PRESS KIT

ARTIS
AMSTERDAM
ROYAL ZOO

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ARTIS

ARTIS is a national institute with a city park where people, animals, microbes, trees, plants, stars, museums, art and heritage come together.

Mission
ARTIS inspires and encourages a broad public to deal with nature responsibly.

Vision
ARTIS is a place that forges connections, bringing people and nature together in imaginative ways and fostering discussion about how nature is valued, understood and treated by humans.

ARTIS inspires and encourages a broad public to deal with nature responsibly. In addition to 26 nationally listed buildings, ARTIS also has a historic city park, the award-winning museum ARTIS-Micropia and the Artispolein, with the adjacent ARTIS-Groote Museum, ARTIS-café restaurant de Plantage and the ARTIS-studio. ARTIS, founded in 1838, is both a foundation and an authorised charity with a CBF quality mark and PBO status.
At ARTIS, nature, culture and heritage come together. Every tree, every creature, every building, microbe, and planet has its own story. ARTIS has been telling these stories since 1838, and each day they are born anew. Experience it for yourself. Be amazed by the many species living side by side in the Forest House and Bird House. Discover the tiniest organisms at Micropia, the world’s only microbe museum. Take a trip through space inside the Planetarium. Watch the giraffes, zebras, ostriches and springboks intermingling on the Savannah. Feel the fluttering of countless wings in the Butterfly Pavilion. Admire the tropical fish swimming in the vast Aquarium. Stroll through the historical city park with its centuries-old trees and wealth of plants. Delight your taste buds at café-restaurant de Plantage. Or relax in a chair near the fountain on Artisplein. Experience nature and discover its significance for our civilisation – because a better understanding of nature fosters greater respect for all life around us. The story of ARTIS is a story about ourselves.

Visit ARTIS, in the heart of Amsterdam.

ARTIS Amsterdam Royal Zoo was chosen number one zoo in the Benelux by visitors of TripAdvisor in 2015.

Giraffe with young. Photograph of ARTIS, Ronald van Weeren.
Practical information
ARTIS Amsterdam Royal Zoo
Plantage Kerklaan 38-40, Amsterdam
www.artis.nl

Facebook www.facebook.com/artis
Twitter: https://twitter.com/artis
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/artis_amsterdam_royal_zoo

Opening hours
ARTIS is open every day
1 November to 28 February
9.00 am until 5.00 pm

1 March to 31 October
9.00 am until 6.00 pm

ARTIS Summer Nights, every Saturday during June, July and August
9.00 am until sunset

Prices ARTIS
0 - 2 years Free entrance
Youth (3 - 9 year) €19.50 *
Normal (10+) €23.00 *

*Tickets purchased online receive €2.00 euro discount per admission ticket

Students €3.00 when showing a valid student card

Prices ARTIS & ARTIS-Micropia
0 – 2 years Free entrance
Youth (3 - 9 year) €25.50 *
Normal (10+) €29.50 *

*A combination ticket purchased online receive €2.00 euro discount per admission ticket

ARTIS-Micropia is the only museum in the world revealing the world of microscopically small life. If you combine your visit to ARTIS with Micropia, you will not only make your day extra special but also save big on the usual admission price. Meet your microbes in Micropia, next to ARTIS.

*recommended age for Micropia: 8 years and up
Directions & parking
ARTIS is located in the centre of Amsterdam, and is easily accessible by public transport. If you are coming by car, you can park on the ARTIS parking facility.

Directions by public transport
Tram 9 from Amsterdam Central Station and tram 14 from Dam stop at ARTIS. Tram 10 also stops a short walk away from ARTIS. The nearest metro station is Waterlooplein. ARTIS is a 10-minute walk from there. For door-to-door travel recommendations, see www.9292.nl.

Parking
ARTIS has its own parking facility. Visitors can take advantage of discount parking fees. The parking facility is only 150 meters away from the main entrance of ARTIS. A number of parking spaces for the disabled are available. Parking tickets are available at the ticket booth and the parking ticket machine at the main entrance, or in the ARTIS shop, upon presentation of your admission ticket. Prices are €9.00 in low season and €10.00 in high season.

Chilean flamingos. Photo ARTIS, Ronald van Weeren
History
ARTIS was founded in 1838 by Messrs. G.F. Westerman, J.W.H. Werlemann and J.J. Wijsmuller under the name Natura Artis Magistra. The aim was ‘to promote the knowledge of natural history’.

Until that time most European zoos had been privately owned institutions. But ARTIS wanted to be accessible to the upper classes, like London Zoo (1828). Buiten Middenhof, the plot of land around what is now the petting zoo, became the birthplace of ARTIS.

Early history
The initial collection was not that remarkable and consisted of a few parrots, monkeys and a Surinam wildcat. A year later, however, ARTIS purchased C. van Aken’s entire menagerie, a collection of exotic animals with which he travelled all over Europe. The menagerie, with a huge elephant called Jack as the leader, included lions, a panther, a tiger, a puma, hyenas, polar bears, brown bears, a zebra, a wildebeest, a kangaroo and even a five-metre boa constrictor. In one fell swoop, ARTIS became a real zoo.

ARTIS in the 19th century
During the first 40 years of its existence, from 1838 to around 1878, ARTIS managed to expand plot by plot to an area of over 10 hectares while slowly increasing its collection of animals. ARTIS’ collection of inanimate objects also grew. To house this collection, an impressive building was built between 1850 and 1855: the Groote Museum.

