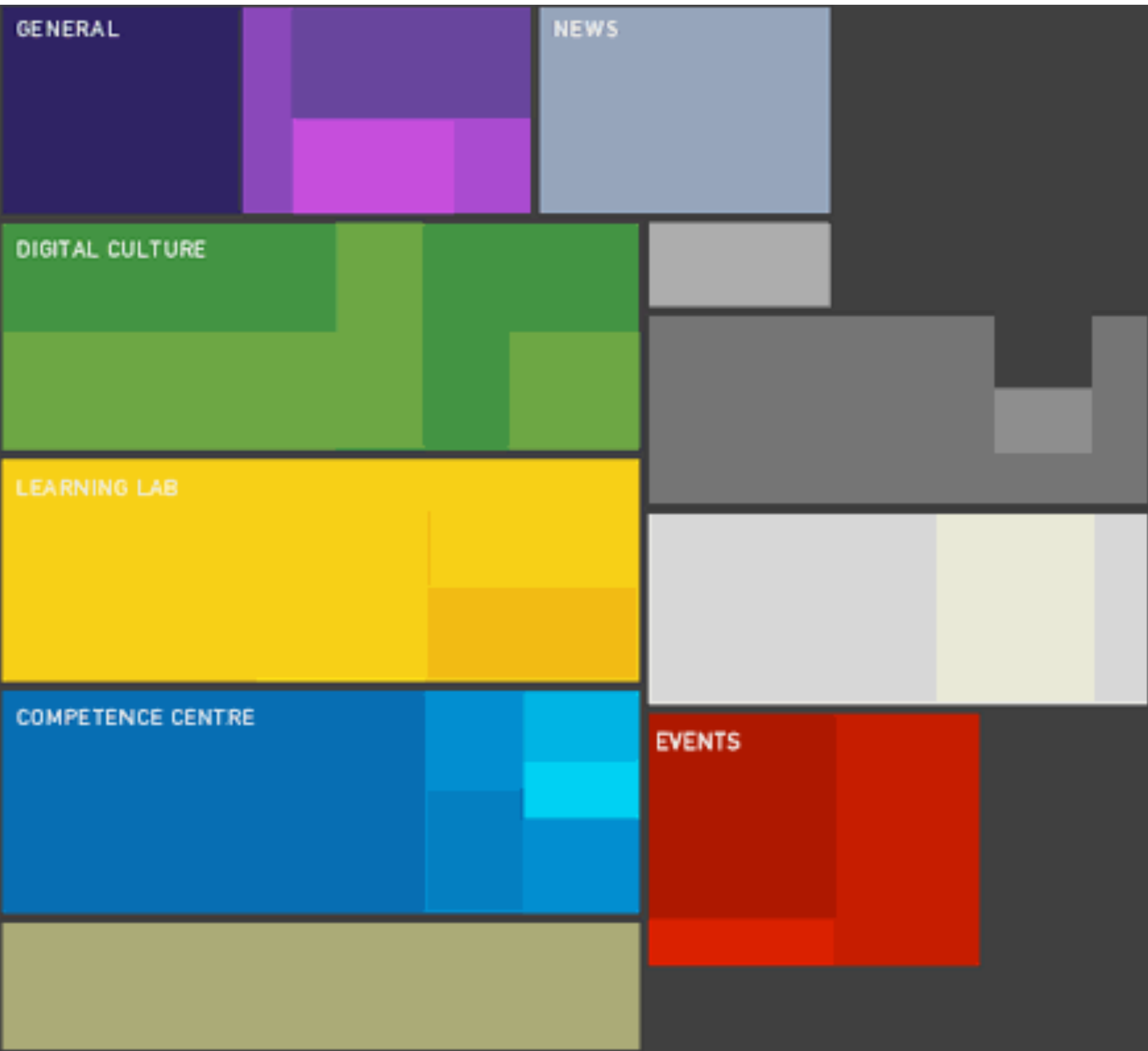
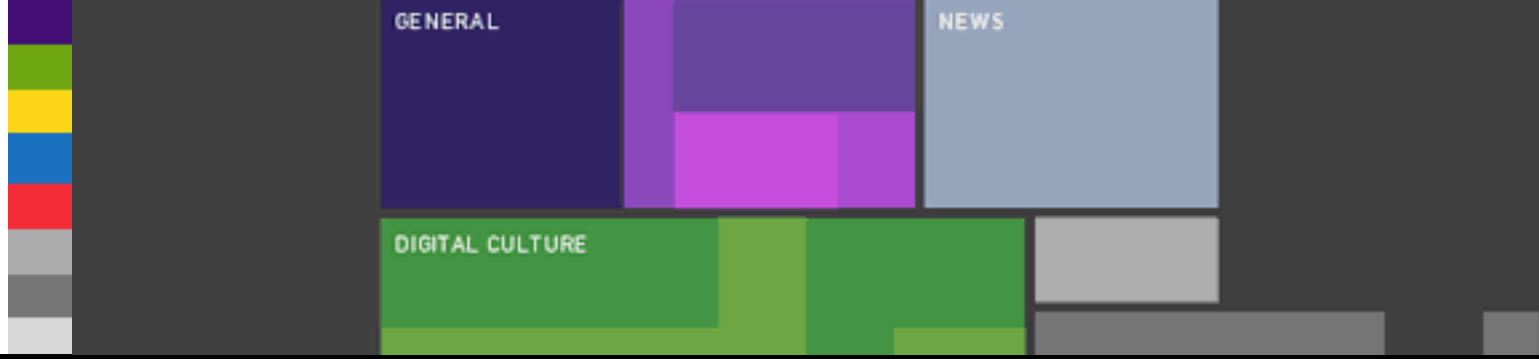






