

Annual Report

2023

**BNO**

# Made by Dutch designers

The Association of Dutch Designers (known by its Dutch abbreviation BNO) is there for professional designers – across all disciplines, at all stages of their careers and regardless of how they are organised. Whether they are students, individual designers, or whether they are working in an agency, a cooperative or a company, we provide knowledge, inspiration and the potential for growth.

Our association offers expert advice, connecting designers and their agencies with peers and other relevant professionals and championing designers' interests with clients and policymakers alike.

In this Annual Report, we reflect on our achievements in 2023. As always here at BNO, over the past year we have been dedicated to informing, inspiring and supporting the design community in the Netherlands.

Two significant changes affected our work in 2023: the rapid emergence of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), which brought about profound changes in the design sector; and the retirement of BNO's Director Madeleine van Lennep after ten years at the helm of our organisation.

Under the guidance of our new Director, Diana Janssen, who was appointed in 2023, we continued to build a resilient design world where designers are making significant contributions to the challenges of today and tomorrow.

# 145

New individual members

# 16

New agency members

## Building Community

We believe that our members can leverage their expertise to help tackle significant societal challenges. That's why we place great value on the power of collaboration and knowledge sharing within the design sector. The more members we have in our community, the greater our impact. In 2023, 145 new individual members and 16 agency members joined BNO. We will continue to strive to increase our membership in 2024.

In 2023, we organised a range of events to bring our members together including: the Creative

Directors' Forum, BNO Interieurzaken, Human Resource Management (HRM) meetings for agencies, Business Boosts for startups, as well as numerous networking events. Our regional platforms also organised 13 events across the country. We also published Dd Magazine #3 and Dd Yearbook '23-'24 focusing on the theme 'naturing'. Dd Yearbook was launched at the Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam in December, featuring inspiring speakers such as artist and philosopher Koert van Mensvoort and textile designer Aleksandra Gaca.

“It is extremely valuable to receive advice in the areas of business, strategy, HR and legal matters. So far, we have been able to bring multiple issues to BNO, from acquisition and negotiations to personnel matters, allowing us to position the studio well both externally and internally.”  
– Studio Modijesky, interior design studio

