



POLICY PLAN 2020-2023

Since 1987, the John Adams Institute offers an Amsterdam stage for the best and brightest of American thinking. Leading intellectual and provocative speakers, from Nobel Prize winners and Supreme Court judges to movie stars, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists and politicians, have been hosted since its inception. In the past 33 years, the John Adams Institute has brought a large number of American guests to Amsterdam who have enriched the cultural life in the city.

ORGANIZATION

The John Adams organization consists of the following components:

Daily organization: a general director, a program director and an event coordinator. Usually supplemented with an intern. The responsibilities are as follows:

- Director (0.4 FTE): generally responsible for day-to-day affairs. The face of the organization and the artistic and substantive value of the program. Writes texts, presents the evenings and represents the organization to the outside world.
- Program director (0.8 FTE): responsible for operational business and creates the speakers' program together with the general director. Responsible for the financial and legal aspects of the organization, as well as programming and fundraising.
- Event coordinator (0.8 FTE): responsible for the production of the events, both on the evening itself and the practical aspects for the preparation, and for the organization of the office.
- Intern (0.6 FTE): generally supportive. Often active with the annual lecture series that John Adams organizes at schools, the maintenance of the website and social media, and supporting the event coordinator.

Board: the board is ultimately responsible for the organization. The board is a supervisory board with a fairly active involvement. The board consists of a chairman, treasurer and secretary and some general members. The general members of the board also each have a clear role, for example supporting the content of the program, fundraising, communication, legal affairs and HR. The board meets at least four times a year.

John Adams hires additional support, such as a web designer, accountant, system administrator and e-marketing consultant.

This structure is expected to remain the same in the period 2020-2023. There are, however, plans to invest further externally in e-marketing and online productions of events.

PROGRAMMING

The John Adams program originally focused on American literature, with the aim of bringing important novelists and poets such as Joseph Brodsky or Saul Bellow to Amsterdam. Over the past 33 years, the JAI has broadened its focus to a more diverse program with current topics that focus on politics, technology, history, economics and society and art. The John Adams has an objective role as a neutral platform where ideas and opinions are expressed. The Institute encourages the diversity of ideas, topics and discussion without taking a stand. The John Adams Institute does not provide a platform for ideas based on exclusion and inequality.

Ten years ago, John Adams programming was roughly split half-half between literature and non-fiction, but in recent years, non-fiction has gained the upper hand in the program. Our goal for the period 2020-2023 is to continue this development. Due to the greater number of speakers on these topics and the decrease in the number of literary speakers, this is a more interesting programming for the John Adams in terms of content and finances. Of course, the John Adams will always continue to organize lectures with novelists, but the number of speakers available is declining. Fewer translations of American novels appear because these are relatively expensive editions (rights and translation), they are read less than before - and most Dutch people buy the English edition of the novel. This is less relevant in non-fiction. One reason for this is that in non-fiction books the content

is more important than the degree of literary language. A translation does not detract from this. The public's demand for knowledge and deeper insight into current affairs has also increased. We also see this in other initiatives in the Netherlands: the number of debates, lectures and discussions, also and especially with American speakers, has risen sharply in recent years. The John Adams occupies a special position in this because:

a) the speaker must be a person for whom people come to the lecture instead of coming for the sole subject of conversation. The aim is to organize an inspiring evening with a person whom the audience would like to hear and meet personally;

b) the speakers are exclusively from North America. Therefore, we do not organize lectures about the United States or subjects from the United States by non-US speakers. We do regularly invite a Dutch - co-speaker to add a Dutch and European perspective to that of the American speaker.

In recent years, John Adams has been successful in programming. The number of events has increased from 12 per year to 20 per year and more events have sold out. Ticket sales have therefore also increased. The aim is that this will remain around 20 events per year in the period 2020-2023.

FUNDRAISING

In 2015, John Adams decided there was a need to establish a clearer and simpler fundraising structure. The fundraising structure at the time was very diffuse, and there was a structural annual budget deficit of about 10%. In those years, this shortfall was made up for by extra income from (special) events, but that income was seldom structural. There was a feeling within the John Adams organization that more contributions from private individuals could be possible.

JOHN ADAMS FAMILY

In 2016, the momentum was used to find more structural funds, with a focus on private support in the form of donations. For the John Adams, fundraising from business has been stable for years.

Since 2016, John Adams has built up a group of donors who support the institute because they have a personal interest in the program that is offered, they consider it important that such a program is offered in the Netherlands and because they find it interesting to meet other donors: the John Adams Family. The aim is also to bring members into close contact with special thinkers and speakers from the North American literary world, culture, politics and science. The Family is an intimate club for which exclusive meetings are organized. Invitations are always for two people. The financial contribution of the members is used to further deepen the program and make it even more interesting with speakers who were otherwise unfeasible. The proceeds of the donations therefore go to the organization of the special events, but can also be partly earmarked. Examples of this are:

- Lecture series in high schools
- Sound equipment
- Digitizing and making audio and video recordings accessible via our YouTube channel and our website
- Organizing online events

The John Adams Family now has 42 members. The aim is to grow to a stable group of 50 members in the period 2020-2023.

