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## Where start-ups grow up

2018  
Autumn

**In this issue** | Delightful orchards for apple-picking and more |  
Featuring cookbooks by internationals | Good deeds | Choirs we love |  
Accepting loneliness | Making connections through gaming |



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# Dear ACCESS readers



PHOTO: RUDI WELLS FOTOGRAFIE

**Mandie van der Meer-Danielski**

ACCESS Editor

editor@access-nl.org

**As I say farewell to ACCESS,  
I reflect on the remarkable yet  
humble start-up that is ACCESS**

Historically, the Dutch have placed great value on trade and innovation. Recent years are no exception as the country sponsors and boosts start-ups, companies influencing entire industries from 3D printing to aeronautics to healthcare. Molly Quell explains in the Cover Story just why the Netherlands is the place for start-ups. And Sally Squirrell offers advice from personal experience on how to be an entrepreneur, a career path many partners of internationals or partners of Dutchies choose. In fact, in the International Community article, you can read about four not-for-profit organisations started here by internationals.

Besides the serious business, we've packed this issue with entertainment for winding down during the busy autumn months. Kim McClure reviews an intriguing film about a Muslim woman losing her way in Amsterdam, and in the Travel article Kim details luscious orchards worth a day trip. Tracey Taylor invites us to delight in choirs whose members span many nationalities and ages. (Our ACCESS volunteers have a few favourites too: Luscinia International Women's Choir of The Hague; Leiden English Choir; Les Fatales, Rotterdam; and Tobin Singing Society, Utrecht.)

Now, whether you're new to the expat life or quite familiar, periods of loneliness affect us all. Vassia Sarantopoulou explains in the Health & Wellbeing article how we can learn to accept loneliness and enjoy the unique journey of creating a new home away from home.

Speaking of home, that's where I'll be planting my two feet for awhile as my family welcomes our second child this autumn. As I say farewell to ACCESS, I reflect on the remarkable yet humble start-up that is ACCESS. The ACCESS model is strong as ever, and being applied beyond the Netherlands. "For internationals by internationals" is a model that's changing the methods and principles of how to guide and provide for newcomers settling in foreign lands. I'm honoured and grateful to have been a part of that work, alongside dedicated volunteers who are here for you, in person at our Helpdesks, over the phone or email, and in these very pages.

# About ACCESS

For 30 years ACCESS has been an independent not-for-profit organisation serving internationals so they may settle successfully in the Netherlands. Our mission is to provide essential, comprehensive and unique services nationally, through the expertise and experience of our dedicated volunteers from the expatriate community.

Our magazine complements the services we provide through our Helpdesk, Q&As on our website, Counselling Service Network and Training Network. Our intention is to further facilitate our readers' settlement process in your new home, by providing content which helps you better understand the country; discover things about it you may not have been aware of; encourage connection with your Dutch neighbours and colleagues; and offer contributors a platform to share your skills.

Have feedback for us? Interested in contributing to the magazine? Please contact the Editor at [editor@access-nl.org](mailto:editor@access-nl.org). We love to hear from our community!

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- welcoming
- informative
- educational
- entertaining
- original

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# ACCESS

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What's more, our website has loads of valuable information on a wide range of topics including education, taxes, healthcare and housing.

The cities of Amsterdam, Amstelveen, Almere, Diemen, Haarlem, Haarlemmermeer, Hilversum and Velsen are working with the Immigration and Naturalisation Services (IND) to bring you the IN Amsterdam services.

To learn more please visit:  
[www.inamsterdam.com](http://www.inamsterdam.com)

**I** amsterdam®

# Thousands in the spotlight

ACCESS has been nominated for The Hague Awards in the Success category for 2018! Naturally, we are immensely proud of this nomination and have set our sights on winning it—but the nomination itself is an achievement.

Not just for us, as an organisation; rather for the thousands of volunteers who have, since our formation 33 years ago, contributed to the successful relocation of internationals to the Netherlands.

Award winners will be announced on 10 September via [theawardsthehague.com](http://theawardsthehague.com)



## An ambassador for newcomers

Thousands you say? Given that in the last seven years alone we have averaged 120 volunteers over the course of a single year—well, over the course of three decades that equals indeed thousands of international and Dutch volunteers. Each and every volunteer who has worked with ACCESS can take pride in this nomination, and if we do win, the success will be theirs too.

In the words of the nomination committee, we are “the most powerful ambassador for potential expats, companies and other newcomers.”

Not only do we contribute to so many people’s successful settling in the city, we do so further by providing our own volunteers, the majority of whom are the partners of someone who has been relocated here to work, with an opportunity to build a new life for themselves. And, thus, also settle as successfully as possible.

## Not just The Hague

The award designed by The Hague & Partners, made up of The Hague Marketing Bureau, The Hague Convention Bureau, and The Hague Business Agency, is intended to celebrate the successful collaboration of these three agencies, put innovative projects and initiatives in the spotlight, and highlight special initiatives and projects that create economic spin-off for the city.

But have no doubt: ACCESS is here to help anyone planning on coming to, just arrived, or already living in the Netherlands, with the questions they have about how things work here, no matter the city. Our central operations may be in The Hague, through our telephone/email Helpdesk, but along with our teams at the expat centres in The Hague, Amsterdam, Leiden and Utrecht—we are here for all internationals, expatriates, and those relocating to any place in the country. Find out how we can be of assistance at [access-nl.org](http://access-nl.org).«



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# Special events in September

## Dam tot Damloop

[damloop.nl/en](http://damloop.nl/en)

22 – 23 September - Amsterdam to Zaandam

Join over 87,000 participants in this weekend-long running event! As one of the largest business runs in the world, watch with 250,000 spectators as participants run 10 miles from Amsterdam, through the IJ-tunnel, to Zaandam. If you want to participate as well as an individual, not as a business, registration for the 22 September Damloop by Night (five miles) or the Mini Dam to Dam runs (for children ages 4-13) is open until 10 September. There are also events for walkers and cyclists.



PHOTO: LE CHAMPION

## Lekkodagen

[lekkodagen.nl](http://lekkodagen.nl) (Dutch only)

28 September – 1 October  
Wijk bij Duurstede

On this beautiful harbour, visitors have the opportunity to admire a variety of over 70 historic ships that will be moored for this event. Lekkodagen brings to life another time period in this old port. Take the bus and check out this cute and remarkable town!

## Netherlands Film Festival

[filmfestival.nl/en](http://filmfestival.nl/en)

27 September – 5 October  
Utrecht

In its 37<sup>th</sup> year, this event features all Dutch film culture has to offer. You can enjoy "NFF English" which is specially designed for English speakers who want to enjoy Dutch-made movie hits, art house films, speeches, presentations, interactive exhibits, fun events and more. Movies are subtitled or in English. The full programme is available online from 3 September. Buy your tickets online!

## Flaaijfeest

[flaaijefrl.nl](http://flaaijefrl.nl) (Dutch only)

27 – 29 September - Nieuwehome

Do you ever wonder how Frisians lived in the countryside 100 years ago? Are you a fan of antique cars, motorcycles, tractors and steam engines? Then come check out the Flaaijfeest, a one-day outdoor museum run by 450 volunteers! You can see what village life was like, observe crafts like cheese making, and notice how people dressed back then. You can also check out Saturday's Farmers' Parade which is free to the public. Tickets for the event are available online.

## EK Show Corps

[drumcorpseurope.org](http://drumcorpseurope.org)

29 September - Kerkrade

Calling all marching band enthusiasts: the Drum Corps Europe (DCE) Championships are coming up! Get a chance to watch the best corps compete against each other to win two prestigious European titles! This drum corps event is the largest one in Europe, hosting thousands of visitors and dozens of top-level performers. The show is full of energy and great beats. Kick off the colder season with some marching band flair!



PHOTO: PVPICURES-BY-JAAP-VIRENEGOOR

# Special events in October

## Fairytale Festival

[sprookjesfestival.nl](http://sprookjesfestival.nl) (Dutch only)

13 - 21 October – Arnhem



PHOTO: HANS WITHOOS

Kids will love this festival with activities for two years and older! Take the whole family to explore the multiple activities hosted around the city of Arnhem, with an opening event at the Bronbeek Estate (Landgoed Bronbeek). The festival includes theatre, workshops, films, music and dancing. On the website, you can select age-appropriate events to attend with your children. Most events will be in Dutch, but can be enjoyed by all!

## Doe's Gek in Zwolle

[doesgek.nl](http://doesgek.nl) (Dutch only)

25 - 28 October – Zwolle

Looking for something fun to do with your kids in October? For two days, the IJsselhallen in Zwolle will become a kids' playground aimed at children ages 4-12! There will be various 'worlds' set up with endless entertainment ranging from a LEGO world, a fairground, a go-cart track, a petting zoo, live performances, a kids' circus and a whole lot more. Open each day from 10:00 – 17:00.

## Medieval Festival Hernen

[middeleeuws-festijn.nl/locaties/hernen/herenglish-version](http://middeleeuws-festijn.nl/locaties/hernen/herenglish-version)

20 - 21 October – Hernen

Visit this unique castle that has remained virtually unchanged since being built in 1350. On these two special days in October, the castle and courtyard will transform back into medieval times. Come enjoy medieval music, archery and scenery. Open 10:00 – 17:00 on both days. Tickets can be bought online at a reasonable price.



PHOTO: KESHIA

## Scandinavian Festival

[scandinavie-xl.nl](http://scandinavie-xl.nl) (Dutch only)

27 - 28 October – Hoevelaken

Want to appreciate all Scandinavia has to offer without leaving the country? Come to this fun two-day event at Expo Hoevelaken! Visit more than 70 stands where you can eat and shop from the North. Attend a woodcarving workshop or watch a fashion show! This event is kid friendly. Children up to 12 years old get in for free.

## Canal Race Amsterdam

[grachtenrace.com](http://grachtenrace.com) (Dutch only)

13 October – Amsterdam



PHOTO: JP VROEMEN

Like watching sports more than engaging in them? Watch more than 100 rowing teams journey through Amsterdam's famous canals during the 32nd edition of this exciting event. See rowers complete a 22-kilometre circuit right through the city centre. Enjoy a nice autumn afternoon by the canals, appreciating other people's athleticism. Check the route online to see where you can follow it.

