



**Universiteit  
Leiden**

## **Diversifying the Collections: Inclusive Citizenship and Public Histories of Exclusion**

### **Applicants**

<b>Supervisor Name</b>	<b>Institute</b>
Monika Baar/ Paul van Trigt	Institute of History
Paul Bijl	KITLV/ Leiden Global

### **Project description**

In educational settings such as museums, universities and schools, white, male, able-bodied and rational subjects still dominate. Although there has been a lot of theoretical work on processes of in- and exclusion through racialization, sexualization, and disabilization, we still know very little about the actual representations and absences of minority groups in such contexts. The recent discussion about the use of words like 'neger' in the Rijksmuseum is telling in this respect. Why do we still have such difficulties in creating inclusiveness and how can we deal with these processes in a historically responsible way? In our project we will investigate how and why minority groups including women, members of LGBTQ communities, people with disabilities and various ethnicized groups were and are represented (or precisely not) in two museums. In line with our expertise in disability and postcolonial/race studies we have selected the 'Rijksmuseum Volkenkunde' and 'Museum van de Geest Dolhuys'. With this project we do not only seek to provide an in-depth historical analysis of these institutional representations, but also to formulate recommendations and present best practices for making museums and digital humanities more inclusive.

The innovative nature of the project lies in its intersectional approach: we will select and analyze representations in which concepts of identity intersect, in particular disability and race. At the micro-level we will focus on the way objects are described and categorized, at the macro level we will be looking into how these categorizations are accommodated in the wider conceptual and visual framework of the exhibitions. By interrogating the two museums' collections in this manner, we will develop during our one-year project a set of entries based on the digital collections of the two museums, which will be presented on a new, accessible website that enables us to link the research results of our project to the websites of museums. The website will be built in such a way that new research findings can be submitted onto the online platform. This will enable new organizations to join the initiative, in accordance with our intention to enhance the project after one year with new research and international collaboration. The trainees are the main executors of the project by selecting and analyzing the sources, co-developing the website and contributing to research proposals and a paper.

### **Research Trainee Profile**

Tasks: undertaking a literature review, inventory and analysis of relevant sources, co-writing of research proposal, co-development of a website, co-writing of paper

Skills: ability to work both independently as in cooperation with others, affinity with interdisciplinary research and with debates about inclusive citizenship, affinity with digital or public history (at least one of the trainees has to be familiar with webdesign), good command of English

Type student: Ma/ ResMa

## Collaboration

The trainees will work as members of the interdisciplinary network Sources of Inclusive Citizenship (to be established in December 2016/ January 2017). This network will be part of the research programme Political Culture and National Identities within the Leiden Institute for History with linkages to other research programmes like Colonial and Global History. Central to the project is a historical analysis, but this investigation is unthinkable without using our expertise from (interdisciplinary) postcolonial, gender and disability studies and without collaboration with museum experts. One of the supervisors, Paul Bijl, has a background in cultural studies, and we will also work together with experts in the field of heritage, education, archival and museum studies including Paul Ariese (Reinwardt), Manon Parry (UvA), Pieter Verstraete (KU Leuven) and the curators and staff of the two museums will be involved. Secondly, from its onset, the project will instigate a public debate about museum collections. Therefore an innovative website with an “accessible for all” design (accessible for people with as many different disabilities and special needs as possible) will be developed in collaboration with digital experts from the University Library (Centre of Digital Scholarship). Moreover, the content of the website will be developed in consultation with representatives of the organizations which collaborate with this project, such as the foundation Disability Studies in the Netherlands and the association KITLV. During their traineeship the students can profit from the available expertise in Leiden and also contribute to the development of this new research line. In the end, also other students can profit from the project results, which can be integrated into the institutes research-lead teaching programme and will contribute to the diversification of the curriculum.

## Deliverables

- Research proposal for building of (accessible for all) interactive public history website about heritage of exclusion, which may be submitted, subject to the specific calls for application, to NWO/ Kiem/ Creatieve Industrie, ‘middelgrote investering’, or other funds
- Development of website (as mentioned above)
- Paper about research results project

## Planning

	Months 1-4	Months 5-8	Month 9-12
Trainee 1	Literature review, inventory sources	Analyzing sources, production of content website	Writing paper
Trainee 2	Writing website proposal, inventory sources	Analyzing sources, production of content website	Development website and launch event

## Student Application

Students can send a motivation letter, CV, a recommendation and one page about the way they should approach the project to [p.w.van.trigt@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:p.w.van.trigt@hum.leidenuniv.nl). We have already identified candidates, thanks to our teaching to students from African Studies, Arts and Culture, Asian Studies, (Public) History, Latin American Studies, Literary Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, North American Studies.