
Proactive in a Changing World

Van Gogh Museum Education Policy 2017–2020

Van
Gogh
Museum

Amsterdam



Proactive in a Changing World

Gogh Museum Education Policy 2017-2020

Basic principles

Foster participation
Target-audience oriented
Remain relevant
Quality and impact measurement

People who are already curious

Van Gogh fans worldwide

People whose curiosity we want to arouse

Youth (Schools and Families)
Young Amsterdammers
People with disabilities
The elderly

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Basic principles

The Van Gogh Museum (VGM) wants to make Van Gogh's life, work, and time accessible to as many people as possible in order to inspire and enrich them. Education is the bridge from content to audience across three mutually reinforcing platforms.



Striving for inclusivity

In the period 2017-2020 the Education & Interpretation Department will further expand its role as an expert in targeted interpretation of the content of the collections, research, and exhibitions. The department uses a connected mix of supply and activities to encourage people to connect personally with the art (or ideas) of the artist. In this, it strives for inclusivity: making Van Gogh accessible to as many people as possible.



Foster cultural participation

The VGM will continue to take a leadership role. With his great fame, fascinating life, and colourful art, Van Gogh is ideally suited for lowering the threshold for cultural participation. We stimulate and satisfy global curiosity in Van Gogh with a broad educational mix. People can shape their own experience in line with their personal taste and learning style: looking, learning, doing, and sharing.



With digital methods, such as our multimedia tour, we foster the connection between the museum and the online experience. Demand driven, we expand digital and guided programmes. To continue creating a bridge between content and the audience, the Department of Education & Interpretation keeps its eye on the world at large, which is changing ever more rapidly and giving rise to new audiences.



Foster participation

People who are already curious

These are the large numbers of Van Gogh fans worldwide. They seek inspiration from Van Gogh's work and often also his life. They visit us in the museum or online. We take pride in this. We continue to stimulate and satisfy their curiosity.



Foster cultural participation

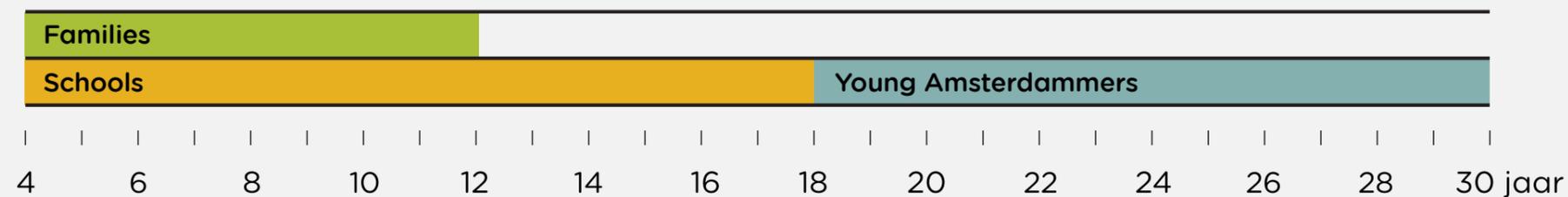
People whose curiosity we want to arouse

In light of major social trends, such as digitization, globalization, as well as ageing, and continuing on the previous policy period, we focus on the public of the future and on inclusivity.

The public of the future

A positive experience with Van Gogh and the museum fosters cultural experience later in the life of:

- Youth: schools (4-18 years) and families with children from 4-12 years
- Young Amsterdammers (18-30 years)



Inclusivity

We foster the participation of people with the potential to be involved, but who face obstacles:

- Disabled persons with visual, hearing, and mobility impairments
- The elderly

The VGM contributes to their empowerment and social engagement.



Remain relevant



Target-audience oriented programmes allow people to experience Van Gogh's impact: in the museum, online, and via physical outreach in the Amsterdam +60 kilometres region. We create learning lines to stimulate 'people who are not yet curious' to develop into 'people who are curious'.

We lower the threshold through the personal guidance of our specially trained guides, museum docents, workshop instructors, and learning by doing.



Through youth education we foster the participation of culturally diverse groups in the Amsterdam region. We plant the seeds for the public of the future through two major programmes:

With *Van Gogh goes to school* we give lessons in schools in focus districts.

