

Educational activities and outreach can help facilitate mutual engagement. UNESCO – the UN organization for education, research, and heritage – has historically emphasized the importance of educating to change minds the latest example of this paradigm (UNESCO 2020). To inform diverse groups of people and bring stakeholders together around shared interests and needs in port cities, we need new and different ways of engagement. The short open-access film [*The Magic of Port Cities*](#) is a case in point: It promotes using creative approaches to engage non-professional audiences in ongoing transitions. The film informs the general public about the particular character of port cities and about the challenges and opportunities inherent in their location at the edge of sea and land. It makes viewers more aware of future urgencies and helps them define a role they may want to play themselves. Funded with a NWO KIEM subsidy from Dutch research council, and sponsored by a diverse group of stakeholders, the animated film takes a playful approach to the understanding of port-city regions, and emphasises the need for change that will make possible a sustainable future. Exploring the forces at play in port-city regions requires a deeper comprehension of the cultures and values that inform them. Culture is understood here as the values, practices and mindsets that have shaped institutions, policies and laws over time, and that guide the social and spatial practices in port cities. Viewers can become aware of the institutional changes that are needed and may be inspired to engage in collaboration and to take action towards building port-city culture.

Understanding the diverse forces and sectoral interests at play in port-city regions is a first step toward identifying paradigms and maritime mindsets. In the movie, our approach goes beyond that of culture as an artefact in a museum or as a heritage object. Instead, the approach requires recognizing—and changing—networks of stakeholders with long-standing values, practices and mindsets that shape the politics, economics, and socio-spatial patterns of port cities. Change is especially difficult because these stakeholder networks have developed over long periods of time. Institutional forms, legal tools and policies are anchored in historical processes and developments, and stakeholders are often vying for the same territories and pursuing competing goals. Even the ways in which they interact have been shaped over time by shared experiences and meeting places. They form a system that needs to adapt and, eventually, drive change. There are often long-standing paradigms, such as the conceptualization of a port as a staple port or as a transit port, as in the case of Rotterdam, that will

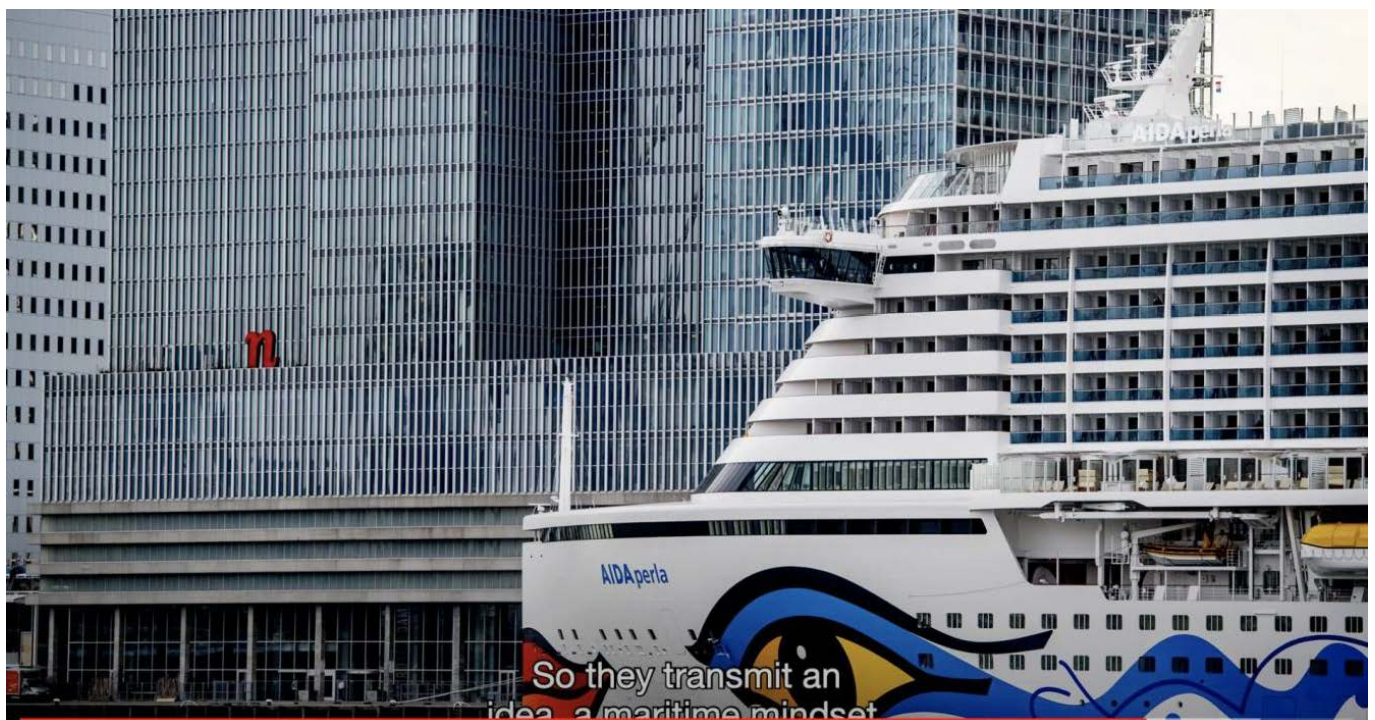
influence decisions regarding investments in infrastructures, storage, and hiring (Hein & Van de Laar 2019).

