

# Arts, Culture and Sports

## Overview

Hong Kong is developing hardware and software to promote the long term development of the culture and sports sectors. This ties in with the city's new positioning as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange, as set out in the National 14th Five-Year Plan.

The current-term Government is committed to fostering the cultural development of Hong Kong to expedite its progression into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange by mapping out a **Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development**, nurturing a diverse talent pool, enriching arts, cultural and creative content, and upgrading cultural infrastructure to further enhance the ecosystem for the relevant industries.

In 2022-23, the Government's recurrent expenditure on the development of arts and culture is over \$5.9 billion, an increase of nearly 40% over the \$4.3 billion five years ago.

## Arts and culture

Hong Kong has:

- **15 museums, two art spaces and 16 performance venues** under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) draw about 3.5 million visitors and two million attendees respectively annually. **The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address** has proposed the implementation of a **10-year development blueprint for arts and cultural facilities**, in which the number of LCSD's museums will be increased to 19 and the number of seats at performance venues will be increased by about 50%.
- Over 7,000 cultural programmes/activities organised by the LCSD attracting over two million spectators/participants each year.
- **Major performing arts groups:** Chung Ying Theatre Company; City Contemporary Dance Company; Hong Kong Ballet; Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra; Hong Kong Dance Company; Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra; Hong Kong Repertory Theatre; Hong Kong Sinfonietta; and Zuni Icosahedron.
- **Major arts and cultural events:** Affordable Art Fair, Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Central, Chinese Opera Festival, Fine Art Asia, French May Arts Festival, Hong Kong Arts Festival, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Hong Kong Film Awards, Entertainment Expo Hong Kong, Asian Film Awards, Hong Kong-Asia Film Financing Forum, Ink Asia, Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival, International Arts Carnival and New Vision Arts Festival. The Government will foster arts and cultural exchanges and collaboration with the Mainland, including organising the Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival in 2024.
- **West Kowloon Cultural District** is one of the world's largest cultural projects offering world-class performance venues and museums as well as diversified arts and cultural programmes.
- **Tai Kwun – Centre for Heritage and Arts**, encompassing 16 heritage buildings, including the former Central Police Station, Victoria Prison and Central Magistracy, is a cultural hub offering multi-purpose venues for a variety of local, national and international artistic offerings.
- **PMQ:** revitalised site of the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road, is a creative industries

landmark that is home to 100+ local young createpreneurs and hosts creative and design events.

### **Other initiatives**

- The newly-established **Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund** targets mega arts and cultural events organised by the private sector and non-government organisations in Hong Kong. It aims to attract and support international and large-scale arts and cultural events to be held in Hong Kong, with a view to further developing the city into an “arts and cultural hub”.
- The Government set aside a total of \$100 million (US\$12.8 million) under various funds operated by different bureaux to promote arts technology through encouraging related sectors to implement projects that integrate technology and arts.
- The 2022-23 Budget earmarked \$85 million each year to support the development of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre, anticipated to be opened by phases starting from late 2023 to early 2024, into a major arts technology venue and incubator providing structured training. An amount of \$30 million will be allocated to implement an **Arts Technology Funding Pilot Scheme** to encourage the nine major performing arts groups to apply arts technology.
- **Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme** was launched in 2011 to nurture small and medium-sized arts groups and budding artists. The 2022-23 Budget will inject \$10 million into the scheme to encourage the arts groups to further explore the use of arts technology under the scheme.
- The 2022-23 Budget set aside \$70 million to upgrade facilities of performing arts venues under the LCSD.
- The Government will allocate \$42 million to organise the first **Hong Kong Performing Arts Market** in 2024.
- The 2021-22 Budget set aside \$169 million to continue to take forward local cultural, heritage and creative tourism projects, such as the Yim Tin Tsai Arts Festival and the City in Time.
- The 2021-22 Budget injected an additional \$1 billion into the **CreateSmart Initiative** to drive the development of creative industries.
- The Government allocated an additional \$900 million in 2021-22 for the **Art Development Matching Grants Scheme** to further promote sponsorship of cultural and arts from all sectors.
- The Government has allocated \$37 million over six years starting from 2022-23 to provide professional training for the conservation staff of the LCSD and the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and increase the number of places under the museum trainee (conservation) programme and the summer internship programme.
- \$216 million was earmarked from 2018-19 to 2023-24 to continue the **arts administrators training scheme**.
- **Sham Shui Po Design and Fashion Project** to nurture young design talents and fashion designers, support design start-ups and help boost local economy. Expected completion in 2023-24.
- **Invigorating Island South** initiative to enhance cultural and leisure facilities in Wong Chuk Hang, Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau, and to expedite the redevelopment/conversion of old industrial buildings in Wong Chuk Hang to provide more operating space for arts and culture.
- To further promote the exchange of culture and arts in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), \$20 million will be allocated for Hong Kong to host the **GBA Culture and Arts Festival** in 2024, when 5,000 Hong Kong and Mainland artists as well as other arts and culture practitioners are expected to offer high-quality cultural and performing arts programmes.
- Starting from the financial year 2023-24, \$135 million will be spent over five years to support Hong

Kong performing arts groups and artists taking part in performances and productions in the GBA. Each year, 1,000 Hong Kong artists are expected to participate in these activities in front of an audience of 40,000 in the GBA.