With *Van Gogh connects* we are learning how to reach and engage Surinamese, Turkish, Antillean, and Moroccan 18 to 30 year olds.

By connecting with its environment, the VGM grows along with social developments and thus remains relevant.

Quality and impact measurement

The Department of Education & Interpretation assesses the quality of accessibility by working with the target audience. We lower thresholds through collaboration and co-creation. From (audience) research, we learn how to foster sustainable participation. This helps us to keep adjusting our programme lines to meet the needs of the developing audiences.



Internal collaboration with regular partners in Marketing, Digital Communication, Collections & Research, and Visitor Services, as well as training and guidelines encourage every VGM department, based on its own expertise, to become (more) aware of how it can contribute to the accessibility of these target audiences.



Activities

VGM Education Policy 2017–2020



People who are already curious

These are the large numbers of Van Gogh fans worldwide. They seek inspiration from Van Gogh's work, and also often his life. They visit us in the museum or online. They have different learning styles, languages, levels of knowledge, and points of reference.



In the 2017-2020 policy period we will stimulate and respond to curiosity about Van Gogh.

- We will keep the education programme in the museum topical. We will develop a demand-oriented multimedia tour and guided programmes (tours and workshops), capitalizing on new content insights, audience research, and technological developments. With the support of the FIL Foundation we will use the data from our popular multimedia tour to ensure better visitor circulation in the museum building. This way we can take full advantage of the museum's capacity without inconveniencing the visitors.

- We will build a bridge between an online and a museum visit. In addition, we will exploit the ongoing development of the award-winning app Touch Van Gogh, the multimedia tour, the website, and digital trends.
- We will concentrate on themes that prompt participation: Van Gogh's illness and death, masterpieces, discoveries, and acquisitions.
- We will distinguish between serving Dutch visitors (with potential for repeat visits) and international ones with respect to subjects and timing. In addition, we will build continuously upon successful programming lines in which we offer depth and engage in a dialogue, such as lectures and workshops.



People whose curiosity we want to arouse

Our social responsibility mandates us to make Van Gogh accessible to target audiences not yet aware of how art can enrich their lives, or target audiences that experience impediments. We focus on:

- The audience of the future: youth (schools 4-18 years and families with children 4-12 years) and Young Amsterdammers (18-30 years). With targeted programmes we foster outreach to Amsterdam's diverse population. The city is home to 180 nationalities.
- Let people facing obstacles participate: People with disabilities and the elderly.



Youth (Schools and Families)

A good cultural experience in childhood lasts a lifetime.

The VGM holds that every (Dutch) child needs to know about Van Gogh, regardless of their home situation. That is why we offer an integrated range of programmes for schools and families.



In the policy period 2017-2020:

- 10% of our museum visitors will be under the age of 18.
- School visits to the museum will grow from 41,000 to 45,000 students per year in 2020. The number of Dutch school visits will increase from 44% in 2015 to 60% in 2020.

- Our school programmes will remain focussed on dialogue and learning by doing, guided by our specially trained museum docents. We differentiate the supply in keeping with Dutch school profiles and levels. The museum offers programmes for 4 to 18 year-olds dovetailed to the Dutch curricula, and for foreign secondary schools.



- We will lower the threshold for participation in the Amsterdam region through outreach and collaborative projects:

- Through bus transportation (such as the Museumplein Bus and the Culture Bus, Amsterdam), we will welcome at least 8000 primary school children to the VGM in 2020.
- With the outreach programme *Van Gogh goes to school*, our museum teachers will give at least 200 lessons per year at primary schools

