

'BNO, made by Dutch designers'

Annual Report BNO 2019

In this annual report, you can read about which topics the BNO board and office have worked on this year, including a financial statement and an overview of activities.

The year 2019 proved to be a lively year for BNO with the necessary and very varied challenges.

Three colleagues from the BNO team decided to broaden their horizons. We welcomed three driven and skilled new colleagues. As of the summer, our sights were set on the new influx of designers through YA, the Young Alumni project of BNO. About thirty of them were allowed to showcase their own work in the autumn issue of Dude. With twice that number, we achieved a spectacular and well-attended YA presentation during the Dutch Design Week. We continued to help the Young Alumni in their quest to further their career: independently, at a design agency or another company.

We further distinguished ourselves at the Dutch Design Week with the Driving Dutch Design pitch event and exhibition, with an episode of Superfast dedicated to packaging and circular thinking, and with the Packaging Talent Award.

The BNO Start pilot, aimed at new young members, was well received. We devised new programmes: BNO Business Boost, aimed at fourth-year design students, and BNO Next Step, aimed at designers at mid-career level.

Dozens of meetings and events took place all over the country, many of which were made possible by the designers who programme and organise the Regional Platforms.

The twelfth Infographics Conference drew 360 visitors.

During a debate with design agencies, we introduced the noteworthy results of the first study among clients. This was received so positively that we immediately deliberated on a more extensive follow-up.

We lobbied for various issues concerning the profession, such as improving the labour market and all its aspects, copyright issues, and administrative consideration and resources for design archives.

We awarded the BNO Piet Zwart Prize to exhibition designer Frans Bevers.

We appointed three valuable people for the creative sector as honorary members: Gerbrand Bas, Jeroen van Erp and Wolfram Peters. They were appointed during a session on the future of the Industrial Design profession.

We published five Dude/Dutch Designers magazines, with Marcel Vroom, Hansje van Halem, Bas Timmer and Simon Buijs respectively (the last edition in both Dutch and English).

We developed new communication material together with design agency De Ronners.

1 — BNO and its members

BNO is intended for professional designers in all aspects of the field, at all stages of their careers and however they are organised: as a student, solo, as an agency, in a cooperative or at a company. BNO provides knowledge, inspiration and growth, assists with expert advice, matches designers and their agencies with peers and other relevant professionals, and serves as the designers' voice vis-à-vis clients and politics.

In the new series of flyers, published in English as they were first introduced during the Dutch Design Week, we use these five slogans: 'Made by Dutch Designers', 'Sharing your stories everywhere', 'Shitload of good contracts', 'Your coach to success', 'We fight for your rights'. Each time followed by: 'Yes, join BNO'.

Active BNO members programmed dozens of inspiring presentations on the practice of design for regional platforms across the Netherlands: BNO Boost (BNO Oost-Nederland) [East Netherlands], BNO Creative Café (BNO Almere, 't Gooi), BNO IMG LAB (BNO Rotterdam), BNO Noord (BNO Noord-Nederland [North Netherlands]), BNO Utrecht, Zefir7 (BNO The Hague), BNO Zuid (Noord-Brabant, Limburg), BNO Zwolle.

Sad but also grateful for everything they have contributed, BNO said goodbye to honorary members Tomi Ungerer, Friso Kramer, Jan van Duppen and Cor Rosbeek. Wim Crouwel passed away shortly after the honorary members' meeting dedicated to him and the movie premiere of 'Wim Crouwel. Modernist' by Lex Reitsma at the Eye Film Museum.

For the second year in a row, more designers and agencies joined BNO than the number of members we had to say goodbye to. The biggest influx was in the category of individual members: 177 designers. Nineteen design agencies joined. At the same time, there were also cancellations, either due to financial circumstances, insufficient use of BNO or as a result of designers quitting their profession.

As of January 2020, BNO comprises 1858 members, including 127 design agencies and companies.

From January, another 70 designers and three design agencies joined BNO.

2 — Board and office

There were no changes on the board this year. Two changes took place on the Supervisory Board, which is responsible for admitting new members and is involved in disputes: Andreas Knol and Pieter van Cleef parted ways with the board.

Jaap Huijgen and Cynthia Boom will be nominated as successors during the members' meeting.

In the spring, the BNO office parted ways with legal adviser Kim Braber, who accepted a job elsewhere after seven years at BNO. Markus Praat left in the autumn for a job abroad. Marsha Simon decided to start her own business. We welcomed lawyer Pascale Kos at the beginning of 2019. With the later arrival of lawyer Inge Naves, BNO Advies (Advice) became complete again. Amy den Hartog joined to strengthen the team in terms of marketing and communication. Furthermore, BNO is supported by interns Neema Izarin and Jasmijn de Boer.

3 — Activities

See the chronological overview for dates and names. Listed by subject:

Regular activities

- BNO Regioplatforms (Regional Platforms): 37 meetings across the country
- BNO Academie (Academy): 12 training courses, 120 participants
- Driving Dutch Design: 20 meetings, 22 participants
- BNO Start: 6 meetings, 20 participants, with 20 mentors
- BNO Mentoring: 20 matches
- BNO Intervisiegroepen (Peer-to-peer groups): 5 groups with an average of 6 participants
- BNO Gastlessen (Guest Lectures): 6, at various vocational schools
- BNO Meetups: for new members, 1 in Dutch and 1 in English
- BNO Ereleden (Honorary Members): 1 meeting
- BNO information meeting about the WAB (Balanced Labour Market Act)
- BNO had a stand at 4 fairs
- BNO Interieurzaken (Interior Design Affairs): 2 meetings
- BNO NEXTpack: 3 meetings
- BNO HRM Network: 4 meetings
- BNO Creative Directors Forum: 2 meetings
- BNO International: 2 meetings.

