

International Symposium

Thursday 8 October 2026

13:00–17:00

Flood Museum - Watersnoodmuseum,
Ouwkerk, The Netherlands

Learning from the past, shaping the future of water and landscapes in the Netherlands and Japan

The New Watermasters

Three Generations – One Future: From Johannis de Rijke to
2100

Organization: Ruud Louwes, Leo van Gelder, Barbara Oomen
Karen van Gemerden – van Burg

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Barbara Oomen – Director,
Watersnoodmuseum

Facilitators: Joëlle Sandee & Richard Cornelis de Boer

Information:
secretariaat@stichtingblauwelijn.nl

13.00-13.05 DUTCH TIME | 8PM JST | Welcome

(5 minutes)

- Prof. Dr. Barbara Oomen – Watersnoodmuseum (Flood Museum)

Welcome - words to guest and Blue Line Foundation as initiator of this seminar. And special guests from the Netherlands, Japan and England.

13:05–13:15 | Introduction 'Johannis de Rijke and the New Watermasters' (10 minutes)

- Ir. Leo van Gelder – Stichting Blauwe Lijn

Welcome to special guests **Ambassador Mr. Rokuichiro Michii Embassy Japan in the Netherlands, Mayor Drs. F.J. (Frederiek) Schouwenaar of the Municipality of Veere, Loco-Mayer - Alderman Johan Sandee of the Municipality of Noord-Beveland** and the international gathering of students, researchers, professors, water professionals and partners from the Netherlands, Japan and England.

Introduction Japanese guests and Dutch contribution from Japan of **Drs. Richard Cornelis de Boer (from Japan), Ir. Toon van der Klugt (Blue Line Foundation from Japan)**.

Blue Line Foundation introduces the purpose of the symposium: *connecting lessons from the past with the challenges of the future and exploring how international cooperation can contribute to resilient water and landscapes towards 2100.*

13:15–13:25 | The Challenge Towards 2100 – A World Under Pressure (10 minutes)

- Prof. Dr. Albert Klein Tank – Delta Climate Centre

Floods, drought, heat, wildfires, typhoons, sea-level rise and changing climate patterns are placing increasing pressure on societies and landscapes around the world. No country, discipline or generation can address these challenges alone. How can we strengthen cooperation between knowledge, policy and practice – and learn from the experiences of previous generations? Integral design, international cooperation, interdisciplinary-approaches, capacity building and students are the keys for the future.

13:25–13.35 | Johannis de Rijke – A Legacy Connecting Japan and the Netherlands

(10 minutes)

- Helenus (Peer) de Rijke – descendant of Johannis de Rijke
- Projectmanager Johannis de Rijke and the Japanese and Dutch watermasters, Karen van Gernerden – van Burg

Peer de Rijke and Karen van Gernerden - van Burg introduce the Johannis de Rijke project briefly and reflect on their journey through Japan in September 2026, travelling together with the TU Delft students and Dr. Luca Iuorio.

During this journey, the story and memories of Johannis de Rijke were shared with many new Japanese friends, connecting his historical work in Japan with today's generation of Dutch and Japanese students, researchers and water professionals. The journey became more than a historical exploration: it created new personal connections and brought the legacy of Johannis de Rijke into a new generation of cooperation between Japan and the Netherlands.

13.35-13.50 | Japanese national and international water management

(15 minutes)

- Prof. Dr. T. Koike (ICharm / Help)

13.50-14.10: New perspectives on Delta Solutions - Study Kakamigahara City - Workshop Westerschelde Delta Climate Centre

(20 minutes)

- Ir. Luca Iuorio TU Delft Delta Urbanism, Urbanism
- Interdisciplinary group 15 students TU Delft
- Ing. Oswald Lagendijk

The historical connection between the Netherlands and Japan through Johannis de Rijke – and to today's New Watermasters 2026.

