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Wei Han, Rosanna LI

Angelina SO

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Creative Industries: Singapore and Hong Kong

– A Review of Design Initiatives with Implications for the Nurturing of

Design Talent

Li Wei Han Rosanna and Angelina So

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Content

1. Design Initiatives of Singapore and Hong Kong

1.1 Introduction

In this paper, we shall discuss Hong Kong's design initiative with reference to Singapore's. We shall explore the difficulties faced by the design industry, the factors affecting its development and what needs be done to strengthen its competitiveness in the world. We shall begin by giving a background of the rise of creative industries. Then after a brief review of the case of Singapore, we will give an account of the policies adopted in Hong Kong and discuss the major difference of the two. Furthermore, as we believe that for design and creativity to flourish and achieve sustainable growth in Hong Kong, education and professional development are indispensable, we will review the current situation in details and make suggestions about the nurturing of design talent in Hong Kong.

1.2 Creative Industries - UK

The UK was the first country to systematically promote creative industries. Until 1997 the creative sector was seen as of only marginal importance to the UK's economic well-being. But it began to change in the 1990's; creativity was seen as a driver for job creation or growth. Gradually the UK government began to focus on the need to develop a creative and innovative people through the arts and culture. In the five years that followed, the UK government dramatically increased financial support to its arts and cultural policies, and there has been increasing recognition that creative skills are necessary for success in all areas of life. According to the UK Creative Industries Task Force (1998), creative industries can be defined as "those industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property".

The creative industries were worth 7.9% of the UK's GDP in 2000, and between 1997 and 2000, the sector had achieved average annual growth of 9.0%, in comparison with 2.8% for the whole economy (British Council). Four of the creative industries account for three quarters of the economic value of the grouping of sectors (Design-2.8% of the whole economy; Software-1.6%; Publishing-0.9%; and Advertising-0.7%). Exports by the creative industries equated to around 3.3% of all good and services exported in 2000 but have grown at around 13% per year during 1997-2000, comparing to the value of all services exported grew by 9%, while all goods and services combined grew by only 5%. Total creative employment over the period 1997-2001 also grew at a rate of 5% per annum, compared to 1.5% for the whole of the economy, while design including fashion rose by 8%.

1.3 Creative Industries - Asia

The economic slowdown since 1997-98 has resulted in a striking decrease in foreign direct investment (FDI) in Asia and undermined the vitality of many Southeast Asian countries heavily dependent on FDI for their development of local manufacturing industries. However, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in some Asian countries have rebounded and demonstrated rapid recovery from the Asian financial crisis. The creative economy, the entrepreneurship and vitality of SMEs and the relative change of FDI in Asia have been the major factors behind this. Creative industries are gradually becoming more central to national and city policy plans. This is true in Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, as well as in Australia and New Zealand. Much of the thinking in these cities/countries has derived from the European and North American policy settings (Asia Europe Foundation, 2006).

1.4 Creative Industries – Singapore

1.4.1 Introduction

In view of a slow global economic situation and a volatile regional political environment, the Singapore government established the Economic Review Committee (ERC) in December 2001, to review Singapore's development strategies, and to formulate comprehensive strategies to restructure the economy. Under the sub-committee on service industries, the Creative Industries Working Group (CIWG) set up three task forces, namely Renaissance City 2.0, Design Singapore and Media 21. After nine months of study, CIWG submitted a report to ERC in September 2002, which detailed the importance of creative industries and put forward their recommendations.

CIWG has adopted the United Kingdom's definition of creative industries and has categorized creative industries into three broad groups: arts and culture, design and media. In 2000, creative industries were accounting for nearly 3% of Singapore's GDP and employing 38% of the workforce. The targets of their goal, Vision 2012, are:

(a) to raise the share of creative industries in GDP to 6%;

(b) to employ 5 - 7% of the national workforce; and

(c) to establish a reputation for Singapore as a New Asia Creative Hub.

CIWG formulated the Creative Industries Development Strategy that consisted of three interlocking industry-specific recommendations: Renaissance City 2.0, DesignSingapore and Media 21, focusing on the Arts, Design and Media sectors respectively. It was

recommended that a national concerted approach be adopted to involve all players with vested interests. The Singapore government have accepted their recommendations and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MICA) is responsible for spearheading the coordination and development of creative industries. As a continuation of our previous research, we shall focus on the design sector of the creative industries of both Singapore and Hong Kong in the following sections.

1.4.2 DesignSingapore Initiative

Design not only includes aesthetics but also market research, usability, safety, ergonomics, environmental sustainability, new technologies, logistics and consumer experience (ERC Report, 2003). While most industries are competing at equal price and functionality, the CIWG perceived that one of the best ways to enhance and create new value in any industry is design. Design's multi-disciplinary and integrative function, makes it possible to cut across urban development, enterprise and trade development, education and capability development, culture heritage and tourism.

According to the World Economic Forum World Competitiveness Report 2001-2002, Singapore was below the mean for uniqueness of product design and only slightly above the mean for innovation and branding. The working group considered Singapore's closest competitors as the economies of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan China and Ireland (ERC Report, 2003). A multi-agency taskforce was set up and made a study mission to places like Hong Kong, Barcelona, Milan, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Copenhagen, Helsinki and London. They also received inputs from an international advisory panel and consulted local industry players.

In Singapore, the design industry includes advertising, architecture, web and software, graphics, industrial product, fashion, communications, interior and environmental (Creative Industries Development Strategies, 2002). The Design Singapore Council, formed by MICA in 2003, acts as the leading, one-stop public organisation for design promotion and design development in Singapore, as well as the representative body for Singapore design at international platforms. Its envisioned outcomes are:

(a) Singapore to be a leading centre for contemporary design in Asia

(b) evolve a distinctive Singapore design and brand identity

(c) design excellence to be a competitive advantage for local enterprises

(d) a pervasive design culture

The DesignSingapore Initiative took off from Singapore's first national design promotion

efforts started in the 1980s. The Design Singapore Council partners with The International Enterprise Singapore (IES) and other agencies in adopting a holistic approach to developing design expertise, enterprise and education, while the IES focuses on developing design as an internationalization capability of Singapore-based companies.

Following are the strategies and recommendations of the Design Singapore Initiative which we have included in our previous report:

1.4.2.1. Integrate Design in Enterprise

- Identify and develop iconic Singapore products and services, such as in entertainment, healthcare and medical products.

- Promote design in the public sector, like in public buildings, train and subway stations, street furniture, etc.