Corporate members and sponsors

A group of enthusiastic and interested companies supports our program. In general, these are multinationals with an interest in the United States, companies interested in international debate and innovation or American companies in the Netherlands. Practical reasons for support companies include:

- it is important that innovative and appealing thoughts, opinions and work from the US are presented to a Dutch audience. There are many new developments coming from the US that are important to present and discuss here.
- the program is interesting for both members of the organization and their business relations. This is especially true for Dutch companies for which the US is an important market.
- the network of the John Adams Institute is interesting. Our sponsors regularly meet each other at events and receptions. As an American organization, they want to support an American cultural center. In addition, there are more specific reasons for supporting John Adams. An event is regularly “adopted” by one of our sponsors, with whom they offer it to relations, customers and employees and in which there is also substantive cooperation.

The John Adams also collaborates with other cultural organizations, such as International Theater Amsterdam, Concertgebouw, Anne Frank House and IDFA. Some of our sponsors also support one or more of these institutions, which can lead to an interesting triangle relationship.

An overview of all our supporters can be found in our annual report and on our website. The contribution of the corporate members and sponsors has remained stable over the years and our goal in the period 2020-2023 is to keep this at least at the same level.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

The John Adams Institute is an independent Dutch foundation and one of a kind. There are no affiliated institutes in other countries. On the one hand, this makes the organization easy: we have an autonomous position to create a program that we want. On the other hand, the John Adams is a stand-alone and has to do everything itself. We cannot share costs or automatically join a tour of a particular speaker. There are other institutes in Europe that organize similar programs in some areas, such as the Amerika Haus in Munich, the American Academy in Berlin, the American Library in Paris and the Antwerp America Foundation. All these organizations also organize public programs with American speakers in their cities. The John Adams Institute has worked with some of these organizations in the past and is in talks with the others to see if programming collaboration is possible.

In the period 2020-2023, the John Adams Institute wants to strengthen this network and expand it where possible. We hope to work towards a consistent collaboration with like-minded institutes in Europe, and hope this will strengthen our speakers’ program. This makes it possible to share some major costs and makes it more interesting for a speaker to come to Europe because less intercontinental travel is needed and a larger target group can be reached in a shorter time.

DIGITALIZATION

Thanks to the contribution of the members of the John Adams Family, the John Adams Institute has been able to digitally secure a large number of sound and image carriers with recordings - both image and sound - of illustrious speakers from recent decades. These recordings form the cultural capital of the John Adams and we have made this publicly accessible in the archive on our website. In

addition to our live events, this archive is the basis of the John Adams as an American cultural center. This archive will of course be expanded with each new lecture.

The videos on the website are embedded videos from our YouTube channel. That channel has over 3,000 subscribers and receives approximately 25,000 unique plays every month. In the period 2020-2023 we want to further develop this digital channel: the design of the video archive on our website will be made more attractive, we will use Google ads more actively to attract more visitors to our video archive and will improve the presentation of the videos on the Make YouTube channel by, for example, making better playlists.

We also have the ambition to use the digital archive in the period 2020-2023 to create a podcast series from our existing material. Existing lectures and discussions will be edited and introduced and closed by a presenter. This makes the lectures more accessible: the listener knows by the introduction who and when the lecture was and what the content will be. We expect to reach a broader target group with this, who may go less to lectures themselves, but are interested in the content. In addition, John Adams lectures can also be better categorized according to topics and themes.

In 2020, the John Adams - partly in connection with government measures due to COVID 19 - started organizing online events. These are video calls with a speaker where the speaker is in the US and the interviewer in a studio in the Netherlands. It is important that the conversations are well presented - in terms of content, but also aesthetically, with enough images, good sound and an attractive studio – all necessary to keep the audience interested in an hour-long conversation.

After several online events in 2020, the wish was expressed to further develop this in the period 2020-2023 in addition to the physical, traditional events. There are always speakers who cannot travel to the Netherlands - and this allows us to give these speakers a place in the programming.

We are in discussion with the Hogeschool van Amsterdam (Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, AUAS) to set up a collaboration for these online events in the period 2020-2023. The AUAS has studios and experienced students who can supervise this. In addition, the AUAS wants to use these programs specifically in certain disciplines, to which they then have exclusive access.

MARKETING AND TARGET GROUPS

Previous studies have shown that the John Adams is reasonably known to our core target group (highly educated, from the age of 30, urban/Randstad, interested in discussion and debate on social issues, interest in art and literature) and is considered to be of high quality. But beyond that, the John Adams is too little known; we are not a household name when it comes to the place to go for in-depth knowledge. In the period 2020-2023 we hope to increase the brand awareness of the John Adams. There are various instruments for this. Some we already have and those should be further developed. However, greater visibility by investing more in marketing activities is also desirable.

The instruments that John Adams already has and that will be further developed in the period 2020-2023:

- Online events: the range of events at the John Adams is so much greater than just that one room on that one evening. The John Adams can thus attract more international visitors and thus also open doors to international fundraising. Online events can also be used for the development of the Europe network of American cultural institutions.

- Podcast: Through the podcast, the John Adams can reach a wider audience that has yet to come to the physical events. For geographical, economic or other reasons. The wider the audience we reach, the more interesting we become for current or potential new sponsors and donors.

- Video archive: This is comparable to the podcast in terms of audience reach: the reach of the John Adams is much larger. You draw this audience to the website and possibly to new events.

- Google Ads: the John Adams has a Google grant to 'buy' Google ads. These advertisements should link to the website. The website must develop into more of a portal for all our digital offerings (podcast, online events, video archive).

Since 2002, the John Adams Institute has been organizing a lecture program at schools across the Netherlands, called The Quincy Club, designed to help young audiences better understand American culture. Every year we visit 20 schools to present a two-hour program on an American social topic that will appeal to students. We will continue to do so in the period 2020-2023, both in schools and with online presentations.