

Valorisation Prize Report
11 May 2022

Valorisation Prize Committee

Monika Barget, Jessica Mesman, Costas Papadopoulos (Chair), Laura Ogden

The valorisation prize committee received two applications for three projects as follows:

Applicant: Christian Ernsten

Submission Type: Own Research Projects

Project Title 1: Walking Seminar Den Haag

Project Title 2: Day Zero/ Ground Zero Cape Town

* Since the two projects differ significantly, the VPC decided to treat them as two separate projects, even though they were submitted in one application form.

Applicant: Cyrus Mody/ submission on behalf of MUSTS

Submission Type: Project he participated in

Project Title: Uitgepakt: Instrumenten voor wetenschap en techniek in Centre Céramique (Unboxed: Instruments for science and technology in Centre Céramique)

The valorisation prize committee agreed to award the valorisation prize as follows:

- ★ **Valorization Prize and Full Award: Christian Ernsten, Walking Seminar Den Haag**
- ★ **Special Mention: MUSTS, Uitgepakt**

1. Walking Seminar Den Haag, Christian Ernsten

The WALKING SEMINAR DEN HAAG consists of a website hosting four self-guided audio tours through the city of The Hague, the associated walking-route maps, and accompanying essays written by FASoS students. It is a highly original project that opens an entire new dimension to public space and at the same time enables researchers and artists to get some timely societal issues on the 'public' agenda. It demonstrates a fruitful and creative collaboration between researchers, artists, and diverse institutions, also involving students in the research process. At the same time, it takes a critical lens, exploring timely topics in relation to urban and rural environments, including issues around the environment, digitalisation, and colonialism. It addresses a broad audience and makes interesting use of multimodal narratives with essays, soundscapes, and podcasts.

The project has been well-received, diversely promoted and shared, and is an excellent example of innovative, creative, and impactful valorisation that places equal emphasis on research, teaching, cross-sectoral /cross-disciplinary collaboration, and engagement with important social themes. It also generated new projects that have a clear valorization aim, e.g. follow up student projects on relations between the city and its rivers and streams & public art in relation to marginalised communities in the city. The project is part of a long-term research project, The Walking Seminar (since 2014), which explores walking as a research method in emergent Anthropocene landscapes.

From a technical point of view and in terms of user guidance, the website could be improved, but the project is impressive and serves as a fine role model for other valorisation projects within FASoS and beyond.

For the above reasons the VPC has unanimously decided to award the valorisation prize to the Walking Seminar Den Haag by Christian Ernsten

2. Uitgepakt: Instrumenten voor wetenschap en techniek in Centre Céramique, MUSTS

UITGEPAKT/UNBOXED consists of a book, exhibition, and postcard series featuring objects from Centre Ceramique's collection of scientific instruments and other technological artefacts, with essays by MUSTS researchers and photos by Eric Bleize. This project is a rare example of a research group's joint effort to reach members of the public and could easily be seen as an exemplar for other research groups. The fact that MUSTS was approached by an external stakeholder to collaborate (rather than being researcher-initiated) is testament to the public and cross-sectoral profile and standing of the research program. The scope – in terms of so many MUSTS researchers being involved – is impressive, as is the task for them to apply their knowledge/expertise to objects that they were not necessarily previously familiar with. The book, exhibition and postcards (and the provided websites) are accessible and engaging. The project's format is simple, however, clear and effective. The link between science and society is made very explicitly in almost all of the explanatory texts. By exhibiting the instruments in the library also makes access free of charge and therefore open to all. Karin Bijsterveld should be commended for leading the project and editing the book. It is also important that a member of the support staff, Eric Bleize, has contributed to this work by taking the pictures of the instruments presented in the project.

The VPC considers Uitgepakt to be an excellent example of a collaborative and outward facing project of a research group that deserves a Special Mention for the 2021-22 Valorisation Prize.

3. Day Zero/Ground Zero Cape Town, Christian Ernsten

DAY ZERO/GROUND ZERO CAPE TOWN is an online exhibition. The online exhibition tells a story about a river in Cape Town, South Africa, about its colonial past and its Anthropocene future. The exhibition covers a 9 km-long walking investigation into the intimate link between imperial conquests and the Anthropocene exploitation of beings, species, and territories in former colonies such as South Africa. The design of the website clearly displays a high level of creativity in linking climate change and colonialism with art, history. and leisure. This project also poses important questions like, 'What would constitute a decolonial reading of Cape Town's river landscape?', 'how do we mobilize the colonial archive and how do we construct and imagine the voices that have been silenced?' Multiple stakeholders have been involved in this project, both from UM, e.g., UM library, and external (and from different fields - photographer, historian, archaeologist). Students of the Arts & Heritage have also been involved.

Despite the project's undoubted merits, especially when it comes to the research process and output, the VPC feels that it has an inward orientation towards an academic audience in sharp contrast to the other two projects. Therefore, it was decided not to award a prize to this project.