- Raise business awareness of design excellence. Case studies were commissioned by the Council to demonstrate the importance of design as an integral part of a business's strategy and competitiveness. Two examples are Eu Yan Sang and Banyan Tree Hotels.

- Facilitate use of design by businesses. For instance, the government offers up to 50% of cost grant to each company that employs a design consultant. Besides, Design Pioneer Programme helps Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises leverage design to create higher value-added products.

1.4.2.2. Develop a Vibrant & Professional Design Community that is active both locally & internationally

- Establish a flagship university program in art, design and media

- Enhance design education in secondary schools, polytechnics and arts schools

- Establish design test beds. The establishment of a Media Lab to engage in multi-disciplinary media research and development is recommended.

- Enhance professional standing of designers. For example, the Overseas Promotion Partnership Programme provides co-funding to help designers gain exposure at prestigious international events like the New York Furniture Fair, the Paris Fashion Festival and Tokyo Designers Block.

1.4.2.3. Position Singapore as a Global Design Hub

- Anchor international design companies and activities in Singapore. Recent developments include the relocation of the International Federation of Interior

Architects/Designers to Singapore; and the Red Dot Award, for the first time in its 50-year history, created a new award category for Concept Design based in Singapore.

- Embark on a national marketing and branding strategy. It is recommended that Singapore participates more actively at international platforms to raise the profile of design capabilities. Moreover the promotion of unique Singapore design, products and services should be synergized with a national marketing and branding effort.

1.4.2.4. Foster a Design Culture & Awareness

- Embed design in all levels of education. ManyWaysofSeeing, a pilot programme to cultivate the appreciate of design and include design as a creative learning tool in schools, is one of several initiatives aimed at bringing design culture and awareness to the rest of the community.

- Bring design everywhere, such as regular showcasing of design in community spaces, schools and shopping malls.

- Design in the mass media. It is proposed that an active media programme be pursued to raise the profile of design like that in Italy, Japan and USA.

Appendix 1 is a summary table of the four crucial strategies and subsequent recommendations of the Design Singapore Initiative provided in the ERC report.

1.5 Creative Industries – Hong Kong

1.5.1 Introduction

Similar to the situation in Singapore, Hong Kong was suffering from a prolonged economic downturn after 1997 and creative industries have gradually been seen as a new thrust to save Hong Kong's economy. In addition, technological innovation and intangible elements such as style, branding, design, and aesthetic or symbolic value are becoming increasingly important in retaining competitiveness in the era of globalization. In response to the economic restructuring in the late 1990s, Hong Kong needed to turn to "service-enhanced manufacturing" which has the same emphasis on "intangible product attributes" as with creative industries for a sustainable economy (HKU, 2003).

The discussions and policy planning relating to creative industries have been going on for some years in Hong Kong. In 1998, the Policy Address laid emphasis mainly on industries that rely on advances in innovation and technology (Policy Address, 1998) but lacked concrete measure in support of related issues. In 2000, the Commission on Strategic Development declared that "creative and cultural activities" would be among the seven key industries with the greatest growth potential for the coming 30 years in HK.

The significance of creativity was formally registered in the government's policy agenda in the same year. Before then, discussions of the matter came mainly from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and the cultural community.

The Baseline Study on Hong Kong's Creative Industries, conducted by the Centre for Cultural Policy Research at the University of Hong Kong and released in 2003 defined Hong Kong's creative industries as "a group of economic activities that exploit and deploy creativity, skill and intellectual property to produce and distribute products and services of social and cultural meaning - a production system through which the potentials of wealth generation and job creation are realized". It was estimated that the creative industries accounted for 3.8% GDP in 2001 with total employment population of 170,000. The Home Affairs Bureau and the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau were to explore new directions for the development of creative industries in 2003 but progress was slow and limited. In 2004, some advances such as a Digital Media Centre, the Cyberport iResource Centre and a Design Centre have been set up. In addition, a $250 million DesignSmart Initiative was launched.

The Minister of Culture of the PRC declared at the Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum in 2005 that the central government would give full support to the SAR Government to develop creative industries (Chan, 2006). In the Policy Address 2005, the Chief Executive renamed "creative industries" as "cultural and creative industries". They encompassed 11 categories, including design, architecture, advertising, publishing, music, film, computer software, digital entertainment, performing arts, broadcasting, and antiques and art dealing. It was indicated that a high-level consultative body directed by the Chief Executive for cultural and creative industries would be established to study the vision for development, direction, and organizational structure. However, so far there has been no follow-up action after the resignation of Tung Chee Hwa.

In 2006, with funding support from the government's Innovation and Technology Fund, five research and development centres have been set up to undertake industry-oriented research in technologies demanded increasingly in the PRD. Moreover, an Integrated Circuit Design and Development Support Centre at the Science Park, as well as the Digital Media Centre and the Wireless Development Centre at the Cyberport have been established. It was also stated in the Policy Address 2006 that the government would allocate $100 million over five years for the Hong Kong Design Centre to further assist trades and industries to make full use of their designs and build their brand names.

1.5.2 Hong Kong Design Industry

According to the Census and Statistics Department, the number of establishments in design services in March 2006 was 1,641, with an employment of 6,355. The design industry in Hong Kong encompasses product design, graphics design, interior design and fashion design. Recently design management which deals with the management of projects with a high content of design, has been developing as a new discipline in Hong Kong. Many local designers are exporting their services, particularly product and interior design firms and mainland China is the biggest export market. The demand for Hong Kong's high-end design services is rising in light of a more flourishing China market (Trade Development Council).

1.5.3 Hong Kong Design Initiatives

1.5.3.1 Steering Group on the Promotion of Innovation and Design

In November 2002, the Government formed the Steering Group on the Promotion of Innovation and Design in examining policy issues and coordinating the various elements of the Government's programme and resources to spearhead the promotion of innovation and design in industry. The Steering Group is chaired by the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology with members from relevant Government bureaux, academia, industry and design professionals. With regard to the economic restructuring of Hong Kong, the Group is to:

- promote the use of innovation and design in adding value to products made by Hong Kong;

- formulate a strategy to speed up the process of upgrading Hong Kong industry from original equipment manufacturing (OEM) to original design manufacturing (ODM); and

- implement the strategy with the support of industry.

