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Subject Felix Meritis



Delft University of Technology

To whom it may concern

Faculty of Industrial Design
Engineering
Department of Industrial Design

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Dear Madame, dear Sir,

Hereby I want to underline the importance of an independent 'institute' that takes the responsibility for organizing dialogues, for executing research, for designing interventions and for operationalizing these interventions on themes that of real importance for society as a whole.

It seems that because of changing roles of national governments within society, giving citizens more and more authority and responsibilities, there is a growing need for a platform that takes the lead in investigating how our future society can look like. A platform that starts to think from a collective perspective at first, and then tries to understand how the individual can develop within this collective.

This platform has to be independent from political, economic, technological or religious factions and ideologies. The human being itself should be the starting point to understand what relation with a future world could be desirable.

As early as in the 18th century, in the era of Dutch enlightenment, an "institute" as described above has been initiated by the citizens of Amsterdam. It's ideas are incorporated in the widely recognized activities of the Felix Meritis Foundation/ Stichting Genootschap Felix Meritis.

When thinking of the work of the Felix Meritis Foundation one cannot escape from the need to reflect on a future society. By understanding 'why' a specific kind of action, an experience or an emotion of the citizen is appropriate to elicit, one can investigate 'how' to make that happen. Finally we can propose technological means (what) that afford this relationship. Technology, thus, is crucial to realize a goal defined at an end-user effect level.

This is why professionals like myself are devoted to work in close cooperation with Felix Meritis to develop formats and content that could address these topics and to deliver them to a wider audience.

I don't know of another institution that puts the question as prominent and eloquent in the centre of our considerations: The 'why' is nowadays often a public issue, the 'what' a private one in which industries are developing all kind of products and services in response to a purely economic competitive context.

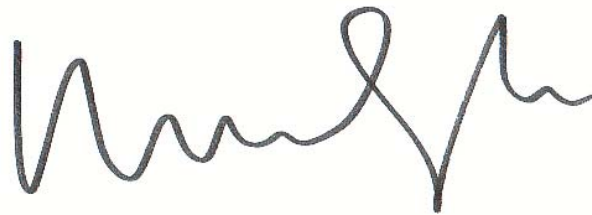
Future society thus has to bridge the gap between the public and the private domain. Where new innovations (on policies, service and products), and new technologies developed by 'industry', contribute to society as a whole and, at the same time, with which you can create raison d'être of the business or government itself.

This design thinking approach could be applied within the domain of mobility, sustainability or healthcare. In all domains where, through technology, meaning is created for society as a whole. The Netherlands are leading in doing research on (Delft, University of Technology) and using (Reframing Studio) design thinking methods to accomplish meaningful effect means relationships. International government and business leaders, for instance from Turkey and China, communicate they see a very important role for such an independent institute.

Amsterdam and the Felix Meritis Foundation could be the ideal centre for the rest of the world to start doing projects together, as colleagues as well as myself are experiencing. Your support in this is of utmost importance.

Kind regards,

Prof. Matthijs van Dijk

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Matthijs van Dijk'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop in the middle and a sharp peak on the right side.