- Explanation of the work and the perspective of Delta Urbanism of the TU Delft (Luca) – 5 minutes
- Explanation of the study case Kakamighara City (15 students of the TU Delft 2026 – 10 minutes
- The results from the workshop Westerschelde Delta Climate Centre (7 October - Oswald Lagendijk) – 5 minutes

14:10–14.40 | Panel session – looking at studies for the future by Japanese and Dutch experts (online – connection)

(30 minutes)

Panel members: Research in the Netherlands – Water Management and Landscape

1. Yuka Yoshida - PhD – researcher; 5 minutes
 - On what kind of research are you working, considering the waterproblems in the Netherlands and Japan?
2. Ir. Taichi Fujii (from Japan – [ONLINE](#)) - PhD - researcher;
 - On what kind of research are you going to work on at the TU Delft in upcoming 10 months?
3. Mr. Kaoru Fujii – Society of the Aqua City Osaka (from Japan – [ONLINE](#))
 - How can students and researchers learn from Johannis de Rijke in Osaka and the Yodo-river?
4. Drs. Jos van Alphen, former member of the National Deltaprogramme;
 - How were you involved with the Japanese – Dutch cooperation in relation to the Deltaprogramme and how do you see this future cooperation, and the place of students, PhD-researchers and Japanese – Dutch partners.
5. Ir. Koos Wieriks, former advisor Ministry of Infrastructure and Water, former advisor of King W.A van Orange; 10 minutes
 - What are the experiences from the time as advisor for the King of the Netherlands with Japan? And how do you see the cooperation between Japan and the Netherlands in these years and for the future?

14.40–14.50 | Reflection on Japan - Netherlands cooperation, past and future (10 minutes)

- Ambassador Mr. Michii, Japanese Embassy of Japan in the Netherlands

14.50-15.15 | Coffee break

15:15-16.00 | The Study Group of 1972 – Rediscovering a Forgotten Vision (45 minutes)

(in Dutch, translation if needed)

- Drs. Hans Waardenburg (Waardenburg Ecology)
- Ing. Ruud Louwes (Rho ADVISEURS)

In 1972, a group of young TU Delft students developed ideas for the future of Zeeland and the Eastern Surge Barrier. Their study “Zeeuws Meer?” reflected a generation that dared to think beyond existing boundaries. Fifty-four years later, their work offers an opportunity to reflect on how young professionals can contribute to long-term thinking about water, landscape and society.

16:00–16:05: Serious Game – Flood Museum

(5 minutes)

- Prof. Dr. Barbara Oomen – Flood Museum

16.05-16.30 | Special moment for the students 1972 – 2026

(25 minutes)

- ‘Secret – activity’ with special guests

16.30 - 17.00 | Panel | Wrap-up – Lessons for the Future – actions needed for international cooperation Netherlands - Japan – England

(30

minutes)

- International focus: Drs. Anne – Beth Derks (Connected by the North Sea)
- Public interaction
- Reactions of experts:
 - Dr. Luca Iorio -TU Delft
 - Drs. Jos van Alphen – University of Utrecht
 - Prof. Dr. Albert Klein Tank
 - Ing. Martijn Waardenburg
 - Peer de Rijke
- Wrap-up by: Ir. Koos Wieriks / Ir. Leo van Gelder - Blue Line Foundation
 - ⇒ How to take away the lessons for the future to international cooperation?
 - ⇒ What can we take away for the cooperation between Japan and the Netherlands?
 - ⇒ And for the Netherlands and England?
 - ⇒ What are the concrete actions we need to work on, to move forward?

Reflection on the student research and on how an interdisciplinary and international approach can contribute to thinking about water and landscapes towards 2100. The session also explores opportunities to develop this approach further through cooperation between students, researchers, governments, ministries and international knowledge networks.

What can we learn from the different generations? From Johannis de Rijke, to the 1972 TU Delft generation, to the New Watermasters of 2026, several lessons emerge: the importance of integral thinking and doing, collaboration across disciplines and generations, and connecting knowledge with practice.

The symposium closes with a perspective towards 2100 and the possibility of developing a stronger international knowledge programme connecting the Netherlands, Japan, England and wider international networks.

16.55 – 17.00 | Closing

- Leo van Gelder
- Barbara Oomen

17.00-17.30 | Drinks