



01.09.2019 - 01.09.2021

CONTEMPORARY COMMONING

Investigating the role of art and design in creating spaces for public action

The Gerrit Rietveld Academy and Sandberg Institute have been approached by property developer BPD to rethink the role of communal spaces in their projects on Amsterdam's Zeeburgereiland. In response to this specific request and to major societal transformations such as rising urban inequality and social fragmentation, the two institutions decided to set up a new consortium in order to research the ways in which the notion of 'the commons' can contribute to new forms of (digital) public space and initiate different forms of urban development. The potential contribution of design and art towards processes of 'commoning' is the main point of departure of this research. With five partners from the intersection of academia, arts, creative industry and civil society, five specific work packages have been developed. Rietveld develops an artistic research through temporary interventions in public space, University of Amsterdam's Center for Urban Studies proposes a post-doc for a comparative study on existing and historical forms of urban commoning, while Waag: Technology&Society will work on experimenting with designing interventions for a digital commons. The 'commoning tools' emerging from these projects will be collected in a 'toolbox' in the form of a digital platform by Casco Art Institute, which amounts to the dissemination of the project. Studio René Boer will facilitate the productive exchange, critical assessment and final dissemination of the project. This project will furthermore result in expanding knowledge and building new networks on the commons, both in institutions as well as on the ground in Amsterdam's Zeeburgereiland.

This project is made possible through the support of [NWO](#).

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