

THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

The Reigerhof in Heerhugowaard (North Holland) has been in the Beers family and is a preserved municipal monument. It's the home for Joke Beers-Siep, Hanneke van der Veeken, and Sandra de Jong-Beers. In 2004 the dairy farm was converted into an art farm with a sculpture garden, 17 studios, and an exhibition hall and creating an inspiring environment for artists and enthusiasts.



Figure 1. A bird-eye-view of the Artfarm with an outdoor sculpture garden

The transition illustrates the power of passion for art and community. Joke Beers-Siep, a lifelong art lover and wife of Piet Beers, a third-generation dairy farmer, has been the driving force behind this transformation. Without external subsidies, they renovated the old barns using the proceeds from the sale of their surrounding land.

The Artfarm rents ateliers at affordable rates to painters, sculptors, photographers, and graphic designers. It also hosts art fairs, exhibitions, festivals, and workshops. Emphasizing the healing combination of art and well-being, workshops for all ages and abilities

encourage reflection on memories, emotions, and experiences, helping participants confront and embrace life challenges.



Figure 2. Creative workshops (left) and excursions (right)

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Upon opening, the Artfarm's ateliers were quickly rented out, demonstrating the high demand for artist spaces in rural areas. The main innovations include:

- 1) Transforming a dairy farm into an arts center
- 2) Promoting holistic wellbeing by providing a space for mental relaxation and creativity, utilising the tranquil atmosphere of the farm
- 3) Offering opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the arts

While Joke and Piet rent the atelier, their two daughters serve on the foundation's board and organize cultural events. They ensure all events are low-threshold and welcoming to locals, including vulnerable populations.

USEFUL LINKS

- www.artfarm.nl
- www.instagram.com/artfarmkw