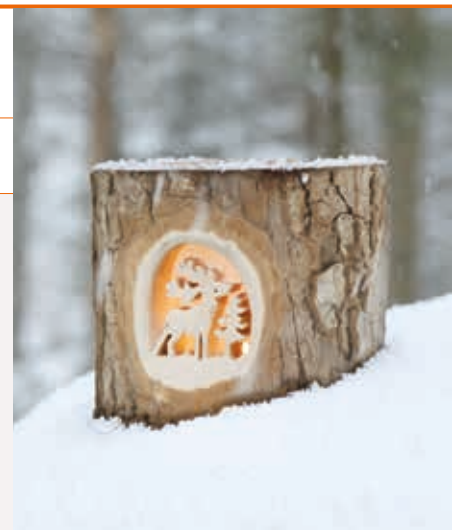


PHOTO: DUIZENDHOUT

# Special events in November

Want to post a community event in this magazine? Contact *ACCESS Magazine* at [editor@access-nl.org](mailto:editor@access-nl.org) subject: 'What's On'.

## GLOW

[gloweindhoven.nl/en](http://gloweindhoven.nl/en)

10 - 17 November – Eindhoven

This impressive light art festival is free to the public! GLOW features the light art-work of over 30 artists in a five-kilometre walking path within the city centre of Eindhoven. Last year, the event attracted 740,000 visitors. Why not be one of them? The theme for the festival this year is 'Shadows & Light'. The website quotes Joni Mitchell: "Every picture has its shadows. And it has some source of light. Blindness, blindness and sight."

## Frans Hals and the Moderns

[franshalsmuseum.nl/nl/event/frans-hals-en-de-modernen/](http://franshalsmuseum.nl/nl/event/frans-hals-en-de-modernen/) (Dutch only)

13 October 2018 – 24 February 2019  
Haarlem

This new Frans Hals exhibit shows his influence on late 19th century artists like Edouard Manet and Vincent van Gogh. Hals' impressionistic style can be seen clearly alongside reactions to his work from these more modern painters. An added bonus: this museum is now split into two locations, a seven-minute walk from one another, so in addition to seeing this exhibit, you can visit the two locations (Hal and Hof) for the price of one!



PAINTING: LAUGHING BOY (JOEPE VAN SLOUTEN), ROBERT HENRI, 1910

## PAN – Fair for Art, Antiques and Design

[pan.nl](http://pan.nl)

18 - 25 November – Amsterdam

Join 40,000 art lovers, professionals and private buyers to see the 120 exhibitors' collections in this fair. Check out their paintings, antiques, art, jewellery, photos, furniture and interesting objects from around the world. Seek a one-of-a-kind deal or simply take a look. Open from noon daily.



PHOTO: HARRY HEUTS

## The Christmas Market at the Municipal Cave

[kerststadvalkenburg.nl/en/inspiration/kerstmarkt-gemeentegrot/](http://kerststadvalkenburg.nl/en/inspiration/kerstmarkt-gemeentegrot/)

16 November – 23 December  
Valkenburg

There is a lot of competition during the holiday season when it comes to Christmas Markets, but this is the biggest, oldest and most popular underground one in Europe! This market sets itself apart with a beautiful setting, holiday music and great cave facilities. Open seven days a week. Tickets can be purchased online.

## Jumping Indoor Maastricht

[jumpingindoormaastricht.com/en](http://jumpingindoormaastricht.com/en)

23 - 25 November – Maastricht

Enjoy Limburg's spirit by attending this three-day equestrian event! Some top riders from the national and international stage will be present, showing off their jumping skills and speed. In addition to the great performances, you can observe and appreciate all the beautiful horses as well! There are also special shopping opportunities for equestrians and the general public. Check the entire programme online.



# The place to start up your start-up

BY MOLLY QUELL

TomTom and Booking.com are just two household names originating on the Dutch start-up scene. There's around 800 start-ups in the Netherlands and, according to StartupRanking, a website which tracks worldwide data about start-ups, the country ranks 12th in the world for the number of start-ups. Per capita, it jumps ahead of other European Union countries including Germany and France, boasting one start-up per 25,000 inhabitants.



PHOTOS: TU DELFT SOLAR BOAT TEAM

Ask three business and entrepreneurship experts what a start-up is and you're likely to get four answers. The traditional definition was put forth by Steve Blank, sometimes referred to as the father of the start-up, as "an organisation formed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model." Start-ups differ from many traditional small businesses in that they are, from the outset, seeking large-scale growth and offer a product that can meet that goal.

If you make delicious cakes and you start a bakery, you're not a start-up. There's only one of you and you can only bake so many cakes per day. Even if your bakery grows or your aim is to hire many more bakers, it still wouldn't meet the definition of a start-up. However, if you invent a machine which bakes better cakes and you can sell those machines to bakeries around the world, you might have yourself a start-up.

### Europe's Silicon Valley

According to Startup Nation Scoreboard, the Netherlands ranks number one in Europe for its start-up business climate, based on criteria including infrastructure, the level of English spoken and the educational level of the country's workforce, among other criteria. "It's more than just the practicalities," according to Oscar Kneppers, founder of Rockstart, a start-up accelerator headquartered in Amsterdam. "The Dutch are trade-driven, optimistic and outward looking," he says. These are important qualities if you want to start your own company.

Dutch-based start-ups raised €442 million in investment during 2017, according to StartupDelta. The largest investment was in the grocery delivery service Picnic, a food delivery start-up, which raised €100,000,000. »

### Save the dates

**13 September** Startup in Residence hosts a showcase event at the [Festival van de Toekomst](#) (Festival of the Future), presenting innovative collaboration between the Provincie Zuid-Holland and Dutch and international start-ups to solve regional challenges.  
[startupinresidence.com/zuid-holland](http://startupinresidence.com/zuid-holland)

**2 October** Impact Startup Fest 2018 takes place at the Fokker Terminal in The Hague. Its goal is to help you “connect and start new initiatives on important themes like climate action, humanitarian innovation, energy, sustainability and how to feed the world”.  
[impactstartupfest.com](http://impactstartupfest.com)

### Amsterdam versus Delft

Unsurprisingly, most of the country’s start-ups are located in Amsterdam, where most of the country’s venture capital investors are also located. TU Delft (Delft University of Technology), however, has created the most spin-off companies of any university in the country. Delft is home to one of Europe’s largest start-up incubators, Yes!Delft, which was started

12 years ago by the Delft *gemeente* (municipality), TU Delft and private partners. “Each city has its own flavour,” says Tom de Heus, project lead at the Impact StartupFest. That event, which takes place in The Hague, sees more start-ups with altruistic goals. “The Hague is the city of peace and justice, so we see more NGOs,” he says. The Red Cross and War Child, among others, will attend the event on 2 October.

All start-ups, however, aren’t located in the Randstad (the area in and around Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht). Accelerator Rockstart has locations in both ’s-Hertogenbosch and Nijmegen, as well as Bogota, Colombia. “In Nijmegen, we see a lot of medical and health-related start-ups,” says Kneppers. In fact, Nijmegen is an area traditionally associated with the health and medical industry. Radboud University is located there, which includes the Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre and collaboration on medical technology with the University of Twente and the Technical University of Eindhoven, which make up the Red MedTech Highway.



### Incubators, accelerators and more

It isn’t only universities which are nurturing start-ups, though many fund the various incubators and accelerators which serve as launching points for the companies just getting off the ground. The specifics vary widely, but generally, an incubator helps to get a company started while an accelerator helps companies to grow. Amsterdam-based Rockstart describes itself as an accelerator “with the goal to provide start-ups with access to the market, capital, knowledge, and community.” Yes!Delft calls itself an incubator that “brings your product to the market as fast as possible.” Co-working space can even be considered part of the start-up ecosystem, as young companies often use them to network, expand and get support.

Title aside, these organisations exist to help companies get started and grow. They often offer classes and mentorships with business experts, free or reduced-priced services with in-house advisors on subjects like taxes and law, and connect companies

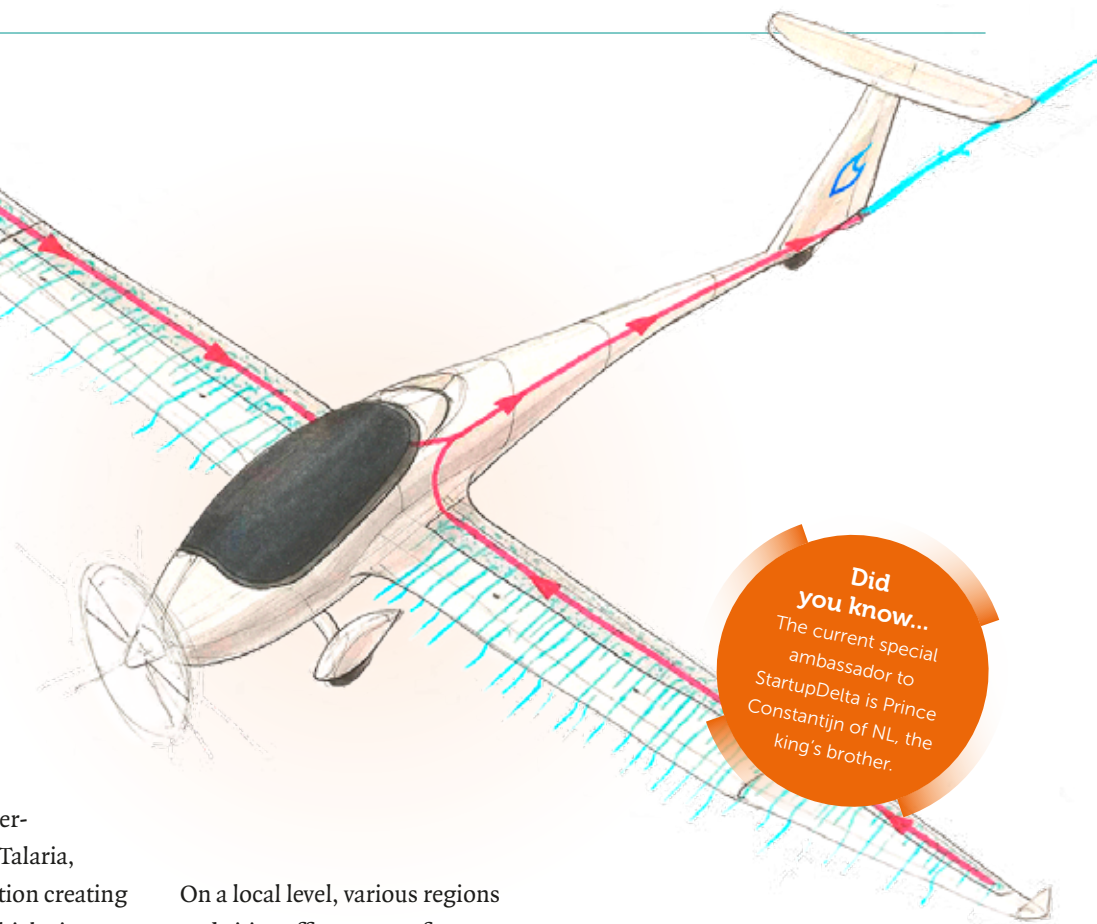
with investors. Many offer working spaces for companies and equipment, such as 3D printers and labs. They further allow those companies to meet one another, share knowledge and network.

