# HET NIEUWE INSTITUUT

# CALL FOR FELLOWS APPLICATION REPORT 2017

# INTRODUCTION

Het Nieuwe Instituut, the Dutch institute for architecture, design and digital culture, was founded in Rotterdam in 2013 todevelop exhibitions, events, and a critical discourse within and between its three key disciplines. Through its activities in the context of current developments, Het Nieuwe Instituut aims to enhance the public appreciation of the cultural and social meaning of architecture, design, and digital culture, as well as empower the interaction between these fields.

From the outset, the institute has fostered research through the appointment of fellows, who have introduced a variety of highly focused questions and investigations into the framework of the museum, the archive, and the public programme. In 2015, Het Nieuwe Instituut created the department of Research & Development to make its support for research more concrete, as well as to establish a devoted and independent platform that could also pursue new formats, timeframes, and outcomes. Alongside the research conducted by the R&D department itself, it has continued to develop the fellowship programme for independent practitioners and created an open call for the selection of fellows.

Since the founding of Het Nieuwe Instituut, fellows have includ-ed writers Matthew Stadler and Ruben Jacobs; curator Annet Dekker; designers Tal Erez, Roos Meerman, Christien Meindertsma, Chris Kabel, Simone C. Niquille, Noam Toran, Chris Lee; architects Dan Handel, Malkit Shoshan, Füsun Türetken, Andrea Bagnato, Daphne Bakker, and Sara Frikech; and theorist Ramon Amaro and artist Sascha Pohflepp. Previous fellows have curated exhibitions and events at Het Nieuwe Instituut, published their research in books and essays, and exhibited their work internationally, including at the Dutch Pavilion of the Venice Biennale. Their work, supported by the fellowship, has also disseminated outwards into other Dutch and international cultural and research institutions, including Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, the Zuiderzee Museum, Fiber and Impakt festivals, Archis/Volume, the Graham Foundation, the Canadian Centre for Architecture, and Goldsmiths University. Het Nieuwe Instituut and the R&D department are committed to continuously evaluating and adapting the way fellows are selected and supported and the impact of the fellowship programme on the research landscape in the Netherlands. This report looks to the 2017 application set to understand the interests and urgencies in contemporary research, and Het Nieuwe Instituut's network and position within that context.

# OPEN CALL AND JURY

One of the critical decisions made by the Research & Development department was to make the selection of the fellows through an annual open call, beginning in February 2016. Whereas fellows were previously chosen in relation to ongoing and future exhibitions or projects, the first call was open to any proposal whose focus or research methodologies stemmed from architecture, design, or digital culture, the three core disciplines of Het Nieuwe Instituut. The call stated that no curriculum vitae or letters of recommendation were requested, and welcomed applicants of any age. It also placed as few restrictions as possible on the application format in order to be inclusive to a variety of proposals, from entirely new speculations to ongoing doctoral research, from strictly literary or analytical approaches to rigorous forms of artistic research and embodied performance. The applications were read by a jury including Tom Avermaete (professor of Architecture, Delft University of Technology), Guus Beumer (general and artistic director, Het Nieuwe Instituut), Anselm Franke (curator, Haus der Kulturen der Welt), Vinca Kruk (designer and researcher, Metahaven), Marina Otero Verzier (director of research, Het Nieuwe Instituut) and Jana Scholze (associate professor, Curating Contemporary Design at Kingston University). The jury selected four fellows — Andrea Bagnato, Simone Niquille, Noam Toran, and Füsun Türetken — as well as three honourable mentions including Michèle Champagne, Victor Muñoz Sanz, and m-a-u-s-e-r.[1]

As part of its investment in independent research in the Netherlands and abroad, the R&D department also published a report about the 243 applications submitted to the open call in 2016. The application set represented a significant source of knowledge in order to better understand the demographics, interests, methods, and depth of research that characterise independent researchers within Het Nieuwe Instituut's networks, as well as to offer insight as to how the institute can best foster and amplify researchers' efforts. The report also acted as a guide for the R&D department itself, highlighting thematic, geographic, or theoretical blind spots in its communication and discussion channels and setting out suggestions to continually improve its accessibility and commitment to innovative and compelling research.[2]

On 13 March 2017, Het Nieuwe Instituut launched its second open call for research fellowships. The 2017 call differed from the 2016 version in two ways. First, it was open to applicants of any nationality or residency. Second, whereas the 2016 call was open to proposals on any subject, the 2017 call described a specific research orientation for each discipline. Applicants for the architecture discipline were asked to examine the spatial and built legacy of the former Dutch colonial territories and their different forms of heritage and after-lives, which are also present in the construction of contemporary cities and current conditions of segregation in the Netherlands, yet remain insufficiently addressed. Applicants for the design discipline were directed towards a study of the relationship between objects and borders, looking at the way material and making cultures shape a politically-inflected sense of locality even as logistical infrastructures work to make objects and

1       Jury Report 2016: https://research-development.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/fellows/jury-report-2016

2       Application Report 2016: https://research-development.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/fellows/application-report-2016

commodities as mobile as possible. Applicants for the digital culture discipline were challenged to respond to the growing influence of algorithmic processing in contemporary systems and the rise of new cultures of human-machine interaction.[3]

By the deadline of 16 April 2017, 176 entries had been submitted. The entire set was ready by the members of the R&D department, who made a pre-selection of 33 projects (11 projects per discipline) that best exemplified the criteria in the call. On 8 May 2017, a jury convened to appoint a new set of fellows. The jury members included Morehshin Allahyari (artist, activist and educator), Quinsy Gario (performance poet, visual artist, theatre maker and activist), Selva Gürdoğan (architect, founder of Superpool, director of Studio-X Istanbul), Susan Schuppli (artist, researcher, Senior Lecturer and Acting Director of the Centre for Research Architecture, Goldsmiths), Marina Otero Verzier (director of research, Het Nieuwe Instituut), and Guus Beumer (general and artistic Director, Het Nieuwe Instituut). The jury was asked to read all 33 pre-selected proposals and invited to nominate any other projects from the entire set of applications for consideration by the other jury members. Proposals were evaluated on the basis of their engagement with the fellowship themes, imaginative reach, depth of investigation, and critical understanding of the role of the structures of power and domination at stake in the sites and methodologies proposed. The jury's decision and the report were published and presented on 23 May 2017.[4]

This report on the applications for the 2017 call for fellows follows the 2016 report. It will consider the demographics of the applicants as well as the subjects, methodologies, and formats of the applications, and reflect on meaningful differen-ces between the 2016 and 2017 application sets. It will further evaluate how the R&D department has responded to the observations in the 2016 report and which steps can be taken in the future in order to foster rigorous, urgent, and innovative research that challenges existing biases and expands the field of subjects and territories included in institutional representation.

[3]      Call for Fellows 2017: https://research-development.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/fellows/call-fellows-2017

[4]      Jury Report 2017: https://research-development.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/fellows/jury-report-2017

→      Notes on the design: the figures included in this report are based on a fixed colour legend according to each of the three disciplines. The colours indicate:
● Architecture
● Design
● Digital Culture
● All applicants / Other

# APPLICANTS
## DEMOGRAPHICS

Het Nieuwe Instituut's Open Call for Fellows specifically does not request CVs, letters of recommendation, or detailed personal information from applicants except for name and country of residence. The call asked applicants to introduce themselves in 300 words, but gave them freedom to choose how to do so. In many cases, applicants included more personal information about their origins, professional and educational background of their own volition.

The 2017 call for fellows received 176 applications in response. Here, the demographics of the application set will be discussed and compared between years.

GROUP SIZE
Individuals represented 87% (153) of the applicants, compared to 94% in 2016. Of the 23 group applications, there were 18 two-person groups, 3 four-person groups, an eight-person group and a ten-person group. Alongside, many individual applicants listed other close collaborators, often from a different discipline, as fundamental to the development of the project. In general, the applications show a growing tendency towards research conducted in multidisciplinary groups.

