



MuseumLAB: The Living Room of The Hague South-West

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Den Haag Zuidwest is a district shaped by post-war housing development and is now at the centre of a long-term regeneration process that addresses intertwined challenges in housing quality, health, safety, education, participation, and employment. Within this context, MuseumLAB, located in Den Haag Zuidwest (see figure 1) operates as an experimental museum space that aims to strengthen ties with residents by making culture, science, and technology accessible in the neighbourhood itself. The Design Brief emphasizes that the key challenge is not only proximity, but relevance: many residents

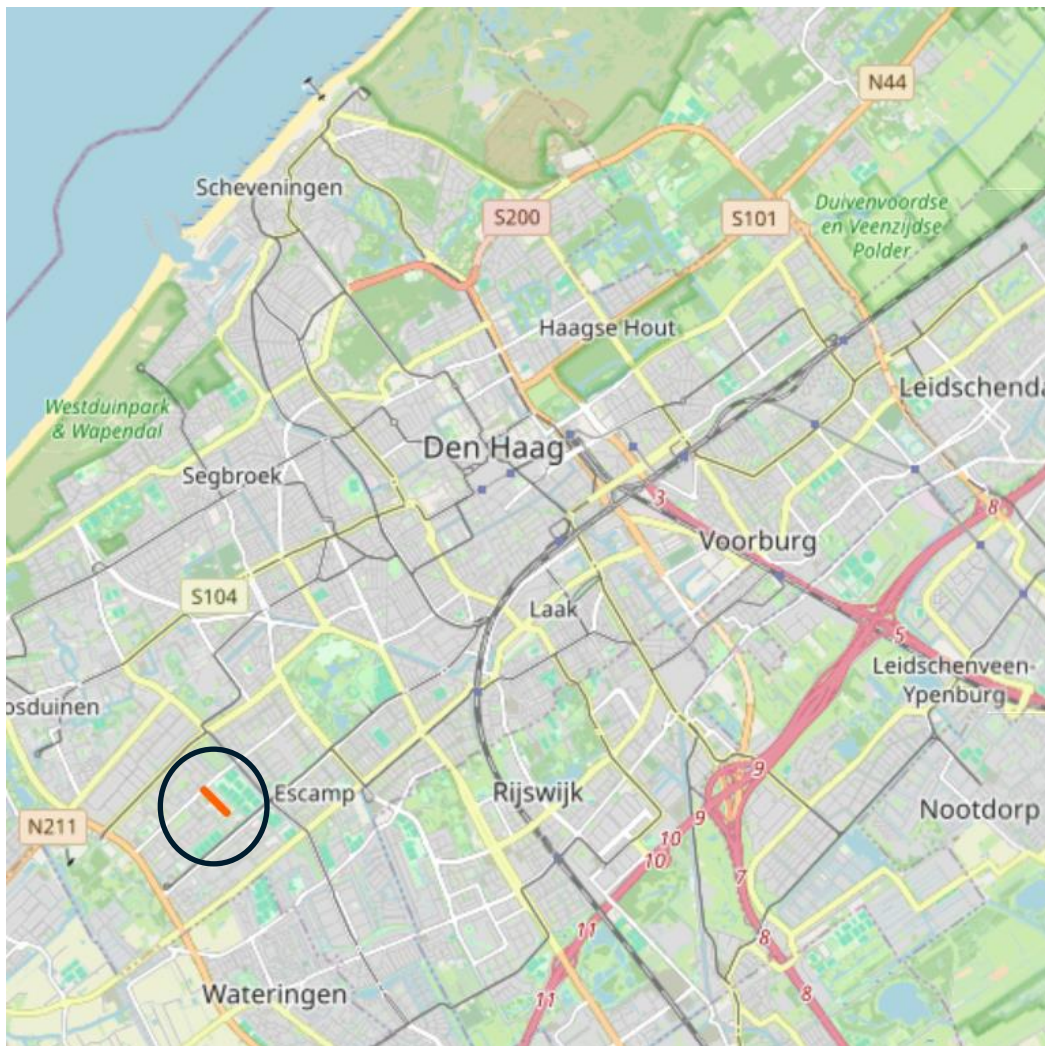


Figure 1: Area of MuseumLAB, from Openstreetmap

are structurally positioned as “outsiders” to cultural institutions due to historical patterns of exclusion, mismatched cultural codes, and unequal access to resources and representation (Simon, 2016). In other words, a museum can be physically present and still feel “locked” to the people living next door.

Our group approached MuseumLAB as a potential communal space: not merely a shared location, but a practice of joint use, meaning making, and collaboration in daily neighbourhood life. The assignment asks how MuseumLAB can contribute to communal space, even on a temporary basis, across four interrelated dimensions: physical, social, cultural, and institutional. This framing guided both our analysis and our design proposal. It also helped us connect everyday observations, such as residents walking past without noticing the museum, to broader questions about visibility, belonging, and power: Who feels invited? Whose knowledge is valued? Who gets to shape what a “museum” is in this neighbourhood?

The neighbourhood context makes these questions urgent. Zijden, Steden en Zichten is part of a highly diverse area, with a substantial share of residents recorded as having a non-European background (AlleCijfers.nl, n.d.). Diversity is a strength, but it also raises practical and social challenges when groups live alongside each other without many opportunities for meaningful interaction. Building on literature on intercultural and transcultural encounters, we treated “integration” not as assimilation, but as creating conditions where people can meet across differences and develop shared reference points—while respecting varied identities and lived realities (Loh, 2022). In the museum context, this means shifting from a model where residents are only audiences to one where residents can also be contributors and co-authors.

Based on this understanding, our group developed a clear vision for MuseumLAB’s role in Zuidwest: “MuseumLAB: The Neighbourhood’s Living Room.” The living room metaphor captures an everyday place that is welcoming, familiar, low-threshold, and repeatedly used. It is a place where people can “drop in,” learn informally, share stories and skills, and feel ownership over the space. This vision responds directly to the problem we heard repeatedly in engagement moments: MuseumLAB is valued by those who know it, but it is not yet legible or embedded enough to become part of residents’ routines and neighbourhood identity.

This final report brings together all previous deliverables into one coherent narrative and proposal. We first explain our approach (Chapter 2), describing how we combined engagement strategies, conversations, course literature, and iterative feedback to translate lived experiences into design criteria and interventions. We then present the results of our co-creation sessions in chronological order (Chapter 3), highlighting how our engagement strategies evolved and what insights shaped our design direction. Chapter 4 presents the design proposal structured around three pillars—Knowledge Hub, Collaboration & Co-creation, and Accessibility—and evaluates the proposal through a Theory of Change framework (inputs → activities → outputs → outcomes → impact). This makes our proposal transparent: it shows not only what we propose, but how it is expected to work and what changes are plausible in the short and long term. Finally, Chapter 5 offers a critical reflection on what we learned about co-creation, positionality, and designing within contexts of inequality and regeneration.

In doing so, our aim is not to “solve” Zuidwest’s complex challenges through a single intervention. Rather, we propose a grounded set of design moves, spatial, programmatic, and organisational, that help MuseumLAB function as a visible, welcoming, and meaningful communal space. By strengthening everyday access, co-authorship, and opportunities for shared practice, MuseumLAB can become less of a hidden facility and more of a neighbourhood anchor: a place people recognise, return to, and increasingly shape as their own.

Chapter 2 – Approach

This chapter outlines the different engagement strategies used throughout this entire process, through which we were able to come up with the created interventions for the MuseumLAB. The approach towards a well-grounded proposal lies in the overlapping of different engagement strategies such as theoretical frameworks grounded in existing academic literature, visiting on-site locations and participating in co-creation sessions with residents. Using all of these strategies together allowed us to create one vision for how we think the MuseumLAB could look like in the near future.

2.1 - Engagement strategies: Literature and Theoretical Frameworks

In order to build a strong foundation for the argumentation and relevance of the design proposal, we based certain ideas on existing academic literature by important scholars and theoretical frameworks, like the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework and Theory of Change.

