

Selection Report: Network Archives Design and Digital Culture 2022 Research Residency

This report is intended to explain the selection process for the 2022 Research Residency programme of the Network Archives Design and Digital Culture. Alongside an overview of the process, the text outlines the breadth of the topics covered by the submitted proposals, as well as the jury's considerations in their assessment.

Open Call

The Network Archives Design and Digital Culture (NADD) is organising a Research Residency this year, in the period September – November 2022. The residency programme aims to explore the potential of decentralised structures for archival practices in design and digital culture. Researchers, theorists, artists, designers, developers, archivists and others with an affinity for the field(s) were invited to submit their research proposals through an [open call](#) between 17th of February – 10th of April 2022. This year NADD received 27 proposals in response to the open call.

A selection was made based on the advice of a jury consisting of Kirsten Algera (MacGuffin Magazine), Annet Dekker (Universiteit van Amsterdam), Eric Kluitenberg (Tactical Media Files) and Clara Stille-Haardt (Het Nieuwe Instituut). The final selection was reached through consensus of the jury, through a discussion spanning two meetings.

Proposals

The jury noted a broad range of topics, perspectives and approaches represented among the submitted proposals.

Approaches to the residency theme

Roughly grouped, the angles from which candidates approached the residency theme included:

- *Case study-based projects setting out to research a topic using material from two or more archives.*
Topics that proposals covered included for example depictions of nature in the Dutch Golden Age, the Surinamese leftist movement (1960-1970), social significance of uniform, or imaginations of human/robot relationships.
- *Propositions for alternative formulations of archives and interactions therewith.*
Proposals touched on issues such as viewing objects as archives, reading archival material as a form of production, making archives playable, the archipelago as a metaphor for decentralisation, or the convergence of the market and the archive.

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- *Explorations of new methodologies and tools for archiving design and digital culture.*
Examples include experiments with and research into networked infrastructures like git or blockchain, or archiving atmospheres and capturing context.
- *Inquiries into the processes constitutive of archival practices.*
Proposals addressed for instance institutional lexicons, selection and search processes, or forms of publishing.

For this year's residency theme (as elaborated in the open call), the jury agreed that the projects' proposed methodology and relation to systemic issues surrounding decentralised archives were most relevant in their assessment.

Connections to archival organisations

As specified in the open call, applicants were asked to focus their research on two or more archives, held at different organisations. At least one of these was required to be held at partnering organisation participating in the research residency programme; Allard Pierson, Beeld & Geluid, Eye Film Museum, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Imagine IC, International Institute of Social History, LIMA, MU, TextielMuseum or V2_ Lab for the Unstable Media. Each of these partners was mentioned at least once across the bulk of the proposals. A number of other NADD other partners were also represented among the organisations that applicants were looking to work with. Several archives and organisations – Dutch and international – that currently have no affiliation with the NADD came up as well.

An important criterion for the jury was how the proposals contribute to the NADD. A recurring criticism of the jury was that the choice of archives that candidates proposed to work with lacked motivation and justification. In their evaluation, the jury was looking for projects that expressed motivation and interest in connecting a number of archives. The jury was especially positive about proposals that engaged with the process of linking multiple archives; processes that could potentially be abstracted to other archive couplings.

Criteria

The jury based their decision on the proposals' engagement with the residency theme, depth of investigation, idiosyncrasy, connection to archival material and potential for exchange within and across heritage, design and digital culture practices. The jury additionally found it important for the selected proposals to represent a diverse set of urgencies in these fields and to fit within the scope of the residency – both in terms of time and budget.

Final selection

Based on the jury's advice, three projects were selected for the research residency instead of two, as originally indicated in the open call. They will be awarded a stipend of 5,000 euros each.

The selected projects are:

- *Playable Archives* by Sara Culmann
- *Diagrammatic Temporalities in Memory Landscapes* by Maxigas
- *How to publish an archive in pluriform?* by OUTLINE

These projects adopt different approaches to distributed and decentralised archives, focusing on interaction with, tooling for and publishing of archives respectively. The organisations that residents plan to work with for the development of their research include Allard Pierson, the International Institute of Social History, LIMA, V2_ and the Software Heritage Foundation.

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