

Chapter 5

Culture, Sports and Tourism

Hong Kong offers a wide range of sports, cultural and recreational opportunities for its hard-working populace and visitors from overseas, ranging from international sports and arts events to community programmes. The tourism sector revived in 2023, with overall visitor arrivals to Hong Kong rising to 34 million. Overnight visitors accounted for half the travellers, a higher proportion than before the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau coordinates government policies on arts and culture, sports, recreation, creative industries and tourism. It is supported by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Create Hong Kong and Tourism Commission in implementing these policies.

The LCSD promotes Hong Kong's arts and culture, enhances its physical environment, and fosters cooperative interaction between sports, cultural and community organisations. The department also organises exhibitions, sporting events and cultural performances.

Arts and Culture Venues

The government provides the majority of arts and culture venues in Hong Kong. The LCSD manages 15 museums, 15 performing arts venues, two art spaces, two indoor stadia and 83 libraries.

West Kowloon Cultural District

The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is a strategic investment by the government, with a vision to create a world-class, vibrant and integrated arts and cultural hub. An upfront endowment of \$21.6 billion was granted to the WKCD Authority in 2008 to develop the district. Stretching across 40 hectares along Victoria Harbour, it is home to the Hong Kong Palace Museum, M+, the Xiqu Centre, Freespace and the Art Park. Other major facilities, including the Lyric Theatre Complex, are planned for completion in the next few years.

PMQ

PMQ occupies the site of the former Police Married Quarters in Central. It is a project that combines heritage conservation and provision of support to the creative industries.

The revitalised Grade 3 historical building includes spaces converted into creative studios, pop-up stores and working spaces, and creates a platform for up-and-coming design and creative entrepreneurs to interact and start their businesses. International and local design brands are welcome to rent the spaces to showcase or sell their products or services. World-renowned designers and artists are also invited to host exhibitions, lectures and sharing sessions on their creative experiences.

Hong Kong Cultural Centre

The Hong Kong Cultural Centre is the territory's premier performing arts facility. It has three main performance venues: a 1,971-seat concert hall, a 1,734-seat grand theatre and a 496-seat studio theatre.

Hong Kong City Hall

Hong Kong City Hall is the territory's first purpose-built major civic centre and a declared monument since 2022. Its main facilities include a 1,430-seat concert hall, a 463-seat theatre and an exhibition hall.

Indoor Stadia

The 12,500-seat Hong Kong Coliseum and the 3,500-seat Queen Elizabeth Stadium are the territory's premier multi-purpose indoor stadia. With flexible stage and seating configurations, the stadia host mega sports events, pop concerts, major celebrations and other activities.

Yau Ma Tei Theatre

Yau Ma Tei Theatre, the only surviving pre-war cinema building in the urban area, is dedicated to nurturing young talent for Cantonese opera. The theatre's Phase 2 is under construction to enhance its function as a professional performance venue.

Xiqu Centre

The Xiqu Centre, with a 1,075-seat theatre, is dedicated to preserve, promote and develop the art of Chinese traditional theatre, Cantonese opera and other forms of *xiqu*.

Freespace

Freespace provides a creative space for cutting-edge productions to promote new ways of seeing and experiencing and includes a 'black box' theatre accommodating 900 people standing or 450 seated.

Regional and District Civic Centres and Theatres

The LCSD runs 11 regional and district civic centres: the Sheung Wan and Sai Wan Ho civic centres on Hong Kong Island; Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre, and Ko Shan Theatre and its New Wing with priority venue hiring policy for Cantonese opera performances in Kowloon; and the Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan, Tuen Mun and North District town halls, Kwai Tsing and Yuen Long theatres and Tai Po Civic Centre in the New Territories.

Arts and Technology in Performing Arts Venues

To tie in with the development of arts technology, performance venues under the LCSD have gradually installed high-tech equipment including immersive audio systems and real-time stage tracking systems. Live streaming systems and high-resolution cameras are also used to broadcast live or recorded performances. The new East Kowloon Cultural Centre is designated as the flagship performance venue for arts technology and has an academy for arts technology to nurture talent for the industry.

Venue Partnership Scheme

This scheme fosters partnerships between the LCSD's performance venues and performing arts groups. It aims to enhance the image and character of individual venues and their partners. The venue partners organised 752 stage performances in conjunction with 751 educational, promotional and audience-building activities in 2023.

Arts and Culture Funding

Recurrent Funding

In 2022-23, the government earmarked more than \$5.9 billion, excluding capital works expenditure, for arts groups, education and promotion, and administration. About

\$399.6 million went into supporting nine major performing arts groups: the 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.

Cultural Exchange

The government sets aside \$50 million every year to strengthen collaboration with government authorities and cultural organisations of Mainland provinces and municipalities as well as overseas, and to support arts groups and artists to perform and stage exhibitions outside Hong Kong.

Local arts groups and artists resumed cultural exchange activities in the Mainland and overseas in 2023. With the support of Economic and Trade Offices in the Mainland and overseas cities, more than 30 programmes and exhibitions were held, spanning Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the United Kingdom and several Mainland cities.

Arts and Sport Development Fund

The arts portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund subsidises long-term arts and cultural development. The Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme seeks to develop the capacity of local artists and arts groups and to promote public-private partnership in local arts development in the form of springboard grants with matching elements and project grants. In 2023, it supported 15 new projects with a total of \$45.45 million. Around \$30 million is also earmarked annually to support projects initiated or recommended by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund

The Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund, set up in 2023, aims to attract and support international and large-scale arts and cultural events to take place in Hong Kong, with a view to developing the city into an arts and cultural metropolis, providing opportunities for the sector to flourish, as well as fostering Hong Kong's development as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. Including the projects approved under the Pilot Scheme, 10 projects were approved during the year.

Cantonese Opera Development Fund

The Cantonese Opera Development Fund supports the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese opera. In 2023, it granted about \$18.6 million to support relevant projects.

Lord Wilson Heritage Trust

The Lord Wilson Heritage Trust aims to preserve and conserve Hong Kong's human heritage by organising activities and funding community organisations and individuals to implement heritage-related projects. In 2023, it allocated \$2.11 million to support six projects.

Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund awards scholarships to candidates of outstanding calibre to pursue further studies or training in music or dance. Ten scholarships worth \$5.25 million were awarded in 2023.

Art Development Matching Grants Scheme

The Art Development Matching Grants Scheme seeks to widen funding sources for arts groups and encourage community support for arts and cultural development. It matches private donations and sponsorships raised by eligible arts groups and organisations by providing corresponding grants and \$1.7 billion has been injected since its launch.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme, established to engage the community in safeguarding Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage, allocated about \$100 million to 124 community-driven and partnership projects from 2019 to 2023.

Arts and Culture Organisations

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

The Hong Kong Arts Development Council operates grant schemes and plans, promotes, funds and supports the overall development of the arts. It is a beneficiary of the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme and implements its own matching fund scheme to help small and medium-sized arts organisations.

The council nurtures artists, curators, arts administrators and other arts professionals by providing opportunities for training, cultural exchange, internship and attachment locally and abroad.

With the additional funding of \$97.71 million in 2023, two new grant schemes – the Arts Talents Internship Matching Programme and Emerging Artists Development Grant – were launched in July to cultivate local arts talent. Among which, the Young Arts Tech Talents Residency Scheme was launched in October to support young arts tech talent to explore and experiment their projects.

The council's new premises at Landmark South, Wong Chuk Hang were officially opened in July, bringing together various facilities including the multi-purpose exhibition hall 'Showcase', Arts Information Centre, 28 arts studios and the council's permanent office.

To continue promoting the development of arts tech, the council hosted the second edition of Art-Tech Exhibition in October. The opening ceremony 'Fill in the Blanks' was held at Sino LuminArt Façade in Tsim Sha Tsui from October to November, reaching an audience of over 1 million.

The council's 'Arts in the City' project is a series of art walks, seeking to blend the uniqueness of Hong Kong's communities, culture, history, arts and tourism. Its first route, 'small valley Tai Hang', was launched in November.

Arts research and policy advocacy are part of the council's main tasks. Through an annual survey, it collects data on performing arts, visual arts, film and literary arts activities. Publications on the arts are produced yearly in collaboration with professional and academic groups.

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts offers professional education, training and research facilities in the performing arts: Chinese opera, dance, drama, film and TV, music, and theatre and entertainment arts. In the QS World University Rankings for Performing Arts 2023, the academy ranked first in Asia and 13th globally.

