

The Hong Kong Arts Festival has supported the initiative to develop new venues since the inception of the WKCD project and continues to do so. We have consistently urged that the project be expedited to alleviate the demand on existing venues and to extend the number and range of venues available.

Since a WKCD management team was established, there has been one effort to collaborate. This was initiated by WKCD. HKAF invested in a good deal of research and curatorial work, leveraging on its programmes and international networks, and was subsequently informed that its funding application was not approved. This was a surprise as HKAF did not approach this project with WKCD in the role of funder, but as a partner. The project was subsequently executed by HKAF independently of WKCD.

Apart from this, HKAF engagement has included:

- 1) Discussion with the many consultants and competitors to WKCD projects, who wish to seek views and inputs from a major player in the community, or are required to do so.
- 2) Attending WKCD briefings and engagements on individual disciplines of music, theatre, dance, with the triple burden on very limited staff time.
- 3) Being asked to present work on the WKCD site.

The HKAF is a major content provider in the performing arts. It works in all disciplines and genres. It has a wide international network and deep understanding of local artists and audiences. In the last 10 years, HKAF has presented large scale popular events reaching a wide audience; and worked with local talent to develop and produce new work encompassing multi-media, music, dance and theatre with good results at the box office, in critical review and in the annual awards.

We would welcome serious dialogue with WKCD. HKAF is very keen to have insight into WKCD's intentions with regard to potential venue users and content providers, its functional design briefs and operational objectives. We have been following media reports with interest and look forward to meaningful engagement which will allow for forward planning with new venues in mind.