GENDER AND AGE
Information about gender and age were not requested. However, the applications suggest a roughly equal split between traditionally male names (79 single, 32 in groups) and traditionally
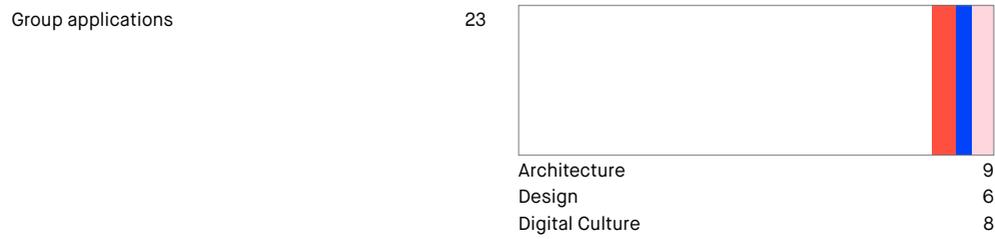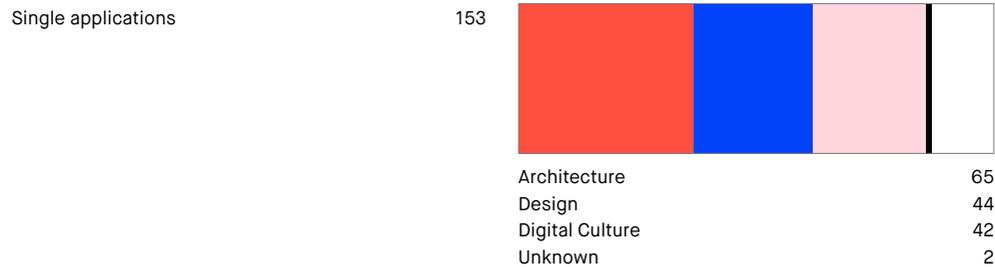
female names (73 single, 34 in groups). As in 2016, about 25% of the applicants (43) listed their age. Among those who did, the total range was between 22 and 57 years of age, similar to 2016.
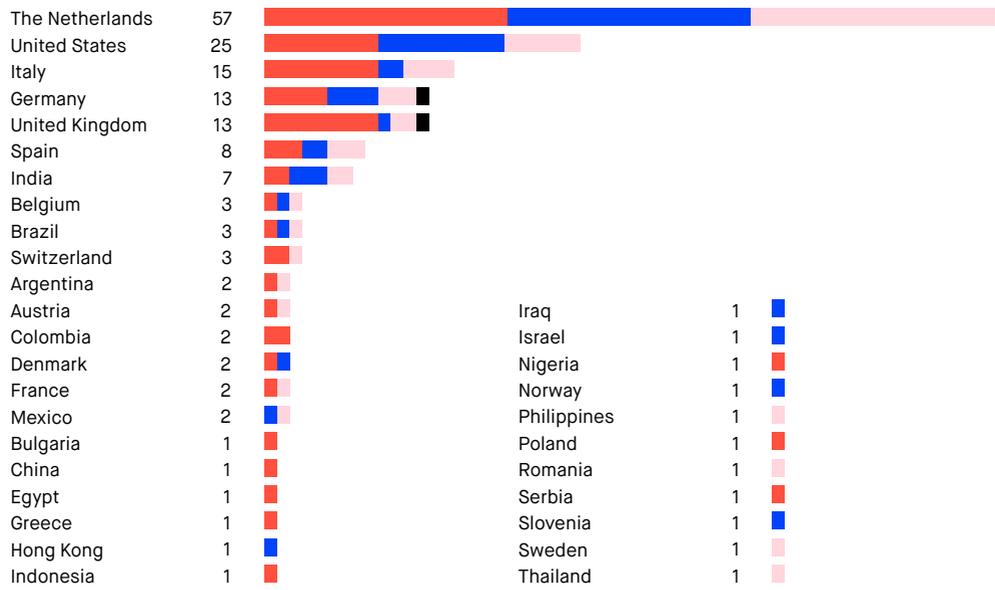
RESIDENCY AND ORIGIN
As in 2016, applications were received from 33 countries of residency. Overall, almost half of the applicants (83) reside outside their country of origin. About one-third of applicants (57) were Dutch residents, compared to more than half in 2016. Of these 57 Dutch residents, about one-third (20) were also born in the Netherlands, a similar proportion to 2016. The other 37 applicants with Dutch residency represented 23 countries of origin, most commonly Italy, Germany, the U.S., with two applicants each from China and Turkey, and one each from Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Croatia, Egypt, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Malaysia, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, the U.K.

One application each from Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, and Thailand, and two applications each came from Argentina, Austria, Colombia, Denmark, France, and Mexico. The rest of the applications came from residents of, in ascending order, Switzerland, Brazil, Belgium, India, Spain, the U.K., Germany, Italy, and the U.S. (Furthermore, the majority of the applicants residing in Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S. have a different country of origin.) While Dutch residents were equally distributed between the disciplines (19 each), architecture attracted the most applications from outside the Netherlands.

In comparison to 2016, applications from U.S. residents rose from 6% to 14% and Italian residents from 5% to 9%.
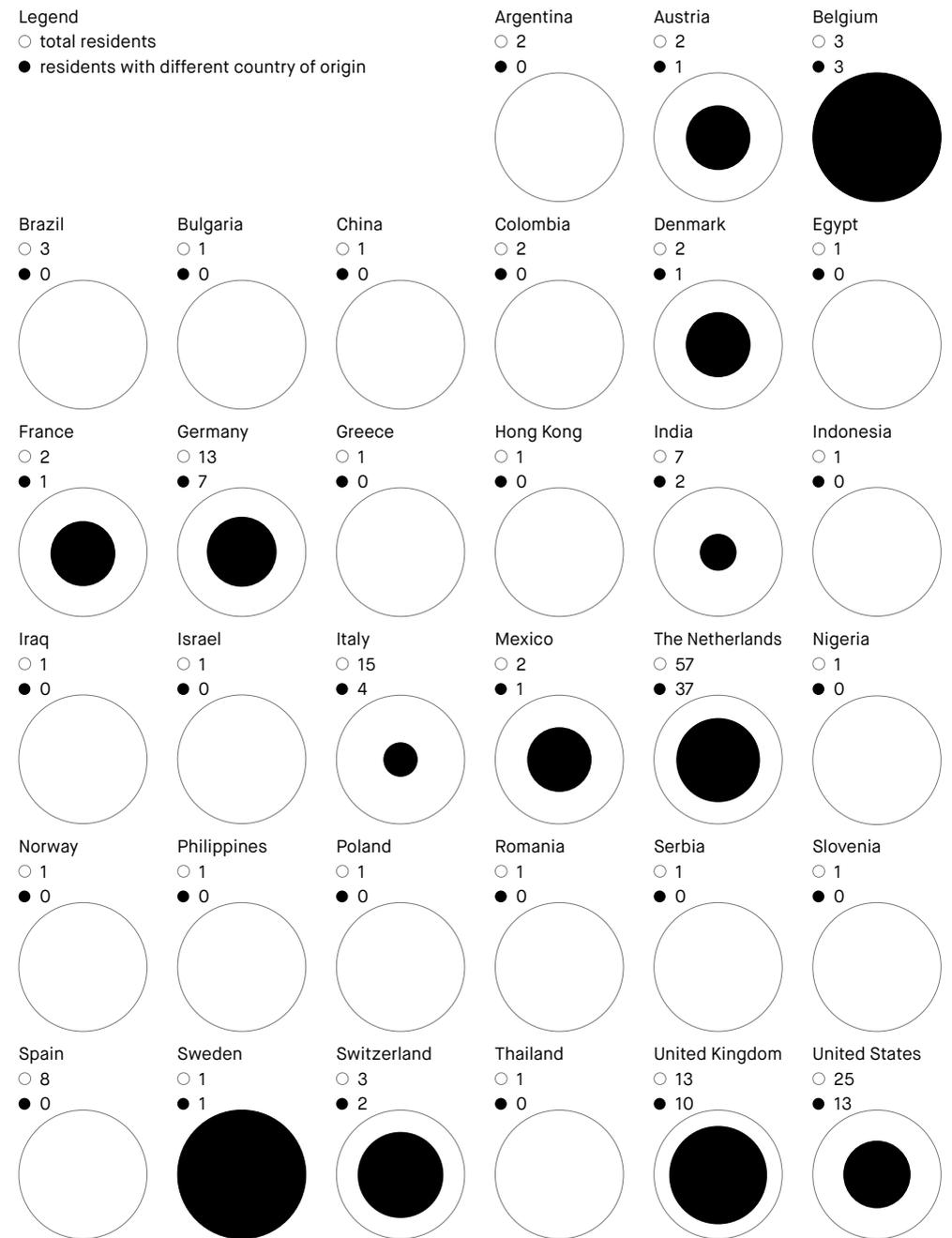
## Applications by category and group composition

