

Sense the possible in the impossible

because things do change

I am applying for a position in de EAAE Council for the following reasons.

The world is changing – and faster than we would like perhaps. It is 2024 and it looks set to be the warmest year ever recorded globally according to Copernicus, the European Union's Earth Observation Programme. Records continue to tumble, one after the other, as a result of the climate crisis.

I am extremely worried and without wanting to come across as a tiresome activist (which I am not), I believe that we (members of the EAAE) have a responsibility to do everything within our power to contribute towards stopping global warming. For many of us, the influence we have on this is being able to adapt and innovate teaching and research (or enabling others to do so); in such a way that we train future generations of designers, so that they have the knowledge, skills and attitude to be able to conceive and design regenerative solutions to the increasing complexity in the spatial domain. The challenges – related to climate change, resource scarcity, energy transition, social inequality, and declining biodiversity, and more – are urgent and complex, and also all spatial issues for which answers must be sought *now* in order to maintain perspective on a sustainable and inclusive future.

We can (and must) consider new narratives in the field of architecture, for example by exploring how architecture can contribute to ecological recovery, with biodiversity and nature as starting points.

We can (and must) consider whether we are training students for the practice as it is now, or are we training them for a practice as it should be – in light of all the big issues. Can we imagine what this practice can and should be in the future? And what will be the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in that practice?

We can (and must) think about what it will mean for future designers to have to build within the legalities of a circular economy, because scarcity of raw materials seems to be becoming a reality. And there are many more questions still.

It will not be easy, but we must move forward, with courage. We need to long for the future. Longing for the future is about narratives, imagination and education. We can (and must), therefore, consider how we can inspire each other within the EAAE; through the steps that we take and by sharing best practices, thus learning from each other. The urgency to take action is high, especially now in these tumultuous times.

My name is Madeleine Maaskant. I studied architecture at Delft University of Technology from 1984 to 1990, graduating from the Master's in Architecture with honours. After winning the biennial European competition in 1996, I (co-)founded the firm Maaskant and van Velzen Architects, with which I was associated until 2010.

I gained administrative experience in the architectural field as a board member of European NL, the Jaap Bakema Foundation, the Dutch School of Landscape Architecture and as chair of the National Consultation of Architecture Study Programmes (*Landelijk Overleg Bouwkunst Opleidingen*, LOBO). I was also a member of the editorial board of the OASE Journal for Architecture from 2000 to 2006.

I have served on a variety of committees, including the Architecture Committee of the Creative Industries Fund NL, as well as on various juries. And I have taught at various architecture schools.

I've been the chair of the board of the Archiprix Foundation, the partnership of higher education institutions in the fields of architecture, urban design and landscape architecture.

Since 2015, I have been the director of the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, part of the Amsterdam University of the Arts. In that role, I have introduced the Climate Curriculum in our school, where we offer three four-year master tracks in Architecture, Urbanism and Landscape Architecture.

I would like to work within the EAAE to put urgent issues in the spatial domain related to climate change high on the agenda and to support colleagues across Europe, so that we can move forward together.

Madeleine Maaskant