During the year, 902 students enrolled in undergraduate and post-secondary programmes in the six performing arts disciplines. Another 161 students were pursuing master's degree programmes in dance, drama, film and TV, music, and theatre and entertainment arts. The academy also admitted 769 students to its junior programmes and around 717 students to its Extension and Continuing Education for Life programme.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

The WKCD Authority initiated and co-presented arts and cultural programmes in the WKCD throughout the year to develop the capacity of the local arts and cultural sector, build audiences, engage the community and nurture young artists.

Hong Kong Arts Centre

The self-financing Hong Kong Arts Centre promotes contemporary arts and culture. It features the works of local and overseas artists, and provides facilities for performances, films and exhibitions. The centre's Hong Kong Art School runs higher diploma and degree courses on fine art, and offers short programmes on a wide variety of arts subjects.

Fringe Club

The Fringe Club is housed in what used to be a cold-storage warehouse built in 1890, now listed as a Grade 1 historical building and adapted for use as a contemporary arts space. It houses three theatres and holds regular exhibitions in different spaces throughout the building.

The club adopts an open-access policy to nurture budding artists and promote mature ones by providing venue and publicity support as well as opportunities for overseas tours. In 2023, 250 exhibitions, music and drama performances, talks and workshops were organised.

Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre

The Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre is an artist village and arts centre, located in a decommissioned factory in Shek Kip Mei. It nurtures creative talent and supports artists' development by letting studios to around 140 artists and cultural organisations, and providing exhibition and performance facilities, including the Central Courtyard, galleries and black box theatre, which featured more than 200 programmes and attracted over 200,000 visitors in 2022-23.

Major Performing Arts Groups

Chung Ying Theatre Company

The company is a professional theatrical arts group. In 2023, it staged *The Miracle of the Namiya General Store* for the third time.

City Contemporary Dance Company

The company is a professional contemporary dance group that nurtures creative dance talent in the context of contemporary China. In the 2023 dance season, it created a number of new works, including *Travel of Soul Time After Time* and *Echo in the Mirror* and *Stream of Dust*, organised the Jumping Frames – Hong Kong International Movement-image Festival, and presented the Hotpot East Asia Dance Platform, featuring dancers from Japan and Korea, at the City Contemporary Dance Festival.

Hong Kong Ballet

This is one of Asia's premier ballet companies. In 2023, it presented *Coco Chanel: the Life of a Fashion Icon*, *La Bayadere*, the International Arts Carnival's opening programme *Sam and Her Amazing Book of Dinosaurs*, *International Gala of Stars 2023*, a re-run of *The Great Gatsby* and *The Nutcracker*, and also conducted an overseas tour featuring a Hong Kong version of *Romeo and Juliet*. It won two awards at the Hong Kong Dance Awards 2023.

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra

The orchestra is the only professional, full-sized Chinese orchestra in Hong Kong. During the year, it performed, for the first time, on a cruise ship's helipad and the concert was broadcast online using 5G technology. This was a showcase of integrating tourism and arts and culture. The orchestra also gathered drum virtuosi from the Mainland, overseas and Hong Kong to perform at the 20th anniversary of the Hong Kong Drum Festival, the *One Beat, One World: Connecting through the Drum* carnival and accompanying 5G live concert.

Hong Kong Dance Company

The company promotes Chinese dance with Hong Kong characteristics. In 2023, it staged performances of *Twirl of the Heartstrings*, *The Kids in Rainbow Jerseys*, *A Dance of Celestial Rhythms* and *HerStory*. The company showcased *Chinese Dance x Martial Arts – Convergence* in Hong Kong and overseas, in which the featured excerpt *Whispers of the Pines* won the Contemporary Dance Award at the 13th China Dance Lotus Awards.

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

The orchestra is recognised as one of Asia's foremost classical orchestras. In celebration of its 50th season in 2023, the orchestra resumed its performances in the Mainland and overseas, showcasing its music to audiences beyond Hong Kong. The annual extravaganza *Swire Symphony Under the Stars* returned to Central Harbourfront and was live-streamed simultaneously.

Hong Kong Repertory Theatre

The company develops diverse theatrical productions of Chinese and western works, and produces local originals. The company presented 11 productions during the year, including *All*

Good Things, The Isle, Scapin in Jiānghú, Chap. 2023, Liu Rushi, my Dear, Moscow Express and *The Impossible Trial – a musical* (re-run). The company won 11 awards at the 31st Hong Kong Drama Awards, with *The Impossible Trial – a musical* gaining 10 accolades; *The Top Restaurant* winning three awards at the seventh Chinese Theatre Awards; and *Ambiguous*, winning Playwright of the Year at the Shanghai One Drama Awards.

Hong Kong Sinfonietta

The symphony orchestra is renowned for its innovative programming. It presented numerous concerts in 2023, including the Asian premiere of William Kentridge's *Oh, To Believe in Another World* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the German choir WDR Rundfunkchor Köln. During the year, the orchestra also toured Europe and the Mainland; and organised the second Hong Kong International Conducting Competition.

Zuni Icosahedron

Zuni Icosahedron is Hong Kong's leading experimental arts group. In 2023, Zuni's theatre season, titled 'Theatre is Gourd', presented Danny Yung's *The Birth of Tragedy*, Mathias Woo's *Death Duel*, *Hong Kong Ghost Comedy*, *The Magic Flute and the Five Elements: Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth*, and *13.67*. Zuni also toured *Read Sing Eileen Chang* twice in the Mainland.

Cultural Presentations

Performing Arts Programmes

The LCSD presented numerous visiting and local programmes in 2023 involving 780 performances with an attendance of 261,000, while 47 online episodes were produced and attracted more than 281,000 viewers. Highlights included New York Philharmonic concerts, China Broadcasting Chinese Orchestra performances, the Duo Recital by Yo-Yo Ma (Cello) and Kathryn Stott (Piano), Tan Dun WE-Festival, *Blossoms* (Part I) performed in Shanghai dialect, Chinese Opera Festival, Cantonese Opera Day, *City under the Moon: Dance Drama Tide of Era* by the China National Opera & Dance Drama Theater, *Hachioji Kuruma Ningyo* by the Koryu Nishikawa Troupe and *Passengers* by The 7 Fingers from Canada.

Specially curated programmes provide performance platforms for local and visiting artists and opportunities for cultural exchange. In 2023, these series of programmes included Our Music Talents, City Hall Virtuosi, The Power of Music, Encore, New Force in Motion, Dance On, Cheers!, New Energy and Solo Play.

Film Screenings

The LCSD organised 398 film screenings, online programmes and media arts programmes, attracting over 50,500 people and online viewers.

Arts Education and Audience-building Projects

The LCSD organised 14 major carnivals and 745 cultural programmes under the Community Arts Scheme, attracting over 1,221,000 participants and viewers. It also organised over 1,200 arts education and audience building activities in schools and public venues to encourage participation in cultural activities, including the Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme.

Greater Bay Area Cultural Exchange

The LCSD supported local arts groups and artists to organise live and online cultural exchange programmes in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) cities. Over 100 touring performances and activities of different arts forms covering Western and Chinese music, jazz, dance, theatre, Cantonese opera and family programmes were held and attracted an audience of more than 22,000 and 442,000 online viewers.

Major Arts and Culture Events

Art Basel and Art Central

Art Basel Hong Kong features over 150 prominent galleries from around the world every year. Art Central showcases avant-garde work by emerging artists from around 100 contemporary art galleries annually. In 2023, Art Basel Hong Kong and Art Central attracted around 86,000 and 40,000 visitors respectively.

Hong Kong Arts Festival

The 51st Hong Kong Arts Festival presented more than 40 programmes in 2023, including 111 performances by more than 1,700 international and local artists. The festival also organised around 300 outreach and education activities. The opening performance was the Ballet of Slovene National Theatre Maribor's *Radio and Juliet* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*, while the finale performance was staged by the Bamberg Symphony from Germany.

The fifth edition of the No Limits project, promoting inclusion through the arts, presented 11 live and online programmes between February and May by local and international artists with different abilities.

International Arts Carnival

The International Arts Carnival brought family audiences fun-filled stage performances and online programmes. Over 38,400 participants and 208,000 views were drawn by 77 festival activities and five online episodes of varied programmes, including ballet theatre, dance for babies, music theatre, acrobatics, theatre, music and multimedia theatre.

New Vision Arts Festival

A showcase of innovative, cross-disciplinary and cross-culture performing arts programmes by visiting and local artists, the New Vision Arts Festival presented 55 live events and seven episodes of online programmes, attracting an audience of over 20,200 in person and 159,700 online.