**Single applications**  153

| Architecture | 65 |
| Design | 44 |
| Digital Culture | 42 |
| Unknown | 2 |

**Group applications**  23

| Architecture | 9 |
| Design | 6 |
| Digital Culture | 8 |

Applications by category and group composition

## Applications by country of residence

| The Netherlands | 57 |
| United States | 25 |
| Italy | 15 |
| Germany | 13 |
| United Kingdom | 13 |
| Spain | 8 |
| India | 7 |
| Belgium | 3 |
| Brazil | 3 |
| Switzerland | 3 |
| Argentina | 2 |
| Austria | 2 |
| Colombia | 2 |
| Denmark | 2 |
| France | 2 |
| Mexico | 2 |
| Bulgaria | 1 |
| China | 1 |
| Egypt | 1 |
| Greece | 1 |
| Hong Kong | 1 |
| Indonesia | 1 |

| Iraq | 1 |
| Israel | 1 |
| Nigeria | 1 |
| Norway | 1 |
| Philippines | 1 |
| Poland | 1 |
| Romania | 1 |
| Serbia | 1 |
| Slovenia | 1 |
| Sweden | 1 |
| Thailand | 1 |

Applications by country of residence

## Legend

○ total residents
● residents with different country of origin

| Country | total residents | residents with different country of origin |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Argentina | 2 | 0 |
| Austria | 2 | 1 |
| Belgium | 3 | 3 |
| Brazil | 3 | 0 |
| Bulgaria | 1 | 0 |
| China | 1 | 0 |
| Colombia | 2 | 0 |
| Denmark | 2 | 1 |
| Egypt | 1 | 0 |
| France | 2 | 1 |
| Germany | 13 | 7 |
| Greece | 1 | 0 |
| Hong Kong | 1 | 0 |
| India | 7 | 2 |
| Indonesia | 1 | 0 |
| Iraq | 1 | 0 |
| Israel | 1 | 0 |
| Italy | 15 | 4 |
| Mexico | 2 | 1 |
| The Netherlands | 57 | 37 |
| Nigeria | 1 | 0 |
| Norway | 1 | 0 |
| Philippines | 1 | 0 |
| Poland | 1 | 0 |
| Romania | 1 | 0 |
| Serbia | 1 | 0 |
| Slovenia | 1 | 0 |
| Spain | 8 | 0 |
| Sweden | 1 | 1 |
| Switzerland | 3 | 2 |
| Thailand | 1 | 0 |
| United Kingdom | 13 | 10 |
| United States | 25 | 13 |

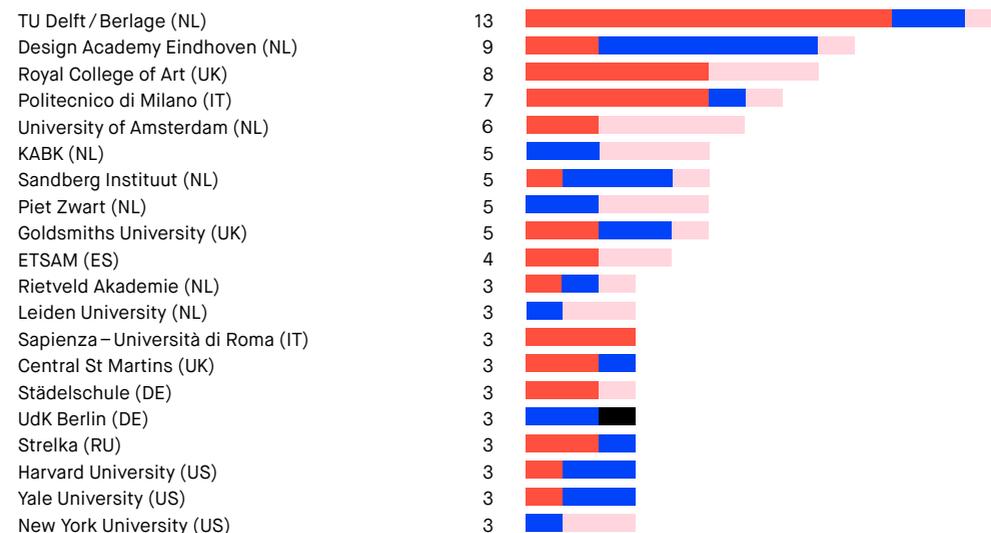Applications by country of residence and origin

Applications from U.K., German, and Spanish residents remained at about the same level, while applications dropped from Romania, Canada, and Turkey.

There may be several reasons for the rise in applications from the U.S. One is the opening of the call to applicants who did not already have the right to work in the European Union at the time of application. Another is the increased circulation of the call through social media and academic networks in the U.S.

EDUCATION

Although information about educational background was not required, some applicants included it in their personal description or referenced it in previous work. The greatest number of applicants, in descending order, came from the TU Delft or the Berlage, Design Academy Eindhoven, the Royal College of Art in London, Politecnico di Milano, the University of Amsterdam, the Royal Academy of Art in the Hague, the Sandberg Instituut (Amsterdam, NL), Piet Zwart Institute (Rotterdam, NL), Goldsmiths University (London, UK), and ETSAM Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. Schools represented by three applicants include the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (Amsterdam, NL), Leiden University, Central St Martins (London, UK), Städelschule (Frankfurt am Mein, DE), Universität der Künste Berlin, Sapienza Università di Roma, Strelka (Moscow, RU), and Harvard, Yale, and New York University in the U.S.

One applicant each was educated in an East Asian university and a West African university; 3% in a Middle Eastern university (5) or Southeast Asian university (6), 5% in a South American university (8), 17% in a North American university (30), 35% in a Dutch academic institution (62), and 61% in an

| | |
|---|---|
| TU Delft / Berlage (NL) | 13 |
| Design Academy Eindhoven (NL) | 9 |
| Royal College of Art (UK) | 8 |
| Politecnico di Milano (IT) | 7 |
| University of Amsterdam (NL) | 6 |
| KABK (NL) | 5 |
| Sandberg Instituut (NL) | 5 |
| Piet Zwart (NL) | 5 |
| Goldsmiths University (UK) | 5 |
| ETSAM (ES) | 4 |
| Rietveld Akademie (NL) | 3 |
| Leiden University (NL) | 3 |
| Sapienza – Università di Roma (IT) | 3 |
| Central St Martins (UK) | 3 |
| Städelschule (DE) | 3 |
| UdK Berlin (DE) | 3 |
| Strelka (RU) | 3 |
| Harvard University (US) | 3 |
| Yale University (US) | 3 |
| New York University (US) | 3 |

Educational background by university

Legend
○ total applicants
● percentage of applicants in the region

North America
● 17%

Europe
● 61%

Southeast Asia
● 3%

Middle East
● 3%

South America
● 5%
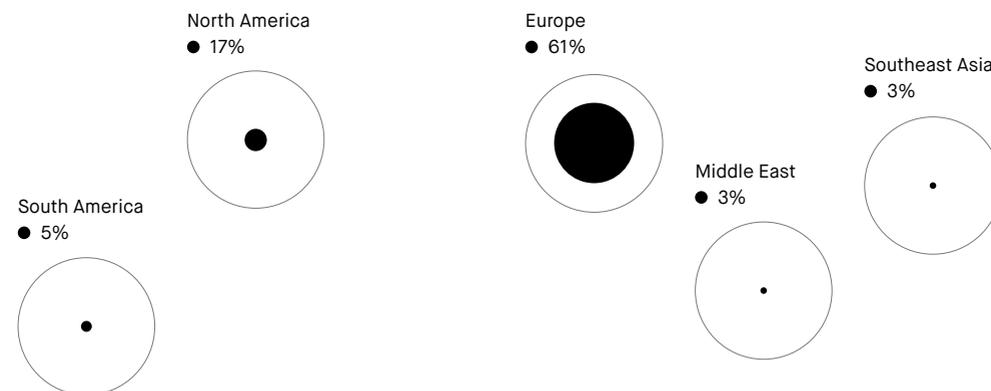
Educational background by geographic region

academic institution in another European country (108). (Some applicants listed multiple institutions for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral education.)

Among the applicants, 21 are currently pursuing their PhD and 16 are bachelor's or master's students.