1.5.3.2 Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC)

The HKDC is a non-profit organization established in 2001 by the Hong Kong Federation of Design Associations with full support from the government. It works with the government, business partners and associations to promote design as a strategic, value-adding component in business. They also help designers raise their profiles as well as the overall design standard in Hong Kong. Design ideas and business opportunities are created and exchanged through activities like the Business of Design Week, exhibitions, seminars, online designer search, 'Good Design Mark' scheme, publications, organizing awards like Design for Asia Award, Design Leadership Award, World outstanding Chinese Designer Award, etc. Their goals are:

- to help Hong Kong establish itself as the design hub of Asia

- to become the innovation centre for Greater China

- to be the design information centre

- to link design centres and organisations worldwide

1.5.3.3 DesignSmart Initiative

In June 2004, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the HK$250 million DesignSmart Initiative to promote the wider use of design and innovation in industries and to help them move up the value chain. The Initiative comprises a Design Support Programme (DSP) with four funding schemes:

1. Design-Business Collaboration Scheme – promote collaborations between design and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

2. Design Research Scheme – support worthwhile research in design or branding-related areas.

3. General Support Scheme – promote and honour design excellence in HK.

4. Professional Continuing Education Scheme – develop professional continuing education courses in design and its application.

As at the end of September 2005, the Design Support Scheme had provided about $33 million to support 18 projects. The Hong Kong Young Design Talent Awards 2005 was launched to select and sponsor outstanding young designers to undergo overseas training and/or work attachment so as to enhance their professional skills.

Under the Initiative, the ITC also provides funding for the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and the Hong Kong Design Centre to develop the existing Tech Centre into the InnoCentre, a one-stop shop for creating and sustaining a cluster of high value-added design activities among design professionals and companies. Its services include a tenancy programme which provides modern facilities and a clustering environment for innovative firms from around the world, a design incubation programme for start-up companies, education, training and professional development, a resource centre and networking programmes.

2. Comparing the Design Initiatives of Singapore and HK

2.1 Introduction

In Section 1 we have outlined the design initiatives of Singapore and Hong Kong. In this section we will explore the major differences of these two places with regard to their efforts in promoting and developing design as one dimension of the local creative industries.

2.2 Singapore

The DesignSingapore, is a top-down national policy formulated by the Singapore government. DesignSingapore can be clearly identified in the hierarchical framework of the government. It is among the 3-tier Creative Industries Development Strategy generated by the Creative Industries Working Group (CIWG) formed under the Economic Review Committee (ERC), the steering force for all economic activities at the top. DesignSingapore is conceived as a national endeavour which is to penetrate the whole country, engaging people from the private and public sectors, business practices and educational institutions, simply put, people from all walks of life. The task of The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MICA) is to develop the strategies of the DesignSingapore into action plans and realize their implementation.

The Design Singapore Council then formed by the MICA is responsible for ensuring that a whole chain of developmental and promotional activities would take place. These include creating and building brand names of Singapore designs; exposing its designs and designers in the international stage; setting up local and international design competitions and awards; hosting international design conferences; inviting design talents and international renowned design companies and individuals to station in Singapore; creating scholarships for overseas studies; upgrading its design institutions to international level; setting up research and development centers; funding local design firms and projects; showcasing its design products in public areas; instilling in its people an awareness of and helping them to appreciate design as an integral part of their daily life and so forth.   The ultimate aim of the Design Singapore Council is to help Singapore become Asia's leader in design industry as well as establishing her as the global design hub.

2. 3 Hong Kong

Unlike DesignSingapore which takes a holistic approach to promoting design initiatives in the Singaporean society, what we have put forward in Section 1 under the term "Hong Kong Design Initiatives" was never introduced by the Hong Kong government as 'a set'

of officially formulated or publicly recognized, design initiatives or strategies or policies, whatever one comes to call them. Despite the fact that developing design as a creative industry has been stated time and again in the Policy Addresses by the former as well as present Chief Executives (CE) and that a number of design-related establishments have been set up, neither Tung Chee Hwa, nor Donald Tsang, has explicitly expressed the need for setting up a ministerial or civil-led unit to formulate a comprehensive policies and strategies to oversee the development of the creative industries, within which design is a category.

Although the Steering Group on the Promotion of Innovation and Design was formed in 2002, to examine policy issues and coordinate the various elements of the government's policy program and resources, and besides, the Baseline Study on Hong Kong's Creative Industries was released in 2003 by the think tank Central Policy Unit (CPU), HK still lacks concrete and systemic policies with clear rationale and objectives for the design industry. What happened is that a series of design establishments and schemes have shot up in different forms and contexts. These include the Hong Kong Design Centre, DesignSmart Initiative (comprises the Design Support Program and the InnoCentre), and five Research and Development Centres, etc. Moreover a number of government departments, government advisory bodies as well as quasi-government organizations have been involved in the establishment and operations of these institutions and programs. For example the Steering Group on the Promotion of Innovation and Design the Commerce; Industry and Technology Bureau, under which is the Innovation and Technology Commission, and under the ambit of which are the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Productivity Council; the Hong Kong Federation of Design Associations, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the City University of Hong Kong, etc. They each exist with its own purpose and agenda, but also overlap in certain areas in terms of their focuses and activities. At present they form the backbones and steering forces on which Hong Kong design industries depend. They provide opportunities for the small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to showcase their products, and a fundamental environment with moderate nourishment for them to bloom.

In spite of the report of the Commission on Innovation and Technology in 1998 which recommended that Hong Kong develop itself as a world class design and fashion centre, there has been insufficient significant effort of the government to move towards this direction. Apart from setting up the Design Centre and the DesignSmart Initiative, the most recent government input would be the allocation of "$100 million over five years for the Hong Kong Design Centre to further assist our trades and industries to make full use of their designs and build their brand names." (Policy Address, 2006). So far the

proposals or actions being put forward in the past only indicated the government's desire for Hong Kong to become a design hub but not the measures on 'how' to materialize that desire. In our view, it would take a comprehensive policy to get Hong Kong there.

2.4 Comments/Observations

Both Hong Kong and Singapore claim themselves to be the leading regional design hub, a melting pot of east and west cultures and aspire to be one of the best in design leadership in Asia and the world. When we compare what has been going on in Hong Kong with that of Singapore, one will have the impression that Hong Kong's design policies are relatively weak in terms of scale and emphasis. This is a result of the major difference between the two places - the discrepancy between a tightly structured centralized national collaborative approach in Singapore, and a "non-linear" and "piecemeal" approach in Hong Kong with some design initiatives funded by the government but not organized under a long-term plan made after in-depth analysis, which comprises vision, well-studied recommendations and feasible strategies.