Hong Kong Week

The rescheduled Hong Kong Week 2022 was held in Wuhan from 15 February to 5 March with a hybrid of physical and online events, showcasing eight programmes in 22 screenings of stage performance, exhibitions and extension activities with an audience of more than 45,700 and 95,500 online viewers. In addition, the first overseas Hong Kong Week was held in Bangkok from 21 October to 12 November, covering nine programmes with 62 performances, exhibitions, film screenings and extension activities which attracted an attendance of more than 781,000.

Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival

The first Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival was launched in April. The LCSD collaborated with more than 40 organisations to bring a variety of over 20 programmes, including pop concerts, thematic exhibitions, film screenings, outdoor and outreach activities. With the participation of around 150 performing units, the festival featured over 200 activities, attracting an audience of around 530,000 in person and 75,000 online.

Asia+ Festival

Presented by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and organised by the LCSD, the Asia+ Festival was held during October and November. The inaugural edition featured a diverse array of programmes, highlighting both traditional essences and contemporary facets from Asian and Belt and Road countries. The festival encompassed stage performances, exhibitions and an outdoor carnival from over 20 countries. More than 62,000 participants were drawn by 29 festival activities.

Chinese Opera Festival

The 11th Chinese Opera Festival featured about 90 varied stage performances and fringe activities, drawing an audience of 45,000. The festival presented a range of opera genres, including Peking, Kunqu, Yue, Wu and Sichuan, while Han and Qu made their Hong Kong debuts. The finale at Victoria Park was the grand Cantonese opera showcase, staged in a traditional bamboo theatre.

Museum Summit

The third edition of Museum Summit was held in March at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. With 'Between' as the theme, the summit invited 35 renowned specialists and scholars related to the museum profession from the Mainland and 15 overseas countries to share their professional experiences and innovative ideas. The summit attracted more than 2,000 people registered, as well as over 12 million viewers online.

Muse Fest HK

Muse Fest HK 2023 was held from 1 to 30 November. It brought together all LCSD museums and cultural venues to provide the public with more than 80 programmes, including a carnival featuring crossover programmes, night events, fun days, talks, workshops, selected museum publications and souvenirs mega sale, and an array of exhibitions. The festival attracted a combined physical and online audience of more than 520,000.

Museums

Hong Kong Museum of Art

In 2023, the Hong Kong Museum of Art presented various exhibitions, including 'Joan Miró – The Poetry of Everyday Life', 'A Tale of Three Cities: Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and Export of Silk Products in the Ming and Qing Dynasties' and 'Titian and the Venetian Renaissance from the Uffizi', attracting more than 1,257,000 visitors combined. The museum also received a donation from Mrs Josephine Sin, the wife of the late collector Mr Christopher Sin, consisting of 490 sets of Chinese snuff bottles from the Fuyun Xuan Collection. It is the

most comprehensive donation of its kind ever received by a Hong Kong museum. The family of calligraphist Jat See-yeu donated 123 sets of artworks of Chinese calligraphy and paintings for the museum's permanent collection, the largest single donation of calligraphy works by an individual Hong Kong artist that the museum has ever received.

The Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, a branch of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, features tea ware and related artefacts as well as rare Chinese ceramics and seals. The museum presented the 'The Art of Living' exhibition and received over 93,000 visitors in 2023.

Hong Kong Museum of History

The Hong Kong Museum of History presented the 'Recreating a Classic: The Best Features of the Hong Kong Story' and 'Joyous Destiny: A Selection of Wedding Memorabilia from the Museum's Collections' exhibitions, and jointly presented the 'China Manned Space Exhibition' with the Hong Kong Science Museum. More than 550,000 people visited during the year.

The museum organises education programmes for different audiences. It also uploaded video recordings of talks and lectures to support history learning and research activities, and to reach a larger audience.

The Museum of History manages five branch museums: Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence, Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery, Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum and Law Uk Folk Museum.

The Museum of Coastal Defence is converted from the old Lei Yue Mun Fort. Apart from the permanent exhibition 'The Story of Hong Kong Coastal Defence' and the Lyemun Fort Historical Trail, the museum organises educational programmes such as field visits to War of Resistance relics and a National Day flag raising ceremony to deepen visitors' understanding of the history of the War of Resistance and coastal defence in Hong Kong. The museum attracted over 187,000 visitors during the year.

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, housed in the declared monument Kom Tong Hall in Central, runs two permanent exhibitions about Dr Sun's life, and organises educational programmes relating to Dr Sun and the history of modern China. It attracted over 84,000 visitors in the year.

The Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery displays the decommissioned fireboat, as well as relics and materials related to the history of the fireboat and sea rescue services in Hong Kong. Some 68,000 people visited the gallery during the year.

Hong Kong Heritage Museum

The Hong Kong Heritage Museum promotes the city's culture and connects people with global culture through exhibitions on pop culture, art, design and history. From April to July, the museum, in collaboration with the French May arts festival and the Palace of Versailles, presented the 'Virtually Versailles' exhibition, bringing the world's first virtual exhibition of the Palace of Versailles, a World Heritage site, to Hong Kong. It received more than 120,000 visitors. Other exhibitions organised during the year included 'Miss You Much Leslie Exhibition', 'Out of

Thin Air: Hong Kong Film Arts and Costumes Exhibition’, ‘Bruce Lee: a Timeless Classic’ and ‘Timeless Diva: Anita Mui’.

The museum organised talks, workshops, special performances, and online programmes to deepen visitors’ understanding of the exhibitions. On 12 September, in commemoration of Leslie Cheung’s 67th birthday, two concerts and two screenings of his classic films were held, attracting nearly 5,000 participants. The museum continued to collaborate with various cultural institutions, including the Hong Kong Film Archive, to engage museum-goers, especially film enthusiasts, while promoting Hong Kong’s pop culture.

To coincide with Muse Fest HK 2023, an open day titled ‘Love Hong Kong: Fun@Hong Kong Heritage Museum’ was held on 18 and 19 November. The long-standing ‘MuseKids Membership Scheme’ and the ‘MuseTeens: Youth Leadership Scheme’ encouraged participants to explore Hong Kong’s history and culture. The museum also supported local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in hosting programmes for target audiences such as teachers, students, families and persons with disabilities.

The museum manages two branch museums. The Hong Kong Railway Museum is situated in the old Tai Po Market Railway Station, a declared monument built in 1913. In early October, Diesel Electric Engine No 60 that served Hong Kong for nearly five decades was added to the museum’s collection. The Sheung Yiu Folk Museum, originally a 19th-century Hakka village and now a declared monument in Sai Kung, reopened in late 2022 after restoration works.

In 2023, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Railway Museum and Sheung Yiu Folk Museum received over 720,000, 230,000 and 41,000 visitors respectively.

Hong Kong Palace Museum

The Hong Kong Palace Museum is a collaborative project between the WKCD Authority and the Palace Museum. It has an exhibition space of 7,800 square metres and aims to promote the study and appreciation of Chinese art and culture, and advance dialogue through international partnerships.

M+

M+, with an exhibition space of about 17,000 sq m, is a museum of contemporary visual culture presenting collections that include visual art, design and architecture as well as moving image from Hong Kong, the Mainland, Asia and beyond.

Hong Kong Science Museum

In 2023, the Hong Kong Science Museum and Hong Kong Museum of History jointly presented the ‘China Manned Space Exhibition’. With exhibits provided by the China Manned Space Agency, the exhibition highlighted the extraordinary achievements of China’s manned space programme, as well as its future development.

In the same year, the science museum organised the ‘Material Tales – The Life of Things’ exhibition, featuring the art and science of materials and showcasing the London Design Museum’s collection and locally developed new materials. The ‘Science Fiction: Voyage to the

Edge of Imagination’ exhibition uncovered connections between significant scientific innovations and celebrated science fiction works.

The museum’s new permanent exhibition, the ‘Palaeontology Gallery’ has been open to the public since September. With ‘Extinction-Resilience’ as its theme, the gallery presents the challenges and evolution that life has gone through since the Ediacaran Period 635 million years ago.

The Croucher Science Week was presented online and live by science communicators from Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the United States to engage students and families in a series of science-related activities.

The museum organised a series of outreach programmes including tours of the outreach vehicle ‘Gear Up – Nano World’, ‘QK Kitchen’ cooking workshops, QK Post Roadshows, the online QK Post and the French Science Festival to promote science in daily life. It also collaborated with more than 70 partners to organise HK SciFest 2023. The museum had more than 1,150,000 visitors during the year.

Hong Kong Space Museum

The Hong Kong Space Museum organises regular astronomy activities and special exhibitions on-site, and holds stargazing and family programmes at its Astropark and iObservatory in Sai Kung. The Space Theatre’s hemispherical screen is equipped with digital planetarium projection and sound systems. Five new shows were screened in 2023 and in addition to the permanent exhibition, special exhibitions titled ‘Nicolaus Copernicus: Life and Work’ and ‘Black Hole: the Information Barrier’ were held.

