

Re: Invitation for presentations of written submissions.

1. We agree that WKCD should have a wholistic approach to the arts and cultural development of Hong Kong. It should emphasize interaction with the existing cultural networks.

Art is not something that can be produced instantaneously like on the production line of a factory. It takes a long process of development with historical, economic, social and political conditions all playing important factors. The WKCD cannot possibly just spring up like a “Las Vegas” out of the desert and have all the software and operating manpower in place. A successful launch of the WKCD is only possible if it makes use of the existing and established art organizations and venues so that it is an extension of them rather than a totally new, isolated and independent hub, consciously or unconsciously marginalizing other cultural entities already in existence.

To make Hong Kong the capital of arts and culture in Asia we need to go beyond the physical limit of WKCD, with the approach that it is a centre connected to the existing network of all the other creative hubs, such as Tsim Sha Tsui with the Cultural Museum, and Wanchai North (composed of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and the proposed Arts and Cultural Precinct in the New Central Harbourfront); and artists communes such as the Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre, and the Cattle Depot etc., through programming or other means.

2. There is an urgent need to develop cultural software now (nurturing artists , arts administrators and building audiences) ---

The first phase of WKCD will be completed by 2015 which leaves us only six years to build artistic contents, audiences and train curators, arts administrators and technical staff. In this respect, the WKCD must support all art organizations towards this end. For example, the Hong Kong Arts Centre, in the last 30 years, has been the incubator for young and developing artists and organizations. The Centre has a good track record in grooming many artists, as well as art administrators and curators working in different fields today. We have been the breeding ground for success stories of names such as Jim Chim (詹瑞文) PIP Cultural Enterprise, Arts in Hospital, Hong Kong Aesthetic Education, Independent Short Film and Video Award (ifva), Street Music programme ... etc. The Hong Kong Arts Centre is indeed a necessary platform for developing WKCD content, in respect of which, we deserve better support, recognition and promotion from the government and the community.

3. We share the viewpoint with the Consultative Committee of the WKCD project that arts education is important and space for arts education venues should be reserved in the cultural district. An art school campus in WKCD will be an anchor in drawing students, teachers, art-related professionals, practitioners and parents on an almost compulsory basis, thus creating people flow which is essential.

The Hong Kong Arts Centre established the Hong Kong Art School in 2000 to offer professional courses in arts administration and management as well as a

wide spectrum of courses from fine art, media art and visual art to art appreciation. We are unique that we are not connected to an academic entity and we are studio based with all our teachers being practitioners in the field. Our graduate students have been the ingredients of local art scene and creative industries. For the last 10 years, our art school has struggled to survive and develop without any government recurrent subsidy. It is now logical and ideal that WKCD accommodates an extension of Hong Kong Arts Centre's Art School.

4. Over one half of the spaces in WKCD are public space. We should look into how to utilize it for creativity and outdoor sculpture while retaining its function as an open space for public leisure uses. Towards this end, Public Art Hong Kong (PAHK), established under Hong Kong Arts Centre umbrella and the YK Pao Foundation in year 2005, would like to extend its service to WKCD as a continuous space flowing from the rest of Hong Kong public space.
5. To conclude, may I reiterate that the government must start to work with existing art organizations to nurture artists, arts administrators and organizations for WKCD and a time frame must be set. We are running out of time, only by making use of existing resources can we adequately prepare for a successful launch of the WKCD project.