With a more structured approach, and operating under the strong leadership of the government, it is obviously much easier for Singapore to brand her designs collectively with a national identity on the international stage. Nationwide interests is to supersede those of the individuals', and strategies such as cultivating a design culture across the country can be more effectively administered when packaged as a national policy. Internally, the distribution of resources and the division of labour can be equally efficient, avoiding unnecessary waste and overlapping. The shortcomings, of course, are that there may be more constraints and restrictions, bureaucratic and hierarchical issues, and infringement of individual rights, interests, needs and aspirations, which are typical of top-down administrations or firm leadership. Nevertheless, it should be noted that even with an "open system" like that of Hong Kong, constraints and restrictions, bureaucracy and hierarchy are also unavoidable.

In the Hong Kong model, most of the design related establishments and initiatives are run independently and not guided by a central policy, this situation has the advantage of providing ample freedom and flexibility for change and manoeuvre, which contributes to encouraging openness and creating a more dynamic environment for the design industry to grow. However, without a holistic plan, it is difficult for local entrepreneurs, particularly SMEs to stand out in the global market, where many governments like the UK and Singapore have formulated policies to help their creative/design industries to advance and gain international status. Research released by Design Council, UK, in 2005 revealed that companies which invested in design performed up to three times better than the FTSE 100 Index. It demonstrates that design can support and contribute to the growth

of an economy (Upstream Asia, 2006). Therefore more government involvement is not going to benefit the industry alone but the economy as a whole.

It is especially so with regard to the research and development of new products, which are deemed vital when Hong Kong's design industry is moving from the Original Engineering Manufacturing (OEM) mode to the Original Brand Management (OBM) mode. The business sector, including the design industry, of Hong Kong has long been criticized for its shortsightedness when it comes to investing for sustainable growth. Advancement of the industry will be gloomy if the motivation for investing in long-term research and product innovations pioneered by SMEs and design professionals is lacking. More government support, in addition to the provision of sufficient funding, is therefore essential. Without a structured design policy/initiative, the design industry will face great difficulties to continue to thrive in the world; also Hong Kong's design profession will lack the vision or missions to go along with in the years to come, particularly when great competition is coming from the mainland, Singapore and Korea, etc. This will likely impede growth and deter newcomers. As was mentioned in 'Thinking Outside the Box – Hong Kong's Creative Industries', "…..having a single Government agency to centralize policy formulation and implementation can guide creative industries more effectively." (Hongkong Industrialist, June 2006, p.21).

We have discussed in the above section the major differences between Hong Kong and Singapore in terms of government involvement in the promotion and implementation of design initiatives. Our intention is that by comparing the efforts they made, we will gain a better understanding of Hong Kong's inadequacies and what she needs to do to increase competitiveness in the cutting edge of design business worldwide. Nowadays design as manufactured product has evolved into design as intellectual property and cultural capital, its development is becoming increasingly dependent on people resource. We believe that for the design industry to prosper and advance and for Hong Kong to become a regional and international design hub, the nurturing of design talent is of fundamental importance. Thus, this will be our main focus in the sections that follow.

3. Enhancing the design industries in Hong Kong through nurturing design talents

3.1 Introduction

As was stated at the beginning, we believe that for design and creativity to flourish, education of the young is most essential in addition to the education of the public at large and continued professional development of people in the trade. In the following, we will try to look at what is happening in design education at present and also what needs to be done to improve the situation.

3.2 The present situation

In Hong Kong two major tertiary institutions are offering design courses: The School of Design (SD) at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and the Institute of Vocational Education (IVE), established by the Vocational Training Council (VTC). SD offers 4 major streams of study: visual communication, advertising, industrial & product design, and environmental & interior design. IVE consists of 5 design departments, offer courses spanning across visual communication, product, interior, fashion & textiles, image, printing and digital media. The majority of the applicants and entrants of these two institutions are fresh secondary school leavers, who have inherited the 'legacy' of local primary and pre-school education. It is therefore worthwhile and necessary to look into these groundwork providers first to see how the prospective designers in Hong Kong are fed and moulded in their fundamental years.

3.3 Secondary education

3.3.1 Creativity hampered by lack of experience and exposure

In our earlier study on DesignSingapore, we questioned whether Singapore is a place that breeds creativity.   Perhaps it would be fair to draw comments from people of Singapore. According to Singapore writer Kwok Kian-Woon (Kwok, 2001, p.25), Singaporeans "are not a people given to self-reflection: hence the sterility of our (their) public intellectual life". Kwok also refers to the 2000 National Day Rally speech by the former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong in which Singaporeans were urged "to innovate, not merely imitate…. We (They) need a mindset change to succeed in the new Economy." (ibid, p.23). What has gone on in the design field in Singapore since 2000 proves that what Kwok and the former PM have taken note of have not been left unattended. Unfortunately, Kwok's and Goh's comments five or six years back can still be applied to the situation in Hong Kong today.   In the 2006/June issue of the <u>Hongkong Industrialist</u> (p.17), it is reported that many industrialists have questioned the quality of locally trained designers. As Hui Chung-wing, chairman of the A-Fontane Group Ltd., said, ***"It is***

difficult to find qualified designers locally, as most designers are not up to standard due to their lack of experience and exposure." (ibid, p.17)

Likewise at the 'Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum' hosted by the Central Policy Unit in 2003, one of the penal members, Victor Lo, Chairman & Chief Executive of God Peak Industries (Holdings) Limited, commented that "If we look at our high school and primary school education, there is very, very limited exposure to any form of creativity.   Even in our high schools our students do not get to be exposed to design or architecture.…. Public awareness, public education is quite weak." (Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum, 2003).

The remarks made by a lecturer from the Hong Kong Institute of Education attending the same forum further supported the comment, "… now in Hong Kong when people teach art and design in secondary school, they just only talk about art. Design and technology, they only talk about technology… For people teaching in primary education, art and craft, they only focus on (art and) craft." (ibid).

What our primary and secondary classrooms fail to provide our students with is 'experience and exposure'. They are important stimulants of innovation and creativity, without which it would be difficult for students to develop their capacity for imagination, originality and creativity, let alone quality. The effect is often detrimental when students take up design at the tertiary level. Raymond Au, Associate Professor of the Institute of Clothing and Textile, PolyU, compares his fashion design students to a piece of white paper, an analogy to suggest that they enroll without any foundation knowledge in art and design. He adds that if these students join the industrial sector immediately upon graduation, chances for them to excel are quite slim (Ming Pao Daily News, 16.2.2004, p.E8). It implies that a 3-year tertiary course is not enough to remedy the lack of experience and exposure during their primary and secondary school years. R. Li, the co-writer of this paper, who has been teaching in the School of Design, PolyU, for more than 15 years, shares similar observations. She was literally shocked, when she learnt that some of her students have never visited any museums in Hong Kong in their entire primary and secondary school years. Inadequate cultivation in arts and culture could be one of the factors affecting their capacity to become quality designers when they grow up.