The Asset-Based Community Development framework looks at community development by looking at how organisations and citizens work separately and also together to improve the social order. It values the importance of looking at the local, individual level to see what residents already own as assets, including their strength, skills, and resources (Russell, 2022). By applying this approach, we put the community of residents in an empowered position, enabling them to be part of the process, rather than proposing ideas to hold them as passive audiences. The two co-creation sessions with the residents are at the core of this framework, as these nights allowed us to let the residents speak and gave us the opportunity to take in what already is in place and what is missing according to the local community themselves.

The second theoretical framework, which is at the core of this research is the Theory of Change (ToC). Theory of change is a framework that explains the ways in which and why certain

changes are expected to happen in any specific context. It analyses the current situation and works toward expected outcomes in a desired vision. In order to achieve this, the theory is built on inputs, outputs, activities, short-term outcomes and long-term impacts of the given situation. This structure proposes that meaningful change in a neighbourhood is the result of relational, often unpredictable factors, that are deeply entangled.

At the core of this proposal are the accessible inputs that flow between the different dimensions. We aim for the MuseumLAB to provide a free, accessible indoor and outdoor space which would function as a place for the residents of the neighbourhood to integrate more easily into the neighbourhood community as well as have a space where meeting, knowledge sharing and collaboration is central within a physical space that allows for this. Through the inputs given to us from the residents during the co-creation sessions, we were able to map out interventions based on their needs and analyse them accordingly to eventually fit in the proposed vision of turning MuseumLAB into a space where people can meet, connect and offers low-threshold activities to enhance community cohesion. Of course, we cannot predict all the outcomes and impact that these interventions will have, and there may be some unexpected outcomes, positive or negative. Nevertheless, by portraying our ideas and interventions in the diagrams in Chapter 4, we aim to showcase what our goals are with our interventions for the MuseumLAB.

Placemaking: What if We Built Our Cities Around Places? by Project for Public Spaces, provided us with a framework for the situation of a space that improves when it is designed around people rather than its function (Project for Public Spaces, 2018). With this in mind, we tried to approach MuseumLAB's environment as a place which allows its visitors to become users of the space, actively contributing to and co-owning it, rather than remaining merely visitors.

It is worth mentioning that the central core of this framework, as it is demonstrated by Nina Simon, is relevance: to be able to connect what the museum can offer with what residents actually value, need, and contribute to (2016). In a neighbourhood like Den Haag Southwest, where historically most residents have been clustered as outsiders in relation to the museum,

relevance must be carefully looked at. Simon's *The Art of Relevance* shaped our way of thinking about how places, especially cultural institutions, can become a meaningful part of lives of people who might be left out from the community in the absence of those institutions. Her perspective of the importance of building relevance on what people already value, influenced us strongly to look at co-creation sessions and conversations with residents deeply (Simon, 2016).

2.2 - Engagement Strategy: Visit to MuseumLAB

To gain insight into the context of MuseumLAB, and prior to our visit, we supported our study with background research, helping us understand how it has performed until now and what is its vision for the future. This contextual knowledge shaped our initial understanding of MuseumLAB's current situation, and how it wishes to improve it, using our ultimate proposed design ideas

During our visit, we observed and explored the physical space thoroughly, both inside the MuseumLAB's space and its surrounding parts of the neighbourhood. When observing the inner space, we paid attention to the appearance and characteristics of the rooms, while exploring the outside area and nearby streets and places, we tried to investigate their relationship with the MuseumLAB and its (potential) visitors. Being present in the space enabled us to think spatially about how design could actually land in the space.

Additionally, having some moments to talk to the director in person, gave us valuable insight on how the MuseumLAB is led and what values shape the core of decisions made by its management team. Exchanging ideas with the director helped us form a better understanding of their priorities and wishes, which could not be gained through research alone, leading to a better alignment of the design proposal with the people in its lead.

Finally, learning about the long-term vision of MuseumLAB was crucial for us, ensuring that our design proposal not only improves the present situation, by responding to existing needs,

but also contributes meaningfully to the future vision of MuseumLAB, providing essentials for better functionality in the future. Our proposed design is aimed at both elevating the conditions in the current space, while supporting future goals as well, by providing activities and initiatives that can both be meaningful for the current phase and the future transformation.

2.3 - Engagement Strategy: Co-creation sessions

While the use and analysis of literature is vastly important for this project, it goes beyond qualitative research. Personal connections and direct contact with the residents of the neighbourhood have been an integral part of this assignment. Without the input of the neighbours, coming up with interventions for the MuseumLAB would not be of much worth. Due to the direct involvement of the neighbours through sharing their stories, ideas and wishes, we were able to come up with activities and improvements to directly relate to the needs of the neighbours. By actively involving the residents into this project, we are not just creating something for them, we aim to create something with them instead. The two co-creation sessions at the Wereldkeuken gave us exactly that opportunity. Speaking to the neighbours gave invaluable insights and their stories helped us understand and build our research toward something truly meaningful for the neighbours. The questions asked during the two co-creation sessions were formulated in such a way that the residents had full control over the direction to take the conversation in. We left the space open for them to elaborate and took notes of both the positive and negative aspects that were shared with us about the neighbourhood and its surroundings. During the sessions part of our strategy was to speak to different types of people, different ages and from different backgrounds. This would allow us to really look at the issues at hand from different perspectives. Seeing as we had a diverse group of people who spoke different languages that could be of use, besides Dutch and English we also had Persian and Spanish speakers, which could allow us to further diversify our approach.

2.4 - Approach: Our vision

As mentioned before, our vision for the MuseumLAB is: The Neighbourhood's Living Room. We thought of this vision for the MuseumLAB as it portrays what we would want it to be: a place where people can meet, with low barriers, not the typical museum image that might prevent some from visiting and welcoming for everyone.

A living room is one of the most universally understood domestic spaces — it's where people relax, receive guests, share stories, watch things together, and simply exist without needing a special reason to be there. By framing MuseumLAB through this metaphor, the proposal is making a deliberate argument: a museum in this neighbourhood shouldn't feel like an institution where you need credentials or cultural familiarity to enter. It should feel like somewhere you already belong.

This is a direct response to a structural problem identified in the report. Physical proximity to a cultural space doesn't automatically create access. Many residents walked past MuseumLAB regularly without even knowing it existed, let alone feeling invited inside. The living room metaphor is meant to close that gap — not through grand gestures, but through everyday familiarity and repeated use.

To develop this vision into a concrete proposal, we built it on three pillars.

The first is the Knowledge Hub. Knowledge sharing is one of the most natural things that happens in a living room — people talk, exchange stories, and learn from each other without it feeling like a lesson. In a neighbourhood as diverse as Zuidwest, with residents of different ages, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences all living side by side, there is an enormous amount of knowledge already present. MuseumLAB can become the space where that knowledge is shared and made visible.

The second pillar is Collaboration and Co-creation. We want MuseumLAB to be a space not only designed *for* residents, but actively shaped *by* them. When people contribute to what happens in a space, they develop a sense of ownership over it — and that sense of ownership

is what turns an occasional visit into a habit, and a habit into a feeling of belonging. This pillar is closely connected to the first: when residents collaborate, they are also exchanging knowledge and learning from one another.

The third pillar is Accessibility. This means making MuseumLAB more welcoming across three levels: physically, socially, and digitally. During our co-creation sessions, we repeatedly found that residents either did not know MuseumLAB existed or felt it was not quite meant for them. Removing those barriers through clearer visibility, a more inviting entrance, an open-door approach, and a better online presence is what allows the other two pillars to actually reach people.

Together, these three pillars work towards the same goal: a MuseumLAB that functions as the neighbourhood's living room — an inviting, low-threshold space where everyone feels welcome, neighbours can meet across differences, and people learn from each other by collaborating and creating together.