In 2023, some 930,000 people visited the museum while its educational and extension programmes had more than 16,500 participants.

Hong Kong Film Archive

In 2023, the Hong Kong Film Archive presented the ‘Tango Between Images – Hong Kong Films and Comics’ and ‘Cinderella and Her *Qipao*’ exhibitions, along with thematic screenings covering the opening programme of the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival ‘When Leslie & Anita Meet Hei and Gin’, ‘Revisiting the Glory Days – The Legacy of Leslie and Anita’, ‘Restored Treasures – *Farewell to My Concubine* (1993)’ 4K Restored Classic (Hong Kong Premiere), and ‘Movies to Go – Hong Kong Week 2023@Bangkok – Border Crossings in Hong Kong Cinema – Thailand’. It also organised educational and promotional programmes including thematic screenings at Tai Kwun and the Hong Kong Museum of Art, and published ‘Restored Treasures – The Valiant Ones (1975)’.

During the year, the archive acquired over 300 film titles and 15,000 film-related materials. More than 94,000 visitors were attracted to its exhibitions and over 180 screenings, seminars and post-screening talks.

Public Libraries

The LCSD operates 71 static and 12 mobile libraries, and a books registration office. The libraries hold 13.67 million books and 1.71 million multimedia items, serving 4.86 million borrowers and lending more than 29.64 million books and other library materials in 2023.

Hong Kong Central Library

Hong Kong Central Library is a major information and cultural centre, with over 2.86 million library materials for reference and lending, multimedia facilities, a central reference library with six subject departments, an arts resource centre, a Hong Kong literature room, a map library, a language learning centre, a young adult library and a toy library. It offers for hire a 1,540 sq m exhibition gallery, a 290-seat lecture theatre, two activity rooms, a music practice room and eight discussion rooms.

Reference and Information Services

Professional reference and information services are available at Hong Kong Central Library and six major public libraries, namely City Hall, Kowloon, Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai, Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun.

Information Technology and Digital Library Services

Online services are integral to the public libraries' reference and information services. The libraries provide more than 2,000 computers for public access to their electronic resources and the internet. More than 518,000 e-books are available to registered borrowers.

The libraries also subscribe to 82 e-databases, some of which are accessible over the internet. About 11,000 hours of digitised audio-visual recordings and over 6.3 million digitised pages of printed library materials, including old newspapers, photographs, maps and manuscripts, in the digital collections are available for public use at all static libraries and online.

Promotion of Reading and Literary Arts

Hong Kong Public Libraries continued the 'Life/Library' publicity campaign to rekindle the joy of reading while competitions, workshops and short videos were produced to promote creative writing and literary arts. In 2023, more than 21,900 reading promotion activities were held, along with major reading events such as '4.23 World Book Day' and 'Summer Library Festival'.

Books Registration Office

The Books Registration Office registers local publications and monitors the use of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) system. It publishes the Catalogue of Books Printed in Hong Kong in the Government Gazette every three months. The catalogue can also be viewed online.

In 2023, the office registered 11,446 books and 4,278 periodicals, and issued 653 publisher prefixes totalling 12,830 ISBNs.

Heritage

Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Office organises activities to enhance public knowledge of Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage. It launched the fifth round of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme in 2023 to engage the community in safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage.

The office's Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre at Sam Tung Uk Museum holds exhibitions and other education and extension programmes to enhance public understanding of intangible cultural heritage. The 'Lost and Sound – Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage' exhibition series showcases the wisdom of folk craftsmanship and the vibrancy of folk culture. It recorded over 97,000 visitors in 2023.

The office also established the 'Traces of Human Touch' exhibition in the former CLP Group Headquarters, highlighting 10 local items of intangible cultural heritage and inviting practitioners of intangible cultural heritage to participate. As at end-2023, the exhibition had attracted more than 54,000 visitors since opening in May.

With the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the eighth cultural exchange programme, 'Genesis and Spirit', resumed in physical form in 2023, showcasing 40 intangible cultural heritage items from Zhejiang to visitors in Hong Kong, including six national items inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in 2022. Additionally, the office participated in various events in cities within the GBA, such as Guangzhou, Dongguan, Zhuhai, Foshan and Shenzhen.

In conjunction with the first overseas cultural exchange extravaganza, Hong Kong Week 2023@Bangkok, the office organised its first exhibition in Thailand, titled 'Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage Carnival'. The exhibition featured a range of experiential activities and live Nanyin performances, attracting nearly 19,000 visitors.

Cantonese Opera

The government preserves, promotes and develops Cantonese opera in Hong Kong.

The Cantonese Opera Development Fund aims to support projects and activities relating to the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese opera. Projects include performances of new and traditional plays, cultural exchanges, arts education and community activities, children/youth training and performances, professional training and research and publication projects.

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts runs the city's first Chinese opera degree course. The Arts Development Council funds training programmes conducted by the Cantonese Opera Academy of Hong Kong.

Conservation Office

The Conservation Office provides preservation and conservation services for museum artefacts, including paintings, prints, historical documents, textiles, metals, ceramics, sculptures, organic objects and archaeological finds. Scientific research and analyses were conducted to complement the conservation work for 180 artefacts in 2023.

The office also held 34 extension activities, including educational workshops and laboratory visits, with a total of 743 participants.

Nurturing Talent

Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme

The scheme aims to nurture young arts administrators and stage management staff to support the development of performing arts. The LCSD also sponsored 22 of its venue partners and the Hong Kong Arts Festival Society to run similar programmes.

Music Office

The Music Office promotes knowledge and appreciation of music, especially among young people, by providing instrumental and ensemble training and organising music activities. The office arranges music training courses and activities, which attracted over 7,600 trainees and 207,000 participants in 2023.

Visual and Public Art

Art Promotion Office

The Art Promotion Office opens up new opportunities for cross-regional collaboration and supports artists to take part in outbound art events. Working with the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale Executive Committee and Oku-Noto Triennale Executive Committee, it showcased works by Hong Kong artists in two Japanese locations – the Hong Kong House in Tsunan and the former Ukai Station in Suzu respectively. A residence programme and work presentation in Suomenlinna, Finland was co-organised with the Helsinki International Artist Programme to enable a Hong Kong artist to conduct international artistic exchanges.

The office also worked with the Hong Kong Designers Association to present the 'Art < Creativity' exhibition series in the GBA to showcase the works of Hong Kong artists and designers in Jiangmen and Zhaoqing.

Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre (vA!)

The Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre is an open, multidirectional art space that focuses on art learning, research and exchange. It organises arts activities and provides facilities for hire. Major programmes during the year included the art project 'vA! Spotlight – Museum of Hands', the online 'art talk' series and the art learning programme 'vA!cademy'.

Oil Street Art Space (Oi!)

Oi! is a platform for art practitioners to realise their artistic creations and engage with the community. In 2023, it launched a series of projects incorporated with art tech, such as 'Oi!

Spotlight', 'Art Seen•Art Screen' and 'The Digital Cuboid: Virtual Realm'. It also organised the 'Archaic Curator Series' to showcase Chinese art and culture, along with various art projects such as 'O! What if... Ideas Bank', 'The Unexplored Flavour: x', 'Sad Kitchen', 'Dress in Time' and 'Vita in Movimento' to promote local art and foster connections with the community.

Creative Industries

Create Hong Kong

Hong Kong's creative industries cover eight sectors: advertising, architecture, design, digital entertainment, film, music, printing and publishing, and television. The government supports their development through Create Hong Kong, under the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau.

Support for Film Sector

Film Development Council and Film Development Fund

Through the Film Development Fund (FDF), Create Hong Kong supports film productions and other film-related projects to promote the sustainable development of the film industry. It consults the Film Development Council on film development matters, including policies, strategies and arrangements to promote and develop the film industry, and strategies for the fund's use.

The government has injected \$1.54 billion into the fund since 2005. Around \$128 million was committed to 27 film productions and other film-related projects in 2023 to nurture talent, enhance local production, expand markets and build audiences.

Nurturing Talent

The First Feature Film Initiative identifies new directors through a competition of screenplays and production proposals, and subsidises the winners to make their first feature-length commercial films. In 2023, three winning films were released commercially in Hong Kong.

The Directors' Succession Scheme invites experienced directors to partner with one or two up-and-comers to co-produce films, aiming to nurture young talent and enhance the quality and quantity of local productions. In 2023, one proposal was approved.