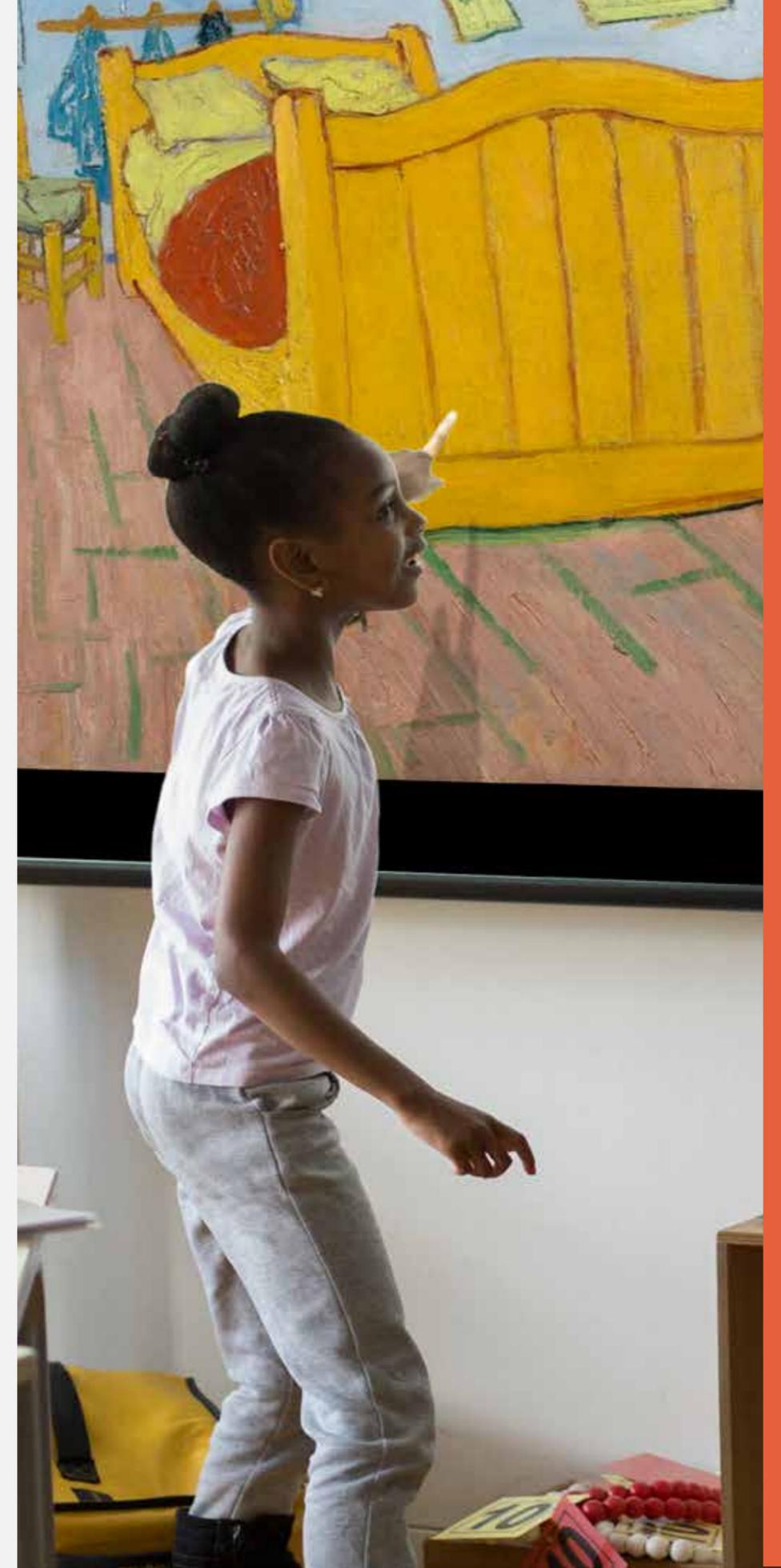
in focus districts in and around Amsterdam in 2020.

Schools in focus districts often have to address many disadvantages facing their pupils, leaving little time for cultural education. These children miss out on positive cultural experiences that lay the foundation for further exposure to and appreciation of culture later in life. For these children, *Van Gogh goes to school* is an unforgettable experience with Van Gogh (and culture in general). Thanks to private financial support we can expand this programme.



- The VGM stimulates and facilitates teachers worldwide to cover Van Gogh in their classes by means of the online education platform *Get to know Vincent*, developed with support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. It provides teachers with building blocks for interactive whiteboards. In addition, teachers can develop their own lessons and share them with other instructors/ the museum. The VGM is developing this platform further in co-creation with teachers worldwide.