Specific projects

- Graduation exhibitions visit, network building YA (Young Alumni).
- Participation Dutch Design Week: with YA at Section C, along with the events
- Driving Dutch Design, Superfast, and the presentation of the BNO Packaging Talent Award.
- YA Hello: as a continuation of the previous activities for young alumni, 4 meetings.
- The 'No Panic Class' and 'No Panic Room' during final exams at Design Academy Eindhoven.
- Co-organisation Infographics Conference: 360 visitors.
- Launch of study 'Clients about their design agency', an initiative of BNO NEXT pack in collaboration with NIMA and DMN.
- General Members' Meeting in Circl, followed by an explanation of the Circl philosophy.
- Additional professionalisation meetings for the new group of comic makers.
- Collaboration with HEMA through the HEMA Foundation Accelerator, a programme for up-and-coming designers to train them to become entrepreneurial social designers.

Behind-the-scenes activities, mainly confidential in nature

- The Supervisory Board met five times and admitted 14 new designers based on their portfolio who did not have the required diploma. No complaints were filed, nor were there any appeals. The Board of Appeal, therefore, did not need to meet.
- Update and supplement of business/legal documents, with the adjustments to the standard employment contracts resulting from the introduction of the Balanced Labour Market Act (WAB) at the top of this year's agenda.
- Tailor-made business and legal advice, for every affiliated designer or agency that requested it. An average of more than 50 questions per week, largely resolved through first-line advice, of which a small number were referred to the SRO, Stichting Rechtshulp Ontwerpers (Legal Aid Designers Foundation).
- Through the SRO, designers, illustrators and other visual artists can call upon specialised attorneys and lawyers for second-tier advice or in case of a legal dispute. Thanks to the SRO, the lawyers provide services at reduced rates or sometimes even entirely at the expense of the SRO when it concerns a matter of principle that is important for the entire design sector. In 2019, the SRO supported nine cases. BNO lawyer Pascale Kos has coordinated the SRO since 2019, and BNO assumed responsibility for the administration as well. Designer Haico Beukers took over as chairman.
- A dozen or so working visits to agencies affiliated with BNO took place, in order to inform and update each other.

4 — Communication

Communications with our business relations take place through personal contact, live meetings and events, digital newsletters (6,593 recipients), the quarterly publication of Dude (3,400 Dutch issues, 1,500 English issues with YA special), the website (20,000 unique visitors per month) and social media: the BNO groups on LinkedIn had a total of 13,675 members in 2019, the Facebook page has 5,592 followers, Twitter has 4,160 followers, and our Instagram account has 3,452 followers. The regional and theme platforms also utilise their own social media channels.

There was a delay in the development of our website due to problems with the database behind it. A number of functionalities are still under development. In addition to quick wins to improve navigation, these functionalities include new forms, changed display of member profiles, implementation of the mail system, and content or editorial plans.

A new communication plan provided a more systematic and well-thought-out pattern to the BNO's use of the various communication channels. This plan was also one of the starting points for the briefing to design agency De Ronners, in light of the planned new magazine and a more balanced use of our online and offline channels.

5 — Lobbying and networking

On account of the visibility of the profession and the conditions under which it can be practised well, BNO takes an active role in forums and at events where designers themselves are often unable or unwilling to come. This ensures that their interests are still safeguarded.

We are part of the Federatie Creatieve Industrie (Dutch Creative Industries Federation), the network of professional and branch organisations in the creative industry. We also work together with parties such as NIMA, Dutch Design Foundation, Designlink and the Design Management Network.

We have close ties with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Council for Culture. We are actively involved in the institutional landscape, which includes the Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie (Creative Industries Fund NL), Het Nieuwe Instituut, CLICK.NL, Creative Council and the Topteam Creatieve Industrie.

We also represent the interests through administrative roles at foundations such as Pictoright, the Pictoright Fund, Platform Makers (and therefore also in Federatie Auteursrechtbelangen, the Dutch Copyright Federation), Stichting Rechtshulp Ontwerpers (Legal Aid Designers Foundation), Best Verzorgde Boeken (Best Dutch Book Designs), Illustratie Biënnale (Illustration Biennial), Infographics Conference and the Verduurzaming Musea (Sustainability of Museums) foundation of the Museums Association.

When necessary or useful, we are in touch with the Stichting Cultuur en Ondernemen (Culture and Entrepreneurship Foundation), the Chamber of Commerce, the RVO (Netherlands Enterprise Agency), the AWVN (General Employers' Association), VNO/NCW/MKB Nederland (Dutch employers' federation), the tender committee of this body, and with European Illustrators Forum (EIF) and Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA).

In 2019, our lobbying activities focused on the Labour Market Agenda for the Cultural and Creative Sector, initially through a broad-based control group that was later called PACCT (Platform Arbeidsmarkt Culturele en Creatieve Toekomst, Labour Market Platform Cultural and Creative Future). At meetings in Nieuwspoor and at the Ministry of Justice and Security, we discussed the value of copyright and the implementation of the Copyright Directive with the appropriate parties.

We co-sponsored the Culture Breakfast for the culture spokespersons of the House of Representatives. We dedicated ourselves to achieving the desired policy on important but at-risk design archives. And we reported to the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam due to numerous changes and the attention we wanted the design profession to receive.

6 — Near future

The 2020-2022 policy plan will address plans for the future.

We will pay closer attention to aspects that (should) form the common thread throughout, such as digitisation, internationalisation and a large and varied community of affiliated designers and agencies. In addition to our range of services and activities, we also aspire to strike the best balance between being a professional trade organisation and a vibrant community. The affiliated designers and agencies are key players in this, with our motto being: BNO, made by Dutch designers!

Spring 2020,
on behalf of the board,
Madeleine van Lennep - Director of BNO