Chapter 3 – Results of the co-creation sessions

3.1 - Co-creation session 1, March 17

Miriam: The first co-creation session was the first direct contact that we had with the residents in or around the neighbourhood. The first thing I noticed was that when the general question was asked to the neighbours who were actually living in Het Zicht, there was only a very small percentage of hand raised. Many people came from surrounding areas such as Leyweg, Leyenburg, Escamp or other nearby neighbourhoods.

**Results Co-creation session 1 -
Observations in short:**

- Lack of knowledge on MuseumLAB itself
- Feelings of unsafety at night
- Dirty feeling of the neighbourhood
- Lack of community cohesion

I was sitting at a table with a woman who actually lived in Het Zicht, whom I had very insightful conversations with. After the initial getting to know each other and explaining what we are really doing or aiming to do with this course, we were able to get into details about the lived experiences of this resident in the neighbourhood. Funnily enough, she was unaware of the existence of MuseumLAB, even though she lives only a couple doors down and, prior to the construction in the street, walked past there very often. I briefly discussed with her the overall goals of MuseumLAB to the best of my ability before sparking the conversation of her experiences. She was very open and very happy to talk about the neighbourhood and her lived experiences. She lived alone, with her dog, and really appreciates contact with neighbours and being able to do things in and around the neighbourhood, but because of medical reasons she recently has been more unable to do what she wants to do. However, she did seem interested in the goals of MuseumLAB and will probably come by and help out when she can.

In terms of sparking the conversation, I experienced this as very easy. The people I spoke to were very open and extremely interested in our cause and therefore were happy to help us by sharing their stories. Unfortunately we did not encounter people who had brought personal

objects, so I cannot specifically reflect on this. However, I did find that objects were not needed to have a meaningful conversation that allowed the residents to openly speak about their experiences. From the different people that shared stories and experiences about the neighbourhood, a couple aspects kept recurring in every conversation. Most prominently, it had to do with safety. Specifically coming from the women I spoke to, many reported experiences of feeling unsafe on the streets at night. Partly having to do with groups of underaged boys causing trouble at night and creating the feeling of an unsafe environment for the female residents specifically. I was unable to talk to a male resident on this issue, so I cannot reflect on this, whether it is part of a gender bias or not, but hopefully this will become clear in the next co-creation session.

Furthermore, structural issues were discussed, where in certain areas the streetlamps are broken, sometimes on purpose according to the residents to create dark areas where drug deals can happen. This then leads to the next aspect when talking about safety. According to some residents, the neighbourhood at night turns increasingly unsafe through the higher levels of drugs and alcohol usage which create further unsafe situations for people out on the street after dark, but which also creates much nuisance for the residents. We briefly discussed with the people in which ways they think this problem can be tackled, but really the only thing that came up was increasing levels of surveillance. However, increasing police surveillance in general might not be the best solution in terms of feeling of safety for people, as this might also, especially to the outside, could communicate that this neighbourhood is unsafe to be in. I do believe that surveillance levels can be increased in a better, more sustainable and appropriate manner, but how exactly is something we should do more research on.

Besides safety levels, something many residents came back to was the state of the neighbourhood in terms of cleanliness. Many people complained that the visuals of the neighbourhood are dirty because of the amount of trash everywhere. The stories revealed that many people who are living in flats experience that people above them throw trash from their balcony, landing in either the green spaces behind the flats or even on other residents' balconies. However, also in other spaces not connected to houses there are high levels of trash

which adds to the perceived lower image of the neighbourhood and creates a less viable living environment for many people. We talked about some sort of solution for the trash problem, and most importantly, people want more accessibility to trashcans in general. In many public spaces there is a lack of trash cans so for an immediate solution, the addition of more trashcans in public spaces could help with this problem in some way.

A last aspect that came up multiple times in the conversations was the fact that many people feel it is difficult to really know their neighbours. I encountered some people who would like to be more involved with other people in the neighbourhood but find that many people of different cultures tend to keep close to their own culture and thus similar people, and do not really branch out to other people. I think in general this is something the MuseumLAB and Wereldkeuken already are working on bridging that gap, but that the expansion of this or the creation of more types of neighbourhood activities can aid this process of social cohesion.

3.2 - Co-creation session 2, March 24

Three of our groupmates assisted the second co-creation session on Tuesday 24th of March, at the Wereldkeuken, near the MuseumLAB. Here we write each of our experiences from our own perspective, since we all sat at different tables and spoke with different members of the community.

Sofie: As I walked in just before 17h, there were already lots of residents and classmates sitting and chatting with each other. I sat down at a table, and after first enjoying some casual conversation, we also started talking about how they lived and what their experiences were. The woman explained that she used to work in security, but was now an autism-coach, sparked by her son, who has autism. She explained the stigma there sometimes is on autism, as well as ADHD and ADD, and how often people refer to it as a disorder when she does not see it that way. It was interesting to see how her previous experience in security, and now her work as an autism-coach gave her her point of view on how things were going in the neighbourhood and in the city. Also afterward, when we were sitting at the table where we had dinner together this conversation was sparked up once again. She thought that in the current day, there are no clear boundaries anymore, which can make it difficult to tackle problems, also in the neighbourhood. She explained by saying that if you give people clarity and explain what is expected of them usually this goes over better. This went on further than just the neighbourhood, stating that Dutch bureaucracy is often a hassle and difficult to understand which can cause problems also with paying bills that are unexpected simply because you did not do something that you did not know should have been done. She stressed the importance of guidance, that people can come somewhere and someone can help them with such things such as filing taxes. I noted down that this could be interesting for the MuseumLAB as well.

Results Co-creation session 2 - Observations in short:

- Low levels of guidance within the community
- Wishes for more interpersonal communication
- Interest in social events
- Interest in activities made for all ages

As I was sitting at a table together with Maarten, the director of the MuseumLAB this also made for interesting conversation as he could comment on experiences and knew the neighbourhood well. However, sometimes it was also limiting as he liked to share his own perspective, making less space for residents to share theirs. When we were on the topic of her work as an autism-coach we also asked Maarten how they worked with this at the MuseumLAB. He went on to say that to them it does not make a difference, and at the age of 6-10 he does not think there should be special treatment for neurodiverse children. This was an interesting perspective, and also made me think about how this should be dealt with if workshops for older children such as teenagers and adults are set up.

The residents I talked to seem to know about the MuseumLAB, and one lady had also been to visit there once. They seemed to like that the space was there, but also not too much to know of it. This could make sense, as they were all older residents, and right now the MuseumLAB's workshops are mostly aimed at young children. One of their annoyances of the neighbourhood seemed to be the use of fatbikes, and how dangerous it could be. Furthermore, they also questioned how the new buildings would hold up, and how much people would actually like living there as they are so much smaller than before. We also asked about the hotel behind the MuseumLAB, where seasonal workers live. A lady I talked to commented that while the hotel was not embraced, it was also not outright rejected by the neighbourhood. She went on to say that she also found it outrageous that people were so against a new centre for homeless people and asylum seekers, and that she found that they should be welcoming.

Overall, the conversation was interesting, consisting of talk about the neighbourhood as well as other topics. However, no one seemed to have brought an object from home with them, so this I cannot reflect upon. I would say that being a native Dutch speaker was very helpful to talk to the residents, as they seemed to be more comfortable speaking in Dutch rather than English. They seemed to be very interested in what we were doing and studying, and very open to conversation. For me, it was not difficult to spark conversation once you sat down next to someone and asked them a question, as they were often eager to talk about their experiences and life. It was a positive experience, and good to connect and talk to residents

about their experiences and see what insights we can take with us into our final design proposal.

Daniel: Coming into the Wereldkeuken, the first thing I saw was a group of ladies sitting at a table and enjoying some coffee. They seemed to know each other from before, and were having a chat with some of our classmates. The conversations were in Dutch, so I was able to have limited understanding, it seemed like our classmates were giving some context to who we were and what was our purpose of being here.

