

# Neude Library

de Bibliotheek  
Utrecht







## From post office

The former Main post office on Neude square is one of Utrecht's most iconic buildings and a nationally listed landmark. In the old days, post office customers only ever got to see the vast central hall. The rest of the building was staff-only.

Since the opening of the library in 2020, the whole building is open to the public. It's both a haven and a hotspot for citizens of Utrecht and visitors from all over to call their own. The library occupies a location with a rich history. From 1397 to 1647 it was home to the nuns of St. Cecilia's. Later, it was the site of the Dutch Mint. Little wonder that archaeological research has found all sorts of coins and other objects. Excavations even turned up a coin people used to make daily purchases around 1750.

The present building dates from 1924 and was designed by Joseph Crouwel in the Amsterdam School style.



Joseph Crouwel

## Old post office

The building has many notable features. On the exterior these include animal head spouts perched high above the front facade. The large, high-ceilinged hall is the heart of the building. Along the walls are several meters tall bluestone statues representing the world's continents, designed by Hendrik van den Eijnde. Van den Eijnde also designed the glazed bricks in the shape of alighting carrier pigeons. These artistic touches earned the building the nickname of 'Temple for Post and Telegraphy'.



## to library





## Resistance heroes

In the stairwell between the ground floor and the first floor is a plaque commemorating two heroes of the Dutch WWII Resistance. Mr. Heukels and Mr. Lans were postal workers who laid an illegal telephone network during the German Occupation, to contact the Resistance in the already liberated parts of the country. They were executed by the Germans just before the end of the war.



## Large clock in the hall

Crouwel also designed the large clock in the hall and the coat of arms of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a must in all Dutch government buildings at the time. Both were made by Royal Delft.



## Finds

Archaeological research has led to the discovery of various coins and other currency and even a tiny medieval die. Some of these objects can be seen in a display case next to the Utrecht collection on level 2.



2 cm



1 cm

## Relief of St. Martin

On level 2 is a carved relief of St. Martin, patron saint of the city of Utrecht. Made by Albert Termote in 1936.



## Broese 1843-1943

Also on level 2 is an artwork titled 'Broese 1843 - 1943' by Toon van Ham, donated by bookshop Broese. In 1951 Van Ham gave this metres-tall glass painting to his good friend Mr. Leeflang, Broese's owner at the time.



## Public award

Post Utrecht, the building in which the Utrecht library is housed, won the DUIC Public Award in 2022.

“ A beautiful and generous public oasis that welcomes you to a world of imagination, development and encounter ”

according to the jury of experts. A nice recognition!



# Neighbors

The library shares the former post office with Broese bookshop, Albert Heijn supermarket, Bever sports, Amac and Søstrene Grene.



## Bike shed

In the basement is a bike shed with space for 720 bikes. Parking here is free for the first 24 hours.

**Tip:** check out the photo exhibition about the old post office in the basement.



Children in the library around 1923



# Oldest library in the Netherlands

On January 8, 1892, Utrecht Public Reading Room opened its doors in the Concordia building on Loeff Berchmakerstraat no. 12, a side street of Neude Square. That makes Utrecht Public Library the oldest in the Netherlands. Dordrecht and Utrecht long vied for this title, both cities claiming their public library to be the first. Utrecht won.

One of its founders was H.A. van Beuningen, whose family also supported the library's relocation to Neude Square 128 years later.



Plaque in honor of Van Berestejn, who celebrated his 25th anniversary as chairman of the Association of Public Reading Rooms in 1939



# Art in the library

Neude Library is also a space for contemporary art. Besides temporary exhibitions, it has five works on permanent display. These are works by artists who live or work in Utrecht, both budding and established talents from within and beyond the Netherlands, including Maarten Baas, Daan Paans, Frank Halmans, Jop Vissers, Vorstenbosch and Jan Willem Deiman.



## Lion-Man

Daan Paans

The hybrid lion-man appears in all eras and cultures. Paans (b.1985) used the earliest known image from southern Germany as his inspiration. He took pictures of the spot where the 30 centimeter high and 38,000 year old sculpture was found. He created a new 3D version and gathered pictures of other lion-people in a book. His intention is to make us think. How do things arise? And how does the past manifest itself in the present?

GROUND FLOOR



## Intellectual heritage

Maarten Baas

This light artwork is inspired by the architecture of the building and by its new function as a library. With his brightly colored light sculpture Maarten Baas (b.1978) connects and contrasts. He plays with the ideas the public has about the library and emphasizes the contrast with the busy Neude Square with its catering, many festivals and cheerfulness. And also the contrast between the clean lines of the building and the playful lines of the artwork,

between the 'closed' building and the open and inviting artwork. Screaming neon signs make it clear that this is a place for silence. And in neon he announces writers like Woolf and Sartre as pop stars. By using the same colors as the stained glass window, the work itself is connected to the building. There's something in it for everyone. For young and old. From miffy to LS and study study.

