



photo: roof Campus Uithof Utrecht

The Testing of a Science Parliament

Partners:

Stichting Science Park

Gemeente Utrecht

The science community in the Netherlands has a strong independent tradition of gathering knowledge, doing scientific research and making it useful to society. This is one of the unique selling points of the global University community.

The Utrecht University is developing a science park at the Uithof campus. Influences from outside of the scientific community will become more apparent. Corporate money will become part of the financial structure of the research program within the University. There is a debate starting what this will do to the scientific agenda. What will be researched in the future and who decides what? System D Academy sees the potential to research a new common ground for sharing idea's.

The Science Parliament

In an ideal world ideas are shared, explored and discussed by everybody so all can learn. Every University should have a Science Parliament where knowledge is shared and wisdom is produced. But science has little to do with democratic processes. The search for truth is a blurry and messy path and the competition big. Research is expensive. And no one can overview all the knowledge produced in the world. So how can we create a common ground for the production of knowledge that is opened up to many voices of expertise?

Non-expert Experts

The same small circle of experts circulate on the world's conference stages... but what about the specialist knowledge right under our noses? Who are the unacknowledged experts in our midst? The maker movement has done a good job of uncovering hidden technological talents, but how can this potential become part of the conventional science community?

The Research Workshop

A Co-Expert Laboratory will be set up at the Campus of Utrecht University during a two-week workshop, Dec 8th - 19th, 2014. System D Academy sets up a backyard laboratory where System D Researchers from the Sandberg Institute, hobbyists from Holland and scientists from the University of Utrecht will collaborate. Within the two weeks they will test different models of sharing knowledge.

The models:

1-Idea Accelerator Lab: How is it possible to find a common language to share ideas and create interdisciplinary research? The Idea Accelerator Lab aims to create an accelerator to pitch concepts to be viewed, criticized and filtered through different perspectives.

2-Peripheral Satellites: Scientists do not have time to “play around” within their research program. They are tied to strict protocols. The back yard hobby shack is set up on the University campus to make room for experiments. Here scientists can work with hobbyists and visa versa without being bothered by strict rules.

3-The Communicator Lab: Scientific concepts are explored and visualized by artists. This helps the scientific community to understand and communicate complex systems to a wider audience. Outside of practical collaboration, art and science inspire one another. Artworks produced in the Communicator Lab can become part of the public space art program.

Method:

The first week is an explorative program where we focus on various learning concepts such as Serendipity, Academia Vitae, the peripheral knowledge of hobbyists and Cybernetics. In addition to these theory lectures, we visit three departments of expertise, the Botanic Archive, the Animal Breeding Lab and the Genetic Manipulation Center. Here, scientists will introduce us to their world of expertise. Together with hobbyists and System D researchers we will conduct an Idea Accelerator workshop. All experiments are gathered into a “Cabinet of Co-Expertise” in a vacant University building.

The second week is focused on creating a “Hobbyist Cabinet”. This is a place where people can come and share their knowledge. System D Researchers will finally constitute a test model of a Science Parliament to be shared in a final presentation to the University of Utrecht.

Accommodation for System D Researchers:

We are offered a place to stay over on the campus of the University. It is a two-room dormitory in the sport complex Olympos. There are showers, bathrooms and an office to work. There is a bar open all night. You have to bring your own sleeping bags and mattresses. You can also choose to go home every day. It's up to you.

Week One: December 8 – 12th, 2014: Testing of a Science Parliament

Monday Dec 8th:

10:00 – 10:30 Introduction of the concept Science Parliament. (Michelle Kasprzak)
10:00 – 10:30 What are the benefits of applying peripheral knowledge to mainstream thought and processes, and how to make it happen? (George Hathaway, P.Eng of Hathaway Consulting Services, a Research Laboratory of advanced engineering and propulsion research)
13:00 – 16:30 Critical Thinking session with Simon Angel
18:00 – 22:00 Lecture/ dialog on the idea of a learning community the Academia Vitae. (Arjo Klamer)

Tuesday Dec 9th:

10:00 – 11:00 Presentation of the relation between art and science by Michelle Kasprzak.
11:00 – 12:30 of the 3 hobby domains: a Bodybuilder, Dog Breeder and Pumpkin Grower
13:00 – 17:00 Excursion to 3 disciplines of science: Horticulture, Genetic Technology, Veterinary Medicine
Prof Jan Rothuizen, coordinator of the Dutch Expertise Centre Genetics of Companion Animals, University Utrecht. He is available next Monday (8 December) from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Prof Corné Pieterse, working at the Department of Biology in the field of plant-microbe interactions. Wednesday afternoon, after 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Dec 10th:

9:30 - 11:00 Excursion to Science Park by Floris de Gelder and Nicoline Meijer.
13:00 - 14:00 Presentation incredible shrinking man by Arne Hendriks
13:00 - 17:00 Start of Co-Expertise Critical Thinking Session: 3 groups consider bodybuilding, dog breeders and pumpkin growers in relation to scientific spheres and what areas to consider for mutual benefit and/or potential application.

Thursday Dec 11th:

10:00 - 17:00 Field research work, and continued collaboration
19:00 - 22:00 Dinner and Hans Abbink on Self Organizing systems and special guest Designer Tomáš Libertíny and his work with Bees.

Friday Dec 12th:

09:00 - 12:00 Field research work
13:00 - 17:00 Lecture about Serendipity. (Pek van Anandel & Daan Alkemade)

Week Two, December 14 – 19th, 2014: Towards a Science Parliament Model

Dec 14th:

10:00 - 12:00 Jessica Gysel Editorial: Presentations and evaluation/discussions of next steps
13:00 - 17:00 Development of tests

Dec 15th:

10:00 - 12:00 Testing ideas
13:00 - 17:00 Jessica Gysel Editorial: development of documentation of process and communication of the Science Parliament for final presentation.

Dec 16th: testing ideas

Dec 17th: testing ideas

Dec 18th: analysis, evaluation and documentation of results

Dec 19th:

13:00 - 15:00: Presentation of the first Science Parliament to a Science and Public audience.
Evaluation of Co-Expertise examples, and considerations of other potential partners and applications