Small organisations get involved, too. AeroDelft is a student-run start-up incubator based in Delft, which focuses on student projects from the university. Founded in 2017 by Liam Megill and Thomas Hunter, both bachelor's students in aerospace engineering, AeroDelft already has two projects: Talaria, a competitor in Boeing's GoFly competition creating a personal flying device; and Phoenix, which aims to build a hydrogen-powered touring motor glider (see image, right). "We really wanted to do something that was by students, for students," says Megill.

### Government support

The Dutch government sees the value in start-ups. The national government tapped former European Union Commissioner Neelie Kroes to attract more start-up companies to the Netherlands. That initiative, known as StartupDelta, is a public-private partnership supported by three government ministries (Economic Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Education, Culture and Science), a number of regional and city initiatives, and various private companies including Booking.com, energy company Eneco and Rabobank.

One of StartupDelta's accomplishments has been the start-up visa. Beginning in 2015, anyone who wished to move to the Netherlands from outside of the EU and start a company could apply for the "start-up visa", which offers a one-year visa to entrepreneurs who are supported by a facilitator, such as an incubator or accelerator. According to the Ministry of Immigration, "This is good for the entrepreneur, but also good for employment and the economy."



**Did you know...**  
The current special ambassador to StartupDelta is Prince Constantijn of NL, the king's brother.

IMAGE: AERODELFT

On a local level, various regions and cities offer support for start-ups.

Regional acquisition agencies, like the Innovation Quarter, a regional partner of the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, offer companies a "soft landing" in their respective regions. Others, such as Founded in Groningen, provide online resources about starting companies and interacting with other entrepreneurs. Founded in Groningen runs the Startup in Residence programme, a five-month intensive training programme for new founders. Many of these initiatives are funded by the regional and local governments, together with local businesses and universities.

### Looking globally

Start-ups in the Netherlands come both from Dutch nationals but also internationals from all over the world. According to StartupDelta, 6% of international students in the Netherlands start a company in the country after they graduate, and the creation of the start-up visa has increased the diversity of start-up founders in the country. "At Rockstart, it's mostly not Dutch actually," says Kneppers. Given that start-ups are heavily based in the technology sector, it's not surprising that English is the preferred language and products are marketed globally. »

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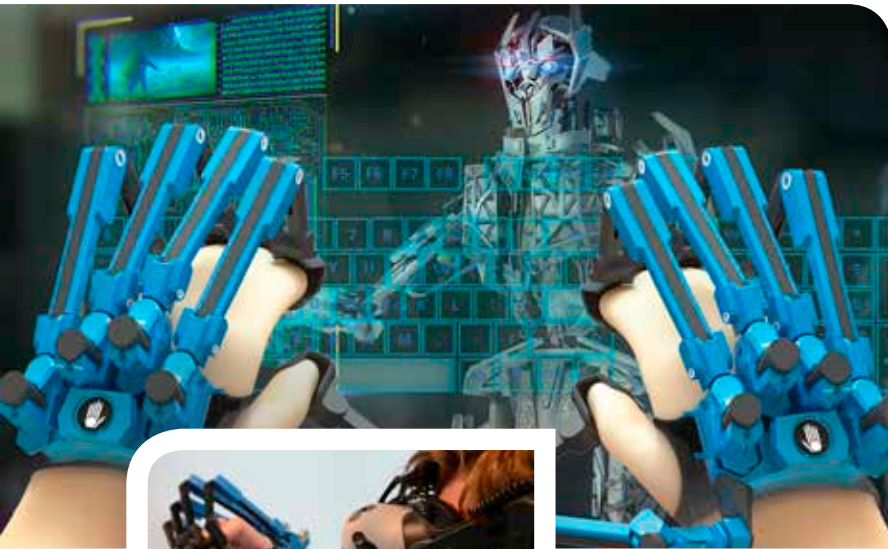
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PHOTOS: SENSE GLOVE



### A different outlook

Unemployment in the Netherlands is low, the economy is growing, and in many sectors there is a shortage of highly-skilled workers. Considering that many of these start-up founders could have more traditional employment, why choose to go their own way? One reason is passion. “At the Impact StartupFest, we see a lot of people with really crazy ideas that no one else has come up with,” says De Heus.

That’s how Gijsbert van Marrewijk started Berthan Engineering Consultants with Johan Schonebaum. The two were on the TU Delft Solar Boat Team. (See photos pages 12-13.) The team participates in various solar boat competitions, but Van Marrewijk and Schonebaum saw a more practical application: water taxis. Their start-up is working on developing sustainable boats which could be used in cities like Rotterdam.

Others enjoy the challenges and working environment of start-ups. “We usually take a break... some ping-pong,” says Max Lammers of Sense Glove, a company developing a glove used to simulate touch in virtual reality. The company is located at Yes!Delft, which

among its other offerings as a start-up incubator, offers companies office space complete with a communal ping-pong table. It’s more than just fun and games though. Sense Glove is looking to see if its technology could also be used as a medical device, which requires extensive testing in the EU. Another company at Yes!Delft is currently going through the process and, after learning that Sense Glove was considering it, offered to share what they had learned. The companies learned off of each other around the ping-pong table.

### Demographics

The stereotype of start-up founders being young, male and in the tech industry isn’t inaccurate. Globally, start-ups tended to skew towards younger, in both the age of their founders and their employees. Data from Namely, a global HR company, found that around half of the employees at start-ups are under 30. Nearly 30% of start-up companies are in the technology sector. And nearly three-quarters of employees are male. Further, only 17% of start-ups have female founders. Women in the industry certainly face an uphill battle.

### Importance

According to Kneppers, start-ups can be more agile than R&D departments at larger companies while StartUp Delta points to the economic benefits of having new companies in communities. Picnic now employs 2,000 people. It also delivers groceries cheaper than large supermarkets like Albert Heijn and has a higher customer satisfaction level. It’s this sort of success story that excites local governments. According to De Heus, this is also precisely why NGOs join the Impact Startup Fest. “Non-profits have less money available for new, risky ventures so it is often better for them to partner with a start-up,” he says. «

### About the author

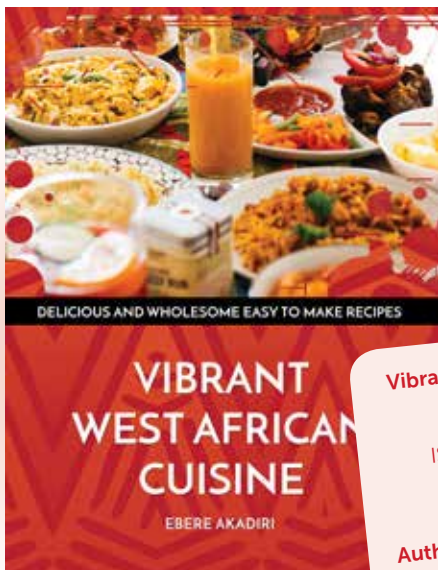
Molly Quell is a writer and journalist living in the Netherlands. She is a contributing editor to *DutchNews.nl*, where you can find her analysing Dutch politics and writing about beer and animals (together, if possible). Follow her on Twitter @mollyquell

## Food

A well-balanced lifestyle includes good, tasty food! There are many cookbooks available to help guide us through the trials of getting a cooked meal on the table. In this article, we share cookbooks written by internationals living—or who have lived—in the Netherlands. Each author has her own unique story about her motivations to share delicious, healthy recipes.

# Internationals inspiring in the kitchen

BY OLIVIA VAN DEN BROEK-NERI



### Vibrant West African Cuisine

157 pages.  
ISBN 9789082816013  
[atarofoods.com](http://atarofoods.com)

**Author's favourite:** Jollof Rice, with habanero peppers, tomato purée and special spices

### To introduce new cuisines

When Ebere Akadiri moved from Nigeria to The Hague five years ago, she realised that many people were unfamiliar with West African cuisines. To help introduce her culture and

cuisine to her new neighbours, she organised cooking workshops, teaching, for example, that in her culture, people eat together. “We welcome people with food!” says Ebere.

What else? “The Dutch people eat potatoes and we eat rice,” she says. West African cuisines also use different types of spices. “The aroma drives you!”

Her cookbook *Vibrant West African Cuisine* is also a way she gives back to her native country. All proceeds from book sales go to the Beauty In Every Life’s “Keep Dignity Alive” campaign, to help educate young Nigerian women and girls, and teach them entrepreneurial skills. (Read more about Beauty In Every Life in the International Community article, page 37.)

### To help busy families

Bojana Snijders-Nikodijević developed an approach for home cooks to use the principles of professional kitchens’ efficiency in their own homes. These time-saving tools can help anyone who struggles with getting a well-balanced meal on the table.

Originally from Serbia, Bojana moved to the Netherlands to complete her Master’s degree. After working in the corporate world for more



### The Plan Prep Plate Method

Simple Dinners for Busy Families

260 pages.  
ISBN 9789082761108  
[planprepandplate.com](http://planprepandplate.com)

**Author's favourite:** Coconuty pumpkin soup, glazed tempeh and chickpeas



### The Foodie Teen

288 pages  
ISBN 9780718182519  
[thefoodieteen.com](http://thefoodieteen.com)

**Author's favourite:** Salted caramel brownie stacks



**Vicky Hampton's Working Lunch:**  
recipes for your office kitchen

160 pages  
ISBN 978 9491499128  
[amsterdamfoodie.nl](http://amsterdamfoodie.nl)

**Author's favourite:**  
Couscous kedgeree with mackerel, lemon and spring onion

than 10 years, she suffered from burnout. That is when Bojana turned to cooking. In 2014, she made it to the finals on *MasterChef Nederland* and decided to dedicate herself to cooking full time.

The methods used in her cookbook can help save time and reduce stress that can come along with cooking. The meals can be tweaked on an individual level to accommodate any lifestyle.

“What I’ve learned... as a chef could be very useful for parents who struggle to get this done,” says Bojana. “It draws upon my professional kitchen experience and my insider knowledge of what is it like to be a mom who feeds her family every day.”

### To get teens eating healthily

Alessandra Peters is a self-proclaimed “health nut and real-food blogger” who studied at The British School in the Netherlands. She started *The Foodie Teen* blog to inspire others to eat more healthily.

