In the policy period 2022-2026, the research and outreach department will work from four research themes. These themes give direction to the projects and the research that takes place from the departments in collaboration with the ArtEZ education and external parties. The themes explicitly give direction and are not conceived from the point of view of the limitation, but as an opening to further investigate. They will help to open-up conversations, ask more questions, deepen the research and learn from each other.

New Ecologies of Matter

How can we reconsider our relationship with the world and with nature and treat the earth in a different way, thinking beyond the political and economic systems that shape our relationship with the earth at present? Can we present new narratives that do not only adopt the human perspective? What role can art play in this respect and what are its possibilities and limitations? And how can art, science and technology mutually support each other? Are there existing methodologies and what are they?

In these times, we are facing systemic de-humanization and exploitation, environmental crises, and untenable systems of exponential growth, characterized by neoliberal marketdriven ideologies. This is not serving our wellbeing as human beings, nor the wellbeing of other living beings and of the natural ecosystems that we're all living-with. There is an urgent need for systemic change and sustainable transformation, for alternative socio-cultural, socio- economic and political systems. In our research, we are committed to reconsidering our relationship with each other, with the earth, with nature and with everything that matters. We start from a critique on anthropocentrism and thus on the ways in which human beings enact power over nature, leading to the exhaustion and exploitation of nature and natural matter. Through art and design research practices and critical thinking, we explore – in an affirmative way – other ways of making-, doing-, and becoming-with nature. This needs a longterm perspective and commitment, a recognition of our interdependencies. We aim to practice more care for and to re-engage with living (things that) matter – both human and non-human, as a continuum of living matter. This also entails taking into account the actual physical matter of all embodied subjects involved. In doing so, we bring ecocriticism into the art academy to explore and create new ecologies of matter, new ecologies that matter – contributing to healthier, balanced and more diverse ecosystems.

Social Equity

In what way are our actions determined by normative ideas about gender, origins and culture? Can art expose structures of inequality in society and actively engage with questions about equality and freedom? Which power relations are being upheld by art or the art world itself and can the art world acknowledge these power relations and redraw them? Do we really care enough to create change?
We firmly strive for a society and a future that is equal, in which injustice, inequality and discrimination are combated. This pursuit calls for a critical self-examination that recognizes that the ideas we have about social equality are based on a framework of values that has its origin in colonial power relations, which determines our epistemology, aesthetics, our manners, ideas about value and relevance. This also calls for an intersectional and situated consciousness, which takes account of the simultaneous effects of, among other things, gender, ethnicity, class and sexuality that cause social inequalities. An awareness that pays attention to connections and the way in which different forms of (in)equality are created and are constantly in motion. From this awareness and from the realization that we do not know but must keep listening, asking and questioning ourselves, we examine our methodologies, quality standards, artistic vocabulary and our selection criteria. From

there, we want to contribute to systemic changes in fashion, design, the (performative) arts, art education and theory, technology and healthcare, together and in constant dialogue with the different communities.

(Un)Learning Practices

It has long been thought that academies were or have been the places where freedoms of action, thinking and making are connected. Historically, this has actually only been the case since the 1960s and the question now is whether this is still the case today. Until the 1960s, art education worked for centuries from a normative aesthetic and working method that did not fundamentally change. Now we are once again in a major process of change. The art academies have become part of a neoliberal education system that increasingly translates its norms and values into industrial, managerial terms. Research by lectorates and education is contained in a business plan. Output, outcome and innovation (not creativity) are new and dominant values in this respect, which curtail security and freedom and derive their origin and authority from various oppression mechanisms. (Un)Learning Practices aims to continue to critically approach prevailing value systems in which art education is embedded – and not just those of and in art education. That means nothing should be taken for granted, no practice is true because it is a practice. And if one does claim that, then it must be questioned. This means that all kinds of assumptions can lose their status as believed to be true. In this way, knowledge can gradually become less important than getting to know itself - knowledge versus knowing -; is deconstructing learning systems more important than following them; making can also be getting to know, and getting to know can also be making. Thus, theory is also a practice and practice can become fixed in theory. Can the I also be a we and turn a we into an I. Can working together be more valuable than acting alone and other cooperative practices can be developed. All these changes and transformations should systematically belong to the work of the inquiring academy and be deployed to promote changes and transformations in itself and in the external world from a shared responsibility. It's the role of art education and research to think critically about learning practices, and perhaps more importantly, unlearning practices.

(Non-)CybernEtic1 Fabric

The future is a direction, not a place. Considering this, the crossroads between digital and analogue will be an increasing factor to determine our prosperity and well-being. Embodied HumanE AI will have an impact on all business sectors, our private lives, the arts with their plethora of applications and perceptions and society as a whole. The diligence with which we act now, determines our approach towards these innovations. Determining the connecting nodes, between the digital and the analog, between the embodied and disembodied and between the measurable and observable, creates a hybrid four-dimensional network: an interwoven fabric with digital and analogue threads creating a multi-modal tapestry across the four cybernEtic planes of decision, dissemination, discovery, and data:

• The decision plane drives network control, reachability, and access.

 • The dissemination plane strives towards a robust and efficient communication substrate.

 • The discovery plane contributes to the investigation, experimentation, and application of the fabrics' edges, nodes, and individual strains.

• The data plane, collects, interprets, analyses and re-implements.

These planes serve as an initial point of departure and can be tweaked in order to suit individual processes from grander human applications in the development of novel digital ecologies to binary

algorithms. How can we create a transparent entity and what are the 1 the science of communications and automatic control systems in both machines and living things decision-making processes on both – the AI and Human – side? How may decision have to be made by an AI in order to be able to judge correctly and correctly according to whom? Will the human factor disappear, or will it remain an integral part of AI? These questions serve as the base for integrating HumanE AI into the plethora of Arts related working mechanisms. The various planes of the (non-)cybernEtic fabric can be translated into the perception, processing, and execution of the Arts in all its forms. In light of this, capacities have to be built around digital ecologies amalgamating HumanE AI and machine learning, digital cultures with embodied and sensorial designs, smart cities and contracts and creative AI for arts practice and health care.