A short time after, two siblings came in and seemed to be Spanish speaking, which is my mother tongue, so I approached them and asked where they were from. They happened to be Peruvian, so also from the same country as me. They seemed happy to have someone they could relate to, since their English and Dutch were not so great. I asked them if they wanted to sit with me during the dinner and they agreed. I had some nice conversations with them and asked them how they knew about this event, the woman said that she saw the flyer about it and had attended the previous event, and she brought her brother along for this one. They have been living in the Netherlands for over 15 years, and the man works with the municipality of the Hague, the woman said she has not worked for about 8 years.

The conversations we had varied between general chit-chat about our foods and culture, and topics more focused on the community. They gave me some ideas about how to design a welcome, useful and communal space such as the MuseumLAB. They mentioned that topics such as first-aid, psychology, and interpersonal communication could be very helpful, with the idea that in a multicultural area, there are many people and they often lack the skills to understand other cultures and ways of communication. They also mentioned that even some general social events would also bring their attention, since people are always willing to chat around and know what is happening around them.

It was very insightful to have a conversation with these people, and their opinions will be considered in the creation of our design for the MuseumLAB.

Shahrzad: I arrived a bit earlier than the walk-in time, but there were two of the residents already in the Wereldkueken, they seemed to know each other and started to talk while sitting at the table drinking coffee. Soon others arrived and the room got filled with different people. The first conversation I participated in was with an old woman who lives nearby and has a blog, where she posts contents related to the city. She was passionate about the history of the neighbourhood. She had actually written a book about the story of the neighbourhood consisting of interviews with the residents, who are mostly not alive anymore. In terms of what activity she would like to participate in, she stated her interest in history and particularly World War II history and background stories. She believed activities should be more fun and participatory rather than just sitting silently listening to one person.

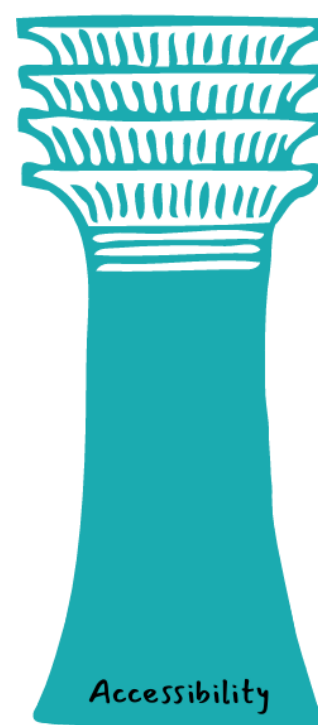
She also showed interest in the garden of MuseumLAB and talked about her experiences with gardening. They used to have 'schooltuintjes', small blocks of garden in the school where every student could plant something, and they were also given gardening lessons there. This conversation was completely in Dutch, and while talking, some other people joined our table, such as a Peruvian brother and sister and an Afghan family, Ali and Zahra and their son Danial. They also started to introduce themselves in Dutch, but I also offered the Afghan family the possibility to speak Persian as well.

Moving to the dining room, the Afghan man remained sitting next to one of my Dutch classmates, while his wife came to the other side of the table to sit next to me. They have been in the Netherlands since 2022, and her husband has been working here in the past two years. He was fluent in Dutch and didn't seem to have problems socializing with other people. The wife, though, was not fluent in Dutch yet. Although she had the confidence to speak in Dutch, she stated that because of having little social contact, there are not so many times when she can talk to other people in Dutch. Since having their one-year-old child, she has been staying home for days, watching after the baby and housekeeping. Her husband works full-time and also does sports like volleyball in his free time, so she has the responsibility to take care of the child. She also said that lately her son goes to daycare twice a week, making it possible for her to do things outside, but overall, she would love to do activities which involve both her son and her. Also, she talked about the fact that her son is learning two languages at

the same time, based on how simple a word in one of the languages is. For example, he calls water *Ab*, which is the Persian word for that, but at the same time *ei*, meaning egg, as the Persian word *Tokhm-e Morq* is not easy to pronounce. She would like to have a space for her child where activities are more hands-on and less language-based, so that her son feels more comfortable. Generally, she was happy with the neighbourhood safety and believed her son is safe to play in the neighbourhood.

Chapter 4 – Design Proposal and ToC Evaluation

In order to achieve our vision in the best way possible, we have developed a design proposal on the base of three pillars, which together work towards making the MuseumLAB further integrated into the neighbourhood Zuidwest. The first pillar, named knowledge hub, encompasses the role MuseumLAB plays in gaining and sharing knowledge from and to the neighbours. The second pillar, collaboration and co-creation, builds further on integrating MuseumLAB into the community, by focusing on activities which aim to encourage collaboration between neighbours through co-creation events. Lastly, the third pillar, accessibility, concerns the ways in which MuseumLAB can improve their accessibility through different dimensions.



4.1 - Pillar 1: Knowledge Hub

To further build MuseumLAB's presence in the neighbourhood, we believe it is possible to make a true knowledge hub out of the MuseumLAB. After all, creating and sharing different types of knowledge between people is an integral part of what happens in a regular living room. A place where people come together to just be, and also to share stories, facts, ideas, and more. In order to do so, MuseumLAB can become a place which encompasses the essence of a living room. A way to further integrate the MuseumLAB into the community, can be done through focussing more on the museum being a museum. This means connecting MuseumLAB activities to knowledge sharing and awareness creating for residents, as well as providing a space where everyone feels welcome, comfortable and positive, where people will want to go back to time and time again, like a living room would too.

Knowledge comes in many different forms and is created and shared in different ways. For the purpose of this assignment, we have decided to focus on two types of knowledge that are relevant for the MuseumLAB and their already existing image. The first being cultural knowledge, which is knowledge that truly comes from the people in the neighbourhood, where MuseumLAB can play a role of the facilitator, but not of the creator. South-West is a very multicultural neighbourhood, with 66% of the total population having non-European backgrounds (Figure 2) (AlleCijfers.nl, n.d.). The neighbourhood is a place where people live next to each other, but where transculturalism has yet been achieved. Transculturalism goes beyond the definition of multiculturalism, which could simply be seen as a society in which multiple cultures live in close proximity to each other, like it is the case in The Hague South-West. Transculturalism, however, encompasses the idea that openness to other cultures can

aid the individual to create a more complex identity that is built upon a mix of different cultures (Loh 2022).

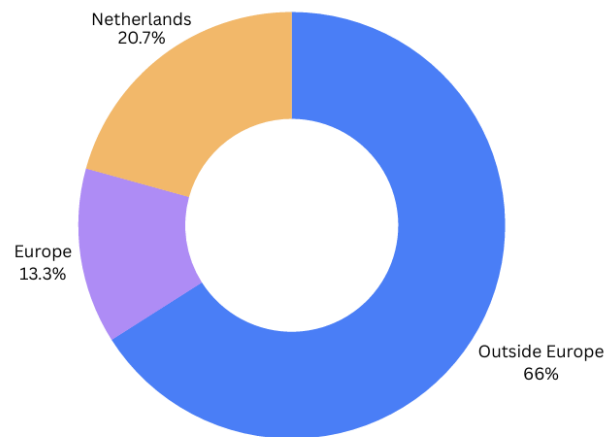


Figure 2: Statistics neighbourhood Zijden, Steden en Zichten, from Allecijfers.nl

It therefore requires the mixing of cultures, whereas multiculturalism does not necessarily refer to the mixing of cultures on an individual level. Currently, many of the residents we spoke to during the co-creation sessions believe the neighbourhood is lacking this transculturalism and wish for people to be more open to mix with each other.

While the MuseumLAB already offers many workshops for children, we also wanted to think of workshops or activities that everyone can participate in, both as a way to get to know new neighbours, as well as strengthening community bonds and feeling of belonging in the neighbourhood by actively engaging different ages and backgrounds. Simon (2016) states that cultural institutions should focus more on designing intergenerational, inclusive activities that connect different people, rather than offering parallel programs aimed at separate target audiences. She calls this approach “Building a Bigger Room”, which can enhance the visitors’ experience by meeting new people, and also being part of a bigger community (Simon, 2016). As this approach suggests, designing workshops and other activities open to everyone regardless of their age and background, increases participation and boosts a sense of shared values and community-belongingness in the neighbourhood.

