

FIFTY YEARS

of academic freedom



The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study



PRESENTED VOICES	THRIVE	STIMULATING	SURPRISING	CURIOSITY
CREATIVE	COLLABORATIVE LEARNING	UNTRODDEN PATHS	CREATIVE	
COUNTER VISIONS	NETWORK	COUNTER VISIONS	THRIVE	INTELLECTUAL
EXPLORATION	COUNTER VISIONS	CURIOUS MINDS	NETWORK	
INTERDISCIPLINARY	UNRESTRAINED	NETWORK	INTERDISCIPLINARY	SURPRISING
SERENDIPITY	INTERDISCIPLINARY	INTERNATIONAL	SERENDIPITY	
PATHWAYS	EXPLORATION	SERENDIPITY	NEW PATHWAYS	EXPLORATION
UNTRODDEN PATHS	CREATIVE	STIMULATING	NEW PATHWAYS	
UNRESTRAINED	INTELLECTUAL HAVEN	THRIVE	UNDERREPRESENTED VOICES	FRESH
CURIOUS MINDS	COLLABORATIVE LEARNING	INTELLECTUAL HAVEN	UNTRODDEN PATHS	



St. Joris Hof

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CENTRUM

FIFTY YEARS

of academic freedom



**The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study
in the Humanities and Social Sciences**

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INTRODUCTION



Since 1971, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS) has opened its doors to about two thousand fellows. They each come, for a stretch of time, to an 'intellectual haven' that allows them to delve deeply into their work and engage other curious minds in interdisciplinary dialogue. For a few months, each fellow experiences a brief cross-section of the Institute's being; for a moment in time, they simultaneously witness and create that which is NIAS. For fifty years, NIAS has been made and remade by its fellows, creating NIAS' collective unfolding.

In this fifty-year retrospective, NIAS offers a lookback to share its history in full with those who make up its many parts. For its 50th anniversary, NIAS aims to trace a story of the Institute as a whole, inviting alumni and the NIAS community to situate themselves in a context larger than their own research, their own work, and their own time at the Institute. This history aims to shape current and past fellows' sense of what it means to have been a part of NIAS and offers inspiration for the Institute's future through a clearer sense of its past.

**True innovation
needs unshackled
scholarship.**

The founding principle of NIAS and of Institutes of Advanced Study around the world is to provide a space for free academic inquiry. It underlies the belief that true innovation needs unshackled scholarship. This is just as urgent and important today as it was fifty years ago when NIAS was established. While many might subscribe to the belief of unrestricted scholarship leading to innovation, it is regrettably not supported by all. Academic freedom around the globe is under threat by governments, budget cuts, and weighty institutional administrative demands. It is the work of Institutes of Advanced Studies to create an intellectual haven, where scholars are unbound by external pressures and can focus solely on their inquiry; where they are stimulated and encouraged to explore ideas beyond disciplinary boundaries; and moreover, where they are encouraged to gain new insights through serendipity. These fresh ideas and insights might not be immediately useful or have a direct political or economic purpose. However, the Institute is deeply convinced that it is this type of curiosity-driven research that creates new and surprising pathways in dealing with societal challenges more effectively and creatively. We are proud that for the past fifty years we have been able to create and facilitate this intellectual haven, and we hope to continue this work in a world that needs it now more than ever.

Prof. Jan Willem Duyvendak
Director NIAS and
Distinguished Research Professor of
Sociology at the University of Amsterdam

THE ORIGIN STORY

THE FIRST INSTITUTE



The first Institute for Advanced Study was founded in Princeton, New Jersey in 1930 by Abraham Flexner, an American educator and researcher. Flexner believed deeply in the creative powers of the individual and had an equally deep distrust of the ability of institutions to cultivate such talent.

A sceptic of the educational systems of his time, Flexner made a name for himself with his 1908 book *The American College: A Criticism* and a 1910 “bombshell report,” commissioned by the Carnegie Foundation on the American medical school system. The latter was a scathing critique and devastating indictment of educational systems in the US, describing institutions as disgraceful, shameful, and even fictional. This Flexner Report led to the closing of nearly half of the medical schools in the U.S. and reform of most others.

Flexner continued his research and writing on education and studying institutions of higher education across Europe. His findings culminated in an essay, published in 1939, called *The Usefulness of Useless Knowledge*, in which he laid out a foundational truth he had come to believe about academic freedom. In the essay, he discussed remarkable discoveries

and societal advances born out of purely curiosity-fueled pursuits. His belief in scholarship unencumbered by teaching, administrative duties, and unrestricted by political, economic or utilitarian goals was shaped by the geopolitics of the moment. It was a time where freedom of thought and the autonomy of science were under extreme pressure – especially in Germany, where Hitler was growing in power. Intellectual research was increasingly being formed in the image of the political ideologies that drove and supported it. Flexner wrote:

The subject which I am discussing has at this moment a peculiar poignancy. In certain large areas - Germany and Italy especially - the effort is now being made to clamp down the freedom of the human spirit. Universities have been so reorganized that they have become tools of those who believe in a special political, economic, or racial creed. Now and then a thoughtless individual in one of the few democracies left in this world will even question the fundamental importance of absolutely untrammelled academic freedom. The real enemy of the human race is not the fearless and irresponsible thinker, be he right or wrong. The real enemy is the man who tries to mold the human spirit so that it will not dare to spread its wings...

When siblings Louis Bamberger and Caroline Fuld made their fortune selling their chain of department stores to Macy's, they sought Flexner to help them with their philanthropic vision of creating a medical school in Newark. Flexner saw nothing in

another medical school In Newark, but had a completely different idea: an Institute of Advanced Study, “not in depressing Newark, but in the peaceful and picturesque town of Princeton.”

The Institute was to be a place of academic research unlike any other. It would be a space for the free pursuit of learning for the world’s greatest minds. There would be no formal instruction, goal, or responsibilities at this Institute. It would be a place to explore and incubate highly specialised research while providing an atmosphere open to intellectual exchange across all disciplinary boundaries. He says of the vision for an Institute of Advanced Study:

We make ourselves no promises, but we cherish the hope that the unobstructed pursuit of useless knowledge will prove to have consequences in the future as in the past. Not for a moment, however, do we defend the Institute on that ground. It exists as a paradise for scholars who, like poets and musicians, have won the right to do as they please and who accomplish most when enabled to do so.

His experiment far exceeded expectations – even his own. The year the Institute opened its doors was the year Hitler came to power and the mass emigration of Jews brought many eminent academics to America. Flexner’s first appointment at his new institute was Albert Einstein. Many more brilliant minds, including John von Neumann, followed.

**Universities have
become tools of those
who believe in political,
economic, or racial
creed.**

Abraham Flexner

In the first year of the Institute, Flexner wrote to a friend, “I have frequently used the phrase, ‘paradise for scholars,’ without any very distinct notion of just how a paradise would be created.” He went on, “[the fellows] have been turned loose...without any regulations whatsoever...every afternoon tea is served informally and there is, to my astonishment, an attendance of about sixty...They talk mathematics but not only mathematics and drift in and out without explanation or ascertainable reason...our fellows have all been teachers working under a heavy routine for some years, they are as happy as birds, doing precisely the things which they have wanted to do.”

The latter half of the century would give rise to two world-changing scientific discoveries with their beginnings at the Institute: nuclear energy and electronic computers. They stand as a testament to Flexner’s belief in a paradise for scholars where the unobstructed pursuit of useless knowledge could take shape, and in turn shape our world.

The Princeton Institute initially did not include social or behavioural scientists, and in 1954 a new institute for Advanced Study, focused on the behavioural sciences, emerged in Palo Alto, California – The Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS).

**A paradise for scholars
who, like poets and
musicians, have won the
right to do as they please
and who accomplish
most when enabled
to do so.**

Abraham Flexner

THE BIRTH OF NIAS



In 1966 Professor E.M. Uhlenbeck, a Dutch linguist, was invited to CASBS. He returned from his visit at the Institute with the transformative vision of creating a similar institute in Europe, a place - like the Institutes in Princeton and Palo Alto – for the free pursuit of intellectual curiosity.

The vision was clear, the execution less so. In Uhlenbeck's own words, "the birth of NIAS was not a smooth and happy affair." The Institute went through several transformations from its initial conception to its final materialisation, with much dialogue between Uhlenbeck, Leiden University, and the Dutch government. Indeed, for a while there were to be students at the Institute, then it was to be only for Dutch professors. For a short period, it was argued that it should be a European Institute, not a Dutch one, and only for scholars in the natural sciences. Sometimes there were to be permanent residents, at other stages, only six-month visiting fellows. Reports were created, amended, argued for, proposals written and simultaneously dropped. Confusion arose over location, engagement with a potential plan for a European university and academic focus-areas. Over many years what would come to be NIAS was shaped, formed, nearly forgotten, and reformed anew – throughout, Uhlenbeck played the drumbeat of support.

In November 1968, shortly after a renewed and enthusiastic discussion about the possibility of an Institute for Advanced Study in The Netherlands, Uhlenbeck heard tell of a large villa for sale in Wassenaar, a former police training school that was surprisingly well-suited to the multifactorial needs of an institute that would house, feed, and cater to the research of its residents. As Uhlenbeck recounts,

The surprising effect of the availability of good accommodation for the institute was that all of a sudden the idea of founding an institute became more real than it ever had been. The presence of a building excellently located in a quiet section of Wassenaar somehow gave the impression that the institute already existed! However, this illusion was cruelly shattered in the following months.

The stroke of luck in finding the villa was short-lived. Uhlenbeck was told that the Department of Education and Science was not in a position to bear all the capital and operating costs involved. Uhlenbeck, not easily deterred, decided to seek financial assistance from Dutch businesses. Uhlenbeck recounts that on New Year's Eve of 1968 he drove to the Unilever office to present "a rosy picture of the Institute I had in mind, and to explain why I needed financial assistance of about one million guilders to buy the Wassenaar property." He was firmly rejected – Unilever had no interest. His vision was stymied yet again. And notably, he adds in his account, he received a parking ticket during the meeting and was greeted by a snow-storm on his return home.





**An institute guided
by a belief in the
importance of human
curiosity.**

Many months went by. Developers were taking an interest in the villa in Wassenaar and plans for the Institute had largely gone quiet. And finally, at long last, Dr. Piekaar, Director-General of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Arts and Science made a historic decision. After years of witnessing slow idea-tion and many setbacks in the attempts to create an Institute for Advanced Study in the Netherlands, he decided to make funds available for buying the property and informed Uhlenbeck that all further expenses would be borne by the Dutch Government. Uhlenbeck, thrilled, acted quickly, moving ahead with the purchase of the villa and establishing formal ties with Leiden and surrounding universities. Committees were arranged, boards set up, and selection procedures began immediately, eventually leading to the invitation of a cohort of thirty-three fellows to begin in September of 1971.

The first cohort of fellows was welcomed by an Institute based on Flexner's academic ideology but in the image of the Institute in Palo Alto. This was true of its scholarly focus areas, humanities and the social sciences; of its decision to have only visiting fellows; of its size; library loan system; and let us not discount, of its volleyball court.

Thus the project of establishing NIAS was born. An Institute inspired by those that came before it, and also one with a unique formation and ideology, guided by a deeply held belief in the importance of human curiosity.





FELLOWS 1975/76

Koolman, J.,
Political Science

Heckhausen, H.,
Psychology

Bastin, J.S.,
Modern History
of South East Asia

Kruijt, C.S.,
Sociology

Heslinga, M. W.,
Social Geography

Kortlandt, A.,
Animal Psychology
and Animal Ecology

Janssen, E.M.,
History

Fokkema, D.C.,
Law

Dorsten, J.A. van,
English Language
and Literature

Goudsblom, J.,
Sociology

Bonarius, J.C.J.,
Psychology

Hennipman, P.,
Economics

Zeeuw, G. de,
Psychology

Bechtel, G.G.,
Psychology

Fikentscher, W.,
Law

Kokkini, D.,
Law

Lorwin, V.R.,
Political Science

Rudolph, W.,
Ethnology

Taylor, D.R.,
Anthropology

Wiehn, E.R.,
Sociology

Buck, P. de,
History

Noorduyn, J.,
Sudanese
and Languages
of the Celebes

Talmon, J.L.,
Modern History

Whallon Jr., R.,
Prehistory

Wit, C.H.E. de,
History

Nes, D. van,
Greek Language
and Literature

Leeden, A.C. van der,
Cultural Anthropology

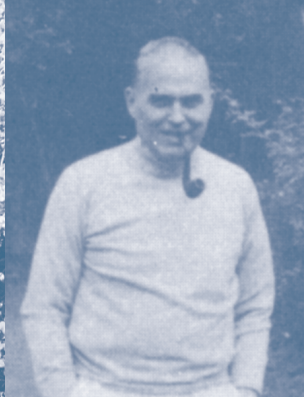
Rorer, L.G.,
Psychology

Josselin de Jong, P.E. de,
Cultural Anthropology

Mair, J.M.,
Psychology

Oerlemans, J.W.,
History

Simpson, G.,
Sociology



WHAT FELLOWS SAY ABOUT NIAS



Since 1971, NIAS fellows have been coming from an increasing number of regions across the world, bringing back their experiences of the Institute to their home-countries. This is what some of them say:

"The interdisciplinary environment and discussions introduced me to types of research and perspectives I haven't been aware of before."

"Long lasting relationships have grown out of the fellowship."

"When I came to NIAS I was tired of university life, and occasionally thinking of career change. I left with renewed energy."

"All valued the contribution of the daily lunches to creating a sense of community, promoting intellectual discussions, and starting friendships."

