back to ArtEZ. Foreign students bring their own knowledge and experiences that add something to our curriculum. All this contributes to the quality of our education in general. The interaction between people from different backgrounds and living in another country contributes to the personal development/skills of students and staff.

In the current Erasmus Programme, ArtEZ had committed itself to closer international collaboration through KA107 and KA203 projects. It has opted for projects that will generate innovative uses of technology (coding) and/or aim to incorporate elements from contexts (Arabic/Asian) that are quite different from our own in order to mutually deepen the cultural scope of the existing curricula.

### ***2. Investing in the individual growth of our students.***

One of ArtEZ' main modernization objectives is to offer more flexible curricula. We aim to support student's individual learning needs as well as possible. Over the past years a steadily growing number of ArtEZ courses have integrated facultative or even mandatory exchange windows in their curricula, opening up opportunities for students to take up ownership of their individual learning path and add an international experience to it. Thanks to the possibilities of the Erasmus Programme, combined with a more flexible curriculum this number is likely to increase. Incorporating international exchange or internship windows in our curricula makes studying or doing an internship abroad more accessible and will simplify our ECTS recognition procedures.

### ***3. Increasing the cultural diversity within the organization***

ArtEZ prepares students for a professional career in an internationally oriented environment of the arts. By participating in the Erasmus Programme ArtEZ is able to welcome exchange students and staff from all over the world - creating international classrooms and an international community. The Erasmus Programme also enables ArtEZ to provide an international experience to our students and staff making them ArtEZ ambassadors abroad and Erasmus ambassadors upon their return. The other way around, incoming exchange students bring in their international backgrounds. They immediately create a more diverse classroom and foster intercultural awareness among Dutch students. ArtEZ deems important to foster awareness towards differences in cultural background and has decided, within the framework of innovation plans, to actively train students in intercultural competences.

### ***4. Improving the international reputation***

The Erasmus Programme plays a significant role in the professionalization of staff members. Teaching and training abroad enhances the skillset of the teacher or staff member and at the same time it helps solidify international cooperation, increase student mobility and it creates ArtEZ ambassadors in the international field. In order to add to the international skillset of staff, ArtEZ offers English language proficiency classes and trains them in intercultural awareness.

Working from a solid regional basis with partners elsewhere in the world (like in the projects in the Middle East and Asia, mentioned above), for example through town twinning, will contribute to a certain discipline and strengthening education / society elsewhere to closer international collaboration.

## **Building a European Education Area – the role of Art Education**

Artists are on the frontlines of envisioning and building the future of Europe and the world. ArtEZ graduates are active 'agents of change' within Europe's cultural and societal realm. Participating in the Erasmus Programme ArtEZ offers students and staff opportunities to experience European identity in all its forms while, teaching, studying, or undertaking an internship abroad. It also provides students an international learning space inside ArtEZ. ArtEZ strives to provide a safe space for the learning process of all of its students, and a community they can come back and retreat to, to strengthen their confidence, a home base in which inclusion and diversity are key elements.

Being a part of the Erasmus programme as well as participating in international networks like Cumulus (for design), ELIA (arts) and AEC (music) stimulates and creates a network of European institutions and creates a closer European education space. As an active member in both, ArtEZ strives to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for job creation, economic growth and improved social cohesion.