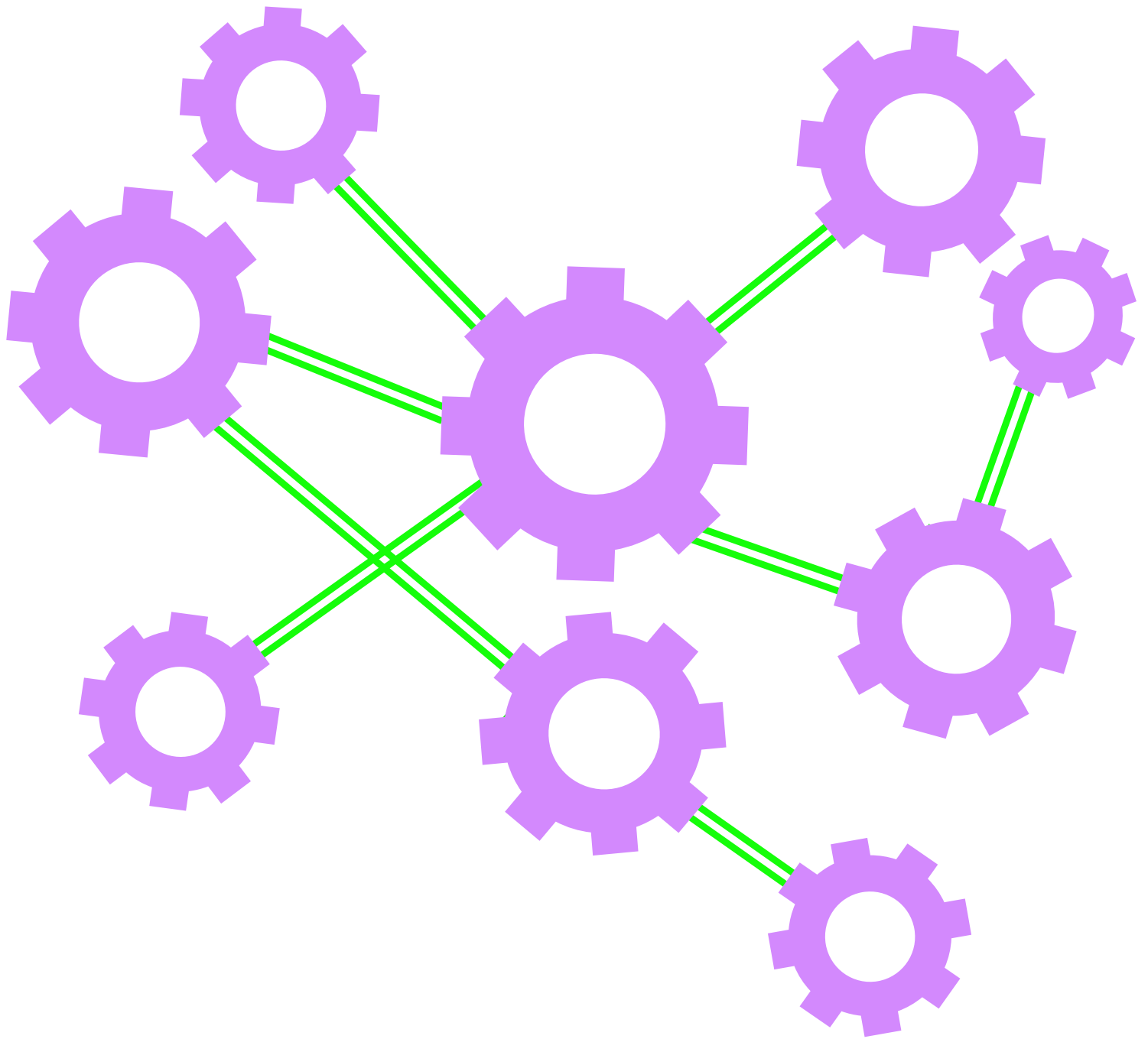
“It’s fantastic to have an organisation dedicated to supporting designers’ interests that addresses the matters involved in running a design studio. I’m delighted to be a part of it!”  
– Joris de Groot, product designer



## A Fresh Start

For more than a century, BNO has been able to thrive thanks to the financial support of our members, without any form of government subsidy. In 2023, a change in leadership took place and we have embraced a dynamic new team as we continue to focus steadfastly on the future. Over the course of the year, Sophie Tijssen was appointed as Communications Manager.