ON THE FACADE





© Anna van Kooij

## House of Books

Frank Halmans

Dutch poet Jan Jacob Slauerhoff's line 'In my books alone I can dwell' was Halmans' (b.1963) inspiration for this gigantic house of books. In this 4.40 meter high playhouse - with books hanging from bookshelves as walls - Halmans invites young visitors to enter. It is a cozy reading spot.

LEVEL 1

## Platform for miffy

Halmans also created the platform for the miffy statue. Halmans' inspiration was a picture of *St. Jerome in his study* by Antonello da Messina in 1460.

LEVEL 1



## Monument to digital failure

Jop Vissers Vorstenbosch

Do you notice that this light sculpture reacts to you and to the space? The rays of LED light constantly shift through the blinds and layers of painted plexiglass that make up this five by five meters light sculpture. As a result, the work constantly has a different appearance.

In his work Vissers Vorstenbosch (b.1986) wants to ask the question of how we should deal with the endless amount of information from the digital world, and how we can find focus and new insights among all the noise.

GROUND FLOOR

### Tip:

Also view this artwork from the outside. Especially in the dark you will witness a fascinating play of colors.



© Han Ernest

## What we hear when we read

Jan Willem Deiman

These two hundred hanging objects are inspired by the Phoenician alphabet, the basis of almost all modern alphabets. The signs and symbols' long vertical lines emphasize the building's height. The alphabet is of course connected with language. It forms a transition from writing to image to sound.

Deiman (b.1986) invites you to discover what these shapes mean.

4 PARTS, MULTIPLE LEVELS

AND GROUND FLOOR STAIRWELL



Foto: Anna van Koolij

## Rent a room in the most beautiful building in Utrecht

### and support the Library

Your conference, workshop or training, meeting, gathering or party will be taken care of down to the last detail.

neude11.nl

NEUDE11



Standing proud in the Kids 0-8 section is Utrecht's own world-famous **miffy**. Her jacket was designed by children's book illustrator Charlotte Dematons.

To read a book is to discover new worlds. Especially when it's a book from our **Do-Box**



## Art for kids



At the **mini post office** is a card rack: take a free postcard and send it.



Relive bygone days in the **telephone district**. Grab a receiver for a musical or poetic encounter.



Let's not forget our books, magazines and DVDs. Eight fun facts about the collection:

## The collection

### 1 Travel

From hiking in Bhutan to flat cycling in Belgium; browse the 'travel' collection.



### 2 English children's books

This beautiful collection is growing and becoming more and more extensive and culturally diverse.



### 3 Utrecht

Discover everything about Utrecht: this university city, St Martin, the Dom church and fashion.



### 4 Cooking

Learn to cook (even) better with our extensive collection of cookbooks. Or dive into wines, brew your own beer and barbecue.



### 5 Newspapers and magazines

You can use Pressreader to read more than 7,000 newspapers and magazines from 120 countries in 60 languages. Free reading on your smartphone, tablet or computer.



### 6 Sheet music

From choral and orchestral music to solo instruments; from bass guitar to oboe. The library has hundreds of books with sheet music.



### 7 Manga books

Growing collection of the popular Japanese comic books. For young people, and adults too!



### 8 Photo books

Browse our beautiful collection of photo books by and about famous photographers. About distant countries, cultures or animals. Imagine yourself in another world for a little while.