After being diagnosed with celiac disease and suffering food intolerances, Alessandra started to research food and learn about nutrition. “I taught myself how to cook using real food,” she says. She also saw how her new diet positively affected her energy and well-being. “*The Foodie Teen* is all about healthy cooking for

teenagers, with delicious, nutritious recipes,” says Alessandra. “They not only taste wonderful, but will make you feel incredible!”

*The Foodie Teen* cookbook showcases more than 100 gluten-free and dairy-free dishes and includes tips to help you de-stress.

### To inspire a better lunch at the office

*Vicky Hampton's Working Lunch* was written for working people who desire a nice, balanced meal, that may even make your colleagues jealous! This cookbook is for those “bored of overpriced ham-and-cheese sandwiches and packet soups from the canteen,” says Vicky, originally from the UK. Her book includes 50 recipes for salads, soups, sandwiches, couscous and more.

Vicky explains how to prepare lunches—at your workplace—using a chopping board, kettle or toaster. There are simple meals as well as gourmet-style lunches that may be a bit more difficult to prepare during a short lunch, but would be great for a dinner at home! «

### About the author

Olivia van den Broek-Neri has lived in the Netherlands for over 10 years and is currently Project Coordinator for Communications & Events at Holland Expat Center South.

# Celebrate your success—or not?

The first year's results are in, and your company has outperformed all expectations. Now is the time to reward your team with a great celebration. But can you really afford the risk of a team outing this quarter? Peter van Eijk offers expert insights on the issue of company liability.

BY PETER VAN EIJK

## **Liability: Is it really that important?**

Yes, in the Netherlands, *liability* is a serious issue. Both individuals and companies are expected to have liability insurance to protect them against potential damages. Liability insurance is required for every person in the Netherlands, in the event that they accidentally damage someone else's property. Companies have liability insurance to cover any damage done by an employee during work.

Because of the emphasis both at corporate and individual levels, liability has become an accepted part of daily life.

### **Before the party begins...**

When you're planning a fun event for your team, liability may be the last thing on your mind, but before your celebration starts, you'll want to ensure that you have everything in order.

Whatever event you are planning, from a simple *borrel* (drinks) evening to a day out in on the beach, a week-end getaway, or a sports competition, consider the potential risks and plan accordingly to ensure your

'reward' does not come back to haunt you. Otherwise, when the party ends, you could be the one left holding the bill.

### **Consider if you're at risk**

Employers have a responsibility to provide their staff with a safe environment in which to work. However, time spent at work can include office outings, as an employee's 'work day' may not end when they leave the office building.

When your team joins a company outing, even if that event has been organised at an external location, and even if attendance is voluntary, you as an employer may still be liable for any events that occur. The more closely that outing or event is related to an employee's work, the greater the risk of liability for the company.

## **The more closely that outing or event is related to an employee's work, the greater the risk of liability for the company**

### **No need to cancel**

Don't panic—your company cannot be held liable for every offense committed by an employee. You as an employer can only be held liable for events that could reasonably be prevented and that relate to work. Liability should not prevent you from celebrating the wins you achieve. To minimise the potential risk, before the event takes place ensure that a safety check has been done and that there is adequate insurance in place.

### **Ask an expert**

If you are uncertain about a particular situation and your liability, get in touch with *GMW lawyers'* liability experts Peter van Eijk and Glenn Kerver. «

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PHOTOS: WORLD YOUTH CHOIR

# The travelling tradition of song

A recent article in the Dutch *AD Magazine* reported that there are 1.7 million Dutch who sing in a choir—that’s as popular as football! But it’s not only Dutch nationals who are scoring on the high notes.

BY TRACEY TAYLOR

I was delighted to discover that there are many international choirs in the Netherlands which have built their success on culture and friendship, and I was certainly whistling a happy tune when I got to interview members of two of them.

## Major development

World Youth Choir (WYC) is based in Amsterdam and was established in 1989. Back then, their first performance was in Sweden but fast forward to July 2018 and WYC has travelled further afield for an exciting debut in Inner Mongolia, a region of northern China. This was with the support of the Asia Pacific Choral Development Foundation in cooperation with the Inner Mongolia Bureau of National Art Troupes.

“The concert tour included performances in Erdos City, Hohhot and Bao Tou City,” says Ki Adams, International Federation for Choral Music Board member and treasurer of the WYC Foundation, »

“and our talented conductors this year were Jonathan Velasco (Philippines) and Helene Stureborg (Sweden).”

“I was excited to conduct WYC and it was my third time to do so,” says Velasco. “I’ve had a long association with the choir starting as a singer in 1990. In 1996, I was the first WYC singer to become a conductor,” he adds with a smile.

Stureborg remarks that “Being asked to conduct the 2018 WYC was a great honour. Jonathan and I met in Tianjin, China, in March to audition the nominated singers and I was overwhelmed by the quality of the applicants,” she goes on to say.

### Treble time

In fact, applications for the 2018 WYC summer auditions represented 45 nationalities! The jury (including representatives from WYC patrons: International Federation for Choral Music, European Choral Association-Europa Cantat and Jeunesses Musicales International) selected 64 singers from 200 candidates, and Velasco and Stureborg then set about creating a programme of 20th century Nordic, European and Asian folk and popular music.



Did you know...  
22 & 23 September  
is Choir Weekend  
in Scheveningen  
(Keizerstraat, Kurhaus  
& de Pier)



PHOTOS: ANU BERGHUIS

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### Future voices

The folks at WYC certainly don't hang around, and concerts for 2019 are already being planned. Getting into the choir is competitive but singers (aged 17-26) who are interested in auditioning should not be afraid to go for it!

With their 30th anniversary coming up next year, WYC is as dedicated as ever to embracing diversity and bringing singers together to perform on a global stage. The result demonstrates that the remarkable educational and social experience of WYC is thriving worldwide! [worldyouthchoir.org](http://worldyouthchoir.org)

### Finland calling

Back in the Netherlands, TAIKA is a unique all-female Finnish choir based in The Hague and the brainchild of Karla-Maria Toiviainen. Having left Finland in 2010, Toiviainen, a classically-trained singer and singing teacher, formed the choir in 2012. "I wanted to offer a platform for Finnish expats who were missing home and being part of a choir," says Toiviainen, "especially as singing is such a tradition in Finnish culture."

### Right pitch

TAIKA has grown from eight to 25 members over six years, and Toiviainen, choir conductor and artistic director, is the first to admit that she is demanding! "I'm keen for our singers to develop, both as individuals and as a group," she says.

With an average age of 30, TAIKA meets once a week to rehearse. Their core repertoire is Finnish female choral music but they also cover folk and pop songs along with material in English and Swedish.

### Key note

I was pleased to chat with chairperson of TAIKA Sanna-Mari Kuisma to ask what the best part of being in a choir is. "Singing!" says Kuisma, "and especially in your native language. *Laulu on tärkein äidinkielenme,*" she adds, meaning, "Singing is our most important mother tongue". "It makes you miss

home but it also makes it easier to cope with the homesickness. Choir time is also 'me' time.

I can focus on my breathing, posture and voice and leave whatever else has happened in my life in the background for a while." And did you know that in the Finnish language, *taika* means magic?

**"Choir time is also 'me' time. I can focus on my breathing, posture and voice and leave whatever else has happened in my life in the background"**

### Looking sharp

TAIKA likes to keep busy and when not performing at the Feel at Home Fair in The Hague or singing at the Finnish Embassy, they host their own concerts. On 16 December, there will be a Christmas performance at Houtrustkerk in The Hague, and next year already will be interesting with a competition at the Tampere Vocal Festival (in Finland) in the pipeline for June, and rumours of a performance in Maastricht in February. (One for my diary!)

### Sing your heart out

TAIKA is often looking for new members so if you are Finnish (or speak Finnish), can sing (always useful in a choir) and live in or near The Hague, then why not reach out to the choir. It's said that the breath of a choir eventually starts to synchronise as the hearts of the singers begin to beat at the same pace... Seems singing really does bring people closer together, and that is *taika*. [taikachoir.nl](http://taikachoir.nl) «

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### About the author

Tracey Taylor is an Irish gal living in Maastricht. She's a writer, expat radio co-host and foodie, and lives with boyfriend Dave and their fancy cat, Little Tubbs. [@tracey\\_taylor\\_nlv](https://twitter.com/tracey_taylor_nlv)

# Connect with locals through gaming!

Understanding a new culture is like learning a new game: whether we observe others playing, study the rules before we give it a try, or learn by doing, the goal is to connect, play and have fun.

TEXT BY UTE LIMACHER-RIEBOLD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JIMMY MC PIKE

How can we best socialise with locals? Especially when the language represents a significant barrier, I encourage internationals to meet with locals by concentrating on what they have in common instead of focusing on the differences. If we meet people through common interests and hobbies, we connect in a safe and healthy way that doesn't push us too much out of our comfort zone.

## Time to play

Gaming is back—not marathon gaming sessions alone on a device nor gaming for money. It's the social fun of board and card games that are booming, and not only among millennials. Despite the massive success of video games in recent decades, the board gaming market experienced a significant growth in the late 1990s and, as an article in *The Guardian* [stated in 2012](#), board games are “making a comeback”.





Games have a goal that players aim to achieve. Some modern board games are based on defeating opponents like the early board games that represented a battle between two armies. Other games represent real-life situations with no inherent themes, like checkers, or with a clear narrative, like Cluedo (also known as Clue), and range from having very simple rules like Tic-tac-toe to being fairly elaborate like Dungeons & Dragons. Whatever the game, having a common goal and a healthy amount of competition brings people of all backgrounds together.

And since, according to a survey done

by [Multiscope in 2013](#), 63% of Dutch people regularly play board games, there is ample opportunity to “get on board” with locals.

### How to connect with locals while gaming

More and more game cafés (or gameries) and game shops offer the opportunity to play the games in loco, allowing people to meet. “The main aim is to play a game, so, if you like gaming, this is a great way to connect with locals,” says volunteer Antonio Gutierrez, External Training Coordinator for ACCESS.

When Antonio moved to the Netherlands in 2010, he looked for ways to connect with the local community and decided to do so whilst pursuing his hobby: board gaming. He did this in France and Belgium before and found his ‘tribe’ in The Hague in the same way. “You start going to these shops and figure out what game you want to play. You can play on your own or ask the owner of the shop to connect you with other players,” he says. “You can also join a club or a community of gamers. There are some internationals in those clubs, but 90% of the members of the gamers are locals.”