"At NIAS I saw, on an everyday basis, a model of academic leadership that inspired me and that I took home to my own faculty."

"Being exposed weekly to ideas, methods, approaches and generally ways of thinking has changed how I think about science, the humanities, and their interface."

"Sharing emerging knowledge with intellectually generous experts in a broad range of disciplines enables one to stress-test one's ideas from multiple perspectives, at a stage where they can be readily corrected, sharpened, or discarded."

"My regular interactions with co-Fellows truly widened my intellectual horizon."

"The staff's contribution to creating the sense of community through the various social activities from the very beginning, was remarkable."

"To realize that everybody at NIAS is dedicated to make thinking happen and writing flow, is both a precious gift and a secret burden."



BUILDING AN INTELLECTUAL HAVEN

A SCHOLARS PARADISE



Abraham Flexner’s vision for the first Institute of Advanced Study was to create “a scholar’s paradise,” and NIAS, too, hoped to create a paradise for its fellows. But what characterises a scholar’s paradise? Since its beginning, there have been key elements which upheld the ideology of NIAS, and indeed all Institutes of Advanced Study.

One of these key characteristics is to go beyond disciplinary boundaries while pursuing curiosity-driven science. The importance of interdisciplinarity is often taken for granted or understood as self-evident. But throughout its history, NIAS has continually advocated cross-disciplinarity, and further, continually asked the question of how best to foster this amongst its fellows.

From the outset, NIAS understood itself as uniquely poised to combat the “menace,” as it was understood, of specialisation. In the late ‘70s, a few years after the Institute’s opening, in its annual report, then Director Henk Misset laid out important flaws in the landscape of academia that, in his eyes “together comprise the *raisons d’être* of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study”. He argued that academics specialised in a very narrow field of study in order to master it sufficiently and

Human curiosity, not politics, economics, nor the agenda of the academy, is the strongest force for bringing about transformational research.

to open up new territories for further research within the same field. This tendency toward specialisation, he believed, had resulted in increasing knowledge about ever-shrinking fields.

Only through a collaboration of scholars from different branches of the humanities and social sciences could boundaries of respective disciplines be pushed, and new challenges be approached. Such interaction would enable scholars to view their own work in a broader scientific and cultural context and thus to discern scientific intersections in what otherwise would remain obfuscated.

This coincides with a second key ingredient of NIAS, its blue sky principle – the notion that fellows propose to study a topic of their own choosing. The blue-sky principle stems from the same belief that human curiosity, not politics, economics, nor the agenda of the academy, is the strongest force for bringing about transformational research and findings.

When the Institute was first created, it offered time away from the pressures of life and the outside world to focus on inquiry. The focus has slightly shifted, as, since the '70s, academia has become incredibly pressured, full of expectations regarding pace, productivity, and impact. The rhythm of research and output in academia is faster than it ever has been before – a pressure-cooker of expectations. What NIAS now offers is not so much a retreat from the outside world, but a retreat from the burden and pressure of academia itself.

This brings us to another component of the Institute for Advanced Study in this modern moment, an element critical to the vision of boundary-crossing research: its slow pace. As the pressures of the academic world increased around it, NIAS offered its fellows respite from that world to practice good science or ‘slow science’.

Slow science, is yes, about the pace of research but only in service of its more important goal: to create conditions that allow research to flourish – time to ask questions, to doubt, to reconsider, and explore. In his explanation of slow science, Jan Willem Duyvendak, NIAS Director, quotes the author of *Slow Food Nation*, Petrini:

Slow philosophy should not be interpreted as the contrast between slowness and speed – slow versus fast – but rather between attention and distraction; slowness is not so much a question of duration as an ability to distinguish and evaluate, with the propensity to cultivate pleasure, knowledge, and quality.

Jan Willem Duyvendak says that this is the best way to frame it: slow science is not a goal in itself but it creates the opportunity for better science; a slow-down that promises qualitatively better, more interesting outcomes.

Slow science is relevant beyond its inherent value to research. It is an important delineation that Institutes for Advanced Study draw, a way to create a boundary between, on the one hand

academia and, on the other, politics, economics, and the demands of society. Slow science is a way to keep distance from the forces of politics and the market, and a belief that inquiry should be guided by human curiosity. As Duyvendak explains,

[We strive to be] a place where the precious commodities of time, space and an informal environment are provided to stimulate scientific serendipity, curiosity, and the production of the kind of knowledge that may not be immediately acknowledged by policymakers or businesses as being useful or functional. Academia...should be about the eagerness to know, to better understand our world, even if the generated knowledge cannot be immediately applied to solve the economic, ecological, financial or social problems of our day.

Slow science creates the time and space to explore and push disciplinary boundaries. It gives scholars the space and time to be guided by curiosity alone, and to meander away from academic specialisations to pursue good science.

But if the rewards of interdisciplinary exchange are great, so too are the challenges: understanding the concepts that underlie different disciplines, finding a common language to discuss ideas, and trusting research you haven't the skills to assess yourself, to name a few. So how then to best create the conditions for interdisciplinarity?

**NIAS offers a retreat
from the burden and
pressure of academia
itself.**

NIAS AT WASSENAAR, IN PEACEFUL ISOLATION



Interdisciplinary exchanges, at first, happened spontaneously given the isolated and close-knit community of NIAS' fellows. For much of our history, fellows worked together in a villa in Wassenaar. NIAS at Wassenaar has been described as a haven, and was one in the truest sense of the word: a physical place for refuge that is demarcated from that which is outside it.

Wassenaar was an incredibly isolated location – as a former fellow put it, Wassenaar was cut off from the rest of the country by dunes and the North Sea on one side and, on the other sides, by a non-existent rail link and a bus service whose meandering routes lent Leiden and The Hague the allure of far-flung places. Another fellow described Wassenaar as a “beacon of enlightened liberalism under the tallest trees of the world, a monastic order, a withdrawal from reality, a state of being in-between, no longer bound by previous norms.” And for much of NIAS' existence, this isolation defined its self-conception and its offerings.

For the span of a few months at NIAS, the fellows lives were almost entirely made up by the sandy dunes near the villa, its notoriously magnificent tall trees, and their fellow researchers.



Of their own accord, fellows set up numerous informal meetings, lectures, seminars, and conferences, spurring intellectual exchange. But perhaps more importantly, they ate lunch together at large communal tables, drank tea together, spent hours playing volleyball together and digested the night's news together at their monastic retreat.

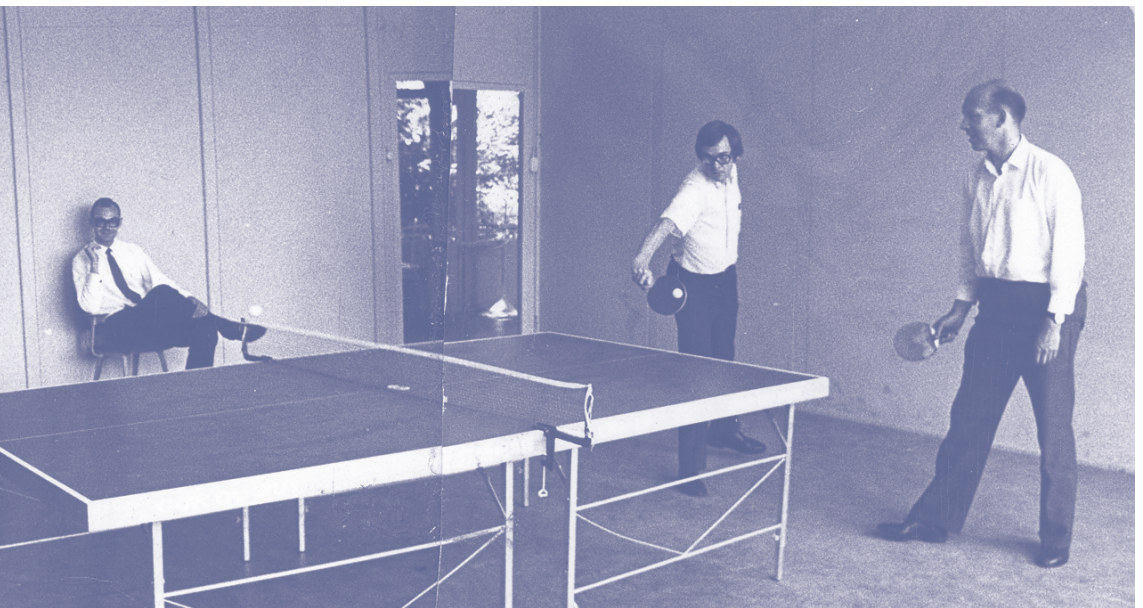
In a discussion in 2009, Peter Burke, a former IAS and NIAS fellow, argued that interdisciplinarity cannot be forced, but institutes like NIAS, who prescribe to the model of proactive serendipity, act as a conduit for modern interdisciplinarity and cognitive diversity. The shared lunches, dinners and movie nights are places of intellectual sociability where one truly gets to talk to the neighbours.

For much of its history, NIAS has seen its isolation as critical for allowing slow, interdisciplinary science to unfold. The tranquil, protective, and secluded nature of Wassenaar was seen as critical to a clear, focused mind. In his farewell speech, Director Henk Wesseling articulated that the importance of isolation, which was for a time characteristic of NIAS. He quoted Newman who said,

The common sense of mankind has associated the search after truth with seclusion and quiet. The greatest thinkers have been too intent on their subject to admit of interruption...Pythagoras...lived for a time in a cave...Friar Bacon lived in his tower upon the Isis.

A physical place for refuge.





As Wesseling put it: if one ever needed an argument for locating NIAS in this isolated part of Wassenaar – or for not providing telephones in the fellows' offices – this is it. And as Wesseling concluded his talk he left with a parting hope: that Institutes for Advanced Study should, as far as possible, remain as they are. And yet, change came to NIAS. In 1988, the Dutch Ministry of Science and Education, which until then had been funding NIAS, decided to bring it under the fold of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

**Change came
to NIAS.**

THE MOVE TO AMSTERDAM, OPENING TO THE WORLD



In 2013, the Board of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) made the decision to relocate NIAS from Wassenaar to Amsterdam. The relocation took almost three years and in September 2016, the new location in the heart of the Dutch capital city of Amsterdam officially opened its doors.

It was a contentious process, with many alumni decrying the change. In the end, budget cuts forced the decision. The costs for the upkeep of the buildings and grounds at Wassenaar were increasing, especially since major renovations were necessary, and staying would mean less money was available for the academic programme and the activities which NIAS offered.

The move to Amsterdam was challenging for NIAS in many ways, but provided new opportunities as well. If Wassenaar was an isolated haven, a retreat for the fellows to have tranquil, undisturbed time for focus, the location in Amsterdam was its polar opposite: it is in the busiest area of one of Europe's busiest cities – a hub of activity, commotion, and goings-on.

NIAS saw the move as an opportunity to build a new Institute for Advanced Study that met the challenges of the 21st century.

As then Director Aafke Hulk wrote on her announcement to alumni of the move, “NIAS may seem like ‘paradise’ to many (former) fellows and staff, but in order to continue it must match the needs and wishes of new generations of academic scholars working in a constantly changing, truly global setting.”

What NIAS set out to do, second to creating time for focused work, was to create conditions for deliberate transgression of boundaries, to allow for cross-fertilisation between topics and fields, and to create the conditions for strong stimuli for intellectual creativity. Amsterdam presented new opportunities for this type of exchange. Not only do boundaries exist between academic disciplines, but also between professions, backgrounds, and lived experiences. While Wassenaar allowed for the exchange between professors of different fields and sub-fields, Amsterdam created the opportunity for wider exchanges: exchanges with other institutions, with non-NIAS scholars, with the myriad sources available in an international city, and with people and activities outside the academic realm.

As Aafke Hulk argued, NIAS moved beyond the belief that the best work and most interesting questions live at the convergence of disciplines and research methodologies. She went further, holding that the true forefront of research was best sought where academic fields overlapped with not only each other but also with a wide breadth of everyday experience. The human experience that, in Amsterdam, unfolded on the streets beneath the Fellows’ office windows.



While NIAS opened to the outside world in Amsterdam, its move also allowed for greater diversity within its walls. Younger scholars with children had found it difficult to consider a fellowship because the lack of public transport to Wassenaar placed too great a burden on their time. With the move to Amsterdam, there was greater potential for inclusivity: NIAS could be a space that included the mutable, diverse world transpiring on its doorsteps, and also, in its new more accessible location, could draw fellows from more distant locations and more varied backgrounds. If NIAS' original perception of diversity was about bringing scholars from different fields together, or inviting international scholars to safeguard against Dutch provincialism, the move to Amsterdam offered an opportunity to radically reshape the purpose and possibility for an inclusive, diverse institute.

**Amsterdam presented
new opportunities.**



MDCCXLVII



NIAS AND PARTNERS

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY EXCHANGE



NIAS' move to Amsterdam may mark its most dramatic change, but the Institute has been subtly shifting and changing over its many years. NIAS has been supported and enabled by a changing group of institutions, and their support has shifted the scholarship that NIAS in turn has fostered.

In coming under the wing of the KNAW, which is responsible for several remarkable research institutes, NIAS saw an occasion to re-examine its goals and how they were being achieved.

First, under the KNAW, NIAS placed a greater emphasis on interdisciplinary research groups. Former Selection Officer, Jos Hooghuis, describes this emphasis on theme groups and the selection of the scholars from different backgrounds as a new, more focused and proactive way to realise an objective of NIAS that had always existed: the pursuit of cross-disciplinary fertilisation. The reformed Selection Committee actively identified possible research topics, and crafted theme groups with a selection of cross-disciplinary fellows to work on them.