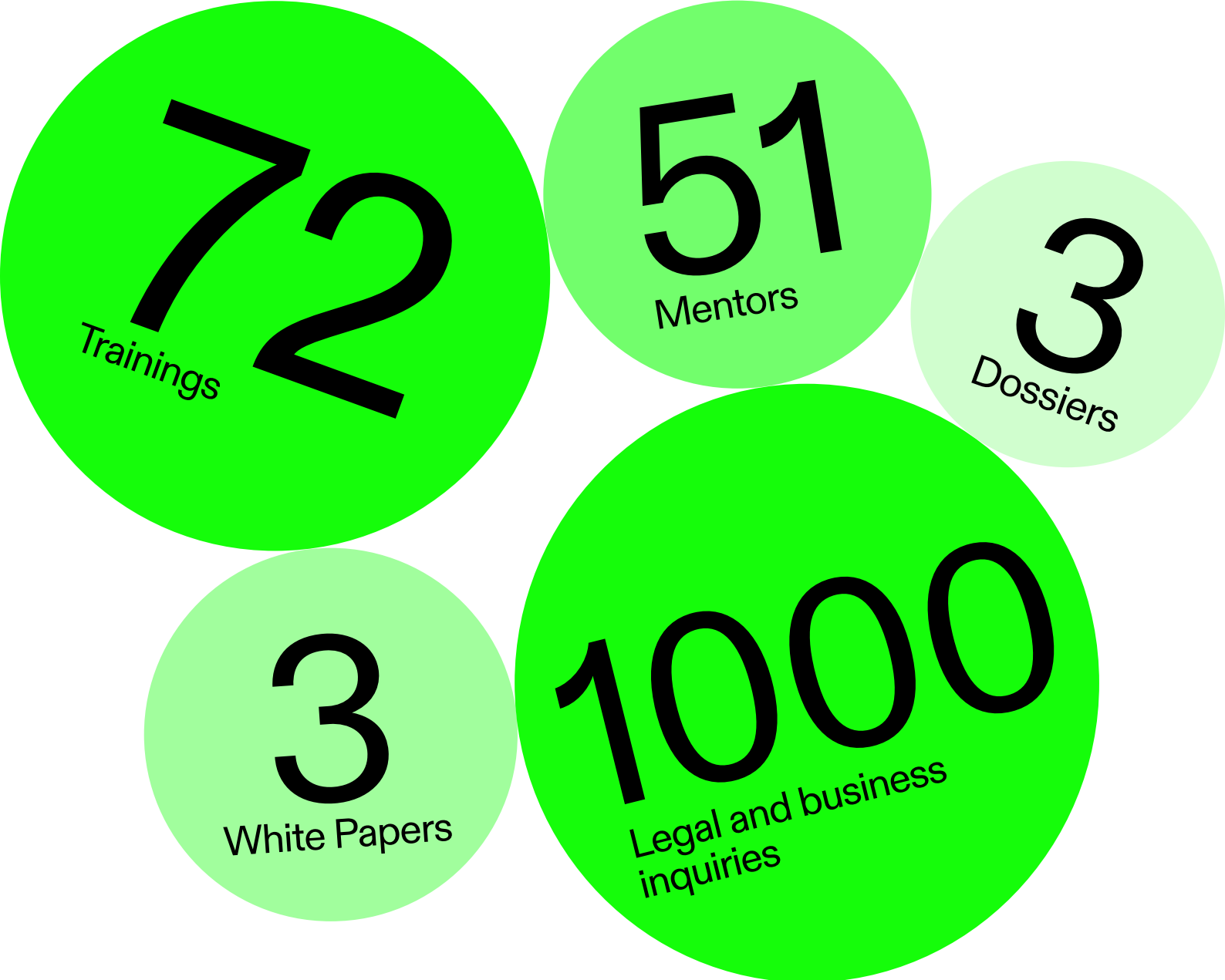
We also received temporary support from Lisette Varossieau as a legal advisor, from Daphne Kusters as Communications Manager and from Pao Lien Djie as guest editor for Dd Magazine #3. Our Board of Directors bid farewell to Annemoon Geurts and Rene Toneman, while new members Lotte de Haan and Harald Dunnink joined our Board. Lienke Raben and Sander Bos took seats on the Admission, Disputes and Advice Council.



## Lobby and Network

We continue to advocate for the (copyright) interests of the design sector and play an active role in the wider institutional landscape. In 2023, BNO was represented in the Federation of the Creative Industry, the Federation of Image Rights and the Pictoright Foundation. We are particularly grateful for the financial contributions from Pictoright, which enabled us to provide added value to the Dutch design world. We would also like to thank the ASF Goede Doelen Fonds for their contribution to the Dd Yearbook '23-'24.

One of BNO's highlights in 2023 was the successful visit of top delegations from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and MKB-Nederland to BNO at Fiction Factory. During the visit, Taco Schmidt (Qindle), Herbert Seevinck (Mijksenaar), Marije Remigius (Fiction Factory) and Diana Janssen (BNO Director) emphasised the importance and role of the design sector in the Netherlands. The delegation also had the opportunity to admire the work of designer and inventor Floris Schoonderbeek on at Fiction Factory's studio.