The statistics show that the vast majority of applicants have taken some part of their education in Europe. Compared to 2016, the most common schools are roughly the same, with increased representation of North American universities. The geographic distribution still demonstrates a limited representation of institutions outside of Western Europe and the United States of America; this imbalance could be addressed by increasing efforts to circulate the call to places and institutions beyond those already well-covered in Het Nieuwe Instituut's network. Furthermore, changes in the application criteria, especially in terms of language and emphasis on writing, may open the call to a broader audience in terms of discourse and modes of communication.

### FUNDING
In 2017, only 13 applications reported about previous funding, fellowships, or residencies. The most common were Jan van Eyck Academie, Rijksacademie, Mondriaan Fund, and Fulbright scholarships.
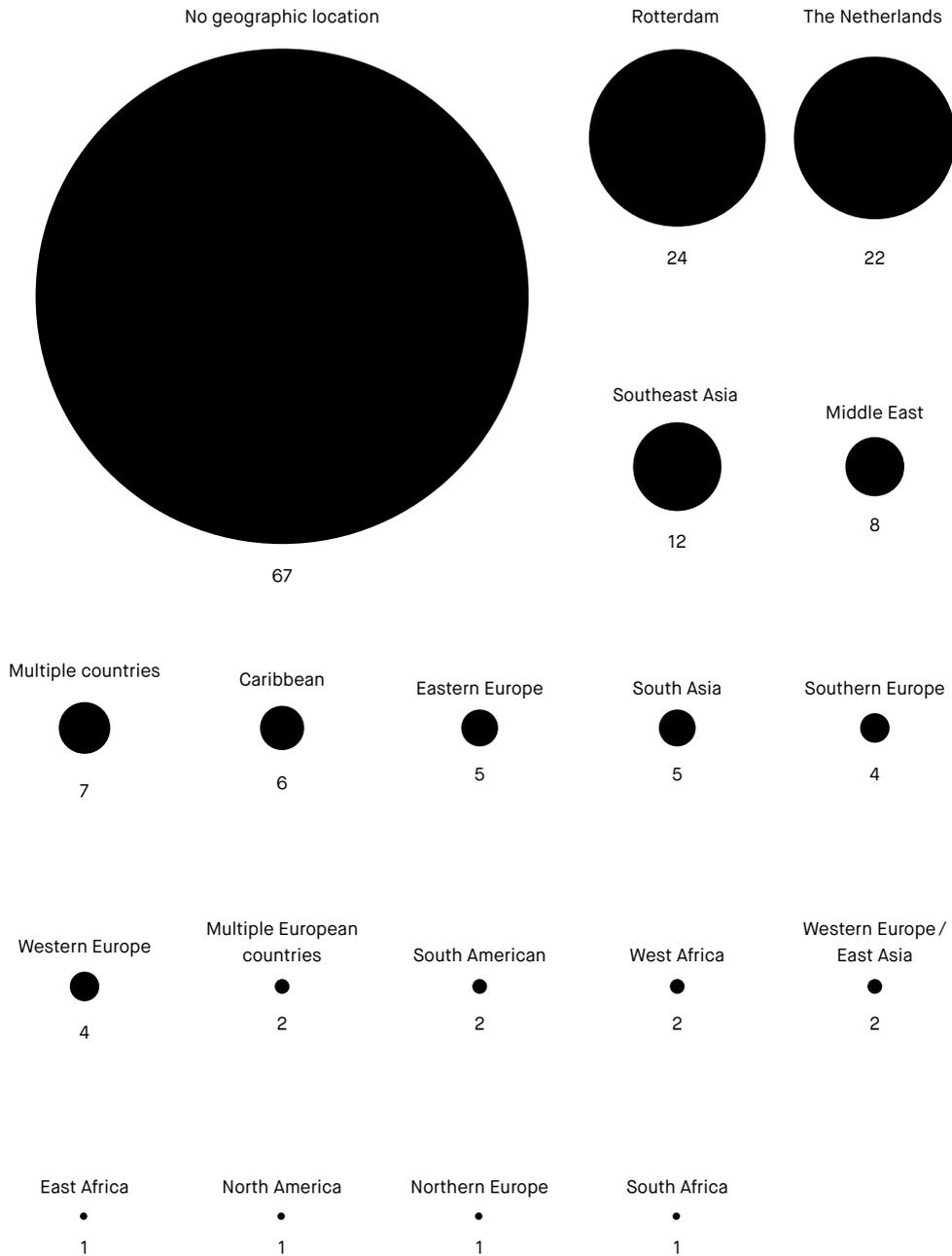
# RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The 2017 Call for Fellows differed from the 2016 edition in that it listed a specific brief for each of the three disciplines — architecture, design, and digital culture — and required applicants to declare which discipline they were addressing. (The three briefs are described in the introduction and can be found in their entirety on the website of Het Nieuwe Instituut.) At the same time, the briefs remained open to a variety of approaches in terms of techniques and strategies, which will be covered in more detail in the following section, Research Methodologies.

### ARCHITECTURE
While the 2016 call for fellows set an entirely open brief for architecture, the 2017 call drew its focus to the architectural legacy of the former Dutch colonial territories and their different forms of heritage and after-lives, as well as their influence on and agency within contemporary cities in the Netherlands. This subject was deemed particularly urgent to consider in a Dutch institution that archives, exhibits, recontextualises, and shapes the discipline of architecture, but the broader methodology is equally significant for institutions with other cultural or geographic focuses. In reaction to this call, applicants had to challenge the dominant forms in which architecture is studied and researched, through both critical engagement with conventional hierarchies and canons as well as recognition and construction of new kinds of archives. Many applicants also described potential futures for architecture and urbanism, both outside and inside the Netherlands, in connection to deep historical roots (in a few cases, as far back as the 16th century) in relation to the brief.

No geographic location

67

Rotterdam

24

The Netherlands

22

Southeast Asia

12

Middle East

8

Multiple countries

7

Caribbean

6

Eastern Europe

5

South Asia

5

Southern Europe

4

Western Europe

4

Multiple European countries

2

South American

2

West Africa

2

Western Europe / East Asia

2

East Africa

1

North America

1

Northern Europe

1

South Africa

1

Research subject by geographic location

Among the 74 architecture applications, one application looked at sites in India; 3 (4%) looked at sites in Africa, including Ghana and South Africa; 4 (5%) looked at sites in the Middle East, including Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iran; 5 (7%) looked at sites in the Caribbean and South America, including Suriname, Curaçao, Aruba, Sint Maarten, and Brazil; 7 (9%) applications looked at multiple sites historically subject to Dutch colonisation; and 12 applications (16%) focused on sites in Southeast or East Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan. Many of the proposals to research sites outside of the Netherlands came from researchers originating from or currently living in the territory of their focus. Inside the Netherlands, 11 (15%) addressed Rotterdam specifically and 12 (16%) addressed other cities in the Netherlands.

Although there were many excellent proposals, the brief does reveal a possible weakness in the intersection of architectural history outside of the traditional canon, familiarity with sites of historic Dutch colonisation, and availability of information about these sites in architectural archives. For instance, one of the reasons that more than twice as many applications address sites in the former Dutch East Indies as in the former Dutch Caribbean could be the availability of several contemporary academic research books in English specifically focused on postcolonial architectural heritage in Indonesia.

DESIGN

The 2017 design brief also differed from the 2016 brief in that it asked applicants to consider objects in a larger political, geographic, and logistical context. While many applications in 2016 did so, it was not addressed by all applicants. In the Netherlands, funding for design research often focuses on studio

practice and material experimentation or technological innovation, and is thus oriented to new proposals and solutions that have not yet entered the wider cultural discourse. In this case, many applicants looked at objects already embedded within a cultural narrative; thus, design was often more the subject than the methodology itself. Another interesting phenomenon was the relationship between the architecture and design briefs: several applicants explored material artefacts as complex manifestations of the legacy of post-colonialism.

### DIGITAL CULTURE

The 2017 digital culture brief may be said to be the broadest of the three disciplines, in the sense that the subject of algorithmic processing is inescapable in the investigation of contemporary technology and how it shapes everyday life. Nevertheless, there is still the need to promote a higher degree of literacy in terms of how algorithms incorporate, distill, and reinforce pre-existing biases as well as developing new ones in systems powered by digital tools, databases, and channels. While the discipline encourages an investigation of how machines are shaping human lives, it also requires a high degree of literacy in existing political and socioeconomic hegemonies and regimes of power, as well as how they often manifest as neutral and objective through digital frameworks.