### What are the most popular games?

It depends on the community of the gamery or board game café and on the age and interests of the group of the gamers; toddlers play with their parents, teens play with their peers. Games can be played by everyone from ages three to 99 and as the concept of most of the gameries is to sell games whilst offering their clients the opportunity to try them out, connect with other players, and form a true community, you can find all kind of games: 30 Seconds, Forbidden Desert, Escape, Flash Point, Ticket to Ride, »

## Where you can play

[dutchnews.nl/features/2017/03/the-best-dutch-game-cafes-and-shops-editing](#)

The Hague

- [tabletopkingdom.nl](#)
- [dekoperenpion.nl](#)
- [games-workshop.com/en-NL/Games-Workshop-Den-Haag](#)

Groningen

[purperendraak.nl](#)

Amsterdam

- [friendsfoes.nl](#)
- [gamekeeper.nl](#)

Leiden

[facebook.com/degravincafe](#)

Delft

[speldorado.com](#)

Utrecht

[subcultures.nl/en](#)

Haarlem

- [spellenhuis.nl](#)
- [the-boardroom.nl](#)





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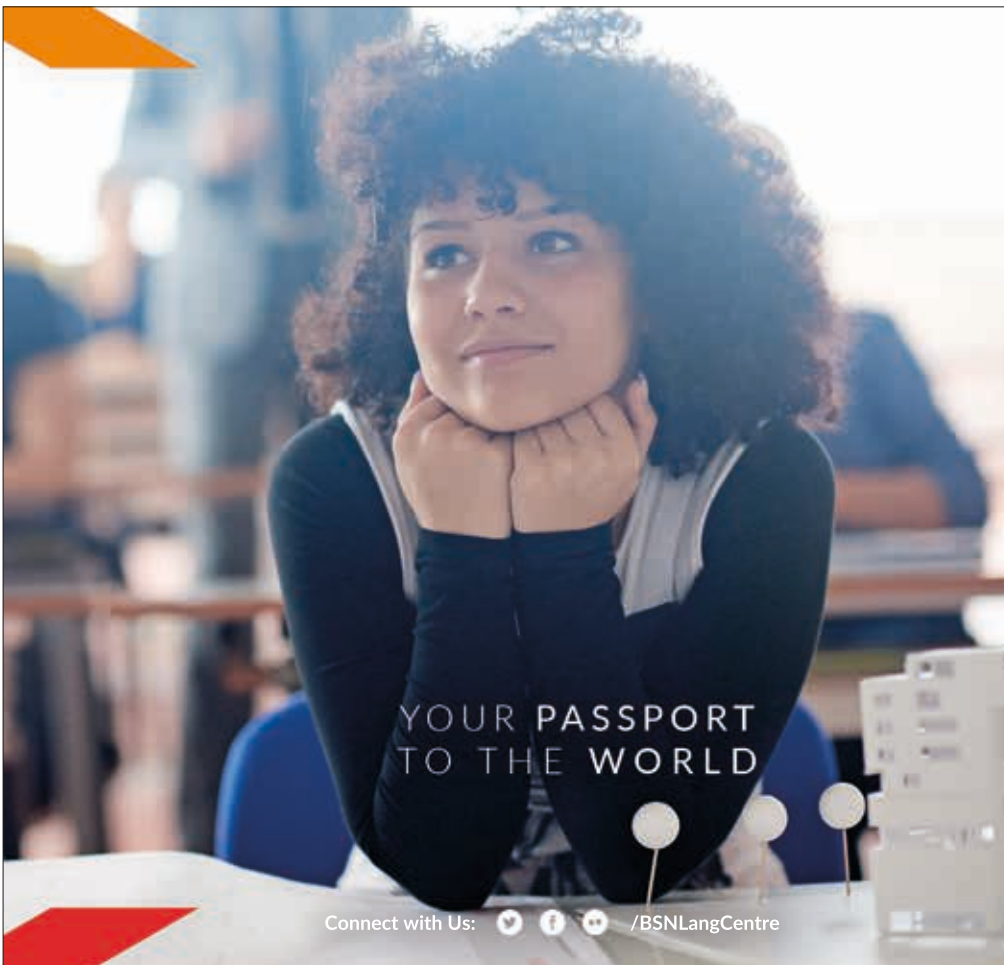
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## Dutch Lifestyle | Connect with locals through gaming!

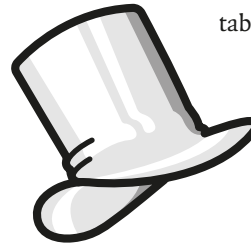


Dungeons & Dragons, Small World, Agricola, Carcassonne, Pandemic, Game of the Goose, Monopoly, Scrabble, Cluedo, The Settlers of Catan (Catan), just to name a few.

Antonio's favourite games are Warhammer 40000, "the thrilling hobby of table-top war-gaming... where mighty armies clash across war-torn worlds, and the forces of Chaos strive to overthrow the Imperium of Mankind," and Zombicide where "you go on a mission together with the other participants and kill the zombies, fostering teamwork and strategic thinking." But he also likes X-Com the board game (which originally was a video game), Magic The Gathering and King of Tokyo.

### Who have you met while gaming?

Antonio has met many of his friends playing board games. He even met Menno de Koning, who won *Heel Holland Bakt* (a Dutch cooking programme on television) three years ago. Antonio ended up in a [video with him](#), so, you never know whom you can meet whilst gaming!



"You connect with people across the table," says Matt Leacock, board game designer most known for cooperative games such as Pandemic. "It is a very human thing and it is tactile: you need to handle the physical components, to get the feel for the texture on the cards and see the wood grain on your components."

**"...it is tactile: you need to handle the physical components, to get the feel for the texture on the cards and see the wood grain on your components"**

### How much does it cost to participate?

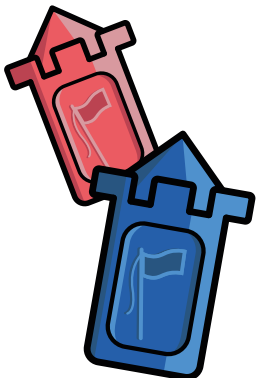
The cost to participate varies from place to place. At the Boardroom in Haarlem you can play all the games you want for only €5 a visit. Other places, like the Tabletop Kingdom in The Hague, offer free play and just ask you to consume a drink and a snack while playing. The concept is to try out the game and, if you like it, purchase it.

### What if I don't know the game (yet)? Can I join as a newbie? What if I struggle to speak Dutch?

In Antonio's experience, "The gaming community is very open: everybody is welcome and the owners are there to help you understand the rules of the game." Also, the Dutch speak English easily and are happy to help with understanding the rules. Furthermore, the owners will help you find the right game for you.

### Where can I play board games?

"Some cafés have board games that you can play while having a drink. I am going to the [Tabletop Kingdom](#), a gaming store in the city center, close to Het Plein," Antonio says. "Oliver, the owner, organises board game evenings in [alternating] places like cafés, breweries (for adults only). He organises tournaments, workshops like the one for fathers and children on Father's Day, painting challenges, etc. Thursday evenings are board game evening, and Friday card games evening. Here you can trade your Magic Cards, buy new sets and play one-on-one, or play multiplayer with different rules. Have a look at [Tabletop Kingdom's Facebook page](#) to find out more about it." «



### About the author

Ute Limacher-Riebold is a trainer at ACCESS. She supports internationals during their life abroad and helps them through transition at Ute's International Lounge. [utesinternationalounge.com](http://utesinternationalounge.com)

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# How to become an entrepreneur

How does one become an entrepreneur? Is it something you do unwittingly, you wake up and say, “Good morning, today, I am going to become an entrepreneur!” Or is it a mindset you can learn?



PHOTO: GABRIEL-PORRAS

BY SALLY SQUIRRELL

## An entrepreneurial mindset

Picture a café. What do you see? Is it full of customers? Empty? Is there a varied menu, a minimal menu? What's the interior like—overcrowded, sparse, welcoming? In everything that you see (or don't see), there is an opportunity for you as an entrepreneur to develop a service, and/or a product to solve a problem in an innovative way and to create new value and new markets.

### Born or made?

Are entrepreneurs born or made? The instinct, drive or the necessity to succeed certainly seems to come from a person's upbringing or circumstances; the

skills, however, can be learnt. What skills do you need to be an entrepreneur? There are many but here are my top four:

- **Focus:** Keeping a strong focus will help you achieve your goals, whether it be a single product or a multi-layered idea. Writing a value proposition statement will help you to focus.
- **Help:** You don't need to be able to do everything yourself (in the beginning it may help). Outsource certain skills when necessary. Find others to do what they do best, so you can do what you want, and can do, best. (Hint: [fiverr.com](http://fiverr.com))
- **Network:** Not only may you need to convince a bank manager to grant you a loan, or crowd-funders to invest in you, you also need to convince prospective buyers to buy from you and suppliers to work with you. Networking helps you to build the right support around you, to connect you to whom and what you need for your business.
- **Creativity, daring, resilience:** You will need every ounce of your creativity on this journey as challenges and unexpected delights are thrown at you. It won't always be a smooth ride but taking risks is necessary—for within them lie opportunities. You, of course, can decide the level of risk to take.

## Ways to leap in

You have a great idea or many ideas and you know they will work but are a little unsure about where to get started.

### 1 Mindset

Gear up the mindset before you start.

Opportunities abound, you just have to open your eyes to see them, or close them when following the steps in this book about entrepreneurship, *Three Simple Steps*. [trevorgblake.com](http://trevorgblake.com)

### 2 What is it that you want to do?

In order to answer this question, start by thinking about your skills and passions.

A useful resource to assist in this process is the workbook *Career in Your Suitcase*. [careerinyoursuitcase.com](http://careerinyoursuitcase.com) »

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### Le Foulard

"An Art Show, made with love by an idiot"  
Koninklijke Schouwburg, Paradijs  
13 October: "How to be an Idiot" Workshop  
By Lucy Hopkins (UK)

Photo by Idil Sukan

15 - 17 November 2018

### Borders

Multi-award winning political drama  
Koninklijke Schouwburg, Paradijs  
By Henry Naylor (UK)

Photo by Sosaland Furlong

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### Night Travel (6+)

Being a refugee child  
Koninklijke Schouwburg, Paradijs  
By Sahand Sahebdivani (Iran)

STET Education: invite this show to your school

19, 21 - 23 December 2018

### A Christmas Carol

All-time favourite Christmas story  
19 Dec: Muider slot, 21-23 Dec: Theater aan het Spui  
By Ashley Ramsden (UK)

STET Education: invite this show to your school

Photo by Agnieszka Wielopolska



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Answers for starting a business [access-nl.org/dual-careers-netherlands/starting-a-business](https://access-nl.org/dual-careers-netherlands/starting-a-business)

#### Government support

Comprehensive explanations for the Dutch context [business.gov.nl](https://business.gov.nl)

#### 3 Why do you want to do what you want to do?

Fill in a business model canvas and a value proposition canvas. These one-page canvasses will help you to further hone your idea/s and focus in on key areas that will help you develop as an entrepreneur as well as to determine the value that you can offer and why.