Second, there was a greater focus on external engagement. NIAS' policies and selection procedures became more outwardly oriented to foster international participation, and it

prioritised research projects that would have “useful repercussion both nationally and internationally”. NIAS hoped to generate and support research on topics of both scholarly and societal concern.

In the shift in priorities under the KNAW, there exist crucial tensions; key to NIAS’ formation is one, to let intellectual curiosity organically unfold, and two, to ensure that there is a place for slow science demarcated from the realm of politics or the economy. Inherent in this mission is the potential for an isolated academic ivory tower; a scholars’ paradise where high caliber research and discoveries are led. The opening up of NIAS over the past fifty years has ensured NIAS does not become a secluded academic world, but with the intention to open up there is also a challenge – there is a narrow line to walk between selecting themes and contributing to public discourse on the one hand and setting an overly strict agenda motivated by social or political impacts on the other. How NIAS walks this line is still unfolding – NIAS is a continued experiment in finding a place for free academic research within a lived social and cultural exchange.

In the interest of stimulating cross-disciplinary exchange, NIAS has developed a series of partnerships – partners with whom NIAS cooperates to offer special fellowships. After recognising a pattern of fewer applicants in fields such as economics, law and sociology, these strategic alliances aimed to strengthen the bonds with disciplines that are traditionally under-represented at NIAS. Taken in sum, they indicate how NIAS has, over its fifty years, sought to expand the type of research it supports.



**NIAS is a continued
experiment in finding
a place for free academic
research.**

The first of these partnerships emerged after the fall of the Berlin wall, when there was a major effort and monetary support available to create opportunities for scholars from the former Soviet Bloc. Beginning in 1993, The Dutch Research Council (NWO), offered financial support, allowing for NIAS to initiate a programme for researchers from Central and Eastern Europe called The Trends in Scholarship (TRIS). The programme offered twenty annual fellowships, giving scholars time to read in their field of research as well as to participate in and contribute to a series of lectures.

Another partnership emerged in the early 2000s as a way to attract scholars in the field of economics. NIAS alone found that they could not attract top economists, as they could not offer a stipend commensurate with their income. Through a partnership with the Dutch National Bank, the Dutch Ministry of Finance, and several other major Dutch financial institutions, NIAS was able to create the Jelle Zijlstra Fellowship, which later became the Willem F. Duisenberg Fellowship. The Fellowship successfully brought economists to NIAS, and is offered to this day.

In 2006, NIAS partnered with the Lorentz Center, which opened up NIAS for the first time to researchers in the hard sciences. The fellowship promotes interdisciplinary research that brings together perspectives from the humanities and social sciences with the natural and technological sciences.

In its project to stimulate cross-disciplinary exchange and include artistic and cultural research, NIAS also opened its doors

to writers and journalists. The Writer-in-Residence fellowship, established in partnership with the Dutch Foundation for Literature beginning in 1999, offers fiction and non-fiction writers an opportunity to work within an international academic community.

In collaboration with the Dutch Fund for In-depth Journalism, the Journalist-in-Residence fellowship was created in 2002 to give journalists time and space to write a book in an academic setting and without interruption. As NIAS argues, the view is that sharing ideas with scholars from the humanities, social sciences and other disciplines can inform a journalist's work and vice-versa.

The first Journalist-in-Residence was awarded to Dirk van Delft, then Science Editor of the NRC. When he came to NIAS he wrote a piece about a prominent Dutch Physicist, Heike Kamerlingh Onnes. As he put it,

I came to NIAS as the first Journalist-in-Residence in February 2002. The first thing I did was to forget my newspaper completely and to behave like an historian of science. My aim was to make considerable progress in the writing [of] a full biography of the Dutch low temperature physicist Heike Kamerlingh Onnes (1853-1926). I succeeded in so far that during my stay at NIAS I passed a point of no return.

As he says, “this point of no return” led van Delft’s to chart an interdisciplinary career after his time at NIAS; he later became the Director of a national science museum and a Professor of the history of natural sciences. Indeed, the time at NIAS radically altered many journalists and writer’s trajectories. And reciprocally, reflections by staff members and co-fellows show that journalists and writers provided incredibly unique contributions to the seminars, talks, and informal gatherings at the Institute. Scholars were pushed and challenged in ways that were not only new to them, but new to NIAS.

In 2015, NIAS went further, adding an Artist-in-Residence in partnership with the Society of Arts-KNAW, which aims to stimulate cross-pollination between the sciences and arts.

NIAS started out as a project to foster research and inter-disciplinary thought. Even in its early years, the diversity of research it fostered was remarkable relative to other institutes at the time. In its 1979 Annual report, NIAS argued:

It differs in important respects from other inter-university institutes in the Netherlands, most notably in the breadth of its scope and the diversity of the disciplines which are pursued by the fellows. Not only Sociologists, Political Scientists, Economists, and Psychologists may participate but also Theologians, Archaeologists, Philosophers, Linguists, Jurists and students of Literature. Thus, NIAS immediately distinguishes itself from the more typical research institution.

While the inclusion of such fields may have been remarkable at that time, it is also possible to acknowledge that in a charting of human interests, this list has its limitations. NIAS' broadening support of wider reaching fields and inclusivity of writers, artists and journalists, marks its evolving conception of knowledge – where it is produced, who has it, and how it can be exchanged.

The Persian Rose garden, a gift from fellow Prof. Dr. Med. Kenower W. Bash, "to provide a place for quiet reflection and contemplation for NIAS Fellows."



SUPPORTED FELLOWSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

NIAS Arts fellowships

Artist-in-Residence

In collaboration with the Society of Arts-KNAW this fellowship offers talented artists from all disciplines an opportunity to work on an artistic research project.

Journalist-in-Residence

The Journalist-in-Residence fellowship was created in 2002 with the Dutch Fund for In-depth Journalism FBJP to give journalists the opportunity to work on an exceptional journalistic project.

Writer-in-Residence

The Writer-in-Residence fellowship, offered in partnership with the Dutch Foundation for Literature NLF began in 1999 and offers fiction, non-fiction writers and poets to work on their newest book project.

**NIAS has been
supported and enabled
by a changing group of
institutions.**

NIAS Scholars fellowships

The Constructive Advanced Thinking Theme Group

Supported by the NetIAS network of Institutes for Advanced Study in Europe, this initiative aims to foster networks for early-career researchers dedicated to devising new ideas to understand and tackle current or emerging societal challenges. It supports groups of 3-5 researchers and is designed to maximize their creativity by offering them stays in different Institutes for Advanced Study.

Distinguished Lorentz Fellowship

In 2006, NIAS partnered with the Lorentz Center in Leiden to bring together perspectives from the humanities and social sciences with the natural and technological sciences. It is undergirded by the belief that important and exciting research advances at the interface of different disciplines, and that topics of societal importance often require extensive collaboration across traditional scientific boundaries in order to progress. The DLF is nomination-based fellowship and meant for senior researchers who have successfully bridged these disciplines throughout their career.

Golestan Fellowship

This fellowship is meant for researchers from the medical or biological sciences including clinical psychiatry, and funded by a legacy from the late Prof. Dr. Med. Kenower Weimar Bash, a Swiss psychiatrist, and a NIAS Fellow during the academic year 1973/74.

The Instituut Gak Fellowship

Set up with the Instituut Gak, this fellowship offers researchers the opportunity to work on topics in the fields of social security and labour market policy.

NIAS-Lorentz Theme Group

As part of the partnership between NIAS and the Lorentz Center, an international group of three researchers, are offered a theme-group fellowship to do cutting-edge research that bridges the divide between the humanities and/or social sciences and the natural and/or technological sciences.

The L'Oréal-UNESCO For-Women-in-Science Fellowship

This program stimulates the scientific careers of young women life scientists with the aim of increasing the number of women professors in the Netherlands in the long run. The fellowship is sponsored by L'Oréal and UNESCO and supported by the Dutch Network of Women Professors (LNVH).

The Scholars at Risk Fellowship continued as the UAF Fellowship

Scholars who suffer grave threats to life, liberty and well-being in their own countries, are provided a safe location and conducive academic environment to carry out their research. This fellowship is set up in collaboration with the Foundation for Refugee Students UAF.

Urban Citizen Fellowship

Together with the Municipality of Amsterdam, this fellowship is set up to stimulate scholars to carry out research projects around the concepts of inclusivity, democratization and representation, and education in relation to urban citizenship.

The Van Doorn Fellowship

This fellowship stimulates sociological research that critically analyses societal issues. In collaboration with the Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Department Public Administration and Sociology at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Willem F. Duisenberg Fellowship

Through a partnership with the Dutch National Bank, the Dutch Ministry of Finance, and several other major Dutch financial institutions in the early 2000s, NIAS was able to create the Jelle Zijlstra Fellowship, which later became the Willem F. Duisenberg Fellowship. The Fellowship brings top-economists to NIAS, and is offered to this day.

**The sum of individuals,
institutions and partners
have helped make NIAS
into what it is today.**

Former fellowships

The Descartes Theme group

Set up in collaboration with the Descartes Centre at Utrecht University, the Max Planck Institute in Berlin and the Huygens ING, The Hague, this theme-group fellowship was awarded to scholars who work on research topics that provide a historical and philosophical perspective on scientific developments that have a major impact on society.

Dutch North Rhine-Westphalian Fellowships

The aim of this research programme was a comparative study of the Dutch and German ‘civil societies’ during the period 1850-2000, taking into account the political, socio-economic and cultural perspectives. A collaboration with the Duitsland Institute in Amsterdam, the Zentrum für Niederlande-Studien in Münster and the Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung in Bielefeld, was the initiator of this enterprise.

The European Institutes for Advanced Study (EURIAS) Fellowship

This international researcher mobility programme was meant for promising young scholars as well as leading senior researchers. The EURIAS Fellowship was funded by the European Commission's COFUND Fellowship.

Henry G. Schermers Fellowship

Named after the renowned legal scholar, this fellowship cosponsored by the Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law was for senior scholars in a field relevant to the HiiL research programme.

Jan Tinbergen Fellowship

This fellowship in economics was sponsored by the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis and was awarded to a renowned international economist. It also facilitated close cooperation and scientific exchange with researchers from the Bureau for Economic policy Analysis.

The KB Fellowship

Co-sponsored by the National Library of the Netherlands, this fellowship aimed to give renowned scholars in the humanities the opportunity to make use of the special collections at the Dutch National Library.

Magyar Fellowship

The programme of Magyar Fellowships was for Hungarian scholars working in social science and humanities, and was sponsored by the Hungarian government and the Ministry of Science in the Netherlands.

Mellon Fellowship

The programme of Mellon Fellowships was established by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to enable Bulgarian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian and Slovak scholars in the humanities and social sciences to carry out research at advanced study institutes in European countries.

The NSvP Fellowship

Set up in collaboration with the Nederlandse Stichting voor Psychotechniek, it offered scholars from Dutch universities and research institutes the opportunity to work on a topic related to labour markets in the future.

P.R.I.M.E. FINANCE Fellowship

This co-sponsored Fellowship was aimed at stimulating research in the field of dispute resolution and arbitration in complex financial issues, and financially supported by P.R.I.M.E. Finance.

The RKD Fellowship

In collaboration with the Netherlands Institute for Art History RKD, it was aimed at stimulating art historical research through access to the RKD's collections and archives.

Spinoza Fellowship

A joint venture between NIAS, the City of The Hague, The Hague Campus of Leiden University and Radio Netherlands Worldwide, this fellowship was awarded to a renowned scientist, jurist, journalist, writer or artist working on a subject relating to international peace, justice and law.

Translator-in-Residence

With the Dutch Foundation for Literature NLF, this fellowship was awarded to translators who translated fiction and non-fiction works into Dutch.

The Trends in Scholarship (TRIS) Programme

After the fall of the Berlin wall, this programme funded by the Dutch Research Council NWO and NIAS offered twenty annual fellowships to scholars from Central and Eastern Europe.

VNC Fellowships

The Flemish-Dutch Committee for Dutch Language and Culture VNC, offered two fellowships, one each for a scholar from a Flemish and a Dutch university. These scholars engaged in a joint research project in the field of Dutch language, literature or history.

NIAS FELLOWS

1971/72

Bastin, J.S., Bechtel, G.G., Bonarius, J.C.J., Buck, P. De, Dorsten, J.A. van, Fikentscher, W., Fokkema, D.C., Goudsblom, J., Heckhausen, H., Hennipman, P., Heslinga, M. W., Janssen, E.M., Jongkees-Vos, M.F., Josselin de Jong, P.E. de, Kokkini, D., Kooiman, J., Kortlandt, A., Kruijt, C.S., Leeden, A.C. van der, Lorwin, V.R., Mair, J.M., Nes, D. van, Noorduyt, J., Oerlemans, J.W., Rorer, L.G., Rudolph, W., Simpson, G., Talmon, J.L., Taylor, D.R., Whallon Jr., R., Wiehn, E.R., Wit, C.H.E. de, Zeeuw, G. de

1972/73

Bachrach, A.G.H., Bachr, P.R., Bouissac, P.A., Clark, P.A., Coats, A.W., Daalder, H., Eijk, C.J. van, Eisenstadt, S.N., Engelberts, R.C., Fagot, R.F., Feldbrugge, F.J.M., Fetscher, I., Fremantle, K.D.H., Gilbert, C.E., Gordenker, L., Hofstee, W.K.B., Hutte, H.A., Irwin, G.A., Kapteyn, P.J.G., Kruijt, C.S., Lammers, C.J., Maddock, K.J., Makagiansar, M., Rabbie, J.M., Resink, G.J., Rommetveit, R., Schöffer, I., Schrage, E.J.H., Seashore, S.E., Stern, F., Stupperich, R., Veenstra, F., Vermeer, W., Witstein, S.F., Eldersveld, S.J., Miller, W.E., Verba, S.