Two new schemes were launched in 2023. The Hong Kong-Asian Film Collaboration Funding Scheme subsidises projects co-produced by filmmakers in Hong Kong and Asian countries, with a view to creating films rich in regional culture and making it easier for them to enter overseas' markets. The Content Development Scheme for Streaming Platforms recruits teams to develop content that can be broadcast on streaming platforms through a competition, with a view to nurturing cross-sectoral production teams and facilitating the film industry to enter new distribution markets.

The FDF also supports the industry to provide local and overseas training to nurture talent in different areas of filmmaking, including post-production services.

Enhancing Local Production

In 2023, three films, engaging one new director, were approved under the Film Production Financing Scheme and its relaxation plan. Six of the funded films were released commercially.

Expanding Markets and Building Audiences

The annual Entertainment Expo Hong Kong resumed its physical format in 2023, drawing an audience of around 380,000.

The FDF subsidises screenings, seminars and film appreciation courses held by industry organisations for the local community, especially young people.

In 2023, Create Hong Kong supported the screening of over 60 Hong Kong films at 34 international film festivals or Mainland/overseas film events through the FDF or a direct subsidy, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices and industry organisations. Create Hong Kong also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Directorate General for Cinema and Audiovisual-Ministry of Culture of the Government of Italy to strengthen cooperation in facilitating and promoting activities and exchanges related to films.

Support for Other Creative Sectors

CreateSmart Initiative

The CreateSmart Initiative (CSI) supports promotional and nurturing projects from seven non-film creative industries, providing about \$466 million to 59 such projects in 2023.

Nurturing Talent and Facilitating Start-ups

The CSI supports multiple projects to nurture creative talent and start-ups, including the Design Incubation Programme and the Fashion Incubation Programme, for design start-ups and up-and-coming fashion designers; the nurturing programme under the DFA Hong Kong Young Design Talent Award, which provides funding to pursue work attachments or further studies overseas; Digital Economy Accelerator, providing training, mentoring and funding for designpreneurs to develop their e-commerce; Hong Kong Comics Development and Promotion Support Programme, providing training and mentoring for comic start-ups and artists with production and promotion subsidies; Animation Support Programme, funding original animations by start-ups and small companies; Hong Kong Game Enhancement and Promotion Scheme, funding game start-ups to enhance the quality and profitability of their products; The Next Writer Publication Funding Scheme, funding emerging writers to publish and promote their new books; Microfilm Production Support Scheme (Music), which offers funding and mentorship to advertising production companies and directors; and supporting the industry to lead Hong Kong designers to participate in the Dutch Design Week. Creative talent is also sponsored to participate in digital entertainment events, such as DigiCon6 Asia.

Exploring Markets

Create Hong Kong supports creative sectors to bring high-value customers to Hong Kong, and takes local talent and products to Mainland and overseas markets. CSI-sponsored projects in 2023 included establishing a Hong Kong Pavilion at the Augmented World Expo Europe; the

Publishing 3.0 – Hong Kong Smart eBook Hub scheme; supporting the fashion trade to participate in Paris Fashion Week and Shanghai Fashion Week, and promoting digital fashion collections from local designers in London Fashion Week and Paris Fashion Week; and promoting Hong Kong original art toy design by participating in the Thailand Toy Expo in Bangkok. The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau also organised a series of activities in Shenzhen during Shenzhen Reading Month in November.

Promoting Cross-sectoral and Cross-genre Collaboration

Create Hong Kong seeks to encourage cross-sectoral and cross-genre collaboration on creative and culture programmes. CSI-sponsored collaboration projects in 2023 included the Hong Kong Digital Advertising Start-ups x Publishing (Writers) Promotion Support Scheme.

Promoting Hong Kong as Asia's Creative Capital

Hong Kong fosters collaboration with Mainland and overseas cities to raise the profile of its creative industries locally and internationally. CSI-sponsored projects in 2023 included supporting local television stations to co-produce television variety programmes with Mainland/Asian production teams; refurbishing the Avenue of Comic Stars in Kowloon Park to promote Hong Kong comics; presenting the 'Juxtaposed 2023 Hong Kong Fashion' runway and exhibition during Hong Kong Week 2023@Bangkok; staging roving architecture exhibitions at the Venice Biennale International Architecture, as well as in Kuala Lumpur and Nanjing; setting up the World of Art and Culture at the Hong Kong Book Fair and enhancing its art gallery; and the international design industry event Business of Design Week.

Sports and Recreation

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and LCSD develop elite sports, promote sports in the community and promote Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events. They develop and coordinate the provision of quality sports and recreation facilities for leisure enjoyment, including parks, landscaped open spaces, sports grounds, playgrounds, sports centres, holiday camps, water sports centres, swimming pools and beaches; and organise and support a wide variety of sports and recreation programmes to promote community sports, identify sporting talent and raise sporting standards.

The bureau and LCSD work closely with the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee, national sports associations (NSAs), district councils, district sports associations and schools to promote sport for all.

The LCSD also issues and renews licences for billiard establishments, public bowling alleys and public skating rinks. In 2023, it processed a total of 61 applications.

Sports and Recreation Facilities

The LCSD manages 25 sports grounds, 105 sports centres, including the Hong Kong Velodrome, 61 11-a-side football pitches, 250 tennis courts, 291 squash courts, four driving ranges and two public riding schools. Works for 12 other major projects are under way.

Hong Kong Coliseum

The 12,500-seat Hong Kong Coliseum is a major multi-purpose indoor stadium which holds major international sports events, such as the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball's Volleyball Nations League Hong Kong 2023 and the Hong Kong Open Badminton Championships 2023.

Hong Kong Stadium

The 40,000-seat Hong Kong Stadium is the territory's largest outdoor sports venue. It is used mainly for football and rugby matches and large-scale community activities. Events held during the year included the Hong Kong Sevens, qualifying matches for the Fédération Internationale de Football Association World Cup 2026 and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup 2027, AFC Champions League group stage matches, and two Hong Kong international football friendly matches against Thailand and Brunei Darussalam.

Queen Elizabeth Stadium

The 3,500-seat Queen Elizabeth Stadium is another major multi-purpose indoor stadium which held many major sports events in 2023, including the World Table Tennis Youth Contender Hong Kong, fifth East Asian Muaythai Championships, 66th Festival of Sport – Hong Kong Powerlifting Championships, Hong Kong Bodybuilding Championships cum 11th South China Bodybuilding Invitational Championships and DanceSport Asia Asian Single Dance Championship – Hong Kong.

Mong Kok Stadium

The 6,000-seat Mong Kok Stadium is one of the major venues for the Hong Kong Premier League and international matches. Events staged in the year included an AFC Champions League preliminary stage match, the Jockey Club Youth Football Academy Summit and an international football friendly match between Hong Kong and Singapore.

Kai Tak Sports Park

Targeted for completion by end-2024, the Kai Tak Sports Park will provide world-class sports facilities, including a 50,000-seat main stadium, a 10,000-seat indoor sports centre and a 5,000-seat public sports ground, for international sports events and large-scale community activities. The superstructures of the three venues have been substantially completed, while building services installation together with testing and commissioning, interior fitting-out and hard and soft landscape works are in progress.

Water Sports Centres and Holiday Camps

The LCSD manages five water sports centres: Chong Hing, Tai Mei Tuk, the Jockey Club Wong Shek, St Stephen's Beach and Stanley Main Beach. Events held at these centres drew about 90,000 participants in 2023.

The department also runs four holiday camps: the Lady MacLehose Holiday Village, Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre, Tso Kung Tam Outdoor Recreation Centre and Lei Yue Mun Park, where various sports and recreational activities are provided, including climbing, archery, American pool, Chinese billiards and karaoke.

In 2023, over 321,000 campers had joined the day, evening and residential camp services.

The LCSD also subsidises 11 NGOs to run 24 holiday camps and sea activity centres, which registered around 820,000 participants in 2023.

Beaches and Swimming Pools

Swimming is one of Hong Kong's most popular summer pastimes. The LCSD manages 42 gazetted public beaches and 45 public swimming pool complexes.

Sports and Recreation Organisations

Sports Commission

The Sports Commission, comprising government officials and representatives from the sports sector, advises the government on all matters relating to sports development and oversees committees on community sports, elite sports and major sports events.

Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China

The Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China is recognised as a National Olympic Committee by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and is a member of the IOC, the Olympic Council of Asia, the Association of National Olympic Committees and the East Asian Olympic Committees.

The federation organises Hong Kong's participation in all major international, continental and regional multi-sports games, such as the summer and winter Olympic Games and Asian Games. In August, a delegation of more than 200 people participated in the Ulaanbaatar 2023 East Asian Youth Games, winning 22 medals. In September, Hong Kong, China sent 940 people to participate in the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou. It was the largest-ever delegation the city had sent to the games and achieved its best-ever result, bringing home 53 medals – eight golds, 16 silvers and 29 bronzes.