#### 4 How can you get started (in a new country)?

Some of the basic answers can be found on the ACCESS website. Recently, however, the Dutch government launched a very comprehensive website, including webinars, to help navigate these questions and provide guidance (see sidebar above).

#### Author's tip!

Mobirise: Create awesome mobile-friendly websites! No coding and free. [mobirise.com](https://mobirise.com)

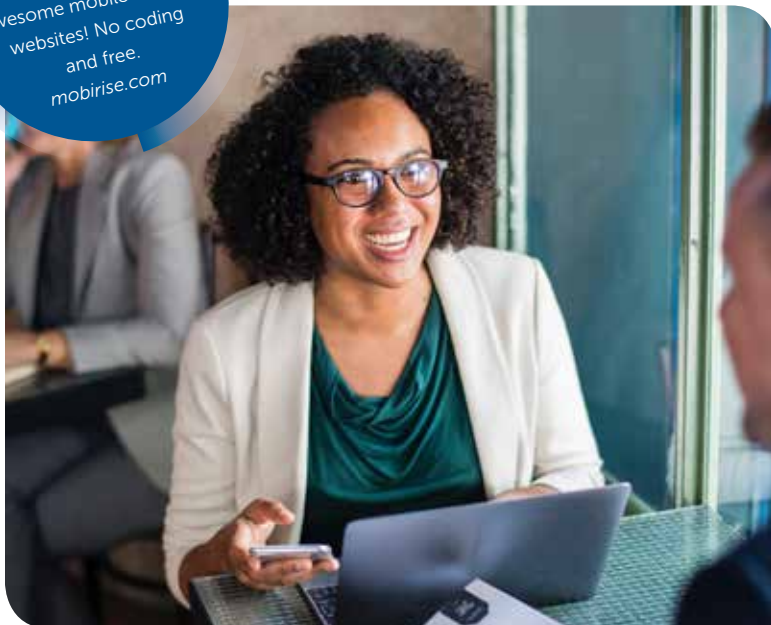


PHOTO: RAWPIXEL

#### 5 Develop the skills you'll need

The Netherlands offers a wide variety of English language courses, programmes, and degrees to choose from. And, there are, of course, many on-line options that could fill the gap.

A low-cost option and relatively quick course is available at Coursera, giving you the skills to build a new business through practical assignments; make a product; get over the fear of promotion; getting out there and help you to look at your network to see who can already help you. [coursera.org/specializations/start-your-own-business](https://coursera.org/specializations/start-your-own-business)

#### 6 Try it

Get something out there and try it. Early customer feedback and market research are very important. But also be careful of naysayers; ask the people who will encourage you in your endeavour with constructive criticism and enthusiasm rather than telling you it won't work straight away, or telling you what you want to hear.

#### 7 Creating prototypes and gathering funds

While undertaking point four, think about how to fund your business. Try to keep costs low. For example, don't buy memberships you don't need. Find places you can prototype if you're making a product, such as FabLab in The Hague. [fablabdenhaag.nl/fablab-den-haag/wat-is-een-fablab/index.php](https://fablabdenhaag.nl/fablab-den-haag/wat-is-een-fablab/index.php)

Various bank loans and crowd-funding efforts can also get you going. Another avenue to explore: Funding Circle, a crowd-funding platform [fundingcircle.com/nl/zakelijke-lening](https://fundingcircle.com/nl/zakelijke-lening) «

### About the author

Sally Squirrell loves this subject and is very enthusiastic about sharing entrepreneurial tips, and helping people to design their architecture/renovation projects too. [eekhoornandsquirrell.com](https://eekhoornandsquirrell.com)



## Expats need **better information** about Dutch **healthcare**

Many expats and other internationals not only feel uncomfortable with Dutch healthcare, they also find themselves poorly informed about the system.



Recent research (April 2018) by the International Community Advisory Panel shows that confusion and lack of understanding persists when it comes to healthcare in the Netherlands. Only 33.5% feel well-informed or relatively well-informed about the health insurance system; more than 60% find themselves not informed, or insufficiently informed about the healthcare system.

This confirms research done by Healthcare for internationals (H4i), a nonprofit network of healthcare providers that aim to have Dutch healthcare better

meet the needs and expectations of internationals. Internationals, especially, would like easier access to comprehensive and understandable information about Dutch health insurance, the healthcare system, and how to find suitable healthcare providers.

*“You can’t expect a Dutch GP to do what you want or to do the same as your home-country doctor, but you surely may expect a clear explanation as to why they proceed in a different way.” - Rebeca Guerra Martínez, Mexico*

### New H4i Information Platform

In response to this need, H4i has recently launched the online H4i Community Platform as a comprehensive source of up-to-date information in English, for internationals who are moving to or living in the Netherlands.

The platform provides information on

1. Dutch healthcare: How it works and how it may differ from what internationals are used to;
2. Health insurance and cost: Are you obliged to take out Dutch health insurance, what are the costs, and how about excess (*eigen risico*) and co-pay obligations;
3. Healthcare providers: What they do and how to find one.

### Familiar themes and FAQs

The platform also addresses themes that internationals are often confused about, such as giving birth in the Netherlands, the use of antibiotics and preventive health checks. You can also find answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), tips and links—all provided by professionals with knowledge of the subject at hand, reviewed by a panel of internationals, the best judges of its relevance and clarity.

The Information Platform can be found at [H4i.nl](https://www.h4i.nl). Here you will also find information about other H4i projects closing the gap across the Netherlands between Dutch healthcare and the needs of internationals. «

Email [info@H4i.nl](mailto:info@H4i.nl)  
Facebook [H4iinternationals](https://www.facebook.com/H4iinternationals)  
Twitter [H4i\\_nl](https://twitter.com/H4i_nl)



# Take your pick

## Orchards in the Netherlands for delicious fun outdoors



PHOTO: OLMENHORST

Dutch *gezelligheid* seems to be as much about being indoors and cozy in town as it does about being one with the green landscapes further afield. If you haven't yet ventured to the Dutch countryside, you'll find neatly arranged fields and toy-town houses that elicit a pastoral peacefulness.

BY KIM MCCLURE

Just one of the ways to fully immerse oneself in the countryside is to visit a fruit-picking orchard. Not only a day of fresh air and light exercise, but you'll leave with a basket of good-for-you treats too.

### A blooming business

The Netherlands is the place to be if you're interested in farming and organic produce. As the second-largest exporter of agricultural products and one of the world's three leading producers of vegetables, it's impressive that such a small country is responsible for one quarter of Europe's vegetable exports.

Location, weather and topography (the flat landscape) all play in the success of agriculture within the Netherlands. And, of course, its green-fingered »

## The pick of the season

Fruits at most *zelfpluk* farms will be largely seasonal, so here's a round-up of some of the fresh autumnal fruits to expect:

- cranberries
- pears
- blackberries
- apples
- elderberries
- quinces
- grapes

residents—residents who are willing to open their farms to the public, to showcase their own hard work and encourage others to grow their own appreciation for fine, delicious produce.

Here's our pick of five gracious, green orchards that offer *zelfpluk*, or pick for yourself, to the public, so you can get a taste of the fun.

### A berry nice time

It's easy to buy high-quality fresh produce in any supermarket or greengrocer in the Netherlands—but why not get a taste for how it's grown and get your hands a little dirty too? You'll find Van Reeuwijk Fruit & Flowers in Abbenes, a small village in the north of the country, within the Haarlemmermeer province.

You and your troop can *zelfpluk*, filling baskets with cherries, strawberries, raspberries, mini-cucumbers and tomatoes grown on the farm. But leave room in your basket for the store, where you'll find flowers a-plenty. The fruit at Van Reeuwijk is largely seasonal, so after the berry season you can pick apples and pears. See [zelfplukken.nl](http://zelfplukken.nl)

### The big (Dutch) apple

For one season every year, De Olmenhorst opens its orchards to the public. The farm is steeped in history, with one family operating the land for 150 years. Its focus for the 60,000 fruit trees is sustainability and responsible farming, with only organic practices used since 2005.

De Olmenhorst prides itself on “healthy and honest” produce, and self-picking in the orchards certainly delivers. Pears and apples abound, with a range of varieties. There are plenty of activities to keep kids and adults entertained after fruit-picking, including workshops, animal rides and even a nature treasure hunt, continuing the joy of the great outdoors.

The 31 hectares of lush fruit farmland can be found about 10 km southwest of Hoofddorp, in Lisserbroek (North Holland). Visit [olmenhorst.nl](http://olmenhorst.nl) to find out more details about picking days and seasonal fruit and vegetables.



PHOTO: MAKO

PHOTO: OLMENHORST



### Country pumpkin

Vegetable lovers will delight at the range of fresh, seasonal produce to pluck at the organic farm De Oude Boerderij. There are over 40 seasonal varieties, with a taste for every palette. On picking days, children can pet farm animals as part of the outdoor experience.

You may be attracted to this farm-to-table organic sanctuary for the vegetable and fruit picking, but you'll be sold on the range of items to buy in the farm store. The self-named "country products" include organic cheese and meat, jams, wine, mustard and olive oil. If you're in the mood for something freshly-baked and fabulous, head to the farm bakery. Only 100% organic flour is used to lovingly create a spread of muffins, breads and other treats. The best part? In their Groeierij programme, the farm helps individuals with mental or physical disabilities by allowing them to work and learn farming skills. Supporting the farm means, in turn, supporting others. Find out more about self-picking and the sustainable produce at [deoudeboerderij.nl](http://deoudeboerderij.nl).

### Cherry-picked

At the heart of this family-run fruit orchard are the Sturkenbooms, who founded the farm and are hands-on in "organic dynamic cultivation." The farm is just a 30-minute drive from the centre of Amsterdam (and therefore more of a city orchard). In summer, red, black and white berries are the crops of the season and you can leave with a luscious bag full.

The small farm has a diverse range of crops, including berries, grapes, nectarines, cherries and 10 kinds of apples. This autumn, get your pick of gooseberries and Colina apples, then peruse the indoor chicory and shiitake crops.

The property has an orchard, garden cafe and supermarket, stocked with locally-sourced goods and made using the farm's fruit and vegetables. Saturdays are self-picking days open to the public.