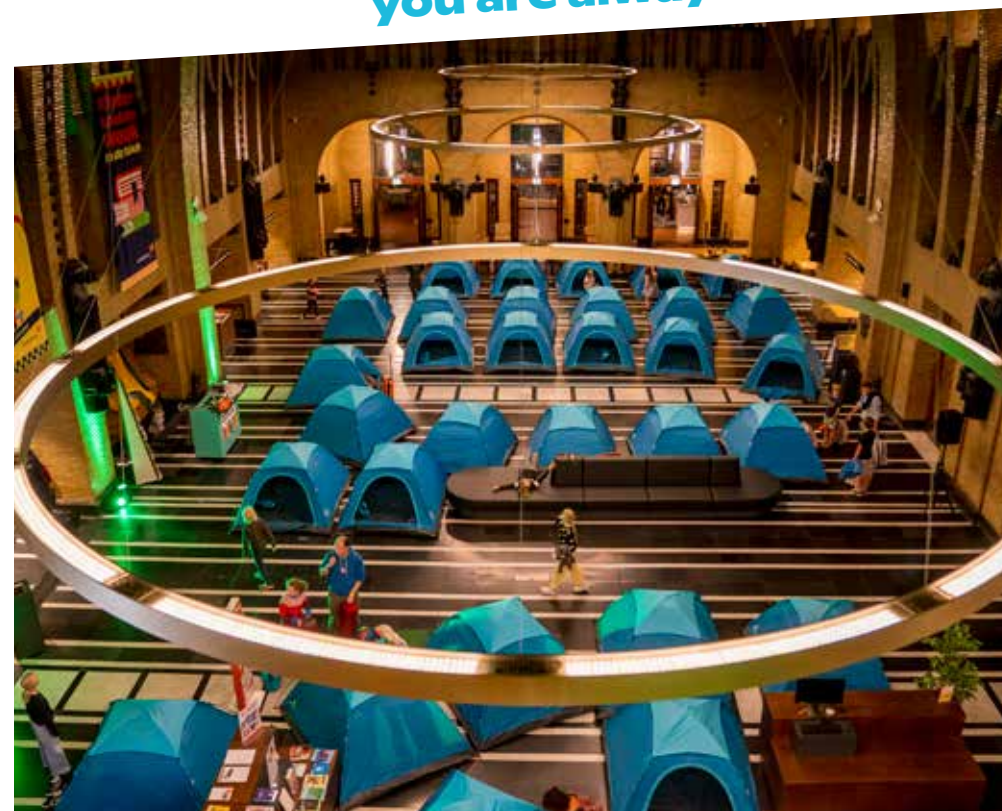


## Always something on

Neude Library is one of the **12 branches** of the Utrecht Library. With **100,000 members**, we are the largest members' club in Utrecht.

Everyone is welcome to come read, borrow, learn, share knowledge and reflect. And to meet other people and relax. We also host lots of activities every month for young and old. From reading aloud to crafting in the Studio. From a Language Café to asking questions at the Information Point. We promote reading and stimulate reading pleasure, digital skills and democratic citizenship. To ensure that everyone can participate in our society. We make the Utrecht Library together with Utrecht residents.