1973/74

Arkel, D. van, Bash, K.W., Becker, H.A., Benthem van den Bergh, G. van, Bertels, C., Bours, A., Brasz, H.A., Broadhurst, P.L., Carter, A.C., Duke, R.D., Firbas, J., Frese, H.H., Gadourek, I., Gawthrop, L.C., Gimbutas, M., Gomperts, H.A., Haandrikman, A.G.J.J., Heekeren, H.R. van, Iser, W., Janssen, L.H., Kamstra, J.H., Meijer, H., Mokken, R.J., Oppenheim, F., Pleket, H.W., Riele, G.J.M.J. te, Sebeok, Th.A., Snellen, I. Th.M., Soejono, R.P., Steinmetz, H., Stinchcombe, A.L., Taylor, M.J., Thung, P.J., Waterbolk, E.H., Werblowsky, R.J.Z.

1974/75

Aronoff, M.J., Berry, J.W., Bianchi, H., Boer, W. Den, Bronkhorst, A.J., Bruijn, J.R., Buve, R.Th.J., Cryns, A.G., Granick, D., Heyt, F.D., Hoogerwerf, A., Hörmann, H., Huyse, L., Jaspars, J.M.F., Kieft, C. van de, Langefors, B., Levontin, A.V., Lijphart, A., Matthes, J., Nijenhuis, W., Pelc, J., Sauveplanne, J.G., Smidt, J.Th. de, Speckmann, J.D., Strien, P.J. van, Verrijn Stuart, A.A., Waardenburg, J.D.J., Wahlke, J., Zoetmulder, P.J., MacKnight, C.C.

1975/76

Beekes, R.S.P., Bertholet, C.J.L., Blau, P.M., Bloembergen, A.R., Boekestijn, C., Cohn, N., Crombag, H.E.M., Daudt, H., Devlin, K.M., Dew, E.M., Ebeling, C.L., Flores d'Arcais, G.B., Haveman, R., Heertje, A., Holleman, J.F., Hondius, E.H., Jolles, H.M., Klir, G.J., Koss, S.E., Lafferty, W.M., Michon, J.A., Nierop, M.S.G.K. van, Nolte, E., Rae, D., Roorda, D.J., Sarason, I.G., Schultink, H., Tack, W.H., Toda, M., Trouwborst, A.A., Vanek J., Verschoor, J.A., Vossen, J.M.H., Vries, J. de, Wentholt, R., Wery, P.L., Wippler, R., Eldersveld, S.J., Miles, D.J., Shils, E.

1976/77

Boer, Th. de, Boogman, J.C., Brands, M.C., Bymes, R.F., Darnton, R., Edema, J.M.P., Furnée, E.J., Geerts, G., Giorgi, A.P., Goodman, G.K., Gupta, G.C., Gyandoh, S.O., Hermans, H.J.M., Kahn, R.L., Kapteyn, A., Keuls, E.C., Klerk, L.F.W.

de, Kolaja, J.Th., Lewin, P., Lulofs, J.G., Meijer, J.M., Melai, A.L., Molony, C.H., Mulder, G.E., Opp, K.D., Opschoor, J.B., Parreren, C.F. van, Pesonen, P. Podgórecki, A., Puchinger, G., Roe, R.A., Schadeberg, Th.C., Ultee, W.C., Veld, R.J. in 't, Cahen, M.D., Cushing, R.G., Dyen, I., Gerson, R., Williams, O., Wolinetz, S.B.

1977/78

Abma, F., Adelman, I., Ashford, D.E., Blois, L. De, Boogaard, N.H.J. van den, Breebaart, A.B., Brink, H. van den, Cammen, H. van der, Fokkema, D.W., Fox, J.J., García, E.C., Günter, R., Harris, A.R., Jonge, D. de, Kahan, J.P., Klinkers, L.E.M., Kuyper, P.J., Lakshmanan, T.R., Lindenberg, S.M., Matthews, P.H., Menert, E., Montias, J.M., Nauta, A.H., Prechtl, H.F.R., Price, R.S., Rapoport, A., Reinink, A.W., Roodbergen, J.A.F., Rusk, J.G., Tazelaar, F., Varga, S.A., Veen, R.J. van der, Waardenburg, J.G., Zeeuw, G. de, Zeisel, J.

1978/79

Anak Agung Gde Agung, I., Bowerman, M., Broekstra, G., Bruner, J.S., Bugter, S.E.W., Campbell, R.N., Dunk, H.W. van der, Eijlsink, A.H., Faber, S., Geert, P. van, Gelder, B.L.M.F. de, Gerlach, H., Grijns, C.D., Gruijter, D.N.M. de, Harari, E., Holthoon, F.L. van, Hoog, R. de, Hummell, H.J., Ierland, M.S. van, Ioanid, V., Kamp, L.J.Th. van der, Kessel, P.J. van, Lammers, J.G., Menert, E., Niel, R. van, Olson, D.R., Schegloff, E.A., Schubert, G., Schulte van Kessel, E.M.R., Somit, A., Swanborn, P.G., Vos, H. de, Wellman, B., Zoetmulder, P.J.

1979/80

Abdullah, T., Alinei, M.L., Allen, V.L., Bailey, C.J.N., Bethe, H.J., Cernea, M., Cahen, H.R., Detares, P.B., Eizennga, W., Feige, E.L., Frake, Ch.O., Fresco, M.F., Furth, D., Kirsner, R.S., Krippendorff, K., Matthijssen, M.A.J.M., Morlan, R.L., Neudecker, H., Pask, G., Polenske, K.R., Ramsay, R.W., Schuur, W.H. van, Spielberger, C.D., Thorne, C.G., Valen, H., Vlist, R. van der, Wassenberg, A.F.P., Whyte, J.H., Zwanenburg, W., Anak Agung Gde Agung, I., Bowerman, M., Bowerman, W.R., Gelder de, B.L.M.F., Krippendorff, S., Lammers, J.G., Parret, H.D.K., Schulte van Kessel, E.M.R., Teune, H., Whyte, Jean., Zoetmulder, P.J.

1980/81

Al, B.P.F., Berg, J.Th.J. van den, Bergh, H. van den, Bolle, K.W., Dessaur, C.I., Epstein, A.L., Ferwerda, R., Gerritsen, W.P., Geschiere, P.L., Gomulka, S., Hogendoorn, W., Jahoda, G., Jansen, A.J., Kedourie, E., Kesteren, A.H. van, Kooij, K.R. van, Linden, H. van der, Maatje, F.C., Meehan, E.J., Nickelsburg, G.W.E., Onderdelinden, J.W., Osolsobě, I., Ritzer, G., Safrai, S., Schreurs, B., Schvey, H.I., Sjöberg, L., Son, D.W.L. van, Soudijn, K.A., Starre, E. van der, Stone, M.E., Teulings, A.W.M., Tindemans, C., Turner, D.H., Vries, L. de, Zoest, A.J.A. van, Bechtel, G.C., Bruinsma, H.A., Cohen, H.F., Feige, E.L., Parret, H.D.K., Wassenberg, A.F.P., Zoetmulder, P.J.

1981/82

Abraham, W.O.G., Allard, R.R., Bruijn, J.T.P. de, Rain, G.P. de, Claessen, H.J.M., Dalim, B., Duncan, G.C., Eisler, H., Fernhout, R., Fillenbaum, S., Glickman, N.J., Goldberg, L.R., Herwaarden, J. van, Hoof, J.J. van, Janis, I.L., Jong, F. de, Kastelein, J., Kersten, A.E., Kettler, D., Lammers, C.J., Ma'oz, M., McGee, R.T., Minogue, K.R., Noorduy, J., Postel-Coster, E., Priemus, H., Sartono, K., Serkenburg, P.G.J. van, Szirmai, A., Tak, J.G. van der, Timmerman, L., Yoran, A., Zinnes, J., Bruinsma, H.A.

1982/83

Arends, J.F.M., Balzer, W., Breman, J.C., Carpenter, P.A., Doerbecker, C.L., Durojaiye, M.O.A., Fishman, J.A., Flap, H.D., Grossman, P., Grossman, S.P., Gunsteren, H.R. van, Hamminga, L., Hickson, D.J., Hoek, L.H., Jarvella, R.J., Jong, H.M.E. de, Just, M.A., Klir, G.J., Knobelsdorf, W.N., Kotelawele, D.A., Kuipers, T.A.F., Lane, R.E., Leupen, P.H.D., Messing, F.A.M., Mitzman, A.B., Muijzenberg, O.D. van den, Nusteling, H.P.H., Offe, C., Pearce, D.A., Prakash, O., Szombati, L., Thierry, H.K., Törnqvist, P.E., Vries, J. de, Woude, A.M. van der, Bruijn, J.R., Kastelein, J., Kirsner, R.S., Maddock, K.J., Postel-Coster, E., Schvey, H.I., Smedts, W.A.J., Vater, H., Zoetmulder, P.J.

1983/84

Beijk, J., Bijl, M. van der, Blaug, M., Bybee, J., Deregowski, J.B., Dijk, M.P. van, Drijkoningen, F.F.J., Dunning, A., Galjart, B.F., Goudsblom, J., Grosheide, F.W., Hemels, J.M.H.J., Hinderink, J., Józefowicz, A., König, E., Kooij, J.G., Kunene, D.P., Laeyendecker, L., Landau, J., Mackenzie, J.L., McNeill, D., Munnichs, J.M.A., Nersessian, N.J., Nicholson, M.B., Pennings, J.M., Praag, B.M.S. van, Prak, N.L., Russett, B.M., Schoffeleers, J.M., Schoorl, J.W., Schrage, E.J.H., Singer, J.D., Soeteman, A., Stassen, L.M.H., Sterkenburg, J.J., Strelau, J., Vall, M. van de, Voeltz, E., Wesseling, H.L., Ziegler, R., Zielonka, J., Zuber, R., Jackson, M.W.

1984/85

Berkvens-Stevelinck, C., Blackburn, R.M., Bosch, F.A.J. van den, Bourgoignie, T., Day, R.H., Dijck, J.J.J. van, Dis, H. van, Engeldorp Gastelaars, P. van, Goedegebuure, J.L., Heerden, J.H. van, Heller, F.A., Hesseling, P.G.M., Hoekstra, T.A., Janowski, A.A., Jong, M.B. de, Kaa, D.J. van de, König, E., Labrie, A., Lerner, M.J., Menze, C.J., Mokrzycki, E., Pettigrew, T.F., Poortinga, Y.H., Ritzen, J.M.M., Rupke, N.A., Scherer, K.R., Schoonheim, P.L., Schutte, G.J., Thompson, S.A., Todd, R.K., Turner, J.H., Vanderjagt, A.J., Verhoeff, J.P., Weymann, A., Wezel, J.A.M. van, Wolfe, B.I., Adj, U.S., Anak Agung Gde Agung, I., Balderston, F.E., Cohen, R., Dunning, A., Galjart, B.F., Haveman, R.H., Maryanski, A., Praag, B.M.S. van, Stone, M.E., Voorhoeve, C.L.

1985/86

Apter, M.J., Baekers, S.F., Benton, G., Berkvens-Stevelinck, C., Bermond, B., Boer, D.E.H. de, Boheemen-Saaf, C. van, Bos, A.P., Breuer, F.J.L.I., Danes, F., Dascal, M., Dilly, H., Draak, J. den, Dussen, W.J. van der, Engelkamp, J., Heestermans, J.L.A., Hijma, J., Jansen, G.H., Jaraus, K.H., Joerges, Ch., Klauw, C.F. van der, Lampman, R.J., Lindblad, J.Th., Lüth, Chr., Mante-Meijer, E.A., Nijboer, J.F., Nijhof, W.J., Ploeg, H.M. van der, Riley, J.C., Ringer, F.K., Sarason, I.G., Schwarzer, R., Smith, N.S.H., Spielberger, C.D., Teichler, U., Tennekkes, J., Vin, J.P.A. van der, Weyzen,

W.P., Barr, R.G., Bruijn, J.R., Defares, P.B., Dijck, J.J.J. van, Dis, H. van, Meehan, E.J., Niel, R. van, Sarason, B.R., Wolterstorff, N.P.

1986/87

Arn, M., Becker, J., Blankenburg, E., Boekholt, P.T.F., Böhm, W., Bosmans, J.L.J., Culianu, I.P., Falkenburg, R.L., Faries, M., Gerbino, W., Groenendijk, C.A., Hoffmann-Nowotny, H.J., James, E., Janssens-Knorsch, U., Judson, J.R., Kagan, R.A., Kalverboer, A.F., Kippenberg, H.G., Klijn, A., Koppen, P.J. van, Lademacher, H., Lange, K.P., Lauwenberg, E.L., Oostrom, F.P. van, Parsons, C.D., Pater, C. de, Paperzak, A.T., Aser, R., Riess Jones, M., Ringdom, S.I.A., Runge, I., Schmidt, S. J., Seidl, H.E.M., Soetenhorst-de Savomin, Loman, J., Suip, R.E.V., Wes, M.A., Weymann, A., Anak Agung Gde Agung, I., Bajpai, K.S., Kaufmann, J., Boer, D.E.H. de, Deven, F.R.C., Jansen-Sieben, R., Lambert, W.E., Mrázek, R., Stone, M.E.