It has a membership of 83 NSAs and sports organisations. Most members are affiliated to their Asian federations (AFs) and international federations (IFs). The NSAs coordinate and conduct activities related to their sports, including recreational programmes for the community, and training and competitions for novices and elite athletes locally. They organise and sanction participation in overseas competitions and train coaches and referees. They also enforce local and international rules and regulations and represent Hong Kong at IF and AF meetings.

The federation organises three major local annual events. In June, the Olympic Day returned as a physical event with about 3,000 participants. The Festival of Sport held around 60 sports events and activities with the support of NSAs. The presentation ceremony for the 2022 Hong Kong Sports Stars Awards was held in April.

The federation also organises educational programmes for sports leaders, administrators, coaches and technical officials, notably through the Hong Kong Olympic Academy, which offers sports management and sports science courses.

The Hong Kong Athletes Career and Education Department of the federation helps athletes to obtain educational qualifications and a career after retiring from athletic life. The Sports Legacy Scheme employs retired and soon-to-retire athletes as coaches for underprivileged students, passing the Olympic spirit to the next generations.

China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee

The China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee coordinates Hong Kong, China's participation in international para multi-sports games including the fourth Asian Para Games in Hangzhou and the World Abilitysport Games in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand in 2023. It also promotes the Paralympic movement, disseminates professional knowledge, builds relationships with NSAs and coordinates programmes for retired athletes.

Anti-Doping Organisation of Hong Kong, China Limited

From 1 April, the Hong Kong Anti-Doping Committee separated from the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China to become an independent organisation and was renamed as the Anti-Doping Organisation of Hong Kong, China Limited. It is governed by a board of directors and is the national anti-doping organisation of Hong Kong.

Sports Association for the Physically Disabled of Hong Kong, China

The association, previously named the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee & Sports Association for the Physically Disabled, was established in 1972, with the aim of enabling local para athletes to achieve sporting excellence. The association develops and promotes 11 types of para sports, including archery, athletics, badminton, bocchia, lawn bowls, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tenpin bowling, wheelchair basketball and wheelchair fencing.

Hong Kong, China Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability

The Hong Kong, China Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability develops, promotes and organises sporting activities to help people with intellectual disability to develop their potential and cultivate a positive attitude through sport, and to facilitate their integration into the community. Its training programme caters for all levels of ability.

Intellectually disabled athletes won 200 medals during the year including 39 golds, 25 silvers and 11 bronzes at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Berlin; 13 golds, 11 silvers and 12 bronzes at the Vichy Virtus Global Games in France; 10 golds, eight silvers and four bronzes at the Special Olympics East Asia Regional Bocce Competition in Hong Kong; and four golds, six silvers and six bronzes at the fourth Asian Para Games in Hangzhou.

Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited

The Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited is Hong Kong's elite sports training centre. It provides comprehensive facilities and support services to athletes, including scientific conditioning, sports science, sports medicine and dual career development in education and sports training.

The institute's Elite Training Programme covers 20 Tier A sports (athletics, badminton, billiard sports, cycling, equestrian, fencing, gymnastics, karatedo, rowing, rugby sevens, sailing, skating, squash, swimming, table tennis, tennis, tenpin bowling, triathlon, windsurfing and wushu) and

six Tier A para sports (boccia (physical disability), para badminton (physical disability), para table tennis (physical disability), wheelchair fencing (physical disability), para swimming (intellectual disability) and para table tennis (intellectual disability)). It also provides support to athletes in 13 Tier B sports and three Tier B para sports. Outstanding athletes whose sports fall outside these two tiers are covered under the Individual Athletes Support Scheme.

Outward Bound Hong Kong

Outward Bound Hong Kong (OBHK) is a non-profit organisation providing personal development programmes for people to learn essential life skills and reach their maximum potential. It is accredited by the Association for Experiential Education, and as part of Outward Bound International, it benefits from the network of over 37 schools around the world.

Based in Sai Kung, with headquarters at Tai Mong Tsai and an island base on Wong Wan Chau, OBHK's facilities include a 67-foot sail training yacht, the *Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong*, a world-class ropes course and a fleet of expedition sea kayaks. It uses outdoor challenges to help participants gain insights and skills that can be applied to work and everyday situations. In 2023, 5,829 people joined its programmes in Hong Kong.

Sporting Achievements

Hong Kong athletes excelled at international sports events in 2023. The Hong Kong, China delegation reached new heights at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou with the total number of medals and representation at events surpassing any previous Asian Games. They clinched eight golds, 16 silvers and 29 bronzes, for a total of 53 medals. Rowers Lam San-tung and Wong Wai-chun won Hong Kong's first gold at the year's games in the men's pair event. Fencer Cheung Ka-long topped the podium in the men's foil individual event while swimmer Siobhan Haughey won two gold medals. Cyclist Yang Qian-yu and golfer Taichi Kho captured gold in the women's individual road race and men's individual golf event respectively, while the rugby sevens men's team successfully defended their title. The bridge men's team, consisting of Chiu Wai-lap, Ho Hoi-tung, Ho Wai-lam, Lai Wai-kit, Mak Kwok-fai and Sze Shun-sum also won gold.

At the fourth Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, the Hong Kong, China delegation won a total of 47 medals, comprising eight golds, 15 silvers and 24 bronzes. Swimmer Tang Wai-lok won the men's 200m freestyle S14 event while Chan Yui-lam won gold in the women's 100m backstroke S14 and 100m butterfly S14 events. Badminton athlete Chu Man-kai successfully defended the title in the men's singles SH6 event. Yeung Hiu-lam won the boccia women's individual BC2 event. Table tennis pair Ng Mui-wui and Wong Ting-ting took the women's doubles WD22 title. The lawn bowls team won two gold medals, including Wu Man-ying in the women's singles B7 event, and Li Chi-ming and Tang Shun-yeek in the mixed pairs B2 event.

Hong Kong also achieved outstanding results at the 2021 Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire World University Games in Chengdu, bringing home 12 medals including four golds, one silver and seven bronzes. Fencer Cheung Ka-long topped the podium in the men's foil individual event and later won another gold in the team event with Choi Chun-yin, Lee Yat-long and Ng Lok-wang, while fencer Hsieh Sin-yan also captured gold in the women's epee individual event. Wushu athlete Hui Tak-yan took the title in the men's taijijian event.

Major Sports Events

Hong Kong is a hub for major international sports events. The 'M' Mark system aims to solicit commercial and community support for hosting more major international sports events. Under this system, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau provides comprehensive support, including matching funds, direct grants, venue and marketing subsidies, to NSAs, private organisations and NGOs to hold world-class sports events.

In 2023, a total of 15 'M' Mark events were held, the highest number to date. Among them were several events held in Hong Kong for the first time, including the Aramco Team Series Hong Kong golf tournament, FIA World Rallycross Championship Hong Kong, China Season Finale, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (Hong Kong Section) Half Marathon and the World DanceSport Federation Breaking for Gold World Series – Hong Kong.

Sports and Recreation Programmes

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau together with other government departments and related organisations, including the LCSD, Department of Health, Education Bureau, Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee, NSAs, district sports associations and schools, provide community sports activities at various levels, encouraging people of different backgrounds, ages, abilities and interests to participate in sports regularly so as to promote the culture of sport for all. In 2023, the LCSD organised about 33,900 sports and recreation programmes for about 1,862,500 participants.

District Sports Teams Training Scheme

A total of 4,185 young people took part in 138 district team events in basketball, football and fencing.

Young Athletes Training Scheme

Training was conducted for 22,462 teenagers in 34 sports disciplines.

Sports Training Programmes for Persons with Disabilities

The Sports Training Programmes for Persons with Disabilities is a scheme designed to encourage people with disabilities to get involved in sports. These programmes are available free to anyone with physical and intellectual disabilities, hearing or visual impairments, those suffering from chronic illnesses or autism, and those recovering from mental illness. In 2023, over 90 training programmes were held for about 1,200 people with disabilities.

Community Sports Club Project

The project, organised by the LCSD in collaboration with the NSAs, subsidised about 430 community sports clubs in organising 3,159 sports programmes for 63,830 participants in 2023. Seminars and management development programmes were conducted for over 260 sports volunteers to help them run the clubs.

Promotion of School Sports

The School Sports Programme provided 7,015 sporting events for 520,305 students at 880 primary and secondary schools through seven subsidiary programmes: Sport Education, Easy Sport, Outreach Coaching, Joint Schools Sports Training, Sport Captain, the Badges Award Scheme, and Sports Award Scheme.