4.1.1 - Language exhibitions

A social activity that could boost community building, knowledge sharing and simultaneously working towards achieving transculturalism, is by hosting regular language and cultural exhibitions. These exhibitions can be hosted in combination with language cafés. These are spaces in which visitors come together with the aim of sharing and practicing a certain language, in a social setting without a school-like environment. These cafés are more informal and easier to build a bridge between different language speakers in a social setting (Narfström 2025, 1). Examples of language cafés exist already in The Hague, such as the 'Dutch Language Café in the centre of the city. However, the benefit of MuseumLAB facilitating a space for this as well, is to really build the community in this neighbourhood, whilst simultaneously creating an opportunity for MuseumLAB to become more well-known in the neighbourhood.

The MuseumLAB would open their doors on certain nights, or during the day in the weekend in order to make sure both adults and children would be able to participate and provide a space where people could come together and share languages. To take this to a next level, instead of just hosting a language café where people come to sit and talk with each other, MuseumLAB can turn this into the creation of exhibitions. Every event can have a different theme, for example, memory, home, migration, food, culture, etc. The exhibition would facilitate a space to make this visual, through bringing in personal objects or artefacts, that can be exhibited, but could also be certain phrases put on paper, turned into drawings or other exhibition manners. MuseumLAB can use the inside space, like the walls to hang things, the tables to display the objects, and possibly provide laptops to show pictures or videos from the participants. This intervention would, instead of just focusing on language exchange, turn it into something visual and accessible. This could be done as a way to help certain people in the neighbourhood learn Dutch, but could also be a way for people to learn a different language in a setting with low pressure. Not only is this a way to share languages, but it also boosts cultural interaction, community building and helps boost a sense of belonging for the residents. It is a relatively easy activity to organize, as MuseumLAB would only need to provide a space where people can sit and talk, and possibly provide some food and drinks where possible.

To take it even further, on the longer term, when the complete move to the new location has happened, MuseumLAB can collaborate with the Wereldkeuken across the street, and host cultural nights. These nights are centred around sharing cultural knowledge in order to boost community engagement. Events could be hosted surrounding a different culture every night to also facilitate a place of learning, but it could also be created in a way to mix cultures. The attendees could be asked to bring a certain dish as well as a cultural artifact that is important to them, and then during dinner, people could go around and try different cultural dishes and learn about the different cultures present. These cultural nights could also be a multipurpose evening, where sharing languages is an integral part of it and therefore continuing learning in a shared and open environment.

The second type of knowledge we would like to incorporate further into the MuseumLAB, is environmental knowledge. Environmental knowledge can be taught through top-down structures of someone explaining the importance of a clean environment. However, we believe that a more beneficial way to do it is through mutual engagement, where both the MuseumLAB and the neighbours work together to teach and learn from each other. The reason for choosing environmental knowledge as an integral part of our knowledge hub pillar, is because of the results coming from the co-creation sessions. Many people we spoke to during these nights, explained that the neighbourhood looks and feels dirty because of the high levels of trash on the streets and that this makes it more difficult to feel completely at home in a neighbourhood. Therefore, we have come up with the following three activities that MuseumLAB can host to help with this issue: A community garden, repair cafés and trash cleanup days.

4.1.2 - Community Garden

The idea of a community garden is something already talked about during the MuseumLAB sessions, but this could be elevated even more. In the current location of the MuseumLAB, there is a big piece of garden behind the building that would be perfect for a community garden. By hosting gardening events, people from the neighbourhood can come and work together at the same time to plant flowers, vegetables or other plants, which is a way to get to know more neighbours through a fun activity. Community gardens are well-known initiatives

in neighbourhoods to promote green urbanism in a public space that is run by a group of people from the respective neighbourhood the garden is in. For example, in an area with many social housing blocks in Amsterdam, a 'Social Garden' was created in 2010. This garden was aimed at creating a clean space in the neighbourhood that also fosters community building, where the organisation behind it (Cascoland and VoorUit) organized regular meetings to teach people skills and therefore were able to maintain the garden (Cascoland, 2019). Similar to the Social Garden in Amsterdam, the community garden of MuseumLAB should foster a space of learning as well. This could be organised in such a way, that certain neighbours with knowledge on gardening in terms of plants, flowers, but also fruits and vegetables, can work together with MuseumLAB to help teach the needed skills to other people present. For the MuseumLAB the garden in their own backyard, is also an extra green space to balance out the buildings around, where the green space becomes a more inviting place to come to. This activity would be open to everyone, so young people as well as adults or older people are able to participate. This will be an easy way to get in touch with people in the neighbourhood and share their knowledge about gardening and taking care of plants with each other.

4.1.3 - Repair Cafés

A second new activity would be the hosting of repair cafés. Repair cafés are a way to bring people together to fix things, rather than throwing them away when they are broken. These items can be anything they feel like that could be repaired, from clothing items, to small electronics, and people can share their skills and help others. Some people might be more knowledgeable in appliances or electronics, and can help out someone with this, while someone else might be really good at sewing and can help and teach someone else a new skill. A similar event was hosted in Amsterdam in 2022, where business owners in one street opened their doors for a day and making their business space into what was called 'maakplaatsen' (literally: making spaces). In these spaces, residents and other visitors were able to follow workshops with different themes, such as food, personal hygiene, repairs or textile processing. It served as a space where people meet, come together to create and learn, making the street come 'alive' (Winne van Woerden, 2022). As we would want to work with other organisations in the

neighbourhood, this could be in potential collaboration with ART-s-cool. This is another partner of the National Project South-West, and they organise art workshops. By collaborating with them on new workshops they could offer new input, more knowledge on Art, have artists to guide the workshops and attract new residents to the repair cafés.

Learning new skills to repair objects can also teach people, especially young children about how to behave more circularly and sustainably in practice, which can also be backed up with some small workshops or informative conversations. The MuseumLAB could provide the necessary tools and could offer guidance where possible, helping the neighbours where they can. In collaboration with ART-s-cool they could potentially also provide help and guidance in this issue. By fixing things instead of throwing them away, this also fosters sharing knowledge about sustainability and recycling, whilst simultaneously reducing waste in the neighbourhood and therefore creates an atmosphere that can strengthen the sense of community.

4.1.4 - Trash Clean-up Days

The last idea is somewhat related to the one above, because the focus is still on upcycling and reducing waste. A big complaint many neighbours had whom we spoke to, was the amount of dirty streets around the neighbourhood. While the MuseumLAB already has hosted workshops with the focus on trash and creating



something out of trash bags, we can think of ways to extend this. For example, by hosting trash cleanup days. People would create groups and go around the neighbourhood to clean up trash from the streets, where they can come back to MuseumLAB to use the collected items to create something new out of it. This can range from new art pieces for the museum, to useful items that can be used in daily life or at the MuseumLAB. A potential collaboration partner for this project could be Wijkz, as they have 'opbouwwerk' listed, as a way of making the neighbourhood more liveable. By collaborating with them they could offer more professional guidance on this process during the trash cleanup days, and offer input on what is needed for the neighbourhood

At the same time, employers from MuseumLAB, or even residents with knowledge on the topic, can host a small talk or lecture to teach people more about a circular economy and how people can actually do small things at home aiding a circular economy. Working together to clean up the streets and then creating something valuable out of it, can foster residents' sense of connection to their physical surroundings, boost their sense of togetherness and shared values, and raise awareness about recycling and waste collection through an activity that would actively contribute to a cleaner neighbourhood.

4.2 - Pillar 2: Collaboration and Co-Creation

If the first pillar positions MuseumLAB as a place where knowledge is shared, the second pillar focuses on how that knowledge becomes social practice. Collaboration and co-creation are the mechanisms through which MuseumLAB can move from being a place people visit occasionally to a place people, especially residents from the neighbourhood themselves, help shape. During our conversations at Wereldkeuken, several residents described that it can be difficult to truly know neighbours across cultural and social groups, even when living close by. This pillar responds to that gap by proposing activities that make interaction purposeful, low pressure, and based on shared doing rather than only talking. By adding this pillar within our vision, we aim to realise a bottom-up focus, instead of the top-down perspective that is often imposed by structures already in place (Simon, 2016).