### THEORISTS, PRACTITIONERS, AND CULTURAL REFERENCES

Compared to the responses to the 2016 call, the 2017 applications shared many of the same references to significant theorists, practitioners, and other cultural figures, but displayed a greater variety of cited names with less repetition. Of 176
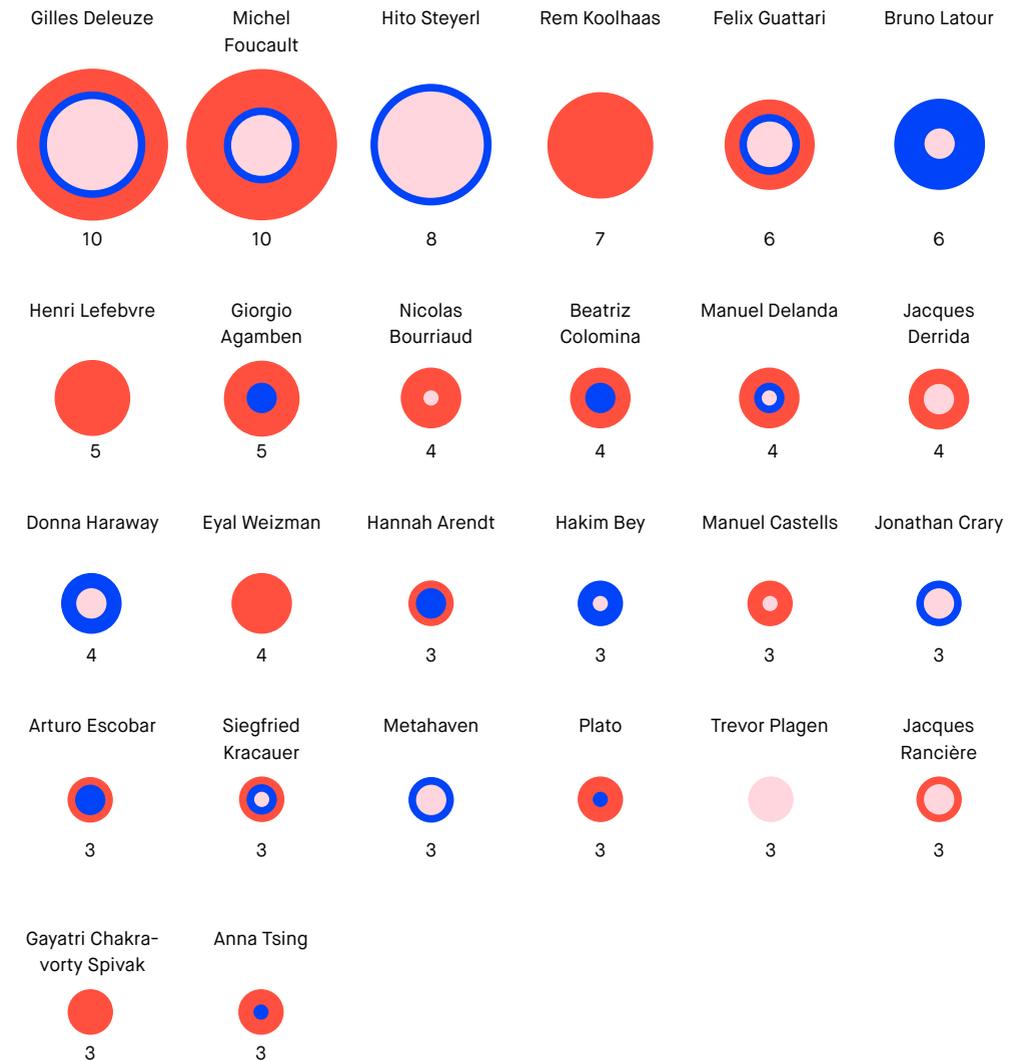


Most commonly cited references

applications, 38 (22%) had no references. The most popular references in both 2016 and 2017 were the French philosophers Michel Foucault (10) and Gilles Deleuze (10), while in 2017 the third most popular reference was the German filmmaker, artist,

and writer Hito Steyerl (8), compared to the Swiss architect Le Corbusier in 2016. (It may be relevant that Hito Steyerl delivered the Benno Premsela lecture at Het Nieuwe Instituut in November 2016, a few months before the 2017 call.) The most popular reference for the architecture brief was the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas (7), for the design brief the French sociologist Bruno Latour (4), and for the digital culture brief Hito Steyerl (7). References that appeared in applications for all three disciplines include Foucault, Deleuze, French philosopher Félix Guattari, Mexican-American philosopher Manuel DeLanda, and German theorist Siegfried Kracauer. Other common names include the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre (5), Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben (5), German theorist Walter Benjamin (4), Israeli architect and writer Eyal Weizman (4), French curator Nicolas Bourriaud (4), Spanish architecture historian and theorist Beatriz Colomina (4), French philosopher Jacques Derrida (4), and American science and technology scholar Donna Haraway (4).

While at least two applicants each referred to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Arturo Escobar, Abidin Kusno, Edward Said, Édouard Glissant, Gloria Anzaldúa, and other leading post-colonial critics or writers, they are still underrepresented in the framing of research proposals in the disciplines of the creative industries. At the same time, there are many other voices and theories that may be difficult to access and incorporate into the discourse in the Netherlands because they have not yet been translated into Dutch or English. Het Nieuwe Instituut's R&D department has discussed projects on translation and cross-cultural dialogue to make clear its commitment to supporting a greater diversity of sources of expertise and philosophical insight.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

The applications listed an enormous range of strategies to pursue research, encompassing diverse ways of collecting, analysing, discussing, and disseminating information. These will be discussed in terms of collaborations, methods and outcomes, although the latter two overlapped greatly: for example, many listed public events or publications as tools to reflect on and generate research results rather than simply as end goals.

### COLLABORATIONS

More than half of all applications listed some form of institutional collaboration. As detailed in the call, preference was given to proposals that included collaborations with institutions, NGOs and organisations in the Netherlands and abroad. These ranged from official institutions like universities, museums, galleries, archives, ministries, and municipalities, to non-governmental research organisations, humanitarian organisations, environmental organisations, manufacturing organisations, broadcast organisations, creative studios, festivals, and publications, both inside and outside the Netherlands.

In education, the most common references for collaboration included TU Delft (10), the University of Amsterdam (7), Willem de Kooning Academie/Piet Zwart Instituut (5), and ArtEZ, Gerrit Rietveld Academie/Sandberg Instituut, Utrecht University, and Leiden University (4 each). Somewhat surprisingly, given the geographic framework provided by the architecture brief, there were more references by architecture applicants to uni-

versities in Europe (9), in the United States (8), and in Colombia (4) than to universities in the Caribbean (3), in Indonesia (1), or in South Africa (1). This appears to be a missed opportunity to engage local academic discourses and practitioners in research being done from the Netherlands on the spatial legacy of Dutch colonialism. The R&D department should also take the lead on such collaborations in its own programmes in order to build connections and foundations for a conversation involving multiple perspectives related to this subject of key interest.

In the cultural sector, a huge variety of museums and galleries were listed as possible collaborators, from Dutch institutions like Tropenmuseum, With de With Center for Contemporary Art, CasCo, V2, Boijmans Van Beuningen, the Kunsthal, and many more, to other museums in Europe such as the V&A or the Triennial di Milano. In general, designers tended to want to collaborate more with museums, arts organisations, and centres for experimental or historical manufacture, while architects were more likely to list the Nationaal Archief and other archives in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe, East Asia, and Indonesia, as well as Dutch creative studios, broadcasters or publishers. Meanwhile, applicants for digital culture were most interested in media and art festivals in the Netherlands and abroad as well as in the high number of smaller, specialised institutions and NGOs investigating technology in the Netherlands (such as Baltan Laboratories or Bits of Freedom) and abroad.