The Student Athlete Support Scheme, a collaboration between the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the Schools Sports Federation of Hong Kong, China, helps students with financial needs develop their sporting potential and pursue their goals. In the 2022-23 school year, around \$6.99 million was allocated to 567 participating schools, benefiting about 18,376 students.

The Opening-up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme provides subsidies to encourage schools to make their facilities available to sports organisations. In the 2022-23 school year, 390 sports programmes were held by 51 sports organisations at 82 schools under the scheme.

'Healthy Exercise for All Campaign' and 'Sport For All Day'

The 'Healthy Exercise for All Campaign' is organised jointly by the LCSD and the Department of Health to encourage regular exercise. In 2023, a total of 1,428 programmes were organised for more than 114,100 participants.

The LCSD's 'Sport For All Day' held every August promotes sport for all in the community by holding free sports and recreation programmes at designated sports centres in all 18 districts and opening most of the fee-charging leisure facilities to the public for free. Online sports demonstrations were featured in a live webcast via a dedicated webpage and the 'LCSD Pluss' Facebook page to encourage the public to exercise at home. In 2023, the event registered nearly 200,000 participants.

Hong Kong Games

The Hong Kong Games, held biennially, promotes a stronger sporting culture in the community through competitions and community participation programmes. Open selection of athletes from the 18 districts for the next Hong Kong Games was launched in July.

Sports Funding

Recurrent Government Funding

The government promotes sports development in Hong Kong by encouraging sports in the community, supporting elite sports and projecting the city as a centre for major international sports events. In 2022-23, over 80 per cent of the \$6.88 billion in overall government spending on sports development went into community-level sports promotion.

Arts and Sport Development Fund

The sports portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund supports athletes' preparation for and participation in major international competitions; the local hosting of international sports events by NSAs and other sports organisations; the upgrading of school and district

programmes to boost community participation; the development of local football and team sports; and one-off initiatives that are important for the development and promotion of sport in Hong Kong. In 2022-23, the fund approved \$232 million for 145 sports projects.

Sports Subvention Scheme

The LCSD subsidises NSAs and other sports organisations in sports promotion and development. In 2023, subventions totalling about \$610 million were allocated to 62 NSAs and 43 other sports organisations, which held 11,287 programmes for 754,362 participants.

Local and international events, staged during 2023 by the subvented NSAs, included the Hong Kong International Track Cup, World Table Tennis Youth Contender Hong Kong, East Asian Muaythai Championships, and Asian Judo Open Hong Kong.

To enhance the NSAs' corporate governance, the LCSD organises thematic seminars to raise awareness among NSAs office bearers and management staff of their roles and responsibilities in effective board practices, strategic planning and risk management. Around 170 NSA representatives attended the thematic seminars in 2023.

Pilot Scheme on Subvention for New Sports

The Pilot Scheme on Subvention for New Sports supports the promotion and development of new sports in the community, so that the public can have more opportunity and choices. In 2023, a total subvention of \$2.1 million on a project basis was granted to 21 eligible sports organisations, including cheerleading, dodgeball (two), floorball, functional fitness, health qigong, kabaddi, kin-ball, kurash, kyudo, molkky, nunchaku, paragliding, pétanque, pickleball, sambo, sepak takraw, sport stacking, standup paddle, tchoukball and VX ball. The subvention was used to organise 332 programmes for around 12,800 participants in total.

Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation (Main Fund)

The Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation (Main Fund) supports NSAs, district sports associations, schools and NGOs to buy equipment and build facilities for physical education and sporting activities. It places emphasis on generating long-term benefits, encouraging the purposeful use of leisure by young people and promoting sports in the community. In 2023-24, the fund approved \$25.74 million for 241 sports projects.

Elite Athletes Development Fund

The Elite Athletes Development Fund provides a stable financial source for the Hong Kong Sports Institute to develop elite sports. The funding allocated in 2023-24 was \$863 million, alongside an additional \$33 million from the institute's fund reserves.

Hong Kong Athletes Fund

The Hong Kong Athletes Fund provides education grants for eligible athletes, one-off grants for eligible retired athletes at the time of retirement from sports training through the Elite Athletes Performance Recognition Scheme, and cash incentives through the Youth Athletes Scholarship Awards for junior athletes participating in major sports events.

Parks and Greenery

The LCSD manages over 1,600 parks and gardens, including 26 major parks. It is responsible for planting and maintaining plants at the public parks, sports and recreation venues, and roadside amenity areas. In 2023, the department planted 2.64 million trees, shrubs and other plants, and enhanced the landscaping at about 24 hectares of park and roadside amenity areas.

Hong Kong Park

Hong Kong Park occupies 8.16 hectares at the former military barracks in Central. The park features flowing water as its central motif and has artificial waterfalls, streams and ponds. Its main facilities include an aviary, a conservatory, a sports centre, a squash centre, a children's playground, an Olympic Square, a vantage point and a restaurant.

The aviary resembles a tropical rainforest in which about 530 birds of 61 species are kept. The conservatory's three sections, namely the Display Plant House, Dry Plant House and Humid Plant House, have adjustable environmental control equipment to simulate different climatic conditions for plants from arid and tropical regions. About 700 bulb plants from over 40 species were featured in an exhibition at the Display Plant House from January to February.

Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens

The Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens, developed between 1861 and 1871, is the territory's oldest public park and occupies 5.6 hectares overlooking Central. In 2023, the animal collection comprised about 170 birds of 39 species, over 20 reptiles of five species, and about 90 mammals of 16 species, mainly primates. More than 1,000 species of trees, shrubs, creepers and foliage plants thrive in the gardens, where the medicinal plant collection and a greenhouse promote public interest in about 500 species of herbs, orchids, ferns and indoor plants. An education and exhibition centre offers guided visits and displays zoological specimens.

Green Hong Kong Campaign

This campaign raises awareness of the importance of greening the environment. The LCSD provides at least one community garden in each of the 18 districts.

In 2023, the districts conducted 71 community garden programmes. Over 6,800 people joined the Green Volunteer Scheme to promote community greening and 891 schools and kindergartens took part in a Greening School Subsidy Scheme to promote environment-friendly initiatives. About 371,200 students from 1,213 schools participated in the One Person, One Flower Scheme, receiving seedlings to plant at home or school.

Hong Kong Flower Show

The Hong Kong Flower Show provides an opportunity for hundreds of thousands of people and horticultural lovers to appreciate the beauty and diversity of flowers and to share their experiences in flower cultivation. More than 220 organisations from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas took part in the flower show at Victoria Park in March, attracting over 700,000 visitors.

Inclusive Park for Pets

The LCSD opens up some existing parks as Inclusive Park for Pets to enable pet owners and other park users to use the facilities together. There are 174 such parks across the territory.

Travel and Tourism

Since the resumption of normal travel in February, Hong Kong's tourism industry has been recovering. In 2023, the number of visitor arrivals was 34 million in total, with a daily average of over 90,000.

The government is formulating the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0, an update on the original blueprint launched in 2017, to set out initiatives in various aspects to develop Hong Kong into a world-class premier tourism destination.

Inbound Tourism

MICE

Hong Kong is a premier Meetings, Incentive Travels, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) destination, offering world-class convention and exhibition facilities and a diversified range of tourist attractions. In 2023, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) successfully bid, assisted in the successful bidding, or subsidised the staging of around 600 international MICE events, which are expected to draw about 370,000 visitors.

Cruise Tourism

International cruise travel resumed in Hong Kong in January, and there were 164 ship calls and a total passenger throughput of 475,000 during the year.

The 2023-24 Budget allocated additional resources to attract international cruise ships to visit. The Seatrade Cruise Asia Pacific, a major cruise industry conference, was held in Hong Kong in October to further drive the recovery of the industry in the region.

Mega Events

The government supports staging large-scale events varying in nature to tie in with the policy objectives of driving culture, sports and tourism integration, product diversification and promoting a positive local ambience and international tourism image while meeting travellers' demand for in-depth tourism experiences.

In 2023, HKTB relaunched events including 'Fortunes Around Hong Kong' Chinese New Year Celebrations, Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races, Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival and Taste Around Town, Hong Kong Cyclothon, Hong Kong WinterFest and Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations. It also supported other citywide events such as the Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament, Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Central, French May arts festival, Florentijn Hofman's Double Ducks in the harbour, the Tai Hang Fire Dragon Dance and Clockenflap music and arts festival.