In the same issue of the HK Industrialist , Professor Lorraine Justice, Director of SD, PolyU, makes the following remark about our students, "It takes Hong Kong students more time to learn how to 'break rules' to think differently enough to come up with new ideas.". "This is due in part to traditional education where the focus on memorization and passing examinations discourages students from questioning and go beyond the

conventional." (2006/June, Hongkong Industrialist, p.16); "…talent can only be nurtured if industry and Government take design and creativity seriously and is given the chance to grow." (ibid, p.17). Professor Justice's comments points to another weakness of Hong Kong's education system – the emphasis on memorizing and examinations may hamper the breeding of creativity.

3.3.2 Recommendations

3.3.2.1 Introduction

If our government and industrialists believe that Hong Kong can excel in design and have the vision for Hong Kong to become a regional design hub, they should be aware that the quality of our design graduates is of crucial importance, which heavily depends on the fundamental education they receive. Yanta Lam, Professor of SD, PolyU, also attending the 'Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum', *advocates a long-term education policy* to enhance creativity. "I think it is important that perhaps we do not expect just a year or two or five years or so, rather it has to take several decades starting from our very young Hong Kong citizens who are now perhaps in kindergartens. I am talking about *pre-school education*, for example, if it is going to be a long-term policy." (Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum, 2003). Another member attending the forum echoed, "… (It) is not just the high(er) education('s) responsibility but it is also how we can bring what we thought at the high(er) education to the secondary and the primary education." (ibid). Indeed, we need to work on the entire education system seriously, from kindergarten all the way through to tertiary level.

While government policies could help to boost the development of novelty and creativity among the young generations, educators should not wait for the government to act first since it will take a long time for any policy to materialize. Take the 2006 Industrial Design Excellence Awards (IDEAs) as an example, the percentage of gold winners with design teams from Asia increased from 7.9% in 2005 to 25.9% last year. According to the Industrial Designers Society of America, "The strong showing by Asia reflects a tremendous investment in design….. Today, Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, and Hong Kong companies and their governments are committing huge resources to design in order to build global brands." (BusinessWeek, June 29, 2006). We can see that competition is keen even in Asia alone. Hong Kong cannot possibly wait until the government comes up with a comprehensive initiative, not to mention practical action plans, like that of Singapore's. If local educators believe that Hong Kong can provide better education for the new generation, then time should not be wasted. There are indeed new alternative schools that are established with a more 'revolutionary' approach to education:

3.3.2.2 Lam Tai Fai Secondary School

Opened in 2004, the school targets to nurture young talents in fashion design alongside a standard grammar school curriculum. It works in close collaboration with the design industries and the Institute of Textile and Clothing (ITC) at PolyU, which is currently the only degree awarding institution in fashion design in Hong Kong. This provides a good chance for young talents to be incubated and identified early in their junior years.

Upon the school's establishment, Andrew Leung, say Honorary President of the Federation of Hong Kong Industries (FHKI) stresses that Hong Kong has all the potential to become an international fashion design hub, but it will take time to nurture people, as 'Rome was not built in one day' (Ming Pao, 16.2.2004, p.E8). He states that close collaboration between the education and business sectors is essential, and believes that "if Hong Kong is able to gear its energy towards building our own brands and training our own professional designers, *in ten to twenty years' time*, Hong Kong will be a fashion design centre." (Ming Pao, ibid). Ten or twenty years may sound too long for the industrialists. They may worry about Hong Kong losing out to Korea, Singapore, or even the Pearl River Delta, which is up and coming in many ways and developing in pace with the mainland's golden era. But if we can learn from Singapore's experience, and recognize that we need to change the way education is carried out in Hong Kong, so as to stimulate more creative and broad-thinking minds, ten to twenty years are what we need, and it would be time well invested for a better future of Hong Kong.

3.3.2.3 HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity (HKSC)

Another example of a more innovative school is HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity (HKSC). The school name itself is very promising as it explicitly focuses on building up creativity. The school is sponsored by the Hong Kong Institute of Contemporary Culture (HKICC), which has the widest network of local and overseas experts, policy makers, and active practitioners coming from the cultural, academic, business, professional and industrial fields. The school is set up with the vision and mission to provide an all round education with emphasis on creativity, imagination, expressiveness, vision and culture. The school curriculum aims at building knowledge, and strengthening students' abilities in thinking and critical thinking. These qualities serve not only the needs of a society that strives for success in the creative industries, but more importantly, they will help to instill the belief that there is "a ladder leading to the constitution of a creative civil society" (Prospectus of HKSC, 2006, p.2).

Education enthusiasts welcome the set up of HKSC. It is hoped that it would serve as an exemplar for others to follow. We think that schools that share a similar vision may start

at a modest level, such as increasing their students' exposure to creativity and experience in cultural activities within the formal curriculum; or when resources permit, go for an overhaul of their school curriculum. Without doubt, Hong Kong will benefit a lot from more alternative schools like those cited above.

3.3.2.4 Education reform

Although a government policy to enhance the nurturing of design talent is not yet available, there have been reforms in the education system for the primary to the senior secondary levels in the last decade. They aim at promoting personal expression, self-reflection, creativity and critical thinking in separation our students. The reforms encourage and support flexibility in the school curriculum to do away with compartmentalizing in timetabling, to allow for cross disciplinary and inter-disciplinary modes of learning and teaching, to provide for learning experience beyond school confinement, and so on. The rationale of the reforms is to recognize the potential of all students and give each one an opportunity to develop and succeed. Nevertheless, as we look upon more educators to pioneer changes in their schools and strive towards the same direction, we notice that paradoxically, one big obstacle of realizing changes in the curriculum actually lies with the educators themselves.

3.3.2.5 Protest of frontline educators

R. Li, a co-writer of this paper, in her capacity as a member of the Curriculum Development Council-Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Committee on Visual Arts (Senior Secondary), a committee specially set up to work on the new three-year senior secondary (NSS) curriculum for the visual arts (VA) subject, has the following experience to share. Li has attended three rounds of consultative seminars regarding the NSS VA subject between 2004 and 2006. Head art teachers from most of the secondary schools that offer the subject attended the seminars. They were presented with the new curriculum which includes the following major changes: to introduce critical art appreciation; to cut down on the element of art production; and for better alignment with the curriculum, to introduce a written requirement in the public assessment of visual arts starting in 2012. Unexpectedly, many of the teachers were overwhelmingly negative to these changes; many were furious and protested against the changes. Li was sad to know that one reason behind their reaction was they claim that many visual arts students taking the School Certificate Examination are incapable of writing or thinking, and so it would be extremely difficult for them to meet the new requirements.