Furthermore, applicants across the disciplines referred to a high number of research institutions in the Netherlands that offer a great deal of expertise in a specialised subject but do not have a large capacity for exhibitions or public programmes. Some of these, such as Play the City, are already amongst Het Nieuwe Instituut's collaborators, and the R&D department
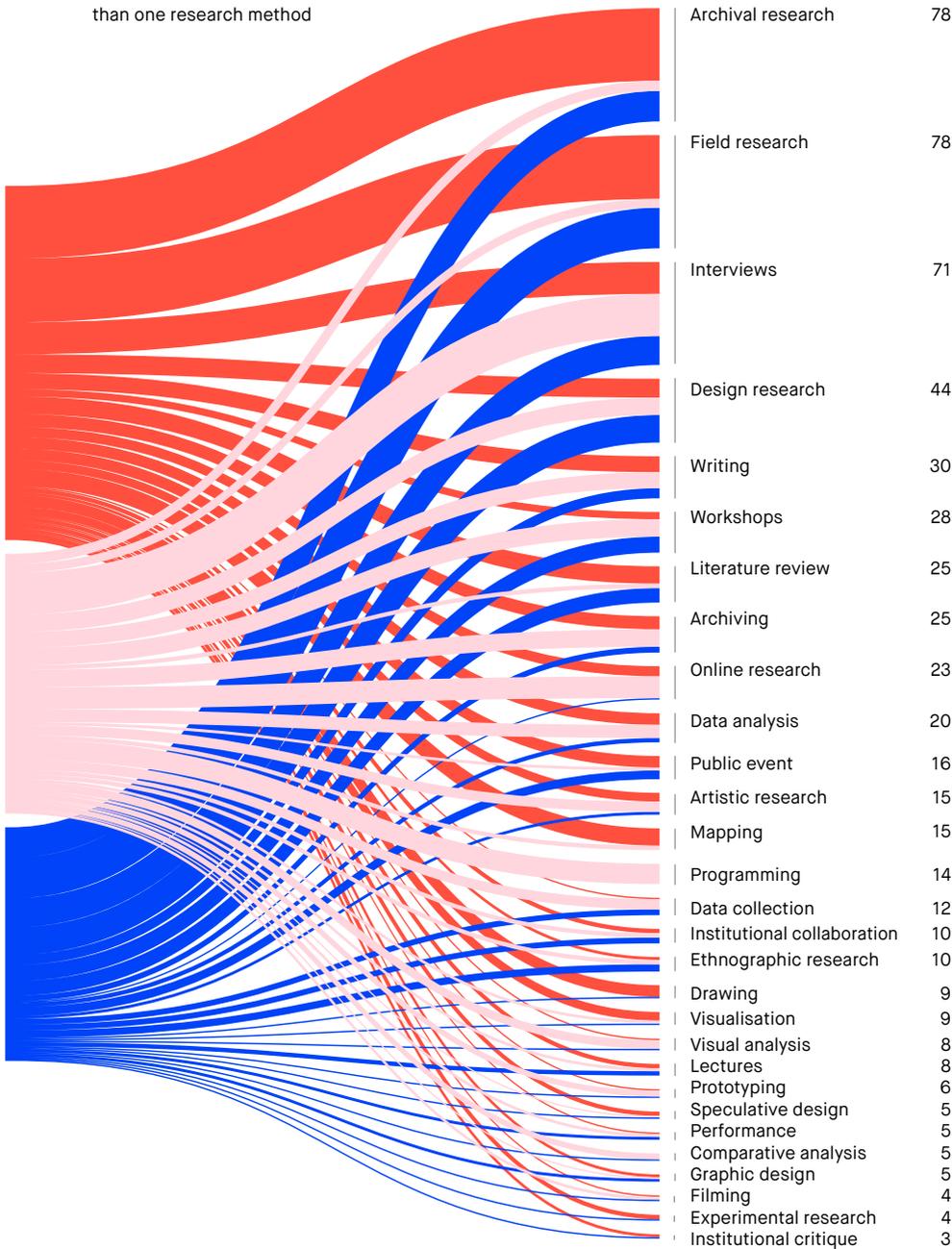
may explore other models for inter-institutional opportunities to host fellows or projects with specific research organisations that are frequently listed.

METHODS
The most common methods overall were archival research, field research, and interviews, each one mentioned in over 40% of applications, followed by design research (25%), writing (17%), and workshops (16%). In addition, among the 50 applications for digital culture, online research was mentioned in 15 (30%) and programming was mentioned in 14 (28%). The interest in archives carries on from 2016, when a similar percentage of applicants also planned to consult archives for their research. In 2017, given the interest in subjects that may be less represented in historical archives, the practice of archiving or building an archive was also mentioned as a strategy in 16% of the architecture applications and 20% of the design applications.

On the other hand, mapping as a strategy was less prevalent in 2017 than in 2016. That may seem unusual given the interest in geo-graphic structures or networks in both the architecture and design themes. However, it may be that the map, as a tool of representation and communication, is in a state of evolution following debates of the past decade, in which its instrumentality in power relations and its presumption of accuracy and competence has been critiqued. Researchers today may be interested in other forms of representation for more complex data, or data whose relationship with mapping has been the source of conflict over time. For example, the selected architecture fellows proposed to create a botanical "atlas" through garden and landscape techniques in real space rather than the traditional drawing and mapping on paper.

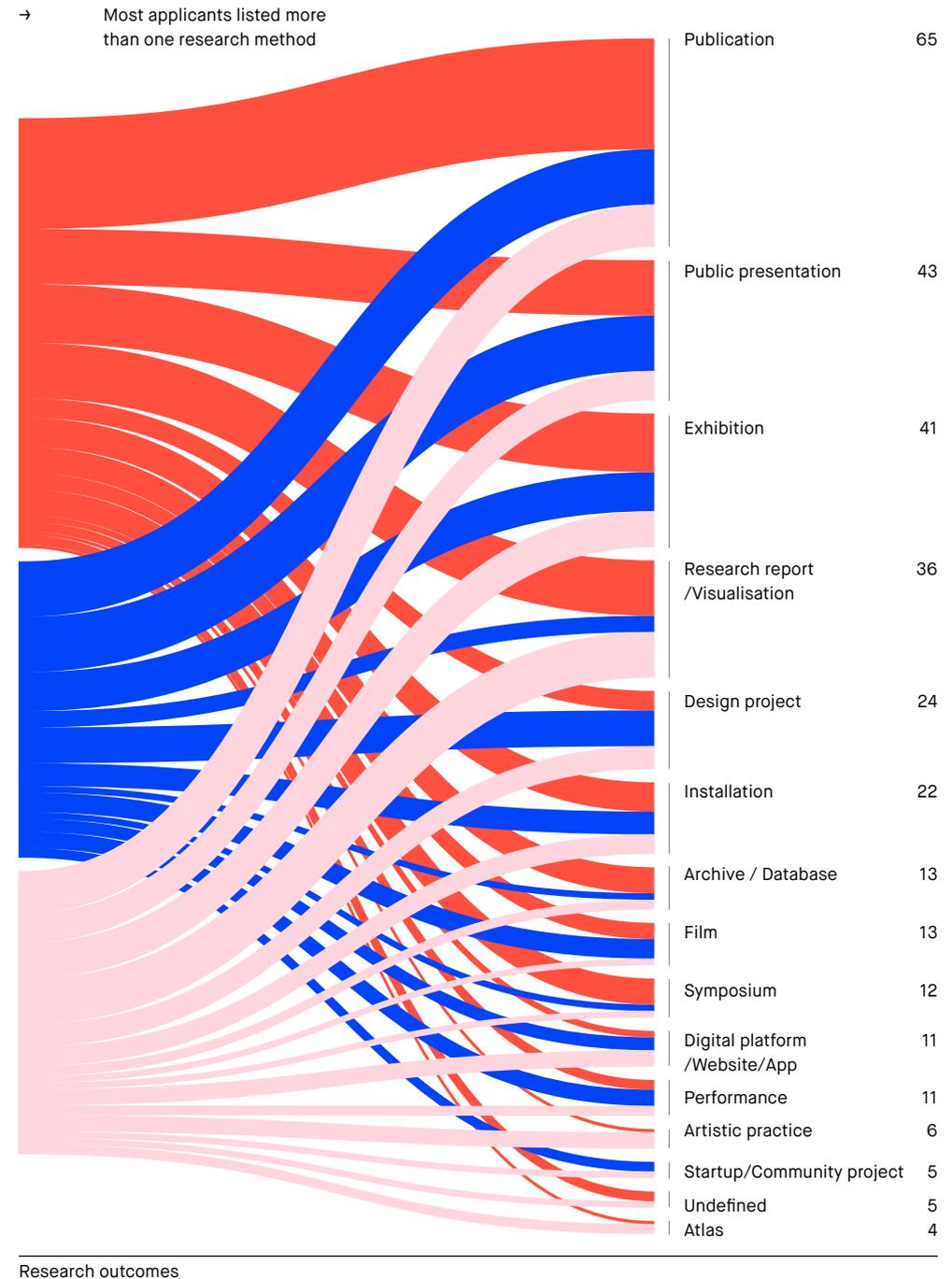| Research methods | |
| --- | --- |
| Archival research | 78 |
| Field research | 78 |
| Interviews | 71 |
| Design research | 44 |
| Writing | 30 |
| Workshops | 28 |
| Literature review | 25 |
| Archiving | 25 |
| Online research | 23 |
| Data analysis | 20 |
| Public event | 16 |
| Artistic research | 15 |
| Mapping | 15 |
| Programming | 14 |
| Data collection | 12 |
| Institutional collaboration | 10 |
| Ethnographic research | 10 |
| Drawing | 9 |
| Visualisation | 9 |
| Visual analysis | 8 |
| Lectures | 8 |
| Prototyping | 6 |
| Speculative design | 5 |
| Performance | 5 |
| Comparative analysis | 5 |
| Graphic design | 5 |
| Filming | 4 |
| Experimental research | 4 |
| Institutional critique | 3 |