- We are continuing the programme line for families from the previous policy period with family walls in the permanent display, annual family days, workshops, family tours, and ‘explore-on-your- own’ activities, such as treasure hunts, Vincent’s travelling case, and the family multimedia tour. We continue to invest in national/municipal partnerships aimed at families. Children’s books in various languages encourage accessibility.

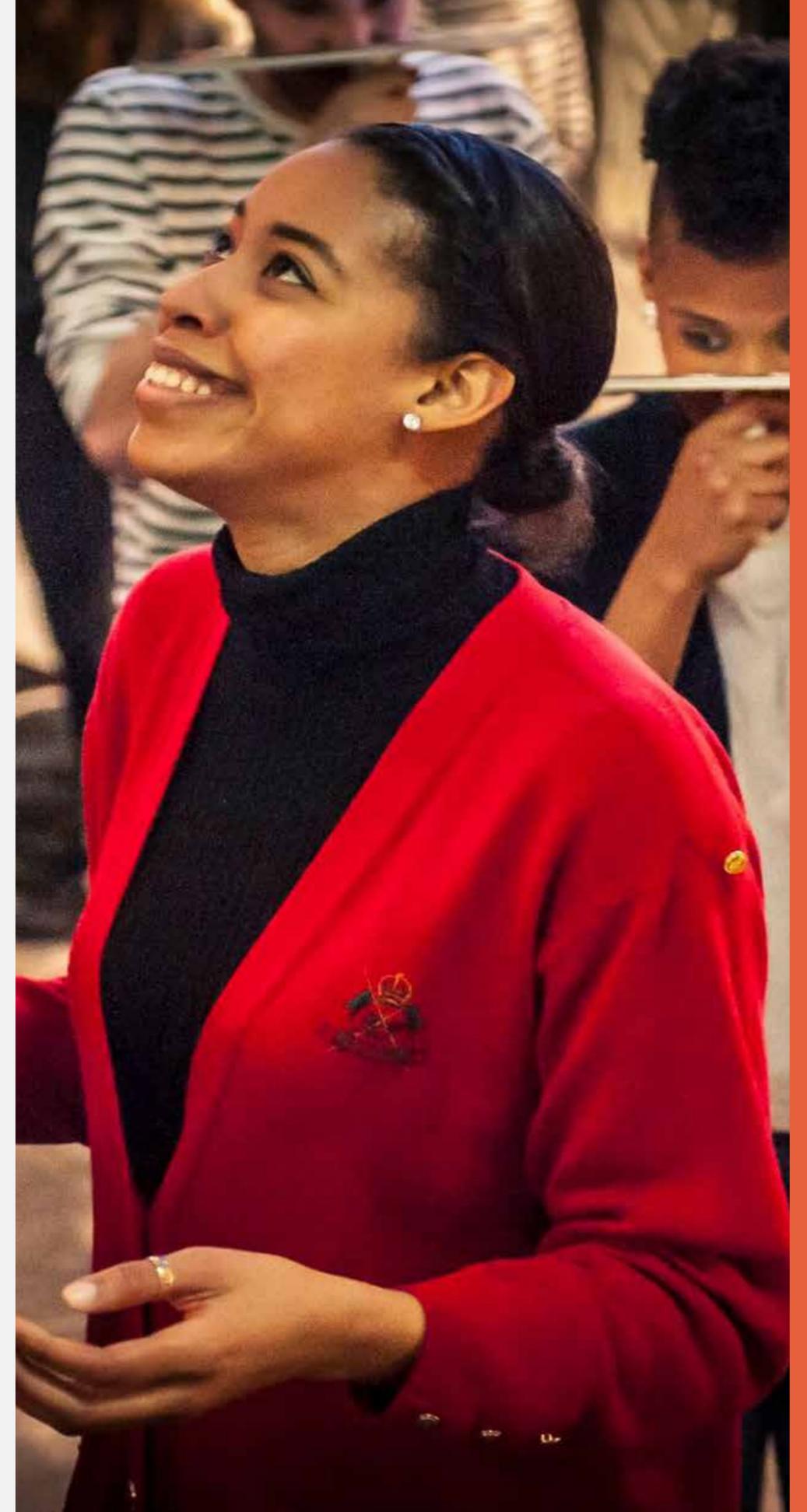


Young Amsterdammers

The VGM wants to be accessible to everybody in Amsterdam.