### **CreateSmart Initiative**

- **Since its launch in 2009, over \$2.3 billion had been allocated under the CreateSmart Initiative (CSI)** to help the creative sector organise about 650 projects in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas, benefiting around 15,000 small and medium enterprises and generating nearly 30,000 jobs and over 80,000 nurturing opportunities.
- **The 2023-24 budget allocated an additional \$500 million to the CSI** to continue to support the development of the seven non-film sectors of creative industries, and to encourage more cross-sectoral and cross-genre collaboration on creative and cultural programmes.
- The CSI will also provide **funding support for the Hong Kong Design Centre and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council to implement flagship events and incubation programmes**, and funding support for the operation and activities of the Sham Shui Po Design and Fashion Project to nurture design talents and assist start-ups to build their brands, and help boost local economy.

### **Pop culture and film**

- The Government injected \$1 billion into the **Film Development Fund (FDF)** in May 2019 to promote further development of the local film industry through new and enhancement measures under the FDF.
- To promote Hong Kong's pop culture to go global, the Government will strive to expand the industry's development capacity with three foci on film, TV and streaming platforms respectively.
- The inaugural Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival was launched in April 2023, featuring an array of exciting events throughout the year. The estimated production costs will be about \$20 million, and it is expected that there will be an audience of over 140 000 people.
- The Government supports through FDF collaboration between local and Asian production teams for co-production of films and development of new content on streaming platforms by cross-sectoral production teams to facilitate Hong Kong film industry to enter new distribution markets.

### **Intangible cultural heritage**

- **Cantonese opera** – first Hong Kong item inscribed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" in September 2009.
- The 2022-23 Budget injected \$100 million into the **Cantonese Opera Development Fund** to support the long-term development of the Cantonese opera sector.
- Twelve items of intangible cultural heritage of Hong Kong are inscribed onto "**The National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage**": Cantonese opera; Hakka unicorn dance in Hang Hau in Sai Kung; *Quanzhen* temples Taoist ritual music; Cheung Chau *Jiao* Festival; Tai O dragon boat water parade; Yu Lan Festival of the Hong Kong Chiu Chow community; Mid-Autumn Festival – the Tai Hang fire dragon dance; Wong Tai Sin belief and customs; Tin Hau Festival in Hong Kong; herbal tea; the arts of the *guqin* (the craft of *qin* making); and Hong Kong cheongsam making technique.
- The above items, together with *nanyin* (southern tunes); spring and autumn ancestral worship of clans; Mid-Autumn Festival – the Pok Fu Lam fire dragon dance; Taoist ritual tradition of the *Zhengyi* school; *sek pun* (basin feast); Hong Kong-style milk tea making technique; paper crafting technique; Hong

Kong *kwan kwa* wedding costume making technique; and bamboo theatre building technique, form the first “**Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong**”, which was announced in August 2017.

- To further promote the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, the Government approved a funding of \$300 million in late 2018 for launching the Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme to engage the community in and strengthen various aspects of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of Hong Kong.

### **West Kowloon Cultural District**

West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is one of the world’s largest cultural projects. Blending traditional local culture with international and contemporary elements, WKCD showcases the unique identity of Hong Kong as a metropolis where East meets West, and establishes Hong Kong as one of the most vibrant arts and cultural hubs in the world. Spanning 40 hectares along the shore of Victoria Harbour, WKCD offers **world-class integrated arts and cultural facilities**:

- **M+** – Asia’s first global museum of contemporary visual culture, exhibiting visual art, design and architecture, moving image, and Hong Kong visual culture of the 20th and 21st centuries.
- **Hong Kong Palace Museum** – displaying valuable artefacts on loan from the Palace Museum in Beijing that represent 5,000 years of Chinese art and culture from the imperial courts.
- **Xiqu Centre** – a new landmark offering a superb platform for the production, education, preservation and promotion of Cantonese opera and other forms of Chinese traditional theatre.
- **Freespace** – a creative venue for multiple forms of contemporary performing arts, where artists and audiences can exchange and explore new ideas.
- **Art Park** – a quality open green space and a vibrant venue for open-air performances and other cultural programmes.
- **Lyric Theatre Complex** – a centre of excellence showcasing the best of Hong Kong and international dance and theatre productions (expected to be completed in 2025).