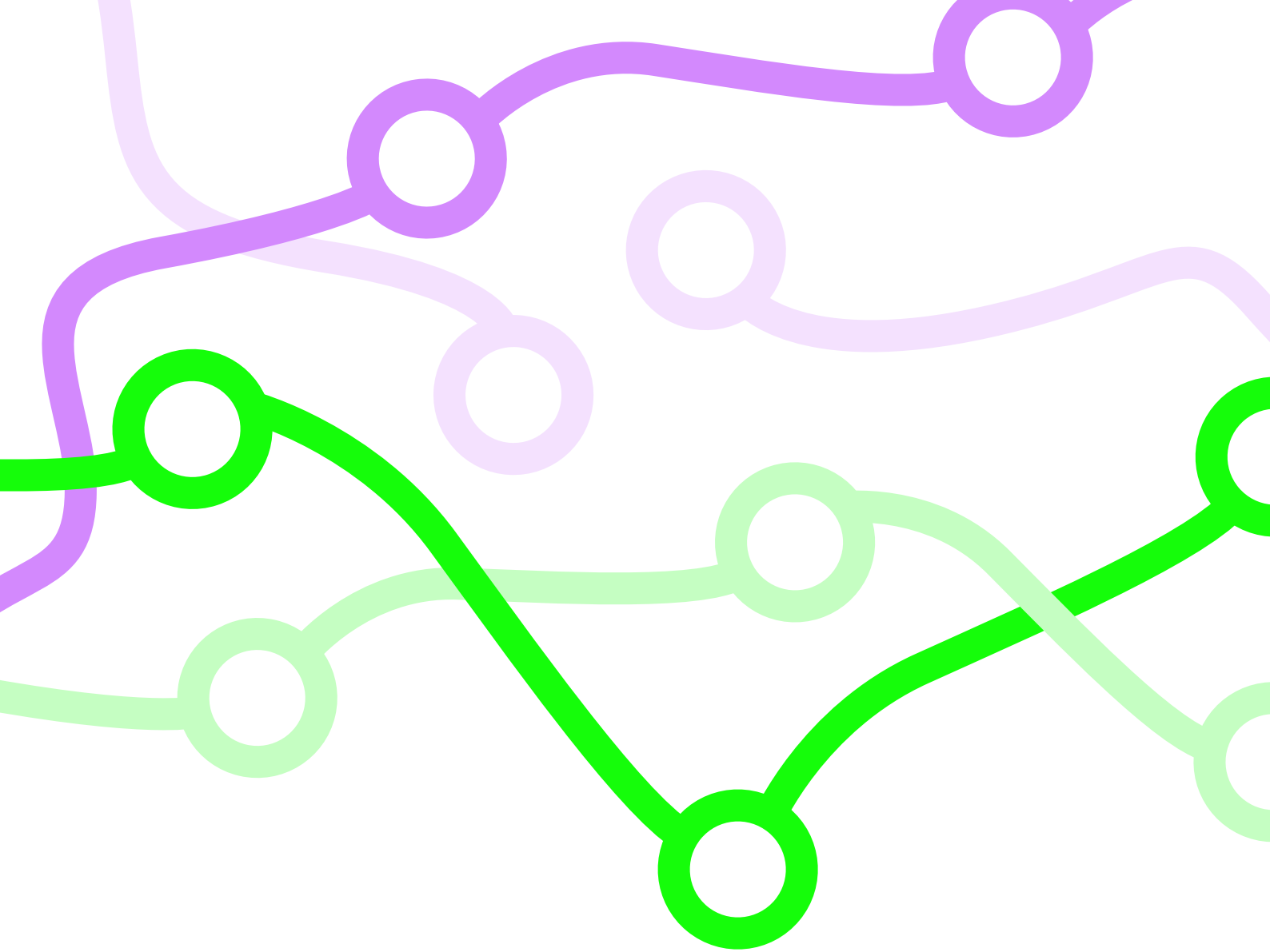
## Professional Growth

Our aim is to create a lifelong learning environment where creative entrepreneurs can continue to grow in their field. In 2023, we supported the professional development of designers and the design community through training, coaching and workshops. Designers were financially supported through Platform ACCT's Werktuig PPO, a subsidy for professionals working or seeking work in the cultural or creative sector.

We also helped 49 young designers embark on building their businesses through the educational

programmes BNO Start and Driving Dutch Design. We supported design agencies through benchmarking, research, training and bringing people together. Additionally, a scheme for confidential advisors was established. We also set up Dossier Later for designers at an advanced stage of their careers, providing guidance on their future, pension schemes and managing their design archives. Collaboration with NADD (Network Archives Design and Digital Culture), a part of the Nieuwe Instituut, was a valuable addition to this endeavour.