Since 2004, the VGM has consciously focussed on young Amsterdammers between the age of 18 and 30. This is the city's largest age group, and one that rarely visits museums.

The museum gained experience in how to reach this segment of culturally minded young Amsterdammers and bind them to the museum with its cross-media programming. This stimulates young talent and shows how Van Gogh still sparks new cultural expressions.



In the 2017-2020 policy period we will:

- Continue the programme line *Vincent on Friday*, with at least nine events annually.
- Foster accessibility through close cooperation with the target audience and special interest groups.
- Actively tie in with events in the city. We will continue collaborating with the Museum Night Foundation. At least once annually we will reach out to the target audience.

- Investigate how to reach a broader culturally diverse target group. To this end, with support from Fonds 21, in 2017 we will launch the project *Van Gogh connects*. Over a four-year period, together with the target audience and the Impact Centre of Erasmus University Rotterdam, we will learn through experimenting and impact measuring how to sustain the participation of Surinamese, Turkish, Antillean, and Moroccan youths.



People with disabilities

The VGM believes that everyone should be able to visit the museum regardless of any physical limitations.

Therefore, a disabled policy was launched in the previous policy period.



For the blind/visually impaired, since 2015 the VGM has been offering *Feeling Van Gogh*, a guided tour and workshop in which participants engage in a multi-sensory Van Gogh experience. In 2016, the VGM and other Amsterdam museums initiated *Museums in gestures*, with guides trained to give

museum tours in Dutch sign language. Together with Vereniging De Zonnebloem (Dutch association offering excursions for people with mobile impairments) the VGM identified barriers in the customer journey that can be removed. This resulted in an improvement and training trajectory for all staff with client contact.



In the 2017-2020 policy period we will make the VGM accessible to people with a mobile, auditory, or visual impairment.

- Accessibility is an integral part of the organization.
- Accessibility will be an assessment criterion of staff and new initiatives.
 - We will steer the entire organization with respect to quality via style sheets and briefings.
 - We will develop courses in accessibility for employees that interact with the public.
- Where necessary we will offer special programmes for people with disabilities.
- Children with disabilities gain little knowledge of art/culture at school. Therefore, we will enter into joint ventures with schools and institutions for the blind and deaf.
- We will ensure target-audience orientation through close collaboration with target audiences and special interest groups.



The elderly

The VGM wants to activate the group of frail elders through Van Gogh.

The Netherlands is an aging country, like the rest of the Western world. The growing group of elderly people risks becoming socially isolated as a result of physical ailments and the loss of friends and family, certainly now that the new Dutch health care regulations oblige them to live at home longer.

Through Van Gogh we provide meaning to the life of older people, foster their social interaction, and help them (re)discover their talent(s).



During the 2017–2020 policy period we will:

- Make the customer journey to visit the museum accessible for vital elders.

- Investigate with the target audience and their interest groups what this requires, with a focus on Dutch seniors.

- Meet the growing need of older people for meaningful activities and take into account their physical limitations.

- Foster the participation of vulnerable older people through collaborations, in which a personal approach is the key to participation.

- Continue participating in the Museum Plus Bus, a joint venture amongst 12 museums to transport the elderly in nursing homes to these museums.



- Continue the learning curve of *Elders meet Van Gogh. Art makes man (the trailblazer project Long Live Art 2014-2017)*.

With this outreach programme the VGM and partners from the culture, health and welfare sectors initiated a workshop programme in which through Van Gogh vulnerable seniors discover what they know, what they are capable of, and who they are. Together with Amsterdam University, the VGM investigated the impact of the programme on the elderly.

- At the end of 2017 there will be a learning path with modules ranging from outreach workshops to a museum visit.
- The VGM will offer the modules itself as well as in collaboration with partners in the health and welfare sector.
- The VGM will serve the Amsterdam region: the number of workshops will increase from 28 in 2017 to 53 in 2020.
- The VGM will foster national participation through cooperation with other Van Gogh regions.



Contact



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