1987/88

Appleyard, R., Arn, M., Balota, D.A., Blok, A., Bogucka, M., Dantzig, A. van, Dongen, A.J.N. van, Driessen, H.G.G.M., Dunning, A., Filius, L.S., Flores d'Arcais, G.B., Garrod, S.C., Handelsman, D., Hartogh, G.A. den, Heesterman, J.C., Huussen, A.H., James, A.R., Jansen-Sieben, R., Kmenta, J., Koentjaringrat, R., Krabbe, E.C.M., Laan, P.W.A.T van der, Leij, D.A.V. van der, Mach, Z., Mennell, S.J., Modelski, G., Mout, M.E.H.N., Neubauer, J., Neumann, O., Noordegraaf, J., Oosthout, H.F.R.M., Parry, J.P., Perfetti, C.A., Pit' ha, P., Rayner, K., Rispens, J., Sato, K., Schipper, K.W., Shamgar-Handelman, L., Sluijter, E.J., Staal, J.F., Vet, J.J.V. de, Vet, J.P., Walton, D.N., Wegge, L.L., Wiegersma, S., Kaufmann, J., MacFarland, P., Russe, M.W.

1988/89

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2010/11

Anderson, J.H., Augusteijn, J., Badenoch, A.W., Baeva, V.G., Bakker, P.J.J.M., Bouwman, B., Brunner, J.J., Creese, H.M., Daal, V.H.P. van, Fickers, A., Foets, M., Fritschy, J.M.F., Gieskes, M., Gill, R.D., Glenn, H.P., Graaf, B. A. de, Griset, P., Hackett, J., Hekman, S., Herik, H.J. van den, Högselius, P., Holierhoek, J., Hoorn, J.F., Horthy, J.F., Jajesniak-Quast, D., Johannes, G.J., Kaijser, A., Kaiser, K.W., Kohlrausch, M., Leemans, I.B., Lipinska, A., Middell, M., Oldenziel, P.R., Pekelder, J., Scarpellini, E., Schiller, N.O., Schlink, P.B., Schmid, A.P., Schot, J.W., Sliedregt, P.E. van, Stejskal, J., Stroomer, H.J., Swan, C., Szubka, T., Tollebeek, J.L., Touwen, L.J., Trischler, H., Verschaffel, T.R.G., Weinbauer, K., Werdmölder, H.A.H., Wieringa, T.D.

2011/12

Abazovic, D., Aboh, E.O., Adams, T., Arntz, A.R., Bähre, E., Baragwanath, D., Berkel, T.A. van, Besselink, L.F.M., Blok, J.H., Bos, J.W., Bovens, M.A.P., Cohen, M.I., Connolly, J., Corsetti, G., Gardiner, S.M., Gijn, D.E., Glasius, M.E., Hoff, J., Jesse, K.D., Klamer, P.A., Koinova, M., König, E., Koppe, E.V., Kraikovski, A.V., Larsen, R.I., Lechevreil, N.,

Mares, M.L., Noë, P.R., Ojebode, A., Onuoha, A.C., Os, D.P., Pasi, M., Peels, S., Peeters, M.M., Perica, V., Pizarro, J., Potegal, M., Rooryck, J.E.C.V., Rosen, R.M., Ross, J., Santen, M.J., Schmidtke, S., Schoots, S., Sluiter, P.I., Spaans, J.W., Strong, S.I., Taiwo, E.A., Tsimpli, I.M., Veen, P.M. van der, Velikonja, M., Wasiak, P., Weerman, F.P., Weijts, Chr., Wekker, G.D., Williams, K.D., Zarkov, D.

2012/13

Adam, S.E., Barbiers, S., Barendregt, H.P., Behrens, P., Ben-Ur, A., Berrebi, S.Y., Bod, R.L.W.M., Boomgaarden, H.G., Cook, H.J., Demszky, G., Dietze, C., Erdmann, R.G., Fono, L.A., Franklin, M.N., Games, A.F., Gelderblom, O., Golüke, G.L.L.P., Hammergren, L.A., Heijer, H.J. den, Hoeven, D.R., Jasper, J.M.J., Jones, S.W., Jonker, J.P.B., Jordan, C., Joris, G.E.A.M., Klooster, W.W., Kreike, E.H.P.M., Kritzing, S., Laarse, P.R. van de, Maaten, J.P., Maier, M., Maier, J., Markowski, R., Mazzucchelli, F., Mojahedi, M., Molendijk, A.L., Monteiro, M.E., Pelt, R.J. van, Reijnen, C.W.C., Reidams, L., Röttger, K.E., Schmidt, B., Smits, I.B., Stark, D., Till, K.E., Trémon, A.C., Verbeeck, G.J.M., Verdes, C.O., Verstraete, G.E.E., Vreese C.H. de, Wakeman, R., Werfhorst, H.G. van der, Wolde, E.J. van, Zabka, M.

2013/14

Adelaar, S.K., Auer, P., Backus, A.M., Berger, V., Bernault, F., Bird, G., Borges, M., Boukhanovsky, A., Cornips, L.M.E.A., Crone, E.A.M., De Amicis, S., Dignum, F.P.M., Dogruöz, A.S., Duindam, J.F.J., Elzinga, B.M., Fair, L.J., Gerritsen, A.T., Golosetti, R., Haan, N. de, Hofstede, G.J., Holyst, J.A., Honing, H., Jaspers, J., Johnstone, B.C., Kampis, G., Kim, M.S., Koenen, L., Konijn-Hoorn, E.A., Maas, H.B.J.B., Möring, M., Motingea Mangulu, A., Mous, M.P.G., Mutongi, K., Oostendorp, M. van, Petrovic, T. Prada, R., Proto, T., Reiken, F., Rice, C., Rietjens, J.A.C., Rivera Andía, J.J., Rooij, V.A. de, Schavemaker, M., Scholz, N., Seyed-Gohrab, A., Sijpesteijn, P.M., Sloot, P.M.A., Smith, C.E., Srinivasan, S., Stengs, I., Tudorie, I.A., Woolard, K.A.

2014/15

Abbink, J., Amico, S.R., Barbosa, M., Beer, S.T.M. de, Bosman, L., Coan, J., Ellemers, N., Frischer, B.D., Gandolfo, L., Green, M., Haegens, K., Holt-Lunstad, J., Hommes, C., Hosli, M.O., IJzerman, H., Keilbach, J.I., Kempers, B., Kraidy, M.M., Kügle, K., Lee, S.W.S., Loontjens, J., Lotysz, S., Lulof, P.S., Mahjoub, J., Moritz, M., Nieuwebeerta, P., Oostdijk, D.M., Plechanovová, B., Poot, H.J., Pruyt, E., Reis, H.T., Rescigno, C., Saloul, I., Schure, P.H., Stanczyk, E., Stronks, E., Thaisen, J.S.R., Verdun, A., Verhoogt, A.F.W., Wiener, A., Zarzycka, M., Zognong, D.

2015/16

Abad, H., Akkerman, N.N.W., Alipour, M., Andrews, F.E., Buning, M., Burg, S. van der, Dalen, H.P. van, De Munck, B., Dijk, M.A. van, Dijn A.M.R. de, Dreu, C.K.W. de, Dubhashi, P., Fögen, T., Fogteloo, M., Germond, C.S., Hagemann, K., Hammarström, H., Handoko-de Man, F., Hendriks, A., Henkens, K.C.J.I.M., Hyde, M., Jäger, G., Jonckheere, K.J.A., Kavousi, M., Klamer, M.A.F., Kolfin, E.P., Kratochvil, F., Lange, C.R., Letschert, R.M., Maede, A., Malaia, E., Margocsy, D., Moran, S.J., Morina, N., Osseweijer, P., Pickel, R.G., Pollet, T.V., Rashkova-Gerbrands, E., Romano, A., Rosseel, J., Schramm, K., Solinge, H. van, Taylor, P., Tworek, M., Valeriani, S., Van Bruaene, A.L., Waal, H. van der, Wang, M., Wijffes, H.B.M., Zacher, H.

2016/17

Bass, M.A., Berg, B.R.M. van den, Bockting, C.L.H., Brandt, B., Caliendo, G., Class, M., Coenders, M.T.A., Cramer, A.O.J., Doorn, N.A.J.M. van, Durston, S., Dutilh, N.C., Eeckhout, B.P.S., Eijnatten, J. van, Ferente, S., Fransen, L.W., Gervain, J., Geurts, H.M., Goldgar, A., Grootenboer, A., Halem, D., Hanson, K., Hollon, S.D., Janse, M., Jedan, C., Kirschner, P.A., Koops, B.J., Koppensteiner, M., Korneev, O., Latif, N., Levelt, C.C., Mügge, L., Mulsow, M., Nijboer, F., Onnekink, D.M.L., Petkov, C.I., Rublack, U., Shirhan, U., Siegle, G., Spinhoven, P., Stodulka, T.J., Tippins, S., Vanhaesebrouck, K., Velthuis, O.J.M., Verelst, K., Walma, M.J.H. van der, Zuidema, W.H.

2017/18

Abbenhuis, M.M., Alhassan, A., Badea, A., Bauman, J.P., Berger, E., Blauw, S.L., Bobrovnikov, V., Boender, W., Chopra, P., Coenen, S.S., Dürr-Fischer, R., Farmanfarmaian, B.R., Fierke, K.M., Futak-Campbell, R.B., Hagenaars, M., Hoogerwerf, A., Hoyer, M.J., Iordanou, I., Jongstra, A., Kamphuis, C.B.M., Leerssen, J.T., Nederveen, M.E.J.V., Ostrer, H., Pagan, C.C., Pieper, R., Prowse, T., Raben, R., Ru, M., Rudiš, J., Ruppert, E.S., Rutgers, L.V., Slingenbergh, L.C.H., Söderström, J., Spierdijk, L., Stek, T.D., Stolow, J., Swennen, F., Tamietto, M., Trépanier, N., Trommel, W.A., Weissing, F.J., Woerkmom, M. van, Zijlmans, G.J.M.

2018/19

Almadhoun, G., Asselin, P., Ayoub, S., Beckert, S., Bennett, H., Bosma, U.T., Brocades, Z.T., Brown, S., Brown-Grant, R., Colvin, C.L., Derbesh, M., Donato, A., Fisun, O., Gelder, M. van, Gelens, H.A.M.A., Gómez López, A.M., Helmers, H.J., Hofman, C.L., Hooren, F.J. van, Jacobs, B., Jones, P.G., Kraemer, F., Kuntz, F.S., Leustean, L., McAllister, L.B., McGarry, A., Rudy, K.M., Schippers, J.J., Schneider, M., Schulz, V., Shen, H.M., Smelik, A., Someren, E.J.W. van, Swanson, S., Tam, K., Thomas, M., Venema, S.E., Vince, N., Weerdt, H.J. de, Wigman, H.J.T., Witte, M. de, Zwan, N.A.J. van der

2019/20

Barðdal, J.I., Bayraktar, N., Bertossi, C., Boute, B.V.E., Bruin, L.C. de, Cantillon, B., Caswell, H., Corrias, L., Dahl, H.M., Dietz, F.M., Dijk, W. van, Dijksterhuis, F.J., Dreyfus, J.M., Elk, M. van, Ervas, F., Flohr, M., Geerdink, N., Geurts, J.J., Glas, R., Glas, G., Hendriksen, M.M.A., Hoijtink, H., Kaika, M., Kalis, A., Kistner, U., Klausen, S.M., Kleinhans, M.G., Kluwer, E.S., Koning, A. de, Krause, J., Krause, K., Kruk, M., Künkler, M., Langfeld, G.M., Lehmann, A.S., Lehmbrock, V.S., Lok, M., Macfarlane, K., Mark, J.A., Mofidi, S., Ndjio, B., Peeters, H., Plumley, Y.M., Ramakers, B.A.M., Rouhana, N.N., Rutten, E., Spiller, H.J., Steffens, J., Thakur, V.S., Tielbeke, J.G., Tigris, S.L., Tulviste, T., Turashvili, D.S., Veldhorst, N.H.H., Vliet, L. van, Wiczorek, K.M., Wilthagen, T.A.C.J.M., Wynsberghe, A. van, Yardımcı-Geyikçi, S.

2020/21

Agbedo, C.U., Ahmadov, A.K.O., Beckers, S., Becking, L.E., Berg, M.A. van den, Besser, S., Biezen, I.C. van, Bisailon, L.E., Bjarnegård, E.K., Blonk, R.W., Braun, L.F., Ciotti, M., De Keere, K., Downing, L.J., Dugard, J.C., Durán, J.M., Eleveld, A., Garcia, P., Haas, H. de, Handmaker, J.D., House, J.R., Jongsma, K.R., Kasinitz, P., Keblusek, M., Kivimäki,

V., Kuhn, T., Lavéant, K., Leurs, K.H.A., Makumbi, J.N., Malesevic, S., Manickam, S.K., Misiedjan, D.J.E., Okome, O.E., Pannese, A., Primiero, G., Rooij, I. van, Rovere, M., Sand, M., Sanders, S., Schatz, A.U., Sessarego, S., Sharma, A., Valenta, M.G., Verhoeven, I., Verloo, N., Vlaming, F. de, Vromen, J.J., Wewerinke-Singh, M.J., Willmetts, S., Yacavone, D.W., Yang, M.