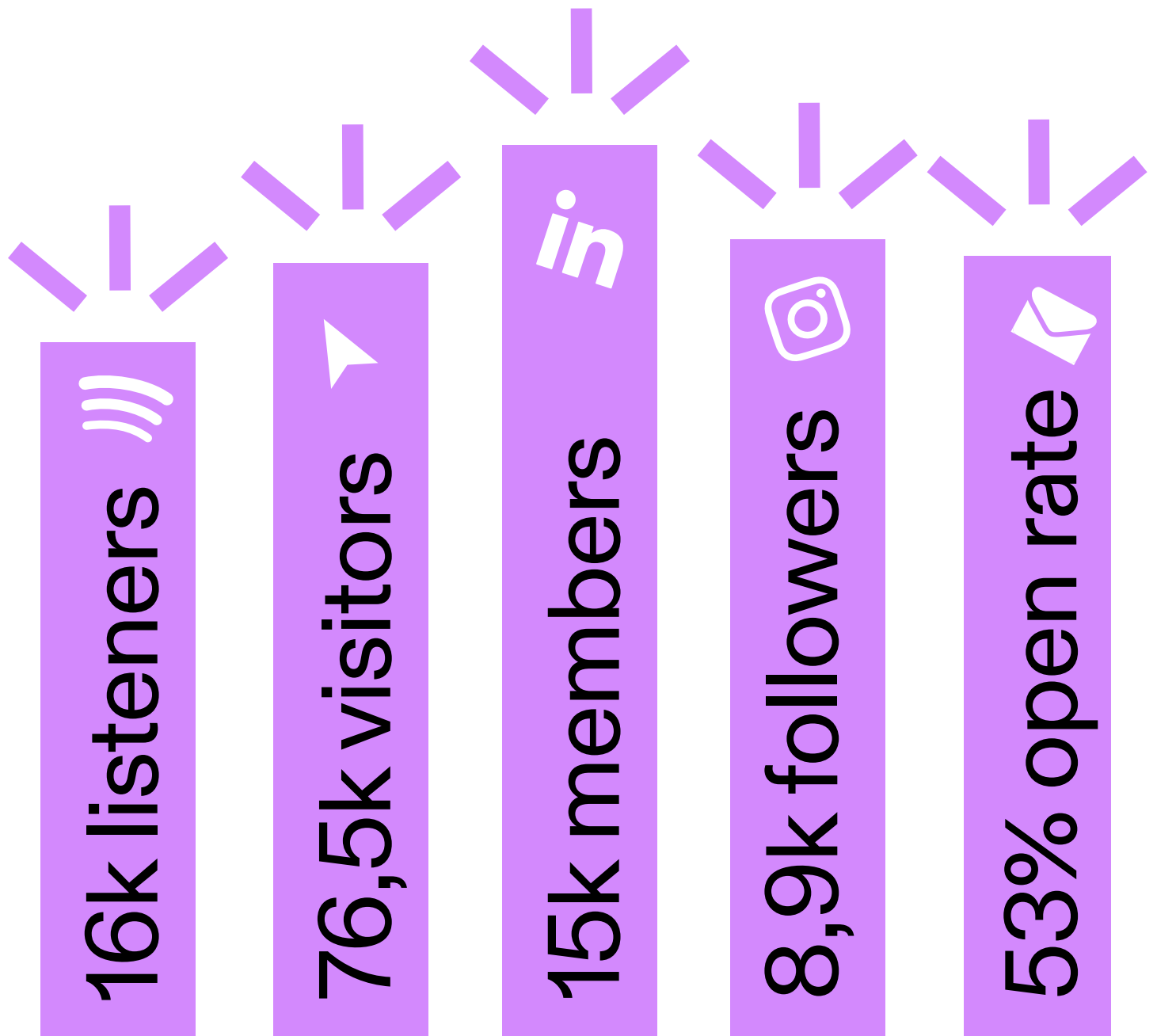




# Rise of Generative AI

Here at BNO, we monitor important developments and, together with design experts, keep a close eye on emerging trends. In 2023, we meticulously tracked advances in generative AI, paying special attention to related copyright aspects. Whether AI poses a threat or offers new opportunities for designers, one thing is certain: a profound understanding of the capabilities and limitations of AI is crucial for the design world.