The Groote Museum
Many members of the Amsterdam Society Natura Artis Magistra were seamen or practitioners of trades involving the East and West Indies. This meant that with each passing day, animals and beautiful, exotic objects were being added to the Society’s collection. Around 1900 the Ethnographic Museum, the current Volharding building, was packed with objects. Two imposing, life-sized, 18th-century Buddhas which were brought back from Japan by Captain M.J.B. Noordhoek Hegt for ARTIS can still be seen in the park.

More and more museums were needed to house the donations, which now also included geological and paleontological objects. By 1900, 10 museum buildings had been erected. The ARTIS library was also constantly enriched with beautiful antiques.

ARTIS in the 20th century
At the beginning of the 20th century, ARTIS fell into hard times. What’s more, in 1938 the Society Natura Artis Magistra almost went bankrupt. All possessions apart from the live animals were transferred to the City of Amsterdam and the Province of North Holland. The grounds and buildings were then put to the Society for one guilder per annum.

The books, stuffed animals, sea shells, minerals and other natural history objects came to various museum departments of the University of Amsterdam, just like the animals after their death. The impressive ethnographic collection had already been donated to the newly established Tropenmuseum in 1920.

After the difficult war years from 1940 to 1945, ARTIS moved into better times in the 1950s and 1960s. Apart from a short-lived dip in 1970, ARTIS was booming with visitors in the last two decades of the 20th century. To commemorate its 150th anniversary in 1988 the zoo opened a new Planetarium. Several years later, the Geological Museum of the University of Amsterdam was also moved to the ARTIS grounds.
1997 – 2002: ARTIS expands

As early as in the 1920s, ARTIS developed an interest in the shunting yard of the Dutch National Railways on the Plantage Doklaan right next to the zoo, which was used to load and unload goods. With the Doklaan site, ARTIS would get a waterfront location: a zoo alongside the canal. Management after management tried to acquire the site – it was after all the only possibility for the zoo to expand – but all these attempts failed for various reasons. It took until 1997 for ARTIS to be put out of its misery: the Dutch Council of State finally announced that it was allowed to expand to the banks of the Entrepotdok. As the plans had been ready for years, ARTIS began construction almost immediately. They built the Savannah for the giraffes, zebras, scimitar oryxes and small African animals and a play island, restaurant and tropical greenhouse, among other facilities. The Savannah was officially opened on 24 April 2002 by Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet.

The future: ARTIS innovates

Twelve years ago, ARTIS started a far-reaching process to give it social relevance for the future, enabling ARTIS’ vision of turning the zoo into an educational institute. In a world where the relation between human beings and nature is fragile, ARTIS strives to stimulate love and care for nature and become the leading institute in this field. That is why ARTIS is being renewed. More space will be created for animals and plants, and there will be a greater focus on education and heritage. These new developments will be implemented in phases.

The world’s first microbe museum Micropia opened next to ARTIS in 2014

The old splendour of the Primate House, the Aviary and the Fazanterie, all three listed buildings, has been restored. A museum dedicated to the imperceptible world of microbes, Micropia, opened its doors. And the Artisplein and renovated Ledenlokalen (Members’ Rooms) have been made accessible to the public. ARTIS is currently building a new jaguar enclosure, and preparations for extending the elephant enclosure on the location of the existing Plantage Doklaan car park are in full swing.

ARTIS keeps on innovating

In the near future, restoration works will be carried out on the Aquarium and the Groote Museum to bring the buildings back to their old splendour. ARTIS hopes that this will help to introduce an even larger audience to the circle of life concept.

Reef aquarium in ARTIS. Photo ARTIS, Ronald van Weeren
Artisplein

The Artisplein is a freely accessible square next to the entrance of the zoo. Open daily from 7.00 a.m. to 11.30 p.m.

ARTIS wins Amsterdam Architecture Prize (A.A.P.)

Landscape architect Michael van Gessel and ARTIS were awarded the Amsterdam Architecture Prize for 2015 by public vote.

Hollandse Polder

At Artisplein you can find the Hollandse Polder, a listed construction and aviary in Dutch polder landscape style. It is a cropped version of the original landscape from which Amsterdam originated.

Café-restaurant de Plantage

Café-restaurant de Plantage is located on the Plantage Kerklaan in the attractive historical building called de Ledenlokalen (Members’ Rooms). It boasts a spacious terrace and a large aviary with North Holland meadow birds – and all this within walking and hearing distance of the trees and animals of ARTIS. The unique 19th century wooden conservatory offers sweeping views of the green and freely accessible Artisplein square.

Water Table and Flamingo terrace

The Water Table fountain borders the square on the park side. A carpet of bricks ties the different parts of the square together. Large new trees and potted plants have been added.

De Ledenlokalen

In 1870, G.B. Salm designed a major building in an eclectic style on the corner of the Plantage Kerklaan and the Plantage Middenlaan streets in Amsterdam: de Ledenlokalen (Members’ Rooms). In 2014, this listed building was restored and at the same time upgraded for use in the 21st century. Two television studios are housed in the South Pavilion of de Ledenlokalen.

Artisplein and Hollandse Polder. Photo ARTIS, Maarten van der Wal.