A key principle in this pillar is that co-creation works best when it is concrete and visible. Activities should produce something that participants can point to, return to, and feel ownership over. This makes participation more than a one-time event. It becomes a repeated practice that slowly builds trust, familiarity, and a sense of shared responsibility. This principle also connects to Simon's idea of "building a bigger room," where cultural institutions create conditions for people to meet across differences through mixed age and participatory activities (2016).

We propose three main interventions within this pillar: a community garden, repair cafés, and neighbourhood trash clean up days. Although these activities were already included in the first pillar of our design proposal, in this section we aim to stress the co-creation and collaboration that takes place when putting them in place, along with sharing knowledge as explained in the previous pillar. These activities were selected because they are hands-on, inclusive across ages, and closely connected to issues and interests that residents raised. They are also relatively affordable to organise, as they can build on existing spaces, existing materials, and residents' own skills. By reducing the need for expensive new resources, the activities remain accessible and easier to sustain over time.

4.2.1 - Community garden

The community garden builds collaboration through slow, repeated encounters. Gardening creates a natural rhythm of return, because plants require care over time. It also allows people to participate at different levels. Some can take responsibility for maintenance, others can join occasional planting days, and children can take part in simple tasks. This makes the activity inclusive for different ages, abilities, and time schedules. Since the garden is also open, people could also possibly work on it at times when the MuseumLAB is not open itself, finding a time that suits everyone and where they possibly meet other residents, in order to work together on the community garden.

The social value of the garden is that it creates a setting where people can work side by side without needing strong language skills or social confidence from the start. It offers a calm environment for conversation to develop naturally. Residents with gardening knowledge can become informal mentors, and MuseumLAB can support by providing structure, basic tools, and continuity. Over time, the garden becomes more than greenery. It becomes a shared project that fosters local pride and creates a tangible example of what it means to care for the neighbourhood together, and therefore of co-creation and collaboration.

4.2.2 - Repair cafés

Repair cafés create co-creation through skill sharing and mutual support. The basic format is simple. Residents bring broken or worn items, such as clothes, small electronics, or household objects, and repair them together with others who have relevant knowledge. The strength of this activity is that it naturally distributes roles. Someone who comes for help in one area may be able to help someone else in another. Therefore, this stresses collaboration and co-creation between residents. This balances giving and receiving, which supports dignity and belonging.

MuseumLAB's role is to provide the space, basic tools, and a welcoming structure, while residents contribute skills and experience and collaborate in order to repair objects previously owned. In the longer term, this activity can be strengthened through collaboration with local partners such as ART s cool, who could bring additional creative expertise, workshop guidance, or links to makers and artists.

4.2.3 - Trash clean up days

As previously mentioned, trash in the street is an issue that many residents find urgent and contributes to a less liveable neighbourhood. By organising trash clean up days, residents are made to feel more responsible over their own streets, rather than blaming other residents over the dirtiness in the streets and therefore possibly creating a vilifying image of their neighbours. Clean up days address the issue of trash

in the streets in a way that builds collective ownership rather than relying only on enforcement or complaint.

The format we propose combines action with transformation. Participants form small groups to collect litter in the neighbourhood and then return to MuseumLAB to sort and repurpose selected materials in a making session. In this manner, participants collect trash together to then form new objects from them. The trash can result in being simple useful objects, small art pieces, or temporary displays. A simple example could be turning plastic containers into plant pots, then using them in the community garden. Linking clean up to making also



strengthens the museum character of MuseumLAB, because the process produces visible outcomes that can be exhibited or shared during display days. By collaborating in these trash clean up days, residents feel a shared responsibility and collaborate to make their neighbourhood more liveable.

This intervention can benefit from collaboration with a neighbourhood organisation such as Wijkz, which could support outreach, organise group leadership, and connect the activity to broader liveability work. MuseumLAB staff and residents with experience in sustainability can add a learning component, keeping it practical and short, focused on what people can do at home and in the neighbourhood.

4.2.4 - Working together

Although each intervention can stand alone, they are designed to reinforce each other. The clean-up days produce materials and a shared sense of action that can feed into making and planting. The community garden provides a long-term place to return to, including a visible outcome that residents can care for together. The repair café creates a recurring indoor space of mutual support and skill exchange, particularly in colder months when outdoor activities are less attractive.

Together, these interventions aim to make collaboration feel normal and worthwhile. They build a culture where residents do not only attend activities but also contribute to them. Over time, this supports the broader vision of MuseumLAB as the neighbourhood's living room, a place where people come not only to consume experiences, but to create them together.

4.3 - Pillar 3: Accessibility

The last pillar encompasses different ideas to enhance the MuseumLAB's accessibility. We have divided them up in three different levels. The first being physical accessibility, which has to do with the actual looks of the MuseumLAB and the direct space around it. The second level is social accessibility, which relates to low-threshold activities to draw people in. The last level concerns digital accessibility, which will elaborate on online engagements. Talking with several

neighbourhood residents, it became apparent that they were often unaware of the presence of a museum in their neighbourhood, resulting in less effectiveness for the museum's activities where they wish to play a more well-known role in the neighbourhood. To circumvent this, we have come up with several ideas that could aid the MuseumLAB in becoming more known in and around the neighbourhood, ranging from a younger demographic to the elderly in the neighbourhood.

4.3.1 – Physical Accessibility

In terms of physical accessibility, we believe that MuseumLAB can benefit from a transformation in the long term, concerning the space directly in front of their building. We made some pictures and a map of our proposed ideas to change and improve the area around the MuseumLAB, elevating its physical accessibility (see Figures 3 and 4). Within these pictures and the map, we kept the existing residential block (keeping the three housing floors above), then proposed a ground-floor transformation: a clearly visible MuseumLAB entrance, a larger “MuseumLAB” sign and transparent frontage to signal a public destination rather than another dwelling. We also removed car parking, replacing it with bicycle parking, and more space greenery (planters, trees, soft landscape edges). We also defined a clearer walking route



Figure 3: A bird's-eye view of the general area where layouts are made to visualize the bigger spaces

connecting the nearby bus stop behind the building to the museum entrance, supported by lighting and paving that reads as a continuous path. Finally, we included relaxing outdoor spaces such as seating, shaded tables, and a small play area, so parents, children, and neighbours of all ages can linger. Finally, an extra addition would be the placing of more trashcans around the entire area, to boost the idea of keeping the neighbourhood clean together.



Figure 4: The area in front of MuseumLAB's current location, where bike parking, greenery and seating areas have been added

Additionally, we came up with the idea of a board showing (weekly) schedule of the museum behind the window (See Figure 5), so that passers-by would get informed about the upcoming activities and exhibitions held by MuseumLAB, even if the place is closed itself. The outcome shows these elements consistently, translating our concept into a coherent, site-based visual proposal.



Figure 5: A big board showing the week's activities in the window of the MuseumLAB

4.3.2 – Display Days

To enhance social accessibility and make the MuseumLAB more visible and attractive to residents, an idea is to create certain 'display days'. Seeing as the museum aspect of MuseumLAB is very important to them, more emphasis can therefore be put on that. Making certain days specific display days, during which they enforce an open-door policy, could potentially lead to more people visiting the museum to look at the exhibitions. This can also create a regular habit of visiting the museum to check out the new exhibition each time. An example of this could be utilising the garden and creating an outside exhibition on special days as an event, where the outside area can then be used for the museum as well. Since the art pieces being exhibited are created during the workshops with children from around the neighbourhood, these special display days could be a way to invite the children and their parents too, to talk about their pieces and in this way can also get acquainted with other guests coming to see the exhibitions. By involving children and their parents actively in creating exhibition content, their sense of agency within the MuseumLAB increases, resulting in a stronger sense of belonging. According to Price and Appelbaum (2022), agency is a core component of cultural belonging, meaning that visitors who feel their contribution and presence to the (cultural) place matters, feel more belonging to the place accordingly. Having a sense of belonging and repeated habit of visiting a cultural place have a direct relation with each

other, therefore providing a sense of ownership over the contents, helps encourage children and their parents returning to the MuseumLAB more often, making the place more visited in the neighbourhood.