# RESEARCH OUTCOMES

Since the first open call in 2016, Het Nieuwe Instituut's fellowship programme has prioritised giving the space and time needed to pursue critical investigation and speculation in relation to and between the key disciplines. That objective emphasises strong forms of engagement, self-awareness about the role of the researcher and the institution, and active discourse rather than the establishment and pursuit of pre-determined outcomes. However, in 2017, the urgency of the global political environment demands brave ambitions from researchers, who have a unique opportunity to develop an independent perspective and shape equally their own practice and the ethos of the institutions in their network. Het Nieuwe Instituut is committed to maintaining a free space for research in the national and international cultural landscape, while also supporting, amplifying, and disseminating the outcomes that emerge from the research process itself.

The applicants in 2017 were largely oriented towards public, live, or widely distributed forms to assemble and communicate their research, and they tended to list multiple outcomes for a single proposal. Publications were by far the most common outcome, listed in 65 applications (37%), followed by public presentations (such as discussions, dinners, parties, launches, or tours) in 43 applications (24%), exhibitions in 41 applications (23%), research visualisations or reports in 36 applications (20%), design projects in 24 applications (14%) and installations in 22 applications (13%). Other outcomes included film, archives or databases, symposia, performance, digital platforms or apps, artistic practice, startups or community projects, or atlases. Only 5 applicants (3%) did not define any outcomes.

Compared to 2016, exhibitions were equally popular as proposed outcomes in the applications in 2017. Publications and public events were more likely to be mentioned as possible end results in 2017, while films and performances were less common. It is possible that the latter two formats were more popular among applicants opting for artistic research in 2016, whereas the 2017 call attracted more discursive formats to deal with complex sociopolitical themes. This tendency should also be evaluated in the larger context of the application process itself. The application format, with its emphasis on research references and precise language, may encourage more academic practitioners, but future calls may explore different adaptations in language, criteria, and media to attract researchers who use other forms of inquiry.

→ Most applicants listed more than one research method



| | |
|---|---|
| Publication | 65 |
| Public presentation | 43 |
| Exhibition | 41 |
| Research report /Visualisation | 36 |
| Design project | 24 |
| Installation | 22 |
| Archive / Database | 13 |
| Film | 13 |
| Symposium | 12 |
| Digital platform /Website/App | 11 |
| Performance | 11 |
| Artistic practice | 6 |
| Startup/Community project | 5 |
| Undefined | 5 |
| Atlas | 4 |

Research outcomes

# APPLICATION     FORMAT

As in 2016, the vast majority of applicants used visual material in their proposals: 86% of architecture applicants, 92% of design applicants, and 74% of digital culture applicants. Applicants in digital culture included an average of 4 images, while applicants in architecture and digital culture used an average of 6 images, slightly lower than in 2016 (an average of 7 images across all categories). One architecture application used a maximum of 26 images.

The most common images were of personal works (included in 43% of applications), site images (24%), diagrams, artistic references, and historical references (20% each), illustrations (11%), maps (9%), architectural drawings, media images, commercial images, and screenshots (6% each), object images (5%), and film stills and social media images (2% each).

Among all applications, 18 different typefaces were used by at least two applicants each, representing 127 applications (72%). As in 2016, the most frequent typefaces were Helvetica (14%), Arial (12%), Times (10%), and Calibri (10%). Among this set of common typefaces, only 21 applicants (12%) used a serif typeface (Garamond, Caslon, Minion, or Cambria). Meanwhile, 49 applicants (28%) used a unique typeface.

As in 2016, more than 90% (159) of the applications were laid out in portrait orientation. Applicants in digital culture were most likely to use landscape orientation, which may reflect a greater focus on or engagement with screens rather than printed works.

Between the announcement of the call on 13 March 2017 and the deadline on 16 April 2017, 176 applications were received. Two applications were submitted on the first day — one, in fact, within minutes of the announcement. Meanwhile, 103 applications (59%) were submitted on the last day.
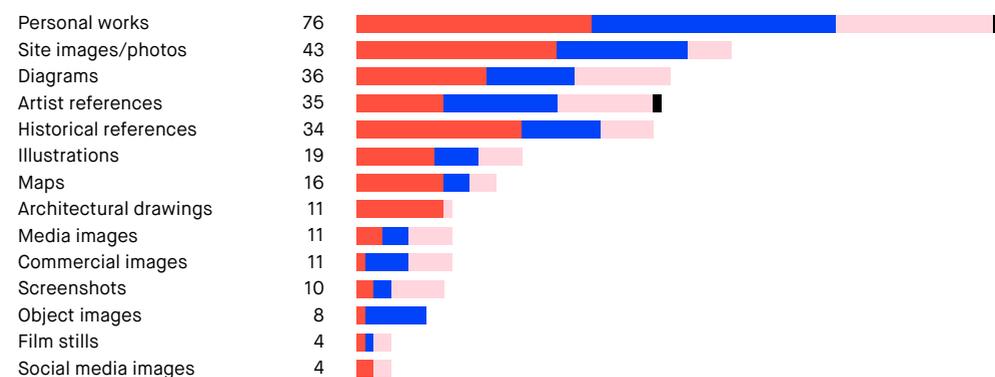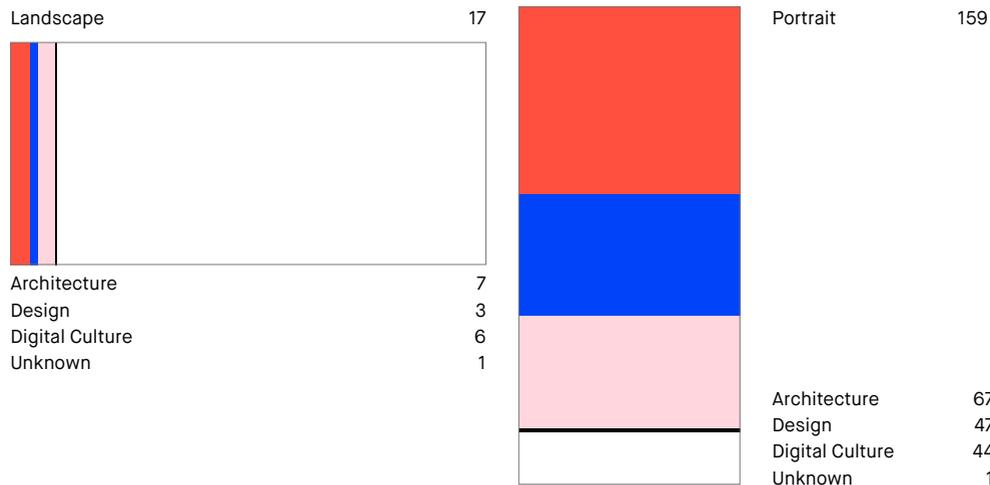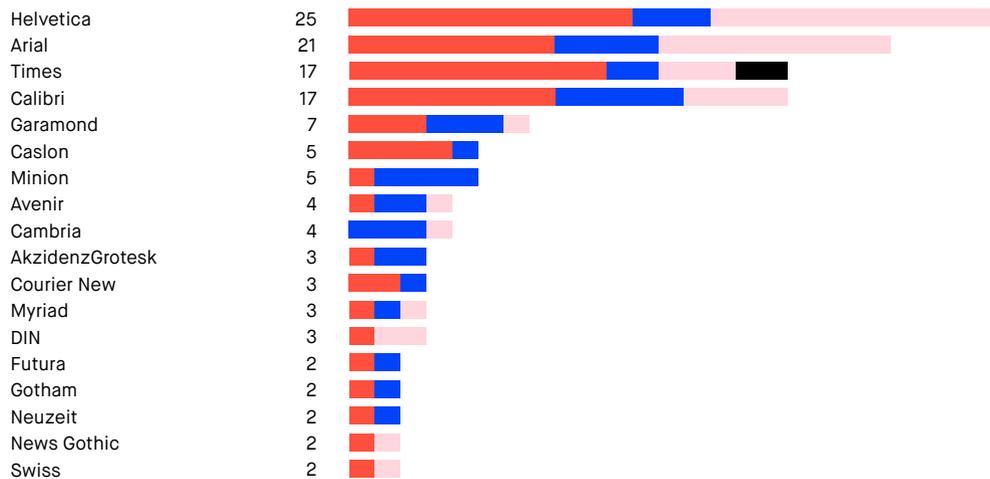
| | |
|---|---|
| Personal works | 76 |
| Site images/photos | 43 |
| Diagrams | 36 |
| Artist references | 35 |
| Historical references | 34 |
| Illustrations | 19 |
| Maps | 16 |
| Architectural drawings | 11 |
| Media images | 11 |
| Commercial images | 11 |
| Screenshots | 10 |
| Object images | 8 |
| Film stills | 4 |
| Social media images | 4 |