**Member or not,**  
you are always welcome.

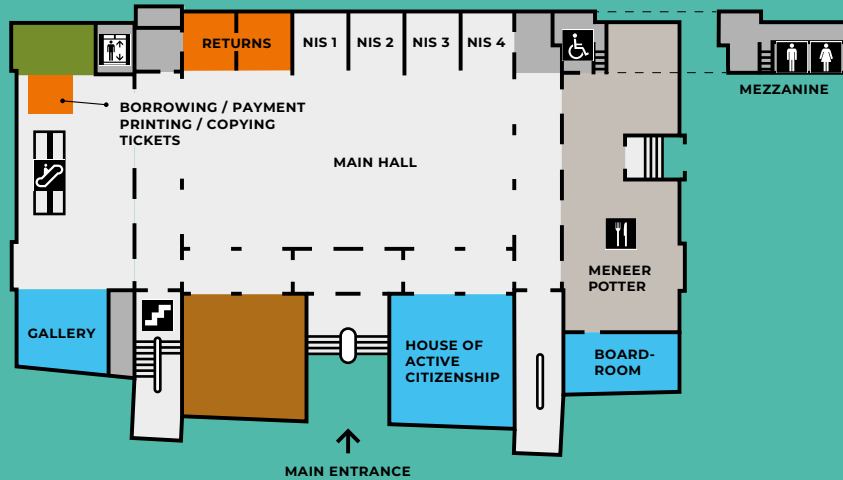




# Floorplan, Collection and Facilities

# and Facilities

FLOOR 0

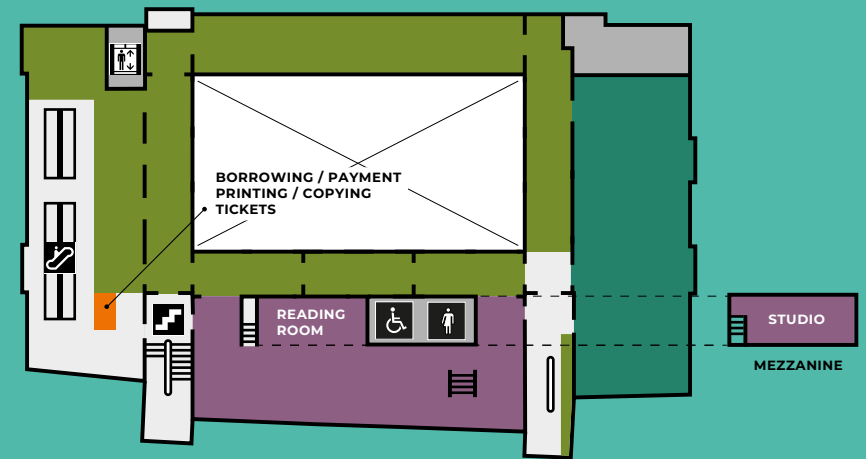


MAIN HALL  
BOARDROOM  
RETURNS

MENEER POTTER  
TOILETS  
GALLERY

HOUSE OF ACTIVE  
CITIZENSHIP  
EXIT

FLOOR 1



STUDIO  
READ TO ME ROOM  
TOILETS

Food & beverage

Reizen  
Countries  
The Netherlands  
Travel  
Continents  
PressReader

Sprinters

Kids 0-8  
Foreign languages  
BookStart  
Look & listen  
Learning to read  
Reading together  
Read to me  
Knowledge & information

Kids 8-12  
Sheet music  
Look & listen  
Foreign language reading  
Easy reading  
Knowledge & information  
Foreign languages independent reading

Liefde & leven  
Philosophy & self-help  
Health  
Historical novels  
Home & garden  
Domestic animals  
Nature & wildlife  
Parenting & education  
Psychology  
Religion  
Romance  
Spirituality  
Regional & family fiction





LECTURE HALL  
CINEMA  
OFFICE  
CUSTOMER SERVICE

NODA Eatery & Deli  
STAGE  
MEETING ROOMS  
POST HALLS

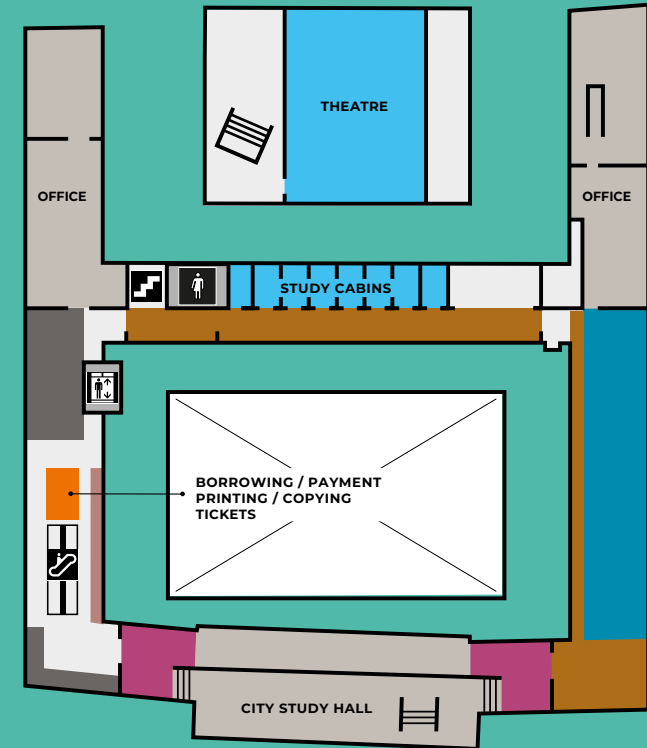
RESERVATIONS  
THEATRE  
TOILETS

- **Look & listen**
  - DVDs - feature films
  - DVDs - music
  - DVDs - non-fiction
  - Documentaries
  - Graphic novels
  - Read & write
  - Audio books
  - Comics
  - Music
  - Music web

- **Newspapers & magazines**

- **Action & adventure**
  - Computers
  - Detectives & thrillers
  - Suspense & horror
  - Management
  - War & resistance
  - Labour & employment
  - Science fiction & fantasy
  - Sports, games & hobbies
  - Transportation

- **Literature & culture**
  - Fine art
  - History
  - History of nations & peoples
  - Dutch history
  - Large print
  - Nations & peoples
  - Literature
  - Music, theatre & film
  - Poetry
  - Myths & fairy tales
  - Language & literary studies
  - Utrecht region
  - Reference collection



OFFICE  
CITY STUDY HALL  
STUDY CABINS 3.1 - 3.8  
TOILETS

- **Youth 12+**
  - Foreign languages
  - Look & listen
  - School reading
  - Reading for fun
  - Easy reading
  - Manga

- **Knowledge & society**
  - Economics & law
  - Encyclopaedias & communication
  - Politics & society
  - Science & technology

- **Foreign languages**
  - Foreign languages
  - English

- **Look & listen**
  - Sheet music



## Take a tour

Explore the former post office and library collection in an hour. Go back in time and reflect on special art. Discover the finest seating, reading and workplaces. There are special kids tours (4+ and 8+) for children.



Scan the QR code for more information or visit:  
[bibliotheekutrecht.nl/rondleidingen](https://bibliotheekutrecht.nl/rondleidingen)

**FREE**