To bring this multifaceted understanding to a broader group of people, some members of the PortCityFutures core team have filmed a number of short videos in relevant, but often overlooked, locations in Rotterdam. Building on their different disciplinary backgrounds and expertise, they have engaged in non-scripted conversations exploring the making of port-city spaces and the actors involved in shaping the form and function of the port city of Rotterdam. An anthropologist, Sabine Luning from Leiden University, posed questions to Paul van de Laar, Chair in Urban History of Rotterdam at Erasmus University, and Carola Hein, Chair of the History of Architecture and Urban Planning at TU Delft and an expert in the long-term development of port-city regions, including the impact of petroleum on port cities.



Trailer: PortCityFutures films. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeb0uZI-jGE>).

The conversations explore port-city relations in the context of various locations south of the River Maas. Koninginnehoofd (is a site where the past, present and future meet. From this location, the Holland-America Line orchestrated the departure of numerous emigrants for the New World. Today, the Rotterdam Port Authority's tower stands tall near the cruise ship terminal, the last inner-city location where big ships are still visible in the city. On nearby Deliplein in Katendrecht, the discussions focus on historic areas under redevelopment—or in danger of gentrification. At the RDM campus, a site world-famous for the reuse of historic port buildings for educational purposes, we discuss mixed-use port city areas and new approaches to co-creation. Finally, visiting Pernis and Waalhaven, the team considers both the historic impact of oil in shaping the port of Rotterdam and the potential redevelopment and heritage value of these sites for the future.



*Cruise ship terminal in Rotterdam.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-cUc5ttGds&t=167s>).*

The short films are first glimpses into the long-term development of Rotterdam.

They also raise important questions: Who is responsible for the planning and design of shared port-city spaces? What role should be given to former port areas that await transitions? What role can future-oriented planning play in rethinking port cities? Is it possible to maintain the identity of a port city in transition, and at the same time do justice to its socio-cultural heritage and diversity? How do you maintain the identity of a city in transition, with a growing number of inhabitants, spatial, economic and political interests? Whom does the port city benefit when differences in economic interests, technological capacities, knowledge, or income in a port city can lead to environmental and social injustice and opposition to the port's functions? Co-habitation of the port and the city requires comprehensive planning of the interconnected multiple functions of port and city—including transportation—to ensure a sustainable, inclusive and socially just development. It also requires a maritime mindset and shared values.



Rotterdam Waalhaven.

References

Hein, C. and P. van de Laar, "The Separation of Ports from Cities: The Case of Rotterdam," in *European Port Cities in Transition.*, ed. Angela Carpenter and Rodrigo Lorenzo (Springer, 2020).

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Head Image: The Magic of Port Cities Film.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyPb2jzCWxE&t=65s>).