Image typology

| Landscape | 17 | | Portrait | 159 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| Architecture | 7 |
|---|---|
| Design | 3 |
| Digital Culture | 6 |
| Unknown | 1 |

| Architecture | 67 |
|---|---|
| Design | 47 |
| Digital Culture | 44 |
| Unknown | 1 |

PDF orientation

| Helvetica | 25 |
|---|---|
| Arial | 21 |
| Times | 17 |
| Calibri | 17 |
| Garamond | 7 |
| Caslon | 5 |
| Minion | 5 |
| Avenir | 4 |
| Cambria | 4 |
| AkzidenzGrotesk | 3 |
| Courier New | 3 |
| Myriad | 3 |
| DIN | 3 |
| Futura | 2 |
| Gotham | 2 |
| Neuzeit | 2 |
| News Gothic | 2 |
| Swiss | 2 |

Typefaces

# CONCLUSIONS

After the completion of the 2016 cycle of research fellows, the 2017 Call for Fellows resulted in the selection of four fellows — one pair for architecture, one for design, and one for digital culture. At the same time, it has also provided a resource for continuing reflection on the nature of research in the Netherlands in the creative industries, outside the traditional boundaries of knowledge institutions (like higher-level education or scientific research centres) but beyond the sphere of direct cultural production (like artistic or creative commissions or platforms to promote or display finished outcomes). Het Nieuwe Instituut, and in particular its Research & Development department, is committed to fostering creative practitioners that require ongoing support for research, as well as exploring the general conditions that characterise research and articulating its demands as an intermediary practice in the Dutch cultural landscape. To that end, this report stands alongside the most visible outcome of the fellowship programme — in other words, the output of the selected fellows — with an analysis of the other 173 applications. Through this series of conclusions made in observation of the entire application set, Het Nieuwe Instituut recognises the high quality of the applicants and, by drawing out their distinguishing characteristics and evolutions since 2016, aims to explore further opportunities to attract, connect, support, and elevate research as a creative practice in its own right.

### DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The Call for Fellows continues to attract a diverse group of applicants marked by an equal gender balance, a wide age range, and a diversity of national backgrounds and residency statuses.

More applicants are also submitting in groups, showing a tendency towards multidisciplinary research teams. This year, about half of the applicants resided outside their country of origin, and the majority of applications came from outside the Netherlands. In particular, the number of applicants from the United States (the majority with origins in the Middle East, Europe, and India) rose since 2016. This reflects the international scope of the existing fellowship programme and its outcomes, as well as the international network of the R&D department and its channels of communication. It also shows the commitment of Het Nieuwe Instituut to accepting applicants without pre-existing residency status in the EU, promising to support them through residency applications on a case-by-case basis or by exploring other channels of communication for those subject to travel restrictions for a variety of reasons. As conditions for research and residency more broadly shift in the world, especially given recent governmental changes in the U.S. and the U.K., the Netherlands has emerged as an attractive alternative for some of the most innovative and dynamic researchers in the creative industries across the globe. Het Nieuwe Instituut strives to be a platform that benefits from and amplifies their unique contributions to the fields of architecture, design, and digital culture, standing out amid a competitive international landscape of fellowship programmes, museums, research centres, and other organisations.

## DISCIPLINARY FOCUS
In 2017, the Call for Fellows asked for responses to specific briefs in each discipline — in architecture, to the architectural legacy of the former Dutch colonial territories and their different forms of heritage and after-lives, as well as presence in the construction of contemporary cities in the Netherlands; in design, to the politics of locality and mobility of objects and crafts; and in digital culture, to the increasing influence of algorithms in systems of everyday life. Het Nieuwe Instituut is committed to the idea that, alongside open-ended individual pursuits, research in the creative industries can be equally successful in the form of carefully framed contributions to specific discussions highlighted as urgent and topical. In the selected fellows for 2017, a high degree of shared research interests and commonalities has already been observed, which will ideally produce an increasingly active and advanced discourse among the disciplines. That discourse should benefit not only the individual practitioners but the larger creative research community as a whole, as well as clarifying Het Nieuwe Instituut's status as a repository, platform, and incubator for research in its own right.
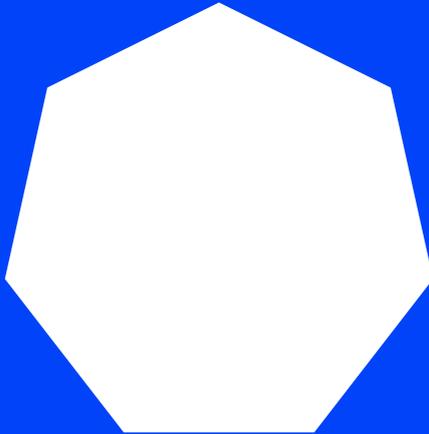
## POSTCOLONIAL BLINDSPOTS
Het Nieuwe Instituut is dedicated to expanding the thematic and geographic boundaries of research practice in the creative disciplines as well as supporting researchers who can tackle inbuilt hierarchies and inequalities in what kinds of heritage and experiences are foregrounded in architecture, design, and digital culture. However, there still remains a great deal of space to improve. Efforts to disseminate the call for fellows beyond Western Europe and the United States increased in 2017 and should continue with even more energy in 2018. While the application set represents a wide diversity of countries of origin and residence, the vast majority of applicants have had some higher education in Europe; therefore, Het Nieuwe Instituut should consider what channels go beyond that already robust network of communication and research discourse. At the same time, it should set an example for and provide a resource to applicants by showcasing and supporting the work of leading thinkers outside of the traditional Western

European canon. Based on the 2017 applications, it is clear that speakers invited by Het Nieuwe Instituut, such as Benno Premsela lecturers Hito Steyerl and Benjamin Bratton, are often referenced by applicants as they set out their research concepts. Given this opportunity and responsibility, the Research & Development department is working on a project on translation and cross-cultural dialogue to promote critical and original voices and texts not previously accessible in English or Dutch, in the hope that future applicants will engage with an ever wider range of backgrounds, origins, and experiences among their references.

### JURY PROCESS AND BIASES

In 2016 and 2017, the calls for fellows attracted diverse sets of applicants from diverse fields, but almost all of them can be characterised as displaying excellent writing skills, highly academic languages and backgrounds, and familiarity and adeptness with the rhetoric and strategy of describing prospective research projects. While these skills merit recognition and support, it is also important to ask whether other kinds and profiles of researchers are less visible within the existing application and jury process. In the future, Het Nieuwe Instituut will explore other formats for application, particularly nonliterary techniques such as film, alongside ways to open up the research fellowships beyond the English-speaking world, in order to ensure that it can attract and foster many different forms of innovation in the creative industries, beyond that already modelled by universities, scholarships, fellowships, and funds. Alongside that, the call for more concrete outcomes and more specific disciplinary focuses should constantly be evaluated and adapted so as to ensure that research remains an open, innovative, critical, and indispensable part of the creative fields.

**THIS REPORT WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT (R&D) DEPARTMENT AT HET NIEUWE INSTITUUT.**