2021/22

Arche, M., Bacigalupo, A.M., Bader, J., Berger, L., Binaiša, N., Blom, I., Boccagni, P., Boletsi, M., Celik Rappas, I.A., Coffeng, L., de Carvalho Dias de Andrade, I., de Lange, S., de Vries, K., de Waal, T., Diabate, A., Dilli, S., Domeneck, R., Dursteler, E., Hamel, M., Kampen, T., Klooster, J., Knight, P., Larik, J., Lippert, F., Lobo-Guerrero, L., Martínez-Ariño, J., Mehan, A., Munniksma, A., Nyanzi, S., Pasveer, B., Perovic, A., Quer, J., Rao, R., Rath, J., Rios, A., Schilling, B., Schmidli, W., Schulz, P., Treur, J., van der Bij, F., van Hout, A., van Steensel, A., Verburgt, L., Wagoner, B., Wieringa, T., Yaghi, G., Zigarovich, J.

NIAS COMMUNITY

EXCLUSIVE AND INCLUSIVE



While the type of research that has been studied at NIAS has shifted and expanded over its fifty years, so too has its fellows – the group of individuals who apply, are accepted, and come to partake in its offerings has broadened and changed since the 1970s.

The very first cohort included thirty-two men and one woman and the overwhelming majority were Dutch or were closely linked to the Dutch universities’ social and professional network. The fellows that followed in the early years of the institute fit the same mold. Fast forward fifty years to the remarks from NIAS’ opening of the academic year in 2020, where Director Jan Willem Duyvendak discussed a key ambition of the Institute which is being an intellectual haven for all:

Some of you might have frowned while reading the title of this event [Being an Intellectual Haven for All]: “Seriously, the most exclusive academic institution of the Netherlands has the ambition to be inclusive?” My answer to those sceptics is a clear yes, we do! Particularly institutions that are difficult to get in, so exclusive, should make all efforts to select on the basis of inclusive criteria – not on the

Particularly exclusive institutions should make all efforts to select on the basis of inclusive criteria.

First-semester fellows in the NIAS garden, September 2019





basis of established categories, powerful networks, dominant genders or hegemonic methodological approaches.

Indeed, there has been significant change over NIAS' fifty years, from its first cohort to its recent ambitions of inclusivity, as it has expanded who can be included in its year-books.

A focus on diversity in some form was present during the initial years of the Institute. NIAS' initial conception of diversity had two components. First, the Selection Committee hoped to ensure that there was a diversity of perspective and thought, and so spent ample time crafting cohorts of fellows who researched similar topical fields from unique academic backgrounds and with distinct epistemological approaches.

Second, from the beginning, the Institute sought to include foreign academics. It is worth noting that "international" was almost exclusively limited to Europe and the US. The justification for including non-Dutch fellows was quite particular, and for a time exclusively understood through the lens of The Netherlands and Dutch academics' experience. Annual reports stated "the foreign researchers working at the Institute have a stimulating influence on the work of their Dutch colleagues," that their presence was "of vital importance to the functioning of the Institute, as it is due to them that the atmosphere of academic internationalism can be created which is of such benefit to the Dutch researchers at the Institute," and "that the presence of academics from other countries is of considerable importance at NIAS, since such international communication is

seen as vital in preventing the kind of provincialism which a small country is heir to.”

At its founding, NIAS invited scholars to come to NIAS rather than accepting formal applications. Connections were forged and invitations given through existing networks. While nearly half the fellows in 1971 were from abroad, many of them were part of a close-knit community working on projects connected to Dutch universities. It is evident that from the outset the who – Dutch and international fellows belonging to an existing network – and why – in the interest of furthering of Dutch academic landscape – of NIAS’ diversity aims reflected how diversity was understood at that time.

In large part, this community reflected the academic landscape of the time in Europe, which was dominated by white men who existed within overlapping social and academic spheres. And NIAS had a preference for established academics. This was reflected in the selection procedure for fellows, which initially did not include a research project, and instead was based on the career and track record of success of the scholar.

In the ‘80s, NIAS began asking for applications, meaning scholars had to apply rather than be invited. The Institute also stopped systematically asking former fellows to nominate scholars for a fellowship since the result had been that fellows came primarily from well-known networks. These changes, opened up the group of potential fellows, though it was still largely Dutch scholars who agreed to review and give advice on the applications.

Initially, US scholars were most highly represented outside of those from continental Europe. This was due in large part to the US sabbatical system, which enabled American fellows to leave their permanent position with an assured post upon return. The rest of the world largely lacked a sabbatical system in the '70s and '80s, and the potential loss of a permanent position was a large impediment to geographically diverse scholars coming to NIAS. Further, lost income was a barrier, in response to which NIAS created a stipend system for new fellows. Stipends and the spread of the sabbatical system in the '90s enabled the geographic diversity of NIAS fellows to increase. Further, the TRIS program, which invited scholars from the recently opened Soviet Bloc in the '90s; a special program established with scholars in Africa; and the move to Amsterdam in 2016 mark moments of expansion in terms of the geographic scope of NIAS' fellow cohort.

However, even today NIAS is well aware that fellow cohorts skew towards scholars who are trained in and affiliated with Western universities. Because of global interconnectivity, scholars who are originally from non-Western countries may still come through a Western academic pipeline. Individuals who have never studied, worked, or been trained in Western academia have a hard time accessing a NIAS fellowship.

Historically, this has also related to how the selection procedure had been set up, and throughout the years NIAS has taken steps to amend the system. For its first thirty years, NIAS struggled to have women represented, usually hosting just a handful of women in relation to thirty or more men each year.

This fact was by no means ignored or un-dissected. Indeed, the majority of annual reports around the time touch upon the poor representation of women. In 1998, then-Director Henk Wesseling, writes,

Regretfully, but not shamefully, we have to admit that the representation of female fellows...is even smaller than last year. I wrote regretfully because we would like to see a different picture but I also added not shamefully because a thorough longitudinal quantitative and in depth analysis of the applications has demonstrated that there is no discrimination at all. On the contrary, there is some evidence that percentage wise, NIAS accepted more female applicants than male ones.

Years later, a fellow wrote,

This year there are only four female fellows at NIAS, as opposed to thirty-two men. This is clearly far below standards in the eyes of the believers in equality, crusaders for emancipation or feminists. They are absolutely right. Besides, they have the NIAS directorate's sincere backing. Every new year the rector and executive director strive for an equal division of fellowships between the sexes. They do not succeed.

For a while, it was customary at the Institute that a year group give a farewell present to NIAS as they left, and in 1997 the

fellow cohort would give an unusual one. Led by Els Kloek, a cultural historian and one of the few females in the group, the cohort found a Dutch artist who made traditional Dutch wooden shoes. But the one they selected was particular – it had been carved into a pointy high heel and painted in tiger print. The message was clear – NIAS needed more female representation.

In their attempts over the years, the Institute thought about having a special fellowship just for female scholars, they made efforts to recruit women directly, and reflected on their selection procedures to try and correct the imbalance. A former staff member recalls that what finally brought relative gender balance to NIAS was sudden and external. In the early 2000s there was a rapid increase in the number of applications from female scholars, though the Institute did not change its policies or procedures. And indeed, this could have been reflective of a trend: in the early 2000s women newly made up roughly half of the PhDs awarded in the Humanities and Social Sciences in the US, a trend that was similar throughout the Western world. As the gender representation in the academic world at-large became more balanced, so too could NIAS. In fact, not only was the increase in women in the humanities and social sciences reflected at NIAS, but NIAS has far surpassed the gender breakdown of professors reflected in Dutch academia, where today only 24% of all professors are women.

But that is not to say that gender power dynamics in academia were suddenly neutralised. Acknowledging this, since the 2000s, NIAS has held meetings and discussions about the

NIAS struggled to have women represented.

A gift from women scholars in 1997; Dutch Catwalk by Bas van Buuren





**At NIAS the meaning of
diversity has grown and
changed.**

possibilities and opportunities for women, particularly young women, to further their academic careers in environments that are sometimes still very male-dominated. One outcome is the Dutch L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women-in-Science Fellowship, which is hosted by NIAS since 2013. The prestigious international program is a collaboration between UNESCO and L'Oréal, and aims to boost scientific careers of women, offering them a residential fellowship which includes a semester at NIAS.

As gender inclusivity has expanded over its fifty years, so too has the geographic makeup of NIAS' fellows. Over the years at NIAS the meaning of diversity has grown and changed. While early on staff were very aware of the question of gender, now western dominance is of more concern. A recent self-investigation into success-rates amongst applicants from non-Western regions revealed that chances for talented scholars from underrepresented regions are still lower than for those trained at and affiliated to Western universities.

Therefore, NIAS recently started, firstly, to broaden its reviewers database by actively reaching out to established scholars in underrepresented regions. This way, the experts who score and assess the applications, are representative of the international academic landscape. Secondly, in 2019 NIAS created the Academic Advisory Board (AAB) whose members are based and academically trained in different regions of the world. They have been given the task to select a group of highly talented fellows, thereby taking into account different educational backgrounds, varieties in career paths and English language barriers.

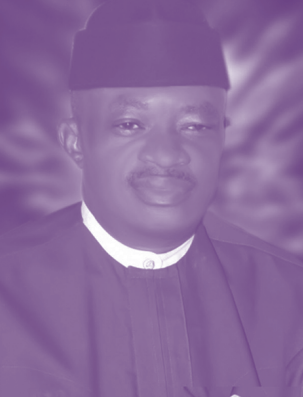
Thirdly, the application criteria have been adjusted to the extent that the assessment of the research proposal has become more important than an ‘excellent’ evaluation of the applicant’s academic career. In order to select a more diverse fellows cohort, means rethinking Western concepts of ‘excellence’ and ‘innovation’. Regular reflection and examination of what selection criteria mean and how they exclude some and include others have therefore become part and parcel of the NIAS selection procedures.

Being aware of the tension embedded in the aim to be “an intellectual haven for all” when places at NIAS are actually quite limited, Jan Willem Duyvendak explains:

What we mean by haven for all is equal chances of access, based on fair and relevant criteria, that are always up for discussion since we might be blind for our own biases as well. But this idea of a “haven for all” is not just about individual fairness – it is also about the collective context in which good arts and science flourishes. We expect that individuals from various backgrounds will contribute to better collective scholarship. We are deeply convinced that the progress of our knowledge depends on the insights of the multiplicity of perspectives, approaches and methodologies.

Regular reflection and examination of what selection criteria mean have become part of the NIAS selection procedure.

FELLOWS 2020/21



Ciotti, M.,
Social anthropology

Becking, L.,
Biology

Bjarnegård, E.,
Political Science

Agbedo, C.,
Linguistics

Dugard, J.,
Law

Besser, S.,
Language
and Literary
Studies

Braun, L.,
African History

Downing, L.,
African linguistics

Damen, M.,
Medieval history

Biezen, I. van,
Sociology

Blonk, R.,
Labour Economics

Vlaming, F. de,
International
Criminal Law

Bisailon, L.,
Sociology

Berg, M. van den,
Sociology,
Urban Studies
Gender Studies

Beckers, S.,
Computer Science,
Philosophy

Ahmadov, A.,
Political Science

Handmaker, J.,
Law and Sociology

Kublusek, M.,
Art history

Kuhn, T.,
Political Science

Malešević, S.,
Sociology

Haas, H. de,
Social and Behavioural
Sciences

Kasinitz, P.,
Sociology

Kivimäki, V.,
History

Makumbi, J.,
Literature

Eleveld, A.,
Social law

Jongsma, K.,
Ethics

Manickam, S.K.,
History, Culture
and Communication

Leurs, K.,
Media Studies

Durán, J. M.,
Philosophy

House, J.,
History, French

De Keere, K.,
Cultural sociology

Lavéant, K.,
Literary History





Pannese, A.,
Art History,
Neuroscience

Sanders, S.,
Writer

Rovère, M.,
Philosophy

Truijens, A.,
Writer

Santillán, O.,
Artist

Sharma, A.,
History

Okome, O.,
African Literature
and Cinema

Slegers, S.,
Journalist

Schaepdrijver, S.,
History

Schatz, A.,
Jewish Studies

Sessarego, S.,
Linguistics

Roos, van, I.,
Cognitive Sciences

Misiedjan, D.,
Law

Primiero, G.,
Logic

Sand, M.,
Philosophy
of Technology

Mofidi, S.,
Political Science

Verhoeven, I.,
Social and Behavioural
Sciences

Vromen, J.,
Philosophy
of Economics

Willmetts, S.,
Intelligence Studies,
History,
Cultural Studies

Yang, M.,
Sociology

Valenta, M.,
Social Science

Verloo, N.,
Urban Studies

Wewerinke-Singh, M.,
Law and Anthropology

Yacavone, D.,
Film Studies



MAPPING 'BELONGING' AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY FIELD OF STUDY



Following upon these new insights and changing attitudes towards diversity and the interplay between exclusion and inclusion, also at work in academic institutions, NIAS organised its first conference on Studies of Belonging in June 2021.

Being the first in a series of bi-annual conferences, it aimed to come to a better and broader understanding of the notion of ‘belonging’. By bringing artists and scientists from a wide array of disciplines and from many places in the world together around this single topic, the conference lay the foundation of a robust and accessible body of interdisciplinary knowledge on how (non-)belonging works in past, present and future societies.

During the first conference, the notion of academic freedom was also discussed, in regards to how, when and by whom scholarly voices and research are seen as legitimate or not. This turned out to be an important issue which cut across many of the discussions. With many individuals working in academic and artistic institutions around the globe being under attack for a wide variety of reasons – ranging from scholars and artists being threatened for their political standpoints, their race, gender, sex or nationality, to being accused of spying for the

government or, in reverse, an activist who tries to undermine the state – this leads to the question what does belonging to academia and arts mean, and, importantly, who is excluded and who is not?