4.3.3 – Digital Accessibility

As well as physical visibility, MuseumLAB needs to become more visible in online platforms as well, to make sure it reaches its audience, especially younger ones, as a goal of MuseumLAB is to try to reach more of a younger audience, like teenagers as well as other demographics. Therefore, an important idea is the creation of a better online space where the MuseumLAB is present. During our research into the MuseumLAB, we realised it was quite hard to find a website specific to them, as the main website of the Omniversum leads to the location in Statenkwartier, a very different neighbourhood in The Hague. While the website does have a section dedicated to the MuseumLAB, it is quite unclear and difficult to reach. A website solely dedicated to MuseumLAB in Het Zicht would be preferred, where all the Museum's information is displayed. After having talked to an employee from MuseumLAB in the last on-site session, they told us that a website is actually in the making, but that input for this website is always welcome.

Therefore, we have come up with certain elements the website should offer, in order to help improve the digital accessibility. The website should be visually pleasing, with pictures or other visuals to help navigate information easily. On the front page it should have a short introduction to the MuseumLAB to announce who they are and what their goals are. It should have a small space on this page announcing the activities or workshops of that week. Furthermore, it should have a specific tab within the website where a full version of an events calendar is published with all the activities, workshops, open days, etc over the span of a longer period (be it a monthly calendar or a yearly calendar). A calendar that is regularly updated, helps the people in the neighbourhood know when and where activities are happening and aids them to find their preferred activity to participate in. The website could then also foster a way to have people sign up for certain events that would need sign-ups. Additionally, to boost community

engagement, the website could have sections dedicated to stories of people in the neighbourhood. This could be done in collaboration with Gera Nieland, a resident from the neighbourhood who writes frequently on her blog 'Haags Allerlei' about The Hague and specifically South-West. She is one of various stories of people in the neighbourhood, but since she has been living there for so long, she probably has quite a network. By publishing these stories about residents from the neighbourhood on her blog as well as on the new website for the MuseumLAB, this could involve both our second pillar, collaboration and co-creation as well as further accessibility as this would attract more people directly to the website and the MuseumLAB itself.

4.4 – Theory of Change Analysis

Transforming the MuseumLAB into the living room of The Hague South-West is a result of the interconnectedness of the four dimensions of the Theory of Change; the institutional dimension, the social dimension, the cultural dimension and the physical dimension. The overlap between these dimensions continuously results in building upon each other and strengthening one another within the created interventions. Therefore, we have decided to incorporate our Theory of Change analysis in the form of our different pillars and interventions, as they often overlap. We decided to combine Pillar 1 and 2 for one diagram, as their interventions overlap, whereas the angle is different. Pillar 3 focuses on a different aspect in its entirety; therefore, we decided to make it a separate diagram.

Furthermore, it is important to keep a critical view of the ToC diagrams, as this theory builds on desired outcomes and therefore in practice could potentially lead to different outcomes. Many of our proposed interventions in pillars 1 and 2 are dependent upon the residents of the neighbourhood being willing to show up and participate in the activities. While the people we spoke to during the co-creation sessions seemed to be interested in more active events, there is always the risk of people not showing up instantly. It is therefore important to keep in mind that the success of the activities we proposed are dependent on being able to reach as many people as possible, through for example online engagements, as discussed in chapter 4.3.3

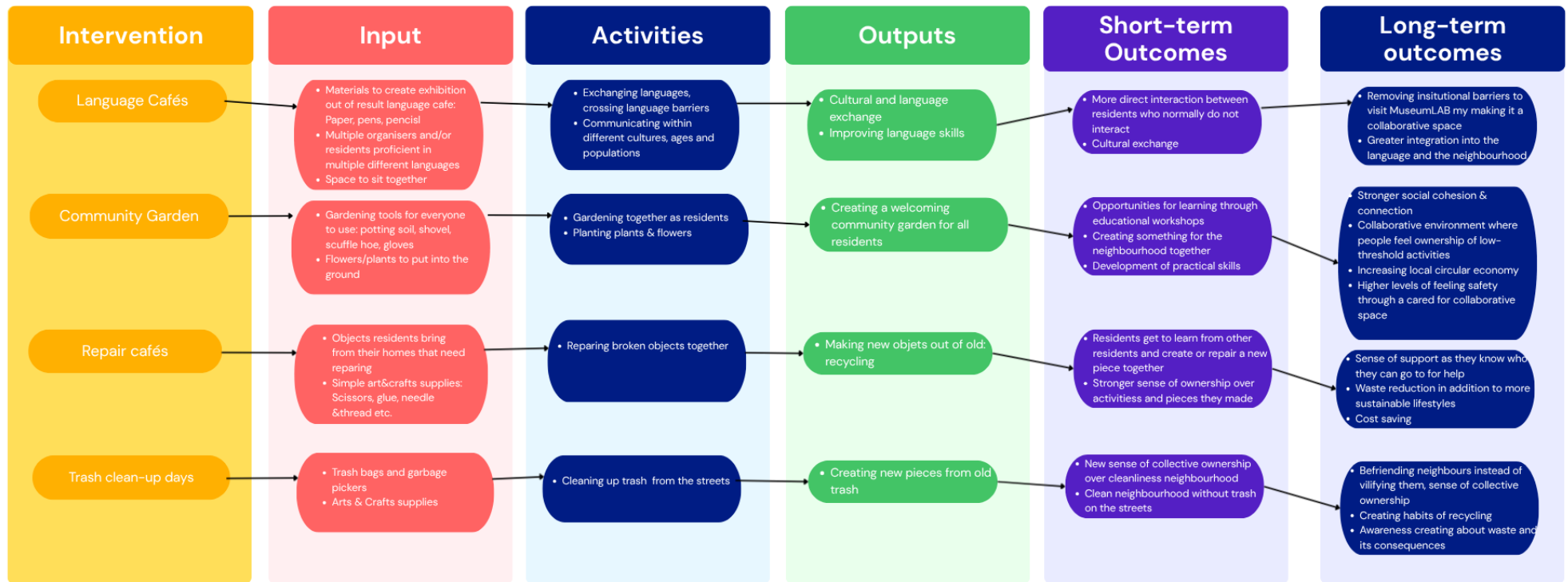
and that the constant updating and sharing posts or other marketing techniques are beneficial. Moreover, especially taking into consideration the ToC diagram of pillar 3, concerning the physical accessibility, it is vital to be aware that some design ideas for the outside of MuseumLAB have to be done in collaboration with other actors, like the municipality, Steadion, or other organisations, and therefore can affect the outcomes of these interventions on the long term. Furthermore, these physical aspects need to be maintained by someone, which would need to be discussed with the municipality as well.