As Victor Lo has commented about the limited exposure of local art and design students,

if "Even in our high schools our students do not get to be exposed to design or architecture, etc.", "how will our universities attract the best and the brightest to get into these creative industries?" (Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum, 2003). The response of the frontline art teachers get us worried about the chance that our schools will be able to breed quality designers. Curriculum changes and financial support from the government are the hardware; but changes in the mindset and attitude of the stakeholders are the software that needs to be developed simultaneously.

3.3.3 Conclusion

Revolution may be too strong a word to describe what needs to be done in the school sector, but fortunately things have started to change in the way that we would like to see them. Equally so, we are seeing new ways of thinking and experiments in the society proposing alternative modes of education to cultivate creativity and to provide better design education for our younger generation. ***These are good signs, but the best thing we hope for is an overall policy, a policy which is in line with the education reforms in the school system to ensure that creativity is nurtured right from the beginning years of education, a policy which supports and enhances the local creative industries and beyond.*** In the following we will turn to design education at the tertiary level.

3.4 Design education at the tertiary level

3.4.1 Introduction

Hong Kong's manufacturing industries and design have slowly evolved from being labour intensive to a discipline involving technology and management.   With the development of a globalized economy, the production of "cosmetic designs" has gradually been replaced by a new generation of designs and products that cater for the needs, tastes and life-styles of the consumers. This change represents a move from Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) to Original Design Manufacturing (ODM), to Own Brand Management (OBM), and to Original Strategy Management (OSM) (Heskett, 2003).

Design education is always closely related with the business and industrial sectors. If there are changes in the concept of design among the industry, there is naturally the need for design education to move from a technical orientation to a technological, conceptual, communicative, managerial, and contextual orientation. Unfortunately, the changes in Hong Kong's design education have been modest, and in certain areas inadequate and limited, according to those in business and industry who are anxious to apply design at the OBM and OSM levels. They trust that moving towards the new directions will help Hong Kong to sustain and advance its competitiveness. They see an urgent need for

Hong Kong not only to reform but also to expand design education rigorously at the tertiary level. Victor Lo, a council member of PolyU and a member of the Hong Kong Design Institute Advisory Board, is much concerned about the limited scale of design education in Hong Kong. He expressed at the 2003 Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum, "… for Hong Kong to try to become a major design hub, we believe that the present scale and depth and breadth are probably insufficient… If we go to Korea and visit a major company like Samsung or LG, their design department has probably 200 to 300 people, and 30, 40, 50 per cent of those designers have a Master degree, so does our education system meet these demands in the future?" (Creative Industry, Creative Hong Kong Forum, 2003).

Ma Fung Kwok (馬逢國), another panellist at the Forum, agrees that in terms of supporting the growth of creative industries, **Hong Kong's tertiary design education is ten years behind where it should be**. Though alarming, these comments are very valid. If we only try to compare with our competitors the number of design graduates we produce, we are lagging behind at least ten years. Currently, SD PolyU produces approximately 110 BA (Hons) degree graduates and 40 Master degree graduates annually. The total is insufficient for even one big company by Korean standard, let alone the entire business sector in Hong Kong. It seems unrealistic that Hong Kong will become a design hub if the education sector is unable to support the necessary human resource. Next, we shall outline Hong Kong's tertiary design education and examine its development over the past few years.

3.4.2 School of Design, PolyU

As mentioned in Section 2, the School of Design, PolyU and IVE are the two major tertiary institutions that offer design courses. The former has undergone drastic changes to reposition itself to face the challenges of the new millennium and the rapid development in the PRD. In April 2002, a Design Task Force was set up at PolyU by the President, Prof. Poon Chung-kwong, with membership comprising local and overseas experts from the academic, business and industry sectors of design. With the Task Force at work, the School has reset its vision and mission, and regenerated its curriculum and programmes to be in line with the current and projected demands of the industries, taking into consideration emerging economic opportunities in the PRD.

The Task Force recommends that as Hong Kong economy is evolving from OEM to OSM, "at undergraduate level, an education balancing basic techniques, conceptual and communication skills, specialization to ensure employability, and understanding of design in its business context, is desirable." (Heskett, 2003, p.10-12). It is suggested that the courses of SD should include technological and managerial training, and design

should be understood as a management and professional business, and an investment activity; and that SD should expand its post-graduate courses and research capacities. Since September 2005, new programmes and curriculum have been introduced in SD. However it is too early to assess the effectiveness of this strategic and structural overhaul.

A Strategic Review Report on design education and (design) practice titled: *'Shaping the Future: Design for Hong Kong'* was published by the Task Force in July 2003 and submitted to the government for consideration. The report recommends the formulation of a design policy for the education sector, *"It would be advantageous if Government initiatives in design in various sectors were coordinated as part of an overall Hong Kong government design policy to give the School of Design and other organizations a framework of their future role and development."* (Heskett, 2003, p.77). But so far, according to the School of Design, the government has not given any formal feedback.

3.4.3 Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI)

Currently a major development of IVE is to merge the five existing design departments scattered in three campuses to form the Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI). HKDI will have its first intake of students in the summer of 2007, and the new campus is due to open in 2010 in Tsueng Kwan O. Setting up HKDI implies not only academic and administrative autonomy, but also a big step forward in the development of design education in Hong Kong. It reflects that the government and the Vocational Training Council (VTC) recognize the significant role of design in local and global economy, in particular its contribution to the creative industries. As Andrew Leung, Chairman of HKDI stated, "… with a mission to provide world-class foundation education in design, the HKDI forms an active support to the growth of the creative industries in Hong Kong and globally." (Prospectus, HKDI, 2006).

HKDI and PolyU will be responsible for providing design education at tertiary levels, with the former offering diploma and higher diploma courses, and the latter offering mainly under- and post-graduate studies. It is envisioned that with the support of the VTC and the industry and business sectors, HKDI will have the potential of developing into a degree awarding institution in the long run. Eventually this will help to increase the number of graduate designers for Hong Kong. However, as we have illustrated in the previous section, keen competitors in the region like PRD, Taiwan, Korea, Japan and Singapore have been making great progress in recent years. *Consequently, unless the number of local graduates in design is able to multiply within a very short time, Hong Kong will always be ten years or more behind. To cope with the pressing situation, Hong Kong needs changes of such a scale that only a government, or civil-led policy*

will be able to fulfil.