To contribute to awareness within our community, we initiated an AI Dossier, conducted a survey on this topic and drafted two White Papers in 2023. Additionally, we appointed an intern, Juul van den Heuvel, who primarily focused on AI. This groundwork led to the establishment of an AI x Design Working Group, consisting of BNO members and BNO staff, to explore all options from various design disciplines and to disseminate this knowledge.



## In the Spotlights

We exist and carry out our work thanks to our members. Together, we are building a resilient design world where various perspectives are showcased and where all voices are heard. We take pride in featuring our members because they form the core of our community and help to enrich the creative landscape. We provide designers with space in our online and offline media to share stories about their work, processes and experiences.

In 2023, we communicated our members' stories through various platforms, including 10 Designers Inc. podcasts (listened to 16,000 times), 56 online articles and interviews with members, 76,501 visitors to our website, 48 weekly Dd Newsletters with an average open rate of 53%, 76,501 users on our website, printed publications Dd Magazine and Dd Yearbook, 8,877 followers on Instagram, 22 Dd Takeovers on our Instagram platform, 15,000 members on our LinkedIn-group and the BNO Piet Zwart Prize for designer Karel Martens.

“We believe it’s important to be part of the design community in the Netherlands and are happy to contribute our part to it.”  
– Mijksenaar, wayfinding design and consultancy firm

“You feel like you’re part of a community that safeguards the well-being of designers. Whether you’re small or large, you’re always treated well. Furthermore, the annual publication Dd Yearbook is a real cherry on top.”  
– Charis Stephanie, illustrator

“BNO membership grants us access to like-minded individuals, inspires us and represents our voice to clients and policymakers.”  
– Kummer & Herrman, graphic design studio

# Our Activities

Below, we have highlighted some of our key activities in 2023.

- AI Activities: 1 research project, 1 knowledge session on copyright and AI, publication of the AI Dossier, 2 White Papers: Responsible use of AI and Prompt-designing, establishment of the AI x Design Working Group, participation in the AI Working Group of the Federation of Image Rights
- General Assembly, A'DAM Tower, Amsterdam
- BNO Business Boost: 4 online sessions
- BNO Creative Directors' Forum: 1 meeting
- BNO Education: 35 training sessions
- BNO HRM Network: 2 live meetings and 2 online sessions
- BNO Interior Affairs: 1 meeting
- BNO Meet-up: 2 gatherings
- BNO Mentoring: 21 matches
- BNO Regional Platforms: 13 meetings
- BNO Start: 10 workshops, 3 mentorship programmes
- CIRCO: 1 session and 1 online meeting
- Our circulair design programme Coco presents Babette Porcelijn, Social Impact Factory, Utrecht
- Participation in the 'Value of Image' Working Group and the 'Image IS' event of the Federatie Beeldrechten supported by BNO, Pakhuis de Zwijger, Amsterdam
- Driving Dutch Design: 16 meetings, 1 Dragons' Den, joint campaign with Dutch Design Week
- Responded to an average of 20 tailored business and legal advisory enquiries per week
- GLUE community gathering, BNO, Amsterdam
- Update of model employment contracts
- Designers Inc. podcast: 10 episodes
- Publication of BNO Benchmark: salary advice and indexing
- Publication of Dd Magazine #3, with guest editor-in-chief Pao Lien Djie
- Publication of Dd Yearbook '23-'24 and launch at the Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam
- Publication of AI Dossier, Confidential Advisor Dossier, Later Dossier
- Admission, Disputes and Advice Council: 5 meetings
- Appeals Board: 1 introductory meeting with the Admission, Disputes and Advice Council
- Awarding of the BNO Piet Zwart Prize to Karel Martens, during the Dutch Design Awards ceremony in Eindhoven
- Awarding of honorary membership and farewell festivities for outgoing BNO Director Madeleine van Lennep
- Visits to graduation exhibitions of all Dutch art academies
- Visits by new BNO Director Diana Janssen to 20 design agencies
- Visits to Salone del Mobile, Fuorisalone, Milan, Italy