Theory of Change

Pillar 1 & 2: Knowledge Hub & Collaboration and Co-creation

Current situation:
Not so much interaction between residents and across cultures in the neighbourhood, therefore lack of social cohesion & feeling of connection between residents

Desired vision:
Creating a collaborative and co-owned sense of community in the neighbourhood by friendly interaction and making the neighbourhood more liveable together



Theory of Change

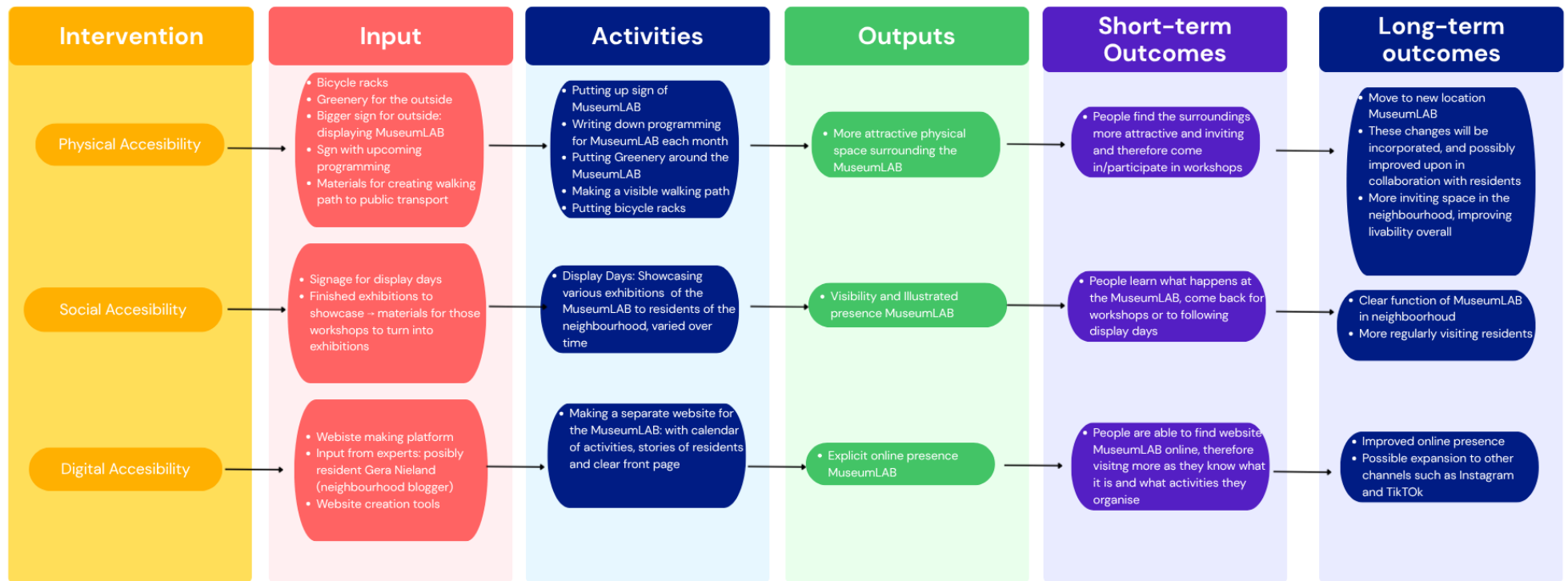
Pillar 3: Accessibility

Current situation:

MuseumLAB's function within the neighbourhood is not clear, no clear signage of its function and what they organise, neither in person or physical

Desired vision:

Improved visibility of the MuseumLAB and clear what its function is in the neighbourhood and to its residents, inviting space both in person and physical.



Conclusion

In conclusion, together the three pillars of this design proposal form a coherent and mutually reinforcing whole. The Knowledge Hub ensures that MuseumLAB becomes a place where residents' own knowledge, cultures, and languages are valued and shared. Collaboration and Co-creation turn that knowledge exchange into something tangible and collective, giving residents a genuine sense of ownership over the space and what happens in it. Accessibility ensures that none of this remains out of reach that people can find MuseumLAB, feel welcome when they arrive, and stay informed about what is on offer.

The three pillars of this design proposal each follow a clear theory of change, moving from concrete inputs and activities through to short and long-term outcomes that together realise the vision of MuseumLAB as the neighbourhood's living room.

What connects all three pillars is the same underlying logic: the barriers keeping residents away from MuseumLAB are not a matter of interest or willingness, but of visibility, accessibility, and opportunity. When those barriers are removed and when residents are given real reasons to return, contribute, and feel ownership MuseumLAB can grow from a space some people know about into a space the neighbourhood recognises as its own.

Chapter 5 – Reflection

Joining two sessions of co-creation with the neighbourhood's residents, we realized how important it is to gather information and insights firsthand from the group the design aims for. They have provided us with realities neither of us, as student experts on the subject, or MuseumLAB staff, working with them directly, have been able to completely understand. This shows how positionality of designers and researchers may result in biased outcomes, although they have enough expertise to tackle challenges, and how using participatory approaches, such as co-creation sessions with residents can hinder potential biases and improve accuracy of the information used as input for design.

It was also interesting to see how conversations would naturally start and go on without any need to push it forward. Although the flyer asked participants to bring a favourite object to talk about, almost no one presented their object, and these people started engaging in conversations easily. This emphasizes the willingness of residents to participate in community activities, and their fundamental need to be heard and valued regardless of their background, or their level of language proficiency. As designers, we took advantage of this willingness to propose activities and spaces which provides the residents with the chance to meet each other, talk and share ideas, and enjoy form a shared experience.

Although a noticeable number of residents joined co-creation sessions overall, it is worth mentioning that the majority of participants were senior residents, showing a lack of participation among younger and middle-aged residents. As MuseumLAB tries to bridge between different groups of people living in the neighbourhood, preparing more engaging and appealing activities that can attract various demographics can help in gathering information from a bigger range of residents, enriching the information gathering process.

Overall, an important takeaway is that co-creation is a fundamental pillar upon which policies and institutions should be built. As was also explained by staff at the MuseumLAB themselves,

often the directors and staff that made the policies, built the buildings in the neighbourhood etc. barely interacted with the residents themselves, even when officially opening the new buildings built for residents in this neighbourhood. This showcases an important gap between residents and governors which makes residents feel unheard throughout the governance process. By doing something as simple as hosting these co-creation sessions, it is an important step to make residents feel heard and to take their input into account throughout the whole process of development. After all, we are developing something for (and hopefully by) residents, and without their input you might end up with something not desirable in their view at all, missing the whole point.

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Appendix 1: Poster

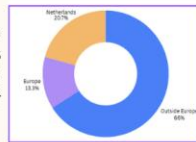
MUSEUMLAB: THE LIVING ROOM OF THE HAGUE SOUTH-WEST

PROBLEM STATEMENT

MuseumLAB has high potential to build community in Zuidwest, but it is easy to miss. From the street, it blends into the residential block and the space in front reads mainly as a "residential parking", and not as a welcoming area"

NEIGHBOURHOOD SNAPSHOT

Zijden, Steden en Zichten (Den Haag Zuidwest; Bouwlust en Vrederust) is home to ~7,850 residents and ~3,790 households (2025). The area is highly diverse: 66% of residents are recorded with a non-European background, and 53% are born in Europe or in the Netherlands (2025).



DESIGN CHALLENGE

How can MuseumLAB become a recognizable, low-threshold communal space in Zuidwest?

LOCATION



CO-CREATION SESSIONS

(WERELD KEUKEN DINNERS)

Our co-creation sessions were intentionally low-threshold. Over dinner, we chatted with residents about their daily routines, experiences in the neighbourhood, and their awareness of the MuseumLAB. Due to the informal and equal setting, people shared detailed stories about their experiences in the neighbourhood. These insights helped shape our design proposal.

Results Co-creation session 1 -

Observations in short:

- Lack of knowledge on MuseumLAB itself
- Feelings of unsafety at night
- Dirty feeling of the neighbourhood
- Lack of community cohesion

Results Co-creation session 2 -

Observations in short:

- Low levels of guidance within the community
- Wishes for more interpersonal communication
- Interest in social events
- Interest in activities made for all ages

OUR APPROACH

- 1. Knowledge hub:** The museumLAB becomes a place where neighbours share and learn together. It makes local knowledge visible and relevant, giving people a reason to enter and return with some of the following activities:
 - a. Language exhibits
 - b. Cultural nights
 - c. Environmental knowledge
- 2. Collaboration and co-creation:** Hands-on activities where residents co-create, bringing people together with activities such as:
 - a. Community gardening
 - b. Repair cafes
- 3. Accessibility:** Make it easy to notice, enter, and join. Physical accessibility with multi-transport options; social accessibility with open-door display days, multi-age activities; and digital accessibility by higher online presence through social media and their own website.

3 PILLARS OF THE MUSEUMLAB



SPATIAL PLAN



QR

TU Delft

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