In response to the government's initiatives 'Happy Hong Kong' and 'Night Vibes Hong Kong' campaigns, HKTB staged the Harbour Chill Carnival and launched the Temple Street – Endless Authentic Encounters respectively.

Green Tourism

The 'Hong Kong Great Outdoors' campaign showcases the city's scenic vistas by featuring a number of hiking trails, outlying islands, sightseeing places, outdoor activities and trail running events. In 2023, HKTB continued promoting green tourism, using '360 Hong Kong Moments' videos to create an immersive experience of the city's natural gems for a global audience. To enhance facilities at hiking trails with tourism appeal, the government completed improvement works at Lion Rock Historic Walk and on the path between Tai Tong Sweet Gum Woods and Wong Nai Tun Reservoir, and kick-started those at Tai To Yan Country Trail, Aberdeen Reservoirs Walk and the path from Twisk to Shek Lung Kung.

Cultural and Heritage Tourism

The Cultural and Heritage Sites Local Tour Incentive Scheme encourages the travel trade to develop more tourism products and itineraries with cultural and heritage elements, enabling the local community as well as visitors to learn more about local culture and heritage. The 'Deeper into Hong Kong: Creative Itinerary Design Competition' received more than 700 suggestions of travel itineraries, of which the final winning six will be selected in February 2024.

Creative Tourism

The Tourism Commission continued to roll out the 'Design District Hong Kong', also known as #ddHK, creative tourism project to showcase the city's authentic culture and characteristics through art installations and a series of cultural activities. The project was held in Tsuen Wan from August to October, attracting more than 390,000 visitors.

Tourism Infrastructure, Facilities and Attractions

Hong Kong has many popular sightseeing spots including the Peak, which provides a panoramic view of Hong Kong Island, the Kowloon Peninsula and Victoria Harbour; theme parks; temples; heritage sites; natural landscape; and a wide range of shops. Accommodation options are also extensive. As at the year end, 321 hotels and 1,315 licensed guesthouses provided about 90,100 and 11,200 rooms respectively.

Ocean Park

Ocean Park is taking forward its future strategy to transform into a destination which focuses on conservation and education, grounded in nature and complemented by adventure and leisure elements to enhance visitor experience. In August, the park launched a new animal exhibit 'Sloth and Friends Studio', featuring sloths, macaw, kinkajou and ball python, and using artificial intelligence to enhance public awareness of saving endangered species.

A Symphony of Lights

'A Symphony of Lights' is a nightly multimedia light and sound show staged on both sides of Victoria Harbour. It symbolises Hong Kong's dynamic energy and contrasting culture. A special

edition with water pyrotechnics was staged during the Harbour Chill Carnival in July and August and during WinterFest in December.

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort is one of the most popular themed resorts in Asia. The resort continued its multi-year expansion plan and in November, it unveiled the world's first and largest World of *Frozen*.

Wetland Park

The 61-hectare Hong Kong Wetland Park is home to an assortment of wildlife. The recreated wetlands, exhibition galleries, theatre and other facilities all underline the importance of wetlands to civilisation and biodiversity conservation. Works to upgrade the exhibition and visitor facilities continued in 2023 to enhance the park's appeal as an eco-tourism attraction.

Ngong Ping 360

The Ngong Ping Cable Car offers a spectacular 25-minute journey with views of the flora and fauna of North Lantau Country Park, Tung Chung Bay, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and Hong Kong International Airport. It takes visitors to Ngong Ping Village, which is designed in a Chinese architectural style with attractions including the Cable Car Discovery Centre, Motion 360 and Walking with Buddha. Visitors can also visit the Tian Tan Buddha, Po Lin Monastery, Ngong Ping Piazza and Wisdom Path on Lantau Island. The Crystal+ cabin has fully transparent sides and bottom, offering unobstructed views of Lantau Island.

Peak Tram

Operating since 1888, the Peak Tram is a funicular railway offering a unique view of the ridgeline and skyscrapers of the city. Following an upgrade in 2022, visitors can enjoy tramcars with enhanced capacity; an expanded, covered and temperature-controlled waiting area at the lower terminus in Central; and a renovated upper terminus at the Peak.

Hong Kong Tourism Board

The HKTB is a statutory government-subsidised organisation that markets Hong Kong around the world as a preferred travel destination. It comprises 20 members who represent various tourism-related sectors and communities. In addition to its Hong Kong head office, the board has 15 offices worldwide and representatives in seven source markets.

The board has seven visitor centres locally: two at the airport and others at Tsim Sha Tsui Star Ferry Pier Concourse, Hong Kong West Kowloon Station, HZMB Hong Kong Port, Kai Tak Cruise Terminal and Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point. Travel information is also available via HKTB's website (in 13 languages), DiscoverHongKong.com, and social media channels.

As inbound travel fully resumed in February, the government launched the 'Hello Hong Kong' global promotional campaign to spread the message that Hong Kong welcomes back visitors. Under the campaign, the HKTB distributed over 2 million 'Hong Kong Goodies' visitor consumption vouchers for redemption at over 3,000 merchants including transportation,

dining and retail outlets, and attractions, and also supported a campaign launched by the Airport Authority Hong Kong and airlines to give away 500,000 air tickets.

The HKTB worked with the government, business sector, travel trade and celebrities to produce about 330 greeting videos, and invited over 2,000 media and travel trade representatives, celebrities and key opinion leaders to visit the city to generate positive word-of-mouth and tell the good stories of Hong Kong.

In addition, the HKTB led trade partners in hospitality, aviation, attractions and other tourism-related sectors to participate in about 30 trade fairs and travel shows outside Hong Kong, promoting the city's tourism appeal to audiences in visitor source markets.

Service Quality

Honest and Quality Tourist Services

The government works closely with the tourism industry and related organisations to promote honest and good quality services for tourists.

The Travel Industry Authority (TIA) is a statutory authority which regulates travel agents, tour guides and tourist escorts. Its work aims to protect consumers' interests and ensure the tourism market's healthy development and operation. Laws such as the Trade Descriptions Ordinance prohibit unfair trade practices and protect consumers' legitimate interests.

The TIA also operates an Administrative Scheme for Registered Shops, which allows Mainland tour group participants who are not satisfied with their purchases to return the goods concerned and seek refunds within 180 days of purchase, provided that the goods are in proper condition.

The HKTB's Quality Tourism Services (QTS) Scheme encourages shops, restaurants and visitor accommodation facilities to offer good service. As at December, 1,184 establishments with 7,757 outlets and 228 rooms had earned QTS accreditation.

Hospitality Initiatives

Hospitality is essential to sustaining tourism. Every year, the government runs a Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme to train about 250 young people to instil in them a sense of courtesy and helpfulness to visitors and to develop a strong hospitality culture in schools and the community.

Easier Entry for Visitors

Hong Kong is a visitor-friendly city. Visitors from some 170 countries and territories enjoy visa-free access for stays of seven to 180 days. The Mainland's Individual Visit Scheme permits residents of 49 designated Mainland cities to visit Hong Kong on their own instead of travelling in tour groups.

Protection of Travellers

Under the Travel Industry Ordinance, travel agents and tourist guides must obtain a licence from the TIA to carry on travel business and receive inbound visitors respectively. As at end-2023, Hong Kong had 1,612 licensed travel agents and 5,402 licensed tourist guides.

The statutory Travel Industry Compensation Fund provides ex gratia payments of 90 per cent of the loss of outbound fares to outbound travellers in the event of travel agents' default. In 2023, ex gratia payments of around \$1.06 million were paid to 65 travellers affected by nine default cases. The fund also offers aid in cases of outbound travellers who sustain injuries or die in accidents in the course of activities arranged by a travel agent. No such payments were made in 2023.

Tourism Cooperation

The Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the GBA provides directions for the cultural and tourism development of GBA. It also sets out the directions for developing the GBA into an exchange hub for culture between East and West and a world-class tourism destination.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government, the Macao SAR Government and the governments of the nine Mainland cities in the GBA jointly established the Tourism Federation of Cities in the GBA and the Joint Regulatory Alliance of the Tourism Market of 9+2 Cities in the GBA to promote tourism cooperation and development within the region.

Hong Kong is a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Tourism Working Group and the Pacific Asia Travel Association, and an associate member of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.

Websites

Create Hong Kong: www.createhk.gov.hk

Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau: www.cstb.gov.hk

Film Development Council: www.fdc.gov.hk

Film Services Office: www.fso.createhk.gov.hk

Flower Appreciation: www.fa.gov.hk

Hong Kong Public Libraries: www.hkpl.gov.hk

Hong Kong public museums: www.museums.gov.hk

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com

Leisure and Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk

Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong: www.mehongkong.com

Tourism Commission: www.tourism.gov.hk