3.4.4 Recommendations - Strengthening cultural element in the design curriculum

3.4.4.1 Introduction

While we await such a policy, we acknowledge that with all the positive changes taking place in design education, Hong Kong is moving on the right track, though slowly, towards becoming a regional design hub. However, we notice that over- concern of and influence on the design curriculum by the business and industrial sectors may be a pitfall. For example only three out of the fifteen members of the Design Task Force were from SD, PolyU. Active involvement of the business sector will inevitably come up with a curriculum that emphasizes vocational and technical aspects in order to cater for the needs of the industry and business world. For example, the importance of business collaboration, and the technological and managerial orientation in the revised programmes of the School of Design, and the emphasis of HKDI on "providing students with the knowledge and skills required by traditional industries to develop into OBM" (Prospectus, HKDI, 2006) all cause to overstress the business nature of design while undermining a crucial element in design education - the study of culture. ***Not once has the word 'culture' appeared in the 28-page HKDI prospectus. Similarly the reference to culture has been minimal throughout the 80-page Review Report of the PolyU Design Task Force.***

As mentioned in our earlier report on the SingaporeDesign Initiative, we think that a sound development in design could not be isolated from the place's own root or culture. It will be difficult for a designer who lacks profound understanding and appreciation of one's culture to create works that carries identity and style; besides it is important that one's perception of his/her heritage is developed in the broad socio-cultural context, beyond mere economic perspectives. We pointed out in our previous report that the impossible success of Ikea and Vivienne Westwood has a lot to do with the respect, understanding, and conception they have of their culture. We also quoted the local lifestyle shop G.O.D. as an example to indicate how Hong Kong culture and heritage could be blended, applied, and branded in products and reflect a local identity while achieving business success.

According to the findings of the 'Style Alert' survey, sponsored by the South China Morning Post and Harper's Bazaar, Hong Kong is "fashion-rich but ***impoverished in terms of culture***" and "***A lacking sense of culture*** and history, a dormant arts scene and a poor environment are stopping the city from taking its place among the world's most stylish metropolises." The organization which carried out the survey remarked that *"Style*

*is not just about people being trendy; it is the depth and intellectual qualities of a city, including its arts, history, heritage and **culture**"*. It was found that these factors are a big concern for people and they believe they are holding the city back. (South China Morning Post, 19.1.2007, p.C5). The result of the survey is stunningly revealing. A design education that lacks cultural perspectives will likely impede Hong Kong's desire to become a major design centre in the region. In addition, culture is an important element if Hong Kong is to develop creative industries, and the element should feature prominently in design education. We will suggest below some of the ways to resolve the problem.

3.4.4.2 Short-term strategy

Both the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the University of Hong Kong (HKU) have their Fine Art Department. The former has a long tradition in integrating fine art with humanities and cultural studies, while the latter is well known for its critical and contextual studies in art history and cultural heritage. As a short-term strategy, we suggest that cultural subjects of these departments be offered as *compulsory or core* credit-bearing subjects to students of the School of Design, PolyU. Simultaneously, the Fine Art undergrads of both universities would be given the opportunities to take design subjects at PolyU as *compulsory or core* modules. In this way, both cultural and design awareness could be enhanced among the students concerned.

3.4.4.3 Medium-term strategy

In the medium-term, the practice of crossing over institutions for subjects could be extended to other tertiary institutions like the Lingnan University, Baptist University, City University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Institute of Education which offer visual arts, digital and media arts, and art and design education courses. This would allow a more balanced curriculum with respect to design and culture as well as more exposure and experience in related areas for design students. In parallel, more university students will be cultivated with an awareness of design. Hopefully, the new graduates will have developed an interest in and an aptitude to appreciate design. Furthermore, the practice of cross-campus credit-based learning may also open the door to possible accreditations of combined degrees in design and culture.

3.4.4.4 Long-term strategy

In the long run, Hong Kong should establish a specialized visual arts school which operates in close collaboration with the academic, industry, business, civil and community sectors. The school will offer opportunities for the young and the talented who aspire to become designers and visual artists to receive a holistic education in art

and design, that comprises the nourishment in culture and humanities, alongside all the OBM and OSM technical, technological, managerial, communicative and conceptual skills required of them for a career in design. In other words, we propose a synchronized strategic policy for design and culture to grow together. However, as we have stressed repeatedly, any policy making has to begin with the government.

3.4.5 Conclusion

In the course of our discussion, we have briefly traced new developments in design education at the school and tertiary levels, and we have put forward proposals and arguments for a long-term policy for the enhancement of creativity among our people. ***We are sorely aware of the fact that even with a 10-year plan in place, by the end of the 10 yrs, we may only be at the edge in terms of competitiveness, but without any plan, we may not be even remain in the arena.***

Mike Nuttal, one of the founders of IDEO, an internationally renowned design consultancy famous for its techniques in innovative design remarked that it has taken the United States 40-50 years, Japan 30 years, Korea and Taiwan 15 years to develop design in their countries. (林心如，2004，p.49). It shows that late comers can always build on and benefit from accumulated knowledge of their predecessors, and with the help of globalization and the rapid advancement of high and information technology, it is predictable that it will take even shorter time, say 10 years or less, for the Pearl River Delta and other major cities in the mainland, and also Singapore, to become leading centres of design. Singapore has complied and put into force its Design Initiative since 2003, and progress has been obvious. This should leave much food for thought for the Hong Kong government and policy makers to ponder, especially if we agree with Andrew Leung that it will take Hong Kong 10-20 years to develop design professionals.

Formulating a policy comprising short-term, medium-term, and long-term planning is of acute urgency if Hong Kong is to have any chance to succeed in its creative industries. The plan needs to look into not only ways of nurturing design talents, but also cultivating an awareness of design in the community at large and enhancing the design professionals in Hong Kong. We would like to end Section 3 – Part II with a remark by Anthea Fan, editor-in-chief of *ampost,* when she talked about the Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre Project in Shek Kip Mei Factory Estate, "In Hong Kong the talk about hardware always precedes software, the big dream of West Kowloon and creative industries will not be able to realize without a capable policymaker who has a (long-term) vision" (ampost, January 2007, p.29).   How much longer do we have to wait for the government to respond? And how much longer can Hong Kong afford to wait?

4. Conclusion

Before working on this paper, we have conducted a presentation on the DesignSingapore Initiative. Initially we were skeptical about the effect of a top-down national design policy which aims to bring Singapore design to the world stage. We were cynical about Singaporeans' capacity for creativity and doubtful whether the Design Initiative would be able to achieve its goals and visions. We thought that by comparing Singapore's with Hong Kong's design initiatives, we would come to see the strengths and weaknesses of our own policies.