The Maastricht McLuhan Institute (MMI), European Centre for Digital Culture, Knowledge Organisation and Learning Technology, was officially opened by Dr Eric McLuhan in November, 1998 and began its formal activities in January, 1999 at the Grote Gracht 82 in Maastricht.

MMI is an initiative of the Universiteit Maastricht, the Hogeschool Maastricht, the Hogeschool Limburg, the Limburgs Universitair Centrum (Diepenbeek), the LIOF Industriebank N.V., and the Province of Limburg.

From the outset, MMI's activities have been placed in a broader context of lasting collaboration. Partnerships have been entered into with the European Network of Centres of Excellence in Digital Cultural Heritage and ICT, and the Stanford Learning Lab (Stanford University). And projects were started involving universities in the Netherlands and abroad, other educational institutions and SMEs.

MMI was established by the Maastricht McLuhan Foundation, consisting of five founding members:

- [Universiteit Maastricht](#) (Faculty of General Sciences, Faculty Of Arts and Culture)
- [Hogeschool Zuyd](#)
- [Limburgs Universitair Centrum](#) (Diepenbeek)
- [Industriebank LIOF N.V.](#)
- [Provincie Limburg](#)

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The board of Management of the MMI Foundation is responsible for an annual activity programme, monitors the execution of this programme, and stimulates initiatives that contribute to enhance the institute's recognition. The Board consists of the following members:

- Dr K. Dittrich, Universiteit Maastricht (chair)
- Prof.Dr P. Tummers, Universiteit Maastricht
- J. Donders (MBA), Industriebank LIOF N.V.
- Drs. M. Dunnewijk, Hogeschool Zuyd
- Mr. J. Gerards, Universiteit Maastricht (secretary)
- J. Giesen, Hogeschool Zuyd
- Prof. Dr H. Martens, Limburgs Universitair Centrum (Diepenbeek).

ADVISORY BOARD

MMI also has an Advisory Board, which in general gives guidance with regard to content of research and development programmes and projects. Furthermore, the Advisory Board discusses contacts to external organizations and businesses, research involvement of the participating institutes, and participation of MMI in other regional, national and international programmes. Members of this Advisory Board are:

- Prof. Dr A. Nieuwenhuizen Kruseman, Universiteit Maastricht (chair)
- Prof. Dr Ir. K. Boon, Universiteit Maastricht
- Ir. J. Bijsmans, Hogeschool Zuyd
- Prof. Dr E. Flerackers, Limburgs Universitair Centrum
- Drs. H. Koolmees, Hogeschool Zuyd
- Drs. W. Weijnen, Provincie Limburg
- Dr R. de Wilde, Universiteit Maastricht
- Drs. C. Zelissen, on behalf of Industriebank LIOF N.V.

The mission of the Research Unit on Digital Culture is twofold:

- to study the implications of ICT developments for culture and knowledge organisation. Academic research entails postgraduate students and visiting scholars.
- to create comprehensive strategies for searching, structuring, using and presenting digital resources more coherently and efficiently; to integrate past knowledge and produce ordered knowledge that leads to new understanding and insights.

To achieve the latter, the research unit is developing an existing software, SUMS, in conjunction with a prototype of a Virtual Reference Room. The implications of this work for education and business are being developed by the Learning Lab and Competence Centre respectively. MMI was chosen as a first node of a European Network of Centres of Excellence in Cultural Heritage. Through this network MMI will contribute to an intellectual framework for interoperability.

This work has grown out of the personal research of the director on Leonardo da Vinci and on the history of linear perspective, which was carried out in the Perspective Unit at the McLuhan Program in the University of Toronto from 1991 to 1996. The research section appointed two new members in 2000 and is intended to grow to a team of 20 within six years. The research unit has its own advisory board to guide it on matters of content.



MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Maastricht McLuhan Institute (MMI) is to study and develop methods for knowledge organisation and knowledge management in a digital, distributed, multimedia world. These methods will be applied to cultural heritage, the design of learning technologies and new electronic services for business. Research will also explore the implications thereof. The quest is to create comprehensive strategies for searching, structuring, using and presenting digital resources more coherently and efficiently; to integrate past knowledge and to produce ordered knowledge that leads to new understanding and insights.

