

Creative Economy Creative Development

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In August 2009 the Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva formally announced the Creative Thailand Policy. At the same time he announced the Thai government's twelve commitments to increase the value of Thailand's creative industries from 12% to 20% of the country's GDP in 2012 and the make Thailand the creative hub of ASEAN by 2012.

The twelve commitments confirmed to the conference participants include the following major development initiatives:

- Enhancing the efficiency of the entire intellectual property management system within six months.
- Enhancing creative learning in the national curriculum in order to cultivate creative thinking in the Thai educational system.
- Supporting specialization in areas of design and other art forms.
- Creating added value of traditional knowledge and general income to the local people.

- Enhance the professional standing of creative Thais and popularize Thai art and culture worldwide.
- Provide creative zones (visual art zone, performing art zone) open for artists to exhibit their works.

At the opening plenary session John Howkins, Chairman of the Creative Group of England and famous author of the “Creative Economy” set the agenda for the conference, urging the Government to support collaborative policy-making, encouraging the individual voice. “Listen to the people who are creative,” “Open up opportunities for people, promoting diversity and inclusion,” “Celebrate change and novelty – be tolerant,” and above all Howkins encouraged learning. “Recognize and encourage every child’s imagination,” “Give all children a creative education,” “Turn their imagination, talent and skills into activities and jobs.”

And so an agenda and a time frame have been set. It is now up to the arts community and not least the institutions in charge of art education to respond. Our Journal of Urban Culture Research will in coming issues follow this response closely.