However, in the course of gathering materials for Hong Kong's design initiative, we realized that there is nothing like a formal, government policy on design per se. Consequently, we ended up comparing with Singapore what we could barely gathered as attempts of our government to help boost the design industry as a segment of the creative industries. These included the Design Centre, DesignSmart Initiative, InnoCentre and so forth. Most of which were established only within the past five years in an extremely piecemeal approach.

When we look into the Hong Kong's situation, we come to realize that in order to excel in design, it is vital to have ground work starting from fundamental education. Consequently we concentrate our study on our school system; from pre-school to tertiary levels as far as design education is concerned. We found that the major problems with Hong Kong's design graduates are the lack of experience and exposure, which is a result of inadequate support from the government and the education sector in nurturing creativity and design talent.

We therefore propose that the government urgently formulate an overall design policy, one which starts from developing creativity and nurturing design talent across all levels of schooling; which ensures the study of culture and heritage as an integral part of any design curriculum; and which encompasses short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies to be implemented by phase. We are fully aware that school education alone is not sufficient to bring Hong Kong to the regional and international design arena. Apart from nurturing design talents, the policy needs to include a commitment in cultivating an awareness of design in the community at large, as well as enhancing the development of design professionals. Nevertheless, within the length and scope of this paper, we have chosen to focus on a more thorough and in-depth study of our education provisions. We have but to look upon the government to arrive at well-studied and applicable initiatives and detailed strategies for consideration by different sectors of the society when one day a design policy finally comes up for Hong Kong.

Although we think that Hong Kong is at the risk of falling behind some of his counterparts, Hong Kong still has advantage over its competitors in many aspects. Similarly, we believe that there is a lot we can learn from Singapore, especially with regards to formulating a holistic design policy. In the case of Hong Kong, it would be best for the policy to be government initiated, but not necessarily fully government directed. It could also form the basis for the development of the creative industries in Hong Kong.

To look on the brighter side, Hong Kong still possesses many qualities that are essential for success in business and industry. For instance, for the 13th consecutive year, Hong Kong has topped the world's freest economies and beat Singapore which claimed second in the 2007 Index of Economic Freedom released by the Heritage Foundations (the Standard, 17.1.2007, p.A5). Another example is that because Hong Kong companies are taxed one of the lowest in the world, Singapore is prompted "to lower its existing corporate tax rate (in the coming fiscal year starting April) of 20 per cent by at least one percentage point to stay competitive" (South China Morning Post, 22.1.2007, p.B4). Moreover, a survey conducted in Singapore by Spire Research and Consulting in 2005 showed that while Singapore's local design professionals and experts rated Singapore's design hub status as fair, most cited Japan and Hong Kong as better locations for engaging in design work (DesignNews, 23.12.2005). Like many other trades and industries in Hong Kong that have been highly successful, our design industry should also benefit from the city's free economy, low corporate tax rate, and the freedom and flexibility for engaging in creative works. What we need to do is to strengthen our design education, and strive hard to bring our designers on a par with those in the global market if Hong Kong is to succeed as one of the world's top cities in design.

Last but not least, it has never occurred to us that we would end up discovering that Hong Kong does not even have a design initiative, when to start with we were challenging and questioning the feasibility and prospect of Singapore's design policy.

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"DESIGN SINGAPORE" INITIATIVE
SUMMARY TABLE OF PRELIMINARY STRATEGIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Outcomes:

- A Leading Centre for Contemporary Design in Asia
- A Distinctive Singapore Design and Brand Identity
- A Competitive Advantage for Businesses
- A Pervasive Design Culture

Strategy 1: Integrate Design in Enterprise

Catalyse the Integration of Design in Enterprise	• Identify and Develop iconic Singapore products and services in select industries where we have existing strengths to jumpstart design innovation in business • Public Sector to lead by example in the use of effective design (in the design of public buildings, amenities, services) so as to nurture local design expertise and demand
Resources to Promote the Integration of Design in Enterprise	• Develop regular case studies, statistical analysis, global benchmarks, and surveys as key resources to promote the significance and use of design excellence to businesses, esp. SMEs • Review existing assistance schemes for businesses (e.g. SEEDS, Research Incentive Scheme, TAP) to facilitate and encourage the use of design by businesses

Strategy 2: Develop a Vibrant & Professional Design Community

Build Expert Capabilities	• Establish Flagship School of Art, Media & Design with a regional and international outlook and close industry involvement at NUS-X, to provide degree courses & a professional development programme in fine arts, multimedia & design in collaboration with leading international design institutions • Review design education at schools, polytechnics and specialised art schools with a view to enhancing the resources, raising the standard and developing areas of specialisation for the industry • Establish design testbeds and research facilities to encouraging multidisciplinary research with industry, professionals and students (e.g. Media Lab Singapore)

Enhance Professional Standing and Development	• Develop quality standards to assess and validate the design profession and enable self-regulation by the design industries • Develop new or existing design award to a prestigious annual national award to recognise design excellence in Singapore • Develop continual professional development programme, in collaboration with IHLs

Strategy 3: Position Singapore as a Design Hub

National Champion for Design	• Establish the Singapore Design Council with the highest possible representation from the public sector, industry, design community and educational institutions, and an international advisory panel – to be the champion for design nationally and galvanise the design promotion efforts in the areas of enterprise, expertise and education; and to be the national design champion in the international arena and network
Inward Investment Promotion	• Anchor international design companies in Singapore, and in particular, the design HQ functions of leading MNCs – to build up the design industry and Singapore's reputation as a design hub • Nurture local design industry • Host international design events and awards in Singapore
Outward Promotion & Internationalisation	• Showcase Singapore designs and concepts at international platforms, such as world expos and fairs • Promote Singapore designs, products and services in trade missions, exhibitions • Synergise promotion of Singapore design, products & services with a national marketing and branding strategy to present a consistent and compelling story of the Singapore brand

Strategy 4: Foster a Design Culture and Awareness

Embed Design in Education	• Embed design concepts and use design as a creative thinking tool in the teaching of subjects such as business, engineering, art
Bring Design Everywhere	• Community Level: regular design exhibitions at museums and public spaces (libraries, malls etc) • Specific Groups: organise workshops and exhibitions for targeted groups and issues, such as "Design in Education week" • National Level: designate a "Design Singapore" Year to synergise with the national marketing and branding strategy
Design in Media	• Raise the profile the design profession/industry and effective designs at regular media platforms: newspapers, magazines, television programmes • Cultivate specific journalists or media on design