NIAS sees it as part of its core mission to establish and foster a truly inclusive intellectual haven, where underrepresented voices, counter visions are respected and untrodden paths are further explored.



**LOOKING BACK
MOVING FORWARD**

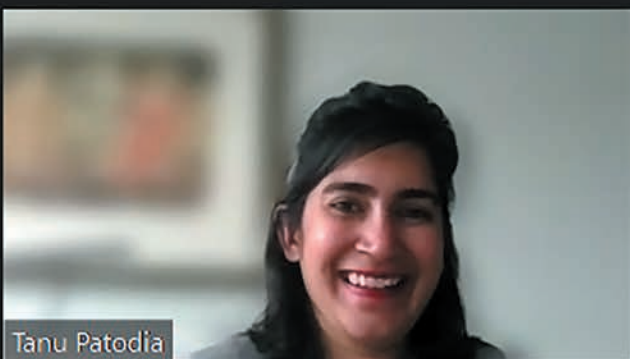


By revisiting its past, NIAS has been setting the stage for the next fifty years, building upon the powerful mission and incredible work of its founding fathers, Flexner and Uhlenbeck. Without the great efforts of all the NIAS directors, heads of academic affairs and staff-members during the last five decades, the Institute wouldn't have been the renowned and indispensable place for advanced study as it is today.

During the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world in 2020 and the subsequent lockdown, NIAS struggled to keep the intellectual exchange and interactions between fellows vibrant and inspiring. Thanks to the unfailing efforts of staff members and fellows during the recurring periods of lockdown, NIAS was able to maintain some of the key aspects of a NIAS fellowship and create a remote, but tightly-knit NIAS community after all. However, we, at NIAS are now convinced more than ever, that the physical presence of fellows at NIAS is key to the experience of collaborative learning.

With an increasing body of alumni every year, many of them united via the NIAS Fellows Association NFA, NIAS will continue to build a strong network of researchers who foster slow

and curiosity-driven arts and science. NIAS will continue to follow the road it has taken since 1971, learning from the past, and strengthen, broaden and deepen its international and interdisciplinary intellectual haven where scholars, artists, writers and journalists can thrive.



**An international
and interdisciplinary
intellectual haven where
scholars, artists, writers
and journalists can
thrive.**



The readings in this chapter were given during the Opening of the Academic Year and the celebration of NIAS 50th Anniversary, on 8 September, 2021



ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

JAN WILLEM DUYVENDAK



Complementary Sides of Academic Freedom

By Prof. Jan Willem Duyvendak,
NIAS Director and Distinguished Research Professor
of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam.

Dear colleagues and guests, from near and far, a very warm welcome to this Opening of the Academic Year, where we celebrate fifty years of academic freedom.

What is the meaning of academic freedom today? To answer this question, it might be helpful to re-introduce the distinction made by philosopher Isaiah Berlin between ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ freedom. Simply put, the distinction between ‘freedom from’ and the ‘freedom to’. If we apply Berlin’s concepts in this way, it looks as if in the past decades the emphasis was mostly put on ‘the freedom from’ – in order to protect academic freedom. Freedom from interferences in academia by politicians, by the market, or by social media users. They all have been criticized, and rightly so, for being intrusive, as imposing their logic on academia and thereby seeking specific outcomes, which are a threat to academic freedom.

There are many good reasons to value mobilisations which protect academia’s autonomy, to keep it ‘free from’. As we will hear this afternoon, academic freedom – like artistic freedom – is under threat in many countries around the world.

**Scholars are targeted
and often physically
threatened.**

These threats come mostly from politicians and state bureaucracies but more recently from social media as well. Scholars are targeted and often physically threatened. We have to be free from those threats.

In this idea of academic freedom-as-free-from, spatial metaphors often dominate: we have to keep distance from other spheres, such as the political or the economic realm. In many countries, this ideal of a separate sphere materialised in campuses, far from the hustle and bustle of non-academic life.

Institutes for Advanced Study were often even more isolated, the most situated at a distance from the world. When we read the history of the Institutes for Advanced Study, we come across many terms that describe these institutes as secluded places, as ideal places not affected by the outside world: ‘a scholarly haven’, ‘a paradise’, in sum, as places of non-interference.

When we take a look at NIAS, we see that for much of its history, fellows lived and worked together in a villa in Wassenaar. NIAS, until 2016, was located in an incredibly isolated location – it was cut off from the rest of the country by dunes and the North Sea on one side and, on the other sides, by a non-existent rail link and a bus service whose meandering routes lent Leiden and The Hague the allure of far-flung places. A fellow described NIAS in Wassenaar as a “beacon of enlightened liberalism under the tallest trees of the world, a monastic order, a withdrawal from reality, a state of being in-between, no longer bound by previous norms.” And for much of NIAS’ existence, this isolation defined its self-conception.

This idea of liberty-in-autonomy did not only materialise in the place but also in the set-up of our institute (and all other IAS’): a key ingredient being the ‘blue sky principle’ - the notion that fellows propose to study a topic of their own choosing. The blue-sky principle stems from the very same belief that academics should define their own research agenda, not politics, economics, or academic bureaucrats.

This principle is more important than ever before. Compared to some decades ago, research today is predominantly financed by earmarked money. Academia itself has become incredibly pressured, full of expectations regarding themes, pace, productivity, and impact. What NIAS now offers is not only a retreat from the outside world but a retreat from the burden and pressure of academia itself.

In that sense, IAS’ embody the ultimate idea of ‘freedom from’ – and today there are many threats from both outside and inside academia.

This idea of a safe haven, a safe space, of being distant, was, however, not just a response to external threats but also inspired by a positive idea of academic freedom, the ‘freedom to’. If scholars have the freedom to do things they aspire to, they will be far more creative than when they are constrained.

The ‘freedom from’ is a necessary condition for the ‘freedom to’ thrive.

**A retreat from the
burden and pressure
of academia itself.**

It might be tempting, given the actual threats, to further withdraw – to look for super safe spaces, to build our own bubbles, our homogeneous spots where we don't feel threatened but are not challenged either.

I guess that that is not what the philosophy of an IAS is or should be: the 'freedom from' was not meant to isolate ourselves among likeminded people but to facilitate unexpected encounters, interdisciplinary cooperation, and collective learning across various fields. The 'freedom from' then should rather be used to develop new insights, resulting from the interactions among fellows with hugely different backgrounds.

Being externally exclusive – keeping the threats at distance – should go hand in hand with being internally inclusive, and as diverse as possible. We, academics and artists, flourish when we get constructive criticism, when we are confronted with unknown worlds, divergent perspectives, a plurality of paradigms and epistemologies.

We love the confrontation of opinions, the exchanges of ideas and experiences – we want to be 'free from' in order to be 'free to' raise all possible questions, to doubt, to re-think our projects, to re-write our articles and books. We cherish the freedom to challenge each other, to provoke, to think the unthinkable. That happens best in a world with diverse voices, where people come together, not to compete but to cooperate.

I do not claim that NIAS has always been the most diverse haven on earth – but a haven it was and still is. Every year, step

by step, we aim to become that diverse place of free thinkers from all over the world, from so many disciplines – of scholars and artists.

I have great admiration and gratitude towards all individuals and institutions who for the past fifty years have made NIAS into what it is today. And I very much look forward to the next fifty years!

Welcome

to the

Opening

of the

Academic Year

2021/22

50 Years of Academic

NIAS

Netherlands Institute for
Advanced Study
in the Humanities and
Social Sciences



g

Year

Freedom



Eye Filmmuseum

IJpromenade 1
1031 KT Amsterdam



15.00 - 17.30h

The event will
start in a few minutes

NIAS 
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for Advanced Study
in the Humanities and
Social Sciences

ROBBERT DIJKGRAAF



Scholars at Risk: The Institute for Advanced Study and Academic Freedom

By Prof. Robbert Dijkgraaf,
Director and Leon Levy Professor
at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, USA.

The Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton was the realisation of a dream of its first director Abraham Flexner. It was meant to be a paradise for scholars, a place where one could dedicate oneself to the pure pursuit of knowledge, with no disturbances or obligations. It was and still is more defined by the absence than the presence of things – no teaching, no committees, no laboratories, no instructions from government or industry. A point of reflection outside the plane, as far removed from the real world as possible.

In many ways, this dream has turned out to be a great success. And we are proud of our more than ninety years of dedication to scholarship and research at the highest level. Currently, there are more than six thousand scholars around the world who have benefitted from this intellectual recharge.

We are particularly proud that the idea of an IAS itself has proven to be so fertile. Hundreds of Institutes have been created

around the world. Remarkably, there is a huge amount of biodiversity in that family. Mirroring Tolstoy's words, all universities are to first approximation alike, but every Institute is completely distinct because there are so many things that it is not. Each makes different choices of disciplines, funding models, locations, presence of permanent faculty, intellectual goals, and interactions with society. But the common denominator is the intellectual freedom to pursue knowledge in and by itself, unbounded by applications or governmental regulations. The connecting thread is the absence of the thought police.

In Princeton, something special happened in February of 2017. President Donald Trump had just been inaugurated and one of the first actions his administration took was the establishment of the so-called travel ban, mostly directed towards Muslim countries. This measure left the country and the world in shock, particularly our own community in Princeton, where so many scholars from around the world had gathered. The United States, which has a history and a self-image as a beacon of freedom and a refuge for scholars at risk, suddenly showed an ugly image to the world. The travel ban came with brutal immigrant deportations, attempts to limit scientific inquiry and expert advice, drastic cuts in the funding of the arts and humanities, and a general attack on facts and the truth itself.

During those months, we organized several town hall meetings to share our concerns about this new regime. Then the scholars on campus did something remarkable. They decided to react to this political emergency with their own tools: scholarship. A very diverse group of social scientists, historians, mathema-

The connecting thread
is the absence of the
thought police.

ticians, and physicists felt the need to organise themselves and dive deep into our archives to investigate how colleagues in previous generations had reacted to such distress, and to find inspiration and learn lessons for the present and the future.

As this so-called History Working Group wrote, “Travel restrictions involving pure accidents of birth, documented by passports from flagged countries, have prompted us to revisit today the Institute’s history not because we believe that history repeats itself. Rather, we seek to provide the IAS community with sketches of scholarly lives and scientific cultures, interrupted by nationalist forces of exclusion. That these lives and cultures managed to reconstitute themselves and enrich our common human heritage is thanks only to efforts to provide them with sanctuary.”

In 1933, only three years after its founding, the IAS was presented with a unique opportunity. Suddenly many renowned scholars from the upper echelons of the German university system had to leave Nazi-Germany, fearing for their lives. However, it was not immediately clear for Flexner how he could act. The Institute had recruited Albert Einstein and John von Neumann shortly before Hitler’s coming to power. But how far should they continue in recruiting additional émigrés? Flexner initially expressed ambivalence on the topic, torn between a desire to live up to founding ideals and concern over the need to support and foster local talent. As he wrote to the mathematician Oswald Veblen on March 27, 1933:

Mr. Bamberger and Mrs. Fuld [the founders of IAS] were very anxious from the outset that no distinction should be made as respects race, religion, nationality, etc., and of course I am in thorough sympathy with their point of view, but on the other hand if we do not develop America, who is going to do it, and the question arises how much we ought to do for others and how much to make sure that civilization in America advances.

On May 2, again responding to Veblen, he expanded on the same theme:

We are certainly in the devil of a fix. Unable to care for our own younger men, we are pressed by applications from foreign countries. It seems to me clear that we must in the first place endeavor to find work for those whom we have encouraged to train themselves in this country on the theory that, if they were worthy, there would be jobs waiting for them. Until we have done that, what else can we do? Our opportunities for making places for foreigners are therefore at the moment limited to a few outstanding personages such as Einstein and Weyl.

In those Depression years, there was a widespread “America First” attitude. However, after expressing this initial hesitation, Flexner took strong action. In association with the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Carnegie Foundation, IAS

became a sort of intellectual Ellis Island. Small grants allowed scholars to obtain visas to escape Nazi Germany and come to Princeton. Ironically, the Institute was founded by the Bamberger family, which owned a large department store in Newark dealing with distressed merchandise. Now their philanthropy suddenly dealt in distressed scholars, acquiring geniuses at bargain-basement prices.

The impact of these European scholars was huge. In his Director's Report in 1939 Flexner writes,

Fifty years from now the historian looking backward will, if we act with courage and imagination, report that during our time the center of gravity in scholarship moved across the Atlantic Ocean to the United States. It is a grave responsibility which is thus being thrust upon us all.

Until his death, Einstein kept on fighting for the right of scholars and scientists to speak their minds, about everything. He crafted his statements as carefully as his formulas, going through many versions, and placing the final text in a wooden box. He was tweeting avant la lettre.

His political activism was called upon again during the McCarthy years when the political climate in the country was becoming increasingly hostile to scientists, teachers, journalists, and artists. In November 1954, at the highpoint of Joseph McCarthy's campaign against the supposed communist infiltration of the U.S. government, Einstein wrote a letter to a magazine in which

he declared that were he a young man again, he would not try to become a scientist: “I would rather choose to be a plumber or a peddler in the hope to find that modest degree of independence still available under present circumstances.” Around the United States, plumbers responded and Einstein was offered membership in the Chicago plumbers union.

McCarthy was quick to react to Einstein’s stand. He told the media that whether his “name is Einstein or John Jones,” the giver of such advice was undoubtedly an “enemy of America,” “a disloyal American,” and “not a good American.” But Einstein was in no way deterred. In a public statement in March 1954, he advocated for “the right to search for truth and to publish and teach what one holds to be true.” He regretted that in this dark age “freedom of teaching, mutual exchange of opinions, and freedom of press and other media of communication are encroached upon or obstructed.”