See [fruittuinvanwest.nl](http://fruittuinvanwest.nl) to get a feel for upcoming events and seasonal produce changes.

### Full of beans

If you subscribe to the notion of "Know what you eat" (or as the Dutch say, "Weet wat je eet"), you'll feel perfectly at home at Sprankenhof. The owners are dedicated to gently educating the public about responsible farming to foster a better connection to healthy food—certified 100% organic, in fact. The farm is located in Tilburg, and the picking season stretches from June to mid-October.

The farm harvests a spread of organic vegetables, fruits and other foods—berries, beans, beetroot, truffle potatoes, cucumbers and organic eggs. It's a pick-and-mix depending on how many people are in the garden picking that day, and you can weigh and pay when you've completed your harvest. You can also pick up a bottle of local honey to round off the sweet experience.

Children will love watching and possibly even meeting up to 700 sheep on the farm, which are sometimes accommodated from the national park nearby. For information on the latest events, what's in season and how you can get involved, visit [sprankenhof.com](http://sprankenhof.com).

Orchard visits and self-picking are a worthwhile outing choice, not only for the relaxation factor but also for the broader role they can play in educating children and adults about seasonal produce and sustainable farming. Consider it for a child's birthday party, a fun family day out or perhaps even a long cycle out into the countryside. With the convenience of buying pre-cut and packed fruit in the Netherlands, it's easy to forget where amazing fresh produce comes from. This is the season to remind ourselves. «

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### About the author

Kim McClure is a South African writer who has lived in the Netherlands.

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# Good deeds, here and there

The tradition of committing good deeds is long and strong in the Netherlands. The Dutch give all year round, to organisations such as the Dutch Cancer Society, the Red Cross Netherlands, UNICEF, World Wildlife Fund, and Kerk in Actie (Church in Action), to name but a few. Charitable organisations rose by more than 30% in 2016.

BY ACCESS  
EDITORIAL TEAM

It's an ever-growing environment of giving and caring for the community, be it local or global. And the founders of such *goededoelen* (charities) are not only Dutch. Internationals, too, have been inspired to share the love, to help those in need in their respec-

tive home countries, and to support refugees arriving here. ACCESS features just four such organisations; their efforts go towards improving life here, or as far as Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Nigeria and beyond. They haven't gone unnoticed.

### Unity In Diversity

Miracle Uche, from Nigeria, has been in the Netherlands for three and half years. It did not take her long to see a way to help refugees and the broader community here. What she saw happening, during the process of integrating refugees with Dutch society, was that the focus was often on connecting the refugees with only the local Dutch community. She wanted to broaden the impact of making connections. Uche, along with other internationals, founded Unity in Diversity (UID). "We had a unique approach in mind, one that encouraged a connection between the Dutch, refugees and all other internationals. We wanted to develop projects together with the refugees, as a team, learning from one another, and eventually uniting beautifully in our diversity, and creating a platform for cultural exchange." »

## Starting a foundation?

Go here:  
[business.gov.nl/starting-your-business/choosing-a-legal-structure/foundation/](https://business.gov.nl/starting-your-business/choosing-a-legal-structure/foundation/)

Among their regular events are Games from Around the World, the aim of which is to encourage different cultural groups to get to know each other and realise their commonalities by playing sports and sharing meals together. By having refugee children play alongside Dutch and international children, they hope to encourage integration while also helping them maintain their own cultural identity.

The international character of UID continues to grow as volunteers come from all continents of the world. The varied composition of UID's team is sure to expand, with their My University Cares Too project, connecting educators, diversity officers, admissions officers, student groups and associations, cultural groups, language schools, and non-profits. Their efforts assist and promote the inclusion of refugee students, and inspire other campuses to do the same.  
[uidnl.org](http://uidnl.org) and [muctoo.org](http://muctoo.org)

## Al-Rawi uses her knowledge, networks, experience and passion to create bridges—small, personal, concrete...



Contributions, financial: NL22 INGB 0007 7241 22  
Contributions, of time or resources: via websites  
Chamber of Commerce Registration: 68050615

### Create Bridges

Basma Al-Rawi, an Iraqi resident in The Hague (pictured left), had her own story of fleeing war when her family had to escape Iraq in 1991. The experience marked her. When there was need—for others—to flee another war many years later, she jumped into action. From The Hague, she organised countless collections among her friends and network and helped translate for newly-arriving refugees who were frightened and overwhelmed.

Al-Rawi continued to support refugees as they slowly settled into their new homes. She was not ignorant though of what was happening in the refugee camps of Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon, housing thousands waiting to know their own future. In 2016, she ran an overwhelmingly successful donation drive for cash, clothes and household items, partnering with a local agency to distribute the collection in Jordan.

From this experience of helping concretely and specifically, together with a group of Dutch and international friends in The Hague, the Create Bridges Foundation was born. Its mission: to support those who have/are suffering because of war or disaster in Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. Funding for her campaigns is organised on a case-by-case basis, monthly contributions, or one-off larger contributions. The support is very specific, such as a much-needed eye operation or tuition fees for a student.

Al-Rawi uses her knowledge, networks, experience and passion to create bridges—small, personal, concrete ones—between those in need and those moved to help. She keeps all donors informed of who has been helped and how.

[createbridges.org](http://createbridges.org)

Contributions: NL38 INGB 0008 4696 67  
Chamber of Commerce Registration: 6898708

## Beauty In Every Life

Beauty In Every Life (BIEL) is a foundation set up in the Netherlands, as well as Nigeria, with the intention of “preventing human trafficking from Nigeria.” It was the brainchild of Ebere Akadiri, herself Nigerian, living in the Netherlands, with vast entrepreneurial experience here and in her home country, and passionate about women’s empowerment. It was a reaction to a news item last year. It illustrated what was happening to young women, trafficked from their home country, when they arrived at their destination—destitute, in slavery, their dignity stripped, their rights violated.

It grabbed her heart and her entrepreneurial spirit. Akadiri’s vision is to raise awareness here—in the countries of destination—but more importantly to provide the women, families, communities in her home country with the skills and opportunities which could prevent them from seeing “leaving Nigeria at all costs” as a solution. So when the plight of her fellow countrywomen struck her, so did the purpose for a publication to benefit those in need. The resulting cookbook is now one of the fundraising elements of BIEL (read more in the Food article, page 18). Book sales contribute to the Keep Dignity Alive campaign, empowering Nigerian women to believe in themselves, with the tools to do so.

[beautyineverylife.org](http://beautyineverylife.org)

Contributions: [beautyineverylife.org/make-an-impact](http://beautyineverylife.org/make-an-impact)  
Chamber of Commerce Registration: 66355214

## M-Capital

M-Capital is a unique initiative, an international non-governmental organisation (INGO), encouraging cross-sectoral co-operation to solve an immediate migration issue. The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration (THP) is a Hague-based NGO, established to raise awareness and dialogue on the subject of migration. From their work and experience, they piloted a programme to tackle the challenges of businesses filling skills gaps. Cities are faced with the challenge of effectively integrating



### Editors tip:

Dignita café in Amsterdam is part of the Not For Sale model, supporting victims of human trafficking.

migrants; migrants, in turn, need to gain employment, contribute to local economies, and participate actively in their new communities. The result was the social enterprise, M-Capital.

While all the stakeholders have a common goal, they operate in a parallel manner within their own silos, with differing timelines and confusing terminology. For example, governmental entities are familiar with terms such as refugees, migrants and statusholders (roughly translated, “status holders” with temporary residence permits). Meanwhile, businesses are often unaware of the differences between these terms and others, such as expats or *kennismigranten* (highly-skilled workers). This lack of awareness hinders companies’ ability to tap into the pool of skills that refugees possess, while the government overlooks the business sector as a support resource. M-Capital closes the gaps and creates matches, for the greater good. «

[placingtalent.com](http://placingtalent.com)

Inquiries: [thehagueprocess.info@gmail.com](mailto:thehagueprocess.info@gmail.com)

Chamber of Commerce Registration: 27275238

# Encouraging exploration and discovery at The British School

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A wide range of co-curricular activities, fine and performing arts, excellent sport programmes and other educational opportunities in and out of the classroom allow students to try new things to discover their interests. The BSN encourages students to get inspired and follow their passion so they can develop into well-rounded young adults.

Diversity is at the heart of the BSN, both in terms of the multicultural student and staff community, and in the wide range of choice students have in pursuing subjects and activities that interest them.

## Fine & Performing Arts

The BSN offers music, drama and arts courses and co-curricular activities that allow students to develop their technical skills as well as their confidence as artists and performers. Drama students have oppor-



tunities to see live performances and collaborate in international workshops. Music students can record, produce and publish their original compositions on the BSN Sessions record label. Those who have a passion for art are encouraged to express their ideas and grow into conceptual artists.

## Sport

BSN Sport fosters talent in our student athletes, while encouraging sportsmanship, leadership and the power of working together on a team. Students can compete internationally in gymnastics, rugby, hockey, swimming, football and more, as well as join junior and co-curricular sport leagues to stay healthy and build skills.

## Co-curricular activities

From junior school through sixth form, students can choose to join activities and clubs that enhance their education with opportunities to discover and develop new interests. Activities include chemistry club, STEM club and Model UN which allow senior school students to explore possible future paths. Junior school students can join subjects like young architects, jazz ensemble, gardening club and concert choir to try out new things and find out what interests them. «

Discover more and start your BSN journey here: [www.britishschool.nl](http://www.britishschool.nl)



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# Radical in Amsterdam

## Review of Mijke de Jong's *Layla M*

Birthing a female heroine who is also a belligerent religious fundamentalist seems an almost impossible task. Mijke de Jong achieves this (and more) in *Layla M*, the 2016 Dutch film, now available on Netflix.

BY KIM MCCLURE

If you live in the city, you'll find a comfortable familiarity with the sights, sounds and moods of grey-blue Amsterdam shown in the earlier scenes of the film. We're introduced to Layla (Nora El Koussour), an Amsterdammer and passionate, outspoken Muslim girl on the verge of independence from her parents as she prepares to sit her final exams.

Layla feels weighed down by the responsibility to protect and remain intimately linked to her Islamic roots. She is deeply disappointed by the extent to which her parents (originally from Morocco) have assimilated to Dutch identity and is outraged by the injustices against her fellow Muslim sisters and brothers, both familial

and friendly. Her frustration and aggression are amplified by the impending burqa ban and right-wing tendencies she feels seething around her.

As Layla's path to fundamentalism becomes complex and dangerous, the viewer follows her experiences of love, loss and adventure, with some dark realities along the way. The most significant of which is the reality that many young Dutch Muslims feel deprived of the platforms and opportunities to openly and actively celebrate their faith.