GLOBAL ACCESSIBILITY

All over the world, the titles and contents of the great libraries, museums and art galleries are becoming available on-line. While interoperable, technological standards are emerging, problems of interoperable applications, tools, interfaces and usability remain. MMI is dedicated to study the implications thereof for culture, knowledge, and learning. Practically, MMI is focussed on creating usable tools with coherent interfaces reflecting changing knowledge structures, historically and conceptually, for which cultural heritage will serve as a test case. The late Marshall McLuhan studied how new media such as printing brought fundamental shifts in emphasis on the structure (grammar), logic (dialectic) or effects (rhetoric) of language. He offered tantalising insights as to how radio and television were introducing new shifts. His student, Walter Ong, explored how these shifts also affected classification and presentation of knowledge. MMI is concerned with how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will affect these shifts: how it is transforming our knowledge organisation and knowledge management, as well as its implications for culture and learning. MMI has three basic units: Research; a Learning Lab and Competence Centre.

RESEARCH IN DIGITAL CULTURE

Existing tools provide insufficient access to the enormous potential resources of a distributed, world-wide, multimedia knowledge network for several reasons. Search engines are typically limited to meta-data in combination with natural language. They focus on contemporary knowledge, out of context, and do not address the complexities of changing structures in earlier historical knowledge. Interfaces change with software functions (e.g. writing, drawing), and collections, but do not adapt to different needs, levels of education or degrees of experience. To address these challenges, MMI departs from a simple premise. Reference rooms are the traditional equivalents of search engines and structuring tools. Indeed the reference rooms of libraries have served as civilisation's cumulative memory concerning search and structure methods through classification systems, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, book catalogues, citation indexes, abstracts and reviews. Digital reference rooms thus offer keys to more comprehensive tools. MMI will combine the idea of a digital reference room with a new interface called a System for Universal Multi Media Access (SUMMA), a prototype of which is part of the European Commission's Museums Over States in Virtual Culture (MOSAIC) and G8's pilot project 5: Multimedia Access to World Cultural Heritage. Cultural applications will thus serve as a test case for a full scale digital reference room, which will eventually help to transform our methods of searching, structuring, using and presenting knowledge. A basis for research is provided by the library of the International Society for Knowledge Organisation. In collaboration with faculties of the founding partners (e.g. Faculty of Arts and Culture) MMI offers scholarships for post-graduate multimedia education. In addition in the context of the European Network of Centres of Excellence, it is foreseen that MMI will eventually offer its own MA and PhD degrees.

LEARNING LAB

A Learning Lab, embedded in MMI, will conduct research on the development and evaluation of electronic learning environments that support teaching and learning in higher education. These environments combine a wide range of tools that support learning activities in the context of self directed and collaborative learning in which students "learn to learn". Handling multiple information sources as well as exchanging information and knowledge between peers and experts requires integrative, adaptive and flexible tool support. The tools developed will not only be applied in regular curricula but also in life-long-learning and international courses. The mission of the Learning Lab is to develop and evaluate tools for learning in collaboration with staff and students, with other educational institutions and business.

DAHLBERG LIBRARY

MMI has been extremely fortunate in being able to acquire the library of Dr Ingetraut Dahlberg. She was a student of Professor Dr. Dr. Alwin Diemer (University of Düsseldorf), and admirer of the famous Indian pioneer in classification, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan. Dr Dahlberg founded the journal International Classification (1974), which later became Knowledge Organisation (1993) She also founded the Gesellschaft für Klassifikation e.V. (1977) and subsequently the International Society of Knowledge Organization (ISKO, 1989). For the past decades she has played a key role in bodies such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Dokumentation (DGD, 1965-1980); Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN), and the Fédération Internationale de Documantation (FID). In addition she has played a co-ordinating role with the International Standards Organization (ISO) technical committees 37 (Terminology) and 46 (Information and Documentation), and the classification sections of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

The main theme of the library is knowledge organisation including its philosophical and theoretical background, classification methodology, its universal and special systems, indexing and terminology. Correspondingly there are sections on each of these areas. In addition there are sections on linguistics, special glossaries, library and information science. There are specialised materials relating to ISO TC 37 (Terminology) and TC 46 (Information Management), the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN), the Fédération Internationale de Documantation (FID) the Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis of the Social Sciences (COCTA) as well as a number of periodicals.

In addition to Dr Dahlberg's collection of books, MMI has become the new home for her ICC classification and will acquire copies of her electronic bibliographies on classification. MMI will also collaborate with Dr Riesthuis of the ISKO Secretariat (Amsterdam), who will publish volumes 5 and 6 of these bibliographies. Collaboration is planned with the Union Internationale des Associations (UIA, Brussels) and the Global Group of organisations connected with ISO TC 37.

HALL OF MIRRORS

In order to be able to disseminate the work done at the Institute to the world outside, a plan was developed to create in the Mirror Room, an in-house space to exhibit new, cultural, educational, and working environments. The Mirror Room will contain several personal computers with sample products from the three departments, Digital Culture, Learning Lab and Competence Centre, as well as new commercial multimedia products. The Mirror Room will also provide students and faculty with facilities to experiment with these new technologies in their curriculum. Additionally the Mirror Room provides a place for (video) conferencing supported by a Smartboard.