The director of the Institute at the time, Robert Oppenheimer, was himself a target of McCarthy’s inquisition. He was squeezed by the hinge of history. On the one hand, he was a loyal servant to his country developing the atom bomb, on the other hand, he was firm in his stance for international collaboration and against the further development of nuclear arms. McCarthy accused him of being a communist, and he famously lost his security clearance in the hearing of the Atomic Energy Committee. Earlier he was celebrated as the world’s most famous scientist, with the possible exception of his colleague Einstein. He appeared on the cover of Time Magazine in 1947 as a national hero. In June 1954, he was again on the

cover, now with the byline: “Beyond loyalty, the harsh requirement of security.”

These days we see growing attacks on academic freedom around the world. The intellectual space is shrinking. Governments and political movements more and more want to impose their views. Populists claim to represent the true views of the nation and try to silence other voices. Facts are pushed away by alternative facts. Scientific findings are undercut by sowing doubt and the spread of disinformation, often disguised as science. In the United States, where Trumpism is still very much alive – although no longer in the White House – these attacks are often framed as a reaction to an excess of “political correctness” in academia. A favourite technique is to shoot the messenger bringing uncomfortable news.

The great challenge for the scholarly community will be to preserve and strengthen our academic freedom, to keep expanding our view, and to allow as many different perspectives as possible. Keep the thought police out, also among ourselves. It is never our aim to be comfortable, reach a consensus, or stop asking difficult questions. How can more knowledge, digging deeper and uncovering more layers, be in any way threatening? Knowledge is the only natural resource that grows when being used. It should be the aim of any institution of higher learning to increase its intellectual biodiversity, both in-depth and breadth. If someone calls a university to ask what it thinks about a certain matter, the answer should not be, “To whom can I direct your call? Just let me know which opinion you want to hear.”

Why create a paradise
for scholars in such an
ugly world?

What role can an Institute for Advanced Study play in this large and complicated world? Isn't it just a drop in the proverbial bucket? Is the whole idea of creating a bubble of freedom, a Platonic environment, an intellectual playground, not irrelevant and perhaps even misleading, creating a fake sense of security and comfort? Why create a paradise for scholars, in such an ugly world?

Let me end with an anecdote of Albert Hirschman, one of the most important social scientists and philosophers of the 20th century, and a long-term faculty member of the IAS. In his early years, he was blown around the world by the winds of war. In many ways he was the last of the distinguished line of European refugee scholars, beginning with that other Albert, who finally found a home in Princeton. Born in Berlin, fleeing Nazi-Germany, barely 18 years old, for France, he fought in the Spanish War, then helped some 2,000 refugees escape in the South of France in 1940, among them Marc Chagall, Marcel Duchamp, and Hannah Arendt. He joined the U.S. Army in North-Africa and Italy, followed by a most distinguished academic career, ending in 1972 at the IAS.

A life-long lover of mountain hikes, Hirschman once reached the summit of a mountain in the French Alps with one of his grandsons. Here the young boy found a rock, naturally carved into the perfect shape of a chair. He sat down and decided he did not want to move again. He had reached perfection. Why should one move further?

How did the great and wise philosopher solve this problem? Hirschman took his mountain axe and chipped off a small part of the rock and put the piece in his grandson's pocket. With this one gesture he achieved two things. The resting spot was no longer perfect. But a small part of that lost perfection he could take down, into the real world, as an inspiration for future hikes.



Prof. Robbert Dijkgraaf



Fenneke





e Wekker



Prof. Nadia Al-Bagdadi

NIAS 
Netherlands Institute
for Advanced Study
in the Humanities and
Social Sciences



Dr. Fenneke Wekker, NIAS Head of Academic Affairs,
in conversation with Prof. Dijkgraaf and Prof. Al-Bagdadi

NADIA AL-BAGDADI



Who's afraid of Academic Freedom?

By Prof. Nadia Al-Bagdadi,
Director of the Institute for Advanced Study
at Central European University in Hungary,
and former President (2018-2021) of the Network
of European Institutes for Advanced Study.

I.

What a pleasure and an honour it is to speak at this joyful occasion, celebrating half a century of one of Europe's most distinguished and vibrant Institutes for Advanced Study. Many congratulations!

And what a disenchantment and a worry it is to address an issue and a threat that has returned forcefully to the agenda: the attack on academic freedom – in familiar ways by the usual suspects and in new ways by new and rather unexpected adversaries. Thus, the question “who is afraid of academic freedom?” is neither a rhetorical flourish, nor a particularly new question. It is a pressing reflection upon the rising tide of alarm in a changing political and intellectual atmosphere in which academic freedom is curtailed and under attack – in some places dramatically so. This threat relates to concrete institutional and cognitive conditions under which academic freedom can be exercised. It relates to nothing less than the conceptual basis which safeguards academic freedom as a value and as

a social good. Why does it matter? Because much is at stake. Some among us have experienced this assault already at first hand; for others, the issue remains still an abstract challenge. My central contention is that it is the simultaneous emergence of assault from multiple directions that define the main danger to academic freedom at its very core today.

II.

Let me state briefly what I understand academic freedom to entail. Academic freedom possesses a two-fold property: it relates to the autonomy of institutions, which in turn guarantee free scientific inquiry. It is this relationship that defines, in knowledge-based societies, the importance of both: scholarship and research, and of institutions of advanced research and higher education – the Humboldtian model, courtesy of Wilhelm von Humboldt. Modern societies need institutions that provide a protective yet autonomous institutional framework for the open quest of science, for critical thinking and innovative research.

Secondly, there is a cognitive correlate of equal weight to this institutional autonomy. If institutional autonomy is about stability and security, academic freedom as a cognitive act rests on different premises. Integral to the process and ultimately to the success of free research is not only their capacity to produce cognitive products, but also to deal with uncertainty: as open, curiosity-driven inquiry. This perspective entails the recognition of vulnerability and of failure, as part and parcel of scientific endeavour. These dimensions are intrinsically political and define the tenor of my brief intervention.

Freedom of critical inquiry and the autonomy of institutions concerned with cognitive goods are thus unique. They are unique precisely in that they are enabling values. These enabling conditions apply universally, and are as important in Amsterdam as they are in Jakarta, across national and regional borders – where better to make this point than at NIAS? In the same vein, it is no longer conscionable to define academic freedom as being a primarily European issue. Such views succumb to narrow arguments about origins, instead of recognizing how academic freedom and the idea of the autonomy of cognitive institutions emerged universally as results of complex, at times violent, political, social and intellectual struggles.

III.

Who, then, is afraid of academic freedom? There are three configurations at work: from the outside, from the inside, and from in-side out.

The assault from the outside: The most tangible and blatant assault comes from the authoritarian state or para-state politics. They trigger, directly and or indirectly, the persecution of scientists, scholars, and critical thinkers, their temporary or long-term exclusion from universities, or indeed their migration or exile. In Europe, historically, it was the cognitive autonomy of universities granted initially by states such as Prussia – a state far from being democratic – that from the early 19th century on enabled scientific inquiry and advances in the natural no less than the social and human sciences. The 20th century saw the reverse, under fascist and communist regimes. Thus, when in 1988, some four hundred Rectors of European univer-

sities signed the Charta Magna Universitatum in Bologna, this moment was thought to define more than some lofty aspiration when it declared institutional autonomy and academic freedom to be the fundamental values and principles of the university. Since then, again much has happened. The paradox of academic freedom is that, like many other types of right, it depends on state protection in order to be free from external intrusion – intrusion from the state, corporate entities, societal movements, or any other agency or interested party. The agreement or at least understanding in which the relationship between the university – as autonomous cognitive and physical spaces of science and *Wissenschaft* – and state and society requires a certain distance and disengagement. In authoritarian contexts, distance is eliminated. All authoritarian assaults are alike in this: that they turn upon its head the fact that universities serve their societies best when they produce cognitive goods by means appropriate to cognition rather than social or political pressure. The case of LEX CEU showed this well. It entailed the withdrawal of accreditation and subsequent expulsion from Hungary for our university. But this was only one move in the broader move to dismantle institutional autonomy across the board and the Gleichschaltung of institutions from the Academy of Science to the universities, in line with the overall remodelling of the Hungarian state.

Those afraid of academic freedom are testing, and sometimes more than testing, the balance between state protection and state control in varying degrees.

The paradox of academic freedom is that it depends on state protection in order to be free from external intrusion.

The assault from inside-out: Of a different scale and nature is another threat against autonomy and freedom, which manifests itself as internal institutional erosion. It operates structurally and not necessarily with an ideological armature – but I am not too certain about this and about unintended consequences arising. This second threat is an outgrowth of neo-liberal transformations of central features of the university, research, and higher education, in which cognitive goods are commodified and managed accordingly. Scientific research and universities are customised and their activities categorised managerially, overseen by an exponential and hitherto unknown expansion of administrative bodies. Expressed in the language of management consultants, conceived in quantifiable terms of efficiency, productivity and measurability, academic freedom becomes an exotic residue of times past. Scientific relevance and usefulness of particular research questions and even entire disciplines are reevaluated using parameters unconnected to cognitive purpose. This is no longer the invisible hand of the market but the alliance between market and bureaucracy.

The assault from within: While the first two configurations relate to institutional autonomy as enabling condition and value, the third group of adversaries is of an altogether different character. It emerged in recent years from within, curtailing academic freedom in the name of other freedoms – an increasingly problematic situation. Defenders of minority rights or subaltern social, cultural or other groups reinforce, paradoxically, dated ideas and rules connected with descent and blood about who is entitled, morally or culturally, to perform

what and which kind of research, study and teaching. Here, academic freedom is turned into its opposite. Starting in the Anglo-Saxon world, spreading fast, from an initially all too justified, well-grounded and argued position of critique of privilege, this strand has started to establish closed containers and agendas for and of inquiry, built on mimetic and identitarian principles, to which cognitive purpose often seems irrelevant. Since these debates dominate much of national and international public domains, I do not need to provide any examples here for this audience. The fine, but crucial line which disallows lack of respect and recognition for the Other and the foreclosing of spaces designed for scientific engagement, this fine line seems to have frayed. Is it the fear to lose the still fragile recent achievements to an Umschlag, to the reverse that stands behind this new form of gate keeping?

IV.

It is in this sense then that the political and legal attacks of the present moment differ from earlier infringements – from the Enlightenment with her battles over rights and wrongs between church and state to the reformist movements of the 1960s. It is this multifaceted and simultaneous assault that signal the difference to earlier infringements. In most of Europe as in other parts of the world academic freedom has and is still taken for granted. To be clear, not as a universal right per se, which it is not, but for having acquired the status of an indispensable enabling power and value. As such it has long set the yardstick for free and critical inquiry and research. Or has it? The renewed and pressing need to protect academic freedom seems to suggest otherwise, as does the failure to

In most of Europe as in
other parts of the world
academic freedom is still
taken for granted.

do so, think of Hungary, Russia, Turkey and the abolition of academic freedom altogether. These are extreme forms of fear of critical and free-thinking. The new identitarian illiberalism from the inside, however, equally disqualifies the free pursuit of knowledge and truth as the very foundation of academic research, as it redefines the link between society and *Wissenschaft*.

Europe, like other parts of the world, is passing through a dangerous anti-intellectual mood at a time when in need to defend one of her central institutions. Though premised on different ideologies than the assault from the outside, this assault coming from within is equally embedded in a culture war. The fear of academic freedom manifests itself in the placing of gatekeepers, in the reproduction of predictable clichés and in the erection of echo-chambers. This fear reflects conflicts of interest, social and political. Ignoring them is not only futile – but dangerous. To some extent, ‘the university’ and science have lost support in society because of their assumed all too large distance and disengagement from society, for example in the struggle for social justice and progress. In turn, and not surprisingly, the current threat to academic freedom and institutional autonomy is not perceived as the social and political relevant attack that it is.

To come to a close: Why is it important to speak about academic freedom and its adversaries? It matters because to us, academic freedom and trust are at the very core of our vocation, in research and in teaching. And it matters because to us citizens, when academic freedom – understood in the broad

sense discussed here – falters, one pillar of society falls. Is there a cure then? There needs to be some cure, in different measures, with different treatments, in different places. It will be rooted in an international alliance and solidarity among Institutions of Advanced Study and teaching. In an effort to protect and interfere with robust institutional reinforcement and resolute individual and collective interventions, which dare to go against curtailing critical research and where necessary against the mainstream.

Institutes for Advanced Study are ideal places for temporary withdrawal and seclusion from the world, if only for a short while, obeying an imperative which is preeminently cognitive. Blissful, undisturbed leisure and concentration for writing and thinking, in splendid isolation and in conversation among fellows.

This does not mean to turn one's back to the world. Even if you think you are leaving the world for a while behind you, the world will not leave you alone.





PERSONAL NOTES

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AKADEMIE VAN WETENSCHAPPEN

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St. Joris Hof

KORTE
SPINHUISSTEEG
CENTRUM

NIAS
Nieuw Instituut
Arnhem



A photograph of a forest path. The path is made of dirt and is partially covered by a stream of water. The path is surrounded by tall, slender pine trees with green needles. The ground is covered in brown pine needles and leaves. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

For its 50th anniversary, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences presents an historical narrative of the establishment, importance and endurance of fifty years of academic freedom at the Institute. Despite, but also because of, some major internal and external threats, the Institute's mission to be an intellectual haven for scholarly and artistic research and to foster curiosity-driven research, stands as strong today as it did in the year of its birth in 1971.