*Layla M* is not director De Jong's first foray into putting families and relationships under the microscope. De Jong, who was born in Rotterdam, is well-known for her intense and often difficult subject matter. In an interview with the *L.A. Times*, De Jong explains her mission in writing the characters and narrative for *Layla M* was to humanise the radicalised Layla and her jihadist husband, Abdel (Ilias Addab). De Jong has won numerous awards for her features, plays, short films, and documentaries.

*Layla M* will strike a chord for anyone living in the Netherlands and, more importantly, hopefully promote conversation around the challenging topics of culture and religion. Complex subject matter well-handled in an enjoyable and resonant film.

Dutch with English subtitles. Available on Netflix, iTunes and DVD. «



### About the author

Kim McClure is a South African writer who has lived in the Netherlands.

# Lonely, but not alone



PHOTO: KYAW TUN

“The lonely expat.” Is there such a term? Do we, expats, resonate with this title at some point in our expat life? Who is this lonely person? Is this person a loner, who has given up socialising and trying to integrate? Or is this person joining every possible expat event and meetup from wine-tasting and book-reading to partying and speed-dating, and still suffering from loneliness?

BY VASSIA SARANTOPOULOU

## **You feel lonely. And that's ok.**

Feeling lonely as an expat is quite a normal stage in the integration process. In fact, it starts even before you land at our next destination: you are in the middle of packing your stuff and you are already flooded by a nostalgic feeling of all the places and the faces that you will definitely miss.

Then you move and the real challenge knocks on your door: you are in a new culture, you don't know how people talk, behave, argue, communicate, connect, laugh, move. You eat lunch at a different time of day. You socialize differently. You don't even speak the same language. The cherry on top? The locals don't seem to support you in this struggle. They don't seem to understand why you take differences and misunderstandings so personally.

---

This feeling of being different, the outcast, the expats vs. the locals, is a very lonely, alienating, isolating feeling. It's left to you to find new people and new places that feel like home so that the ebb and flow of homesickness will be smoother and less painful every time.

However, remember our anti-loneliness mantra: You are not alone. Many people in this situation feel exactly the same. You may think you are different, but actually you are more similar than you think: we are all struggling for some connection with the people around us, and, believe it or not, expats and locals have the same needs for communication, friendship and reciprocity.

## ...expats and locals have the same needs for communication, friendship and reciprocity

### Healthy loneliness and acceptance

Loneliness is inevitable in everybody's life. It's a wound that needs tending to and that will heal soon. Whether you are getting a divorce, or you move to a new house or change jobs, loneliness is there to remind you of all the things you don't know and are afraid of. At the same time, loneliness can be a very productive period: it is the opportunity to re-connect with the people around you and to start building meaningful relationships, where you can be honest and where you feel safe to be yourself.

### Make the most out of your loneliness and overcome it

When the first part of the integration process has passed and you are still feeling like a fish out of water, then you may need to re-evaluate your strategy. Let's first answer some questions:

- Are you taking steps to learn the language? Even

---

## Reach out

The ACCESS Counselling Service Network (CSN) supports the mental health requirements of the international community in the Netherlands. CSN is composed of licensed professionals speaking several languages, all personally familiar with the expatriate experience.

Confidential ACCESS On-call Counsellor Contact Form:

[on-call.access-nl.org](https://on-call.access-nl.org)

---

some words can make a big difference toward feeling that you are becoming part of the larger community.

- Do you choose social events wisely so that they match your background, values and interests? Or do you only join parties for fun, but without truly connecting with anyone? It has been proved that we feel less lonely when we join activities with people who share the same hobbies, experiences and values.
- Have you noticed whether you have high expectations from the people you meet? Usually we tend to expect people to like us instantly, to become friends with us, to invite us for dinner, etc. It depends, of course, on the culture, but some people have their own pace when connecting with others. Be patient; connections will develop over time.
- Who said that being different is bad? Yes, you are different from the other cultures you meet—exactly what makes you interesting to others. Start seeing yourself as a person making the most of this diverse canvas you live in.

And remember, you are not alone. «

In order to help us support more expats in their lonely journey, AntiLoneliness invites you to fill in a survey at [antiloneliness.com/the-lonely-expat-survey.html](https://antiloneliness.com/the-lonely-expat-survey.html).

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## About the author

Vassia Sarantopoulou of AntiLoneliness has been working as a counsellor-psychologist for more than 15 years. Based in Leiden, she offers individual and couples counselling, workshops and support groups for anxiety, loneliness, depression, and other issues. [antiloneliness.com](https://antiloneliness.com)

# Art through the eyes of a child

Developing an interest and understanding for art and museums is quite the feat for a five-year-old. Each school year, a dedicated teacher takes on this exciting challenge with her charge of Preschool tots at the German International School The Hague.



The project begins by introducing the children to a carefully chosen artist by simply showing a few of their works of art. Together, they reflect on what they see, express their feelings when looking at the painting and imagine what the artist was thinking when the work was created. At once, their curiosity is sparked and the creative journey begins.

Throughout the school year, the children learn about the artist and corresponding period in art history as well as delving into the techniques and colours used.

They work on a wide array of skills which are not solely art related such as the importance of working together, setting up one's work space, developing their fine motor skills by learning to properly hold a paintbrush and adeptly manage a pair of scissors. They learn about the effects which can be achieved using different types of paint, artistic methods and materials.

The children develop an awareness and appreciation for art and begin to go through the world with more attentive eyes, recognising artistic and architectural elements around them. On a family holiday to Austria, one child points out onion spires on churches which remind her of Hundertwasser or another child who sees fantasy-inspired shapes and immediately thinks of Miró. They are fascinated by the artists and want to know what influenced them and motivated them to create their masterpieces. They associate bright colours with happiness and one child is convinced that "Miró was very happy because he painted with such pretty bright colours".

070 354 9494  
[www.disdh.nl](http://www.disdh.nl)



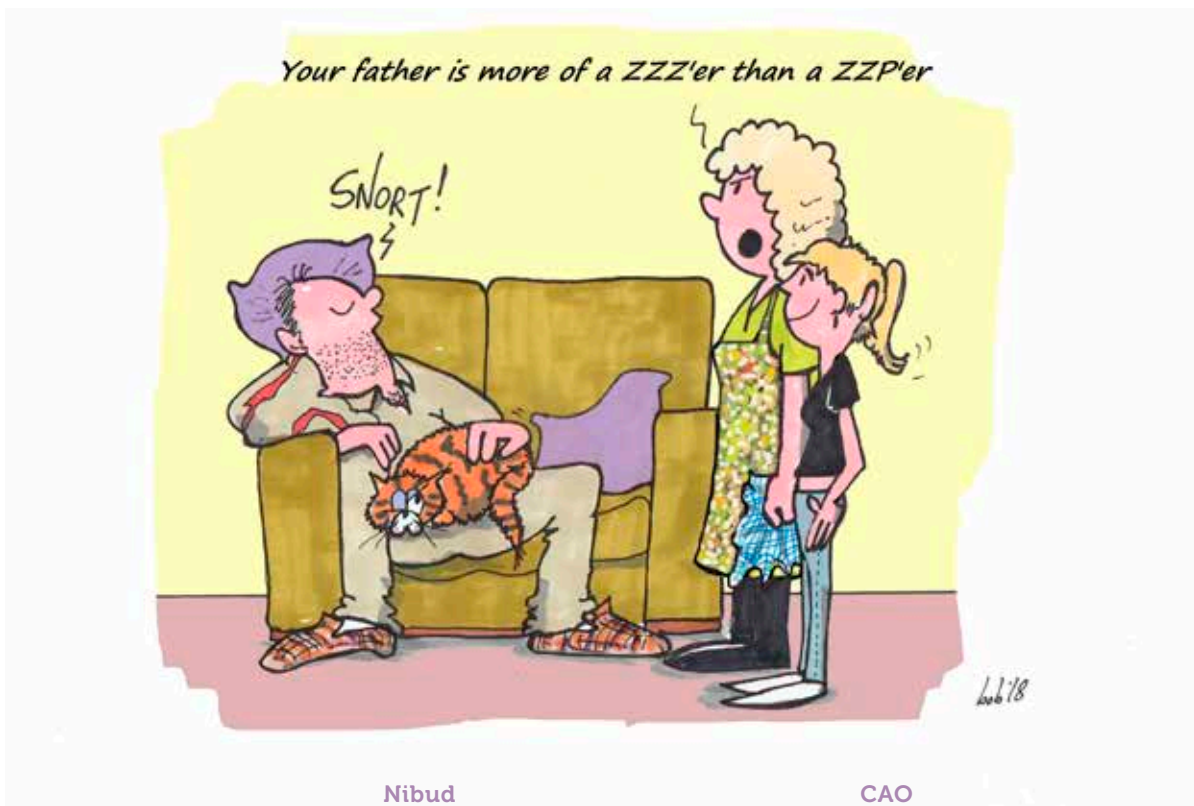
## The children... go through the world with more attentive eyes

The highlight of the year-long project is a group exhibition in which all the paintings are hung and sculptures displayed. At the official opening, parents stand in awe admiring their children's work with the young artists looking on feeling proud of their success and honoured to have come so close to the artist they have learned to cherish and respect. «

# Dictionary of Dutchness

Courtesy of **DutchNews.nl**

For fun, and to help internationals relieve their frustrations over Dutch acronyms and puzzling terms...



## ZZP'er

ZZP'er stands for *Zelfstandige Zonder Personeel* (independent without staff) and is the moniker given to the 1,060,000 people (2017) who work in the Netherlands as self-employed, freelancers or one-person companies—be they long-distance lorry drivers, accountants or plumbers. The government is trying to crack down on what it calls 'pretend' freelancers—people who only have one client, rather than the regulation four. Hundreds of postal delivery workers, for example, are ZZP'ers but only work for PostNL or a private postal company.

## Nibud

The *Nationaal Instituut voor Budgetvoorlichting* (Nibud) is a non-profit organisation set up during the recession of 1979 to provide consumers with independent advice on managing their household spending. It also compiles statistics about how different social groups spend their money and its calculations about how much people should be allowed to spend on their mortgage are treated by the government as gospel. The annual Nibud pocket money review is dreaded by many parents throughout the country.

## CAO

CAO stands for *collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst* (collective labour agreement). CAOs are a fundamental element of Dutch industrial relations and cover pay, working hours, conditions, bonuses, perks, training, etc. The agreements are traditionally negotiated in the autumn by unions and employers. In theory, at least, they are binding to the whole sector. They are particularly disliked by foreign companies who say they are too rigid and make it hard to fire people.

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