### **Sports**

The Government is committed to promoting the development of sports in Hong Kong by adopting a three-pronged approach: promoting sports in the community, supporting elite sports and promoting Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events. The bulk of Government spending on sports development goes to the promotion of sports in the community, which accounts for over 80% of overall expenditure.

Hong Kong has:

- 103 public **indoor sports centres** with an average usage rate of the main arenas at about 94% in 2021.
- 44 public **swimming pool complexes** with attendance of over 9.1 million in 2021.
- The **Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI)**, which supports around 1,300 athletes (including around 500 full-time athletes), provides elite sports training for 20 Tier A sports and six Tier A disability sports. The Government has allocated \$990 million to the main works project for the new facilities building of the HKSI to provide additional training facilities and strengthen sports science and sports medicine support.
- **Major sports events** include: Hong Kong Masters (snooker), Harbour Race (swimming), Hong Kong Sevens (rugby), FIBA 3x3 Hong Kong Masters (basketball) and Hong Kong Squash Open in 2022.

## **Other initiatives**

- The Government launched in January 2022 a \$300 million **Sports Science and Research Funding Scheme**, which is jointly financed with the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust with the aim of strengthening support in sports science and sports medicine to enhance the competitiveness of athletes at international sports events.
- The Government will continue to provide support for retired athletes and allocate more resources to expand the existing Retired Athletes Transformation Programme. The target is to double the number of retired athletes joining the programme within five years from 2022-23 to provide them with more opportunities for career transformation. Besides, as announced in the **Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address**, the Government will launch a five-year pilot programme on career and education for athletes with disabilities to equip them with the knowledge and skill necessary for transformation and development after retirement, and provide them with placement opportunities.
- The Government is exploring ways to further promote sports development through enhanced professionalism in the sports sector and development of sports as an industry. As announced in the **Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address**, the Government will support the development of professional leagues and clubs, including enhancing the arrangement of training and competition venues for qualified sports clubs and supporting local sports clubs in their participation in major sports competitions on the Mainland and in the region, so as to take forward exchanges in sports and give impetus to the development of the sports industry in Hong Kong.
- The Government has substantially increased the yearly subvention for **the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China** and over 60 **national sports associations (NSAs)** since 2020-21, to enhance the promotion and development of sports in the community, youth training programmes, public participation, squad training at all levels, overseas exchange programmes/competitions; and enhance the corporate governance of NSAs. NSAs can also make use of the additional resources to improve their manpower and staff remuneration. The total amount of subvention has been increasing progressively from about \$300 million in 2019-20 to more than \$500 million in 2023-24.
- As announced in the **Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address**, the Government will also strengthen the promotion of urban sports introduced in the Olympic Games or the Youth Olympic Games so as to encourage participation of more young people and to identify and nurture junior athletes with relevant potential. The Government will also review the competition events of the Hong Kong Games to provide more opportunities for participation of different age groups and enhance the "M" Mark System to support the hosting of at least 10 major international sports events in Hong Kong annually, with a view to promoting Hong Kong as a centre for mega international sports events.

## **Kai Tak Sports Park**

Occupying an area of about 28 hectares, the Kai Tak Sports Park is the largest sports infrastructure ever in Hong Kong. It will provide modern and multi-purpose sports and recreation facilities to foster sports development in Hong Kong. The Sports Park is targeted for completion in the second half of 2024.

## **Sports and recreation facilities**

- The Government announced in 2017 a Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities which covers 26 projects costing about \$20 billion and feasibility studies for another 15 projects. Pre-construction and construction work on 21 projects, involving \$9.1 billion in spending, are underway.

- To make the public play spaces more innovative and fun as well as to meet the aspirations of local residents, the Government announced in 2019 the launching of a five-year plan to transform more than 170 public play spaces under the management of the LCSD. Since 2020, a total of 87 transformation projects have been rolled out in phases.
- The 2021-22 Budget earmarked \$318 million to implement a five-year plan for upgrading over 70 football pitches under the management of the LCSD.
- As announced in the **Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address**, the Government will map out a 10-year development blueprint for sports and recreation facilities, providing about 30 diversified facilities by phases, such as sports centres, swimming pools, sports grounds and parks. The planned facilities include Hong Kong's second sports park to be developed in Whitehead, Ma On Shan, and large-scale sports and recreation facilities in the Northern Metropolis.

### **15th National Games 2025**

Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will co-host the 15th National Games in 2025. Hong Kong will spare no effort to work closely with the relevant ministries of the Central Government, the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Macao Special Administrative Region Government on the preparatory work and follow the Central Authorities' requirement of striving for a "simple, safe and wonderful" Games.

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